

**Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan
2014 -2031
Incorporating Examiner's Modifications**

October 2015



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hook Norton & background to this Plan

Hook Norton has a long history and distinctive character. A settlement known as Hocneratune dates back to at least AD 922¹, and the parish now has just over 2,000 residents². It is one of the most western parishes in the Cherwell District, and is within the Ironstone belt of North Oxfordshire. The village is set in a countryside of hills and small valleys where fields are used mainly for pasture. Many springs arise and contribute to the tributaries of both the River Stour (north of the parish) and River Swere (south of the parish).

It was once a centre of the wool industry, and has supplied iron ore from local ironstone to the Brymbo Steel Company in Wales. The industry ceased after the Second World War. Similarly, Banbury and Cheltenham railway is also now closed down but parts of the construction remain, including two viaducts. The Brewery, which dates back to 1849, continues to provide employment. However, many residents travel long distances to work.

The village has retained a range of services and Hook Norton has a vibrant community. There is a strong local feeling that house prices are high and young people with Hook Norton connections are being forced to go elsewhere. Very recent development pressure has focussed the challenges of maintaining and enhancing a sustainable community, and the quality of the natural, built and historic environment. This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to help address the challenges.

1.2 Who and what is this Plan for

This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Hook Norton residents under the provisions of the Localism Act of 2011 to guide the future development of Hook Norton. The Plan covers the period 2014 to 2031, with a review every five years. The end date of 2031 was selected to correspond with the Cherwell District Council Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan covers Hook Norton Civil Parish area (shown on Fig 1 overleaf). A vote in favour at the referendum means that the Neighbourhood Plan will then become part of the Development Plan for the area, against which any proposals for development will be assessed. In the lead up to the referendum, decision makers are expected to consider this Neighbourhood Plan as a material consideration in any development planning decisions.

¹ Source: History of Hook Norton 912-1928, Margaret Dickens.. Pub. The Banbury Guardian 1928, reprinted Hook Norton Local History Society Group, 2009

² Source: Census 2011, Key Statistics. Population is 2,117

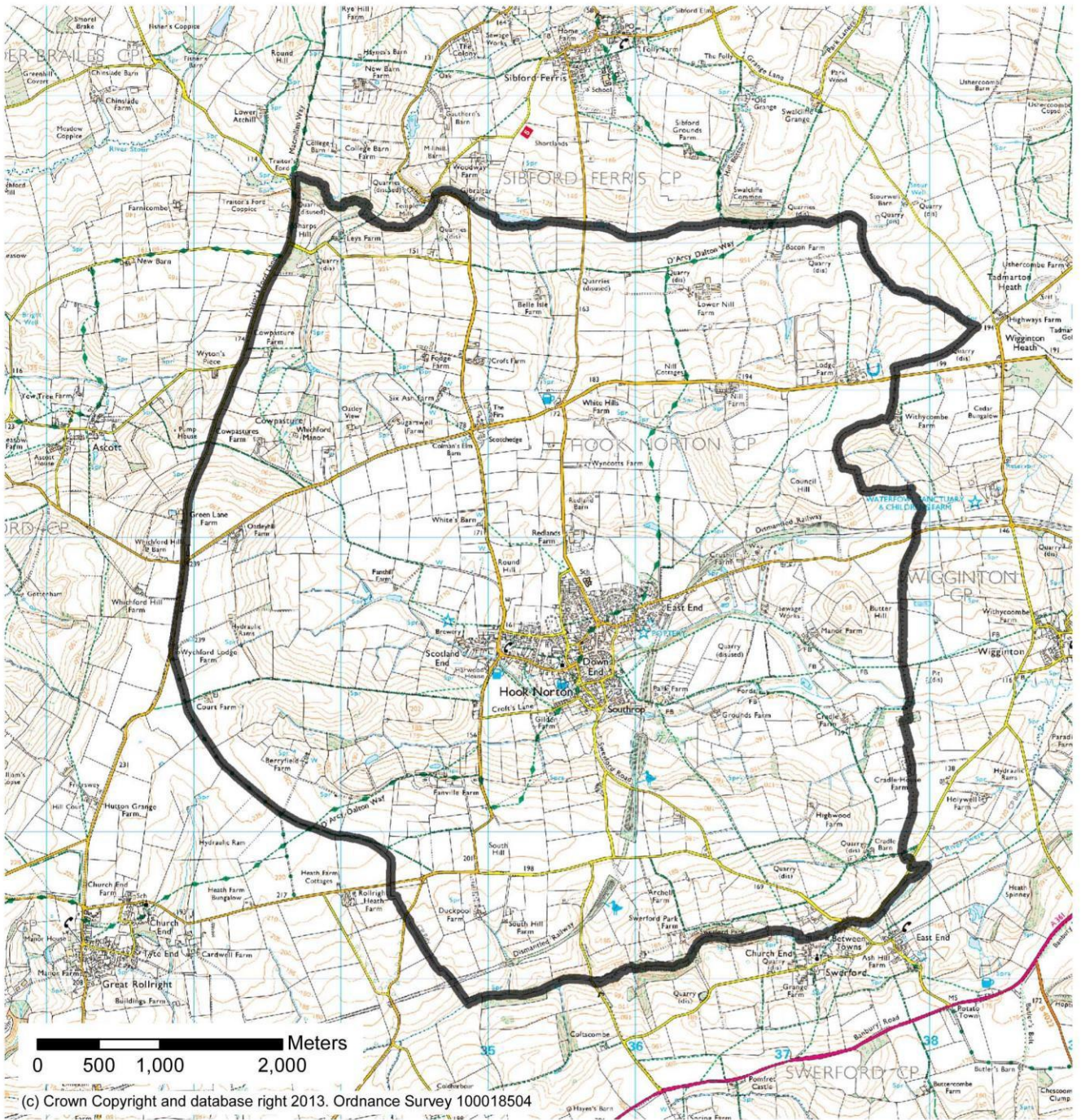


Fig 1 Civil Parish of Hook Norton

1.3 How does this plan fit with Cherwell District and National Plans

This Neighbourhood Plan provides locally focussed policies and actions to address matters identified as important to the local community, particularly where it is perceived that these matters are not being adequately addressed through existing planning policies.

The adopted Local Plan for the Cherwell District is the Cherwell Local Plan, 1996, from which many policies have been 'saved' for use until replaced by a new plan. Cherwell District Council has been working on a replacement for several years. There is a Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011 which was never adopted, and more recently the emerging Cherwell District policy is contained in the Cherwell Local Plan 2006-2031. This has been through public consultation and the Draft Submission Document was approved by Cherwell District Council in October 2013 for progression toward examination and adoption. Examination commenced in June 2014 and recommenced in December 2014 following modifications. The Inspector's final report was released in June 2015.

