

Public Document Pack

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 7 February 2011 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also Present: Councillor Daniel Sames

Apologies for absence: Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Colin Clarke

Officers: Ian Davies, Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Martin Henry, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance
Gillian Greaves, Head of Housing Services
James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager
Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Nigel Bell, Team Leader - Planning and Litigation
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

104

Declarations of Interest

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

9. Localism Bill 2010: Opportunities for Cherwell.

Councillor James Macnamara, Personal, as Trustee of charities that own property in the district that may be affected by elements of the Localism Bill.

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Personal, as a tenant of the landowner who had agreed to be involved in the DCLG Neighbourhood Planning Vanguard scheme.

11. Concessionary Travel and Community Transport.

Councillor G A Reynolds, Personal, as a recipient of travel tokens.

105 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

106 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

107 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

108 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Review into Built Environment Conservation Area Policy**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which presented the report and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review into the Council's Built Environment Conservation Policy.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attended the meeting to present the report.

Resolved

- (1) That the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regard to the Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny Review be noted.
- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations regarding Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny Review as detailed below be agreed:
 - (1) That the Executive recognises the importance of our conservation areas and continues to support the work carried out by the Council to protect their character.
 - (2) That the Executive asks the LDF Advisory Panel to make sure that policies to protect conservation areas are contained within the LDF at the appropriate earliest opportunity.
 - (3) That the Executive approves the informal planning guidance document "*Subdivision of buildings for residential use*" which is shortly to be brought before it for approval following public consultation.
 - (4) That the LDF Panel be requested to keep under review the effectiveness of the document "*Subdivision of buildings for residential use*" and in due course, if this document is found not to be effective in generally achieving its objectives, to consider

whether the document should be reviewed and incorporated more formally as a Local Development Document within the Local Development Framework.

- (5) That Executive supports the efforts of the Council as we work with other organisations (such as the Highway Authority in respect of highway maintenance) to make sure that where public money is spent in conservation areas, this is appropriately directed to ensure that priority is given to ensuring the enhancement of the conservation areas.

Reasons

This report presents the work of an Overview and Scrutiny review of the work of the planning service within conservation areas insofar as this work relates to:

- Identifying, appraising and reviewing conservation areas
- Developing local planning policies and guidance to protect conservation areas
- Determining planning applications, Listed Building Consents and Conservation Area Consents
- Enforcing the planning decisions of the council

Options

Option One To accept some or all of the overview and scrutiny recommendations.

Option Two To reject some or all of the overview and scrutiny recommendations.

109

Draft Planning and Design Guidance: Subdivision of Buildings for Residential Uses

The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development submitted a report which recommended the Executive approve the draft 'Subdivision of Buildings for Residential Uses' document as informal guidance with immediate effect, so that it can be used to aid applicants when submitting applications and assist planning officers and committee members when determining such applications.

Resolved

- (1) That the Planning and Design Guidance: Subdivision of Buildings for Residential Use, as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be approved, subject to minor amendments by the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Planning and Housing.

Reasons

This document will be informal planning guidance. As informal guidance, it will have limited weight but, having been the subject of consultation, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for the sub-division of buildings for residential use. The guidance provides for the improvement of living environments created by the sub-division of existing residential premises. It also provides guidance on the impact on such works on the external appearance of the building and any further impact on the street as a whole.

Options

Option One Approve the document without changes.

Option Two Approve the document with changes.

Option Three Do not approve of the document.

110 **Planning Policy for Wind Energy Development**

The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development submitted a report which sought approval of an informal (non statutory) planning guidance document on the subject of wind turbines and residential development.

Members of the Executive commented that the guidance document demonstrated that Cherwell District Council was not opposed to renewable energy but set limits to protect residents in the district.

The Executive thanked Officers for completing a comprehensive piece of work in such a short period of time.

Resolved

- (1) That the document entitled 'Planning Guidance on the Residential Amenity Impacts of Wind Turbine Development' as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be approved for use as informal planning guidance.

Reasons

This document will be informal planning guidance. As informal guidance, it will have limited weight but, having been the subject of consultation, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The local guidance document is linked to policy SD3 of the Draft Core Strategy. This policy sets out the Council's strategic approach to assessing proposals for renewable energy, and makes clear that the Council supports renewable and low carbon energy where appropriate. In assessing planning applications, it identifies a number of issues which are of local significance to Cherwell District which need to be considered.

Options

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Option One | To approve the document set out as appendix 1 for use as informal planning guidance in determining planning applications |
| Option Two | To approve the document for use as informal planning guidance, with amendments |
| Option Three | Not to approve the document for use as informal planning guidance. |

111 **Localism Bill 2010: Opportunities for Cherwell**

The Interim Chief Executive submitted a report which sought consideration of the opportunities and issues for the district which are created through the Localism Bill 2010.

The Chairman began by reminding Members that the Bill had been introduced as draft legislation and was unlikely to receive Royal Assent until late 2011 however it was useful for the Executive to consider the content of the Bill.

Members considered the six key principles of the Bill and agreed that officers should be requested to draft a letter from the Leader on behalf of the council to Tony Baldry MP outlining the issues and questions the Executive had raised during the course of the discussion.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the Localism Bill 2010 be noted.
- (2) That officers be requested to provide update briefings to the Executive as the Bill continues on its legislative passage and to draft a letter from the Leader of the Council to Tony Baldry MP highlighting the points raised by the Executive.
- (3) That officers be requested to bring forward any opportunities for pilot projects as and when they arise including any legal, risk and financial implications.

Reasons

The Localism Bill provides many potential opportunities for Cherwell District Council to develop localism and to work towards 'The Big Society'. Due to the way the Bill has been introduced it is inevitable the clauses will be subject to much amendment during its legislative passage and therefore may change quite dramatically from the analysis which is set out above, therefore a further report will be produced following the bill receiving Royal Assent.

Additionally, whilst the Bill contains many proposals aimed at enhancing democracy, these come at a real cost both in terms of the staffing resource to

administer them but also in terms of budgets for instance the cost for a district wide referendum is estimated to be in excess of £150,000.

Options

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Option One | To agree the recommendations |
| Option Two | Not to agree the recommendations |
| Option Three | To amend the recommendations |

112 **Car Park Order Notice**

The Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services submitted a report which advised Members of any objections to the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order advertised on 13 January 2011 and sought authority to make the Order subject to any objections received.

The Portfolio Holder Safer Communities, Urban and Rural advised Executive that one objection had been received relating to the introduction of charges for blue badge holders.

Resolved

- (1) That the objections to the Order be received.
- (2) That formal Order Making on final proposals for implementation on, or as soon after, 4 April 2011 as is practicable be authorised.

Reasons

A range of car parking proposals have been considered as part of service planning for 2011/12, and through the budget preparation process. These proposals, if adopted, would be introduced on or as soon after 4 April 2011 as is practicable as ticket machines, information boards, highways direction signage and access all need to be considered to enable implementation.

Options

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Option One | Consider and deal with any objections to the Cherwell District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) Order |
|-------------------|---|

113 **Concessionary Travel and Community Transport**

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report which updated the Executive on changes to the Concessionary Travel Scheme and their implications, following the statutory transfer of the administrative responsibility for the scheme to Oxfordshire County Council from 1 April 2011. The report

also updated the Executive on the effects of these changes on the Community Transport (Dial a Ride) scheme, the risks facing the scheme in the future, and the course of action that officers are taking to mitigate as far as possible any adverse effects.

Resolved

- (1) That the change in statutory responsibility for the Concessionary Travel Scheme to the Oxfordshire County Council (“the County Council”) from 1 April 2011, including the changes made to the scheme by the County Council, and the effects on Dial a Ride services provided by Banbury Community Transport Association (BCTA) be noted.
- (2) That the County Council’s delegation of its functions under section 145[2] of the Transport Act 2000 [duty to issue concessionary passes] and associated powers, to Cherwell District Council for the period up to 31 March 2012 the costs of which are to be met by the County Council be accepted.
- (3) That the Head of Housing Services in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to negotiate and complete an Agency Agreement with the County Council under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 19 of the Local Government Act 2000 that gives effect to the rights and responsibilities referred to in [2] above.
- (4) That the further examination and development of the alternative proposals within the Cherwell District for longer term community transport provision be approved and the cost implications noted:
- (5) That the County Council be requested to undertake a County Wide review of community transport and related services in the light of the effects of the changes in the Concessionary Travel Scheme and from future funding of Community Transport, the results of which are to be reported back to the Executive.

Reasons

Service Continuity – Following the announcement by way of Statutory Order of the transfer of the Concessionary Fare Scheme to the County Council there is a real need to inform customers of the service of the changes and ensure that the service continues seamlessly. The continued interim provision of the service on behalf of the County Council by Cherwell District Council for a year, will allow the County Council to fully prepare for a seamless transfer of the service delivery of the scheme on 1 April 2012.

Effects on Community Transport – Despite the overall beneficial effects of the extension of travel passes to Dial a Ride services even after the effects of the withdrawal of further travel tokens from 1 April 2011, the risk of potential reductions in the grants from Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council in the future, represent a major service continuity risk for community transport in the Cherwell District. As a contingency a number of potential options need to be developed to try and mitigate any effects on community transport in the future.

Options

- Option One** Accept the recommendations contained in this report, thereby allowing interim arrangements for service continuity and the consideration of the future role of community transport within the Cherwell District. This is the option advised by officers.
- Option Two** Accept the service continuity arrangements for 2011/12, but not to endorse the potential development of future community transport arrangements.
- Option Three** Not to accept the service continuity arrangements for 2011/12, but to endorse the potential development of future community transport arrangements.
- Option Four** Not to accept the recommendations in this report.

114

Performance Management Framework 2010/11 Third Quarter Performance Report

The Interim Chief Executive and the Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager submitted a report which covered the Council's performance for the period 1 October to 31 December 2010 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

Resolved

- (1) That the following achievements be noted:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- The Council's job club programme is ongoing with a number of workshops held including interview skills coaching, a redundancy seminar and young people's specialist training including retail apprenticeships.
- The Council's apprenticeships programme has seen success with NVQs in Business and Administration completed. The programme has been extended until September 2011.
- Affordable Housing: performance is currently on track with 40 units delivered and plans in place to deliver additional units, including extra care housing for older people.
- Temporary Accommodation: numbers of households in temporary accommodation remain low with 24 at the end of December 2010.

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

- Litter: after inspections 97% of land was found to have litter at acceptable low levels, strong performance against a target of 95%.
- Recycling: currently performance exceeding target and is projected to be at 58% by the end of the year.

A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- Activities for older people: participation rates have continued to improve with 630 additional people taking part in group activities.
- The Community Safety Partnership is reporting a reduction in serious acquisitive crime (theft of and from cars, burglary - dwelling and robbery) of 23% in comparison to last year (data provided by Thames Valley Police).
- Private sector funding has been achieved for radios to support Street Wardens in their work.

An Accessible Value for Money Council

- Reducing the Council's costs by £800,000 in 2010/11: as of 31st December the target has been met and the savings have been reflected in the Council's draft budget for 2011/12.
- Providing More Services Online: there are currently more than 80 transactional services available on the Council's website. The consultation portal has also seen increasing availability of consultation activities including the draft budget for 2011/12.
- The Council's outreach workers have a programme of visits to venues where hour hardest to reach customers are likely to be. The venues include supermarkets, doctors' surgeries and community events.
- Next Steps sessions (careers advice) have been offered as surgeries at all the Council's link points, helping to improve access to partners' services.

(2) That officers be requested to report in the final quarter on the following item where performance was below target or there are emerging issues:

- Strategic Risks: given the significant changes facing the Council in terms of reducing budgets and shared management the Extended Management Team will be reviewing the strategic risks facing the Council. An update on this review will be brought forward to the next quarter report.

- (3) That the responses identified to issues raised in the quarter two performance report be agreed.

Reasons

The Performance Management Framework allows Councillors to monitor the progress made in delivering our objectives and to take action when performance is not satisfactory or new issues arise.

Options

- Option One**
1. To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.3.
 2. To request that officers report in the third quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.4 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.
 3. To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the quarter two performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.
- Option Two** To identify any additional issues for further consideration or review.

115

2010/11 Projected Revenue & Capital Outturn at 31 December 2010

The Head of Finance submitted a report which summarised the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 9 months of the financial year 2010/11 and projections for the full 2010/11 period. These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2010/11 budget process currently underway.

The report also considered progress against the 2010/11 Corporate Procurement Action Plan which contributes to the council's annual efficiency target.

Resolved

- (1) That the projected revenue & capital position at December 2010 be noted.
- (2) That the changes in the 2010/11 capital programme as detailed in 3 – 7 below be approved.
- (3) That an additional £2,072K of project funding into the 2011/12 capital programme be slipped and that this be considered as part of the 2011/12 budget process.

- (4) That the supplementary estimate of £45,000 for implementing the changes due to car parking proposals be approved.
- (5) That the contents and the progress against the Corporate Procurement action Plan and the Procurement savings achieved at December 2010 be noted.
- (6) That the transfer of projected service underspends to reserves to facilitate the funding of SNC joint working implementation costs and replenishment of the planning control reserve be approved.
- (7) That the transfer of the windfall interest received in respect of the Councils VAT Fleming case to the Organisational change reserve be approved.

Reasons

This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2010/11 Revenue and Capital Budget and includes the latest update against the 2010/11 Corporate Procurement Action Plan.

Options

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Option One | To review current performance levels and considers any actions arising. |
| Option Two | To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information. |

116

Draft Budget 2011-12

The Head of Finance submitted a report which provided the third and final opportunity for the Executive to shape and refine the interaction between corporate service plans and financial matters before the final budget is presented to full Council on 21 February 2011.

The first draft was reported to the December 6 2010 Executive meeting and a second draft to the January 10 2011 Executive meeting. The information has now been updated to reflect changes since then and, subject to any further changes Members may wish to include tonight, this final draft will be used to prepare a final budget proposal to be presented to full Council on 21 February 2011.

Resolved

- (1) That the changes to the draft budget since 10 January 2011 and consider the draft revenue budget as set out in the annex to the minutes (as set out in the minute book) in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities be approved.

- (2) That the surplus of £9,149 be transferred to general fund balances to enable a balanced budget be approved.
- (3) That a Council tax freeze be recommended to full Council.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication, to amend the contributions to or from general fund balances to allow the Council Tax increase to remain at the level recommended by Executive to full Council following the announcement of the final settlement figures.
- (5) That the proposed 2011/12 capital programme as set out in the annex to the minutes (as set out in the minute book) be agreed.
- (6) That the review of earmarked revenue reserves undertaken by the Portfolio Holder of Resources and Communication be noted and the re-allocation between various earmarked reserves and creation of 2 new reserves be approved as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book).
- (7) That the draft corporate plan and public pledges as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be endorsed and that authority be delegated to the interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any minor amendments to the plan or pledges as required.
- (8) That the 2011/12 Corporate Improvement Plan as set out in the annex to these minutes (as set out in the minute book) be noted.
- (9) That it be noted that the latest MTFS financial forecast is currently being refreshed and will be part of the budget book.
- (10) That officers be requested to produce the formal 2011/12 budget book on the basis of Appendices 1-4 to the report and attached as annexes to these minutes (as set out in the minute book).
- (11) That the updated Draft Budget 2011/12 be recommended for adoption by the Council on 21 February 2011 (as a key decision).

Reasons

The Council is required to produce a balanced budget for 2011/12 as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax. It has to base that budget on its plans for service delivery during the year, recognising any changes in service demand that may arise in future years.

Options

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Option One | To review draft revenue and capital budget to date and consider actions arising. |
| Option Two | To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information. |

117

Population and Household Projections for Cherwell and Key Implications for the Local Development Framework

The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development submitted a report which outlined for Members the updated population and household projections for Cherwell and sought consideration of the implications in terms of proposed changes to the Local Development Framework procedures and the consideration of a locally determined level of growth for the district.

The Executive acknowledged that the preparation of a Local Development Framework (LDF) was a statutory requirement but some Members were concerned about the population and household projections that had been proposed. Members commented that it was imperative that the correct figure was included in the LDF and raised concerns about the assumptions that had been made in reaching the recommended figure of 12,750 which was based on nil net migration. Members queried why the nil net migration scenario had been chosen over the other scenarios and questioned its validity and the household occupancy assumptions.

Members requested that officers provide further information in response to their concerns and agreed that further consideration of the item should be deferred to the March meeting.

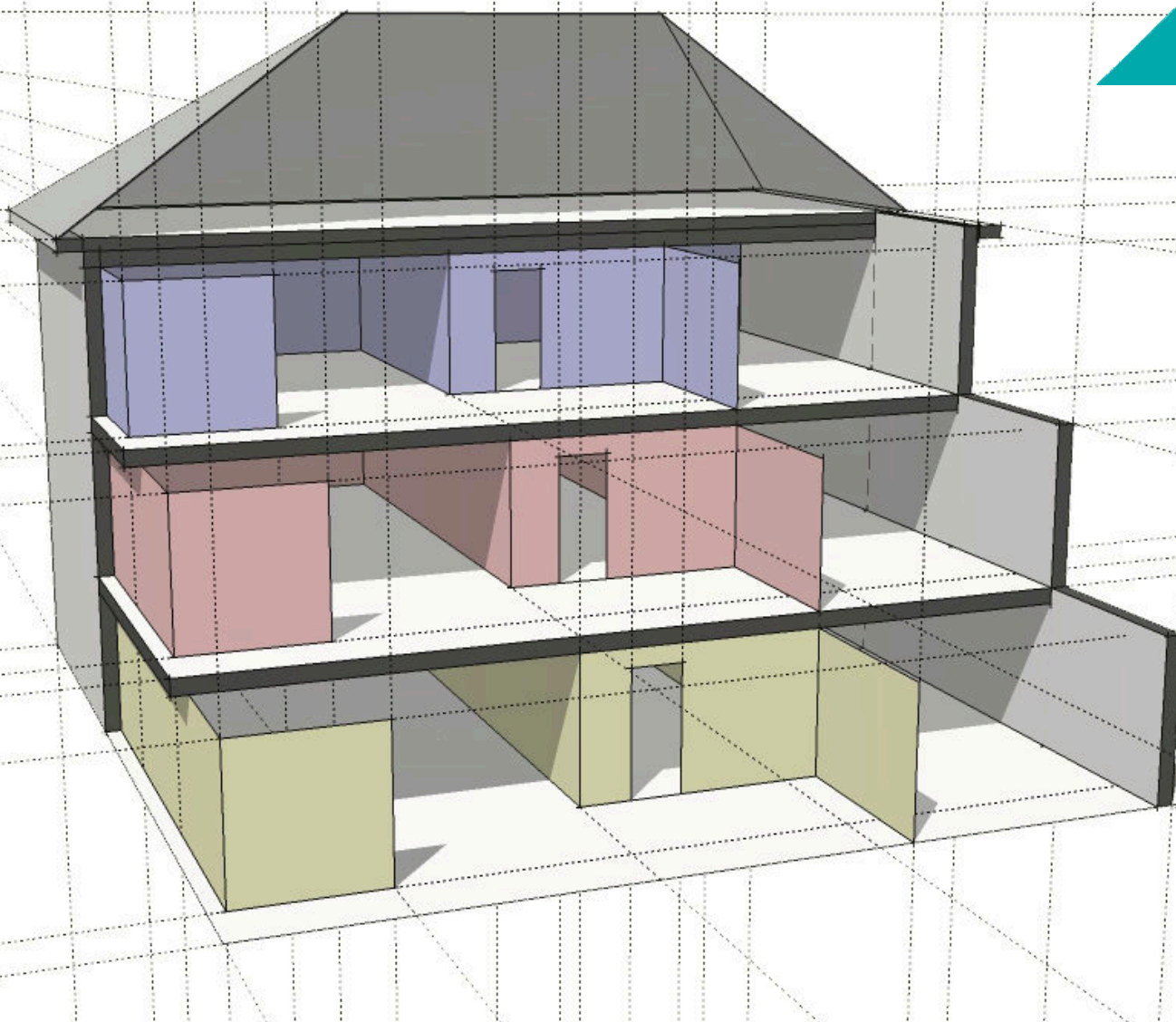
Resolved

- (1) That consideration of the item 'Population and Household Projections for Cherwell and Key Implications for the Local Development Framework' be deferred to the March 2011 Executive meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:



Planning and Design Guidance:
Sub Division of Buildings for Residential Use
February 2011

Planning, Housing and Economy

Contents



THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE	5
THE STATUS OF THIS GUIDANCE	6
RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS	7
Studio Flat	7
One-Bedroom Flat:	8
Bedroom	8
Living / dining room	8
Kitchen	8
Bathroom	9
Internal storage	9
Two-Bedroom Flat:	10
Main bedroom	10
Second bedroom	10
Living / dining room	10
Kitchen	11
Bathroom	11
Internal storage	11
HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION	12
Category A	12
Category B	12
Category C	13
Kitchens	13
Bathrooms	13
IMPACT ON THE STREET	14
Flat over flat relationship	14
Main entrance	14
New windows	14
Meter cupboards	14
Letterboxes	14
Obscure glazing	14
Pipe work	14
Cloths drying	14
TV aerials and satellite dishes	14
Bin stores	15
Cycle storage	15
Car parking	15
Front boundary walls and paving front gardens	15
Impact on neighbouring properties	15
Permitted Development	16
Private amenity space	16



INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS	17
Means of Escape	17
Outlook and ventilation	17
Sound insulation	17
Basement conversions	18
Roof conversions	18
Building Regulations	18
Accessibility	18
MAKING AN APPLICATION	19
Planning permission	19
Listed Building Consent	19
CONTACTS	20
Useful contacts	20
Council contacts	20
APPENDIX - Kitchen Layout Guide	21

The Purpose of this Guide



1. The Government's key housing policy goal set out in *Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing* is "to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, one they can afford, in a community where they want to live".

2. The Council has become concerned at the number of planning applications submitted that propose to convert houses into flats and bedsit accommodation, where the proposed room dimensions would produce very cramped living conditions and, in some cases, make it impossible to arrange even a modest amount of furniture and live comfortably. The Council does not consider that such properties constitute decent homes.

3. British homes are amongst the smallest in Europe. Recent CABE research has revealed that space inside modern homes is considered too small by the occupants and it recommends that Local Authorities should set minimum space standards. Many already do.

4. The Council is responsible for dealing with overcrowding in domestic premises. Several different pieces of legislation are relevant:

Statutory Overcrowding

(i) The Statutory Overcrowding provisions in the Housing Act 1985 continue to apply and provide bench-mark space standards which can be used to assess the suitability of rooms of different sizes.

Overcrowding as an enforceable hazard

(ii) The Council is also able to assess possible overcrowding using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and is required to take action if a serious hazard is identified.

Space Standards in Houses in Multiple Occupancy

(iii) A building containing rooms occupied as separate units of accommodation by individual households sharing kitchen or bathroom facilities is classed as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The Housing Act 2004 (section 139) gives the Council the power to serve an overcrowding notice if it considers that an 'excessive number' of people 'is being or is likely to be accommodated' in an HMO.

5. The Council has adopted space standards for this purpose and also uses these when setting licence conditions for those HMOs which require a licence. The Council standards are contained in this document in sections 45 to 57.

