

South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2011-2034

JANUARY 2019



FINAL
PUBLICATION
VERSION 2ND

www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.	1
Policy List.	2
Foreword.	5
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	7
Chapter 2 THE PUBLICATION VERSION	15
Chapter 3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES	19
Chapter 4 OUR SPATIAL STRATEGY	25
Chapter 5 DELIVERING NEW HOMES	83
Chapter 6 EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY	123
Chapter 7 INFRASTRUCTURE.	147
Chapter 8 NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	167
Chapter 9 BUILT ENVIRONMENT	197
Chapter 10 ENSURING THE VITALITY OF TOWN CENTRES	213
Chapter 11 COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	221
Chapter 12 MONITORING AND REVIEW	227
Appendix 1 Glossary	243
Appendix 2 Strategic Allocation Maps.	254
Appendix 3 Site Allocations.	258
Appendix 4 Green Belt Proposed Changes.	261
Appendix 5 Safeguarding Maps.	264
Appendix 6 Didcot Garden Town Principles	278
Appendix 7 Settlement Hierarchy	280
Appendix 8 Local Plan Development Trajectory	281
Appendix 9 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation	282
Appendix 10 Scheduled Monuments.	284
Appendix 11 English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in South Oxfordshire.	286
Appendix 12 Listed Buildings, Heritage at risk and Conservation Areas in South Oxfordshire	287
Appendix 13 Town Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Frontages	288
Appendix 14 List of Core Strategy (2012) and Saved Local Plan 2011 policies.	290
Appendix 15 List of Article 4 Directions in South Oxfordshire.	300

Policy List

Policy Ref Policy Title

STRATEGY

STRAT1	The Overall Strategy	28
STRAT2	South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements.	35
STRAT3	Didcot Garden Town	39
STRAT4	Strategic Development	39
STRAT5	Residential Densities	41
STRAT6	Green Belt.	43
STRAT7	Land at Chalgrove Airfield	46
STRAT8	Culham Science Centre	51
STRAT9	Land Adjacent to Culham Science Centre	52
STRAT10	Land at Berinsfield.	58
STRAT10i	Berinsfield Local Green Space	60
STRAT11	Land South of Grenoble Road	63
STRAT12	Land at Northfield	66
STRAT13	Land North of Bayswater Brook	71
STRAT14	Land at Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University	76

SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING

HEN1	The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames.	78
TH1	The Strategy for Thame	79
WAL1	The Strategy for Wallingford	81
H1	Delivering New Homes	86
H2	New Housing at Didcot	88
H3	Housing in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford	90
H4	Housing in the Larger Villages	94
H5	Land to the west of Priest Close, Nettlebed	95
H6	Land at Joyce Grove, Nettlebed	96
H7	Land to the South and West of Nettlebed Service Station	96
H8	Housing in the Smaller Villages	97
H9	Affordable Housing	99
H10	Exception Sites	101
H11	Housing Mix	103
H12	Self-Build and Custom Housing	106
H13	Specialist Housing for Older People	108
H14	Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	109
H15	Safeguarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites.	110
H16	Infill Development	113
H17	Sub-division and Conversion to Multiple Occupation	114

H18	Replacement Dwellings	115
H19	Re-use of Rural Buildings	116
H20	Rural Workers' Dwellings	117
H21	Extensions to Dwellings	119
H22	Loss of Existing Residential Accommodation in Town Centres	120

EMPLOYMENT

EMP1	The Amount and Distribution of New B-class Employment Land	128
EMP2	Range, Size and Mix of Employment Premises	129
EMP3	Retention of Employment Land	130
EMP4	Employment Land in Didcot	132
EMP5	New Employment Land at Henley-on-Thames	132
EMP6	New Employment Land at Thame	133
EMP7	New Employment Land at Wallingford	133
EMP8	New Employment Land at Crowmarsh Gifford	134
EMP9	New Employment Land at Chalgrove	135
EMP10	Community Employment Plans	137
EMP11	Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas	137
EMP12	Tourism	139
EMP13	Caravan and camping sites	141
EMP14	Retention of Visitor Accommodation	142

INFRASTRUCTURE

INF1	Infrastructure Provision	149
TRANS1a	Supporting Strategic Transport Investment across the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway	151
TRANS1b	Supporting Strategic Transport Investment	152
TRANS2	Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	154
TRANS3	Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes	156
TRANS4	Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans	158
TRANS5	Consideration of Development Proposals	159
TRANS6	Rail	161
TRANS7	Development Generating new Lorry Movements	161
INF2	Electronic Communications	162
INF3	Telecommunications Technology	163
INF4	Water Resources	164

ENVIRONMENT

ENV1	Landscape and Countryside	169
ENV2	Biodiversity – Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species	171
ENV3	Biodiversity – Non Designated Sites, Habitats and Species	172

ENV4	Watercourses	174
ENV5	Green Infrastructure in New Developments	177
ENV6	Historic Environment	178
ENV7	Listed Buildings	180
ENV8	Conservation Areas	182
ENV9	Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments.	184
ENV10	Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes.	185
ENV11	Pollution - Impact from Existing and/or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)	187
ENV12	Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Sources)	188
EP1	Air Quality	189
EP2	Hazardous Substances	190
EP3	Waste Collection and Recycling	190
EP4	Flood Risk	192
EP5	Minerals Safeguarding Areas	194
DESIGN		
DES1	Delivering High Quality Development	198
DES2	Enhancing Local Character	199
DES3	Design and Access Statements	201
DES4	Masterplans for Allocated Sites and Major Development	202
DES5	Outdoor Amenity Space	203
DES6	Residential Amenity	204
DES7	Public Art	205
DES8	Efficient Use of Resources	206
DES9	Promoting Sustainable Design	208
DES10	Renewable Energy	210
TOWN CENTRES		
TC1	Retail and Services Growth	214
TC2	Retail Hierarchy	214
TC3	Comparison Goods Floorspace Requirements	217
TC4	Convenience Floorspace Provision in the Market Towns.	218
TC5	Primary Shopping Areas	219
COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
CF1	Safeguarding Community Facilities	222
CF2	Provision of Community Facilities and Services.	223
CF3	New Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities.	223
CF4	Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	224
CF5	Open Space, Sport and Recreation in New Residential Development	225

Foreword

Welcome to our second Publication version of the Local Plan for South Oxfordshire. The Local Plan is an important document because it sets out the identified need and location for housing and employment, and supporting infrastructure, in our area up to 2034. We had planned to submit the November 2017 Publication version for examination, but we have reviewed the strategic allocations in the Plan amidst uncertainty regarding deliverability.

You have helped to shape this document and given us your views through several rounds of public consultation and this document has sought to address many of the issues that have been raised. Much has changed since the last version was published, including changes to national planning guidance published this year and progress towards an expressway between Oxford and Cambridge.

This Plan is necessarily a balance between the requirement from Government to deliver the economic and housing growth including affordable homes, and the need to protect the greenness of our District. We promote healthy safe communities and support connected economic growth. We are trying to do this by ensuring it is delivered in as sensitive, sustainable and fair a way as possible across the whole District so that South Oxfordshire remains one of the best places to live and work in the country. We have signed a Growth Deal with our partner authorities in Oxfordshire and the Government to help deliver affordable homes and infrastructure and have committed to a countywide plan – a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire, which will set out the high level planning landscape to 2050.

South Oxfordshire continues to be at the forefront of Neighbourhood Planning and places greater responsibility with our communities to make decisions and this is reflected in the plan.

This is our Local Plan and it contains our vision for South Oxfordshire.



Cllr Jane Murphy
Leader of the Council



Cllr Felix Bloomfield
Cabinet Member for Planning



1 INTRODUCTION

Have your say on development in South Oxfordshire

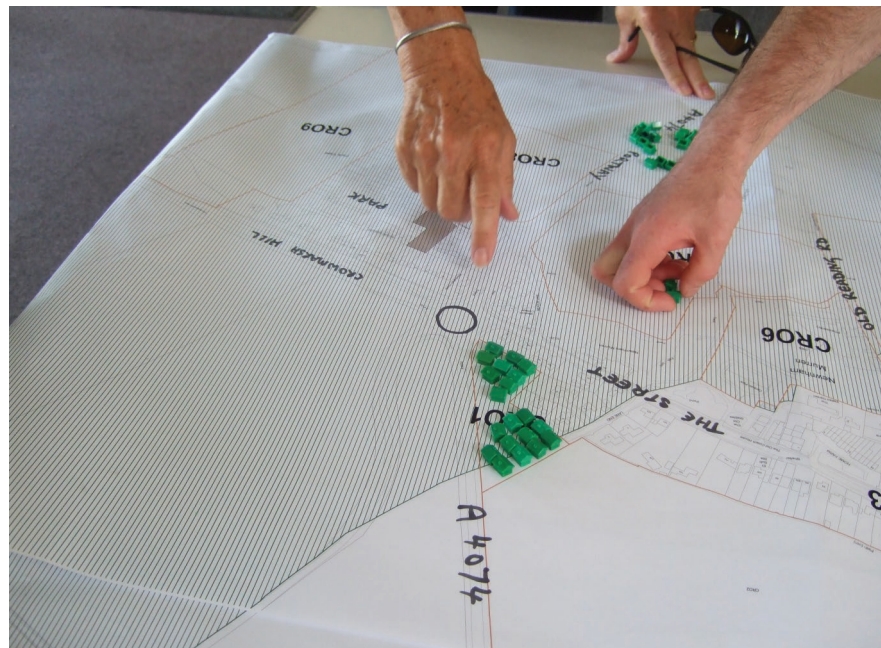
- 1.1 South Oxfordshire has been working on a new Local Plan to shape the future of the district. We have involved our communities in preparing the new plan, and we would now like your views as to whether the plan is sound and complies with legislation.

What is the Local Plan for?

- 1.2 Planning has a key role in enabling us to meet the challenges that the district faces whilst protecting what we value about the district, and also builds on opportunities to make it an even better place.
- 1.3 The Local Plan sets out how development will be planned and delivered across South Oxfordshire to 2034. It sets out a vision, shows how we have developed a strategy which responds to that vision and how it will be delivered working in partnership with everyone with a stake in the future of the district. It also includes policies that are used when we are determining planning applications.
- 1.4 The Local Plan sets out policies for change and includes a strategy for delivering growth from 2011 to 2034. It identifies appropriate areas and sites for development, such as new homes, offices, shops and community facilities. It sets out how valuable historic and natural environments will be protected and enhanced. The policies in this Plan will be used to help make decisions on planning applications in the district. It also identifies circumstances and locations where development will not be appropriate.
- 1.5 In preparing this new plan we have:
- Explored how much land is likely to be needed for different uses;
 - Identified the right areas and sites to make sure that we have a healthy supply of developable land;
 - Worked with our neighbouring councils and Oxfordshire County Council, expert advisors (such as the Environment Agency and Natural England) and infrastructure providers (such as Thames Water) to look at how the impacts of development and growth can be managed across South Oxfordshire and beyond

- Supported parish and town councils who are working on community-led plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans so that they have had their say on how their local area is shaped;
- Listened to our residents, businesses and communities.

The plan guides development of the district, in strategic terms, over the length of the plan period



What have we done to date?

- 1.6 We have previously consulted at the following stages
 - Issues and Scope – June 2014
 - Refined Options – February 2015
 - Preferred Options – June 2016
 - Second Preferred Options – April 2017
 - Final Publication Version (1st) – October 2017
- 1.7 The first two stages of consultation were based on a plan that ran until 2031. We are required to ensure that, once the plan is adopted, it has a life of 15 years from the date of adoption so that it provides an effective plan for future development.
- 1.8 Our work programme indicates that the plan is likely to be adopted in 2019, therefore the plan must run to at least 2034.

What is in the new Local Plan?

- 1.9 The plan guides development of the district, in strategic terms, over the length of the plan period. It provides the basis for growth, through setting out the distribution of new housing, employment and retail development and it also provides the framework for protecting the district's important natural and built environment.
- 1.10 The plan covers the whole of South Oxfordshire, and the Council has worked and will continue to work with our neighbours to plan for cross-boundary issues, such as how to accommodate the unmet housing needs of Oxford and where new strategic transport and utilities infrastructure are needed.
- 1.11 Whilst the Local Plan provides the broad strategic framework for growth, much of the detail, such as some of the specific non-strategic sites to be allocated for housing, will be finalised at the local level, through Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).

Why we have prepared a new Local Plan

- 1.12 In April 2014, the councils across Oxfordshire published a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), and this identified that South Oxfordshire needs additional housing beyond that which is planned for in the existing Core Strategy.
- 1.13 As well as this, Oxford City Council indicated that they would have difficulties in meeting their identified housing need entirely within the city boundary and that other districts across the county could be asked to consider taking some of this "unmet housing need".
- 1.14 In response the Council decided to review the existing plan and consider how to plan for additional growth in the most advantageous and positive way.
- 1.15 By preparing this new Local Plan now the Council will ensure that it can plan for where, how and when new development takes place, and that it can plan for all needs in the best way.

The Development Plan

1.16 The South Oxfordshire development plan is the starting point in making decisions on planning applications. All planning applications will be determined in accordance with the “Development Plan” unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises:

- The existing Core Strategy (including the “saved policies” of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011) until it is replaced by the Local Plan 2034
- “Made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Development Plans prepared by local communities
- Any Development Planning Documents relating to minerals and waste prepared by Oxfordshire County Council.



Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 1.17 In South Oxfordshire, Neighbourhood Development Plans can be prepared by either town or parish councils, or a neighbourhood forum. Once “made” (adopted) they form part of the development plan. They set out in more detail how a community wishes to see its area develop. Where Neighbourhood Development Plans are prepared, they must be in general conformity with the Local Plan.
- 1.18 South Oxfordshire District Council will continue to support communities who wish to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans. Details of how the Council can help with the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans are set out on the Council’s website.



Neighbourhood Development Plans form part of the development plan

What we have done so far

- 1.19 The Local Plan preparation process started in June and July 2014, when the Council held a Local Plan Issues and Scope public consultation, which was the first public stage of preparing the new Local Plan. It asked a number of questions about how the Local Plan could approach planning for additional housing, where business and job growth could be located, and how the Local Plan can improve transport, infrastructure, shopping and community facilities. You can see the consultation document on our website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/issuesandscope.
- 1.20 Nearly 4,000 comments from the Issues and Scope consultation were received, from almost 800 individuals and organisations. The Issues and Scope Consultation Report is available at www.southoxon.gov.uk/issuesandscope and this provides a detailed summary of the main themes arising from the responses.



- 1.21 The comments received informed the more detailed Refined Options consultation, which was held between 19 February and 2 April 2015. This was effectively a part two of the Issues and Scope work, which helped to refine the wide range of issues in the previous consultation before moving to this more formal Preferred Options stage. The consultation document can be seen on the website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2032/local-plan-2032-consultati.
- 1.22 Over 3,200 responses were received from 750 individuals and organisations. The Refined Options Consultation Report provides a detailed summary of the main themes, and can be found at www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2015%2006%2001%20FINAL%20LP2031%20Refined%20Options%20Consultation%20Report%20+%20cover_0.pdf. The responses received from this second consultation informed the first Preferred Options document.
- 1.23 The third stage in the process was a Preferred Options version of the Local Plan. Consultation on this document was undertaken between June and August 2016. This stage of the Local Plan preparation set out the preferred approach in respect of a number of issues. The first Preferred Options version of the Local Plan did not include any development management policies. The consultation document can be seen on the website at the following location www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SODC%20LP2032%20preferred%20options%20low-res.pdf.
- 1.24 7,893 comments were received in response to this consultation stage from 1,331 individuals and organisations. The Preferred Options consultation report provides a summary of these issues and the Council's response to them. The consultation responses covered a number of areas of support and objection to the emerging Local Plan. There was support for the emerging spatial strategy and distribution, though others considered that development should have a



Submission

Examination

Adoption

greater focus at Didcot and also at Oxford. Some of the responses received were unclear as to why so many homes were being proposed, though there were representations from the development industry which argued that the Local Plan did not deliver enough new homes. Some respondents considered the rural areas should help to deliver more housing, whilst others indicated that there was insufficient infrastructure to support this. Common themes included planning for infrastructure and ensuring that roads could accommodate the increase in traffic. Site specific issues were raised in relation to proposed development at Chalgrove and also suggestions were made as to other locations where development could be located, such as at Culham.


The preparation of the second Preferred Options Report was informed by the previous consultation stages


- 1.25 The preparation of the second Preferred Options Report was informed by the previous consultation stages and from the development of the evidence base to support and justify the policies and allocations it contained.
- 1.26 Approximately 7,666 responses from 1,369 individuals and organisations to the Second Preferred Options version of the Local Plan were received. These responses were particularly focussed on the following key issues:
- Duty to Cooperate matters
 - Housing numbers
 - Proposed strategic allocations
 - Infrastructure


The consultation report can be found on the Council's website.


- 1.27 The Publication version of the Local Plan built upon the earlier iterations of the Plan and it was based upon the most up to date evidence. It was published in October 2017, however the Council have reviewed the Local Plan's strategic allocations within the Local Plan since this first Publication Version. The Publication Local Plan (1st) is available on the Council's website.



 Studies which set out requirements – these provide evidence of the level of need we should plan for, including for housing, employment, shopping and leisure.

 Studies which look at the suitability of sites and places for development – these provide information about which places might be most appropriate for development.

 Studies which look at the impacts of development – these provide information about how development will affect roads, water supply and so on, and what might need to be done to deal with these impacts.

 Public consultation – this Plan will go through at least six stages of public consultation (of which this is the sixth) and a public examination before it can be adopted as the development plan for the district.

2 THE PUBLICATION VERSION

- 2.1 This document sets out the Council's draft Local Plan and is subject to formal public consultation. We are asking for your views as to whether the plan is sound and whether it complies with legal requirements prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
- 2.2 This draft Local Plan will be independently examined by an appointed Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate.
- 2.3 The relevant soundness criteria are whether the Local Plan is:
- i) Positively prepared: based on a strategy that seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development
 - ii) Justified: the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence
 - iii) Effective: the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities
 - iv) Consistent with national policy: the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.4 When considering whether the plan meets its legal requirements, the Inspector will consider a number of issues including:
- i) Local Development Scheme: has the plan been prepared in accordance with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme?
 - ii) Statement of Community Involvement and relevant regulations: has consultation on the plan been in accordance with the Council's Statement of Consultation and have the appropriate bodies been consulted?
 - iii) Duty to Cooperate: has the plan been prepared in cooperation with other local planning authorities and prescribed bodies, such as the Environment Agency and the Local Enterprise Partnership, to identify and address any issues which will have a significant impact on at least two planning areas?
 - iv) Sustainability Appraisal: has an adequate Sustainability Appraisal been carried out?
 - v) Appropriate Assessment: has an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations Assessment been carried out?
 - vi) National Policy and Legislation: does the Plan comply with national policy and legislation, for example, the National Planning Policy Framework.

When considering whether the plan meets its legal requirements, the Inspector will consider a number of issues

The Local Plan is a plan for everyone with an interest in South Oxfordshire, but particularly residents, businesses and the local communities

- 2.5 The draft Local Plan document has been informed by and builds on earlier stages of public consultation. It takes account of the comments and ideas received. It also takes account of the growing evidence base that we have produced on a wide range of background topics and issues. We have then used this information, evidence and comments to produce this more detailed set of proposals which indicate our preferred levels of development, where this should broadly be located and the range of policies that will be required to guide and shape this development, whilst balancing the need to protect our natural and built environment.
- 2.6 The South Oxfordshire Local Plan – Publication Version contains:
- A vision for South Oxfordshire in 2034
 - Objectives and a strategy for showing how we will achieve our vision
 - The allocation of sites for development
 - Strategic and non-strategic policies which will be used to assess planning proposals and applications.

How can you take part?

- 2.7 The Local Plan is a plan for everyone with an interest in South Oxfordshire, but particularly residents, businesses and the local communities. It is therefore essential that we have sought the views and thoughts of as many of these groups as possible in the preparation of this draft Local Plan.
- 2.8 To help achieve this, we are undertaking extensive public consultation and engagement over a six-week period between 7 January 2019 and 18 February 2019.
- 2.9 We will be holding a series of “roadshow” events across the district during the consultation period. Full details of the consultation programme can be found at our website www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan.

What happens next?

- 2.10 The development of the Local Plan follows a number of different stages which are defined by legislation (see page 12). The legal requirements are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.11 The consultation exercises to date, and the consultation embarked upon for this document, have been undertaken under Regulation 18 of the legislation. This Regulation enables us to undertake one or more consultations on

matters that it considers appropriate – i.e. the form of the consultation is not prescribed in law.

- 2.12 This Publication version of the Local plan is known as the Regulation 19 stage. It complements the earlier Regulation 18 consultations. To assist the examination Inspector, representations made under Regulation 19 should relate to the soundness of the Submission draft Local Plan or to its compliance with legal requirements.
- 2.13 Anyone is then able to make formal representation(s) on the Publication version of the Local Plan.
- 2.14 Once we have consulted on the Proposed Submission Document, we will then formally submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State. It is anticipated that this will be achieved before the end of March 2019. The Plan will be submitted under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.15 All representations received will be considered by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Having considered all representations, the Inspector will then conduct a formal independent examination into the Local Plan. The Inspector will make recommendations in respect of the Local Plan and, for the Local Plan to proceed to adoption, the Inspector must find the Local Plan to be “sound.” It is anticipated that the examination is likely to be conducted in the summer of 2019.
- 2.16 Once a Local Plan is found to be “sound”, it can proceed to adoption. In the case of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, this is expected to be at the end of 2019.



INNOVATION CENTRE

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 South Oxfordshire is a beautiful and prosperous place with many strengths: its natural environment, picturesque towns and villages, and a buoyant and successful economy. There are challenges in ensuring that we plan for development in a way that protects and enhances all that is special about our District. In our vision for 2034 we set out how we see the district evolving whilst building on our strengths.
- 3.2 A set of strategic objectives define what the Local Plan 2034 focuses on to deliver our stated vision. Our strategy is an evolution of that developed for the Core Strategy 2012, as we believe it is still appropriate and sustainable, and it reflects valued input from the community.

Our Vision for 2034

3.3 South Oxfordshire will remain a beautiful and prosperous place to live. It will be an attractive place for people to work and spend their leisure time.

- 3.4 By meeting our housing and employment needs and the creation of new, sustainable and vibrant places, we will have provided enough homes and jobs for those wishing to live and work within South Oxfordshire. New development will meet the highest standards of design with necessary associated infrastructure.
- 3.5 We have continued to support development at the towns and larger villages. Growth will support employment opportunities and deliver regeneration and infrastructure with a focus on delivering housing and employment at Science Vale¹. We will also strengthen the heart of the district by allocating new development at strategic locations.
- 3.6 Science Vale will continue to grow as a world-renowned science, research and innovation led hub that attracts business, creates job opportunities, and delivers housing growth. Roads and rail links will have been improved and pedestrian and cycle networks will have made it easier for people to get around, in particular to major employment sites. Didcot will be a flourishing Garden Town, being both the gateway to and the heart of Science Vale.

¹ Science Vale is an area in Southern Oxfordshire, crossing the border of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. It is one of the most successful science clusters in the UK. This activity is concentrated around the three centres for science and technology at Harwell Campus, Culham Science Centre, and Milton Park, but is supported by a number of important settlements including Didcot, Wantage and Grove.

- 3.7 Through careful management of the Oxford Green Belt we will have made provision towards Oxford city's unmet housing needs whilst protecting the important setting of Oxford and also making appropriate provision for housing, business growth and urban and rural regeneration. The North Wessex Downs and Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and enhanced, whilst also allowing for appropriate and sustainable growth in places. Our rich and varied history is celebrated, protected and enhanced for the benefit of residents and visitors.

The North
Wessex Downs
and Chilterns
Areas of
Outstanding
Natural Beauty
will be protected
and enhanced



- 3.8 We will plan for new development at seven strategic locations; Grenoble Road, Culham, Berinsfield, Wheatley, Northfield, Chalgrove, and North of Bayswater Brook. We will exceed expectations in terms of healthy living, sustainable travel and the design of buildings, homes and public spaces. Everyone will have access to high quality leisure, retail and cultural facilities which will also attract visitors. South Oxfordshire will continue to be a tourist destination, helping our towns and villages to remain vibrant and prosperous. Communities will thrive, and through neighbourhood planning and community engagement, will have their say on how their local area is shaped.

Strategic Objectives

3.9 There are a series of objectives which underpin the Local Plan, which should not be viewed in isolation, but rather should be considered as a full suite of objectives. A balance needs to be struck between the core pillars of sustainable development, including the protection of the environment and the need to provide sufficient development to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

Objective 1 - Settlements

- OBJ 1.1** Support the settlement hierarchy, the growth and development of Didcot Garden Town, the delivery of new development in the heart of the district, the growth of our market towns and the vitality of our villages.
- OBJ 1.2** Support rural communities and “their way of life”, recognising that this is what attracts people to the district.
- OBJ 1.3** Meet identified housing needs by delivering high-quality, sustainable, attractive places for people to live and work.
- OBJ 1.4** Focus growth in Science Vale through delivering homes and jobs, retail and leisure facilities and enhanced transport infrastructure.



Objective 2 - Housing

- OBJ 2.1** Deliver a wide range of housing options to cater for the housing needs of our community (including self-build and older persons' accommodation).
- OBJ 2.2** Support the regeneration of housing and facilities to strengthen communities and address deprivation issues.

- OBJ 2.3** Support meeting the economic and housing needs of the county as a whole, reflecting the special character of South Oxfordshire.

Objective 3 - Economy

- OBJ 3.1** Improve employment opportunities and employment land provision, which will provide high quality local jobs to help retain more skilled residents in the local workforce.
- OBJ 3.2** Aim to reduce commuting distances by supporting business growth in locations close to existing business areas, transport connections and broadband provision.
- OBJ 3.3** Ensure economic and housing growth are balanced, to support sustainable journeys to work, recognising that we cannot determine where people work –some of whom will choose to travel to employment locations beyond our district, such as London, Oxford and Reading.
- OBJ 3.4** Support the retail and service sectors as well as low and high-tech industries.
- OBJ 3.5** Create the conditions whereby world-renowned and cutting edge industries choose to locate and grow their businesses here, contributing to a strong and successful economy, in line with the Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire.
- OBJ 3.6** Inspire the next generation of workers by planning for high quality education facilities.
- OBJ 3.7** Encourage tourism by protecting our built and natural assets, such as the Thames, and providing services and facilities for visitors.

Objective 4 - Infrastructure

- OBJ 4.1** Ensure that essential infrastructure is delivered to support our existing residents and services as well as growth.
- OBJ 4.2** Make sustainable transport, walking and cycling an attractive and viable choice for people, whilst recognising that car travel and parking provision will continue to be important in this predominantly rural District.

Objective 5 - Design

- OBJ 5.1** Deliver high quality, innovative, well designed and locally distinctive developments in sustainable locations in accordance with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.
- OBJ 5.2** Support development that respects the scale and character of our towns and villages, enhancing the special character of our historic settlements and the surrounding countryside.

Objective 6 - Community

- OBJ 6.1** Champion neighbourhood planning, empowering local communities to direct development within their area and provide support to ensure Neighbourhood Development Plans are deliverable, achievable and sustainable.
- OBJ 6.2** Provide access to high quality leisure, recreation, cultural, community and health facilities.
- OBJ 6.3** Ensure all communities have access to the services and facilities they value, supporting access to sport and recreation and the health and wellbeing of everyone.

Objective 7 - Natural and Built environment

- OBJ 7.1** Protect and enhance the natural environment, including biodiversity, the landscape, green infrastructure and our waterways, placing particular importance on the value of the Oxford Green Belt, our two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the River Thames.
- OBJ 7.2** Conserve and enhance our rich and varied historic assets and their settings, celebrating these as some of our strongest attributes.

Objective 8 - Climate change

- OBJ 8.2** Minimise carbon emissions and other pollution such as water, air, noise and light, and increase our resilience to the likely impact of climate change, especially flooding.



4 OUR SPATIAL STRATEGY

Introduction

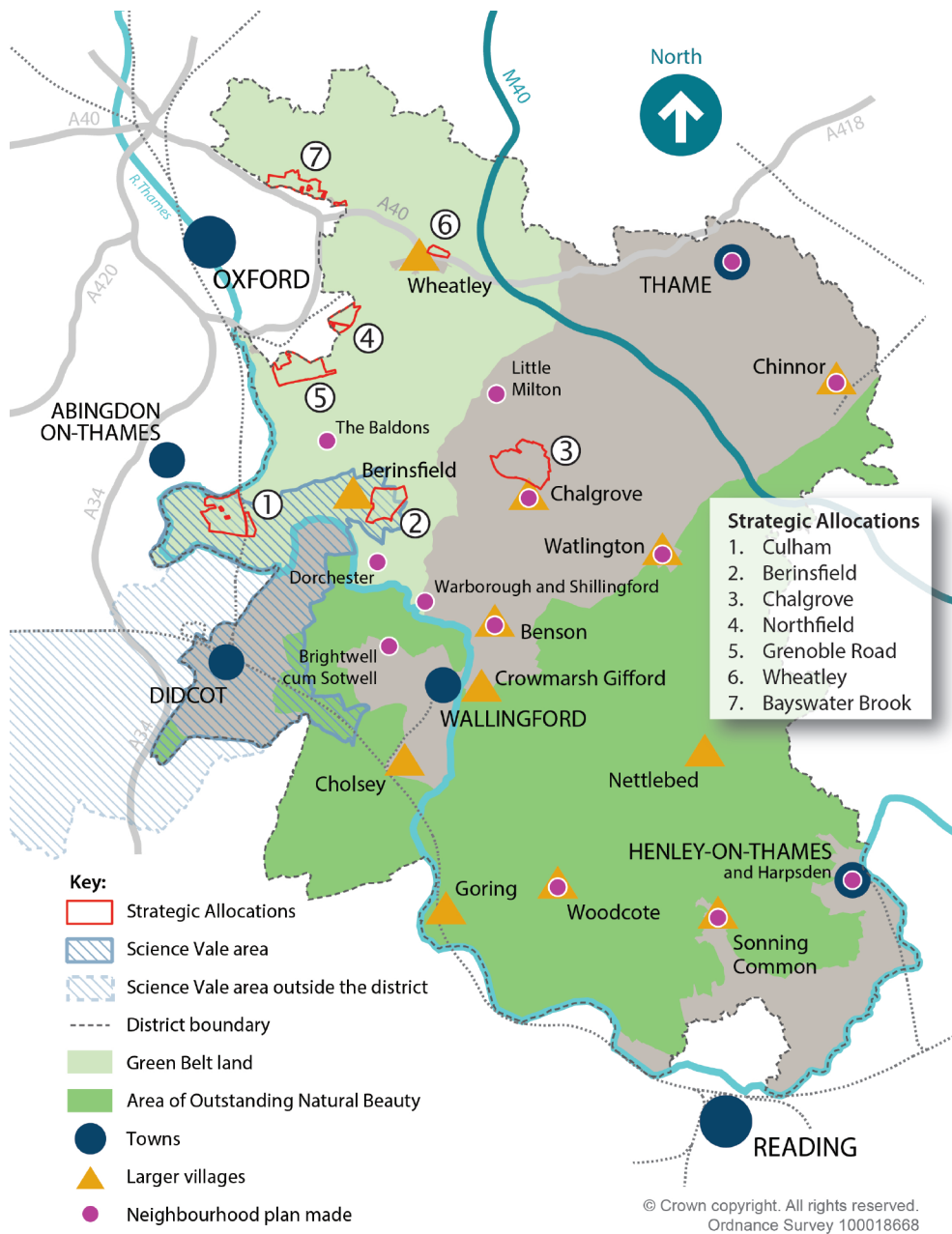
- 4.1 The Local Plan updates the spatial strategy set out in the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy adopted in December 2012, to ensure that we meet the requirement set out in national policy to meet our housing needs. The strategy sets out how we will deliver the vision and objectives set out in Chapter 3. It identifies the roles that Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town and Culham, the market towns, the villages and the countryside, including areas adjacent to Oxford City allocated for strategic development in this Plan will play in the future. It shows where new homes will be built, where opportunities to provide new jobs will be created, and where infrastructure and services will be required. It shows how we will work in partnership to deliver the strategy with those responsible for key services, including healthcare, education, transport, water supply and community safety and with others such as affordable housing providers.
- 4.2 Local planning authorities have a responsibility to plan positively and work collaboratively. We cannot plan in isolation, and South Oxfordshire has been working with, and continues to work with the other Oxfordshire authorities, supported by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, Local Enterprise Partnership, key stakeholders, our parish and town councils and infrastructure providers and with government. We have signed up to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal which commits the Oxfordshire authorities to delivering growth.
- 4.3 The plan seeks to meet needs identified for South Oxfordshire as well as all the needs arising from our neighbour Oxford City. A joint work programme with the other Oxfordshire authorities² has been progressing on the scale of Oxford City's unmet needs and how they can best be met.
- 4.4 All allocations made in the Core Strategy are retained and the Local Plan makes provision for housing to meet additional housing requirements identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014. The strategy has been updated to help address the key challenges facing the district now and to make best use of available opportunities.
- 4.5 Our strategy delivers sustainable development, supporting the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in national policy.

² Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council

The Strategy

Drawing on a combined approach to the distribution of new housing development enables a series of benefits to be delivered through the Local Plan

- 4.6 Historically, growth in South Oxfordshire has been largely focused upon Didcot and the market towns of Thame, Wallingford and Henley-on-Thames. Other than Wallingford, these towns are located towards the boundary of our District and the historic focus of development to the periphery of the district has led to a reduction in development to support the investment in services and infrastructure in other areas, particularly the centrally located heart of South Oxfordshire.
- 4.7 The issues and options version of the Local Plan presented a series of potential options for the distribution of development within the district.
- Core Strategy approach
 - Science Vale and 'sustainable settlements'
 - All in Science Vale
 - All in single new settlement
 - Dispersal
 - Next to neighbouring major urban areas (Reading/Oxford)
 - Raising densities (from 25dph)
 - Locating development in settlements where it could help fund projects.
- 4.8 Each of these options has been consulted upon and tested through the Sustainability Appraisal. The preferred option for the Council is to principally focus development at Science Vale and sustainable settlements (which include Towns and Larger villages), where over 70% of housing will be located and to deliver elements of some of these options rather than favouring any one scenario in isolation. The strategy draws together the Core Strategy approach with development at Science Vale and next to the neighbouring major urban area of Oxford. It is also complemented by the identification of new settlements and the location of development to fund regeneration and by the Local Plan raising densities. Drawing on a combined approach to the distribution of new housing development enables a series of benefits to be delivered through the Local Plan and this ensures that the housing needs of the District can be accommodated.
- 4.9 Our preferred strategy supports the delivery of new housing and economic growth and translates our vision and objectives under inter-related spatial themes to:
- Support a strong network of vibrant settlements including the regeneration of town centres, making the whole District more sustainable, recognising the rural nature of South Oxfordshire and the effects generated by nearby major centres;



- Support a movement strategy that strengthens connections to key places, allows a choice of transport modes and manages traffic to improve environmental quality;
- Create a thriving economy in urban and rural areas with a range of work opportunities including more high value jobs and enable the up-skilling of our workforce to support existing and new businesses;
- Deliver sufficient new homes to meet the needs of the communities and economy supported by appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities;
- Maintain and enhance the built, historic and natural environment and ensure good quality developments and design.

- 4.10 The Local Plan seeks to build upon the existing settlement hierarchy and actively create a sustainable pattern of development throughout the District. It identifies strategic allocations at seven locations at Grenoble Road, Culham, Berinsfield, Chalgrove, Wheatley, Northfield and North of Bayswater Brook.

Strengthening the heart of South Oxfordshire

Policy STRAT1: The Overall Strategy

- 1. Proposals for development in South Oxfordshire will be assessed using national policy and guidance and the whole of the development plan* and should be consistent with the overall strategy of:**
 - Focusing major new development in Science Vale including Didcot Garden town and Culham so that this area can play an enhanced role in providing homes, jobs and services with improved transport connectivity;
 - Providing strategic allocations at Grenoble Road, Culham, Berinsfield, Wheatley, Northfield, Chalgrove and North of Bayswater Brook including necessary infrastructure and community facilities;
 - Close working with partner agencies, neighbouring local authorities, communities and other stakeholders to ensure the timely delivery of our strategy, which will deliver a significant amount of growth beyond the end of the plan period;
 - Supporting and enhancing the economic and social dependencies between our towns and villages;
 - Supporting the roles of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford by maintaining and improving the attractiveness of their town centres through measures that include environmental improvements and mixed-use developments and by providing new homes, jobs, services and infrastructure;
 - Meeting unmet housing needs of Oxford City on strategic allocations adjacent to the boundary of Oxford near to where that need arises;
 - Supporting and enhancing the roles of the larger villages of Benson, Berinsfield, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Cholsey, Crowmarsh Gifford, Goring-on-Thames, Nettlebed, Sonning Common, Watlington, Wheatley and Woodcote as local service centres

- **Supporting smaller and other villages by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment to help secure the provision and retention of services;**
- **Protecting and enhancing the countryside and particularly those areas within the two AONB and Oxford Green Belt by ensuring that outside of the towns and villages any change relates to very specific needs such as those of the agricultural industry or enhancement of the environment;**
- **Support and enhance our historic environment.**

*The development plan is outlined in paragraph 1.16

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 & 7.

- 4.11 Understanding the nature of our towns and villages and how they inter-relate and link with places outside the district is a vital part of our strategy. Movement patterns are complex and vary with the purpose of the journey. Some key services such as main hospitals and regional shopping centres will continue to be provided outside the district, particularly in Oxford and Reading.
- 4.12 The strategy can influence how services and employment are accessed and where new development is located within the district. It can support and influence where and how service providers deliver their services and encourage different and improved ways of delivery.
- 4.13 South Oxfordshire has around 140 settlements, although some are just isolated groups of houses with no community facilities. These vary considerably in size and character reflecting their natural setting and historical development. The settlements in the district have been categorised by the services and facilities they offer and a hierarchy of policies has been established on this basis. We looked at these against a range of criteria on employment opportunities, schools, health services, recreation and leisure opportunities and access to shops and public transport provision to prepare a settlement assessment and hierarchy³. Villages have been categorised as being either “larger villages”, with a wide range of services and facilities in sustainable locations, or “smaller villages” that have a more limited range of services. There is a clear distinction between the villages in the settlement hierarchy but we will be promoting development through this Plan to the most sustainable locations. We are directing development to the larger villages to complement the spatial strategy and will support those Neighbourhood Development Plan groups who wish

**South
Oxfordshire
has around 140
settlements**

³ Settlement Assessment Background Paper, South Oxfordshire January 2019

to promote development in the smaller villages. In addition, there are “other villages” which lie at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy, being hamlets or very small settlements with very limited or no services. Our Local Plan reflects the status of settlements in this assessment.

- 4.14 Our vision and objectives for South Oxfordshire recognise the rural nature of our District and the importance of our rural settlements in contributing to what makes South Oxfordshire such a beautiful and prosperous place to live. Our strategy for the Local Plan is to continue to ensure that all our communities thrive and that everyone has access to services within a short distance. This is achieved through our network of settlements and the settlement hierarchy, which ensures development takes place within the more sustainable locations of the District.

Meeting our housing and employment needs

- 4.15 National Planning Policy is clear that local planning authorities should, as a minimum provide for the objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in their area. They should also provide for any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas where this has been agreed through a statement of common ground.
- 4.16 The NPPF⁴ and Planning Practice Guidance⁵ direct Local Planning Authorities to use the “standard method” to establish the minimum local housing need figure. For South Oxfordshire this results in an annual housing need of 556 homes a year. This figure represents the minimum annual housing need for South Oxfordshire. It does not automatically translate into the housing requirement for the Local Plan that will need to take into account other factors when determining the homes to plan for.
- 4.17 The Planning Practice Guidance⁶ explains that the standard method for working out housing need is just the starting point for working out how many homes to plan for. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors, might have on demographic behaviour. The Guidance states that Councils should consider uplifting the housing requirement for the Local Plan above the results of the standard method. It gives the examples of where a housing or growth deal is in place, where strategic infrastructure improvements are planned to support new homes, where an authority has agreed to take on unmet need from a neighbour (based on that authority's standard method results), and where a recent strategic housing market assessment (SHMA) suggests higher levels of need.

