



A strategy for Hanslope

Prepared by a team of volunteers from the Parish in 2008/2009
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This Parish Plan is dedicated to Margaret Adams who was a founder member of the Parish Plan team but who died just prior to its completion.

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1 Introduction

Over the past 18 months a team of volunteers has been working to produce a strategic plan for the village of Hanslope. The objective was to identify what the village needs for the future, with a target horizon of 5-10 years.

The process that has been followed was to consult informally with village groups and village businesses and to also canvass opinion at village events such as the local election, Street Fayre etc. From these opinions the team identified the key issues concerning villagers and prepared a questionnaire that was hand delivered to every house and business in the village. Over 1000 questionnaires were delivered and 367 responses were returned. The team is grateful to those who responded and particularly to those who added their thoughts and opinions to the questionnaires.

Having analysed the responses to the questionnaires the team has prepared the following Parish Plan. It should be noted that in several cases the issues are well known to the Parish Council which has been trying its best to find a solution. It is trusted that this Parish Plan will add weight to the resolution of those issues.

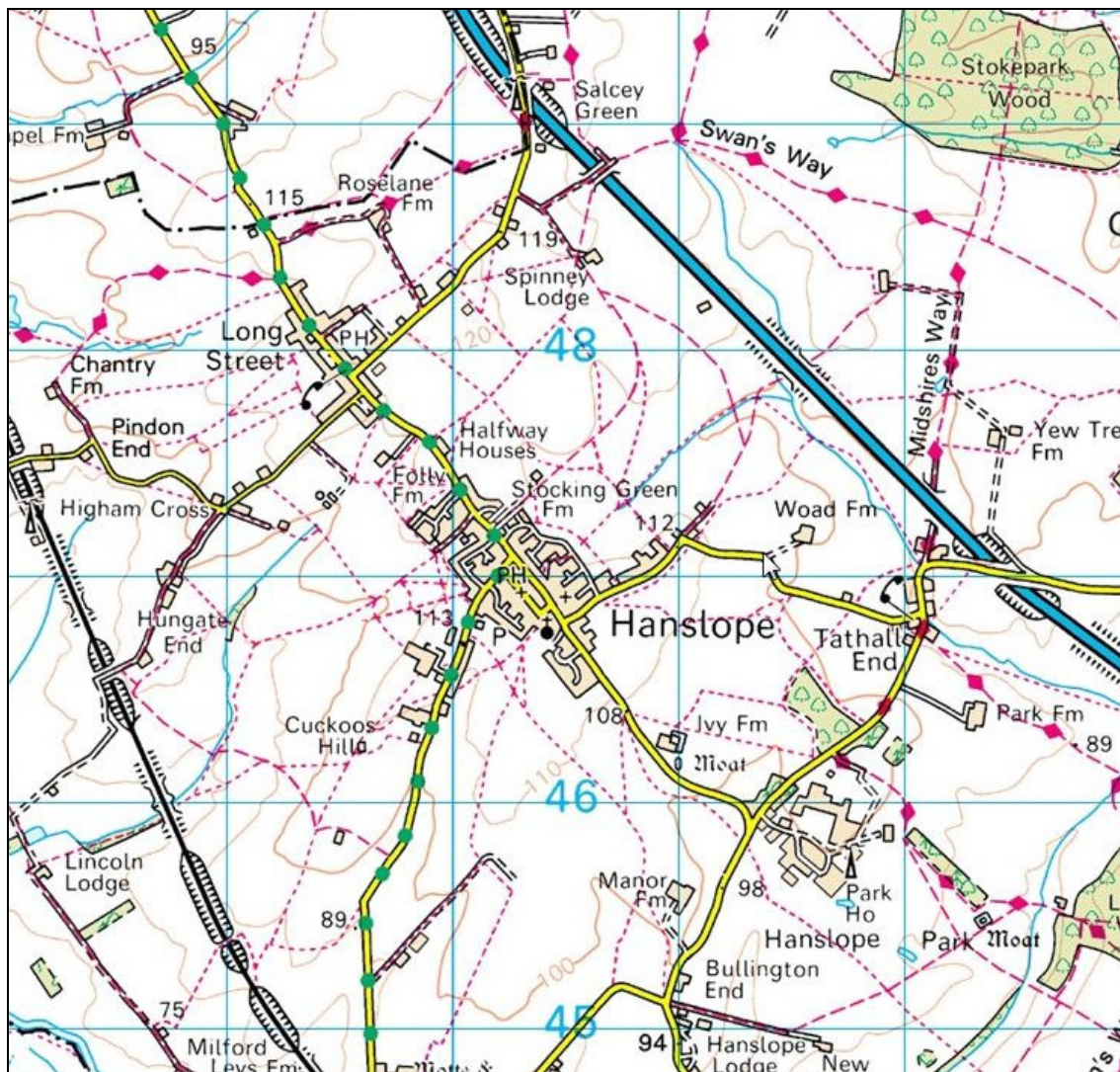
This may be the end of the task of preparing a plan for Hanslope but the hard work of implementing that plan starts now. Some of the actions are allocated to the Parish Council and Milton Keynes Council but the responsibility for the future of our village lies in our own hands. That means that your time and effort is required to make this plan work. It's time for you to get involved!



2 Hanslope – our Village

Hanslope is one of the largest villages in the County of Buckinghamshire and is situated at the northernmost boundary of the county, adjacent to Salcey Forest and Northamptonshire.

It is almost equidistant between the town of Northampton and the New City of Milton Keynes, and comes under the auspices of the latter. The Parish of Hanslope consists of the village itself and Long Street plus Tathall End and Bullington End to the east and Pindon End and Hungate End to the west. Overall the Parish covers an area of about 1000 hectares.



Courtesy of Ordnance Survey

The village is dominated by the spire of the church of St James the Great located at the southernmost end of the village, in the area once known as Church End. This is one of the tallest spires in the area, visible for miles around and is often used as a beacon for aircraft flying into Cranfield Aerodrome, 10 miles distant.



The village goes back many centuries and known records exist from the 12th Century. Around that time it even had a castle, although this is located in what is now the Parish of Castlethorpe to the west. Unlike the traditional 'castle', this was likely wooden in construction, and nothing remains, though the associated earthworks can still be traced near Castlethorpe Church.

In the 16th Century Hanslope was known as a centre of lace-making that spread over several towns and villages of the area, including Stony Stratford and Olney. In 1830 it

was even the supposed location of a notorious prize fight in June of that year between Alexander McKay, then the Scottish Champion, and the Irishman Simon Byrne. Considerable sums of money had been bet, and the police of the day tried to have the fight stopped. Although early records indicated this was outside the current Watts Arms pub, recent information shows it actually took place at Salcey Green, which makes it Northamptonshire! McKay was defeated in the fight, and died from his injuries. He is buried in St James' churchyard.

