

Great Casterton

Parish Plan



2005



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved.
 Rutland Council District Council Licence
 No. LA 100018056

With Special thanks to:



CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. History
3. Community and household
4. Transport and traffic
5. Crime and community safety
6. Sport and leisure
7. Youth
8. Village church
9. Education
10. Retail services
11. Farming and heritage
12. Conservation and the environment
13. Planning and development
14. Health and social services
15. Information and communication
16. Local councils
17. Conclusion
18. Action plan



INTRODUCTION

PARISH PLANS

Parish plans are part of the “Vital Villages” initiative of the Countryside Agency, run locally through the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland). A Parish Plan should provide a picture of a village, identifying through consultation the concerns and needs of its residents. From the plan villages should identify actions to improve the village and the life of the community. The resulting Village Action Plan is then used to inform the County Council, through the Parish Council. Parish Plans have a statutory place in local government.



GREAT CASTERTON PARISH PLAN

Great Casterton’s Parish Plan started with a meeting of villagers in June 2002. There was particular interest because of a contentious planning decision imposed by the County Council on the village. The Community Development Officer for Rutland, Adele Stainsby, explained the purpose of the plan and the benefits for the village. A committee was formed, and a constitution drawn up. The Parish Council promised a small initial grant while an application for Countryside Agency funding was prepared. The money granted was to be balanced by the voluntary work of villagers.

Meetings of the Parish Plan Group, open to all villagers and widely publicised, were held in The Plough Inn, during the rest of 2002 and into 2003. Issues of concern to a wide variety of residents were discussed and towards the end of 2003 a core group of villagers, with the agreement of the larger group, set out to devise a Parish Questionnaire. This group was ably guided by Adele Stainsby using her experience of Village Design statements elsewhere in the County. Great Casterton’s Parish Plan was to be the first in Rutland.

In March 2004, a 26 page questionnaire, with a 2 page youth annex, was distributed to the 169 households in the village. 103 questionnaires were returned completed, a 64% response. This is considered excellent by survey standards, and better than the last General Election. The Prize Draw linked to the completion of the questionnaire may have helped. We now have what is probably the most comprehensive survey of the village since the Doomsday Book was written.

The confidential responses were input to a computer programme devised by the Rural Community Council and then analyzed. In December 2004 the Group met to discuss the writing up of the Plan. Volunteers offered to produce reports on their particular area of interest and I agreed to take over the chairmanship and produce the plan.

Many residents have contributed to this plan by their attendance at meetings, contribution of ideas for the questionnaire, drafting, distribution and collection of the questionnaires, and writing up of the plan.

Great Casterton is very much a working village, and there have been a number of changes in office holders in the group due to pressure of work, etc. Our main thanks must go to:

- Jonathan Peacock, who chaired the Group so ably until December 2004, despite growing business pressures
- Michael Roffe, who was the main instigator of the project and acted as Secretary until January 2005, when he handed over to his daughter Sharon, due to pressure of work. He is also the historian.
- Sue Peacock, our Treasurer
- The landlord of the Plough Inn, for his hospitality
- Judith Rose, Parish Council Liaison, who spent many hours helping to draft the questionnaire and also contributed to the plan
- Adele Stainsby, Rutland Community Development Officer, who has guided us throughout
- The Parish Council, for their unfailing support
- Revd Philip Street and Ian Warrington for their contribution to the plan.
- The Countryside Agency for their generous financial support



Margaret Markey
Chair
April 2005



THE VILLAGE

Great Casterton gets its name from a significant Roman settlement on the banks of the River Gwash. The village straddles the old Roman Road Ermine Street, now the B1081 linking Stamford, two miles south, to the A1 dual carriageway. The B1081/Ermine Street was the Old Great North Road, from London to the north of England and Scotland, until a Stamford bypass was built in the 1970's.

For many years much of the land and houses in the village were owned by the Burghley Estate. Indeed there are to this day Burghley owned buildings and land for rent in the village. The older buildings in the village are of limestone, with Collyweston slated roofs. Stone walls abound, some dry and some listed.

The village is part of the Casterton and Ryhall ward of Rutland County Council, represented by two County Councillors. It has a small Parish Council of five members, all elected volunteers.

There are 169 households on the electoral register for the village, which has a total population of about 470. The majority of houses are spread along the Old Great North Road (B1081) (Main Street), Pickworth Road (C9303) and Ryhall Road (C9304). There is a 1970s private development of 26 houses in College Close, off Ryhall Road, and a 1980s private development of 24 houses in Ermine Rise, off Main Street.

There are local authority houses off Pickworth Road and on Main Street, many of which are now privately owned. Nine new units of social housing are under construction off Pickworth Road, behind the Primary School. Over recent years there have been a number of barn conversions, some with associated new built houses. Most recently, ten conversions/new houses are under construction at the Home Farm site near the Parish Church on Main Street.

Older houses in the village are a mixture of farmhouses, farm cottages, converted retail and agricultural premises, with a sprinkling of infill 20th century dwellings.

The Old Great North Road, from the Old Rectory at the south of the village to the houses on the left hand side of the road past the Ryhall Road/Pickworth Road/Ingthorpe Road junction, and including the Ryhall Road houses to the Granary, form a Conservation Area, with stringent planning regulations. There are 12 listed buildings in the village.



HISTORY OF GREAT CASTERTON

(The Town by the fort)

Prior to the Roman invasion the site of the present village was part of the territory of the Coritani. It is possible that in the area of the village there may have been small farmsteads, however the majority of the land was covered by forest.

The Roman incursion into the territory of the Coritani occurred around 43 to 47 AD. In the first century AD a fort was constructed to guard the crossing of the river Gwash. Its position some distance from Ermine Street suggests that this was its primary function.

As often happened with military forts a settlement grew up outside and was well established during the fort's occupation. The settlement would have had traders who supplied the fort with goods etc required by the garrison as well as being occupied by the soldiers' unofficial wives. The local tribe appear to have become closely intertwined with the Roman garrison and certainly the majority of the population would stem from the local Coritani tribe. It is deduced that this settlement flourished and it is known that the rampart bank was built on the remains of earlier settlement buildings.

During the end of the second century and the beginning of the third century the town wall was built, which from evidence from excavations was 2.10m wide at its base with a 6.50m wide ditch in front of the wall.

The town defences were altered in the fourth century, the ditch filled in and a larger one dug further out at a distance of 8m from the new wall. The remains of this ditch can be seen today from the Ryhall road. The dimensions are some 18m wide by some 3.3m deep. Rectangular bastions were added to the new wall and were used as mounts for artillery which could project stones and iron tipped bolts. It is assumed that the bastions would have been roofed over to keep the artillery pieces dry.

