



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Executive

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Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040

CONSULTATION DRAFT
(REGULATION 18) SEPTEMBER 2023



About this Consultation

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Overview

We are preparing a new Local Plan for Cherwell and would like your views. We are presenting a draft of the Plan for consultation so that you can consider our emerging proposals.

We have some key questions we would like you to consider:

- What is welcome/unwelcome and why?
- Have we missed anything?
- Could the plan be improved?
- Does the draft Plan meet Cherwell's needs?

Please help us develop the Local Plan further by providing your comments. We will then consider these alongside our technical work in developing a proposed Plan which we will also make available for comment.

For more information on how to respond to this current consultation please visit www.cherwell.gov.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!

Summary

We are producing a new Local Plan to meet Cherwell's needs, protect its environment and secure sustainable development.

This consultation draft of the Cherwell Local Plan 2040 has been prepared to prompt discussion and feedback on new planning policies to guide the delivery of sustainable development across the district.

We are inviting comments on an emerging set of policies and development proposals to help us consider:

- What is welcome/unwelcome and why?
- Have we missed anything?
- Could the plan be improved?
- Does the draft Plan meet Cherwell's needs?

The draft Plan is supported by technical evidence made available alongside this consultation. More will follow the consultation as we consider all the comments received.

We have had regard to national policy and guidance and feedback we received from two earlier consultations in 2020 and 2021. 'Statements of Consultation' summarising the comments and suggestions made are also available to support the current consultation.

We have sought to consider the needs of the district and the issues it faces. Our planning policies must respond by facilitating and guiding development so that it helps support our communities, create opportunities for all, improve our places to live and work, respond to challenges such as climate change and protect our environment, landscape and built heritage.

The draft Plan sets out a vision and proposes homes, employment land, infrastructure and other essential services required to support the local community over the Plan period.



The emerging Plan has three overarching themes:



**Meeting the Challenge
of Climate Change and
Ensuring Sustainable
Development**



**Maintaining and
Developing a
Sustainable Local
Economy**



**Building Healthy
and Sustainable
Communities**

The draft Plan suggests a series of objectives for meeting the vision and addressing these themes.

It presents a draft strategy, draft policies, and proposals for meeting these objectives and delivering the vision.

In summary the draft strategy is to:

- Ensure that our committed growth is delivered;
- Focus new development at Bicester and to a lesser extent at Banbury;
- Revitalise our urban centres and encourage investment;
- Raise the design quality of our built and 'green' environments;
- Minimise carbon emissions and achieve set net gains in biodiversity; wherever possible in delivering new development.

The strategy is supported by area strategies for Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington, Heyford Park, and our Rural Areas.

We are also proposing a number of strategic development policies to complement the core policies. Most will apply across the district and will inform and guide development to ensure it is well-designed and reflects the overarching themes and Plan objectives.

CHAPTER 1: **Introduction**

What is the role of a Local Plan?

- 1.1. A Local Plan is the statutory starting point for making planning decisions. It provides a vision and a policy framework for the future development of an area. It provides for new development to meet the needs of the district and establishes planning policies to guide that development such that it delivers the vision and meets national and local objectives.

How is the Local Plan Prepared?

- 1.2. A Local Plan is prepared by considering the economic, environmental and social context of the district and its development needs. We have national planning policy to comply with and national guidance to consider. We engage early in the process on the issues and options we need to examine and do this with the benefit of technical evidence.
- 1.3. We must consider strategic priorities that extend beyond the district's boundaries and consider the wider context for the Plan. We cooperate with neighbouring authorities and partners and consult with infrastructure providers. We seek the input of our local communities and all those with an interest in the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the district.
- 1.4. We consult on the proposed Plan before it is submitted to the Government for independent examination. The final Plan is presented to the Council for adoption, at which point it becomes part of the statutory '*Development Plan*' which includes *Neighbourhood Plans* and the *County Council's Minerals and Waste Plans*.

What stage of preparation are we at?

- 1.5. We are still preparing, gathering evidence and considering our options. However, we are consulting now on emerging proposals to help us prepare a robust Plan. We are at what is known as 'Regulation 18' stage – a reference to the Local Plan regulations which we must comply with.



- 1.6. Following this consultation, we will prepare the proposed or pre-submission Plan – the ‘Regulation 19’ stage. That will also be published for comment and all observations received will be submitted with that Plan to the Government for consideration as part of the Plan’s examination.

What consultation has there been so far?

- 1.7. There were two public consultations prior to the current one:
- Planning for Cherwell to 2040 – A community involvement paper (July 2020);
 - Planning for Cherwell – Community Involvement Paper 2: Developing our Options (September 2021).

What time period does the Plan cover?

- 1.8. The draft Plan covers the period 2020-2040. However, the Plan should include at least fifteen years’ supply of new housing from the point at which the Plan is adopted by the Council. There is some uncertainty when exactly that will be and so we may need to extend the Plan period beyond 2040, perhaps to 2042 or 2045.



QUESTION 1: Do you have a view on the Plan period?

How is this consultation draft of the Plan structured?

- 1.9. This initial consultation draft of the Plan has:
- A proposed vision;
 - Proposed objectives for meeting that vision;
 - A strategy and area strategies;
 - Suggested core policies and more specific policies for achieving those objectives including potential allocations of land for development;
 - A suggested delivery framework including a draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

1.10. There are also three themes running through this emerging Plan:



THEME ONE

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Ensuring Sustainable Development

- Connectivity and Transport
- Sustainable design and construction and Renewable Energy
- Flood Risk
- Natural Resources
- Landscape
- Green Infrastructure
- Biodiversity



THEME TWO

Maintaining and Developing a Sustainable Local Economy

- Employment
- Tourism
- Town Centres & Retail
- Education
- Utilities and Infrastructure



THEME THREE

Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities

- Achieving Well Designed and Healthy Places
- Housing
- Historic Environment

1.11. We are still developing the Plan and would welcome comments on its presentation.

?

QUESTION 2:
How could we improve presentation of the Plan?

How will the Local Plan be implemented?

1.12. Determining planning applications is the main way in which the Local Plan will be implemented. Planning decisions must have regard to the statutory *Development Plan*. Planning permissions for major developments are often accompanied by legal agreements which secure the necessary infrastructure for a particular development. We are also working on a Community Infrastructure Levy which is another means of securing funding.

- 1.13. We can only require infrastructure necessary and appropriate for the development proposed and the economic viability of its provision must be considered by the Local Plan. A viability assessment of the final, proposed Plan will support the next consultation. Wider infrastructure needs must be met by the relevant infrastructure providers themselves. Government funding can sometimes be accessed to support the delivery of critical, strategic infrastructure. The Plan's draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the current thinking of what will be needed to support the Plan.