⁴ Paragraph 60

⁵ See Planning Practice Guidance-Housing Needs Assessment

⁶ See Planning Practice Guidance-Housing Needs Assessment

- 4.18 South Oxfordshire is a partner of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. Along with the other district and county councils in Oxfordshire, we have collectively committed to plan for 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031. In return for this commitment to deliver higher than our local housing needs, government has granted some flexibilities with regard to our housing land supply in the short term, as well as committing to £150m worth of infrastructure funding for the first five years of the deal.
- 4.19 The Growth Deal itself is not however an assessment of housing need. It does not seek to model the growth in population, address affordability or identify the effects of changes in government policy or economic circumstances might have on housing needs. Consequently, the Growth Deal does not identify housing requirement for each District, nor does it attempt to apportion any housing needs from one authority to another.
- 4.20 The deal derives its aspirational housing target from the Oxfordshire SHMA. The SHMA was published in April 2014 and is therefore close to the five-year lifespan that planning documents have before the NPPF directs they must be reviewed. Furthermore, the SHMA is based on 2011 “interim” household projections, and so the base data on which it is grounded is now quite dated. The SHMA is also based on a methodology for working out housing needs that was set out in the first NPPF (March 2012) and original Planning Practice Guidance.
- 4.21 However, the SHMA is the only document that provides an evidenced approach to the 100,000 homes identified in the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. It is also the only document that seeks to split the 100,000 home target between each of the constituent authorities. The SHMA looked at both the expected growth in population, the anticipated economic growth between 2011 and 2031 and the need to support affordable housing provision.
- 4.22 The SHMA is based on economic forecasts and considers a number of possible economic growth scenarios. In South Oxfordshire, the evidence considers that the provision of 750 dwellings a year would support economic growth. It represents the committed economic growth scenario forecast in the SHMA and takes forward planned growth set out in the Strategic Economic Plan. This is primarily to meet the needs of our existing businesses wishing to expand and to allow for new business formation at similar rates to the past. A proportion of this provision would also meet the need for affordable housing in the District.
- 4.23 Based on these assessments, the SHMA made recommendations in terms of the housing range that the Local Plan should be planning for which recognised that the affordable housing evidence provided a basis for considering higher housing provision. This was presented in the form of a range which identifies a total need

In South Oxfordshire, the evidence considers that the provision of 750 dwellings a year would support economic growth

for between 14,500 and 16,500 homes for South Oxfordshire over the twenty-year period 2011-2031. This would equate to an annual provision of between 725-825 new homes. The 100,000 home target of the Growth Deal is based on the midpoint of this range (775 homes a year).

- 4.24 The Growth Deal commitments and the Oxfordshire SHMA are a sound justification for uplifting South Oxfordshire's housing requirement above the 556 homes per year from the standard method. Taken together, the evidence sets a housing requirement for South Oxfordshire of 775 homes a year between 2011 and 2034, or a total plan requirement of 17,825 homes. This is explained further in Section 5 of this Plan and the Housing Topic Paper.
- 4.25 Oxford City Council has identified that it will have difficulty in meeting its own identified housing commitments of the Growth Deal, and has asked the other Oxfordshire authorities to assist in the provision of housing. South Oxfordshire District Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with all the authorities and relevant prescribed bodies in Oxfordshire under the Duty to Cooperate to identify the scale of unmet need and how Oxford City's housing requirement should be distributed across the county.
- 4.26 In September 2016 the Oxfordshire Growth Board considered a Memorandum of Cooperation between each of its five members on how to accommodate the levels of unmet need arising from Oxford City. This was based on the housing need set out in the 2014 SHMA and consequently the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. It sets out an amount of housing for each authority to plan for, based on an assumed unmet need of 15,000 homes from Oxford city. It also included an agreement that the delivery of these homes would be monitored as part of housing land supply calculations from 1 April 2021 to allow local plans to come forward to address this need.
- 4.27 The Council considers that it can meet the full 4,950 homes apportioned to South Oxfordshire through this agreement, and proposes to monitor this between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2031 in accordance with the memorandum.
- 4.28 Oxford City Council ran a consultation on their proposed submission Local Plan in November 2018. Their Local Plan identifies a housing target of 1,400 homes a year based on the Oxfordshire SHMA, the Oxfordshire Growth Deal, and a 2018 SHMA "roll forward". This Council has agreed to support Oxford City in meeting their housing needs to 2031, in accordance with the timescales of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. The Local Plan does so through providing a total of 4,950 homes between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2031.

Oxford City Council has identified that it will have difficulty in meeting its own identified housing commitments of the Growth Deal



- 4.29 To ensure that we meet the needs requested by Oxford City, the Local Plan has identified strategic sites on the edge of the City. These sites will also provide an increased level of affordable housing in line with those levels required by Oxford City as set out in Policy H9 (affordable housing).
- 4.30 Along with the other authorities in Oxfordshire, the Council will continue to monitor the housing needs of Oxford City. The joint strategic spatial plan will be the appropriate plan for addressing any needs that arise after 2031.
- 4.31 It is recognised that there is significant uncertainty regarding the precise level of unmet need which Oxford City may find on the conclusion and adoption of their own Local Plan. In addition, there is an uncertainty as to how the emerging Oxford to Cambridge corridor might impact on South Oxfordshire and the other Districts of Oxfordshire. A Ministerial Statement has now been published⁷ endorsing the recommendations of the NIC⁸ to establish a new corridor between the two cities, but uncertainty remains as to how the corridor is to actually be created and how the growth plans adopted by Councils across the corridor might be aligned. South Oxfordshire will be undertaking a review of its Local Plan once both Oxford City and South Oxfordshire have adopted their plans and the implications of the Oxford to Cambridge corridor, including the route of a proposed Expressway between the two cities, are clearer. This is the most appropriate and responsible manner in which to plan for additional homes until the full extent is known.
- 4.32 Based on the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and SHMA evidence, to meet South Oxfordshire's own housing requirement we need to plan for approximately 2,099 additional new homes over the 2011—2034 period. The Local Plan also helps Oxford city meet its obligations under the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, therefore the total needed to plan for is 7,049 new homes to 2034.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cambridge-milton-keynes-oxford-arc-study-government-response>

⁸ <https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/partnering-prosperity-new-deal-cambridge-milton-keynes-oxford-arc/>

- 4.33 In total this equates to the need to provide 22,775 as our housing requirement in the plan period.
- 4.34 The housing requirement for South Oxfordshire is set out in Policy STRAT2.
- 4.35 National Planning Policy requires that planning policies should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It is clear that local planning authorities should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth.
- 4.36 The 2014 SHMA forecasts anticipated economic growth across Oxfordshire and the District between 2011 and 2031. The SHMA forecasts a total increase in employment of around 88,000 people for Oxfordshire with an increase of 11,455 jobs in South Oxfordshire from 2011 to 2031. The 2017 'South Oxfordshire Employment Land Review Addendum' (SOELRA) examines the forecasts of the 2014 SHMA. Based on the SHMA, the SOELRA projects an increase of 12,403 jobs from 2011 to 2033.
- 4.37 To plan for the economic growth forecast in the 2014 SHMA, the SOELRA forecasts that between 33.2 to 35.9 hectares of additional employment land is required in the District over the period 2011 to 2033. As this employment forecast ends at 2033, to account for the additional year in the plan period, an additional requirement of between 1.5 to 1.63 hectares is required. This results in an additional requirement of between 34.7 and 37.5 hectares of employment land in the district over the period 2011 to 2034.
- 4.38 In order encourage sustainable economic growth and meet this requirement, the Local Plan identifies locations and allocations for employment throughout the District, dispersed between the Plan's strategic allocations and the sustainable locations. This approach reflects the Local Plan's spatial strategy.
- 4.39 Our locations for employment are as follows, as set out further in Policy EMP1:
- Within Science Vale:
- Culham Science Centre and the adjacent strategic site;
 - Didcot, albeit with some in the Vale of White Horse;
 - the strategic sites in Berinsfield,
- At sustainable locations:
- The strategic sites in Chalgrove and Grenoble Road; the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford with sites to be identified in Neighbourhood Development Plans; and
 - at Crowmarsh Gifford with sites to be identified in Neighbourhood Development Plans

Policy STRAT2: South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements

1. **During the plan period, provision will be made to meet the following requirements:**
2. **Housing requirements**
 - South Oxfordshire Housing Requirement
775 homes per year (17,825 between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2034)
 - Addressing Oxford's contribution to the Growth Deal
495 homes per year (4,950 between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2031)
 - Total housing requirement for the plan period
22,775 homes
3. **Employment land requirements**
 - South Oxfordshire Employment Requirement
37.5 hectares between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2034
4. **These requirements are to be delivered in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in STRAT1.**
5. **The locations and trajectory for housing development is identified in policies H1.**
6. **The appropriate level of new housing and employment will be monitored and a review undertaken within five years following the adoption of the Local Plan, taking into account the most up-to-date evidence available at that time.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2 & 3.

Didcot and Science Vale

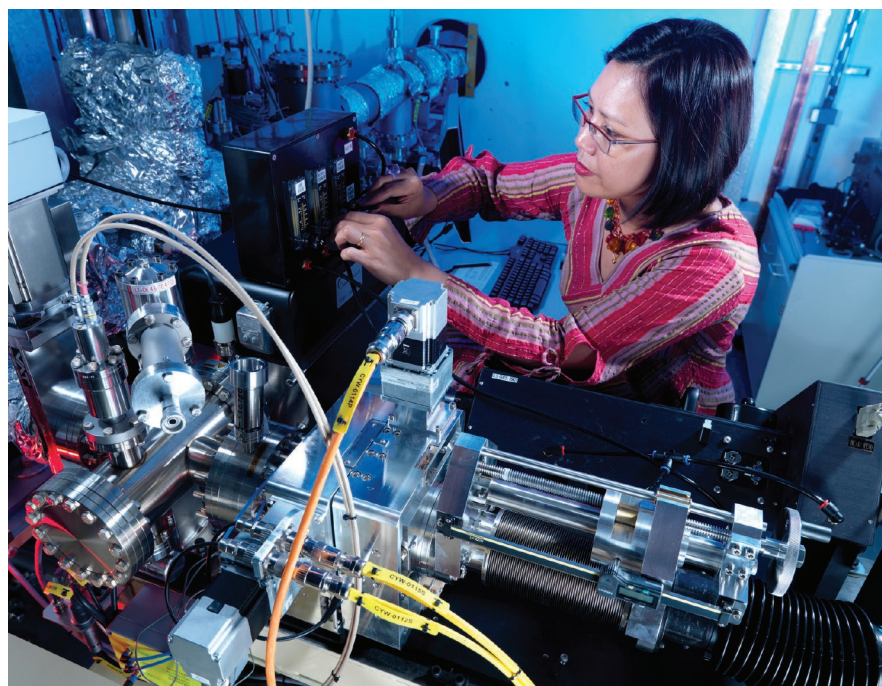
- 4.40 Science Vale is already an international location for science and technology. From this strong starting point, we need to capitalise on Science Vale's opportunity to provide an even better environment for business to flourish. Science Vale is one of the most successful science clusters in the UK. This activity is concentrated around the three centres for science at Harwell Campus, Culham Science Centre and Milton Park, but is supported by a number of important settlements. Didcot is at the heart of Science Vale. It makes the first and leaves the last impression on anyone travelling to Science

From this strong starting point, we need to capitalise on Science Vale's opportunity to provide an even better environment for business to flourish

Vale from elsewhere in the UK or from across the globe and it provides the ideal opportunity to act both as a gateway and a hub.

- 4.41 The Local Plan's vision for Science Vale in 2034 is grounded in continuing this story of economic success and channelling this prosperity into improved social and environmental wellbeing: the area will consist of thriving communities that have benefited from sustainable growth and the successful delivery of major infrastructure.

Didcot is the gateway to Science Vale



- 4.42 One of the priorities for Science Vale is to provide an environment in which science led business can flourish. Part of this is ensuring that the Local Plan promotes an attractive and diverse housing offer, set in an area with good transport and communications networks, links to university research, 'big science', the space sector and cutting edge technology. Clustering development in one area gives a critical mass of economic, social and cultural activity to support the delivery of infrastructure and sustain vibrant town centres. Science Vale has fewer development constraints than much of Oxfordshire and offers well established road and rail networks. These transportation links are already driving investment and supporting job growth. Continued economic growth is supported with a priority to respect the Oxford Green Belt and North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- 4.43 Didcot is the gateway to Science Vale. It connects Science Vale with the rest of the UK through direct train services to Oxford, London, and Bristol. Yet the economic and social links between Didcot and the rest of Science Vale

remain weak. An important part of our strategy for Science Vale is to improve and strengthen its relationship with Didcot, and realise Didcot's full potential as a thriving and attractive location to live, work and visit. We will do this by providing the homes, jobs, skills, and infrastructure needed to turn Didcot into a successful and sustainable town in its own right, and a vital part of a thriving Science Vale.

The Strategy for Science Vale

4.44 Our strategic approach for Science Vale:

- Excellent design embedded in development throughout Science Vale
- Protection for the distinctive character and heritage of Science Vale's towns, villages and countryside
- A range of new homes, to balance the new jobs
- Opportunities for people to build their own homes in appropriate locations
- Didcot transformed into a well serviced and well connected high quality urban hub, including new social infrastructure (such as schools and medical facilities and a new leisure centre) to support the growing population
- A "step change" in travel choices away from car travel towards public transport, cycling and walking with Didcot at the heart of a fully connected Science Vale
- Didcot Parkway Railway Station and its role as a major rail interchange improved
- New innovative housing to be provided linked to the existing Culham Science Centre
- Culham railway station to be improved and transformed into a focal point for the new community
- A new railway station at Grove in the longer term
- Improvements to capacity of the rail lines
- Convenient bus services throughout the area
- More and better cycling and walking links to encourage reliable, active and healthy travel
- Improved access onto the A34
- Aspirations for Superfast Broadband across all of Science Vale by 2033.

Didcot Garden Town

4.45 In December 2015, the Government announced that Didcot would become a Garden Town delivering 15,050 homes and 20,000 high-tech jobs in the greater Didcot area. Garden Towns are locally-led and ambitious proposals for new communities that work as self-sustaining places and should have high quality and good design embedded from the outset⁹.

⁹DCLG 2016. Locally-led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities.

- 4.46 The designation of Didcot as a Garden Town is an exciting opportunity. Both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are working closely together and in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and other key stakeholders to develop a joined up vision and delivery strategy for the area. The Didcot Masterplan Area is shown in Appendix 6.
- 4.47 It is important the area realises its potential as a thriving and attractive location to live, work and visit and in particular to provide a high quality service centre at the heart of Science Vale. This will allow Science Vale's international reputation for science and technology to support continued and accelerated growth of businesses in these sectors.
- 4.48 The Garden Town initiative will help to shape growth already identified through the Local Plan for housing, employment and infrastructure.
- 4.49 To support the successful implementation of the Garden Town initiative, six high level principles have been developed to help shape development proposals that come forward. Proposals for development within the Garden Town Masterplan Area as set out in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan will be expected to demonstrate how they comply with these principles in accordance with Policy STRAT3.
- 4.50 More detailed planning policy will be developed for the Didcot Garden Town area in line with the Garden Town Principles set out here. Garden Town policy will support the long-term achievement of the sustainable Garden Town vision and principles through: engaging with local people and businesses; forming part of a strategic and integrated investment plan; maximising social and environmental opportunities; and supporting long-term sustainability goals.
- 4.51 Additional planning policy for the Garden Town will complement and support the Local Plan. Garden Town policy is likely to come forward as an additional planning document for the Garden Town Area: possibly as a Development Planning Document (such as within the next Local Plan) or as a Supplementary Planning Document. Because Didcot spans both the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council areas, the Garden Town planning policy document will be developed through joint working and adopted by both councils.

Policy STRAT3: Didcot Garden Town

- 1. Proposals for development within the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan Area will be expected to demonstrate how they positively contribute to the achievement of the Didcot Garden Town Principles as set out in Appendix 6.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objective 1,2,3,4,5,6, 7 & 8.

Implementing the Spatial Strategy

Policy STRAT4: Strategic Development

- 1. New development will be provided within Strategic Allocations in order to deliver the scale and distribution of development set out in Policies STRAT1 and STRAT2 in this chapter.**
- 2. Development proposals should enable a comprehensive scheme to be delivered within each strategic allocation. Developers must ensure that the sites provide an appropriate scale and mix of uses, in suitable locations, to create sustainable developments that support and complement the role of existing settlements and communities.**
- 3. Proposals must be accompanied by a comprehensive masterplan for the entire strategic allocation. This should demonstrate how new development will integrate with and complement its surroundings in an appropriate manner.**
- 4. Proposals must ensure that necessary supporting infrastructure is provided. Developers must engage with relevant infrastructure providers to ensure the implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.**

5. **Proposals to deliver strategic development need to be supported by:**
 - i) a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
 - ii) a Health Impact Assessment;
 - iii) a Transport Assessment;
 - iv) an Air Quality Assessment;
 - v) an Arboricultural Survey;
 - vi) an Ecological Impact Assessment;
 - vii) a site specific flood risk assessment which takes into consideration the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
 - vii) a Heritage Impact Assessment; and
 - viii) an archaeological desk based assessment to provide an assessment of archaeological significance

6. **Each development will be expected to provide:**
 - i) a scheme of an appropriate scale, layout and form which respects the surrounding character and setting;
 - ii) high quality public transport facilities and connections within and adjacent to the site;
 - ii) appropriate vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access including safe and attractive connections with nearby communities and employment areas;
 - iii) investigation and mitigation by the developer of any former land uses on the site which may give rise to contamination;
 - iv) a Noise Assessment including noise during construction and noise insulation of development;
 - v) a Landscape Management Plan to provide appropriate landscaping and an integrated network of green infrastructure;
 - vi) an Ecological and Landscape Management Plan to be provided to manage habitats onsite;
 - vii) an integrated water management plan to include proposed foul and surface water drainage strategies; and
 - viii) leisure facilities and playing pitches as outlined in the Council's current Leisure Study.

7. **This policy will also be used to determine planning applications for large scale major development.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Housing Density

Policy STRAT5: Residential Densities

1. **Proposals for major residential development must achieve the following minimum net densities based on their location in the District:**

Location	Minimum net density Dwellings per hectare
Major centres and sustainable transport hubs	
Didcot	70
Oxford	70
Reading	70
Market towns	
Henley-on-Thames	50
Thame	50
Wallingford	50
Larger villages*	45
Smaller villages*	40
Other locations *	35
Strategic Allocations	
Grenoble Road (STRAT11) and Northfield (STRAT12)	70
North of Bayswater Brook (STRAT13)	45
Berinsfield (STRAT10)	45
Chalgrove (STRAT7)	45
Culham (STRAT9)	45
Wheatley (STRAT14)	45

*See Settlement Hierarchy Appendix 7

2. **Where major development sites are subdivided to create separate development schemes, the site will be considered comprehensively, as a whole, and the Council will seek the appropriate density to be achieved across the entire site.**
3. **Proposals that do not meet these density standards will only be permitted where justified****

4. Proposals for minor residential development must demonstrate how they have achieved an efficient use of land.

**** Where policies in this Plan relating to habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176 of the NPPF) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63 of the NPPF); and areas at risk of flooding provide a clear reason for reducing density thresholds.**

- 4.52 The NPPF requires consideration of how to efficiently use available land for housing in the District. The previous Core Strategy density policy aimed to achieve a net density of 25 dwellings per hectare. The Council has undertaken research in support of this Local Plan which indicates that this is likely to be an ineffective use of land, especially in many of our larger settlements.
- 4.53 The research has demonstrated that the Local Plan should be requiring higher densities in South Oxfordshire. The benefits of doing so include maximising the commercial viability of existing services and facilities by concentrating more people within walking distance of them, using less available land for development, encouraging the development of smaller (1 and 2-bedroom properties) which are needed in the District, and resulting in longer term energy efficiencies.
- 4.54 In the Council's housing topic paper, it sets out in detail how the Council has arrived at the density policy above. The approach supports that set out in the NPPF, in that the Policy concentrates higher densities where there are sustainable transport opportunities – including rail and buses, but also walking and cycling (meaning close to existing services, facilities, and employment opportunities). As such, Didcot, Oxford and Reading are a focus for higher densities. The policy then cascaded this approach to apply an appropriate increase of density based on the Council's settlement hierarchy.
- 4.55 The higher densities proposed can be achieved with a built form that is consistent with the settlement it adjoins; even at the higher end at 70 dwellings per hectare a development of entirely three-bedroom houses with off-street parking is achievable.
- 4.56 These densities have already been achieved, or exceeded, in the settlements that the relevant density threshold applies to.

Green Belt

4.57 In 1992 the Central Oxfordshire Local Plan defined the boundaries of the Green Belt within South Oxfordshire.

4.58 The five purposes of the Green Belt are to:

- check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (such as Oxford);
- assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.59 The plan proposes alterations to the Green Belt to accommodate our strategic allocations at Culham, Berinsfield, Grenoble Road, Northfield and Land North of Bayswater Brook, Wheatley. These proposals are included at Appendix 4. The individual sections within the plan which are relevant to each of these strategic allocations, provide specific detail on the approach for its release.

4.60 The Local Plan gives substantial weight to protecting the Green Belt when considering any planning application. Only appropriate development will be permitted in the Green Belt in accordance with national planning policy; inappropriate development will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

The Local Plan gives substantial weight to protecting the Green Belt when considering any planning application

Policy STRAT6: Green Belt

1. **To ensure the Green Belt continues to serve its key functions, it will be protected from harmful development. Within its boundaries, development will be restricted to those limited types of development which are deemed appropriate by the NPPF, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.**
3. **The Green Belt boundary has been altered to accommodate strategic allocations at STRAT8, STRAT9, STRAT10, STRAT11, STRAT12, STRAT13 and STRAT14. The boundaries of the reviewed Green Belt are identified on the proposed changes to the Green Belt boundary maps (see Appendix 4).**

- 4. Detailed amendments to the Green Belt made by the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in compliance with the requirements of the NPPF and the need identified within the Local Plan.**
- 5. Where land is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt, new development should be carefully designed to minimise visual impact.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 and 7.

Land at Chalgrove Airfield

4.61 Chalgrove Airfield is a former Second World War airfield located directly north of the village of Chalgrove, north east of the B480, approximately 11 miles to the east of central Oxford and approximately 5 miles south of junction 7 of the M40 motorway.

4.62 The airfield opened in 1943 and was closed in July 1946 when it was leased to the Martin-Baker company for development and testing of aircraft ejection seats. Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited ("Martin-Baker") undertake the development and testing of aircraft ejection equipment and the operation of a pyrotechnic facility at Chalgrove Airfield and also use the runway at Chalgrove for the landing and take-off of its own aircraft as well as the aircraft of customers. The site contains three runways and a perimeter track surrounded by security fencing, with managed grass across the rest of the site. Buildings, including the war-time t-2 hangers, are located to the east of the site. The site is currently owned by Homes England, but leased and used by Martin-Baker Ltd. Chalgrove Airfield has a CAA Ordinary Licence (number P683) that allows flights for the public transport of passengers or for flying instruction as authorised by the licensee (Martinbaker (engineering) Limited). The site of the Monument Industrial estate to the southeast of the airfield was once part of the airfield. The Local Plan safeguards land for Martin-baker's continued operations and it supports opportunities for increased employment at Monument Business Park.

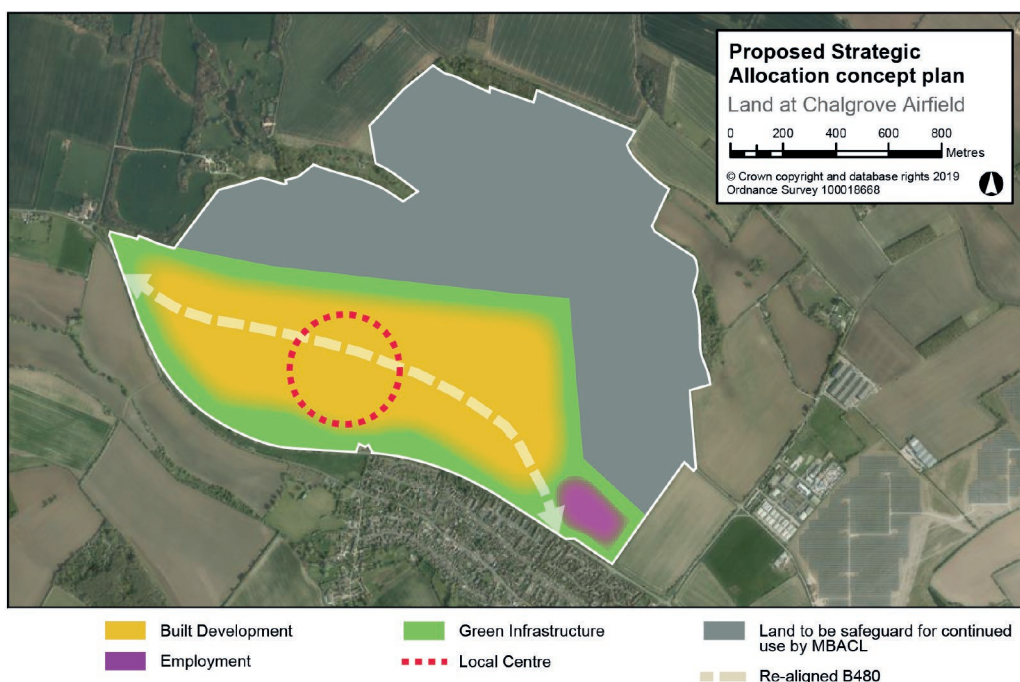
4.63 RAF Benson were consulted on the disposal of the airfield site and its transfer from the Ministry of Defence to Homes England. The MoD has confirmed that it has not held flying or landing rights since Martin Baker's occupation of the

site. Any existing arrangements has been agreed between RAF Benson and the tenants Martin-Baker, not the landowners. It has also stated that its disposal would not have proceeded if operations at Benson were impacted.

- 4.64 Homes England, as land owner, had been working with their tenant Martinbaker aircraft Company Limited (MbaCL) to bring forward proposals for development. Homes England has confirmed that they Homes England will continue to try to work with Martin-Baker to agree terms to facilitate the development. In the event that this continues to be unsuccessful, they will seek to use their statutory powers of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to bring this site forward for development. They have advised that their objective is to retain Martin-Baker on site. Martin-Baker have advised that they will resist Chalgrove Airfield being allocated as a strategic housing site and will resist any use of compulsory purchase.
- 4.65 It is recognised that there exists uncertainty of this site and the outcome of a CPO. The housing trajectory clarifies that the Plan is not reliant on development coming forward on this site in the first five years of the Plan period and indeed, no completions have been identified on the site until 2026/2027 at the earliest. The future of this site and the allocation will be monitored, and if circumstances change the allocation can be revisited through the first review of the Local Plan.
- 4.66 The airfield is flat and largely free from constraints. The site is predominately “previously developed land”. There are no known archaeological or ecological constraints. “Chalgrove Field 1643”, a registered historic battlefield, is located adjacent to the site to the east. The Martin-Baker facility is located on part of this historic battlefield. Detailed heritage and archaeological surveys need to be undertaken in line with Policy STRAT4. These must make a full record of the significance of heritage assets, demonstrate how adverse impacts will be avoided, and they should maximise opportunities for increasing understanding and education.
- 4.67 The site is not located within or adjoining an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) or Air Quality Monitoring Area. However, the neighbouring settlement of Watlington approximately 3.2 miles east along the B480 has an Air Quality Management Area located around its centre. Additionally, the nearby settlements of Stadhampton which is situated to the west of the site along the B480 toward Oxford and Little Milton to the north east of the site along the A329 on the route towards M40/A40 are subject to air quality monitoring. An Air Quality Screening Assessment is to be undertaken in line with Policy STRAT4 and demonstrate how adverse impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

We will support the delivery of a sustainable community with appropriate infrastructure...

4.68 The site is located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3, however, there are water courses in the area and 'run off' from the airfield is known to be a local issue. The site is also outside the AONB and the Green Belt and is centrally placed in South Oxfordshire. We will support the delivery of a sustainable community with appropriate infrastructure, a range of services and facilities including employment, schools and retail alongside integrated green infrastructure and leisure opportunities.



Policy STRAT7: Land at Chalgrove Airfield

Site area: 255 hectares

1. Land within the strategic allocation at Chalgrove Airfield will be developed to deliver approximately 3,000 new homes with at least 2025 to be delivered within the plan period, 5 hectares of employment land, 3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and supporting services and facilities.
2. Proposals to develop Chalgrove Airfield will be expected to deliver:
 - i) land safeguarded for the future operations of Martin-Baker to include a re-aligned runway to be designed in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) standards;
 - ii) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;

- iii) development densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5;
- iv) a net increase of employment land of 5ha required to be delivered during the plan period on a dedicated employment site located where it relates well to and supports the operations at Monument Business Park;
- v) the required pitches for Gypsies and Travellers to be incorporated in the site masterplan and be appropriately located in line with Policy H14 and be delivered during the plan period;
- vi) sufficient additional education capacity, likely to be two 2 form entry primary schools including early years provision (each 2.22ha), one new 8 form entry secondary school with sixth form (10.55ha) which incorporates a relocation for Icknield school from Watlington and off-site contributions to Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- vii) sufficient health care facilities on site or provision of off-site contributions to serve the existing and future demand in this area, in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- viii) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;
- ix) to deliver all necessary transport infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:
 - a. re-alignment of the B480 through the site;
 - b. improvements to highway infrastructure through direct mitigation or significant contributions to new or improved roads, such as a bypass or edge road, including sustainable transport improvements, and where appropriate in association with relevant Neighbourhood Development Plans and any wider County Council highway infrastructure strategy, around, but not limited to Benson, Stadhampton Chiselhampton and Watlington, including highway intervention measures to mitigate additional impacts, both transport and environmental (including air quality), in Cuxham, Chiselhampton, Little Milton, Shirburn and other settlements where justified. In particular, land will need to be identified and secured for delivery for the proposed route of the Chiselhampton, Stadhampton and Cuxham bypasses, as supported by more detailed evidence as it comes forward;
 - c. improvements to the Public Transport network through significant contributions to new or improved services

- to include but not limited to increased frequency on the Chalgrove to Oxford bus route of up to 4 buses per hour to be supported by highway improvements on the B480 corridor, and support for an east west bus service linking Chalgrove to Didcot (and where appropriate other significant growth areas) with a target frequency of 2 buses per hour;
 - d. encourages cycling and walking and provides links through the site and to adjacent employment and into the village of Chalgrove;
 - x) an integrated network of green infrastructure can be provided that both links wildlife habitats and enhances ecologically important habitats and open space provision as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - xi) a scheme that delivers specific mitigation and management of surface water and runoff for the benefit of the existing village of Chalgrove;
 - xii) mitigation of potential impact on residential amenity associated with the continued use of part of the site as an airfield including but not limited to noise pollution.
- 3. The proposed development at Chalgrove Airfield will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
 - i) high-quality development that is integrated and relates closely to the existing settlement of Chalgrove;
 - ii) regard to the continued safe use of the airfield and considers how the site layout and design can mitigate any potential impacts associated with the continued use of the re-aligned runway;
 - iii) safe access and egress with regard to the existing road network and proposed development in close proximity to the site;
 - iv) long distance views from the AONB have been considered;
 - v) maximises residential density in and around the new 'Local Centre'
 - vi) respects the setting of the Listed Buildings and the Registered Battlefield (Battle of Chalgrove 1643).

- 4. The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure needs to be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Land at Culham Science Centre

4.69 Culham Science Centre (CSC) is owned by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) and is located within 'Science Vale'. The site hosts the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy which includes the Joint European Torus (JET) project. It is the leading UK centre for fusion research and technology and is of international importance. The site also hosts a number of related businesses. The UKAEA aims to redevelop the CSC buildings within the next five years as the current stock is outdated. The Government is committed to this world renowned technology innovation enclave with high levels of investment planned. It has recently been announced that there will be Government investment of almost £100m to CSC for fusion research to create two new Centres of Excellence. CSC cannot expand without necessary infrastructure, and this infrastructure is reliant on housing delivery at Culham to part fund the Culham river crossing and Clifton Hampden Bypass.

4.70 The Council recognizes the key role of the CSC site and support and encourage its redevelopment. The site is proposed to be inset from the Green Belt. A masterplan should be prepared and agreed with the Local Planning Authority that will consider the future of the whole site. This approach to Culham is consistent with the objective to increase the number of high quality jobs in the district.

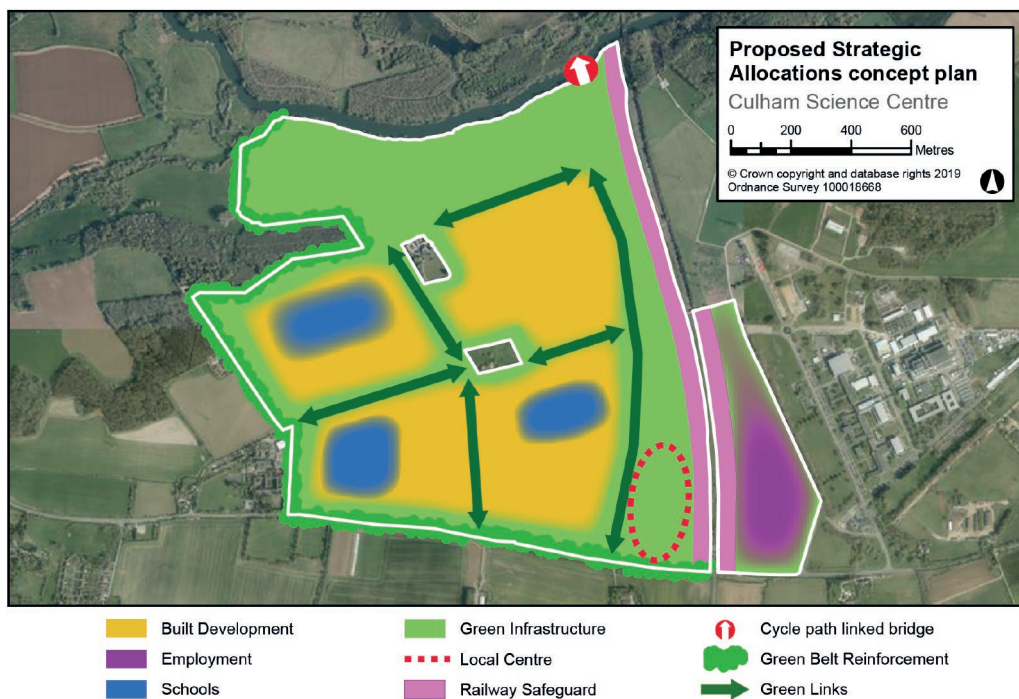
4.71 The Council will continue to support the redevelopment and intensification of the Culham Science Centre for research and science based business. At the adjacent 'No. 1 site' and land west of the railway we will plan for a mixed use development including the retention of employment land, but with improved premises, comprehensively across the allocated site and Culham Science Centre. This provides an opportunity to provide significant development in a sustainable location. The Local Plan proposes development here that will have access to employment opportunities as well as public transport at the railway station. This will be a community within Science Vale that can make

The Local Plan proposes development here that will have access to employment opportunities as well as public transport at the railway station

the most of advancing technologies such as clean heat and power generation and autonomous vehicles. This development will include a variety of services and facilities to support a new community including schools, health care and retail. Development in this location will also help enable much needed road infrastructure in the area.

- 4.72 The Local Plan proposes to inset Culham Science Centre and land adjacent to it from the Green Belt. The site is at the outer edge of the Green Belt. This location is also at a distance from the special historic setting of the City of Oxford and does not make a significant contribution towards the purposes of including land in the Green Belt to check the unrestricted sprawl of Oxford City. The exceptional circumstances justifying a release of the Green Belt through the Local Plan in this area are:
- The additional land provides an opportunity to deliver housing adjacent to one of the major employers in southern Oxfordshire
 - Development in this location is at the heart of Science Vale and supports the delivery of much needed significant strategic infrastructure.
- 4.73 The Council supports delivery of a new Thames crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town and the Clifton Hampden by-pass, as identified in Policy TRANS1b. This crossing has strategic transport benefits and is required to support development proposed in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan, as well as development allocated in the Vale Local Plan Part 1 and development proposed in the emerging Vale Local Plan Part 2. It is also part of a package of transport infrastructure in this area as identified in the Science Vale Area Transport Strategy in the Oxfordshire Transport Plan, which includes the Clifton Hampden Bypass and the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road.
- 4.74 The timing of delivery of this infrastructure linked to proposed new development is complex, particularly given that funding for this package is expected to come from a variety of sources including developer funding, Garden Town and other government funds not yet confirmed. There is a significant amount of further detailed transport modelling and transport assessment work to support development and delivery of these schemes, including the Culham Crossing. This work, including development of a more detailed Micro-simulation transport model for Didcot Garden Town, is being progressed and funded in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse, and will give an understanding in more detail of the impact and phasing of homes and jobs in the area linked to required infrastructure. This evidence will be used alongside other evidence, including the outputs of Transport Assessments from the proposed new development, to inform any limitations on the level of homes at the site linked to infrastructure funding to be set down at planning application stage.

4.75 The STRAT9 site allocation is located adjacent to the Culham Brake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at the north-west corner of the site. The Culham Brake SSSI is protected due to its national importance as one of the largest populations of the summer snowflake *leucojum aestivum*. High level assessments suggest that strategic development at Culham is unlikely to have any negative hydrological effect on the Culham Brake SSSI, as the SSSI is watered directly by the River Thames. Appropriate consideration should be given to the SSSI in developing detailed proposals for this site which should be in compliance with the concept plan below.



Policy STRAT8: Culham Science Centre

Site area: 73 hectares

1. Proposals for the redevelopment and intensification of the Culham Science Centre will be supported where this does not have an unacceptable visual impact, particularly on the openness of the surrounding Green Belt and the Registered Parkland associated with Nuneham House.
2. In combination with the adjacent strategic allocation (Policy STRAT9) this site will deliver at least a net increase in employment land of 7.3 hectares (with the existing 10 hectares of the No.1 site)

retained but redistributed across the two strategic allocations). The exact siting and phasing of the employment development must be agreed through the master planning and subsequent planning application process.

3. Opportunities that support job growth and appropriate diversification or enterprise “clustering” will be supported to complement the wider development proposed in the area. Working proactively with the UK Atomic Energy Authority and development partners a masterplan for the site that facilitates this growth must be prepared and agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
4. The Culham Science Centre is to be removed from the Green Belt and inset as shown on the Green Belt Inset Plan (Appendix 4) to enable this development to be brought forward.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1 & 3.