The buildings within the town were simple structures, the majority being constructed of wood and mud. Large stones, some moulded, have been found in excavations and are assumed to be from the town wall and bastions, but may well have been part of early buildings robbed for the construction of the wall, such as major tombs etc.

The town had an enclosed area of some 18 acres. Excavation has revealed the most interesting building within the town discovered to date to be a bath building or a mansio (coaching inn) at the southern end of the town. The town itself had no regular grid system for the streets apart from Ermine Street which was diverted through the town.

It has been suggested because of the possible existence of these buildings that Great Casterton may have been a "posting station", however further excavations to prove this theory have not been possible.



In 1959 to the North of the town a Roman Saxon burial ground was partially excavated and in addition a smelting kiln was uncovered. Some of the later burials were found to have been cut into the counterscarp of the bank of the town defences. A large part of this burial ground was further excavated in 2004 and then destroyed by a housing development. It is possible but not proven by excavation that the burial ground may extend to the site now occupied by the Plough Inn.

A villa or farm house was built in the fourth century AD a quarter of a mile outside the eastern defences of the town. The town and villa were occupied well into the fifth century AD.

From 550AD onwards Anglo Saxon invaders from the continent started to colonise and interrelate with the local British population. Little is known of this period of history in this area, however Leicestershire and Rutland were part of the Mercia sphere of influence which lasted up to about 872 AD.

From 872 up to 877 the Danish conquest was in progress and eventually the village would have been under the "Danelaw". By the end of the 9th century Ceolwulf was the puppet king of the Danes, ruling Mercia. Between 917 and 918 AD the English regained the territory from the Danes, however current research concludes that the area we now know as Rutland was on the whole avoided by the Danes.



During this period the town of Great Casterton went into decline, the Danes founding their own town in what is now Stamford. The Domesday Book of 1085 lists Casterton as part of the Royal Manor, the area around the village being mostly forest and agricultural land. From this time on up to the Black death of 1348 there was a rising population in this area, however Great Casterton remained an agricultural village flanking Ermine Street which was to become the Great North road in modern times.

In 1522 King Henry VIII undertook a military survey. Great Casterton at this time was reasonably prosperous and still being referred to as a town. "The local Chief lord being John Hussey knyght he having available for service with the King twenty one Bill men."

The landlords of the village from 1600 onwards were the Brownlow family. By the late 19th century the land in and around the village was owned by the Burghley Estate (Cecil family).

From this time onwards to the present day the village has remained predominantly a farming community, with the Great North Road which became the A1 passing through the centre. In the 19th century there was stabling for horses at the Plough Inn, for hauliers using the A1. A large watering trough was sited in front of the inn under a large oak tree.

From the 1950s onwards the village developed into a school based centre with the building and expansion of the primary and secondary school. Today's village population comprises a mixture of professions ranging from agriculture to medicine .

Notable places, dates and names connected with the village and surrounding area are:

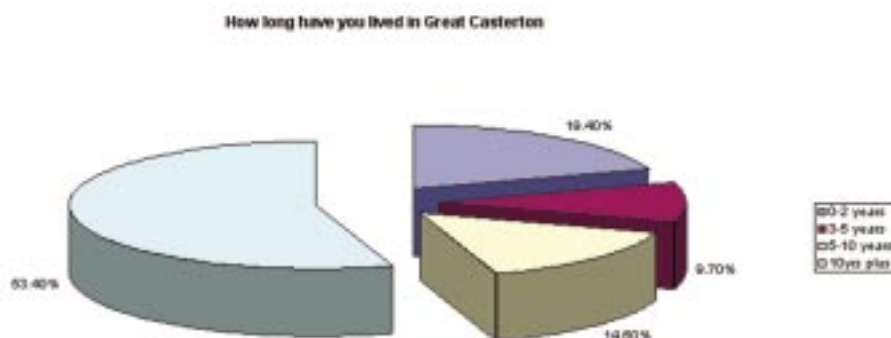
- Ingthorpe (village in the meadow) – a deserted medieval village.
- The poet John Clare married Patty Turner in Great Casterton Church in 1820, holding their wedding breakfast in the Crown Inn.
- Two and one quarter miles west of Pickworth is the site of the Battle of Losecoat Field 1470, between Edward IV and the Lancastrian rebels.
- 2 miles north west of the village is a place called the Bloody Oaks, which may have been part of the battle of Losecoat Field, however on a map of 1645 the wood is shown as Royal Wood. More probably the wood was known by this name because of the execution of the highway man John Bowland at Empingham corner in 1769.
- Tickencote Church with its Norman chancel.
- North on the Pickworth Road past Mounts Lodge Farm there are the remains of a moated medieval site called Woodhead Castle.

The road leading in to Great Casterton from Stamford is a modern ramp over a bridge built to assist traffic during its use as the Old Great North Road. Before this ramp was constructed you would have crossed the river and then negotiated a small incline before entering the village.



COMMUNITY AND HOUSEHOLD

Great Casterton has little employment, the farms are now mainly mechanised. Barker Signs, Tudor Coaches, the Plough Inn, the Crown Inn, the Primary School and Community College are the main employers. An increasing number of residents work from home, but the majority commute to work outside the village, which explains the large number of households with 2+ cars. Notwithstanding, the majority of residents have lived in the village for 10+ years.



The reasons for living in the village are diverse – Q3. They include:

- The house itself – 52.4%
- Rural setting – 42.7%
- Local facilities eg schools, church, pubs – 25.2%
- Access to road network – 17.5%
- Born here – 4.9%

20% of respondents chose to add other reasons for living in Great Casterton, including:

- Work (x6)
- Near to good schools (x5)
- Near to Stamford (x2)
- Rail link to London
- Not flat, the river
- Farming
- All we could afford

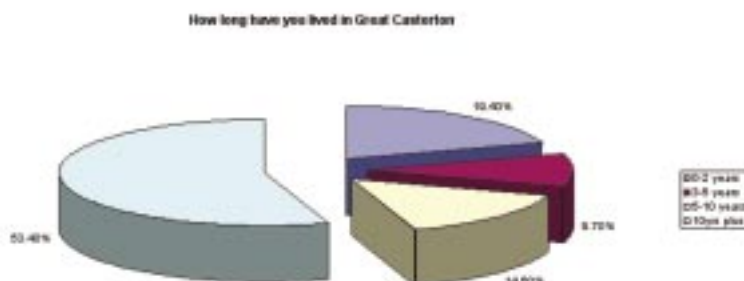
Of the 103 households who completed the questionnaire the age distribution is:

• 0 - 11yrs	41
• 11 - 18yrs	50
• 19 - 60yrs	149
• 60+ yrs	52
	<hr/>
	292
Unallocated	6
	<hr/>
	298
	<hr/> <hr/>

TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC

TRANSPORT

The status of Great Casterton as a commuting village is demonstrated by the number of residents who own two or more cars (Q6).