Other guidance on size

6. Although none of the legislation referred to provides an absolute standard which can be applied to individual rooms in a converted flat, the guidance provided in support of the legislation, the Council's adopted HMO standards and the floor space standards provided for the assessment of Statutory Overcrowding have informed this document.

7. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has its own standards, which are currently being reviewed. If proposed core standards are adopted they will apply to new build, general needs housing and non-specialised housing where the HCA is:

- Providing an element of grant funding which represents the majority of housing provision supported by the HCA.
- Facilitating or providing free or discounted land value.
- Facilitating or funding major infrastructure investment as part of a regeneration project.

The HCA requirements are contained in the following table.

Homes and Communities Agency Room Standards	
No bedrooms/ occupancy	M ²
1 Bed/ 2 person	48
2 Bed/ 3 person	61
2 Bed/ 4 person	70
3 Bed/ 5 person	86
4 Bed/ 6 person	99

8. The Council will however use this guidance as an overall marker for the size of complete units. Whilst it is recognised that the combined sizes of the room dimensions set out in this document may not reach the overall HCA standards, the Council does not expect there to be any circumstances where only the minimum room dimensions are used.

9. This document should be read alongside other existing guidance and policy, notably:

- The Councils Home Extensions and Alterations Design Guide (March 2007). This can be found at www.cherwell.gov.uk/.
- The Councils private sector housing policies. These can be found at www.cherwell.gov.uk/.
- The approved documents of the Building Regulations. These can be found at www.planningportal.gov.uk/.

10. The Council will apply the guidance contained in this document to

- **the conversion of existing properties to flats, studio flats or HMOs and**
- **the construction of new flats**

The guidance applies whether the properties are for sale or rent.

The Status of this Guide



11. This document has been the subject of consultation with stakeholders and the public. It has been amended in light of the comments received and adopted as Informal Development Principles by the Council's Executive. Whilst it will not form part of the Statutory Development Plan, it will be afforded weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

12. The Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan covers the period 2001-2011 and was originally produced as a replacement for the adopted Local Plan.

The decision was taken by the Council to discontinue work on the plan on the 13 December 2004 and withdraw it from the statutory local plan process as by the time of its adoption it would have been substantially out of date, having been overtaken by the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016.

The Council has been working on the preparation of a Local Development Framework (LDF) since December 2004. However, to avoid a policy void the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 was approved by the Council as interim planning policy for development control purposes on the 13 December 2004.

The Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan carries reduced weight compared to an adopted local plan. Nevertheless, it is a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.

13. Policy H23 of the Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan, states:

"Proposals for the conversion of existing dwellings to provide two or more self contained units of accommodation will be permitted provided that they would be unlikely to cause demonstrable harm to the amenities and privacy of neighbouring properties. Outside the built up limits of a settlement, proposals for the conversion of an existing dwelling to two or more units will not be permitted unless it would secure the future of a listed building."

Residential Conversions

Room Dimensions

14. This section sets out what the Council considers to be the absolute minimum dimensions for room sizes, based upon feasible arrangements and space required for furniture and movement. In all cases, if window or door positions vary or if other features, such as low ceilings, projecting chimney breasts or radiators, compromise the most efficient layout, dimensions will need to be increased.

It is unlikely that accommodation limited to the sum of the minimum dimensions for each room will be acceptable. It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the following minimum requirements can be satisfactorily accommodated.

Studio Flat:

Minimum floor area 20m² plus bathroom (in each case)

15. A studio flat to which this guidance applies is a self contained living environment where living, cooking, eating and sleeping takes place in one room, with private bathroom facilities (see paragraph 43 for details) and with its own lockable front door beyond which all the facilities of the studio flat are accessed.

16. The minimum requirements are considered to be all the facilities required for living. The juxtaposition of activities needs to be carefully planned, for example so that the bed is not located directly adjacent to the kitchen area, and should allow for storage of tall, bulky and awkwardly sized objects.

17. The minimum requirement is for:

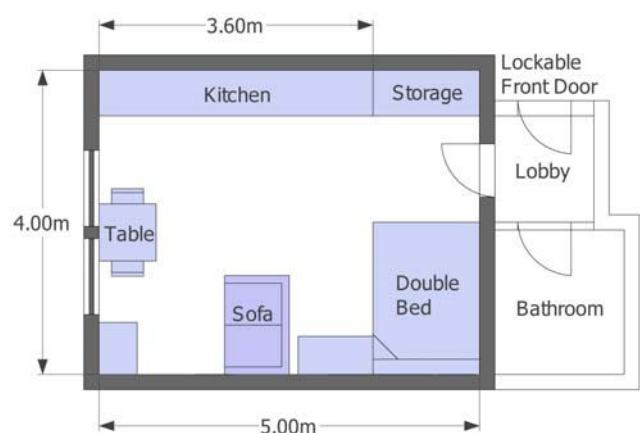
- a compact cooking area capable of accommodating chilled food storage, dry goods storage, utensil storage, cooking and washing facilities (A galley kitchen of 3.6m in length is considered the minimum, although a smaller standard may be acceptable in an HMO).
- storage
- a double bed
- 2 chairs
- a table
- two person sofa

18. Kitchens or kitchen areas should be organised so that there is safe and easy access to all appliances and

- there is space for a minimum of 3 white goods appliances of 0.6m width each
- there are wall cupboards for storage
- the cooker has worktops on both sides, is not in a corner or directly next to the sink or free standing
- the sink has adequate space on each side for the separation of clean and dirty utensils

19. A workable space should be retained in front of the kitchen for ease of use, 1.2m is recommended. It is also considered advisable for the floor surface in this area to be washable (e.g. non permeable).

20. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 20m², as shown.



This drawing and all that follow are for illustrative purposes only

One-Bedroom Flat:

Total minimum floor area = 30.4m² plus circulation (HCA 48m² for 2 people)

21. A one-bedroomed flat is a self contained living environment without shared cooking or bathing facilities and with its own lockable front door beyond which all the facilities of the flat are accessed.

22. It has, at a minimum, a separate bedroom, bathroom and living room, which may include dining and cooking areas or these may be separate in a living / dining or kitchen dining combination.

23. Entrance off a communal area should ideally be into a circulation area; access into a living area may be acceptable and access directly into a bedroom, bathroom or kitchen will not be acceptable.

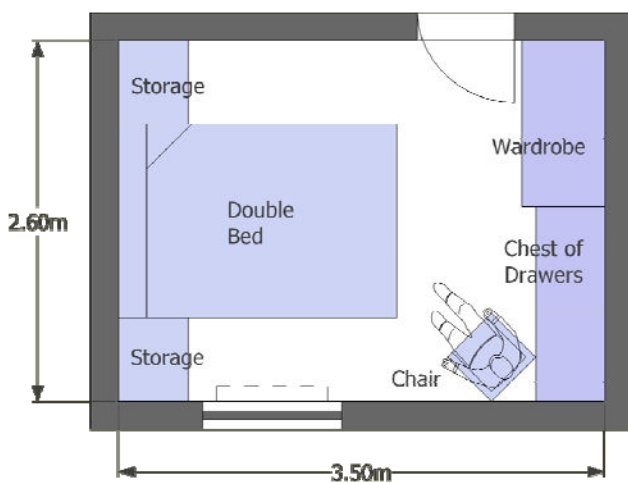
Bedroom:

Minimum floor area = 9.1m²

24. Here the minimum requirement is to accommodate:

- a double bed with space to access it from both sides
- a chest of drawers
- a wardrobe for clothes storage
- a chair

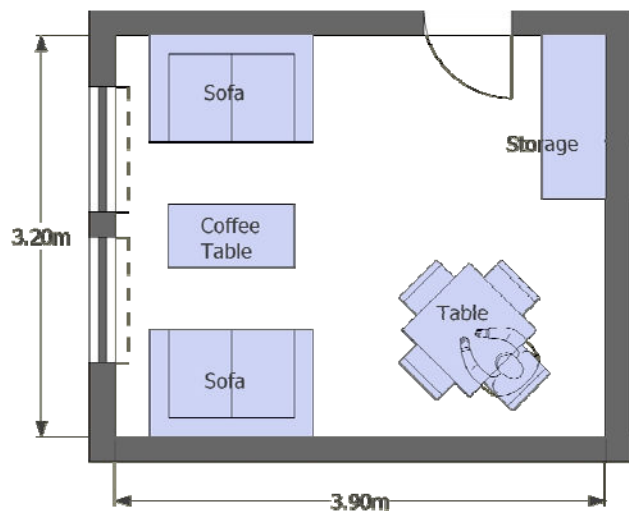
The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 2.6m x 3.5m as illustrated below.



Living / dining room:

Minimum floor area = 12.5m²

25. Here the minimum requirement is to enable 2 occupants plus 2 visitors to eat at a table and to relax on easy chairs, together with storage, display space and room for audio-visual equipment. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 3.2m x 3.9m as illustrated below.



Kitchen:

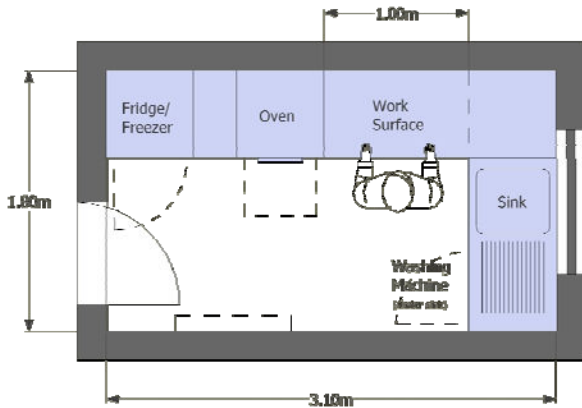
Minimum floor area = 5.6m²

26. Kitchens or kitchen areas should be organised so that there is safe and easy access to all appliances and

- there is space for a minimum of 3 white goods appliances of 0.6m width each
- there are wall cupboards for storage
- the cooker has worktops on both sides, is not in a corner or directly next to the sink or free standing
- the sink has adequate space on each side for the separation of clean and dirty utensils

27. Where separate kitchens are provided natural lighting and ventilation must be provided and the operation of the window must be possible across the work top. Units and appliances should not be placed in front of windows where the cill is lower than the height of the appliance, because of the adverse effect on the external appearance of the building.

28. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving a 5.6m² floor area are 3.1m x 1.8m. The lowest dimension must be no smaller than 1.8m to allow easy access to the fridge/ oven etc. Further details are contained in the Appendix.

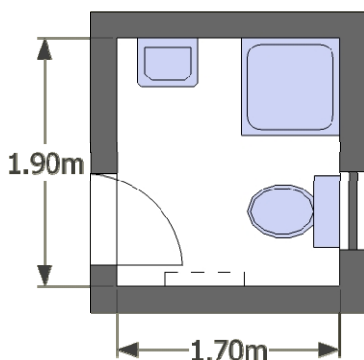


Bathroom:
Minimum floor area = 3.2m²

29. A bathroom must be capable of accommodating:

- a minimum 900 x 900mm shower tray
- a basin
- a WC
- a radiator and towel rail
- an inward opening door that does not foul the space required for use of the sink or the WC
- natural or artificial lighting and ventilation
- 1m² of circulation space which is uninterrupted by any of the elements of the bathroom suite.

The minimum dimensions capable of accommodating this are 1.9m x 1.7m, as illustrated below.



Internal storage

30. Plans must demonstrate provision for storage of:

- tall objects such as vacuum cleaners and ironing boards
- bulky objects such as suitcases
- awkwardly sized objects, possibly relating to a sport or a hobby.

Two-Bedroom Flat:

Total minimum floor area = 43m² plus circulation (HCA = 61m² for 3 people, 70m² for 4 people)

31. A two-bedroomed flat is a self contained living environment without shared cooking or bathing facilities and with its own lockable front door beyond which all the facilities of the flat are accessed.

32. It has, as a minimum, two separate bedrooms, a bathroom and living room that either includes dining and cooking areas or has a separate living / dining or kitchen / dining combination.

33. The accommodation is accessed off a communal hallway ideally into its private circulation area. Access into a living area may be acceptable and access directly into a bedroom, bathroom or kitchen will not be acceptable.

Main bedroom:

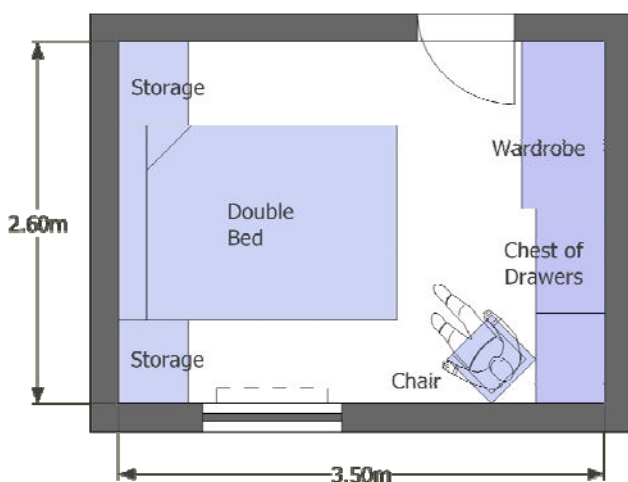
Minimum floor area = 9.1m²

34. The main bedroom should be independently accessed from the circulation area or living space within the flat, not through a kitchen or bathroom.

35. The minimum requirement is to accommodate:

- a double bed with space to access it from both sides
- a chest of drawers
- a double wardrobe for clothes storage
- a chair.

The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 2.6 m x 3.5m as illustrated below.



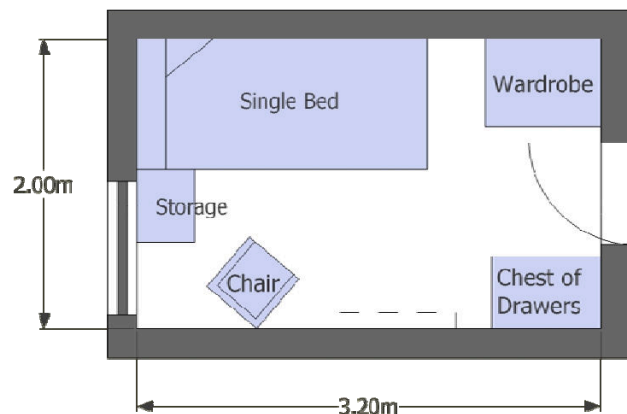
Second bedroom:

Minimum floor area = 6.5m²

36. The second bedroom should be independently accessed from the internal circulation or living space within the flat and not through the main bedroom, kitchen or bathroom. Here the minimum requirement will be to accommodate as a minimum:

- a single bed, with circulation space on one long and one short side
- chest of drawers
- a single wardrobe.
- a chair.

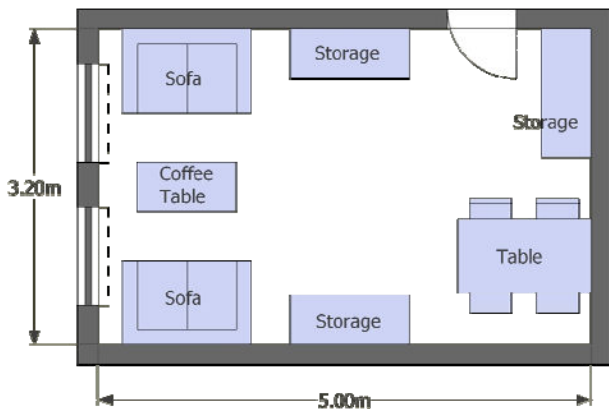
37. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 2m x 3.2m as illustrated below. If the room is to accommodate a double bed, the minimum dimensions will be the same as for the main bedroom.



Living / dining room:

Minimum floor area = 16m²

38. Here the minimum requirement is to enable 4 adults to eat at a table and also to sit on easy chairs, together with storage and display space and room for audio-visual equipment. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving this are 3.2m x 5.0m as illustrated overleaf. The additional 3.5m² over the one bedroomed unit is considered necessary in order to accommodate the additional storage for the extra occupants.



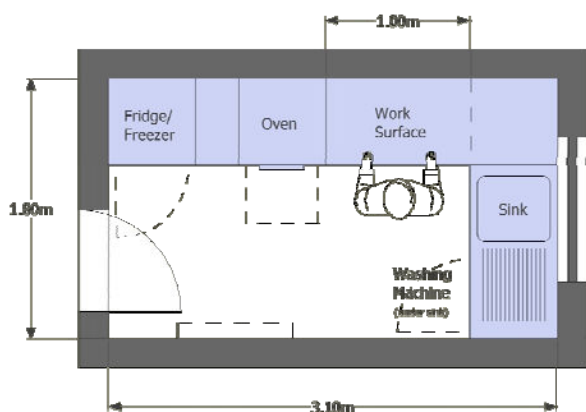
Kitchen:
Minimum floor area = 5.6m²

39. Kitchens or kitchen areas should be organised so that there is safe and easy access to all appliances and

- there is space for a minimum of 3 no. white goods appliances of 0.6m width each
- there are wall cupboards for storage
- the cooker has worktops on both sides, is not in a corner or directly next to the sink or free standing
- the sink has adequate space on each side for the separation of clean and dirty utensils.

40. Where separate kitchens are provided natural lighting and ventilation must be provided and the operation of the window must be possible across the work top. Units and appliances should not be placed in front of windows where the cill is lower than the height of the appliance.

41. The minimum dimensions capable of achieving a 5.6m² floor area are 3.1m x 1.8m. The lowest dimension must be no smaller than 1.8m to allow easy access to the fridge/ oven etc. Further details are contained the Appendix.



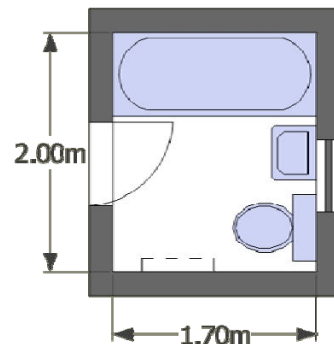
Bathroom:
Minimum floor area = 3.4m²

42. Where there is only one bathroom proposed, it must include a bath. Where a second bathroom is proposed a shower room may be acceptable and may be accessed through the main bedroom (en-suite) provided that the main bathroom is accessed via the internal circulation space.

43. The main bathroom must be capable of accommodating:

- a bath
- a basin
- a WC
- a radiator and towel rail
- an inward opening door that does not foul the space required for use of the sink or the WC
- natural or artificial lighting and ventilation
- 1m² of circulation space which is uninterrupted by any of the elements of the bathroom suite.

The minimum dimensions capable of accommodating this are 2.0m x 1.7m as illustrated below.



Internal storage

44. Plans must demonstrate provision for storage of:

- tall objects such as vacuum cleaners and ironing boards
- bulky objects such as suitcases
- awkwardly sized objects, possibly relating to a sport or a hobby.

Houses in Multiple Occupation



Room Dimensions

45. The following space standards are the benchmark against which the Council will determine the 'suitability for occupation' of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The space standards are split into three categories, which relate to three specific HMO types: houses occupied and let by rooms (Category A), houses occupied on a shared basis (Category B) and temporary accommodation for households with no other permanent home (Category C). Category C is not normally considered acceptable, but would be permitted in emergency cases.

Category A

46. These are HMOs occupied and let as individual rooms. There is likely to be exclusive occupation of habitable rooms and some sharing of amenities such as bathrooms, toilets and possibly kitchens.

47. Each occupant is likely to live independently with little social interaction between the tenants. Occupants will usually have single tenancy agreements and will have taken up occupancy at different times. Such houses will typically lack a communal living room. Bedsits are an example of this type of accommodation but houses comprising a mixture of bedsits and self contained units are also covered.

48. Bedsits will be expected to accommodate:

- a bed (size to suit the number of occupants)
- a dining table and chairs
- a comfortable chair or two person sofa
- storage
- a compact cooking area capable of accommodating chilled food storage, dry goods storage, utensil storage, cooking and washing facilities, where no separate kitchen facilities are provided, (See section 112).

Category A Space Standards

One Person Accommodation	
One Room Letting	
Bedsit with integral cooking facilities	11m ²
Bedsit with no cooking facilities in room	8.5m ²
Two Room Letting	
Bedroom	6.5m ²
Kitchen	5.5m ²
Bedroom/ living room (with separate kitchen)	8.5m ²
Kitchen/ living room (with separate bedroom)	8.5m ²
Two Person Accommodation	
One Room Letting	
Bedsit with integral cooking facilities	16m ²
Bedsit with no cooking facilities in room	13m ²
Two Room Letting	
Bedroom (with separate living room)	10m ²
Kitchen	5.5m ²
Living room (with separate kitchen)	11m ²
Kitchen/ living room (with separate bedroom)	13m ²

Category B

49. These are HMOs where for certain activities the occupiers live as a single household but for others do not. They are usually rented by an identifiable group of sharers as opposed to separate, lone individuals or a number of couples or families.

50. Occupiers have exclusive use of certain rooms, usually the bedrooms, but share the kitchen, bathrooms etc. There is expected to be a communal living room and a significant degree of social interaction.

51. Bedrooms will be expected to be able to accommodate:

- a bed with space to access it (size dependant on number of occupants)
- a chest of drawers
- a wardrobe for clothes storage
- a chair.

52. Living rooms will be expected to accommodate:

- a table and chairs (number of chairs dependant on number of occupants)
- comfortable chairs
- storage
- display space
- space for audio-visual equipment.

Category B Space Standards

Study/ Bedrooms	
One person unit	
Study/ bedroom (with separate living room)	6.5m ²
Study/ bedroom (no living room provided)	8.5m ²
Living room (1-6 persons)	11m ²
Two person unit	
Study/ bedroom (with separate living room)	10m ²
Study/ bedroom (no living room provided)	13m ²
Living room (1-6 persons)	11m ²

Category C

53. This category deals with premises such as hotels, hostels or guesthouses that become HMOs because they are providing accommodation for people who have no other permanent place of residence. The category includes bona-fide hotels used for this purpose whether on a permanent or temporary basis and whether this is their sole activity or they accommodate a mixture of homeless households and commercial guests.

54. The Council can issue a Declaration under Section 255 Housing Act 2004 to confirm its judgement that premises are in use as an HMO to which the Act applies.

55. Each unit will be expected to have access to kitchen facilities, which may be shared with other residents. A separate living room may be provided by way of a residents lounge. Where there is no separate living room, space for a comfortable chair and additional storage will be expected.

Category C Space Standards

Bedrooms	
One person (with separate living room)	6.5m ²
One person (no living room provided)	8.5m ²
Two person (with separate living room)	10m ²
Two person (no living room provided)	13m ²
Three person (separate living room must be provided)	10m ²
Four person (separate living room must be provided)	13m ²
Living Rooms	
Living room (1-5 persons)	11m ²
Living room (6-10 persons)	14m ²

Kitchens

56. Each kitchen must be large enough and laid out in such a way as to enable safe and unhindered use of the facilities. Kitchens must be a minimum of 1.8m wide so to allow safe circulation and sufficient room for the facilities to be used. In order to judge the suitability of shared kitchens the Council will have regard to the space standards below.

57. In all cases the Council will use its discretion in determining appropriate room sizes for larger numbers of occupants.

