



Annual Meeting of Council

Wednesday 19 May 2021

Members of Cherwell District Council,

The Annual meeting of Council will be held at Spiceball Leisure Centre, Cherwell Drive, Banbury, OX16 2BW on Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 6.30 pm, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

Tuesday 11 May 2021

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3 Communications

To receive communications from the Chairman and/or the Leader of the Council.

4 Minutes of Council (Pages 7 - 24)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of Council held on 22 February 2021 .

5 Urgent Business

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

6 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/2022

7 Investiture of Chairman

8 Vote of Thanks to Immediate Past Chairman

9 Past Chairman's Response

10 Election of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/2022

11 Investiture of Vice-Chairman

Council Business Reports

12 Annual Business Report (Pages 25 - 34)

Report of Chief Executive

Purpose of report

To note the results of the 6 May 2021 district elections, to note the constitution of Political Groups, to note the appointment of the Deputy Leader and Executive for the Municipal Year 2021/22, and consider and agree the suggested constitution of Committees for the Municipal year 2021/2022 and to appoint representatives to the Oxfordshire County Council Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel, the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel and Oxfordshire Growth Board advisory sub-groups.

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the District elections held on 6 May 2021.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders (addendum to report to follow).
- 1.3 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive portfolios for 2021/2022.
- 1.4 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2 (to follow).

- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees not subject to political balance requirements as set in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.6 To appoint members (and where appropriate, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations to be made by political groups (Appendix 3 - to follow).
- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Oxfordshire Growth Board.
- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and Executive member substitute to each of the Oxfordshire Growth Board advisory sub-groups: Housing Advisory Subgroup, Infrastructure Advisory Subgroup, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Subgroup and Environment Advisory Group.

13 'Making' (Adoption) of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan (Pages 35 - 202)

Report of Assistant Director – Planning & Development

Purpose of report

To seek the 'making' of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan following the successful referendum and the recommendation of the Corporate Director – Environment & Place.

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the referendum result of 6 May 2021 where 91.7% of those who voted were in favour of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan, which is above the required 50%.
- 1.2 To formally 'make' the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan presented at Appendix 1 to this report so that it continues to have effect as part of the statutory Development Plan for the District.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Development, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning to issue and publicise a Decision Statement.

14 Changes to Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference (Pages 203 - 210)

Report of Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Purpose of report

The report recommends approval of changes to the terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 to approve the proposed terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

15 Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21 (Pages 211 - 224)

Report of Director of Finance

Purpose of report

This report presents the annual report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21.

16 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21 (Pages 225 - 242)

Report of Director of Law and Governance

Purpose of report

This report presents the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the report

FIRST MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

Appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

At the conclusion of the Council's proceedings all Members are asked to remain in their seats in the Council Chamber while Committees meet for the purpose of electing their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen.

The Monitoring Officer will ask the members on each committee to stand in turn and the relevant members are asked to stand/sit as appropriate:

- Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee
- Appeals Panel
- Budget Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Planning Committee
- Standards Committee

The Monitoring Officer will seek nominations for Chairman. Once appointed, the Chairman of each Committee will seek nominations for Vice-Chairman.

For information

Please note: Members are advised that written questions and motions for the next Council meeting on Monday 19 July must be submitted to the Director of Law and Governance, democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, by 5pm on Wednesday 7 July.

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221589 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221589

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held as a virtual meeting, on 22 February 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor David Hughes (Chairman)
Councillor Hannah Banfield (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Surinder Kaur Dhesi
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Sean Gaul
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Tony Mephram
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Richard Mould
Councillor Cassi Perry
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Katherine Tyson
Councillor Tom Wallis
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Bryn Williams

Councillor Lucinda Wing
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Jason Slaymaker

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Stephen Chandler, Corporate Director Adults & Housing Services
Steve Jordan, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Jane Portman, Corporate Director (Interim)
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Business Partner
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

62 **Declarations of Interest**

10. Budget Setting for 2021/22 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26.

Councillor Shaida Hussain, Non Statutory Interest, as a trustee of Banbury Museum.

13. (Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy.

Councillor James Macnamara, Non Statutory Interest, as a Magistrate and, although he did not hear matters involving Cherwell District Council, would abstain from voting on the item.

63 **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed councillors, officers and members of the public and press to the virtual meeting of Full Council.

The Chairman introduced the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Hannah Banfield, and explained that if he had any technical issues and had to drop out of the meeting, Councillor Banfield would take the Chair until he was reconnected.

Communications

The Chairman made the following announcements.

Former Councillor Margaret Ferriman

The Chairman advised Council that former Councillor Ferriman passed away peacefully on 5 January 2021 in St Anne's Care Home.

Mrs Ferriman was a Labour member of Cherwell District Council and represented Banbury Neithrop ward between 1980 and 1996. During her time as a councillor, Mrs Ferriman served on numerous committees, including Personnel, Recreation and Amenities, Development and North Area Planning. Former Councillor Ferriman was also a member of Banbury Town Council and a County Councillor representing Banbury Ruscote division. She was an Alderman and was made an MBE in 2010 for her services to community relations.

On behalf of Council, the Chairman expressed condolences on the passing of former Councillor Ferriman.

A number of Members paid tribute to former Councillor Ferriman.

Former Councillor Ray Jelf

The Chairman advised Council that former Councillor Ray Jelf passed away peacefully last week.

Mr Jelf was a Conservative member of Cherwell District Council representing the Hook Norton ward between 2013 and 2015. During his time as a councillor, Mr Jelf served on the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee and was Vice-Chairman of the Appeals Panel.

On behalf of Council, the Chairman extended condolences to the family of former Councillor Ferriman.

A number of Members paid tribute to former Councillor Jelf.

Council observed a period of silence in memory of former Councillor Margaret Ferriman and former Councillor Ray Jelf.

Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer, Anita Bradley

The Chairman commented that many Members had already met the new Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, Anita Bradley, in other meetings but would like to formally welcome the Director Law and Governance to her first meeting of Council.

The Director of Law and Governance thanked the Chairman and said she was looking forward to working with members at Cherwell District Council.

Housekeeping

The Chairman reminded Members of the protocols for virtual meetings.

The Chairman reminded Members that following agreement of the of the Constitution review, motions were taken as the last item on the agenda and there was an 11pm cut off time for the meeting. If the meeting was mid-debate on a motion, the Chairman would not close the meeting until we have concluded the debate and voted on that motion. Any motions not heard would carry forward to the July Council meeting as motions were not on the agenda at the Annual Council Meeting.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

66 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

67 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68 **Minutes**

a) **Minutes of the Executive, Lead Member Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Lead Member decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council on 14 December 2020 no key decisions have been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice.

b) **Minutes of Committees**

Resolved

That the minutes of Committees as set out in the Minute Book be received.

69 **Questions**

a) **Written Questions**

There were no written questions.

b) **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Cherry: Redevelopment of garages in proximity to Bretch Hill Community Centre

Councillor Billington: Bollard in Kidlington

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

There were no questions to Committee Chairman on the minutes of meetings.

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Members' Allowances 2021/2022

The Director Law and Governance submitted a report to determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2021/2022 financial year following the submission of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance, Councillor Ilott, clarified that the Deputy Leader received the Deputy Leader special responsibility allowance as well as the Executive member special responsibility allowance.

The Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance thanked Members who had provided information to the Panel and thanked the Panel for their work and report.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration to the levels of allowances to be included in the 2021/2022 Members' Allowances Scheme, the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations, as set out below, be adopted:
 - The Basic Allowance be frozen at the current level of £4512
 - All Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA's) be frozen and remain at the current level:
 - Leader of the Council*: £7680
 - Deputy Leader of the Council*: £2652
 - Executive Members holding a portfolio: £6708
 - Leader of the Opposition: £3096
 - Chairman of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee: £3732
 - Chairman of the Budget Planning Committee: £3732
 - Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee: £3732
 - Chairman of Planning Committee: £4464
 - Chairman of Appeals Panel: £264 SRA plus £264 per meeting to a capped limit of £1056
 - Chairman of Licensing Committee: £264 SRA plus £264 per meeting to a capped limit of £1056

- Chairman of Personnel Committee: £264 SRA plus £264 per meeting to a capped limit of £1056
 - Chairman of Standards Committee: £264 SRA plus £264 per meeting to a capped limit of £1056
 - *Leader and Deputy Leader receive the respective SRA and the SRA for Executive Members holding a portfolio
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- All Co-optee and Independent Persons Allowances be frozen and remain at the current level of £768.
 - The Dependant Carers' allowance be frozen and remain at the current level of £20 per hour and claims capped at 40 hours per month.
 - The Childcare allowance be frozen and remain at the current level of £10 per hour and claims capped at 40 hours per month.
 - There be no change to Travelling and Subsistence Allowances
 - Bicycles: 20p per mile
 - Motorcycles: 24p per mile
 - Motor vehicles including electric vehicles: 45p per mile
 - Breakfast allowance: £6.02 per meal
 - Lunch allowance: £8.31 per meal
 - Evening meal allowance: £10.29 per meal
 - The Democratic Services Team to book overnight accommodation.
 - Non-Executive Director allowances to be frozen and remain at the current level of £4464 and expenses paid at the same levels as district councillors and recharged to the relevant company
- (2) That the Director Law and Governance be authorised to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2021.
- (3) That the Director Law and Governance be authorised to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2020/2021) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
- (4) That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its report and a fee of £300 set for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review for 2021/2022 and the same level of fee be agreed for any reviews carried out in 2021/2022 capped at a maximum of £1200, which can be funded from existing budgets.

Prior to consideration of the item, the Chairman sought the agreement of Members to suspend standing orders with regard to the duration of the speech by the proposer of the budget, or the speeches of the Group Leaders. All other speakers would continue to have a three minute time limit. Members indicated agreement.

The Chairman reminded Council that it was required in legislation that any motion or amendment to the budget and council tax setting be taken by recorded vote and this would be done at the appropriate time.

The Director of Finance submitted a report which was the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2021/22 to 2025/26 and set out the Executive's proposed Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2021/22, medium term financial strategy to 2025/26, capital programme to 2025/26 and all supporting policies, strategies and information.

The report also detailed the Calculations for the amounts of Council Tax for 2021/22 and the setting of Council Tax for 2021/22.

Councillor Ilott thanked the Director of Finance and the finance team who had worked hard on the budget process and submitted a balanced budget to Council. Councillor Ilott also thanked the Budget Planning Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee for their hard work supporting the budget setting and business plan process.

Having presented the report, Councillor Ilott proposed the Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2021/22, medium term financial strategy to 2025/26, capital programme to 2025/26 and all supporting policies, strategies and information. Councillor Wood seconded the proposal.

Councillor Woodcock, on behalf of the Labour Group, addressed Council in response to the budget and confirmed that he would be proposing no amendments.

Councillor Tyson, on behalf of the Progressive Oxfordshire Group, addressed Council in response to the budget and confirmed that she would be proposing no amendments.

Councillor Sibley had submitted apologies for the meeting and therefore did not address Council in response to the budget but had confirmed prior to the meeting that would not be proposing no amendments.

A recorded vote was taken, and members voted as follows

Councillor Hannah Banfield	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against
Councillor Nathan Bignell	For
Councillor Maurice Billington	For
Councillor John Broad	Abstain

Councillor Hugo Brown	For
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Colin Clarke	For
Councillor Conrad Copeland	Abstain
Councillor Ian Corkin	For
Councillor Nick Cotter	Abstain
Councillor Surinder Dhesi	Against
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Sean Gaul	For
Councillor Carmen Griffiths	For
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE	For
Councillor Chris Heath	For
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor David Hughes	For
Councillor Shaida Hussain	Against
Councillor Tony Ilott	For
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes	For
Councillor James Macnamara	For
Councillor Kieron Mallon	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Andrew McHugh	For
Councillor Tony Mephram	For
Councillor Ian Middleton	Abstain
Councillor Perran Moon	Against
Councillor Richard Mould	For
Councillor Cassi Perry	Against
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor George Reynolds	For
Councillor Barry Richards	Against
Councillor Dan Sames	For
Councillor Katherine Tyson	Abstain
Councillor Tom Wallis	For
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For

Councillor Lucinda Wing	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

Resolved

- (1) That the Business Plan (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That, having due regard, the statutory report of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 25 report) be noted.
- (3) That the net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2021 of £22.374m, including the budget allocations to the Directorates of the Council (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (4) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2021/22, including the Savings Proposals, Pressures and the Revenue Impacts of Capital Schemes (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved
- (5) That the Capital Bids and Capital Programme (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (6) That the Capital and Investment Strategy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (7) That the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2021/22 (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (8) That the Property Investment Strategy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (9) That the Reserves Policy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (10) That the planned level of reserves for 2021/22 – 2025/26 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (11) That the Chief Finance Officer's recommended minimum level of General Balances of £5m be approved.
- (12) That an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2021 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £138.50 per annum be approved.

- (13) That it be noted that on 4 January 2021 Executive approved Cherwell District Council's calculated Council Tax Base for 2021/22:
- a) for the whole Council area as 55,615.9 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by sections 72 to 79 of the Localism Act 2011 ("the 1992 Act")]; and
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- (14) That it be agreed that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021/22 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) be £7,702,802.
- (15) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the 1992 Act:
- a) £115,532,120 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the 1992 Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses;
 - b) £102,378,407 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the 1992 Act;
 - c) £13,153,713 being the amount by which the aggregate at 1.6.4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.6.4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the 1992 Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act);
 - d) £236.51 being the amount at 1.6.4(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.6.2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);
 - e) £5,450,911 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act as per the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book);
 - f) £138.50 being the amount at 1.6.4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.6.4(e) above by Item T(1.6.2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates.

- (16) That it be noted that for the year 2021/22 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the 1992 Act, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below :

<u>Valuation Band</u>	<u>Oxfordshire County Council</u>	<u>Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley</u>
	£	£
A	1,048.74	154.19
B	1,223.53	179.88
C	1,398.32	205.58
D	1,573.11	231.28
E	1,922.69	282.68
F	2,272.27	334.07
G	2,621.85	385.47
H	3,146.22	462.56

- (17) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the 1992 Act, hereby sets the amounts shown in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2021/22 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- (18) That it be noted that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the 1992 Act;
- (19) That, in fulfilment of the requirements of Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011, the Pay Policy Statement (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

72 **Adjournment of Council Meeting**

The Leader of the Council confirmed that he did not require Council to adjourn to allow Executive to meet discuss any issues arising from the budget.

73 **Final Recommendations for the Adderbury Community Governance Review**

The Chief Executive submitted a report to report the results of the second consultation stage of the Community Governance Review (CGR) for Adderbury and to consider the final recommendations of the CGR Working Group, that will bring the review to a close.

Resolved

- (1) That the results of the second consultation stage of the Adderbury Community Governance Review be noted.
- (2) That the final recommendations that no warding of Adderbury Parish Council take place, and that the number of parish councillors for Adderbury Parish Council should remain as 12 be approved.

74 **(Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy**

The Assistant Director – Regulatory Services submitted a report which introduce a final draft of the revised Statement of Licensing Policy following consultation.

Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 requires all licensing authorities to prepare and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy outlining the principles they propose to apply in exercising their functions under the Act. It is a requirement that the policy is reviewed at least every five years to ensure it reflects current legislation and guidance. The last review and revision at Cherwell District Council occurred in 2015 when the policy was adopted by Council at its meeting on 14 December 2015 and published in January 2016.

Resolved

- (1) That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minutes Book) be approved for adoption.

(Having declared an interest in the item, Councillor Macnamara abstained from voting)

75 **Amendment to Outside Body Representative**

The Chairman reported that Councillor Mallon had been appointed the council's representative to the to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the 14 May 2019 Annual Council meeting. As no Annual Meeting was held in May 2020, the appointment continued.

Councillor Mallon had advised that, due to other commitments, he is no longer able to act as the council's representative. Councillor Chapman had on occasion substituted for Councillor Mallon at Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and had indicated that he would be willing to be appointed as the council's permanent representative in place of Councillor Mallon.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Phil Chapman be appointed as the council's representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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Motions

The Chairman advised that three motions had been submitted. No amendments to any of the motions had been submitted and, in line with the Constitution, no amendments to the motion were now permitted.

The Chairman reminded Members of the revised speaking limits on motions: five minutes for proposers of motions and three minutes for all other speakers.

Paper Lite

It was proposed by Councillor Corkin and seconded by McHugh that the following motion be adopted:

“Last year Cherwell District Council consumed 1.4million sheets of paper. A third of this was sent to elected members in the form of committee papers, reports and general communications. There is obviously a considerable financial cost associated with this, including the cost of the paper, officer time, printing and distribution. Equally importantly, there is also a very considerable environmental cost that we must address if we are to meet our zero carbon by 2030 commitment.

Over the last 9 months this authority has shown enormous resilience and resourcefulness: Our dispersed workforce is successfully operating from home, we are developing an agile model of working that will ensure we capture the best practice of operating during the pandemic and, of course, members are now successfully fulfilling their democratic responsibilities remotely, mastering Teams and tech in a way we could have barely imagined at the beginning of the year.

This motion draws on this innovation and asks members to deploy the same resourcefulness to embrace a “paper-lite” culture and calls on this council to:

- Recognise that continuing to have printed media as the default position for this council is unsustainable
- To resolve that from 7 May 2021 the default position will be “paper-lite” and members will have to opt into hardcopy print and that it will remain an option for those that need it.
- To ensure that adequate training and support will be provided to all members who require it to make the transition.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Twenty is Plenty

It was proposed by Councillor Sames and seconded by Councillor Sibley that the following motion be adopted:

“This Council notes :

1. The recent endorsement of the "Twenty is Plenty" campaign by Oxfordshire County Council in its role as Highways Authority which means all new residential roads will have a 20 mph speed limit, unless there is compelling evidence for a higher limit.
2. The evidence that introduction of 20mph limits even without formal enforcement results in much safer speed profiles and this is particularly beneficial in the vicinity of schools, community hubs and care facilities.

This Council believes that as the Local Planning Authority we should support the County Council as Local Highway Authority in securing 20 MPH speed limits (instead of 30 MPH) in new developments in the interest of securing a more usable and more attractive environment for those not travelling by motor vehicle.

The Council further believes that there may be a role for a "best practice guide" produced by OCC and would ask the county council to consider how it might best advise Parish Councils to help them facilitate 20mph limits where there is local demand.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Horton General Hospital

It was proposed by Councillor McHugh and seconded by Councillor Mallon that the following motion be adopted:

“This Council fully recognises the value of the much-loved Horton General Hospital to the residents of Banbury and its surrounding catchment area, which uniquely covers four counties.

Local efforts to retain acute services at the Horton have been welcomed by Councils at all tiers in recent months and by community groups and residents alike. This Council’s position has always been that the Horton’s future should be as a fully functioning General Hospital complementing the world-class services at both the John Radcliffe Hospital and Churchill Hospital so as to build on Oxfordshire’s enviable reputation – both nationally and internationally – as a centre for excellence in healthcare. That remains unequivocally the case today.

This Council is encouraged that Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUHFT) and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) have listened to the strong representations of residents, Councillors and community groups (notably, Keep the Horton General) in recent years and

those of Victoria Prentis MP and this Council welcomes steps taken by both OUHFT and OCCG to develop a masterplan for the Horton without delay.

For its part, this Council resolves to do all it can to support the advancement of this vision and commits to reviewing options with Councils at other tiers with a view to supporting OUHFT and CCG-led redevelopment plans so as to deliver an improved facility on the hospital's existing site or at a new and improved one within the Banbury area that is accessible to residents across the Horton's unique four-county catchment area."

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Flooding

It was proposed by Councillor Middleton and seconded by Councillor Tyson that the following motion be adopted.

"Worsening flooding has substantial economic and social costs. Homes and businesses nationwide are at repeated risk of significant damage which leads to financial and emotional distress. In some cases, these risks can no longer be insured against. Climate change will exacerbate this for Cherwell residents with increased incidence, and severity, of flooding.

The cross-agency nature of the problem can be frustrating and inefficient in a crisis, with no one organisation taking responsibility for flooding response or maintenance of flood defences. Resources are stretched thin, and while major incidents receive the attention of various emergency agencies, lower level, localised flooding, which is becoming more widespread, can sometimes receive a less focused response.

Last year CDC resumed responsibility for district land drainage & flood risk management. In view of these responsibilities, and our close working relationship with the county council, we should wherever possible:

1. Encourage areas that are at risk of flooding to establish a 'flood resilient community', including forming local flood response groups, forums for residents to feedback information on current and potential flooding risks, and the setting up of their own flood response stores to provide locally available flood alleviation equipment
2. Publish regularly updated surveys and maintenance programs, with maps of drainage and flood defences and associated repair responsibilities.
3. Call on all risk management agencies to set up a cooperative task force, which we would participate in, including the provision of a centralised contact point which can trigger an immediate, proportionate response to all emergency flooding events."

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Resolved

(1) That the following motion be adopted:

“Last year Cherwell District Council consumed 1.4million sheets of paper. A third of this was sent to elected members in the form of committee papers, reports and general communications. There is obviously a considerable financial cost associated with this, including the cost of the paper, officer time, printing and distribution. Equally importantly, there is also a very considerable environmental cost that we must address if we are to meet our zero carbon by 2030 commitment.

Over the last 9 months this authority has shown enormous resilience and resourcefulness: Our dispersed workforce is successfully operating from home, we are developing an agile model of working that will ensure we capture the best practice of operating during the pandemic and, of course, members are now successfully fulfilling their democratic responsibilities remotely, mastering Teams and tech in a way we could have barely imagined at the beginning of the year.

This motion draws on this innovation and asks members to deploy the same resourcefulness to embrace a “paper-lite” culture and calls on this council to:

- Recognise that continuing to have printed media as the default position for this council is unsustainable
- To resolve that from 7 May 2021 the default position will be “paper-lite” and members will have to opt into hardcopy print and that it will remain an option for those that need it.
- To ensure that adequate training and support will be provided to all members who require it to make the transition.”

(2) That the following motion be adopted:

“This Council notes :

1. The recent endorsement of the "Twenty is Plenty" campaign by Oxfordshire County Council in its role as Highways Authority which means all new residential roads will have a 20 mph speed limit, unless there is compelling evidence for a higher limit.

2. The evidence that introduction of 20mph limits even without formal enforcement results in much safer speed profiles and this is particularly beneficial in the vicinity of schools, community hubs and care facilities.

This Council believes that as the Local Planning Authority we should support the County Council as Local Highway Authority in securing 20 MPH speed limits (instead of 30 MPH) in new developments in the

interest of securing a more usable and more attractive environment for those not travelling by motor vehicle.

The Council further believes that there may be a role for a "best practice guide" produced by OCC and would ask the county council to consider how it might best advise Parish Councils to help them facilitate 20mph limits where there is local demand."

- (3) That the following motion be adopted:

"This Council fully recognises the value of the much-loved Horton General Hospital to the residents of Banbury and its surrounding catchment area, which uniquely covers four counties.

Local efforts to retain acute services at the Horton have been welcomed by Councils at all tiers in recent months and by community groups and residents alike. This Council's position has always been that the Horton's future should be as a fully functioning General Hospital complementing the world-class services at both the John Radcliffe Hospital and Churchill Hospital so as to build on Oxfordshire's enviable reputation – both nationally and internationally – as a centre for excellence in healthcare. That remains unequivocally the case today.

This Council is encouraged that Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUHFT) and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) have listened to the strong representations of residents, Councillors and community groups (notably, Keep the Horton General) in recent years and those of Victoria Prentis MP and this Council welcomes steps taken by both OUHFT and OCCG to develop a masterplan for the Horton without delay.

For its part, this Council resolves to do all it can to support the advancement of this vision and commits to reviewing options with Councils at other tiers with a view to supporting OUHFT and CCG-led redevelopment plans so as to deliver an improved facility on the hospital's existing site or at a new and improved one within the Banbury area that is accessible to residents across the Horton's unique four-county catchment area."

- (4) That the following motion be adopted:

"Worsening flooding has substantial economic and social costs. Homes and businesses nationwide are at repeated risk of significant damage which leads to financial and emotional distress. In some cases, these risks can no longer be insured against. Climate change will exacerbate this for Cherwell residents with increased incidence, and severity, of flooding.

The cross-agency nature of the problem can be frustrating and inefficient in a crisis, with no one organisation taking responsibility for flooding response or maintenance of flood defences. Resources are stretched thin, and while major incidents receive the attention of various emergency agencies, lower level, localised flooding, which is becoming more widespread, can sometimes receive a less focused response.

Last year CDC resumed responsibility for district land drainage & flood risk management. In view of these responsibilities, and our close working relationship with the county council, we should wherever possible:

4. Encourage areas that are at risk of flooding to establish a 'flood resilient community', including forming local flood response groups, forums for residents to feedback information on current and potential flooding risks, and the setting up of their own flood response stores to provide locally available flood alleviation equipment
5. Publish regularly updated surveys and maintenance programs, with maps of drainage and flood defences and associated repair responsibilities.
6. Call on all risk management agencies to set up a cooperative task force, which we would participate in, including the provision of a centralised contact point which can trigger an immediate, proportionate response to all emergency flooding events.

The meeting ended at 11.35 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Council

19 May 2021

Annual Council Business Report

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To note the results of the 6 May 2021 district elections, to note the constitution of Political Groups, to note the appointment of the Deputy Leader and Executive for the Municipal Year 2021/22, and consider and agree the suggested constitution of Committees for the Municipal year 2021/2022 and to appoint representatives to the Oxfordshire County Council Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel, the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel and Oxfordshire Growth Board advisory sub-groups.

1.0 Recommendations

** The recommendations are also included in the relevant section of the report **

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the District elections held on 6 May 2021.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders (addendum to report to follow).
- 1.3 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive portfolios for 2021/2022.
- 1.4 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees not subject to political balance requirements as set in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.6 To appoint members (and where appropriate, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations to be made by political groups (Appendix 3 - to follow).

- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Oxfordshire Growth Board.
- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and Executive member substitute to each of the Oxfordshire Growth Board advisory sub-groups: Housing Advisory Subgroup, Infrastructure Advisory Subgroup, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Subgroup and Environment Advisory Group.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council’s Constitution requires that at the annual meeting, Council shall:
- Note the results of the District Elections, if held, and the constitution of Political Groups and Group Leaders and elect the Leader of the Council if required
 - Conduct any business concerning the establishment of and appointments to the Executive, including the appointment of Deputy Leader and the allocation of functions to Lead Members
 - Conduct any business concerning the establishment of, and appointment to:
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - The Standards Committee
 - Such other Committees as the Council consider appropriate

3.0 Report Details

District Election Results

- 3.1 Councillors were elected to district wards as set out below. All councillors elected in the scheduled elections will serve a three year term, to 6 May 2024, as result of the elections having been postponed from May 2020.

Ward	Elected	Party
Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote	Adam Nell	Conservative
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	Kieron Mallon	Conservative
Banbury Cross and Neithrop	Matthew Hodgson	Labour
Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown	Andy Beere	Labour and Co-operative
Banbury Hardwick	John Donaldson	Banbury Hardwick
Banbury Ruscote	Mark Cherry	Labour and Co-operative

Bicester East	Sandy Dallimore	Conservative
Bicester North and Caversfield	Lynn Pratt	Conservative
Bicester South and Ambrosden	Dan Sames	Conservative
Bicester West	Les Sibley	Independent
Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton	George Reynolds	Conservative
Deddington	Bryn Williams	Conservative
Fringford and Heyfords	Patrick Clarke	Conservative
Kidlington East	Maurice Billington	Conservative
Kidlington West	Dorothy Walker	Liberal Democrat
Launton and Otmoor	Simon Holland	Conservative

Recommendation

1.1 To note the results of the District Elections held on 6 May 2021.

Constitution of Political Groups

- 3.3 The Chief Executive will report on the notification of the constitution of Political Groups received prior to the meeting and appointment of Group Leaders (to follow).

Recommendation

1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders (to follow).

Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive 2021/2022

- 3.5 The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barry Wood, will advise Council of his appointment of Deputy Leader and the Executive Portfolios for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

Recommendation

1.3 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive Portfolios for 2021/22.

Committee Appointments 2021/22

- 3.6 The current constitution of the Council (48 Members) is:

31 Conservative (65%)
9 Labour / Labour & Co-operative Party (19%)
4 Independent (8%)
3 Liberal Democrat (6%)
1 Green (2%)

- 3.7 The Council is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to review the political balance on its committees on an annual basis. Appendix 1 summarises how the rules operate.
- 3.8 Appendix 2 (to follow) will set out the initial arithmetical product of the rules for the Council's committees. The figures in brackets will show the adjustments which are necessary to achieve the balance across and within committees to comply with the rules. Appendix 2 (to follow) will also set out the allocation of seats not subject to the political balance requirements.
- 3.9 Appendix 3 (to follow) will set out Group nominations to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the political balance requirements.

Recommendations

- 1.4 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees not subject to political balance requirements as set in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.6 To appoint members (and where appropriate, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations to be made by political groups (Appendix 3 - to follow).

Appointment of Representatives

- 3.11 Council is asked to appoint a representative to the Oxfordshire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022. The representative cannot be a member of the Executive. The current appointed representative is Councillor Phil Chapman.
- 3.12 Council is asked to appoint a representative to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2021/2022. The current appointed representative on the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel was Councillor Andrew McHugh. Councillor Tony Ilott is the current named substitute.
- 3.13 Council is asked to appoint members as the council's representative (by precedent the Leader) and substitute to the Oxfordshire Growth Board for the municipal year 2021/2022. In 2020/2021, Councillor Barry Wood was the council's representative and Councillor George Reynolds his named substitute.
- 3.14 Council is asked to appoint members to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Panel comprises 18 councillors, three appointed annually by each constituent Council of the Growth Board. Three non-Executive members should be appointed by each constituent council having regard to the council's own political balance. It is a requirement at Panel meetings that at least one member from each of the partners is in attendance for the meeting to be quorate.
- 3.15 In 2020/21, the representatives were Councillor Lucinda Wing, Councillor Tom Wallis and Councillor Sean Woodcock with substitutes permitted from the relevant political party.

- 3.16 The Oxfordshire Growth Board (OGB) has three advisory sub-groups: Housing Advisory Subgroup, Infrastructure Advisory Subgroup, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Subgroup and Environment Advisory Group. The membership of each sub-group includes an Executive member of each partner authority and an Executive member substitute. It is custom that the Executive member whose portfolio most closely fits the role of the group is appointed to the respective sub-group.

Recommendations

- 1.7 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.8 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.9 To appoint an Executive member representative and Executive member substitute to the Oxfordshire Growth Board.
- 1.10 To appoint three non-Executive representatives to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member and an Executive member substitute to each of the Oxfordshire Growth Board advisory sub-groups: Housing Advisory Subgroup, Infrastructure Advisory Subgroup, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Subgroup and Environment Advisory Group

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is required to note the results of the District Council elections, appoint a Leader (if required), agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements and also on committees not subject to political balance requirements and to agree the appointments to each of the Committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups.

5.0 Consultation

Group Leaders
Committee appointments (Appendix 2 - to follow)

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To amend the appointments. This is not recommended as nominations have been submitted by Group Leaders.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845

Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 It is a legal requirement for Council to agree proportionality after an election and appoint committees. It is for the Council Leader to appoint the Deputy Leader and the other Executive members, and to allocate Lead Member responsibilities.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer, 07783

879052, anita.bradley@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 In ensuring the legal requirements are met risk to the authority is mitigated.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, 01295 221786,

louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Local Government & Housing Act 1989 – Political Balance
- Appendix 2 - Allocation of seats on committees subject to political balance requirements and seats on committees not subject to political balance requirements (to follow)
- Appendix 3 – Committee appointments (to follow)

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager, 01295 221589,
natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

Local Government & Housing Act 1989 - Political Balance

General Description of the Rules

1. For most local authority committees and sub-committees and for certain other appointments, the 1989 Act requires the Council to allocate seats to political groups in accordance with the groups' proportionate strength on the Council as a whole.
2. The political balance requirement applies only where political groups have been set up, but where it does apply the allocation to committees has to be reviewed annually. A review is also required on the formation of a new political group or if requested by a member newly joining a group.
3. A committee must review the allocation of seats on its sub-committees following any change in the committee's membership as a result of a 1989 Act review.

The Allocation

4. The allocation process depends on the proportionate strengths of the political groups and the nature of the committee, sub-committee or other body concerned. The following rules apply:
 - (i) Where a group has an overall majority on the Council, that group is entitled to a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee.
 - (ii) Each political group is entitled to its proportion of the total number of seats on all the committees added together, according to the ratio of the number of members of the group to the number of members of the Council.
 - (iii) Subject to (i) and (ii) above, each group is entitled to its proportion of the number of seats on each individual committee.
 - (iv) For sub-committees and some other bodies, a group is entitled to its proportion of the number of seats regardless of the total number of seats involved (but still subject to the majority rule in (i) above).
 - (v) The allocations of seats to political groups are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. Where the allocations leave a seat or seats unfilled on a committee, sub-committee or other body those seats must be allocated to any independent members of the Council.
5. Except where a "no dissent" alternative (as described below) is adopted, application of these principles, "so far as reasonably practicable", is mandatory. Once the allocations have been agreed under this procedure, the appointment of individual members must then be made in accordance with the wishes of the respective groups.

Alternatives where "No Dissent"

6. The requirement to allocate seats according to political groups' proportionate strengths can be overridden by some other arrangement, either in relation to all committees, sub-committees and other bodies or in relation to any individual committee, sub-committee or other body, provided that no councillor votes against the alternative arrangement when it is proposed.

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Cherwell District Council

Council

19 May 2021

'Making' (Adoption) of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan

Report of Assistant Director – Planning & Development

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek the 'making' of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan following the successful referendum and the recommendation of the Corporate Director – Environment & Place.

1.0 Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the referendum result of 6 May 2021 where 91.7% of those who voted were in favour of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan, which is above the required 50%.
- 1.2 To formally 'make' the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan presented at Appendix 1 to this report so that it continues to have effect as part of the statutory Development Plan for the District.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Development, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning to issue and publicise a Decision Statement.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council's Executive resolved at a meeting on 2 November 2015 to designate Weston-on-the-Green Parish as a Neighbourhood Area.
- 2.2 The Weston-on-the-Green draft Submission Neighbourhood Plan was submitted by Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council to this Council on 11 October 2018. The Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents were publicised as required and public consultation took place between 19 November 2018 and 11 January 2019.
- 2.3 Following the consultation, the Council, in agreement with the Parish Council, appointed an Independent Examiner to undertake the independent examination. The Examiner's report is dated 11 September 2019.

- 2.4 Having considered the Examiner's report, officers were of the view that all of his recommendations should be accepted bar those related to two key modifications (15 & 21).
- 2.5 A report was presented to the Executive on 4 November 2019. Officers expressed significant concerns that those modifications would 1) result in a lack of clarity which would create uncertainty about the land release required at Weston-on-the-Green with consequential harm, and 2) introduce a sequential test for development that would conflict with local plan policy. Officers proposed revised wording. Members agreed and decided that the Plan should not proceed to referendum. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan area was approved as the area for a future referendum.
- 2.6 A decision statement was published on 14 November 2019 inviting representations on the proposed changes recommended by officers up until 10 January 2020.
- 2.7 Having considered the representations received a new Independent Examiner was appointed to undertake a further, partial, examination.
- 2.8 A new Independent Examiner was appointed, in consultation with the Parish Council, on 17 March 2020. The scope of the partial examination was restricted to the Council's responses to the recommended modifications (15 and 21 and consequentially 24, 26 and 27).
- 2.9 The role of the Examiner was to determine whether the Council's proposed changes to the original Examiner's recommendations as set out in the decision statement met the prescribed 'basic conditions' and legal requirements for Neighbourhood Plans, and to recommend whether or not the Plan should proceed to referendum.
- 2.10 The Examiner provided his report on 8 June 2020.
- 2.11 The Executive considered the Examiner's report on 6 July 2020 and resolved that the Plan should proceed to referendum. The decision statement detailing the Council's intention to send the neighbourhood plan to referendum was published on 18 July 2020.
- 2.12 Following a delay due to the Covid 19 pandemic the referendum took place on 6 May 2021 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Referendum Regulations. More than 50% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan.
- 2.13 The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan now operates as part of the statutory Development Plan for Cherwell District and the Council is asked to formally 'make' the Plan so that it continues to operate as part of the Development Plan. The Plan proposed to be made is found at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.14 On 18 May 2021, a report was considered by the Corporate Director – Environment & Place which included the referendum result and a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Corporate Director resolved:

1. To note the referendum result of 6 May 2021 where 91.7% of those who voted were in favour of the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan which is above the required 50%.
2. To recommend to Council:
 - a) that it formally 'makes' the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan as presented at Appendix 1 so that it continues to have effect as part of the statutory Development Plan for the District; and
 - b) that the Assistant Director – Planning and Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, be authorised to issue and publicise a Decision Statement following the Council's confirmation.

3.0 Report Details

Referendum

- 3.1. The Neighbourhood Plan and other required information was made available for public viewing on the Council's website, at a location in the Parish (St Mary's Church) and at the Council's offices at Bodicote House before and during the referendum. The documents available were:
 - A Notice of Referendum;
 - An Information Statement which provides general information about neighbourhood planning, the referendum and a map of the referendum area;
 - The draft Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan (Referendum Version);
 - Both reports of the independent examiners into the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - Summaries of the written representations submitted to the independent examiners;
 - A Referendum General Statement;
 - A Decision Statement confirming the Executive's determination that the Plan should proceed to referendum.
 - 3.2. Those eligible to vote were sent the requisite information to enable participation in the referendum.
 - 3.3. The question posed for the referendum (as specified by the regulations) was:

'Do you want Cherwell District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Weston-on-the-Green to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
 - 3.4. More than 50% of those who voted, voted 'Yes' in response to this question. The declaration of poll results is attached at Appendix 2 to this report. 199 people voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan with 18 against, providing a majority vote of 91.7%. The result of the referendum has been publicised on the Council's website.
- 'Making' the Neighbourhood Plan**
- 3.5. As a result of legislative changes made in 2017, a neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the statutory Development Plan once it has received majority

support at a referendum. The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan now has this status.

- 3.6. However, the Council is still required to formally 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan for it to continue to have effect and must do so within a prescribed eight-week period from the day after the referendum, which is by 1 July 2021.
- 3.7. Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the Council to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the applicable referendum have voted in favour of the Plan.
- 3.8. The Council is not subject to this duty if the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU (*NB this remains a requirement post Brexit*) or human rights obligations. There is no known breach or incompatibility. Officers consider that the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan can be formally 'made'. If the Council decided not to formally 'make' the Plan, it would cease to have effect as part of the Development Plan.
- 3.9. As soon as possible following the decision to make a Neighbourhood Plan, the Council must publish a decision statement stating that the Plan has been made and the reasons. A copy of the decision statement must be sent to the qualifying body (Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council) and anyone who asked to be notified of the decision. The District Council must publish where and when the decision statement can be inspected.
- 3.10. The Council is also required to publish the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan on its website and notify any person who has asked to be notified of the making of the Plan that it has been made and where and when it may be inspected.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 A referendum was held on the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan on 6 May 2021. Of those eligible to vote, 199 voted in favour of the Plan with 18 against. The vote of 91.7% in favour meets the requisite majority and the Plan is now part of the statutory Development Plan. The Council is still required to formally 'make' the Plan and there is no known breach or incompatibility with EU or human rights obligations which prevents this. The Council is therefore requested to 'make' the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan which would be within the prescribed eight-week period.

5.0 Consultation

Cllr Colin Clarke – Lead Member for Planning

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 There is no known breach or incompatibility with, any EU or human rights obligations. The Council has no options or alternatives to making the Plan.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The cost of 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan is being met from within existing budgets. A Government grant of £20,000 has also been received following the decision of the Executive to proceed to referendum in July 2020.