Only 25% of households have to keep their cars on the road, but 49% have concerns about parking in general on roads in the village. The main concerns involve the Primary School and the Community College, and the congestion on Pickworth Road and Ryhall Road in the morning and afternoon. The narrowness of Main Street relative to the amount of traffic, particularly HGV, is the second most important parking concern.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

- Parish Council to raise parking issues with Primary School and Community College
- Parish Council to raise Main Street traffic flow with Rutland CC

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Great Casterton is served by a regular daytime bus service from Oakham to Stamford. Its frequency precludes the issue of travel tokens to elderly villagers. There are also bus services to Nottingham and Peterborough. Central Line trains from Stamford Station (3 miles distance) provide connections countrywide via Peterborough, Leicester and Birmingham. There are numerous taxi firms in Stamford.

32% of respondents use public transport, in the main buses. Of those who don't use public transport the majority use cars. A significant number found the directions, routes and times of public transport unsuitable:

- No early/late services
- Not frequent enough
- Need shuttle service to Stamford
- Inflexible
- Problems with luggage

SUGGESTED ACTION

- Parish Council to raise with County Council the concerns expressed, especially those of elderly residents



CYCLING

37% of respondents ride a cycle, and 39% of respondents said they would use cycle lanes if provided. Main Street was the most popular road for cycle lanes, with a request for a lane all the way to Stamford. A cycle lane on Ryhall Road was also suggested.

TRAFFIC

The B1081 (Main Street) is the first signposted road to Stamford from the A1 South. In Stamford the B1081 is the designated route to the A1 North. Main Street, Ryhall Road (C9304), Pickworth Road (C9303) and Ingthorpe Road (unclassified) now constitute a rat run for all kinds of traffic to and from the east of Rutland and South Lincolnshire, mainly because there are no HGV restrictions on Ryhall Road and Main Street. Rutland County Council has agreed that Ryhall Road and Main Street should form part of the designated route for abnormal loads from South Lincolnshire to the A1 North/South. The Council has also agreed that Main Street (B1081) can be a diversion for the A1 North or South. It appears that for these reasons Great Casterton has been specifically excluded from Rutland County Council's recent programme of HGV restrictions in East Rutland, despite the frequent representations of the Parish Council and individual villagers. Traffic entering the village from the A1 South regularly exceeds the speed limit on Main Street (30 mph).

The traffic calming measures already in the village – speed tables and 20 mph limit on Ryhall Road/Pickworth Road, installed in 2001 as part of the Safer Routes to School initiative, are considered poor by over 50% of respondents (Q19). Only 7% consider them good. Q17 asked for preferences for traffic calming - the majority (62%) - would like interactive speed signs, with 26% wanting more traffic calming and 22% lower speed limits. Pelican crossings were requested by 13% and traffic lights by 8%. Other measures suggested include:

- Speed cameras
- Police checks
- Chicanes on Main Street

We understand that as a result of considerable efforts by the Parish Council interactive speed signs will be installed on Main Street in the near future.

Q20 asked for views on dangerous junctions in the village. 79% of respondents felt that the Main Street/Pickworth Road/Ryhall Road/Ingthorpe junction is dangerous.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Parish Council, informed by the views of residents, should pursue with Rutland County Council

- An HGV ban on Main Street/Ryhall Road
- Safety measures at the Main Street/Ryhall Road/Pickworth Road/Ingthorpe Road junction
- A review of speed limitation measures throughout the village





Primary School



Crossroads



Crossroads



Pickworth Road



Crossroads



Primary school

CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Great Casterton is within the Leicestershire and Rutland Police Authority. Of the total number of police officers in the authority - 2272 (2003/4) - Rutland is allocated 24. One inspector, four sergeants and 19 constables comprise the Rutland County team. Our policeman looks after six other East Rutland villages. Police response is from Oakham, 10 miles away. Since 2003 Community Support Officers, who have limited powers, assist the police locally.

Q25 asked for a judgement on village policing.

- 63% considered policing poor
- 29% considered policing fair
- 1% considered policing good

Q26 asked for suggestions on improving policing in the village. Over 60 respondents mentioned a greater police presence in the village, from a policeman living in the village, to foot patrols and regular police car patrols.

Q27 asked about experience of crime in the last 12 months (Mar 2003-Mar 2004)

- 16 respondents had experienced burglary/theft
- 16 respondents had experienced anti-social behaviour
- 13 respondents had experienced car crime
- 11 respondents had experienced vandalism
- 5 respondents had experienced illegal hare coursing
- 1 respondent had experienced deer poaching



However of those who had experienced crime, only 59% had reported the crimes to the police. The reasons for non reporting varied. Some incidents were regarded as too minor, however one respondent feared retaliation, and three thought the police would not deal with it.

Of those who reported crime, 45% were not satisfied with the response they received.

42% of residents would be interested to hear about crime prevention (Q34), and 54% would like a specified area in the village to discuss crime related issues (Q35). The roles they would most like to see police undertake (Q36) included:

- Patrolling streets on foot – 69%
- Patrolling in a car – 65%
- School visits – 39%
- Household visits – 23%
- Security talks – 21%

Only one respondent was interested in becoming a Special Constable, and less than 50% were interested in running or joining a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

In view of the high level of discontent with policing revealed by the questionnaire it is recommended that the Parish Council share the responses with the Rutland team, and endeavour to establish:

- A more regular and visible police presence in the village
- Improved communications with the police

SPORT AND LEISURE

Great Casterton has very limited sport and leisure facilities available to residents. There is a bowling green, the Church runs a weekly Youth Club and occasional social functions for parishioners in the Church Hall, and there is bell ringing. Keep Fit for the over 50s is held in the Church Hall. There are two public houses, one of which runs a weekly quiz night. The Primary School Parent Teachers Association organizes regular social events in the school. Casterton Community College runs a wide programme of adult education classes for Rutland.

Q39 to 42 asked people about their sport and leisure activities. Our respondents participate in a very wide range of sports outside the village, but a very limited number within the village.

Q41 asked what facilities respondents would make use of if available within Great Casterton. The most popular would be swimming – 16 respondents asked for this. Keep fit/gymnastics and access to the Community College tennis courts were also suggested by a number of people. Only 6 respondents would be prepared to organise/assist with activities in the village.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council be asked to raise with Primary School/Community College special arrangements for villagers to access their facilities.



Community College Playing Fields



Bowling Green



Church Bell Ropes



Community College Tennis Courts

EDUCATION

There has been a primary school in the village since the 19th century. Great Casterton C of E Controlled Primary School, which also serves the villages of Little Casterton, Tinwell, Pickworth and Stretton was built in 1961 when the former village school was demolished. A number of children from Stamford attend the school, in particular from the Rutland Heights estate, built in the 1990's on land which was previously part of Rutland and still within the ecclesiastical parish of Great Casterton. The school came out of Special Measures in March 2004, after significant improvement in teaching and learning, and is soon to federate with Empingham C of E Primary School, with which it shares a head teacher. Federation is one method under consideration by Rutland County Council to keep open small village schools.