Kitchen Space Standards

Kitchen (1-6 persons)	7m ²
Kitchen/ diner (1-6 persons)	13m ²

Bathrooms

58. Bathrooms must meet the minimum space standards provided in paragraph 29. The number of bathrooms necessary will depend on the overall number of occupants.

Impact on the Street



59. Existing buildings form part of an established street scene. It is important that conversion to flats does not adversely impact the appearance of the building and that the cumulative impact of works associated with the conversion do not have an adverse impact upon the street scene.

Flat over flat relationship

60. A building with similar rooms stacked above each other tends to produce a more ordered elevation, with similar sized windows above each other. Soil stacks and services can be grouped making maintenance easier. This can also reduce internal sound disturbance.

Main entrance

61. In the conversion of older properties the original main entrance should continue to be used as the main entrance to the building, thereby continuing the established building pattern in the street. If car parking is located to the rear it may be acceptable to have a secondary entrance from the rear.

New windows

62. The introduction of new windows requires Building Regulation approval and also planning permission in flats. In listed buildings this additionally requires listed building consent. Inserting new windows on front elevations should be avoided as this can disrupt the pattern of fenestration in the building. Where these can be accommodated satisfactorily, they should be an exact match of the existing windows in material and design and should be positioned to sit comfortably within the existing pattern of fenestration, lining up both vertically and horizontally as appropriate.

Meter cupboards

63. Whilst these need to be accessible to be read by service providers, they should not cause harm to front elevations, but should be located within communal porch areas, on side elevations, internally facing front boundary walls or be ground mounted.

Letterboxes

64. Where possible each flat should have its own letter box in its own front door. Where this is not possible and banks of letter boxes are required, lockable boxes should be located within communal porch areas, on side elevations or on the internally facing front boundary wall.

Obscure glazing

65. Obscure glazing to protect privacy in bathrooms, for example, should not be used on the front elevation of properties but be restricted to side and rear elevations.

66. A window that would have a detrimental impact on the amenity and/ or privacy of neighbouring properties cannot be justified through the use of obscure glazing.

Pipe work

67. New foul pipes serving added bathrooms or kitchens should not cause harm to the front elevation of properties and should, where possible, be grouped on side or rear elevations.

Clothes drying

68. Secure external space, not visible from the street, should be available on plot for the drying of laundry. Where this cannot be provided, space should be identified internally, for example by an ailer over the bath.

TV aerials and satellite dishes

69. Planning permission may be required to:

- erect a satellite dish on an elevation facing a highway if in a Conservation Area.
- erect more than two satellite dishes to serve a group of flats.

They should ideally be located on rear elevations, below ridge lines and chimneys. Consent is required to erect satellite dishes and aerials on listed buildings. They should be located within the roof space, or if this is not possible, on outbuildings to the rear, out of sight of public view.

Bin requirements/ stores

70. The Council operates a wheeled bin refuse system, which uses three coloured bins for different types of rubbish.

71. The Council's detailed guidance document entitled '*Planning and Waste Management Design Advice Document*' sets out the requirements for waste collection and was formed as a result of the work undertaken by the 'Oxfordshire Waste Partnership'. Ideally it seeks:

- in flats that waste collection be through the use of coloured communal collection containers or coloured individual bins held in a communal location
- bins stores be in a covered area and serviced by a private road
- bins stores be within 5m of the collection point with a minimum of 1m provided in front of the containers
- bin storage areas be a minimum 1.4 square metres per flat or multi-occupancy properties
- bin stores be robustly screened and unobtrusive
- bin stores be designed into the proposal from the outset using sympathetic materials.

For further information applicants should contact Environmental Services.

72. The Council will consider the requirements for bin storage flexibly where it can be demonstrated that the amenity of the area will not be adversely affected. For example, storage areas could be provided within the converted building itself as long as there is easy access and effective ventilation.

Cycle storage

73. One cycle storage space is required per bed space. Ideally space for cycle storage should be included within the ground floor of the building. Where this cannot be achieved, secure covered storage must be provided at the side or rear of the building with easy access onto the street and must be included and designed in the proposal from the outset using sympathetic materials.

Car parking

74. In Banbury and Bicester town centres the Council's car parking policy is one space per dwelling. Elsewhere 1 parking space for a 1 bedroom unit, 2 parking spaces for a 2/3 bedroom unit and 2 parking spaces, plus further spaces determined on merit for a 4 bedroom unit are applied. Car parking should be provided on plot and should not:

- add to the requirement for on street car parking
- dominate the frontage
- fill the whole of the plot.

75. The Council will consider flexible or car free housing where it can be demonstrated that the additional units are located within easy reach of all essential services. Unless the amenity of the area will be adversely affected.

Front boundary walls and paving front gardens

76. Planning permission is required for the creation of new vehicular access from an A or B classified road and also for turning any front garden into a parking area, unless it is to be constructed of permeable paving.

77. Front boundary walls, railings and hedges all contribute to the character of a street and the cumulative effect of their removal can have an adverse effect on the character of the street and degrade the environment for others. In a Conservation Area consent is required for the substantial demolition of walls over 1m adjacent to a highway. The Council will encourage alternative means of providing car parking that does not involve demolition of front boundaries and loss of front gardens.

Impact on neighbouring properties

78. Views from rear windows of upper floors into neighbouring gardens are hard to avoid in an established neighbourhood. The conversion of an upper floor bedroom into a living room or kitchen can result in an increase in overlooking and therefore loss of privacy for neighbours. For this reason, and to assist with the surveillance of the street, it is preferable, for living rooms and kitchens to be at the front of the building. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that kitchen units and appliances are not higher than the window cill as this can look unsightly from the street.

Permitted development

79. Flats and HMOs do not have permitted development rights, so planning permission will be required for all material external alterations. Once a building is converted to flats these new rules will apply. A Listed Building Consent application will also be required for any works, internal or external of alteration to a listed building. It is always advisable to check with Development Control before undertaking works.

Private amenity space

80. The Council considers it important for all dwellings to have some access to private outdoor space, such as a patio or balcony, or semi private shared amenity space closely associated with the home, for outdoor amenity, children's play, growing plants and drying laundry. It may not be appropriate to introduce balconies to an existing property. Outdoor space should be as private as possible, secure and directly overlooked only by the dwellings to which it relates.

81. On developments or conversions of 10 units or more containing one or more two-bedroomed properties or larger, the Council requires that a Local Area of Play (LAP) be provided. If this is not possible the Council will seek a financial contribution towards off site children's play and public open space provision to meet the residents' needs. Any off site LAP must be within a 1 minute walk of the development/ conversion.

82. Further and more in depth information is contained in the Council's *'The Provision of Open Space in New Development'* guidance document.



Means of escape

83. The provision of a means of escape from flats can be complicated – particularly in listed buildings. Where flats are formed in two-storey buildings, means of escape windows may be used from habitable rooms (living rooms, bedrooms etc.) in place of formal protected routes. Where flats are formed in multi-storey buildings, a protected common staircase discharging to outside is required together with suitable internal layouts in the flats. Advice about specific projects is available from the Council's Building Control team.

84. Where escape windows are used, they must have an opening area of at least 0.33m², with no dimension less than 0.45m e.g. 0.45m x 0.75m. The bottom of the opening area must be between 0.8m and 1.1m above internal floor level, with window catches and hinges that ensure a clear opening. Windows must also be accessible externally by a ladder. Further information can be found in the Building Regulations Approved Document B, Volume 2 which is downloadable from the Planning Portal.

85. The internal staircase will also need to provide a protected environment, which has direct access to the outside and is directly accessible to all the flats.

86. Means of escape from conversions will require doors opening on to the stairs to be upgraded to fire doors, to provide a protected staircase. This may conflict with listed building requirements and may make sub-division impracticable. Fire escapes on the front elevation of buildings will not be acceptable, so other means of escape will be required.

Outlook and ventilation

87. All habitable rooms (living room, dining room, bedroom and kitchen) must have a window that opens to provide adequate daylight and ventilation and an acceptable outlook. Windows must be capable of being opened to the equivalent of 1/20th of the floor area of the room to provide adequate ventilation.

88. Bathrooms, kitchens, toilets and utility rooms require mechanical extract ventilation even where a window is provided.

89. Where new windows are to be inserted their cills and lintols should be level with and match the existing windows. Windows to habitable rooms should have a clear and largely unobstructed view.

90. Traditional roof lights are unlikely to provide an acceptable outlook from a habitable room, as they generally provide views at an elevated angle only.

91. It is important to locate high usage room types (e.g. living rooms) on the front/ street facing elevation. This provides natural surveillance of the street, creating an active frontage. Lower usage rooms, such as bedrooms should be located to the side or rear to restrict overlooking of neighbouring gardens.

Sound insulation

92. Sound insulation is vital in any conversion and can be difficult to install within an existing structure. Listed buildings need to be treated with care, as additional thickness in the floors or ceilings can lead to the loss of cornices and skirting boards. Raising the floor will also affect the door openings and may reduce the height to an escape window so that it no longer complies.

93. Information on where and how sound insulation is to be placed and installed must be attached to any application for Listed Building Consent, so that its impact on the buildings historic fabric can be properly assessed.

Basement conversions

94. The conversion of a basement or semi basement into a flat needs to ensure that:

- adequate damp proofing is undertaken and that services and fixings for wall mounted furniture, which would breach this, are not required
- drainage outfalls are high enough to provide adequate fall or that pumping mechanisms are installed
- adequate daylight and ventilation are provided
- the aspect from habitable rooms is acceptable.

95. Ceiling heights of habitable rooms should ideally be 2.4m. For a space to be considered usable it must have a ceiling height, which exceeds 1.5m, otherwise it will not be considered as part of the floor space.

Roof conversions

96. The conversion of a roof space into a flat needs to ensure that:

- the ceiling height at the point of entry to the flat is ideally 2.4m or above and ceiling height throughout does not prejudice the effective use of habitable rooms. For space to be considered usable it must have a ceiling height which exceeds 1.5m, otherwise it will not be considered as part of the floor space.
- any dormer windows are located and designed to be in keeping with the appearance of the building and do not disturb the harmony of the pattern of fenestration.
- in listed buildings as much of the historic fabric is retained as possible and the removal or cutting through of original roof trusses and floor joists is avoided. Openings should be designed to fit within existing features.

Building regulations

97. A Building Regulations application is required for changes of use (such as subdividing to form flats) as well as structural work to a building. The Building Regulations can be complicated; it is not possible to explain the requirements in full within this document. Advice about the Building Regulations and how they might apply to the subdivision of a building is available from the Council's Building Control team.

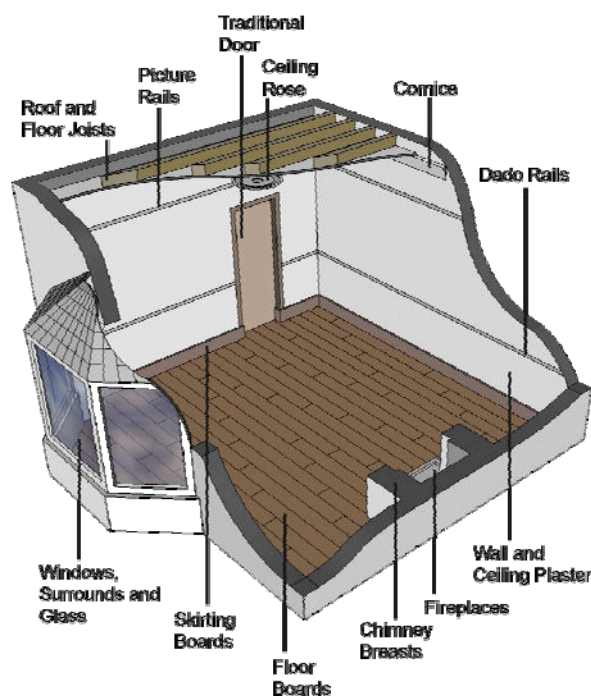
98. It is advisable to consult Building Control at an early stage so that your application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent can accurately reflect the structural work required.

Listed Buildings

99. The conversion of listed buildings, if not carefully considered, can have an adverse impact on the fabric and finishes of the building. A greater level of information is required in a Listed Building Consent application so that the impact can be properly assessed. Below is a list of some of the most common features to be aware of:

- Original/ historic roof joists
- Original/ historic floor joists
- Original/ historic floor boards
- Historic ceiling roses
- Historic doors and their surrounds
- Windows, their surrounds and glazing
- Historic cornices
- Historic skirting boards
- Decorative/ historic wall and ceiling plaster
- Period fireplaces
- Chimney breasts and hearths
- Historic picture/ dado rails.

Where the age and/ or significance of existing features is unknown the Council's Design and Conservation Team will be happy to provide guidance.



Accessibility

100. Access and facilities for disabled people should be provided in accordance with the Building Regulations.

Making an Application



101. Below is a list of the documents you need to submit with your planning application and/ or Listed Building Consent application. You are advised, prior to submission of any application, to contact the Council and discuss your proposals. This will not only save time in the long run, but may also alert you to potential problems with the scheme.

The current list of requirements is subject to future change in order to meet forthcoming government standards. For the time being these details must be submitted with each application. Further details are contained in the Council's '*Validation of Planning Applications*' document.

Information Required for a Planning Application

102. Applications should be made on the planning application form, available from the Council Offices at Bodicote House or downloadable from the Council's Website. For the application to be registered the following information must be submitted:

- Four copies of all the plans including the application forms
- A location plan
- A block plan of the site
- Existing and proposed elevations
- Existing and proposed floor plans
- Existing and proposed site sections and finished floor and site levels
- Roof plans
- The completed Ownership Certificate as required by article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995
- Design and Access Statement
- The appropriate fee.

103. In addition to the above information the following Local Requirements may be necessary dependant on the type and scale of your proposal.

- Daylight/ sunlight assessment
- Economic statement
- Flood risk assessment
- Ventilation/ extraction assessment
- Drainage assessment
- Landscaping details
- Noise impact assessment
- Planning statement
- Tree survey/ arboricultural report.

Information Required for a Listed Building Consent Application

104. In addition to planning permission, works to a listed building will require a Listed Building Consent. **It is a criminal offence to alter a listed building without consent.** Below is a list of further information required as part of a Listed Building Consent application:

- Plans to a scale of 1:20 that show all new doors, windows etc
- Heritage impact assessment
- Structural survey, essential for listed buildings, which shows that the building is capable of conversion without substantial demolition and rebuilding.
- Location of services
- Location of letterboxes and cycle and bin stores
- Location of bins storage
- Sound insulation installation
- Photographs.

105. An application for either planning permission or Listed Building Consent can also be made electronically through the Planning Portal.

Contacts



Useful Contacts

Royal Institute of British Architects
66 Portland Place
London
W1B 1AD

Tel: 020 7580 5533
Fax: 020 7255 1541

Email: info@inst.riba.org
Website: www.architecture.com

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
RICS
Parliament Square
London
SW1P 3AD

Tel: 0870 333 1600
Fax: 0207 334 3811

Email: london@rics.org
Website: www.rics.org

The National Federation of Builders
55 Tufton Street
London
SW1P 3QL

Tel: 0870 898 9091
Fax: 0870 898 9096

Email: info@builders.org.uk
Website: www.builders.org.uk

Council Contacts

The Council's offices can be found at:

Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

Tel: 01295 252535
Website: www.cherwell.gov.uk

Specific services can be contacted as follows:

Development Control
Tel: 01295 221883/1884
Email: planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Design and Conservation
Tel: 01296 221846
Email: design.conservaion@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Building Control
Tel: 01296 221835/ 1836
Email: building.control@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Housing Services
Tel: 01295 221809
Email: housing@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Environmental Services
Tel: 01295 221940
Email: customer.service@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Acknowledgments

All images are the creation of the author.

All OS plans reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown Copyright.

Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Cherwell District Council License number 100018504 2010.

Appendix

106. A satisfactory kitchen must be safe, convenient and must allow good hygiene practices. It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each. Worktops must be secure, level and impervious and must be of adequate size. Adjacent walls require splash backs and power-points must be suitably located. The following guidance is based upon 'Space in the Home', published by The Department for the Environment in 1986.

Good Practice

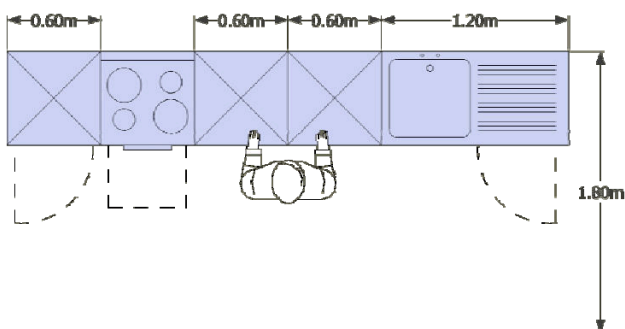
107. The following guidance assumes that all typical kitchen appliances are to be located in the kitchen or separate cupboard. It may be practical to locate washing machines in a bathroom, in which case the room dimensions will need to be adjusted. Permanent positioning of an appliance in a bedroom will not be acceptable.

108. The minimum width for a work top which can be used as working space is 0.3m. There must be a minimum of at least one uninterrupted surface that is 1.0m or greater in width. Care needs to be taken in the positioning of wall mounted cupboards in relation to this surface, otherwise the space could become unusable.

Galley Kitchen

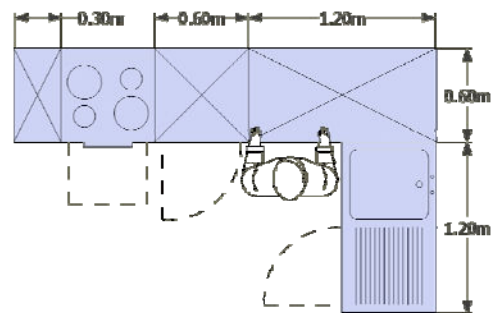
109. This is the minimum provision for a kitchen. It incorporates worktop on both sides of the cooker and working space both sides of the sink bowl.

110. The minimum length of a single galley kitchen is considered to be 3.6m. The length is made up of 6 bays of 0.6m. The minimum dimensions of this layout are 0.6m x 3.6m, plus 1.2m of circulation space to enable someone to pass a person using an appliance or an open door, therefore the dimensions required are 1.8m x 3.6m



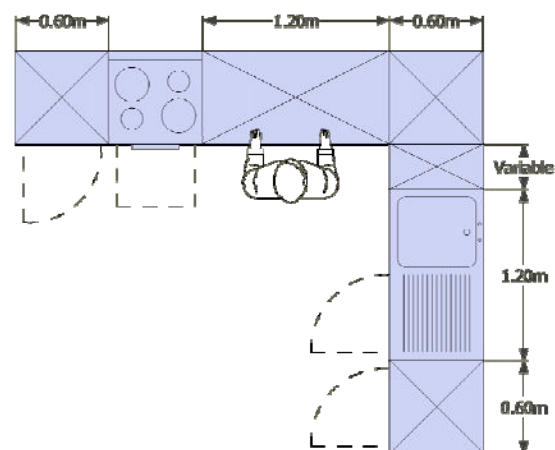
Alternative Minimum Layout

111. This arrangement provides more work space, but could be further improved by allowing more space either side of the sink. The dimensions of this layout are 1.7m x 2.7m.



Suggested Kitchen Layout

112. This is a good kitchen layout. It is well set out and has plenty of useable work space, including enough space to accommodate 4 white goods. It may also be large enough to accommodate a small breakfast table. The dimensions of this layout are 3.0m x 2.6m.



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Produced by:
The Design and Conservation Team
Planning Policy and Economic Development
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
Ox15 4AA



Planning Guidance on the Residential Amenity Impacts of Wind Turbine Development

February 2011

Executive Summary

There is considerable interest in proposing commercial scale wind turbines in Cherwell and the surrounding districts. The purpose of this document is to help ensure that the wider benefits resulting from renewable energy generation are balanced with local issues including landscape impacts, and the economic, social and amenity impacts on local communities.

The document has been prepared as informal planning guidance, linked to Draft Core Strategy policy SD 3 which listed the issues of particular local significance when considering proposals for renewable energy schemes in the district. ~~If approved in draft form by the Executive, the draft document will be subject to a period of public consultation. After this, members will be asked to approve the document as informal (non-statutory) planning guidance.~~ It will be shared with anyone considering a wind turbine proposal within the district, and will be a material consideration that the Planning Committee can take into account in considering proposals.

This document recommends separation distances between turbines and settlements or dwellings, firstly as a general standard for amenity reasons and then for a variety of reasons including landscape, noise, heritage, safety and shadow flicker. Where possible the standards set out in this document are linked to national guidance, or a local evidence base. The document does not provide a comprehensive list of the issues to be considered in determining applications for large scale wind turbine development.

This document will typically apply to commercial scale, large turbines but the principles could also apply to medium scale turbines (Chapter 2 provides more information).

Table 1 below lists the distances suggested in this document (see the individual chapter for further information and justification):

Table 1 Suggested Distance Summary

Impact or Issues	Chapter	Suggested 'Indicative' Distance
Dwellings and Settlements	Chapter 3	Normally a minimum of 800m from dwellings or settlements No less than 3 times turbine height (ground to blade tip) Settlements of more than 10 dwellings should not normally have turbines in more than 90 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 5km Individual dwellings should not normally have turbines in more than 180 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 10km
Landscape and Visual	Chapter 4	At least 400m from dwellings or settlements
Noise	Chapter 5	At least 400m from dwellings or settlements
Heritage	Chapter 6	Proposals resulting in significant adverse impacts on heritage assets within 2km will be unacceptable Detailed consideration of impacts on heritage assets to extend to 5km
Safety	Chapter 7	Ground to blade tip height + 10% between occupied buildings and roads
Shadow Flicker	Chapter 8	10 rotor diameters from dwellings or settlements

Wind turbines within these distances will not normally be considered appropriate. However, proposals will be considered on a case by case basis. For example, appropriate separation distances may also be influenced by the orientation of views, and the local land cover and topography. It will be for the applicant to demonstrate to the Council that amenity and other consideration are not harmed by the proposal.

Finally, this document also lists sources of further information which will be of assistance in determining wind turbine proposals in Appendix 1.