Comments checked by:

Karen Dickson, Strategic Finance Business Partner. 01295 221900

Karen.Dickson@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The referendum on the Plan garnered more than 50% of the vote. The Council is now under a duty to make the Plan within the above-mentioned timeframe and would be in breach if it failed to do so.

Comments checked by:

Matthew Barrett, Planning Solicitor, 01295 753798, [matthew.barrett@Cherwell-](mailto:matthew.barrett@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

[DC.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.barrett@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

Risk Implications

- 7.3 There is no risk to the Council beyond the legal risk identified.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, 01295 221786

louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equality & Diversity Implications

- 7.4 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been led by the local community and has been subject to extensive collaboration and consultation, culminating in the local referendum. All sections of the community, including all socio-economic and minority groups have therefore had the opportunity to influence the 'making' of the neighbourhood plan.

Comments checked by:

Emily Schofield, Acting Head of Strategy, 07881 311707

Emily.schofield@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met:

N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

Launton and Otmoor

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Business Plan Priorities 2021-2022:

- Housing that meets your needs
- Leading on environmental sustainability
- An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres
- Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Lead Councillor

Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan for ‘making’
- Appendix 2 – Record of results of poll

Background papers

None

Reference papers

Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan -

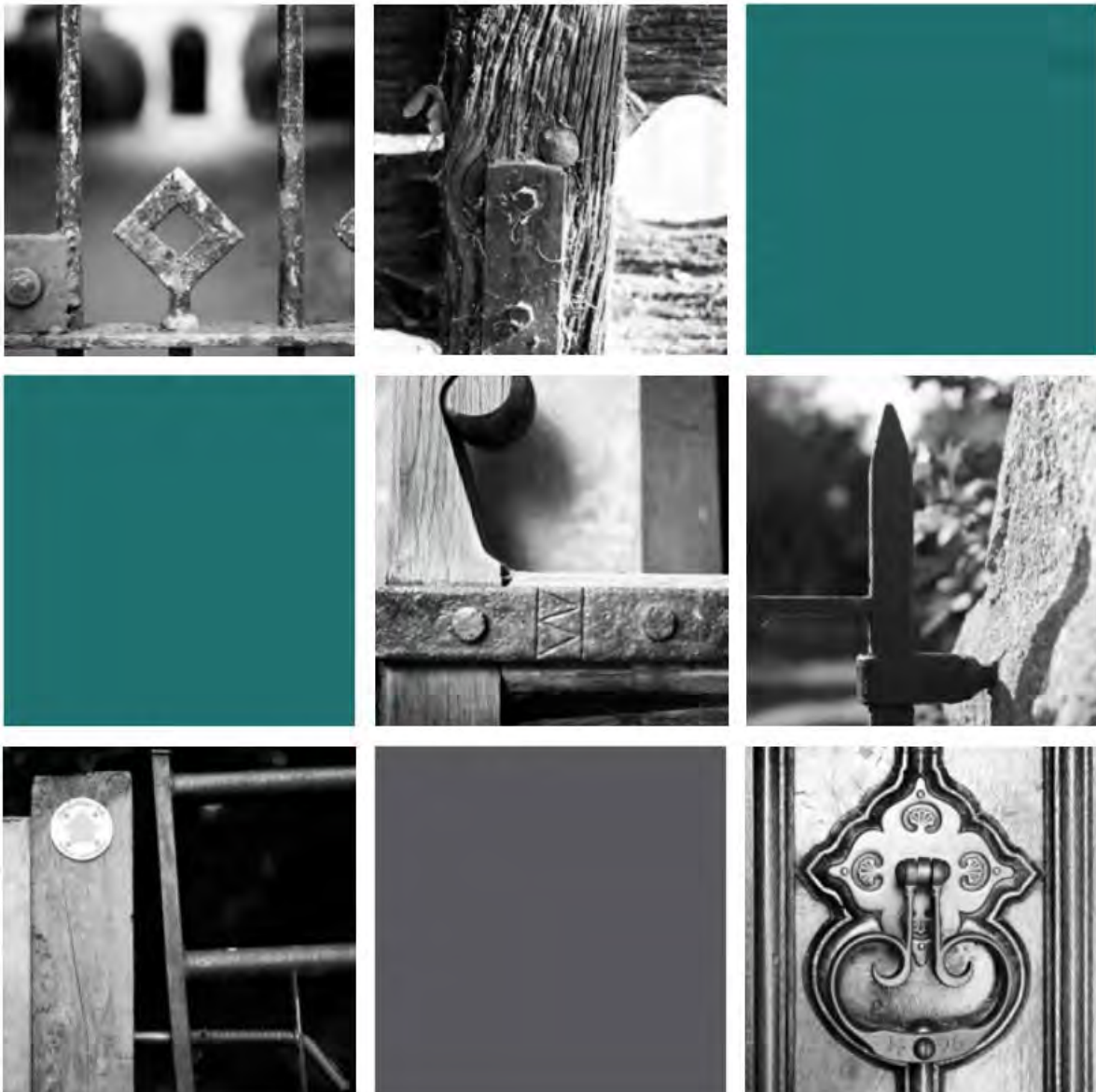
<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/221/neighbourhood-plans/402/weston-on-the-green-neighbourhood-plan>

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WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2018-2031

VERSION FOR MAKING



DEDICATION

This Plan encapsulates the vision for Weston-on-the-Green as expressed by its residents in 2015-2018. We thank all participants for their views, their interest and their help in preparing this document.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.



FOREWORD

Weston-on-the-Green is again a thriving village. With strong local businesses, a significant part of the population is present during the working day and the community is eager to reclaim some of the social infrastructure that has dissipated and ensure that the built and natural environments are respected and enhanced.

Against the history of a village that has been in existence since the Norman conquest, ours is a limited tenure and the Neighbourhood Plan has provided an opportunity for the village to come together, think about its future and plan to ensure that Weston is in the best possible order for those who come after us.

Throughout this exercise, the village has been conscious of the need to address social and economic issues as well as the environmental issues that are the focus of a physical plan. These themes are carried through the **Introduction** which describes the plan making process, **Section 2: Weston-on-the-Green Today: Environment** which records the baseline environmental surveys, **Section 3: Social and Economic Baseline Studies**, **Section 4: Concerns and Aspirations: Issues arising from the consultations** where the wishes of villagers are set out, and **Section 5: A Vision for Weston-on-the-Green : Objectives and Policies** which details the planning policies that will form part of the Cherwell District Council Local Plan.

The policies seek to support modest, planned growth of the village while retaining the landscape setting in which the village nestles and arresting further erosion of those green spaces within the village which contribute to its character. That growth provides an opportunity to balance the existing demographic by providing market and affordable homes that will enable young families to locate or remain here as well as creating homes for those who wish to down-size. Development on the proposed sites identified in this Plan would provide for ~10% growth in housing in the village.

There are policies to enhance the heart of the village and also support the shop, post office and Memorial Village Hall which are all central to village life. Through the period of the Plan, sites will be considered for a nursery school and allotments, these needs being unmet at present. The intrusion of traffic is a continuing concern and objectives to calm traffic on the B430 and Church Road / Lane are set out as Parish Council transport objectives in support of planning policies.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed or lent support to the making of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Message of support from the Parish Council



This document sets out a vision for the village of Weston on the Green. It reflects the thoughts and feelings of local people who care about the community in which they live.

They have looked and commented on housing, transport, green spaces, infrastructure and local facilities, which has led to the production of a Neighbourhood Plan which will guide the future development of the village.

We hope that residents and neighbours understand the challenges faced by the Steering Group but agree that a Neighbourhood Plan is the best option for us to shape the future of our Parish and ensure that Weston-on-the-Green continues to thrive and remains a desirable place to live, for all existing and future residents.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and pay tribute for their work since August 2015. I would also like to thank everyone who have contributed towards the production of this document, the residents who completed questionnaires, the many who attended the consultation sessions and for the continuing support of Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk. Without this help it would not have been possible to produce this Neighbourhood Plan.

Kate Hessian
Chair, Weston on the Green Parish Council (2015-2018)

Comment from the Chair of the Steering Group



It has been a unique challenge to be the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for Weston-on-the-Green. The work started with a focused group of people and over time spread out into the community. It is the voice of the village that has been the most important part of this document. We've had comments from those who have lived here all of their lives to comments from the fairly new to the village. Each point of view has been important to the final document. I have learned that this is a special village, with a unique history stretching back beyond the Domesday Book. Our story encompasses an abbey, a priory, a Tudor mansion, St. Mary's church, which has artefacts from Norman times. We have 16th century houses, a toll road as well as a range of houses built from the 17th to the 21st century. The work of the Neighbourhood Plan team has been to honour our history whilst finding ways to grow and help meet the needs of the country. We feel we have done this within the confines of being a rural village.

A great deal is owed to the research and hard work of many members of the Steering Group. I have been most fortunate to have a team with a unique set of skills who have produced this document. This work has set an agenda for the foreseeable future and has the commitment of the Parish Council.

Finally, thank you to the people of Weston-on-the-Green who have been supportive, generous with their ideas and patient as we worked through the stages of producing such a comprehensive document.

Diane Bohm

Abbreviations/Glossary	
Abbreviation	Definition
ACLP	Adopted Cherwell Local Plan
CDC	Cherwell District Council
CDCLP	Cherwell District Council Local Plan
CLP	Cherwell Local Plan
CLPP1	Cherwell Local Plan Part 1
CTA	Conservation Target Area
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Development
HELAA	Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidelines
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
RAF (Weston-on-the- Green)	Royal Air Force
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SLE	Sustainable Local Economy
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Village confines: the area of the village defined by continuous and contiguous development forming the existing built up area of the village, excluding any curtilage beyond the built footprint of the buildings on the site (e.g. garden areas backing onto the rural landscape and outlying farms and buildings which are part of the rural countryside).

Village envelope: an extension of the ‘village confines’ that includes its landscape setting and features surrounding the built-up part of the village, i.e. fringe areas which give it an identity separate from the open countryside.

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Cover and Chapter images courtesy of R. Evans

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose: This Plan addresses the need for housing growth, improved recreation and community facilities, design of new development, economic growth and transport for a period spanning 2017-2031 that takes into account the character of Weston-on-the-Green (WOTG) and the villagers' priorities.

Process: The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) group was established to develop the NP in consultation with the villagers and local businesses. The NP Steering Group focused its communication strategy on the creation of a website, mail drops, surveys, the village newsletter and periodic public meetings. A wide range of inputs was sought. Survey material was gathered and presented to the village through meetings and workshops. Responses were consolidated and analysed to identify the **Proposed Sites** and suggested **NP Policies**. Progress reports were made monthly during Steering Group meetings to which the public was invited. Reports were on the website and in the village newsletter.

NP Policies: The village consensus was to support growth in the population and housing in the village in keeping with and/or enhancing village character as found in the design code of this Plan, and to protect areas of the village that provide open natural environments for passive recreational use. Policies are grouped into four themes:

Theme 1: Village Character and Environment → Environmental policies E1-E6

- to respect and conserve the historic form and character of the village; to conserve the village setting using previously developed land, minimizing any light pollution, keeping the pattern of the village envelope including grass verges and green spaces and enhancing biodiversity;

Theme 2 Housing and land use → Housing policies H1-H7

- to deliver a measured development plan for new housing and land use that addresses the need for economic growth and of the existing and future Parish population;

Theme 3 Community and Economy → Community policies C1-C4

- to better the community by upgrading facilities and supporting local businesses;

Theme 4: Transport Highways, Footpaths/ways → Transport policies T1-T3

- to improve mobility around the village by upgrading and extending pedestrian and cycle routes and reduce the impact of traffic in the village and to reduce the isolation caused by the cessation of public transportation.

One site is proposed in the housing policies (policy H1) in this Plan to deliver 20 new homes (8% growth) by 2020: Site A (Southfield Farm) will provide 20 homes. This site has existing planning approval and at the time of drafting this Plan, building has yet to commence.

INTRODUCTION **1**



1 INTRODUCTION

. 1.1 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: PURPOSE AND STATUS The Weston-on-the-Green

Neighbourhood Plan has arisen out of the Localism Act that came into force in 2012 which aims to give local people more influence in their area. The Plan provides a vision for the future of the village and sets out clear policies to realise aspects of this vision.

. 1.2 HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANISED

. The **Introduction, Section 1**, outlines the founding process for the Plan. **Following this are four further document sections:**

Section 2. Weston-on-the-Green today – Environment: This section provides a description of the village and the surrounding parish. It defines the designated Neighbourhood Plan area as the parish boundary and summarises the key historic development pattern and features of the village which are unique and worthy of preservation.

Section 3. Weston-on-the-Green today – Baseline Studies: This summarises the data which provide the evidence base for the plan. These studies include demography, social and economic considerations, historical context, village character, transport and highway conditions. Detailed reports on some of these topics are reproduced in full in the appendices, which are bound separately (see **Appendix C, D, E**).

Section 4. Concerns and Aspirations: Issues arising from the consultations: This section reports on the issues facing Weston-on-the-Green. It draws on village meetings, questionnaires and comments gathered via the doorstep and social media. Here, villagers describe their concerns and aspirations for the village which provides a ‘brief’ for the subsequent plan-making.

Section 5. A Vision for Weston-on-the-Green: Objectives and Policies : Weston-on-the-Green residents have an overall vision for the future of the village within its parish environment. This vision includes a set of objectives that will improve the quality of life for existing and future residents, specifically addressing urgent issues such as traffic calming, new community facilities and the preservation of the rural character of the village. The Neighbourhood Plan policies set out a framework which, overlaid onto the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, will govern new housing development and land use in the Plan area by

setting out sites for new housing numbering 20 dwellings and allow the village to develop in line with the overall vision for the future.

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Weston-on-the-Green residents under the provision of the Localism Act of 2012 to guide the future development of Weston-on-the-Green. The Plan covers the period 2017 to 2031.

Weston-on-the-Green is an ancient village with references to a Weston Manor dating from the 11th century. The village grew over succeeding centuries until the Parish now has just over 500 residents¹. The village has the unusual character of being largely contained to the western side of the B430 (the old Oxford to Northampton road) and is set in a rural landscape of crops and pasture. Two of the original farms are still operating from the village. The Plan area includes RAF Weston-on-the-Green, a former Royal Flying Corps station during WW1 which is now home to the No 1 Parachute Training School, based at Brize Norton. A historical context for the village is presented in **Appendix C**.

The village is a vibrant community, which has lost some of its services but importantly has retained a small shop and post office. Due to its location within commuting range of London and the main towns and cities in Oxfordshire, house prices are high and young people and local families find it increasingly difficult to find housing in the village.

1.4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The Qualifying Body and the designated area for the Neighbourhood Plan

The Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council is the 'qualifying body' as defined by the Localism Act 2011. In July 2015, the Parish Council registered a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan. This was approved at the Cherwell District Council Executive meeting held on 2 November 2015.

The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the civil parish and extends to the flood plain to the west, just beyond the A34 to the south, the M40 to the east (excluding Junction 9) and the Roman road of Akeman Street to the North (see **Figure 1**).

The Plan proposal relates solely to the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Area and no other Neighbourhood Plans relate to this neighbourhood area.

¹ www.oxford.gov/districtdata/download/downloads/id/54/cherwell_census_2011_leaflet_v2.pdf

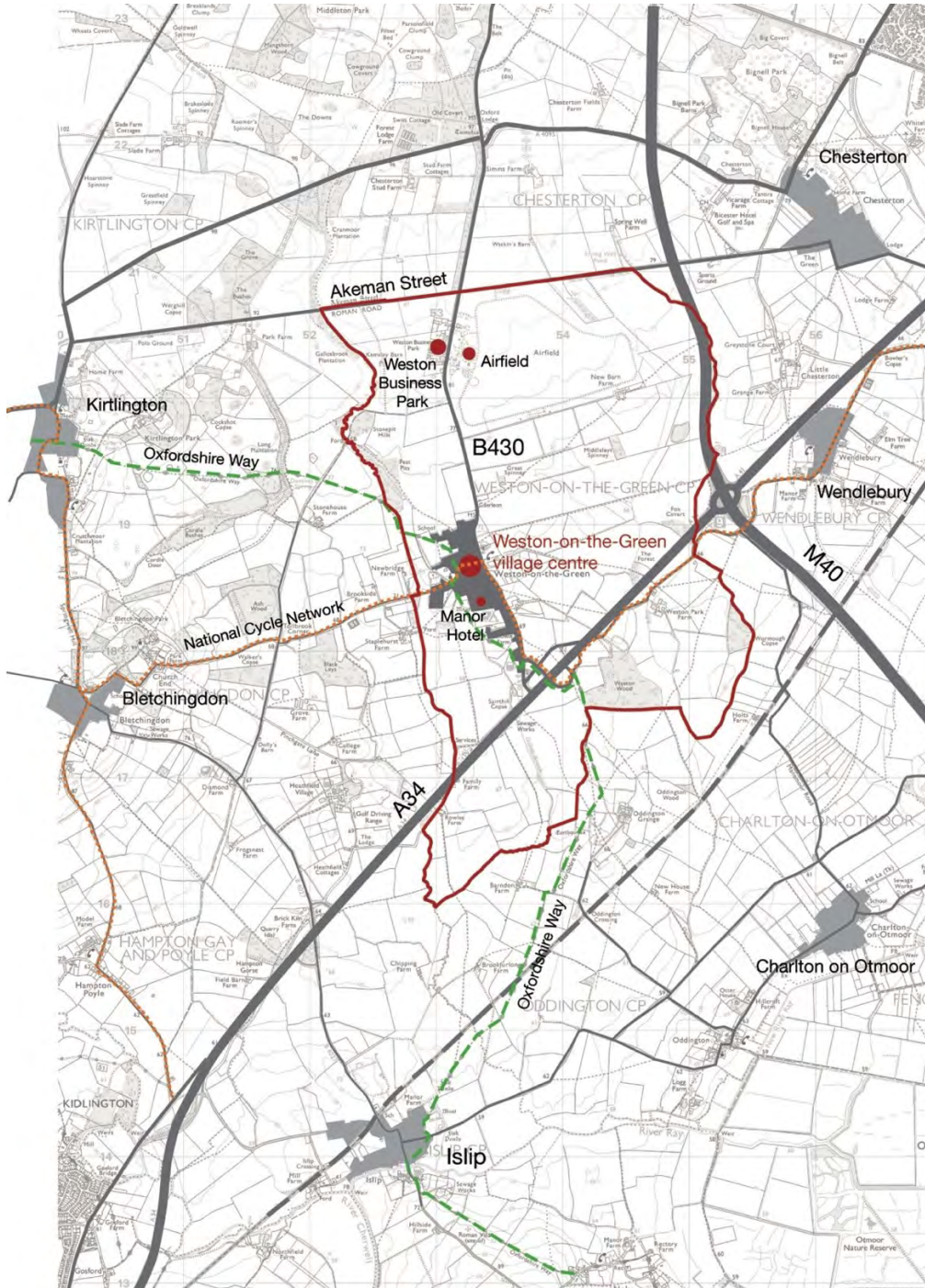


Figure 1: The designated Neighbourhood Plan area = the Weston-on-the-Green parish boundary (Crown copyright and database right 2018. Ordnance Survey)

1.5 RELATIONSHIP OF THE PLAN TO CHERWELL DISTRICT AND LOCAL PLANS

The objectives and policies presented in this Plan provide guidance to address important issues to the local community. In doing this, the Neighbourhood Plan is a key component of a broader Parish Plan that has aspirational objectives to improve the Parish and achieve a better environment in which to live. The focus of the Neighbourhood Plan is the definition of policies to guide future development within the designated area in line with these objectives.

This Neighbourhood Plan was prepared within the context of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 2011-2031 (CLPP1), the saved policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (CLP) and the former Cherwell Local Plan Part 2 (CLPP2). Policy Villages 1 of the adopted local plan identifies Weston-on-the-Green as a Category A settlement. Weston-on-the-Green is the fourth smallest of the Category A settlements. Policy Villages 2 of the adopted Local Plan 2011-2031, which seeks to distribute growth across the Rural Areas, provides for an additional 750 dwellings in Category A villages, in addition to windfall sites and planning permissions for 10 or more dwellings. As of 31st March 2017, there are 86 dwellings remaining from the Policy Villages 2 requirement. At 31st March 2018, the total number of housing completions in Weston-on-the-Green between 2011 and 2018 was 17. The number of dwellings with planning permission but not yet built equals 23 (source CDC Housing land supply update²).

The Oxford Green Belt was designated to protect the rural setting of settlements and maintain the character of the intervening countryside by restraining development pressures within the Green Belt and this is captured in policy ESD14 of the Cherwell Local Plan. The outer boundaries of the Oxford Green Belt were approved in 1975. A number of villages are washed over by the Green Belt and the villages of Bletchingdon, Merton, Murcott and Weston on the Green lie partly within and partly outside the Green Belt. The boundary of the Green Belt in Weston-on-the Green is shown in Figure 5.

To ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is minimised, priority development sites are those that lie adjacent to existing development, avoid the coalescence

² <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/33/planning-policy/370/monitoring-reports/4>

of settlements and otherwise have the least impact possible on the Green Belt. In the case of Weston-on-the-Green, this has resulted in disproportionate development pressure being placed on the northern half of the village which sits outside of the Green Belt. The impact of this on housing density in the village can be seen in Figure 9.

In addition, proper weight must be given to CLPP1 policies ESD13 (resist development that causes undue visual intrusion into the countryside, harm the setting of settlements or be inconsistent with local character) and ESD15 (reinforcing local distinctiveness) in considering sites which encroach on the rural periphery of the village. The very small scale of the Weston-on-the-Green settlement population currently falls below the critical mass required by the present service providers to sustain a public transport option to the village and therefore permitting any small-scale residential development in the parish would disproportionately increase car trips, thereby adding to congestion in the local area and the approaches to Bicester and Oxford. For these reasons, the pressure for large scale development in Weston-on-the-Green is reduced.

Conformity with existing planning policy:

A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with national planning policy as set out by the NPPF and support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan (CLPP1 and saved policies in the CLP). It must demonstrate that:

- The Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European policies.

A Basic Conditions Statement is provided in a separate document accompanying this Neighbourhood Plan outlining elements of conformity of this Plan with statutory requirements.

The Plan provides local detail that overlays National and Local policies and has drawn on evidence gathered and prepared for the Cherwell District Council Local Plan and new data collected from residents and businesses in the Parish of Weston-on- the-Green using surveys conducted in 2015 and 2016. It takes account of national planning practice guidelines.

1.6 HOW THE PLAN WAS MADE

The planning process was initiated by a small group of volunteers who met with the Parish Council Chairman and Parish Clerk in December 2014 to discuss the desire to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Weston-on-the-Green.

The Parish Council agreed to support the formation of a Steering Group, made up of volunteers including Parish Council and non-Parish Council members, to collect information on the current make-up of the village and the key objectives for its future. The Steering Group activities were supported by local funds and later by a grant (Grant NPG-02207) made to the Parish Council from Cherwell District Council. The Steering Group established its Code of Conduct and appointed key roles of Chair and Treasurer. The Parish Council received reports from the Steering Group, and supported and contributed to the consultation events. The Steering Group ensured that the Plan was transparently a community effort and not driven by the Parish Council alone.

A process for developing the Neighbourhood Plan was clear from the outset and consisted of staged work:

- 1. base studies establishing the status quo of the village;**
- 2. consultation on aspirations and concerns;**
- 3. draft proposals and consultation;**
- 4. final draft plan and consultation.**

The starting point was the formation of action sub-groups, again made up of volunteers to gather information, plan and organize activities under the following headings:

Action Group 1: Community Engagement;

Action Group 2: Village Form and Character;

Action Group 3: Social & Economic Aspects;

Action Group 4: Transportation & Highways.

A one-year action plan was created around three village events which outlined the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan to residents and developed policies based on feedback from the

community.

The Steering Group developed and launched a website (see **Figure 2**):

<http://www.wotgneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/> to engage with the community and provide information on events and progress towards the Plan.

October 2015	1. Village Form and Character team
	2. Social & Economic Aspects team
	3. Transportation & Highways team
	1 st Event: Weston-on-the-Green: Aspirations and Concerns
	Exhibition of base studies plus workshop/questionnaire for villagers
	Feedback of workshop/questionnaire
	Summary of agreed objectives
Nov-Jan2016	Develop Plan content/options
February 2016	2 nd Event: Neighbourhood Plan Ideas
	Exhibition and workshops to review ideas and seek feedback
March-April 2016	Preparation of Draft Neighbourhood Plan
September 2016	3 rd Event: Draft Neighbourhood Plan for village consultation
	Exhibition to seek comment on Draft Neighbourhood Plan
December 2016	Revisions to Draft Plan and approval by Parish Council
March 2017	Pre-submission of draft Plan to Cherwell District Council for comment
April-May 2017	6 week formal consultation period
May 2017	Amendments made to the Plan
June 2017	Final pre-submission of the Draft Plan to Cherwell District Council
September 2017	Schoolfield issue arose
November 2017	Further comments from CDC on the Plan
May 2018	Informal submission to Cherwell District Council
October 2018	Regulation 16 submission to CDC
January 2019	Received representations following completion of Regulation 16
March 2019	Schedule of changes to CDC; request to proceed to examination
April 2019	Appointment of Examiner
April 2019	'Schedule of Changes' consultation
September2019	Examiner's report published
November 2019	CDC Executive Decision Statement on Examiner's Report
March 2020	Appointment of 2nd Examiner for focussed examination
June 2020	2nd Examiner's Report
July 2020	CDC Executive accept the 2nd Examiner's report and agree to referendum

Table A: Outline Neighbourhood Plan timetable



Figure 2: Homepage of the Neighbourhood Plan website: www.wotgneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

Social media (Facebook and Twitter) provided additional routes for public engagement.

Questionnaires were used to ask individuals and groups for their views and aspirations for the village; to suggest solutions for these, and ask for their help in developing policies.

At the start of the consultation process, a village-wide questionnaire was distributed to all homes and businesses (see **Figure 3**) and responses were used as a basis for discussions at the first Village Meeting.

Further consultation with residents and businesses included meetings with individuals and groups representing specific concerns:

- . landowners;
- . young parents;
- . older residents;
- . children of the village;
- . professionals working out of the village;
- . residents of each street/lane.

Figure 3: First questionnaire survey: ‘Have your say’

Members of the Steering Group also talked with the Lead Planning Officer of Cherwell Council and took advice as the Plan progressed. The results of such conversations and meetings were noted and helped to shape the policies in the Plan. The Steering Group, with sub-group leaders, brought together the data, material and information gathered in the research phase to prepare the first draft policy objectives. These were:

- . to identify proposed sites for development;
- . to understand the priority issues related to development in the village and beyond;
- . to plan a phased timetable for development;
- . to identify measures outside of the Neighbourhood Plan which would support the Plan policies and objectives.

Consultation meetings for the village as a whole and an analysis of the questionnaire responses identified the issues that shaped the first draft plan. Policies for the Plan were created from these and the draft Plan document was compiled. More detail of the survey and meeting processes are provided in **Appendix B**.



Weston-on-the-Green survey questionnaire - Village appraisal

The questionnaire will collect information on the community of the Weston-on-the-Green Parish as a basis for developing a **Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish**.

Neighbourhood planning is a way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. It will allow us to say where we think new houses, businesses and shops should go - and what they should look like.

The Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan is being taken forward by a dedicated group of villagers who are engaging with the Parish community to gather information and views from everyone in order to shape the plan. The Plan will be submitted to Cherwell by the Parish Council.

Have your say!

We are asking all HOUSEHOLDS to complete the questionnaire for the village appraisal – one per household.
[If you would like a larger print version of this questionnaire, or help to complete it, please contact Alex Reid (tel 350835) or Paula Hessian (tel 350662)].

Your completed questionnaire should be returned to one of four village addresses by the 30th of September:
 Alex Reid at The Cottage, North Lane
 Patsy Parsons at Hunters Moon, Knowle Lane
 Val Atilan at Rutland Cottage, Church Road
 Diane Bohm at Oddtymes, Northampton Road.

Alternatively, please drop it in the returns box in the Village Shop; post it to Susan Davis, Westfield Farm Cottage, North Lane OX25 3RG; or call Paula Hessian (350662) and she will collect it at an agreed time.

Residents should complete one questionnaire per Household.
Businesses should complete Questions 13-16 only, unless they are also residents.
It should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this survey questionnaire. The information provided by you will be used for the purposes of formulating a Neighbourhood Plan for Weston-on-the-Green. **Data gathered will not be used in a manner which would allow identification of your individual responses and will be destroyed when the Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted.**

1.7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement team was responsible for ensuring the whole village, including businesses, was kept informed of each stage of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and for directing them to whom they could talk if they any had comments or concerns. The Statement of Community Engagement is detailed in **Appendix B**.

A concerted effort was made to reach out to those who weren't on email and without access to the website. As well as articles published in the Weston-on-the-Green Village News, villagers were encouraged to pass on information to their neighbours. One of the main concerns of the Steering Group was that every part of the village was represented and the Community Engagement team encouraged as wide a spread of villagers as possible to join the sub-committees.

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN TODAY: ENVIRONMENT **2**



2 WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN TODAY: ENVIRONMENT

2.1 WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN PARISH BOUNDARY AND SETTING

The village of Weston-on-the-Green lies to the north-east of Oxford and halfway between Kidlington and Bicester. The south entrance to the village is just 1/4 mile off the A34 on the Northampton Road (B430).

Weston-on-the-Green village is immediately surrounded by agricultural land and has close proximity with woodlands and copses – Peat Pits, Weston Fen and Weston Wood which, along with the fields and crops on the village fringe, give Weston its rural feel (see **Figure 4**).

The name Weston refers to the position of the village in the west of the parish, “hard up against the Bletchington boundary” as Weston has been described.



against the Bletchington boundary” as Weston has been described. The ‘on-the-Green’, possibly derives from the fact that the village once abutted the edge of a very large green. Weston-on-the-Green village has grown to one side of an ancient way from Oxford to Northampton, the B430 which was once a turnpike road. The village has since developed as a series of four lanes (three of which are no-through roads), on the western side of, and perpendicular to the B430. The ancient ‘green’ lies on the eastern side of the B430.

Figure 4: Aerial view of Weston-on-the-Green village from the south (Courtesy of Paul Morrison)

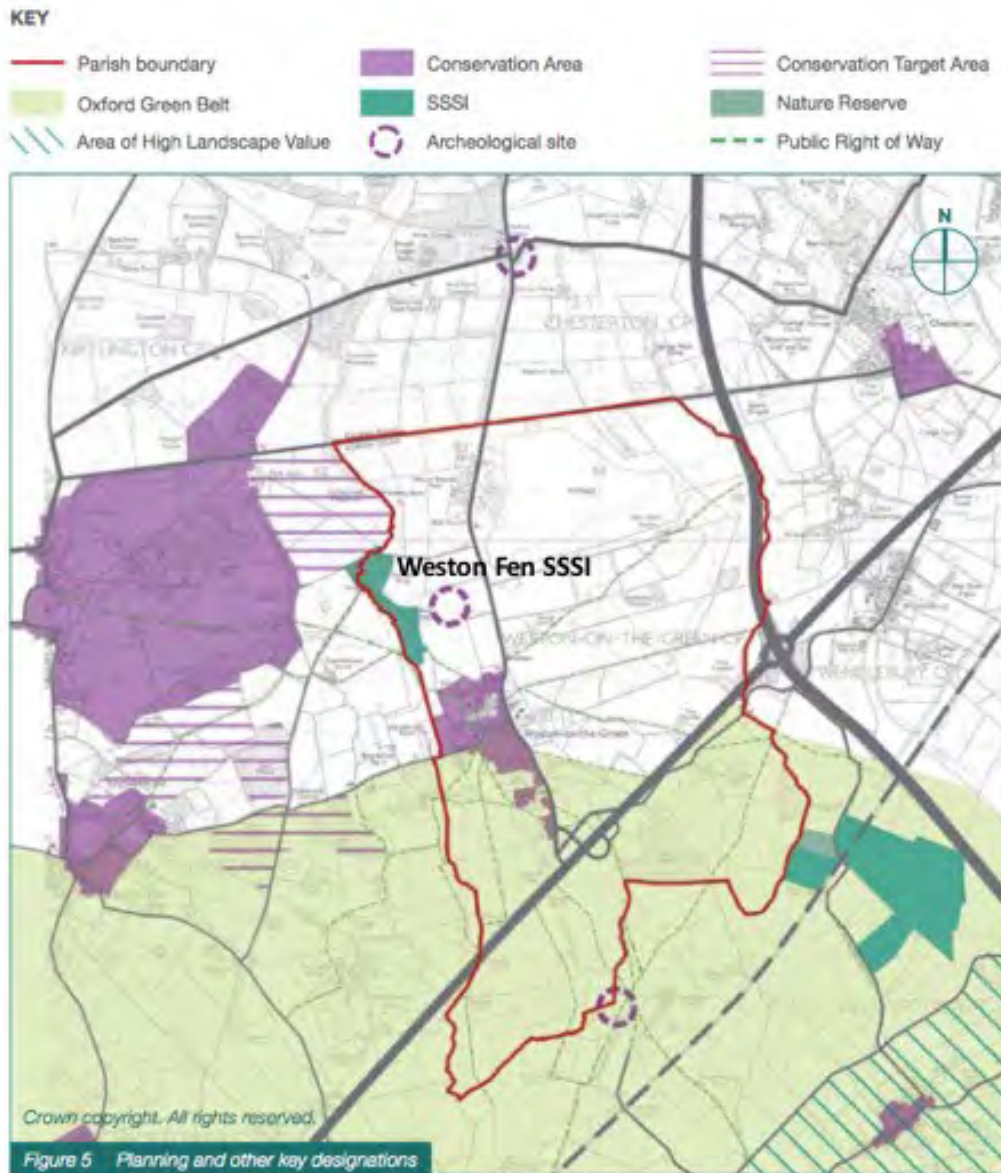


Figure 5: Planning and other key designations (Crown copyright. All rights reserved)

This layout, with the village on the western side and the green on the eastern side of the through road (B430) is unusual and highly distinctive; to the west is a compact Cherwell valley village, to the east a rural landscape of big skies and open fields where some recent development of the farms has established limited commercial and engineering services. The parish forms part of a landscape rich in historical features and field patterns including areas important for wildlife conservation (e.g. the Weston Fen SSSI and the ancient woodlands to the south of the A34). Two designated Conservation Target Areas (CTA) border the Neighbourhood Plan area: Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods CTA (Figure 6a)

to the west of the parish, and Otmoor CTA which is an extensive tract to the south-east (Figure 6b) and Weston-on-the-Green plays an important part in linking the two. Opportunities will be sought to strengthen wildlife corridors, for example the Schoolfield on the western edge of the village confines. The Schoolfield is an important green space in the village (see Appendix G, site h) that will help to establish an important link between the Weston Fen SSSI and the fields linking with rich habitats in the south (Weston wood and Otmoor CTA, Figure 6a and 6b below). Otmoor CTA includes the Wendelbury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSIs that lie just 3 miles from the Weston village centre. Area B requires regeneration to return it to grassland with the rich biodiversity associated with this habitat type.

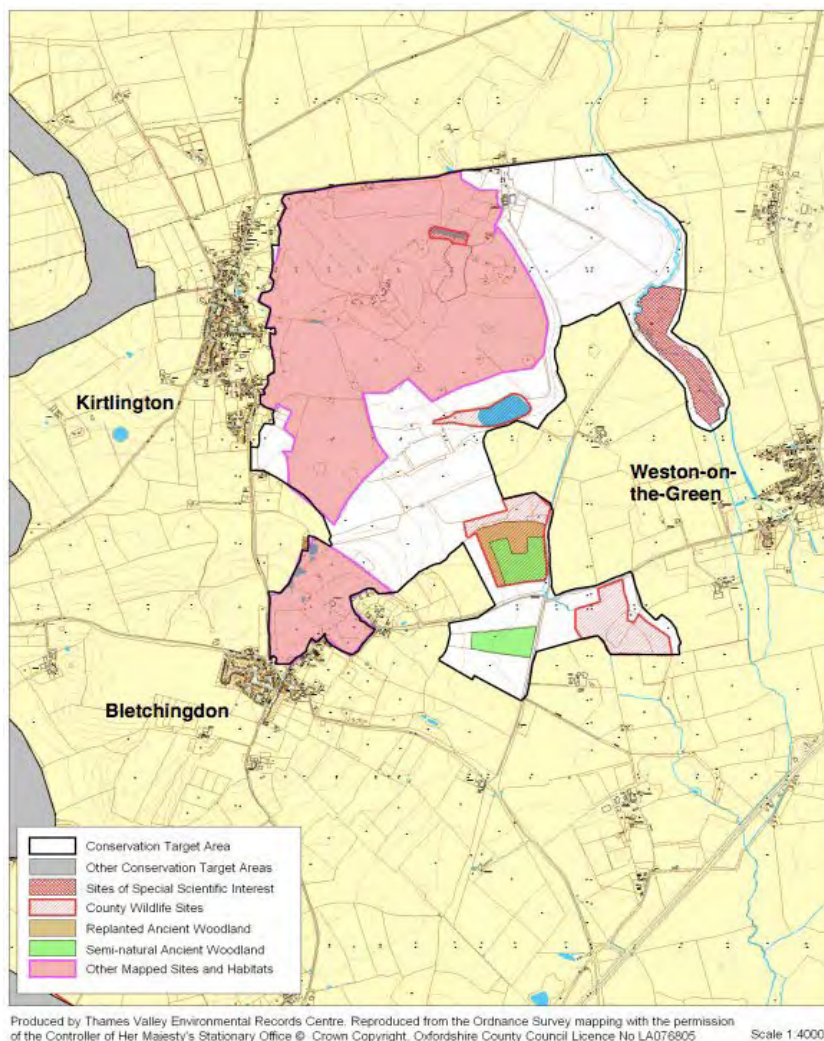


Figure 6 a): Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods CTA

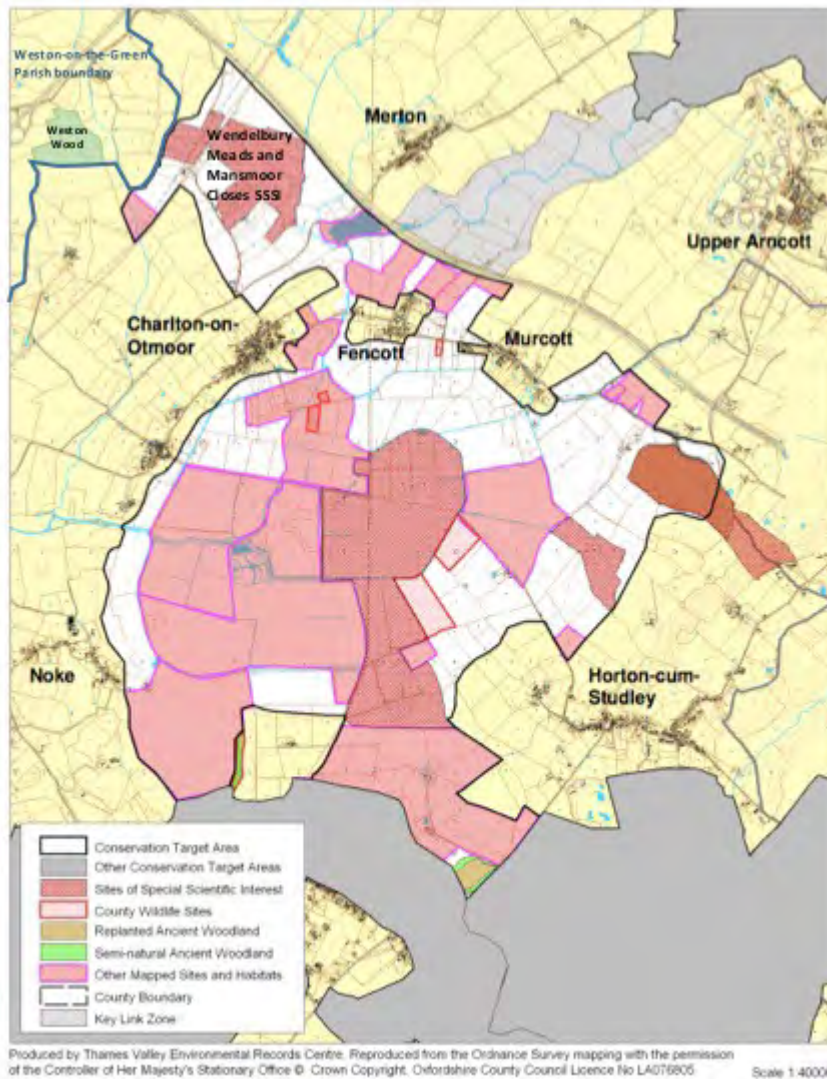


Figure 6 b): Otmoor CTA

[Figure 6a) and b): Conservation target areas bordering Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan area. (Crown copyright. All rights reserved)]

This objective is aligned with the core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework that local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape as laid out in policy ESD10 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside³. In addition, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all

³ 'Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment, Planning Practice Guidance 2016; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

public bodies, including Parish Councils in exercising their functions, to have regard (so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions) to the purpose of conserving biodiversity, including, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, and restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. In formulating our Plan policies, we have consulted various recommended sources⁴ regarding environmental and habitat assessment and the Historic Environment Record which details all designated heritage assets and archaeological sites, historic buildings, landscapes and sites of local value.