There is also a Community College in the village, with over 800 pupils. It provides 11 - 16 education for children from the East of Rutland, community education and child care facilities.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Over 90% of respondents said it was important for the village to have its own primary school (Q48). The main reasons were:

- Ease of access - 79%
- Education in own environment - 73%
- Enhances village community - 61%
- Support for parents - 37%

However of the 23 households responding with primary age children, only 7 had children in the village primary school. The main reasons for not sending children to the village school (Q53) were:

- Academic achievement - 7 respondents
- Size of school - 4 respondents
- Dissatisfaction with staff/governors - 4 respondents

There were many other reasons given, which roughly can be broken down into:

- Children already settled before moving to village - 9
- Dissatisfied with other aspect of school - 4

The primary school is situated in the middle of the village. 52% of respondents were interested in more community use of the school, such as:

- Holiday activities for children - 38%
- Afterschool activities for children - 35%
- Use of computers - 28%

Since the questionnaire was completed the Primary School has distributed flyers about its high standards, facilities etc throughout the village.



Primary School pre 1961



Primary School 2005

SECONDARY SCHOOL

While it is generally highly regarded for the education it offers, the Community College is perceived as contributing greatly to the traffic congestion and parking problems in the village, which gains little advantage from its presence. This has been a constant source of complaint at Parish Plan meetings and was reflected in answers to the questionnaire. When it was built the then Parish Council was assured that its facilities would be available for villagers. The only concession at present is the free use of a room for Parish Council meetings 4 times a year.

Q59 asked for suggestions for use of college facilities by village residents either free or for a reduced fee.

- 66% wanted use of grounds for village events
- 56% wanted use of indoor sports facilities
- 55% wanted use of outdoor sports facilities
- 54% wanted holiday activities for children
- 51% wanted use of rooms/halls for village functions

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Primary School should be encouraged to continue its marketing, targeting new families with young children. It should also be asked to look at provision of facilities to the community
- Parish Council should raise the issues that concern the village with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the Community College



Casterton Community College - Ryhall Road

VILLAGE CHURCH

The Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul is on the B1081 (Main Street) on the Southern approach to the village. It is a historic church dating from the 12 century, Grade I listed with some significant architectural features. There is an additional graveyard off a footpath to the South of the church. There is an active parish community with services twice weekly, a Sunday school, a coffee morning and a youth club. The rector, who is also responsible for churches at Tickencote, Little Casterton, Pickworth and Exton, lives in the village.

Q43 asked how important the church is to the village. 83% of respondents considered it to be important or very important. 71% considered its main importance to be for baptisms, weddings and funerals, with a significant number also considering it important for Sunday worship (56%), for its history (57%) and as a place to meet other members of the community (46%).

Respondents were asked about the maintenance of the church grounds and graveyard. While most were not willing to help maintain these, 28% said they were willing to pay - presumably through council tax - and 18% would help with voluntary mowing.

Q46/47 asked about the use of the church hall, The most popular use was for Post Office facilities - 43% - with children's parties a close second. 30% considered it should be the village polling station. It will be so for the 2005 General Election! Other suggestions were in the main for village social activities and community events. (It is proposed to launch this plan in the Church Hall.)

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parochial Church Council (PCC) consider the views of respondents on the use of the Church hall.
- Parish Council discuss with the PCC the maintenance of the church grounds and grave yards.



Old Grave Yard



Church Hall



Church



War Memorial

RETAIL SERVICES

There have been no shops in the village since the Post Office closed in the late 90s, although a number of mobile shops call. There are two garages with convenience stores approximately half a mile from the southern and northern boundaries of the village.

About half the respondents said they had been inconvenienced when the Post Office closed (Q62). However all those who have arrived in the village during the last seven years will have entered "No".

Very few people make use of the mobile shops which visit the village (Q63). About a quarter use the newspaper delivery service. These answers probably indicate that most people are not seriously inconvenienced by the lack of shops in the village.

If a mobile Post Office were available, stamps, parcels and utility payments would be in highest demand. One suspects that the overall demand would vary considerably according to the frequency of visit.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council to investigate the feasibility of reinstating the village post office on a part time basis by use of a "mobile facility"

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Of the 103 respondents, nearly 91% felt that conservation and environmental protection are important. The areas of most concern are buildings in the village (67%), open spaces (65%) and the landscape (68%). A considerable part of the village is already a Conservation Area - see section 3

MANAGEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Villagers feel that management of the environment in relation to the better supervision of existing trees (37%), more tree planting (51%) and more regular mowing of roadside verges (50%) are important. A number of villagers complained about the way the area of grass at the crossroads in the village is used as a car 'showroom' and a suggestion was made that it could be better used by the primary school as a 'green' area or sensory garden. It was also suggested that a village sign could be placed on this area of grass. A number of respondents felt that more attention should be given to the collection of litter (60%) especially rubbish on the verge leading from the A1 into the village and on secluded pathways. The point was made that Rutland County Council should ensure that roads and paths within the village remain rubbish free, especially when this rubbish is created by its own tenants. Unswept roads and pavements (21% and 25% respectively) are of concern, as is the problem of dog/horse droppings (32%), graffiti (11%) and dogs wandering around the village (22%). More bins should be provided around the village for dog dirt. Concern was also expressed about fly tipping (20%).



Nearly 54% of respondents said that they were concerned about noise in the village with 45% citing traffic noise and the A1 in particular. One respondent suggested that the traffic noise and fumes have worsened since the farmer cut down hedges behind the Plough. A number of respondents suggested that a noise barrier be erected in the vicinity of the A1 to reduce the noise. Nearly 14% of respondents stated that pets/animals are a cause of disturbance (especially dogs in the High Crescent area), with car alarms (6%) and house alarms (6%) also being mentioned. Other instances of noise disturbance in the village were given as follows:

- Lorries and cars going over the speed bumps in Ryhall Road, especially vehicles using speed bumps as a form of high speed entertainment
- HGV traffic in general
- Fireworks up to two weeks prior to 5th November and also at New Year
- Music being played loudly by inconsiderate neighbours
- Children out late at night
- Alarms for the Grange Farmyard Industrial site opposite the Community College
- Motorbikes using the fields around the village for recreation

The problem of overhanging branches was mentioned a number of times (32%), an instance was cited where this problem had been reported to the Council and nothing had been done. The problem of uneven pavement surfaces was raised by 27% of respondents with the footpaths along the main street being criticized for their poor condition and narrow width. Concern was expressed about instances where cars are parked on pavements, especially where villagers use pavements as an extension of their property for car repairs. It was suggested that a zebra crossing should be placed on the main road into Stamford. From a safety point of view respondents suggested that the lighting at Toll Bar be improved. Secluded pathways were cited as areas where smoking and drinking take place. A number of respondents complained about speeding traffic through the village and it was suggested that cameras would provide a better deterrent instead of the speed bumps currently in place on the Ryhall and Pickworth roads.