This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan of 1996 and the emerging policies of the proposed replacement, the Cherwell Local Plan 2006-2031³, together with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to repeat National or Cherwell policies but, where appropriate, to add local detail to those policies. The Neighbourhood Plan makes use of evidence gathered and prepared for the emerging Local Plan. It also takes account of National planning practice guidance.

1.4 How the plan was prepared

Local involvement and consultation is at the heart of neighbourhood planning. The Parish Council of Hook Norton started the process with a resolution in September 2012. A public meeting was held by the Parish Council to explain the concept and invite volunteers. From this, a Steering Group was formed primarily of non-Parish Council members as the Council considered it important that the Neighbourhood Plan was not simply seen as something produced by the Parish Council but was a community effort. The Parish Council formally registered with Cherwell District Council to become a Neighbourhood Area on 26 November 2012 and this was approved by Cherwell District Council on 3 June 2013.

The Steering Group used a range of methods to inform people about the Plan and its progress including the local newsletter delivered to each household, posters placed throughout the village, a dedicated Neighbourhood Plan website, emails and social media. Consultation roughly followed 5 stages and included various methods. These are summarised below:

- Identifying the issues – by questionnaire delivered through the Newsletter; two presentations and workshops advertised by posters and to which invitations were sent to representatives of local services, businesses, clubs and societies; and informal discussions such as at the Village Market
- Survey relating to key issues – commissioned from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
- Consultation on goals and objectives, and potential sites – distributed through the Newsletter, plus two 'drop-in' style presentations
- Consultation on policies – 2 workshop style presentations with questionnaires
- Consultation on Pre-Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan – in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and including consultees as advised by Cherwell District Council.

³ Cherwell Local Plan, Submission, January 2014

The Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by extensive background research to identify the social, environmental and planning context, and the main sources used are identified in the Evidence base section of this Plan (Section 7). In addition to using existing sources for initial background information, the Steering Group commissioned a survey to obtain more detail, and maintained an ongoing review of relevant material produced during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. This material included: national planning guidance; Cherwell District Council documents, planning applications and decisions; and the development of other Neighbourhood Plans. The preparation of the Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan has also been informed by a process of Sustainability Appraisal.

1.5 Key issues, goals and objectives

Early consultation identified the importance of the countryside, rural character and amenities to the community of Hook Norton. Concerns were raised about development, lack of affordable housing, and issues about transport. To obtain more detail about some of these, particularly housing, a survey was commissioned⁴.

Five main themes emerged from the consultation: housing; community and amenities; environment; employment; and transport. A series of goals were developed within these five themes, together with objectives arising from the goals, and these were endorsed by a strong majority through local consultation⁵. Taking into account feedback from the Sustainability Appraisal process, the goals and objectives for this plan are as follows:

Housing

Goal To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home

Objectives arising:

- 1.1** To deliver a mix of housing that caters for the full range of housing needs in the village, as identified in the housing needs survey
- 1.2** To provide suitable accommodation for older residents and those with other particular requirements, to enable them to continue to live in the village
- 1.3** To provide suitable 'truly' affordable housing to enable young and lower income residents to remain living in the village
- 1.4** To provide a limited amount of housing with preferential access to current village residents, or those with a strong local connection
- 1.5** To ensure that new development is of high quality design, in keeping with the village and parish character and to a high level of sustainability
- 1.6** To limit the size of individual developments to ensure that growth in the parish is sustainable and does not negatively impact on the infrastructure and amenities for existing residents

Community and Amenities

Goal 1 To maintain and enhance the character, vitality and community spirit of the village

Objectives arising:

- 1.1** To retain and protect from inappropriate development the village "Crown Jewels" (for example the library, the Sun public house)
- 1.2** To maintain and enhance the existing range of amenities, services and facilities
- 1.3** To encourage the purchase of locally produced goods and services
- 1.4** To provide a safe and healthy environment for all the people of our community

⁴ Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Survey. Oxfordshire Rural Community Council,

⁵ Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement refers

Goal 2 To maintain and develop an infrastructure to support our community activities

Objectives arising:

- 2.1 To maintain and enhance the facilities for children and young peoples' activities
- 2.2 To maintain and enhance facilities for a range of sporting and non-sporting leisure activities

Employment

Goal To maintain and enhance employment opportunities and businesses providing sustainable services and local employment

Objectives arising:

- 1.1 To encourage and support local agriculture and businesses in suitable locations
- 1.2 To ensure that any new employment opportunities are appropriate to the surroundings and meet high standards of sustainability (in terms of location and design)
- 1.3 To encourage new business start-ups and opportunities for local people

Environment

Goal 1 To maintain the rural character and tranquility of the parish whilst seeking opportunities for landscape, heritage, recreational and ecological gain

Objectives arising:

- 1.1 To retain and enhance the special character of the locality and distinctive local identity of the village
- 1.2 To maintain and enhance key views within and of the village and the wider District, including the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- 1.3 To maintain and enhance the village's Conservation Area
- 1.4 To retain and enhance accessible open spaces within and around the village
- 1.5 To encourage sympathetic management of the countryside around the village to enhance the high quality landscape and improve local biodiversity

Goal 2 To minimise the environmental impact of new development, and ensure that any development is sympathetic to its setting within the village and the wider neighbourhood

Objectives arising:

- 2.1 To ensure that any development is compatible with the built and natural environment
- 2.2 To encourage development that makes use of previously developed land and buildings rather than greenfield locations

Goal 3 To reduce harm to the environment by aiming for a low carbon community

Objectives arising:

- 3.1 To improve the energy efficiency of the village
- 3.2 To encourage and support home working
- 3.3 To require all development to meet high standards of sustainability

Transport

Goal Improve access within the parish, improve travel choices and reduce the need to travel

Objectives arising:

- 1.1 To reduce traffic congestion
- 1.2 To encourage buses to serve existing and new areas, run at appropriate times and be affordable
- 1.3 To ensure there is adequate car parking available in any new development
- 1.4 To promote alternatives to minimise the use of cars e.g. car sharing
- 1.5 To protect, develop and improve the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths in the parish to improve links within the parish and with other parishes, and enable all people to actively move around

1.6 Policies and actions

Feedback from the consultations, and the results of the survey, were used to develop draft policies. It was recognised that not all of the issues raised would be appropriate for Neighbourhood Plan policies. However, the plan process could suggest alternative ways in which some aspects could be taken forward and the Steering Group has therefore recommended to the Parish Council actions which could be taken to assist the community. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore refers, where relevant, to these suggestions and further detail has been provided to the Parish Council.

Policies and actions for this Plan were identified in four subject areas:

- Hook Norton character and countryside
- Community – Living and working in Hook Norton
- Transport
- Housing

Consultation took place on the draft policies and the feedback received was taken into account in this Plan.