2.2 HISTORIC LAYOUT AND FEATURES

The Cherwell District Council first designated the Weston-on-the-Green Conservation Area in October 2000 and a revised Conservation Area appraisal in June 2009 resulted in amendments to the Conservation Area boundary. This document details the topographical and historical features of the village, noting its unusual structure with one village street (Church Lane) and three lanes which originally served the village farms: Knowle Lane, Westlands Avenue (now redeveloped but originally serving Westfield Farm) and North Lane.

A late 18th century map of the village (see **Figure 7**) shows that this structure was already established by that date and has changed little since that time. Features that have remains unchanged are:

- . Church of St Mary
- . Dwellings around the village core (The Forge, Dower House, Walnut Tree Cottage, Willow Cottage, Hazel Cottage, Rose Cottage)
- . Church Lane and its 17-19th century dwellings (Mulberry Cottage, Jubilee Cottage, Holly Cottage)
- . Weston Manor
- . Mill House
- . North Lane

There are 33 listed structures in the village. St. Mary's Church and Weston Manor are Grade II*, the remainder are Grade II⁵ (Figure 9).

⁴ Planning for the environment at the neighbourhood level, publication code LIT 6524; http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/LIT_6524_7da381.pdf

⁵ Weston-on-the-Green Conservation Appraisal 2009, Cherwell District Council.

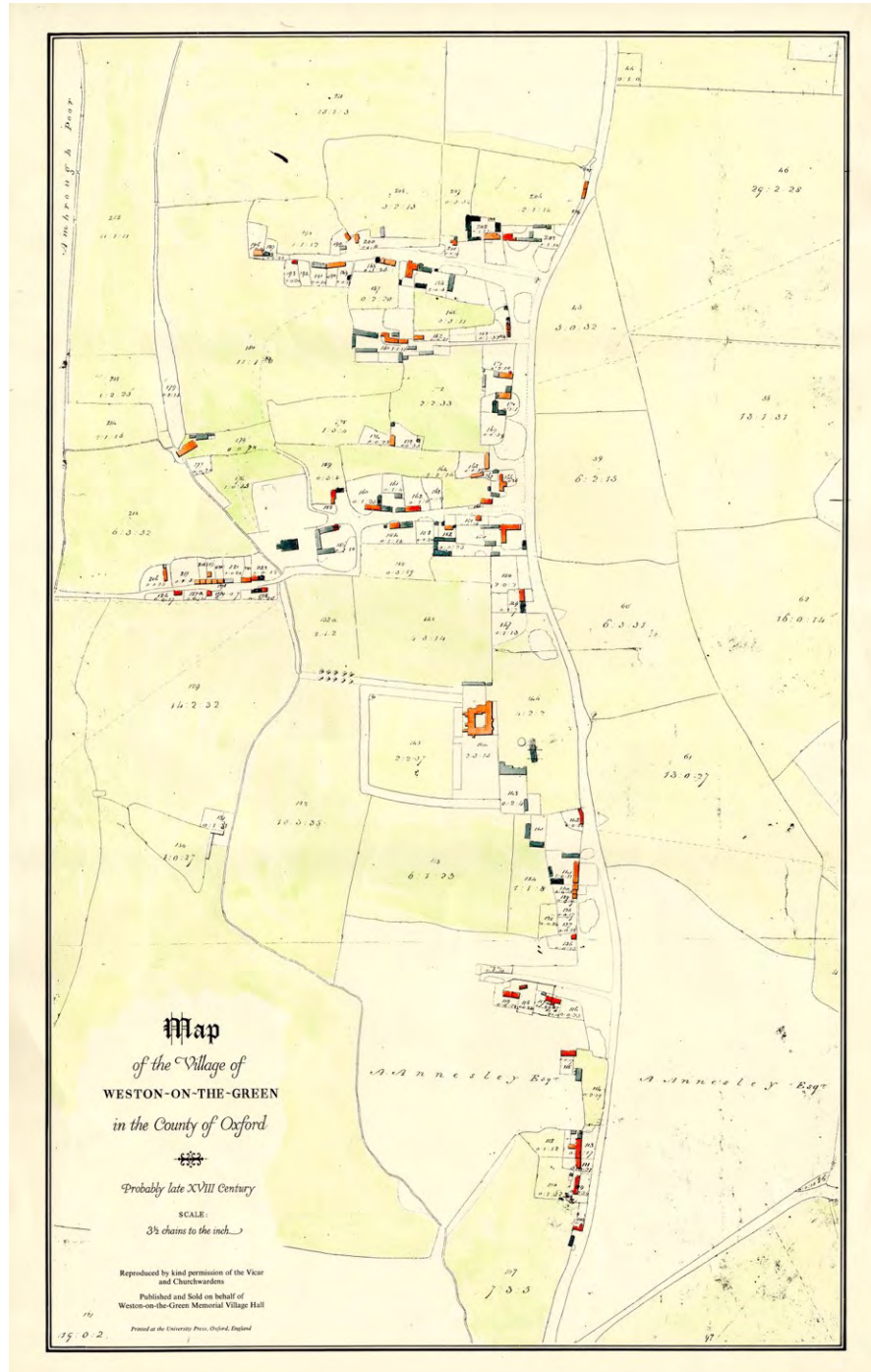


Figure 7: Weston-on-the-Green late 18th century map (reproduced from the Weston-on-the-Green archive, with kind permission of P. Hessian)

Cherwell District Council's Conservation Area Appraisal (June 2009) identifies six 'character areas' which derive from the historical development of the village (Figure 8).

These are:

- The Church character area
- Weston Manor character area
- The Farms character area
- Village Core character area
- The Street character area
- The Village Landscape character area

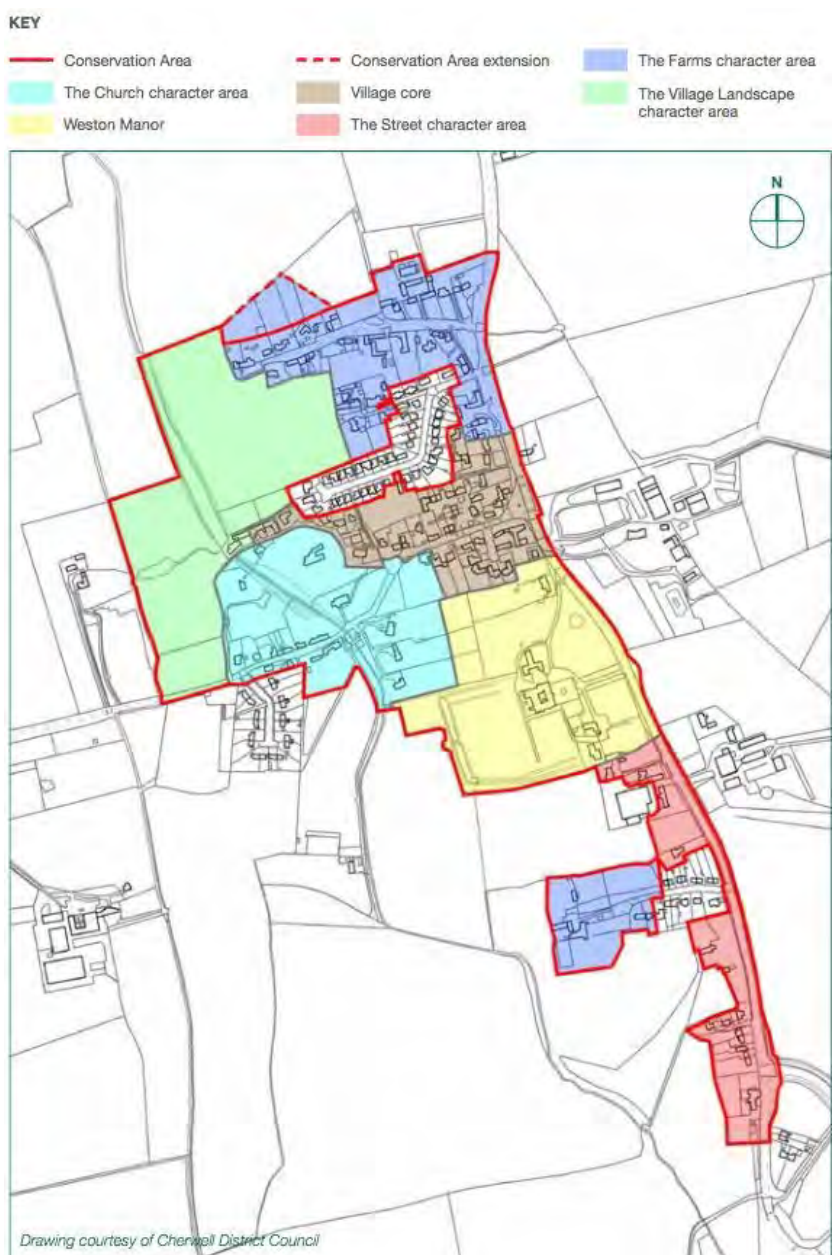


Figure 8: Character areas (from Weston-on-the-Green Conservation Appraisal 2009)

2.3 PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE

From the early 'village confines' pattern of the 16-17th centuries, major growth in the village has come in two forms: the addition of over 40 bungalows in the mid-1960s (which had a large impact on the village in terms of increased population and the on-traditional layout) and the smaller developments of three or more houses in groups – Knowle Lane in two phases (pre-1800 and then some further houses in the 1930s, 1940s and 1960s), Church Close (1950s), Ladygrass, CopperMill and Monk's Walk (1973), Shepherds Close (1980s), Village Farm Court and Blacksmiths Close (1990s) and Oxford Court (2000s). Individual development of small pieces of land for dwellings e.g. along the road between the Ben Jonson and Hazel Cottage (from early 19th century through to late 20th century), conversion of redundant community buildings (e.g. school, Methodist chapel), to 'Stoneyfield' in North Lane (2014).

The village now has a range of building types: some of traditional vernacular style dating back to the 16-17th century whose footprint can be seen on Figure 7, the 18th century map; some could be described as 'one off' design; others typical of estate developments of the 1960s and later. However, on balance, the character and feel of the village has been maintained around the original 'village confines' layout and many of the historical features are preserved and still in use. Crucially, this collection of fairly modest dwellings grouped along one side of the main road and along four side roads, three of which are cul-de-sacs but connected by village footpaths across the 'back' of the village, has been maintained through the 20th century development. The key patterns of building form which characterise the village are identified on a survey drawing at **Appendix I**. Figures 9 and 10 provide a summary of characteristics identified below:

Street pattern and alignment

The historic lanes are made up of long, straight segments with small deflections hiding the long distance views which are revealed as the viewer passes the point of deflection. Dwellings located on the east-west lanes/road are no more than one or two turns (junctions) off the Northampton Road creating a highly 'legible' form (Figure 9). On the main road through the village (running north-south), just 21 houses border the B430, generally set well back behind deep gardens and wide verges. The remaining 90% of the village lies on the winding lanes extending west.

A number of key positive views in the village and extending into the rural borders are important assets which should be protected (see Appendix G and H for more detail). Some internal vistas could be improved, namely those cast into the once agricultural farm areas which now tend to be used for light industrial and storage purposes (Figure 10).

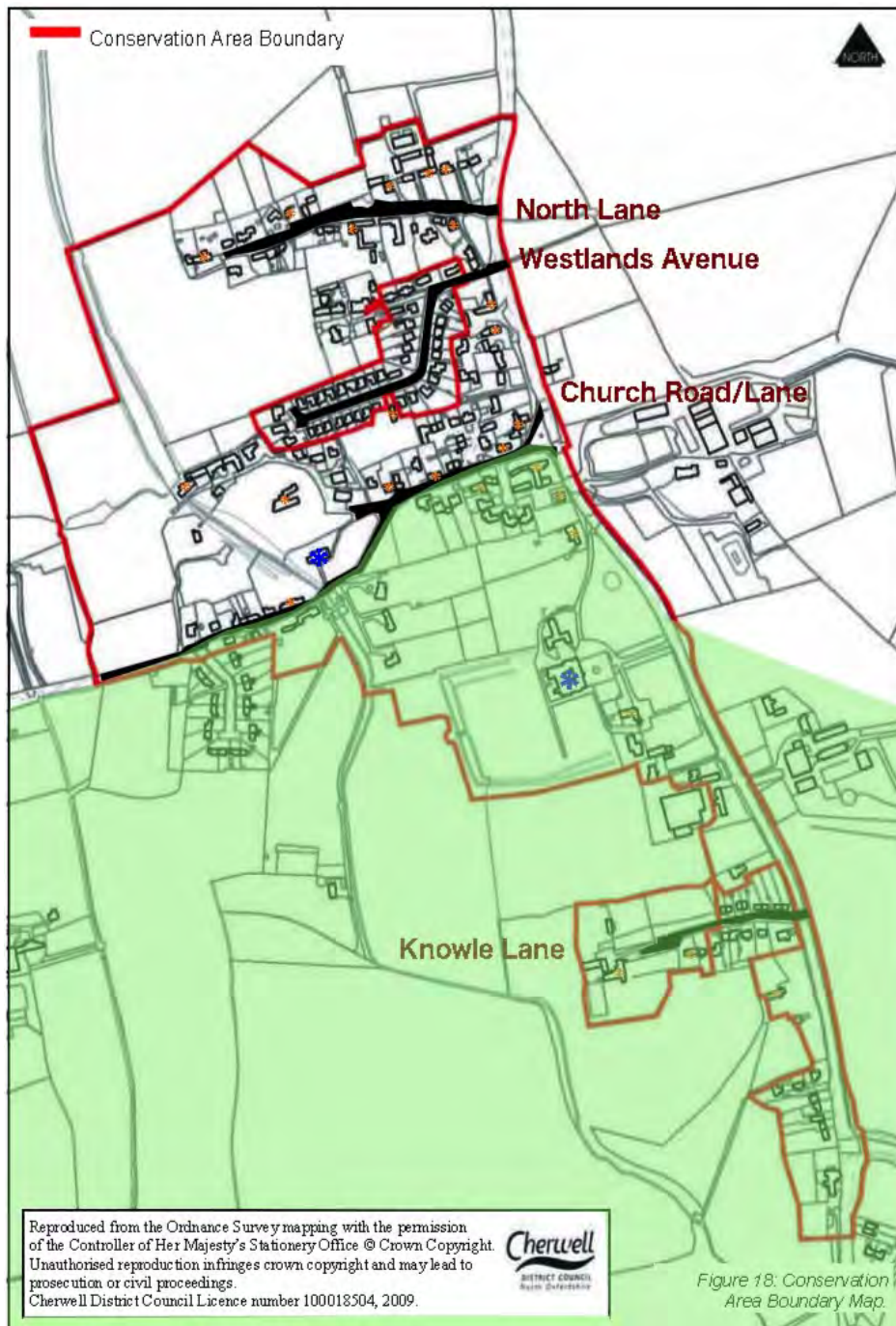


Figure 9: Conservation Area Boundary and listed buildings: Grade II (orange) except those marked in blue which are Grade II* (Courtesy of Cherwell District Council). The area in the Green Belt is shown.



Figure 10: Key characteristics of the village showing positive and adverse vistas from viewpoints; village entry points; open spaces within the village envelope; hedgerows, verges and greens. (Map Crown copyright, all rights reserved; annotations courtesy R. Evans & S. Daenke)



Figure 11: The junction of Church Road and the Northampton Road creates a memorable space.

- **Focalpoints**

The street pattern creates focal points at the junction of Church Road and Northampton Road (Figure 11) and also the junction of Church Road / Church Lane / Mill Lane.

- **Gateways**

'Gateways' are the visual entry points into the village: from the south at The Chequers public house, from the north at the Great Oak on the junction of North Lane and the Northampton Road, from the west on crossing the flood plain at the end of Church Lane and from the east via the A34 overpass.

- **Enclaves**

Residential or business enclaves have been created from former farmyards. Such developments include Village Farm Court, Blacksmith's Close, Oxford Court, Shepherd's Close and are generally good design solutions to infill sites.



Figure 12: Example of building frontage set directly against public grass verge.

- **Building frontages and boundary walls**

Most of the village housing is either built directly against a lane or verge, forming a continuous building frontage (Figure 12), or set back from the street with a low stone front boundary wall or hedge delineating the edge of the property. This combination of continuous frontages and buildings set back behind boundary walls and hedges is a key characteristic of the village (e.g. Figure 13).



Figure 13: Small landmarks or 'marker' buildings are created where gables front the street (Bramble cottage)

- **Landmarks and 'marker' buildings**

The principal landmark buildings are the Church of St Mary the Virgin and Weston Manor Hotel. There is also a large number of lesser landmarks which because of their siting or a prominent gable, create memorable places within the village (e.g. Figure 13).

- **Key view and open vistas**

There are a number of memorable vistas across the surrounding countryside; every lane emerging onto the Northampton Road affords such a vista over farmland to the east.



Figure 14: Four cottages – the informal rhythm of the elevations results from a variety in plot widths (North Lane)

- **Variation in plot widths**

Terraces with a continuous building frontage typically have a variation in plot widths, lending an informal street frontage which expresses the character of the individual homes (e.g. Figure 14).

- **Shallow building depths**

The vernacular buildings typically have stone walls and are a single timber beam span in depth. For a given roof pitch, the ridge is therefore lower than on deep-plan buildings.

- **Roof pitches** Roof pitches reflect the original roof covering: 50+ degrees for thatch, 40+ degrees for clay tile or stone slates and 35 degrees for Welsh slate.

- **Eaves heights**

The eaves height of the vernacular cottages or barn conversions are typically lower than modern housing and this gives a more intimate scale compared to more recently built streets (e.g. Figure 14).

- **Materials**

The predominant materials are local stone walls; tile, slate or thatch roofs and granite streetscape details. A more comprehensive list is provided in the Design Code at **Appendix A**.

Understanding the characteristics of the village is important in designing new development. Since much of the village is within either the Conservation Area where there are a number of listed buildings (see Figure 9) or the Green Belt (Figure 10), it is important to preserve and enhance the character of the area. There are some areas where a different approach may be appropriate – for example where there are existing detrimental views or intrusive activities there are opportunities for new development to change the character by introducing new character that has a positive impact on its surroundings.

2.4 LANDSCAPE SETTING AND GREEN SPACES

Weston-on-the-Green has a rich historic environment with 33 listed buildings, a conservation area and potential archaeological interest, and its rural character is maintained by views into the open lowland landscape on the west, north and eastern sides of the village. There is, therefore, potential for new development to have significant effects on the heritage assets within the village, depending on where the development takes place. Much is made in the Conservation Appraisal of the open verges which characterise parts of the village, mainly in the northern half. However, aside from these, the village has little public space other than the playing field on Church Lane. Therefore the preservation of the open spaces in the village, which are under threat from inappropriate development or use for parking, is important to conserve the character of the village and the rural setting beyond the boundaries.

In Weston-on-the-Green, there is a ‘potential priority habitat’ namely that part of the area known as ‘the Schoolfield’ that lies within flood zones 2 and 3. This forms a link between existing preserved areas of rich biodiversity in the parish, including the Weston Fen SSSI, the ancient woodland Weston Wood, and the adjacent Conservation target areas of Otmoor and Kirtlington and Bletchingdon Park and Woods (see Figure 16).

Additional to the policies and actions in this Plan, it is the intention of the Parish Council to oversee or to ensure that the Green Spaces and priority habitats are suitably managed, to maintain and enhance biodiversity and, where possible, to create new habitats for wildlife. This includes the valuable areas this Plan proposes to protect (Appendix F) and the areas designated as Local Green Spaces (see Appendix G). We will make clear that

policy ESD10 of the Local Plan is rigorously applied to all the open green spaces and areas which have heritage assets in the village. A management plan will evaluate and identify strategies to promote the restoration of wild plants and habitats in open areas such as meadows; look at ways to support biodiversity on the Churchyard (Wildlife in Churchyards Guidance Note, Church Buildings Council, section 55(1)(d) of the Dioceses, Mission and Pastoral Measure 2007); manage and create hedgerows and improve the village ponds to protect freshwater wildlife.

Designated Local Green Spaces: Weston-on-the-Green is characterised by its setting in an agricultural countryside and also by retained green spaces within the village. A number of areas were identified in the Conservation Appraisal 2009 as important green spaces. These included: North Lane ponds and grass verges, the iconic oak tree at the intersection of North Lane and the B430, the open grass area and verges on the B430 frontage to the Ben Jonson public house, the green and village stocks, St Mary's churchyard.

A recent reappraisal by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified additional areas of special character which we feel justify designation as Local Green Spaces according to the criteria laid out in the NPPF.

These are I: Weston Manor grounds fronting the B430; II: the Stocks situated on a small green at the junction of Church Road and the B430; III: St. Mary's Churchyard and IV: the playing field. All of these spaces are important to the character of the village and are proposed as Local Green Spaces in Policy E5 of this Plan. The identification of the designated NP Local Green Spaces (sites **I - IV**) is shown in Figure 15 and their evaluation against the criteria set out in Paragraph 77 of the NPPF are included in **Appendix G**.

Community Amenity Space: We have identified a 'priority habitat' area known as the Schoolfield (Area B) that we wish to see protected as an ancient lowland meadow. Additional open areas of green space which are of particular value to the character of the village are also shown (Figure 15; e-h. Note the site shown as h is also Area B).

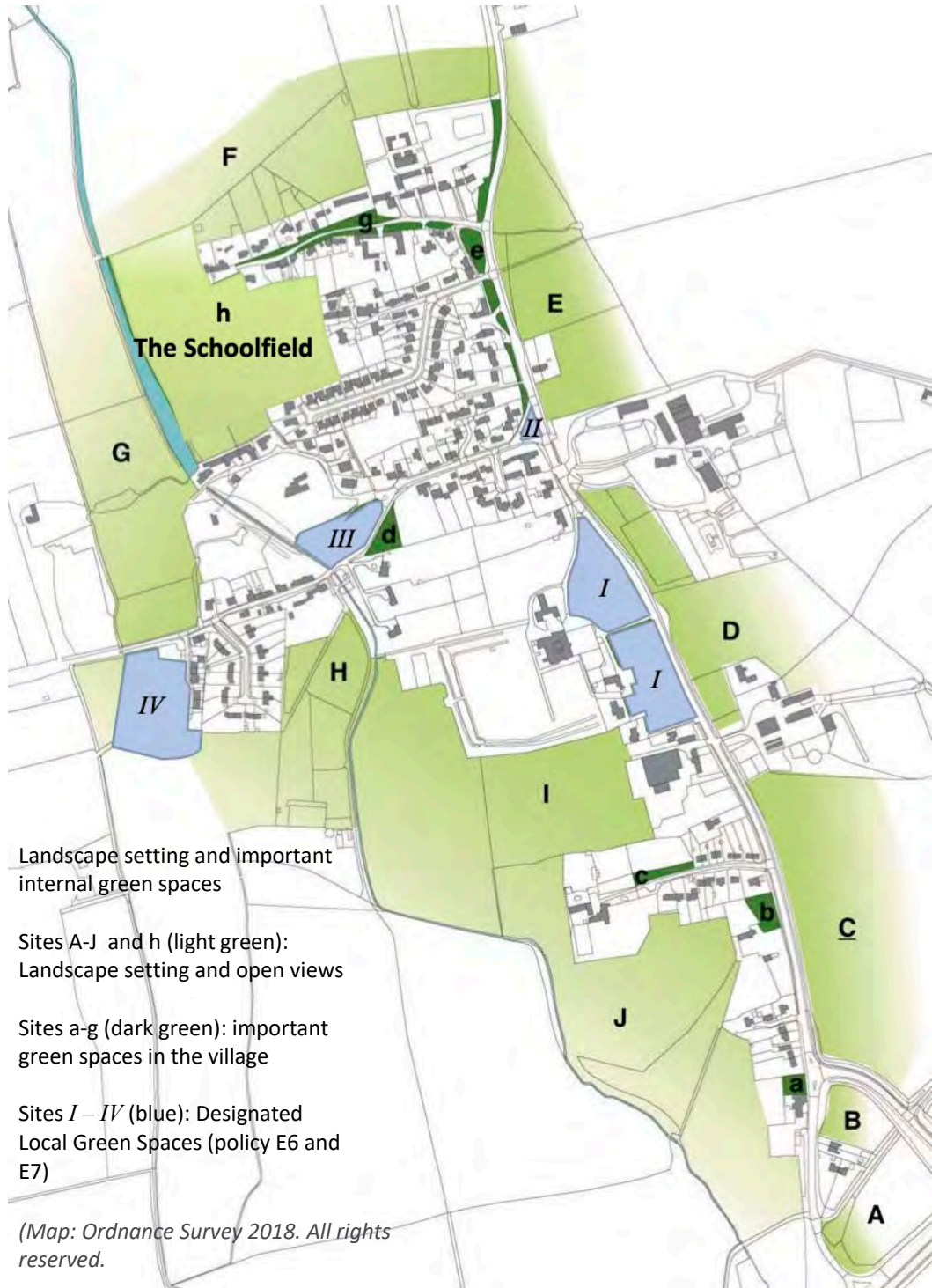


Figure 15: Important green spaces (e-h) and new designated Local Green Spaces in this Neighbourhood Plan (I-IV): A full appraisal is given in Appendix G (Map: Ordnance Survey 2018. All rights reserved.)

A key aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to conserve and increase biodiversity in the parish environment and to support this through our Plan policies. As mentioned, the broader parish area contains and is adjacent to SSSIs and other important habitats. Figure 16 shows the designated habitats bordering the village which lie within the largely agricultural landscape. The importance of connected habitat corridors to maintain biodiversity and support natural species has been highlighted by ecological consultees and can be accessed via data available via Natural England. The habitat corridor which links important sites and traverses Weston-on-the-Green parish north-east to south-west is highlighted with a red boundary marker (see Figure 16)⁶. This Plan seeks to further support the connection of a north-south habitat corridor (from Weston Fen SSSI to Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSI, shown bordered in red) by the protection and conservation of important and designated green spaces in the village. Figure 16 illustrates how the village green spaces identified in Appendix G of this Plan will extend and strengthen this corridor.

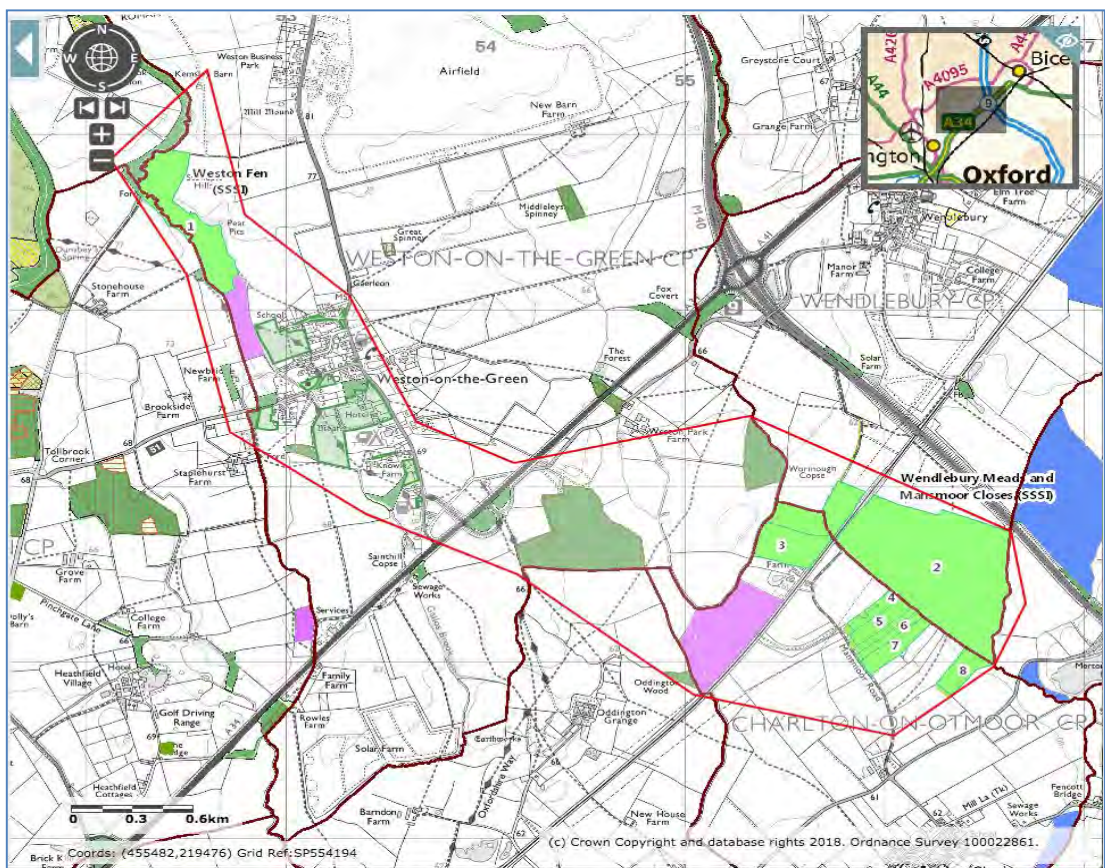


Figure 16: Habitat designations in the Parish of Weston-on-the-Green showing green spaces as identified in Appendix G of this Plan adding continuity to a north-south connected habitat. (MagicMaps, Crown Copyright 2018, all right reserved)

⁶ <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>
 Copyright resides with the data suppliers.

Legend to Figure 16: Habitats

Good quality semi-improved grassland (Priority habitat inventory, England)

Lowland meadows (Priority habitat inventory (England))

Open spaces within Weston-on-the-Green village that contribute to the habitat corridor

Parish administrative boundary

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BASELINE

STUDIES **3**



3 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BASELINE STUDIES

The current issues that were considered in producing this Plan included:

- **Housing**
- **Access to/from and around the village**
- **Environment and sustainability**
- **Design quality**

An overview of these issues, around which consultation was sought, is set out below. The evidence base for **Section 3** is presented in **Appendix D and E** to this Plan (Social and Economic Profile of Weston-on-the-Green and Community survey data).

3.1 HOUSING

The parish of Weston-on-the-Green recorded a population of 523 people in the 2011 census and this has changed little since those data were collected. A review of available housing in the parish reported by the Office for National Statistics⁷ and data collected specifically for this Neighbourhood Plan in 2015 demonstrated:

A high level of home ownership (83%) with low numbers of social and privately rented housing;

A median residency term approaching 20 years and few properties available for potential purchasers or tenants;

A high proportion (76-82%) of larger dwellings of 3 or more bedrooms, 49% of which are detached houses with gardens;



Figure 17: House sizes in the village

Higher median property value (£344,995) compared with the regional median in Cherwell District (£220,000 recorded in 2011). In 2016, the average house price from sales in the

⁷ Office of National Statistics www.ons.gov.uk

village was close to £500,000.

Data from the Surveys reported in Appendix E of this document recorded the current occupancy of houses in the village:

Fig A9 (Appendix E) shows that data from Survey 1, confirming data from the 2011 census, recorded the majority of households with 2 occupants (51%). These survey data also showed that 56% of occupants >65 years were living with another in the same age group. Figure 18 shows numbers in each age group living alone, with one other or more than one other. Most >65s are in the 2 per household category.

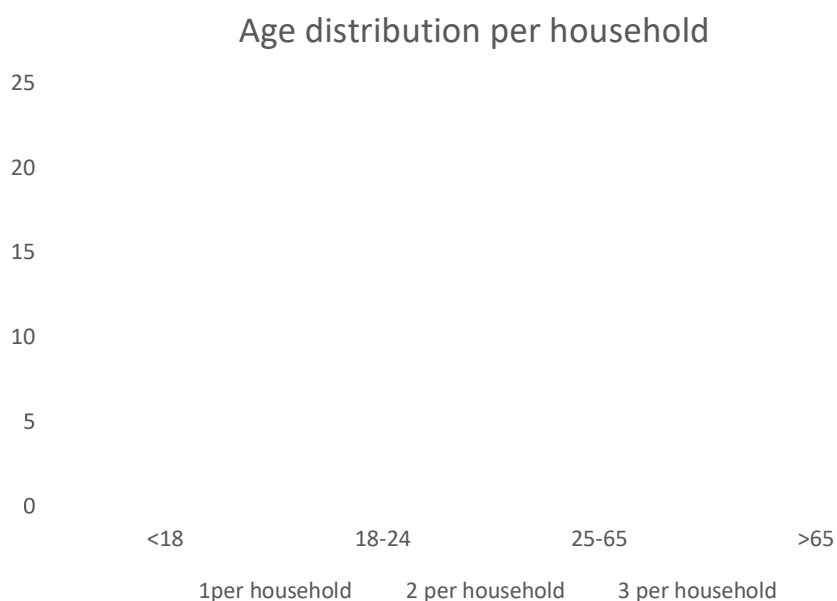


Figure 18: Age distribution per household

This points to many older residents occupying larger (31 of 67 (46%) were 4 bedroom) detached houses of high value and 39 of 90 occupants recorded in the survey were >65 years (43%);

4 of 90 surveyed occupants were in the 18-24 years range (4.4%) and 38% of survey respondents from all age groups wanted new housing for young families to be part of the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

CALCULATED HOUSING NEED FOR WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

Based on the information gathered on the current and future populations, the housing needs for the village were calculated as follows:

- 1. An objective of 15% growth in new housing in the period 2017-2031 = 38 new houses needed based on the survey data. This is reasonable to achieve based on the current expected growth in the region and the present housing expectation from Category A villages in the Local Plan.**
- 2. The profile of housing needed is stratified as follows:**
 - a. Provide housing for an increased 20-35 age group in the village (9% increase or 46 young residents) = 6x1-2 bed (16%) and 9x2-3 bed houses (24%);** housing is required that is attractive and affordable for younger people. The objective is to attract young families to the village and increase the proportion of the residency in the 20-35 age group to 40% by 2025. In the 2011 census, the proportion in this group (for Weston-on-the-Green) was 37% but has since fallen to 31% in 2016. To achieve 40%, we estimate at least 15 new affordable smaller houses need to be built in the village (assuming 2 young occupants per new house);
 - b. Provide housing for retirees and downsizers = 5x1-2 bed (13%) and 6x2-3 bed (16%);** housing suitable for downsizing retirees or those in the >65 years age group who require some care support, is needed. 18 of 50 (36%) survey 1 respondents said they would need assistance to stay in their existing home, and 28% wanted single occupancy homes to be made available. To accommodate the needs of this age group, which is projected to increase within the term of this plan from 32% recorded in the 2011 census to 52% in 2037 (Population Estimates tool, Office of National Statistics 28/4 2016), at least 11 houses meeting these needs are required.

Totals: 1-2 bed = 11 houses (30%); 2-3 bed = 15 houses (40%); 3-4 bed = 5 houses (25%); 4 bed or larger houses = 1 (5%).

Of these, at least 35% (or such higher figure as is fixed in local policy) shall be affordable housing as defined in local and national policy.

Of the 20 houses approved on Site A, 7 fall into the affordable smaller homes category. At the moment, 20 houses is sufficient growth for the village given the present issues around lack of public transportation to/from the village.

Other development sites that come forward must fulfil the criteria in this Neighbourhood Plan including, crucially, being well connected with the village. The Parish Council would support development on exception sites in the Green Belt if it could contribute to affordable housing (Policy Villages 3 of the Local Plan). Subject to all planning consents, one site in the village (see HELAA 229 in Appendix F) could provide 18 extra houses if appropriate conditions are met. Windfall housing, which falls within Policy Villages 1 of the Local Plan, may add housing incrementally, but sites will be rigorously measured against the policies in this Plan. Since more than half of the village is included in the Green Belt, this is a significant constraint and development particularly taking account of the policies regarding character and intensification in the part of the village that is outside the Green Belt.

3.2 ACCESS TO/FROM AND AROUND THE VILLAGE

Weston is a small compact village which in principle should be easily walkable. However key facilities in the village are disconnected by lanes and roads where heavy traffic dominates narrow road spaces and footways are not available for pedestrians. Church Lane between St Marys Church and the playing field is particularly identified as a pedestrian hazard. Although public footpaths connect areas of the village across the western fields, these are not accessible to all or in poor weather conditions.

The village has a cycleway which is part of the Sustrans National cycle network but this is limited to a short stretch of the B430, is poorly connected to other routes and is badly neglected.

As of July 2016, there is no direct public transport option to/from the village as the only direct bus (Thames Travel 25 service) was withdrawn due to funding cuts from Oxfordshire County Council. At present there is no alternative public service in place except for a bookable and relatively expensive door-to-door service.

3.3 EMPLOYMENT

The village has few working farms now and a high proportion of residents commute out of the village for work. There are a number of well established businesses in the village, operating from converted buildings within or on the edge of the village, or from the Weston Business Park, situated approximately one mile north of the village along the B430. In addition, there are many residents who work from home in full or part employment. RAF Weston-on-the-Green maintains its own company of staff which provides adventure and force development training through parachuting.

3.4 CURRENT PROFILE OF THE PARISH

Full details of the data recorded for the parish, including data from the 2011 census and information gathered by survey of the villagers in 2015-16 is provided in **Appendices D** and **E**.

Population

The 2011 census showed 523 inhabitants of Weston-on-the-Green parish (recorded from 218 households). The age distribution of Weston-on-the-Green is skewed with relation to neighbouring parishes and the larger county areas, with a high proportion of residents aged 60 plus.

The present skew in the parish towards an ageing population exaggerates the national trend in rural areas, while the 0-15 age group is predicted to fall further. This presents a significant challenge in providing adequate community-level support and public services for the village demographic.

Population structure in 2011: Proportion of residents per age group				
Age Groups	Weston-on-the-Green	Cherwell District	Oxfordshire County	Neighbouring Villages Bletchington, Chesterton, Kirtlington (averaged)
3-5 Years	4%	7%	6%	5%
5-11 Years	7%	2%	2%	6%
11-18 Years	8%	6%	6%	10%
18-25 Years	5%	8%	10%	7%
25-60 Years	44%	49%	47%	46%
60 plus	33%	15%	16%	25%

Table B: Population structure of Weston-on-the-Green compared with related regional figures.(2011 UK Census data, Office of National Statistics www.ons.gov.uk)

3.5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

Weston-on-the-Green is an affluent village with a high level of employment and a high educational profile. The village retains several working farms and businesses that employ local people, and there is a thriving ‘work-from-home’ community. However, the majority of employed residents commute to their workplace outside the village, some considerable distances. The skewed population age range means that the number of retired residents is higher than the Cherwell District average.