In the early 20th Century the village was also in the news as a murder of the local squire took place on 21st July 1912. Edward Watts, Squire of Hanslope Manor, in Hanslope Park about one mile south of the main village, had walked to St James, accompanied by his wife, Edith. On their return and virtually at the Manor, the Squire was shot by, it transpired, his gamekeeper, William Farrow, who then shot himself. That he had recently been dismissed was the likely motive. A memorial stands in a small area opposite the current gates to Hanslope Park.



Hanslope Park is now occupied by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, having taken over much of the work of Bletchley Park after the Second World War. Alan Turing who is regarded as the founder of computer science was based at Hanslope Park from August 1944 after his work of breaking the Enigma code at Bletchley Park was complete. It was while he was living and working in Hanslope that he developed his designs for the Automated Computer Engine, one of the world's first real computers. We may not be able to say that Hanslope is the birthplace of modern

computing but it was probably conceived here! Hanslope Park is now a significant employer of people living in the village, though many others commute to Milton Keynes, Northampton and much further afield, including London.

There is however a growing base of small businesses and industries surrounding the village, creating employment as well as supplying goods and facilities. In addition, an increasing number of people in the village work from home making it vital that the village has modern communication facilities, particularly broadband.

Hanslope is also home to the Milton Keynes Eventing Centre, which is one of the largest equestrian venues in the country and located on Castlethorpe Road, about half a mile outside the main village.

According to the 2001 National Census the Parish of Hanslope included 940 dwellings (of which 15 were vacant) and had 2,217 residents. Clearly there has been some further expansion since 2001 with the addition of Saxon Close and the Cuckoo Hill Farm development.



Street Fayre 2008

The current village amenities include Hanslope School, the doctors' surgery, three churches, three pubs, the Village Hall, recreational and sports field, the working

men's club, six shops – butchers, wine merchants, newsagents, general store, florists and a Chinese takeaway, plus its own BT telephone exchange.

Hanslope has a very wide variety of clubs and societies ranging from art to yoga and there are a number of very active sports clubs in the village.

In a world that inevitably appears to be shrinking and homogenised, Hanslope acknowledges it has to fit in with the wider community. It cannot be viewed in isolation, but it also endeavours to keep its unique identity as a separate village, which to date it has achieved.

This Parish Plan has been prepared by a small team of volunteers with the following stages:

- Identification of key issues of concern by face to face consultation with residents at village events, with representatives of Hanslope groups and associations and with local businesses.
- The preparation of a village survey and its distribution to all village residents and businesses
- The analysis of the survey results
- The development of the village website (www.hanslope.org.uk)
- The preparation of this Parish Plan

The plan is set out in a number of sections, each addressing a key area of general concern within the village: Environment, Travel and Transport, Housing, Education, Facilities. There is a Summary of Policies and Actions at the end of the document and the results of the traffic survey and the village survey are included in the appendices.



3 Environment

The two main topics raised by many residents relate to the appearance of the village and 'green' issues.

3.1 Village Appearance

Many villagers have expressed concern about the appearance of the village. Some specific concerns are:

- The general appearance
- The number of unsightly areas
- The level of dog and horse fouling
- The maintenance of hedgerows and pathways
- The level of litter
- The level of vandalism

3.1.1 General Appearance

Hanslope is not an unattractive village but there is more that could be done to improve its appearance. As one respondent commented, "Having just spent 2 weeks in a village of a similar size in France, Hanslope could look much tidier and prettier than it does.....All of us need to make sure our own properties look clean and tidy

too!“ This has the benefit of making it a more pleasant place for people to live and to work. It is recommended that:

Action: A team of ‘Village Appearance’ volunteers be recruited (perhaps several teams, each working on one road/area) and asked to develop specific proposals for improving the appearance of the village.

These proposals could include:

- Campaigning for overhead cables to be put underground
- Additional tree/shrub planting. Perhaps it will be possible to seek funding from the Parish Council and/or elsewhere
- Identify problem areas for litter and take individual action e.g. bin by the kebab van
- An anti-litter campaign with the school and other local groups
- Get villagers and village organisations involved in improving the appearance – a village ‘Spring Cleaning’ weekend perhaps?
- Entering Best Kept Village award, (we might not win for a few years but it will help to encourage activities to improve the appearance of the village)

3.1.2 Unsightly Areas

There are several unsightly areas in the centre of the village, including:

- The old bus garage (see photo on next page).
- The house opposite Londis Stores
- The bungalow to the side of the paper shop
- The Gold Street rear entrances of High Street properties
- High Street, by the walkway through to Gold Street

The “appearance of the village is blighted by derelict buildings,” according to one respondent. Another commented, “As a newcomer to the village I was surprised by the number of poorly maintained/derelict buildings.” In the survey 118 respondents regarded the level of derelict buildings as high or very high.



These sites have been a problem in the village for upwards of twenty years but nothing appears to have been done. Rightly or wrongly, villagers expect the Parish Council to have the responsibility to address this problem.

Action: The 'Village Appearance' team is asked to lead a campaign to improve the appearance of unsightly areas.

3.1.3 Dog and Horse Fouling

The survey asked for views on the levels of dog fouling in the village and the provision of dog bins. 141 of the respondents regarded the level of dog fouling to be high or very high and 219 regarded the provision of dog bins to be low or very low.

It is understood that this issue is being addressed by the local Neighbourhood Action Group and that a new strategy is in place to fine dog owners who do not clear up after their dogs. However:

Action: The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to note that 219 (60%) of survey respondents regarded the number of dog bins provided to be low or very low.

Several respondents identified the fouling of pavements and footpaths by horses to also be a significant problem.

Action: The Parish Council and/or Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to encourage local stable owners to make sure their clients take action to address this problem and to explore options for sanctions if the situation does not improve.

3.1.4 Hedgerows and Pathways

There was a spread of opinion in responses to the survey question on the maintenance of hedgerows and pathways. However some specific points were made in the responses that are worthy of note/action:

- The hedge cuttings are invariably not collected after the hedges have been maintained. This leads to drainage ditches becoming blocked and several people have reported punctures to bicycle and pushchair tyres from thorn branches left on the road and pathways
- Hedges are maintained infrequently and quick growing brambles become a hazard for pedestrians on pavements, particularly at night.
- Some verges receive little or no attention and the long grass creates blind spot problems near corners, Higham Cross Road being an example of this problem.