The policies and actions in this Plan together provide for sustainable development of Hook Norton. In planning terms there are 3 dimensions of sustainable development. These are:

- Economic – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy
- Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
- Environmental – contributing to producing and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

This Neighbourhood Plan recognises that these 3 roles are mutually dependent, and also takes account of the particular and special qualities of Hook Norton.

The Cherwell Local Plan seeks to focus growth in the urban areas of the District. Hook Norton is a rural parish which is appreciated by residents and enjoyed by visitors. It shares with many rural areas a lack of affordable homes and a need to retain local services to enable the village to continue to thrive. The community accepts that there will be development but is very aware that development simply to meet housing numbers can erode the qualities which make a place special and valued. Approval has recently been granted for large scale housing development in Hook Norton and a further application for a large residential development has recently been made. Strong concern has been expressed that the infrastructure is unsuited for this type of growth, and that this will result in characterless estates of standardised homes more typical of suburbia than the village.

This Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to carefully manage growth, taking into account infrastructure and amenities. It is not anti-development and it does not provide for less than the amount of development described in higher level plans. This Plan seeks to meet the needs of the community in a way which retains and enhances the character of Hook Norton now and for the future.

Applicants and decision makers must read this Plan and Policies as a whole when assessing if a proposal would be acceptable.

2. HOOK NORTON CHARACTER AND COUNTRYSIDE

2.1 Policy background and reasoning

Sustainable development is at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework. One of the Core Principles of the Framework recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The spatial strategy of the Cherwell Local Plan focusses development on urban areas of the District and development in the countryside is to be strictly controlled. This represents the most sustainable approach.

In relation to villages and rural areas, Cherwell wishes to protect our built and natural environments and the character and appearance of our villages and relevant policies to this effect are included in both the adopted and emerging Local Plans.

The Government places great importance on good design and recognises it is a key aspect of sustainable development. Design is fundamental to the retention of local distinctiveness, which is supported by the Framework.⁶

The Local Plan requires development to be of a “high standard”⁷ and provides some elements of guidance. The emerging plan similarly requires any development in villages to be “built to exemplary design and building standards”⁸. Hook Norton has a rich heritage interest. It has many examples of high quality design, and expects only the best of any new development.

The Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to supplement aspects of the Local Plan with particular reference to Hook Norton, with a view to ensuring a cohesive approach to any development in the parish.

The policies reflect results of consultation which showed the high importance and value placed on Hook Norton’s character and countryside. Particular aspects which are expected to have significant weight when considering any planning application are:

- Hook Norton parish is immediately adjacent to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Landscape in the parish has for many years been designated as an Area of High Landscape Value in recognition of its environmental quality;
- The tranquillity map referred to in the emerging Local Plan policy ESD 13 shows virtually the whole of the parish is categorised as “most tranquil” ;
- The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment which informed the Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance classifies the majority of landscape in Hook Norton as “conservation type”;
- A large part of Hook Norton village is designated as a Conservation Area (as shown on plan in Appendix A);
- Good design and positive contribution to local character is not just a matter for designated areas – it is applicable to all of Hook Norton in order to maintain the integrity of the landscape and environment as a whole;
- The landscape and character of Hook Norton attracts visitors which contribute to the local economy;
- Maintenance of unspoilt rural views is an inherent part of landscape quality, particularly from Public Rights of Way, to and from ridgelines and hillsides and other frequently used viewpoints. Views of countryside generally, and particular views to

⁶ Para 60

⁷ Policy C28 of Cherwell Local Plan, November 1996

⁸ Para C218 of Cherwell Local Plan 2006 – 2031. Submission January 2014

and from hills were identified as most important in the Neighbourhood Plan Survey. Important views also included buildings unique to Hook Norton, including the viaduct, church and brewery. The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies "a series of impressive deflected views".

Policy HN - CC 1: Protection and enhancement of local landscape and character of Hook Norton

Any development must be located and designed so that it is readily visually accommodated into its surroundings and setting, and provides a positive contribution to the locally distinctive character and context of Hook Norton.

Proposals which would introduce development to isolated sites in the open countryside which would adversely affect the tranquillity, unspoilt character and amenity value of the landscape will not be permitted.

Development which makes use of previously developed land and buildings will generally be preferred to greenfield locations. Residential gardens are not considered previously developed land and redevelopment of residential gardens to provide inappropriate housing is specifically not supported, where it would result in a cramped form of development or otherwise detract from the character of the village

Policy HN - CC 2: Design

Any full planning application for development must contain sufficient detail to demonstrate the proposal is of high quality design. Proposals for development within or visible from the Conservation Area must have regard to the principles set out in the Hook Norton Conservation Area Appraisal. All new development should:

- **Reflect local distinctiveness and be readily assimilated particularly in terms of: the extent and amount of development; scale; layout; open spaces; appearance; and materials**
- **Respect and enhance the historic environment of the parish and its heritage and natural assets**
- **Ensure that locally important views and vistas are maintained or enhanced**
- **Retain and enhance open spaces, walls, hedgerows and trees which are important to the local character**
- **Take account of information and design guidance included in the Cherwell Countryside Design SPD, Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, Hook Norton Conservation Area Appraisal and any specific design guidance provided by Hook Norton Parish Council**
- **Incorporate features to improve environmental performance and reduce carbon emissions, unless it is demonstrated to be not practicable and viable.**

Policy HN - CC 3: Local distinctiveness, variety, and cohesiveness

The traditional pattern of growth which characterises Hook Norton is small scale and gradual change. This must be reflected in the extent and amount of any development in Hook Norton. Designs which could be 'anywhere place' will not be acceptable. Variety in density, layout, building orientation and sizes will be sought to reflect the local context. Building styles and materials must also respect and positively contribute to local distinctiveness. Hook Norton is one of Oxfordshire's Ironstone villages and it is therefore expected that local ironstone will continue to be the predominant building material, particularly in the conservation area. All elements of schemes must be considered to produce a cohesive and high quality design in which detailing such as car parking, boundary treatments, bin stores, meter boxes, and lighting are all provided for in a harmonious and inclusive design.

Policy HN - CC 4: Resource efficient design

High levels of resource efficiency will be expected and must be demonstrated in any application for development. Applicants will be expected to put forward site-specific proposals which take account of location, layout and building orientation to minimise energy consumption.

Policy HN - CC 5: Lighting

Any lighting proposed must be of a design which does not cause visual intrusion nor cause adverse effects due to light pollution. All lighting must meet high levels of energy efficiency.

3. COMMUNITY - Living and Working in Hook Norton

3.1 Protection of Locally Valued Resources

Policy background and reasoning

The importance of rural services is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework as contributing to a prosperous rural economy and promoting healthy communities.