Figure 19: Business sites in the Plan area (Crown copyright. All rights reserved)

3.6 HOUSING STYLES

The size of Weston-on-the-Green has fluctuated during the time period 1665 to present when both the number of households and the population was recorded. However, until the 1950s, the number of households was fairly constant at around 100. In the second half of the 1900s, the number of houses increased with the Church Close and Westlands Avenue developments, which together provided about 80 new homes within 15 years. During this time, the population also rose from around 350 in the 1930s to 523 at the 2011 census.

The housing styles visible in the village clearly represent the periods in which they were built

(see **Figure 20**). There are many 17th-18th century stone and thatch cottages and some grander buildings (the Dower House). More substantial buildings surviving in the village from the early-mid 19th century are less common (Prospect House, the Schoolhouse, Jubilee Cottage), possibly reflecting the drop in population between 1850-1920. More recent styles are the bungalows in Westlands Avenue and the new builds on Gallosbrook Way, both 20-21st century developments.

The 2011 census recorded a stable resident population with a median residency period of 18 years. With high owner-occupancy, the housing stock in the village has a low turnover providing few opportunities for incoming residents. The recent village survey figures show a predominance of larger houses (most houses are three or more bedrooms) and few rental properties and affordable homes. Almost half of all properties are owned outright and have been in the same ownership for many years.

The average house price in the village is some £120,000 above the Cherwell District regional average recorded in 2015 at about £500,000. This makes the majority of housing unaffordable for younger families and single occupants, even as housing is rarely available to purchase.

In 2011-2012, fewer than 11% of houses built in the South-East region were constructed as part of a Housing Association or Local Authority scheme, representing affordable housing at entry level. The present housing stock in the village clearly is inadequate for the existing population make-up and for a future which aspires to attract new families to the village, and this issue has significantly shaped the objectives and policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.



Figure 20: Representative housing styles in the village

3.7 EDUCATION

Weston-on-the-Green had a village school from 1855 to 1984 at which time it was closed. There are no educational facilities in the village except for one nursery school on the Weston/Wendlebury parish boundary, 1.5 miles distant from the village centre (see **Figure 21**). Children of school age attend a number of local schools ranging from 2.5 to 5.5 miles distant, or commute longer distances to schools, for example to Oxford. Of concern is the common over-subscription of local schools where places are in short supply. There are no plans to build a school in the village.

3.8 COMMUNITY

As a small village, Weston has limited but well used community facilities. They include the Church, the Memorial Village Hall, the shop and post-office, the playing field, two public houses and a small village green. There is no allotment space.

KEY

Primary school

Nursery

3K Distance radii in kilometres

The figure is a map illustrating the distribution of primary schools and nurseries within a five-kilometre radius of a central point. The map features a central area with concentric orange circles representing distance radii, labeled 1K, 2K, 3K, 4K, and 5K from the center outwards. A network of roads is shown in black lines. A north arrow is located in the top right corner. There are four primary schools marked with orange squares and two nurseries marked with blue circles. The primary schools are located at approximately 3.5K, 4.5K, 4.8K, and 5.2K from the center. The nurseries are located at approximately 2.5K and 3.5K from the center.

Figure 21: Distances to existing nursery and primary schools within a five kilometre radius.

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CONCERNS AND ASPIRATIONS: ISSUES ARISING FROM THE CONSULTATIONS **4**



4 CONCERNS AND ASPIRATIONS: ISSUES ARISING FROM THE CONSULTATIONS

The consultations associated with the building of this Plan identified key concerns and aspirations for the future of the village. These were developed into objectives and where appropriate, into policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, as presented in **Section 5** of this document. The following comments and concerns were noted, and the aspirations (**A1-31**) listed:

THEME 1: VILLAGE CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT

The history of Weston-on-the-Green is a cherished asset that forms an important foundation of the current village form and environment. There is a strong wish to preserve the historic features of the village, namely the vernacular building styles, the Church, Memorial Village Hall, the stocks, the ponds, the Manor, the pubs and the farming heritage. Preservation and conservation are important ideologies that should safeguard the heritage assets in the village. Residents noted the tranquillity of the village at weekends and holiday periods when traffic was less intrusive and its loss during the busy commuting times when traffic noise levels were raised. Some of the important features of the village are being lost, partly because of inappropriate development in the recent past, and while embracing change that will support the future needs of the village, these changes should not be at the expense of its historical legacy. The village should remain as a compact group of related dwellings while continuing also to relate to the open countryside on its boundaries and be attractive for residents and visitors.

A1: Preserve the historic character of the village;

A2: Restore safe access around the village so that the key facilities can be used by all.

Crucially, it is important for the majority of villagers that the existing 'village confines' should be maintained to preserve the outlook from the residential spaces into the open vistas bordering the village, thereby maintaining the rural character and charm of the area. 'Dormitory and linear development' were major concerns, both of which would detract from

the village centre and the sense of community.

A3: Maintain the existing 'village confines' area and resist a linear extension of the village along the B430 and encroachment into the rural boundary areas around the village.

THEME 2: HOUSING AND LAND USE

Weston-on-the-Green has increased in size incrementally and slowly, with only one major development in the 1960s (Westlands Avenue) which added 60 new dwellings, a 30% increase at the time. As a result of data gathered in the Village survey (Appendix D) the Neighbourhood Plan supports a further 15% growth over the period to 2031. 8% growth will be met immediately with **Site A** (Southfield Farm) which already has planning approval.

Priority would be given to previously developed land that is within the 'village confines', delivering homes that meet local needs. A further 12% growth could be supported on two sites in the Green Belt that could meet both the Local Plan policies and the policies and Design Code in this Plan. However these sites are within the Green Belt which bisects the village at Church Road (see Figure 9). The Local Plan policies (BSC2, ESD14 and Policy Villages 1) seek to retain the Green Belt land and protect it where possible unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated which may permit development.

The village includes a diversity of building styles spanning the period from the 12th century (Weston Manor), the 17-18th centuries (stone and thatch), the 19th century (e.g. Prospect House and Jubilee Cottage) and through to the 20th and 21st century. Housing has grown incrementally over the years until the 20th century when the first of the uniform estate developments was built (Church Close followed by Westlands Avenue). The consultations revealed a consensus view that new developments should be on a scale that does not impact adversely on the existing character mix of housing. Therefore, developments that present a dominant style on a single site are not favoured. New housing should be of a style and layout and of an appropriate scale to sit easily with the existing local setting. Sites are shown on Figure 22.

Developments on the edge of the village have been deeply unpopular and vigorously

opposed. Development pressure at these sites has been driven by the designation of the south half of the village as Green Belt, which restricts development. The main growth in housing has therefore been concentrated to the north of the Green Belt boundary, which aligns with Church Road, Church Lane and the Bletchingdon Road (see Figure 5). Rather than extend housing beyond the existing 'village confines' which will erode the areas bordering the 'village envelope', sites within the 'village confines' are more consistent with the wishes of the village. In addition, development puts pressure on the existing infrastructure of the parish and previous evidence of flooding and water management issues in the village confirm that it is essential for developers to engage with Thames Water to ensure that the demand for water and sewage treatment infrastructure can be met and surface drainage requirements and flood risk is properly assessed. The National Policy Statement for Waste Water⁸ states that adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is a requirement for sustainable development.

A4: No large-scale housing developments should be allowed in the village;

A5: No 'satellite' or 'dormitory' housing development should be supported outside the 'village confines', nor 'ribbon development' along the B430 ;

A6: Keep new housing to the west of the B430, maintaining the open rural spaces on the eastern side;

A7: New house styles should be in sympathy with the village character e.g. the Gallosbrook Way is considered an acceptable example of new housing which does not jar with the historic environment;

A8: New housing should support young people with limited means, older people and young families e.g. an appropriate mix of housing types should provide for the existing and future population of the village;

A9: The siting of new housing should not increase traffic problems in the village;

A10: New housing should be energy efficient and should adequately plan for the expanded load on water management infrastructure;

A11: New housing should be laid out with a variety in density, layout, building orientation and sizes to reflect the local building styles and materials must also respect and positively contribute to local distinctiveness.

⁸ National Policy Statement for Waste Water 2012, ISBN: 9780108511486.

THEME 3: COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY

The village grew around a working agricultural community. The latter part of the 20th century saw local employment much diminished and a pattern of commuting established. Today, there are businesses of all sizes and a large number of home-workers which means that the village is populated during the working day again and there is a demand for local shops and services.

A12: Local employment should be encouraged.

Currently, the heart of the village is underused in spite of the fact that Weston-on-the-Green is home to more than 90 businesses and 37% of households have residents who work from home for all or part of the week. Combined with a high proportion of retired people, this means that up to 50% of the population is village-based during the working day. Compared with commuter villages, this is a real asset, which provides an opportunity to promote and expand the use of local shops and services, including the existing shop/post office, focusing these activities at the centre of the village.

A13: Local retail and community services should be expanded to support the local resident population and businesses e.g. ;

A14: Internet and mobile phone access should be improved to bolster businesses;

A15: Access to/from the village to outlying business sites (RAF airfield, Kelberg, the Flight House, Weston Business Park, Bear Necessities Nursery) should be improved.

Enhancement around the village centre and upgrading of village facilities such as the playing field, playground and village ponds would make Weston-on-the-Green a more attractive destination. Improving access to footpath walking routes, the historic village features and making use of nearby formal attractions (Blenheim Palace, Rousham Park, Oxford) would make the village more visitor-friendly and boost village retail and catering businesses, hotel and pubs. Weston Manor, which is both a historic icon in the village and a major employer, can play a valued role in meeting these aspirations. A high priority for families with children is to establish a village recreation area that has a safe access route. The existing playing field

and playground is reached from the vast majority of the village by Church Lane leading onto the Bletchington Road. Footpaths connect with Church Lane but the crucial last distance to enter the playing field is by walking on the road surface on a single width section of the road. With parked vehicles and traffic volume and congestion, this is a dangerous stretch of road that deters many families from using the facilities. It is difficult to see a remedy to this as many historic cottages along Church Lane are built up to the road edge, making it impossible to provide a footway for pedestrians. Therefore, the identification of new space in the village that can be made available for recreation is a priority and Area B has been identified that could provide a safe open space that can be used for passive appreciation of the rural setting and its natural habitat. A draft plan for Area B for the establishment and management of an amenity space, has the strong support of the Parish Council. As a matter of principle and policy, all development should seek to provide a net gain for biodiversity in the local area, thereby positively contributing to the network of green spaces that link wildlife corridors county-wide. A separate site will be sought for allotments, for which a previous call for land allocation in 2014 was unsuccessful. Traffic management schemes are also essential to reduce the impact of traffic on residents and users of village facilities.

Cherwell has the largest expected level of population growth in Oxfordshire at 27,240 stated in the Local Plan. The impact of this on health services that also serve the small villages is considerable. The recommendation of the Oxfordshire Primary Care Commissioning Committee is to allow S106 Planning obligations to fund the expansion of existing health facilities as well as fund new ones⁹. In addition, isolated villages have special needs such as rural loneliness, transport to surgeries, remote health monitoring and other community support facilities. These needs must be taken into account for new development of any scale (e.g. 10 or more houses).

A16: The village centre facilities should be more flexible with improved retail opportunities;

A17: Playground facilities need better access for children and family members and should be improved to include a clubhouse and new features. The designation of a new safely accessible recreational area in the village would be supported for purposes distinct from those already available;

⁹ Primary Care Estates July 2017: Oxfordshire Primary Care Commissioning Committee Paper No 6, Appendix 1 'Health needs associated with Housing need'.

A18: An allotment ground should be sought;

A19: Local expansion of health and social support services for an expanded population should be a condition of planning approval, with consideration of S106 contributions to fund these;

A20: Better information should be provided on the accessible features of the parish (walking trails, cycle paths, historic features, bridle paths and nearby tourist destinations) to encourage healthy transport options;

A21: The ancient open areas bordering the village should be conserved and biodiversity should be protected and enhanced.

THEME 4: TRANSPORT , HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS/WAYS

The high volume and speed of traffic through the village, and the loss of public transport options to the village is the issue that unites the villagers as the main concern for the future. The impact of traffic on the entire village is significant and this led to the large number of specific concerns regarding its future management.

A22: B430 speed limit should be reduced to 30mph through the village;

A23: Traffic calming measures should be introduced subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation;

A24: Speed on the lanes radiating from the B430 should be reduced to 20mph;

A25: The weight restriction for heavy lorries should include both directions on the B430, except when in use as a diversion route for the A34;

A26: The stocks junction should be remodelled to slow down and manage high volume commuter traffic on Church Road and Church Lane;

A27: Pedestrian crossings are needed across the B430 to allow access to commercial premises on the eastern side;

A28: Footways for pedestrian access around the village need extending and upgrading;

A29: The cycle path needs extending and upgrading (should be extended up to RAF airfield and Weston Business Park);

A30: Parking areas need better management in the village centre, and green verges should be reinstated where existing parking has destroyed their integrity;

A31: Some form of public transport must be reinstated for the village.

The Parish Council is aware that central funding is not available to address the aspirations above and are committed to a long-term plan to make improvements incrementally as funding allows.

Some of the concerns and aspirations listed here and arising from village consultations are outside of the scope of the objectives or the Neighbourhood Plan policies. However, they show the depth of feeling of the community to make improvements to the village and the real concerns for the future. The Parish Council is aware that central funding is not available to address the aspirations above and are committed to a long-term plan to make improvements incrementally as funding allows.

A VISION FOR WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN: OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES **5**



5 A VISION FOR WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN: OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Weston-on-the-Green grew slowly over a millennium to become a working village based around four farms by the mid twentieth century. During the closing decades of that century local employment declined and Weston became a largely commuter village. Today, the village economy has come full-circle with over 70 local businesses and many residents working part of the week from home following the internet revolution. As a working village, there is demand for local services, an acceptance that modest growth will bring benefits, but also an insistence that new development shall be appropriate to the character of the village and that intrusive traffic – particularly that which threatens pedestrian safety – shall be calmed.

The overriding principle of the NPPF is that of sustainable development, which is generally taken to mean ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

The NPPF identifies three key elements of sustainable development:

- 1. economic** - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, supporting growth and innovation;
- 2. social** - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing a supply of suitable housing and a high quality built environment;
- 3. environmental** - contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, providing a biodiversity net gain for the area, minimising waste and mitigating the effects of climate change.

While the Cherwell Local Plan policies set the standards for sustainable development throughout the District, the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan supplements these policies to ensure that specific development conditions that are relevant to the local community overlay more general policies and can be implemented within Planning policy.

The adopted Local Plan requires high standards of design and building methods. Weston-on-

the-Green has a rich history which is reflected in many designs of exemplary quality and with notable vernacular features. This Plan seeks to safeguard the quality of any new developments within the designated Neighbourhood Plan area.

5.1 DEVELOPING THE POLICIES

At an early stage of developing the Plan, feedback and opinion received from respondents shaped the objectives and policies presented here. Potential strategic development sites, identified in the Cherwell Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA, 2017) were considered during this process. The full HELAA appraisal of available land in Weston-on-the-Green is provided in Appendix F to this Plan. The assessment is used as an evidence base for the Cherwell Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group also considered each of these sites in the light of the objectives and policies established and the outcome of these are recorded in Appendix F.

Proposed housing development site and potential exception site:

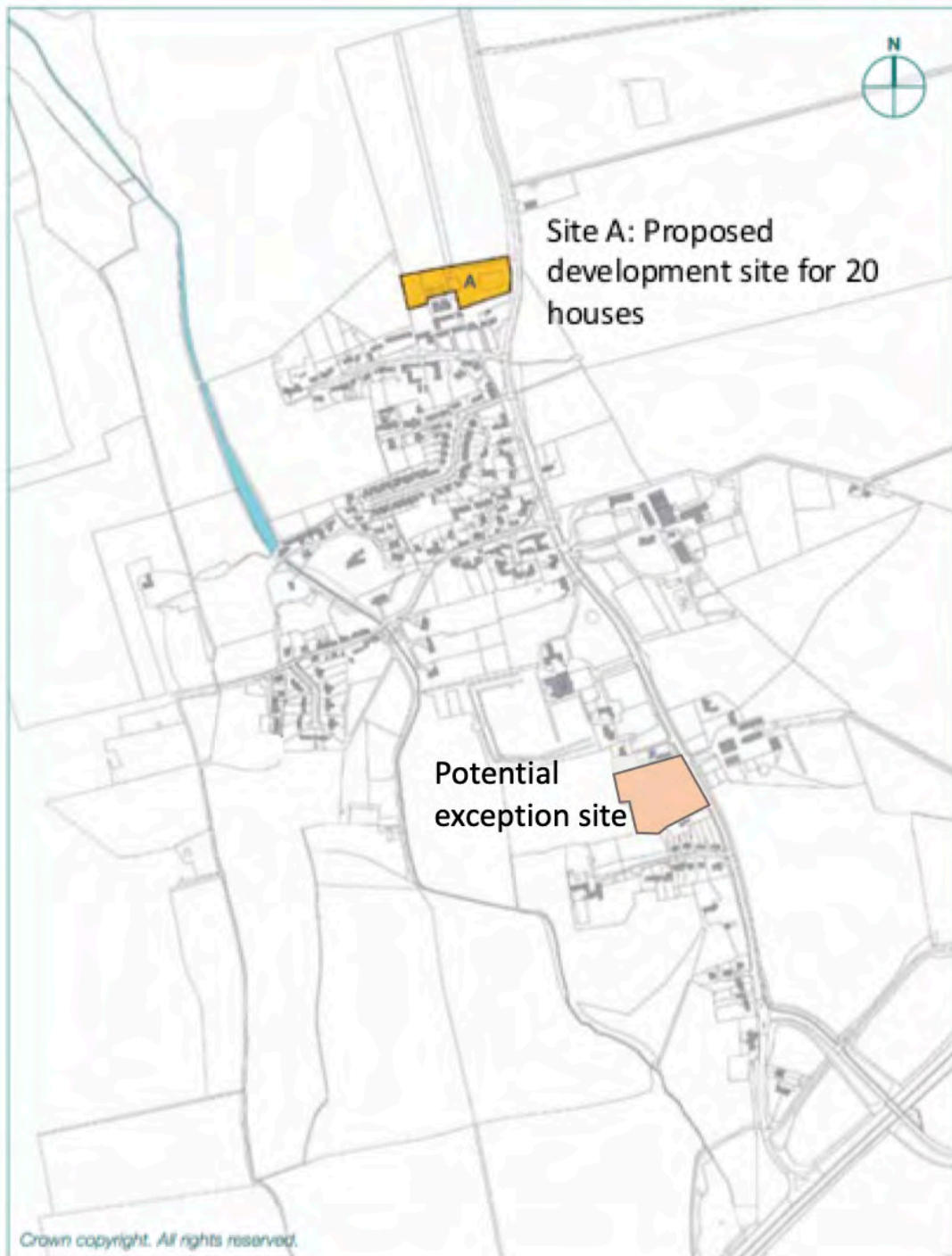


Figure 22: Site A proposed in this Plan (see policy H1) and potential exception site.

5.2 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

Policies and objectives were established in the four themes to address the main concerns articulated by villagers during the consultation process. In each theme, policies are measured for consistency with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (ACLP).

Theme 1 – Village character and environment

Objectives:

<p>O1: To respect and conserve the historic ‘village confines’ within its open countryside setting and preserve open spaces for the benefit of the whole village.</p>	<p>Small rural villages are surrounded by open areas bordering the ‘village confines’. These fringe areas are important buffers between the built-up village dwellings and the actively farmed agricultural land and support wildlife habitats and local access-ways.</p>
<p>O2: To maintain the rural character of the village, and its distinction from the more urban developments of Kidlington and Bicester.</p>	<p>We aim to protect the natural and historic boundaries to the village and the remaining green spaces that contribute to village character. New development should maintain the building character and rural context and protect public rights of way.</p>

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

E1: Development should provide a positive contribution to the locally distinctive character of Weston-on-the-Green and conserve important aspects of the setting of the village, in particular it should:

- **Recognise the importance of open space, rural character and important views; and**
- **Achieve a biodiversity net gain for the parish including appropriate maintenance and expansion of green spaces; and**

- Implement a biodiversity measure for all development proposals; and
- Avoid development outside the village confines along the B430 unless it is in accordance with policies in this Plan and the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

The use of biodiversity assessment indicators is explained in 'The UK Biodiversity Indicators 2017'¹⁰

E2: Development should preserve and enhance the green infrastructure and the natural environment of the area, and where appropriate:

- Provide new footpaths with landscaping to link existing rights of way or other green spaces;
- Value, preserve, support and enhance green infrastructure within the parish, including open green space, wild green space, allotment space, habitats in or on structures;
- Preserve hedgerows or create new ones;
- Create a pond or preserve an existing one;
- Plant trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape;
- Use native plants in landscaping to provide nectar and seed sources for wildlife;
- Incorporate bird and bat boxes into the design of new buildings;
- Keep exterior lighting levels low to encourage wildlife;
- Use green roofs or walls to new or existing buildings where allowed;
- Preserve and manage potential grassland habitats by careful cutting or grazing and monitoring visitor numbers.

E3: Development that makes use of previously developed land will generally be preferred to greenfield locations. Inappropriate development of residential gardens will not be supported where it will detract from the character of the village or will have a negative impact on biodiversity, such as the loss of roosts and nests of bats and birds.

E4: Any lighting proposed should be designed to ensure that it does not cause visual

¹⁰ jncc.defra.gov.uk/ukbi, 2017

intrusion, nor cause adverse effects due to light pollution.

E5: The distinctive wide grass verges between dwelling boundaries and the carriageway should be preserved and protected in the existing village landscape and the same pattern adopted in new developments.

E6: Four sites, the boundaries of which are shown in Figure 15, are designated as Local Green Spaces. They are:

I: Weston Manor grounds fronting the B430;

II: the Stocks situated on a small green at the junction of Church Road and the B430;

III: St. Mary's Churchyard;

IV: the playing field.

E7: New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances.

We consider policies E1-E6 are consistent with each of the following:

NPPF – Para 17 “..ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives; contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment;

NPPF – Para 57 “..plan positively for...public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.”

NPPF – Para 58 “ ..add to the overall quality of the area; establish a strong sense of place; includ[e] green and other public space as part of developments; respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings”

NPPF – Para 70 “plan positively for the provision and use of shared space”

NPPF – Para 109 “..enhance the natural and local environment; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing

net gains in biodiversity where possible.”

ACLP – A9 “cherish protect and enhance our distinctive natural and built environment and rich historic heritage; maintain rural character where its landscapes, its vast range of natural and built heritage define its distinctiveness.”

ACLP – BSC 10 “Consideration will be given to the need to designate Local Green Spaces in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG.”

ACLP – ESD 10 “Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment will be achieved; a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources and by creating new resources.”

ACLP – ESD 11 “Biodiversity enhancements sought in association with development could include the restoration or maintenance of habitats through appropriate management, new habitat creation to link fragmented habitats.”

ACLP – ESD 13 “seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value.”

ACLP – ESD 17 “Green infrastructure comprises the network of green spaces and features in both urban and rural areas including the following: ...natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors, amenity green space, children’s play space, allotments Churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas, ...woodlands, Green roofs and walls.”

Green spaces and priority habitats

Policy ESD10 in the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1¹¹ recognises the value of SSSIs, ancient woodland, aged or veteran trees and priority habitats as valuable contributors to biodiversity and the recent report by Wild Oxfordshire¹² identifies specific areas of concern where habitats and wildlife are under threat. Areas adjacent to designated sites can form part of an overall ecological unit and provide important linkages. Also landscape features such as hedgerows, woods, trees, rivers and riverbanks, ponds and floodplains can be of importance both in urban and rural areas, and often form wildlife corridors and stepping stones for species mobility.

The NPPF (sections 76 and 77) permits local communities, through Neighbourhood Plans, to identify special protection for Local Green Spaces of particular importance to them, subject to certain conditions. They must be demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance and character (e.g. their aesthetic value, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife).

Designated Local Green Spaces and Community/Neighbourhood space in this Plan are shown in Figure 15. Marked Sites I-IV are described in more detail in Appendix G. Each site has been evaluated for designation against the pre-conditions set out in the NPPF Paragraph 77 and a summary of how these sites meet the requirements is given in the Appendix. The designation of Local Green Spaces is intended to provide opportunities to implement elements of a wider green infrastructure strategy (see O1 and O2) for the community: for example, restoring neglected environmental features (hedges, ponds); improving the existing public right of way network to connect missing sections; planting additional street trees and sowing wild flower strips. This protection is embodied in policy E7 of this Plan.

Theme 2 – Housing and land use

Survey and census data have confirmed that the housing mix in Weston-on-the-Green is weighted towards larger detached housing and the most recent survey identified a large proportion of the housing with low occupancy. However, the parish population is skewed

¹¹ Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=11344>

¹² The State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017; www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk.

towards the upper age ranges. There is clearly an imbalance with the needs of the community as it stands and the housing stock that makes up the village. Provision has been made in the Housing policies to support an expanded population with health services appropriate for the parish demographic and the isolation of the population (no public transport).

Objectives:

<p>O3: To deliver a mix of housing that addresses the demonstrable needs of the current and future communities as identified in the housing survey.</p>	<p>Provide small houses for young families, first-time buyers, retirees and single people; those with strong local connections and lower income residents. Insist on high design quality and limited size of individual developments to allow growth which will support sustainability, but not compromise the character of the existing environment.</p>
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HOUSING AND LAND USE POLICIES

H1: A development of 20 dwellings is supported on Site A (Southfield Farm) as shown on Figure 22 subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan.

H2: In addition to the major development set out in Policy H1, sustainable residential development within the village confines will be permitted for conversion, infilling and other development, provided that they protect the character of the village and are in accord with the other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Planning Policies.

H3: New developments should contribute to the overall target of 30% 1-2 bedrooms; 40% 2-3 bedrooms; 25% 3-4 bedrooms and 5% 4-5 bedrooms.

H4: New development should place additional emphasis, in addition to the requirements outlined by the NPPF paragraphs 126-141 and especially paragraphs 132 and 139 on the conservation or enhancement of all heritage assets of the parish and ESD15 of the Local

Plan, such that housing type should be appropriate to the local setting e.g. terrace, detached, semi-detached, affordable, design for life, and relate in scale, massing and layout to neighbouring properties. The density of new housing should be consistent and compatible with the existing prevailing density of the locality in which new development is proposed.

H5: All planning applications for development should provide specific detail to show compliance with the Design Code (Appendix A) and all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, including proper and full consultation with utility companies with specific regard to building over or close to existing public utility infrastructure.

H6: Developments should provide safe and convenient access to village facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and users of mobility aids.

H7: New housing should be: clearly designed for the needs of residents at or beyond the state pension age; adaptable for wheelchair access with ground level WC and shower where practicable.

H8: New developments of 10 or more houses should have a corresponding impact on the health care resources available to support the expanded population. Developer contributions should be considered to enable local health facilities to expand and to support ancillary resources that offset the effects of rural isolation.

H9: Developments of 10 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings (gross), will provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site. In the event of a lower threshold for affordable housing or a higher percentage for provision becoming local policy, these will apply. Where this would result in a requirement that part of an affordable home should be provided, a financial contribution of equivalent value will be required for that part only. Otherwise, financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision will not be accepted.

We consider policies H1 – H7 are consistent with each of the following:

NPPF – Para 7 “...the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity ...”

NPPF – Para 17 “always seek to secure high design quality and a good standard of amenity to all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.”

NPPF – Para 55 “...sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.”

NPPF – Para 58 “Neighbourhood Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area: respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.”

ACLP ESD15 “Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District’s distinctive natural or heritage assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential” ;

“Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated ‘heritage assets’ (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG. Proposals for development that affect non- designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Regeneration proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets, particularly where these bring redundant or under used buildings or areas, especially any on English Heritage’s At Risk Register, into appropriate use will be encouraged.”

ACLP Policy Villages 1 C261 “allows minor development, infilling and conversions with consideration of ESD 15”.

ACLP Policy Villages 2 C272 “in the interests of meeting local housing need in rural areas, an allocation enables development of some new sites (for 10 or more dwellings) in the most sustainable locations.”

ACLP BSC 4 “provide a mix of housing ...that reflects the needs of an ageing population, a growth in smaller households”.

Theme 3 – Community and economy

Objectives:

<p>O4: To expand and support the community wellbeing by improving community facilities including support for businesses and home-workers.</p>	<p>Engage with the Village Memorial Hall trustees and Committee and users of community facilities to discuss plans to enhance the centre of the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some restructuring around St Mary’s Church and the Memorial Village Hall providing centralised community space at the heart of the village (see Figure 23); • expanding facilities for the community • expanding retail service opportunities providing safer pedestrian access to village facilities (see also Transport Objectives); • providing nursery facilities in the village.
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Figure 23: An artist's impression of the square at the centre of the village (Courtesy R. Evans)

COMMUNITY POLICIES

C1: Development proposals should not adversely affect facilities of community benefit.

Developments that seek to enhance the facilities in the area bounded by the Church, the Memorial Village Hall and the village shop/post office, including the Memorial Village Hall itself, should not adversely affect the existing character of the area, nor reduce the parking provision for or associated with the Memorial Village Hall.

C2: Developments that enhance the community educational facilities within the designated Plan area, including safe access for all users, will be supported. Proposals that address the provision of children's nursery facilities and allotments will be supported.

C3: All developments must provide connectivity (virtual services such as broadband, telecoms) to the highest standard available at the time of proposal.

C4: Developments should not harm a heritage asset, character of the village centre, or important space, key street scenes and views such that:

- a. Development that results in harm to the visual contribution of key views set out in this Plan and in Cherwell District Council's Weston-on-the-Green Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) shall not be permitted.
- b. Unless required for sustainable development (and then only to the extent necessary) development will not harm key features of local and heritage

character as described in Appendices A, F-H of this Plan and including:

- i. views of high positive visual impact, particularly the Parish Church, the green and stocks, the Memorial roundabout at the village centre, the wide verges on North Lane and the B430, the Manor frontage; designated Local Green Spaces;**
- ii. the rural character engendered by all types of amenity and green spaces, particularly the playing field, the spinney, the ponds and the Schoolfield.**

We consider policies C1 – C4 are consistent with each of the following:

NPPF – Para 17 “..ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives; contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment;

NPPF – Para 42 “The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.”

NPPF - Para 50 “plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends; identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand.”

NPPF – Para 57 “..plan positively for...public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.”

NPPF – Para 58 ““Neighbourhood Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area: respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.....add to the overall quality of the area; establish a strong sense of place; includ[e] green and other public space as part of developments; respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings”

NPPF – Para 70 “plan positively for the provision and use of shared space”

NPPF – Para 109 “..enhance the natural and local environment; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.”

ACLPL – ESD 10 “Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment will be achieved; a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources and by creating new resources.”

ACLPL – ESD 11 “Biodiversity enhancements sought in association with development could include the restoration or maintenance of habitats through appropriate management, new habitat creation to link fragmented habitats.”

ACLPL – ESD 13 “seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value.”

ACLPL – ESD 17 “Green infrastructure comprises the network of green spaces and features in both urban and rural areas including the following: ...natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors, amenity green space, children’s play space, allotments Churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas, ...woodlands, Green roofs and walls.”

Theme 4 – Transport, Highways, Footpaths/ways

Alongside the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and the Highways Authority to achieve the following Transport Objectives:

<p>O5: Ensure that new developments improve road safety and aim to reduce traffic volume in the parish. Proposals should include measures to limit traffic speeds.</p>	<p>Additional traffic volume, created as a consequence of new housing, is not consistent with the objective to reduce traffic volume in the village. For this reason, O1 led to policy T2, requiring new developments over a minimum size of 10 dwellings to contribute to traffic mitigation measures.</p>
<p>O6: Developments should not adversely affect public rights of way. Exceptionally, re-routing will be considered only where sustainable development is majorly affected in which case any loss of amenity will be minimised.</p>	<p>Where possible, Public Rights of Way should be enhanced by creating or upgrading link paths, improving maintenance and signage.</p>

TRANSPORT POLICIES

T1: Parking areas and access routes related to new development should be designed in a manner in keeping with the local area with regard to scale, materials, splays and signage, be consistent with the stated Design Code and should not result in a net loss to biodiversity or green space.

T2: Developments of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to promote and improve low- carbon transport connectivity by contributing to improvements in the local footway/ cycleway network to facilitate safe and energy efficient means of transport around and beyond the village limits and enhance links with neighbouring parishes.

T3: In so far as planning permission is required, any proposal to alter or extend an existing dwelling that would reduce the level of off-street parking provision will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the overall parking provision retained is satisfactory.

We consider policies T1 – T3 are consistent with each of the following:

NPPF – Para 35 “Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and have access to high quality public transport facilities; create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians”.

ACLP SLE 4 “All development where reasonable to do so, should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. “

5.3 DELIVERY OF THE PLAN

Implementation of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan policies over the period to 2031 will be managed by the Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council in close cooperation with Cherwell District Council.

Meeting the objectives within each theme will be the responsibility of the Parish Council, in consultation and close collaboration with other implementing bodies: e.g. Oxfordshire County Council (highways, public rights of way, countryside access) Natural England, infrastructure providers (telephone, broadband providers), utility companies (Thames Water, underground power and telephone cabling), local/regional amenity groups (Memorial Village Hall trustees, Parochial Church Council) and the private sector (energy generation, nursery facilities).

An implementation plan will be drawn up to make the enhancements described in Section 5.2 alongside the implementation of policies outlined in this Plan. The implementation plan will include: assessing the existing deficiencies in the green spaces and drawing up a list of actions to rectify these; managing existing and new public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by creating flower strips, planting trees to improve the streetscape, improving existing public rights of way by cutting back hedges, improving surfaces, repairing gates and fences and clearing unsightly areas and litter. Every effort will be made to improve all public areas to make them richer in biodiversity, ecologically sound and more attractive for residents. The key responsibilities for implementation of the policies in this Plan are given in Table C:

Table C: Plan policies and responsibilities for their implementation		
Plan policy	How the policy is delivered and monitored	Key responsibilities
<p>E1</p> <p>Development should provide a positive contribution to the locally distinctive character of Weston-on-the-Green and conserve important aspects of the setting of the village</p>	<p>Preserve existing and take every available opportunity to create new areas of open space to help retain the rural character and open areas of community benefit including the reservation and enhancement of important views linking with the rural landscape</p> <p>Achieve a biodiversity net gain for the parish including maintaining and expanding spaces that extend habitat corridors that link designated sites to the north and south of the Parish</p> <p>Implement a biodiversity measure for all development proposals</p> <p>Resist development outside the village confines along the B430.</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC</p> <p>Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>E2</p> <p>Development should preserve and enhance the green infrastructure and the natural environment of the area</p>	<p>Provide new footpaths with landscaping to link existing rights of way or other green spaces;</p> <p>Value, preserve, support and enhance green infrastructure within the Parish, including open green space, wild green space, allotment space,</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC</p>

	<p>habitats in or on structures</p> <p>Preserve hedgerows or create new ones;</p> <p>Create a pond or preserve an existing one;</p> <p>Plant trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape;</p> <p>Use native plants in landscaping to provide nectar and seed sources for wildlife;</p> <p>Incorporate bird and bat boxes into the design of new buildings;</p> <p>Keep exterior lighting levels low to encourage wildlife;</p> <p>Use green roofs or walls to new or existing buildings where allowed;</p> <p>Conserve and manage potential grassland habitats by careful cutting or grazing and monitoring visitor numbers.</p>	
<p>E3</p> <p>Development that makes use of previously developed land will generally be preferred to greenfield locations</p>	<p>Inappropriate development of residential gardens will not be supported where it will detract from the character of the village or will have a negative impact on biodiversity, such as the loss of roosts and nests of</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC</p> <p>Cherwell District Council</p>

	bats and birds.	
E4 Any lighting proposed should be designed to ensure that it does not cause visual intrusion, nor cause adverse effects due to light pollution	Refuse planning applications where lighting is intrusive	Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council
E5 The distinctive wide grass verges between dwelling boundaries and the carriageway should be preserved and protected in the existing village landscape and the same pattern adopted in new developments	Refuse planning applications that do not preserve or protect wide grass verges	Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Oxfordshire County Council
E6 Four sites (I: Weston Manor grounds fronting the B430; II: the Stocks situated on a small green at the junction of Church Road and the B430; III: St. Mary's Churchyard and IV: the playing field) are designated as Local Green Spaces because of their significance to the character of the village and should not be developed.	Refuse planning applications on areas designated as Local Green Space unless exceptional circumstances to mitigate harm are met	Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council
E7 New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances.	Refuse planning applications on areas designated as Local Green Space unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated	Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council

<p>H1 Support the development of 20 dwellings on Site A (Southfield Farm) subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan</p>	<p>Planning is now approved for this development</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>H2 In addition to the major development set out in Policy H1, sustainable residential development within the village confines will be permitted for conversion, infilling and other development, provided that they protect the character of the village and are in accord with the other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Planning Policies.</p>	<p>Refuse planning applications that negatively impact on the character of the village or contrary to the policies in this Plan.</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>H3 New developments should contribute to the overall target of 30% 1-2 bedrooms; 40% 2-3 bedrooms; 25% 3-4 bedrooms and 5% 4-5 bedrooms</p>	<p>Refuse planning applications that do not meet these targets</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>H4 New development should place additional emphasis, in addition to the requirements outlined by the NPPF paragraphs 126-141 and especially paragraphs 132 and 139 on the conservation or enhancement of all heritage assets of the parish and ESD15 of the Local Plan, such that housing type should be appropriate to the local setting e.g. terrace, detached, semi-detached, affordable, design for life, and relate in scale, massing and layout to neighbouring properties. The density of new housing should be consistent</p>	<p>Refuse planning applications that are not compatible with the local setting as set out in the policy</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>

<p>and compatible with the existing prevailing density of the locality in which new development is proposed.</p>		
<p>H5 All planning applications should provide specific detail to show compliance with the Design Code (Appendix A) and all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, including proper and full consultation with utility companies with specific regard to building over or close to existing public utility infrastructure.</p>	<p>Refuse planning applications that do not show compliance with the Design Code or utility requirements</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>H6 Developments should provide safe and convenient access to village facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and users of mobility aids.</p>	<p>Accessibility plans should be provided by developers</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Developers Oxfordshire County Council (Highways)</p>
<p>H7 New housing should be clearly designed for the needs of residents at or beyond the state age pension and adaptable for wheelchair access with ground level WC and shower where practicable.</p>	<p>Developers to incorporate these requirements into plans as appropriate</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>H8 New developments of 10 or more houses should have a corresponding impact on the health care resources available to support the expanded population. Developer contributions should be considered to enable local health facilities to expand and to support ancillary resources that offset the effects of rural isolation.</p>	<p>Developer contributions should be considered to enable local GP practices to expand proportionately to an increase in population and to support ancillary resources that offset the effects of rural isolation</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group</p>

H9 Developments of 10 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings (gross) will provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site.	Refuse planning applications that do not provide the required level of affordable housing	Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council
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<p>C1</p> <p>Developments should not adversely affect facilities of community benefit. Developments that seek to enhance the facilities in the area bounded by the Church, the Memorial Village Hall and the village shop/post office, including the Memorial Village Hall itself, should not adversely affect the existing character of the area, nor reduce the parking provision for or associated with the Memorial Village Hall.</p>	<p>Refuse planning applications that adversely affect community assets or reduce parking in the central village area</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>
<p>C2</p> <p>Developments that enhance the community educational facilities within the designated Plan area, including safe access for all users, will be supported. Proposals that address the provision of children’s nursery facilities and allotments will be supported.</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council to liaise with appropriate bodies and local people</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC</p>
<p>C3</p> <p>All developments must provide connectivity (virtual services such as broadband, telecoms) to the highest standard available at the time of proposal.</p>	<p>Refuse site briefs that do not include up-to-date connectivity</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Utility providers</p>
<p>C4</p> <p>Developments should not harm a heritage asset, character of the village centre, or important space, key street scenes and views.</p>	<p>Refuse planning permission for developments that adversely impact on important spaces street scenes and views.</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council</p>

<p>T1</p> <p>Parking areas and access routes related to new development should be designed in a manner in keeping with the local area with regard to scale, materials, splays and signage, be consistent with the stated Design Code and should not result in a net loss to biodiversity or green space.</p>	<p>Planning applications to comply with the Design Code of this Plan</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Oxfordshire County Council (Highways)</p>
<p>T2</p> <p>Developments of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to promote and improve low-carbon transport connectivity by contributing to improvements in the local footway/cycleway network to facilitate safe and energy efficient means of transport around and beyond the village limits and enhance links with neighbouring parishes.</p>	<p>Financial contributions to be sought from new developments</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Oxfordshire County Council</p>
<p>T3</p> <p>In so far as planning permission is required, any proposal to alter or extend an existing dwelling that would reduce the level of off-street parking provision will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the overall parking provision retained is satisfactory.</p>	<p>Planning applications where off-street parking is reduced to an unsatisfactory provision will be refused</p>	<p>Weston-on-the-Green PC Cherwell District Council Oxfordshire County Council</p>

5.4 MONITORING

Monitoring delivery of the policies will be the responsibility of different bodies as defined in the Delivery and Monitoring table. Delivering the policies will require an integrated approach involving public sector (Weston-on-the-Green PC, Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, utilities), private sector (developers and owners) and voluntary bodies and groups.

