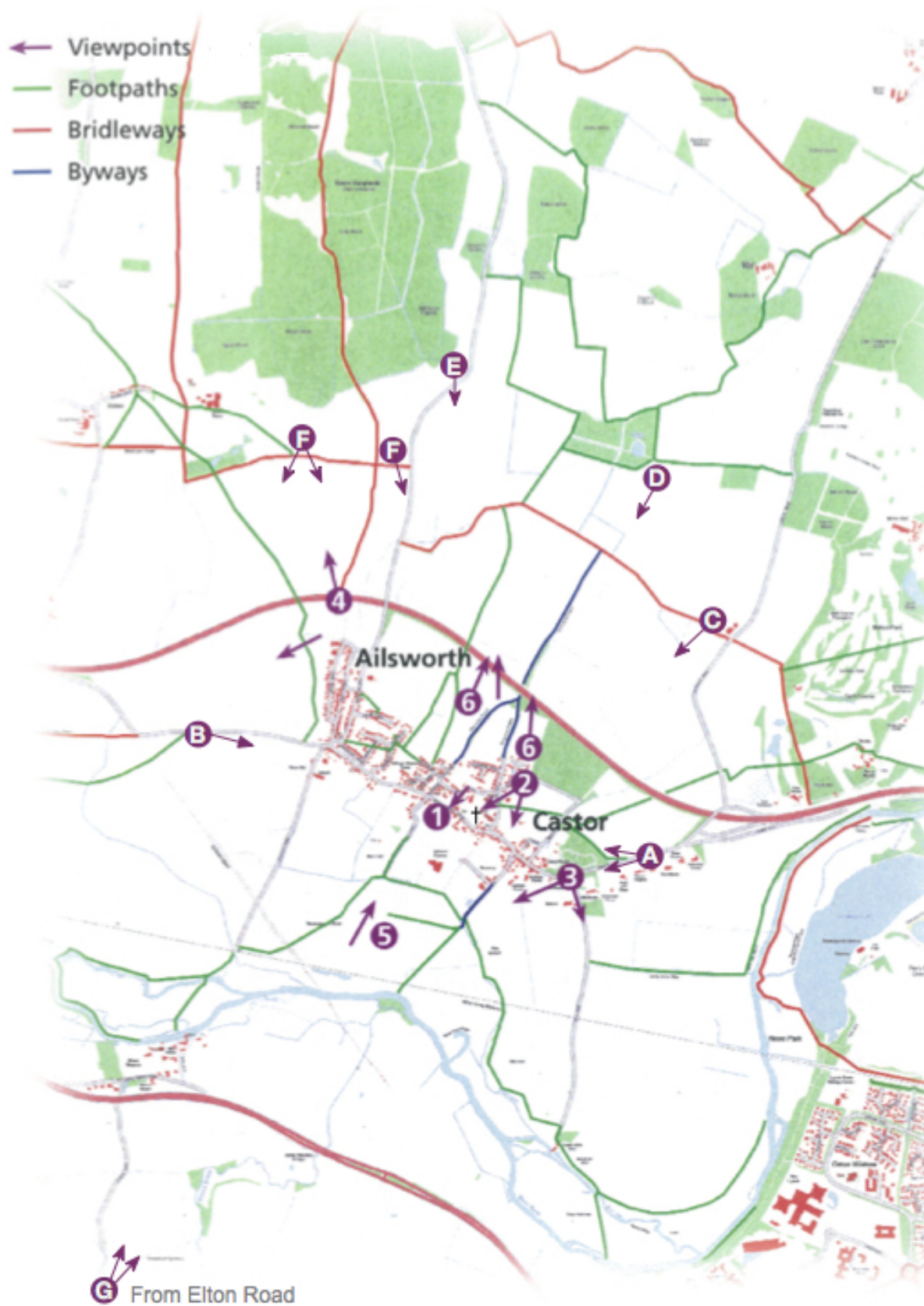


## Main Views and Rights of Way



Map is reproduced from Village Design Statement (2004) with additional sight line points identified A-G

## **Evidence on sight lines of Castor Church and views into and out of villages**

**Prepared for the Castor and Ailsworth Neighbourhood Plans - Feb 2017**

*This map and narrative aims to show important sight lines into and out of villages of Castor and Ailsworth. It builds from the Village Design Statement (2004) and adds to it with an eye to landscape character including heritage and aesthetics.*

### Excerpt from Village Design Statement 2004

There are a number of open spaces within the villages which provide opportunities to admire the views and open countryside. The most popular are:

1. From St Kyneburgha Church looking south towards Alwalton
2. From the field west of Water Lane looking south across Castor provides a good view of various types of rooftops
3. From the junction of Mill Lane and Loves Hill, looking west affords a good view of the Nene Valley. Further down Mill Lane looking east is a pleasant view of Ferry Meadows
4. From the bridleway at the end of Maffit Road / Main Street in Ailsworth looking north towards Castor Hanglands and south west to the Nene Valley
5. From the Nene Valley Way / River walk towards the village gives splendid views to the church and to the village
6. Views to the north of Castor from Clay Lane, cow lane and High Street across farmland as yet archaeologically unexplored, are a significant part of our heritage