How will we know if the Local Plan is successful?

- 1.14. We produce monitoring reports each year on the delivery of new development and the effectiveness of our Local Plans. We can review the Plan if there is a significant change in circumstances and we should, in any case, review it at least every five years.

How does the emerging Plan affect existing Local Plans?

- 1.15. We have existing planning policies in three Local Plans:
1. The remaining saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996;
 2. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031;
 3. The Partial Review of the Local Plan 2020.
- 1.16. In preparing a new Plan, we wish to develop new planning policies to put us in the strongest position to respond to challenges associated with climate change, to enhance biodiversity, to meet our development needs and strengthen our local economy.
- 1.17. When we prepare our final, proposed Plan we will need to determine which policies from existing Plans continue to help us in meeting our vision and objectives and which should be retained/saved.
- 1.18. We start to do that with this draft Plan and summarise our current thinking in Appendix 1 – Retained Policies List.



QUESTION 3: Do you agree with our draft proposals for retaining/saving existing policies?

CHAPTER 2: **Plan Vision and Objectives**

Our Vision for Cherwell 2040

The Cherwell Local Plan Review will ensure that by 2040:

- We achieve our climate action targets. Our energy production will be sustainable and new developments are built to high energy efficient standards.
- There is a choice of well-designed market and affordable homes to meet our needs and neighbourhoods are sustainable, healthy, vibrant and cohesive communities, that promote good health, wellbeing and equality. They respond positively to their local social and natural context and seek to address the challenges of our growing and ageing communities.
- Working with our partners, investment in social and physical infrastructure related to development is timely. Residents of new development have convenient access to excellent health, education, open space, sport and recreational activities when and where they need it. The Plan has helped to reduce inequalities in health, along with poverty and social inclusion and supported well-being. Poverty and social exclusion have been reduced.
- The Plan has supported a sustainable, flexible and resilient economy that is vibrant, inclusive with good transport links and sound infrastructure, supported by excellent educational facilities to foster the workforce skills required for the future. The economy has grown to provide more diverse employment for our increasing population and reduce the need for our residents to travel outside the district for work.
- Our urban areas will build on their ongoing economic success, take full advantage of new technologies and the green economy and by sharing knowledge and common resources to take an important role in the regional and national economy.



- Cherwell continues to be a caring place known for fostering and retaining young talent, attracting business and investment and reducing poverty and social isolation.
- Our distinctive natural and built environment and our rich historic heritage is cherished, protected and enhanced. Cherwell maintains its rural character where its landscapes, its vast range of natural and built heritage and its market towns define its distinctiveness.
- The district's biodiversity resource is enhanced. Our natural environment is more diverse. Social, economic and ecological resilience provides the capacity to adapt to change, including minimising flood risk. Our heritage assets, visitor economy and vibrant cultural offer are further enhanced with improved access.
- Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington have re-shaped and adapted with an improved public realm and a greater mix of uses to maintain their roles as attractive, vibrant, retail, cultural and social centres for our communities and visitors.
- Heyford Park and other areas of planned growth benefit from enhanced community facilities, sustainable transport links and other infrastructure investment required to support their existing and new neighbourhoods.
- Our rural communities are realising their potential by making the most of new technologies, supported by small business growth and transport services that are more responsive to their needs. New rural models of transport and service provision complement existing services for a more sustainable and well-connected (including digital) rural living. Our villages are places where communities thrive, as well as benefitting from being well connected to our towns, and major employment and service centres.



QUESTION 4:
Do you have any comments on the draft Vision?

Strategic Objectives



Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Ensuring Sustainable Development

- SO 1:** Promote net-zero carbon new developments, with high sustainable construction standards, and low embodied carbon to ensure new developments deliver the highest viable energy efficiency, including the use of decentralised energy; and support a local zero-carbon energy system that reduces Cherwell's reliance on global fossil fuels and prioritises community energy.
- SO 2:** Deliver developments that efficiently use local natural resources (particularly water), that minimise and are resilient to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and heatwaves.
- SO 3:** Improve air quality. Protect and maximise opportunities for biodiversity net gain and the enhancement of Cherwell's natural capital assets, such as soils, woodlands, hedges and ponds in order to capture and store carbon.
- SO 4:** Maintain and improve the natural and built environment including biodiversity, landscape, green Infrastructure and waterways by ensuring new development achieves high-quality design standards and conserves and enhances the natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets of Cherwell.
- SO 5:** Prioritise active travel and increase the attraction of and opportunities for public transport, ensuring high standards of connectivity and accessibility to services for all. Reduce dependency on the private car as a mode of travel, facilitating the creation of a net-zero-carbon transport network.



Maintaining and Developing a Sustainable Local Economy

- SO 6:** Support a strong and sustainable economy within the district, including the visitor economy and agriculture, and ensure sufficient land is allocated to meet our identified needs.
- SO 7:** Increase education, training and skills, and encourage investment in the local workforce; improve and enhance digital connectivity and infrastructure, to support a sustainable and resilient economy, reduce inequality and help to reduce unnecessary transport.
- SO 8:** Support Cherwell's urban centres, including where beneficial, redevelopment and renewal, to maintain and enhance their vitality, viability, distinctiveness and safety.
- SO 9:** Recognise the economic benefits of preserving and enhancing the character and beauty of Cherwell's built and natural heritage, and landscape, and the wider benefits from its natural capital and ecosystem services to ensure Cherwell remains attractive to business and as a place to live, work and visit for current and future communities.



Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities

- SO 10:** Meet the housing needs of all sectors of Cherwell's communities, in a way that creates sustainable, well-designed, safe, inclusive and mixed communities, promoting inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods.
- SO 11:** Create sustainable, well-designed, distinctive places where healthy behaviours (being active, having opportunities to access a healthy diet, and having good social connections) are the norm and which provide a sense of belonging, safety, and a sense of community.
- SO 12:** Focus development in Cherwell's sustainable locations, making efficient and effective use of land, conserving and enhancing the countryside, landscape, the natural environment, and the setting of its towns and villages.
- SO 13:** Protect and enhance the historic environment, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets and archaeology, and promoting inclusive access to local assets where appropriate.
- SO 14:** Provide sufficient accessible, well maintained good quality services, facilities and infrastructure, to meet health, education, transport, open space, sport, recreations, cultural, social and other community needs.



QUESTION 5:
Do you have any observations on our objectives?

CHAPTER 3: **Our Strategy for Development in Cherwell**

Spatial Strategy

- 3.1. Our draft spatial strategy below encompasses what we are seeking to deliver to achieve our vision and objectives for Cherwell. It would be implemented through the area strategies and policies that follow.