The strategic Plan for the Parish will be included as a standing item at each Parish Council meeting and a progress report will be tabled at each Annual Parish Meeting.

The Parish Council website will include updated information on progress during the lifetime and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan. At 5-year intervals a review of progress will be undertaken with recommendations and amendments considered as appropriate.

The delivery of new housing as described in policy H1 will be accompanied by implementation of the objectives within the Parish plan guided by the following time-plan:

Years 1-5 (2018-2023):

Improvements to existing village community facilities:

- Developing an overall Neighbourhood Plan implementation and management programme in consultation with advisory bodies and Stakeholders;
- First tranche of traffic calming measures completed;
- Consultation and plan to improve public transport options for residents;
- Consultation on upgrade to the village centre started;
- Initiate upgrades to cycle routes and footpaths;
- Reinstatement and maintenance of grass verges;
- Defining the grassland management objectives and implementation plan for Area B and initiating first steps.

Years 6-10 (2023-2027):

- Complete upgrades to cycle routes and footpaths;
- Public transport solutions implemented;
- Advanced consultation on the development of a nursery school in the parish;
- Fundraising for major village objectives;
- Upgrades to the village centre completed; design for Village Square proposed;
- Maintaining grassland Management and monitoring progress: reporting to stakeholders.
- Further traffic measures and monitoring.

Years 11-14 (2027-2031):

- Enhancement of community facilities (village centre; football field; footpaths; allotments);
- Appraisal of progress in grassland management and biodiversity on and adjacent to Area B with nearby SSSIs as comparators. Revision of the management plan as appropriate.

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2018-1031

APPENDICES

- . **A** Design Code
- . **B** Statement of community engagement and consultation
- . **C** Historical context for the village
- . **D** Social and economic profile of Weston-on-the-Green
- . **E** Community survey data
- . **F** Site appraisal and Environmental Statement for Area B (the Schoolfield)
- . **G** Landscape setting and important internal green spaces
- . **H** Characteristics of village form (morphology)

APPENDIX A

DESIGN CODE

A1 Introduction

The need for a Code

This Code has been prepared as a guide for developers planning to build in Weston-on-the-Green to ensure that new build developments are compatible with the look and feel of the village, particularly if they are within, or adjacent to, the Conservation Area. Many of the recommendations are derived from the 2009 Conservation Area Appraisal report, prepared by Cherwell District Council and also the analysis of the form of the village set out in Appendices H and J. New developments will be expected to reflect the characteristics described in this analysis¹. The guidance will also be useful for householders planning renovations or refurbishment.

A2 Public realm

Generally, the village is located to the west of the B430, with a main street leading to the Church, shop and village hall, and then to Bletchingdon. Apart from Westlands Avenue, other roads are 'lanes', which traditionally led to the three village farms.

Streets

Streets within new developments should have the characteristics of these 'lanes', with:

- houses located at different distances from the carriageway
- long straight segments with small angles of deflection between each segment to give a gently meandering appearance (see Appendix H)
- grass verges of varying width from the dwelling boundary to the carriageway, with these verges including trees and hedgerows

¹ Photographs of local features provided with permission by R. Evans 2016.

- a shared surface for pedestrians and vehicles, but with a footway (pavement) where the need is warranted
- traffic calming achieved through design

Footways (pavements)

- Any footway created for new developments should link up with the existing network of pedestrian access to village facilities.
- Footways should, where possible, be set back from the carriageway edge and separated from it by a grass verge. In this circumstance, footways should meet the grass verge without edging.
- Footways should be firm, free from undulations or trip hazards. If laid correctly, suitable materials are tarmacadam, asphalt, brick/block paving and paving slabs. Gravel and cobbles are not suitable. (See BS 8300, 5.5).
- Footways should be a minimum of 1500mm wide, if necessary widened to 1800mm wide for a distance of 2m to create passing places (see BS 8300, 5.2(b) and 5.3).

Cycle paths

- Cycle paths should link with existing official cycle ways.

Verges and greens

- Verges and greens are historically characteristic of the village and should be incorporated into new developments.
- Existing and newly-formed grass verges should not, in principle, be used for car parking.
- Where, in exceptional circumstances, grass verges need to be used for parking cars, they should be reinforced, to maintain a 'grassy' appearance.

Kerbs

- Kerbs that separate a footway from the carriageway should be granite or basalt setts laid on their side to match those in Church Road, not precast concrete kerbs.



Street from B430 to the shop, church and village hall



North Lane from the B430



Footway separated from carriageway










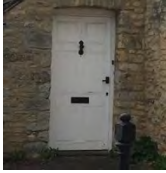
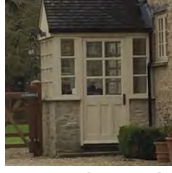


Kerb to footway of granite setts

<p>Shared surfaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared surfaces should be suitable for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, with priority for pedestrians. • The choice of surface should respect the needs of blind and partially sighted people and people who use mobility devices, if necessary, by having a portion of the surface with the characteristics of a footway (see above under Footways). <p>Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pedestrian routes around the village, and access to village facilities, should be accessible to all, including elderly and disabled people (see BS 8300). (see also under Footways above) 	
<p>A3 Housing plots</p> <p>Location of houses within plots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses should be built either directly against a front verge (where appropriate, forming a continuous frontage of terraced houses), or set back from the street with a front garden and a boundary wall delineating the front of the property. The combination of these two typologies gives variety to a development (see Appendix H). <p>Driveways and hard standings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of the surface area of entrance driveways and hard standings should be of a porous material, such as gravel, porous brick/block paving or porous asphalt, with pedestrian access complying with Footways. <p>Waste management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage for refuse bins should be provided where it is not visible from the street. <p>Cycle storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External storage should be provided for cycles. <p>Boundary features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary features should be stone walls (coursed rubble limestone or dry stone walls with 	

<p>cement:sand coping), metal railings, timber post and rail fencing, or hedges of privet or native species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect the 'open' character of the 'lanes', stone boundary walls and post and rail fencing on the public side of house plots should be no more than 1.35m high. • Boundary features should reflect the materials found in neighbouring properties. 	 <p>Typical stone boundary wall</p>
<p>A4 Housing form and tenure</p> <p>Housing form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where houses are designed in terraces, a variation in house width, depth, number of storeys and roof form gives an informal rhythm to the elevation, which is characteristic of the village (see Appendix H). Designers should attempt to achieve this in new developments. <p>Incremental development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain the character of the village, housing sites of sufficient size should be developed incrementally or be designed to appear so. <p>Number of storeys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwellings of 1 to 2.5 storeys are acceptable, but care should be taken to consider the relative eaves height of adjacent houses. 	
<p>Eaves height</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be compatible with the scale of village houses, the eaves height of new houses should be lower than in common for modern "estate" houses, if necessary by projecting the rafters more than normal beyond the external wall (see Appendix H). <p>Housing tenure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per Cherwell DC and national guidelines, we require a proportion of new housing developments to be 'affordable' housing. • We also encourage a proportion of dwellings to be 'Shared ownership' and homes 	

<p>that are of appropriate size and cost for first time buyers.</p> <p>Innovative design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support Cherwell's initiative on 'self-build' or 'custom-build' and are not, in principle, against innovative housing design. 	
<p>A5 Housing standards</p> <p>Design quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments should be compatible with the principles in <i>Building for Life</i>, which is supported by CABI. <p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments should achieve <i>Secured by Design</i> accreditation. <p>Accessible and adaptable housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support the concept of accessible and adaptable housing designed to meet the changing needs of the occupants over time (e.g. through accident, old age or disability) (see the Lifetime Homes standard or Requirement M4(2) of Approved Document M of the Building Regulations). <p>Energy efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support forms of construction where the fabric energy efficiency is maximised in line with the Sustainable Construction policy of Cherwell District Council. 	
<p>A6 Detailed features and materials</p> <p>Roof pitch and shape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roof pitch should be consistent with the chosen roof covering, with steeper pitches being preferred within the Conservation Area. Pitched roofs should have a minimum pitch of 35 degrees. 	
<p>Dormer windows and Velux rooflights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both of these are used throughout the village and are acceptable for new developments, provided the design chosen and 	

<p>the materials used are compatible with the examples used in the rest of the village.</p>	
	
<p>Walls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walls should be finished in coursed rubble limestone to match the rest of the village, although the use of red brick quoins, combined with the stonework, is acceptable to give variety. Lime mortar should be used as modern mortars can accelerate weathering in stone. A traditional style of pointing (not 'ribbon' pointing) should be used – this is particularly important for stonework. 	 <p>Rubble limestone</p> <p>Stone with brick quoins</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The occasional use of render on some walls, coloured to match the tones of natural stone, is also acceptable. Weatherboarding is acceptable for outbuildings, e.g. garages, but should be used sparingly. 	 <p>Render coloured as natural stone</p>
<p>Roof coverings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following roof coverings are acceptable for pitched roofs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain clay tiles (not concrete tiles or Pantiles) Thatch Stonesfield or Welsh slates. 	 <p>Clay tiles</p> <p>Slates</p>
<p>Eaves design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of eaves in the village do not have pronounced fascia and soffit boards. To be compatible with traditional village houses, the eaves should be designed either without a fascia board or, if one is proposed, it should be unobtrusive. 	 <p>Thatch</p>

<p>Windows and doors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hung timber casement windows of 2 or 3 lights are acceptable. Adjacent casements should be 'balanced', i.e. have the same glazed area dimensions. • The ratio of window area to wall area should following traditional practice, except in exceptional circumstances. • Windows of uPVC are not acceptable for housing within the Conservation Area, and discouraged outside this area. Very durable windows of timber or timber composite construction, which have much less environmental impact, are now available. 	 <p>Side-hung casement windows</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doors should be of timber, either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solid boarded ○ Part glazed, or ○ Of stable door design. 	 <p>Solid boarded door</p>  <p>Part glazed door</p>
<p>Lintels and sills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lintels should be of timber (traditional for farm buildings), stone or stone-effect. • Sills should be of stone or stone-effect. Ceramic tile sills are also acceptable. <p>Garage doors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timber boarded side-hung garage doors are preferred to metal or fibreglass up-and-over doors. 	 <p>Stone sill</p>  <p>Ceramic tile sill</p>

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

1 - How the Neighbourhood Plan was Developed

First Stages:

A small group of villagers met with the PC Chairman and Parish Clerk in November 2014 to explore the idea of creating a Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council (PC) called a village meeting in March 2015² to explain what a Neighbourhood Plan is and to see if the village was in favour of one being written for Weston-on-the-Green. As there was a majority vote in favour of this the PC held another meeting in April 2015 where Geoff Botting of Woodcote village, who had successfully completed a Neighbourhood Plan, explained the process. Following a full discussion of the issues within the village, it was agreed at that meeting to encourage the Neighbourhood Plan and specifically to address issues of traffic and development.

A core group of volunteers was established which met several times, during which 4 task groups, Community Engagement, Village Form & Character, Social & Economic Aspects and Transportation & Highways, were formed and team leaders allocated to each.

A village meeting was held in August 2015 for all those interested in volunteering and from this the Steering Group was formed, along with people volunteering for each task group. Each volunteer was asked to fill in a data protection form to ensure they were happy with their contact details being circulated to other member of the groups.

The Social & Economic Aspects group prepared a questionnaire to be circulated to every household and business in the parish boundary. It went through several drafts with the Steering Group before being signed off and delivered around the parish. The returned forms data were collated before the first Village Event in October 2015.

The Team leaders met several times before the Village Event to finalise the details of the Event.

² A full list and dates of all meetings held are available on request from clerk@westononthegreen-pc.gov

Meeting 1: 17th and 22nd October 2015



The first Village Meeting was held on Saturday, October 17th and repeated on Thursday, October 22nd 2015 (two events were held so that more villagers could attend). It was advertised through the village newsletter, a leaflet drop and large advertising panels at all entry points to the village. The format was an exhibition and workshop:

Display panels were prepared on different topics and presentations given of work undertaken to date. Key survey data were presented which provided a basis for discussion e.g. the average age of residents, house size, number of children, form of transport and other matters of key concern. The presentations were followed by a workshop consisting of small group discussions using a prompt question sheet and led by a member of the Steering Group.

The workshop reviewed the context for a Neighbourhood Plan and set the expectations for the tone of discussion. Each table was led by a member of the Steering Group and consultation, together with questionnaires, were used to capture the key concerns and aspirations for the future of the Parish. These identified potential improvements in the parish environment.

Notes were made on a flip chart and then summaries of each group discussion were shared with the meeting.

A large aerial map of the village was located in the centre of the room and the attendees were encouraged to place Post-it™ notes to highlight issues and potential sites for development.



The final tally of Post-it™ note suggestions and green (agreement) or red (disagreement) spot stickers recorded on the aerial map was over 70. The attendance at the meetings was between 60-75 people with landowners evident at the second meeting.

The exhibition was moved to the Church, which is open every day thus enabling people to drop in at their leisure, read the exhibition panels and add their notes to the aerial photograph. It was displayed for three weeks.

The key points were collated and circulated to the Steering Group which met to discuss the next steps to be taken. From these key issues the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies began to be drawn up.



2 - Second Stages:

The Steering Group began to write a draft proposal of ideas that had emerged from the October meeting. They looked at various options of sites for new development.

Team leaders met with various landowners to discuss whether they were happy with their land being put forward as suggestions for new housing/village green etc.

There was a second village meeting held in February 2016 (again run twice) to display the draft proposals that had emerged from the October meetings. Villagers were given questionnaires listing all these ideas and were asked to tick or cross anything they liked/didn't like. There were also discussion groups where people could debate issues that had been raised, and put forward further suggestions.

Meeting 2: 6th and 10th February 2016

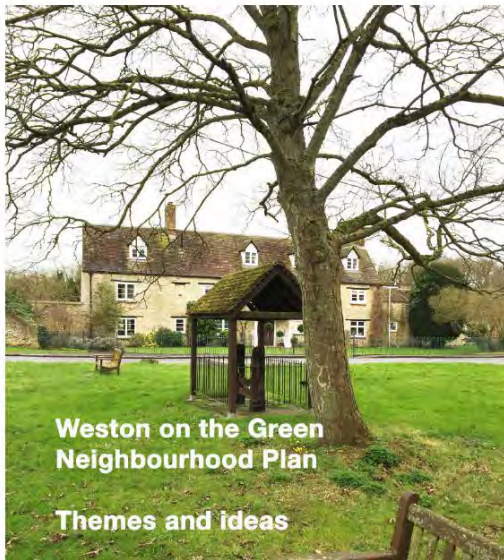


The second Village Meeting was held on Saturday, February 6th and repeated on Wednesday, February 10th, 2016. The meetings were focused around an exhibition organised by topic.

The topics were:

Community and design	Housing
Environment and Public spaces	Traffic calming, Movement & design

Information was provided to attendees in a booklet where opinions could



be captured on a response form. The centre of the booklet contained an aerial map of the village with numbers indicating twenty-six key items. These included proposed housing sites, a village square, new village green, site for allotments and a day nursery for children, key views to protect, the village historic boundary, public footpaths both current and needed, National Cycle Network, sites for traffic calming, preserved green spaces and lanes with original verges, the Conservation area and the Greenbelt which runs through half of the village.

Once the majority of the group had had a chance to look at the exhibition, members of the Steering Group led small group discussions. This was an opportunity to enlarge on the proposals, explain in more detail and answer questions. There was a large table with an A0 map with the proposals numbered so the public could have an overview of the village and an awareness of the impact of future development. The results of the questionnaire were tabulated and there was an overwhelming majority support for these proposals to be developed into policies.



Figure A2 Consultations in Meeting 2

3 - Third Stage

Once the returned questionnaires from the February meetings had been collated, the Steering Group began to form the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan document. An Editorial Team, consisting of Diane

Bohm, Roger Evans, Susan Daenke, Mike Finbow, Alex Reid and Patsy Parsons, was formed. Members of the Steering Group continued to meet with stakeholders to ensure they were up-to-date with how the plan was developing.

Meeting 3: 20th September 2016



The third Village Meeting was held on Tuesday 20 September 2016 with the aim of consulting with the village on the pre-final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan . It was a well attended and lively meeting, with over 35 villagers turning out.

The evening was a chance for villagers to hear an explanation of the contents of the final Neighbourhood Plan , how the central planning process works and how a NP fits into this; a description of the proposals put forward at the original village consultation meetings and how they were chosen and thus to discover what the Neighbourhood Plan means for the village. It was also an opportunity for any feedback to be given and questions to be asked. Diane Bohm, the Chair of the Steering Group (SG), led the presentation with support from Susan Davis and Bob Hessian.

It was agreed that the next steps would be:

- All feedback from this meeting would be considered based on the information in the Executive Summary;
- The final draft would be presented for approval to the Parish Council and then submitted to Cherwell District Council for review;
- After consideration of CDC's comments, the Parish Council, which is the legal body for submitting the Neighbourhood Plan, would formally submit the Plan to CDC;
- It would go to the Planning body and either be agreed and comments/suggestions made or be rejected;
- If agreed with suggested amendments, the Steering Group would make changes as advised by the CDC.

The Steering Group continued to work on amendments to the draft throughout October. In November 2016 there was a meeting with Cherwell District Council and they encouraged us to continue to look at policies on topics ranging from protection of the Conservation Area, to improved digital communication and encouragement for small businesses, provision of allotments and recreation facilities including a new site and a biodiversity policy. Their report was thorough and it took us several months to digest and address it.

Communications: A website was created along with a Facebook page so the village could be continually updated with the process and progress of the NP. Each edition of the Village News also ran an article explaining what had happened and what the next stage of the process was.

The dates of all Steering Group meetings, plus the Village Events, were advertised on the website and in the Village News and posters were put round the village before each meeting reminding people the Steering Group meetings were open to everybody and they were welcome to attend.



Four banners were put up in prominent positions around the village advertising each village event, as well as leaflet drops and posters around the village.

The community engagement team was responsible for delivering two Social and Economic surveys as well as organising three leaflet drops that

reached every household and business in Weston-on-the-Green.

Every Steering Group meeting was advertised in the Village News and by posters throughout the village during the week before each meeting. To ensure that the Steering Group had the maximum number of responses to the ideas and proposals put forward at the second

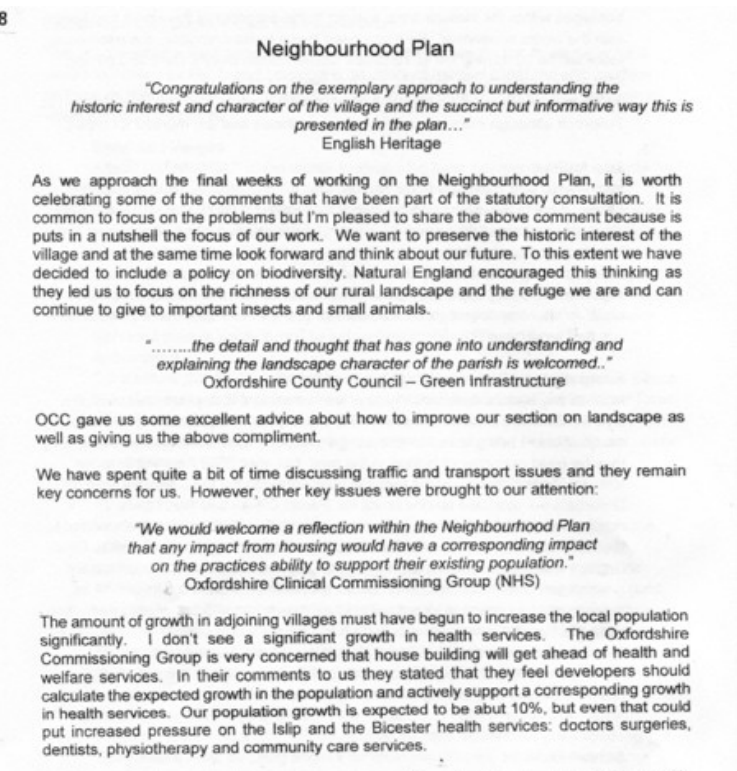
Village Event in February 2016, door-to-door who would be affected and met with young mothers to discuss their concerns about traffic and access to the playground.

After the October event, people were encouraged to visit the Church and view information on the website. Before the February event, volunteers conducted a door-to-door questionnaire to try to engage the whole village with the process.

Following that event the SG felt it important to reach the households who had not so far engaged in the consultation process. An email was distributed asking for volunteers to talk with neighbours; another leaflet drop was organised directing people to the website showing the results of the survey.

There was agreement to form a Schoolfield Group to investigate: the history of the field, any protection of the field and to plan for the future of the field. Two members of the Neighbourhood Plan group, both Parish Councillors volunteered for the group. Over the next five months the Neighbourhood Plan was amended to include a deeper look at the issues of biodiversity, connection to a wildlife corridor status and use of the Schoolfield. There was consultation with Cherwell District Council who in turn consulted the Environment Agency and Thames Valley Environments Records (TVERC) in order to understand how our concerns regards the Schoolfield, plus our biodiversity statement, would affect the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Option. Agreement on the wording occurred after consultation with the WF2 group.

A second village meeting occurred on January 24th, 2018 with 100-120 people present. This was an information sharing meeting regarding the research the ~WF2 group had done on the history of the Schoolfield and the present challenge of a potential housing application. Villagers were reassured that the Neighbourhood Plan had amended the plan to include a specific policy on the meadow.



Consultation has been wide and varied throughout the process of writing the Neighbourhood Plan. Writing the NP has been an iterative process and as such had asked much of the volunteers who have worked tirelessly throughout the process.

APPENDIX C

HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR THE VILLAGE

The earliest map of the village, dated early 18th century and showing individual buildings, is in the County records office. Apart from the sequential issues of OS maps, the next most informative maps are those drawn up at the time of the sale of the village in 1918. The sale catalogue worked with two maps – one of the whole parish, showing fields, woodlands etc. and one showing the centre of the village and detailing properties in their different sale lots.

Comparison of the 1800 map with that of 1918 shows that there was very little change in the scale of the village during the 19th century. In fact when Jubilee Cottage (Church Lane) and the School House (North Lane) were built in 1887, it was reported in the local paper that these two buildings represented the only new properties built in the village 'within living memory'. Given that this phrase usually represents about 60-80 years and also that the 1800 map so closely resembles that of 1918 it is clear that the village did not grow during the Victorian era.

From records of the Manor during the 19th century, it is fairly clear that the owners, the Norris Berties, were not in the top echelons of the landed gentry and most of the mid-19th century was characterised by an empty Manor House undergoing modernisation. The family were probably unable to spend money on property for their tenants and it is likely there wasn't a great call for new buildings in the village anyway. In the Victorian age, many of the children of village families moved away because mechanisation was beginning to improve agriculture and reduce the number of people required in the workforce. Many men and women moved away to either Birmingham, West London or places further afield such as Australia and Canada and local women left to find work in service all over the country.

The most significant developments of the village in the 20th century was the building of Church Close and Westlands Avenue in the 1950's and 1960's. This provided approximately 50 bungalows and 18 semi-detached houses in a very conventional layout on land adjacent to the Ben Jonson public house and on the Bletchingdon Road. Extension of the Westlands Avenue development to Shepherd's Close added a further six semi-detached houses in the 1970's. These housing areas remain incongruous with the rest of the village pattern which exemplifies small incremental additions to housing over centuries, demonstrating different styles. This has built an interesting mix of housing which adds to the essential character and history of the village.

Certain areas of the village have remained undeveloped and are now valued as important open and green spaces: the wetland areas around North Lane, Gallosbrook and the Millpond, the ridge and furrow field near

the old School (the Schoolfield), the Manor moat, and areas to the west of Knowle Lane. Some of these areas are in danger of loss or damage if action is not taken to safeguard them from neglect or inappropriate development. In addition, although some commercial development of the farmland on the eastern side of the B430 has occurred, only very few dwellings are located on this side of the road. This is consistent with the historic origins of Weston-on-the-Green and its descriptive name.

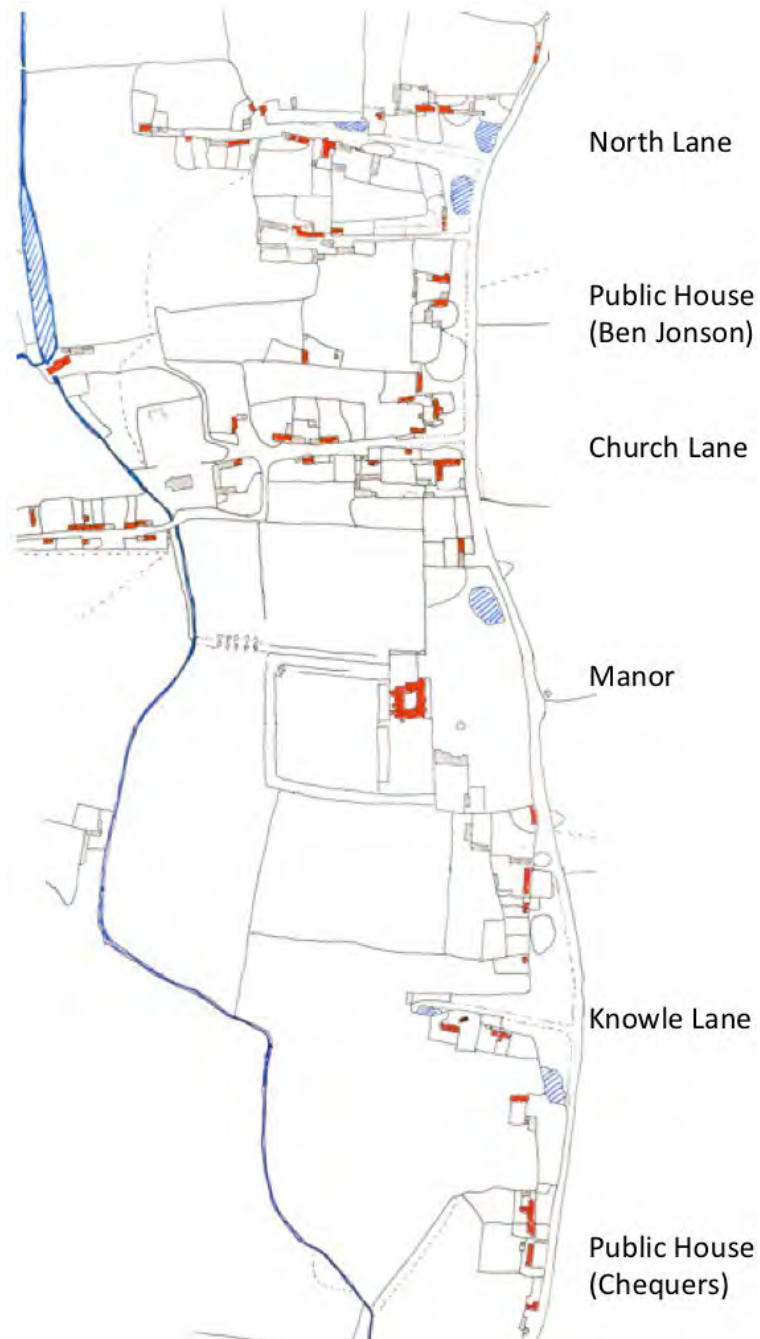




Fig A4: Weston on the Green 2000

APPENDIX D SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE OF WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

Current profile of the parish. Parish population:

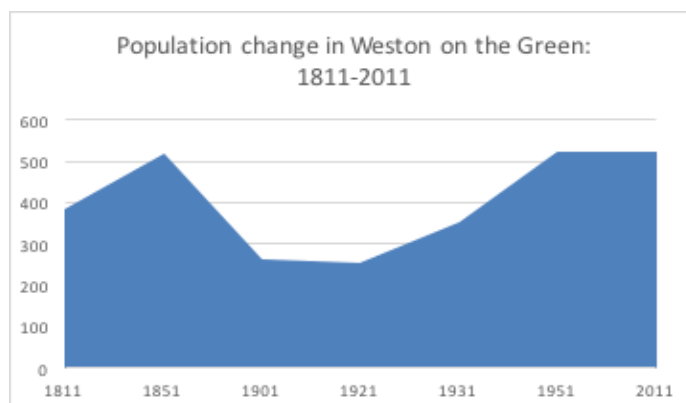
The 2011 census showed 523 inhabitants of Weston-on-the-Green parish (recorded from 218 households).

The population of the parish represents 0.37% of the total Cherwell District population and 0.08% of the total Oxfordshire county population. The age distribution of Weston is skewed in relation to neighbouring parishes and the larger county areas with a high proportion of 60 plus residents.

Age structure	Number of Persons
nursery 3-5	20
primary 5-11	37
secondary 11-18	41
University 18-25	25
working age 25-60	230
retired & 60plus	170

Fig A5: Population numbers per age group. The median age of the parish in 2011 was 48.5 years compared with 40.5 years in 2001: the median for the UK population at large in 2011 was 40 years (ONS census data).

Historic population data (1811 to present) indicate that the village population has not increased significantly over 150 years, with a notable loss of residents between 1851 and 1901.



This may have been a combination of low registration of births (documented in the Constables' Book 1797-1843⁴) and slow recovery of the population as a result of the 1914-18 war. At best, there has been an overall small increase in population since 1811 to date, although the population age distribution has changed significantly in that time.

⁴ The 'Constables Book for the Parish of Weston' is a handwritten record of public expenditure kept by a series of parish constables from 1797 to 1843. The record ceased following the County Police Act of 1839.

The present skew in the parish towards an ageing population exaggerates the national trend in rural areas which is predicted to rise from 24% 65+ people recorded in 2013 to 29% 65+ people in 2025.

Equivalent predictors show significant expansion of the 65+ age group in Weston-on-the-Green to 2037 which could see this group exceeding 32% of the total parish population. By comparison, the 0-15 age group represented 19% of the total parish population in 2011 and is predicted to fall to 16% in 2037.

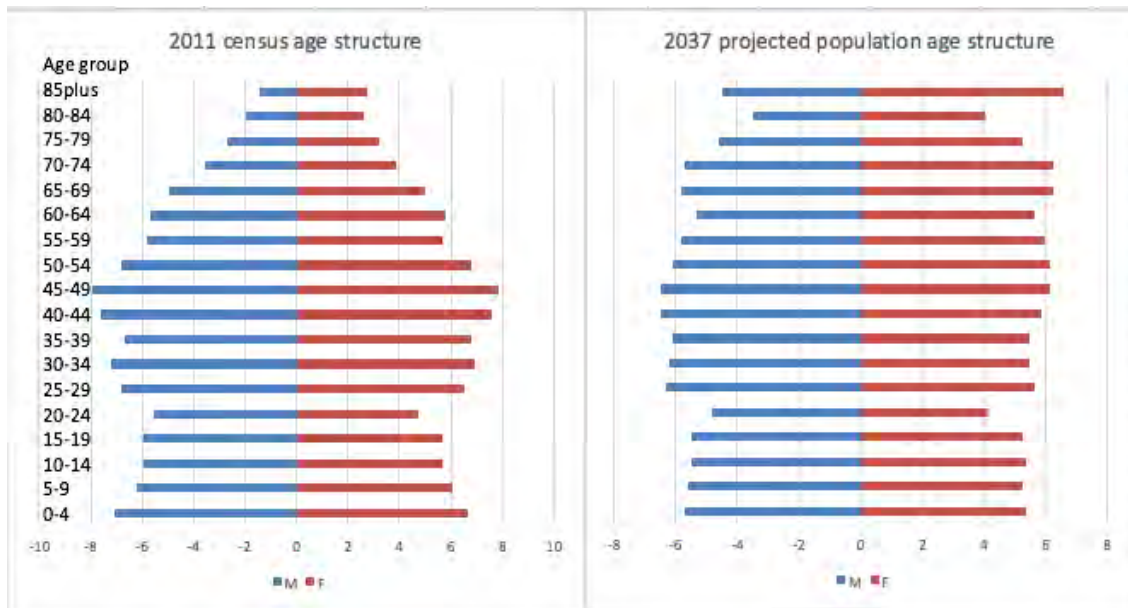


Fig A7: Age distribution for Weston on the Green at 2011 and projected to 2037 (calculated using Population Estimates Analysis Tool released 28/4/16, Office for National Statistics).

⁵ 2013 Rural Ageing Research Summary Report of Findings, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, 2013: www.tns-bmrb.co.uk.

Social and economic considerations

Weston-on-the-Green has a high level of employment closely linked with work opportunities in Oxford, Bicester and London. In 2011, 71% of adult residents were in some form of economic activity, 1% were declared unemployed. Average gross incomes for the parish were in the highest category at £980 average per week or more⁶ with minor flanking areas in Kidlington and Bicester falling below that level.

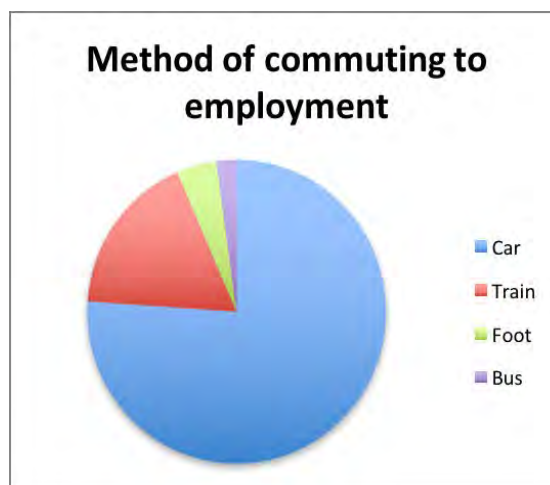


Fig A8: Method of commuting to employment for residents of Weston on the Green

The adult population in Weston-on-the-Green is therefore relatively advantaged with 40% having degree or higher qualifications, a low index of deprivation and better than average health (<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>). However, this apparent advantaged picture can mask pockets of deprivation which may put an extra burden on community and local services.

Employment

In 2011, the census recorded a total of 324 residents (62% of the total population of the parish) in some kind of employment, of which 54% were in full-time employment, 22% in part-time employment and 24% were self-employed. In 2015, the proportions recorded (Survey 2) from village residents were largely unchanged from these with the added information that 37% of households had residents who regularly worked from home.

Weston-on-the-Green supports a number of businesses in the village. The Cherwell area 016 is rich in businesses in the Professional, Scientific and Technical sector (19%), agriculture (16%) and building /engineering (11%)⁶. Survey 1 in the parish recorded more than 90 businesses, many located at the Weston Business Park, the Manor Farm retail development and within the village. Most of these employ 0-4 people with some notable exceptions (Kel-Berg Trailers and Trucks Limited, David Beecroft Limited, Axicon Limited, The Manor Weston) each of which employs in excess of 10 people. Many businesses are situated outside the village settlement area although there are a large number of residents and small businesses working from home in the village (Figure 19).

⁶ Data from the Super-output area 016, of which Weston-on-the-Green is a subcategory area, 2007/2008

Of the villagers in employment, most (79%) commute from the village to their place of employment by private vehicle.

Similarly, the majority of workers employed by businesses in the parish commute from outside the parish boundary to their workplace.

Housing

Of the 218 households identified in the 2011 census in Weston-on-the-Green, a high percentage (83%) were owner-occupied.



The median residency period in the village is 18 years, with one resident having lived in the village for 69 years. Weston-on-the-Green therefore has a core of relatively long-term residents of which 96% are owner-occupiers. Between 76% (census 2011 data) and 82% (survey 2015) of households had 3 or more bedrooms and most were detached.

Data collected over the last five years showed that the majority of households had two residents, despite the predominance of larger housing in the village.

Figure A9 shows consistency in this trend comparing the 2011 census data (purple) with village survey data (green) collected in 2015.

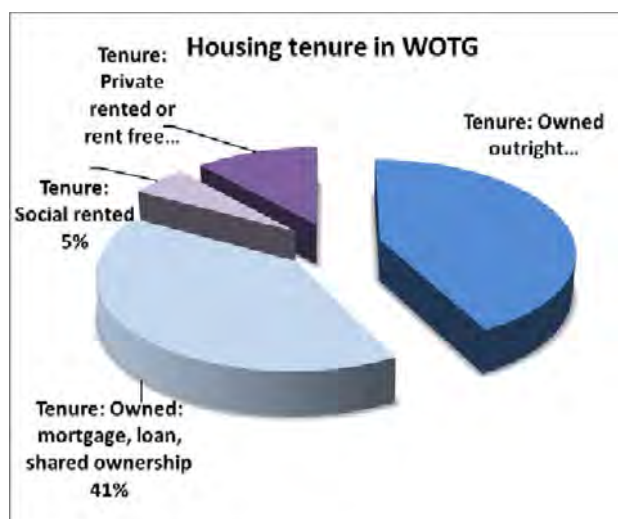


Fig A10: Ownership/rental status for housing in the village.

Rental properties were in the minority, with only 5% being shared/social rental and 10% being private rentals.

In 2011-2012, fewer than 11% of houses built in the South-East region were constructed as part of a Housing Association or Local Authority scheme, representing affordable housing at entry level. In Weston-on-the-Green, the recent development of Gallosbrook provided seven houses close to the village centre, three of which were part of a shared ownership scheme. However, 47% of residents of Weston-on-the-Green wanted new housing to fall into one of

“affordable, retirement/sheltered, shared ownership or Council/Housing Association” categories.

70% of village residents (Survey 1) agreed that more housing should be built in the village, identifying the need to attract young people to the village as being the main motivation (33% of respondents wanted young people), closely followed by the need to accommodate retirees (26% of respondents) who wish to stay in the village but may need alternative accommodation types.

However, the median value of properties in the village in 2013 was £344,995, significantly above the regional median (Cherwell District) of £220,000 and local people have concerns about the affordability of housing in Weston-on-the-Green, particularly for young people and families. In particular, there are a number of young adults who were raised in the village and would like to return as homeowners, but are unable to do so because of the lack of affordable, available housing.



Overwhelmingly, given the current average price of real estate in the village and surrounding area, the need for affordable houses was highlighted in the survey responses (20% of all responses included this as a priority need). The average price of real estate in the OX25 postcode was almost £500,000 in April 2016 and despite the economic constraints of the last 7 years, has risen steadily over that time (Housing Market trends for

OX25). Firstly, most housing prices are beyond the means of many younger people and first-time buyers. Secondly, there is little available housing that comes to market in the village and sales tend to be quickly completed.