Note that these issues can apply to village residents as well as farmers as village residents with hedges on boundaries with roads and footpaths have a responsibility to maintain these hedges and ditches.



Obstructed ditches can cause flooding

It is recommended that:

Action: The Parish Council is asked to address the hedge cutting problems (branches left in ditches and on pathways etc) with Milton Keynes Council.

Action: The Parish Council is asked to address the grass cutting service quality concerns with Milton Keynes Council.

Action: The village website is used as a reporting mechanism for problems with hedges/footpaths. These problem reports are brought to the attention of the Village Appearance team, Parish Council or Milton Keynes Council, as appropriate.

3.1.5 Vandalism

The survey asked for views on the level of vandalism in the village. While 79% (290) of respondents regarded the level of vandalism to be acceptable or low, it can be argued that only a zero level of vandalism is acceptable.

It is recommended:

Action: The Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to address the problems of vandalism within the village.

Note that it is understood that the NAG is already addressing this issue.



Vandalism in Tathall End
(now removed)

3.2 Green Issues

From the questionnaire responses to the 'green' questions (see Appendix) it can be seen that there is a general interest in green issues. For example, 288 (79%)

respondents thought that reducing the carbon footprint of the village was possibly or definitely a good thing to do. How this should be accomplished is, however, unclear. More information is needed to help identify what our village carbon footprint is together with some practical steps as to how as individuals and as a community we can take steps to reduce it.

On the question of whether the village should be self supporting in terms of energy generation the response was not so clear. The views may become better defined if and when a proposal is made for any form of energy generating capacity near the village.

In order to develop some more specific proposals for the village to reduce its carbon footprint it is recommended:

Action: That a team of ‘green volunteers’ be recruited to identify proposals for the village to consider. These might include issues on energy efficiency programmes, recycling, street lighting, funding opportunities etc.

One resource this team might utilise is the National Energy Foundation based in Milton Keynes. A presentation to village residents has already been offered by the NEF.

4 Travel and Transport

4.1 Public Transport

The following services are available:

- A school bus takes young children between Castlethorpe and Hanslope Junior School, and there is a school bus for secondary school children attending the nearest schools in Milton Keynes.
- On school days there is also one public bus morning and afternoon linking Hanslope with Woughton Campus for MK College and two adjacent schools.
- The regular public service normally runs through Hanslope every 90 minutes on its route between Northampton and Milton Keynes. The first bus of the day going to Northampton calls at Roade School and is so full of children from Castlethorpe and Hanslope that there is little room for village residents travelling to work. The last bus from Northampton at 18:45 is suitable for many workers. In contrast, office workers have a suitable bus to get to work in Milton Keynes, but the last bus back, leaving at 17:30 is too early for many.

There are no busses in the evening and only two each way on Sundays. There is no bus to Hanslope Park and the only outlying part of the village accessible by bus is Long Street.

This regular bus service is rated as poor or very poor by 48% (176) of respondents. A common complaint from regular users is the frequency of breakdowns and cancellations and the difficulty of getting information about the situation. One useful proposal from the survey responses is that there should be an additional service as far as Wolverton which would link to the more frequent City Services to other parts of Milton Keynes and to the rail network.

Improving public transport is a key issue in trying to reduce road congestion and carbon emissions. The present, limited service results in high car use by villagers out of necessity.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to address the reliability of the regular bus services for Hanslope.

Action: Milton Keynes and Northampton Councils are asked to work together to provide a larger bus to Northampton on weekday mornings or provide an additional bus as far as Roade School on schooldays.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to schedule a later bus to Hanslope from Milton Keynes in the evenings.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to provide an additional bus service from Hanslope to Wolverton to link up with the rest of the MK bus network.

4.2 Pedestrian provision: Pavements and Footpaths

Almost half of the respondents thought that pedestrian provision is acceptable, but a significant minority (125 - 34%) judged it to be poor or very poor. The newer estates and the centre of the village mostly have pavements on both sides of the road, but for some outlying parts, such as Tathall End or Hanslope Park, pedestrians would have to walk to the village across fields or on narrow, winding roads with heavy traffic at peak times, as there are no pavements.

Some of the pathways and pavements are too narrow for a double buggy and this is sometimes exacerbated by encroaching hedges and more often by cars and vans parking on the pavement. The latter point is raised forcibly by several respondents: it

completely halts progress for mobility scooters and endangers parents and children by forcing them into the road.



Inconsiderate and illegal parking in Gold Street (on both sides of the road)

The high level of traffic at peak times makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross the road in several parts of the parish and particularly in Gold Street from the path from the sheltered housing across to the shops and Post Office.

Action: The Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to address the problem of parking on pavements.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is requested to implement a safe crossing point for pedestrians in Gold Street.

Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to provide a paved pedestrian/cycle path to connect the centre of the village with Hanslope Park.

Action: Hanslope School is encouraged to work with the charity Sustrans in its 'Safe Routes to School' project to investigate pedestrian/cycle routes to/from the school in order to reduce traffic within the village.

Hanslope is fortunate to have inherited an extensive network of well used public footpaths and bridleways through its fields: more than almost any other parish in Milton Keynes. They are generally well maintained and signposted and are monitored by a Ramblers volunteer.

Policy: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to ensure that future developments in the parish do not interfere with footpaths or bridleways.

Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to investigate ways of providing cycle and pedestrian access between Tathall End and the main part of the village.

This could perhaps be achieved as part of the proposed foot/cycle path to Hanslope Park – see above.

Action: Public footpath users are requested to report any obstruction to footpaths (rights of way) to the Milton Keynes Council footpath officer for remedial action.