Contents

1 Introduction	5
2 Wind Turbine Size and Wind Speed	9
3 Dwelling Distance	11
4 Landscape and Visual Impacts	17
5 Noise	23
6 Heritage	27
7 Safety	31
8 Shadow Flicker	35
9 Cumulative Impacts	37

Appendix

1 References	41
---------------------------	-----------

Chapter 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Renewable energy generation is seen by all parliamentary parties as a key priority in reducing carbon emissions in order to meet national and international targets. Various national documents including the UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) and the Energy White Paper (2007) are clear on the importance attached to onshore wind as a sustainable source of energy. The White Paper identifies onshore and offshore wind, and biomass, as potentially the most cost effective ways of limiting carbon emissions.⁽ⁱ⁾
- 1.2 The existing national planning policy guidance (particularly PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS22: Renewable Energy) follow the same direction in terms of promoting renewable energy. The PPSs are to be replaced by a National Policy Framework as part of the Localism Bill. However, the overall policy direction is likely to remain similar given the direction of the letter sent to chief planning officers regarding the status of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) (6 July 2010) which stated that:
- "Through their local plans, authorities should contribute to the move to a low carbon economy, cut greenhouse gas emissions, help secure more renewable and low carbon energy to meet national targets, and to adapt to the impacts arising from climate change".
- 1.3 The most recent 'evidence gathering' study relating to renewable energy potential in the South East, Oxfordshire, and Cherwell district is the 'Review of Renewable and Decentralised Energy Potential in South East England' (LUC and TV Energy, June 2010). This study was originally intended to inform the new Regional Strategy, but despite RSS revocation the report continued to be finalised and released in order to help local authorities prepare their own local targets and renewable energy strategies.
- 1.4 In the study, Oxfordshire was found to have the most potential for commercial scale wind energy across the region (Figure 3.1 of the above study). Cherwell district was found to have the most potential across Oxfordshire (Appendix 3.1 of the above study).
- 1.5 The Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study (CAG, 2009) undertaken for the Council focused on strategic policy formulation rather than detailed spatial identification of the potential for renewable energy, but nevertheless illustrates in more local detail the kinds of factors constraining wind farm development in the district. These factors were subsequently listed as part of a 'criteria based' policy in Draft Core Strategy policy SD 3.
- 1.6 Draft Core Strategy policy SD 3 set out the Council's general position towards assessing renewable energy proposals. It makes clear that the Council supports renewable and low carbon energy where appropriate. *Each proposal would of course be considered on its own merits. The policy in assessing planning applications, it identifies a number of issues which are of local significance to Cherwell District which need to be considered. These include the impact of proposals on landscape designations, visual impact upon local landscapes and impacts upon the historic environment and residential amenity.*

i Please note that in producing this document, the Council is not expressing a preference for or prejudice against one type of renewable energy in particular. However wind turbines are likely to have the greatest visual, landscape, and other amenity impacts.

Purpose and Status of this Document

- 1.7 The purpose of this document is to provide additional detail on the criteria set out in Draft Core Strategy policy SD 3, specifically relating to proposals for commercial scale wind turbines and the need to protect residential amenity. As it does this, the document seeks to respond to a motion passed by the Council in July 2010 relating to the distance between turbines and settlements or individual dwellings (see para 1.12 below). This is necessary to ensure that the wider benefits resulting from renewable energy generation are balanced with local issues including landscape impacts, and the economic, social and amenity impacts on local communities.
- 1.8 This document recommends separation distances between turbines and ~~settlements or dwellings~~ for use in Cherwell, firstly as a general standard for amenity reasons and then for a variety of reasons including landscape, noise, heritage, safety and shadow flicker. ~~Where possible the standards set out in this document are linked directly to national or local policy, or a local evidence base.~~ The document does not provide a comprehensive list of the issues to be considered in determining applications for large scale wind turbine development. *Issues such as biodiversity, aviation, and highways are nonetheless important considerations relating to proposals for wind turbine development, and sources of information on these issues are listed in Appendix 1. These issues along with traffic generation are likely to be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process (it is not the role of this document to repeat EIA guidance). Consideration will also need to be given to peripheral items such as substations and power cables, although the primary impacts on amenity will arise from the turbines themselves.*
- 1.9 ~~This document will form informal planning guidance. If approved in draft form by the Executive, the draft document will be subject to a period of public consultation. After this, members will be asked to approve the document as informal (non statutory) planning guidance from the Council on the subject of wind turbines. It will be shared with anyone considering a wind turbine proposal within the district, and will be a material consideration that the Planning Committee can take into account in considering proposals before them.~~
- 1.10 *Where possible the standards set out in this document are linked directly to national or local policy, or a local evidence base. The guidance will typically relate to commercial scale, large turbines but the principles could also apply to smaller turbines, in particular medium scale turbines. More detail is provided in Chapter 2. The guidance typically applies to residential amenity as experienced from a single dwelling (unless where otherwise stated). However, given the relatively dispersed pattern of population in the district, a pragmatic and reasonable approach needs to be taken in balancing local amenity impacts against national benefit (in the form of renewable energy generation).*
- 1.11 *This document forms informal planning guidance, to be shared with anyone considering a wind turbine proposal within the district, and is a material planning consideration that the Planning Committee can take into account in considering proposals before them.*

Context

- 1.12 This document has been prepared in response to a motion adopted by Full Council on 19 July 2010, which read as follows:

"That this Council develops, as a matter of urgency, a policy setting minimum acceptable distances between proposed wind turbines and dwellings".

1.13 There is currently no minimum separation distance in English planning law or guidance. What separation guidelines do exist in Scotland and Wales are explained as a general guide rather than a rule. *Scottish Planning Policy (para 190)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾* states that:

"A separation distance of up to 2km between areas of search [for wind farms] and the edge of cities, towns and villages is recommended to guide developments to the most appropriate sites and to reduce visual impact, but decisions on individual developments should take into account specific local circumstances and geography".

1.14 In Wales, Technical Advice Note 8⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ discusses distances specifically in relation to noise impacts, and states that:

"500 metres is currently considered a typical separation distance between a wind turbine and residential property to avoid unacceptable noise impacts. However, when applied in a rigid manner it can lead to conservative results and so some flexibility is advised".

1.15 Jane Davidson (Environment Sustainability and Housing Minister), in response to a written question to the National Assembly for Wales, confirmed that:

"The issue is less to do with distance than the need to limit noise from wind farms to 5 decibels above background noise for both day and night time. The separation distances between wind turbines and residential properties can be examined as part of the refinement work by local planning authorities and on a case by case basis, taking into account topography and orientation, when decisions on planning applications are taken".

1.16 There are no statutory distances relating to residential amenity currently in place in England.

1.17 Two Private Member's Bills relating to minimum statutory distances have recently been proposed in Parliament. The first, a 'Ten Minute Rule' Bill, set out the following:

Turbine Height (metres)	Distance from Homes Suggested in Bill (miles)
25 to 50	0.5
50 to 100	1
100 +	1.5

1.18 The Bill also suggested an alternative approach, specifying 'set back distances' by using a fixed multiple in proportion to height.

1.19 This Bill was criticised in the planning press, and was reported as being 'arbitrary', 'ill founded' and 'inflexible' (Planning, 13 November 2009). It did not progress to a second reading, although this is not uncommon for 'Ten Minute Rule' Bills.^(iv)

1.20 A second Bill originated in the House of Lords and had its first reading on 27 July 2010. The date of the second reading is still to be announced. This set out the following:

ii <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf>

iii <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/tans/tan8/?lang=en>

iv <http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/bills/private-members/>

Turbine Height (metres)	Distance from Homes Suggested in Bill (metres)
25 to 50	1000
50 to 100	1500
100 +	2000

- 1.21** The first and second Bills use miles and metres respectively to measure distance. Both Bills propose exceptions to these distances, where residents (the first bill) or owners (the second) of dwellings within the 'buffer zone' agree to the construction of the turbines.
- 1.22** It could be, therefore, that in the future, separation distances are set out in national planning law or policy.
- 1.23** In the absence of this, this document ~~proposes~~ *presents the* local approach to be taken towards wind turbine development in Cherwell. It adds detail to draft Local Development Framework policy (draft Core Strategy policy SD 3) in setting out minimum separation standards to protect residential amenity, and to reduce noise, safety and shadow flicker impact, and adverse impacts on landscape and heritage.

Chapter 2 Wind Turbine Size and Wind Speed

Wind Turbine Size

- 2.1** Wind turbines are measured in terms of height (hub height (a), rotor diameter (b) and ground to blade tip (a + (b/2)), and in terms of generating capacity (in watts, kilowatts (kW) or megawatts (MW); 1000w = 1kw and 1000kw = 1 MW). The output of a wind turbine depends on the rotor diameter. Doubling the rotor diameter quadruples a turbine's output. Similarly, wind speed also increases generating capacity. A doubling of wind speed results in a roughly eight fold increase in power output.^(v)
- 2.2** Although there are no rigid categories relating to the scale of wind turbines, individual onshore turbines tend to fall within four size bands: micro, small, medium and large.^(vi)
- 2.3** A combination of sources^(vii) has been reviewed to suggest how we could broadly quantify these groupings. This is complicated by the fact that different turbine models have differing capacities compared to their heights. Consequently there is considerable overlap between the 'small' and medium' categories. Turbine efficiencies are also dynamic and constantly evolving, so our categorisation below represents only an approximate 'snapshot' at the current time.

Table 2 Wind Turbine Sizes

Grouping	Capacity	Ground to Blade Tip Height	Comments
Micro	Less than 100w	N/A	Used to charge 12 or 24 volt batteries
Small	0.6kW - 1 or 2.5kW	N/A	2.5kW typically the limit of building mounted (roof mounted) turbines.
	6 - 10kW	10 - 15m	Typically mast mounted turbines for domestic use
	Up to 100kW	20 - 50m	Typically suited for other applications, such as serving a village hall, a school, or a business. 100kW likely to be the absolute maximum in the 'small' banding although there is likely to be some overlap between 'small' and 'medium' in terms of height.
Medium	100s kW up to 1MW	50 - 80m	Larger than domestic application. A number of applications have been received by the Council for such turbines at farm locations.
Large	1 - 3MW	90 - 135m	Commercial scale turbines. This grouping represents the majority of planning applications submitted for wind turbines, according to the DECC.

v 'PPS22 Companion Guide', Technical Annex: Wind, CLG (2004)

vi 'Review of Renewable and Decentralised Energy Potential in South East England', LUC & TV Energy (2010)

vii Renewable UK (formerly the British Wind Energy Association), the Department for Energy and Climate Change, the CAG Study, the Energy Saving Trust and planning applications received by the District Council

- 2.4 Onshore wind farms typically comprise a number of commercial scale or 'large' turbines, and at the largest are capable of generating tens of MW. Applications for schemes generating 5MW or more (or 15m or taller, or two or more turbines) are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment. Applications for schemes generating 50 MW or more are decided by the Infrastructure Planning Commission (or its future replacement).

Context

The turbines allowed at the Fewcott Appeal (APP/C3105/A/09/2116152) have an individual rating of between 2 and 2.5MW. Four turbines are proposed.

The turbines at the Westmill Community Wind Farm in the Vale of White Horse have an individual rating of 1.3 MW. There are five operational turbines generating enough electricity to power around 2,500 homes each year.

- 2.5 This document ~~will~~ typically ~~apply~~ *applies* to commercial scale, large turbines but the principles could also apply to smaller turbines, in particular medium scale turbines. As Table 2 shows, measurements can be made in terms of height and megawatts, so as a rough guide this document applies to any turbine with a ground to blade tip height of over 50m. It is noted that Planning Policy Statement 22 states that authorities should not set arbitrary limits on the numbers of turbines that will be acceptable in particular locations (para 21). This document recognises that there are likely to be more significant impacts arising from larger turbines and highlights the key policy guidance and thresholds to be used in siting these larger turbines. *It does not, in itself, impose a limit on the specific numbers of turbines but rather focuses on their appropriate location.*

Wind Speed

- 2.6 DECC guidance^(viii) states that the benchmark currently used for the minimum commercially viable average wind speed varies between 5 metres per second (m/s) and 7m/s at 45m above ground level. In practice, most developers currently consider sites with wind speeds of over 6m/s at 45m. These speeds are noted in the Appeal Decision relating to the Fewcott proposal. Here, the Inspector also acknowledged that wind technology is constantly improving (meaning that turbines could become viable at lower wind speeds).
- 2.7 PPS22 recommends measuring wind data onsite for at least 12 months prior to finalising a scheme, which can be achieved through the use of historical meteorological data and onsite anemometers.^(ix)

viii Renewable and Low-carbon Energy Capacity Methodology, January 2010 at http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/what%20we%20do/uk%20energy%20supply/energy%20mix/renewable20energy/ored/1_20100305105045_e_@@_methodologyfortheenglishregions.pdf

ix PPS22 Companion Guide, Technical Annex para 32

Chapter 3 Dwelling Distance

What are the Issues?

- 3.1** Cherwell is a rural district with a dispersed pattern of development. There are over 90 villages and hamlets in the district, containing 35.3% of the population. Most of these villages are relatively small, with populations under 500.^(x) Because few areas are far from existing settlements or individual dwellings, the amenity impacts of wind development are likely to be significant in many parts of the district. Additionally, many of the roads in the district pass through these small settlements and are unsuited to large vehicles.^(xi) *Accordingly, this chapter presents separation distances between wind turbines and dwellings in order to minimise harm to residential amenity.*
- 3.2** ~~This chapter focuses on separation distances between wind turbines and settlements or dwellings for reasons of residential amenity.~~ It is important to distinguish between impacts on residential amenity and other impacts arising from wind proposals such as landscape and wider visual impacts, noise impacts, or safety issues. ~~Accordingly~~ This document is split into several chapters which discuss how and why separation distances could be used to minimise the various impacts. However, there are inextricable links between ~~the chapters~~ *this chapter* and all others in the document - for example, residential amenity is heavily affected by noise levels.

National and Local Policy Guidance

- 3.3** Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy states that proximity to dwellings, and whether a site is constrained by a population centre or scattered dwellings, is one of the factors to be considered in appraising suitable sites for wind energy. It does not suggest the appropriate minimum proximity.
- 3.4** The Draft National Planning Policy Statement on Renewable Energy (2009) (intended to provide the basis for decisions by the Infrastructure Planning Commission) states that "Appropriate distances should be maintained between wind turbines and residential properties to protect residential amenity". It does not define 'appropriate'.
- 3.5** The 'Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study' (2009) undertaken to inform future Core Strategy policies recommends that impact on residential amenity within the district be assessed by a 'residential survey' which considers the visual impact on individual dwellings closest to the proposal, and groups of dwellings, as distance increases. The Study suggests that separation distances for reasons of visual amenity are likely to be similar to those required for other reasons such as noise (which will, of course, differ on a case by case basis).
- 3.6** The Study was not undertaken specifically to recommend separation distances between dwellings and turbines. It did however examine the theoretical potential for renewable energy development (not just wind energy) in Cherwell. In doing so, the desk based study undertaken by the consultants across a broad study area used a notional separation distance of 800m between large scale turbines and dwellings (for noise and visual impact reasons) in order to assess general constraints on development and to identify areas that were less constrained. It noted that the use of different turbines or site layouts could justify smaller distances, whilst smaller turbines would also require smaller distances. In addition, local topography may mean that a smaller distance buffer may be appropriate.

x Living in Cherwell, CDC (2010) at http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/g/Living_in_Cherwell_FULL_MMCL_July_2010.pdf

xi Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study, CAG (2009) at http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/W/Renewable_Energy_and_Sustainable_Construction_Study_%28September_2009%29.pdf

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 3.7** A brief review of appeal decisions indicates that there is no general rule that is strictly applied in relation to distances between turbines and dwellings. Rather, a judgement is made according to the specifics of each case and the local circumstances that justify larger or smaller distances.
- 3.8** The Appeal Decision relating to the Fewcott Inquiry (APP/C3105/A/09/2116152) considered the effect of the proposals on individual views. It states that:
- "The appeal development would be prominent in the outlook from some 50 houses in Ardley and Fewcott, another 50 or thereabouts in Fritwell, some 12 in Stoke Lyne and the house at Green Farm. But I remind myself that no protection exists for the benefit of a private view. Consequently I do not regard as unacceptable the situation in which a turbine is prominent in the view from a domestic window. Rather, my concern is to recognise cases in which the effect on living conditions of people in such houses would be one of unacceptable dominance or overbearing. Evidence was given at the Inquiry that there is a risk of such an effect within up to 3 times the turbine height (to rotor tip) which in this case is 375m. This was based on observations at a wide number of finished wind farms." (paras 55 & 56)
- 3.9** The Inspector noted that one dwelling would experience an 'overbearing effect' created by the turbines, but that there would be no perceptible harm to the views in the wider area.
- 3.10** This appears to suggest that a minimum distance for residential amenity *could* be three times the turbine height. The minimum approximate 400m buffer resultant in this instance is in accordance with Chapter 4, where it is suggested that turbines within 400m of a dwelling will have a dominant visual impact. *However, distances in other appeal decisions are discussed below.*
- 3.11** An Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in South Devon for 3 turbines up to 100m high (APP/K1128/A/08/2072150) discussed the impact of the turbines on a dwelling 500m away. The Inspector noted that the turbines would:
- "...fundamentally change the outlook from this property...[H]owever, the turbines would be slender structures and I do not believe that they would, at this distance and height, have an overbearing or dominating impact that would harm the residential amenity that the occupiers could reasonably expect in this rural agricultural setting".
- 3.12** Other dwellings in the locality (53 dwellings within 2km of the site) were noted as being unlikely to be adversely affected by impact on outlook. Given a combination of the separation distances, orientation of views, and the local effects of trees, other buildings and the topography, the Inspector was satisfied that the turbines would not significantly affect the living conditions of other occupiers.
- 3.13** An Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in Cumbria for 6 turbines up to 100m tall (APP/M0933/A/08/2090274) found that the visual impact of turbines on the amenity of occupiers of a dwelling 600m from the turbines would not be highly prominent - the turbines would not be so dominant or oppressive as to be unacceptable. The 600m distance was also noted as being acceptable in an Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in Essex for 5 turbines up to 125m tall (APP/P1560/A/08/2088548) although the Inspector states that this is not a general rule, but appropriate in that particular instance due to tree screening around the dwellings.
- 3.14** The Inspector in an Appeal relating to a proposal for 11 turbines 125m tall in Leicestershire (APP/F2415/A/09/2096369) found that the impact on the living conditions of residents 670m from the site of the turbines would not be unacceptable.

- 3.15** A distance of 700m from the nearest residential dwelling was found to be appropriate in the Appeal Decision relating to a proposal for 7 wind turbines 125m tall in Norfolk (APP/L2630/A/08/2084443).
- 3.16** A distance of between 600 and 800m from the nearest residential dwelling was also found to be appropriate in the Appeal Decision relating to a proposal for 5 turbines 100m tall in Nottinghamshire (APP/B3030/A/08/2072487).
- 3.17** 800m was also the distance between the nearest dwelling and 10 turbines up to 100m tall in a proposal in South Northamptonshire (planning application reference KE/03/0559), which was approved.
- 3.18** Other Inspectors consider turbines unacceptable at these distances. In one case (5 turbines at 125m tall in Dover, APP/X2220/A/08/2071880) the closest dwelling stood 360m from the nearest turbine. For this dwelling, the Inspector found that the turbine would be 'looming', 'unpleasantly overwhelming' and 'unavoidable'. This 'unpleasantly overwhelming and unavoidable' impact extended to dwellings within 800m. At a settlement 1km away from the turbines, the impact too would be dominating and unavoidable, although in this case it was the widely spaced spread of the turbines, rather than their height, that would be visually invasive. The Inspector noted that there were some more closely located properties that would be less affected, because the turbines would be more closely grouped rather than spread out.
- 3.19** At an appeal relating to a proposal for 16 turbines in Cambridgeshire (APP/W0530/A/05/1190473) the Inspector considered that the impact of the turbines on a settlement 800m away would be significant. The impact was exacerbated by the particular circumstances of the location; the settlement was surrounded by small, low level agricultural enclosures with hedgerows and trees, which made a significant contribution to the character of the area and the pastoral component to the setting of the village. The turbines were found to completely dominate the character and appearance of the area, and the appeal was dismissed.
- 3.20** This brief review of appeal decisions serves to demonstrate that there is no general rule being applied, for a number of reasons. Separation is clearly required for residential amenity, but the distance depends on a number of factors present in each case including topography and land cover.

Other Examples

- 3.21** Fenland District Council has produced 'Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance' which considers each of the impacts raised by wind energy and suggests criteria or thresholds beyond which wind turbine development is unlikely to be acceptable. It does not have a section of residential amenity specifically. However the criteria referred to in the document's 'Landscape and Visual Impact' section are of interest. It suggests that the visual impact of turbines within 400m will be 'dominant', forming the principle element of the view and overpowering the viewer. *Because of the landform of the Fenland district, which offers little opportunity for effective screening of wind turbine developments, their guidance suggests that is desirable to limit the extent of turbine visibility within a given field of view. The document explains that, it further suggests that, based on professional judgement, settlements of more than 10 dwellings should not have wind turbines in more than 90 degrees of their field of view from public or residential viewpoints for a distance of 5km. Individual dwellings should not have wind turbines in more than 180 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 10km. This focus on the 'field of view' occupied by wind turbines appears to tackle the issue raised by the Inspector in the Dover appeal (see para 3.18).*
- 3.22** South Northamptonshire District Council's draft 'Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside' SPD has a section entitled 'Local Amenity' but the issues and guidance discussed in that section relate entirely to noise levels.

- 3.23** Torridge District Council's 'Wind Energy Policy' statement establishes a minimum distance between dwellings and turbines of 600m for reasons of 'local amenity', again defined specifically as noise and visual impact issues. The document acknowledges that in some cases lesser separation distances might be required.

Conclusions

- 3.24** The brief review of appeal decisions indicates that there is no single 'separation rule' relating to residential amenity being applied across the country, with judgements in each case being determined by local circumstances.
- 3.25** Looking specifically in Cherwell, we know that the district is 89.3 % rural,^(xii) with an evenly scattered dispersed distribution of settlements and isolated farmsteads.^(xiii) Most settlements in the district are small villages and hamlets^(xiv) and typically, the setting of these settlements is tranquil and agricultural. Topography across the district is complex, but on the whole the district is relatively flat (particularly in the south of the district, although less so in the north/western part with its hills and valleys) and unlikely to provide any significant screening of turbines, whilst the district as a whole is 'noticeably lacking in woodland cover'.^(xv)
- 3.26** The combination of these factors means that within Cherwell, large scale wind turbines are likely to have a dominant impact within a broad distance. It is recommended that a separation distance of 800m is normally required between large scale wind turbines and dwellings.
- 3.27** *It is also important to consider the 'field of view' occupied by turbines in relation to residential amenity (although this also relates to landscape and cumulative impacts), as well as the differences in the amenity impacts on one single dwelling (which this document is intended to relate to specifically), and a settlement. For example, a turbine may not dominate a settlement in terms of scale, but it would be visible by a larger number of people; whereas, a single dwelling is more likely to be dominated by a turbine that is out of scale with it, but fewer people would experience views of it. Similarly, a number of turbines are more likely to have a greater cumulative impact on a single dwelling than they would on a settlement. Obviously these considerations are dependent upon the specific positioning of the turbines in terms of topography, screening, and so on, and would need to be applied on a site specific basis.*

xii Key Facts in One Place - Cherwell District, (GOSE), 2008 at <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/497648/docs/170192/179006/179028/Cherwell.pdf>

xiii Cherwell Landscape Assessment, CDC (1995) at http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/7/n/CDC_Landscape_Assessment_-_Cobham_Nov_1995_-_lr.pdf

xiv Living in Cherwell, CDC (2010) at http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/g/Living_in_Cherwell_FULL_MMCL_July_2010.pdf

xv CDC (1995)

Guidance within Cherwell District

A minimum separation distance of 800m between large scale wind turbines and dwellings will normally be expected. Appropriate separation distances may be influenced by the orientation of views, and the local effects of trees, other buildings and the topography, as well as other issues such as noise, safety, shadow flicker, and impacts on landscape or heritage assets.