Nurseries and Schools

The village has one private pre-school/nursery within the parish boundary, Bear Necessities (near Wendlebury, 1.5 miles). Others are more distant:

- o Willow Cottage (Bletchingdon, 2.2. miles)

- o Chesterton Play Group (Chesterton, 3.4 miles)

The village survey of 2015 identified that, despite the low number of resident children of pre-school and school age in the village, a much larger number of children were regularly cared for/supervised in the village by grandparents or other relatives/friends. This brought into focus a need for more nursery facilities in or close to the village and other community services for young children.

Weston-on-the-Green has no school in the village. The original school, founded in 1855, closed in 1984. Children in the village are served by five primary schools within a radius of 5.5 miles from the village centre:

- Chesterton VA C of E: 3.4 miles
- Kirtlington VA C of E: 4.9 miles
- Bletchington Parochial VA C of E: 2.5 miles
- Dr South’s VA C of E, Islip: 4 miles
- Heyford Park Free School: 5.5 miles

Three of these schools are full to quota or oversubscribed for 2016 and two (Bletchington and Heyford Park) are filling rapidly. Children attending secondary schools and sixth form colleges travel further afield to Bicester, Woodstock, Heyford Park, Oxford, Banbury, Abingdon, Witney and Headington. Compared with the national average, a higher proportion of children from the village attend independent schools. There are currently no plans to build a school in the village.

Community facilities and services

Weston-on-the-Green has a lively social life and the available facilities are well used. The village survey provided an indicator of the use and popularity with residents. Many residents use the village shop/post office on a daily basis and there was a clear emphasis on the importance of maintaining this service for the village. The Memorial Village Hall, which is run as a charity governed by a Board of Trustees, also provides facilities that support activities for both the village and external users.

Frequent users from the village are the Women’s Institute, Parish Council, Garden Club, Weston Walkers, Weston Society, Painting and Art group, and various fitness groups. In all, the Memorial Village Hall recorded more than 2000 local users in 2015 with a further 1000 external users from commercial bookings.

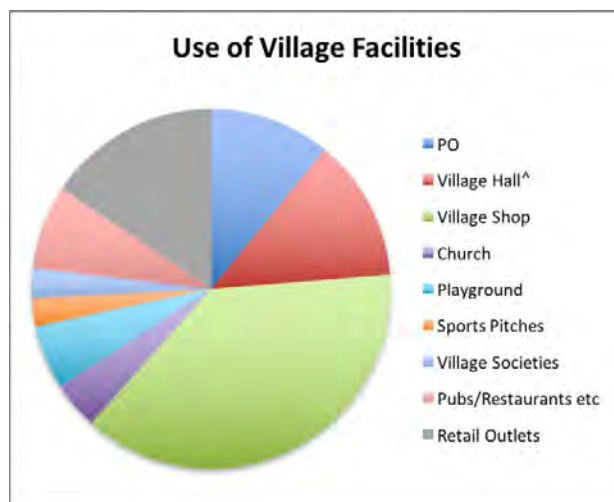


Fig A12: Use of village facilities as captured in the Neighbourhood Plan survey 1.

The playing field and playground are the main space for recreation on the community green. Situated on the edge of the historic heart of the village, it is poorly connected to the rest of the village, relying on the main Bletchingdon road as the primary access route from elsewhere. The road has no verge or footpath and is a serious barrier for users of the playing field and playground as children and families find access difficult and dangerous.

At the heart of the village is the Church of St Mary the Virgin in the Akeman Benefice, which is still well attended. The Church bells have recently been restored and a new bell-ringing group has convened. The village has actively supported the upkeep and improvement of the Church for many years and is looking at supporting some secular activities in the Church.

Informal social life focuses on the two public houses and the Milk Shed, a popular café and ice cream parlour on Manor Farm.

Although a small village, Weston makes the most of its limited community services and facilities. The recent village surveys conducted as part of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation identified the significant number of residents who undertake at least some regular work from home. This has been largely unrecognised until now, and brings into focus areas where community facilities can be upgraded to support this economic activity and help to rebuild vibrancy in the village.

Weston has strong links to surrounding villages and facilities in Oxford and Bicester. The parish is keen to protect its historic assets (e.g. the moat, the village ponds, the broad grass verges, the spinney and nature trail, the footpath network and the scheduled SSSIs) from unsympathetic development.

Transport and highway considerations

Primary access to the village is via the B430 on a north/south axis. There is a secondary route to the village from the Bletchingdon Road using Church Lane and Church Road to join the B430.

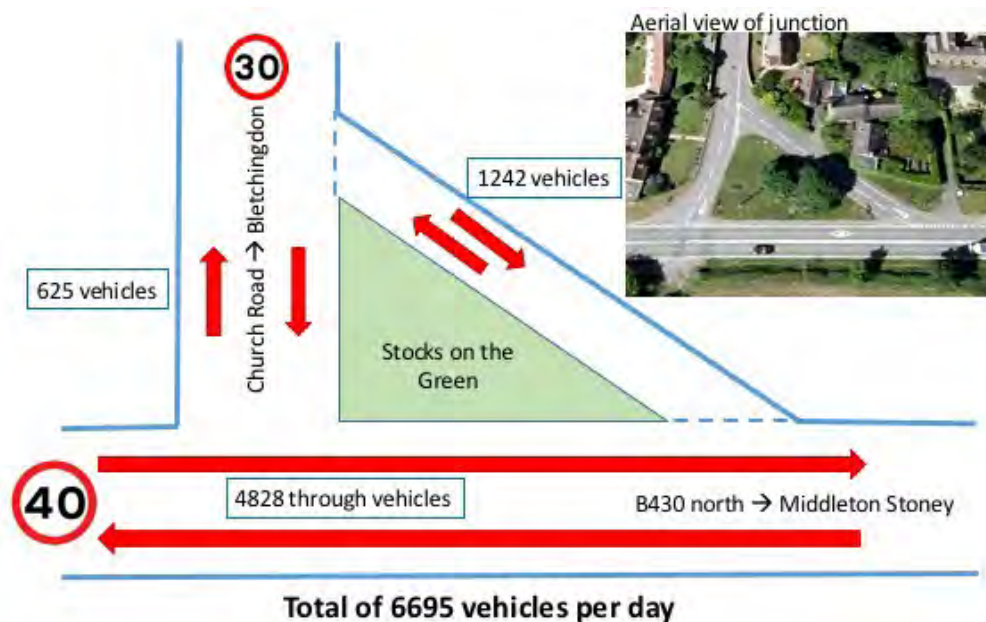


Fig A13: Traffic volume recorded in one day of April 2016 (school holiday period).

The B430 is subject to high traffic volumes often at speeds above the 40 mph limit currently in force. Traffic surveys have been undertaken in the last five years to monitor traffic volume and speed.

Survey 1, 2011: Speed survey B430

Survey 2, 2015: Vehicle volume B430 and Church Road

Survey 3, 2016: Vehicle volume and speed, B430 and Church Road

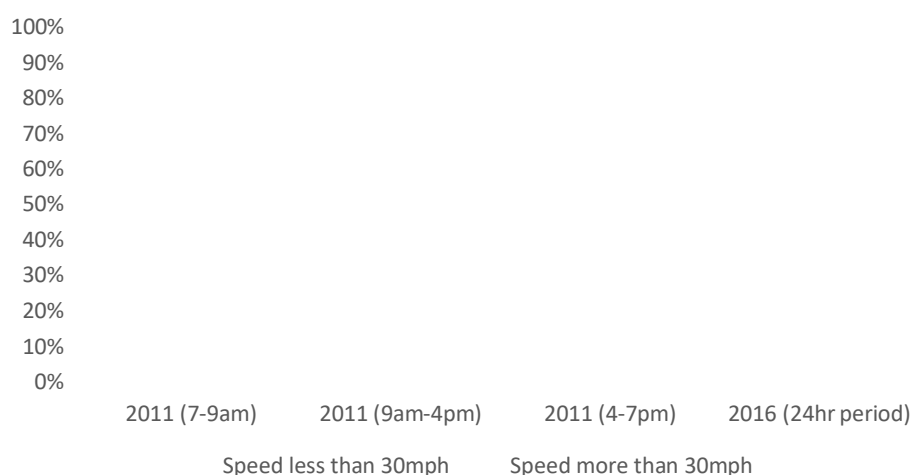
A survey undertaken in April 2016 recorded more than 6,500 vehicles per day using the B430, including over 200 lorries and HGVs. There is a weight restriction on the south flyover access to the A34 which is poorly observed. High traffic volumes were also observed on the partly single lane width Church Road/Church Lane route (more than 1750 vehicles per day) again often at speeds in excess of the 30 mph limit. At peak periods, over 150 vehicles per hour use this narrow lane to avoid congestion on the A34.

Car	2232	1511	1577
Motorcycle	19	21	13
Light van	166	128	109
Large van	267	172	124
Lorry	65	52	29
HGV/articulated lorry	151	21	5
Bus/coach	10	8	1
Farm vehicle	3	2	9
Totals	2913	1915	1867

Fig A14: Number of vehicles recorded in a 14 hr period (0500 1900) April 2015

A vehicle speed survey undertaken in 2011 showed that 33% of vehicles exceeded the 30mph limit between 07.00 and 09.00 during the morning peak period; 64% exceed the speed limit between 09.00 and 16.00 and 42% exceed the speed limit between 16.00 and 19.00 during the evening peak.

Speed survey data 2011 and 2016



Noise is a significant factor at peak commuter times due to the traffic volumes, and the noise of heavy vehicles travelling through the village at night is particularly disruptive for residences close to the B430. The junction

of the B430 with the Bletchingdon Road creates an element of hazard for commuters as well as pedestrians as the road layout here is confusing for users. The lack of pavements on Church Road/Lane restrict the ability to safely access the village shop, Hall, Church and the playing field which are the "core" of the village.

There are no pedestrian crossing points on the B430 that would allow easy access from the residential part of the village to the west of the B430 to the businesses and facilities to the east, even though the Milk Shed café is well used by villagers and accessed regularly by foot. The sweeping curve of the B430 and the 40mph speed restriction make vehicular access from the side streets a cause for concern.

Public transport is almost non-existent. The only bus service through the village was discontinued in July 2016. There is therefore a high reliance on cars for employment commuting and daily activities such as shopping and attending appointments (e.g. doctor, dentist etc).

The public footpaths and bicycle paths lack co-ordination to allow access through and around the village.

APPENDIX E

COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA (see Figure 3 of the Plan)

Survey 1a – Basic householder profile: Householder responses

The village survey conducted in October 2015 sought to establish key drivers for identifying the type of housing and facilities that residents felt were important for the future. The identification of valued facilities helped to prioritise new housing sites in the village. The survey responses were collated; volunteers helped with personal visits to residents where necessary.

Neighbourhood Planning – WG S&E survey questionnaire –
31/07/15

People:

- 1) age profile:
 - a) which age range do you belong to? <21; 22-39; 40-59; 60-74; 75+
 - b) how many people are in your household?
 - c) Will this number change: in 5 years; 10 years; >10 years?
 - d) How long have you lived in the village?

Housing:

- 2) Households:
 - a) What type of dwelling do you live in?: detached, semi detached/terraced, flat/maisonette, bungalow, caravan/mobile home/temp structure/ other
 - b) How many bedrooms: bedsit/1, 2,3,4 or more
 - c) Housing tenure: is your dwelling owner occupied; housing association/council rent; private rent; 2nd home + duration of residence/ tied to employment
 - d) Unoccupied housing (this is probably not for the questionnaire but we need to know the number in the village (if any))
- 3) Suitability of your housing:
 - a) Is your home: Too small; too large
 - b) What features affect your answer above: garden/ stairs/access/repair/upkeep/parking/ other
 - c) Ideally would you like to: remain in own home; move to other premises?
 - d) What assistance would you require to remain in your home: home repair/handyman, adaptation (eg stairlift, disabled access), equity release, sheltered support
 - e) In selecting a new home to move to, what are the important factors in selection
 - f) Single level living
 - g) Purchase/rental cost of property
 - h) Running costs
 - i) Public transport
 - j) Close to support services: health facilities, post office, bank, other
 - k) close to schools/nursery

- l) close to shops/leisure facilities
- m) close to centre of village (church and social focus)
- n) close to countryside
- o) close to friends and family
- p) Is there a need for more housing in the Parish?
- q) Yes – in 5 yrs/ >5 yrs; No

- 4) What reasons are there for new housing?
- a) Family members wishing to move back to village
 - b) Living with parents
 - c) Family expanding
 - d) Retirement/downsizing/equity release/lower cost
 - e) Health issues/support needed
 - f) Closer to amenities
- 5) Affordability:
- a) Annual incomes of those with village housing need:
 - b) < 10Kpa; 10-25K; 25-40K; >40K (how does this align with housing association shared ownership rules)
 - c) What kind of new housing do you think should be built in the village:
 - d) Affordable housing (definition?)
 - e) Open market development
 - f) What type of development (flats, terrace/semi det, 1-2 bed, 2-3 bed, 3-4 bed, 5-6 bed, detached, bungalows, courtyard development (shared areas)
 - g) Shared ownership schemes
 - h) Council and/or Housing Association housing

Business in the Parish:

- 6) Do you work in a business within the village?
- a) Do you work from home (all the time/part of the time)
 - b) If you are an owner/manager of a business, how many people do you employ at this location (how many from the village?)
 - 1
 - 2-5
 - 6-10
 - 10+
- 7) Are there any facilities that would make working from Weston better? (e.g. availability of meeting rooms, shared facilities, faster broadband)
- a) If you travel to work, what is the distance of your commute?
 - b) Within the Village/Parish
 - c) Oxford/Oxfordshire
 - d) London
 - e) Elsewhere
 - f) How do you travel to work
 - g) Car
 - h) Bus
 - i) Train
 - j) cycle

Use of Village and neighbouring amenities:

- 8) Do you have nursery and school-age children in your household?
- a) Number of children (and ages)?
 - b) Do you use a nursery in the Parish?
 - c) Other nursery facilities used – distance from home?
 - d) Which schools do your children attend – distance from home?
 - e) How do your children travel to school: bus; car; bicycle; other?

Users of Village facilities: -how often do you use:

- a) Post office
- b) Village Hall
- c) Village Shop
- d) Church
- e) Playground
- f) Sports pitches
- g) Village societies
- h) Pubs and restaurants
- i) Retail outlets (e.g. Godwins Farm)

Which existing village amenities do you most value (e.g. 1=unimportant to me; 5 = essential)

- a) Post office
- b) Village hall
- c) Village shop
- d) Church
- e) Playground
- f) Sports pitches
- g) Village societies
- h) Pubs and restaurants

Are there other or better amenities which you would like to see in the village(e.g. nursery school, community meeting rooms, improved bus service etc)

Free comment

Survey1b- feedback on current village profile: Householder responses
How many people are in your household?

Count of Replies	65
Average	2.28
Median	2
Household Size:	
Single Person	12

2 People	32
3 People	11
4 People	7
5 People	1

How many residents of your household are in the age range:

Age	<18	18	25	>6
		24	65	5
1 per household	5	3	12	16
2 per household	6	1	21	23
3 per household			3	

How long have you lived in the Village (years)?

Average	21.22
Min	moved this year
Max	69 years

What type of dwelling do you live in?

Dwelling Style	Count
Detached	35
Semi/Terrace	22
Flat	0
Bungalow	14

How many bedrooms in your dwelling?

Bedrooms	Count
1 Bedroom	2
2 Bedrooms	10
3 Bedrooms	24
4 Bedrooms	31

Housing Tenure:

Owner Occupied	68
Housing association	2
Private Rent	1

Is your home:

Too Small	1
Too Large	4
Right Size	57

Factors affecting home size response:	
Stairs	1
Access	1
Repairs/upkeep	1

Parking	1
Other	3

Ideally, would you like to move to other premises in the next 10 years?

[Redacted]	
Yes	13

What assistance would you require to stay in your home?

[Redacted]	
None	50
Home Repair/Handyman	8
Adaptations	3
Care support	7

In selecting a new home to move to, what are the important factors?

[Redacted]	
Single Level Living	16
Cost of Property	26
Running/Repair costs	21
Public Transport	30
Close to: Support Services	23
School	9
Shops/Leisure	31
Village centre	29
Countryside	35
Family and friends	25

Do you think there is a need for more housing in the Parish?

[Redacted]	
Yes - in 5 years	32
Yes - in over 5 years	15
No	21

What reasons are there for new housing?

[Redacted]	
Proximity to family	15
Young families moving to the village	38
Family expanding	7
Retirement/downsizing/equity release/lower cost	31

Health issues/support needed	7
More single occupancy	14
Other	3

What kind of new housing do you think should be built in the village?

Affordable housing	43
Flats	6
Terrace/semi detached	20
1-2 bed	31
2-4 bed	31
5+ bed	5
Detached	15
Bungalow	23
Retirement/sheltered housing	32
Shared ownership schemes	22
Council/Housing Association	19

Are you employed at present?

Employed	Full time	32
	Part time	14
Self Employed	Full time	8
	Part time	9
Student		4
Other	(sometimes "retired")	39

How often do you use the Village facilities?

	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Post office	20	20	13	15	3
Memorial village hall	6	23	36	6	0
Village shop	21	19	5	8	20
Church	14	35	13	10	0
Playground	32	23	3	6	2
Sports pitches	50	12	0	2	1
Village societies	15	22	32	1	0
Pubs Restaurants etc	1	33	27	6	2
Village retail	0	17	25	28	3

Are there other or better facilities which you would like to see in the village?

Schools	19
Community meeting rooms	7
Other educational services	13
Better connectivity (broadband, mobile signal)	51
Allotments	30

"Other" Suggestions for improvements:
 Group for Pre-school Street Light, Vet
 Traffic Calming Bus Service Hourly

B: Survey feedback on current village profile: Business Related Results. How many people do you employ at this location, and do they reside in the parish?

Employee number	Businesses with employees	Residing in the parish
1	3	1
2-5	4	2
6-10	1	
10+	1	

Are there any facilities that would make working from Weston better for your business?

Facilities	
Availability of Meeting rooms	1
Shared Facilities	1
Faster Broadband	7
Better Mobile Connectivity	5
Better Visitor/staff Access	1
Other	1

How do your employees travel to work?

Car	26
Bus	
Train	
Cycle	2
Foot	4

Number of employees and distance travelled:

	Number Employees	Distance
Within the Village/parish	2	0
Oxfordshire	28	Ave 10 miles
London	0	0
Elsewhere	2	30

Survey outcomes:

- A total of 77 survey responses were received out of 218 households which had the opportunity to make a return (35.3% of total) and including 73 total attendees of the two village meetings held on Feb. 6th and 10th 2016.
- The survey questions were based on the inputs from villagers who attended the meetings of Oct 17th and 22nd 2015 and were designed to collect more in-depth views on focused issues.
- Outcomes for each section of the survey are summarised as the percentage of votes for or against each idea put forward.

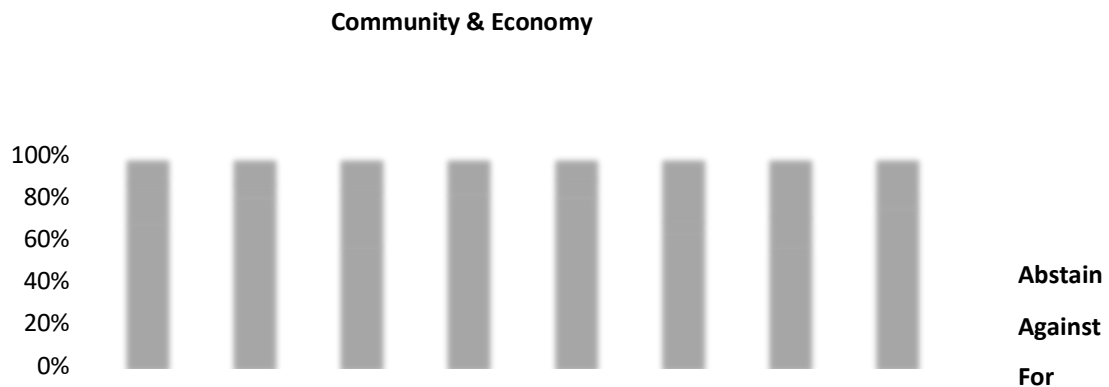
The results to the sections of the survey were as follows:

Community & Economy

Ideas:

- Create a village square between St. Mary's Church and the Memorial Village Hall
- Improve mobile phone reception, Wi-Fi hot spot at village square
- Promote a pop-up café on the square
- Upgrade the Memorial Village Hall and add a conference room and an auxiliary room
- Retain village shop and post office in its current location
- Retain some of the non-residential building stock to accommodate community businesses (e.g. A3 use class: restaurant / café)
- Identify a site for a nursery school within a 10-minute walk of 80% of homes
- Investigate the demand for allotments and possible provision

Results:



Housing Ideas

- Priority for young people, families and elderly long-term villagers wanting to down-size
- Maintain settlement pattern of winding lanes to the west of B430
- Work with land-owners willing to offer sites for affordable housing, self-build and custom-build
- Sites identified for small clusters of housing – see Proposals Plan exhibition panel
- Produce a general Design Code for new developments in the village – see Design exhibition panel
- Produce Site Development Briefs for each potential site to guide development

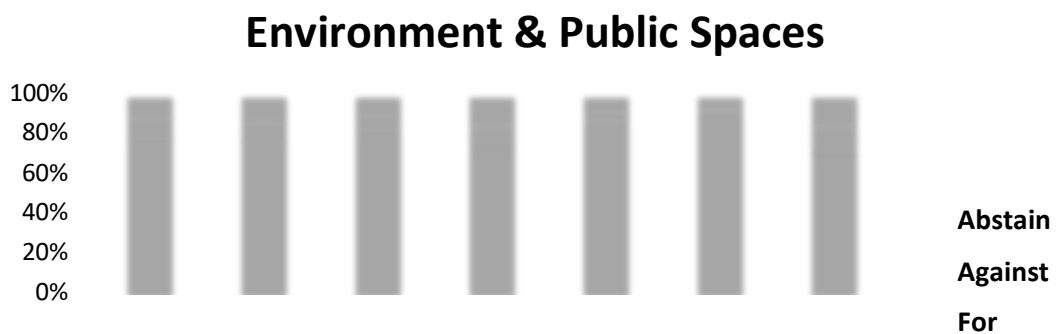
Results:



Environment & Public Spaces Ideas

- Retain the open nature and big skies east of the B430
- Retain the countryside setting to the north of North Lane
- Retain the ridge and furrow field
- Identify the remaining green spaces in the village that should not be built on
 - see Proposals Plan exhibition panel
- Protect broad verges: aim for off-road and off-verge parking where possible
- Protect ancient water courses
- Preserve dark skies and tranquillity

Results



Traffic Calming & Movement Ideas:

- Reduce the speed limit on the B430 to 30mph by agreement with Oxfordshire County Council
- Create a traffic-calming feature at the northern and western entrances to the village (B430 and Church Lane)
- A special scheme in Church Lane to be designed to ensure pedestrian safety between the post office and the play ground
- Establish 'Home Zones' on all other streets within the village, with a 20mph speed limit and priority for pedestrians (requires agreement with the County Council)
- Provide pedestrian crossings giving access to the east side of the B430 both at the junction with Church Road and at the Milk Shed
- Establish new public rights of way to improve the pedestrian network
- Create new bus stops and shelters on the B430, close to Chequers, for an hourly Stagecoach S5 (Bicester / Oxford) service.

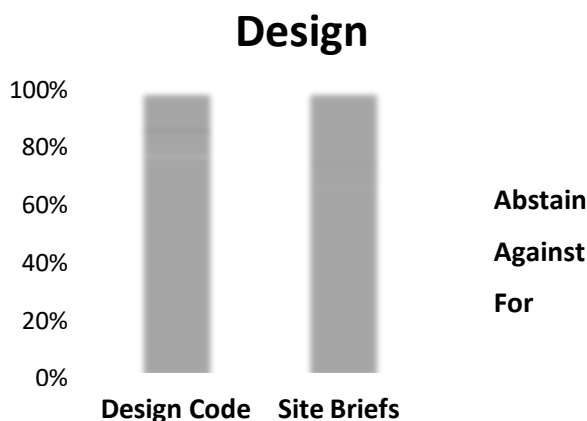
Results:



Design Ideas:

Produce a general Design Code (Appendix E) to ensure developers design housing that is compatible with the existing village.

Results:



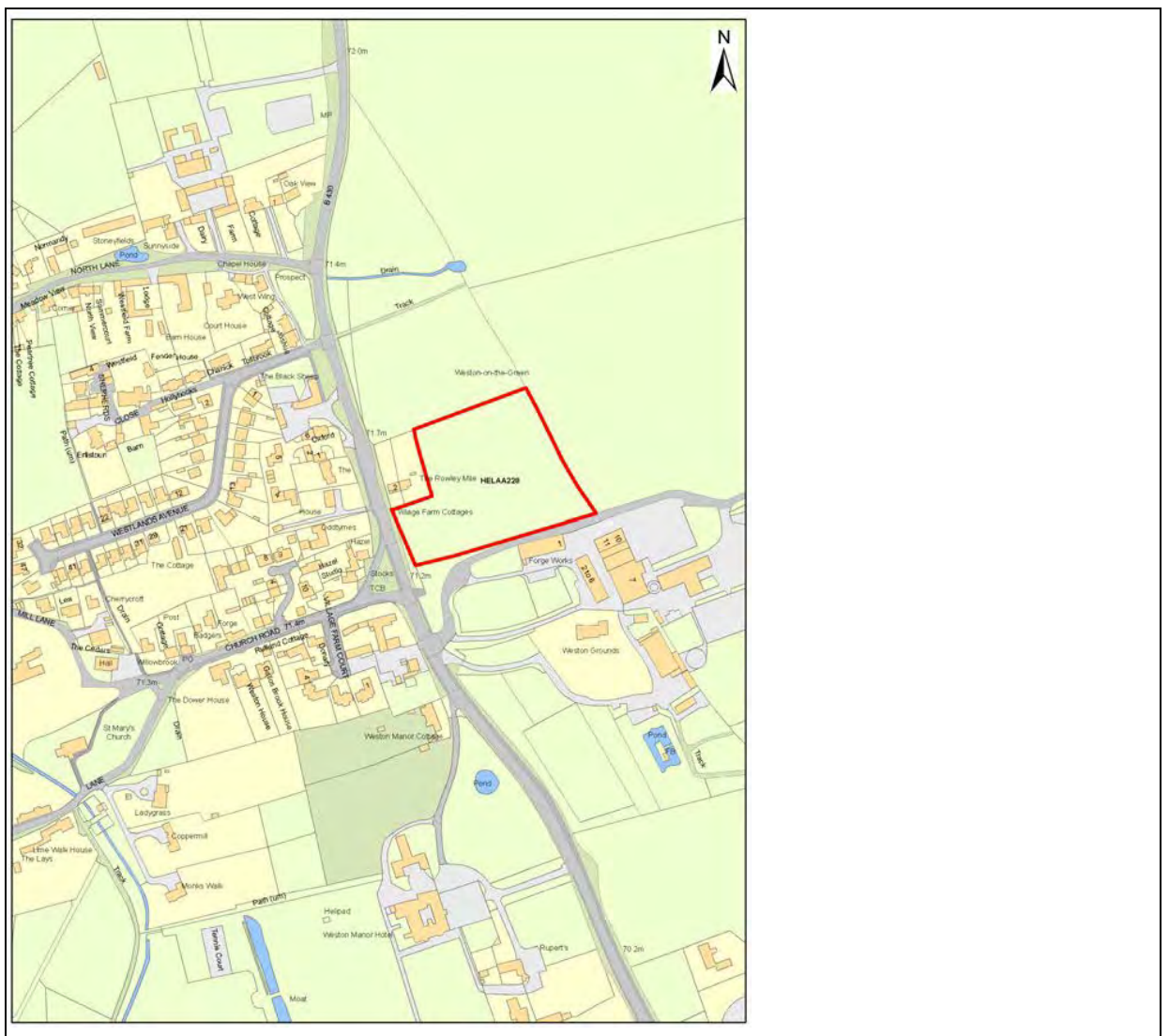
APPENDIX F

SITE APPRAISAL FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT –

This section shows the sites in the CDC Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) 2018. In the left column, the overall assessment by CDC is stated; the site description relates to the map below; the right column records the assessment in the context of this Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies.

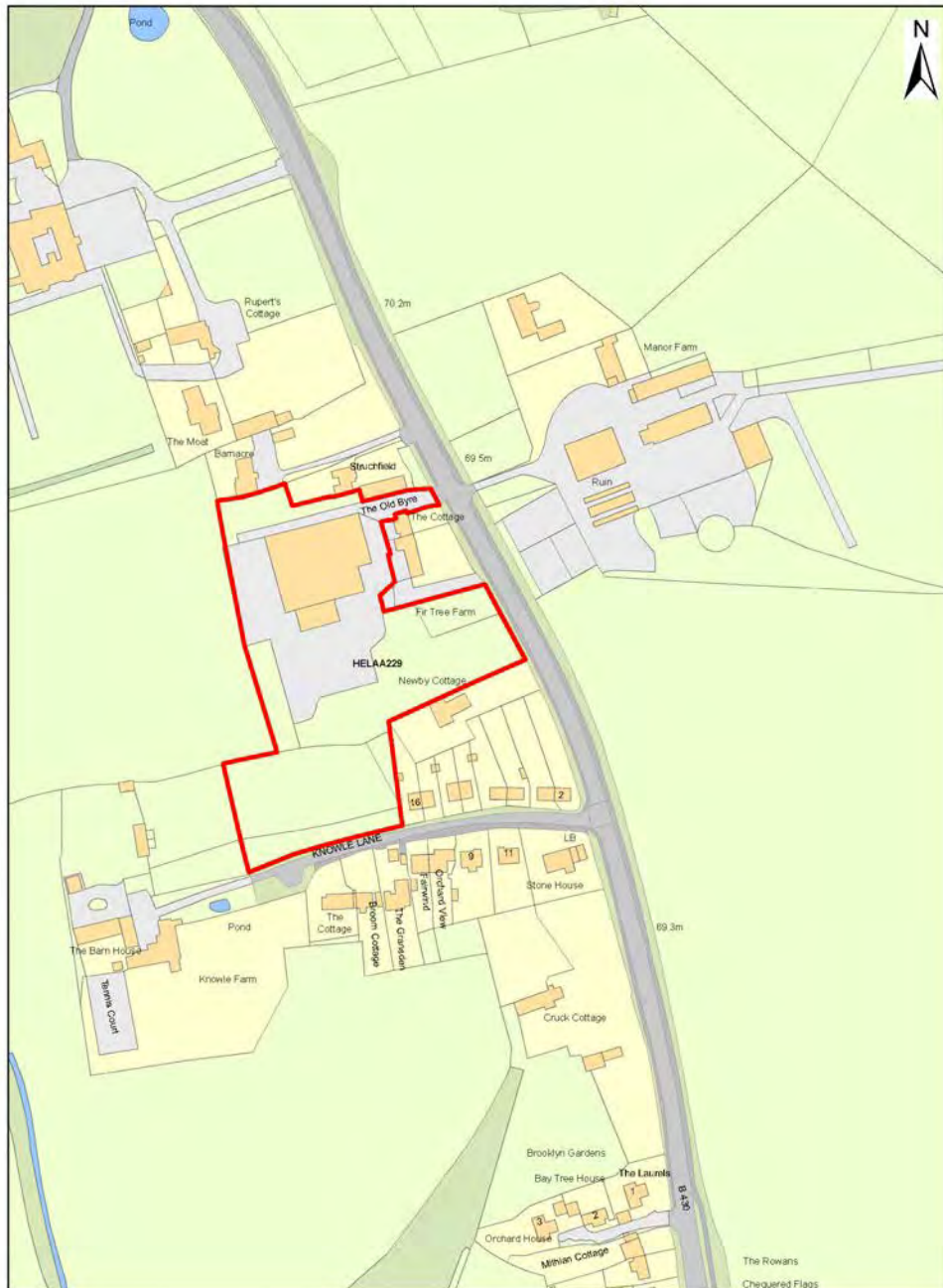
Sites considered for housing development (maps reproduced from the HELAA 2018: © Crown Copyright and database right 2017. Ordnance Survey 100018504)

Sites identified in the HELAA 2018	Site description	Reason for <u>non-allocation</u> under this Plan
HELAA 228 OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE	Land to the east of B430, part of Weston Grounds Farm	The site is located to the east of the B430 and has poor connectivity to the village. The site provides a valuable open rural vista to the east. It is contrary to Objective O5 (Transport) and Policies E1, E2, H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



<p>HELAA 229</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE</p>	<p>Land at Fir Tree Farm and North of The Knowle, Weston on the Green</p>	<p>This site is centrally located for access to the village core and is currently used for agricultural and business purposes. The site lies within the Green Belt and would need to satisfy the requirements of an exceptional site in order to be considered for development. This site would be supported for development by the Parish Council if it could meet planning conditions.</p>
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HELAA229



<p>HELAA 230</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land at Weston on the Green, Weston on the Green</p>	<p>Land on the eastern side of the B430 with poor connectivity to the village. The site extends over the site of the original Green and provides valued views to the east from the village boundary. It is contrary to Policies E1, E2, H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA230



<p>HELAA 231</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Field known as Baby Ben, adjoining Northampton Road</p>	<p>This site lies to the east of the B430 and is subject to flooding. Access from the site is on a bend in the road where the carriageway is already narrowed. It is contrary to Objective O5 (Transport) and Policies E1, E2, H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA231



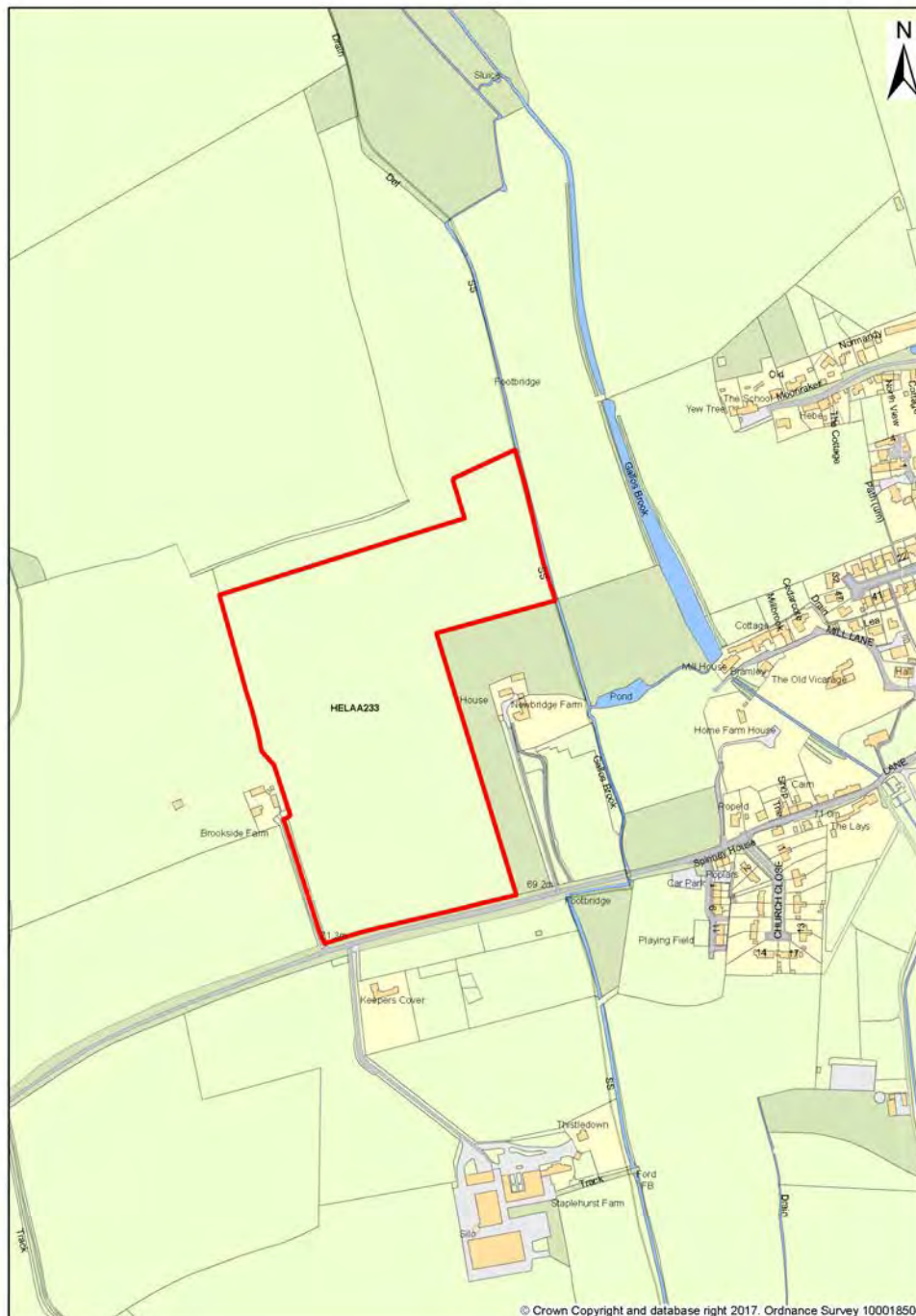
<p>HELAA 232</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land adjoining Caerleon, Northampton Road</p>	<p>This site lies immediately adjacent to PR82 to the east of the B430. Access from the site is on a bend in the road where the carriageway is already narrowed. It is contrary to Objective O5 (Transport) and Policies E1, E2 and H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA232



<p>HELAA 233</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land opposite Staplehurst Farm, Church Road</p>	<p>This site is outside the Parish Boundary and therefore not applicable to this Plan. However, since it has immediate adjacency to Weston-on-the-Green on the Bletchingdon Road, concerns about access onto the very narrow and already busy single track lane through the village have been raised. The lack of public transport to the village compromises a development of this size where it would increase private car use and numbers (car journeys and parking).</p>
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HELAA233



<p>HELAA 234</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land east of B430 opposite Weston Manor</p>	<p>Greenfield site outside the built-up limits. Weston on the Green is a Category A village in the adopted Local Plan Part 1, the category of the most sustainable villages in the district. The adopted Local Plan makes provision for some development (10 or more homes and small scale employment) at Category A villages. The site overlaps with HELAA230 - see separate assessment. It is contrary to Policies E1, E2, H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA234



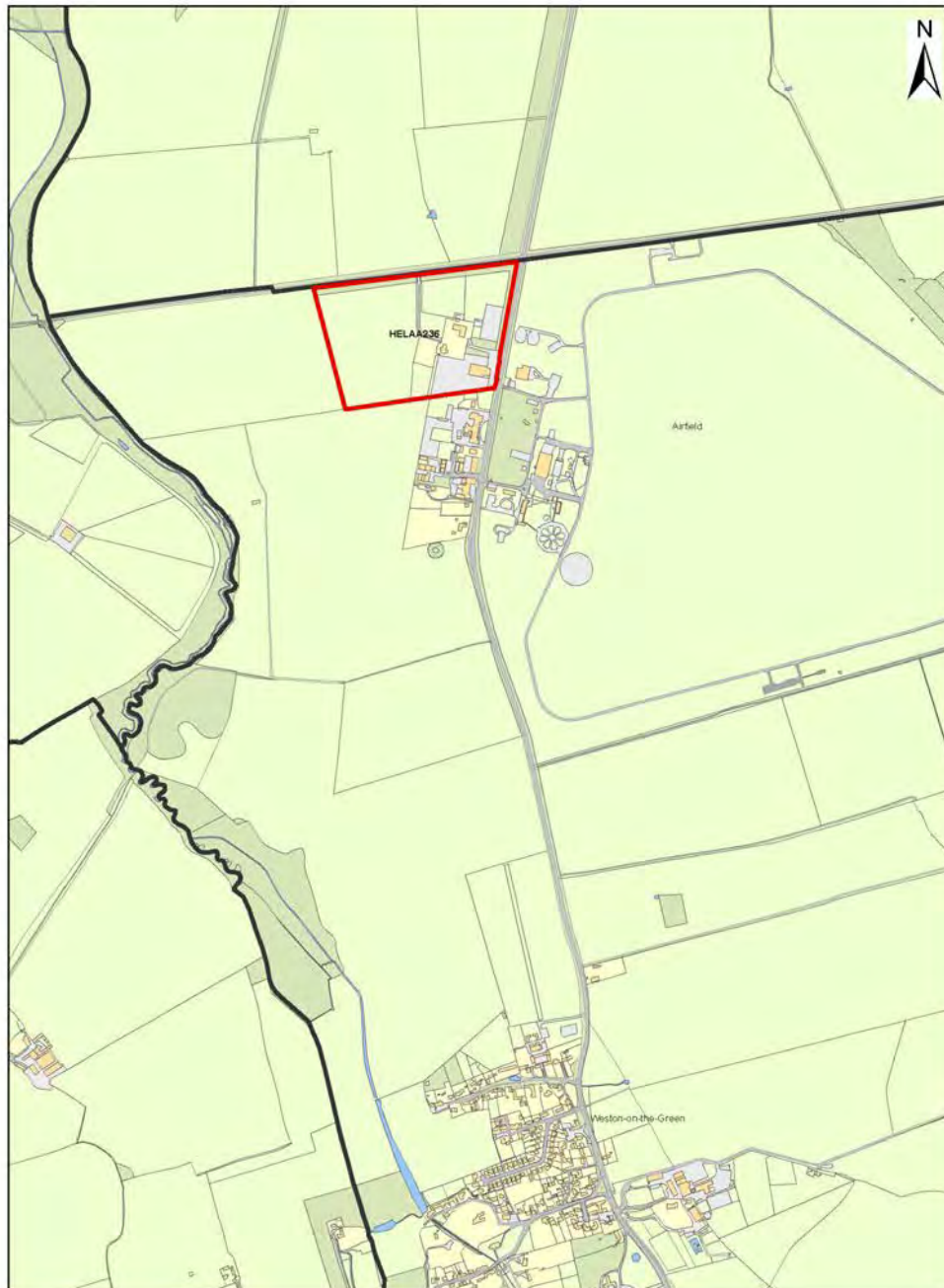
<p>HELAA 235</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land near the B430, Weston on the Green</p>	<p>This land lies immediately adjacent to the A34 and is contained within the flyover and slip roads making the junction between the B430 and the A34. It is contrary to Objective O5 (Transport) and Policies E1, E2, H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA235



<p>HELAA 236</p> <p>OVERALL ASSESSMENT: NOT SUITABLE</p>	<p>Land to the Rear of Kelberg Trailers,</p>	<p>This site is well outside the 'village confines' and would be isolated from the village by way of pedestrian or cycle routes. Development of this site would be unsustainable on transport grounds. It is also adjacent to land which has evidence of bronze age settlement and SSSI designated areas (along Gallosbrook). Development would produce a satellite estate in a region of the Parish which currently is confined to business, light industrial and RAF activities. It is contrary to Policy H5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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HELAA236



Communal space for recreation – the present case

Weston-on-the-Green, while being set in a rural landscape, has very little open land available for community use. For 13 years, the Parish Council has leased land from the Duchy of Cornwall to use as a playing field and part of this area has been established as a playground for young children. Management of the land is in partnership with the Duchy and in 2012 part of the land was sold by the Duchy for affordable housing and the area available for recreation was reduced.