Concern was expressed about footpaths and bridleways by 42% of respondents, in relation to (in percentage order) -

- uncut vegetation
- dog dirt
- uneven ground surface
- signposts
- stiles/gates
- barbed wire/other obstructions.



Maps of local footpaths (54%), waymarked routes (42%), marked circular routes (38%), leaflets of walks available to buy (38%) and guided walks of the area (30%) were felt to be useful literature in relation to footpaths and bridleways in the village. A small number of respondents felt that literature on cycle trails (with maps and marked routes) would be useful and criticism was aimed at the County Council for their unwillingness to police and maintain bridleways.

Just over 50% of respondents felt that the County Council does not adequately maintain pavements, verges and roads within the village. Areas which require attention were as follows:

- Roads should be swept more often
- Pot holes need repairing especially by speed bumps, which should have a more effective drainage facility
- Reinstatement after road works is very poor
- Pavements should go all the way up Pickworth Road - at present they do not
- Pavements on the main road need improving
- Lighting within the village should be improved, especially in the High Crescent area
- The maintenance of the path between Pickworth Road and the main road should be improved.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council share with Rutland County Council residents' concerns about environmental, issues, linking noise pollution to the concerns about traffic.
- Parish Council investigate the provision of a village sign for the grass triangle at the centre of the village.
- Parish Council investigate the provision of footpath maps etc.

RECYCLING

Household waste is collected weekly from green wheelie bins; there are no arrangements for separation of waste nor are there recycling facilities in the village. However nearly 72% of respondents said that they recycle waste in the form of glass/bottles (67%), paper (54%), clothes (48%), cans (34%), plastic (28%) and cardboard (31%), with nearly 69% saying that a permanent recycling facility should be implemented in the village. Nearly 89% of respondents said that they would use such a facility. Suggestions as to the location of this facility are as follows:

- Pub car parks
- Community College
- Primary School
- OK Diner car park/Bloody Oaks service station
- Garages in Pickworth Road
- Village hall
- Green boxes for every household provided by Rutland Council, similar to those provided for households in South Kesteven
- North side of the village/either end of the village
- Somewhere accessible, not too close to housing
- BP Garage
- Old allotment site



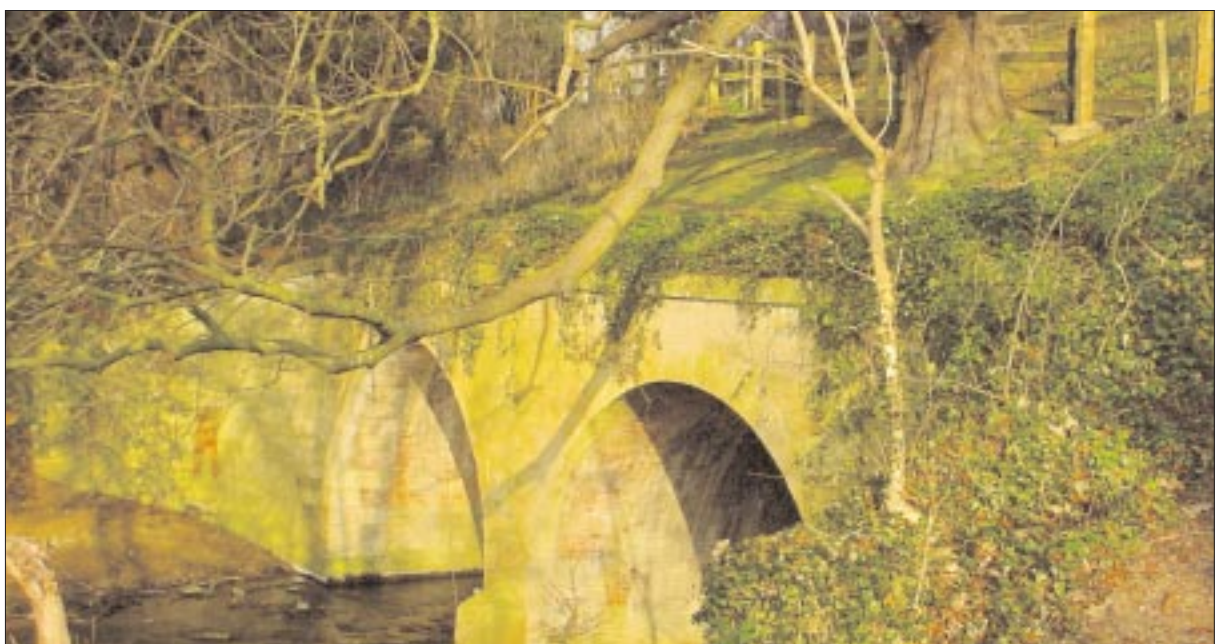
Concern was expressed that if there were to be a recycling facility in Great Casterton, it would increase the number of cars coming into the village. It was also felt that such facilities are untidy, are used as dumping grounds for all sorts of household/industrial waste and attract vermin.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council to raise again with Rutland County Council the provision of recycling facilities in the village.

NATURAL/HISTORIC HERITAGE IN THE VILLAGE

The natural and historic heritage was felt to be important by 60% of respondents but only 17% of respondents said that they would be interested in setting up or participating in projects or research about the heritage of the village.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

On the subject of planning and development, 52% of respondents would like Great Casterton to remain as it is. Nearly 35% favoured a working community; a commuter community and a retirement community were selected by 4% and 1% respectively.

The majority of respondents - 66% - thought house types should be mixed, although 25% would prefer terraced/semis/bungalows (Q70). The vast majority - 74% - felt that new housing should be for the needs of local people. (21% of respondents said they would need alternative housing in the village in the next 10 years). The need for new rented housing - private/housing association - was considered low - 9%.

With regard to the type of housing development, nearly 44% of respondents favoured redevelopment of existing sites (brownfield sites), 39% favoured carefully designed single dwellings, 38% infill development within existing village boundaries, whilst only 7% favoured larger scale developments outside existing village boundaries. Mention was made that there should be no new development on green field sites and special attention should be paid to the preservation of historical sites within the village.



Only 29% of respondents were quite satisfied with the way in which the planning system is implemented in the village, 1% totally satisfied, with 16% quite dissatisfied and 7% very dissatisfied, 40% had no opinion.

If there were an important planning application affecting Great Casterton Parish, nearly 87% indicated that they would welcome a public debate in the village with representatives from Rutland County Council Planning Department.