All the consultation and survey results for the Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan show that the services and facilities currently available in Hook Norton are greatly valued resources. The Parish Council has identified some of these as particularly special "Crown Jewels". During the consultation for this Plan, the Crown Jewels concept was supported and extended. Consequently a list of Locally Valued Resources has been drawn up and is to be reviewed on a regular basis. The current list is shown below. This list includes The Bell Public House which, at the time of preparing this Plan, is not currently trading but has been designated as an Asset of Community Value (on 19 July 2013) and an application for conversion to residential use was refused by Cherwell District Council on 10 July 2014, with a large amount of support from the local community.

Table 1. Locally Valued Resources

Shop	Peartree Public House	School
Post Office	Sun Public House	Playgroup
Doctor (& associated dispensing)		Playground
Dentist	Memorial Hall	Playing fields
Vet	St Peters Church	Allotments
Gate Hangs High Public House	Baptist chapel & meeting room	
	Library	

Policy HN - COM 1: Protection of Locally Valued Resources

Any proposal for a change of use which would adversely affect or result in the loss of any Locally Valued Resource as defined in Table 1 will not be permitted unless in exceptional circumstances and where it has been clearly shown as the only, or most locally acceptable option, taking into account all relevant factors including:

- full exploration of options to secure the continuation of the facility;
- designation as an Asset of Community Value and community purchase
- alternative provision

to the extent that each factor is applicable. The list of Locally Valued Resources is shown in Table 1 and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

3.2 Communities and facilities generally

Comments made during the consultation for this Neighbourhood Plan will be collated and presented to the Parish Council to inform its considerations when various matters arise and should there be any opportunities to follow up any of the detailed suggestions and comments made.

3.3 Public Rights of Way

Policy background and reasoning

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Public Rights of Way should be protected and enhanced. The emerging Local Plan policies consider Public Rights of Way only in the context of green infrastructure for the District.

Public Rights of Way within the Parish are well used and valued both locally and more widely as a recreational resource. Individuals and groups use the paths on a regular basis, as evidenced by the Hook Norton walking group and routes arranged by Ramblers and AONB. The paths include several long-distance trails. Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan suggested creation of circular walks to/from the village of Hook Norton, routes to avoid roads, to link Hook Norton to Chipping Norton, and several other routes and links. These are listed in Appendix B for use in implementing Policy HN – COM 2, and for both Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council for use in their Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

Policy HN - COM 2: Public Rights of Way

Existing Public Rights of Way in the parish will be protected. Where re-routing is essential to accommodate sustainable development any loss of amenity value will be minimised.

Opportunities will be sought to enhance the network of Public Rights of Way through the creation of new links, improved maintenance and waymarking, and making use of developer contributions, agricultural schemes and local partnership initiatives.

3.4 Infrastructure and utilities

Policy background and reasoning

Great concern was expressed in the consultation for this Neighbourhood Plan about the need to co-ordinate any development with necessary infrastructure, and to provide this in a harmonious way, with considerations of sustainability being fundamental. The extent of provision, and the ability of the infrastructure and those utilities which there are in the parish, to cope were consistent themes throughout the consultation.

In response to the pre-Submission draft of this Plan, Thames Water specifically requested that the Plan include the advice that developers should engage with Thames Water at the earliest opportunity to establish:

- The demand for both water supply and sewage treatment and the necessary infrastructure, and whether these can be met, and
- Surface water drainage and flood risk requirements and whether these can be met.

In relation to flooding and water management, the Environment Agency advise that there should be no new development in Flood Zone 2 or 3, nor within 8 metres of any watercourse.

The community of Hook Norton has expressed strong feeling about the limited opportunity for local involvement in identifying where any developer contributions might be required and be most useful to the community. In particular, concerns were raised in relation to the

acceptance of a recent Section 106 contribution which appears to be sufficient only to bus primary age children elsewhere rather than enable attendance at the village school.

Community contributions may be considered in a measured way by the various relevant authorities, including Planning from Cherwell District Council, and the Highways and Education Authorities at Oxfordshire County Council, working with the Hook Norton Parish Council as the representative of the community of Hook Norton.

The Parish Council is consulted on all planning applications and if it wished to suggest items for inclusion in a S106 Agreement it could do so at this stage. It is important to note that Section 106 Agreements can only be sought where they are: necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Thus many items which might be considered desirable could not be included. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is intended to replace S106 agreements for many aspects of community infrastructure and the proportion of funds raised in this way is higher (25%) where a neighbourhood plan is in place than elsewhere (15%). The introduction of CIL will present an opportunity for the Parish Council to use its share of the proceeds as it chooses.

3.5 Facilities for young people

The Parish Council owns a play area which was recently re-equipped to a high standard with play equipment for younger children and adjacent hard and grassed spaces for informal games. There have been some problems in the area caused by noise and antisocial behaviour. Some respondents in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations thought this may be helped by providing additional facilities and others that it was a matter of the behaviour regardless of provision. Therefore the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has recommended to the Parish Council that this be considered by a small, specific group involving the Parish Council, local young people, and the Sports & Social Club. The Sports & Social Club facilities include large areas of playing field, a Multi Use Games Area and a clubhouse, all of which are available to members.

3.6 Local employment

Policy background and reasoning

Local employment opportunities are limited and many residents travel long distances to work⁹. The Cherwell Local Plan 1996 proposed a site at the old Brymbo works for employment generating development. An adjacent site (to the north) was granted permission in February 2000¹⁰ for fabrication and repair of agricultural, commercial and equestrian boxes etc. However, the site at Brymbo has not been developed for the industrial use envisaged. Employment land at the Stanton engineering site was granted permission for housing in 2013¹¹.

Consultation showed support for local employment and home-working. It also noted that a recent initiative which provided small offices in Hook Norton had been unsuccessful and identified broadband provision as a critical factor to home working. Retention of existing businesses, services and facilities in Hook Norton will assist in keeping local employment.

⁹ Source: ORCC Community profile for Hook Norton, 2013

¹⁰ Application No. 99/02275/F

¹¹ Application No. 12/00472/F

Policy HN - COM 3: Broadband

It is understood that Oxfordshire County Council will be rolling out high speed broadband to Hook Norton by 2015¹². In the event that this does not happen, proposals which would facilitate better quality broadband to Hook Norton will be supported provided this can be delivered in compliance with other relevant policies in this Plan, and in particular policies regarding Protection of Local Landscape and Character of Hook Norton. Any development occurring after high speed broadband infrastructure has been provided to Hook Norton will be expected to provide connectivity to that infrastructure.

Policy HN - COM 4: Retention of Local Employment

Sites providing local employment within the parish should be retained for employment use except in circumstances where it is demonstrated not to be viable.