Large scale wind turbines should always be separated from dwellings by a distance of at least three times the turbine height (ground to blade tip) for reasons of residential amenity.

As a guiding principle, settlements of more than 10 dwellings should not normally have wind turbines in more than 90 degrees of their field of view from public or residential viewpoints for a distance of 5km from the viewpoint. Individual dwellings should not have wind turbines in more than 180 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 10km from the property. These criteria may be influenced by, amongst other issues, topography and screening.

- 3.28** *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*

Further Information

- 3.29** See Appendix 1 - 'General'.

Chapter 4 Landscape and Visual Impacts

What are the Issues?

- 4.1 A key consideration *with* proposals for wind turbines will be impacts on landscape character and visual amenity. Cherwell is a largely rural district with highly valued local landscapes. The Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment (1995) states that:

"The landscape character of Cherwell district is immensely varied, with large areas of unspoilt countryside".

- 4.2 Making a planning judgement on the acceptable level of landscape or visual impact can be difficult since there is no guidance in relation to such 'acceptable levels' and landscape impacts cannot be quantified, unlike other impacts such as noise levels.

- 4.3 However, there are well established approaches to assessing the capacity of landscapes to accommodate wind turbines based on the following process:

Landscape Sensitivity + Visual Sensitivity + Landscape Value = Landscape Capacity.

- 4.4 Each of these elements will be informed by Landscape Character Assessment, whilst overall conclusions on capacity will also require an understanding of what level of change within the landscape would be acceptable.

- 4.5 Guidance on assessing landscape and visual impacts is discussed in more detail below.

National and Local Policy Guidance

- 4.6 In terms of national landscape designations, a small part of the district falls within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). PPS22 states that within national designations, planning permission for renewable energy projects should only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the designation of the area will not be compromised by the development, and any significant adverse effects are clearly outweighed by environmental, social and economic benefits (para 11). The Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board has produced a Management Plan *and a Position Statement* (Appendix 1) for the AONB. *The Management Plan has been adopted by this* which this District Council has adopted for use as supplementary guidance (it is therefore a material consideration in determining applications). This Management Plan encourages and supports appropriate scale renewable energy generation (including small scale single wind turbines) but states that wind farms are likely to be inappropriate.

- 4.7 In terms of locally valued landscapes, it is very clear in government guidance (PPS22 and PPS7) that local landscape designations should not be used to justify blanket restrictions on renewable energy development within broad areas. Instead, the approach should be to identify the different landscape characters of an area, and assess the capacity of those different landscapes to accommodate turbines using the approach set out in para 4.3. This could be undertaken by the local authority at a district level (see 'Other Examples', below) or could be undertaken on a smaller scale and on a case by case basis within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) submitted as part of a wind farm proposal in accordance with the Environment Impact Assessment Regulations.

- 4.8 The main source of guidance for producing a landscape character assessment is 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance', Countryside Agency (2002) (weblinks are in Appendix 1).

- 4.9 The main sources of guidance to assess landscape and visual impact are:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact', Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002)
- 'Visual Representation of Windfarms Good Practice Guidance', Scottish Natural Heritage (2006)
- 'Guidelines on the Environmental Impact of Wind Farms and Small Hydroelectric Schemes', Scottish Natural Heritage (2001)
- PPS22 Companion Guide.

- 4.10** In brief, LVIA's should distinguish between landscape and visual effects. Landscape Impact Assessment considers change to individual landscape elements; change to landscape character; and change to designated landscapes and settings. Visual Impact Assessment considers change to views and visual amenity.
- 4.11** Within Cherwell, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments can be informed by the Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Assessment (LCSA) (*which focuses on the landscapes around Banbury and Bicester*) and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) (see Appendix 1), which are useful sources of local information. ~~However, neither of these studies refers to wind turbines specifically, and the LCSA focuses on the landscapes around the main settlements of Banbury and Bicester. The landscape of the Cherwell/Aylesbury Vale border has been assessed within the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment and the Areas of Sensitive Landscape Study. These documents highlight the sensitivity of the landscape along the Cherwell/Aylesbury Vale boundaries, particularly towards the south. It is important to use all available landscape evidence to identify the level of impact which might occur from wind turbine development.~~
- 4.12** In terms of policy guidance, Land Use Consultants^(xvi) advise that a policy prohibiting wind turbine developments "if significant landscape effects are created" is meaningless, because significant effects, or change, will occur inevitably. This view was echoed by the Inspector at the Fewcott appeal who noted, in that particular case, that "there would be change but not harm" (APP/C3105/A/09/2116152, para 54). Examples of how policies can be used to define acceptability or harm are discussed in para 4.17 below.
- 4.13** **It is important to note that landscape and visual impacts are likely to be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, in order to demonstrate that significant adverse effects are being avoided or mitigated.**

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 4.14** An Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in South Devon for 3 turbines up to 100m tall (APP/K1128/A/08/2072150) noted that the turbines would exert a characterising influence over the local landscape within a radius of 500m - 600m. In this case, the impact was exacerbated by the fact that the turbines would be sited near to the edge of a plateau and would be about double the height from the ridge, on which they would be sited, to the nearby valley floor. In visual terms, effects would be 'high' up to 1.5km/2km away, dropping to 'medium' at a distance of 3-5km.
- 4.15** At an Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in Cumbria for 6 turbines up to 100m tall (APP/M0933/A/08/2090274) found that the turbines would give rise to a significant change in the appearance of the immediately surrounding area (within 600m and 1km). However, the landscape was found to be 'sufficiently robust and of a scale that could assimilate the six structures without being dwarfed by them' (para 38).

xvi In a training event provided on behalf of CLG and the Centre for Sustainable Energy

- 4.16** An Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in Essex for 5 turbines up to 125m tall (APP/P1560/A/08/2088548) found that the turbines would exert a characterising influence over the landscape within and up to 700m distance. However a number of 'mitigating' factors were noted including existing human influence on the landscape, the topography, and the capacity of the exposed and windswept landscape to accommodate the turbines.

Other Examples

- 4.17** There are several examples of studies and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) prepared by other local planning authorities which consider in detail the capacity of the different landscape types within the district to accommodate wind turbines. Huntingdonshire District Council has produced an SPD on wind power (2006) which considers landscape issues, whilst Vale Royal Borough Council has produced an SPD on Landscape Sensitivity and Wind Turbine Development (2007). South Holland District Council's SPG on Wind Energy also follows the detailed landscape character assessment and subsequent landscape capacity approach. Fenland District Council's "Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance" quantifies the impact that turbines are likely to have on each of the district's landscape types, and draws conclusions on the extent to which each landscape type can accommodate different 'magnitudes' of impact. It sets out the following:

Table 3

Distance from Turbines	Magnitude of Visual Impact
Within 400m	Dominant
400m - 2km	Prominent
2 - 5km	Conspicuous
5 - 15km	Apparent
15 - 30km	Inconspicuous
Over 30km	Negligible

- 4.18** *(Note: Scottish Planning Advice Note 45, on which the above table is based, contains different categories of distance and descriptions of impact. Links to this document are provided in Appendix 1).*
- 4.19** Fenland's guidance document also refers to the proportion of a 'field of view' occupied by turbines in relation to residential visual amenity (see Chapter 3).
- 4.20** Torridge District Council's 'Wind Energy Policy' statement establishes minimum separation distances between turbines and designated landscapes (500m from AONB). In terms of non designated landscapes, it adds that developers are required to provide information on how the turbine proposal will integrate into the existing landscape, taking into account identified landscape character areas. A district wide Landscape Character Assessment was underway at the time the document was produced (May 2010) and it is stated that once this work is completed, it would be possible to produce a landscape sensitivity assessment to wind energy development in the district.

Conclusions

- 4.21** It is important to distinguish between landscape impacts and visual impacts, and between these impacts and residential amenity impacts, which are covered in Chapter 3.

- 4.22** Impacts on the wider landscape, and conclusions on the capacity of landscapes to accommodate large scale wind turbines, will need to be assessed in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with large scale wind proposals. This, in turn, can be informed by existing information on the landscape characters and types in *Cherwell and adjoining districts* (the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study and the Cherwell Landscape Character Assessment undertaken in 1995, listed in Appendix 1).
- 4.23** In terms of the visual impact of large scale turbines when experienced within a local landscape (i.e the landscape surrounding a settlement, it is considered that the Council could make use of the distances established by Fenland District Council in Table 3 above. For example at a distance of 400m, large scale wind turbines are likely to have a dominant visual impact on the local landscapes around the settlement, and this is considered to be inappropriate:
- 4.24** *We know that there are numerous landscape character areas and types within the district, and topography is complex. Turbines are likely to have a more wide ranging visual impact in the south of the district, which is relatively flat, although landscape value is typically higher in the north of the district (with the local Area of High Landscape Value designation and AONB). In broad terms, to minimise the visual impact of large scale turbines when experienced within a local landscape (i.e the landscape surrounding a settlement), the Council will make use of the distances established by Fenland District Council in Table 3 above. For example, at a distance of 400m, large scale wind turbines are likely to have a dominant visual impact on the local landscapes around the settlement, and this is considered to be inappropriate. However, mitigation measures should be used to further guide location and avoid harmful landscape and visual impact.*
- 4.25** 15% of the district^(xvii) is covered by landscape designation (the AONB) or designations requiring careful consideration of the visual impacts of developments (the Green Belt). It is therefore necessary to include guidance relating to designated areas specifically. This can be directly influenced by national policy and the guidance of bodies such as Natural England. *In the case of Green Belt policy, the key consideration will be to what extent the development is inappropriate, and to what extent the harm caused by inappropriate development is outweighed by special circumstances.*
- 4.26** *Finally, the considerations relating to the 'field of view' as set out in Chapter 3 will also be relevant to minimising landscape and visual impacts. This needs to factor in consideration that impacts are experienced by a greater number of people in settlements compared to individual dwellings, as well as take into account any mitigating factors reducing views of turbines, such as screening.*

xvii Key Facts in One Place - Cherwell, GOSE (2008) at <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/497648/docs/170192/179006/179028/Cherwell.pdf>

Guidance within Cherwell District

Large and medium scale wind turbine developments within or outside the AONB *which adversely affect the special qualities of the AONB* are unlikely to be permitted. Within the Green Belt, turbines will only be permitted where they do not compromise the openness of the Green Belt *or the purposes for which it was created*.

Large and medium scale wind turbine developments that would result in a 'dominant' landscape and visual impact (i.e within 400 metres of *dwelling settlements*) are unlikely to be permitted.

If a suitable broad location can be found, the following principles should guide the location of turbines:

- the direction and flow of the landscape and contours should be followed
- layouts should be designed to avoid (1) visual confusion and disordered clutter, (2) 'tangles' of turbines where multiple turbines are seen behind each other, and (3) isolated turbines that are remote from the rest of the group.

Adverse impacts should *always* be minimised through appropriate mitigation. The local planning authority will seek to influence mitigation at the earliest stages in a proposal, and will enforce mitigation measures through the use of planning conditions.

As a guiding principle, settlements of more than 10 dwellings should not normally have wind turbines in more than 90 degrees of their field of view from public or residential viewpoints for a distance of 5km from the viewpoint. Individual dwellings should not have wind turbines in more than 180 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 10km from the property. These criteria may be influenced by, amongst other issues, topography and screening.

- 4.27** *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*
- 4.28** ~~The guidance documents set out in Appendix 1 - 'Landscape and Visual Impacts' should be used to avoid significantly adverse landscape impacts:~~
- 4.29** ~~In undertaking a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of wind turbine proposals, reference should be made to the landscape characters within (and adjoining) the district identified in the documents listed in Appendix 1 identified in the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study. The information in these documents should be used to inform the avoidance of significantly adverse landscape impacts.~~
- 4.30** A thorough district wide landscape capacity assessment would enable the Council to develop more specific evidenced based guidance.

Further Information

- 4.31** Please see Appendix 1 - 'Landscape and Visual Impacts'.

Chapter 5 Noise

What are the Issues?

- 5.1 Noise can have an adverse impact on the environment and the quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. There are two distinct types of noise source within a wind turbine - the mechanical noise produced by the gearbox and generator, and the aerodynamic noise produced by the passage of blades through the air.

National and Local Policy Guidance

- 5.2 The framework for assessing noise impacts is currently 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms', produced by the Energy Technology Support Unit for the DTI in 1997 (ETSU-R-97). This provides the framework for the measurement of wind farm noise and for deriving suitable noise limits to offer a reasonable degree of protection. PPS22 recommends the use of ETSU-R-97 for assessing operational wind farm noise generation (standards outside of the planning system exist to manage construction noise generation (i.e. BS 5228 1997)).
- 5.3 ETSU-R-97 recommends the application of noise limits at the nearest noise sensitive properties (i.e. at numerous sites). Limits should be set relative to the existing background noise levels (which may increase with wind speed). The predicted noise levels from wind turbines are then compared with the limits to determine acceptability.
- 5.4 It further states that noise from wind farms should be limited to 5 decibels (dB A) above background levels for both day and night time. A fixed limit of 43 dB A is recommended for night time. Both day and night time lower limits can be increased to 45 dB A where the occupier of a property has some financial interest in the wind farm. It is important to note that noise levels are therefore measured in relation to the increase above the background noise levels. Therefore a noisier location could potentially accommodate noisier wind turbines.
- 5.5 The PPS22 Companion Guide contains a comparison between typical wind turbine noise at a distance of 350m and other common noise sources. It stresses that:
- Noise levels from turbines are generally low and, under most conditions, it is likely that turbine noise would be completely masked by wind-generated background noise
 - Aerodynamic noise from wind turbines is generally unobtrusive
 - Varying the speed of the turbines can, if necessary, reduce the sound output
- 5.6 Low frequency noise (infrasound) is sometimes raised as an issue in response to wind farm proposals. The PPS22 Companion Guide asserts that there is no evidence that ground transmitted low frequency noise from wind turbines is at a sufficient level to be harmful to human health.
- 5.7 Some non statutory research reports recommend that buffer zones are applied between turbines and dwellings for reasons of noise protection. This buffer zone could be 2km, or greater if the individual turbine has a capacity of over 2MW. This advice has not yet been incorporated into statutory guidance.
- 5.8 The guidance on assessing the noise impacts of wind farms is currently under review by the DECC to ensure that the ETSU-R-97 guidance is applied in a consistent and effective manner (Planning, 6 August 2010).
- 5.9 **It is important to note that noise impacts are likely to be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, in order to demonstrate that significant adverse effects are being avoided or mitigated.**

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 5.10** In the Fewcott Appeal, the Inspector concluded that a precautionary approach should be taken, limiting noise levels at each site to the lowest background noise level (rather than the less demanding common practice of relating the noise limit to wind speed). Existing and proposed noise levels were assessed at six locations. At the property closest to the nearest wind turbine (400m) the noise generated was found to be within the limits proposed by ETSU-R-97 (i.e 5 dB A above background noise levels).
- 5.11** At an Appeal Decision relating to a proposal for 10 turbines in Lincolnshire (APP/E2530/A/08/2073384) the Inspector discusses the 2km buffer zone suggested in a research document referred to him. He notes that "I could not find (among the 3 references to the subject in the reported studies) any scientific or other justification for its precise recommendation of a 2km separation distance between turbines and dwellings" (para 19).
- 5.12** It is of note that the Inspector at an Inquiry relating to proposals for 5 turbines 120m tall in Dover (APP/X2220/A/08/207/1880) discussed ETSU-R-97's rejection of minimum separation distances but concluded that "separation distance is the best insurance against unacceptable noise impact, whatever its cause" (para 59).

Other Examples

- 5.13** Cumbria County Council's guidance document on wind turbines refers to PPS22 and the ETSU-R-97 document but does not specify separation distances.
- 5.14** The national planning policy in Wales (as set out in Chapter 1) refers to a typical distance of 500m to avoid unacceptable noise impacts.
- 5.15** ~~Northants~~ *Northamptonshire* draft SPD, 'Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside', examines the approach set by ETSU-R-97, ~~finds there to be shortcomings~~ and refers to a '600m distance recommendation' between turbines and residential properties for noise reasons. It does not identify the source or justification for this figure.
- 5.16** Fenland District Council's 'Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance' again refers to ETSU-R-97 and adds that 'common practice suggests that for 2-3MW turbines, a buffer of between 400m and 700m is required to minimise noise impacts'. This specific distance is not justified in any more detail.
- 5.17** It is of note that the ETSU-R-97 document states that a minimum separation distance of between 350 and 400m (as suggested in the predecessor to PPS 22) would be unlikely to offer an adequate level of protection today due to the difference in noise emissions from different types of turbines, the increase in scale of turbines today, and topographical reasons.

Conclusions

- 5.18** It is concluded that there are clear guidelines by which the acceptability of wind turbine proposals in relation to noise impacts can be quantified. The review of policy guidance and appeal decisions does indicate however that the important consideration is the level of noise generated over background noise levels (which will differ at different locations across the district). The review of policy guidance (PPS22 and its endorsement of ETSU-R-97) does indicate a 'minimum separation distance' within which noise impacts are likely to be unacceptable (400m).

Guidance within Cherwell District

In accordance with PPS22, wind farms should be located so that increases in ambient noise levels around noise sensitive developments are kept to acceptable noise levels with relation to existing background noise. The level of acceptability is as set out in 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97).

As a general rule, a separation distance of less than 400m would be contrary to the advice set out in ETSU-R-97.

However, the important consideration is noise generation above background levels, rather than distance. If background noise levels are particularly high (for example, adjoining the M40), noise generated by turbines situated at or around 400m of dwellings may fall within the limits established in ETSU-R-97

Planning conditions or obligations will be used to safeguard local amenity, such as to secure mitigation measures including those set out in PPG24.

- 5.19** *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*
- 5.20** ETSU-R-97, PPS22 and its Companion Guide and PPG24: Planning and Noise offer further advice.
- 5.21** Early consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Department and the Anti Social Behaviour Manager is recommended.

Further Information

- 5.22** Please see Appendix 1 - 'Noise'.

Chapter 6 Heritage

What are the Issues?

- 6.1** Wind turbines may have adverse impacts on Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens, either directly (ground disturbance to archaeological sites) or indirectly (on the setting of such features). Many of Cherwell's villages and the town centres are protected by Conservation Areas, the district has approximately 3000 listed buildings, 55 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and a number of registered parks and gardens and historic battlefields.
- 6.2** The consideration of impacts on heritage assets focuses around two key issues - the significance, or value, of the heritage asset itself, and the significance of the impact that would be caused by wind turbine development. These issues are considered below.

National and Local Policy Guidance

Significance of Heritage Assets

- 6.3** Heritage assets can be designated or undesignated. Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) sets out a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets. It states that heritage assets can be harmed by development which occurs within their setting, and suggests a 'hierarchy' of assets in para HE9.1:
- "Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields grade I and II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional".
- 6.4** PPS5 also contains advice on the balance between protecting heritage assets, and mitigating the effects of climate change.
- 6.5** Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings, and the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. What constitutes the 'setting' is not universally defined and may vary on a case by case basis (*English Heritage has recently produced draft guidance on 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', whilst PPS5 Practice Guide also provides guidance on development proposals affecting the setting of heritage assets, listed in Appendix 1*).
- 6.6** Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy advises against establishing fixed buffer zones around Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Registered Historic Battlefields and Registered Parks and Gardens. What is important is to consider how the objectives of the designation would be affected by a wind turbine proposal. It states that planning permission should only be granted 'where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of designation of the area will not be compromised by the development' (para 11).

Significance of Impacts

- 6.7** The Scottish Planning Advice Note 45 (Renewable Energy Technologies) suggests that indirect visual effects on the setting of nationally important monuments are not considered likely to be significant beyond 15km of the wind turbine and the indirect visual effect on the setting of an historic site of regional significance is not likely to be significant beyond 5km. It also provides useful guidance on how perception of a wind farm changes as distance increases.
- 6.8** In 2005 English Heritage issued guidance on 'Wind Energy and the Historic Environment'. This includes guidance on how to assess the impact of wind turbines on the setting and visual amenity of historic sites. It suggests six factors to be considered when assessing the acceptability of wind turbines: visual dominance, scale, intervisibility, vistas and sight lines, movement, sound or light effects, and the existence of previously unaltered settings. For example, in relation to movement, sound and light effects, the guidance states that 'adequate distance should always be provided between important historic sites and wind turbine developments'. It does not define adequate.
- 6.9** Combining the guidance in PAN 45 and the six English Heritage criteria makes it possible to consider the severity and significance of impact on historic sites. Severity and significance is typically measured on a point scale ranging from minimum to maximum, although differing categories are frequently used to describe points on the scale. There is no universal definition of when impacts are and are not considered to be significant, nor the point at which 'significant' becomes 'unacceptable'. The review of appeal decisions, below, briefly discusses some examples.
- 6.10** The assessment of impacts on heritage assets will be closely linked to the assessment of landscape and visual impacts, since impacts in both cases will depend on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (i.e where the turbines will be seen from).
- 6.11** **It is important to note that heritage impacts are likely to be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, in order to demonstrate that significant adverse effects are being avoided or mitigated.**

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 6.12** At the Fewcott appeal, the Inspector assessed the impact on a range of listed buildings in the vicinity of the wind turbine site (there were 26 listed buildings within 2km of the turbines). The impact on one Grade II listed building, 500 metres from the nearest turbine, was found to be 'slight', ranking 3 on a scale of 8. At Rousham Park, a Grade I Registered Park and Garden 7km from the turbines, the impact was found to be of moderate/slight significance (ranking 4 on a scale of 8), reducing in significance in the summer months when trees are in leaf.
- 6.13** In other appeals there are frequently found to be adverse impacts on the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas within 2km of turbine sites, and up to 5km (as found in the Appeal Decision relating to a proposal for 6 turbines 125m tall in Norfolk, APP/K2610/A/05/1180685). This was not found however to justify refusal of the turbine development in an appeal relating to 7 turbines 125m tall in Norfolk (APP/L2630/A/08/2084443), nor in an appeal relating to a proposal for 5 turbines 100m tall in Nottinghamshire (APP/B3030/A/08/2072487).
- 6.14** In other cases, such as the appeal relating to a proposal for 10 2.3MW wind turbines in Lincolnshire (APP/E2530/A/08/2073384), there was found to be unacceptable harm caused to a number of heritage assets including a Grade I listed country house 9km from the proposed turbines, and this was one of the primary reasons for dismissing the appeal.

Other Examples

- 6.15** Fenland District Council's Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance states that wind turbine developments within 2km of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings will need to be carefully assessed to ensure there are not significant adverse effects on the settings of these features.
- 6.16** South Holland District Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Wind Energy similarly states that turbines demonstrated to have a significant adverse effect upon the views of church towers or spires (within Conservation Areas) within a 2km radius will be considered unacceptable.
- 6.17** South Northamptonshire's draft SPD 'Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside' requires proposed developments to be accompanied by *an assessment which takes into account designated and undesignated heritage assets, stating that the extent of any potential impact will change depending on the nature of the asset and local topography* cultural heritage impact assessment which takes into account all listed buildings, conservation areas and historic parks and gardens within 5km of the site boundary.
- 6.18** Torridge District Council's 'Wind Energy Policy' statement contains a section on cultural heritage, and the need to consider the impacts of wind energy development on historic sites, although it does not recommend specific separation distances.