District

- Minimise carbon emissions and achieve set net gains in biodiversity wherever possible in delivering new development;
- Raise design standards and improvements to the built environment to elevate the attractiveness of our towns and villages;
- Ensure that new development improves well-being wherever possible through design, accessibility, social interaction, the provision of amenities and facilities and opportunities for active travel and recreation;
- Encourage new development that improves opportunity for all and in particular provides access to housing to meet all needs.

Banbury

- Deliver committed development and provide for some limited additional growth reflecting the topographical, landscape and rural character constraints of the town's edge;
- Revitalise, appropriately repurpose and seek further investment in the town centre, continue to improve its built and 'green' environment and public realm and further develop the nighttime economy;
- Continue to support and strengthen the town's economy and diversify its skill base;
- Encourage development proposals that will support education and help reduce deprivation;
- Seek strategic transport improvements to encourage active travel, reduce congestion and pollution, and reduce cross town traffic by motorised vehicles.

Bicester

- Deliver committed development and be the focus for additional development reflecting the town's on-going growth and transformation as a sustainable Garden Town and its regional and sub-regional location on the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor including and East-West Rail route;
- Continue to maximise the benefits of having key international and national destinations and economic activity to support further business investment;



- Support the continued improvement of the town's centre, its facilities, its public realm and 'green' environment;
- Resolve transport connectivity and infrastructure challenges and encourage active travel.

Kidlington

- Strengthen Kidlington's role as a Local Service Centre;
- Continue to support investment in key economic assets including the Village Centre, London-Oxford Airport, Begbroke Science Park and at Langford Lane;
- Improve the built and 'green' environment of Kidlington Village Centre;
- Ensure the successful implementation of the committed 4,400 homes to help Oxford's housing needs so that the planned benefits for the communities of Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Begbroke and Yarnton are delivered.

Heyford Park

- Ensure the implementation of the committed growth at Heyford Park to fully establish the new settlement already planned;
- Provide for the future expansion of Heyford Park to meet future housing and infrastructure needs should highway capacity limitations be resolved.

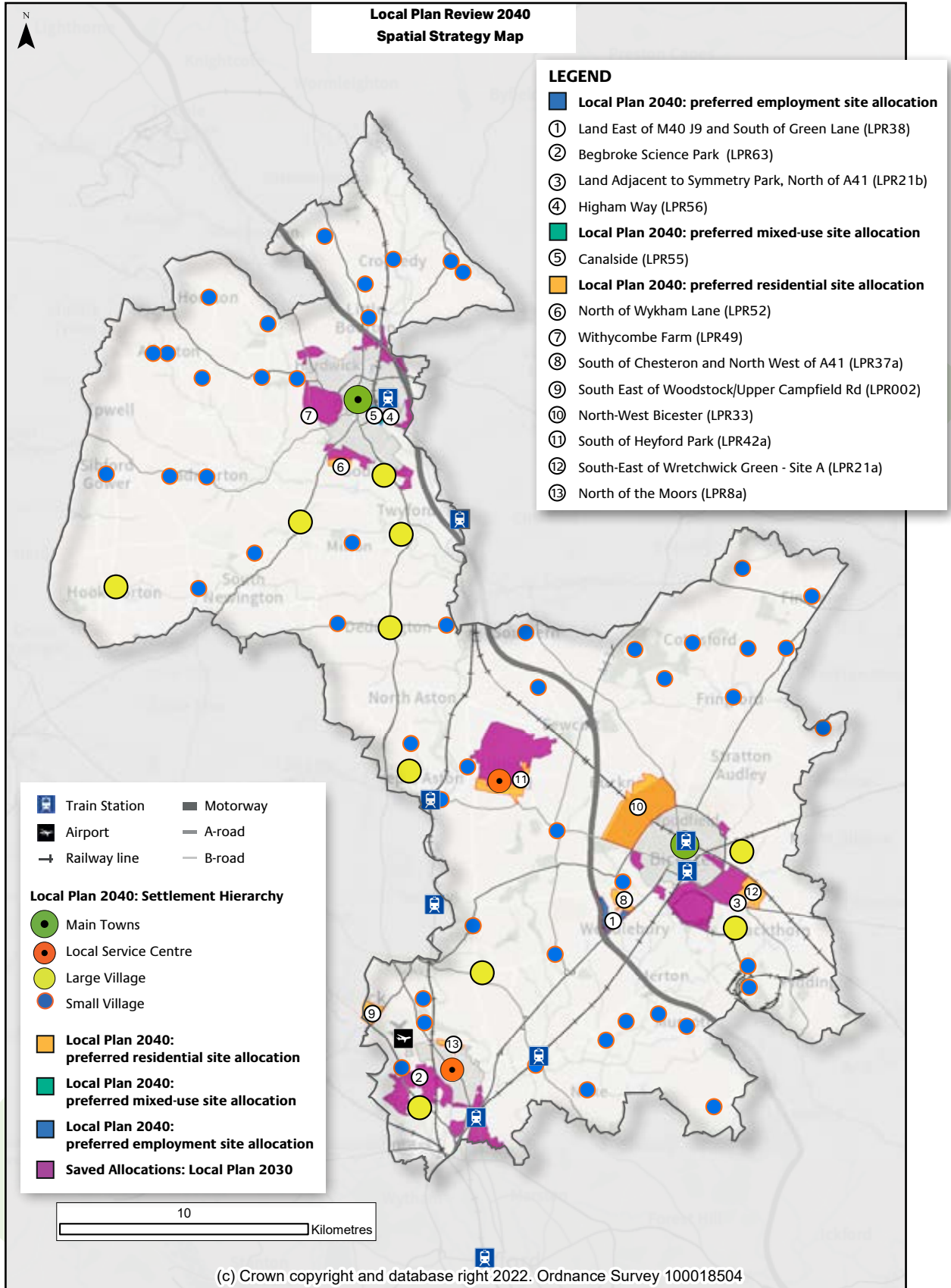
Rural Areas

- Protect the identity and character of our villages and rural areas and avoid unplanned development in the open countryside;
- Provide for limited development to meet local community and business needs and help support the vitality of these more rural settlements and the viability of existing businesses and farms;
- Direct the development of new housing to the larger and more sustainable villages that offer a wider range of services and are more well-connected to our urban areas than the smaller villages;
- Maintain the designated Green Belt but consider a limited release at Kidlington to meet local housing needs if there are exceptional circumstances to do so;
- Protect the Cotswolds National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).



QUESTION 6:
Do you have any comments on our strategy?