4.3 Traffic and Parking

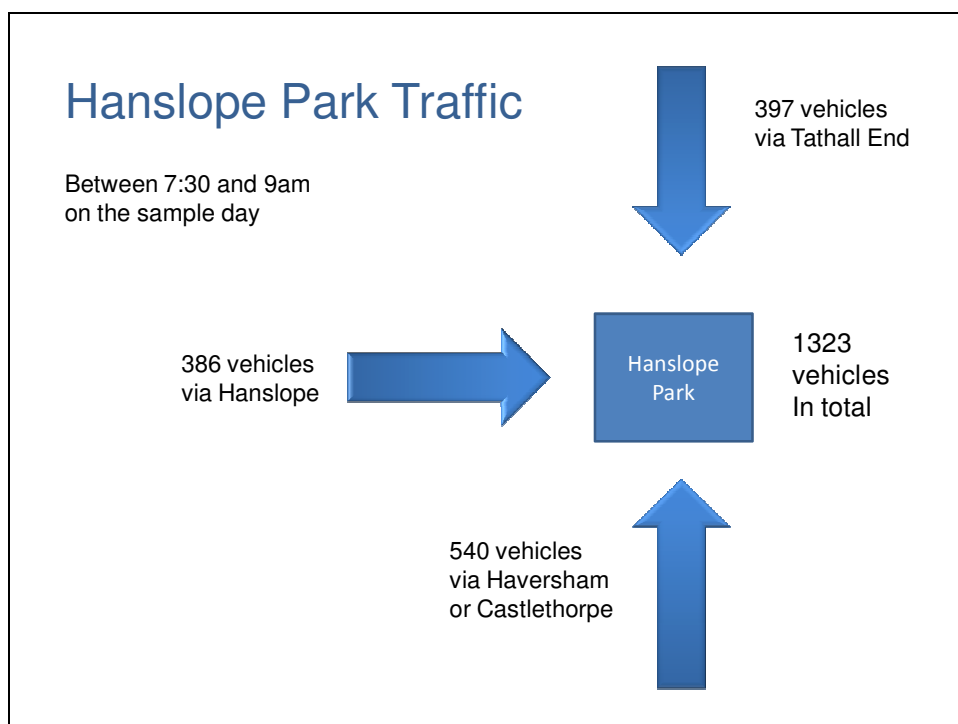
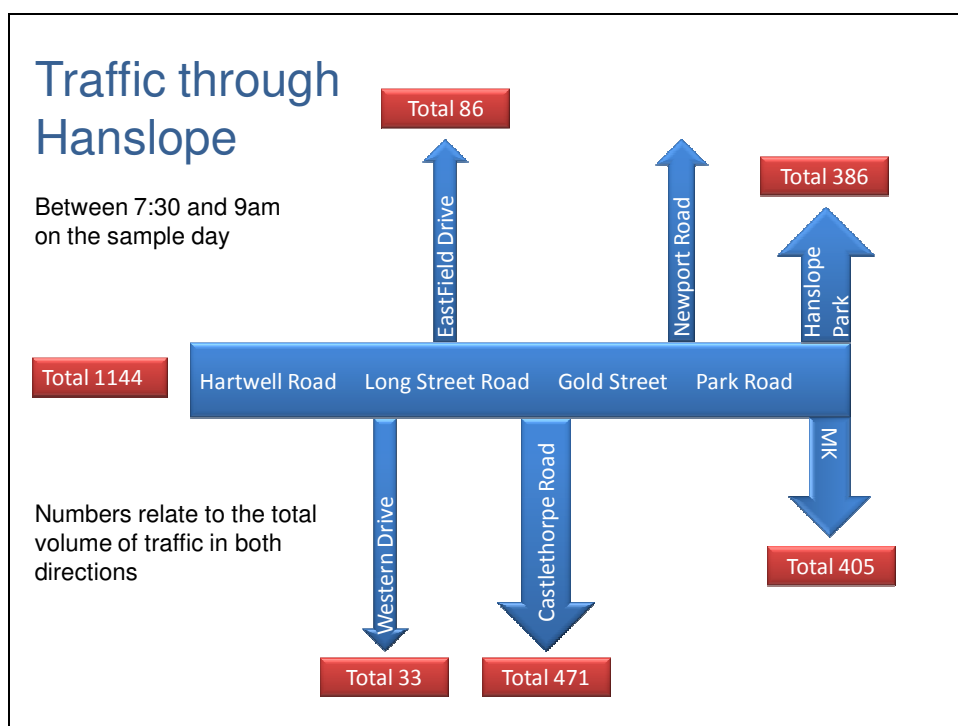
Hanslope sits directly in line for travel between Northampton and Milton Keynes, being the only main route if commuters want to avoid the high traffic volumes on the M1, A508 and, in particular, the daily congestion at the A508/M1 Junction. This makes the rush hour periods very difficult for villagers as the roads though the village were never designed to take the volume and size of vehicles it now finds it has to accommodate.

In the survey these two subjects brought forward a great many written responses. Over 80% (299) of the responses said the volume of traffic was either 'high' or 'very high'. Nearly 60% (207) said that parking provision was either 'poor' or 'very poor'. Almost 75% (268) said that illegal and/or inconsiderate parking was a problem in the village. It can therefore be said that the overall attitude was one of dissatisfaction with the current situation. Consequently these are two areas that the plan must consider very carefully. As they are linked they cannot be addressed in isolation.

The concerns of residents revolve around the following factors:

- The volume of traffic passing through the village during the week, particularly between 7am and 9.30 am and also between 3.30 and 6.00 pm.
- The speed of traffic, particularly on the entry and exit to the village (Newport Road, Castlethorpe Road, Park Road, Forest Road, Hartwell Road and Long Street Road)
- Parking in a manner likely to cause problems for both pedestrians and other road users. Particularly noted in Gold Street, outside the Recreation Ground at weekends, by the doctors' surgery, near the Newport Road/Park Road junction and around the school. However there seem to be similar problems in many locations around the village and all these problems need to be addressed.

In order to try to quantify the scale of some of the traffic issues some 'snapshot' traffic surveys were carried out. Traffic counts were taken between 7:30am and 9:00am on the 23rd and 24th February 2009 and the details are included in Appendix A. Diagrammatically, the results are as follows:



With over 1000 cars passing through the village centre between 7.30 am and 9.00 am and similar reverse flows in the afternoon/evening the pressing need for traffic control measures is obvious. At present there are no parking restrictions, no pedestrian crossings and the only place where crossing the road is aided is outside

the school with the crossing patrol. The present situation is unsafe with the potential for accidents in the morning and evening commuting periods.

The plan needs to look at both traffic management and the identification of added parking sites. These need to be implemented together or one will contradict the other. Simply providing extra off-road parking spaces could encourage through traffic to increase and be quicker. Making more calming measures on their own could only frustrate residents even more.

4.3.1 Traffic Management

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to implement a comprehensive traffic calming scheme throughout the whole village - Newport Road, Castlethorpe Road, Eastfield Drive, Park Road, Gold Street, High Street and including both Long Street and Tathall End.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to implement 20 mph speed limits in critical areas (Gold Street, Western Drive, Eastfield Drive and High Street), a 30 mph speed limit on the full lengths of Castlethorpe Road, Newport Road and through Tathall End and a 40 mph speed limit on Forest Road for at least 500m from the junction with Hartwell Road.

This would make the use of the village as a 'rat run' between Northampton and Milton Keynes less attractive. The present traffic calming measures in Long Street Road only slow the traffic in that immediate area and have no benefit for the rest of the village. If the objective of reducing the speed of traffic through the village is attained then residents would need to accept the slight inconvenience of the increased traffic calming measures.