Conclusions

- 6.19** Due the high number of heritage assets within Cherwell District, detailed consideration will be given to the direct and indirect impacts of wind turbine proposals on the historic environment. The guidance in this document relates particularly to the indirect impacts on the setting and visual amenity of historic sites. Like many of the other impacts discussed in this document, the significance of impacts on heritage assets, and the acceptability of these impacts, will vary on a case by case basis and will depend, for example, on sight lines or topography. Significance and acceptability will also depend on the 'significance' or value of the heritage asset itself, and the extent to which the asset, and the reasons for its designation or protection, would be compromised by the development. This document does not define the 'significance' of heritage assets or the impacts upon them. However, the established categorisation of assets such as Listed Buildings could inform an appropriate definition of significance (for example, Grade I listed buildings are of a higher, and more significant, value, than Grade II or Grade II* listed buildings).
- 6.20** One key theme emerging from the brief review of appeal decisions and other authorities' guidance documents is that significant impacts are more likely within 2km of the heritage asset, and may extend to a distance of up to 5km. There are examples where impacts were found to be unacceptable at a distance of over 5km but this is more likely to apply in exceptional circumstances dependent on the sensitivity of the asset and the details of the proposal.

Guidance within Cherwell District

Large scale wind turbines that are demonstrated to have significantly adverse impacts on designated heritage assets within a 2km radius will be considered unacceptable.

Significant impacts are likely up to a distance of 5km, and a detailed assessment will be undertaken to ensure no harm is caused to designated heritage assets within this distance.

- 6.21** *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*
- 6.22** *Similarly, this guidance does not imply that no impacts on heritage assets are likely over 5km. Much depends on the qualities of the individual asset, and the reasons for its designation. The review of appeal decisions indicates that impacts have been found to be unacceptable well over 5km but this is likely in more exceptional circumstances.*
- 6.23** Proposals for large scale wind turbines will be consulted upon with English Heritage, with the Archaeology team at the County Council, and the District Council's own specialist design and conservation team.

Further Information

- 6.24** Please see Appendix 1 - 'Heritage'.

Chapter 7 Safety

What are the Issues?

- 7.1** PPS 22 states that properly designed and maintained wind turbines are a safe technology. The only source of possible danger would be the loss of a piece of the blade or, in most exceptional circumstances, of the whole blade. Many blades are composite structures with no bolts or other separate components and blade failure is therefore most unlikely. Even for blades with separate control surfaces on or comprising the tips of the blade, separation is most unlikely (PPS22 Companion Guide, paras 49 and 50).
- 7.2** The build up of ice on turbine blades is unlikely to present problems on the majority of sites in England. For ice to build up on wind turbines, particular weather conditions are required that in England occur for less than one day per year. In those areas where icing of the blades does occur, fragments of ice might be released from the blades when the machine is started. Most wind turbines are fitted with vibration sensors which can detect any imbalance which might be caused by icing of the blades; in which case operation of machines with iced blades could be inhibited (PPS22 Companion Guide para 79).
- 7.3** Finally, concern is often expressed in public consultation responses about the effects of wind turbines on car drivers, who may be distracted by the turbines and the movement of the blades.

National and Local Planning Guidance

- 7.4** The minimum desirable distance between wind turbines and occupied buildings calculated on the basis of expected noise levels and visual impact will often be greater than that necessary to meet safety requirements. Fall over distance (i.e. the height of the turbine to the tip of the blade) plus 10% is often used as a safe separation distance (PPS 22 Companion Guide, para 51).
- 7.5** With regards to highway safety, PPS22 states that drivers are faced with a number of varied and competing distractions during any normal journey, including advertising hoardings, which are deliberately designed to attract attention. At all times drivers are required to take reasonable care to ensure their own and others' safety. PPS 22 highlights that turbines should not be treated any differently from other distractions a driver must face and should not be considered particularly hazardous.

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 7.6** At the Fewcott Appeal (APP/C3105/A/09/2116152) the Inspector concluded that the stability of built structures is not often a planning consideration because adequate checks are imposed on their design by other legislation or procedures. The Inspector was satisfied that certified compliance with European Standard IEC61 400-1 and with BS EN 61400 - 1:2005 Wind Turbine Design Requirements would provide adequate assurance of the safety of the development, and this could be secured by condition (Appeal Decision, para 93).
- 7.7** In one appeal case reviewed, relating to a proposal for 16 turbines 100m tall in Cambridgeshire (APP/W0530/A/05/1190473), safety issues featured prominently, particularly highway safety issues. Here, the closest turbines were to be 250m from the A14 Trunk Road. The Inspector noted that the road carried a substantial volume of traffic and an unusually high proportion of lorries. The road was operating significantly over its theoretical capacity and the Highways Agency was concerned about the number of accidents, whilst the highway authority had objected to the proposal. Although the Inspector highlights that "there are now a large number of wind farms adjoining or close to road networks with no history of accidents resulting from their installation" (para 59), he concluded that

the very little margin for driver error on the A14 and the particular combination of circumstances in this case (including the number and design of junctions on the road) could be especially critical to the point where optimum driver performance starts to decline. The proposed development was found to have a harmful impact on road safety.

Other Examples

7.8 In other authorities' Supplementary Planning Documents, it appears that safety is rarely discussed in its own right, separately from issues covered elsewhere in this document including Chapter 8.

7.9 Fenland District Council's Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance states that, in order to ensure a safe zone around turbines in relation to ice build up, the following distance should be applied:

$$d = (D + H) \times 1.5$$

Where:

d = maximum falling distance of ice (in metres)

D = rotor diameter (in metres)

H = hub height (in metres)

7.10 *South Northamptonshire's SPD 'Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside' contains a section of 'Safety and Proximity to Roads, Railways, Public Rights of Way and Power Lines'. It refers to Highways Agency guidance 'Planning Applications for Wind Turbines Sited Near to Trunk Roads' (Appendix 1), and the guidance in PPS2 relating to 'fall over distance'.*

Conclusions

7.11 It is concluded that there is adequate guidance in PPS22 relating to the positioning of turbines and safety concerns, which is worth reiterating in this document in order to present a comprehensive consideration of the recommended separation distances. Beyond this, it is clear from the brief review of appeal decisions that safety is rarely an issue discussed in its own right, particularly since other compliance procedures (for example British Standards) exist to ensure safe engineering and construction. Similarly in relation to highways safety, it is for the Highways Agency or highways authority to advise on the acceptability of proposals.

Guidance within Cherwell District

'Fall over distance' (the ground to blade tip height + 10%) will be required between wind turbines and occupied buildings and roads.

7.12 *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*

7.13 The advice in PPS22 is to be followed and compliance is to be achieved with the other relevant consent procedures relating to turbine safety.

7.14 The highways authority and the Highways Agency will be consulted on applications on a case by case basis. *The Highways Agency's Spatial Planning Advice Note 'Planning Applications for Wind Turbines Sited Near to Trunk Roads' provides further guidance.*

Further Information

7.15 Please see Appendix 1 - 'Safety'.

Chapter 8 Shadow Flicker

What are the Issues?

- 8.1** Shadow flicker occurs as a result of the sun passing behind the rotors of a wind turbine, casting a moving shadow over nearby properties within 130° either side of north (PPS22). The likelihood of this occurring and its severity depends upon:
- The direction of the dwelling relative to the turbine (s)
 - The distance from the turbine (s)
 - The turbine height
 - The time of year (the effect is greater when the sun is brightest)
 - The proportion of daylight hours in which the turbine (s) operate
 - The frequency of bright sunshine and cloudless skies (particularly at low elevations above the horizon)
 - The prevailing wind direction.
- 8.2** Shadow flicker will not occur in periods of full cloud cover, and its impact will be reduced in overcast skies. Turbine blades will also not rotate continually during daylight hours, as the blades will not rotate during calm periods or very high winds and so shadow flicker would not occur in such conditions.
- 8.3** Turbines can also cause flashes of reflected light, which can be visible for some distance. It is possible to ameliorate the flashing but it is not possible to eliminate it. Careful choice of blade colour and surface finish can help reduce the effect. Light grey semi-matt finishes are often used for this.

National and Local Policy Guidance

- 8.4** The PPS 22 Companion Guide advises that flicker effects have been proven to occur only within ten rotor diameters of a turbine. Within this distance, the duration shadow flicker effects are likely to be very limited: 'A single window in a single building is likely to be affected for a few minutes at certain times of the day during short periods of the year'. There are no set thresholds for the acceptability of shadow flicker in the UK, but guidelines adopted by the Irish Government recommend that shadow flicker at dwellings and offices within 500m of a turbine should not exceed 30 hours per year or 30 minutes per day.
- 8.5** The 'Onshore Wind Energy Planning Conditions Guidance Note' (BERR) states that shadow flicker can be mitigated by siting turbines at sufficient distances from residences likely to be affected (the 10 rotor diameter distance suggested in PPS22); using tree planting and fitting window blinds; and using technology to stop turbines during episodes of shadow flicker.

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

- 8.6** An Appeal Decision relating to a proposal in Cumbria for 6 turbines up to 100m tall (APP/M0933/A/08/2090274) found that shadow flicker could potentially affect two dwellings for up to 25 hours per year. It was noted that:

"In practice the likelihood of shadow flicker occurring will be reduced by meteorological conditions and intervening structures. Whilst shadow flicker can be a source of nuisance, its effects are relatively easy to mitigate, not least by shutting down the relevant turbines during periods when it could occur...[S]hadow flicker is a matter which can appropriately be addressed by a condition which requires a protocol to be in place prior to the operation of the wind turbines" (para 72).

- 8.7** This appears to be a common approach in the majority of appeal decisions reviewed. In one appeal, relating to a proposal for 5 120m turbines in Dover (APP/X2220/A/08/2071880), the Inspector reviewed the effects of shadow flicker in much more detail and visited a sample of the properties with the potential to be affected (in that case 105 buildings within 820m distance), and found that for the most part shadow flicker effects would be avoided by a combination of distance, contours and building orientation. However, some dwellings fell within the 'ten rotor diameter' recommended in PPS22 and these dwellings would be adversely affected.

Other Examples

- 8.8** South Northants' *Northamptonshire's* draft SPD on Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside contains a section relating to shadow flicker and reflected light which states that proposals should ensure that shadow flicker does not affect residential properties. Shadow flicker may occur within ten times the rotor diameter of a turbine, so turbines should be located to avoid these locations. *Where this is not possible planning conditions will be used to require a shadow flicker mitigation scheme, unless it can be demonstrated that shadow flicker effects would not be experienced within habitable rooms within any dwelling.*
- 8.9** Fenland District Council's Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance sets out that proposals for wind turbines should ensure that shadow flicker does not affect any residential properties, A roads or B roads. Shadow flicker can affect properties within 130° either side of north and may occur within ten times the rotor diameter of a turbine, so turbines should be located to avoid these locations.

Conclusions

- 8.10** In conclusion, there is clear guidance that, to avoid shadow flicker, wind turbines should normally be located at a distance of at least 10 rotor diameters from dwellings. It has also been proven (PPS22) that within this 10 rotor diameter, shadow flicker will only occur in some conditions for some of the time and will only affect nearby properties within 130° either side of north. It is important however that the guidance discusses mitigation opportunities to ameliorate the effects of shadow flicker where they cannot be completely avoided.

Guidance within Cherwell District

To avoid shadow flicker, wind turbines should normally be located at a distance of at least 10 rotor diameters from dwellings.

Within this distance, investigations will be undertaken to identify any properties likely to be affected by shadow flicker. If there are found to be unacceptable shadow flicker impacts, mitigation measures should be taken including moving the position of the turbine, using technology to stop turbines during episodes of shadow flicker, or, as a last resort, using tree planting and fitting window blinds to ameliorate the effect.

- 8.11** *This guidance does not reflect a blanket restriction on wind turbines, but guidance on location in order to minimise harmful impacts.*

Further Information

- 8.12** Please see Appendix 1 - 'Shadow Flicker'.

Chapter 9 Cumulative Impacts

What are the Issues?

- 9.1** Cumulative impact assessment requires the consideration of additional effects that may arise as a result of a wind turbine proposal in combinations with one or more existing or proposed schemes. This might include:
- Operational development
 - Developments under construction
 - Approved developments
 - Submitted applications
 - But not schemes at an earlier stage, for example where the local planning authority has been consulted on whether Environmental Impact Assessment would be required (a 'screening opinion'), or what issues the Assessment should consider (a 'scoping opinion').
- 9.2** Cumulative impact assessment is therefore somewhat speculative - the number of projects which will be built, and when, is uncertain (because the assessment can include 'submitted' - not approved - applications).
- 9.3** Cumulative assessment is focused on the potential relationship between different developments. The term 'cumulative impact' is often used to refer only to landscape and visual effects (hence there is a relationship between this section and Chapter 4), but there can be a wide range of other environmental, social and economic cumulative impacts.
- 9.4** 'Cumulative' does not necessarily mean a simple addition of the impacts of wind proposal A + wind proposal B. For example, wind proposal A may give rise to minor impacts on bird populations, well within the capacity of that bird population for regeneration and hence has little effect on the overall bird population level. The same would apply to wind proposal B, taken on its own. However, the level of bird mortality occasioned by proposals A and B taken together may exceed the capacity of the population for regeneration, in which case the bird population would go into decline. Whereas the impact of A and B, each on their own, is not discernible, the impact of A + B is to cause population collapse (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2005).
- 9.5** The definition of the 'cumulative impact' will vary according to the impact being considered. For example, when considering cumulative landscape and visual impacts, effects can be
- Combined (when multiple schemes are seen when looking in one direction)
 - Successive (when schemes are seen one after the other, such as when looking in an opposite direction)
 - Sequential (when schemes are seen one after the other when travelling through the landscape along roads or paths).
- 9.6** Key issues to consider will be:

Landscape

- Will wind farms become a significant or defining characteristic of the landscape?
- Will wind farms appear at odds with each other?

Visual

- Will the visible number of wind turbines increase?
- Will proposal lead to a feeling of being 'surrounded' by development?
- How will wind turbines or farms appear and relate to one another when seen together from viewpoints or routes?

9.7 Cumulative impacts will also result from the way in which different impacts of the same scheme interact with each other (planting to reduce noise or visual impacts may have positive or negative impacts on local wildlife depending on the species planted).

National and Local Policy Guidance

9.8 The document frequently referred to is the guidance on cumulative impact produced by Scottish Natural Heritage (see below). This explains how setting thresholds for the acceptability of cumulative impacts is likely to be simpler for infrastructure or road systems, where there are likely to be established upper limits for capacity which further development must not breach. Cumulative ecology assessment is best undertaken by appropriate agencies concerned with national populations (rather than a developer concerned with one proposal). Cumulative landscape assessment should be informed by an analysis of landscape sensitivity or capacity studies. It is unlikely that thresholds or capacities can be simply expressed in terms of turbine numbers or power output; they are more likely to be expressed in terms of acceptable limits of change.

9.9 **It is important to note that the consideration of cumulative impacts is a requirement of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, along with a consideration of the relevant alternatives.**

Guidance from Appeal Decisions

9.10 In an appeal decision relating to a proposal for 11 turbines up to 125m tall in Leicestershire (APP/F2415/A/09/2096369), the Inspector briefly discussed cumulative impact. He noted that two wind farms nearby were at application and scoping stages. Possible cumulative impacts were a material consideration, but the Inspector agreed with the cumulative impact assessment undertaken by the Appellant, which did not show that the proposed scheme would add undue harm to the local landscape nor to protected species and wildlife.

9.11 Cumulative landscape impacts were discussed in some detail in the appeal relating to a proposal for 6 turbines 100m tall in Cumbria (APP/M0933/A/08/2090274). Here, there were two existing wind farms 7km to the north and 25km to the south of the appeal site. The Inspector found that the gap between the schemes and the differences in land cover were sufficient to dispel an impression of a landscape dominated by wind farms. Nor, he found, would there be significant adverse cumulative effects in terms of serial (successive) and sequential views.

9.12 Shortly before the Cumbria application was determined by the Council, an application was submitted for 3 turbines 110m tall, 2km from the appeal site. The Inspector noted that this second scheme was not obviously going to be the 'preferred' scheme - the turbines were taller but smaller in number and so capable of generating less renewable energy. He found that it was not necessary to consider the cumulative impacts of both of the proposals together, since the application for the second scheme had not yet been determined. The cumulative impacts of the proposals should be considered at the Inquiry into the second scheme, when the full facts about the second scheme's impact were known.

- 9.13** Intervening distance and the degree of separation were considered to render cumulative impacts insignificant in an appeal relating to a proposal for 5 turbines 125m tall in Essex. (APP/P1560/A/08/2088548). Finally, the proliferation of single turbines and wind farms within a 60km radius of the appeal site in a proposal relating to 16 turbines in Cambridgeshire (APP/20530/A/05/1190473) was not considered to justify a conclusion that the additional turbines would be unacceptable on proliferation grounds.
- 9.14** *However, in a recent appeal decision in Yorkshire (January 2011), a proposal for three turbines has been dismissed based on the 'critical importance' of the cumulative impact of schemes (with 15 wind farms already approved in the surrounding area).*

Other Examples

- 9.15** Fenland District Council's SPD contains thresholds and criteria on cumulative visual impacts. It states that proposals for new wind turbine development, detached from existing sites by more than 500m but within 4km of existing turbine developments are unlikely to be acceptable in visual terms. There may be circumstances where it can be demonstrated that a distance greater than 500m is required. Proposals within 10km of existing turbine developments will need to be carefully considered.
- 9.16** Other SPDs are less quantitative but require careful judgements for each individual scheme to determine the acceptability of cumulative effects.

Conclusions

- 9.17** The cumulative assessment of proposals, whether the consideration of the combined impacts of numerous schemes, or the consideration of the interaction of impacts generated by a single scheme, is an important consideration in determining acceptability. It is considered that within the Cherwell district, the assessment of cumulative impacts should continue to be undertaken on a case by case basis.
- 9.18** *The considerations relating to the 'field of view' occupied by turbines, as set out in Chapter 3, will also be relevant to minimising cumulative impacts. This needs to factor in consideration that impacts are experienced by a greater number of people in settlements compared to individual dwellings, as well as take into account any mitigating factors reducing views of turbines such as screening.*

Guidance within Cherwell District

Assessment of cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts will be undertaken on a case by case basis, founded on a well considered judgement of the information surrounding a proposal.

The Council will expect applicants to consider the cumulative impact of their proposal alongside any other approved, under construction, or operational schemes when they submit proposals.

As a guiding principle, settlements of more than 10 dwellings should not normally have wind turbines in more than 90 degrees of their field of view from public or residential viewpoints for a distance of 5km from the viewpoint. Individual dwellings should not have wind turbines in more than 180 degrees of their field of view for a distance of 10km from the property. These criteria may be influenced by, amongst other issues, topography and screening.

Further Information

9.19 Please see Appendix 1 - 'Cumulative Impacts'.

Appendix 1 References

General

'*Delivering Community Benefits from Wind Energy Development: A Toolkit*', DTI (2007), at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file38710.pdf>

'Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy', ODPM (2004), at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps22>

'Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22', ODPM (2004), at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningrenewable>

'Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study', CAG Consultants for Cherwell District Council (2009), at http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/1/i/Renewable_Energy_and_Sustainable_Construction_Study_%28September_2009%29.Pdf

'Review of Renewable and Decentralised Energy Potential in South East England', Land Use Consultants and TV Energy (2010), at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100908090945/http://se-partnershipboard.org.uk/page/5/view/175/sub/77/energy>

'Wind Energy Policy', Torrington District Council (2010), at <http://www.torrington.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=5050>

'Wind Power in the UK', Sustainable Development Commission (2005), at http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/file_download.php?target=/publications/downloads/Wind_Energy-NovRev2005.pdf

'Wind Turbine Development Policy Guidance', The Landscape Partnership for Fenland District Council (2009), at <http://www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/content/development-policy/ldf/evidencedocs/wind-turbine-study/wind-turbine-development-policy-guidance.en>

'Wind Turbines in the Open Countryside' (Draft), South Northamptonshire District Council (2010), at http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/documents/Draft_Wind_Turbines_SPD_%28May_2010%29.pdf

'Wind Turbine Study', The Landscape Partnership for Fenland District Council (2008), at <http://www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/content/development-policy/ldf/evidencedocs/wind-turbine-study/wtsd.en>

Landscape and Visual Impacts

'*Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment*', Jacobs Babbie for Aylesbury Vale District Council (2008), at <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/avldf-framework/avldf-evidence-base/environment-evidence/av-lca-may2008/>

'*Aylesbury Vale Areas of Sensitive Landscape Study*', Jacobs for Aylesbury Vale District Council (2008), at <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/avldf-framework/avldf-evidence-base/environment-evidence/aylesbury-vale-areas-sensitive-landscape/>

'*Cherwell Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment*', Halcrow for Cherwell District Council (2009), at <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3244>

'*Cotswolds AONB Management Plan*', Cotswolds Conservation Board (2008), at http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management_plan/index.html

'Cotswolds AONB Position Statement: Renewable Energy Projects', Cotswolds Conservation Board (2005), at <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=positionstatements>

'Designing Windfarms in the Landscape', Scottish Natural Heritage (2008), at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A337202.pdf>

'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Landscape Institute and IEMA (2002)

'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland', Countryside Agency and SNH (2004), at <http://www.landscapecharacter.org.uk/lca/guidance>

'Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/04', as amended, Landscape Institute (2008)

'Making Space for Renewable Energy', Natural England (2010), at <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE254>

'Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study', at <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/>

'PAN45: Renewable Energy Technologies', The Scottish Executive (2002), at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/02/pan45/pan-45>

'Visual Representation of Windfarms: Good Practice Guidance', SNH (2006), at <http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/heritagemanagement/Visual%20Representation%20of%20windfarms%20-%20excerpt.pdf>

Noise

'Noise Radiation from Wind Turbines Installed Near Homes: Effects on Health', Frey and Haddon (2006)

Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise, ODPM (1994), at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg24>

'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Windfarms', ETSU (1997) at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.berr.gov.uk/energy/sources/renewables/explained/wind/onshore-offshore/page21743.html>

Heritage

'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance', English Heritage (2008), at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf>

'Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment', CLG (2010), at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1514132.Pdf>

'Planning Policy Statement 5: Practice Guide' (2010), at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/pps5practiceguide.pdf>

'Scottish Planning Advice Note 45 (Renewable Energy Technologies)', Scottish Executive Development Department (2007), at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/171491/0047957.pdf>

'Supplementary Planning Guidance on Wind Energy', South Holland District Council (2004) at <http://www.sholland.gov.uk/environment/plandev/localplan/Supplementary+Planning+Documents.htm>

'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (Draft), English Heritage (2010), at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/setting-and-views/heritage-assets/>

'Wind Energy and the Historic Environment', English Heritage (2005), at [http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Wind_Energy_\(final\).Pdf](http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Wind_Energy_(final).Pdf)