Key Diagram – Cherwell’s Spatial and Areas Strategies



District Wide Policies



Theme 1: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Ensuring Sustainable Development

Core Policy 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

- 3.2. Climate change is the greatest long-term challenge facing society. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and pledged to be carbon neutral by 2030. Climate change impacts how we live now and in the future. Its impacts are already evident locally in the form of extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall and extreme temperatures. The UK's ten hottest years on record have all been since 2002, and six of the ten wettest years have occurred since 1998.
- 3.3. It is estimated that the centre and south-east of the UK will experience the most extreme temperature peak rises in coming decades. At the same time, despite being an area of water stress, the catchments of the region's major rivers (e.g. the Thames basin, which includes the River Cherwell) will be most under threat from increased flooding in winter, increasing flood risk in Banbury and some of our villages.
- 3.4. Cherwell's Climate Action Framework confirms the Council's commitment to become a carbon neutral organisation via a range of actions including reduced/cleaner travel, reduced electricity use, the addition of solar panels, and retrofit council buildings with clean heat such as heat pumps or networks.
- 3.5. The Framework reiterates the commitment to enable the whole district to be net zero carbon by 2030. Recognising that the Council cannot achieve this alone, it commits to work with businesses, the other Oxfordshire District Councils and County Council (via *Oxfordshire's Local Connectivity & Transport Plan*, and *OxLEP's Energy Strategy*). Quoting the *OxLEP Energy Strategy*, Cherwell's Framework document recognises that to halve emissions by 2030, Oxfordshire needs:
- A 5x increase in solar electricity generation;
 - 40% of heating to be renewable;
 - New housing to meet very high energy standards;
 - Retrofitting 4,000 existing homes each year to achieve C-grade Energy Performance Certification;
 - Electric and active travel to become the new normal.

- 3.6. The above suite of actions was identified to realise the *OxLEP Energy Strategy's* goal of halving the County's emissions by 2030. To realise the rest of Cherwell's goal of net zero by the same date, Cherwell would need to go proportionally further on all of the above actions, or expand the suite of actions to include more sectors and carbon sequestration as well as cutting emissions at source.
- 3.7. In December 2022, the Council also resolved to support the One Planet Oxfordshire shared vision and committed to review its operations and activities using the One Planet Living Framework.
- 3.8. In recognition of the importance of mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change this Local Plan is focused on achieving sustainable development, as far as this is possible.
- 3.9. We recognise that the Local Plan will not be able to address all climate issues alone. We will need to work alongside other stakeholders to help meet the obligations of the *Climate Change Act 2008* and the legally binding targets to achieve 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 3.10. Across Oxfordshire, there are various existing and emerging strategies to help meet these targets including the *Oxfordshire Energy Strategy (2019)* prepared by OxLEP and, more recently, the *2021 Pathways to a Zero-Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO)*.
- 3.11. Whilst we have made progress in recent years, our biggest challenges remain how to decarbonise transport, reduce reliance on fossil fuels for heating, and protect and enhance carbon stored in the natural environment. We also need to invest more in retrofitting our existing housing stock, install cleaner heating systems, and replace petrol and diesel vehicles with electric ones. Encouraging individual behavioural changes such as active travel, dietary changes and reducing our energy demand can help too.
- 3.12. Similarly, it is important to ensure that we adapt our buildings and the environment to the inevitable changes to our future climate.
- 3.13. With emissions from buildings accounting for approximately 20% of CO₂ emissions in the UK there is also an increasing recognition that constructing new buildings using sustainable construction techniques is essential in addressing climate change.

Core Policy 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

All development proposals (including new buildings, conversions and the refurbishment of existing buildings) will be required to ensure and demonstrate that development is resilient to climate change impacts and that the impact of the development on climate change is mitigated. This will include:

- i. Distributing growth to the most sustainable locations as defined in this Plan;
- ii. Making the most efficient use of land and buildings, having regard to the character of the locality;
- iii. Delivering development that seeks to reduce the need to travel and which prioritises sustainable travel options, including active travel;
- iv. Designing and delivering developments that, wherever possible, have zero carbon emissions and use resources efficiently, including water. All new residential development will be required to meet a water efficiency of no more than 110 litres/person/day mains water consumption;
- v. Promoting the use of decentralised and renewable energy where appropriate;
- vi. Taking account of known physical and environmental constraints when considering locations for development;
- vii. Delivering developments that are designed to be resilient to climate change impacts including the use of passive solar design for heating and cooling;
- viii. Minimising the risk of flooding and using sustainable drainage methods;
- ix. Minimising the effects of development on the microclimate through the provision of green infrastructure, including open space, water, planting and green roofs;
- x. Minimising energy demands and energy loss through design, layout, orientation, landscaping, materials and the use of technology;
- xi. Using recycled and energy efficient materials, and
- xii. Minimising waste and making adequate provision for the re-use and recycling of waste; and causing no deterioration and, where possible, achieving improvements in water or air quality.



Core Policy 2: Zero or Low Carbon Energy Sources

- 3.14. We will expect developers to consider all available zero or low-carbon energy sources so that the energy used in development causes the minimum possible carbon emissions. Options could include on-site renewable energy and low-carbon energy generation for individual buildings. Examples are solar photovoltaics, solar thermal systems and heat pumps, direct, off-grid connections to local offsite renewable energy sources such as solar farms or wind turbines, or large-scale sources of energy/heat such as a direct connection to low carbon heat networks.
- 3.15. Within the definition of ‘zero carbon technologies’ we will not accept speculative technologies whose transition to zero carbon relies on highly uncertain energy sectoral changes that are technically unproven at scale or whose trajectory is likely to be highly localised for the near future. Examples of technologies that would not count are:
- ‘Hydrogen-ready’ gas boilers (unless it is demonstrated that the development site is in an area earmarked for imminent development of a green hydrogen grid);
 - Fossil-fuel powered CHP, unless there is a concrete credible and funded plan to imminently transition the system to an electrical or fossil-free energy source;
 - Fossil-fuel powered heat system that relies on future carbon capture technology, unless at the time of the development it is proven that this technology is available, viable and suitable within the near future at the system supplying the development.
- 3.16. By contrast, any highly efficient electrically powered technology would count as ‘zero carbon ready’ as there is a credible timeline for the national electricity grid’s transition to net zero carbon.

Core Policy 2: Zero or Low Carbon Energy Sources

All new dwellings and new non-residential development of 1,000m² or more should deliver zero and low carbon energy technologies on-site to achieve on-site net zero operational carbon (regulated and unregulated energy) wherever possible. This energy demand to be met with renewable technologies should be calculated using the following methodologies:

- Regulated energy: SAP or SBEM methodologies (latest versions available);
- Unregulated energy: SAP Appendix L or BREDEM (homes) or CIBSE TM54 (non-residential buildings), and/or
- Alternatively, total energy demand may be calculated using CIBSE TM54 or the Passivhaus Planning Package.