**The points A – G have been added as part of the development of the 2017 Neighbourhood Plans and are shown on the map above Main Views and Rights of Way.**

- A. View from Peterborough Road as you enter Castor village – with a view over the tops of buildings of Castor Church tower & steeple and across the Nene Valley towards Stibbington and the A1.
- B. View as you approach Ailsworth village – with view of the villages with the church tower evident in amongst the buildings. This is a good view with Castor Hanglands in the north and an attractive new aspect to Ailsworth village with the Normangate development stretching down Station Road
- C. View from the west of Milton Park towards Castor village and the church– from a footpath (sitting on an east to west Roman road which joins with King Street). This view continues along the track cutting across the top of the Drift – an ancient medieval lane (Castor Village to Oldfield Pond)
- D. This view is from the plantation at Oldfield Pond back to Castor Church. Originally this pond was in a common area serving farmers and their stock with strips in the Old Field (a part of the Open-field system).
- E. This view is from Helpston Road or the eastern edge of Castor Hanglands – the church tower is visible from this point. There has been a building visible from here since Roman times with the Praetorium preceding Kyneburgha's church.
- F. Two points: One from the crossing point of The Maffit (an ancient lane running from Ailsworth up into the Hanglands) and a track way into Manor Farm, Upton. The second further down the track at the point the farm track intersects. These points mark the view across the Nene Valley including Castor Church, across to Chesterton Woods and over towards Wansford.
- G. This marks to view across the Nene Valley from the Elton Road as you travel from Elton to Wansford.

## **Evidence on sight lines of Castor Church and views into and out of villages**

**Prepared for the Castor and Ailsworth Neighbourhood Plans - Feb 2017**

### Views across the Nene Valley and to Castor Church

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan development for Castor and Ailsworth parishes we have noted the sight lines both into and out of the villages, across the Nene Valley and from Castor Church. We have added some additional points to the original map from the Village Design Statement.

The villages are set on a gentle rise from the River Nene. The villages and the woodland running on the north side of the river valley are central to the view across the Nene Valley from Chesterton Woods and the Elton Road running from Wansford to Elton.

The Nene Valley northern slopes continue up and starts to flatten off as you approach the spring line running from ponds and woods south of Upton village (TF 11106 00164 - TF 11296 00254), the southern entry on the Maffit to Castor Hanglands (TF 11826 00664) across to Oldfield Pond (TF 13216 00224).

This is an ancient landscape was not enclosed until 1898. It is crossed by footpaths and bridleways, medieval lanes, ponds and watercourses stretching over 3700 acres of "Open-fields". The remains of this landscape are evidence today in these features and the almost 360 degree view of Castor Church which sits centrally on the valley slopes and can be seen from almost all points on the circle of the Nene Valley. The church is visible from Durobrivae, the Nene, Castor Hanglands, the westerly access to Milton Park and the access points to the villages of Castor and Ailsworth on the Peterborough Road. The church itself is 900 years old and it has not changed much since the 1300s.

Importantly this church sits on the site of a Roman Praetorium – which is likely to have been the largest building in Roman Britain save the Governor's Palace in Londinium. Examination of the foundations suggests that this building probably stood as high as today's church tower. This means a building has been visible here from the surrounding area for the best part of 1800 years.

(Ref: The Praetorium of Edmund Artis: A Summary of Excavations and Surveys of the Palatial Roman Structure at Castor, Cambridgeshire 1828–2010 S.G.Upex pub Britannia 42 (2011), 23–112 doi:10.1017/S0068113X11000614).

**Finally we have included here an excerpt from Dr SG Upex's 2016 report:**

*A Report made to Ailsworth and Castor Village Planning Group on the Distribution and significance of Archaeological Sites Around and to the North of the Two Villages*

#### **Additional comment:**

Views into and from the core areas of both Ailsworth and Castor are significant aspects of the visual and historical landscape and can be equated to views seen by many past generations. Particularly noteworthy is the view of Castor church from areas within Normangate Field to the south of the village, first represented by an engraving by William Stukeley in 1724 and shown in Figure 20 below.

# Evidence on sight lines of Castor Church and views into and out of villages

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Figure 20. Published engraving (1724) by William Stukeley showing the view to Castor church from Normangate Field.

Similarly the view of the church at Castor from the within the area of the Roman town of *Durobrivae* shown in Figure 21 conveys the impression the Roman Praetorium would have had from the Roman perspective in say the second century.

Figure 21. Castor church seen from within the area of the Roman town of *Durobrivae*.



These and other distant views which provide a visual setting for the historic framework of the settlements of both villages outlined within this report form important aspects of the way modern populations view their past. As such they form significant settings for the narrative of the past where people now live and as such need to be respected, protected and conserved.