Policy STRAT9: Land Adjacent to Culham Science Centre

Site Area : 220 hectares

1. Land within the strategic allocation adjacent to Culham Science Centre, will be developed to deliver approximately 3,500 new homes, with approximately 1,850 homes within the plan period, a net increase of 7.3 hectares of employment land in combination with the adjacent Science Centre, 3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and supporting services and facilities.
2. The proposed development at Culham will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan, taking into consideration this policy’s concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration with and agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
3. Proposals to develop Culham will be expected to deliver:
 - i) in combination with the adjacent Science Centre a net increase of employment land of at least 7.3 hectares (with the existing 10 hectares of the No.1 site retained but redistributed across

- the two strategic allocations). The exact siting and phasing of the employment development will be agreed through the planning application process;
- ii) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;
 - iii) development densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5;
 - iv) sufficient additional education capacity, likely to be a total of two new 2 form entry primary schools and one new 8 form entry secondary school with sixth form on site and appropriate contributions towards Special Education Needs (SEN);
 - v) sufficient health care capacity, likely to be a total of one new GP surgery on site to serve existing and future demand in this area in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - vi) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;
 - vii) all necessary transport infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:
 - a. new junctions onto the A405 and significant contributions towards the Clifton Hampden bypass, the Thames road crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town, and upgrading the A4074/B4015 junction at Golden Balls;
 - b. provide for excellent public transport facilities including, but not limited to, new and improvements to existing cycle and footpaths including contributions for a 'Cycle Premium Route' is proposed between Didcot and Culham; provision of a new cycle bridge and associated connectivity and paths across the River Thames to connect appropriately with Abingdon on Thames to the north of the site; bus improvements including provision of a scheduled bus service, with a minimum of two buses per hour between Berinsfield, Culham and Abingdon, with options to extend or vary services to Chalgrove and Didcot;
 - c. contributions to Culham station improvements including longer platforms, public realm and new station building; potentially car parking;
 - viii) the provision of appropriate communal parks and gardens and amenity greenspace allotments, children's playspace and open space in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4. The proposed development at Culham will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
 - i) a layout that recognises plans for improvements to Culham railway station and any associated future rail capacity upgrades, recognising its importance and potential to support growth and development at the adjacent Science Centre;
 - ii) a layout that recognises the overhead power lines on the site and avoids the built form beneath these where possible;
 - iii) appropriate landscaping and an integrated network of green infrastructure throughout the site and in particular along the boundaries of the strategic allocation, which would allow limited through views, creating a permanent defensible edge to protect the Oxford Green Belt. This shall be based on a landscape character, including historic landscape characterisation, that preserve and enhance the surrounding Green Belt Way and River Thames long distance footpaths;
 - iv) a layout and form that respects the setting of the heritage assets within and beyond the site; in particular the Listed buildings and structures (the Culham railway station and rail bridges and “Schola Europaea”) and the registered Park and Garden associated with Nuneham House;
 - v) a layout that has remains undeveloped to the northern border of the site and that should be utilised for flood plain storage, protecting the physical boundary features on the site;
 - vi) a layout that takes into account the mineral safeguarding area to the north of the site and the amenity of future residents
 - vii) a layout and appropriate mitigation measures that protect Culham Brake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is adjacent to the north-west corner of the site, the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority sites to the north of Culham, and that within the Culham Science Centre and numerous BAP priority habitats, including the BAP priority habitat south of Culham Railway station
5. Archaeological evaluation will need to be undertaken ahead of the determination of any planning application in order to assess the significance of deposits in line with the NPPF 2018. A scheme of

appropriate mitigation will be required following this evaluation including the physical preservation of significant archaeological features and their setting where appropriate.

- 6. The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure needs to be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed, (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority.**
- 7. Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre is to be removed from the Green Belt and inset as shown on the Green Belt inset plan (Appendix 4) to enable this development to be brought forward.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 5 & 6.

Land at Berinsfield

- 4.76 The village of Berinsfield is currently ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt. The Local Plan proposes to inset the built up area of the village and an area of greenfield land to the east of the village from the Green Belt.
- 4.77 Delivering growth and regeneration at Berinsfield promotes a sustainable pattern of development that will address key issues currently facing the village. Development at Berinsfield will deliver the necessary and specific benefits that cannot be achieved by developing elsewhere in the district. The location is also at a distance from the special historic setting of Oxford and does not make a significant contribution towards the purposes of including land in the Green Belt to check the unrestricted sprawl of Oxford.
- 4.78 In April 2016, the Council confirmed the Community Investment Scheme for Berinsfield. This initiative identified the challenges that the village is currently facing and set out a range of objectives intended to address these challenges. In particular, it recognised that the village is currently home to a number of community facilities that are of real importance to local residents. However, the long-term sustainability of many of these facilities is not assured and, without significant investment, could be lost from the village. This would have adverse effects on a population which is already affected by relatively high levels of deprivation compared to the rest of the district.

For Oxfordshire, the village scores highly on the indices of deprivation, particularly in the area of barriers to housing and services; education, skills and training; employment; income; adult skills; children and young people; and the proximity of local services

In order to deliver the regeneration package the plan needs to allow for a sufficient number of homes to be built at the village

4.79 Given this, the exceptional circumstances for releasing land from the Green Belt at Berinsfield are as follows:

- the tenure mix of housing in Berinsfield is more unbalanced than in other parts of the district, with higher levels of social rent. Releasing land for development will help to rebalance the mix as well as provide further opportunities for employment and service provision; and
- for Oxfordshire, the village scores highly on the indices of deprivation, particularly in the area of barriers to housing and services; education, skills and training; employment; income; adult skills; children and young people; and the proximity of local services. Development in this specific location will help to address these matters.

4.80 The expansion of Berinsfield is considered acceptable only if it will lead directly to the implementation of a masterplan for the regeneration of the village and the funding of the entire cost of the regeneration package identified by the Council through the Community Investment Scheme, including the requirements set out in Policy STRAT10. The mix of housing should reflect the regeneration objectives of Berinsfield taking account of site specific evidence. The regeneration of Berinsfield has strong community support and this policy seeks to achieve a unique solution which could not otherwise be realised.

4.81 The Council has undertaken a number of studies which indicate that Berinsfield requires investment and regeneration. The Council will support this by further work to explore detailed solutions for the regeneration of Berinsfield in accordance with Policy STRAT10. This will identify the form that development should take in order to deliver the regeneration package identified.

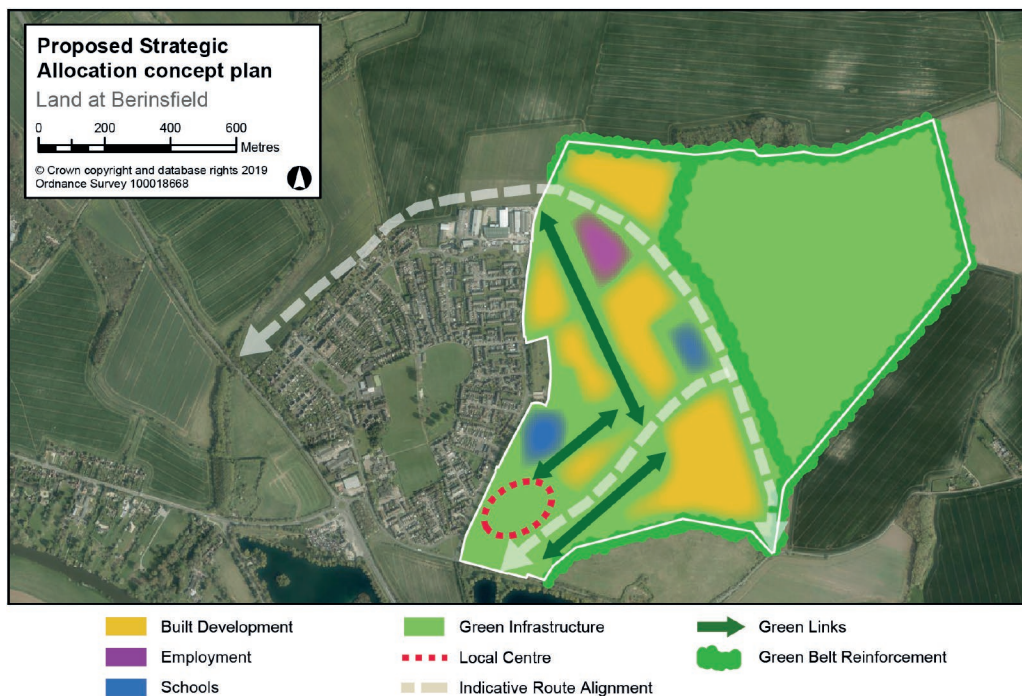
4.82 The Council's most recent evidence suggests that the regeneration will need to include the following:

- new premises for Berinsfield children's centre;
- new and expanded premises for Abbey Woods Academy;
- new premises for the Adult Learning centre;
- new and expanded premises for a health centre;
- new premises for the Abbey Sports centre, including a replacement swimming pool of regulation length and a four-court (34.5m x 20m) sports hall; and
- a 'community Hub' building – a flexible community space that enables the co-location of a range of different users and groups

4.83 The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (Adopted 2012) explained the exceptional circumstances warranting a review of the Green Belt boundary at Berinsfield. These were supported by the Inspector at its examination. In line with the exceptional circumstances warranting the review, the examining Inspector

considered that the review of the Green Belt boundary at Berinsfield should not be confined to drawing a tight boundary around the built up area.

- 4.84 In order to deliver the regeneration package the plan needs to allow for a sufficient number of homes to be built at the village. The development will also need to make sure it can mitigate its impact on the infrastructure network and will need to make contributions to some expensive projects, including the new River Thames bridge at Culham, the Clifton Hampden Bypass, improvements to Golden Balls roundabout and a new secondary school on the strategic allocation at Culham.
- 4.85 Through the Council's work with the community, the viability assessments and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, it has been calculated that the number of homes that we need to achieve this regeneration to be around 1,700 new homes. This would be inappropriate in one of the larger villages and could give rise to more Green Belt harm as it could result in fewer open gaps between buildings and taller structures.
- 4.86 The proposed strategic allocation therefore extends to around 130 hectares. Not all of this land will be needed for development. As part of the cooperative master-planning process the proposals will need to respond to particular constraints and areas where development would, and would not, be appropriately located, would provide green infrastructure, including planting to permanently contain and redefine the settlement edge.
- 4.87 Policy STRAT10 requires any planning application to be supported by a comprehensive masterplan for the whole village. The masterplan must include extremely sensitive design; landscape planting and the maintenance of key views to important landmarks such as the Chiltern Hills and the Wittenham Clumps to mitigate any Green Belt harm as best as is possible.
- 4.88 Given that the existing village of Berinsfield will be inset from the Green Belt, the Council also propose to allocate the important open space within the centre of the village as Local Green Space with the support of the local community.
- 4.89 In addition to the regeneration package to be delivered at Berinsfield, the development will also be expected to contribute towards off-site infrastructure to mitigate the development, such as a contribution towards road infrastructure (such as the new Culham river crossing, the Clifton Hampden bypass and upgrades to the Golden Balls roundabout) and a contribution towards a new secondary school. These are set out in the South Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan.



Policy STRAT10: Land at Berinsfield

1. Land within the strategic allocation at Berinsfield, will be developed to provide around 1,700 new homes, with 1,600 expected within the plan period, around 5 hectares of employment land and supporting services and facilities. The number of new homes should demonstrably support the regeneration of Berinsfield and the delivery of the necessary social infrastructure.
2. The proposals to develop land at Berinsfield will be expected to deliver:
 - i) the entire cost of the necessary regeneration package, including social, environmental, recreation, housing and public services infrastructure;
 - ii) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;
 - iii) development densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5 ;
 - iv) provide sufficient education capacity, likely to be a total of two primary schools on site and a contribution to a new secondary school and Special Education Needs (SEN);
 - v) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on

- the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;
- vi) all necessary transport infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:
 - a. a new junction and access onto the A4074,
 - b. upgrades to the existing A4074/A415 junction,
 - c. contributions towards upgrading the A4074/B4015 junction at Golden Balls, the Clifton Hampden bypass, and the Thames road crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town
 - vii) provide an integrated network of green infrastructure that links locally important wildlife sites and the enhancement of ecologically important habitats including areas of woodland and open space provision as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - viii) be accompanied by a minerals assessment that considers if minerals can be extracted and used on site in accordance with Policy EP5; and
 - ix) be accompanied by an archaeological assessment that considers the areas of archaeological constraint in accordance with Policy ENV9.
3. The proposed development at Berinsfield will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
- i) appropriate landscaping throughout the site, including a new permanent defensible landscaped edge to protect the Oxford Green Belt, while still maintaining a sense of permanent openness between Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard, and maintaining key views to the Chiltern Hills and Wittenham Clumps;
 - ii) no greater land-take of greenfield land than is necessary to deliver the required regeneration and other relevant policy requirements. Any part of the developable greenfield area that is not required for housing or related infrastructure should provide green infrastructure including planting to contain the settlement edge

4. **The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of the housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure needs to be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority.**
5. **Land at Berinsfield is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and inset as a settlement as shown on the Green Belt Inset Plan (Appendix 4) and specifically to enable this development to be brought forward.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 5 & 6.

Policy STRAT10i: Berinsfield Local Green Space

1. **Land identified in Appendix 2, figure (ii), at the centre of Berinsfield is allocated as Local Green Space.**

Grenoble Road

4.90 Land to the south of Grenoble Road is adjacent to the south of Oxford City and is within the Green Belt. It is bordered on its northern edge by the Oxford Science Park, a caravan park, a Sewage Treatment Works, the Kassam Stadium an entertainment area, and the Greater Leys neighbourhood. The site is entirely greenfield land and is comprised of several fields with tree lines and hedgerows defining most of its boundaries, with the exception of the A4074 on its western edge, and an electricity substation on its eastern edge.

4.91 An urban extension to the southern edge of Oxford will promote a sustainable form of development that will in part help the city in addressing its housing commitments of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. Development at Grenoble Road will provide specific benefits that would not be achievable elsewhere in the district; notably the provision of a new park and ride site to the south of Oxford, the provision of affordable housing, an extension to the South Oxford Science Park and the ability to contribute to the regeneration of Greater Leys.

Furthermore, the site would also benefit from the potential re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line at the Oxford Science Park.

4.92 There are several Green Belt studies that have assessed the contribution of the land at Grenoble Road makes to the Green Belt:

- South Oxfordshire Green Belt Study (September 2015) – Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd and Terra Firma Consultancy
- Oxford Green Belt Study (October 2015) – Land Use Consultancy
- South Oxfordshire Strategic Sites Green Belt Study (November 2018) – Land Use Consultancy

4.93 The Terra Firma Report (September 2015) identified that Grenoble Road currently provides a strong sense of containment for the city. The study also concluded that the site plays an important role in separating Oxford from Garsington, with some intervisibility between the site and Garsington, Marsh Baldon and Toot Baldon. The study recommended that a small parcel of land to the southwest of the caravan park is inset from the Green Belt.

4.94 The Oxford Green Belt Study (LUC-October 2015) assessed the site as part of the wider parcel of OX15. It noted significant urbanising influences within the site such as the sewage treatment works, the caravan park, the substation and pylons crossing the site. The study concluded that the site had a limited relationship with the historic areas of Oxford.

4.95 The South Oxfordshire Strategic Sites Green Belt Study (November 2018) considered that the development of Grenoble Road would constitute urban sprawl, but the higher ground to the south provides containment that would limit the extent of this sprawl. Allocating the site would result in moderate harm to the Green Belt

4.96 There will be some Green belt harm from releasing this site for development. However, the exceptional circumstances for releasing this land justify this harm. These include: (a) the provision of a new park and ride site to the south of Oxford; (b) an opportunity to provide an extension to the South Oxford Science Park, and (c) the ability to contribute to the regeneration of Greater Leys. Policy Strat11 includes mitigation measures to require the creation of the site and surrounding villages.

4.97 In addition to its Green Belt designation, the site has a number of other challenges that development would need to address. The Sewage Treatment Works generates a significant odour issue on the site. In its current form it would not be acceptable to locate new homes near the works. An odour study must be completed and submitted prior to the commencement of

The study concluded that the site had a limited relationship with the historic areas of Oxford.

development, with appropriate mitigation measures being put in place before the occupation of any residential units.

- 4.98 The site is also adjacent to Greater Leys, one of the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire. Part of the justification for releasing this site from the Green Belt is that it can support the regeneration of this area through providing new housing stock, community facilities, employment and training opportunities and excellent sustainable transport links. The development is considered acceptable only if it will lead directly to the implementation of a masterplan for the regeneration of the Greater Leys area.
- 4.99 The site will also provide for a 9.7 hectare extension to the South Oxford Science Park to support the economic growth of the knowledge industry to the south of the city along the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine.
- 4.100 Policy STRAT11 makes provision for a new Park and Ride facility on the western edge of the site as identified by the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4. It is important that the site takes advantage of this sustainable transport hub but doesn't encourage residents to drive from one end of the site to the other to catch the bus.
- 4.101 The site must mitigate its impact on local infrastructure and deliver the requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.



Policy STRAT11: Land south of Grenoble Road

Site area: 153 hectares

1. Land within the strategic allocation at Grenoble Road will be developed to deliver approximately 3000 new homes, 1700 within this Plan period, provide approximately 10 hectares of employment land extending the Oxford Science Park, a Park and Ride site adjacent to the A4074 and supporting services and facilities.
2. Proposals to develop land south of Grenoble Road will be expected to deliver:
 - i) within the safeguard land, a new park and ride facility adjacent to the A4074 as shown in Appendix 5;
 - ii) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;
 - iii) development densities in accordance with STRAT5;
 - iv) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;
 - v) a high-quality development that is fully integrated and relates closely to the existing settlement of Blackbird Leys;
 - vi) improvement of existing community facilities and services at Blackbird Leys;
 - vii) sufficient education capacity, likely to be on-site primary school provision of two 2-form entry primary schools, 10.55 hectares for a secondary school with an initial capacity of 600 students and this should have the capability to expand to meet future needs and appropriate contributions towards Special Education Needs (SEN);
 - viii) sufficient contributions towards enabling primary healthcare services to address patient growth associated with the development, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - ix) All necessary transport infrastructure improvements through direct mitigation or contributions to new and improved infrastructure, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:
 - a. cycling and walking infrastructure network on and off site ensuring the site is well connected to Oxford City and appropriate surrounding villages;

- b. improvements to bus services along the A4074 and B480 corridors to Oxford City and nearby villages and associated infrastructure;
 - x) open space provision as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - xi) be supported by an Air Quality Screening Assessment and identify appropriate mitigation in relation to potential impacts on the Oxford AQMA;
 - xii) be accompanied by a comprehensive odour assessment, the methodology of which will be agreed by the Local Planning Authority, that identifies the necessary mitigation required to offset the odour impact of the sewage treatment works. This will need to be submitted and agreed before development can commence, and the mitigation measures implemented before any residential units are occupied; and
 - xiii) extend the woodland at Sandford Brake Sub Station to ensure a buffer between the development and the Sub Station is provided.
- 3. The proposed development at Grenoble Road will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan for the site and a strategy for the regeneration of Greater Leys, taking into account the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
 - i) the provision of a network of green infrastructure providing habitat connections which integrates and improves existing hedgerows on the site;
 - ii) a landscaped urban edge can be created to the south of the site to provide a transition into the wider landscape through woodland planting. The landscape planting should create a strong and defensible edge to Oxford, and create a permanent sense of openness between the site and Nuneham Courtenay, Marsh Baldon, Toot Baldon and Garsington;
 - iii) a layout that recognises the overhead power lines on the site and minimises the location of the built form beneath these;
 - iv) it can maximise densities along key transport corridors on the site.
- 4. The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure needs to

be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan, including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority.

Northfield

- 4.102 The site at Northfield is located on the edge of Oxford city's administrative boundary and is, in its entirety, within the Oxford Green belt. The site is bounded in the north west by the Unipart factory and other key employment sites within the city, the B480 to the west, and Northfield Brook/agricultural land to the south and east. The site also relates well to other key business areas in Oxford city, including Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park. Furthermore, the site relates well with the strategic allocation within this Plan at Grenoble Road.
- 4.103 An urban extension on the southern edge of Oxford will promote a sustainable form of development that will in part, assist the city in addressing its housing commitments of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal.
- 4.104 As stated above, the site is entirely within the Oxford Green Belt. The Local Plan therefore proposes to inset this site from the Green Belt. The site specific exceptional circumstances for doing this are:
- The development of this site will help to provide for Oxford City's unmet housing need, including affordable housing need, adjacent to and related to where that need arises.
- 4.105 Alongside the Green Belt designation on the site, there are also other constraints that development would be required to address. The southern part of the site contains an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3, with Hollow Brook and Northfield Brook running through this area. Furthermore, there is an increase in landscape sensitivity to the east of the site, which has a stronger relationship with the surrounding landscape. A line of electricity pylons runs across the eastern edge of the site. Development will have to be sensitively designed to address these constraints. In line with the Concept Plan below.
- 4.106 The development would be required to mitigate its impact on the local infrastructure as per the policy requirements below. Developer funding would be expected to contribute towards enabling primary healthcare services to deal with patient growth associated with development and local upgrades to the existing water network and water supply infrastructure.



Policy STRAT12: Land at Northfield

Site area: 68 hectares

1. Land within the strategic allocation at Northfield will be developed to deliver approximately 1,800 new homes and supporting services and facilities within the plan period.
2. Proposals to develop Northfield will be expected to deliver:
 - i) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;
 - ii) development densities in accordance with of Policy STRAT5;
 - iii) sufficient educational capacity likely to be a new 3-form entry primary school and appropriate contributions towards other or secondary school and Special Education Needs (SEN);
 - iv) sufficient contributions towards enabling primary healthcare services to address patient growth associated with the development, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - v) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;

- vi) all necessary transport improvements through direct mitigation or contributions to new and improved infrastructure, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:
 - a. provision and contribution towards cycling and walking infrastructure network on and off site ensuring the site is well connected to Oxford City and appropriate surrounding villages;
 - b. contributions towards the financial costs of the engineering works to improve the B480 route towards Cowley for buses;
 - c. provision of infrastructure/financial support for Eastern Arc-Culham-Science Vale bus service (assumed access point near Oxford Rd/Watlington Road junction);
 - d. contributions towards improvements to bus services along the B480 corridor and through the site to Oxford City and nearby villages;
 - vii) open space provision as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - viii) appropriate air quality mitigation measures to minimise impacts on the Oxford AQMA as demonstrated through an appropriate Air Quality Screening Assessment;
3. The proposed development at Northfield will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
- i) the delivery of a high-quality development that is fully integrated with its surroundings;
 - ii) appropriate landscape mitigation measures to minimise the visual impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and maintain important views of Oxford City, providing a defensible Green Belt boundary and a strong countryside edge retaining a permanent separation between Oxford and Garsington;
 - iii) provision of a landscape led scheme which integrates a network of green infrastructure with structural landscaping along the north western boundary (Industrial Estate) that integrates and improves existing hedgerows and tree belts on the site;

- iv) **built development within Flood Zone 1 has site specific flood risk mitigation and management including implementation of sustainable surface water drainage measures. This should be informed by including appropriate on-site hydraulic modelling;**
 - v) **it can maximise densities along key transport corridors on the site.**
- 4. The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure needs to be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority;**

Land north of Bayswater Brook

4.107 Land north of Bayswater Brook directly adjoins the eastern boundary of Oxford City. The site is entirely within the Oxford Green Belt. The Local Plan proposes to inset this site from the Green Belt. The exceptional circumstances for doing this are:

- The site's proximity to major employment locations and a wide range of services and facilities means that there is high potential to support travel by walking and cycling;
- The site is well positioned to connect with public transport provision in Oxford City; and
- The development of this site will help to provide for Oxford City's unmet housing need, including affordable housing need, close to where that need arises.

4.108 The western and northern parts of the site are within a highly sensitive landscape, with views to and from Oxford City's historic core, as well as having strong connections with surrounding countryside. The western and northern parts of the site are of particular significance to Oxford's historic setting. Built development should avoid these sensitive areas and should instead be focused on the lower lying ground on the south and east of the site, which has a greater likelihood to accommodate acceptable development in landscape terms, as it is less visible from the wider area and has higher potential for mitigation to be achieved.

- 4.109 Development focused on the lower lying ground on the south and east of the site must be sensitive to the listed buildings within and surrounding the site, including their setting, as well as being sensitive to the site's archaeological potential. Appropriate detailed landscape and visual impact assessments and heritage impact assessments that demonstrate how harm to heritage assets, landscape and Oxford's historic setting will be avoided must be provided as part of any planning application.
- 4.110 A designated Oxford viewcone lies directly to the west of the site. This area is safeguarded for access only and is not proposed to be inset from the Green Belt. Other built development within the Oxford viewcone would harm the rural nature of this historic view. The layout and design of access arrangements in this area should be sensitive to the Oxford viewcone.
- 4.111 Sidlings Copse and College Pond SSSI and Wick Copse Ancient Woodland are located directly to the north of the site. These are fragile sites comprising rare habitats which could suffer under increased visitor pressure. Other potential indirect impacts of development, such as impacts on hydrology and air pollution and nutrient deposition, also need to be considered and managed.
- 4.112 The Bayswater Brook runs along the south of the site. Areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 should be preserved as accessible green space, with built development restricted to Flood Zone 1.
- 4.113 The Bayswater Brook is designated as a Site of Local Importance to Nature Conservation in the Oxford City Local Plan. Existing habitats associated with the brook should be protected and opportunities for enhancement should be pursued. The adjoining Barton Park development proposes a linear park alongside the Bayswater Brook as a buffer between the watercourse and built development. There is an opportunity to mirror this with complementary provision on this site.
- 4.114 Whilst the site directly adjoins Oxford City and is within relatively close proximity to employment locations and a wide range of services and facilities, the A40 is a major physical barrier to connectivity, particularly in terms of walking and cycling. Development would need to provide on-site and off-site pedestrian, cycle and public transport connections to Oxford city centre and other key employment locations (such as the John Radcliffe Hospital and Oxford Science and Business Parks).
- 4.115 Road capacity to the east of Oxford is already under significant pressure, particularly along the A40 and the Headington roundabout. There is currently

Appropriate detailed landscape and visual impact assessments and heritage impact assessments that demonstrate how harm to heritage assets, landscape and Oxford's historic setting will be avoided must be provided as part of any planning application

insufficient road capacity to support new, direct road access between the site and the A40 west of the Barton Park site.

4.116 The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 identified the adjoining area of Barton as being within the 20% most deprived areas in England. Barton is identified as a priority regeneration area in the Oxford City Local Plan. Development at Land North of Bayswater Brook has potential to support regeneration aspirations for Barton by increasing the viability of and contributing to the improvement of existing services and facilities and by providing new accessible services and facilities.

4.117 The site is located in an area of archaeological interest, within an area of a known Roman settlement. Deposits include the line of a possible Roman road as well as a number of possible Roman settlement sites. Land North of Bayswater Brook is also immediately adjacent to the site of Headington Wisk Roman Villa. Any surviving aspects of the Headington Wisk Roman Villa site or related high status Roman settlement could be considered to be of similar significance to a scheduled monument.

4.118 The Grade II* listed Wick Farmhouse Well House is located within the site boundary. This listed building is currently included on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register. Development at Land North of Bayswater Brook provides an opportunity to improve the condition of this listed building.



Policy STRAT13: Land North of Bayswater Brook

Site area: 112ha hectares

- 1. Land within the strategic allocation at Land North of Bayswater Brook will be developed to deliver approximately 1,100 new homes and supporting services and facilities within the plan period.**
- 2. Proposals to develop Land North of Bayswater Brook will be expected to deliver:**
 - i) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;**
 - ii) development densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5;**
 - iii) sufficient educational capacity likely to be a 2-form entry primary school including early years provision, appropriate contributions towards an off-site secondary school and Special Educational Needs (SEN);**
 - iv) sufficient contributions towards enabling primary healthcare services to address patient growth associated with the development, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;**
 - v) provision of convenience floorspace that meets the day-to-day needs of the local community only without impacting on the vitality and viability of existing centres in accordance with Policy TC2 – Retail Hierarchy;**
 - vi) all necessary transport improvements as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:**
 - a. provision of high quality pedestrian, cycle and public transport access and connectivity to Oxford City Centre and other major employment locations, particularly the John Radcliffe Hospital and Oxford Science and Business Parks;**
 - b. provision of sustainable transport connectivity improvements to overcome severance caused by the A40 Oxford Bypass; and**
 - c. provision of all necessary highways infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include a new road access between the site and the A40/ B4150/ Marsh Lane junction, and either a new road link between the site and the A40 between the Thornhill Park and Ride junction and the Church Hill junction for Forest Hill, or significant upgrades to the existing A40 Northern Oxford Bypass road including at the A40/ A4142 Headington**

- Roundabout. If more detailed evidence indicates that the preferred mitigation is a new link road, land will need to be identified and secured for delivery of this in consultation with the land owners and County Council;
- vii) a schedule of works as agreed with the Council for the repair of the Grade II* Wick Farm Wellhouse identified on the 2018 Heritage at Risk. This is to be agreed prior to the determination of an application for development. An application for planning permission must be accompanied by an application for listed building consent for the works to the Wellhouse; and
 - viii) a development that ensures that there will be no demonstrable negative recreational, hydrological or air quality impacts on the Sidlings Copse and College Pond SSSI.
3. The proposed development at Land North of Bayswater Brook will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration this policy's inclusive concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that has been informed by detailed landscape, visual, heritage and ecological impact assessments and demonstrates an appropriate scale, layout and form that:
- i) focuses built development within Flood Zone 1 only, with areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 preserved as accessible green space;
 - ii) respects listed buildings and structures, both within and surrounding the site, and their settings;
 - iii) ensures appropriate highways and sustainable transport access and permeability across the site, including between Bayswater Road and the B4150 Marsh Lane/A40 junction;
 - iv) provides a permanent defensible Green Belt boundary around the allocation and a strong countryside edge;
 - v) retains and incorporates existing hedgerows and tree belts, particularly where this assists with the creation of a new Green Belt boundary;
 - vi) relates to and connects with adjoining built development and development that is planned within Oxford City;
 - vii) respects and avoids harm to Oxford's historic setting;
 - viii) minimises visual impacts on the surrounding countryside;
 - ix) provides a network of green infrastructure that:

- a. retains and incorporates areas of functional flood plain and existing surface water flow paths;
 - b. protects and enhances existing habitats, particularly those associated Sidlings Copse and College Pond SSSI and the Bayswater Brook;
 - c. connects with adjoining green infrastructure within Oxford City;
 - d. retains and incorporates existing public rights of way and supports movement through the site and into adjoining areas by walking and cycling; and
 - e. provides an appropriate buffer to the Oxford viewcone.
4. An archaeological assessment will need to be undertaken before the determination of any planning application for this site. Following this assessment, a scheme of appropriate mitigation should be established, to include the physical preservation of significant archaeological features and their setting where appropriate.
5. The number and phasing of homes to be permitted and the timing of housing delivery linked to the planned infrastructure need to be informed by further evidence as per the requirements of other policies in the plan including Policy TRANS4. This will be agreed (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the relevant statutory authority.

*As per the Historic England Register of At Risk Heritage Assets - <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/50140>

Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.119 Wheatley is the only Larger Village which is inset from the Green Belt where a Neighbourhood Development Plan is being prepared. According to current national planning guidance, a NDP can make detailed amendments to the Green Belt boundary where the Local Planning Authority sets the need.

There are limited opportunities to redevelop existing land within the inset boundary

- 4.120 The inset boundary at Wheatley is drawn tightly around the built edge of development. There are limited opportunities to redevelop existing land within the inset boundary and the removal of Green Belt would enable new development to take place at this village. The Green Belt Study found that the land immediately adjacent to the eastern built up edge of Wheatley has few essential characteristics of the Green Belt.
- 4.121 The exceptional circumstances for the NDP to release the land at Wheatley are as follows:
- to support the Neighbourhood Development Plan and to ensure that future allocations can be made through the NDP;
 - Wheatley is a Larger Village and benefits from a number of services and facilities and represents an appropriate location for accommodating additional development; and
 - the location of this land is recognised to be positioned between existing residential development to the west and industrial buildings to the east and has limited essential characteristics of the Green Belt.

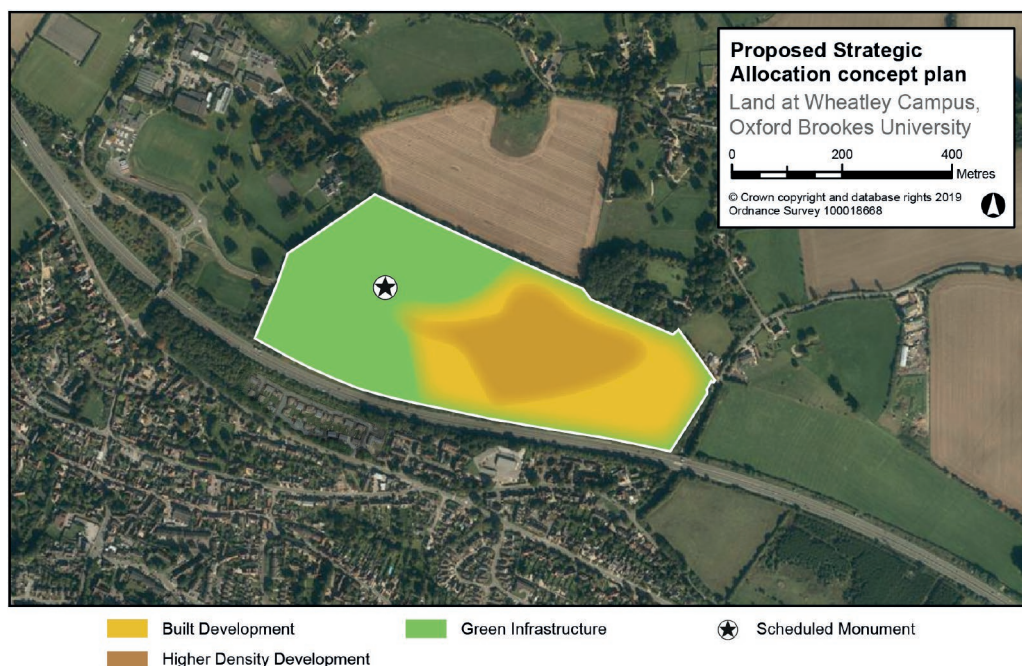
Land at Wheatley Campus

- 4.122 The Local Plan proposes to inset Wheatley Campus from the Green Belt. The site is adjacent to the village of Wheatley which is already largely inset from the Green Belt. The existing development within the site has compromised the site's openness and countryside character, and the site is well contained and too close to Wheatley to play any significant role in the setting or special character of Oxford City. The exceptional circumstances justifying a review of the Green Belt through the Local Plan in this area are:
- There are opportunities for the site to be well connected to surrounding settlements, particularly the major urban area of Oxford City, by public transport and cycling;
 - To inset the site from the Green Belt will enable the most efficient use to be made of a partially previously developed site;
 - There are limited alternatives for accommodating additional development at Wheatley other than through Green Belt release; and
 - The redevelopment of the site will provide new homes, helping to meet identified housing needs, including affordable housing needs.
- 4.123 Additional housing here could help sustain current bus service provision on the A40/Oxford corridor and other village facilities. The A40 is a potential barrier to movement by sustainable modes; there will be a need for good cycle and

walking links to the village centre and primary school to encourage active and healthy travel. Improved cycle links to Oxford City will also be needed to encourage travel to employment, further education and other services by sustainable modes.

- 4.124 The site includes a range of existing buildings situated predominantly on the eastern side, including a 10 storey tower block. There is an opportunity to deliver a more sensitive development that responds positively to the heritage assets nearby and the surrounding countryside.
- 4.125 The western, undeveloped part of the site is particularly sensitive in landscape and heritage terms. There is a scheduled monument within this part of the site. The open parkland is a particularly important part of the setting to surrounding listed buildings, notably the former deer park to Holton Park. There are trees within the site directly connected to its historic parkland use, a high number of which are the subject of a tree preservation order. It is also possible that archaeological deposits may survive within the less disturbed parts of the site. Built development should therefore focus on the less sensitive, eastern part of the site.
- 4.126 The development capacity of the site is constrained by primary education capacity in Wheatley. There is limited potential for primary school provision to be extended at present. Therefore, taking into consideration new homes that are likely to be delivered through the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan, the number of new homes to come forward on the Wheatley Campus site will need to reflect available primary education capacity.
- 4.127 This site includes a number of playing pitches and this level of provision should be maintained and a wider community use should be explored through any planning application.
- 4.128 There is a need for smaller scale accessible green space (between 2 and 20 hectares) in the north of Wheatley. Development at the Wheatley Campus site provides an opportunity to deliver new smaller scale accessible green space alongside new homes.
- 4.129 The noise assessment required to support this proposal must pay careful attention to the relationship of the site to the A40 and the impact of noise on the southern area of the site, and appropriate mitigation must be incorporated within the proposal.

As part of this refurbishment, Oxford Brookes University intends to relocate the existing uses at the Wheatley Campus to the Headington Campus



Policy STRAT14: Land at Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University

Site area: 22 hectares - Existing development footprint: 12 hectares

1. Land within the strategic allocation at Wheatley Campus will be developed to deliver at least 300 new homes within the plan period. Development should be focused on the previously developed and eastern part of the site. In general, development on the undeveloped, western part of the site will not be considered appropriate with the exception of an access route and functional green space (including playing pitches) where their layout and design is sensitive to heritage assets, landscape and protected trees.
2. Proposals to develop land at Wheatley Campus will be expected to deliver:
 - i) affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with Policy H9;
 - ii) development densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5;
 - iii) any necessary contributions to enhance local school capacity arising from the proposal;
 - iv) all necessary transport infrastructure as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:

- a. cycling and walking links to the centres of Holton and Wheatley and to the primary school;
 - b. cycle link improvements to Oxford City, to ensure the route is a safe and attractive travel option;
 - c. pedestrian and vehicular access to the east, with at least emergency, pedestrian, cycle and bus access to the west;
 - d. Support for accessible and well connected bus services through the site; accessible green infrastructure and open space provision as set out in the IDP;
 - v) a programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation to be undertaken ahead of any development; and
 - vi) appropriate landscaping, including buffers along the A40 and an appropriate countryside edge.
3. The proposed development at Wheatley Campus will deliver a scheme in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan taking into consideration the concept plan. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:
- i) visual impacts on surrounding countryside has been minimised;
 - ii) valuable individual specimen trees, avenue and groups of trees and native vegetation are retained and respected;
 - iii) surrounding listed buildings and structures (in particular Holton Park) and their setting are conserved and enhanced; and
 - iv) an appropriate buffer and setting to Scheduled Monuments within the site (the moated site 580m south west of Church Farm) and adjacent to the site (the moated site of Holton House and its associated ice house).
4. Existing sports facilities should be retained or replaced within the development or, where this is not achievable because of site constraints, replacement facilities should be provided close to Wheatley or Holton to ensure that there is no local deficit of quantity or quality created by the redevelopment of the site.
5. The Wheatley Campus site is to be removed from the Green Belt and inset as shown in the Green Belt Inset Plan (Appendix 4)

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Henley-on-Thames

Introduction

4.130 Henley-on-Thames has a population of around 11,600. The town lies in the south-east of the district and acts as an important service centre for nearby areas in South Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Henley-on-Thames's shopping centre is the largest of our market towns with a good range of shops and services to serve local residents and visitors alike. Tourism, based on the town's riverside setting, its legacy of historic buildings and the festivals and events that take place, are important to the economy and vitality of Henley-on-Thames.

4.131 Henley-on-Thames's strengths:

- A beautiful market town
- Riverside setting with excellent opportunities for enjoying the river Thames
- Access to the surrounding Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- A range of shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants
- Host of the world renowned Henley Royal Regatta
- Venue for numerous festivals and events
- A well preserved centre with many historic buildings and features
- A range of employment opportunities
- A train station with services to Twyford.

4.132 The joint Henley-on-Thames and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan was made in April 2016 and sets out planning policies for the town, including housing allocations.

4.133 Specific policies relating to housing, employment and retail for Henley-on-Thames are covered in chapters 5 (Delivering New Homes), 6 (Employment and Economy) and 10 (Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres) of this Plan.

Policy HEN1: The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames

1. The Council will support development proposals that:

- i) are in accordance with the Joint Henley-on-Thames and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan or any subsequent made replacement of that Plan;**
- ii) strengthen the retail offer within Henley Town Centre;**

- iii) **enhance the town's environment and conserve and enhance the town's heritage assets;**
- iv) **strengthen and improve the attraction of Henley-on-Thames for visitors and provide leisure opportunities;**
- v) **improve accessibility, car parking in the Town Centre, and pedestrian and cycle links;**
- vi) **improve employment opportunities at existing employment sites and identify new sites for employment;**
- vii) **address air quality issues;**
- viii) **support Henley College and Gillotts School to meet their accommodation needs.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Thame

Introduction

4.134 Thame is an award winning market town, located on the northeast edge of our district. It has a population of approximately 11,500 and is an important local centre for nearby villages both in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Thame has a strong agricultural base with regular cattle and farmers' markets held in the town. A good range of independent shops, pubs and eateries and events such as the Thame Food Festival attract visitors to the town.

4.135 Thame's strengths:

- Thriving traditional market town with regular cattle market and farmers markets
- Finalist in the Great British High Street competition
- Well preserved historic High Street and market place
- A calendar of popular events that attract visitors
- A range of shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants
- Employment opportunities.

4.136 Thame was one of the first places in the country to have a Neighbourhood Development Plan, with their plan made in July 2013.

4.137 Specific policies relating to housing, employment and retail for Thame are covered in chapters 5 (Delivering New Homes), 6 (Employment and Economy) and 10 (Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres) of this Plan.