Where full compliance is not feasible or viable proposals must:

- Demonstrate through the energy statement that additional renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies have been provided to the greatest extent feasible and viable, and
- Incorporate 'zero carbon ready'* (as opposed to immediately providing 'low/zero carbon') technologies.

*This may include off site existing or planned zero, low carbon or renewable energy generation or heat network provision where there is a direct off-grid connection to the development which has capacity to serve the development.



Core Policy 3: The Energy Hierarchy and Energy Efficiency

3.17. We will use the Energy Hierarchy to assess proposals against our climate change objectives. It should inform the design, construction and operation of new buildings. The priority is to minimise energy demand, and then address how energy will be supplied and renewable technologies incorporated.

3.18. We require any calculations to use the latest SAP methodology.

- 3.19. Proposals should provide data that is consistent with the building performance metrics set out in the Government's response to the Future Homes Standard consultation (January 2021) or any subsequent set of metrics required through the *Building Regulations*.
- 3.20. On all new dwellings and commercial development over 1,000m² we will expect the development to be tested through the most up-to-date SAP calculations to demonstrate the performance gap between design and construction. For sites of over 10 dwellings where standard house types are used, a sample of at least 20% of all dwellings (and including all house types) shall be tested.

Core Policy 3: The Energy Hierarchy and Energy Efficiency

All new development will be expected to achieve net zero carbon emissions from total operational energy use (regulated and unregulated) by incorporating measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in operation and minimising both annual and peak energy demand in accordance with the following energy hierarchy:

- i. Be lean: use less energy and manage demand during operation;
- ii. Be clean: exploit local energy resources (such as secondary heat) and supply energy efficiently and cleanly;
- iii. Be green: maximise opportunities for renewable energy by producing, storing and using renewable energy on-site, and
- iv. Be seen: monitor, verify and report on energy performance.

All major development proposals will be required to be supported by a detailed energy statement that demonstrates how the net zero-carbon target will be met within the framework of the energy hierarchy.

For steps i-ii. of the energy hierarchy, all new dwellings and new non-residential development of 1,000m² or more should deliver:

- v. Residential: achieve a Part L Fabric Energy Efficiency metric of no more than 15-20kWh/m²/year;
- vi. Non-residential: a 19% reduction in carbon emissions compared to Part L 2013 through energy efficiency measures (fabric efficiency, efficient services and efficient energy supply).

Performance against the above targets should be using the latest version of SAP.

Where full compliance is not feasible or viable, proposals must demonstrate through the energy statement that carbon reductions to the greatest extent feasible through energy efficiency measures have been considered and incorporated.

Core Policy 4: Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development

- 3.21. Wherever possible, all developments should maximise opportunities for on-site electricity and heat production from solar technologies (photovoltaic and thermal) and use innovative sustainable building materials and smart technologies. This approach will reduce carbon emissions, reduce energy costs to occupants, improve energy resilience, and support the growth of green jobs.
- 3.22. As a minimum, energy statements, should contain the following information:
- a. A calculation of the energy demand and carbon emissions covered by *Building Regulations* and, separately, the energy demand and carbon emissions from any other part of the development, including plant or equipment, that are not covered by the *Building Regulations* (i.e., the unregulated emissions), at each stage of the energy hierarchy.
 - b. Proposals to reduce carbon emissions and energy use beyond the respective standards set by the *Building Regulations* Part L2021, through the energy-efficient design of the site, buildings and services, whether it is categorised as a new build, a major refurbishment or a consequential improvement.
 - c. Proposals to further reduce carbon emissions through the use of zero or low-emission decentralised energy where feasible.
 - d. Proposals to further reduce carbon emissions by maximising opportunities to produce and use renewable energy on-site.
 - e. Proposals to address air quality risks, where a separate air quality assessment has not been undertaken.
 - f. Proposals for demand-side response, specifically through installation of smart meters, minimising peak energy demand and promoting short-term energy storage, as well as consideration of smart grids and local microgrids where feasible.
 - g. A plan for monitoring and annual reporting (for major development) of energy demand and carbon emissions post-construction for at least five years.
 - h. Proposals explaining how the site has been future-proofed to achieve zero carbon on-site emissions by 2050.
 - i. Confirmation of offsetting arrangements, if required.
 - j. A whole life-cycle carbon emissions assessment, and actions to reduce lifecycle carbon emissions.
 - k. Analysis of the expected cost to occupants associated with the proposed energy strategy.
 - l. Proposals that connect to or create new heat networks should include details of the design and specification criteria and standards for their systems.
- 3.23. In 2021, the Government tightened building regulations on energy and carbon as a first step towards the implementation of the Future Homes Standard planned to be introduced in 2025. Homes built under the Future Homes Standard should produce 75-80% fewer carbon emissions compared with

the standard set by pre-2021 building regulations, and eventually become net zero as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise (because the Future Homes Standard is designed to rule out gas boilers). The Future Homes Standard also comes with a higher standard of fabric thermal performance compared to today's building regulations (2021). The Government's intention is that homes built to the Future Homes Standard will not need to be retrofitted with any additional measures or technology to reach the energy and carbon performance standards that are needed as part of the UK's overall transition to net zero carbon in 2050.

- 3.24. Developers will be required to perform SAP or SBEM calculations at pre-planning, using design values and submitted within the planning application energy statement; and post-construction and preoccupation, using figures from the building constructed.
- 3.25. Calculations should be performed using the latest available version of the SAP methodology (currently SAP 10.2). If the completed building fails to meet the conditioned standard, the developer must take reasonable remediation measures. Any residual operational carbon emissions (regulated and unregulated) will be required to be offset whether identified at application stage or pre-occupation stage, unless this is demonstrated to be unviable.
- 3.26. To ensure the energy performance gap is minimised we recommend the use of a recognised quality assurance process that ensures the 'as built' performance (energy use, carbon emissions, indoor air quality, and overheating risk) matches the calculated design performance of buildings. Examples of these include BEPIT (Building Energy Performance Improvement Toolkit), the Passivhaus accreditation process and the Assured Performance Process (NEF/GHA).



Core Policy 4: Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development

All new dwellings and new non-residential development of 1,000m² or more should achieve net zero operational regulated carbon emissions by implementing the energy hierarchy.