Not only has the volume of traffic increased in recent years but so has the size of the vehicles using Hanslope as a through route. Our narrow streets and lanes are not suitable for such traffic. The implementation of a weight restriction would need the co-operation of Milton Keynes and Northants as most of the through traffic passes from one local authority area into the other.

Action: Milton Keynes and Northants County Council are asked to implement a weight restriction on traffic passing through Hanslope.

Action: The Parish Council, the MK Ward Councillor and the MP are asked to maintain a higher level of regular liaison with Hanslope Park to ensure the

Park management appreciates and takes action to reduce the impact of the Park on the village and to identify future needs.

Hanslope Park Management needs to be aware of all the proposals as almost half of the morning rush hour traffic through the village comprises vehicles going to the Park (see Appendix for Traffic Survey data). Although no detailed statistics were recorded, the impression gained during our survey is that the vast majority of vehicles travelling to the Park were of single occupancy. If the Park encouraged a car sharing scheme it could have a significant positive benefit to the village as well as reducing travel costs for the staff and having a benefit on the environment.

Action: The Parish Council, the MK Ward Councillor and the MP are requested to encourage the management of Hanslope Park to implement a car sharing scheme.

There has been no improvement to the roads around Hanslope for at least thirty-five years, in which time Hanslope Park has increased in size tremendously.

Policy: Any future expansion of Hanslope Park must take into account the traffic problems created in Hanslope, which does not appear to have been considered with the previous expansions.

4.3.2 Parking

There is insufficient parking within the village. This leads to significant parking problems, particularly in Gold Street and High Street but also near the Surgery and, at weekends, near the Recreation Ground.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to carry out a detailed survey of the whole village to identify possible extra car parking sites including Gold Street, High Street, the Village Hall etc. and then to provide additional parking capacity.

Various areas of wider grass verge may need to be forfeited. A reorganisation of the parking areas around the doctors' surgery and the Recreation Ground could provide many more spaces. Positive action needs to be taken to stop anti-social parking, particularly in identified problem locations. This could involve the police and the possible use of permanent bollards. If this means parked vehicles in Gold Street have to park wholly in the road, as they should legally, then it may act as a deterrent to through traffic using the village as a short cut (see below).

Action: The Parish Council is asked to consider using the land to the side of Baden Lodge to provide additional parking for users of the Recreation Ground and for the Surgery.

4.4 Cycling

The village is situated in a prominent position on National Cycle Network Route 6 and therefore has above average cycle traffic, particularly at weekends. This use of the village lanes in leisure time is not a problem and pubs in the village could well exploit this.

During the working week the amount of vehicular traffic, particularly during the morning rush hour, makes cycling a much less pleasant form of travel. The length of Hartwell Road and Long Street Road from the junction with Forest Road to the Watts Arms is on the cycle route and yet is one of the busiest stretches of road in the village. Ideally a dedicated cycle track along this stretch would be best but this is not easily done. Liaison with Sustrans, the charity behind the national cycle network, might bring a positive response as it was not the intention that a National Cycle route should pass along a road with almost 1000 vehicles an hour passing over it during any part of the day.

A considerable number of village residents work at Hanslope Park and the distance between the village and that establishment is perfect for either walking or cycling. A dedicated path for these purposes is much needed and would be a major benefit to the village. At present the narrowness of the road, the bends and the narrow grass verges and the volume of traffic stop many people using the walking or cycling options. Thus the installation of a suitable path is a major aim of this plan (see action in section 4.2).

If the roads and paths around the village were more suitable it might be possible for more children at the village school to travel by bicycle. Sustrans has run a 'Safe Ways To School' initiative recently and any safe increase in cycle use at the school would reduce the number of car journeys to/from school and parking problems at a particularly critical time of day.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to make National Cycle Route 6 between Long Street and the village centre a safer route for cyclists, if necessary providing a dedicated cycle and pedestrian path.

This would also help children wishing to cycle or walk to the school from Long Street rather than having to be taken such a short distance by car.

With this link in place it would then be logical for the cycle path to Hanslope Park to be linked with National Cycle Route 6 at Castlethorpe. This will have the benefit of enabling Hanslope residents to have a safe cycle route into Milton Keynes by connecting with the Milton Keynes Redway network. In addition it will also encourage more Hanslope Park employees to commute to work by bicycle. This is a stated aim in Hanslope Park's Environmental Policy and would have a beneficial effect on the high traffic levels through Hanslope and Castlethorpe village centres each morning and evening.

Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to link the foot/cycle path between Hanslope and Hanslope Park to the National Cycle Route 6 at Castlethorpe.



Hanslope's only cycle path!

5 Housing

Hanslope has a rich variety of housing ranging from centuries-old character cottages to very modern dwellings.



Horseshoe Cottages from the church

Over the past forty years there have been several significant housing developments in the main village adding many houses, bungalows and also a sheltered housing complex. More recently there have been smaller developments, including some affordable and social housing provision, which have utilised land within the existing village environs.



New housing development at Saxon Close

Taking account of the strong concerns expressed by residents in the survey this Plan asserts:

Policy: There should be no housing development outside the village boundary.

Policy: Any developments inside the village boundary should be aimed at providing a high proportion of low cost accommodation for village residents, particularly one and two bed properties.

Policy: There should be no housing development on agricultural land.

Policy: There should be encouragement for the reuse of the old bus garage brown field site.

Policy: There should be encouragement for the redevelopment of other dilapidated and uninhabited buildings.

Action: The Parish Council, Milton Keynes Council and our MP to reject any future proposed developments which contradict the above policies.

For the avoidance of doubt and any misinterpretation of the words used in the above policy statements, the intention is that the number of houses in the village should

not increase by building beyond the present village or by building on agricultural land that is currently within the village or between the various parts of the village.

6 Education

Education in the village dates back to 1721 with the establishment of The Parochial School at the Vicarage House. The so called “Top School” was established circa 1840 on the Newport Road and is now the Village Hall and still houses the Pre-school. In 1872 the “Bottom School” was established on Long Street Road, it burnt down in 1969, but the Hanslope Combined School was built on the same site.



The Bottom School

(Image courtesy of Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre)

6.1 Children's Centre

For nearly 40 years, Pre-school children have been served by Hanslope Pre-school located at the Village Hall and much of the adult education and leisure provision is also housed there. This sharing of space imposes constraints on both sides and the

hall no longer meets the criteria for a fit for purpose early learning environment. Its distance from the school is also a disadvantage.