¹² Source: <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/broadband-oxfordshire>

4. HOUSING

4.1 Sustainable housing growth

Policy background and reasoning

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that Neighbourhood Plans should support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, and plan positively to support, shape and direct development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

In relation to housing growth, this Neighbourhood Plan takes a pragmatic approach which has regard to policies in both the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan, and provides positively for sustainable housing growth.

Both adopted and emerging Local Plans adopt a village categorisation approach, and both provide policies to manage unanticipated or windfall development. For Hook Norton, both Local Plans allow for infilling, minor development and conversions. In addition, the Submitted Local Plan also includes Hook Norton within an allocation of growth in the rural areas.

Type of development

The understanding of minor development, infilling, and conversions varies between the adopted and emerging Local Plans. Both Plans refer to the scale of development which is appropriate for Hook Norton as “small” and the Submitted Local Plan identifies this as “typically but not exclusively for less than 10 dwellings.”

Hook Norton is one of the villages which have recently had permissions for new housing granted under the National Planning Policy Framework provisions relating to 5 year housing land supply. The Neighbourhood Plan consultation responses made clear that the recent approvals for housing in the village are considered to represent development at an inappropriate scale for Hook Norton. One will result in a development of 37 dwellings and another of 70 dwellings. Both are due to be developed in the same time frame and the consultation responses expressed concerns about the effects and sustainability of this at parish level (Section 3.4 of this Plan refers).

This Plan therefore seeks to provide clarity about the type of development which is appropriate in Hook Norton.

Local Plan allocation and recent growth

The adopted Local Plan does not allocate numbers but identifies Hook Norton as able to “accommodate some limited extra growth”.

The Submitted Local Plan distributes growth across the rural areas by allocating new housing, on sites for 10 or more dwellings, during the plan period to groups of villages. Policy Villages 2 of the Submitted Local Plan shows Hook Norton is within a group required to deliver 252 dwellings between 6 villages in the period 2012 – 2031. The numbers take account of completions and permissions as at 31 March 2012.

As part of the evidence base for this Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant figures in the Submitted Local Plan have been updated to take into account further completions and permissions between 31 March 2012 and 30 June 2014. For the group which includes Hook Norton, all of the 6 villages have had recent approvals granted which in total will provide for 528 dwellings (as shown in Appendix C). This represents 210% of the allocation for this group of villages. It also exceeds the entire anticipated allocation for all the villages of Cherwell

during the whole Plan period. There is therefore a need for policy at parish level to take this very recent extent of growth into account.

The effect of recent approvals for Hook Norton is that 107 dwellings (42% of the total allocation to the group of 6 villages) are now due to be built on the outskirts of the village, all in the same time frame. A further application for 54 dwellings in Hook Norton has recently been made¹³. The emerging Local Plan seeks to avoid overdevelopment in any village¹⁴. Account has been taken of this in developing policy for this Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore does not allocate nor anticipate a need to allocate any sites for 10 or more dwellings. This accords with Cherwell District Council's aim of supporting the long term sustainability of rural areas through a measured approach to development¹⁵.

Future sustainable growth

In identifying future sustainable growth, this Plan takes account of the findings of CRAITLUS¹⁶, part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base, which gives Hook Norton a poor sustainability rating.

Large developments are not acceptable to the community. Consultation results showed 44% of respondents preferred future housing developments to be 10 -20 dwellings, and 41% preferred development to be less than 10 dwellings. Sustainable housing growth in Hook Norton therefore focuses on small scale development to provide incremental and balanced growth which respects the character of the area.

Policy HN - H1: Sustainable housing growth

Sustainable housing growth for Hook Norton in this Plan period (2014 to 2031) means conversions, infilling, and minor development. 'Conversions' means the conversion of either residential or non-residential buildings. 'Infilling' means the development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, typically but not exclusively suitable for one or two dwellings. 'Minor development' means small scale development proposals, typically but not exclusively for less than 10 dwellings. To maintain a sustainable community, proposals for up to 20 dwellings may be permitted where this does not result in more than 20 dwellings being built in any one location at any time, taking into account any extant permissions. In all cases, housing growth must comply with all relevant policies in this Plan.

¹³ Application 14/00844/OUT

¹⁴ Para C.235. Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031 Submission January 2014

¹⁵ Para C.6a. Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031 Submission January 2014

¹⁶ Cherwell Rural Area Integrated Transport and Land Use Study (CRAITLUS), August 2009

4.2 Location of development

Policy background and reasoning

The presumption of the National Planning Policy Framework is avoidance of new isolated homes in the countryside. This was supported in consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan. Respondents were clearly not in favour of a general expansion of the village beyond existing settlement limits. In responses to the question where housing should not go, 92% identified areas outside the current village extent as areas not considered appropriate for housing.

Three locations which would extend the built up area into open countryside to the North or West of the village accounted for 45% of the total areas where respondents thought housing should not go – these were: off Bourne Lane; the “Beer Festival” fields between Clay Bank and Hayway Lane; and the field between the School and Redlands Farm.

Similarly, land between the old railway and Park Hill/Beanacre was not considered suitable, nor was development to the south of the village (off the Chipping Norton Road, Swerford Road, Burycroft Road/Crofts Lane or the fields either side of the stream).

The area between Ironstone Hollow and the old railway evoked a close split between respondents who thought it appropriate for housing and those who did not.

Locations most frequently identified as possible for future potential housing were: the “derelict” site off Rope Way; the old KMS site between Scotland End and Old School End; and land adjacent to the Doctors surgery.

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation, sites identified in the Cherwell District Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) were ranked in order of preference¹⁷. The rankings show that the top three most popular and least popular sites accord with the same general conclusions as above. Specific sites which were included in the top 3 but not mentioned above are: near the telephone exchange; and the small piece of land accessible off the Bourne and immediately to the south of the consented Bourne Lane development.¹⁸

Results of the consultation about SHLAA sites provided not just rankings but also many comments about whether all or part of a site was considered potentially suitable, and the potentially suitable areas were also indicated graphically by respondents. These comments, and the responses about preferred size of development¹⁹, make clear that a ranking for any site has also to be seen in the context that not all of that site may be considered suitable.

Sites suggested as potentially suitable in part only were: land between Ironstone Hollow and the old railway; off Bourne Lane (subsequent to the consultation, the whole site was consented), and the land near the Doctor’s surgery. In each of these cases, the smaller potentially suitable areas identified were those closest to existing housing. Also identified as potentially suitable in part were: land near the telephone exchange; and land between Old School End and Scotland End. In both these cases, it was noted that the sites are, in part, currently in alternative uses and it is anticipated these may/should continue. Furthermore these sites may be relevant to the ongoing work of the Forum addressing transportation factors including car parking.²⁰

¹⁷ Note that since the Station Road/Stanton site had been approved this was not included in rankings. Also, the Bourne Lane site as shown in the SHLAA was split to show the small, roughly triangular shape section in the south, & accessed off The Bourne, as a separate site. This gave a total of 11 sites.