- i. For new dwellings, a minimum 63% reduction in carbon emissions should be achieved by on-site measures (before the addition of renewable electricity measures), as compared to the baseline emission rate set by *Building Regulations Part L 2021*;
- ii. In new non-residential buildings, at least a 35% reduction in carbon emissions through on-site measures compared to the rate set by *Building Regulations 2013* (or equivalent percentage reduction on *Building Regulations 2021*) should be achieved before addition of renewable electricity measures;
- iii. Subsequent to points (i) and (ii) above, deliver sufficient renewable energy generation to comply with *Core Policy 37: Zero or Low Carbon Energy Sources*;
- iv. Where any residual operational carbon emissions remain (over the course of 30 years; regulated and unregulated), these should be calculated and offset to zero. Offsetting will only be considered acceptable in exceptional circumstances if it can be demonstrated that achieving net zero operational carbon development via on-site measures (and near-site renewables) is demonstrably unfeasible or unviable.

Where full compliance is not feasible or viable, proposals must demonstrate through the energy statement that carbon reductions to the greatest extent feasible have been considered in accordance with the energy hierarchy.

Core Policy 5: Carbon Offsetting

- 3.27. Carbon offsetting will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that it is the only feasible and viable option available to enable necessary development to be brought forward. As such we consider offsetting to be an option of final resort. Using the most up to date Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) or SBEM, planning applications will be required to set out in full the anticipated annual operational carbon emissions from the development for each of the 30 years after completion. The sum of this will be the amount of carbon to be offset over the 30-year building life.
- 3.28. Further details of how this policy will be implemented will be set out in the Council's Developer Contributions SPD.

Core Policy 5: Carbon Offsetting

All new dwellings and new non-residential development of 1,000m² or more that cannot achieve net zero carbon (regulated and unregulated energy uses) will be required to address any residual carbon emissions forecast over a period of 30 years, by a financial contribution to the Council's carbon offsetting fund.

Contributions to an offsetting scheme shall be secured through Section 106 Agreements and will be required to be paid prior to the occupation of the development.

Core Policy 6: Renewable Energy

- 3.29. The way we produce energy has evolved with increasing renewable energy generation, particularly solar and offshore wind. There has also been a move to de-centralisation and smaller, community, renewable energy schemes are becoming more common.
- 3.30. Cherwell is Oxfordshire's second largest renewable energy producer. Except for a small dip in 2019, renewable energy generation in the district has increased every year since 2015. We need to consider the land use implications of meeting future renewable energy generation requirements necessary for local and national carbon reduction targets.
- 3.31. We recognise the need to provide a positive framework for renewable and low carbon energy generation and also acknowledge that national policy makes clear that such schemes are no longer required to justify the need for them. However, development, including wind and solar energy developments, within the district needs to be managed carefully to maximise their potential contribution towards energy needs, whilst at the same time ensuring that the important characteristics of our environment and landscape are not unacceptably harmed.
- 3.32. In 2019 we commissioned a study to identify areas of potential suitability for wind energy development within the district. The study involved two key tasks, firstly, an assessment of the technical potential for wind energy within the area, and secondly, an analysis of the sensitivity of the landscape within the district to wind turbines. The Study concluded that the potential for wind generation sites within the district was very limited. We therefore do not propose to identify specific sites for commercial wind generation in this Plan.
- 3.33. The Study did, however, conclude that there may be scope for some limited

development for turbines of less than 50 metres (to tip). Any proposals for such turbines will therefore be considered on their merits having regard to national advice, the findings of the 2019 Study, together with a site-specific assessment and design considerations.

- 3.34. When assessing proposals for renewable energy the cumulative impacts of existing operational consented and proposed developments will need to be considered and, if necessary, suitable mitigation measures proposed, to minimise impacts on biodiversity and landscape character, public rights of way and users, and quality. Applicants will need to demonstrate that cumulative effects do not become a significant or defining characteristic of the wider landscape. Special attention and protection will, in particular, need to be given to the landscape and biodiversity of the Cotswolds National Landscape.
- 3.35. Community energy has the potential to deliver significant long-term benefits to local communities including reduced energy bills and increased energy sustainability and security. Community energy can also help foster greater support and acceptance of renewable energy development. Renewable energy developments that are genuinely led by or meet the needs of local communities will be encouraged and supported. The neighbourhood planning process provides a good opportunity for the detailed consideration of such community energy schemes.

Core Policy 6: Renewable Energy

The Council supports renewable and low-carbon energy provisions providing any adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily.

Planning applications involving renewable energy development will be encouraged provided that any adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative impact, on the following issues, which are considered to be of particular local significance in Cherwell:

- i. Landscape and biodiversity including designations, protected habitats and species, and Conservation Target Areas;
- ii. Visual impacts on local landscapes;
- iii. Best and most versatile agricultural land;
- iv. The historic environment including designated and non-designated assets and their settings;
- v. The Green Belt, particularly visual impacts on openness;
- vi. Aviation activities;
- vii. Public rights of way and pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians;
- viii. Highways and access issues, and
- ix. Residential amenity.

Core Policy 7: Sustainable Flood Risk Management

- 3.36. *The Flood and Water Management Act 2010* assigns Local Authorities with responsibility for managing flood risk. In Cherwell, Oxfordshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), with the District Council having an important supporting role to play as a Risk Management Authority.
- 3.37. The probability of flooding can be reduced through the management of land, river systems and flood defences, and the impact reduced by controlling the type of development allowed to be located in flood-risk areas.
- 3.38. Our Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provides the framework for applying the sequential and exceptions tests in the district. The SFRA identifies and maps the risk of flooding across the district based on a range of data and taking into account the predicted climate change impacts and is a useful source of information in undertaking site-specific flood risk assessments particularly in relation to specific locations across the district. The SFRA also highlights the biodiversity opportunities associated with the use of sustainable flood risk management techniques, for example in enhancing or creating priority habitats such as grazing marsh, wet grassland, wetlands and aquatic habitats (particularly so in the Conservation Target Areas).
- 3.39. We are also preparing Level 2 SFRA's to assess the level of Flood Risk for some proposed site allocations in more detail. These assessments will provide site-specific guidance for flood risk assessments, policy recommendations and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidance.



Core Policy 7: Sustainable Flood Risk Management

The Council will manage and reduce flood risk in the district using a sequential approach to development, and where necessary, the exceptions test in accordance with national policy and guidance and locating vulnerable development in areas at lower risk of flooding. Any residual risk will be managed taking account of the impacts of climate change. Development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and the benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding.

In addition to safeguarding floodplains from development, opportunities will be sought to restore natural river flows and floodplains, increasing their amenity and biodiversity value. Building over or culverting of watercourses should be avoided and the removal of existing culverts will be encouraged.