Safety

'Planning Applications for Wind Turbines Sited Close to Trunk Roads', Highways Agency (2009) at http://www.highways.gov.uk/business/documents/Wind_Turbines_SP_12-09.Pdf

'Wind Turbines: Design Requirements', BS EN 61400-1:2005, British Standards Institution (2005), at <http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030095699>

Shadow Flicker

'Onshore Wind Energy Planning Conditions Guidance Note', Renewables Advisory Board and BERR (2007), at <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file35240.pdf>

'Onshore Wind: Shadow Flicker', BIS, at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.berr.gov.uk/energy/sources/renewables/planning/onshore-wind/shadow-flicker/page18736.html>

Cumulative Impact

'A Guide to Assessing the Cumulative Effects of Wind Energy Development', Volume 1, ETSU for DTI (2000), at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file17844.pdf>

'Cumulative Effects of Windfarms', Scottish Natural Heritage (2005), at <http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/strategy/cumulativeeffectsonwindfarms.pdf>

'Review of Guidance on the Assessment of Cumulative Impacts on Onshore Windfarms' Phase 1 Report, Entec (2008), at http://www.entecuk.com/downloads/windfarm_cumulative_impacts_report.pdf

Other Issues

Biodiversity

'Bats and Onshore Wind Turbines', Technical Information Note TIN051, Natural England (2009), at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/C245244.Pdf>

'Bats and Single Large Wind Turbines', Joint Agencies Interim Guidance TIN059, Natural England (2009), at <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/TIN059>

'Bird Survey Methods for Use in Assessing the Impacts of Onshore Windfarms on Bird Communities', Scottish Natural Heritage (2005), at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A305435.pdf>

'Guidelines for the Consideration of Bats in Wind Farm Projects', EUROBATS (2008), at http://www.eurobats.org/publications/publication%20series/pubseries_no3_english.pdf

'Making Space for Renewable Energy', Natural England (2010), at <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE254>

'Standing Advice for Protected Species', Natural England (2009), at http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south_east/ourwork/standingadvice/protectedspecies/default.aspx

'Windfarms and Birds: Calculating a theoretical collision risk assuming no avoiding action', Scottish Natural Heritage (2000), at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/C205425.pdf>

'Wind Farm Development and Nature Conservation', English Nature, RSPB, WWF-UK, BWEA (2001), at <http://www.bwea.com/pdf/wfd.pdf>

Aviation & Telecommunication

'CAP 168: Licensing of Aerodromes', Civil Aviation Authority (2010), at <http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=33&pagetype=65&appid=11&mode=detail&id=232>

'CAP 670: Air Traffic Services Safety Requirements' (2010), at <http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=33&pagetype=65&appid=11&mode=detail&id=200>

'CAP 764: CAA Policy and Guidelines on Wind Turbines', Civil Aviation Authority (2010), at <http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=33&pagetype=65&appid=11&mode=detail&id=2358>

'Wind Energy and Aviation Interests: Interim Guidelines', Wind Energy, Defence & Civil Aviation Interests Working Group (2002), at <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=7&pagetype=90&pageid=1209>

'Wind Farm Assessment Tool', BBC & OFCOM, at http://www.bbc.co.uk/reception/info/windfarm_tool.shtml

'Windfarms and Wireless Services: Coordination and Guidance', OFCOM, at <http://licensing.ofcom.org.uk/radiocommunication-licences/fixed-terrestrial-links/guidance-for-licensees/wind-farms/>

Highways

'Planning Applications for Wind Turbines Sited Close to Trunk Roads', Highways Agency (2009) at http://www.highways.gov.uk/business/documents/Wind_Turbines_SP_12-09.pdf

'Public Rights of Way' section on Oxfordshire County Council's website at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

'Wind Farms: Advisory Note 20', British Horse Society (2010)

Revenue 2011/12 Budget Proposal and Analysis

The Status of the Budget

- 1.1 This third draft of the budget presented to the Executive has been subject to further validation of revenue, capital bids and efficiency savings and now incorporates the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny
- 1.2 This final draft of the budget for 2011-12 shows a surplus of £9,149 which it is recommended should be a contribution to General Fund balances
- 1.3 The provisional settlement figures of the Government Grant we will be receiving in 2011-12 were issued on the 13th December and were incorporated within Draft 2 of this budget. No further changes have been made within this Final draft.
- 1.4 The amount available for distribution from the Collection Fund has been finalised and were prepared by the statutory deadline of 15th January 2011. It has therefore been confirmed that our share of the surplus equates to £130,417.
- 1.5 Since the last report on January 10th 2011 the Bank of England's has maintained interest rates at 0.5%.
- 1.6 The draft budget has been prepared on the basis of expenditure and income inflation at 0% unless other contractual arrangements are in place.

General Fund Revenue Budget

- 1.7 The General Fund Revenue budget is shown below in Table 1.

Service Area	Approved Budget 2010/11	Proposed Budget 2011/12	Movement
Corporate Core	£4,543,693	£4,028,176	-£515,517
Environment & Community	£11,622,769	£9,783,652	-£1,839,117
Planning, Housing & Economy	£4,947,243	£4,348,141	-£599,102
Service Total	£21,113,705	£18,159,969	-£2,953,736
Centrally Controlled Items			
Provisions (Specific Risk Reserves and pension Comp.)	£263,881	£582,614	£318,733
SNDC Joint Mgt	£0	-£333,000	-£333,000
Credit for Capital Charges	-£2,850,060	-£3,218,477	-£368,417
	£18,527,526	£15,191,106	-£3,336,420
Contribution to (+) / from (-) Earmarked Reserves	£0	£600,000	£600,000
Contribution to (+) / from (-) General Balances	£0	£9,149	£9,149
Net Budget Requirement	£18,527,526	£15,800,255	-£2,727,271
RSG Settlement	-£10,905,340	-£8,574,773	£2,330,567
Council tax Compensation Grant	0	-£155,037	-£155,037
Collection Fund Surplus	-£84,477	-£130,417	-£45,940
Investment Income	-£1,348,753	-£723,407	£625,346
Amount to be funded from Council Tax	£6,188,956	£6,216,621	£27,665
Number of band D equivalent	50113	50337	-224
2011-12 Cost of Band D equivalent	£123.50	£123.50	
2010-11 Cost of Band D equivalent	£123.50	£123.50	
Increase in Annual Council Tax	£0.00	£0.00	
Weekly Increase in Council Tax (pence)	0.00p	0.00p	

- 1.8 The finalisation of support allocations and internal recharges may result in the service total of £18,159,169 being re-allocated across the 3 service areas but the bottom line totals and budget requirement will not change.
- 1.9 In order to balance the budget and secure the £360,510 deficit from Draft Budget 2, further reductions in costs, increases in income and review of reserves and provisions were taken into account. The main drivers for this are summarised in Table 2 below and as can be seen these adjustments have resulted in a surplus of £9,149.

BUDGET MOVEMENT DRAFT 2 TO FINAL (Main Drivers)	£'s
Draft 2 Shortfall	£ 360,510
Scrutiny Recommendations - Car Parking Income	-£ 422,201
Value for Money Review - Cultural & Heritage	-£ 119,322
Deletion of Standards Committee Budget	-£ 20,000
Value for Money Review - Economic Development	-£ 14,000
Additional Costs - Excess Charge Notices	£ 10,057
Additional Utility Costs - Sports Centre	£ 15,614
Interest Review	£ 67,720
Review of Risk Provision /Vacancy Assessment/ Pension Provision	£ 98,304
Various Budget Adjustments	£ 14,169
Final Draft - Surplus - Moved to General Fund Reserve	-£ 9,149

- 1.10 Table 3 below includes a walk from the 2010/11 net service budget to the proposed 2011/12 net service budget highlighting the main drivers of cost pressures, impact of service income and cost reductions.

Budget Walk 2010/11 to 2011/12	
Base Service Budget 2010/11	£18,527,526
Budget Virements	£146,336
2010/11 Budget Pressure Adjustments	£520,098
Budget Reductions	-£3,413,444
Changes in Financing	-£249,023
New Effects	£193,464
Inflation	£75,298
Draft Base Budget 2011/12	£15,800,255

- 1.11 These movements are further analysed in the tables below

Budget Virements

The Budget Virements figure of £146,336 incorporates both the virement of funding for service expenditure and the realignment of costs in respect of the new organisational structure within 2010/11. It is summarised in the following table :-

Budget Virements	
Procurement Action Plan	£13,369
Job Evaluation	-£62,369
Realignment of Services to new organisational structure	-£97,336
	£146,336

Budget Pressures from 2010/11

Budget pressures 2010/11 Budget Monitoring	
DSS Subsidies & Rebates	£50,000
Car Park Income Pressures	£278,000
Rental Income Pressures	£98,000
Environmental Services Dayworks - under recovery	£35,000
Health & Recreation - Various Budget Pressures	£26,615
Customer Services & ICT - Various Budget Pressures	£32,483
	£520,098

Budget Reductions –

As detailed, the total value of reductions included in this budget now totals **£3,413,444**. These are detailed below in Appendix 1A

Changes in Financing

Changes in Financing	
(Use of) Transfer to General Fund Balance	£9,149
(Use of) Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	£600,000
Movement in Risk and Pension Provisions	£318,734
SNDC Joint Working	-£333,000
Concessionary Fares Transfer to the County	-£843,906
	-£249,023

New Effects (Main Drivers)

New Effects (Main Drivers)	
Increase In NNDR	£49,130
Electricity	£26,092
Increased Mgt Fee Sports Centres	£44,319
Town Centre - Fees no longer recoverable	£50,000
Car Park Income Pressure	£125,882
Movement in subsidies - Exchequer Services	-£204,107
Career Grade Increases	£13,000
Various Budget Adjustments	£61,148
Loss of Rental Income Orchard Way shops	£28,000
	£193,464

Council Tax

- 1.12 The level of council tax being proposed is £123.50 pa at Band D and this is in line with Council commitment of a zero increase. Table 1 above also details the Council Tax Compensation Grant which the Council will receive from Central Government in 2011/12 - £155,037.

Joint Senior Management Team with South Northants District Council

- 1.13 During the course of the development of the budget for 2011/12 proposals for Joint Working with South Northants were progressing. The Joint Working Group was preparing a Business Case for consideration and once agreed by full council at their meeting in December the projected, profiled savings from the project could be incorporated in the financial plans of the authority. The draft budget proposals for 2011/12 contain base budget savings of £333,000 as a result of the Joint Senior Management arrangements.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 – 2015/16

- 1.14 The coming years will present even further challenges which in the main will relate to the continued cuts to the level of government grants received, local government finance and housing benefit reform, inflation and interest rates.
- 1.15 The Council's has a strong track record and commitment to delivering efficiencies resulting in a 33% reduction in net expenditure of services since 2007/08 when the net revenue budget stood at £23.5m compared to £15.8m in 2011/12. A total of £3.3m (14%) has been delivered as part of the 2011/12 budget as a result of the forecasted funding reductions.
- 1.16 These reductions and forward planning together with the joint working with South Northamptonshire Council strengthens our position to meet the forecast challenges of future years.

Summary

- 1.17 This budget will be presented to the Executive on February 7th 2011 with a recommendation to produce the 2011/12 budget book on the basis of Appendices 1-4 and a recommendation to Council on 21st February 2011 to adopt the 2011/12 budget (as a key decision) and set council tax accordingly.

ANALYSIS OF BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Appendix 1A

Review of Savings	Buidling Block Description	B Block Number	£800K Savings Promise	Building Blocks	Efficiencies	Scrutiny	Total	CRP	PHE	EAC	Total
Finance VFM 2009/10	Resources Reduction		£100,000				£100,000	£100,000			£100,000
Legal VFM 2009/10	Further £50k to be identified in 2010/11		£57,000				£57,000	£57,000			£57,000
Communications VFM 2010/11	Full review of printing, advertising and marketing - target 100k reduction		£115,000				£115,000	£115,000			£115,000
Corporate & Democratic Core VFM 2010/11	Review use of 3 Fund managers - target reduction in costs to Treasury Management		£10,000				£10,000	£10,000			£10,000
Corporate & Democratic Core VFM 2010/12	Review of democratic services - VFM - target £70k reductions		£70,000				£70,000	£70,000			£70,000
Corporate & Democratic Core VFM 2010/13	Review of community planning activities - target £20k reductions		£31,000				£31,000	£31,000			£31,000
Community Planning VFM 2009/10	Insurance review - merge with Finance and reduce 1 post		£49,000				£49,000	£49,000			£49,000
ICT review 2009/10	ICT review		£93,000				£93,000			£93,000	£93,000
Regeneration & Estates VFM 2009/10	Canteen - staff reductions and fee review		£27,000				£27,000		£27,000		£27,000
Housing Services VFM 2010/11	VFM - Annual Programme - Housing Services		£100,000				£100,000		£100,000		£100,000
Procurement Self Financing Target	Contract Negotiations - cashable savings		£153,904				£153,904	£153,904			£153,904
VFM Programme	Scalable structure, selective external hosting, alternative procurement etc	1		£133,684			£133,684			£133,684	£133,684
Parish Websites	Alternative parishes website hosting	3		£2,100			£2,100			£2,100	£2,100
Cash Handling	Install 4 Autotellers. Requires £100k capital	6		£52,831			£52,831			£52,831	£52,831
Recycling Income	Improved recycling performance through increased targeting.	8		£45,000			£45,000			£45,000	£45,000
Gate Fees	Negotiated reduction in gate fees	9		£77,135			£77,135			£77,135	£77,135
Glass Collection	Lower net cost in-house collection service requires capital of £130k.	10		£75,900			£75,900			£75,900	£75,900
Bring Banks	Various operational efficiencies	11		£20,000			£20,000			£20,000	£20,000
	Reduced replacement bin costs by more repairs etc	13		£12,500			£12,500			£12,500	£12,500
Street Cleansing	Reduce staff levels through non-use of seasonal staff and not filling a vacancy created through natural turnover of staff.	14		£54,019			£54,019			£54,019	£54,019
Expressions of Interest	Reduction in resources through expression of interest processes	15		£58,517			£58,517			£58,517	£58,517
Vehicle Maintenance	Increased income on MOT's	16		£5,000			£5,000			£5,000	£5,000
Vehicle Maintenance	Improved cost base	17		£2,540			£2,540			£2,540	£2,540
Staffing	Implemented reduced hours for 3 posts	18		£62,720			£62,720			£62,720	£62,720
Arts Grants	Eliminate all but Mill. Means no OYAP, St Mary's Church	20		£31,906			£31,906			£31,906	£31,906
Museum	Partial reduction Staff Hours	21a		£10,376			£10,376			£10,376	£10,376
Leisure Development	No Projects Officer resulting in fewer projects, limited S106 activity and no support to parishes and other voluntary sector bodies	24		£25,927			£25,927			£25,927	£25,927
Grants	No grants to village Halls	25		£38,775			£38,775			£38,775	£38,775
Cooper School	Joint User Agreement	27		£33,621			£33,621			£33,621	£33,621
North Oxford Academy	Joint User Agreement	28		£40,517			£40,517			£40,517	£40,517
Arts Service	Reduced arts activity and voluntary sector support.	30		£38,000			£38,000			£38,000	£38,000
Countryside	Reduced partner activity and grant aid	32		£9,976			£9,976		9,976	9,976	£9,976
Street Wardens	Review budgets and target reduction of £16k	33		£15,848			£15,848			£15,848	£15,848
Car Parks	Reduced frequency of cash collections from machines	34		£6,825			£6,825			£6,825	£6,825
Subscriptions	Safer Communities Urban & Rural ServicesCancel specified subscriptions within Service	35		£2,742			£2,742			£2,742	£2,742
Christmas Lights	Negotiate shared costs of Christmas Lights with Urban Centres	36		£36,000			£36,000			£36,000	£36,000
Enforcement	Increased fines through enforcement capability for Street Wardens	42		£15,750			£15,750			£15,750	£15,750
Nightsafe	Reduce officer time to 50%	43		£13,382			£13,382			£13,382	£13,382
Training	Sell externally	54		£25,000			£25,000	£25,000			£25,000
Admin Review II	Total Admin in PHE, EAC and Corporate equates to £1m - reduce by 10%	66		£93,656			£93,656	£93,656			£93,656
Landscape Contract	Review specification - target 20% saving in new contract 1/4/12	70		£106,579			£106,579			£106,579	£106,579
Services for the Elderly	Reduce work in this area by 50%	80		£28,441			£28,441			£28,441	£28,441
Contract Management	Review the contract management resource throughout the Council and centralise within one team with Procurement - reduce by 2 posts	85		£52,624			£52,624	£52,624			£52,624
Statutory / Discretionary Review		87		£6,000			£6,000	£6,000			£6,000
Facility Management	Centralisation of all and general reduction in service maintenance budgets - budget clarification required as costs covered in devolved budgets	100		£7,447			£7,447		£7,447		£7,447
Benefits Advertising	Not a statutory function to promote the take up of benefits - was an audit commission indicator	106		£5,000			£5,000	£5,000			£5,000
Performance Regime	Consider the performance regime of the Council on the back of the demise of CAA - target reductions in performance team and admin as a result of reviewing what is measured and what is no longer necessary - assume 1 post deleted	108		£28,882			£28,882	£28,882			£28,882
Bank Charges	Pass card payment transaction charges to customer	109		£30,000			£30,000	£30,000			£30,000
Debt Recovery	Increase court costs - not raised for a number of years - assume 5% increase	110		£100,000			£100,000	£100,000			£100,000
Internal Audit	Review specification and consider reduction in light of CAA demise and stat/disc reviews - assume 20 day reduction in new contract negotiation in 12/13	112		£9,000			£9,000	£9,000			£9,000
EFFICIENCIES											
Efficiencies Corporate Core					£162,647		£162,647	£162,647			£162,647
Efficiencies PHE					£255,234		£255,234		£255,234		£255,234
Efficiencies EAC					£241,733		£241,733			£241,733	£241,733
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS											
Pest Control (Wasps)	Increased Income					£14,000	£14,000			£14,000	£14,000
Special Collection	Increased Income					£30,000	£30,000			£30,000	£30,000
Member Training	Reduced Expenditure					£7,505	£7,505	£7,505			£7,505
Staff Training	Reduced Expenditure					£60,000	£60,000	£60,000			£60,000
Car Parking	Increased Income					£422,201	£422,201			£422,201	£422,201
			£805,904	£1,414,220	£659,614	£533,706	£3,413,444	£1,166,218	£389,681	£1,857,545	£3,413,444
								34%	11%	54%	

Capital Programme 2011/12

- 1.1 A total of 27 bids were received of which 4 were deleted at appraisal stage. This leaves 23 bids for consideration and these are analysed according to consultation priority below:

Priority	No. of bids
1 Refuse collection & recycling, housing (needs, strategic & private sector), anti-social behaviour	6
2 Economic development & regeneration	2
3 Sports facilities, local, community & leisure development, safer communities, health promotion	2
4 Cleansing, local transport & concessionary fares, environmental protection, conservation & urban centres, arts, rural areas, car parking, estates	1
5 Building control & engineering, public protection, enforcement	0
6 Planning control, diversity & equality	0
7 Landscape, Banbury museum, tourism, licensing	0
Corporate Revenue & benefits, democratic services, chief executive office, member services, corporate charges, communications, treasury, improvement, community planning, elections, land charges	12
	23

- 1.2 The draft capital proposals to date for 2011/12 are shown in Appendix 2a these bids totalling £3,843,980. Each scheme is supported by an appraisal and these have been scored according to priority by the Capital Investment Delivery Group.
- 1.3 At least one third of the capital bids can be categorised as spend to save initiatives and generate positive revenue implications which if considered for inclusion in the final 2011/12 capital programme will contribute to the financial challenges ahead.
- 1.4 The new capital bids have been scrutinised by the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and their observations and recommendations were reported in January 2011.
- 1.5 The Capital Strategy for 2011/12 has a direct impact on the Treasury management revenue budget in terms of the opportunity cost of reduced cash balances from the use of capital receipts and reserves. Decisions on the future capital programme will need to take into account the overall priorities and affordability in revenue as well as capital terms.
- 1.6 The Council is one of over 100 local authorities that were affected by the collapse of Icelandic banking institutions. The Council currently has a total of £6.5 million in short term investments with one of the affected banks, Glitner. Although the Council remains confident of getting all of its investment back an application was made to capitalise the costs that, in 2010-11, have to be written off to the revenue account. The application matched the amount which the Council would otherwise have to write off and totalled £4.615m. Of the amount applied for 70% was granted by the Secretary of State and as a result

£3.230m can be charged back to capital reserves, which are in relatively plentiful supply. Capital reserves are estimated to be £37.5m at the 31 March 2011 and £23.5m at the 31 March 2012 after taking account of this write off and capital expenditure.

- 1.7 However, this is purely an accounting requirement and does not mean that the deposits are lost. The Council continues to work with Bevan Brittan and LGA to seek full recovery of the £6.5m invested. Should the deposits be repaid in full as priority creditor status then the accounting entries would be reversed.
- 1.8 The Executive has agreed that 21 capital schemes which were approved as part of the 2010/11 budget process but which work has been delayed until 2011/12 will also be delivered in 2011/12 and these together with additional slippage requests in the Q3 Finance Report (elsewhere on agenda) are detailed schedule in Appendix 2b.
- 1.9 A summary of the draft capital programme and recommended financing is summarised below:

	Total Scheme Cost	2011/12 Profile
Proposed programme (Appendix 2a)	£5,862,314	£3,843,980
Schemes approved and slipped from 2010/11 (Appendix 2b)	£9,084,000	£8,834,000
Schemes with prior approved but not profiled until 2011/12 (Appendix 2c)	£6,245,184	£1,245,184
Total Capital Programme to be Financed	£21,191,498	£13,923,164
<u>Financed by:</u>		
Capital Receipts	£15,414,448	£8,644,164
Government Grants		
<i>£375k per annum Governmental Grant Funding towards Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants</i>	£375,000	£375,000
Use of Reserves		
<i>Wheeled Bins Reserve</i>	£15,000	£15,000
<i>Vehicle Replacement Programme</i>	£605,050	£207,000
<i>SW Bicester Sports Village Fund</i>	£1,500,000	£1,400,000
<i>Housing Reserves</i>	£3,282,000	£3,282,000
	£21,191,498	£13,923,164

Further Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 2a	New Capital Bid Proposals
Appendix 2b	Schedule of capital schemes slipped from 2010/11
Appendix 2c	Bids with prior approval but profiled for 11/12 onwards

Capital Bids 2011/12 by Score

Bid No.	Consultation Priority	Capital Scheme	Service Head	Service	Capital Bid Score	Total	
						Estimated Capital Cost	Estimated Cost for 2011/12
						£s	£s
24	1	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	Gillian Greaves	Housing Services	45	£860,000	£860,000
19	4	Vehicle Replacement Programme	Ed Potter	Environmental Services	44	£2,186,000	£207,000
9	C	Extended Contract for Website Hosting	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	40	£59,000	£19,666
5	C	Photovoltaics at Bodicote House and Banbury Museum	David Marriott	Economic Development & Estates	39	£350,000	£350,000
20	C	Solar Photovoltaics at Thorpe Lane Depot	Ed Potter	Environmental Services	39	£100,000	£100,000
21	C	Solar Photovoltaics at Sports Centres	Paul Marston Weston	Recreation & Health	39	£785,000	£785,000
14	C	Uniform & Corporate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Database & Application Upgrades	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	38	£15,000	£15,000
22	1	Delegated Affordable Housing Capital Pot	Gillian Greaves	Housing Services	36	£500,000	£500,000
23	1	Discretionary House Condition Grants	Gillian Greaves	Housing Services	36	£325,000	£325,000
6	1	Orchard Way Refurbishment	David Marriott	Economic Development & Estates	34	£250,000	£250,000
8	3	CCTV Internet Protocol Transmission	Chris Rothwell	Urban & Rural Services	34	£100,000	£100,000
17	1	Mini MRF (Materials Recovery Facility)	Ed Potter	Environmental Services	34	£29,000	£29,000
18	1	Recycling Bins Programme	Ed Potter	Environmental Services	34	£15,000	£15,000
4	2	Fees of Future Regeneration Schemes	David Marriott	Economic Development & Estates	31	£50,000	£50,000
1	C	Replacement Voicemail Service	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	29	£10,000	£10,000
3	C	Highfield Depot Improvements	David Marriott	Economic Development & Estates	29	£10,000	£10,000
11	C	Virtual Server Infrastructure Expansion	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	29	£30,914	£30,914
12	C	Storage Area Networks (SAN) Expansion	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	29	£41,900	£41,900
13	C	Core Business System Integration	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	28	£52,500	£52,500
16	3	Corporate Bookings System	Ian Davies	Environment & Community	23	£50,000	£50,000
7	C	Community Intelligence Hub	Chris Rothwell	Urban & Rural Services	21	£20,000	£20,000
10	C	SMS Text Messaging Functionality	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	17	£13,000	£13,000
15	C	Contact Centre Call Recording	Pat Simpson	Customer Service & Information Systems	12	£10,000	£10,000
GRAND TOTAL						£5,862,314	£3,843,980

C = this service was not consulted on as part of the public consultation exercise

* This had original savings of £216,000 but is a possible replacement for a 2010/11 bid. Therefore if this goes ahead, the savings from 2010/11 will be slipped.