¹⁸ Application No. 11/01755/OUT

¹⁹ See Section 4.1 of this Plan

²⁰ See section 5.1 of this Plan

Policy HN - H2: Location of housing

Any applications for housing development will be assessed for suitability of location using the following criteria. Suitable locations will:

- **Not be in Flood Zone 2 or 3 or within 8 metres of a watercourse**
- **Comply with policies in this Neighbourhood Plan**
- **Take account of existing or potential alternative site uses which shall be identified in consultation with the Parish Council.**

4.3 Density

Policy background and reasoning

The adopted Local Plan provides design control to ensure that new housing is compatible with the density of existing dwellings in the vicinity. The emerging Local Plan generally seeks a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare on net developable areas but allows for lower densities where there are justifiable planning reasons.

Density is a component of local distinctiveness. Therefore, in addition to the Policies provided in the Hook Norton character and countryside section of this Neighbourhood Plan, a specific policy relating to housing density is required.

Policy HN - H3: Housing density

For housing development within Hook Norton the maintenance of local character has a higher significance than achieving a minimum housing density figure. The appropriate density for a housing site should in every case within Hook Norton result in a development that is in character with the local surrounding area.

4.4 Types of housing

Policy background and reasoning

Hook Norton has a high proportion of larger sized homes. The 2011 Census shows 41% of homes with 4+ bedrooms in Hook Norton, whereas in the Cherwell (Non Metropolitan) District, the comparative figure is 24%²¹ The most recent information is from the Neighbourhood Plan Survey of May 2013 which indicates 52% of homes in Hook Norton having 4 or more bedrooms.

Neighbourhood Plan consultation identified a need for a range of types of accommodation, particularly affordable and sheltered housing. This accords with the emerging Local Plan

²¹ Table QS411EW

which concludes²² that for the foreseeable future the direction of travel should be to provide more moderately sized family homes which are affordable to those on average incomes, and more downsizing homes which will appeal to 'empty nesters.'

To balance the current mix and respond to consultation feedback, a range of housing types is therefore required. It is expected that in assessing any proposals, considerable weight will be given to the desirability of including homes meeting the Lifetime Home Standards²³ and homes which meet the needs of older people.

Policy HN - H4: Types of housing

A mix of dwelling types and sizes that has regard to the needs of current and future households in Hook Norton will be sought in any development resulting in 3 or more homes. Scheme proposers are required to submit with any planning application a statement setting out how the proposed housing types, sizes and tenures comply with the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Housing Needs Survey.

4.5 Affordable housing

Policy background and reasoning

Affordability of housing was strongly identified in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations as crucial to the vitality of Hook Norton. In particular, the responses identified the need for affordable housing for: young people with Hook Norton connections; for people working and providing key services locally; and to enable older people to remain in their community.

Both the adopted and emerging Local Plan consider affordable housing and allow for this to be provided in two ways:

- Through a planning obligation (Section 106 Agreement)
- Through a Rural Exception Site development.

Cherwell District Council's Allocation Scheme sets out how any such affordable housing will be allocated to those on the Council's Housing Register.

Planning obligation/Section 106 Agreement affordable housing

Both the adopted and emerging Local Plan provide policies to include an element of affordable housing in new developments. The emerging Local Plan makes specific provision²⁴ for rural areas which requires all development of, or suitable for, 3 or more dwellings gross to provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

Under Cherwell District Council's Allocation Scheme, people with village connections may obtain up to 50% of all new lettings, and at least 1 in 3 of re-lettings for social housing which is not a Rural Exception Site development.

²² Para B.122. Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031. Submission January 2014

²³ The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes. More information from <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/index.php>

²⁴ Policy BSC 3

Rural Exception Sites

In addition to affordable housing from planning obligations, the adopted Local Plan provides for small scale low cost housing on sites within or immediately adjacent to rural settlements subject to local need and reservation for local people. There is a similar provision in the emerging Local Plan in Policy Villages 3. Policy Villages 3 permits a proportion of market housing in limited occasions in order to enable a degree of cross subsidisation, with the number of market homes not to exceed 25% and subject to robust justification.

Cherwell District Council's Allocation Scheme allows that applicants with a village connection have first priority for affordable housing built on Rural Exception Sites.

In order to meet the particular need for affordable housing for people with Hook Norton connections, and to retain affordable housing for those people, a further policy is required at parish level.

Policy HN - H5: Provision and retention of affordable housing

Any affordable housing provided as a Rural Exception Site development in Hook Norton will be subject to a legally binding obligation to ensure that initial occupation, and any subsequent lettings or sales, is limited to people meeting Hook Norton Needs or Connections Criteria as set out in Appendix D. This obligation will have permanent effect unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer any requirement for the affordable housing.

Where affordable housing is provided under a Section 106 agreement or similar planning obligation Agreement as a requirement of a housing development under Local Plan policy, the maximum proportion possible of the total units provided under Cherwell District Council's Allocation Scheme shall at every opportunity be allocated to people meeting Hook Norton Needs or Connections Criteria as set out in Appendix D. This obligation will have permanent effect unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer any requirement for the affordable housing.

5. TRANSPORT

5.1 Policy background and reasoning

Hook Norton has no rail link, the nearest station is Banbury. The old railway line has been partly developed and partly recognised as of nature conservation interest.

Road access to Banbury necessitates travel through other villages, such as Milcombe and Bloxham, or Broughton. All roads in the parish are minor and many are unsuitable for large vehicles due to gradient, width, bends or a combination of those factors. The route through Hook Norton village has several acute bends and narrow stretches, particularly at East End, Chapel Street, High Street and Scotland End which are difficult for buses and large vehicles. Access to the centre of the village requires use of at least part of this route.

A bus service connects the village to Banbury and Chipping Norton but service times do not enable people working standard hours to travel to and from Chipping Norton for work. Similarly, it is also not feasible for Hook Norton bus users who work standard hours to make use of the S3 bus connection from Chipping Norton to Oxford.

The car is the principal mode of transport.²⁵ Transportation factors make Hook Norton one of the least sustainable locations within the Cherwell District.²⁶

Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan showed concerns arising from the combination of limited bus services, narrow rural roads, large vehicles and on-street parking. In addition to the policies below, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group recommended to the Parish Council that a Forum be set up to consider these concerns and to explore possible solutions on a Standing Working Group basis with a range of relevant Authorities, organisations and individuals. Some of the options identified for the Forum were Routing Agreements²⁷, liaison with Satellite Navigation providers, amendments to bus timetabling, and working with landowners in relation to car parking provisions.