It was felt that Rutland County Council planning department do not consider the views of local people when deciding on future development. An instance of a significant village development being agreed and sanctioned long before public opinion was sought was cited as evidence of this. Concern was expressed about the wisdom of the proposed social housing development next to the school in such a small village with few or no amenities.

It was also felt that the village should develop as a more integrated community. Mention was also made that as Great Casterton is located close to the A1, steps should be taken by the Council to give the village a 'more villagey feel'. There are no facilities for children in the village at present and a playground or park should be incorporated into any future development plans - this point was mentioned a number of times in the questionnaire. A number of respondents felt that the village should be subject to no further development as it is already losing its charm and character. As the village has no shops or village 'heart' it was felt that housing development should be kept to a minimum in order to keep the village small. It most certainly should not have a 'Rutland Heights' type of development. New housing seems to be aimed at executives rather than local people and as such the prices are much too high, making it impossible for younger people to afford to live in the village.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- It is recommended that in future "major changes" to the development plans affecting the village community should be notified at least 12 months in advance of the event, either at the Annual Parish Meeting or at a Public Meeting .
- Senior County Council Members should be available to present the changes and answer questions.
- Parish Council to pursue restoration of limited development village status rather than a 'rural centre' as it lacks most of the essential facilities for the latter.



FARMING AND HERITAGE

A majority of people felt that farming was very important - 48.5%, or moderately important - 35% - to maintaining the village heritage, 5.8% felt "it was not important" and had no interest in farming activity. A majority of those interested (55%) wanted to see livestock grazing, with free range poultry, arable and setaside activity.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

A majority of respondents (91.8%) had experienced no problems accessing healthcare services. Of the 6.9% experiencing problems these were all related to non availability of dental care. No respondents were housebound/unable to access healthcare. Three residents (2.9%) used the children's day care at Casterton Community College, with only one resident being unaware of the facility. Two people expressed an interest in crèche facilities, one daily and one occasionally. Twelve people expressed an interest in occasional before/after school care.

SUGGESTED ACTION

- Primary school to be asked to pursue before/after school care

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The main means of communication in the village were perceived to be via local "Flyers" (50.5%), word of mouth (49.5%), the local paper (47.6%), and the Church News Letter (37.9%). The Parish Council notice board, schools and pubs also helped. A majority of people (60.2%) would like more information, although 62% had no idea on how to produce it. Only 26% expressed an interest in making use of free internet access if available, with 58.2% not being interested. A majority of residents (50.5%) were not interested in joining a village email list although 40.8% were. Four residents used the Rutland Mobile Library service with a number (16) of residents using Stamford and Peterborough Libraries. Whilst 21.4% were aware of the Great Casterton web site, 72.8% were not. No one was interested in maintaining or improving the website. A majority of people thought that a welcome pack containing local information would be useful although there were no strong views on what should be included. Since the questionnaire was distributed a second Parish Council notice board has been installed in the church grounds facing Main Street.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council to be asked to consider Welcome pack
- Church be encouraged to maintain its newsletter.



LOCAL COUNCILS

A majority of residents (49.5%) were satisfied with the service they received from Rutland CC although 39.8% were not, complaining that the village was sidelined and RCC provided poor value for money.

A majority (65%) were also satisfied with the Parish Council although some (15.5%) complained that it was slow and largely ineffective. Although 50.5% did not know how to contact their Parish Councillors, 38.8% did. A majority - 45.6% - felt that communication with Parish Councillors could be improved although 25.2% felt it could not. A variety of ideas were put forward to improve communications.

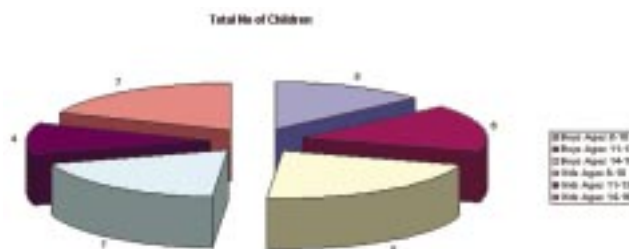
SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council to be asked to make contact arrangements known
- Parish Council to be asked to consider periodic newsletter highlighting what is planned, eg lighting, bus shelters, road signs etc.

Only 7.8% of respondents attended the Annual Parish Meeting at Casterton Community College with 57.3% expressing no interest in the meeting. 82.5% had no wish to become Parish Councillors. A majority (86.4%) had no interest in Local Council issues.

YOUTH

A separate questionnaire was included for young people. This was completed by 37 children, 19 boys and 18 girls.



The range of schools attended was considerable. 16 children attend Casterton Community College; two children attend Great Casterton Primary School. 6 other secondary schools, state and independents have pupils from the village; 7 other primary schools have pupils from the village.

Q142 asked about participation in activities. 6 attend the youth club, 13 attend sports clubs, and 20 other clubs have youth members from the village. Our village youth participate in a very wide range of sporting and other activities.

Q144 and 145 asked about knowledge of youth clubs in the village. 20 were unaware of any provision, of whom 12 were interested in receiving information.

10 children took part in activities at the Community College, all sports related except one.

Q149 asked what facilities they would like to see in Great Casterton.

- Sports field - 23
- Playground - 19
- Skateboard area - 18
- BMX track - 17
- Other - 10 (including swimming pool, gymnastics, sports courts and a shop selling sweets!)

11 thought a newsletter would be of interest to the young people, with 22 possibly agreeing. However only 2 would be interested in helping produce a newsletter.

The final question, Q151, asked for ideas to make Great Casterton a better place for young people. The response was excellent, in the main focusing on playgrounds for younger children, access to playing fields and courts, meeting places and an ice cream van! It will give food for thought to the authorities.

For a small village, Great Casterton has a lot of play and sport facilities, however they are in the schools and at present unavailable outside school hours.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Parish Council to approach the two schools and the LEA about the out of hours use of their facilities
- The Youth Club be asked to publicise more widely its activities
- Rutland County Council be asked to take note of the ideas of the young people of the village
- Parish Council to take note of the strong wish for a play area and progress it when land and funds allow - possibly as a future planning gain.

CONCLUSION

The process of producing a Parish Plan has been an illuminating exercise. The open meetings of village residents, and in particular the comprehensive questionnaire completed by 64% of households, have resulted in a fascinating snapshot of our village, and much information about the concerns and wishes of its residents.

Overall our community appears settled, with an average mix of housing and ages. There is no wish to see the village expand; indeed there is a strong wish to emphasise its small village status. Any new housing development should be limited but mixed, to meet the needs of the local population.