Capital Programme 2011/12 - Slipped Schemes

Schedule 2b

Capital Scheme Slipped from 2010/11	Slippage agreed at 1st Nov 10 Executive	Slippage proposed at 7th Feb 11 Executive	Profiled for 2011/12	Profiled for 2012/13
Funding for Mollington & Hornton Rural Exemption Sites	£60,000		£60,000	
Purchase of Temporary Accommodation Bryan House	£330,000	£165,000	£495,000	
Disabled Facilities Grants	£0	£100,000	£100,000	
Discretionary Grants for Domestic Properties	£0	£30,000	£30,000	
Kidlington Pedestrianisation	£20,000		£20,000	
Fees for Future Regeneration Schemes	£50,000	£50,000	£100,000	
Climate Changes Initiatives Fund	£16,000		£16,000	
Bicester Cattle Market Car Park Phase 2	£94,000		£94,000	
Old Bodicote House	£371,000	£450,000	£821,000	
Land at Claypits Lane Bicester	£187,000		£187,000	
Orchard Way Banbury Redevelopment	£1,100,000		£1,100,000	
Financial Ledger - Agresso 5.5	£50,000		£50,000	
Budget Module	£15,000		£15,000	
Fleet Management System	£28,000		£28,000	
Village Hall, Recreation Play Grants	£19,000		£19,000	
South West Bicester Sports Village	£270,000		£270,000	
Banbury Foyer & Banbury Youth Hub	£0	£68,000	£68,000	
Urban Centres Improvements	£7,000		£7,000	
Replacement Cabling Infrastructure for CCTV	£55,000		£55,000	
Online Service Provision via Forms	£20,000		£20,000	
Bicester Pedestrianisation	£250,000		£0	£250,000
Banbury Pedestrianisation	£20,000	£60,000	£80,000	
Thorpe Lane Depot	£50,000	£134,000	£184,000	
Bicester Town Centre Development	£4,000,000	£1,015,000	£5,015,000	
	£7,012,000	£2,072,000	£8,834,000	£250,000

APPENDIX 2c

Capital expenditure approved in 2010/11 profiled for 2011/12

	Profiled 2011/12 spend	Profiled 2012/13 spend
Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment	0	5,000,000
Car Park Refurbishments	5,000	0
Microsoft Licensing Agreements	110,184	0
South West Bicester Sports Village	1,130,000	0
	1,245,184	5,000,000

REVIEW OF RESERVES JANUARY 2011										APPENDIX 3
	Cost Centre Number	Balance as at Apr 10	Balance as at 31 Dec 10	Projected Spend Jan Mar 11	Review of Reserves 1 2011 y/e with PFH	Balance as at Mar 11				Proposed Utilisation and Re-allocation
		£	£		£	£				
INSURANCE RESERVE										
Self Insurance Reserve	50096	(300,000)	(300,000)	0	50,000	(250,000)				Good claims history - reduce by £50k and transfer to Planning Control Reserve
		(300,000)	(300,000)	0	50,000	(250,000)				
NEW RESERVES										
Iceland Write Off reserve	New	0	0		(1,385,000)	(1,385,000)				To match capitalisation request funded from environmental warranties reserve
Joint Working Implementation	New	0	0		(384,844)	(384,844)				To fund costs of implementing a Senior Management Team - forecast is prior to any contribution from the 2011/12 Budget.
		0	0	0	(1,769,844)	(1,769,844)				
BUILDING CONTROL RESERVE										
Building Control Reserve	50144	(47,242)	(47,242)			(47,242)				To be used in establishing joint service with SNC
		(47,242)	(47,242)	0	0	(47,242)				
REPAIR AND RENEWALS RESERVE										
Plant and Transport Renewals Reserve	50111	(605,050)	(605,050)	200,000	0	(405,050)				To fund future capital - review in March 2011
Wheeled Bins Replacement Reserve	50370	(331,352)	(331,352)	120,000	0	(211,352)				To fund future capital - review in March 2011
		(936,402)	(936,402)	320,000	0	(616,402)				
OTHER EARMARKED RESERVES										
Corporate IT Contingency Reserve	50121	(79,330)	(79,330)	79,330		0				No longer required
Economic Risk Reserve	50142	(100,000)	(35,000)		35,000	0				No longer required - transfer to Joint Working Implementation Reserve
Planning Policy Reserve	50130	(696,899)	(696,899)			(696,899)				Planning Specific
Planning Control Reserve	50131	(710,614)	(710,614)	338,371		(372,243)				Planning Specific - top up by £50,000 from Self Insurance review
Environmental Warranties Reserve	50124	(3,281,773)	(3,281,773)	200,000	1,285,000	(1,796,773)				Transfer £1,384,000 to Icelandic Write Off - remaining equates to long term asbestos liability
Hanwell Fields Reserve	50145	(100,000)	(100,000)			(100,000)				Scheme nearly complete and funding required to discharge legal commitment
Licensing Reserve	50585	(25,000)	(25,000)			(25,000)				Specific project
Corporate Change Reserve	50371	(592,844)	(826,844)	250,000	226,844	(350,000)				Leave at £350,000 to fund general change initiatives - transfer £27,000 to Iceland legal costs and balance to Joint Working Implementation reserve
Iceland Legal Cost reserve	50,110	0	(65,000)	42,000	(27,000)	(50,000)				Top up to £50,000 fund from Corporate Change Reserve
Interest Rate Risk Reserve	50418	(200,000)	(200,000)		200,000	0				No longer required - transfer to £100k to Joint Working Implementation Reserve and £100k to Iceland Write Off Reserve
		(5,786,459)	(6,020,459)	909,701	1,719,844	(3,390,914)				
Total		(7,070,104)	(7,304,104)	1,229,701	0	(6,074,403)				

Corporate Plan 2011/12

Appendix 4

Cherwell District Council's new corporate plan will be developed for the same period as covered by the comprehensive spending review (4 years 2011/12 - 14/15). This version outlines the Council's priorities for **year one** of the period (2011-2012) taking into account the reductions in the Council's net budget. This draft outlines the Council's four strategic priorities and the objectives that underpin each one. The performance of each objective will be monitored through either progress against projects, key milestones or numerical performance measures. Detailed targets and performance milestones will be set out in the Council's Performance Management Framework, which will be received by Executive at their meeting in March 2011.

	A	B	C	D
	A District of Opportunity	A Cleaner Greener Cherwell	A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Community	An Accessible Value for Money Council
1	<p>Work with partners to tackle disadvantage in the District.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support vulnerable residents through challenging economic times (<i>numerical measures homelessness, temporary accommodation, mortgage rescue, and project benefits reforms</i>) Work with our partners to reduce the number of young people not in education employment or training across the district (<i>numerical measure</i>) Support local people into work (<i>apprenticeships and the Job Club - project measure</i>) Deliver the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme (<i>project measure and performance scorecard</i>) 	<p>Provide excellent waste collection and recycling services, working to reduce the amount of waste produced and to increase recycling across the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the household recycling rate to above 60% (<i>numerical measure</i>) Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill (<i>numerical measure - tonnes</i>) Maintain the current high levels of customer satisfaction with our recycling and waste collection services (<i>numerical measure - survey</i>) 	<p>Work with partners to support the development of safe and thriving local communities and neighbourhoods.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide a wide range of recreational activities and opportunities of young people across the district (<i>project measure & numbers participating</i>) Work with partners to maintain already low levels of crime in the district (<i>numerical measures -crime & ASB</i>) Improve the condition of homes in the district to make them safer and healthier (<i>project measure</i>) 	<p>Provide value for money and a financially sound organisation, minimising the impact of smaller council budgets on frontline and priority services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Secure savings of at least £1m to help meet the reduction in our government funding (<i>financial measure against medium term financial strategy</i>) Ensure the Council's budget is matched to strategic priorities and services are able to demonstrate they provide value for money (<i>finance/project measure</i>)
2	<p>Balance economic development and housing growth.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 500 new homes including through planned major housing projects (<i>measured through the AMR- number of new homes, numerical measure</i>) Deliver 100 affordable homes in the district (<i>numerical measure</i>) Promote local economic development through business advice and support, inward investment and the Local Enterprise Partnerships (<i>project measure</i>) 	<p>Work to ensure our streets, town centres, open spaces and residential areas are clean, well maintained and safe.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain high levels of residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness (<i>numerical measure - survey</i>) Increase the number of bring bank recycling sites in the district (<i>numerical measure</i>) Work with local communities to continue the programme of neighbourhood litter blitzes (<i>numerical measure</i>) 	<p>Support the local community, voluntary and not for profit sectors to play an active role in the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the local voluntary sector to provide advisory services for the local community (<i>project measure</i>) Support volunteering across the district (<i>project measure</i>) Prepare a new community development strategy to ensure the Council's work in this area provides value for money and addresses local need (<i>project measure</i>) 	<p>Work with partners to reduce Council costs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce senior management costs by implementing a single shared senior management team with South Northamptonshire Council (<i>financial measure</i>) Explore opportunities to reduce costs by working with partners including South Northamptonshire Council, to develop alternative service delivery models or shared services. (<i>project measure</i>)

A	B	C	D
A District of Opportunity	A Cleaner Greener Cherwell	A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Community	An Accessible Value for Money Council
<p>3 Develop a robust and locally determined planning framework.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a clear long term local development framework for the district <i>(project measure)</i> 2. Prepare an updated policy for developer contributions and deliver at least £1million funding for infrastructure improvements. <i>(project measure)</i> 3. Protect and enhance the quality of the built environment <i>(planning appeals and project measures)</i> 	<p>Work to reduce our impact on the natural environment, limit our use of natural resources and support others in the district to do the same.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by installing solar panels on Council buildings and generating savings in our energy costs <i>(project measure and co2 numerical measure)</i> 2. Work with partners to improve the energy efficiency of homes and enable more residents to achieve affordable energy bills <i>(project measure)</i> 	<p>Provide good quality recreation and leisure opportunities in the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make progress on the South West Bicester multi-sports village <i>(project measure)</i> 2. Maintain current levels of visits/usage to district leisure centres <i>(numeric measure)</i> 3. Secure the long term future of Banbury museum, reducing the cost for local taxpayers and maintaining access for the community <i>(project measure)</i> 	<p>Demonstrate that we can be trusted to act properly for you by being transparent about our costs and performance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the information available to the public about our costs and performance, maintaining the publication of all items of expenditure over £500 <i>(project measure)</i> 2. Consult with local residents in a cost effective manner to ensure the Council has a good understanding of local priorities <i>(project measure)</i>
<p>4 Work to improve the quality and vibrancy of our town centres and urban areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start building the new shops and cinema in Bicester Town Centre <i>(project measure)</i> 2. Make progress on the Canal side Regeneration programme in Banbury <i>(project measure)</i> 3. Prepare detailed planning guidance for the future redevelopment of the Bolton Road area in Banbury <i>(project measure)</i> 	<p>Work with partners to support the development of Eco-Bicester, creating a centre of excellence in terms of green or sustainable living.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver the Eco-Bicester demonstration projects <i>(project measure)</i> 2. Work with all parties to achieve an acceptable scheme on the initial 400 home development <i>(project measure)</i> 3. Ensure there are opportunities for local people to participate in the Eco-Bicester programme <i>(project measure)</i> 	<p>Support improvement of local health facilities, services and standards across the district.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work to promote active and independent lifestyles amongst older people <i>(project measure: the Ageing Successfully programme)</i> 2. Support the local NHS to retain and develop health services at the Horton General Hospital <i>(project measure)</i> 3. Continue to support new and improved health services in Bicester and the surrounding area <i>(project measure)</i> 	<p>Work to ensure we provide good customer service through the delivery of high quality and accessible services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain high rates of customer satisfaction with our Services <i>(70% numerical measure-annual survey)</i> 2. Enable you to book appointments online for our services <i>(project measure)</i>
			<p>Work to ensure we provide good customer service through the delivery of high quality and accessible services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain high rates of customer satisfaction with our Services <i>(70% numerical measure-annual survey)</i> 2. Enable you to book appointments online for our services <i>(project measure)</i>

Highlighted objectives will form the Council's Public Pledges and will be included in the Council Tax Leaflet.

Draft Pledges 2011/12

1. Work with our partners to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training across the district
2. Deliver 100 affordable homes in the district
3. Start building the new shops and cinema in Bicester Town Centre

A Cleaner, Greener District

1. Increase the household recycling rate to above 60%
2. Maintain high levels of residents' satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness
3. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by installing solar panels on Council buildings and generating savings in our energy costs
4. Work with partners to improve the energy efficiency of homes and enable more residents to achieve affordable energy bills
5. Deliver the Eco-Bicester demonstration projects

A Safe, Healthy and Thriving District

1. Continue to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities and activities for young people across the district.
2. Work with partners to maintain already low levels of crime in the district

A Value for Money Council

1. Secure savings of at least £1m to help meet the reduction in our government funding.
2. Improve the information available to the public about our costs and performance, maintaining the publication of all items of expenditure over £500
3. Maintain high levels of customer satisfaction with our services
4. Enable you to book appointments online for our ten most used Council services

NB. These pledges are in draft format

Area of Attention	Theme/Priority	Focus and key activities	Priority Rating	Lead Officers	Start	Finish
SNC and shared services	Exploiting the potential for sharing services	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief (and priority) to be determined by Joint Arrangements Steering Group <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify priority areas for assimilation based on the needs of the management team Form joint council working teams and assess feasibility/practicalities Develop individual action plans for implementation across teams 	High	<p>Service: TBC</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Karen Muir</p>	Await brief	Await brief
Medium Term Financial Strategy	2 year settlement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the implications of the 2 year settlement, local government finance reform and benefits reform; <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the implications' of the settlement Update the MTFs forecast in line with settlement and budget 11/12 Prepare action plan to address forecast deficit taking into consideration the various CIP projects underpinning the MTFs Refresh MTFs strategy in line with funding reductions and corporate strategy Engage in consultation into the Local Government Finance Reform 	High	<p>Service: Karen Curtin</p> <p>Impr: Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Finance: Karen Muir</p>	Jan 2011	July 2011
Medium Term Financial Strategy	VFM programme	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out VFM Reviews to help deliver the Public Promise of £1m in 2012/13 <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete reviews of two outstanding services (Tourism and Economic Development) Carry out further reviews in conjunction with SNC joint activity workstreams 	High	<p>Service: Various</p> <p>Impr: Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Eric Meadows</p>	Feb 2011	Aug 2011
Medium Term Financial Strategy	New Homes Bonus use/ Budget Strategy	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Homes Bonus use / budget strategy (in particular the relationship to mainstream revenue spend support versus infrastructure use) <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkage with SNC re common framework opportunities Assess impact of NHB proposals (financial and logistical) Determine change in policy/practice required to maximise benefits to the council Recommend interim fee policy for 11/12 	High	<p>Service: Phil Clarke</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Joanne Kaye</p>	TBC	TBC
Legislation changes in housing and response	Practical support for implementing change/improvement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the action plan agreed by Executive (10 Jan 2011) <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As set out in the Action Plan Linkage to the Brighter Futures activity to trial supporting residents affected by the benefit reductions from April 2011 	High	<p>Service: Gill Greaves</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Joanne Kaye</p> <p>Legal: Nigel Bell</p>	As per Action Plan	As per Action Plan

CDC Corporate Improvement Plan 2011/12

Appendix 5

Area of Attention	Theme/Priority	Focus and key activities	Priority Rating	Lead Officers	Start	Finish
Medium Term Financial Strategy	DC fee / charge setting and VFM	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce a charging policy for development control in line with new flexibilities Consider the linkage with SNC for a shared framework <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess scope and impact of flexibilities proposed Develop a fee model to inform charging policy Consult on and communicate changes Gain Executive approval (inc. commitment to review annually) 	High	<p>Service: Bob Duxbury Impr: Alison Davies Finance: Joanne Kaye</p>	Jan 2011	Apr 2011
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Banbury Museum Trust Status	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact Executive's (in principle) decision to move to Trust status for the Museum and TIC <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed report on next steps and proposals to Executive, including implementation plan, for final decision Identify potential trustees and decide on necessary structure/staffing arrangements, IT/telephony, financial plan, tenancy agreement and legal agreements Implement the agreed Plan 	High	<p>Service: Paul Marston-Weston Impr: Neil Lawrence Finance: Denise Westlake Legal: Richard Hawtin</p>	Jan 2011	Apr 2012
Customer Service Improvement Programme	Practical support for implementing change/improvement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve the following outcomes; lower cost of service, maintain/improve customer satisfaction, control access to the service; focus on online service delivery and routinely apply customer insight to service design <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a range of interrelated projects to achieve outcomes; payment kiosks, Tell Us Once initiative, Right First Time service reviews, appointments system for benefits, online booking system, enhancements to Lagan, introduce customer intelligence reporting and regular meetings with services, introduce a new phone number suite and SMS capability Use advertising/communications campaign to encourage migration to lower cost services and improve customer information, workload management to control access, improve online services to encourage greater use and increase telephone capacity to improve response rates Ongoing improvements/actions arising from Right First Time reviews, regular customer intelligence meetings with services and delivering existing Customer Service Improvement Plan 	High	<p>Service: Pat Simpson (+ other services) Impr: Neil Lawrence Finance: Denise Westlake</p>	Feb 2011	Aug 2011

CDC Corporate Improvement Plan 2011/12

Appendix 5

Area of Attention	Theme/Priority	Focus and key activities	Priority Rating	Lead Officers	Start	Finish
Implementing Localism in Cherwell	Dealing with the impact of the Localism Bill	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a council-wide strategy to embrace the opportunities offered by the Bill, particularly the General Power of Competence (GPC), and including the devolution of current powers/activities to neighbourhoods <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain an early understanding the scope and implications of the Bill Consult local councils and community groups on functions they wish to see devolved, and the support needed to take them on Consult Managers on areas that the GPC could enable them to undertake Develop a strategy for Executive consideration 	High	<p>Service: Various</p> <p>Impr: Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Finance: Sarah Best</p>	Mar 2011	June 2011
Deprivation / Brighter Futures in Banbury (local co-ordination)	Practical support for implementing change/improvement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation and coordination of local activity to meet the objectives of the programme CDC is Banbury programme lead and programme management CDC has responsibility for delivery of 2 Themes and associated workstreams (Employment & Financial Support Theme and Housing and the Environment Theme) <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency Theme Partnerships meeting regularly Multi-agency Delivery Action Plans in place for 2011: Worklessness project, NEE's reduction programme, Benefit Reduction Support Trial, Job Clubs, Food Bank, Spring volunteering event, Housing New Build/Self-build project, Warm Homes, HMOs, overcrowding and homelessness initiatives, Govn Affordable Housing changes..... Consultation/Communication Programme under development with Members 	Medium	<p>Service: Ian Davies/ Gill Greaves/ Claire Taylor</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Leanne Lock</p>	Jan 2011	Apr 2012
Services to Young People	2010/2011 Improvement Team Work Programme	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the priority areas to support in the light of spending pressures and a reduction in provision by OCC Develop a future vision of the service that Cherwell provides and an associated strategy/policy and action plan to 2014 Develop the multi-agency/voluntary sector opportunities <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing project brief and confirm scope/timetable Develop a "map" of providers of young peoples services Identify the priorities for Cherwell and the scope of the commitment in terms of staff resource and funding to 2014 Consider cross-boundary linkage with SNC 	Medium	<p>Service: Paul Marston-Weston</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Denise Westlake</p>	May 2011	Aug 2011
Community development improvement plan	Practical support for implementing change/improvement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure community development activity is focused on the needs of Cherwell's communities <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore current provision of grants, links with housing services, seek to shift current policy in the light of external drivers of Localism and the Big Society 	Medium	<p>Service: Gillian Greaves/ Claire Taylor</p> <p>Impr: Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Finance: Karen Muir</p>	July 2011	Sept 2011

CDC Corporate Improvement Plan 2011/12

Appendix 5

Area of Attention	Theme/Priority	Focus and key activities	Priority Rating	Lead Officers	Start	Finish
Managing information	Practical support for implementing change/improvement	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying how CDC can best respond to increasing demands and expectations for easily available information, and control increasing costs of information provision <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess sources/impact/implications of demand and any new requirements arising from the Government's transparency agenda Assess council information needs to support policy and service planning initiatives Research best practice elsewhere Identify process improvements and IT requirements necessary Agree programme, costs and implementation plan 	Medium	<p>Service: TBC</p> <p>Impr: Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Finance: Jessica Lacey</p>	April 2011	July 2011
Responding to the Changing Needs of an Ageing Population	2010/11 Improvement Team Work Programme	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify long-term strategy to respond to increasing numbers of older people together with their changing needs Develop a future vision, strategy/policy and action plan to 2014 <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop project brief Consider linkages with SNC Develop a "map" of providers of young peoples services Identify the priorities for Cherwell and the scope of the commitment in terms of staff resource and funding to 2014 	Low	<p>Service: Various</p> <p>Impr: Alison Davies</p> <p>Finance: Karen Muir</p>	May 2011	Aug 2011