Policy TH1: The Strategy for Thame

- 1. The Council will support development proposals that:**
 - i) are in accordance with the Thame Neighbourhood Development Plan or any subsequent made replacement of that Plan;**
 - ii) strengthen the retail offer within Thame Town Centre;**
 - iii) improve the attraction of Thame for visitors and businesses;**
 - iv) improve accessibility, car parking, pedestrian and cycle links;**
 - v) support schemes that enhance the quality of the town's environment and conserve and enhance the town's heritage assets;**
 - vi) provide new employment opportunities and improve the stock of existing employment areas.**
 - vii) provide new, or enhanced community facilities that meet an identified need.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Wallingford

Introduction

4.138 Wallingford is the smallest market town in the district, with a population of around 8,000. Wallingford is an important local service centre for the surrounding villages providing retail, education, health, sports and leisure facilities. Wallingford has a long and rich history that is reflected in its urban form and open spaces. Of particular significance are Wallingford Castle and the castle gardens and meadows. Wallingford has a good range of independent shops, antique shops and eateries. Events such as Bunkfest, the heritage railway and the town being used as the setting for a number of television programmes, attract visitors.

4.139 Wallingford's strengths:

- Riverside setting with excellent opportunities for enjoying the river Thames
- Access to the surrounding Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Well preserved historic features including a compact medieval centre
- Attractive market place that holds regular markets
- Wallingford Castle and Meadows
- A good range of facilities in terms of schools, health and recreation

- A range of employment opportunities
- A number of independent shops and restaurants
- A calendar of events that draws visitors to the town, including markets, festivals and rowing events.

4.140 Members of Wallingford community are in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan that will contain planning policies for the town including possibly allocating sites for housing. Like all planning policy documents, the Neighbourhood Development Plan will gather increasing weight as a material consideration the further it gets through the process. Full weight can be given to the plan when it is made. This also applies to a review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4.141 Specific policies relating to housing, employment and retail for Wallingford are covered in chapters 5 (Delivering New Homes), 6 (Employment and Economy) and 10 (Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres) of this Plan.

Policy WAL1: The Strategy for Wallingford

- 1. The Council will support development proposals that:**
 - i) that have regard to a Wallingford Neighbourhood Development Plan appropriate to its stage in the plan making process;**
 - ii) support measures that improve the attraction of Wallingford for visitors with emphasis on the River Thames and the towns' heritage;**
 - iii) support the market place as a focal hub;**
 - iv) improve accessibility, car parking in the town centre, pedestrian and cycle links;**
 - v) provide new employment opportunities and improve the stock of existing employment areas;**
 - vi) support schemes that enhance the town's natural and historic environment and conserve and enhance the town's heritage assets;**
 - vii) address air quality issues in the town centre.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.



ROOKERY COURT

5 DELIVERING NEW HOMES

5.1 One of our main objectives of this Plan is to deliver new homes in places where people want to live and that they can afford. In chapter 4 it sets out where these houses will go in a sustainable and achievable manner that meets our spatial strategy. This chapter provides details of the houses built so far and provides a forecast of future house building in the district. This chapter also contains policy direction for Neighbourhood Development Plans and a contingency if they fail to deliver, and policies for affordable housing, our preferred tenure mix and policies for infilling, redevelopment and householder development.

Sources of housing supply

5.2 The NPPF directs us to significantly boost the supply of housing. This means we need to consider not only the number of homes that we are planning for, but ensuring the homes come forward at the right pace to meet demand. The NPPF recognises the role that small and medium sized sites can play in achieving quicker housing delivery, a point that is also reiterated in the Letwin Review of Build-Out Rates*. Our strategy reflects this, and we have sought to rely on a mix of site sizes to best ensure a robust supply of housing throughout the plan period.

5.3 The housing supply in this Plan is made up from a diverse set of sources:

- Strategic allocations made in this Plan
- Retained Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011 allocations
- Existing planning commitments
- Small scale (non-strategic sites) to be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans or identified in this Plan where Neighbourhood Development Plans are not being progressed
- Sites not yet identified that will come forward through the development management process in accordance with the policies in this Plan, known as windfalls.



* www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-build-out

We expect windfall development to take place in accordance with the development plan

- 5.4 The allocations within this Plan are largely on strategic development sites except for allocations at Nettlebed, and would not fall within the definition of a smaller or medium sites. However, the Council's supply of housing does include a significant proportion of sites on less than 1ha, and on other smaller sites of less than 100 homes. We expect these smaller sites to deliver quicker than the larger strategic allocations. The sources of smaller housing sites are expected to be:
- Windfall and infill development which is permitted across all of our settlements
 - Sites allocated / to be allocated in neighbourhood development plans
- 5.5 We expect windfall development to take place in accordance with the development plan, which will focus speculative development to infill sites within settlements. Since 2011 we have delivered on average 145 dwellings per annum from windfall sites. We have taken a conservative approach to forecasting this forward and consider that 100 homes per year could be reasonably achieved. As this will be focused on infill sites within settlements, we expect most of these developments to be smaller housing sites.
- 5.6 In South Oxfordshire we currently have 12 made neighbourhood development plans. The majority of the sites allocated in these plans are on smaller sites, with only a handful of sites extending over 100 homes in total.
- 5.7 However, the strategic allocations are still an important part of the delivery of the Local Plan and to the achievement of our vision and objectives. As set out in our spatial strategy chapter, we propose six large scale developments and a brownfield redevelopment opportunity. Together, these sites have a potential capacity for around 14,400 new homes. However, we do not expect these to all be built before 2034 and so the Local Plan only counts 10,375 homes towards the plan requirement.
- 5.8 The Plan already made provision for around 15,700 new homes through the rolling forward of allocations in our adopted Core Strategy and the Local Plan 2011, the commitments in made Neighbourhood Development Plans and the granting of planning permissions. Around 4,400 of these committed new homes have been built since 2011.
- 5.9 The previously allocated sites of the Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011 will continue to be saved within this Local Plan (some of these sites are currently under construction or complete, whilst others have yet to start).

Table 5a: Sites previously allocated in the Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011

Allocation	Indicative dwelling capacity
Great Western Park	2,587
Ladygrove East	642
Vauxhall Barracks	300
North East Didcot	2,030
Orchard Centre Phase 2	300
Mongewell Park	166
Wallingford greenfield neighbourhood	555
Townlands Hospital, Henley-on-Thames	62

- 5.10 At the time of publication Neighbourhood Development Plans have been made at Benson, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Chinnor, Dorchester-on-Thames, Henley-on-Thames and Harpsden, Long Wittenham, Thame, The Baldons, Sonning Common, Warborough and Shillingford, Watlington and Woodcote. The Council continue to support the creation of Neighbourhood Development Plans across the District. The made plans allocate new homes as follows:

Table 5b: Neighbourhood Development Plan allocations

Neighbourhood Development Plan	Net number of dwellings
Towns	
Henley-on-Thames	500
Thame	775
Larger villages	
Benson	541
Chinnor	0
Sonning Common	195 (+34)*
Watlington	260
Woodcote	76
Smaller villages	
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	67
Dorchester on Thames	0
Long Wittenham	0
The Baldons	15
Warborough and Shillingford	29

*to include reserve sites

- 5.11 The various sources of the housing supply for the Local Plan are summarised on Table 5c below.

Table 5c: Expected sources of housing supply

Supply of new homes to come forward	Net number of dwellings to 2034
Committed components of housing supply	15,726
Completions (1 April 2011 to 31 March 2018)	4,364
Commitments (as at 30 September 2018)	
Sites under construction, with planning permission and allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2011 and Core Strategy	11,362
New components of housing supply in this Local Plan	12,739
New strategic allocations delivering in the plan period *	10,375
Outstanding market town allocations to be made through Neighbourhood Development Plans	519
Outstanding larger village allocations to be made through Neighbourhood Development Plans	499
Nettlebed allocations	46
Windfall allowance	1,300
Total	28,465

* strategic allocations continue to deliver housing beyond the plan period, and will deliver a total of 14,400 homes.

- 5.12 Within South Oxfordshire, new housing will be planned in order to deliver the scale and distribution of housing development set out in Chapter 4: Our Spatial Strategy. Whilst the overall level of development required to support the existing and future needs of South Oxfordshire, and a proportion to assist Oxford City in meeting its commitments of the Growth Deal amounts to 22,775 new homes, the Local Plan provides for development that exceeds these requirements. This provides additional flexibility to enable the management of our housing land supply trajectory going forwards and to respond to changing circumstances.

Policy H1: Delivering New Homes

- Housing development (including general market housing and affordable housing – land use class c3 – and institutional accommodation for older people – land use class c2 – where need is demonstrated) will be permitted at strategic allocations,**

smaller sites allocated or carried forward in this Plan and on sites that are allocated by Neighbourhood Development Plans. Where Neighbourhood Development Plans are not progressed in larger villages and market towns, planning applications will be considered against the housing targets for the towns and larger villages as identified in Policies H3 and H4 of this Plan.

2. The Development Plan contains a range of site types and sizes that will be developed with different time scales and that are dependent on different infrastructure. The Council has developed a detailed development trajectory (shown at Appendix 8) that will provide the annual delivery targets for this plan period.
3. Housing development on sites not allocated in the development plan will only be permitted where:
 - i) it is for affordable housing on a rural exception site in accordance with Policy H10; or
 - ii) it is appropriate infilling within the existing built up areas of towns, larger, smaller and other villages as defined in the settlement hierarchy (shown in Appendix 7); or
 - iii) it is brought forward through a community right to build order; or
 - iv) there are other specific exceptions/circumstances defined in a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or Neighbourhood Development Orders; or
 - v) it is a proposal involving the sensitive, adaptive re-use of vacant or redundant building(s). Provided that the building(s) in question are proven to not be in a viable use as required by other policies of this Plan.
4. On sites that are not allocated in the development plan, housing development and conversions to dwellings will be permitted on previously-developed land that is in and adjacent to the existing built-up areas of towns, larger villages and smaller villages provided that it does not conflict with other policies in the Development Plan. In other locations, the potential to develop previously developed land will be balanced against other policies of the Development Plan, particularly with reference to safe and sustainable access to services and facilities and safeguarding the natural and historic environment.

5. **Proposals that will bring empty housing back into residential use will also be encouraged.**
6. **The Council will support development which provides for the residential needs for all parts of our community, including Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and caravan dwellers. Proposals for new residential caravan and mobile home sites will be considered in accordance with the housing policies of the Development Plan. Planning permission for single residential caravans or mobile homes will only be given in exceptional circumstances and on a temporary and personal basis.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2,4, 6 & 7.

Didcot

Policy H2: New Housing in Didcot

1. **At Didcot, provision will be made for around 6,500* new homes between 2011 and 2034. This provision will be at:**

Location	Indicative dwelling capacity
Ladygrove East (saved from the Local Plan 2011)	642
Didcot North East (saved from the Core Strategy)	2030
Great Western Park (saved from the Local Plan 2011)	2587
Vauxhall Barracks (saved from the Core Strategy)	300
Orchard Centre Phase II (saved from Core Strategy)	300
New: Didcot A	270
New: Didcot Gateway	300
New: Hadden Hill	74
Total	6,503

*Some of the dwellings proposed in Policy H2 have already been completed since 2011 and some are on sites that have planning consent (including outline planning permission or with a resolution to grant permission).

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7.

5.13 The supply of sites to deliver 6,500 homes at Didcot is shown in Policy H2. As outlined in Policy STRAT3, all development will be expected to be delivered following the principles of the Garden Town. Some of the sites in the centre of Didcot have the potential to deliver at a higher density than shown here – and hence these are indicative numbers of homes – but this will be further explored through the work on the delivery of the Garden Town.

Market Towns

5.14 In each of the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford the Local Plan proposes the provision of an additional 15% growth of housing stock. This level of growth has been calculated on the basis of the housing stock existing as at 2011-the base date of the Local Plan. The market towns have already collectively delivered 5% growth from the start of the plan period and the Plan is therefore planning positively for further growth over the remainder of the plan period. This will be delivered in accordance with Policy H3. The NDP, or review of the made NDP, for each Town must provide allocations to meet the requirements in Policy H3..

5.15 If a Neighbourhood Development Plan does not progress within a specified time frame, the Council, as the local planning authority, will allocate sites for housing in those towns. To support this, the published Strategic Land Availability Assessment will be used as the basis to identify suitable, available and achievable sites. This would be done by working with the local community and parish council.

5.16 This 15% growth figure needs to be balanced with the social, economic and environmental factors that may impact upon the ability of settlements to accommodate the amount of development that has been calculated. Consideration of the availability of suitable and deliverable sites may also impact on how much development a settlement may accommodate. An assessment has been undertaken to check the capacity of our towns to accommodate further growth. This took account of the evidence collected as part of the plan-making process, including land availability, infrastructure delivery and landscape capacity. This has informed the number of homes identified for each town in Policy H3. Ultimately the detailed evidence base will need to be provided to support each Neighbourhood Development Plan and its assessment of capacity, whether this is to support a higher or lower number than that provided in Table 5d: Provision of homes at the market towns.

Consideration of the availability of suitable and deliverable sites may also impact on how much development a settlement may accommodate

5.17 On the basis of 15% dwelling growth from 2011 and the requirements from the Core Strategy the following numbers of houses are expected to be built in the plan period. These numbers take into account existing commitments and completions and identify the following remaining levels of development to be delivered.

Table 5d: Provision of homes at market towns

Town	Core Strategy + 15% growth	Completions and commitments*	Outstanding requirement for NDP
Henley on Thames	1,285	1,129	156
Thame	1,518	1,155	363
Wallingford	1,070	1,431	0

* Completions as of March 31 2018, and commitments as of 30 September 2018

Policy H3: Housing in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford

1. **A housing requirement of 3,873 homes will be collectively delivered in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford as follows:**
 - i) **Henley-on-Thames: 1,285 homes (156 remain to be allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan)**
 - ii) **Thame: 1,518 homes (363 remain to be allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan)**
2. **If a Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for housing in that market town will be supported provided that proposals comply with the Development Plan.**

* the plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient housing sites.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Larger Villages

- 5.18 The Local Plan proposes the provision of 15% growth in the larger villages. This level of growth has been calculated using the existing housing stock as it was at 2011 - the base date of the Local Plan - and is on top of Core Strategy allocations where these exist. The larger villages have already collectively delivered 7% growth in housing based on completed dwellings between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2018. The Plan is therefore planning positively for further growth over the remainder of the plan period. This will ensure that these places continue to grow and support the services and facilities that sustain them.
- 5.19 Development in the larger villages should be proportional, appropriate and dependent on existing infrastructure. It is considered that the most appropriate mechanism for delivering housing in larger villages is by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan and allocating development sites.
- 5.20 This level of growth will support local services and facilities and result in a sustainable and balanced distribution of development. Where larger villages are in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the delivery of the houses allocated to these villages should be provided for by the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This enables communities to have their say on where development in their area will go.
- 5.21 If a Neighbourhood Development Plan does not progress within a specified time frame, the local planning authority will allocate sites for housing in those villages. To support this, the published Strategic Land Availability Assessment will be used to identify suitable, available and achievable sites. This would be done by working with the local community and parish council.
- 5.22 Where a larger village already has an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan which does not provide for their level of allocated housing development, this will need to be reviewed within the specified timeframe as set out in Policy H4.
- 5.23 As Nettlebed is not preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan the Local Plan proposes to allocate sites in this village, and will continue to work with the local community and parish council to support this.
- 5.24 There are currently 12 settlements classed as larger villages in the District. These are:

Table 5e: Larger villages

Benson	Cholsey	Sonning Common
Berinsfield	Crowmarsh Gifford	Watlington
Chalgrove	Goring-on-Thames	Wheatley
Chinnor	Nettlebed	Woodcote

- 5.25 Ten of these twelve villages are either in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, or already have a “made” plan. The Local Plan’s proposed strategy for housing distribution in the larger villages is for each settlement to grow proportionally by around 15% from the 2011 base date, plus any housing allocated to that village through the Core Strategy.
- 5.26 At Berinsfield the Council is working closely with the community on an investment and regeneration scheme. It is expected that the remaining larger villages will allocate housing sites through their Neighbourhood Development Plans to meet their identified number of homes.
- 5.27 There are proposed strategic allocations at Berinsfield and Chalgrove and Wheatley, and it is not expected that each of these villages would deliver additional growth over and above what is already planned for these strategic allocations. In addition, potential development in Berinsfield and Wheatley is restricted by the Green Belt. However, the Council does not want to suppress the appetite and hard work of the Neighbourhood Development Plan groups in these communities and the Council will continue to support appropriate proposals made through a robust and evidenced NDP.
- 5.28 In Benson and Chinnor a number of planning appeals have been allowed, therefore already achieving the minimum 15% growth level. However, both communities may wish to consider safeguarding sites that have been given permission to benefit from the full weight of their NDP and to provide them with a robust baseline for monitoring.
- 5.29 The achievement of the 15% growth figure needs to be balanced with the social, economic and environmental factors that may impact upon the ability of settlements to accommodate the amount of development that has been calculated. Consideration of the availability of suitable and deliverable sites may also impact on how much development a settlement may accommodate.
- 5.30 Some villages are constrained by factors such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Flood Zones. Where Neighbourhood Development Plans are considering sites within an AONB or sites that form part of the setting of an AONB a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be undertaken. In these villages

a 15% growth may not be fully achievable. Other villages are unconstrained and can plan for more than 15% growth. The level of growth proposed should be evidenced within the Neighbourhood Development Plan with local communities helping to shape the development of their village. Ultimately the detailed evidence base will need to be provided to support each Neighbourhood Development Plan and its assessment of capacity, whether this is to support a higher or lower number than that provided in Table 5f: Provision of homes at larger villages.

Some villages are constrained by factors such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Flood Zones

- 5.31 The number of houses identified for each larger village in the 'Core Strategy +15% growth' column of Table 5f should be built in the plan period.
- 5.32 Table 5f differentiates between villages where this Local Plan proposes allocations to either meet the village's growth needs (due to them not preparing a neighbourhood development plan) or where the Local Plan has proposed strategic allocations in Chapter 4. For villages where the Council is not making allocations in this Local Plan, the table identifies a housing requirement for them to be achieved either through neighbourhood development plans or planning applications in accordance with Policy H4. The Council will support larger villages to allocate further development sites should the NDP so wish, where this level of growth is sustainable for that village, and where this is in accordance with national policies and guidance. These housing targets take into account the existing commitments and completions and identifies the following remaining levels of development to be delivered at each larger village.

Table 5f: Provision of homes at larger villages

Larger village	Core Strategy + 15% growth	Completions and commitments*	Outstanding requirement for NDP
Villages without allocations in this Local Plan			
Benson	383	854	0
Chinnor	594	796	0
Cholsey	612	585	27
Crowmarsh Gifford	312	570	0
Goring-on-Thames	329	96	233
Sonning Common	377	269	108
Watlington	262	305	0
Woodcote	225	94	131
Villages with allocations in this Local Plan			
Berinsfield	274	7	0
Chalgrove	248	339	0
Nettlebed	46	15	0
Wheatley	305	129	0

*Completions as of March 31 2018, and commitments as of 30 September 2018.

Policy H4: Housing in the Larger Villages

- 1. A housing requirement of 499 homes will be collectively delivered through Neighbourhood Development Plans and Local Plan site allocations at the Larger Villages as follows:**
 - 27 homes at Cholsey
 - 233 homes at Goring-on-Thames
 - 46 homes at Nettlebed
 - 108 homes at Sonning Common
 - 131 homes at Woodcote
- 2. If a Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for housing in the larger villages will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall housing distribution strategy as set out in Policy STRAT1.**

* the plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient housing sites

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Neighbourhood Planning

5.33 The Council strongly advocates neighbourhood planning and offers a range of support to neighbourhood planning groups. The Council firmly believe that Neighbourhood Development Plans have been proven to be an innovative and appropriate way to manage development at a local level. There has been great success in the district with preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans, and the Council is confident that this success will continue and that local led growth will support the overall spatial strategy of the Local Plan. In the event that a Neighbourhood Development Plan does not adequately progress with allocating site(s) for housing, the Local Plan has built in contingency to allocate housing for these areas within the Local Plan or its subsequent reviews.

Housing Allocations at Nettlebed

5.34 Nettlebed, although the smallest of the larger villages, forms an important part of the network of settlements in the western area of the district along the A4130. It has a reasonable range of services including a primary school,



doctor's surgery, village hall, convenience shop and garage, post office and pub/restaurant. It is also on the bus route, with an hourly service, being halfway between Wallingford and Henley-on-Thames. The village has a small historic core centred on the High Street with more modern housing development to the north. Nettlebed is entirely within the AONB and much of the land to the north and east is common land.

5.35 The community have decided not to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan and subsequently the Local Plan is allocating sites on their behalf.

Policy H5: Land to the west of Priest Close, Nettlebed

Site area: 0.76 hectares

- 1. This allocation will be expected to deliver:**
 - i) a residential development of approximately 11 dwellings;**
 - ii) a scheme of an appropriate scale and form with landscaping that conserves and enhances the AONB;**
 - iii) appropriate and safe means of access; and**
 - iv) a scheme that protects existing landscape features, including existing boundary vegetation, and any ecological constraints.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 5.36 Land to the west of Priest Close is a greenfield site on the edge of the village. The Council's Landscape Assessment Update¹⁰ found that whilst the site lies within the Chilterns AONB, which makes it highly sensitive in its own right, the site is extremely well contained and relates well to the existing village edge. There is therefore some potential for sensitively designed small scale residential development on the site, provided that the existing boundary vegetation is retained and, particularly on the southern boundary, strengthened.

Policy H6: Joyce Grove, Nettlebed

Site area: 10.9 hectares

- 1. This allocation will be expected to deliver:**
 - i) a residential development of approximately 20 dwellings wholly within the existing listed building and associated buildings;**
 - ii) a scheme of an appropriate scale and layout in a form that respects the listed building and its setting; and**
 - iii) appropriate and safe means of access.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 5.37 Joyce Grove comprises a substantial Grade II listed house and outbuildings within a parkland setting. Given this, it would not be suitable for new-build housing, but it is considered that there is the potential to re-use and sympathetically convert existing buildings to provide some new homes. The site is currently occupied by Sue Ryder and operates as a hospice. It is a highly valued facility for southern Oxfordshire. The Council is aware that the building does not currently meet the occupiers needs and that they have been exploring options to relocate. At this point in time an appropriate alternative site has yet to be identified and the Council does not expect that the houses will contribute towards Nettlebed's housing supply until later in the Plan period.

Policy H7: Land to the South and West of Nettlebed Service Station

Site area: 1.3ha

- 1. This allocation will be expected to deliver:**
 - i) a residential development of approximately 15 dwellings;**

¹⁰ South Oxfordshire District Council - Landscape Assessment Update (Hankinson Duckett Associates, 2018)

- ii) **a scheme of an appropriate scale and form including relevant landscaping to minimise the impact on the AONB; and**
- iii) **appropriate and safe means of access.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

5.38 Land to the South and West of Nettlebed Service Station is a greenfield site on the western edge of the village. The landscape capacity study found that the site was not visually prominent and could accommodate some development. The site is in close proximity to the village providing access to a range of facilities and services.

Smaller Villages

Policy H8: Housing in the Smaller Villages

1. **The Council will support development within the smaller villages in accordance with Policy H16. Where a Parish Council wishes to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan and make housing allocations within it to support further growth, the Council will support this.**
2. **Those Neighbourhood Development Plans will need to demonstrate that the level of growth they are planning for is commensurate to the scale and character of their village, and this is expected to be around a 5% to 10% increase in dwellings above the number of dwellings in the village in the 2011 census (minus any completions since 1 April 2011).**
3. **Neighbourhood Development Plans allocating sites on greenfield sites in these locations should consider how development can meet the bespoke needs of their village, including housing mix, tenure and the amount of affordable housing.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2 & 3.

- 5.39 Smaller villages, as defined in the settlement hierarchy (Appendix 7), have no defined requirement to contribute towards delivering additional housing (beyond windfall and infill development) to meet the overall housing requirement of South Oxfordshire. There is a sufficient supply of housing from strategic allocations and from existing planning permissions, which means that the less sustainable settlements will not be required to offset the housing requirement. However some parishes may still wish to proceed with preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for example to achieve the protection afforded by allocating housing to fund projects they want to deliver or they would like to identify a specific type of housing bespoke to their village's needs. The Council's strategy therefore allows them to do so, provided that the levels of growth are commensurate to the size of the village.
- 5.40 Proposals in a neighbourhood development plan must be in conformity with the strategic policies in this Plan, and policies in the NPPF. This Local Plan does not set down a requirement for smaller villages in the Green Belt to deliver additional housing and as such, smaller villages would not be expected to propose alterations to the Green Belt through neighbourhood development plans.

Other Villages

- 5.41 It is not generally expected that those settlements classified as "other villages" will provide a significant source of housing supply, However, it is possible that some development proposals may come forward over the Plan period in these villages, such as single dwellings, infilling and conversions from other uses. Such proposals will be considered against the relevant policies in this Local Plan.
- 5.42 Some of the other villages may wish to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans and we will support them to bring these forward in the same way that the Council would support their preparation in smaller villages.

Affordable Housing

- 5.43 The starting position for the provision of affordable housing is outlined in Policy H9.
- 5.44 The affordable housing should meet required standards and should be of a size and type which meets the requirements of those in housing need.

Policy H9: Affordable Housing

1. The Council will seek affordable housing contributions in accordance with the criteria set out below:
 - 40% affordable housing on all sites with a net gain of 10 or more dwellings or a combined gross floorspace of more than 1000sqm (internal area).
 - Within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): 40% affordable housing on all sites with a net gain of five or more dwellings or a combined gross floorspace of more than 1000sqm (internal area). For proposals of less than 10 homes in the AONB, this will be sought as a financial contribution.
 - On sites adjacent to Oxford City: 50% affordable housing on all sites with a net gain of 10 or more dwellings or a combined gross floorspace of more than 1000sqm (gross internal area).
2. Proposals where affordable housing is required should have regard to the following:
 - i) In circumstances where it can be adequately demonstrated that the level of affordable housing being sought would be unviable, alternative tenure mixes and levels of affordable housing provision, may be considered;
 - ii) In cases where the 40% calculation provides a part dwelling, a financial contribution will be sought equivalent to that part residential unit;
 - iii) The Council will expect a tenure mix of 40% affordable rented, 35% social rented and 25% other affordable routes to home ownership;
 - iv) With the exception of part dwellings, the affordable housing should be provided on site and the affordable housing should be mixed with the market housing;
 - v) The affordable housing should meet required standards and should be of a size and type which meets the requirements of those in housing need;
 - vi) Affordable housing should be indistinguishable in appearance from market housing on site and distributed evenly across the site, with these units being clustered in groups of no more than 15 homes;
 - vii) To prevent the artificial subdivision of sites with the same landowner, where land is subdivided to create separate development schemes that cumulatively meet the thresholds

of this policy, the Council will consider the site as a whole and will seek affordable housing on each part. The Council will also consider the site as a whole where a developer seeks to amalgamate adjacent sites with the same landowner into a single development thereby meeting the threshold.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 4, & 6.

- 5.45 Affordable housing includes social rented / affordable rented and intermediate housing that is available to households in the district whose needs are not met by the market. Other intermediate housing will be delivered in accordance with the definition in the National Planning Policy Framework. The cost must be low enough for eligible households to afford based on local incomes and house prices.
- 5.46 The exact amount of affordable housing and tenure mix on each site will be agreed through negotiation between developers and South Oxfordshire District Council, and Policy H9 will be the starting position. A request for a departure from this by a planning applicant is expected to be supported by robust evidence, including viability assessments where required and will only be supported exceptionally. The Council's current housing strategy, and where relevant and appropriate, local housing needs surveys, will inform these negotiations. The Council will monitor the delivery of affordable housing through Policy H9 and review the Housing Delivery Strategy periodically to ensure that the aim to provide a healthy mix of houses is fulfilled.



Affordable Housing on Exception Sites

Policy H10: Exception Sites

- 1. In exceptional circumstances, small-scale affordable housing schemes may be permitted within or adjoining villages, provided that:**
 - i) it can be demonstrated that all the proposed dwellings meet a particular local need that cannot be accommodated in any other way;**
 - ii) there are satisfactory arrangements to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing remain in perpetuity and that the dwellings remain available for local people;**
 - iii) there are no overriding amenity, environmental, design or highway objections; and**
 - iv) there are adequate local services and facilities in the settlement.**

- 2. Planning obligations will be sought before planning permission is issued to ensure that the above conditions are met.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 4, & 6.

5.47 The Council will seek to increase the stock of affordable housing by allowing proposals which would not otherwise be permitted. The Council will work closely with parish councils and local communities to progress these schemes. The involvement of landowners is also crucial. Some landowners are prepared to make available land at, or only slightly above, agricultural value, where it is understood that an exception to normal policy is being made and that planning permission would not be given for speculative housing development on that land. The Council will always support the sale of land to Registered Providers by agreement but, in circumstances where agreement cannot be reached, will consider the use of compulsory purchase powers.

5.48 The planning authority must be convinced of the need for affordable housing in a particular village and be satisfied that the housing provided would be available at a price which local people can afford. A detailed housing needs survey will be required with each planning application for a rural exception site to demonstrate the extent of the housing need arising from people with a local connection. Housing need is based on factors such as overcrowding, lack of or sharing of

facilities, income, ill-health and disability. The following criteria will usually be used to define local connection:

- applicant to have lived in the parish for 5 out of the last 8 years; or
- applicant's parent or child to be currently resident in the parish, and to have at least 10 years' continuous residence; or
- applicant has worked full time for 2 years in the parish, or equivalent in part time (this may include voluntary work), and there is evidence of continuing commitment to work in the parish.

5.49 Applicants must be on the housing register before they can be nominated for an exceptions site property. Where more applicants than vacancies exist, the dwellings will be allocated in accordance with our current Housing Allocations Policy. If there are insufficient applicants meeting these criteria, applicants meeting the local connection criteria for the immediately neighbouring parishes will be considered. In this case, applicants whose local connection is closer to the new properties may be given precedence over those who are more distant.

5.50 A planning obligation will normally be required to ensure that the houses provided meet a local need, and that satisfactory arrangements are made to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing remain in perpetuity. Schemes will normally be managed by a Registered Provider.



Policy H11: Housing Mix

- 1. A mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households will be sought on all new residential developments.**
- 2. All affordable housing and at least 15% of market housing on sites of 11 dwellings or more should be designed to meet the standards of Part M (4) Category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings (or any replacement standards).**
- 3. At least 5% of affordable housing dwellings should be designed to the standards of Part M (4) Category 3: wheelchair accessible dwellings.**
- 4. On sites of 100 dwellings or more plots should be set aside to allow for at least 3% of market housing dwellings to be designed to the standards of Part M (4) Category 3: wheelchair accessible dwellings (or any replacement standards). The exact requirement should be based on evidence regarding current demand. The plots should be marketed to an acceptable level for a period of 12 months to identify an appropriate buyer.**
- 5. All affordable housing and 1 and 2 bed market housing dwellings should be designed to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards.**
- 6. The mix of housing shall be in general conformity with the Council's latest evidence* and Neighbourhood Development Plan evidence where applicable for the relevant area.**

*The latest evidence is in the Oxfordshire SHMA 2014, but The Council's housing mix evidence will be updated and published periodically.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1,2, 4,5 & 6.

- 5.51 One of the Local Plan's objectives is to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, highlighting the need to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future needs. Policy H11 provides that a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households will be sought on all new residential developments. The current evidence (the Oxfordshire SHMA 2014) found a shortfall in smaller units and recommended for most units to be 2 and 3 bedrooms.
- 5.52 The Council will publish updates to its housing mix evidence as necessary.
- 5.53 While the housing mix should be informed by this evidence it will also need to respond to the character of the site and its setting.
- 5.54 New homes need to be high quality, accessible and sustainable. The Government has created a new approach for the setting of technical standards for new housing. The Code for Sustainable Homes has been withdrawn and local planning authorities can no longer set out any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to construction, internal layout or the performance of new dwellings, although they can encourage them.
- 5.55 The new system comprises new additional optional Building Regulations (Part M) on water, access (including wheelchair access) and internal space. Together these are referred to as optional national technical standards. These new optional standards complement the existing set of Building Regulations, which are mandatory. Local planning authorities can choose whether to impose the additional optional national technical standards as their local standards. The additional technical standards should only be required through Local Plan policies if they address a clearly evidenced need and their impact on viability has been considered.
- 5.56 The government has also introduced a nationally prescribed space standard. This space standard does not form part of the Building Regulations, but local planning authorities will be expected to apply the national space standard instead of any local standard previously applied.
- 5.57 The Council's Housing Strategy presents evidence to support the need for improved accessibility and space standards in South Oxfordshire. The evidence shows that by 2039 over one quarter of the housing stock in South Oxfordshire will be occupied by people aged over 65. The vast majority of which will want to continue to live in their own homes. It is amongst these older age groups, particularly those over 75, that a need for housing which is accessible or adaptable is most likely to apply.

- 5.58 There are 17,500 people in South Oxfordshire living with a long term health problem or disability of which a quarter occupy social rented housing. Those aged 65+ account for more than half of all people with a long term health problem or disability. There are significant proportions of older people living with disabilities across all tenures of housing, however the proportion in the social rented sector is disproportionately high. On average, over the last four years, 185 adaptations have been made each year to properties within South Oxfordshire, and the majority of these were to housing association properties.
- 5.59 The evidence shows there is a case in South Oxfordshire for building up a stock of accessible and adaptable homes, in line with Part M (4) Category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings of Building Regulations, over the long term. The Council has considered the costs of delivering these homes through our viability evidence testing. This case for delivering these homes is strongest with regard to the affordable sector, to ensure that the affordable housing stock is capable of meeting their needs. The Council has control over the occupancy of the affordable housing stock so can ensure, as far as possible, accessible and adapted homes are available to those with specific needs.
- 5.60 Very few wheelchair accessible properties are available in the district. In the last 5 years only 3 properties have been developed. There is evidence of some need for wheelchair accessible properties, in line with Part M (4) Category 3: wheelchair accessible dwellings of Building Regulations, within the affordable housing sector. The need for wheelchair accessible properties is relatively small (2.3%) in the market housing sector. Therefore Policy H1 of the Local Plan requires the provision of 3% of open market plots to be marketed as wheelchair accessible homes on sites of 100 homes or more. These plots should be meaningfully marketed for a period of 12 months, and where a buyer cannot be secured, they can be remarketed as standard housing product in accordance with other policies in this Plan. It also ensures that the features of the property match the individual needs of the buyer.
- 5.61 The price of space is high. As a result developers tend to build and buyers purchase and occupy smaller homes. The space available in homes in the affordable sector is particularly important because these homes are occupied more intensively than homes in the market sector. Houses are allocated on the minimum amount of space required and this has come under even more pressure since the introduction of the "under occupancy charge" which reduces benefit payments to working age people who are under occupying their homes. In comparison, in the market sector households have a greater tendency to buy and occupy homes according to their income and life stage and levels of under occupancy are often high. Overcrowding is more of an issue in the private rented sector, although there are not high levels of

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overcrowding in the District. It is where homes are fully occupied that it is important to ensure that the space available is sufficient to meet the family's needs.

The price of space is high... As a result developers tend to build and buyers purchase and occupy smaller homes

5.62 In South Oxfordshire, the majority of dwellings on the market for sale meet or exceed the nationally described space standards. However, there is evidence that a significant proportion of smaller properties in the District, such as one and two bedroom properties, particularly new build properties, fall below the space standard. This is a concern given that these properties are more likely to be fully occupied, particularly if they are rented. There are also some areas in the District, Henley-on-Thames, Didcot and Chinnor, where properties appear more likely to fall below the minimum space standards.

5.63 Policies to increase floor area in line with space standards are likely to result in higher prices for those dwellings, and this could price some households out of the market for new homes.

5.64 The Council will put in place a system to collect data on the Gross Internal Area of new build properties, in addition to the number of bedrooms so that this can be monitored.

Custom build and self-build

Policy H12: Self-Build and Custom Housing

1. **The Council will support proposals for self-build and custom build projects that are delivered in accordance with policies in the Development Plan.**
2. **On strategic allocations the Council will seek 3% of the proportion of the developable plots to be set aside for self-build and custom build. This will be reviewed through the Authority Monitoring Report, subject to the need shown on the register. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.**
3. **Neighbourhood Development Plans should consider the local need for this type of development and where appropriate identify specific sites to allocate for self-build and custom housing.**

4. **Where serviced plot(s) for Self and Custom Build have been sought as part of an allocation in a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Strategic Allocations within the Local Plan, they must be made available and marketed for an appropriate time (to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority through the granting of planning permission for the site). If, following this marketing these plots have not sold, and sufficient evidence is provided that there is not likely to be market interest in the plot(s), the applicant will be able to develop the land for further market housing.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 5 & 7.

- 5.65 Building your own home could be a more affordable way for many people to become home owners. The Council strongly support initiatives that provides opportunities for people to design and/or build their own home. The two types of projects can be described as follows:
- **Custom build:** The eventual occupiers take on a “project management” role, coordinating the services of designers, architects, planners and construction staff. They may get actively involved in some aspects, but generally physical involvement is kept to a minimum.
 - **Self-build:** The occupiers take on an active role, procuring, designing and building their own home. They may outsource elements of the project, where their skills or time do not allow it. This option is generally cheaper than custom build, as “sweat equity” reduces the cost of the project.
- 5.66 The Council hosts a register where people can indicate their interest in custom and self-build opportunities at www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/application-advice/general-planning-advice/custom-and-self
- 5.67 Where there is evidence for a need for these types of plots, the Council expects opportunities to be identified in partnership with Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Planning Groups and Community Led Housing groups that could address the specific local need, in line with the Joint Housing Delivery Strategy and policies in the Development Plan.
- 5.68 The Council may support provision of self-build plots as part of planning approvals to provide open market or affordable housing where a specific realistic and deliverable need is identified.
- 5.69 Where Self-Build plots are to be provided through Strategic Allocations in the

Local Plan or on major development sites, the Council will support their provision where they are appropriately designed and incorporated into the masterplan for the site and consistent with other policies within the Development Plan.

5.70 In most cases self and custom build proposals would be expected to be delivered as part of the open market part of a development site. However, in certain circumstances where it is in accordance with the Council's affordable housing policy and there is agreement on its delivery with a Registered Housing Provider, it may be acceptable for it to come forward as part of the affordable housing contribution of the site. The Council encourages developers of such proposals to seek pre-application advice to determine the suitability of the proposals as they will be determined on a case by case basis.

5.71 At the time of writing there are about 400 people registered as interested in self and custom build homes in South Oxfordshire. The Council will support the delivery of this type of home in appropriate locations. The 3% plot requirement in Policy H12 is the percentage required to deliver the existing level of homes on the register solely through the proposed strategic allocations as set out in STRAT policies 7,8,9,10,11,12 and 13.

Specialist Accommodation for Older People

Policy H13: Specialist Housing for Older People

- 1. The Council will use its current housing strategy* to identify appropriate locations for specialist accommodation for older people to meet the needs of specialist housing. Specific sites could be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans.**
- 2. On major development sites the Council will seek a proportion of the dwellings to be specifically built to meet the needs of older people. This will be subject to the local need identified and the viability of individual sites.**

* Joint Housing Delivery Strategy For South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (2018-2028) www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Joint%20Housing%20Delivery%20Strategy%20-%202018%20to%202028.pdf

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4,5 & 6.

- 5.72 Housing and health are inextricably linked, and the value of living in a suitable home in a sustainable location becomes even more important as people get older. Being able to continue living independently for as long as possible may require some level of support which could be provided through adaptations to the home or receiving social care visits at home. However, other options can include moving to a more suitable property – perhaps a smaller home with no stairs - or to a home which is provided as part of a specialist housing scheme such as “Close Care”, Extra Care Housing or other form of retirement housing. Providing options for people to “downsize” to smaller or specialist housing can help free up family housing.
- 5.73 The Council's design policies encourage the provision of housing that specifically caters for the needs of all people, or can be adapted for them in line with the “accessible and adaptable” standards in Building Regulations Part M.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 5.74 The overall scale of need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the District is small in comparison to wider housing needs, but the Council has a responsibility to address these needs. It is important that the Local Plan develops a fair and effective strategy to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, particularly through the identification of land for pitches.