Existing flood defences will be protected from damaging development and where development is considered appropriate in areas protected by such defences it must allow for the maintenance and management of the defences and be designed to be resilient to flooding.

Site specific flood risk assessments will be required to accompany development proposals in the following situations:

- All development proposals located in flood zones 2 and 3;
- Development proposals of 1 hectare or more located in flood zone 1;
- Development sites located in an area known to have experienced flooding problems;
- Development sites located within 9m of any watercourse.

Flood risk assessments should assess all sources of flood risk and demonstrate that:

- There will be no increase in surface water discharge rates or volumes during storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 storm event with an allowance for climate change (the design storm event);
- Developments will not flood from surface water up to and including the design storm event or any surface water flooding beyond the 1 in 30 year storm event, up to and including the design storm event will be safely contained on site.

Development should be safe and remain operational (where necessary) and proposals should demonstrate that surface water will be managed effectively on site and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere, including sewer flooding.

Core Policy 8: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

- 3.40. Potential flooding and pollution risks from surface water can be reduced by reducing the volume and rate of water entering the sewerage system and watercourses. Managing drainage more sustainably in this way can ensure that developments are better adapted to the predicted impacts of climate change.
- 3.41. SuDS seek to manage surface water as close to its source as possible, mimicking surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development. Typically, this approach involves a move away from piped systems to softer engineering solutions. Where site specific Flood Risk Assessments are required to be submitted to accompany development proposals these should be used to investigate how SuDS can be used on particular sites and to design appropriate systems.
- 3.42. In considering SuDS solutions, the need to protect water quality must be considered, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. Where possible, multiple benefits including for recreation and wildlife should be delivered. Proposals must include an agreement on the future management, maintenance and replacement of the drainage structures.
- 3.43. Advice on SuDS and their various techniques is provided in our Level 1 SFRA.

Core Policy 8: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off.

Where site specific Flood Risk Assessments are required in association with development proposals, they should be used to determine how SuDS can be used on particular sites and to design appropriate systems.

In considering SuDS solutions, the need to protect ground water quality and biodiversity must be taken into account, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. Where possible, SuDS should seek to reduce flood risk, reduce pollution, and provide landscape and wildlife benefits. SuDS proposals must include an agreement on the future management, maintenance and replacement of the SuDS features. Advice should be sought from Oxfordshire County Council, the relevant lead local flood authority, including reference to the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit.

Sustainable Drainage Systems should seek to enhance water quality and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive.



Image: 2018 Peter Bocklandt/Shutterstock

Core Policy 9: Water Resources

- 3.44. In considering development proposals, we will seek to reduce the impact of development on the water environment, maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainability in water use. Some development can also remediate contaminated land which may be having an adverse impact on controlled water and human health.
- 3.45. Cherwell District lies within an area of serious water stress and the Upper Cherwell area, including Banbury, has been over abstracted. We will seek to ensure that new development is located in areas where adequate water supply can be provided from existing and potential water supply infrastructure. We will also ensure that new development incorporates water efficiency measures, thereby reducing overall demand.
- 3.46. We will seek to protect and enhance water quality including surface water and groundwater; ensure adequate water resources, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity; and, and promote sustainable water use. Water quality will be protected and enhanced by avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment.
- 3.47. In 2015, the Government updated *Building Regulations* Part G, introducing an 'optional' requirement of 110 litre/per/day for new residential development, which should be implemented through local policy where there is a clear evidential need.

Core Policy 9: Water Resources

Development proposals which would adversely affect the water quality of surface or underground water bodies, including rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, as a result of directly attributable factors, will not be permitted. Where it is likely that a proposal would have a significant adverse impact on water quality then a more detailed assessment will be required. The assessment should form part of the Environment Statement.

Development that has the potential to reduce water quality will not be permitted in sensitive areas, particularly those within the vicinity of drinking water supplies and those protected under the Water Environment Regulations 2017.

Water quality will be maintained and enhanced by avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment. Development proposals which would adversely affect the water quality of surface or underground water bodies, including rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, as a result of directly attributable factors, will not be permitted.

Development will only be permitted where adequate water resources exist or can be provided without detriment to existing uses. Where appropriate, phasing of development will be used to enable the relevant water infrastructure to be put in place in advance of the development commencing.

New developments are required to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres/head/day (l/h/d) for new homes.

Core Policy 10: Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC

- 3.48. The Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located in the southwest corner of the district. The SAC receives statutory protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 3.49. It has been designated as internationally important due to the lowland hay meadow habitats it supports. The site includes vegetation communities that are potentially unique in the world (due to the influence of long-term grazing and hay-cutting). The site has been traditionally managed for several centuries and so exhibits good conservation of structure and function. It is also designated as internationally important as it supports creeping marshwort, being one of only two known sites in the UK that support this plant species. The River Thames flows through the centre of the site and the hydrological regime makes an important contribution to the integrity of the site in supporting these habitats and species.

- 3.50. The SAC receives groundwater supplies from the River Cherwell and the River Thames (and their catchments). Alteration to adjacent rivers or obstruction of natural groundwater flows may alter the flooding regime of the SAC and lead to a degradation of the internationally important habitats and biodiversity that it supports. However, the current groundwater recharge could be maintained using Sustainable Drainage Systems, including porous surfacing, which maintains infiltration of groundwater without exacerbating flood risk.
- 3.51. If new development is situated next to watercourses that flow into the River Thames upstream of the SAC, it is possible that there could be a decrease in water quality flowing through the SAC during the construction and the operation of the development. This could potentially alter or prevent the nutrient enrichment of the habitats and species that the SAC supports, leading to degradation or loss.
- 3.52. Our aim is to prevent any obstruction of groundwater flows and to preserve water quality, to maintain the stability of the hydrological regime within the SAC and therefore its integrity as a site of international importance.

Core Policy 10: Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC

Developers will be required to demonstrate that:

- i. During construction of the development there will be no adverse effects on the water quality or quantity of any adjacent or nearby watercourses;
- ii. During operation of the development any run-off of water into adjacent or surrounding watercourses will meet Environmental Quality Standards (and where necessary oil interceptors, silt traps and Sustainable Drainage Systems will be included);
- iii. New developments will not significantly alter groundwater flows and hydrological regime of the Oxford Meadows SAC is maintained in terms of water quantity and quality, and
- iv. Run-off rates of surface water from the development will be maintained at greenfield rates.