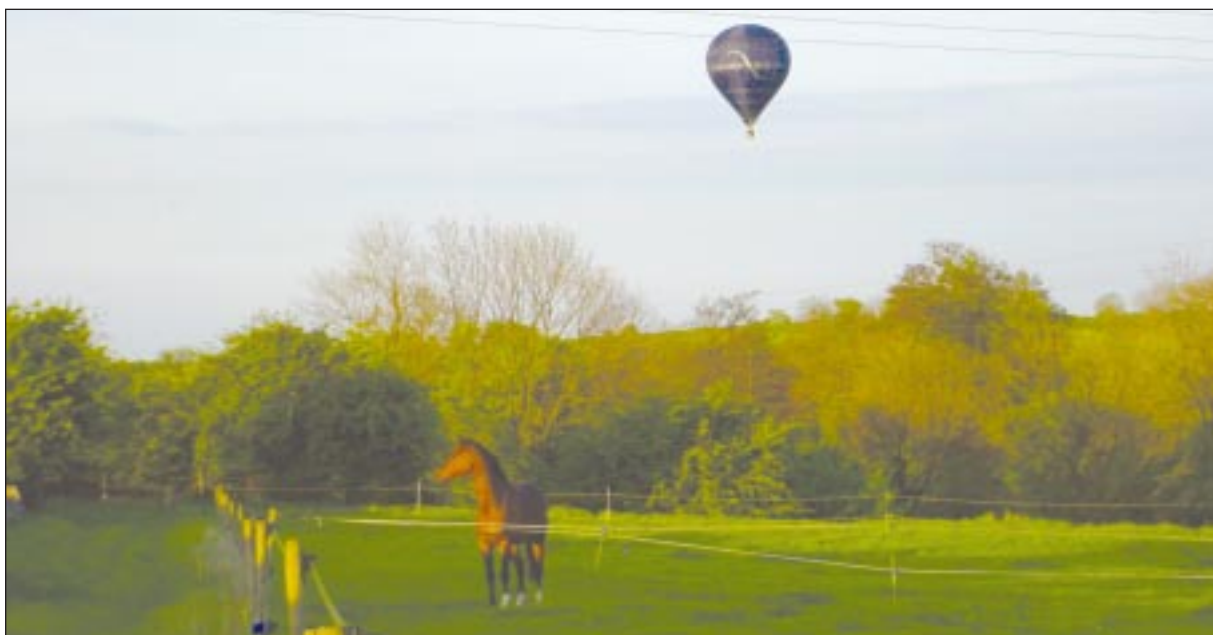
The main concerns seem to be the heavy traffic, especially HGV, and its associated problems - speed, congestion and noise pollution; environmental issues; future development; the level of policing in the village; and the lack of recreational facilities, in the main for young people, in our community.

These issues have concerned the Parish Council for some years, but their representations to Rutland County Council have had little effect. It is to be hoped that the strength of feeling of residents expressed through our questionnaire will add considerable weight to the Parish Council in its dealings with Rutland County Council.

NEXT STEPS

A copy of this plan will be distributed to every household in the village. The plan will also be sent to the Parish Council, our Rutland County Councillors, Rutland County Council, our Member of Parliament, the Rural Community Council, Leicestershire and Rutland Police Authority, the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Parish Councils, the Parochial Church Council, and the head teachers of our two schools. Copies will be placed in local libraries.

The suggested actions arising from this consultation exercise will be progressed, mainly through the Parish Council, with priorities set at the launch of the plan. The group will review the Action Plan yearly.