With the advent of Sure Start and the After School Club, both of which share facilities with the school and increasing demands to develop learning and raise standards, accommodation within the school is under acute pressure.

Hanslope Children's Centre would alleviate all of these problems as it will be purposefully planned for children and families and will provide a proper home for each group. All the important services for families, such as health, care and education will be drawn together in one place giving fuller, better coordinated support and increasing its role as a natural community hub. This will have the additional benefit of freeing up the Village Hall for adult education and other community groups.

In Milton Keynes 13 Children's Centres have now been built to provide these services to communities but as a rural area Hanslope is not seen as enough of a priority for a Centre to be fully funded and instead a limited outreach Sure Start service has been provided which currently operates on a part time basis in a shared space within the school.

The Hanslope Children's Centre CIC (Community Interest Company) is a new social enterprise company with community stakeholders drawn from the Pre-school and after school club together with representation from the primary school and the wider community. The funding strategy is aimed at attracting donations or sponsorships from local organisations matched to grants from regional and national charities which will be complemented by a community loan to be repaid from the running costs of the organisations involved. Over half of the community based funding target has already been raised and a comprehensive building specification has been drawn up. No date has yet been set for completion.

The Plan Questionnaire showed general support for the Centre with 61% responding they supported / possibly supported it. There were also a number of comments supporting the urgent need for the children's centre and recognising that it will be of benefit to the whole community, but particularly those with young families.

Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are requested to provide financial and other forms of support to ensure that the Children's Centre is developed as a high priority action

7 Employment

Hanslope is quite fortunate to have a number of small, local employers and a major one, Hanslope Park. However, the vast majority of working Hanslope residents must travel to Milton Keynes, Northampton or commute to London to work.



Hanslope Park with the village in the distance

(Aerial photography - Copyright (c) Alan Turnbull, www.secret-bases.co.uk)

The only significant provider of local, career based employment can be found at Hanslope Park. Staff are provided with training and college leavers can continue their training in areas such as accountancy, engineering and IT under government sponsorship. Hanslope Park employment opportunities can be found on their web site at www.fcoscareers.co.uk. A link to this site has been placed on the Jobs page on the Hanslope web site.

The various business units that operate on the local farms i.e. Cuckoo Hill, Rose Lane Farm and Manor Farm are mainly small specialised businesses that would require particular skills. The village web site could be used by local employers as a free resource to advertise their vacancies. This has a benefit to both the business and the local community. In addition local businesses should be encouraged to offer

apprenticeships to help young people within the village to find long term employment. There is government funding available to help employers with the cost of taking on an apprentice (see www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers.aspx).



Business Units at Cuckoo Hill

Action: Local employers are encouraged to make use of the village website to advertise for new staff.

Action: Local employers are encouraged to offer apprenticeships to young people in the village.

Local Farms are either family owned and family worked or tenant farmers. For those wishing to go into an agricultural based career the nearest agricultural college is at Moulton and the opportunity to practise any skills in the surrounding area is limited.

For youngsters who have to travel to either Milton Keynes or Northampton to work the infrastructure is not conducive unless they drive or can obtain lifts from those who do. Busses are infrequent and timetables are not altogether convenient (see section 4.1). This often means that younger people must move closer to these areas and therefore leave the village.

There are no obvious strategies to help overcome these issues other than to encourage local employment and to improve the public transport services.

8 Community Facilities

8.1 Village Hall and Sports Facilities

As part of the village survey, questions were asked about the need for a new Village Hall and sporting facilities. The responses about the Village Hall were mixed with 52% indicating that a new Village Hall was possibly or definitely needed. The result for additional sports facilities was much clearer with 67% of responses saying that facilities were either possibly or definitely needed.

Most Village Halls are owned by the local parish council and are therefore completely under the control of an elected body. This is not the case in Hanslope where the Village Hall is owned by the Church and the Parish Council is therefore not able to contribute to the costs of upgrading a building that is not owned by them. This leads directly to the necessity for the Village Hall Committee to spend so much time and effort on raising funds.

The Village Hall is administered by a committee and is the responsibility of a board of trustees. Since its opening in 1981 there have been several occasions when major fund raising events have been needed to pay for repairs and for upgrading of the fabric of the building which dates back to 1840. Funding the hall is a continual headache for the committee. The hall consists of two rooms, one large and one small, a small kitchen and newly refurbished toilets. There is no stage and no bar. The large room has a supporting pillar in the middle which limits the activities for which it can be used. There is also very little car parking space at the hall.

During the school term the use of the Village Hall is dominated by the playgroup and much of the storage capacity is used to store necessary equipment for this group. This is a situation which would change if and when the proposed children's centre is built but the shortcomings of the existing building would remain.

The Village Hall and the Recreation Ground both date from a time before the village had increased to its present size. The 'Rec' dates from the immediate post war period so the changing room building is now well over fifty years old. The other two buildings were added about twenty five years ago. The football pitches are very heavily used, often with up to five games being played over a weekend, occasionally more. Consequently matches are quite often postponed because of unfit pitches. At least one extra pitch would be immediately fully used if available.

Action: The Parish Council is asked to procure land for at least one more grass sports pitch.

There are only two quite small changing rooms which means only two teams can change at once and there is an obvious problem with car parking in the Recreation Ground area at weekends. The car park is barely large enough for the cars associated with one adult match. When there is more than one match in progress, and particularly when there are youth matches (with many parents supporting their children), cars have to park in Castlethorpe Road causing obstruction and traffic problems. A proposal for additional car parking to be provided at the Recreation Ground has been made in section 4.3.2.

Thus it is considered that Hanslope needs better facilities in both these areas.

Action: A project team is established to develop a strategy for developing a new Community Centre for Hanslope.

Note that while it may be expected that the current Village Hall Committee would take on this role, this is not practicable as they have more than enough work to do to maintain the existing facilities. In addition, the requirement to continue to maintain the existing Village Hall will remain right up until the new facilities are available. Hence this project team needs to be primarily new volunteers.

This Community Centre could combine the functions of the buildings at present on the Recreation Ground with the functions of the Village Hall. The Community Centre should be designed from the outset as a multi-purpose building and the facilities available should as a minimum include:

- a hall/function room with a stage
- a second hall for sports facilities such as badminton and other indoor games
- smaller rooms available for smaller functions and meetings
- changing rooms with showers
- adequate storage facilities for user groups
- kitchen and bar facilities
- ample car parking spaces.

Action: Hanslope to have new facilities for both sporting and non-sporting purposes. One option is that these requirements could both be provided in a new Community Centre.