Policy H14: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 1. The provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople will be delivered through:**
 - **Safeguarding authorised sites;**
 - **Extending existing sites, where possible, to meet the needs of existing residents and their families**
 - **Delivery within the following strategic allocations:**
 - **4 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Didcot North East (carried forward from Core Strategy) as shown on the policies map**
 - **3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre (STRAT7) as shown on the policies map**

- 3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Land at Chalgrove Airfield (STRAT9) as shown on the policies map

2. **Proposals for pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, will be permitted where it has been demonstrated that the following criteria have been met:**
 - i) the capacity of the site can be justified to meet needs for further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, or extensions to an existing sites;
 - ii) the site is not located within the Oxford Green Belt unless very special circumstances are demonstrated;
 - iii) the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the amenity of neighbouring properties, and is sensitively designed to mitigate visual impacts on its surroundings. Proposals within the AONB will be considered in accordance with Policy ENV1;
 - iv) there are no adverse impacts on the significance of heritage assets in accordance with Policy ENV6;
 - v) the site has safe and satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access to the surrounding principal highway network. The site will be large enough to enable vehicle movements, parking and servicing to take place, having regard to the number of pitches/ plots on site;
 - vi) the site can be provided with safe electricity, drinking water, sewage treatment and waste disposal facilities;
 - vii) no significant barriers to development exist in terms of flooding, poor drainage, poor ground stability or proximity to other hazardous land or installation where other forms of housing would not be suitable.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 4, 5 & 6.

Policy H15: Safeguarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites

1. **Proposals that result in the loss of an authorised and permanent site for residential use by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will not be permitted unless:**
 - i) suitable alternative provision is made for the use on a site with equal access to services; or

- ii) **it has been determined that the site is no longer needed for this use.**
- 2. **Appropriate, detailed and robust evidence will be required to satisfy the above criteria. The Council will require the independent assessment of this evidence.**
- 3. **Planning conditions or legal obligations may be necessary to ensure that any replacement sites are provided. Any replacement site should be available before the original site is lost.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 4, 5 & 6.

- 5.75 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are defined as persons that are leading or have led a nomadic life. Travelling Showpeople differ from other Gypsies and Travellers as their employment and travel centres upon holding fairs, circuses or shows across the country. Therefore, different terminology is used when referring to their residential needs. Gypsy and Traveller households tend to reside on a residential "pitch" within a Traveller "site" whereas Travelling Showpeople tend to reside on mixed-use "plots" within a Travelling Showpersons "yard".
- 5.76 Local Planning Authorities are required to set pitch and plot targets for Travellers which address their accommodation needs. The Council identify these needs by undertaking a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which identifies how many additional permanent traveller pitches will have to be delivered during the plan period. The GTAA was recently updated to reflect changes to national guidance set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) (PPTS). The most significant of these changes was to the planning definition of a 'Gypsy' or 'Traveller'. Gypsies and Travellers who have stopped travelling permanently due to ill health or old age have now been removed from this definition. The changes also make it much more difficult for Gypsies and Travellers to get planning permission for pitches located in the Green Belt or open countryside.
- 5.77 The GTAA (2017), prepared jointly with Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council and Vale of White Horse District Council, identified a need for 10 additional permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches to be delivered to 2033. For the Travelling Showperson community, the assessment identified no need for any additional plots. The need identified in the most recent GTAA is lower than the need identified in the GTAA update in 2014. This is because the Council is

only required to identify pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople that meet the planning definition set out in PPTS (2015). The

5.78 The 10 pitch requirement includes provision for Traveller families where it was unknown whether they met the planning definition set out in PPTS (2015). The accommodation needs of families where it was known that they no longer meet the definition are taken into account with other 'caravan dwellers'. To guide speculative applications appropriately, Policy H14 includes criteria against which applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation can be assessed.

Work was undertaken in 2013/14 to identify appropriate sites for permanent traveller pitches

5.79 Work was undertaken in 2013/14 to identify appropriate sites for permanent traveller pitches. The Delivery of Pitches report (2015) recommended safeguarding all existing permanent traveller sites within the district and intensifying and/or extending these, where appropriate. The study also identified new sites with the potential of being suitable for permanent traveller sites. This included the greenfield neighbourhood development at Didcot, now known as Didcot North East, which was considered suitable for 15 permanent traveller pitches. Delivering pitches on this site was also identified as a priority in the Core Strategy (Policy CSH5). Other sites recommended by the study as sites with potential and future potential could not be taken forward for a variety of reasons including, the sites being needed for infrastructure improvements, the sites being identified for a different use in a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the sites being located in the Green Belt or the sites identified as potential waste management sites.

5.80 Taking into account the recommendations made by the Delivery of Pitches report (2015) previous priorities set out in the Core Strategy and our strategy for this Local Plan, we have identified three sites that could deliver the 10 pitches required. The Council have taken forward the previous commitment from the Core Strategy to provide pitches at Didcot North East and are allocating four pitches to this site. The remaining six pitches will be delivered at our strategic sites at Chalgrove and Culham. Allocating pitches at strategic sites allows us to consider the needs of Travellers at the outset of the design process and properly integrate the pitches into the design of the development.

5.81 The Council will continue to monitor the need for and supply of Traveller pitches and plots within the District.

Infill development

Policy H16: Infill Development and Redevelopment

1. **Proposals for housing on sites within the built-up areas of the towns and villages will be permitted provided that:**
 - i) **an important open space of public, environmental, historical or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view harmed;**
 - ii) **if the proposal constitutes backland development, it would not create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built limits of the settlement; and**
 - iii) **it does not conflict with other policies in the Development Plan.**

2. **Infill development is defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. The scale of infill should be appropriate to its location and this will be directed, in part, by the settlement hierarchy as shown on the table below.**

3. **Proposals for the redevelopment of existing sites for residential use will be supported in accordance with the table below:**

Settlement type	Infill limit	Redevelopment supported
Towns / larger villages	No limit	No limit
Smaller villages	Sites of up to 0.2ha (equivalent to 5 to 6 homes)	No site area limit. Redevelopment proposals in these categories of settlement are likely to be acceptable but will be considered on a case by case basis through the development management process in line with other policies in the Development Plan.
Other villages	Sites of up to 0.1ha (equivalent to 2 to 3 homes)	

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 4, 5 & 6.

5.82 The development of large back gardens or land behind an existing residential frontage may be acceptable in principle if it meets the criteria in the above policy. However, such development will not normally be permitted if it creates problems of privacy and access.

Subdivision of Dwellings and Multiple Occupation

Policy H17: Sub-division and Conversion to Multiple Occupation

- 1. The sub-division of dwellings and conversions to multiple occupation will be permitted within the built-up areas of the towns and villages (as set out in Appendix 7) provided that the development:**
 - i) would not harm the amenity of the occupants of nearby properties;**
 - ii) is appropriate in terms of the size of the property and the proposed internal layout, access, private amenity space and car parking provision;**
 - iii) would not adversely affect the historical interest or character of the building or the surrounding residential area; and**
 - iv) would not result in environmental or highway objections.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 4, 5 & 6.

5.83 The sub-division of larger properties into flats can add to the stock of smaller and less expensive dwellings, more of which will be required over the coming decade to accommodate the growth in smaller households. Houses in multiple occupation have a number of residents living in them as separate households and they can provide a useful and relatively affordable form of accommodation for single people. However, subdivision and conversion to multiple occupation will not be permitted if it would result in access problems, over development, lack of garden space, lack of car parking space and a general alteration to the character of the property and the residential character of the area, either on its own or cumulatively. The introduction of large areas of hard surfaces for car parking in gardens will be resisted where it would be detrimental to the character of the area.

Replacement Dwellings

Policy H18: Replacement Dwellings

- 1. Proposals for the replacement of an existing dwelling located outside the built-up limits of settlements will be permitted provided that:**
 - i) the residential use of the existing dwelling has not been abandoned;**
 - ii) the existing dwelling is not subject to a temporary or time limited planning permission;**
 - iii) where the dwelling is listed, or of historic, visual or architectural merit or interest, repair and restoration is to be fully explored before replacement is entertained;**
 - iv) within the Green Belt the proposed replacement dwelling is not materially larger than the original* dwelling; and**
 - v) the proposal can demonstrate that satisfactory vehicular access and parking arrangements and adequate amenity areas are retained for the replacement dwelling.**

*'Original' means the volume as existing on July 1st 1948, or if constructed after that date, as originally built. External garages and outbuildings will not be included in this calculation.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 5.84 In the case of listed buildings, where the Council have a duty to ensure their protection and maintenance, the restoration of the original building is the prime objective. Other non-listed but attractive buildings should be retained and restored wherever possible because of the contribution they make to the character of the district.
- 5.85 The Council are mindful of the need to retain the district's stock of smaller and less expensive dwellings to help offset the demand created by the trend towards smaller households.
- 5.86 In the Green Belt, replacement dwellings should not be materially larger than the dwellings they replace. The Council will, therefore, normally only grant

planning permission for the replacement of dwellings within the Green Belt which are not materially greater in volume than the original dwelling, taking into account any permitted development rights which remain unused. Not materially greater in volume means that, in addition to any unused permitted development rights, an increase of up to, but no more than, 10% in volume may be acceptable provided that the overall impact would not be any greater than the existing dwelling on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. Where the existing dwelling has garage accommodation which is to be demolished, applications for the replacement dwelling should also include replacement garage accommodation or the volume of the replacement dwelling should be reduced commensurately.

- 5.87 Where planning permission is granted for a replacement dwelling with a volume which is inclusive of permitted development rights, the Council will impose a condition removing permitted development rights for extensions/additions to the new house. Where applications are submitted to extend replacement dwellings, the Council will take into account the size of the original dwelling. In all cases, the Council will seek to ensure that the new dwelling does not have a greater impact on the character of the site and its surroundings than the existing dwelling due to its scale, size, form or materials used. In the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Council will give great weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, wildlife and cultural heritage

Re-use of Rural Buildings

Policy H19: Re-use of rural buildings

- 1. When planning permission is required for a change of use of rural buildings priority will be given to employment uses in order to support sustainable rural economic development.**
- 2. In the case of proposals for the re-use of a rural building(s) for residential use where planning permission is required it will only be granted where other uses have been explored and found to be unacceptable in planning terms and where the location constitutes sustainable development.**

- 5.88 The re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of the rural areas for commercial and industrial development, as well as for tourism, sport and recreation. The re-use of rural buildings can reduce demands for new building in the countryside, avoid leaving an existing building vacant, boost the economy and provide jobs. In recent years, the re-use of rural buildings has provided a substantial stock of buildings for employment use. This policy applies to buildings which are outside the built-up areas of the towns and villages of the district.
- 5.89 Buildings to be reused should be permanent and substantial, and not require reconstruction. To meet this requirement, buildings should normally be enclosed on all sides and the whole of the structure covered by a roof and it should be in a sound structural condition. The Council may request applicants to provide a structural survey to demonstrate that this requirement can be met.
- 5.90 The Local Plan generally supports the re-use of rural buildings for employment use. Such buildings are often particularly suitable as they often need little adaptation. New development should be located where the need to travel by car can be reduced and where cycling and walking and the use of public transport can be maximised. Any proposals for the enclosure of adjoining land as part of the re-use of the building will be an important consideration especially in terms of potential impact on the landscape.
- 5.91 To prevent the proliferation of buildings in the countryside, planning permission for the conversion of farm buildings may be subject to conditions to prevent their replacement by new buildings under permitted development rights. Similarly, the Council is unlikely to grant planning permission for the conversion of buildings erected under permitted development rights where they have clearly not been genuinely needed or used for agriculture.

Rural Workers' Dwellings

Policy H20: Rural Workers' Dwellings

- 1. The provision of a rural worker dwelling in the open countryside will be permitted provided that:**
 - i) it is essential, and can be demonstrated there is an existing need for one or more permanent full time workers to be readily available at all times for the rural enterprise to operate viably;**

- ii) **the functional need cannot be met by other suitable available existing dwellings in the locality of the rural enterprise;**
 - iii) **the rural enterprise is economically sustainable, has been established for at least 3 years and is likely to remain financially viable for the foreseeable future;**
 - iv) **the size and scale of the dwelling is proportional with the needs of the rural enterprise; and**
 - v) **it respects the landscape, rural character, and its rural locality.**
- 2. If a rural worker dwelling is essential to support a new rural enterprise it should be provided temporarily by a caravan, a wooden structure which can easily be dismantled, or other temporary accommodation for the first three years.**
- 3. Planning permission will be subject to an appropriate occupancy condition, restricting its occupation to a person who is directly employed on a permanent full time basis and their family.**

5.92 The planning system should seek to support a prosperous rural economy. The Council will support economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development and balancing sustainable growth with the protection of the countryside. The Council recognise that the demands of rural businesses can sometimes necessitate the need for one or more employees to live either at, or close to, their place of work. This demand can arise from a range of rural based enterprises, such as farming, forestry, and commercial equine related businesses. The Council will therefore support the need for rural workers' dwellings in the open countryside where there is a demonstrable need in order to sustain the effective operation of a viable rural business. A financial appraisal will need to be provided with any proposal.

5.93 The proposal will need to demonstrate that there is no suitable available existing accommodation in the vicinity of the rural business (such as the nearest settlement) or buildings suitable for re-use and conversion to residential use, either on the site of the rural enterprise, or in its locality. Proposals for new rural enterprises requiring a rural worker dwelling will need to demonstrate how the business will be viable and sustainable for the longer term.

5.94 If the proposal complies with this policy, permission will be given for temporary accommodation for the first three years before an application for a permanent dwelling will be considered. The Council may also seek a legal agreement to tie the building to the land to discourage subsequent fragmentation of the agricultural unit by separate use of the building.

Extensions to Dwellings

Policy H21: Extensions to Dwellings

- 1. Extensions to dwellings or the erection and extension of ancillary buildings within the curtilage of a dwelling, will be permitted provided that:**
 - i) in the Green Belt, outside of the built form the larger and smaller villages the proposed extension or alteration does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original* dwelling or ancillary building;**
 - ii) adequate and satisfactory parking is provided in accordance with the current Oxfordshire County Council parking standards, unless specific evidence is provided to justify otherwise;**
 - iii) amenity areas are provided for the extended dwelling that accord with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide; and**
 - iv) the proposal does not conflict with other policies in the Development Plan.**

*'Original' means the volume as existing on July 1st 1948, or if constructed after that date, as originally built. Garages and outbuildings will not be included in this calculation.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

5.95 Planning permission is not always required for house extensions but where it is needed the above policy will apply. Householders contemplating alterations or extensions to their home should check with us to see whether planning permission is required and have regard to the our Design Guide.

Accommodation in town centres

Policy H22: Loss of Existing Residential Accommodation in Town Centres

- 1. The loss of existing residential accommodation in the town centres will not be permitted other than in accordance with the relevant policies of this Plan, except in cases of upper floor accommodation where an independent access does not exist and cannot be provided, or in cases where there are insurmountable environmental factors which militate against continued residential use. The loss of private gardens, which could affect the residential amenity of the occupants of existing dwellings will also be resisted.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

5.96 It is particularly important to retain residential accommodation in the town centres to maintain a balance between uses and to allow easy access to services. The Council will allow a change of use in the exceptional circumstances described in the policy. With regard to environmental factors, however, there will be few locations in the four South Oxfordshire towns where noise, fumes or other forms of nuisance will be such as to render premises unsuitable for living accommodation. The Local Planning Authority will be guided in this matter by advice from its environmental health department.

5.97 The amenity afforded by a private garden is often an important factor in keeping town centre flats and houses in residential use. The Council will, therefore, resist development that would destroy such gardens.





Howbery
WATER AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Welcome

- ↑ Red Kite House
- Kestrel House
- Manor House 
- Fountain Building
- Stables
- Puddleduck Nursery
- Evenlode
- Windrush Innovation Centre
- Lifestyles Gym
- Isis Innovation Centre
- Thames Wing

6 EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

Introduction

- 6.1 Oxfordshire is one of the strongest economies in the UK, partially due to one of the most important clusters of research-based, high-value businesses in Europe, including scientific research and development, higher education, health related industries, car manufacture and motorsports, creative and digital sector businesses and visitor economy. Oxfordshire is uniquely placed with sectors poised for growth including medicine and life sciences (bio-technology for example), advanced engineering (cryogenics, space, advanced materials), information technology, and low carbon environmental technologies¹¹. However economic growth is hindered by productivity per person being below the average for the South East of England, a heavily constrained energy network, higher median house prices and, while full fibre roll out is double the UK average at 8%, this is well behind our international competitors.
- 6.2 South Oxfordshire lies within the economically buoyant Thames Valley area between Oxford and Reading. The western part of the District lies within Science Vale, the location of a particularly high density of science and high-technology activities centred around Harwell Campus¹², Culham Science Centre and Milton Park (one of Europe's largest business parks) and containing both the Science Vale Oxford and Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zones.
- 6.3 The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) published a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in 2016 setting out an ambition for accelerated economic growth for Oxfordshire. The plan seeks to meet the needs of our science and knowledge-rich economy, placing Oxfordshire at the forefront of the UK's global growth ambitions. Oxfordshire is developing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), which outlines how Oxfordshire will support the achievement of the National Industrial Strategy. The LIS is being developed by OxLEP and will build on the current SEP, providing a framework to guide Government, public and private sector investment decisions to make Oxfordshire one of the top global innovation networks and increase productivity of all businesses. Whilst this strategy is in the development stage, the Local Plan can support this opportunity to build an ambitious programme for long-term economic growth and increased productivity for all residents.
- 6.4 Whilst the LIS will benefit approximately 20% of South Oxfordshire businesses, the Council's Business and Innovation Strategy (BIS) 2017 to 2020 outlines its support for all businesses in the District: from the home-based sole traders to

The plan seeks to meet the needs of our science-and knowledge-rich economy, placing Oxfordshire at the forefront of the UK's global growth ambitions

¹¹ Oxfordshire Skills Strategy to 2020: Building a responsive skills support system

¹² Harwell Campus formerly known as Harwell Science and Innovation Centre

**The majority
of workers
employed
in South
Oxfordshire
are employed
in the service
industries**

the rapidly growing small and medium businesses that are integral to the science and high-technology supply chain. The BIS highlights the challenges businesses have in finding quality office space of the right size, in the right location, and at the right price. The Local Plan can help address this challenge by implementing policies to encourage the safeguarding and refurbishment of existing employment land and the creation of new sites that will allow our innovative businesses to increase productivity and grow.

- 6.5 South Oxfordshire's four towns are the main employment centres, with our rural areas providing a large number of small firms and some major international research institutions. The largest employment centre outside the towns is Culham Science Centre, which specialises in fusion research and hosts a number of high-tech research and development activities in energy, materials and robotics, as well as commercial technology organisations. The business area around Monument Business Park at Chalgrove provides an important range of businesses and premises. There is also an important cluster of environmental science companies and research institutions at Crowmarsh Gifford and Wallingford.
- 6.6 South Oxfordshire has a higher than average number of economically active people at 89.5% compared with a national average of 77.8% as of December 2015. The number of economically active people increased from 71,500 in January 2011 to 79,000 in December 2015. Unemployment fell from 4.1% to 2.4% over the same period¹².
- 6.7 The Local Plan will continue to encourage and support the local economy and develop a balance between jobs and housing. The majority of workers employed in South Oxfordshire are employed in the service industries, a third of which are within financial and other business services, which is above the national average. The second largest sector is Public Administration, Education and Health. South Oxfordshire has a slightly higher than average number of micro-businesses that employ up to 9 people. South Oxfordshire has a higher than average number of people employed at Manager, Director or Senior Official level. South Oxfordshire's residents are highly-qualified, again above the national average.
- 6.8 Employers take a very positive view of South Oxfordshire as a place to do business. Key strengths highlighted by employers include its central geographic location bringing them in close proximity to customers, suppliers and other businesses alongside good transport links and the fact that it is a thriving and prosperous area¹³. For many small and medium enterprises the quality of life and work/life balance represents the key reason for locating and operating within the District¹⁴.

¹² ONS annual population survey (numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those of aged 16-64)

¹³ Oxfordshire Employers Skills Study 2010, Oxfordshire Economic Partnership

¹⁴ South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council SME Business and Innovation Strategy, March 2017 (Lichfields)

6.9 In 2015 the incomes of residents living in the District were higher than people working within the district. This means that people living within the District were earning higher incomes by commuting to work outside of the District, mostly in the surrounding areas of 'Science Vale' in the Vale of White Horse, Reading and Oxford, and also by commuting to London. This implies that the area suffers from a leakage of highly skilled residents to employment elsewhere.

Economic Forecasts

6.10 The 2014 SHMA forecasts anticipated economic growth across Oxfordshire and the District between 2011 and 2031. The SHMA forecasts a total increase in employment of around 88,000 people for Oxfordshire with an increase of 11,455 jobs in South Oxfordshire from 2011 to 2031. The 'South Oxfordshire Employment Land Review Addendum' (SOELRA) published in August 2017 examines the forecasts of the 2014 SHMA. Based on the SHMA, the SOELRA projects an increase of 12,403 jobs from 2011 to 2033 with an increase of between 6,227 and 6,734 jobs in the office, manufacturing and distribution sectors ('B-class' jobs based on labour demand and local labour supply).

6.11 To plan for the economic growth forecast in the 2014 SHMA, the SOELRA forecasts that between 33.2 and 35.9 hectares of additional employment land is required in the District over the period 2011 to 2034. The Council has previously published a 'South Oxfordshire Employment Land Review' (ELR) in 2015 which forecasts a requirement of 24.4 hectares of employment land for the period 2014 to 2031 or approximately 31.6 hectares if extrapolated over the plan period. Therefore, the SOELRA sets a slightly higher requirement in line with the 2014 SHMA. Further to this, as the above employment forecast ends at 2033, to account for the additional year in the plan period beyond the date of the evidence base, an additional requirement of between 1.5 to 1.63 hectares is required (based on a pro-rata for the previous plan period). This results in an employment requirement of between 34.7 and 37.5 hectares of employment land in the District over the period 2011 to 2034.

6.12 The 2015 South Oxfordshire's Employment Land Review (ELR) reports, that within South Oxfordshire employment land comprised approximately:

- 40.7 hectares (234,100sqm) of gross office floorspace (use class B1a), and
- 265.1 hectares of gross industrial land
- Approximately a third of this industrial land is light industrial type (B1c) or general industrial (B2), with the majority characterised by warehousing and distribution use (B8).

The Local Plan aims to support the provision of jobs for the increased population of the district and flexible business space that fulfils demand

- 6.13 The 2015 ELR undertook a review of the quality and characteristics of employment land in the District, identifying where these existing employment areas have capacity for expansion. The 2015 ELR went on to make recommendations for the potential locations and approximate amounts of additional office, research and development (B1a/b) space:
- Culham Science Centre: 3.3 hectares (19,000sqm)
 - Central Didcot: 2.6 hectares (15,000sqm)
 - Land at or near Monument Business Park - Chalgrove: 0.7 hectares (4,000sqm)
 - With a remainder of 0.3 hectares (2,000sqm) met in the town centres of Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford (including Crowmarsh Gifford) and Thame.
- 6.14 The 2015 ELR also makes recommendations for the potential locations and approximate amounts of additional industrial land (B1c/B2/B8):
- Crowmarsh Gifford: 2.5 hectares
 - Culham Science Centre: Approximately 1.3 hectares
 - Hithercroft Industrial Estate - Wallingford: 1.9 hectares
 - London Road Industrial Estate - Wheatley: 0.4 hectares
 - Land at or near Monument Business Park - Chalgrove: 2.5 hectares
 - Southmead Industrial Estate - Didcot: 2.9 hectares
 - Thame: 1.6 hectares
 - With a remainder of 6.3 hectares provided at new sites at the four main towns.

Strategy

- 6.15 The Council aims to ensure that all residents have the skills and infrastructure needed to gain meaningful employment locally, and to be highly productive in those jobs. The Local Plan continues to support the increased productivity and growth of all sectors through supporting business formation, growth and relocation as well as supporting the delivery of infrastructure necessary for this to occur. This inclusive economic view will give all people the opportunity to work at or nearer their home and reduce long distance out-commuting. The Local Plan aims to support the provision of jobs for the increased population of the district and flexible business space that fulfils demand. The Council will encourage key economic sectors that can add value to the local economy, along with supporting existing businesses and education providers.
- 6.16 The Council aims to support inclusive and sustainable development by planning new housing close to employment development and by working with partners to improve skills and productivity amongst residents. Flexibility is

key to respond to changing economic circumstances by having enough land available that is capable of being developed and well served by digital, utility and transport infrastructure. The Council also needs to make sure that there are a variety of sites for large and small businesses and for innovation and for skills development, all of which links to the knowledge-based economy and the sharing of local innovation and technology that can improve productivity.

6.17 The Council's strategy makes a strong link between the housing growth in Didcot and the business growth needs of 'Science Vale', including at Harwell Campus and Milton Park outside the District (within Vale of White Horse District). The Council has worked with Vale of White Horse District Council to plan for enough B-class jobs to cater for Didcot's increased population. Core Policy 6 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 identifies 28 hectares of employment land at Milton Park within the Vale of White Horse District, of which 6.5 hectares is to meet the cross-boundary employment land needs of Didcot within South Oxfordshire.

6.18 The Local Plan's locations for employment are as follows:

- Within Science Vale:
 - Culham Science Centre and the adjacent strategic site;
 - Didcot, albeit with some in the Vale of White Horse;
 - The strategic sites in Berinsfield.
- At sustainable locations:
 - The strategic sites in Chalgrove and Grenoble Road;
 - The towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford with sites to be identified in Neighbourhood Development Plans; and
 - At Crowmarsh Gifford with sites to be identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

6.19 The Local Plan supports developments at the Culham Science Centre and land to the west of the Science Centre which focus growth within the 'Science Vale', close to Didcot and with rail links to Oxford. The Science Centre and the adjacent land will be planned comprehensively with 7.3 hectares of employment land. There will be opportunities for the replacement of temporary buildings at the Science Centre and an intensification of uses. There may be the need for redevelopment of some buildings for industries that tend to provide a lower density of employment. The Local Plan is planning for the redevelopment of the Culham No.1 site between the Culham Science Centre and the railway station to make the most of this sustainable location. The Plan requires the 10 hectares of existing employment land on this site to be retained within the wider area and the Council will support the relocation of the existing business if required.

6.20 The Council is supporting significant housing development at Chalgrove Airfield, Berinsfield and Grenoble Road. To enable the creation of sustainable communities and to provide new residents with the chance to work locally, the Local Plan proposes allocations for additional employment land at these locations to complement the strategic allocations. In addition, the Local Plan supports the provision of additional employment land at the four towns as these are sustainable locations where additional housing delivery will take place over the plan period.

Policy EMP1: The Amount and Distribution of New B-class Employment Land

1. To facilitate the provision of additional office, manufacturing and distribution jobs ('B-class jobs' * refer to Appendix 1), between 2011 and 2034. The requirement for 34.7 hectares and 37.5 hectares of B-class employment land will be provided. Employment land will be provided at the following locations:

Location	Site	Net amount of employment supply (hectares)
Didcot	Southmead Industrial Estate (Carried forward from Core Strategy)	2.92
	Milton Park (Within Vale of White Horse District) (Carried forward from Core Strategy)	6.5
Henley-on-Thames	Sites to be identified in the NDP	1.0
Thame	Sites to be identified in the NDP	1.6
Wallingford	Sites to be identified in the NDP (Likely to be at the Hithercroft Industrial Estate)	3.1
	Hithercroft Industrial Estate (Carried forward from Core Strategy)	2.25
Crowmarsh	Sites to be identified in the NDP	
Gifford	(Likely to be at Howbery Park)	0.28
Culham	Redevelopment and intensification of Culham Science Centre and Culham No.1 site with strategic allocation west of Culham Science Centre. 10 hectares of existing employment land at Culham No.1 to be retained within the comprehensive development.	7.3
Chalgrove	To be allocated in accordance with STRAT7	5.0
	To be allocated in accordance with EMP9	2.25

Berinsfield	To be allocated in accordance with the regeneration strategy	5.0
Grenoble Road	Extension to Oxford Science Park, to be allocated in accordance with STRAT11	10.0
Total		47.2

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

Types of employment premises

6.21 In order to meet the diverse need for employment across South Oxfordshire the Policy below requires a range of premises within any proposals for employment development.

Policy EMP2: Range, Size and Mix of Employment Premises

- Proposals for employment use will provide a range and size of premises, including flexible business space to meet current and future requirements. The Council will support proposals for premises suitable for small and medium sized businesses, including start-up/ incubator businesses (up to 150sqm) and grow-on space (up to 500sqm). Proposals for employment uses will be considered against this criteria and the overall employment distribution strategy at EMP1.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

6.22 South Oxfordshire District Council, in partnership with the Vale of White Horse District Council, commissioned consultants Lichfields to prepare a Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) Business and Innovation Strategy (2017). The strategy highlights the importance of SMEs in South Oxfordshire and the difficulties these firms are experiencing in finding suitable premises.

6.23 To promote a balanced local economy, the Plan needs to ensure that a range of size and types of premises is available. The Council will seek to widen the variety of premises to include more modern and flexible business space. Enough space is needed for small and medium sized businesses, including

start-up / incubator businesses (up to 150sqm) and grow-on space (up to 500sqm), and opportunities to provide this will be sought. Whether units are suitable for start-up / incubator businesses will depend partly on management arrangements and lease terms that are beyond our control; however the Council will do all it can to assist in this regard.

Retention of Employment Sites

Policy EMP3: Retention of Employment Land

- 1. Existing employment land will be retained in order to promote and grow a balanced, sustainable economy and local services. Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of employment land to non-employment uses will only be permitted if:**
 - the Council agrees that the applicants can demonstrate that any employment use is no longer viable;
 - it is evidenced that there is no market interest in the site following one year of active and effective marketing; and
 - the change of use from employment uses will not lower the employment capacity of the District below that estimated to be necessary to meet projected need.
- 2. In addition to the criteria above, where there is no reasonable prospect of land or premises being used for continued employment use, a mixed use enabling development which incorporates employment space should first be considered.**
- 3. Proposals for the loss of an existing employment land use which causes detrimental effects to the amenity of the nearby area (particularly where residential uses are adversely affected) will only be permitted:**
 - where the Council is satisfied that all options to mitigate the detrimental effects have been explored; and
 - where the proposal secures the relocation of the existing employment land use on a suitable alternative site or where the proposal provides sufficient, suitable employment land to compensate for the loss of the existing employment land use to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 4. Such relocation or compensation shall be secured using a planning condition or legal agreement.**

- 5. Schemes that improve the stock of existing employment land, employment premises, commercial buildings and the environment of existing employment areas will be supported.**
- 6. Through the monitoring of employment land gains and losses, the Council will record, and publish in the authorities monitoring report, how much land the Council continues to need to meet the projected employment land requirements in the District. The Council will use this information to help determine planning applications.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

- 6.24 To support sustainable economic growth, meet the development needs of businesses and the anticipated needs over the plan period and to ensure that sufficient land of the right type is available, the Council will seek to ensure that employment land is not lost during economic fluctuations. The policy seeks to ensure that employment land is only released for other uses where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.
- 6.25 It is important that local employment sites are retained to maintain a reasonable balance of employment and housing uses within settlements. This affords the residents of the villages, towns and surrounding areas the opportunity to find work locally. This need is particularly strong as a number of employment sites and premises have been redeveloped for housing in recent years. Local employment plays an important role in supporting local services and facilities and supporting sustainable communities.
- 6.26 The district is an area of economic growth and demand for premises is usually high. However, we accept that there could be instances where the continued use of a site for employment may not be economically viable. In such circumstances, and before any planning permission for alternative, non-employment uses is granted, the Council will require evidence that the site has been marketed reasonably at a realistic price for at least one year. The Council are likely to take advice from property consultants about the evidence submitted and prevailing market conditions. The Council has a guidance note that demonstrates the sorts of marketing that will be necessary to meet the above criterion for market interest evidence. In the event that any employment use is demonstrably economically not viable, the Council require that a range or mix of alternative uses is explored and the policies in this Plan on other uses will apply.

The Four Towns

Policy EMP4: Employment Land in Didcot

- 1. In addition to employment opportunities generated through the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan and the strategic allocations in this Plan, at least 2.92 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Didcot at the following sites located within Southmead Industrial estate:**
 - **Site EMP4i: Southmead Industrial estate East (2.66 hectares)**
 - **Site EMP4ii: Southmead Industrial estate West (0.26 hectares)**
- 2. A small part of site EMP4i is located within an area of flood risk. Employment uses are classed as 'less vulnerable', however comprehensive development of the site should be appropriate to the flood risk level.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

Policy EMP5: New Employment Land at Henley-on-Thames

- 1. In addition to allocations in the made in the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan, an additional 1 hectare of employment land will be delivered at Henley-on-Thames. This will be delivered through a review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.**
- 2. The review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of the adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for employment will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall STRAT1.**

***When the Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient employment sites.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

Policy EMP6: New Employment Land at Thame

- 1. In addition to allocations in the made Thame Neighbourhood Development Plan, an additional 1.6 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Thame. These will be delivered through a review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.**
- 2. The review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If a Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of the adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for employment will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall plan distribution strategy as set out in STRAT1.**

***When the Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient employment sites.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

Policy EMP7: New Employment Land at Wallingford

- 1. A least 2.25 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Wallingford at the following sites located within Hithercroft Industrial Estate:**
 - Site EMP7i: land at Hithercroft Road and Lupton Road (2.0 hectares)**
 - Site EMP7ii: land at the junction of Whitley Road and Lester Road (0.25 hectares)**

2. **At least a further 3.10 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Wallingford through the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for employment will be supported providing that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall plan distribution strategy as set out in STRAT1.**

*When the Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient employment sites

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

- 6.27 High-tech and science related businesses are important to the district and this creates indirect demand for employment floorspace linked to 'Science Vale'. This includes supply chain firms that seek to be close to but do not have to be within 'Science Vale'. Wallingford / Crowmarsh Gifford is a key location for this type of demand with around a third of the overall South Oxfordshire industrial demand located in this area.

Employment Sites in the Villages

Policy EMP8: New Employment Land at Crowmarsh Gifford

1. **At least 0.28 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Crowmarsh Gifford. This will be delivered through the Neighbourhood Development Plan.**
2. **The Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for**

employment will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall plan distribution strategy as set out in STRAT1.

*The Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient employment sites.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6.

Policy EMP9: New Employment Land at Chalgrove

- 1. In addition to the strategic allocations at Chalgrove Airfield, at least 2.25 hectares of employment land will be delivered at Chalgrove at the following site located within the Monument Business Park:**
 - Site EMP9i: Land at Monument Business Park (2.25 hectares)**
- 2. The site has outline planning permission for employment use, part of which, approximately 0.44 hectares, has already been built out since 2011. Policy EMP9 safeguards this site for future employment growth.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3 & 6

Community Employment Plans

6.28 Sustainable development can include new jobs or make it easier for jobs to be created locally and a key principle of National Planning Policy¹⁶ is to drive and support economic development. Development should therefore consider how to maximise opportunities to deliver the greatest benefit for local communities.

6.29 Providing jobs and training for the local community offers the opportunity to generate and share increased economic prosperity. Community Employment Plans (CEP) prepared in partnership with developers, the Council and skills providers can play an important role in achieving this. A CEP is an employer-led initiative which can form part of planning obligations for significant

¹⁶ The National Planning Framework (NPPF), Paragraph 80, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

developments. The measures contained within a CEP seek to mitigate the impacts of development through ensuring local people can better access employment, skills and training opportunities arising from development. CEPs can also help to create the proper alignment between the jobs created and a local labour force with the appropriate skills. They can also reduce the need to source employees from outside of the area, reducing the need for longer-distance commuting.

- 6.30 In South Oxfordshire both economic activity and employment rates are higher than the regional average and significantly higher than the national average. The tightness of the local labour market brings challenges for businesses seeking to recruit staff from a small pool of local labour. The deliverability and viability of sites could potentially be affected by labour skills shortages and subsequent increased labour costs.
- 6.31 The Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan¹⁷ identifies the importance of a CEP as an action to help deliver the 'People Programme', in particular by addressing exclusion from the labour market, upskilling and other measures to help young people and adults who are marginalised from or disadvantaged in work. CEPs will assist with delivering our Corporate Plan 2016-2020¹⁸ strategic priorities to optimise employment opportunities; encourage local apprenticeships and local workforce schemes that benefit our young people; support the Government's objective of achieving full employment; and ensure that the skills needs of our employers are identified and that training programmes are in place to provide a skilled labour force.
- 6.32 To support this approach, all new development is encouraged to maximise opportunities for local economic development and the Council may seek the preparation of a CEP for major development. Where a CEP is required applicants will be provided with a template as a basis. Through discussion with the Council appropriate targets and outcomes for the site-specific CEP will be agreed. The CEP will then be subject to regular review and monitoring meetings with us. The Council will provide assistance to identify appropriate local partner agencies and organisations to work with and support the developer to facilitate the timely delivery of the CEP.

¹⁷ Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP) (2014) Strategic Economic Plan, available at: <http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/content/strategic-economic-plan>

¹⁸ South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2016-2020, available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-work/corporate-plan>

Policy EMP10: Community Employment Plans

- 1. All new development proposals should demonstrate how opportunities for local employment, apprenticeships and training can be created and seek to maximise the opportunities for sourcing local produce, suppliers and services during both construction and operation.**
- 2. The Council will require, where appropriate, the submission of a site-specific Community Employment Plan (CEP) for the construction and operation of major* development sites, using a planning condition or legal agreement.**
- 3. The CEP should be prepared in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council and any other appropriate partners. The CEP should cover, but not be limited to:**
 - i) local procurement agreements;**
 - ii) apprenticeships, employment and training initiatives for all ages and abilities; and**
 - iii) training and work experience for younger people including those not in education, employment or training.**

*As defined by Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 3, 4, 6 & 8.

Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas

Policy EMP11: Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas

- 1. Proposals for sustainable economic growth in the countryside and rural areas will be supported. The Council will:**
 - i) support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas through conversion of**

- existing buildings and within the built-up areas of towns and villages (as set out in Appendix 7), both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- ii) promote the sustainable development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - iii) support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses, communities and visitors in rural areas and which respect the character of the countryside. This will include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and
 - iv) promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

This policy contributes towards objectives 1, 3, 4, 6 & 7.

Tourism and Visitors

- 6.33 Tourists and visitors make an important contribution to the economy and employment in Oxfordshire. In 2014 £1.56 billion was spent by visitors to Oxfordshire with a further £362.5 million of business turnover generated through indirect and induced spending (multiplier spend). This supported 23,197 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and 32,089 actual jobs and accounted for 5.7% of all employee jobs across the County¹⁹.
- 6.34 Tourism expenditure provides economic benefits to the rural areas, villages, and towns of the district and assists with the viability of facilities and services that can also benefit residents. Tourists are attracted to South Oxfordshire by a wide range of features, including the District's attractive countryside, the River Thames, the pretty villages and the historic market towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford.

¹⁹ "The Economic Impact of Tourism on Oxfordshire Estimates for 2014, Tourism South East Research Unit August 2015"

Tourist attractions and facilities

Policy EMP12: Tourism

- 1. The Council encourages new development to advance the visitor economy for leisure and business purposes. Proposals for such purposes will be supported as follows:**
 - i) within the built-up areas of the towns - larger scale developments including conference facilities, museums, heritage centres, hotels, guest houses and associated facilities for visitors;**
 - ii) within the built-up areas of the larger and smaller villages – smaller and proportionately scaled developments that are in keeping with the character of the settlement, including museums, heritage centres, hotels, guest houses, self-catering accommodation and associated facilities for visitors; and**
 - iii) at service areas on the main transport corridors - hotel accommodation.**

- 2. Outside the above locations, small-scale development to support the visitor economy, including farm diversification and equine development, will be supported provided that proposals are in keeping with the scale and character of the locality and would not adversely affect heritage assets or their setting. Larger developments will only be supported in exceptional circumstances, for example to sensitively re-use a historic building, or to proportionally support or enhance enjoyment of a significant and established visitor attraction where this cannot reasonably be achieved from a town or village location.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3 & 6.

6.35 The Council will generally be sympathetic to proposals to improve existing tourist attractions and to the creation of new attractions which have regard to the character, landscape and heritage of the area. Examples include opening historic houses or gardens to the public, farm visits, museums, historic trails, interpretation plaques and interpretation centres.