The playing field lies on the edge of the village to the south of the Bletchingdon Road. A section of the playing field is fenced off as a car parking area, and another section is reserved for a playground area. This space is useful for organised events.

Other communal areas include the village green on which the stocks are located, and the village duck pond on North Lane and the pond by the Oak Tree. The Memorial Village Hall, which provides valuable indoor recreational resources, has little outside land which can be used even for small events.

Each of these available communal areas are small and distributed around the village, so there is no single site that can accommodate all recreational needs of village residents, nor a tranquil space that embodies the beauty and value of our rural heritage and in part reinstates the properties of the Weston village green which was lost to the village sometime during the enclosure period.

A valuable part of village life is the appreciation of the open spaces conferred by the rural countryside. One of the objectives stated in the Neighbourhood Plan is to attract new families to the village to ensure its sustainability for the future. The village is well served by public footpaths, however, accessible community open space is limited. An important objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide amenity space which is accessible without the use of a car.

Currently, to get children to nurseries, schools and recreational activities outside the village with no public transport solutions to/from the village means using private car transport, which is contrary to the objectives of sustainability in the NPPF and the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

Communal space for recreation – future plan

The Neighbourhood Plan identified a number of aspirations (see A2, A17, A18, A21, A28 in section 4 of the Plan) to improve community facilities, including access to open spaces for unstructured recreation and passive appreciation of the countryside setting. This need is in addition to retaining the existing playing field which will continue to provide structured facilities for games and events.

Key to identifying a suitable site was good access routes in the village via public footpaths and roads with footways so that the space or spaces could be reached safely on foot.

The aspirations aim for the preservation and enhancement of quality green space which has a positive impact on the village environment. Green or open space can provide tangible social benefits such as promoting healthier lifestyles and encouraging social interaction within a community. As well as the recreational benefits, green spaces also provide opportunities to preserve, reclaim and enhance biodiversity, and help alleviate and mitigate against flooding. It provides opportunities for learning and appreciation of the natural world, especially for children, and a chance to understand some of the history and heritage of their village. The social function of the Schoolfield has been diminished over the last 20 years and it is intended to reclaim that use compatible with the maintenance of a lowland meadow. The Neighbourhood Plan policies recognise the value that green spaces have on the lives of people in the village (see Appendices F & G) and propose the designation of Area B as a green space dedicated to this purpose.

The Parish Council's Aspirations in terms of The Schoolfield

Area B (The Schoolfield) will be preserved and managed as a grassland habitat with access for passive recreational open space commensurate with the maintenance of a lowland meadow. The site will be carefully managed to enhance natural grassland and wildlife biodiversity (see also policy E2).

Area B shown on the map below is an area of 4 hectares. It lies within the Weston-on-the-Green Conservation area but is outside the Green Belt. It was originally part of Westfield Farm which also included houses and cottages (some of which are Grade II listed) on North Lane and the area now known as Shepherds Close. There is pedestrian access to the site through North Lane (two public footpaths with access from North Lane cross the site), Shepherds Close and Westlands Avenue (the Oxfordshire Way footpath crosses The Schoolfield south to north providing the route from Weston to Kirtlington).

This land was evaluated in the Cherwell District Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Report of 2013 (site WG010) and considered unsuitable for housing development, stating: "The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the importance of this parcel of land in providing views into the Conservation area and providing an interface with the surrounding lowland landscape that gives the wider area its distinctive character. Although the site is well related to the village it is an important open space in establishing the setting of the Conservation Area and in providing for recreation (the public footpaths which cross the site are well used)." The site was not included in the HELAA 2018.

Area B: The Schoolfield –



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Area B has been in private ownership for many years and was managed as grazing land for horses and more recently cattle and sheep. The land has not been ploughed or cultivated in living memory and still bears a striking ridge and furrow pattern.



The Schoolfield (Area B) in 2012 showing marked ridge and furrow pattern (GoogleGB Camera 676m; 51o51'55oN, 1o13'43oW)



The Schoolfield (Area B) in 2017. The field pattern is still in evidence. Footpaths crossing the site are evident. (GoogleGB)

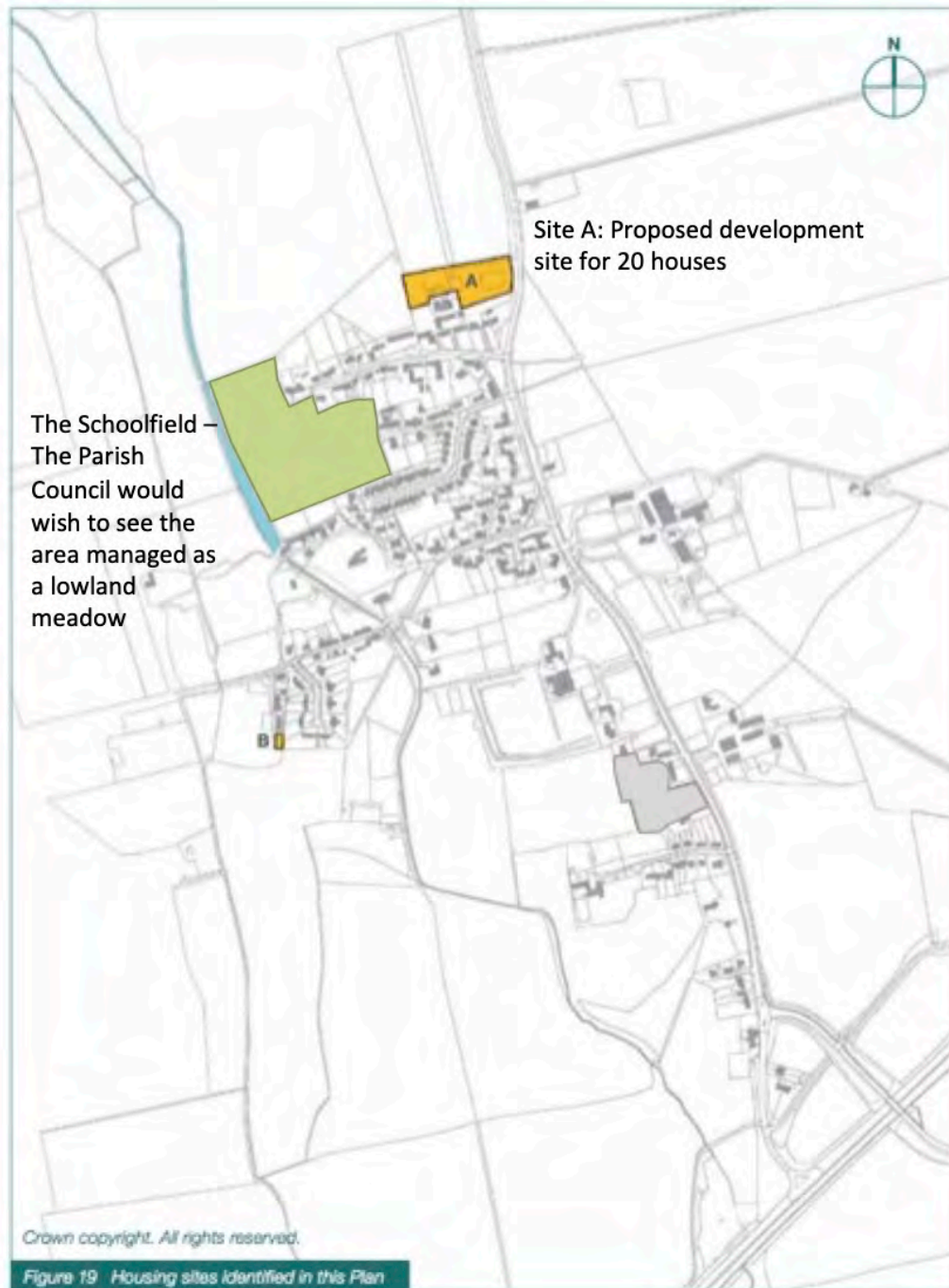
The site is identified as a possible NERC Act S41 grassland habitat approximately 300 metres south east of the Weston Fen SSSI and is considered to be part of a biodiversity corridor linking important habitats to the north/northwest of the site

(Weston Fen SSSI, Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods CTA) with others to the south/southeast (Weston Wood and Otmoor CTA and Wendelbury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSIs). Such grasslands are a habitat for newts, bats, orchids and rare butterflies (possibly the Brown Hairstreak butterfly which was recorded south of the site in 2017 (Dave Wilton, Upper Thames Branch butterfly sightings http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/butterfly_sightings.html). In the summer of 2018, the following species with lowland meadow associations were recorded on the Schoolfield: marsh marigold, brown sedge, water horsetail, common sedge, meadowsweet and angelica (Sam Watson, Ecologist). This area has been described as the 'lungs' of the village, reaching into the most populous northern half of the village and extending directly to the agricultural landscape beyond. The field is bounded on the western side by the Mill stream with the Mill situated at the south western corner of the field and cottages on Mill Lane form part of the south boundary. A narrow strip of land at the southern boundary of the field was purchased by the cottages on Mill Lane in the 1970's to extend their properties. The purchased land was subject to a Section 52 covenant preventing the new owners from developing the properties on the land. The field has recently changed ownership and its future is undetermined. There is concern in the village that the natural grassland habitat may be degraded by neglect and the land is under threat from weed invasion with some woody overgrowth and perennial weeds already present.

The Parish Council desire is to keep this field as a community/amenity space, an open area of natural tranquillity where wildlife can be observed and appreciated. The plan will retain the field as open space which will be managed to preserve and enhance the wildlife habitats which appear to be in decline. The proposal includes an option to set up a Community Interest Company or Trustee Group to manage the area, funded through donations and operating in the interests of the village. The ownership and management would be external to the Parish Council but include one Councillor on its Management body. The aim is to manage cutting and grazing that will conserve the habitat structure according to the principles outlined in the Lowland Grassland Management Handbook 2007. This would be based on a mixture of limited grazing (3-4 sheep) and grass cutting at different time of the year as well as monitoring the use of the field to manage trampling, litter and dog fouling. The expectation is that over a period of 10 years, significant reparation can be made to the natural habitat to sustain wildlife species that are native to the area and currently under pressure.

Area B is one of the last remaining open fields which has been retained as pasture in the village. Its location for recreation, education and passive use as an open space of natural tranquillity is unique. It is remote from the busy roads surrounding the village (A34, B430 and more distant but audible from parts of the village, the M40). It has several safe access routes approaching from the north,

east and south of the village. It is an enclave of peace that could replace the long lost Green from which the village takes its name. If it can be secured now, this important environmental resource can be preserved and looked after as a valuable wildlife habitat for the foreseeable future and to the great benefit of the parish.

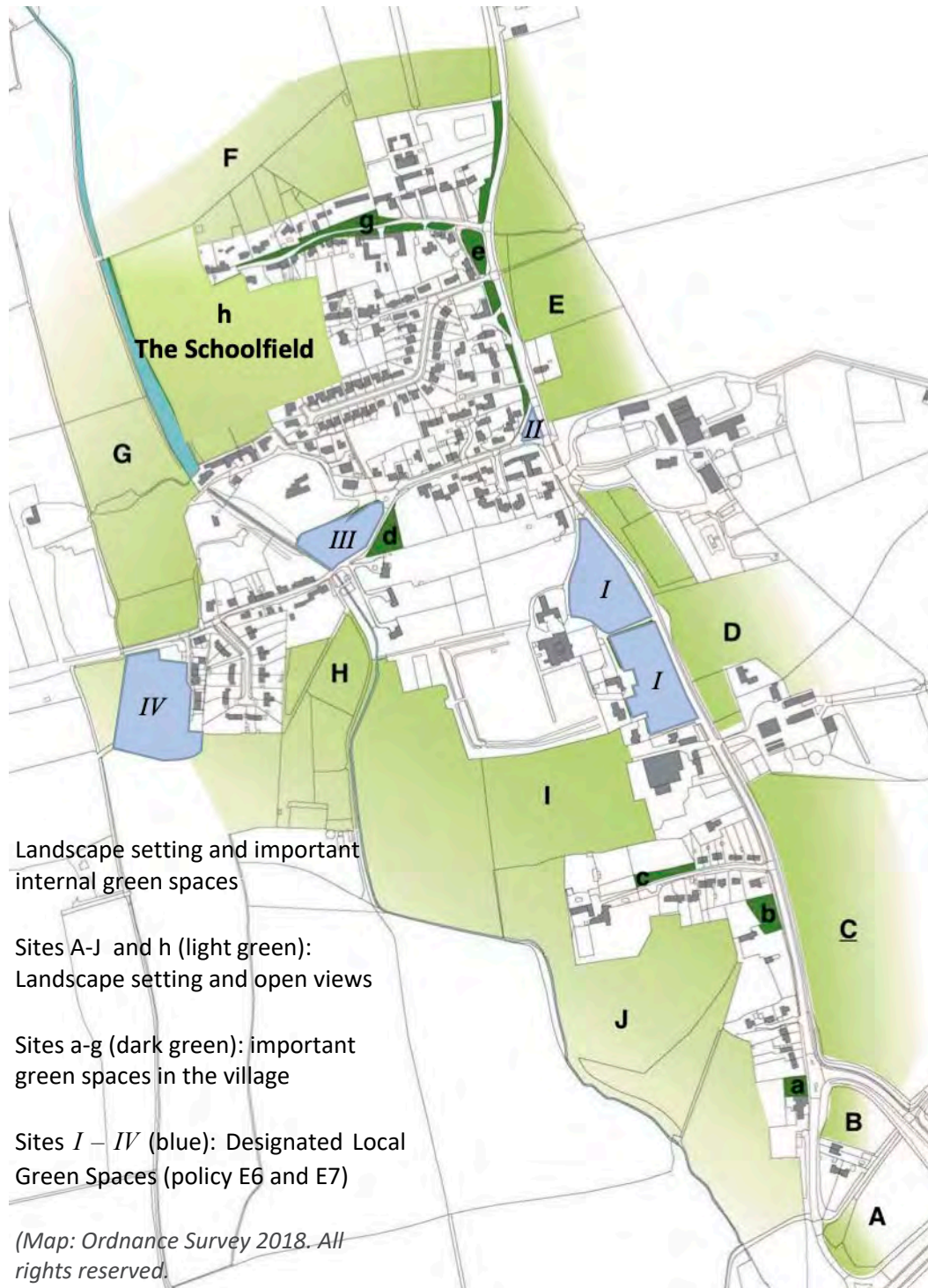


Map showing the position of the Schoolfield – the Parish Council would wish to see the area managed as a lowland meadow.

APPENDIX G

LANDSCAPE SETTING AND IMPORTANT INTERNAL GREEN SPACES

Weston-on-the-Green is characterised by its setting within an agricultural countryside and also by retained green spaces within the village. Those aspects that are important to the character of the village have their key characteristics noted below. *Green spaces i, ii, iii, iv and ix are all with the greenbelt.



Landscape setting

The following sites are associated with open views from the built-up village area to the rural countryside and enhance the character of the village within its broader landscape.

A | LAND BOUNDED BY B430, A34 AND CONNECTING FLYOVER



This is arable land that largely screened by mature hedgerows and provides visual screening and some noise reduction from the A34. This landscape would have once connected to Weston Wood (ancient woodland) to the east of the A34. The hedgerows extend north screening dwellings sitting between fields A and B.

B | LAND BETWEEN B430 AND FLYOVER



Arable land partly screened by hedgerows but with glimpses from the B430. It lies opposite to the Chequers public house which marks the southern entrance to the village.

C | PART OF FIR TREE DAIRY



Photo shows view from south. The low hedgerow along the B430 and open landscape afford dramatic views of big skies east of the B430. Footpaths 404/8 and 404/11 cross the field. The original 'green' stretched from these fields northwards across fields D and E.

D | LAND BETWEEN MANOR FARM AND WESTON GROUNDS FARM



These fields lie opposite Weston Manor Hotel grounds. This is a largely open landscape and affords views to the more recent industrial buildings developed on the Weston Farm Grounds. Together with land parcels E, C, B and A it establishes the open countryside setting to the east of the village and is crossed by footpath 404/12.

E | LAND OPPOSITE THE VILLAGE CORE



This land is bounded by a mature hedgerow so is less open than the land to the south. It still establishes the eastern edge to village development. Footpath 404/14 leads eastwards from the Ben Jonson public house.

F | LAND TO THE NORTH OF NORTH LANE



This arable landscape lies just above North Lane and contains the northernmost part of the village. Northwards the land forms a plain and is utilised as an airfield to the north-east before being bounded by Akeman Street (Roman Road). In this landscape lies the Weston Fen SSSI and a Bronze Age Ring Ditch.

G | GALLOS BROOK FLOOD PLAIN



The flood plain marks the western edge of the village with Gallos Brook signalled by a spine of trees. Newbridge Farm (pictured), Brookside Farm and Staplehurst Farm, while all outside the parish boundary, maintain an open countryside setting with the floodplain creating a threshold to the village.

H | LAND SOUTH OF CHURCH LANE



The village development south of Church Lane – GallosBrook Way, Church Close and Weston Manor. The approach to the village along the Oxfordshire Way from the south passes through a paddock which maintains a green ‘wedge’ into the village at this point.

| LAND SOUTH OF WESTON MANOR



This is part of Fir Tree Farm and while the western boundary of the Manor is screened by large trees there is a clear view of the industrial buildings of Fir Tree Farm.

J | KNOWLE FARM



Knowle Farm extends around the southern tip of the village to enclose the Chequers public House.

Parcels A,B,C,G,H,I,J and part of D all lie in the Green Belt.

Important green spaces within the village

There are a number of important green spaces still remaining within the village.

a| CHEQUERS PUBLIC HOUSE GARDEN



This open and sunny garden faces the eastern entrance to the village from the flyover and is a pleasant introduction to Weston-on-the-Green.

b| PRIVATE GARDEN ON B430



Lying just below the B430, the low hedge affords a view into a private garden. Many of the traditional low walls and hedges to the fronts of village houses have been replaced by tall screens so it is a delight to see a private garden that allows passers-by to share the view.

c | GREEN EDGE TO NORTH SIDE OF KNOWLE LANE



This is a distinctive green edge to the lane and hides what was once an orchard. Some management of the trees and scrub is needed but it does make a strong contribution to the character of Knowle Lane.

d | PRIVATE GARDEN TO DOWER HOUSE



This large garden complements the greenery of the churchyard environs. It was an orchard from Victorian times and is now laid to lawn, open to view over a low stone wall.

e | VERGES FROM WESTON MANOR TO AND INCLUDING NORTH LANE



These broad verges include the private garden to Bramble Cottage, bounded by a low hedge, the verge and pond adjacent to the Great Oak tree and the green outside the Ben Jonson which was used for village fairs until the 1960's. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that grassed verges in the village play a key role in retaining a rural feel. The Bramble Cottage garden was wholly taken over for the cultivation of vegetables between the wars and has only recently been grassed with a wildflower area managed by the owner.

f | THE GREAT OAK AND VERGE



The great oak stands at the entrance to North Lane and historically marked the northern end of the village. The verge on which the oak stands and the adjacent pond, forms a tidy apron at this northern gateway into Weston on the Green. This is one of the oaks that has a connection to fertility in the village according to local folk-lore. The tree is on the special interest list at OCC and is a notable icon for the village. The public bench was donated by villagers and is a popular place to sit.

g| NORTH LANE VERGES



edges badly. This

registered as a village green, but the surrounding grassed area is unprotected. This area needs regeneration as it was once a charming local attraction with ducks and duckhouse.

The Conservation Area Appraisal states that verges should be retained ‘without the use of a kerb, where appropriate’. Where some verges have been appropriated as front gardens, the County Council keeps a definitive record of the verges and ensures that all verges are kept in public ownership, protected, and available for public usage such as paths and recreation. These verges are progressively being eroded for parking and heavy construction vehicles have carved up the

area also includes the North Lane duck pond – part of which is registered as a village green, but the surrounding grassed area is unprotected. This area needs regeneration as it was once a charming local attraction with ducks and duckhouse.

h| THE SCHOOLFIELD



space, in private ownership. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the relationship of this medieval ridge and furrow field to the village is considered of importance ‘because of the two way views both into and out of the Conservation Area and due to the heavily vegetated boundary which separates the land from the surrounding landscape, while remaining open to the village’. It is a rich habitat which connects other protected sites (the SSSI 400m to the north with the Weston Wood and Otmoor borderlands to the south.

This open tract of land forms the western boundary of the village and has the Oxfordshire Way and two other footpaths running across it. It provides a valuable connection between North Lane and the village centre. Evidence of a ridge and furrow ploughing pattern suggests this site was once an important part of the manorial field use, running alongside the mill stream and close to the Mill. Now known as the Schoolfield, it was used as a recreational area when the school was in occupation and is currently a valued open

Designated Local green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan* (see Policy E6 and E7, Figure 15 and section 2.4):

Green spaces which are considered of particular importance to the local community are designated as 'Local Green Spaces' where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community services;
- special to the village and holds a particular local significance, and
- local in character and not forming an extensive tract of land.

The NPPF states that to be considered for designation in the NPPF as a Local Green Space, an area should be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance. Significant factors are:

- Beauty
- Historic significance
- Recreational value
- Tranquillity
- Richness in wildlife

Based on the assessments of Local Green Space undertaken by other local authorities, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has applied the following criteria when considering candidates for designation as Local Green Space:

- Proximity to the community it serves - the measurement usually applied is the walking distance or distance in metres e.g. within 300m or 5 minutes walking (as set out in Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance⁷) is the guide taken as a measure in this case. Area B is less than 5 minutes walk from the centre of the village and at most 10 minutes from the extreme south or north boundaries.
- Beauty - The Steering Group assessed the visual attractiveness of the proposed areas and their contribution to the landscape, character and setting of the village settlement including views to and from the settlement (see Figure 10 in the NP). Local Green Spaces will typically contribute to local identity and character of the area and a sense of place.
- Historic significance – Consideration was given to the proposed areas and whether they have historical significance. The areas may reflect an archaeological site or other historical feature, provide the setting to a statutory listed building or scheduled monument or be within a Conservation Area. Designated areas I to III all have historic significance to the village: sites I and III are Grade II* listed and site III includes the old stocks which are located on a registered village green.
- Recreational value – Site IV is the only open recreational area in the village and is used for football, including training groups for young players and general outdoor activities by

⁷ Nature Nearby – Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance (NE265) Jan 2010, www.naturalengland.org

families. The field is used periodically for small fetes and local events and annually hosts the Guy Faulks bonfire and firework display. The adjoining spinney provides a nature trail which has access from the playing field and is popular with various groups and families.

Tranquillity – The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England’s (CPREs) Tranquillity Map identifies Weston-on-the-Green in the mid-tranquillity range. The village has audible pollution from the major roads bordering the parish, namely the A34 to the south, the M40 to the east and the B430 which runs through the village south to north. All sites have audible gains in birdsong and Site IV has running water from Gallosbrook which runs along the spinney to the Manor moat. Visual pollution arises from the night-sky glows from Bicester, Kidlington and distantly, Oxford. Positive visual tranquillity factors in the designated areas include trees in the landscape (Site IV), open green areas (Site I and II), quiet contemplative space (Site I).

All the sites designated in this Plan (policy E6) and subject to protection under policy E7 are local in character and not extensive tracts of land. The largest is Site IV which is approximately 2 hectares area. All sites are self-contained.

I | WESTON MANOR GROUNDS



This is a memorable space as seen from the B430 over a low stone wall. The lime avenue to the main entrance of Weston Manor is a highly distinctive historical feature of Weston-on-the-Green. Weston Manor has a rich history at the centre of the village and the Manor building is Grade II* listed. The grounds surround the Manor House and echo the original Manorial layout when the village was tithed. This open area is one of that last examples of undisturbed land in its original form at the heart of the village.

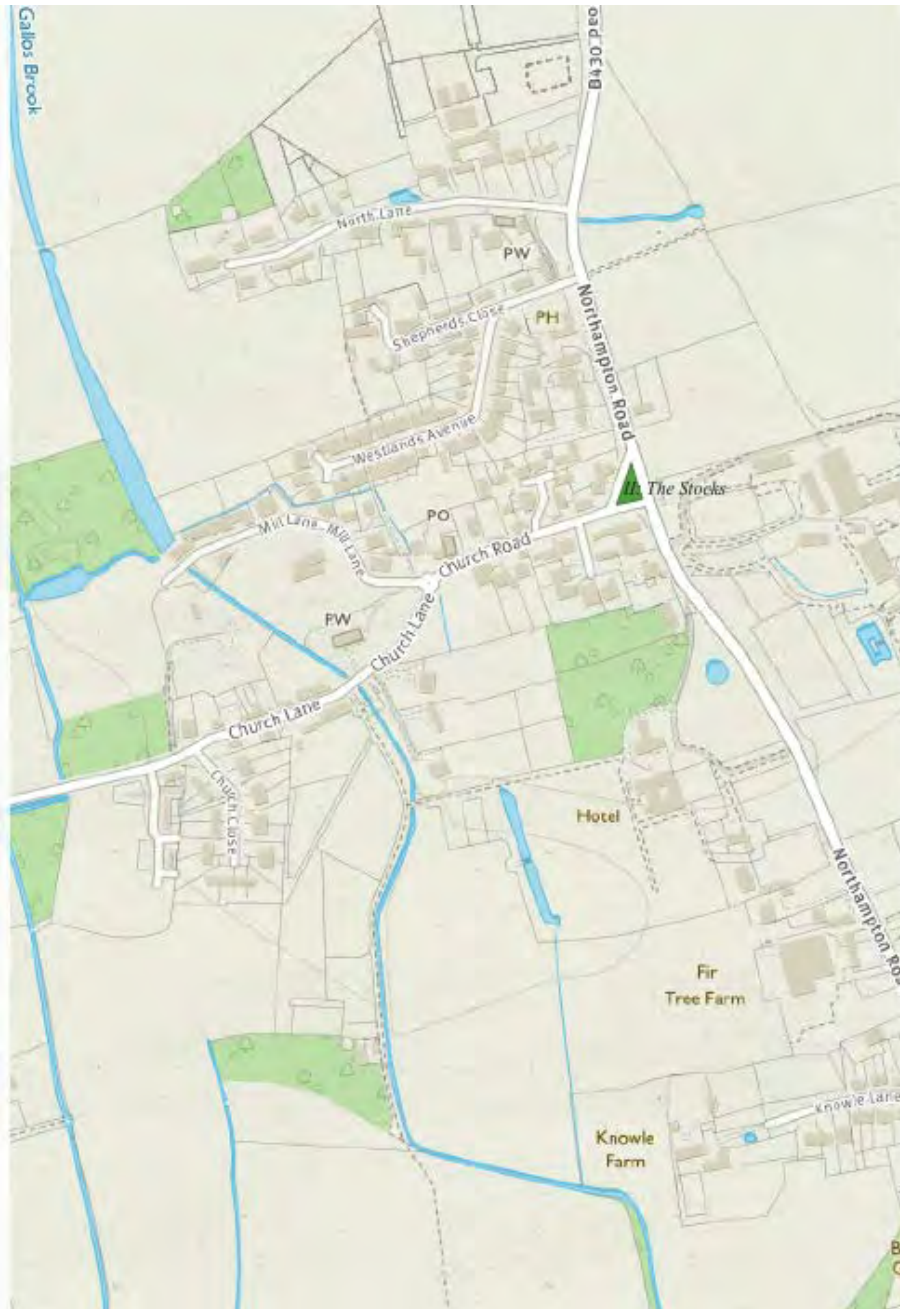


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III | THE STOCKS



This is a focal point at the junction of Church Road with the B430 and is sometimes mistaken as the 'Green' in Weston. It is the site of the village stocks, now fenced off for protection. The stocks are particular to Weston-on-the-Green and historical accounts provide evidence of their use. This area is a registered village green.

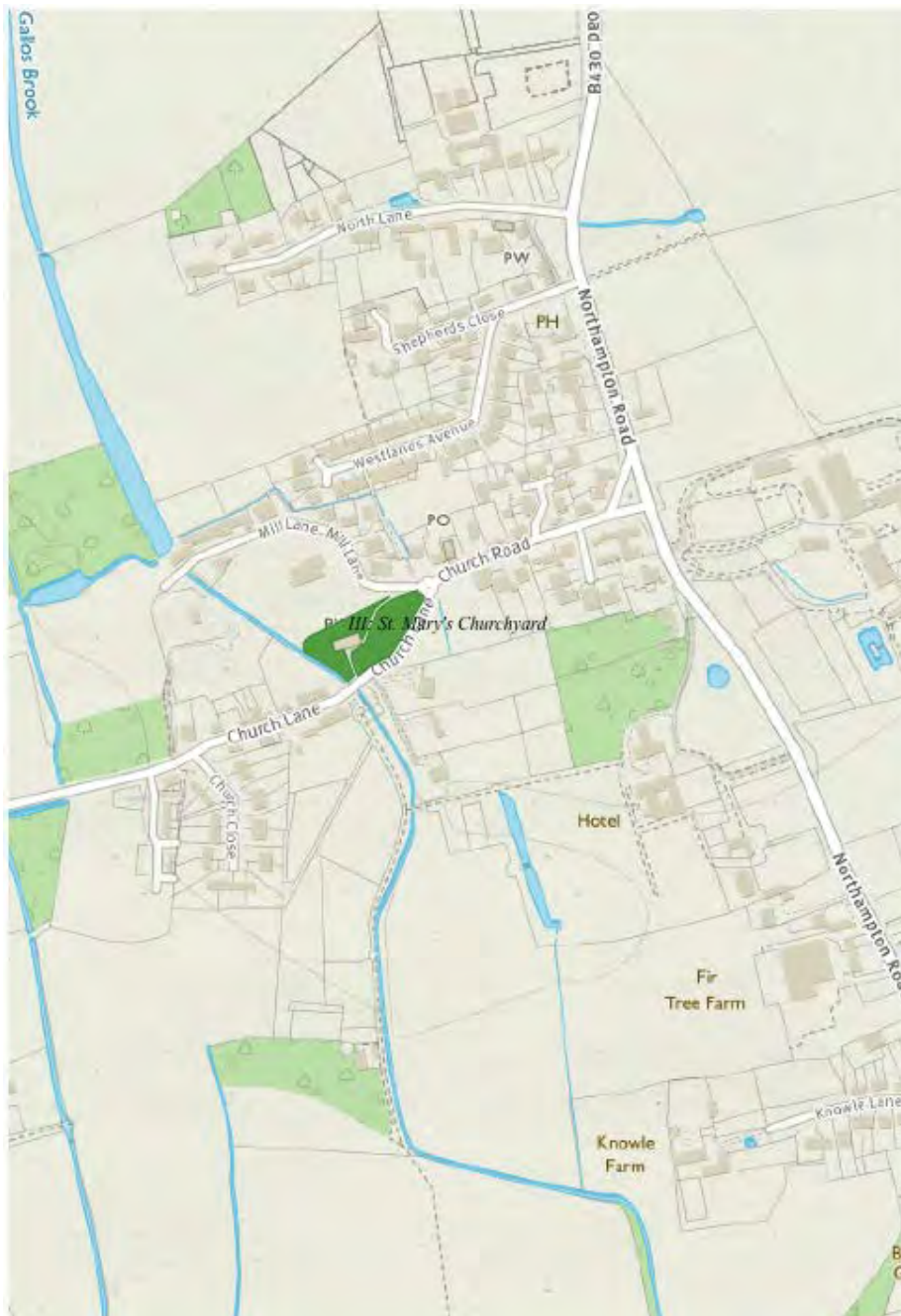


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III | ST. MARY'S CHURCHYARD



The churchyard functions as an important green space at the heart of the village. The trees are protected by tree preservation orders. It is used as a pedestrian route from Church Lane to the Memorial Village Hall and shop. In recent years, the Church has diversified to accommodate a variety of social events and acts as a meeting place

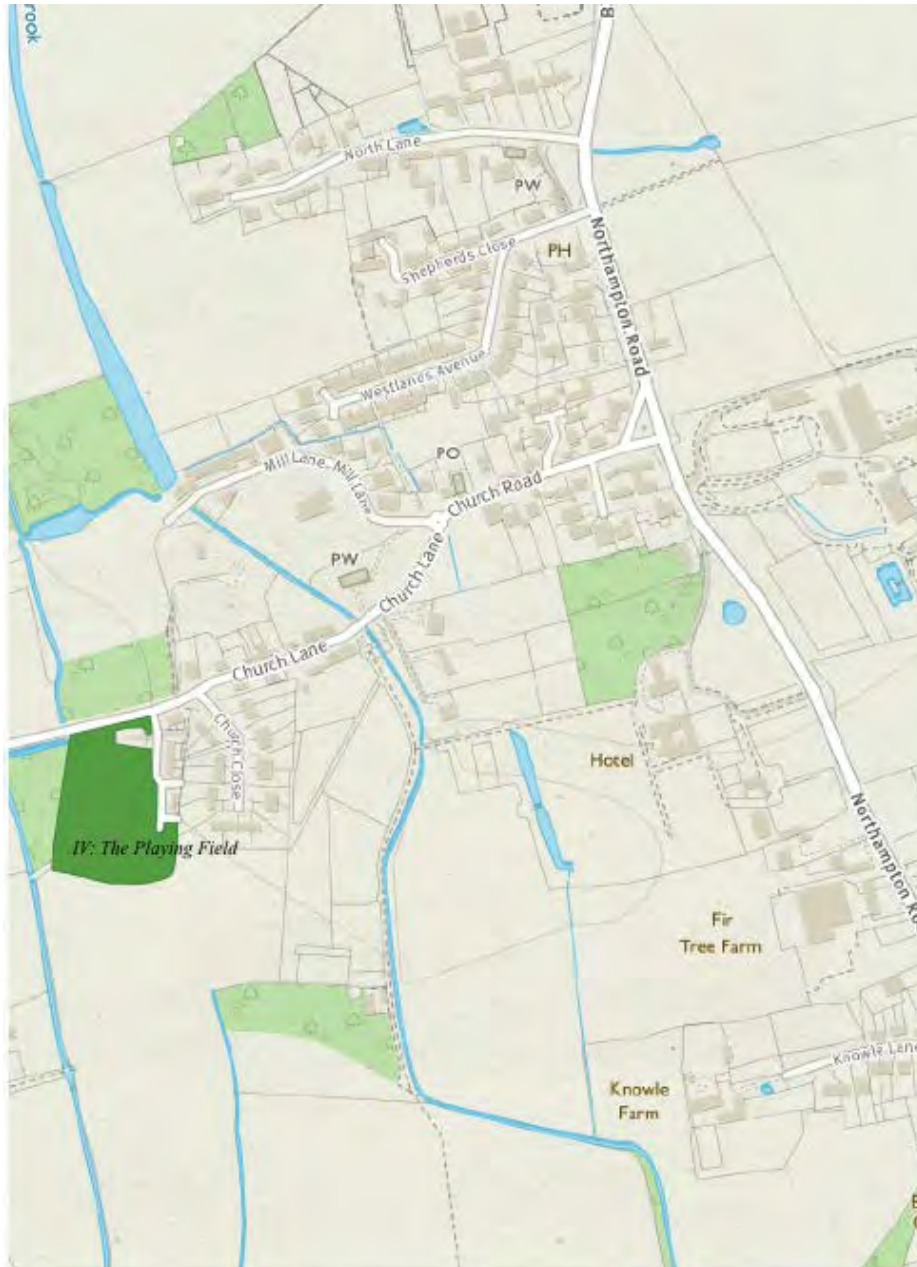


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IV | THE PLAYING FIELD



The only recreational area of the village is bounded by a small spinney and stream feeding the Manor moat. This area is in constant use and includes a playground for small children. The Playing field is overlooked by the Gallosbrook Way housing which establishes the western edge of the village confines. The field sits within floodplain zones 2 and 3 and is maintained by the Parish Council. A small carpark is located on the northern boundary by Church Lane. The land is leased by the Parish Council from the Duchy of Cornwall.