It may be that some of the agricultural land opposite the Recreation Ground would need to be acquired. The increased use that these facilities would facilitate is likely to reduce the level of vandalism as the regular presence of people using the various facilities would make such antisocial behaviour too visible.

Obviously this is a very expensive proposal. It is hoped that there may be access to some form of central funding but local fundraising would also be required. This will take a considerable time and in the meantime the present facilities will need some upgrading, particularly with car parking spaces which are inadequate in both locations.

Hanslope is now a big village by any standards and it deserves better facilities for its residents. Many of these better facilities are in place in nearby smaller villages where they are very well used. The initial impetus for this project could come from the various groups that would benefit but the involvement of both Parish Council and Milton Keynes Council would obviously be necessary.

8.2 Communications

A common view expressed in the survey responses is the lack of information available about what is going on in the village. There are several ways in which information is already disseminated in the village:

- Notice Boards
- Parish Council Newsletter
- The Clarion
- 'Around the Villages' entries in the Citizen
- Parish Council Open Meetings
- Circulars from churches and individual groups
- Event publicity in the form of posters

No single form of communication is the best for all village residents and the Parish Plan team decided that a village web site would be a useful addition. The web site is operational and can be found at www.hanslope.org.uk. In common with all the other information sources it does mean the village residents must actually go and look for the information!

Action: The Parish Council to fund the continued development of the Hanslope village web site to help provide effective communication within the village.

9 Summary of Policies and Actions

Action Item	Timescale	Priority
Policy: There should be no housing development outside the village boundary.	Ongoing	High
Policy: Any developments inside the village boundary should be aimed at providing a high proportion of low cost accommodation for village residents, particularly one and two bed properties.	Ongoing	High
Policy: There should be no housing development on agricultural land.	Ongoing	High
Policy: There should be encouragement for the reuse of the old bus garage brown field site.	Ongoing	High
Policy: There should be encouragement for the redevelopment of other dilapidated and uninhabited buildings.	Ongoing	High
Action: The Parish Council, Milton Keynes Council and our MP to reject any future proposed developments which contradict the above policies.	Ongoing	High
Action: The Parish Council to fund the continued development of the Hanslope village web site to help provide effective communication within the village.	Ongoing	High
Policy: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to ensure that future developments in the parish do not interfere with footpaths or bridleways	Ongoing	High
Action: Local employers are encouraged to make use of the village website to advertise for new staff.	Ongoing	Medium
Action: Local employers are encouraged to offer apprenticeships to young people in the village.	Ongoing	Medium
Action: Public footpath users are requested to report any obstruction to footpaths (rights of way) to the Milton Keynes Council footpath officer for remedial action.	Ongoing	Low
Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are requested to provide financial and other forms of support to ensure that the Children's Centre is developed as a high priority action	Short	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to address the reliability of the regular bus services for Hanslope.	Short	High
Action: The Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to address the problem of parking on pavements.	Short	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is requested to implement a safe crossing point for pedestrians in Gold Street.	Short	High

Action Item	Timescale	Priority
Action: The Parish Council, the MK Ward Councillor and the MP are asked to maintain a higher level of regular liaison with Hanslope Park to ensure the Park management appreciates and takes action to reduce the impact of the Park on the village and to identify future needs.	Short	High
Action: The Parish Council, the MK Ward Councillor and the MP are requested to encourage the management of Hanslope Park to implement a car sharing scheme.	Short	High
Policy: Any future expansion of Hanslope Park must take into account the traffic problems created in Hanslope, which does not appear to have been considered with the previous expansions.	Short	High
Action: A project team is established to develop a strategy for developing a new Community Centre for Hanslope.	Short	High
Action: The Parish Council is asked to procure land for at least one more grass sports pitch.	Short	High
Action: A team of 'Village Appearance' volunteers be recruited (perhaps several teams, each working on one road/area) and asked to develop specific proposals for improving the appearance of the village.	Short	Medium
Action: The 'Village Appearance' team is asked to lead a campaign to improve the appearance of unsightly areas.	Short	Medium
Action: The Parish Council is asked to address the hedge cutting problems (branches left in ditches and on pathways etc) with Milton Keynes Council.	Short	Medium
Action: The Parish Council is asked to address the grass cutting service quality concerns with Milton Keynes Council.	Short	Medium
Action: The village website is used as a reporting mechanism for problems with hedges/footpaths. These problem reports are brought to the attention of the Village Appearance team, Parish Council or Milton	Short	Medium
Action: The Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to address the problems of vandalism within the village.	Short	Medium
Action: The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to note that 219 (60%) of survey respondents regarded the number of dog bins provided to be low or very low.	Short	Low

Action Item	Timescale	Priority
Action: The Parish Council and/or Neighbourhood Action Group is asked to encourage local stable owners to make sure their clients take action to address this problem and to explore options for sanctions if the situation does not improve.	Short	Low
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to provide an additional bus service from Hanslope to Wolverton to link up with the rest of the MK bus network.	Medium	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to implement a comprehensive traffic calming scheme throughout the whole village - Newport Road, Castlethorpe Road, Eastfield Drive, Park Road, Gold Street, High Street and including both Long Street and Tathall End.	Medium	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to implement 20 mph speed limits in critical areas (Gold Street, Western Drive, Eastfield Drive and High Street), a 30 mph speed limit on the full lengths of Castlethorpe Road, Newport Road and through Tathall End and a 40 mph speed limit on Forest Road for at least 500m from the junction with Hartwell Road.	Medium	High
Action: Milton Keynes and Northants County Council are asked to implement a weight restriction on traffic passing through Hanslope.	Medium	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to carry out a detailed survey of the whole village to identify possible extra car parking sites including Gold Street, High Street, the Village Hall etc. and then to provide additional parking capacity.	Medium	High
Action: The Parish Council is asked to consider using the land to the side of Baden Lodge to provide additional parking for users of the Recreation Ground and for the Surgery.	Medium	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to schedule a later bus to Hanslope from Milton Keynes in the evening.	Medium	Medium
Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to provide a paved pedestrian/cycle path to connect the centre of the village with Hanslope Park.	Medium	Medium

Action Item	Timescale	Priority
Action: Hanslope School is encouraged to work with the charity Sustrans in its 'Safe Routes to School' project to investigate pedestrian/cycle routes to/from the school in order to reduce traffic within the village.	Medium	Medium
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to make National Cycle Route 6 between Long Street and the village centre a safer route for cyclists, if necessary providing a dedicated cycle and pedestrian path.	Medium	Medium
Action: Milton Keynes Council is asked to link the foot/cycle path between Hanslope and Hanslope Park to the National Cycle Route 6 at Castlethorpe.	Medium	Medium
Action: That a team of 'green volunteers' be recruited to identify proposals for the village to consider. These might include issues on energy efficiency programmes, recycling, street lighting, funding opportunities etc.	Medium	Low
Action: Milton Keynes and Northampton Councils are asked to work together to provide a larger bus to Northampton on weekday mornings or provide an additional bus as far as Roade School on schooldays.	Medium	Low
Action: Hanslope to have new facilities for both sporting and non-sporting purposes. One option is that these requirements could both be provided in a new Community Centre.	Long	High
Action: Milton Keynes Council and the Parish Council are asked to investigate ways of providing cycle and pedestrian access between Tathall End and the main part of the village.	Long	Low

Timescales: Short – now to 2 years
 Medium – 2-5 years
 Long – 5-10 years

Appendix A – Traffic Survey Results

Traffic flow through Hanslope on 23/02/09

A snapshot survey was taken from 7.30am to 9.00am on a weekday as this was identified by the village survey as the time when the traffic is at its peak.