6.36 Facilities which assist tourists by providing information or services, such as picnic areas, toilets, car parks and information points, can contribute to the enjoyment of a visit and will normally be permitted. The Policy will ensure that such development is in keeping with the locality, both in terms of scale and design of any new building, and the level of activity and type of use. The Council will support schemes to improve existing signing for tourist attractions and facilities, where appropriate, if well designed and in keeping with the surrounding area. Applicants should refer to the "Tourism Signing in Oxfordshire" Application Pack produced by Oxfordshire County Council for guidance. Anyone wishing to erect a sign should seek advice from the Council to see whether consent is required under the Advertisement Regulations and have regard to the relevant policies of this Plan.

Serviced accommodation, public houses and restaurants

6.37 A joint Hotel Needs Assessment²⁰ has been prepared with Vale of White Horse District Council. The assessment confirms the need for a significant increase in hotel supply in the 'Science Vale' area, and further hotels in Thame, Henley-on-Thames and Wallingford. The Council will normally grant planning permission for new hotels, including conference facilities and other serviced accommodation, in the larger settlements outside the Green Belt. Extensions to existing premises will normally be permitted on sites outside the Green Belt. The conversion of suitable buildings to provide visitor accommodation will normally be permitted throughout the district, particularly as this can provide a good way of retaining historically important buildings in a viable use.

6.38 Proposals for additional visitor accommodation should protect the amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties and should not cause traffic congestion or disturbance. Proposals must be of high quality design in accordance with the adopted Design Guide and respect their surrounding environment. It is important that adequate off-street car parking is provided and that it is designed and landscaped to blend with its surroundings.

6.39 The use of existing homes to provide bed and breakfast is generally supported because it makes a valuable contribution to the local economy and provides for good value, short-stay visits. In many cases, the provision of some bed and breakfast accommodation may not require planning permission, however, the advice of our officers should always be sought.

6.40 Proposals for tourist accommodation in the Green Belt will be considered against the relevant national policies and this Plan.

²⁰ South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse Hotel Needs Assessment 2014.

Self-catering accommodation

- 6.41 Purpose-built self-catering accommodation has a similar impact on the environment to new permanent homes and we will consider such proposals in the same way.
- 6.42 Where holiday accommodation is permitted, legal agreements may be used to ensure that the accommodation remains as holiday lets and permitted development rights may be withdrawn to protect the setting of the building.

Caravan and camping sites

Policy EMP13: Caravan and camping sites

- 1. Touring caravan and camping sites will be permitted provided that:**
 - i) the proposed development has no adverse impact on the landscape, ecological or historic characteristics of the site and its surroundings;**
 - ii) the proposed development would not cause any detrimental impact on the amenities of adjacent occupiers or the quiet informal enjoyment of the open countryside;**
 - iii) where appropriate, the site is accessible by public transport and provision is made for pedestrian and cycle links with adjacent areas;**
 - iv) where possible, associated facilities are sited in existing buildings;**
 - v) where new buildings are essential these must be designed to a high standard, be accessible to all and be sensitively sited; and**
 - vi) the site is located outside Flood Zone 3.**

- 2. Where permission is given, it will normally be subject to a condition restricting the use to holiday accommodation only and the site may also be made subject to a seasonal occupancy condition.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3, 6 & 7.

- 6.43 The use of land for touring caravans and camping can assist in farm diversification and help sustain the provision of services in rural areas. Such sites can be visually intrusive, particularly in the open countryside, and usually require a number of

permanent buildings, such as reception areas and toilet blocks. Where possible, associated facilities should be sited in existing buildings. The Council will take a cautious approach to the provision of caravan and camping sites. However, the Council recognises that with imagination and care it may be possible to design and locate new sites that are discreet and respect the landscape. Sites that present a negative impact on the landscape will not be permitted.

- 6.44 Proposals within the Green Belt will be considered in accordance with relevant national policies and this Plan. Care will need to be taken to ensure that proposals do not adversely affect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas. Sites should normally be located within walking distance of the main towns or larger villages which have a range of facilities and therefore reduce the need for visitors to travel. Adequate access to the site is particularly important where touring caravans are to be accommodated.
- 6.45 Caravan and camping sites will not be permitted in areas at highest risk from flooding. Where permission is granted for caravan and camping sites and flooding is an issue, planning conditions will be used to require an appropriate flood evacuation plan, including the erection of suitable flood warning notices.
- 6.46 A comprehensive landscaping scheme and management plan is fundamental to ensure no detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape. Care should be taken with the boundary treatment to ensure effective screening.
- 6.47 Touring caravans are not suitable for permanent occupation and their use will be restricted to holiday accommodation only. Change of use for part or all of a touring caravan site, or an extension to a touring caravan site to a permanent residential caravan site, is unlikely to be acceptable given the additional impact on the environment and the need for additional services and facilities. To reduce the visual impact of new touring caravan and camping sites and to prevent them being used throughout the year, the site may be made subject to a seasonal occupancy condition.

Visitor Accommodation

Policy EMP14: Retention of Visitor Accommodation

- 1. Development resulting in the loss of sites or premises used, or last used, as visitor accommodation will only be considered acceptable where it can be adequately demonstrated that:**
 - the business is no longer viable and has no reasonable prospect**

of continuing and alternative visitor accommodation businesses have been fully explored; and

- **the loss of the visitor accommodation will not have an adverse impact on the tourism industry, the local community and the local economy.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3 & 6.

The retention of existing visitor accommodation is of great importance

6.48 Staying visitors are a particularly important element of the tourist economy. The retention of existing visitor accommodation is of great importance in providing a range of accommodation types across a variety of economic groups, helps to attract a mix of visitors and provides support to businesses within the District.

6.49 It is important to control the loss of visitor accommodation to prevent the threat to the quality, quantity and choice of accommodation on offer across the District and the resulting negative effects on the District's economy.

6.50 Viability evidence is required to be submitted as part of any proposal involving the loss of visitor accommodation. The information should be comprehensive and will often include detailed financial viability information, which may require the Council to seek specialist input to make an informed assessment. When assessing a proposal, consideration will be given to retaining and maintaining the direct economic benefit from income and employment generated for the District by visitor accommodation businesses and to maintain the indirect benefits through spending on goods and services.

6.51 Where a claim is made that the business is no longer viable, the Council must be satisfied that:

- the business has been run in a reasonable and professional manner by the proprietor;
- there has been a serious and sustained effort to run a visitor accommodation business in the premises using available business support services;
- the business has been actively market tested to potential purchasers of the business, with a guide price reflecting the going concern value of the accommodation business (or its hotel/self-catering market value if not currently trading), normally for a minimum 18 months, and that no reasonable offers have been received during this time. The guide price must reflect the potential earnings of the business and the cost of essential works; alternative visitor accommodation business models have been explored and discounted;

- a forward business plan has been presented that shows the business is no longer viable. If the business has not operated recently, then a forward business plan must be presented with a clear demonstration that an attempt has been made to implement it; and
- any previous tourism / visitor related planning approval has been given a reasonable time to become commercially established and any claims that these changes are no longer financially viable must show the relationship between the original business planning and the current situation. The Local Planning Authority will need to be satisfied that permitted enabling developments have supported the authorised provision of visitor accommodation.

6.52 Applicants should provide supporting information to demonstrate business activity for at least the last three years.



7 INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction

- 7.1 Good connections and high quality infrastructure are essential to our quality of life. We need to travel to work, school, shops, leisure and health facilities. A thriving economy needs good connections to operate efficiently. These can range from the strategic road and rail network, to our ability to access the internet with the benefits that it can offer to work from home and provide services. Improving accessibility to services and employment is fundamental to sustainable development and to meeting the objectives of this Plan. The challenge is to do this in a way that minimises the impact of the transport system on the environment and provides for necessary improvements in a cost-effective way.
- 7.2 Successful and sustainable communities depend upon physical, green, social and community infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and businesses. Infrastructure encompasses a very wide range of provision including transport, public utilities and waste management, flood management measures, social and community infrastructure such as affordable housing, health care facilities, emergency services provision and sports provision, green infrastructure, culture, faith and spiritual facilities, education, leisure and tourism, and other community facilities ranging from community meeting halls to children's play areas.
- 7.3 It is important to appreciate that whilst there is a considerable degree of funding from governmental and other public sources, a significant amount of the money for provision of new or the enhancement of existing infrastructure comes in the form of financial contributions from developers or in the form of payment in kind through direct provision of facilities or services.
- 7.4 To better understand the suitability of existing infrastructure provision and identify the infrastructure required to support the level of development proposed through the Local Plan, South Oxfordshire District Council have developed an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP is an important element of the evidence for the Local Plan and will help inform and underpin strategic policies for growth and development. The IDP outlines in more detail the infrastructure requirements to support proposed development growth, particularly for strategic sites, as well as planned delivery and funding arrangements. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis during the plan period.

The challenge is to do this in a way that minimises the impact of the transport system on the environment and provides for necessary improvements in a cost-effective way

Improving travel choice in rural areas is to be encouraged, while accepting that there is unlikely to be a single model for delivering the flexible and responsive transport services

- 7.5 The location of all forms of development can be a key factor in influencing where and how we travel and reducing the need to travel and enabling sustainable travel options. These principles have a key influence on the other elements of the plan. For example, accessibility to services and facilities and the availability of high quality, frequent and reliable public transport are key features for a strong network of settlements and the overall distribution of new housing and employment land.
- 7.6 The policies within this section contribute towards our vision and objectives which seek to build on opportunities for sustainable travel. They have been informed by relevant evidence, including our Evaluation of Transport Impacts work. However, we recognise that the rural nature of the district means that many residents will still be dependent on car travel for some or all their journeys, and this is reflected in the policies below. This section of the plan has also been informed by and is consistent with Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4²¹, which sets the transport policies and provides transport strategies for the county to 2031. Improving travel choice in rural areas is to be encouraged, while accepting that there is unlikely to be a single model for delivering the flexible and responsive transport services required to meet the diverse needs of rural communities.

Infrastructure provision

- 7.7 Successful and sustainable communities and new developments depend on suitable physical and social infrastructure being in place to meet the needs of their residents. These needs include transport, utilities and waste, social infrastructure, environmental and green infrastructure, cultural, education, health leisure, faith and community facilities. The level and type of infrastructure can range from major investments such as new schools, to support for community transport schemes.
- 7.8 It is also recognised that new development may need to take into account existing infrastructure constraints, such as the presence of overhead powerlines or gas pipelines. It will be important for developers to engage early on in the planning process with the organisations responsible for these distribution networks, currently either National Grid or Scottish and Southern Power Networks, to see how these can best be accommodated within new development. Urban design considerations will be important in determining how these networks can be taken into account, and agreements will need to be made with these organisations on any proposed modification, taking into account relevant guidance (www.nationalgrid.com/uk/about-grid/our-networks-and-assets/land-planning-and-development). It may be

²¹ www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire

appropriate for any changes to agreed at the planning application stage, for example, through appropriate conditions.

- 7.9 The need for, and importance of, providing adequate, appropriate and timely infrastructure is a strong message that comes from local residents during consultations, who are often concerned that the necessary infrastructure is not provided, or not provided quickly enough.
- 7.10 To maintain and provide infrastructure and other community services effectively, it is essential that there is a partnership working approach between the public, private and voluntary sector agencies involved. We will continue to work closely with a wide range of infrastructure providers and stakeholders. Key organisations include Oxfordshire County Council, the Highways England, the NHS and Clinical Commissioning Group, Town and Parish councils, Thames Water and the Environment Agency. An example of this partnership work is the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy work being undertaken for the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which has helped to evidence and map strategic infrastructure requirements for Oxfordshire over the next 15-20 years. This work has assisted in informing our Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which gives more detail on the infrastructure required to support the development proposed in the plan.

Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision

- 1. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on-site and off-site infrastructure and services.**
- 2. Planning permission will only be granted for developments where the infrastructure and services needed to meet the needs of the new development is already in place or will be provided to an agreed timescale. Infrastructure includes the requirements set out in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Leisure Study, Green Infrastructure Strategy, any relevant made Neighbourhood Development Plans, and/or infrastructure needed to mitigate the impact of the new development.**
- 3. Infrastructure and services, required as a consequence of development, and provision for their maintenance, will be sought from developers, and secured through planning obligations, conditions attached to a planning permission, other agreements, and funding through the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or other mechanisms.**

- 4. Development will also need to take account of existing infrastructure, such as electricity pylons or gas pipelines running across development sites. Early engagement with infrastructure providers will be necessary, with any changes set down and agreed at planning application stage, for example through planning conditions.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

Transport

Strategic Transport Infrastructure

7.11 As the Highway Authority, Oxfordshire County Council manages and maintains the local road network and prepares a countywide Local Transport Plan which sets out policies and strategies for developing the transport system across the county. Highways England is the government company charged with operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads, including the M40 and A34. Network Rail own the railway network, with train operating companies, mainly Great Western Railway, providing services. In association with the bus companies, this provides a network of public transport services providing sustainable transport choices across the district.

7.12 The Council works with our partners including neighbouring authorities, Highways England and the National Infrastructure Commission to reflect, support and enable the implementation of transport objectives through land-use policies and proposals. In particular, we recognise the work undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission on developing plans for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, their recommendations on progressing growth along this corridor as set out in their 2017 report 'Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc' and the government response to this report in the Autumn 2018 budget²².

²² www.gov.uk/government/publications/cambridge-milton-keynes-oxford-arc-study-government-response

²³ <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/oxford-to-cambridge-expressway/>

7.13 The Local Plan will make a positive contribution towards delivering the ambitions set out for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, but it is recognized that the key infrastructure schemes, namely the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and East-West Rail, are currently in the development stage, and their impacts on South Oxfordshire are currently not known. In particular, the decision on a route for the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway around Oxford is not due until 2020²³.



Whilst there is some uncertainty on these matters, the Council will continue to work positively with others on the development of this infrastructure, and understanding potential impacts, including linkages with development proposed in this Plan.

- 7.14 All development influences travel patterns either through new trips on the network or the re-routing of existing trips. Oxfordshire is relatively self contained in terms of trips and the level of travel to work trips made within the County is approximately 70%. Major locations of employment include Science Vale in the central area of the district around Didcot, with links to employment at Oxford to the north of the district and Reading and the Thames Valley to the south of the district. The main requirements of national policy relating to transport are to reduce the need to travel, promote more sustainable modes of transport, and improve accessibility. The location of all forms of development is therefore very important.

Policy TRANS1a: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment across the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway:

1. **The Council will work with Network Rail, Highways England, the National Infrastructure Commission, the County Council and others to:**
 - i) **plan for, and understand the impacts of changes to rail infrastructure and service improvements linked to East-West rail;**
 - ii) **plan for, and understand impacts and required mitigation associated with the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.**

Policy TRANS1b: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment:

- 1. The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to:**
 - i) deliver the transport infrastructure which improves movement in and around Didcot, including measures that help support delivery of the Didcot Garden Town;**
 - ii) support measures identified in the Local Transport Plan for the district including within the relevant area strategies;**
 - iii) support sustainable transport measures that improve access to/from proposed major development around Oxford;**
 - iv) support delivery of the safeguarded transport improvements as required to help deliver the development required in this Plan period and beyond;**
 - v) ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network, including the A34 and M40, are adequately mitigated;**
 - vi) plan for improvements in the Reading area, including a proposal for a new River Thames crossing, subject to ensuring that any traffic and environmental impacts of those measures do not result in adverse impacts on South Oxfordshire;**
 - vii) understand any wider cross-border transport impacts from development and plan for associated mitigation;**
 - viii) understand any cross-border transport impacts from development and plan for associated mitigation;**
 - ix) support the development and delivery of a new River Thames road crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town;**
 - x) support, in association with major development, the delivery of new or improved roads, such as a bypass or edge road, including sustainable transport improvements, linked where appropriate with relevant Neighbourhood Development Plans and any wider County Council highway infrastructure strategy.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

- 7.15 To enable delivery of transport network improvements required to bring forward new development, there will be a need for on-going positive engagement with infrastructure providers throughout the plan period.

Oxfordshire County Council have published their Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP 4), and it will be important that, as far as possible, the Local Plan supports delivery of identified schemes to improve highway and public transport networks. The LTP4 also supports promotion of sustainable travel, particularly within more built-up areas such as Didcot and around Oxford. New development can help fund and enable the provision of new public transport, walking and cycle links between homes, jobs, shops and other facilities such as health centres. In Didcot, development of sustainable transport improvements will need to align to development of the Didcot Garden Town. Around Oxford, the proposed major development will need to positively support delivery of measures within the Oxford Transport Strategy.



- 7.16 Over a wider cross boundary area, development and supporting infrastructure also need to be appropriately planned for as identified in the relevant Infrastructure Delivery Plans. To the south, we recognise the ambition of neighbouring authorities for additional connections across the River Thames and the potential for park and ride options into Reading, and will continue to engage positively with these authorities to better understand the forecast benefits and impacts of these schemes. In particular, any further work to progress these schemes must fully assess the traffic and environmental impacts on South Oxfordshire.
- 7.17 Road and rail connections within and through South Oxfordshire are currently experiencing significant growth in demand because of strong economic growth. This is set to continue as new homes and jobs come forward in the district and the surrounding areas. Significant new investment is already taking place, such as upgrades to junctions on the A34 Trunk Road, and electrification of the Great Western Mainline. However current studies being undertaken by Network Rail and Highways England indicate that these will only cater for part of the forecast increase in demand for travel. Further options for road and rail investment are therefore being considered in more detail, linked to the plans for growth across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc²⁴. The Council will need to continue to engage with national and local partners to explore and plan for both the economic benefits and environmental impacts of these proposals.

Policy TRANS2: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility:

- 1. The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to:**
 - i) ensure that where new development is located close to, or along, existing strategic public transport corridors, bus and/or rail services can be promoted and strengthened in response to increases in demand for travel and freight;**
 - ii) plan positively for rail improvements within the area that support improved connectivity to areas of new development;**
 - iii) ensure new development is designed to encourage walking and cycling, not only within the development, but also to nearby facilities, employment and public transport hubs;**
 - iv) support provision of measures which improve public transport (including Park & Ride), cycling and walking networks within and between towns and villages in the district;**
 - v) support, where relevant, sustainable transport improvements in the wider Didcot Garden Town area and in and around**

²⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxford-to-cambridge-expressway-strategic-study-stage-3-report and www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2016-documents

Oxford, particularly where they improve access to strategic development locations;

- vi) promote and support improvements to the transport network which increase safety, improve air quality, encourage use of sustainable modes of transport and/or make our towns and villages more attractive;**
- vii) adopt an approach to the provision and management of car parking aimed at improving the attraction of our town and village centres;**
- viii) ensure the needs of all users, including those with impaired mobility are planned for in development of transport improvements.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

7.18 It is recognised that new development can have both a positive role in improving and funding sustainable transport network connections, and also through the provision of good urban design to encourage walking and cycling from new development to shops, schools and other facilities. This will be particularly important in significant growth areas including Didcot Garden Town, where the Council will work with the Vale of White Horse District Council, to ensure that plans for cross border development and infrastructure are co-ordinated appropriately.

7.19 In Neighbourhood Development Plan areas, it will be important to ensure that sustainable transport movements are incorporated into Neighbourhood Development Plans. These improvements will also need to be complimented by relevant and reasonable upgrades to surrounding highway networks to mitigate impacts of development, which should include taking into account air quality considerations where relevant. The provision and management of car parks will be key given that within a rural district such as South Oxfordshire the car will continue to play a role in providing transport accessibility for many. It will also be important to ensure the sustainable transport network around Oxford is strengthened and improved to take account of the proposed strategic development here.

7.20 To enable further delivery of key transport infrastructure that will support development within the plan, there is a need to safeguard land to ensure that any proposals for development do not prejudice their future delivery. Those schemes identified as needing land for safeguarding will help support delivery of Local Plan growth and particularly in the Didcot area where it will support committed

The provision and management of car parks will be key given that within a rural District such as South Oxfordshire the car will continue to play a role in providing transport accessibility for many

growth in the Vale of White Horse District. At present, some of these schemes are at relatively early stages of development and therefore areas of safeguarding are relatively broad. The District will continue to work in association with others, including Oxfordshire County Council to develop these schemes in more detail, including understanding any environmental and archaeological impacts and associated mitigation.

Policy TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes:

- 1. Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:**
 - Clifton Hampden bypass
 - A new Thames road crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town
 - Didcot Northern Perimeter Road
 - Science Bridge, Didcot
 - (A4130/ B4493) Didcot Central transport corridor improvements
 - Southern Didcot Spine Road
 - A4130 road safety improvements
 - A4074/ B4015 (Golden Balls) Junction Improvements
 - A bypass for Watlington
 - A bypass for Benson
 - A bypass for Southern Abingdon
 - A new Park and Ride site at Sandford to the south-east of Oxford.
- 2. New development in these areas should be carefully designed having regard to matters such as building layout, noise insulation, landscaping, the historic environment and means of access.**
- 3. Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact upon the delivery of the identified schemes should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.**
- 4. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the transport schemes listed above.**
- 5. As the options for the schemes progress, the impact of the schemes will be subject to thorough assessment. This will include**

full environmental and archaeological assessments working in association with the relevant statutory bodies. Where schemes are located in areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3, a flood risk sequential test and the exception test should be undertaken as part of the appraisal process.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

- 7.21 Transport infrastructure improvements will be required to support the demand for travel arising from proposed new development, and the need for new measures will be informed by transport evidence which supports the Local Plan growth strategy. The Council will therefore continue to work with partners, including Oxfordshire County Council, to assess requirements through use of transport modelling tools and assessment of sustainable transport improvements. The evidence developed to date has identified the benefits of delivering a number of key highway infrastructure schemes, as well as several sustainable transport improvements²⁵. This, in turn, builds on priorities identified in the Local Transport Plan 4, including the Science Vale Area Transport Strategy²⁶.
- 7.22 Plans which illustrate the extent of the safeguarded transport schemes identified in policy TRANS3 are shown in Appendix 5.

Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans

- 7.23 As new development comes forward, there will be a need to look in more detail at the specific transport and access impacts associated with individual sites. Where such developments would generate significant amounts of travel, there will be need for a transport assessment for the site. The determination of whether significant amounts of travel are generated will be dealt with on a case by case basis. This will need to review both the transport implications of development, as well as appropriate mitigation. Especially important will be promotion of measures that enable sustainable transport choices, and where relevant a travel plan will be required to demonstrate how such measures will be delivered.
- 7.24 The scoping of transport assessments should be done in agreement with Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority, and be in line with latest county and Planning Practice Guidance²⁷. It is also important that applicants

²⁵ www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies

²⁶ www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/ltp4-area-strategies

²⁷ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

take account of requirements for infrastructure in the area as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will be reviewed and updated as required. In scoping of transport impacts, there will also need to be consideration of the development site location, recognising that in more rural areas the opportunity for take up of sustainable transport choices may be less, and that more innovative measures may be needed. In addition, there may be a need to take account of the cumulative impacts of development, for example where this relates to delivery of particular infrastructure improvements.

Policy TRANS4: Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans

- 1. Proposals for new developments which have significant transport implications that either arise from the development proposed or cumulatively with other proposals will need to submit a transport assessment or a transport statement, and where relevant a Travel Plan. These documents will need to take into account Oxfordshire County Council guidance and Planning Practice Guidance²⁸ and where appropriate, the scope should be agreed with Highways England²⁹.**
- 2. Appropriate provision for works and/ or contributions will be required towards providing an adequate level of accessibility by all modes of transport and mitigating the impacts on the transport network. Consideration should be given to the cumulative impact of relevant development both in South Oxfordshire and adjacent authorities, and how this links to planned infrastructure improvements. This should take into account the latest evidence base work, which, where relevant, will inform the scoping of the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.**
- 3. The transport assessment or transport statement should, where relevant:**
 - i) illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes of transport;**
 - ii) show the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site;**
 - iii) detail the proposed measures to improve access by public transport, cycling and walking to reduce the need for car travel and reduce transport impacts;**
 - iv) illustrate the impact on the highway network and the impact of proposed mitigation measures where necessary;**

²⁸ www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/transport-new-developments

²⁹ Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development (DfT Circular 02/2013) at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development

- v) **include a travel plan (that considers all relevant forms of transport including accessible transport for disabled people) where appropriate; and**
 - vi) **outline the approach to parking provision.**
- 4. Where relevant, evidence obtained from this detailed work will inform the number and phasing of homes to be permitted on proposed development sites and will be established (and potentially conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the Highway Authority.**
- 5. In accordance with the guidance, travel plans will be required, implemented and monitored for all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

7.25 In planning for new development, there are several key considerations in relation to transport access and movement that need to be accommodated at both the design and delivery stage. For most new development, this will be looked at as part of the transport assessment, and where relevant a site travel plan. The travel plan will need to take into account the needs of all those travelling to/from the new development, including disabled people, and their need for accessible transport. Transport also needs careful consideration as part of the wider master planning and site design development. For example, how parking provision is planned and delivered will need to take account of the urban design principles set out in Chapter 9 of the plan.

7.26 Promotion of sustainable transport access and provision of facilities on-site will also need to take account of wider environmental impacts and issues such as air quality, particularly where Air Quality Management areas are in place.

Policy TRANS5: Consideration of Development Proposals

- 1. Proposals for all types of development will, where appropriate:**
- i) **provide for a safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network;**
 - ii) **provide safe and convenient routes for cyclists and pedestrians, both within the development, and including**

- links to rights of way and other off-site walk and cycle routes where relevant;**
- iii) provide for covered, secure and safe cycle parking, complemented by other facilities to support cycling where relevant;**
 - iv) be designed to facilitate access to high quality public transport routes, including safe walking routes to nearby bus stops or new bus stops;**
 - v) provide for appropriate public transport infrastructure;**
 - vi) be served by an adequate road network which can accommodate traffic without creating traffic hazards or damage to the environment;**
 - vii) where new roads, pedestrian routes, cycleways and street lighting are to be constructed as part of the development, they should be constructed to adoptable standards and be completed as soon as they are required to serve the development;**
 - viii) make adequate provision for those whose mobility is impaired;**
 - ix) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other low-emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations;**
 - x) provide for loading, unloading, circulation and turning space;**
 - xi) be designed to enable the servicing of properties by refuse collection vehicles;**
 - xii) provide for parking for disabled people;**
 - xiii) provide for the parking of vehicles in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards, unless specific evidence is provided to justify otherwise; and**
 - xiv) provide facilities to support the take up of electric and/ or low-emission vehicles.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, 6 & 8.

7.27 Demand for use of rail services is growing strongly, and there are plans to significantly improve rail services operating to and through South Oxfordshire³⁰. In the short-term, there is a focus on enhancing rail services to Didcot, complemented by measures to expand the station and improve access by car, bus, walking and cycling. Any upgrades in this area will need to take account of proposals developed as part of Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan. In the longer-term there is likely to be a need for upgrades at Culham and other

³⁰ www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Western-Route-Study-Final-1.pdf

smaller stations such as Cholsey and Goring-on-Thames in association with significant infrastructure investment and to serve new areas of homes and jobs. At strategic level, this needs to be informed by assessment of capacity and options for improvements across Oxfordshire and the wider area. Examples of upgrades could be expansion or enhancements of car or cycle parking, and are likely to be informed by development of station travel plans. There will be a need to ensure that such improvements are delivered in a way that do not significantly impact on the environment or surrounding residential areas.

Policy TRANS6: Rail

- 1. Where required, and not covered within the scope of permitted development, planning permission will be granted for proposals which:**
 - i) improve rail services in South Oxfordshire;**
 - ii) improve access to rail services including for disabled people; and/or**
 - iii) improve facilities at railway stations such as car and cycle parking and upgrades to interchanges provided that there are no significant adverse effects on the environment or amenities of residents.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

7.28 It is recognised that development that results in significant increases in the movements of lorries, such as logistics operations needs careful consideration in planning terms, and that in general these types of operations are more appropriate in locations with good access to strategic transport networks. Detailed transport assessment work will need to be undertaken to understand environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation, and wherever possible sustainable transport access should be promoted for staff and visitors.

Policy TRANS7: Development Generating New Lorry Movements

- 1. Proposals for development leading to significant increases in lorry movements, such as freight distribution depots should only be permitted in locations where:**
 - i) any increase in lorry movements can be appropriately accommodated on the surrounding road network;**

- ii) **the opportunities for sustainable transport access have been maximised; and**
- iii) **the development does not result in adverse environmental effects on the surrounding area.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

7.29 Provision of improved electronic communication across the district and to new development will be critical to supporting continued economic development in the district, and supporting growth of high-tech industries. In line with the outcome of the central government's 'Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review' and section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be in particular be a need to provide full fibre broadband to new development coming forward over the next few years³¹. From a transport perspective, provision of high quality broadband will also be important in supporting new ways of working such as flexible hours and working at home that help reduce pressure on the transport network, particularly at peak times, and support the vitality of our towns and villages.

Communications

Policy INF2: Electronic Communications

1. **The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to promote faster, more reliable and more comprehensive coverage of electronic communications.**
2. **Proposals for all new development should ensure appropriate infrastructure is provided during construction, sufficient to enable all development to be connected to full fibre broadband without any post development works.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, & 6.

7.30 The availability of advanced ICT infrastructure including high-speed broadband access is important for the success of the local economy and skills development.

³¹ www.gov.uk/government/news/forging-a-full-fibre-broadband-and-5g-future-for-all, and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Policy INF3: Telecommunications Technology

- 1. In accordance with Government advice, if a proposed installation meets the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines for public exposure then it will not be necessary to consider further health aspects and concerns.**
- 2. Prior approval (or planning permission where required) for the siting and appearance of antennae will be granted for telecommunications installations provided that the following criteria are met:**
 - i) the siting and appearance of the proposed apparatus and associated structures should seek to minimise impact on the visual amenity, character or appearance of the surrounding area in accordance with design policies and where appropriate heritage and/or ecological policies;**
 - ii) if on a building, apparatus and associated structures should be sited and designed to seek to minimise impact to the external appearance of the host building;**
 - iii) if proposing a new mast, it should be demonstrated that the applicant has fully explored the possibility of erecting apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures.**
 - iv) when considering applications for telecommunications development, the Council will have regard to the operational requirements of telecommunications networks and the technical limitations of the technology.**
- 3. Any planning permission will contain conditions to ensure that when any facility ceases to be used, becomes obsolete, or falls into disrepair, the demolition and removal of all works is undertaken, both above and below ground, and the reinstatement of the site to its original condition or to an agreed specification, will be required.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6 & 7.

7.31 Telecommunications are of great importance to the economy and we need to accommodate the growth of new and existing systems. However, owing to the potentially obtrusive nature of telecommunication installations, wherever legally and technically possible, we will encourage the sharing of existing masts, buildings and other structures such as electricity pylons to limit

In addition, careful consideration will need to be given to any impacts on archaeological sites, conservation areas or buildings of architectural or historic significance

the proliferation of unsightly development, particularly in visually sensitive locations. To achieve this, we will encourage pre-development and pre-application discussions between operators and will expect confirmation that the cumulative exposure will not exceed the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) standards. Where the sharing of a mast will require it to be extended, we may consider the sharing of an existing site to be preferable in environmental and visual amenity terms. In proving a need for new telecommunications development, applications should be supported by technical evidence such as radio coverage plots.

- 7.32 The future telecommunication requirements of a new development should be given careful consideration at the design stage to minimise visual intrusion, not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents, allow for easy maintenance and future growth. In addition, careful consideration will need to be given to any impacts on archaeological sites, conservation areas or buildings of architectural or historic significance. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that there are no suitable alternative locations before consideration will be given to proposals within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Because telecommunications is a rapidly expanding and evolving technology it can become obsolete. Redundant apparatus should be removed.

Water

Policy INF4: Water Resources

- 1. All development proposals must demonstrate that there is or will be adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve the whole development. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users. When there is a capacity constraint and improvements to off-site infrastructure are not programmed, the developer should set out how the infrastructure improvements will be completed prior to occupation of the development. For phased development proposals, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and water treatment capacity.**
- 2. New developments are required to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres/head/day (l/h/d) for new homes.**

- 3. Proposals that increase the requirement for water will only be permitted where adequate water resources either already exist or can be provided without detriment to existing abstraction, river flows, groundwater flow to and from springs, water quality, biodiversity or other land uses.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 6 & 7.

- 7.33 Demand for water in the district continues to increase and it is appropriate, therefore, that new development minimises the pressure on existing resources. Measures to reduce the demand for water should be incorporated into new development. Where there is an adverse impact on water resources, including groundwater, planning conditions and planning obligations may be imposed to mitigate the adverse effects of the development and to secure water conservation measures. The Water Cycle Study identifies areas of South Oxfordshire where water supply and/or wastewater infrastructure or treatment upgrades are required to serve proposed growth. These constraints, and the timing of measures to address them, should be taken into account when phasing new development. This is particularly important for development within Chalgrove, Didcot, Thame Wheatley and around Oxford which have been identified as having significant constraints.
- 7.34 Thames Water is the water and wastewater service provider for South Oxfordshire. Thames Water is responsible for the planning and implementation required to provide a secure supply of water to their customers which supports future growth. Thames Water will therefore advise on the capacity of their network to supply water to a new development. The Environment Agency has a wider role to regulate the use of water and licenses water for use by private abstractors and water companies. The Council will continue to work with both organisations to ensure water matters are appropriately evidenced and taken account of in growth plans.



Welcome to
Goring Lock

**LOCK KEEPER
ON DUTY**

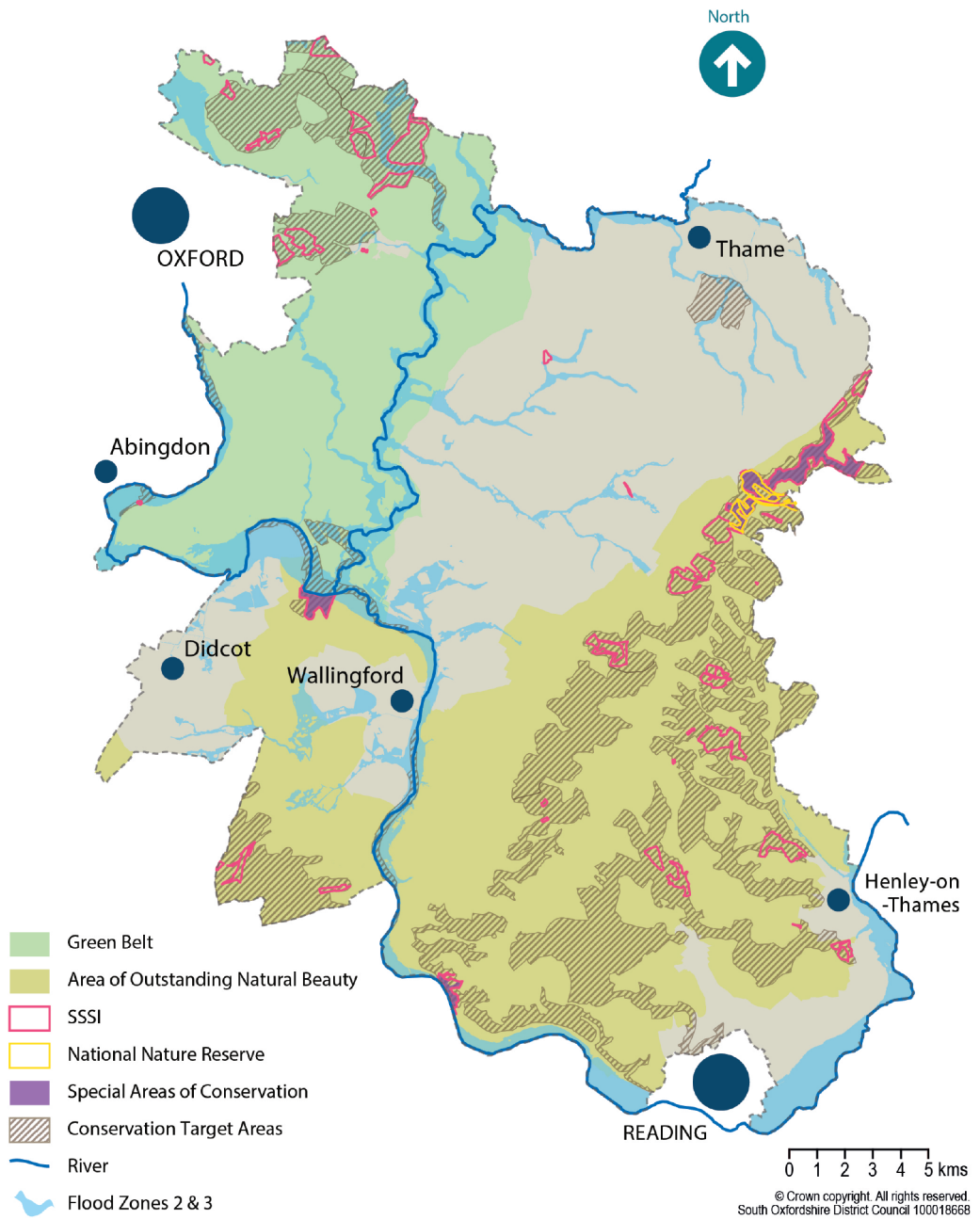
All vessels using these waterways must be registered with the Environment Agency
For further information visit
www.gov.uk/register-a-boat

8 NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

- 8.1 South Oxfordshire has a beautiful natural and built environment, which makes the district an attractive place to live and work. This environment also attracts visitors who contribute to the local economy.
- 8.2 The landscape of the district includes rolling downland, wooded hills, ancient woodlands, historic parkland, low-lying farmland, riverside meadows and strategic environmental assets including the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns AONB, the Green Belt and the River Thames and its tributaries. We encourage effective management of the AONB and the Green Belt.
- 8.3 The whole District is rich in biodiversity, including international, national and locally protected sites and habitats. Maintaining sustainable agricultural land and practices is important in preserving the district's rural character and landscape.
- 8.4 The valley and tributaries of the River Thames are highly attractive features of the landscape and its special visual and environmental qualities are for the most part unspoilt. The Thames Valley is noted for its peace, tranquillity, biodiversity and cultural heritage, which is essential to preserve. The long-distance Thames Path and the river itself provide a focus for recreation and leisure activities.
- 8.5 We will seek to ensure that the planning and design of development not only protects water supply and quality, but also protects and, where appropriate restores, natural river form and function, whilst maximising resistance and resilience to flood risk.
- 8.6 The district has a rich cultural history that has provided South Oxfordshire with over 3,500 listed buildings, 52 scheduled monuments, 13 Registered Parks and Gardens, a Registered Battlefield, and 72 Conservation Areas. Sadly in 2017 there are 15 sites on the Heritage at Risk Register. Parts of the district's natural environment and some historic assets are of national significance. These heritage assets³² help establish the distinctive character of South Oxfordshire. We seek to ensure the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of all our heritage assets as they make a positive contribution to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality.

³² Further information on nationally protected historic buildings is available on the Historic England website (www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/). Further information on Heritage at Risk is also available (www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/) The lists are updated periodically.



Landscape and countryside

Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside

1. The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBS):
 - Development in an AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible, enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB
 - Development in an AONB will only be permitted where it is appropriate to the economic and environmental wellbeing of the area or promotes understanding or enjoyment of the AONB
 - Major development in an AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest
 - Development proposals that could affect the special qualities of an AONB (including the setting of an AONB) either individually or in combination with other developments, should be accompanied by a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. AONB management plans will be a material consideration in decision making.

2. South Oxfordshire's landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's valued landscapes, in particular:
 - i) Trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands), hedgerows and field boundaries;
 - ii) Irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland;
 - iii) The landscapes, waterscapes, cultural heritage and user enjoyment of the River Thames, its tributaries and flood plains;
 - iv) Other watercourse and water bodies;
 - v) The landscape setting of settlements or the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;
 - vi) topographical features;
 - vii) areas or features of cultural and historic value;
 - viii) important views and visually sensitive skylines; and

ix) aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquility, wildness, intactness, rarity, scale, enclosure.

3. Development which supports economic growth in rural areas will be supported provided it conserves and enhances the landscape, countryside and rural areas.