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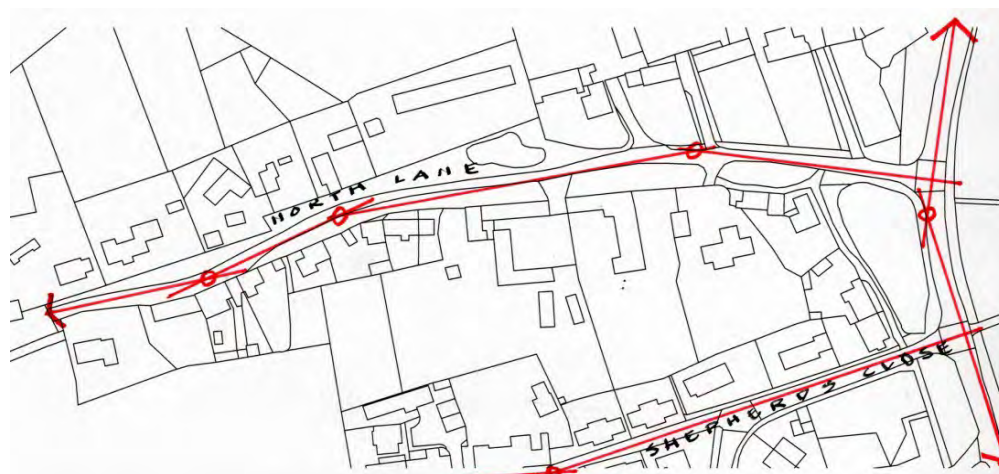
APPENDIX H:

CHARACTERISTICS OF VILLAGE FORM (MORPHOLOGY)

The following analysis highlights the key elements to consider for new designs but the arrangement of buildings, lanes and landscapes should always be such that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This analysis should inform the design of new development (see Appendix E – Design Code and Appendix J – Village Character).

Street pattern and alignment

Lanes run east-west to the western side of the Northampton Road. The historic lanes are made up of long, straight segments with small angles of deflection between each segment, typically 10 to 20 degrees but always less than 45 degrees. This gives a gently meandering appearance where the small deflections hide the long distance views which are revealed as the viewer passes the point of deflection.



North Lane comprises four 'segments' (red line) with small deflections in the alignment of the lane just screening each segment

Virtually all dwellings are located no more than one or two turns (right angled junctions) off the Northampton Road creating a highly 'legible' layout.

Focal points

Focal points or nodes are memorable places at the junctions of streets or lanes and may take the form of a small square or green. The junction of Church Road and Northampton Road is one (shown right) and the junction of Church Road / Church Lane / Mill Lane another.



The junction of Church Road and the B430 creates a memorable place

Enclaves

Some buildings are grouped around a public or private space which is set behind a street or lane. Historically, many of these would have been farmyards and some have been converted into residential or business use where they create 'enclaves' which reference their historical context. Such developments include Village Farm Court, Blacksmith's Close, Oxford Court and Shepherd's Close and are generally good design solutions to infill sites.

Gateways

Gateways signify the visual entry points into the village: from the south at The Chequers public house, from the north at the Great Oak on the junction of North Lane and the Northampton Road, and from the west on crossing the flood plain at the end of Church Lane.

Tree canopy and important hedgerows

The principle tree canopies and hedgerows also give form to the village and are shown on the survey drawing (Appendix J).

Verges and greens

The verges and greens are a historic remnant and form an important part of the public realm. It is proposed that some of these be designated formally as Local Green Spaces and that any future development incorporates new greens. A more detailed assessment of green spaces is provided at Appendix G.

Edges to the countryside

There is a clear visual edge between the built-form of the village and the surrounding countryside which generally follows the 'character areas' defined in the CDC Conservation Area Appraisal (the boundaries to these are also indicated in Appendix J).

Key building frontages and important front boundary walls

Most of the village housing is either:
built directly against the back of footpath / lane or against a verge and often forming a continuous building frontage.
Or set back from the street with a stone front boundary wall delineating the edge of the property. This is typical of larger detached properties.



Example of building frontage set directly against public grass verge

This combination of continuous frontages and buildings set back behind boundary walls is a key characteristic of the village. Where 20th century development has arranged houses around standard estate roads without following either precedent, the typology is not characteristic of the village.



Example of building set behind front boundary stone wall

Landmarks and 'marker' buildings

The principal landmark buildings are the Church of St Mary the Virgin and Weston Manor Hotel. There is also a large number of what might be termed 'marker buildings', lesser buildings which because of their siting, perhaps on a corner, or perhaps because of a prominent gable which can be seen from a distance, create memorable places within the village.



Small landmarks or 'marker' buildings are created where gables front the street (Hazel Cottage and Bramble Cottage, above)

Key views and open vistas

The historic lanes are rich in landmarks and marker buildings and their distinctive gables or elevations frequently terminate long views. There are a number of memorable vistas across the surrounding countryside; every lane emerging onto the Northampton Road affords such a vista over farmland to the east.

Vista needing screening

The industrial areas at Fir Tree Farm and on the eastern side of the Northampton Road require screen planting. There is a real risk that unplanned industrial development on the eastern side of the road could severely damage the setting of the village.

Area of weak orientation

There are several areas where the building typology is uncharacteristic of the village and does not define public spaces by either a continuous frontage or a consistent boundary wall treatment. They are instead typical of prevailing standards at the time of construction and include the Memorial Village Hall site, Church Close and Westlands Avenue.

Variation in plot widths

Terraces with a continuous building frontage typically have a variation in plot widths which leads to an informal street frontage which expresses the character of the individual homes.



Four cottages | A continuous building line and consistent use of natural stone unifies this group of differing architectural styles. The informal rhythm of the elevations results from a variety in plot widths (North Lane).

Shallow building depths

The vernacular buildings typically have stone walls and are a single timber beam span in depth, usually 4.5 metres maximum span. For a given roof pitch, the ridge is therefore lower than on deep-plan buildings.

Roof pitches

Roof pitches in the village reflect the original roof covering: 50+ degrees - thatch
40+ degrees- clay tile or stone slates 35 degrees - slate

Most roofs are therefore more steeply pitched than modern houses with typical building depths of 8 metres and corresponding shallower roof pitches.

Low eaves heights

Not only do most of the vernacular houses and cottages have lower ceiling heights than modern houses, the thick outer walls and steep roof pitches mean that eaves heights are notably lower than in modern buildings. The eaves height is more important than the ridge in giving scale to the street and a modern house can unintentionally stand out where the eaves height is higher – something that could easily be remedied though attention to construction detailing.

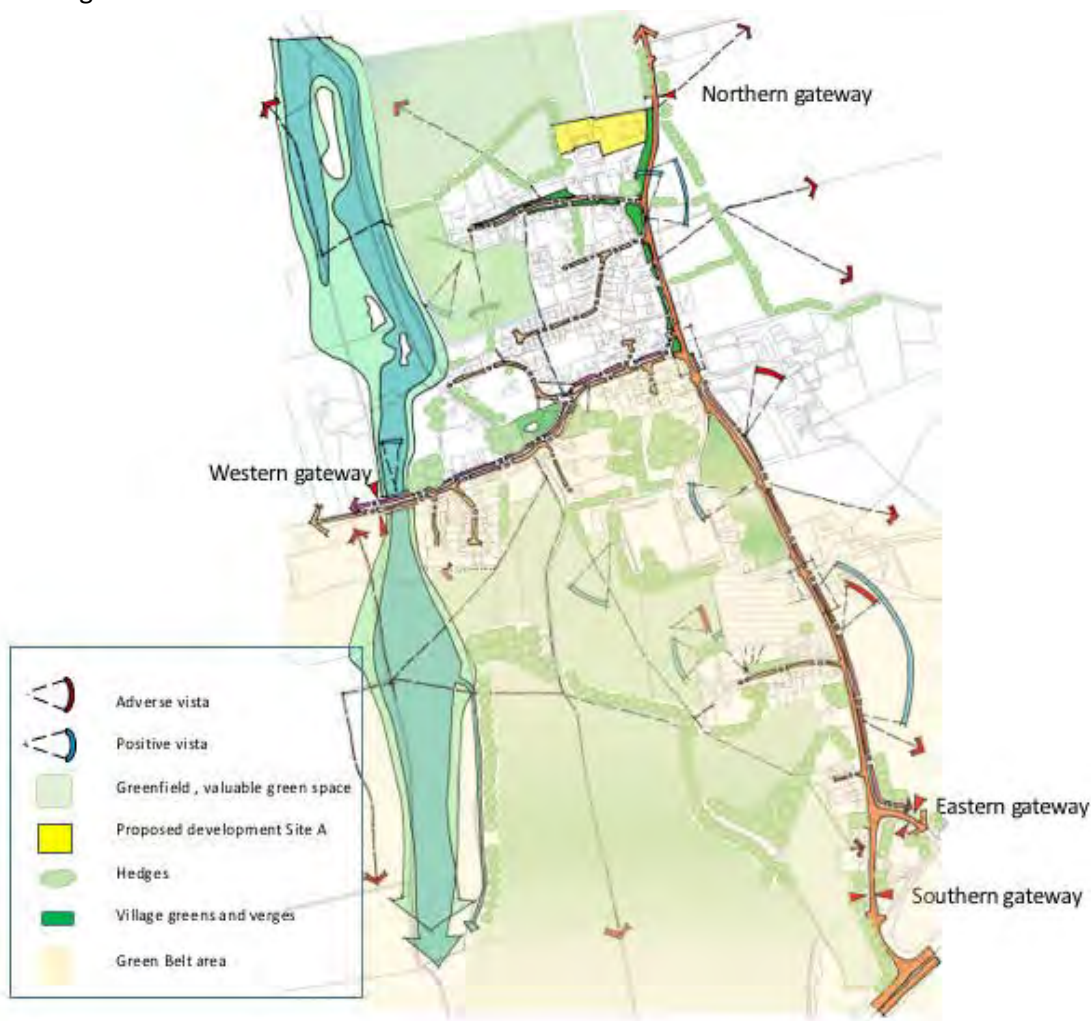
Materials

The predominant materials are local stone walls, tile, slate or that roofs and granite streetscape details. A more comprehensive list is provided in Appendix E - Design Code.

The following figure (also shown as Figure 10 in the main NP) shows the key characteristics of the village, including positive (blue) and adverse (red) vistas from viewpoints shown; the open and green spaces within the village confines and the main hedgerows, verges and greens.

Development Site A is shown in yellow. The compass entry points to the village are shown.

The wetland area associated with Gallosbrook and the Millstream is shown on the western edge of the village.



Key characteristics of the village showing positive and adverse vistas from viewpoints; village entry points; open spaces within the village envelope; hedgerows, verges and greens. (Map Crown copyright, all rights reserved; annotations courtesy R. Evans and S. Daenke)

Declaration Of Result Of Poll for the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan Area Referendum

I, Yvonne Rees, being the Counting Officer for Cherwell District Council at the Referendum on 6th May 2021 held under the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012, do hereby give notice that the result of votes cast is as follows:

	No. Votes
Number cast in favour of a "YES"	199
Number cast in favour of a "NO"	18
Total number of votes cast	217

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:

A - want of official mark	0
B - voting for more than one answer	0
C - writing or mark by which the voter or proxy could be identified	0
D - unmarked or void for uncertainty	0
Total Number of Rejected Ballots	0

Turnout 43.90%

I hereby declare that more than half of those voting have voted in favour of Cherwell District Council using the Neighbourhood Plan for Weston-on-the-Green to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

Yvonne Rees
Counting Officer

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Cherwell District Council

Council

19 May 2021

Changes to Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference

Report of Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

This report is public

Purpose of report

The report recommends approval of changes to the terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

1.0 Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 to approve the proposed terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The existing terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee would benefit from alignment with current best practice.
- 2.2 The terms of reference proposed at Appendix 1 are accordingly based on a Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) model template, which covers what CIPFA currently recommend as best practice.
- 2.3 The proposed new terms of reference were agreed by the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2021.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 At its meeting on 20 January 2021, the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee agreed to review recommended best practice within CIPFA Audit Committee Guidance (2018) and agree additions to the AARC work programme.
- 3.2 One such addition comprised a review of the terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

- 3.3 It was therefore agreed to include within the work programme for the March meeting of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee a review of the Committee's current terms of reference, in particular the extent to which the current terms of reference accord with CIPFA recommended guidelines, and to seek approval of any changes required to those terms of reference to align them with CIPFA best practice.
- 3.4 The terms of reference at Appendix 1 of this report which Council is recommended to approve accordingly follow best practice as recommended by CIPFA's Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018, and were agreed by the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting 17 March 2021.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 This report aligns the terms of reference for the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee with CIPFA's Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018, and, following agreement of those terms by the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee on grounds of best practice, is now recommended for approval by Council.

5.0 Consultation

Not applicable

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: No alternative options have been identified as the Terms of Reference which are the subject of this report follow best practice as currently recommended by CIPFA.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845
michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by: Richard Hawtin, Team Leader – Non-contentious, 01295 221695
richard.hawtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 There are no risk management issues arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by: Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, 01295 221786 louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision (N/A)

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All corporate plan themes.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Tony Ilott – Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Terms of Reference for Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer,
anita.bradley@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

SUGGESTED ACCOUNTS AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (AARC) TERMS OF REFERENCE – based on CIPFA template for Local Authorities

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee shall comprise 8 members with unnamed substitutes, and every Committee member or appointed substitute shall undertake appropriate training before being permitted to serve on the Committee.

Statement of purpose

1. The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is a key component of Cherwell District Council's corporate governance framework. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes. By overseeing internal and external audit it makes an important contribution to ensuring that effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, risk and control

- 2 To review the council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, including the ethical framework and consider the local code of governance.
- 3 To review the AGS prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control.
- 4 To consider the council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 5 To consider the council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
- 6 To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the council.
- 7 To monitor progress in addressing risk-related issues reported to the committee.
- 8 To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- 9 To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the council from fraud and corruption.
- 10 To monitor the counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources.
- 11 To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

Internal audit

- 12 To approve the internal audit charter.
- 13 To review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
- 14 To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, including internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.
- 15 To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
- 16 To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the head of internal audit to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- 17 To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the head of internal audit. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- 18 To consider reports from the head of internal audit on internal audit's performance during the year, including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
 - a) updates on the work of internal audit including key findings, issues of concern and action in hand as a result of internal audit work
 - b) regular reports on the results of the QAIP (Quality Assurance Improvement Programme)
 - c) reports on instances where the internal audit function does not conform to the PSIAS (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards), considering whether the non-conformance is significant enough that it must be included in the AGS.
- 19 To consider the head of internal audit's annual report:
 - a) The statement of the level of conformance with the PSIAS and the results of the QAIP that support the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit.
 - b) The opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the committee in reviewing the AGS.
- 20 To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- 21 To receive reports outlining the action taken where the head of internal audit has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- 22 To contribute to the QAIP and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- 23 To provide free and unfettered access to the audit committee chair for the head of internal audit, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the committee.

External audit

- 24 To support the independence of external audit through consideration of the external auditor's annual assessment of its independence and review of any issues raised by PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments) or the authority's auditor panel as appropriate.

- 25 To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
- 26 To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- 27 To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- 28 To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.

Financial reporting

- 29 To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council.
- 30 To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Accountability arrangements

- 31 To report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions.
- 32 To report to full council on a regular basis on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the committee.
- 33 To publish an annual report on the work of the committee.

Treasury Management

- 34 To be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. Receiving regular reports of activity, reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management processes.

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Cherwell District Council

Council

19 May 2021

Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21

Report of Director of Finance

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report presents the annual report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21

1.0 Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Annual Report contains information relating to the work of Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee during 2021/22.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Within recommended practice for Audit Committees (CIPFA, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – Audit Committees Practical Guidance 2018), the committee should report on an annual basis to Council on how the committee has discharged its responsibilities.
- 3.2 The Annual Report 2020/21 was approved by the March Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Council is invited to note the content of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2020/21.

5.0 Consultation

None.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: No alternative options have been identified as this report is for information only.

7. Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845
michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Richard Hawtin, Team Leader – Non-contentious, 01295 221695
richard.hawtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 There are no risk management issues arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, 01295 221786
louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision (N/A)

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All wards are affected

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All corporate plan themes.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes, Chairman of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1: Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee 2020/21

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance lorna.baxter@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Appendix 1:

Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

**Report of the work of the Accounts, Audit &
Risk Committee during 2020-21**

Contents

Section	Page
Chairman's Introduction	3
Role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee	4
Key Activities	5

Annex

1. Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Functions (terms of reference)

Chairman's Introduction

As the Chairman I am very pleased to present this annual report which sets out the role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee and summarises the work we have undertaken during the financial year 2020/21.

The Committee is a key component of the council's governance framework, providing independent support to ensure good governance and strong public financial management.

The Committee continues to be well supported by Officers, providing a high standard of reports and presentations. I would like to thank the Finance Team, Risk & Performance Team, Internal Audit and External Audit for their input.

I should like to take this opportunity to give my personal thanks to all the officers, my Vice Chairman Cllr Hugo Brown and without exception, all fellow Committee members who have contributed and supported the work of the Committee in such a meaningful and positive way throughout the past year.

COUNCILLOR MIKE KERFORD-BYRNES
Chairman, Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

Role of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

The Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee operates in accordance with the “Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities” produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in 2018. The Guidance defines the purpose of an Audit Committee as follows:

1. Audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their function is to provide an independent and high -level resource to support good governance and strong public financial management.
2. The purpose of and Audit Committee is to provide to those charged with governance independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes. By overseeing internal and external audit it makes an important contribution to ensuring that effective assurance arrangements are in place.

The key functions of the Account’s Audit & Risk Committee are defined within its terms of reference; this is attached as Annex 1 to this report.

How the Committee has discharged its responsibilities during 2020/21

NB: May and June 2020 meetings were cancelled due to COVID-19.

Key AARC Activities	July 20	Sept 20	Nov 20	Jan 21	March 21
Financial Reporting					
Considered monthly performance, risk & finance monthly report					
2019/20 Annual Statement of Accounts up-date					
Review of Treasury Management Outturn 2019/20					
Treasury Management 2020/21 update					
Capital and Investment Strategy 2021/22					
Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22					
Housing Benefit Subsidy Audit / Housing Benefit Subsidy Risk Based Verification					
Briefing on outcomes of Redmond Review into LG audit					
Internal Audit					
Annual Report of the Chief Internal Auditor 2019-20					
Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 2020-21					
Review of Internal Audit Reports and monitor of in-year progress					
Review of Internal Audit Charter and Quality Assurance Programme					
External Audit					
External audit progress updates					
Review of those charged with governance – response to EY					
Annual Audit Opinion 2019/20					
Governance & Risk Management					
As above under financial reporting - Considered monthly performance, risk & finance monthly report					
Briefing on Cyber Security Arrangements					
Approval of Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20					
AARC – terms of reference review					
AARC – draft annual report					
Counter-Fraud					
Approval of Counter-Fraud Strategy and plan for 2020-21					
Counter-Fraud Plan update					
Update on Counter-Fraud arrangements for 21/22					

Our work in 2020/21

The key activities of the Committee are captured in the table above. In summary:

Financial Reporting

The Committee reviewed and approved (subject to final external audit review) the annual statement of accounts on behalf of the Council and considered the external auditors report. The Committee reviewed the proposed accounting policies for the statement of accounts, including the enhancement of the accounting policy relating to the preparation of the accounts on a Going Concern basis in response to increased external audit focus on this area due to the financial impact of COVID-19.

The Committee Members attended a briefing on the Council's draft 2019/20 accounts in August 2020 to assist in their understanding of how the accounts are produced.

The Committee receives reports on Treasury Management throughout the year, exercising its stewardship role, including the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2019/20 and quarterly Treasury Management monitoring reports for 2020/21. Additionally, the Committee considered the Capital and Investment Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22. The Committee have provided effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies, receiving regular reports of activity, reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management.

Internal Audit

The Committee approved the Internal Audit Strategy for 2020/21, including the annual audit plan, which provides members the opportunity to challenge and influence the plan where the Committee has identified areas of concern.

The Committee receives regular progress reports from the Chief Internal Auditor, including summaries of the outcomes from Internal Audit work.

The Committee has continued to review, and monitor material weaknesses identified from the internal audit reports with Senior Managers attending to provide assurance on how the issues were being addressed. This has supported the implementation of the actions plans to deliver the required improvements in key areas for the Council.

The completion of the Internal Audit Plan and the annual statement of the Chief Internal Auditor is produced for the Committee at the end of the financial year. Based on the evidence of the reports presented to the Committee, the team continues to provide an effective challenge and therefore assurance on the key risk activities.

The Committee approves the Internal Audit Charter on an annual basis, this was approved at the July 2020 meeting.

External Audit

The Council's external auditors, Ernst and Young, attended all the committee meetings during 2020/21, providing regular updates on their work plan and any matters arising.

The Committee is satisfied that the External Auditors are free to carry out their duties without restrictions. We are also assured that if identified they would bring any material issues to the attention of the Committee.

Governance & Risk Management

The Committee approved the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20 in November 2020 as part of the Council's accounts.

The Committee receives regular updates on risk management, considering the Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report which includes review of the Leadership Risk Register.

Counter-Fraud

The Committee receives regular updates from the Counter Fraud Team on outcomes of investigations. The Committee plays a key role in monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's counter fraud arrangements. Working with the Finance Team & Internal Audit, the Counter Fraud team has had additional responsibilities during 2020 / 21 scrutinising applications relating to Government Grants designed to mitigate the financial impact of the Covid pandemic.

Overall, the Council has a strong system of internal control, so as expected, there is very little fraud identified; however nationally statistics show that fraud is on the increase, so it is important that the Council remains vigilant.

Annex 1 – Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference

Draft TOR – subject to approval

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee shall comprise 8 members with unnamed substitutes, and every Committee member or appointed substitute shall undertake appropriate training before being permitted to serve on the Committee.

Statement of purpose

1. The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is a key component of Cherwell District Council's corporate governance framework. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes. By overseeing internal and external audit it makes an important contribution to ensuring that effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, risk and control

- 2 To review the council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, including the ethical framework and consider the local code of governance.
- 3 To review the AGS prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control.
- 4 To consider the council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 5 To consider the council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
- 6 To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the council.
- 7 To monitor progress in addressing risk-related issues reported to the committee.
- 8 To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- 9 To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the council from fraud and corruption.
- 10 To monitor the counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources.
- 11 To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

Internal audit

- 12 To approve the internal audit charter.
- 13 To review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
- 14 To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, including internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.

- 15 To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
- 16 To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the head of internal audit to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- 17 To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the head of internal audit. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- 18 To consider reports from the head of internal audit on internal audit's performance during the year, including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
 - a) updates on the work of internal audit including key findings, issues of concern and action in hand as a result of internal audit work
 - b) regular reports on the results of the QAIP (Quality Assurance Improvement Programme)
 - c) reports on instances where the internal audit function does not conform to the PSIAS (Public Sector Internal Audit Standards), considering whether the non-conformance is significant enough that it must be included in the AGS.
- 19 To consider the head of internal audit's annual report:
 - a) The statement of the level of conformance with the PSIAS and the results of the QAIP that support the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit.
 - b) The opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the committee in reviewing the AGS.
- 20 To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- 21 To receive reports outlining the action taken where the head of internal audit has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- 22 To contribute to the QAIP and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- 23 To provide free and unfettered access to the audit committee chair for the head of internal audit, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the committee.

External audit

- 24 To support the independence of external audit through consideration of the external auditor's annual assessment of its independence and review of any issues raised by PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments) or the authority's auditor panel as appropriate.
- 25 To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
- 26 To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- 27 To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- 28 To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.

Financial reporting

- 29 To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council.
- 30 To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Accountability arrangements

- 31 To report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions.
- 32 To report to full council on a regular basis on the committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the committee.
- 33 To publish an annual report on the work of the committee.

Treasury Management

- 34 To be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. Receiving regular reports of activity, reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management processes.

Cherwell District Council

Council

19 May 2021

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21

Report of Director of Law and Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report presents the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21

1.0 Recommendations

Council is recommended:

1.1 To note the report

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a constitutional obligation to “produce a unified annual report for the whole scrutiny process” and to present it to Council.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The report briefly summarises the work undertaken by the Committee during the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

3.2 A draft of the report details was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the March 2021 meeting.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The recommendations as set out are in the best interests of the Council and ensures the Overview and Scrutiny Committee fulfils its constitutional obligation.

5.0 Consultation

Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 16 March 2021 – approved the report.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to agree the recommendations. This is rejected, as this would lead to the Committee not meeting its constitutional obligation.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Joanne Kaye, Strategic Finance Business Partner. 01295 221454,
joanne.kaye@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Chris Mace, Solicitor. 01295 221808, Christopher.mace@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 There are no risk implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes. 01295 221786,
louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

N/A

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The Corporate Plan themes addressed by each scrutiny topic are detailed in the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual report 2020/21.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Lucinda Wing, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2020/21

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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emma.faulkner@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

Foreword

This annual report for overview and scrutiny at Cherwell District Council outlines the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2020/21.

Whilst meetings were delayed in starting for the year as officers worked out how to continue governance under the backdrop of a global pandemic, the quality of scrutiny and debate was first-rate, and meetings were full of thought-provoking and relevant topics for consideration.

The committee's work programme this year was of profound importance to our residents, with two deep dives undertaken to examine Cherwell and Oxfordshire's response to the pandemic, covering everything from the vaccination programme to support for our most vulnerable residents.

We have also had the pleasure of examining an array of topics that I hope will help Cherwell 'come back better' in a post-Covid world, from a draft strategic vision for Oxfordshire and our Climate change response, to our 'Including Everyone' strategy examining how we can be more representative of our residents and incorporate their diverse lived experiences into our policy-making.

I extend my gratitude to officers and members of this committee who rose to the challenges of using a virtual platform to enable us to convene throughout the covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Lucinda Wing
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2020/21

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Councillor Lucinda Wing (Chairman)	Councillor Tom Wallis (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mike Bishop	Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Shaida Hussain	Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Tony Mephram	Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon	Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Douglas Webb	Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitutes

No substitutes attended the Committee during 2020/21.

Guests in attendance

Councillor Barry Wood – Leader of the Council
Councillor Ian Corkin – Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor Tony Ilott – Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance

External Guests

Craig Bower, Digital Programme Manager, Oxfordshire County Council

Officers

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ansaf Azhar, Corporate Director of Public Health and Wellbeing
Stephen Chandler, Corporate Director Adults & Housing Services
Paul Feehily, Executive Director – Place and Growth (Interim)
Kevin Gordon, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Steve Jordan, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment & (Interim) Monitoring Officer (until January 2021)
Rob MacDougall, Chief Fire Officer
Jason Russell, Director Community Operations
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer (from January 2021)
Gillian Douglas, Assistant Director – Social Care Commissioning and Housing
Robert Jolley, Assistant Director – Growth & Economy
Ed Potter, Assistant Director – Environmental Services
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director – Wellbeing
Richard Webb, Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Belinda Green, Operations Director – CSN Resources
Robin Rogers, Head of Strategy
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes

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Frances Evans, Housing Strategy and Development Team Leader
Sandra Fisher-Martins, Climate Actions Mobilisation Manager
Richard Hawtin, Deputy Monitoring Officer
Sue Marchand, Community Nature Officer: Wellbeing
Steven Newman, Senior Economic Growth Officer
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader
Samantha Shepherd, Policy Team Leader
Sarah Gilbert, Team Leader Climate Action
Sam Thomas, Sustainability Project Officer
Glenn Watson, Principal Governance Officer

Scrutiny Topics 2020/21 and their links to Corporate Priorities

Covid-19 updates – *all priorities*

Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring – *all priorities*

Including Everyone – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework – *all priorities*

(Draft) Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire – *all priorities*

Constitution Review – *all priorities*

Community Nature Plan 2020-2022 – A natural environment for people and wildlife
all priorities

Housing Strategy Progress Report – *Housing that meets your needs*

Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026 – *Housing that meets your needs and Healthy, resilient and engaged communities*

Digital Connectivity in Cherwell – *An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres*

(Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy – *An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres and Healthy, resilient and engaged communities*. Updates on Climate Change – *Leading on environmental sustainability*

Safeguarding – *Healthy, resilient and engaged communities*

Business Plan 2021 – N/A as reviewing all priorities for 2021/22

Summary of the topics considered

Covid-19 updates

The Committee have received three comprehensive updates on the district and county response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The updates gave details of the level of cases across the district, the financial support that was being offered to businesses and individuals via the various government grant schemes, educational arrangements and community support services that had been set up.

During the first national lockdown a number of district council departments had their usual day-to-day work put on hold, and the staff were temporarily redeployed to assist county council colleagues.

The Committee have been extremely grateful to the officers of Cherwell District and Oxfordshire County Council for taking time to give detailed updates during the pandemic.

Including Everyone – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework

In October 2020 the Committee considered a draft of the proposed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework, 'Including Everyone'.

A partnership approach had been undertaken with Oxfordshire County Council, and a number of engagement sessions had been held with staff from both Councils to help inform the first draft of the framework.

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As well as the framework, each Council would have its own action plan that would give details of how the framework would be applied in each organisation.

The Committee were asked for any comments on the draft framework or suggestions for inclusion in the Cherwell specific action plan, ahead of its consideration by Executive. The Committee commented that not all residents had access to IT equipment or the internet at home, and in some areas of Banbury Polish speaking residents accounted for a large proportion of the electorate. It was therefore requested that digital inclusivity and community integration of non-English speakers be included.

Executive considered the draft framework at their November 2020 meeting, and they agreed the framework and action plan, which had been updated to include the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Constitution Review

The Committee considered the Constitution Review across two meetings, in October and December 2020.

A review of the Constitution was carried out in September 2020. Feedback on the existing Constitution was sought from members and officers, with legal firm Bevan Brittan supporting the process.

The Committee was asked to consider some 'areas for further consideration'; those areas of the Constitution that would undergo a more detailed review by an informal cross-party working group.

The Committee agreed the areas for further consideration, and recommended them to Council for approval and the establishment of a working group. Council agreed the recommendation at its meeting in October 2020.

The Committee then considered the 20 recommendations that had been made by the working group, at their December 2020 meeting. Four of the recommendations were amended from what had been put forward by the working group, and a further three had amendments proposed but not supported.

Council considered the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny at their meeting in December, and all were agreed.

Community Nature Plan 2020-2022

Also in December 2020, the Committee considered the Community Nature Plan for the period 2020-2022.

The Community Nature Officer – Wellbeing explained that the Council had a statutory biodiversity duty, under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities

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Act 2006. In previous years a corporate biodiversity plan had been produced, and this had evolved into a Community Nature Plan.

The Community Nature Officer – Wellbeing also explained to the Committee that the delivery of the plan was achieved thanks to partnership working with key organisations and a network of local conservation and community groups, that included Wild Oxfordshire, Warriner School Farm and the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust.

The Committee endorsed the plan, and requested that a progress update be given towards the end of 2021. It was also requested that consideration be given to an all Member briefing in advance of the next review of the Plan, to allow more Members engagement in the review process.

Executive considered the plan at their meeting in January 2021, and it was approved.

Housing Strategy Progress Report and Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026

The Committee have considered two Housing updates this year, regarding progress on the Housing Strategy in July 2020 and the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in January 2021.

The Committee had considered the draft Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024 in February 2019, and endorsed it ahead of its adoption by Executive in March 2019. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested an update on implementation of the new strategy after 12 months.

The Committee had been due to receive the update in March 2020, however the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the meeting did not take place. The pandemic also impacted on the delivery of the Housing Strategy, and officers explained to the Committee that the annual action plan for 2020-21 had been revised to take account of the changes and challenges occurring as a result of covid.

At the time of the update in July 2020, £180,000 had been spent on emergency accommodation for homeless residents, with a number of local hotels being used as temporary accommodation.

In January 2021, the Committee considered the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for the period 2021 – 2026. The current strategy had come to an end, and it was a statutory requirement for the Council to have a Homelessness Strategy.

The proposed new strategy would cover a period of five years, and the main changes included a person-centred, strengths based approach to actions and solutions; working with partners and using feedback from customers to identify up-stream prevention; working with registered providers to review the allocation scheme

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and accept nominations of customers who are 'tenancy supported'; and improving data capture, recording and monitoring.

In providing feedback to be considered by the Executive at their meeting in March 2021, the Committee commented that they would like to see more reference to social housing in the strategy rather than affordable housing, as there was still a need for more social housing.

At the Executive meeting on 1 March 2021, the Lead member for Housing confirmed that increasing social housing was a priority.

Digital Connectivity in Cherwell

In July 2020 the Committee received a presentation relating to Digital Infrastructure, as a follow-on to work that had been undertaken in previous years regarding broadband and mobile phone connectivity across the district.

The Senior Economic Growth Officer for CDC and the Digital Programme Manager for OCC explained that superfast coverage, defined as speeds above 30 megabits per second, had increased from 66% across Cherwell in 2013 to 98% in 2020.

With regard to future plans, universal coverage of full fibre fixed broadband was targeted for 2033, with near full availability of 5G for mobile connectivity by 2033. Recent central Government announcements had suggested that the full fibre target could be brought forward to 2025.

The Digital Programme Manager clarified that the rollout of the 5G network was critically dependent on the fibre network, it was not a case of one being developed over the other.

The Committee commented that there was a clear link between the future rollout of fixed fibre and its importance to the Cherwell Industrial Strategy, and requested a further update on the combined subject later in the year.

Work on the Cherwell Industrial Strategy has been affected by the covid-19 pandemic, but officers remain committed to providing an update at an appropriate time.

Climate Change

The Committee has received two detailed updates from officers regarding ongoing Climate Change work taking place across the Council.

The first update was in September 2020 and gave details of the work that had been undertaken since the Council had declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019, and included a pledge to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030.

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Workshops had been held with officers and Members, assisted by consultants from Aether and BioRegional, to give more information on climate change and to gather ideas for inclusion in a detailed action plan.

A joint team had been set up with officers from Oxfordshire County Council, as well as a Climate Change champions group that was looking at installing electric vehicle overnight charging points in car parks.

The vehicle fleet used by the Environmental Services team was also being reviewed. A number of smaller electric vehicles were already in use at the waste services depot, but the technology was not yet available for larger refuse collection vehicles. Cost models currently estimated that an electric refuse vehicle would cost around £400,000, compared to the current £175,000 for a diesel vehicle.

As well as the initial cost of the vehicles, charging capability and the relevant upgrading of equipment and increase in electrical capacity would need to be factored in to cost modelling.

The second update in March 2021 summarised project progress since October 2020, and provided an overview of the planned projects for the next 6 to 12 months.

Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring

Quarterly monitoring of the Council's Performance Framework remains an important part of the ongoing work programme for the Committee.

The Committee has continued to concentrate on the performance element of the reports, as the risk and finance sections fall under the remit of the Accounts, Audit and Risk and Budget Planning Committees respectively.

The Committee has been extremely pleased to see Council performance on the whole remaining high despite the Covid pandemic, and have noted changes to the framework which have been required as a direct result of the pandemic.

Business Plan 2021

In January 2021 the Committee received an update regarding the proposed business plan for 2021/22.

The four existing strategic priorities – housing that meets your needs; leading on environmental sustainability; an enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres; and healthy, resilient and engaged communities; would remain in the plan, alongside the underpinning delivery themes of customers, healthy places, partnerships and continuous improvement.

Three new delivery themes would be added, to reflect the changing local and national priorities; Covid-19 recovery; including everyone, the equalities, diversity and inclusion framework; and climate action.

The 'Plan on a page' approach that had been used for previous plans had been replaced by a slightly longer business plan document, which included a foreword from the Leader of the Council and details of Council funding sources.

The Committee supported the draft Business Plan, which was approved by full Council in February 2021.

(Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy

In January 2021 the Committee considered proposed changes to the Statement of Licensing Policy, prior to its consideration by the Executive.

The Council was required to review the policy at least every five years. The last review had taken place in 2015, with the revised policy taking effect from January 2016.

The proposed changes for the latest review related to policy changes around child exploitation and safeguarding, and the provision of 70% no smoking seating in external areas of licensed premises, similar to the requirements under pavement licence conditions.

The Committee supported the proposed changes to the policy, which was approved by Executive at its February 2021 meeting.

The Committee had also requested that consideration be given to notifying Parish and Town Councils of licensing applications relating to their areas. The Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety suggested that certain applications that would be of material interest to the Parish and Town Councils, such as Alcohol Premise License, Temporary Event Notice (unless submitted by the Parish/Town themselves) and Gambling Premise Licenses would be notified to the Parish and Town Councils. The Committee supported this suggestion, and thanked the Assistant Director – Regulatory Services for addressing the query.

Safeguarding

The Committee would usually consider a draft of the annual Safeguarding Audit in November, however due to the Covid pandemic the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board delayed the requirement for submission of the completed audit.

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing instead gave a general update on safeguarding, and advised the Committee that policies and processes were still being followed. The overall number of reports made in connection with safeguarding issues was at a similar level to 2019.

The Committee were also advised of changes to the staff training system, which meant that it was easier to track the number of staff that had completed mandatory training. At the time of the update in November 2020, completion numbers for the Prevent module which focussed on extremism stood at 89%.

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Whilst safeguarding training was not mandatory for Members, it was highly recommended that as many members as possible complete it. At the time of the update, 50% of members had completed the training.

Rolling Topic Sheet

The Committee again made use of the rolling topic sheet throughout the year, to keep track of subjects raised as possible areas of scrutiny.

Annexe 1 to this report gives details of the topics raised, with a brief summary of the actions taken.

Topic and suggested by	Update
<p>Planning Policy for the District, including the Growth Deal.</p> <p>Raised by Councillors Ian Middleton, Mike Bishop, Chris Heath and Phil Chapman</p>	<p>Officers from Planning Policy have agreed to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss this subject in more detail.</p>
<p>Digital Infrastructure/5G (to be considered at the same time as the Cherwell Industrial Strategy due to the synergies between the items).</p> <p>Raised by Councillors Tom Wallis, Bryn Williams and Former Councillor Sandra Rhodes</p>	<p>Following the Digital Connectivity presentation at the July 2020 meeting, the Committee requested that an update be provided later in the year, and that it be linked to the Cherwell Industrial Strategy item that is currently on the work programme.</p> <p>The timetable for the Industrial Strategy was under review, as the focus of the Economic Development Team had been on work arising as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Officers remain committed to attending a future meeting of the Committee at the relevant time, to provide a further update on both aspects of this subject.</p>
<p>Management companies managing new housing developments – is the use of management companies rather than adoption by the Council on the rise, if so what is the cause of this?</p> <p>Raised by Councillor Lucinda Wing</p>	<p>Initially raised during the 2019/20 Municipal year, information regarding this subject has previously been circulated to Committee members.</p> <p>Under work programme planning for 2021/22, the Committee will be asked to decide whether to pursue this topic in the new Municipal Year.</p>
<p>Sale of Fur on Cherwell Markets</p> <p>Councillor Lucinda Wing</p>	<p>Cllr Wing had been approached by a member of the electorate regarding the sale of Fur as opposed to Faux Fur at Cherwell Markets and wanted to know if there were any restrictions on selling Fur on Cherwell Markets. Cllr Wing subsequently raised the matter at the July Council meeting as a question to the Leader.</p>

	<p>The Assistant Director Environmental Services reported that there were restrictions on selling live animals but not fur. These could be written into the current agreements when they were up for renewal.</p>
Coronavirus (Covid-19)	<p>Councillors requested an update regarding Emergency Planning review, what went well and what would be done differently; economic impact on the district – what and how it was being addressed.</p> <p>The Committee has subsequently received three detailed updates from the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors, as detailed in the main annual report.</p>
Constitutional Working Group Councillor Ian Middleton	<p>Cllr Middleton requested that a cross party Constitutional Working Group be set up, to discuss and scrutinise proposed changes to the Constitution before they are considered by full Council.</p> <p>This subject was subsequently addressed by the Constitution Review that took place between October and December 2020.</p>
Licensing applications – advertisement and consultation processes	<p>The Committee raised questions relating to Councillors and town/parish councils being made aware of Licensing applications in their areas, and also queried the frequency of Licensing Committee meetings.</p> <p>Executive requested that the Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety provide feedback on the queries.</p>

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