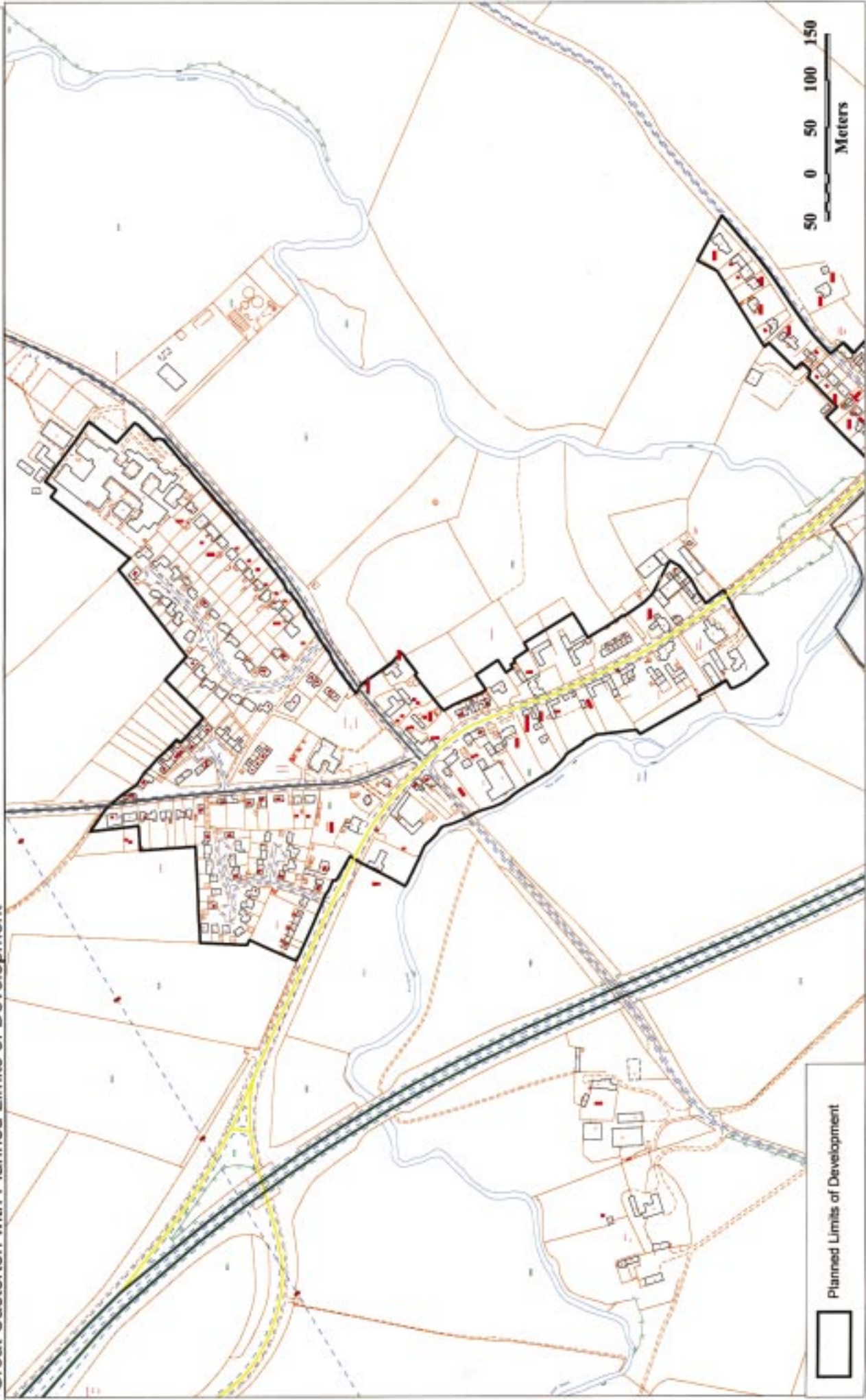


ACTION PLAN

- 1. On road parking issues to be raised with the Primary School and Community College**
- 2. Traffic flow in Main Street to be raised with RCC with an aim to reduce speed and congestion.**
- 3. Concerns about bus services to be raised with RCC**
- 4. HGV ban for Main Street and Ryhall Rd to be pursued with RCC**
- 5. Safety measures at the Main Street/Ryhall Road/Ingthorpe junction to be pursued with RCC**
- 6. Traffic speed limitations throughout the village to be reviewed**
- 7. Policing issues to be raised with Leicestershire and Rutland Police Authority, in particular the requests for a more visible presence and improved communications**
- 8. Parochial Church Council (PCC) to take note of views on use of Church Hall**
- 9. Parish Council to discuss with PCC the maintenance of Church grounds/graveyards**
- 10. Access to Sport and Leisure facilities at schools to be pursued**
- 11. Issues of concern regarding Community College to be raised with Governing Body**
- 12. Primary School expansion to be encouraged**
- 13. Parish Council to investigate feasibility of visiting post office facilities.**

- 14. Respondents' concerns on environmental issues to be represented to RCC**
- 15. Parish Council to raise again the provision of recycling facilities in the village.**
- 16. Major Planning changes to be announced to the community as far in advance as possible (a minimum of 12 months) via the Annual Parish Meeting or at a Public Meeting. Senior County Council Members to present changes and take questions**
- 17. Parish Council to make contact arrangements known**
- 18. Parish Council to consider Welcome Pack for new villagers**
- 19. Parish Council to consider periodic newsletter**
- 20. Church to be encouraged to continue its newsletter**
- 21. Rutland County Council to take note of the views of the youth of the village**
- 22. Youth Club to be asked to publicise its activities**
- 23. Parish Council to take note of the strong wish for a play area and to progress it as soon as land is available, and possibly through a planning gain**
- 24. Parish Council to consider sign for village**
- 25. Parish Council to investigate literature on footpaths etc.**
- 26. Parish Council to pursue restoration of 'limited development' status to village rather than present inappropriate Rural Centre status**

Great Casterton with Planned Limits of Development



Planned Limits of Development



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

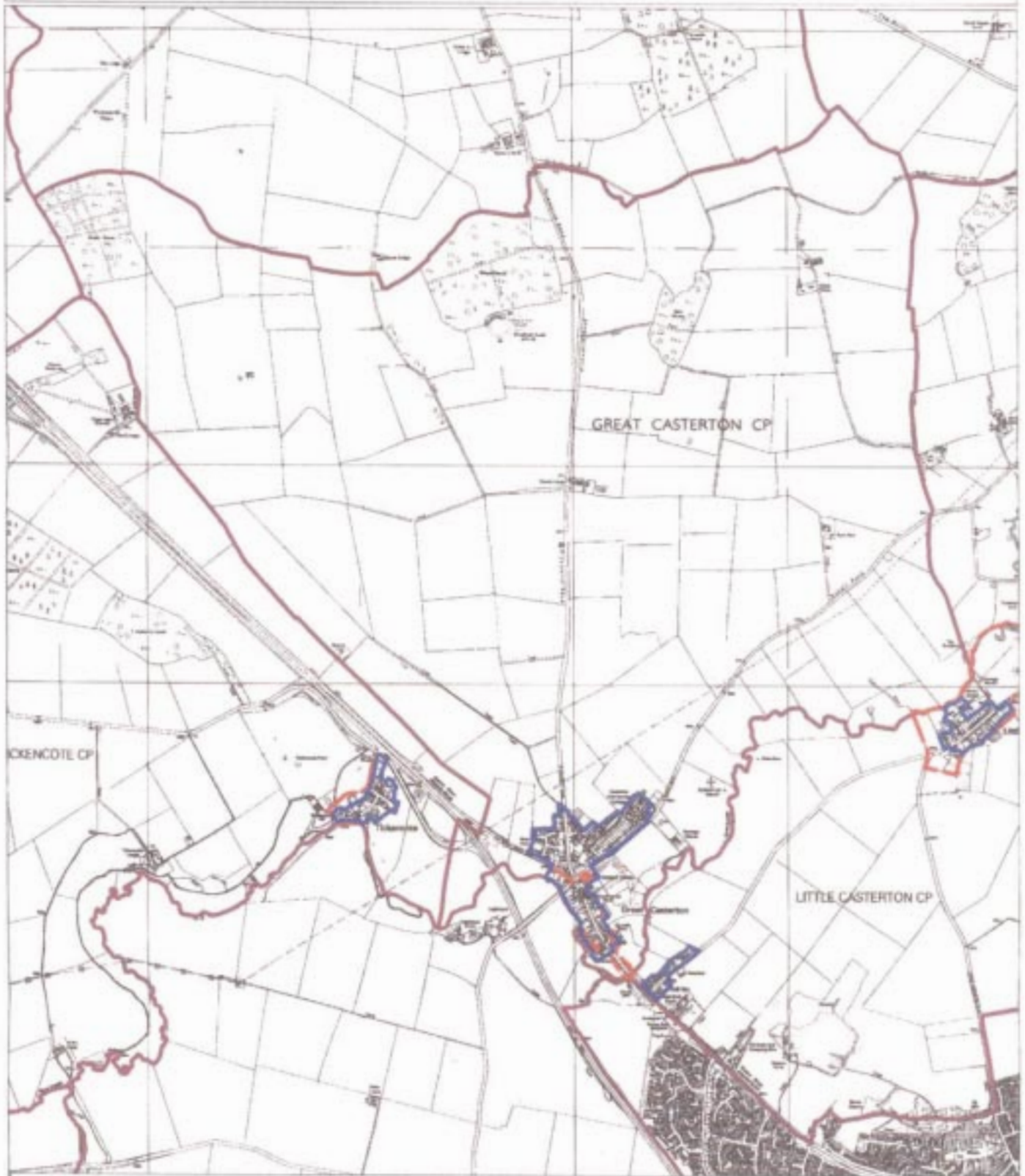
This copy has been reproduced specifically to supply an individual with authority information. No further copies may be made.

Rutland County Council Licence No. 100018056

Plot Centred at 500,060 309,060
Scale: 1:5,245
Date Plotted 16/3/2005



The Parish of Great Casterton



Legend



Conservation Areas



Planned Limits of Development



Parish Boundary



This copy has been reproduced specifically to supply an individual with authority information. No further copies may be made.

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Scale 1:25000