4. The Council will seek the retention of important hedgerows (according to the definition within the Hedgerow Regulations 1997). Where retention is not possible and a proposal seeks the removal of a hedgerow, the Council will require compensatory planting with a mixture of native hedgerow species.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2,3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Significant weight is also given to protecting non-designated landscapes, the countryside and green infrastructure assets from harm

8.7 South Oxfordshire is a mainly rural District. Mid-year population estimates for 2014 from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) rank the district as 249th out of 326 districts in terms of population density, with an average of 202 people per square kilometre (the national average for England is 417 people per square kilometre).

8.8 The countryside and its relationship with our settlements contributes significantly to the district's character and is highly valued. Development should conserve and where possible, enhance the landscape setting of settlements. The Council will use its evidence base on the district's landscape which currently includes the Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Capacity Assessments and the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, to assess and determine development proposals.

8.9 Whilst supporting suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of local communities, great weight is given to conserving and enhancing the intrinsic character and beauty of our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection. Significant weight is also given to protecting non-designated landscapes, the countryside and green infrastructure assets from harm.

Trees and hedgerows in the landscape

8.10 Trees and hedgerows, individually and collectively, can make an important contribution to biodiversity and the landscape. They also absorb atmospheric pollution and have a beneficial influence on the climate.

- 8.11 The Council will protect trees of significant amenity value which are worthy of retention and considered to be at risk, through Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas and planning conditions as appropriate, except in woodland subject to a Forestry Commission management agreement. When considering applications to carry out work to trees protected by an Order or Conservation Area, the Council will take account of good arboricultural practice, the effect of the trees on nearby properties, and the contribution they make to the visual quality of the area.

Biodiversity

Policy ENV2: Biodiversity - Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species

- 1. The highest level of protection will be given to sites of international nature conservation importance (Special Areas of Conservation). Development that is likely to result in a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on such sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the conservation of Habitat and Species regulations 2010 (as amended).**
- 2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are of national importance. Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either on its own or in combination with other developments) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh any harm to the special interest features and the SSSI's contribution to the local ecological network. In such circumstances, measures should be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements) that would mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.**
- 3. Development likely to result, either directly or indirectly to the loss, deterioration or harm to:**
 - **Local Wildlife Sites**
 - **Local Nature reserves**
 - **Priority Habitats and Species**
 - **Legally Protected Species**
 - **Local Geological Sites**

- **Ecological Networks (conservation target Areas)**
- **Important or ancient hedges or hedgerows**
- **Ancient woodland and veteran trees**

will only be permitted if:

- i) the need for, and benefits of the development in the proposed location outweighs the adverse effect on the interests;**
 - ii) it can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the interests; and**
 - iii) measures will be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate or as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.**
- 4. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) will be refused planning permission, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons justifying the granting of planning permission.**
 - 5. Where development has the potential to affect a proposed wildlife site the developer must undertake surveys and assessments to determine whether the site meets the criteria for Local Wildlife Site status.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 & 7.

- 8.12 The level of protection and mitigation should be proportionate to the status of the habitat or species and its importance individually and as part of a wider network.**

Policy ENV3: Biodiversity – Non Designated Sites, Habitats and Species

- 1. Development that will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district will be supported. All development should provide a net gain in biodiversity where possible. As a minimum, there should be no net loss of biodiversity. All proposals should be supported by evidence to demonstrate a biodiversity net gain using a recognised biodiversity accounting metric.**

- 2. **Development proposals which would result in a net loss of biodiversity will only be considered if it can demonstrated that alternatives which avoid impacts on biodiversity have been fully explored in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy*. In the absence of alternative sites or layouts, development proposals must include adequate mitigation measures to achieve a net gain of biodiversity. Where harm cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated, appropriate compensation measures will be sought, as a last resort, through planning conditions or planning obligations (depending on the circumstances of each application) to offset the loss by contributing to appropriate biodiversity projects to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.**

- 3. **Planning permission will only be granted if impacts on biodiversity can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated fully.**

*For more information please refer to section 5.2 of BS 42020:2013

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 & 7.

8.13 Adequate information must be provided, prior to planning decisions being made, to assess the impact on biodiversity where reasonably likely to occur. The use of conditions to require the submission of ecological information, after the grant of planning permission, will only be considered in wholly exceptional circumstances where the need for such surveys could not have reasonably been foreseen by the applicant or the Council.

8.14 South Oxfordshire supports a rich variety of natural habitats and species. Many of these habitats are of national and international significance. These include:

Table 8a: Natural habitats and species

International	4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
National	38 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
Local	150 confirmed or proposed Local Wildlife Sites ³³ 4 Local Nature Reserves 5 local Geologically Important Sites

8.15 In addition, there are numerous other important natural habitats, which are priority habitats of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity (under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act)³⁴.

³³ A current list of Local Wildlife Sites is available on the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre website (www.tverc.org/cms/). The list is updated periodically so should be referred to for the most up to date list of conservation sites

³⁴ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents

³⁵ www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/

- 8.16 In Oxfordshire a series of Conservation Target Areas (CTA)³⁵ have been identified which form the Ecological Network for the County. The CTA provide the best opportunities for targeted conservation action. They connect and buffer important habitats and species assemblages and have been designed to provide resilience to future climate change. Development proposals that would affect the integrity of these networks will be resisted or discouraged.
- 8.17 Development should contribute to the conservation of ecological networks, protected sites and priority habitats. All development should consider how it can improve biodiversity, and loss can only be permitted when there are unavoidable impacts that cannot be mitigated and compensation is provided to achieve a net gain. We will apply a form of Biodiversity Accounting to help understand if development proposals will achieve no net loss.

Biodiversity: Watercourses

Policy ENV4: Watercourses

- 1. Development of land that contains or is adjacent to a watercourse must protect and where possible, enhance the function and setting of the watercourse and its biodiversity. As a last resort development should provide mitigation for any unavoidable impacts.**
- 2. Development should include a minimum 10m buffer zone along both sides of the watercourse to create a corridor favourable to the enhancement of biodiversity.**
- 3. Proposals should avoid the culverting of any watercourse. Opportunities taken to remove culverts will be supported.**
- 4. Outside settlements, proposals for mooring stages will not be permitted. Proposals for posts, earthworks or facing riverbanks with piles and planking will not be permitted except under exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the Environment Agency. Where it is necessary to protect a riverbank from erosion, the protective measures must be designed to maintain and enhance the special character of the river and its environment, including its biodiversity**
- 5. Development which is located within 20m of a watercourse will require a construction management plan to be agreed**

with the Council before commencement of work to ensure that the watercourse will be satisfactorily protected from damage, disturbance or pollution.

- 6. Sites for new development with existing culverts will be expected to investigate the feasibility of de-culverting the watercourse. Where bridges are proposed as an alternative to culverting, the construction method should take into account the importance of maintaining an obstruction free bank for wildlife.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 & 7

Development proposals should aim to provide enhancements to the watercourse that benefit biodiversity and other ecosystem services

- 8.18 Watercourses are vital to biodiversity, provide a unique range of habitats, act as wildlife corridors, and form an important element of South Oxfordshire's ecological network. They make a significant contribution towards the character of our landscape and form an important part of green infrastructure. They provide vital ecosystem services, help improve water quality, provide drainage and flood management and provide green space for informal recreation. Of specific note are South Oxfordshire's globally rare chalk streams which support special wildlife habitats and species.
- 8.19 The health of all watercourses is under pressure from a variety of issues including abstraction, pollution and increased disturbance. It is essential that watercourses are positively integrated into the design of new development from the outset to protect their ecological importance and retain and enhance biodiversity. Integrating watercourses into development can provide attractive riverside settings, natural areas of green infrastructure and areas for informal recreation.
- 8.20 All development proposals adjacent to watercourses should avoid damaging impacts and provide mitigation for any unavoidable impacts. Development proposals should aim to provide enhancements to the watercourse that benefit biodiversity and other ecosystem services.

Watercourse Buffer zones

- 8.21 Watercourse buffer zones are required to avoid disturbance associated with development. The buffer zone should be a minimum of 10 metres wide, measured from the top of each bank. Larger developments should provide further buffering which can be used for informal recreation.

The buffer zone should not form domestic land or parking areas of any kind, but may form part of the requisite green infrastructure for new developments

8.22 Buffer zones:

- i) Allow the watercourse to undergo the natural processes of erosion, deposition and natural changes to the bank profile without necessitating intrusive and harmful bank protection works
- ii) Provide space for semi-aquatic and terrestrial habitats which are important to the lifecycle of many species
- iii) Create, maintain and enhance wildlife corridors which can also be used as part of green infrastructure networks
- iv) Prevent permanent overshadowing of the water by buildings
- v) Reduce the risk of pollution caused by run-off
- vi) Reduce incidences of flooding by allowing water storage and the natural drainage of rainwater.

8.23 Proposals should include long term management plans for the buffer zone which retain and enhance its biodiversity value and should seek to reinstate buffer zones where previous land uses or development have not provided this. Buffer zones should be reserved as a natural or semi-natural habitat, free from built development and formal landscaping, planted with native species that are naturally found by local riversides. Soft infrastructure such as pedestrian footpaths should be kept to a minimum. The buffer zone should not form domestic land or parking areas of any kind, but may form part of the requisite green infrastructure for new developments.

8.24 Where a 10m wide buffer zone is not considered possible by the Council, proposals should be accompanied by detailed plans to show how the land will be managed to promote biodiversity and how maintenance access to the watercourse will be created.

8.25 It should be noted that in addition to any planning permission, consent is required from either the Environment Agency or the Lead Local Flood Authority to carry out any work within 8 metres of a watercourse.

Culverts

8.26 Culverting can have a huge impact on the ecology of the watercourse by removing habitat and fragmenting the channel and its river corridor. All opportunities to de-culvert a watercourse should be taken. Culverting should be avoided as:

- i) the absence of sunlight, natural banks and vegetation means that culverts are not usually able to sustain significant life;
- ii) they are often protected by screens, which usually makes the culvert impenetrable to animals such as otters, water voles, fish and invertebrates. This can prevent the movement of species along the river corridor and lead

- to animals being forced onto roads causing animal deaths and road traffic incidents;
- iii) they can significantly increase the risk of flooding due to the risk of blockage and changed channel dynamics; and
 - iv) maintenance is complicated due to restricted access.

Green Infrastructure

Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

- 1. Development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional Green Infrastructure and protect or enhance existing Green Infrastructure.**
- 2. Proposals should:**
 - i) protect, conserve, enhance the district's Green Infrastructure;**
 - ii) provide an appropriate level of Green Infrastructure where a requirement has been identified for additional provision either within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan, AONB Management Plan or the Habitats Regulations Assessment;**
 - iii) avoid the loss, fragmentation, severance or other negative impact on the function of Green Infrastructure;**
 - iv) provide appropriate mitigation where there would be an adverse impact on Green Infrastructure; and**
 - v) provide an appropriate replacement where it is necessary for development to take place on areas of Green Infrastructure.**
- 3. All Green Infrastructure provision should be designed to meet the quality standards set out within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan, or the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan. Consideration should also be given to inclusive access using such guides as the Fieldfare Trust 'Countryside for All – A good practice guide to Disabled People's Access in the Countryside' and the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. Where new Green Infrastructure is provided, applicants should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure its ongoing management and maintenance.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 & 7

8.27 Green Infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space in both urban and rural areas, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Such networks can also include “blue” infrastructure features such as ponds, lakes, reservoirs, streams and rivers. When assessing planning applications, we will take into account the findings of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) to define new Green Infrastructure requirements and how they should be delivered. Where new Green Infrastructure is identified as a mitigation requirement within the HRA this must be delivered by the applicant to meet requirements.

Historic Environment and Heritage Assets

Policy ENV6: Historic Environment

- 1. The Council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the District’s historic environment. This includes all heritage assets including historic buildings and structures, Conservation Areas, landscapes and archaeology.**
- 2. Proposals for new development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Proposals that have an impact on heritage assets (designated and non-designated) will be supported particularly where they:**
 - i) conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage asset and settings. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that will be given to its conservation;**
 - ii) make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (through high standards of design, reflecting its significance, including through the use of appropriate materials and construction techniques);**
 - iii) make a positive contribution towards wider benefits;**
 - iv) provide a viable future use for a heritage asset that is consistent with the conservation of its significance; and/or**
 - v) protect a heritage asset that is currently at risk.**
- 3. The Council will work with landowners, developers, the community, Historic England and other stakeholders to:**

- i) ensure that vacant historic buildings are appropriately re-used to prevent deterioration of condition;**
- ii) ensure that alterations (internal or external to the fabric of the building eg. to improve energy efficiency), are balanced alongside the need to retain the integrity of the historic environment and to respect the character and significance of the asset;**
- iii) identify criteria for assessing non-designated heritage assets and maintaining a list of such assets as Locally Listed Buildings;**
- iv) encourage Heritage Partnership Agreements, particularly for Listed Buildings on any 'at risk' register;**
- v) encourage better understanding of the significance of scheduled monuments on the "Heritage at Risk" Register and to aid in their protection;**
- vi) seek to reduce the number of buildings on the "Heritage at Risk" Register;**
- vii) better understand the significance of Conservation Areas in the district through producing Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans; and**
- viii) support Neighbourhood Development Plans where they seek to assess their heritage assets and add to the evidence base.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, 6 & 7

8.28 Heritage assets may be classified as either 'designated' or 'non-designated' and both can be important to consider through the planning process. Heritage assets can include listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, archaeological sites and other assets.

8.29 Development proposals at an early stage should refer to sources of information on the historic environment such as the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record, The National Heritage List for England, the South Oxfordshire Heritage Impact Assessment, and, where relevant, Conservation Area Character Appraisals to ensure that proposals are based on an understanding of the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected. Development proposals should also take into account the principles set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and other relevant guidance.

8.30 In some circumstances, further surveys and analysis may be required prior to any application being determined. Heritage Statements, Statements of

Significance, and Impact Assessments should be produced in line with current best practice and relevant national guidance.

- 8.31 The Council will monitor buildings or other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk through discussions with owners and willingness to consider positively development schemes that would ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers.

Listed Buildings

Policy ENV7: Listed Buildings

- 1. Proposals for development, including change of use, that involve any alteration of, addition to or partial demolition of a listed building or within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of a listed building will be expected to:**
 - i) conserve, enhance or better reveal those elements which contribute to the heritage significance and/or its setting;**
 - ii) respect any features of special architectural or historic interest, including, where relevant, the historic curtilage or context, such as burgage plots, or its value within a group and/or its setting, such as the importance of a street frontage or traditional shopfronts; and**
 - iii) be sympathetic to the listed building and its setting in terms of its siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form, in order to retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design, and in accordance with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.**

- 2. Where development proposals affecting the significance of a listed building or its setting will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance they will only be supported where it is justified that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. This will be demonstrated by:**
 - i) the greater the harm to the significance of the Listed Building, the greater justification and public benefit that will be required [before the application could gain support];**
 - ii) providing exceptional circumstances exist for the demolition of a listed building; and**

iii) **minimising any identified harm or loss to the Listed Building through mitigation.**

- 3. Changes of use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the new use can be accommodated without any adverse effect on the significance of the building and its setting.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.



8.32 A “listed building” is a building, object or structure fixed to the building or within the building’s curtilage that has been judged to be of national importance in terms of architectural or historic interest and included on a special register, called the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

8.33 When a building is listed, it is listed in its entirety, which means that both the exterior and the interior are protected which includes interior features and fabric such as staircases, panelling, roof structures, floors, walls, fireplaces, doors etc. In addition, any object or structure fixed to the building, and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948, are treated as being part of the listed building.

Conservation Areas

Policy ENV8: Conservation Areas

1. **Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must conserve or enhance its special interest, character, setting and appearance. Development will be expected to:**
 - i) **contribute to the Conservation Area's special interest and its relationship within its setting. The special characteristics of the Conservation Area (such as existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, burgage plots, traditional shopfronts and signs, farm groups, medieval townscapes, archaeological features, historic routes etc.) should be preserved;**
 - ii) **take into account important views within, into or out of the Conservation Area and show that these would be retained and unharmed;**
 - iii) **respect the local character and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area in terms of the development's: siting; size; scale; height; alignment; materials and finishes (including colour and texture); proportions; design; and form, in accordance with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal;**
 - iv) **be sympathetic to the original curtilage of buildings and pattern of development that forms part of the historic interest of the Conservation Area;**
 - v) **be sympathetic to important spaces such as paddocks, greens, gardens and other gaps or spaces between buildings which make a positive contribution to the pattern of development in the Conservation Area;**
 - vi) **ensure the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and/or**
 - vii) **ensure no loss of, or harm to any building or feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.**

2. **Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a Conservation Area, consent will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.**

- 3. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a Conservation Area, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.**
- 4. Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of structures which make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be encouraged to prevent harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.**
- 5. Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance. In some circumstances, further survey, analysis and recording will be made a condition of consent.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

- 8.34 Conservation Areas are described in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Inevitably, these areas will vary greatly. Pleasant groups of buildings, open spaces, trees, an historic settlement pattern, a village green, or features of archaeological interest, may all contribute to the special character of an area, and it is that character, rather than individual buildings, which Conservation Area legislation seeks to preserve and enhance.
- 8.35 A feature of many towns are ‘burgage plots’. Surviving patterns of burgage plots have considerable historic and archaeological significance and contribute much to the character of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford. They are among the principal historic assets of these towns and should be conserved.
- 8.36 When undertaking conservation area appraisals the opportunity will be taken to produce and update lists of locally important non-designated heritage assets and a condition survey of listed buildings.

Archaeology

Policy ENV9: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments

1. **Development must protect the site and setting of Scheduled Monuments or nationally important designated or undesignated archaeological remains.**
2. **Applicants will be expected to undertake an assessment of appropriate detail to determine whether the development site is known to, or is likely to, contain archaeological remains. Proposals must show the development proposals have had regard to any such remains.**
3. **Where the assessment indicates archaeological remains on site, and development could disturb or adversely affect archaeological remains and/or their setting, applicants will be expected to:**
 - i) **submit an appropriate archaeological desk-based assessment;**
or
 - ii) **undertake a field evaluation (conducted by a suitably qualified archaeological organisation), where necessary.**
4. **Nationally important archaeological remains (whether scheduled or demonstrably of equivalent significance) should be preserved in situ. Non-designated archaeological sites or deposits of significance equal to that of a nationally important monument will be assessed as though those sites or deposits are designated.**
5. **Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of such remains consent will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.**
6. **Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of such remains, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.**
7. **For other archaeological remains, the effect of a development proposal on the significance of the remains, either directly or indirectly, will be taken into account in determining the application.**

- 8. In exceptional cases, where harm to or loss of significance to the asset is considered to be justified, the harm should be minimised, and mitigated by a programme of archaeological investigation, including excavation, recording and analysis. Planning permission will not be granted until this programme has been submitted to, and approved by, the Council and development should not commence until these works have been satisfactorily undertaken by an appropriately qualified organisation. The results and analysis of findings subsequent to the investigation should be published and made available to the relevant local and county authorities.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

8.37 Our archaeological resource has great social, economic, cultural and educational value for the community and this potential can be developed through suitable management and interpretation. Some archaeological sites and monuments are designated as Scheduled Monuments and are legally protected under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.

8.38 A network of historic routes also exist as archaeological features in the district, ranging from pre-historic tracks, Roman roads, medieval coffin ways, salt roads, and droveways, to later turnpike roads. These routes are integrated into the district's landscape and serve an important function in linking settlements and forming a unique setting for the district's distinctive landscape features and will therefore be protected.

Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes

Policy ENV10: Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes

- 1. Proposals should conserve or enhance the special historic interest, character or setting of a designated battlefield, historic landscape OR park or garden contained in the Historic England Registers.**
- 2. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of such heritage assets, consent will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial**

harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. All other options for their conservation or use must have been explored.

- 3. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of such heritage assets, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.**
- 4. Substantial harm to or loss of these assets should be wholly exceptional in the case of grade I and grade II* sites and require clear and convincing justification in other cases.**
- 5. A balanced judgment, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset, will be required in assessing proposals affecting non-designated historic battlefields, parks and historic landscapes including historic routes.**
- 6. Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. In some circumstances, further survey, analysis and recording will be made a condition of consent.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

8.39 Historic battlefields, landscapes, parks and gardens are an important part of the district's heritage and environment. They comprise a variety of features including the open space itself, views in and out, archaeological remains and, in the case of parks or gardens, a conscious design incorporating planting and water features, and frequently buildings. The Green Infrastructure and biodiversity value of historic landscapes is also important. There is a need to protect such sites and their settings and to encourage sympathetic management wherever possible.

8.40 A number of the most important sites have been included on the "Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England". Registered Parks and Gardens are included on the National Heritage List for England. Registered sites are of national importance, but the district has several other sites of regional or local importance that should also be protected from harm, and enhanced where possible.

Environmental Protection and Pollution

Policy ENV11: Pollution - Impact from Existing and/or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)

- 1. Development proposals should be appropriate to their location and should be designed to ensure that the occupiers of a new development will not be subject to individual and/or cumulative adverse effect(s) of pollution. Proposals will need to avoid or provide details of proposed mitigation methods to protect occupiers of a new development from the adverse impact(s) of pollution.**
- 2. Unless there is a realistic potential for appropriate mitigation, development will not be permitted if it is likely to be adversely affected by pollution. Factors can include, but are not limited to:**
 - noise or vibration;
 - smell, dust, odour, artificial light, gases and other emissions;
 - air pollution, contamination of the site or its surroundings and hazardous substances nearby;
 - land instability; and
 - any other relevant types of pollution.
- 3. Opportunities to mitigate and/or remediate the impacts of pollution on the natural environment should also be considered wherever possible and related to a development.**
- 4. Development on contaminated land will not be permitted unless the contamination is effectively treated by the developer to prevent any harm to human health and the natural environment (including controlled waters).**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

Policy ENV12: Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)

- 1. Development proposals should be located in sustainable locations and should be designed to ensure that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on human health, the natural environment and/or the amenity of neighbouring uses.**
- 2. The individual and cumulative impacts of development on human health, the natural environment and/or local amenity will be considered when assessing development proposals.**
- 3. The consideration of the merits of development proposals will be balanced against the adverse impact on human health, the natural environment and/or local amenity, including the following factors:**
 - noise or vibration;**
 - smell, dust, odour, artificial light, gases and other emissions;**
 - air pollution, contamination of the site or its surroundings and hazardous substances nearby;**
 - land instability; and**
 - any other relevant types of pollution.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

8.41 "Pollution" is anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light. Pollution can also include legacy contamination of soils and groundwater, ground conditions and land instability, natural hazards or sources of pollution from former activities such as mining.

8.42 In determining planning applications, the Council will consider whether the proposal is an acceptable use of the land, the cumulative impact of the proposal and also consider the impact of the proposed use. Amongst other matters, the Council will consider proposals in terms of how it may be affected by sources of pollution and how a proposal may cause pollution. The Council will prevent new development from being put at risk from or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of pollution or land instability. Development should be appropriate for its location. The Council will also consider the future remediation of the land.

- 8.43 Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. Proposals should avoid or provide assessments of and mitigation for all significant adverse impacts from pollution. Further information on requirements and standards is available from the Council's Environmental Protection Team.
- 8.44 The Council will also consider that existing businesses and uses may wish to develop in continuance and will therefore consider the effect nearby proposals may have on these existing businesses and uses.
- 8.45 The Council will consider proposals against current local and national standards, guidance, legislation and/or objectives. This will include consideration of the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality. There are currently three Air Quality Management Areas within South Oxfordshire at Henley, Wallingford and Watlington. The adjoining urban areas of Oxford City and Reading town centre, and the town centre of Abingdon-on-Thames are also designated Air Quality Management Areas.

Policy EP1: Air Quality

- 1. In order to protect public health from the impacts of poor air quality:**
 - **development must be compliant with the measures laid out in the Council's Developer Guidance Document and the associated Air Quality Action Plan, as well as the national air quality guidance and any local transport plans;**
 - **where sensitive development is proposed in areas of existing poor air quality and/or where significant development is proposed, an air quality assessment will be required;**
 - **all development proposals should include measures to minimise air pollution at the design stage and incorporate best practice in the design, construction and operation of the development;**
 - **where a development has a negative impact on air quality, including cumulative impact, developers should identify mitigation measures that will sufficiently minimise emissions from the development. Where mitigation is not sufficient the impacts should be offset through planning obligations; and**
 - **development will only be permitted where it does not exceed air pollution levels set by European and UK regulations.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

Hazardous substances

Policy EP2: Hazardous Substances

- 1. Development which involves the use, movement or storage of hazardous substances will only be permitted where a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been carried out and identified control measures implemented to adequately reduce risk as far as reasonably practical to the health and safety of users of the site, neighbouring land and the environment. Development within the vicinity of an installation involving hazardous substances or activities will only be permitted if the impact on health and safety of occupants of that development is acceptable. The Council will seek to reduce the potential for conflicting land uses and promote safety of people and protection of the environment.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 & 7.

8.46 The Council are empowered under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 to regulate the presence of hazardous substances, so that they cannot be kept or used above specified quantities. National Planning Practice Guidance provides further advice on how the planning system deals with hazardous substances. Development of new installations where hazardous substances are handled will be carefully controlled.

Waste collection and recycling

Policy EP3: Waste Collection and Recycling

- 1. Development proposals for residential use must ensure:**
 - i) adequate facilities are provided for the sorting, storage and collection of waste and recycling;**
 - ii) sufficient space is provided for the storage and collection of individual or communal recycling and refuse containers; and**
 - iii) access is provided that is safe for existing users/residents and for refuse and recycling collection vehicles.**

- 2. Development proposals for non-residential use must ensure:**
 - i) sufficient space is provided for the storage of communal recycling and refuse containers;**
 - ii) provision is made that is adequate for the proposed use. The location and design of recycling and refuse provision should be integral to the design of the proposed development.**

- 3. In assessing recycling and refuse provision, the following points should be considered:**
 - i) the level and type of provision, having regard to the above requirements and relevant space standards;**
 - ii) the location of the provision, having regard to the need to provide and maintain safe and convenient access for occupants, while also providing satisfactory access for collection vehicles;**
 - iii) the impact of the provision on visual amenity, having regard to the need to minimise the prominence of the facilities and screen any external provision;**
 - iv) the impact of the provision on health and amenity of neighbouring development and the proposed development; and**
 - v) the security of the provision against scavenging pests, vandalism and unauthorised use.**

- 4. Recycling and refuse storage should be separate from cycle storage, car parking and key circulation areas.**

- 5. Development will not be permitted if recycling and refuse provision that meets the above requirements cannot feasibly or practicably be provided.**

8.47 In promoting good design it is important to ensure that proper provision is made for waste and recycling, storage and collection, and that opportunities are taken for incorporating re-use and recycling facilities in all new developments.

8.48 Policy DES8 encourages developers to make provision for the effective use of resources, including minimising waste and making provision for the recycling of waste on site.

- 8.49 In combination with Policy DES8, Policy EP3 requires that adequate facilities for the sorting, storage and collection of waste are provided on all new developments and seeks to further encourage sustainable waste management initiatives.
- 8.50 Refuse and recycling storage and collection facilities should be designed and provided in accordance with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council's Waste Planning Guidance which can be found on the Council's website.

Flood risk

Policy EP4: Flood Risk

- 1. The risk and impact of flooding will be minimised through:**
 - i) directing new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding;**
 - ii) ensuring that all new development addresses the effective management of all sources of flood risk;**
 - iii) ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and**
 - iv) ensuring wider environmental benefits of development in relation to flood risk.**
- 2. The suitability of development proposed in Flood Zones will be strictly assessed using the 'Sequential Test', and, where necessary, the 'Exceptions Test'. A sequential approach should be used at site level.**
- 3. A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, a SFRA should accompany all proposals involving:**
 - sites of 1 hectare or more;**
 - land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems;**
 - land identified in the strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or**
 - land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where development would introduce a more vulnerable use.**
- 4. All development proposals must be assessed against the current South Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment or any updates**

and the Oxfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to address locally significant flooding. Appropriate mitigation and management measures must be implemented and maintained.

- 5. All development will be required to provide a drainage strategy. Development will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and ensure that runoff rates are attenuated to greenfield run-off rates. Higher rates would need to be justified and the risks quantified. Development should strive to reduce run-off rates for existing developed sites.**
- 6. Sustainable drainage systems should seek to enhance water quality and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive.**

8.51 Areas of South Oxfordshire are at risk of flooding and the impact of climate change is important. Climate change allowances should be taken into consideration in flood risk assessments as set out in National Planning Practice Guidance. The planning system has an important role to play in minimising flooding, the risk of flooding and increasing resilience. Only appropriate development should take place in areas at risk from flooding, and development should be directed away from areas of the highest risk. A sequential, risk-based approach to locating development, referred to as applying the Sequential Test, and if necessary, the Exception Test should be applied, taking into account climate change.

8.52 The Council will uphold the sequential approach to flood risk. Neighbourhood planning groups considering proposed development within areas at risk of flooding must apply the Sequential Test to the whole neighbourhood area. If necessary, the Exception Test should also be applied. The Environment Agency provide bespoke advice where developments in high flood risk areas require a site-specific flood risk assessment. Should mitigation be required, the Council will expect those measures to be in the application proposals and part of the development.

8.53 Where the redevelopment or change of use of a previously developed site in Flood Zone 2 or 3 is proposed, opportunities should be taken to:

- reduce vulnerability to flooding by promoting less vulnerable and water compatible uses; and
- reduce the built development footprint, thus improving floodplain storage and flow paths.

Minerals Safeguarding Areas

Policy EP5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

- 1. Minerals are a non-renewable resource, therefore to safeguard future potential extraction, development will be directed away from Minerals Safeguarding Areas.**
- 2. Where development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas cannot be avoided, development must demonstrate that all opportunities for mineral extraction have been fully explored.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objective 7.

8.54 Minerals Safeguarding Areas as identified in Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, are shown on the Policies Map





9 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 9.1 Our “built environment” consists of all the man-made aspects of our surroundings. It includes not only buildings but the spaces between buildings such as parks and gardens, and social spaces such as squares, as well as the infrastructure that supports our daily activities such as streets, railways, utility networks and flood defences.
- 9.2 The way we develop our built environment has a direct impact on how successful and sustainable places and communities are. In South Oxfordshire we want to create places where people want to live, work and visit. Successful places allow us to carry out daily activities with ease and offer choice as how to do them. These places should be designed for everyone and built to last.

High Quality Development

- 9.3 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, which is an important component of sustainable development. New development should create a sense of place and enhance the lives of those who live, work and visit.
- 9.4 We are committed to securing the highest quality of design in new development of all types and scales in South Oxfordshire. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide seeks to define high quality development, the principles to achieving it and raise the profile of high quality design throughout the district. It aims to address specific design issues that we have been experiencing within South Oxfordshire. We consider the design guide to be a vital tool that will help us create successful and sustainable places. The value and quality of the design guide has been demonstrated by it being shortlisted for two national awards. The design guide together with the policies in this Plan, will ensure that we can deliver our objectives for high quality developments.



Policy DES1: Delivering High Quality Development

- 1. All new development must be of a high quality design that reflects the positive features that make up the character of the local area and both physically and visually enhances and compliments the surroundings.**
- 2. All proposals must be accompanied by a constraints and opportunities plan and design rationale. Important landscape and built features both within and adjacent to the site should be retained as part of a proposal.**
- 3. Planning permission will only be granted where proposals are designed to meet the key design objectives and principles for delivering high quality development set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.**
- 4. New development should be designed to ensure that buildings and their surrounding spaces can be accessed and used by everyone and promote and safe environments that reduce the opportunity for crime as well as the fear of crime itself.**
- 5. Where development sites are located adjacent to sites that have a reasonable prospect of coming forward in the future, integration with the neighbouring site should form part of the proposal's design.**
- 6. Where the Council are aware that sites with similar delivery timescales are coming forward together they will require a comprehensive masterplan to be prepared across all sites.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, & 7.

- 9.5 The South Oxfordshire Design Guide sets out key design objectives and principles that we consider critical in delivering high quality development. These must be considered at the outset and throughout the design process. The Council will support development that meets these objectives and principles and the design criteria set out in part 2 of the guide. New development should take account of all relevant guidance including the County Council's Cycling Design Standards (2017), Walking Design Standards (2017) and Residential Road Design Guide 2nd Edition (2015) or updated versions of

these documents. New development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should meet the principles set out in the Chilterns Building Design Guide.

- 9.6 All proposals should take account of the local context, including the local character and existing features. Important local features, both within the landscape and built environment, in particular important trees and hedgerows, should be retained as part of the proposal. This should be set out on an opportunities and constraints plan.
- 9.7 Securing high quality design is about more than just aesthetics. It is important that new development delivers sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in order to create successful places where people want to live, work and play. New development should be designed to meet the needs of all users including the young and elderly, disabled, parents and carers. It is important that the places that we create are safe. To ensure that the development we deliver is designed to reduce the opportunity for crime, as well as the fear of crime itself, proposals must, wherever possible, incorporate the principles set out in the "Secured by Design" scheme.

Policy DES2: Enhancing Local Character

- 1. All proposals for new development should include a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the design:**
 - i) has been informed by and responds positively to the site and its surroundings; and**
 - ii) reinforces place-identity by enhancing local character.**
- 2. Where a character assessment has been prepared as part of a made Neighbourhood Development Plan, a proposal must demonstrate that the positive features identified in the assessment have been incorporated into the design of the development.**
- 3. Where there is no local character assessment a comprehensive contextual analysis of the local character should be prepared as part of an application. This should identify the positive features that make up the character of the area. The proposal must demonstrate that these positive features have been incorporated into the design of the development.**

4. Proposals that have the potential to impact upon a conservation area or the setting of a conservation area should also take account of the relevant Conservation Character Appraisal.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

To avoid developments reflecting previous poor quality design the Council may undertake its own contextual analysis

- 9.8 Past developments in the district have not always taken account of future development coming forward on adjacent sites, this has undermined the integration of new development with existing communities.
- 9.9 National planning guidance emphasises the importance of promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness as well as being positive about good contemporary design. Proposals for new development should demonstrate how the proposed scheme reflects this special character as well as the distinct character of the local area. This should be set out in the Design and Access Statement that supports the application.
- 9.10 The Council encourages communities preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans to consider what the positive features are in their local area and identify them as part of a made plan. Where these local features have been identified as part of a made Neighbourhood Development Plan, proposals should demonstrate that they have been incorporated into the design. Where these local features have not been identified, proposals should include a comprehensive contextual analysis that identifies them.
- 9.11 New development should take account of all relevant design guidance including the County Council's Cycling Design Standards (2017), Walking Design Standards (2017) and Residential Road Design Guide 2nd Edition or updated versions of these documents. New development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should demonstrate how the design has been informed by the Chilterns Building Design Guide.
- 9.12 In some cases developers have been selective in the features that they have identified as forming part of the local character and have not always considered whether the features form a positive part of the local character. To avoid developments reflecting previous poor quality design the Council may undertake its own contextual analysis if it is considered that the positive features of the local character have not been identified correctly.

Policy DES3: Design and Access Statements

- 1. Where an application is required to be supported by a Design and Access Statement, this must demonstrate how the development proposal meets the key design objectives of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and the design criteria set out in Part 2 of the Guide.**
- 2. The Design and Access Statement should be proportional to the scale and complexity of the proposal. It should include:**
 - a clear drawing trail showing how the design of the development and the rationale behind it has evolved and clearly demonstrating that the key design objectives and principles set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide have been considered at the outset and throughout the process and have been met by the final design;**
 - the delivery implementation phases and strategies to be put in place to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure and services when they are needed by new residents; and**
 - how consultation with the existing community and communities in the surrounding area has informed the design of the development.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

9.13 Design and Access Statements are an important mechanism for communicating the design of a development. A checklist setting out when a Design and Access statement is required as part of a planning application can be found on the Council's website.

9.14 New development should take account of all relevant design guidance including the County Council's Cycling Design Standards (2017), Walking Design Standards (2017) and Residential Road Design Guide 2nd Edition (2015) or updated versions of these documents. Proposals within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should demonstrate, as part of the Design and Access Statement, how the design has been informed by the Chilterns Building Design Guide.

Policy DES4: Masterplans for Allocated Sites and Major Development

- 1. Proposals for sites allocated in the Development Plan, including sites allocated within Neighbourhood Development Plans, and major development* must be accompanied by a masterplan. For outline applications, an illustrative masterplan should be submitted. In all cases, the masterplan should demonstrate that:**
 - i) clearly sets out the land uses proposed including the amount, scale and density of development, the movement and access arrangements and green infrastructure provision;**
 - ii) illustrates how the proposal integrates with the surrounding built, historic and natural environments, in particular maximising existing and potential movement connections and accessibility to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport;**
 - iii) is based on a full understanding of the significance or special interest of the historic environment as it relates to the site, including above and below ground archaeological remains and other heritage assets on the site or within the setting of which the site lies, and the conservation and enhancement of those remains or assets and significance or special interest.**
 - iv) defines a hierarchy of routes and the integration of suitable infrastructure, including for example SuDS within the public realm;**
 - v) demonstrates a legible structure and identifies key elements of townscape such as main frontages, edges, landmark buildings and key building groups and character areas;**
 - vi) demonstrates as appropriate the careful siting of community facilities and other amenities to meet the needs of the existing and future community, including access to education/ training facilities, health care, community leisure and recreation facilities; and demonstrates a clear link to the principles established in the Design and Access Statement and the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and accords with the masterplan.**

*As defined by Development Management Procedure Order 2010.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 9.15 Masterplans are an important tool used by designers to set out the strategy for a new development and to demonstrate that the general layout, scale and other aspects of the design are based on good urban design principles. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide sets out the principles of good design that must be demonstrated through the preparation of a masterplan as part of applications for major development and development of allocated sites.
- 9.16 Masterplans should be produced in consultation with South Oxfordshire District Council, the community and other stakeholders where appropriate.

Policy DES5: Outdoor Amenity Space

- 1. A private outdoor garden or outdoor amenity space, or alternatively a shared outdoor amenity area should be provided for all new dwellings. The amount of land that should be provided for the garden or amenity space will be determined by the size of the dwelling proposed and by the character of surrounding development. Private outdoor sitting areas should not be overlooked by adjacent outdoor habitable rooms. They should also not be compromised by shading from buildings or shading, leaf litter and anxiety of established significant trees and hedges that would lead to future pressure to prune or remove these landscape features.**
- 2. Proposals for new development should demonstrate that the size, location and character of gardens and outdoor amenity spaces have been considered as an integral part of the design and not as an afterthought. These spaces should not be compromised by parking areas or garages.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 9.17 The relationship of a building with its plot is critical to how well it fits in with neighbouring development and to its impact on the overall character of the street. The extent of plot coverage also determines the external area available for private garden space. This policy and the Design Guide seek to ensure that reasonable standards of private amenity space are provided in new developments.
- 9.18 The Design Guide contains guidelines in respect of the recommended minimum size of private amenity space that should be provided, with the size

relating to the number of bedrooms in the proposed dwelling. Used on their own, these standards would lead to uniform plot sizes and shapes that pay little regard to the character of the area. This policy, however, requires the character of the site and the surrounding development to be considered in determining the appropriate garden area, as well as the type of dwelling that is being provided. It also requires that private garden and outdoor sitting areas are designed to provide a reasonable degree of privacy, sunlight and outlook.

- 9.19 Often garden and outdoor amenity spaces, particularly communal areas provided for flatted developments, are identified at the end of the design process and consist of the leftover space surrounding the building(s). This tends to result in spaces of an inappropriate size and shape that bear no relation to the internal workings of the building and/or the requirements of the intended user(s). Gardens and outdoor amenity spaces should be considered from the beginning of the design process and throughout. The provision of garden and outdoor amenity spaces should not be compromised by the need for parking or garages.

Policy DES6: Residential Amenity

- 1. Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses, when considering both individual and cumulative impacts, in relation to the following factors:**
 - i) loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight;**
 - ii) dominance or visual intrusion;**
 - iii) noise or vibration;**
 - iv) smell, dust, heat, odour, gases or other emissions;**
 - v) pollution, contamination or the use of / or storage of hazardous substances; and**
 - vi) external lighting.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, 6 & 7.