Long Street Road / Hartwell Road

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
North	50	42	38	32	27	26	215
South	202	176	186	172	151	42	929
Total							1144

Gold Street

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
North	35	38	32	21	20	23	169
South	130	135	168	128	126	75	762
Total							931

Castlethorpe Road

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
North-East	22	22	20	30	24	28	146
South-	43	57	55	58	68	44	325
Total							471

Eastfield Drive

A single count was made for the whole period. 56 vehicles turned out of Eastfield Drive onto Long Street Road. 35 turned south and 21 turned north. 30 vehicles turned into Eastfield Drive, 20 from the north and 10 from the south.

Western Drive

In the whole period 22 vehicles turned out of Western Drive onto Long Street Rd. 16 turning south and 6 turning north. In the same period 11 vehicles turned into Western Drive.

Traffic flow at Hanslope Park - 24/02/09 and 09/03/09

Counts were taken between 7.30 am and 9.00 am on a weekday as this was identified by the survey as the time when the traffic was at its peak. Counts taken at the junction by Hanslope Park and on the road to and from Tathall End.

Traffic going to Hanslope Park

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
North (Hanslope)	37	62	108	72	69	38	386
South (MK and Castlethorpe)	86	94	122	102	76	60	540
Entering H. Pk. from Tathall End (09/03/09)	62	79	74	82	45	52	397
Total							1323

However there is an overflow car park in the farm across the field from the Park, which was filling up just out of view, so the actual number is more than this.

Travelling to and from MK and Castlethorpe

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
North (to Hanslope)	12	17	14	11	23	11	88
South (to MK & Castlethorpe)	62	72	93	77	63	38	405

Travelling out of Hanslope Park

Travelling	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00	8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	Total
From HP to Hanslope	2	1	6	2	1	3	15
From HP south to MK and Castlethorpe	12	16	23	13	10	13	87

Of the traffic passing through Hanslope in a southerly direction (791 vehicles), 386 were going to Hanslope Park (48.7%) and 405 were travelling towards Milton Keynes or Castlethorpe (51.3%).

Appendix B – Village Survey Results

A survey of all Hanslope homes and businesses was carried out in October 2008. Of the 1014 surveys issued, 367 responses were received. A response rate of 36.2%

Travel and Transport	Very Low	Low	Acceptable	High	Very High	No Response	No Opinion
The volume of traffic travelling through Hanslope is	0	0	66	168	131	1	0
The speed of traffic travelling through Hanslope is	4	17	106	158	78	3	0
	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
Traffic calming measures in Hanslope are	32	101	163	55	9	6	0
The level of public transport in Hanslope is	63	113	124	32	3	31	0
Parking provision in Hanslope is	52	155	132	19	1	7	0
	No	Yes				No Response	No Opinion
Is Illegal and / or inconsiderate parking in Hanslope a problem	50	268				6	42

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
Maintenance of the roads in Hanslope is	10	75	174	92	13	2	0
Maintenance of the pathways in Hanslope is	24	100	169	63	8	2	0
The level of pedestrian provision is	16	109	173	59	6	3	0
The quantity of cycle paths in Hanslope is	86	143	80	11	0	46	0
Would you use a cycle / footpath between Hanslope Park and Hanslope?	No	Possibly	Yes			No Response	No Opinion
	94	60	156			3	53
Environment, Community, Facilities etc.							
	Very Low	Low	Acceptable	High	Very High	No Response	No Opinion
The level of derelict and unused buildings in Hanslope is	26	106	107	97	21	9	0
The level of litter in Hanslope is	13	111	162	71	8	1	0
The level of vandalism in Hanslope is	16	149	125	55	1	20	0
The level of dog fouling in Hanslope is	8	95	100	115	37	11	0
The quantity of dog bins in Hanslope is	90	129	101	4	1	41	0

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
The quality of the maintenance of hedgerows / ditches and natural landscape	20	67	158	97	18	6	0
The number of shops in Hanslope is	4	24	168	111	57	2	0
The variety of shops in Hanslope is	7	38	156	107	54	4	0
	Not Important	Important				No Response	No Opinion
The existence of a post-office in Hanslope is	3	361				2	0
	No	Possibly	Yes			No Response	No Opinion
Does Hanslope require a new facility for	45	113	111			4	93
Does Hanslope require upgraded or additional sports facilities for all ages?	56	120	131			3	56
Does Hanslope require a new or extended Village Hall?	136	108	84			4	34

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
The sense of community in Hanslope is	1	16	89	171	76	13	0
The number of groups and organisations in Hanslope is	0	5	101	187	62	11	0
	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
The variety of groups and organisations in Hanslope is	0	9	112	175	55	15	0
The number of events in Hanslope is	1	24	158	141	35	7	0
The variety of events in Hanslope is	2	30	158	137	31	8	0
Housing	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	No Response	No Opinion
The level of affordable housing in Hanslope is	22	95	136	62	23	28	0
	No	Possibly	Yes			No Response	No Opinion
Should local, young people have priority for new affordable housing?	16	74	261			2	13

	No	Possibly	Yes			No Response	No Opinion
Should Hanslope remain as a village, separate from Milton Keynes and Northampton?	8	6	343			2	7
Should the number of houses in Hanslope continue to grow?	230	102	25			2	7
Green Issues	No	Possibly	Yes			No Response	No Opinion
Should future planning permission require the houses to be more environmentally friendly?	31	127	180			6	22
Should Hanslope be self supporting in terms of energy generation?	122	127	79			5	33
Should Hanslope have a recycling collection point?	95	75	179			6	11
Should Hanslope aim to reduce its carbon footprint?	31	108	180			10	37