Policy HN - T1: Access and parking

Any new development must provide access to the local road network which is suitable and sympathetic to the surroundings, and must provide sufficient off road parking taking account of Oxfordshire County Council's parking standards. Applicants for planning permission must clearly set out the proposed level of parking provision in relation to objectively assessed needs at the time, and show how future needs have been taken into account.

Policy HN - T2: Non-car transport

Opportunities will be sought to improve the local footpath/cycleway network to facilitate safe, active and energy efficient means of transport and provide enhanced linkages, including to bus stops. All development proposals must demonstrate how their proposal has taken this requirement into account. Where possible developer contributions will be sought towards the provision of an enhanced bus service for Hook Norton.

²⁵ Census 2011, Table QS701EW

²⁶ Cherwell Rural Area Integrated Transport & Land Use Study (CRAITLUS)

²⁷ Taking into account Oxfordshire County Council's advisory lorry route map – see <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/streets/1Banburywithins et.pdf>

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Following a 'yes' vote at Referendum, this Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the area.

Implementation is expected to be principally through two main organisations, Cherwell District Council and Hook Norton Parish Council, with input from other organisations. The main roles are anticipated as follows:

Implementation of Neighbourhood Plan – main roles

Cherwell District Council (CDC)	Decision-making body determining planning applications
	Monitoring the more strategic aspects of policy eg housing numbers (Annual Monitoring Report)
	Primary role of liaison & coordination with Oxfordshire County Council
	Maintain housing register
Hook Norton Parish Council (HNPC)	Lead body for maintaining the List of Locally Valued Resources (Annual Review)
	To review this Plan at 5 yearly intervals and consider any changes required
	To work with CDC and OCC in regard to local initiatives and actions
	Input toward determining planning applications
	Follow up on non-policy recommendations of this Plan eg Transport Forum, & a Group to consider facilities for young people
CDC and HNPC	To maintain positive working relationship in dealing with future planning documents relating to the Local Plan and this Plan
	To cooperate regarding developer contributions to community infrastructure
Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)	Input required - particularly as Highway Authority; Education Authority & responsibilities for libraries & Public Rights of Way
	Provide high speed broadband (target by 2015)
OCC, CDC & HNPC	Co-operate regarding developer contributions to community infrastructure
	Work with others on initiatives eg Public Rights of Way

7. REFERENCES AND EVIDENCE BASE

Cherwell District Council (www.cherwell.gov.uk):

Annual Monitoring Report 2013 (December 2013)
Approved Allocation Scheme (Committee approval, November 2012)
Cherwell Local Plan. November 1996. – for list of saved policies see
<http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/5/pdf9113687191646230866.pdf>
Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031 Proposed Submission. August 2012
Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031 Proposed Submission Focussed Consultation. March, 2013
Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031. Submission January 2014
Cherwell Rural Area Integrated Transport & Land Use Study (CRAITLUS). August 2009
Countryside Design Summary SPD. June 1998,
Hook Norton Conservation Area Appraisal. May 2007
Strategic Housing Market Assessment review and update. December 2012
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. March 2013, revised October 2013

Cobham Resource Consultants (November 1995) Cherwell District Landscape Assessment, available via www.cherwell.gov.uk

Department for Communities & Local Government :

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
Planning Practice Guidance –<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:

Consultation Statement. July 2014
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. October 2013
Neighbourhood Plan. Pre-submission version. November 2013
Sustainability Appraisal Report. November 2013
Sustainability Appraisal Report. Submission Version. July 2014
via www.hooknortonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk

Office for National Statistics. Census 2011

Oxfordshire County Council

Advisory lorry route map – via <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/lorry-routes>
Better Broadband for Oxfordshire - via
<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/broadband-oxfordshire>
Rights of Way Improvement Plan – via
<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-rights-way-improvement-plan>
Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, 2004 - via
<http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/>

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Survey Report. September 2013.
(with ACRE and OCSI) Rural community Profile for Hook Norton. August 2013
via www.hooknortonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk

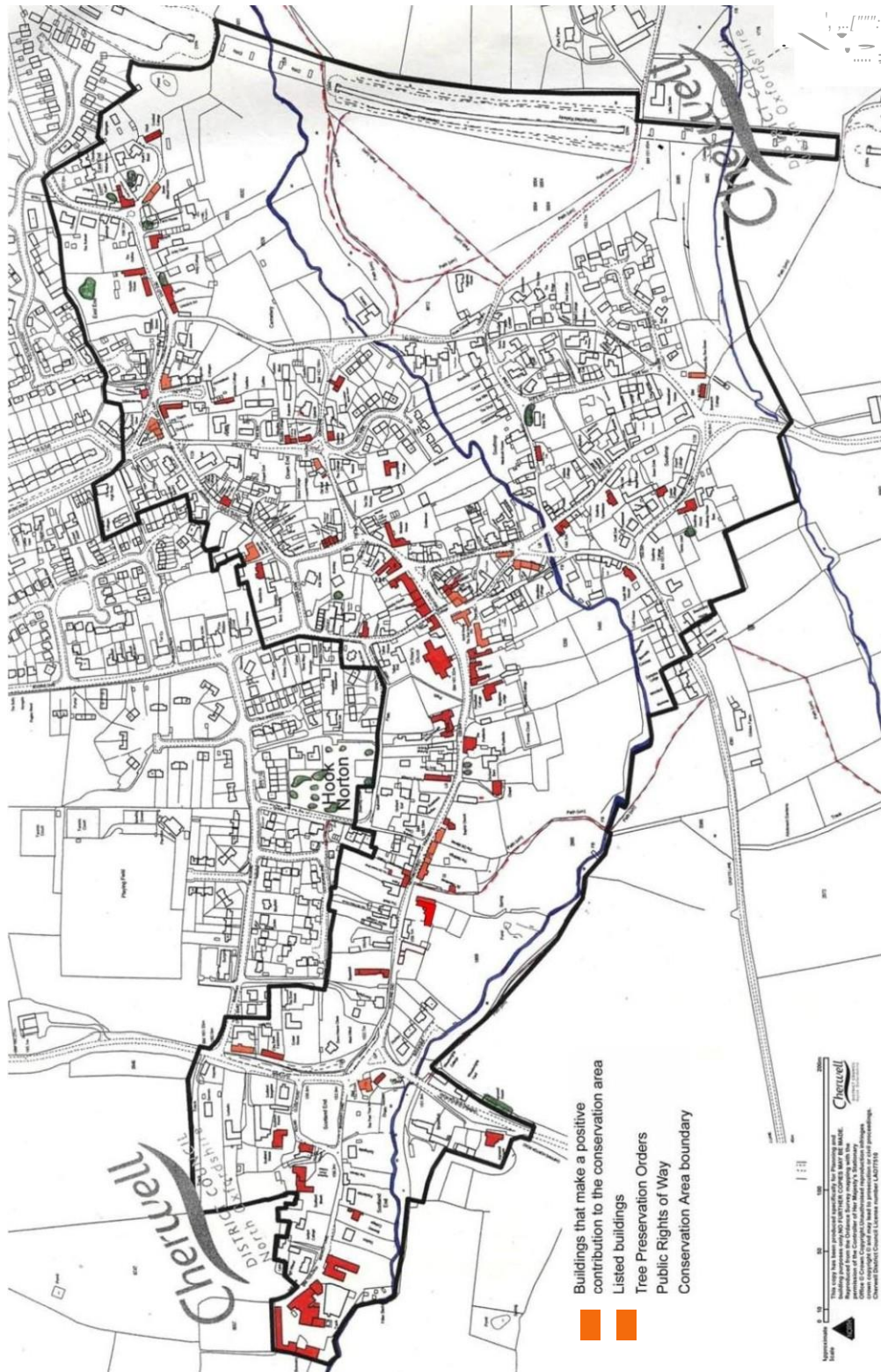
APPENDICES

- Appendix A** Hook Norton Conservation Area
- Appendix B** Public Rights of Way – suggestions made in Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Survey Report (September 2013)
- Appendix C** Recent growth - Update to housing completions and permissions for the group of villages including Hook Norton, between 31 March 2012 and 30 June 2014
- Appendix D** Affordable housing – Hook Norton Needs and Connections Criteria
- Appendix E** List of policies

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Appendix A Hook Norton Conservation Area

Source: Cherwell District Council



Appendix B Public Rights of Way – suggestions made in Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan Survey Report

Circular walks from and to the village

Use old railway

Footpath on land opposite Redlands Farm towards Gate Hangs High, linking to existing footpaths

Chipping Norton, Sibfords, Whichford

Around outskirts of village & interconnect existing footpaths – so could get off road & create web surrounding village

Top of South Hill (to bypass double bend), continuing in straight line to South (ancient) connecting Stanton site

Austins Way with rights of way across to Wigginton/ Swerford.

Reinstate Wheatsheaf to Viaduct/ Swerford path

Across manor fields to link path by stream to path beside allotments

HN – Sibfords/ Whichford HN – Rollright

Station Rd – Wigginton

To join the footpath from the allotments to the Court Farm Bridleway

Ironstone Hollow/ Hollybush

Direct access to school

Footpath track to Chipping Norton

Circular walk to east of village Redlands Farm/ Old railway

Bridlepath – Gt Rollright to Ascot footpath

Appendix C Recent growth

Update to housing completions and permissions for the group of villages including Hook Norton, between 31 March 2012 and 30 June 2014

Requirement as per Local Plan 2006 -2031²⁸ for the group of 6 villages including Hook Norton (Adderbury; Ambrosden; Chesterton; Deddington; Hook Norton & Launton) 252

Numbers permitted (in applications for 10 or more dwellings) in those villages between 31 Mar 2012 and 30 June 2014 (as listed below) 528

Application	Number Permitted
11/01755/OUT, Hook Norton, Bourne Lane, allowed on appeal	70
12/00305/OUT, Chesterton, allowed on appeal	44
12/000472/F, Hook Norton, Station Rd.	28
13/00186/F, Launton	11
13/00301/OUT, Deddington, allowed on appeal	85
13/00344/HYBRID, Ambrosden, Springfield Fm	90
13/00456/OUT, Adderbury, Milton Rd. S., allowed on appeal	65
13/00621/OUT, Ambrosden, Ambrosden Court, allowed on appeal	45
13/01768/F, Twyford (Adderbury), E. of Deene Cl.	59
14/00250/F, Adderbury, Milton Rd. N.	<u>31</u>
	TOTAL 528

²⁸ Policy Villages 2. Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031. Submission January 2014

Appendix D Affordable housing – Hook Norton Needs and Connections Criteria

Local Connection

For the purpose of applying the policies in the Plan 'local connection' refers to people who are aged 16 years or above and who meet 2 or more of the following criteria:

- The person was born in Hook Norton or lived in the Parish as a child up to the age of 16;
- The person normally resides in Hook Norton and has done so for a continuous period of at least 3 years;
- The person has immediate family who are currently resident in Hook Norton and have been so for at least 15 years;
- Hook Norton is the person's permanent place of work.

Local Need

For the purposes of applying the policies in the Plan, 'local need' means people who meet the 'local connections' criteria, who are in need of housing locally, but cannot meet those needs locally because they either cannot afford to buy a suitable home that may be currently available or cannot identify a suitable home in the parish that meets their needs to rent or buy and they fall within one of the situations listed below:

- An existing resident or family who have lived in Hook Norton for a continuous period of at least the last three years and is seeking to establish a separate household;
- People from outside Hook Norton who meet the criteria of having a 'local connection';
- People who have an essential need through age or disability to live close to those who have lived in Hook Norton for at least three years;
- People or households who have, for whatever reason, the written support of the Parish Council

Eligibility and Occupancy Cascade Arrangements

For the purposes of applying the policies in the Plan and in preparing controls over future sales, lettings and occupancy arrangements for affordable housing a cascade arrangement will be set out in planning obligations associated with the grant of planning permission for new affordable housing (by new build or conversion) so that a clear hierarchy on eligibility to occupy the dwelling is made known when permission is granted.

- a) Properties will be sold or let first to people in need in Hook Norton.
- b) If, after a reasonable period (of active marketing) there are no applicants who meet the eligibility criteria, then applications will be invited from residents in the parishes adjacent to Hook Norton. If following a further reasonable period still no occupier has been found the property may be occupied on the open market.

Appendix E List of policies in this Plan

Hook Norton character and countryside

Policy HN - CC 1: Protection and enhancement of local landscape and character of Hook Norton

Policy HN - CC 2: Design

Policy HN - CC 3: Local distinctiveness, variety, and cohesiveness

Policy HN - CC 4: Resource efficient design

Policy HN - CC 5: Lighting

Community

Policy HN - COM 1: Protection of Locally Valued Resources

Policy HN - COM 2: Public Rights of Way

Policy HN - COM 3 : Broadband

Policy HN - COM 4 : Retention of Local Employment

Housing

Policy HN - H1: Sustainable housing growth

Policy HN - H2: Location of housing

Policy HN - H3 : Housing density

Policy HN - H4: Types of housing

Policy HN - H5: Provision and retention of affordable housing

Transport

Policy HN - T1: Access and parking

Policy HN - T2: Non-car transport