- 9.20 New dwellings should be designed to ensure adequate privacy for existing and new residents to enable them to enjoy their homes without undue intrusion from neighbours or the public. Buildings should also be orientated within their plots to maximise daylight and passive solar gain, with garden areas orientated to maximise sunlight. These objectives can be achieved by careful siting of properties, by ensuring that there are adequate distances between properties and through the erection of screen walls and fencing. Developments should be designed to avoid overshadowing of any adjoining dwelling or dwellings, although it is recognised

that in high density housing schemes, overlooking distances may not be so readily achievable. Innovative design approaches will therefore be sought to provide acceptable standards of privacy. The Design Guide contains detailed guidance.

Policy DES7: Public Art

- 1. All proposals for major development*, or development of sites larger than 0.5 hectares, must make provision for public art that makes a significant contribution towards the appearance of the scheme or the character of the area, or which benefits the local community. Applicants will be required to set out in their proposal details of the provision of public art, including its location and design in accordance with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. Contributions will be required in accordance with Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision.**

*As defined by Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

- 9.21 Public art can improve the quality of new developments, and along with high quality design, help to create stimulating and rewarding environments that are of benefit to current and future generations.
- 9.22 National policy places an emphasis on public art in design and place-making for new developments. Successful schemes can make places more interesting, exciting and aesthetically pleasing for residents and the community. Public art incorporated into public spaces can also help to bring neighbourhoods together and provide a space for social activities and civic life.
- 9.23 The Council will seek to support public art within new development schemes in accordance with our Arts Development Strategy. The Council also seeks to promote quality art within new developments by encouraging partnership working between professional artists and craftspeople and encouraging local participation to help to establish an identity for an area.
- 9.24 Applicants will be expected to contribute towards the provision of public art in order to help improve the appearance of the scheme and/or reflect the character of the area.
- 9.25 The Council will particularly support proposals for art within residential and commercial development that benefits the local community and helps to

establish civic or corporate pride and identity, encourage public enjoyment and engagement, promote the renewal of social skills or supporting the local economy. Proposals that contribute towards the appearance of a scheme, for example to make a positive contribution to the character of an area or that draw inspiration from local culture and history to improve the 'sense of place', will also be supported.

Policy DES8: Efficient Use of Resources

- 1. New development is required to make provision for the effective use and protection of natural resources where applicable, including:**
 - i) the efficient use of land, with densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, taking account of local circumstances including protection of the local environment, access to local services and facilities and local character. Proposals which seek to deliver higher quality and higher density development which minimises land take will be encouraged**
 - ii) minimising waste and making adequate provision for the recycling, composting and recovery of waste on site using recycled and energy efficient materials**
 - iii) maximising passive solar heating, lighting, natural ventilation, energy and water efficiency and the re-use of materials**
 - iv) making efficient use of water, for example through rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling causing no deterioration in, and where possible, achieving improvements in water quality (including groundwater quality)**
 - v) taking account of, and if located within an AQMA, is consistent with, the Council's Air Quality Action Plan**
 - vi) ensuring that the land is of a suitable quality for development and that remediation of contaminated land is undertaken where necessary**
 - vii) avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality**
 - viii) re-using vacant buildings and redeveloping previously developed land, provided the land is not of a high environmental value.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8



- 9.26 In South Oxfordshire, the prudent use of natural resources is a key element of delivering sustainable development. The Council encourages applicants to consider how our existing resources can be used effectively and efficiently when planning and designing development proposals. Housing density should be optimised in strategic allocations and at the towns in the district, unless there are overriding reasons concerning townscape, character, landscape, design or infrastructure capacity. Special consideration will be given to the prevailing character and appearance in Conservation Areas and the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 9.27 National policy requires planning policies to take account of the presence of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. There are three Air Quality Management Areas designated in South Oxfordshire in the market towns of Henley-on-Thames and Wallingford, and the larger village of Watlington. This plan seeks to ensure that new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with our Air Quality Action Plan.
- 9.28 The Water Framework Directive seeks to protect the quality of water, including the aquatic ecology, unique and valuable habitats, drinking water resources and bathing water. It requires that there is no deterioration in the status of water bodies and that they all achieve good ecological status by 2027. The Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out actions to help meet this obligation. Policies on Green Infrastructure, biodiversity and promoting sustainable design will also assist in achieving this objective by ensuring that surface water run-off is appropriately controlled. Aquifers within South Oxfordshire support strategically important public drinking water abstractions. Policies will seek to ensure that essential water resources are protected from

Special consideration will be given to the prevailing character and appearance in Conservation Areas and the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

derogation and pollution. Where required, references will be made to the Environment Agency, Source Protection zone mapping and their guidance "The Environment Agency's approach to Groundwater Protection".

- 9.29 Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for determining planning applications for minerals and waste development and producing the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, which will safeguard mineral resources, aggregate rail depots, sites for recycled and secondary aggregate supply, other minerals infrastructure sites and sites for waste management. These areas are marked on the Policies Map. Should the district receive a planning application in any of these areas, Oxfordshire County Council will be consulted on the development. Applicants are advised to review the Minerals and Waste Local Plan prior to making a planning application.
- 9.30 In line with the Government's White Paper: Fixing our Broken Housing Market, all development will be expected to use land efficiently, with a density and form appropriate to the site and its surroundings, taking into account local character and accessibility to services and facilities.

Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy DES9: Promoting Sustainable Design

- 1. All new development, including building conversions, refurbishments and extensions, should seek to minimise carbon and energy impacts in line with nationally adopted standards.**
- 2. New development should be designed to improve resilience to the anticipated effects of climate change.**
- 3. The Council will not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design.**
- 4. A sensitive approach will need to be taken to conserve the special character of designated and non designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, 6, 7 & 8.

- 9.31 Increasing our resilience to the likely impact of climate change and promoting a low carbon future is one of the Local Plan's strategic objectives in response to the Climate Change Act (2008) which mandates an 80% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.
- 9.32 To improve resilience to the anticipated effects of climate change, the Council expects applicants to consider the effects of changing weather patterns and design new developments so that they incorporate measures to combat these. This could include planting, shading, the orientation and positioning of windows and advance glazing systems to reduce solar heat gain in the summer and from lower sun angles in the winter; using cool building materials to prevent the penetration of heat and flood resilient building materials; increasing natural ventilation; incorporating flood resilient measures such as raising floor levels and preventing the infiltration of heavy rain around windows and doors. Consideration should also be given to using locally sourced, more sustainable building materials and fuel, for example, locally sourced wood.
- 9.33 The South Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study identified South Oxfordshire as being in an area of water stress. In order to address this the Policy applies a higher standard for water efficiency.
- 9.34 The design and construction of new developments and refurbishments to existing buildings can have a significant role in helping to reduce carbon emissions, which can be supported by improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings.
- 9.35 The Government has established that through Part L of the Building Regulations, emissions allowed from new buildings will be reduced incrementally and that "zero carbon" buildings will be required within the plan period. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 stipulated that a review of minimum energy performance requirements under building regulations must be carried out and it is expected that changes will be made to current standards.

The design and construction of new developments and refurbishments to existing buildings can have a significant role in helping to reduce carbon emissions

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation

Policy DES10: Renewable Energy

- 1. The Council encourages schemes for renewable and low carbon energy generation and associated infrastructure at all scales including domestic schemes. Planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy generation will be supported, provided that they do not cause a significantly adverse effect to:**
 - i) landscape, both designated AONB and locally valued biodiversity, including protected habitats and species and Conservation Target Areas;**
 - ii) the historic environment, both designated and non-designated assets, including by development within their settings;**
 - iii) openness of the Green Belt;**
 - iv) the safe movement of traffic and pedestrians; or**
 - v) residential amenity.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

9.36 The Government has set a target of that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline³⁶. To help increase the use of renewable and low carbon energy we will promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources, including community-led initiatives, and design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. The Council will identify and publish a list of any areas considered suitable for wind energy development within the district.

9.37 There are many forms of renewable energy. The most prevalent being wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and hydro power and biofuels. The most appropriate form of renewable energy for a development will depend on the scale of the development and the opportunities and constraints presented by its location.

³⁶ Climate Change Act 2008 available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>





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10 ENSURING THE VITALITY OF TOWN CENTRES

Introduction

- 10.1 The NPPF 2018 encourages local planning authorities to pursue town centre policies which support their vitality and viability. In doing so, local planning authorities are expected to recognise that town centres are at the heart of their communities and therefore policies to manage and grow them should be in place. However, town centres and, in particular the retail sector is facing significant challenges, a fact acknowledged and recognised by the government through its removal of the requirement for local planning authorities to identify primary and secondary shopping frontages.
- 10.2 South Oxfordshire district is made up of the largest town; Didcot and the three market towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford, numerous large and small villages, and local shopping parades providing services to nearby settlements. These are areas where people go to access their employment, leisure and shopping needs – many have become the heart of their local community's activities. Focusing people's day to day activities within these centres also brings multiple benefits to both businesses as well as local communities.
- 10.3 The district's town centres are facing increasing competition for expenditure from nearby centres outside of the district including Aylesbury, Bicester Village, High Wycombe and the higher order services and functions provided by Oxford City and Reading.
- 10.4 This plan seeks to build on the District's improved retail offer and achieve a good balance of mixed uses in our town and village centres in order to meet the needs of those who live, work, shop and spend leisure time here³⁷. The policies in this section provide the Council's proposed way forward for focusing growth, by recognising development already taking place in its town centres, particularly within Didcot. While all market towns also perform a leisure function, it is Henley on Thames which has a greater dual retail and leisure offer.

³⁷ Orchard Centre Phase II development (completed Spring 2018)

³⁸ The quantum of development for convenience floorspace in the district to 2034 has been calculated on a pro-rata basis to take account of the additional year not assessed in the retail needs assessment. Figures have been taken from the Addendum to the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment 2016 – GVA Grimley Limited, published in 2017.

³⁹ This figure does not include the requirement arising from the strategic allocations, but only the need arising from the three market towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford.

Policy TC1: Retail and Services Growth

- 1. Provision is made for 25,670sqm³⁸ (net) of comparison retail floorspace and 4,500sqm³⁹ of convenience floorspace to be provided in the District over the Plan period.**
- 2. Provision of convenience floorspace required within the Strategic Allocations will be dealt with in each of the respective STRAT Policies.**

- 10.5 The Orchard Centre phase II extension has delivered approximately 15,000sqm of additional retail and commercial floorspace to the existing town centre in Didcot. The extension, anchored by an M&S food store, enhances Didcot town centre's offer by bringing to it 23 stores, six restaurants, cafes and a gym, as well as improved public realm and car parking.
- 10.6 The NPPF requires the Council to positively promote competitive town centre environments through policy formulation and to at least fully meet the retail need, so that the local economy is not constrained and potential investment diverted outside the District. The role of the centres set out in the District's town centre hierarchy (Policy TC2) will influence the provision, ensuring that it is appropriate and realistic whilst also providing opportunities to meet the development needs in full. The strategic residential allocations will create new convenience retail floorspace only to serve the local communities and this provision will need to complement rather than compete with the existing local centres.
- 10.7 Retail requirements are typically split into two categories: comparison goods and convenience goods. As Didcot is already delivering convenience retail against the identified requirement, any further provision of convenience retail within Didcot Town Centre within this plan period would result in surplus provision within the town centre, thereby impacting on vitality and viability of other centres. Provision for additional retail floorspace within Didcot town centre will therefore be for comparison goods.

Policy TC2: Retail Hierarchy

- 1. The Council will promote the continued role and functions of the town centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and structure. The hierarchy of centres in the district is:**

- **Major town centre:** Didcot, Henley-on-Thames
 - **Town centre:** Thame, Wallingford
 - **Local centre:** Berinsfield, Benson, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Cholsey, Crowmarsh Gifford, Goring-on-Thames, Nettlebed, Sonning Common, Watlington, Wheatley, Woodcote.
2. **The Policies Map identifies the boundaries of the four town centres.**
 3. **To ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply a ‘town centre first’ approach to retail, services and other main town centre uses in accordance with the established hierarchy of centres.**
 4. **For our Major town centres and town centres, development proposals for retail, services and other main town centres uses will be permitted that:**
 - seek to ensure such uses are located within the town centre boundary;
 - are in keeping with the role and function of that centre;
 - diversify the town centres to provide uses that are complementary to retail, while not undermining the town’s retail role, including where appropriate mixed-use developments, uses that contribute to the evening economy, community facilities and upper floor residential and office uses; or
 - reinforce the local distinctiveness of our towns, improve their vitality and viability and encourage more visits; or
 - seek to improve access and movement for all users.
 5. **For our local centres, development proposals will be permitted that:**
 - provide retail and leisure uses within the centres through infill development and small scale redevelopment;
 - provide small scale retail or leisure development that contributes to the vitality and viability of the villages whilst not undermining the retail roles of the towns;
 - seek to improve access and movement for all users.
 6. **Retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses will continue to be directed to these centres in line with the sequential approach to retail development locations set out in the NPPF⁴⁰.**

⁴⁰NPPF 2018, para 86

7. Any retail, leisure and offices developments proposed outside these centres must be subject to a retail impact assessment, where the proposed gross floorspace is greater than the local threshold of 500sqm.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7

While greater use of public transport, cycling and walking is central to sustainable development, appropriate levels of car parking will be maintained in key locations

- 10.8 The Government, through the NPPF 2018, supports a town centre first approach when locating development for town centre uses as this ensures the vitality and viability of the centres. It also promotes mixed-use development. The network of town centres set out in this Policy reflect the NPPF requirement on local planning authorities to apply a sequential test and/or impact test to planning applications for main town centre uses.
- 10.9 The position of a centre in the hierarchy reflects its size, range of services, and facilities, as well as the size of its catchment area. In particular:
- i) Didcot and Henley-on-Thames town centres are the main social, cultural and economic foci for the district. They have good access to major roads and rail links and benefit from a quality shopping environment. For Henley, this is combined with a high tourist/leisure offer. The sequential approach suggests that they should be the first choice for retail, leisure, community employment and main town centre uses.
 - ii) Thame and Wallingford will be the focus of more localised main town centre retail, commercial and community facilities, leisure and services that reduce the need to travel.
 - iii) Local centres include shopping parades, individual shops and facilities to cater for day to day needs such as a small supermarket, newsagent, post office, takeaway and pharmacy. These facilities provide a convenient and sustainable choice within walking distance.
- 10.10 Aside from the above centres, small parades/local shops not covered by this Policy are still an important feature within a neighbourhood. Where new local parades/shops are provided, like those planned for within strategic allocations they are required to meet the day-to-day need of the local community only.
- 10.11 The Council considers that the national threshold of 2,500sqm is not appropriate for the District. The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (2016) identifies that while Didcot is performing well, the other centres are relatively small and could potentially be adversely impacted upon by out-of-centre development.

10.12 Modern retailers selling a range of comparison goods generally have a requirement for a larger format unit. A threshold of 500sqm is deemed appropriate for protecting the vitality and viability of the district's centres when considering the size of the smallest 'main' foodstore in the District is 569sqm.

10.13 While greater use of public transport, cycling and walking is central to sustainable development, appropriate levels of car parking will be maintained in key locations in order to maintain the viability of shopping centres. The Council will, without inducing unmanageable traffic flows, ensure that the economic viability of town centres is not undermined by the inability of shoppers to find a safe, secure and well laid out parking space in reasonable proximity to the shops.

Policy TC3: Comparison Goods Floorspace Requirements

- 1. Didcot Town Centre will remain the focus for comparison goods floorspace requirements. The additional retail floorspace at the Orchard Centre Phase II development will meet the identified comparison requirements in the district up until 2027.**
- 2. Appropriately-scaled developments on smaller town centre opportunity sites elsewhere in the district may also be appropriate.**
- 3. In Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford there is no qualitative need for additional comparison goods floorspace during the Plan period. Applications for new comparison goods floorspace in these town centres should be treated on their individual merits.**
- 4. Applications for comparison retail located outside of town centres will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential test and the locally set retail impact threshold (500sqm).**

Policy TC4: Convenience Floorspace Provision in the Market Towns

1. Each of the three market towns should make provision for a single format food store with at least 1,500sqm net sales floorspace. As per Policy TC2, 'a town centre first' approach will be expected to be undertaken and then if this is not appropriate, edge of centre and then a criteria based selection assessment. This will be provided at the following locations:

Location	Site	Net amount of retail floorspace required
Henley-on-Thames	Site to be identified through the review of the Henley-Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan	1,500sqm
Thame	Site to be identified through the review of the Thame Neighbourhood Development Plan	1,500sqm
Wallingford	Site under construction	1,500sqm

10.14 The 2017 Retail Assessment update identified a qualitative requirement to plan for additional convenience goods provision in Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford up to 2033. It recommends no pressing need to plan for additional convenience goods provision in Didcot, due to foodstore openings. The main convenience goods offer in Didcot town centre includes Sainsbury's (approximate net floor area 4,000sqm) and a Marks and Spence food hall (approximate net floor area 1,000sqm) within the Orchard Centre as well as Aldi on Broadway (approximate net floor area 1,140sqm).

10.15 The convenience goods floorspace required to meet day-to-day needs within the Strategic Allocations will be dealt with in each of the respective STRAT Policies.

10.16 The joint Henley-Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan has identified a key opportunity site to accommodate retail floorspace requirements in Henley-on-Thames. The Local Plan is supportive of this opportunity.

10.17 The Council will support the future review of the Joint Henley-Harpsden and Thame Neighbourhood Development Plans to identify suitable locations for convenience retail development.

10.18 In Wallingford, permission was granted in 2018 for a Lidl food store (P17/S3651/FUL) at Lupton Road on the Hithercroft Industrial Estate with a net tradeable floor area of 2,125sqm. This site is currently under construction and when operational, the convenience goods floor space requirement for Wallingford will have been met for the duration of the Plan period.

Policy TC5 – Primary Shopping Areas

- 1. Appendix 13 identifies the boundaries of the Primary Shopping Areas**
- 2. Where planning permission is required, proposals resulting in the loss of retail uses at ground floor must demonstrate that:**
 - the unit has been proactively and appropriately marketed for at least 12 months and it has been demonstrated that there is no longer a realistic prospect of the unit being used for retail purposes in the foreseeable future.**
 - the proposal meets the needs of residents within the local neighbourhood**
 - the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole**
- 3. Proposals for retail and services outside the Primary Shopping Areas, over the relevant thresholds will only be permitted provided the sequential test and an accompanying impact assessment have indicated that is appropriate to do so.**

10.19 A Primary Shopping Area is defined in NPPF 2018 as an area where retail development is concentrated.

10.20 Retail developments are significant trip attractors and should be located in places that are well-connected by public transport. Improving the attractiveness of primary shopping areas through sustainable modes of transport through improved public realm will support the vitality of the primary shopping area.

10.21 Historically, non-retail uses were resisted in primary shopping areas; however, changes in retail trends and technology need to be taken into consideration as part of future development assessment.



11

COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Introduction

11.1 The ability to access local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship forms an essential part of the quality of life for residents of the district. We recognise the importance of these community facilities in promoting social interaction and cohesive communities and the Local Plan promotes the retention and development of local services and community facilities in its towns and villages.

11.2 It is important that there is a sufficient network of facilities across the district. We need to provide the right type of housing in our towns and villages, particularly our smaller settlements, to attract young people and families that will support the sustainable provision of facilities and help to ensure their vibrancy. We recognise that there is pressure on local services, particularly schools, doctors surgeries and community facilities, and the need to provide facilities for all parts of the community, including disabled people and young people.

11.3 Planning plays an important role in safeguarding existing and developing new community and recreational facilities as it can create new opportunities for exchanges and interactions between a variety of community members.

11.4 Much of our role in ensuring there are sufficient community and recreational facilities is undertaken in the preparation of the Local Plan and when determining planning applications. In determining planning applications for the loss of community facilities, we will be guided by our Community Facilities Viability Assessment⁴¹.

11.5 We will require developers to make contributions towards the provision of new community and recreational facilities and the ongoing maintenance of existing facilities.

11.6 We will also support communities in protecting, enhancing and delivering community and recreation facilities in their towns and villages. Town and parish councils can seek to do this through the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders or they may construct or rebuild community buildings under a Community Right to Build Order. Local communities are also able to identify buildings or open space that

⁴¹ Community Facilities Viability Assessment, 2014. Available online at www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-2011

are of value to them and apply for them to be listed as Assets of Community Value allowing them to bid for the assets if they are put up for sale. We have a support role to play in taking these powers forward.

Policy CF1: Safeguarding Community Facilities

- 1. Proposals that result in the loss of an essential community facility or service, through change of use or redevelopment, will not be permitted unless:**
 - i) it would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility or the replacement of an existing facility equally convenient to the local community it serves and with equivalent or improved facilities;**
 - ii) it has been determined that the community facility is no longer needed; or**
 - iii) in the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.**
- 2. Appropriate, detailed and robust evidence will be required to satisfy the above criteria. The Council will require the independent assessment of this evidence.**
- 3. Planning conditions or legal obligations may be necessary to ensure that any replacement facility and its ongoing maintenance is provided. Any replacement facility should normally be available before the original facility is lost.**
- 4. A community facility or service may be essential, either because it is one of a limited number of that nature in a settlement or area, or is fundamental to the quality and convenience of everyday life in a settlement. This includes the protection of Public Rights of Way including bridleways and by-ways. If suitable alternative provision already exists, any facility or service will not be considered essential.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3, 4, 6 & 7

11.7 In the interests of the well-being of local communities, it is important to protect the existing community facilities in our towns and villages wherever possible, by resisting their loss to another use. The Council will give priority to the retention and enhancement of community uses on established sites.

Policy CF2: Provision of Community Facilities and Services

- 1. Development proposals for the provision of new or extended community facilities and services will be supported, particularly where:**
 - i) they are located within or adjacent to the built-up area of an existing settlement;**
 - ii) they would clearly meet an identified local need; and**
 - iii) they are accessible for all members of the community and promote social inclusion.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 3, 4, 6 & 7.

11.8 In general, the Council will welcome proposals involving the provision of new community facilities and services including Public Rights of Way for the local population, provided that there are no overriding objections to the proposal. The provision and improvement of public house facilities will also be considered in relation to policies CF1 and CF2.

11.9 In the event that a community identifies the need for a new local facility, the Council will support the community in exploring this through a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or Community Right to Build Order.

Recreation

11.10 Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation make an important contribution to the health and well-being of the residents of and visitors to South Oxfordshire, and also provide a range of benefits including biodiversity, green infrastructure and visual amenity. National guidance recognises the important role that the planning system has in facilitating healthy communities through providing access to high quality facilities for sport and recreation, including open spaces for informal recreation.

Policy CF3: New Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 1. Proposals for sport and recreation facilities will be encouraged and supported, in line with other policies in the Plan, and Sport England guidance. Where possible new sports and recreation facilities should be co-located with other community uses and be well related to the**

settlements they serve, being sited within or adjacent to settlements. Where new, major facilities for outdoor sport are to be provided they should, as far as possible, be accessible by public transport. Provision for the future long-term maintenance and management of the open space and/or facilities will be sought and must be agreed as part of the planning application.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 3, 4, 6 & 7.

11.11 The Council would encourage and support proposals for new sport and recreation facilities provided that they are appropriately located to serve the local population and, if appropriate, the wider population by public transport. The long term maintenance and management of the facilities must be agreed as part of any planning application and may need to be set out in a legal agreement. The Council will also explore options for the management of new areas of open space to be undertaken by community owned and run trusts.

Policy CF4: Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 1. The Council will seek to protect, maintain and where possible enhance existing open space, sport and recreation, play facilities and land including playing fields to ensure their continued contribution to the health and well-being of visitors and residents. Development proposals that result in the loss of such facilities will only be permitted where:**
 - i) it can be demonstrated that alternative facilities of equal or better quality will be provided in an equally accessible location as part of the development;**
 - ii) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss; or**
 - iii) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 6 & 7.

11.12 The policy above is intended to safeguard all existing recreation facilities whether formal or informal or publicly owned, and whether buildings or open

land, including allotments. This is considered important in view of the growing demand for recreational facilities and the restrictions on public spending. There is also increasing concern about the loss of recreational facilities, particularly within more urban areas, as once land is lost to development it cannot be brought back into recreational use if a need arises for further provision in the future.

Policy CF5: Open Space, Sport and Recreation in New Residential Development

- 1. New residential development will be required to provide or contribute towards inclusive and accessible open space and play facilities in line with the most up to date standards set out in the Open Space Study including:**
 - **Amenity greenspace (including parks and gardens)**
 - **Allotments**
 - **Equipped children's play areas**
- 2. New residential development will be required to provide or contribute towards accessible sport and recreation facilities, including playing pitches, in line with the Council's most up to date Leisure Study, and Sport England guidance.**
- 3. The provision of open space, sport, recreation and play facilities, and playing pitches is expected to be delivered on site, unless this is demonstrated not to be feasible.**
- 4. Provision for the future long-term maintenance and management of the open space and facilities will be sought and must be agreed as part of the planning application.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 6 & 7.

11.13 Provision of the new facilities should be made within the development site itself and in perpetuity. Where it is demonstrated that on-site provision is wholly or partially infeasible, a financial contribution will be required and collected through our adopted Community Infrastructure Levy. The future management of open space and/or facilities provided on site will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that residents can enjoy the benefits of them in the long term.

11.14 Proposals for recreational facilities should consider the potential that such features may have for attracting crime and anti-social behaviour.



12 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 12.1 Monitoring the performance of the Development Plan is essential to assess its effectiveness and to record whether proposals and policies are being implemented and delivered. The outputs of appropriate monitoring will enable us to be fully informed of the progress of development in the area and whether a full or partial review of the plan is necessary.
- 12.2 The NPPF sets out that plans should be flexible to adapt to changing circumstances. As detailed in the introduction to this Plan, we are committed to reviewing the plan if delivery issues emerge through monitoring, and will implement measures to ensure that housing, employment and infrastructure needs are met during the plan period.
- 12.3 In order to ensure effective monitoring a framework has been prepared setting out key indicators that will track the delivery of the plan.
- 12.4 The tables below set out the indicators and targets in relation to each Policy in the Local Plan. The range of indicators reflect SODC's relationship with other plans and programmes and therefore includes indicators required by Government as part of the "Single List", "Contextual Indicators" (CI) which relate to local characteristics and issues of the locality and other "Local Indicators" such as those from the Local Transport Plan (LTP).
- 12.5 The monitoring outcomes for each Development Plan Document will be reported in each Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR is required to outline the progress in preparing the documents and assess the extent to which the policies are being implemented and their effectiveness. Where a policy is not meeting its objective, the AMR will explain why and suggest what action should be taken. For key policies relating to strategic housing or employment, these actions have been set out within the policy. The monitoring framework itself will be reviewed as part of the AMR.

1. Strategy

Policy	Indicator	Target
STRAT1: The Overall Strategy	Covered by all other indicators in framework	Covered by all other targets in framework
STRAT2: South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements	Number of dwellings permitted and completed in the district to meet South Oxfordshire's housing requirement	17,825 homes to be delivered over the plan period
	Progress towards meeting South Oxfordshire's portion of unmet need in the housing market area	Progress towards meeting annual requirement of 1270 homes between 2021-2031
	Number of dwellings permitted and completed in the district to meet the overall need	22,775 homes to be delivered in the plan period
	Quantum of land permitted and completed for employment by strategic site and allocation	To deliver 37.5 hectares of employment land over the plan period
	Number of Homes delivered at the Grenoble Road, Northfield, and North of Bayswater Brook strategic allocations.	For 4,950 homes to be delivered from 2024/25 at the Grenoble Road, Northfield, and North of Bayswater Brook strategic allocations to meet Oxford City's contribution to the Growth Deal.
STRAT4: Strategic development	Progress of essential strategic infrastructure items	To deliver strategic infrastructure items in accordance with the timeframes identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan
	Progress of other Strategic infrastructure items	
STRAT5: Residential Densities	Average density for major developments permitted by strategic allocation and location	To ensure all relevant planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy
STRAT6: Green Belt	Status and type of permissions granted within the Green Belt	To ensure all relevant planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy

STRAT7: Land at Chalgrove Airfield	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit approximately 3,000 homes and deliver a minimum of 2025 in the plan period
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver 5 hectares of employment land at strategic allocation
	Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies and Travellers	To permit and deliver 3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the plan period
STRAT8: Culham Science Centre	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation	To deliver a net increase in employment of 7.3 hectares.
STRAT9: Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit approximately 3,500 homes and deliver approximately 1,850 homes in the plan period
	Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies and Travellers	To permit and deliver 3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the plan period
STRAT10: Land at Berinsfield	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit approximately 1,700 homes and deliver approximately 1,600 in the plan period
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver 5 hectares of employment land at strategic allocation
STRAT10i: Berinsfield Local Green Space	Status and type of permissions granted on land identified	To ensure land identified acts as Local Green Space

STRAT11: Land South of Grenoble road	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit approximately 3000 homes and deliver approximately 1700 homes in the plan period
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver 9.7 hectares of employment land at strategic allocation
STRAT12: Land at Northfield	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver approximately 1,800 homes in the plan period
STRAT13: Land North of Bayswater Brook	Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation	To agree a masterplan for the strategic allocation which guides any subsequent planning applications
	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver approximately 1,100 homes within the plan period
STRAT14: Land at Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University	Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	To permit and deliver at least 300 homes

2. Settlements and Housing

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy HEN 1: The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames	Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Henley-on-Thames	To permit and deliver the number of homes identified for Henley-on-Thames
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the Parish of Henley-on-Thames	To ensure there is no net loss of employment land

Policy TH1: The strategy for Thame	Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the Parish of Thame	To ensure there is no net loss of retail floorspace
	Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Thame	To permit and deliver the number of homes identified for Thame
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the Parish of Thame	To ensure there is no net loss of employment land
	Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the Parish of Thame	To ensure there is no net loss of retail floorspace
Policy WAL1: The strategy for Wallingford	Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Wallingford	To permit and deliver the number of homes identified for Wallingford
	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the Parish of Wallingford	To ensure there is no net loss of employment land
	Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the Parish of Wallingford	To ensure there is no net loss of retail floorspace
Policy H1: Delivering New Homes	Covered by all other housing indicators	Covered by all other housing targets
Policy H2: New Housing in Didcot	Number of homes permitted and completed in Didcot at strategic allocation sites	To deliver at least 6,500 homes at Didcot over the plan period
Policy H3: Housing in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford	Number of homes permitted and completed in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford	To deliver the homes required for each town in accordance with the policy
Policy H4: Housing in the Larger Villages	Number of homes permitted and completed by Larger Village	To deliver the homes required for each Larger Village in accordance with the policy
Policy H5: Land to the West of Priest Close, Nettlebed	Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	To deliver approximately 11 homes

Policy H6: Land at Joyce Grove, Nettlebed	Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	To deliver approximately 20 homes
Policy H7: Land to the South and West of Nettlebed Service Station	Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	To deliver approximately 15 homes
Policy H8: Housing in the Smaller Villages	Number of homes permitted and completed by Smaller Village	To deliver homes in the Smaller Villages in accordance with the policy
Policy H9: Affordable Housing	Percentage of affordable housing provided on major developments or sites with a combined gross floorspace of more than 1000sqm	To ensure all planning permissions on major developments or sites with combined gross floorspace of more than 1000sqm provide 40% affordable housing or in accordance with policy
	Tenure split	To provide a split of 40% affordable rented, 35% social rented and 25% intermediate housing
Policy H10: Exception Sites	Status of permissions granted for rural exception sites	To ensure all applications are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy H11: Housing Mix	Average housing mix of planning permissions	To ensure the cumulative delivery of planning permissions for housing developments provides a housing mix that accords with the latest evidence available
Policy H12: Self Build and Custom Housing	Number of registered interests on the self and custom build register compared with the potential supply of self and custom build housing	To ensure the districts need for self and custom build housing is being met
	Percentage of self and custom build plots on strategic allocations	3% of developable plots to be set aside as self and custom build plots on strategic allocations
Policy H13: Specialist Housing for Older People	Amount and type of housing designed for older people permitted as part of strategic allocations and within the district.	To meet the identified need for specialist housing for older people

Policy H14: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople by location	To meet the identified need for pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
Policy H15: Safeguarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites	Status and type of permissions granted on Safeguarded Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H16: Infill Development and Redevelopment	Status and type of housing permitted not in accordance with policy	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H17: Sub-division and Conversion to Multiple Occupation	Status and type of permissions relating to sub-divisions of houses in multiple occupation	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H18: Replacement Dwellings	Status and type of replacement housing permissions outside the built-up limits of settlements	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H19: Re-use of rural buildings	Status and type of housing permissions outside the built-up limits of settlements	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H20: Rural Workers Dwellings	Status and type of rural worker dwelling application	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H21: Extensions to Dwellings	Status and type of permissions	To ensure development is in line with the policy
Policy H22: Loss of Existing Residential Accommodation in Town Centres	Status and type of permissions	To ensure development is in line with the policy

3. Employment

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy EMP1: The amount and distribution of new B-class employment land	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed, by location	To deliver 37.5 hectares of employment land
Policy EMP2: Range, Size and Mix of Employment premises	Status of permissions proposing employment use of up 150sqm	To encourage proposals for startup/incubator businesses
	Status of permissions proposing employment use of up 500sqm	To encourage proposals for grow-on space
Policy EMP3: Retention of employment land	Amount of B-class employment land lost to other uses not in accordance with the policy	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy EMP4: Employment land in Didcot	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed, in Didcot at EMP4i and EMP4ii	To deliver 2.92 hectares of employment land
Policy EMP5: New Employment Land at Henley-on-Thames	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Henley-on-Thames	To deliver 1 hectare of employment land in addition to that allocated in the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan
Policy EMP6: New Employment Land at Thame	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Thame	To deliver 1.6 hectares of employment land in addition to that allocated in the Thame Neighbourhood Development Plan
Policy EMP7: New Employment Land at Wallingford	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Wallingford	To deliver 5.35 hectares of employment land
Policy EMP8: New Employment Land at Crowmarsh Gifford	Quantum of employment land allocated, permitted and completed	To deliver 0.28 hectares of employment land
Policy EMP9: New Employment Land at Chalgrove	Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Land at Monument Business Park	To deliver 2.25 hectares of employment land at Land at Monument Business Park

Policy EMP10: Community Employment Plans	Number of applications for Major developments supported by a community employment plan	To maximise the opportunities for sourcing local produce, suppliers and services during both construction and operation
Policy EMP11: Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas	Status and type of applications for employment uses in the open countryside	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy EMP12: Tourism	Status and type of permissions granted for visitor economic developments.	To deliver a net increase in development for visitor economy over the plan period in accordance with the policy
Policy EMP13: Caravan and Camping Sites	Status and Type of permissions granted for Caravan and Camping Sites	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
EMP14: Retention of Visitor Accommodation	Amount of C1 use floorspace lost	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy

4. Infrastructure

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision	Covered by all other infrastructure indicators	Covered by all other infrastructure targets
Policy TRANS1a: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment across the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway	Progress of infrastructure within the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway	Positive progress towards the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway's identified priorities
Policy TRANS1b: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment	Progress of transport projects identified in the Local Transport Plan	To support the development and delivery of transport projects
Policy TRANS2: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments of over 80 dwellings	To ensure developments meet sustainable travel targets in Travel Plans.
	Progress of transport schemes	Covered by target for TRANS1b

	To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas	To ensure development supports improvements to air quality and meets the AQMA's standards.
	Level of cycle movements*	To increase the proportion of journeys undertaken by cycling locally
Policy TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.
Policy TRANS4: Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans	Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments over 80 dwellings	Covered by target for TRANS2
Policy TRANS5: Consideration of Development Proposals	Number of permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.
Policy TRANS6: Rail	Status and type of planning permissions related to rail services	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.
Policy TRANS7: Development Generating New Lorry Movements	Number of permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.
Policy INF2: Electronic Communications	Compliance with Building Regulations	To ensure delivery of dwellings is in compliance with Building Regulations
Policy INF3: Telecommunications Technology	Number of planning permissions refused	To ensure all planning permissions are only refused in accordance with the policy.
Policy INF4: Water Resources	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.

* On those routes in South Oxfordshire that are monitored by the Highways Authority.

5. Environment

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside	Status and type of permissions permitted in the AONBs	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV2: Biodiversity- Designated sites, Priority Habitats and Species	Changes in areas of Priority Habitats and Species	No net loss
	Number of permissions granted contrary to consultee advice on impact on Special Areas of Conservation	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
	Number of permissions granted contrary to consultee advice on impact on SSSI's	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV3: Non- Designated Sites, Habitats and Species	Change in biodiversity area and/or sites	To deliver a net gain in biodiversity area
Policy ENV4: Watercourses	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure in New Developments	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV6: Historic Environment	Number of buildings on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register	To protect all buildings on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register and facilitate their subsequent removal from the Register
	Number of new Conservation Area Character Appraisals	To agree a programme of the review and production of Conservation Area Character Appraisals and deliver that agreed programme
	Progress of Heritage Partnership Agreements	To ensure the completion of Heritage Partnership Agreements where appropriate for any listed building on an 'at risk' register

Policy ENV7: Listed Buildings	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV8: Conservation Areas	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV9: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments	Status and type of planning permissions	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV10: Historic Battlefields, Registered Park and Gardens and Historic Landscapes	Status and type of planning permissions	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV11: Pollution- - Impact from existing and/ or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment (Potential receptors of Pollution)	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy ENV12: Pollution- Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy EP1: Air Quality	To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)	To ensure development supports improvements to air quality and meets the AQMAs standards.
Policy EP2: Hazardous Substances	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy

Policy EP3: Waste collection and Recycling	Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling or composting	To take the opportunities presented by new development to deliver a percentage increase of household waste sent for re-use, recycling or composting.
Policy EP4: Flood Risk	Number and detail of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy EP5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.

6. Design

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy DES1: Delivering High Quality Development	Covered by all other design indicators	Covered by all other design targets
Policy DES2: Enhancing Local Character	Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy DES3: Design and Access Statements	Number of permissions granted for major development supported by an appropriate masterplan and design and access statement.	To ensure all major development is accompanied by a masterplan and design and access statement.
Policy DES4: Masterplans for Allocated Sites and Major Development	Covered by indicator for DES3	Covered by target for DES3
Policy DES5: Outdoor Amenity Space	Covered by indicator for DES3	Covered by target for DES3
Policy DES6: Residential Amenity	Covered by indicator for DES3	Covered by target for DES3

Policy DES7: Public Art	Number of permissions granted for major development, or sites larger than 0.5 hectares, that incorporate public art provision	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy DES8: Efficient Use of Resources	Covered by indicators for STRAT12, EP1 and EP3	Covered by targets for STRAT12, EP1 and EP3
Policy DES9: Promoting Sustainable Design	Number of permissions granted that incorporate climate change adaptation measures.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy DES10: Renewable Energy	Status and type of permission granted for renewable energy	To deliver schemes for renewable energy in accordance with the policy, thereby contributing to the UK's renewable energy target.
	Renewable energy capacity	To increase the renewable energy capacity for the district

7. Town Centres

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy TC1: Retail and Services Growth	Net change in comparison and convenience retail floorspace	Provision of a net increase of 25,670sqm comparison and 4,500sqm convenience retail floorspace
Policy TC2: Retail Hierarchy	A and D use class development permitted by settlement hierarchy	To ensure applications are granted in accordance with policy
	Number of applications approved and refused for 500sqm or greater of retail floorspace accompanied with a Retail Impact Assessment	To ensure applications are granted in accordance with policy
Policy TC3: Comparison Goods Floorspace Requirements	Comparison retail floorspace permitted by settlement hierarchy	To ensure applications are granted in accordance policy

Policy TC4: Convenience Floorspace Provision in the Market Towns	Provision of convenience floorspace (sqm retail floor space) at Henley, Thame and Wallingford	To ensure 1,500sqm of food retail floorspace is provided at Henley, Thame and Wallingford in accordance with policy
Policy TC5: Primary Shopping Areas	Number of planning permissions granted resulting in loss of retail floorspace in Primary Shopping Areas	To ensure applications are granted in accordance with policy

7. Community Facilities

Policy	Indicator	Target
Policy CF1: Safeguarding Community Facilities	Number of community facilities* lost	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy
Policy CF2: Provision of Community Facilities and Services	Status and type of permissions for community facilities	To increase the provision of the community facilities
Policy CF3: New Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	Provision of sporting facilities	An increase in sports facilities in the South Oxfordshire area
Policy CF4: Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	Number of permissions leading to the loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities	To ensure there is no loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities except where in accordance with the policy

* These include use facilities under A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2 use classes.

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