Core Policy 11: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity

- 3.53. Cherwell has a number of areas of high ecological value including sites of international and national importance. The district is home to many legally protected species as well as priority species and habitats. Much of this biodiversity resource is mapped by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) and this is used as an information source by local authorities and conservation organisations. The data has also been used to identify

Conservation Target Areas and the emerging Nature Recovery Networks across Oxfordshire. Wild Oxfordshire's 'State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017' report highlighted the need for investment in nature and wildlife and conservation action to help recover species and habitats in the County.

- 3.54. Other sites of national importance include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs). There are 18 SSSI's wholly or partly within Cherwell covering approximately 1.1% of the district.
- 3.55. Sites of regional/local importance include Local Geological Sites (LGSs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), non-statutory nature reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation including District Wildlife Sites (DWSs – value at a district level due to the presence of important habitats and species), ancient woodland, aged or veteran trees, and *UK Biodiversity Action Plan* (BAP) Priority Habitats (habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act). Cherwell contains 13 LGSs, 4 LNRs, 89 Local Wildlife sites (completely or partly within the district), 13 proposed LWSs and proposed extensions 27 DWS's and 37 proposed DWS's (as of October 2022). A live list of Local Wildlife Sites and associated maps are available at <https://www.tverc.org/cms/>
- 3.56. It is not just designated sites that are of importance to the biodiversity resource of the district. Areas adjacent to designated sites can be of value as they can form part of the overall ecological unit and may provide important linkages. Moreover, landscape features such as hedgerows, woods, trees, rivers/riverbanks, ponds and floodplains can be of importance both in urban and rural areas, and often form wildlife corridors and steppingstones. Similarly, it is not just greenfield sites that can be of value; previously developed land can also make an important contribution to biodiversity. Some development can remediate contaminated land that may be having an adverse impact on ecology.
- 3.57. It is important that any features of value are identified early in the planning process so that adequate measures can be taken to secure their protection. Developers will be expected to incorporate and enhance such features within a site wherever possible and adequate measures should be taken to protect them from damage during construction. Networks of habitats including trees will be protected from development and where possible strengthened by it.
- 3.58. This Plan seeks to create a net gain legacy, in perpetuity. There are a number of features which can be incorporated into developments to encourage biodiversity including green and brown roofs, green walls, SUDs, using native and locally characteristic species in landscaping schemes, using landscaping

to link up existing areas supporting biodiversity, and including features such as bird and bat boxes. Further guidance on incorporating features into residential development to encourage biodiversity can be found in the Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD and BBOWT's "Homes for People, Homes for Wildlife" which was endorsed by the Council in 2018.

- 3.59. Relevant habitat and species surveys and associated reports will be required to accompany planning applications which may affect a site of known biodiversity value or the biodiversity/natural environment of the local area. A biodiversity survey and report will also be required where it is likely that previously unrecorded biodiversity interest may be present which, could be affected by the development. All developments around Bicester will require surveys carried out for the brown hairstreak butterfly. Surveys should include consideration of the site's value as a wildlife corridor and the contribution it makes to ecological networks. In addition to identifying biodiversity impacts, biodiversity surveys and reports should identify opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements.
- 3.60. The emerging Nature Recovery Network (NRN) reflects the hierarchy of sites, identifying three zones:
- Core zone comprising the most important sites for biodiversity including all nationally and locally designated sites, nature reserves, priority habitats and ancient woodland. The focus is to protect and manage these important sites to support the greatest amount of biodiversity and ecosystem services, restore them to favourable condition, and avoid habitat damage to or increase fragmentation;
 - Recovery zone comprising Conservation Target Areas, (CTAs) important freshwater areas, areas to provide improved habitat connectivity and linkages to buffer and connect core sites or provide stepping stones between them. New development will be expected to contribute to the target habitats and species of the CTAs and specific projects identified in Nature Recovery Plans and Projects, and
 - Wider landscape zone comprising the remainder of the district, where the focus is on strengthening the character of the landscape, including agricultural and urban landscapes, and making nature accessible, including restoration or creation of hedgerows and other landscape features, managing farmland or improving access to the countryside.

Core Policy 11: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity

All new development proposals will be expected to make a positive contribution to Cherwell's nature recovery through the protection, restoration and expansion of protected sites, habitats and species. Facilitating their adaptation to climate change and improving connections between wildlife corridors and protected sites at a landscape scale, in line with the hierarchy of designations set out in legislation and the NRN zones:

- i. Development which is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and/or Ramsar site will not be permitted*;
- ii. Development which is likely to have a significant adverse impact on nationally important sites, namely Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs), will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm it would cause to the site and the wider national network of SSSIs and NNRs and the loss can be mitigated to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity, and
- iii. Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of biodiversity or geological value of regional or local importance, in addition to irreplaceable habits such as ancient woodland, and aged or veteran trees, will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm it would cause to the site.

Any development with the potential to impact on a SAC, SPA and/or Ramsar site within the district will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment and will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of the international site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, or that effects can be mitigated to avoid any effect on integrity.

Development that would compromise the favourable condition or make it less likely that a favourable condition can be reached, of a SSSI, will only be permitted if the need for and the public benefits of the proposed development outweigh the loss.

Development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to enhance biodiversity such as green and brown roofs, green walls, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), soft landscaping and nest boxes, in addition to retaining and where possible enhancing existing features of nature conservation value within the site. Existing ecological networks including those identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy should be maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation and ensure habitat connectivity.

Relevant habitat and species surveys proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed will be required to accompany planning applications that may affect a site, habitat or species of known or potential ecological value.

Where, having followed the mitigation hierarchy, there is an unavoidable requirement for offsite biodiversity compensation to offset any harm as a result of the development, this should be proportionate in scale to the proposed development.

Planning conditions/obligations will be used to help deliver the Conservation Target Areas habitat and species targets and the wider Nature Recovery Network where appropriate.

Any new development will be required to secure the long-term management and monitoring of biodiversity features created on-site and those created off-site to compensate for development impacts, through a Biodiversity Improvement and Management Plan.

*Unless it meets the relevant subsequent legal tests (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest and No Alternatives) and provides adequate compensation.

Core Policy 12: Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.61. Under the *Environment Act 2021*, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) will have to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from November 2023. BNG will be measured using Defra’s biodiversity metric and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years.
- 3.62. In line with the requirements of the *Environment Act*, the Council will expect all development proposals to demonstrate a minimum 10% increase in BNG and will encourage applications to consider achieving higher net gains.
- 3.63. Development proposals will need to be supported by a statement outlining how BNG has been addressed.
- 3.64. Other biodiversity principles also need to be considered alongside BNG that does not replace existing protections and does not apply to irreplaceable habitat.
- 3.65. In assessing BNG the Council will firstly consider proposals against the ‘mitigation hierarchy’ as illustrated by Figure 1.

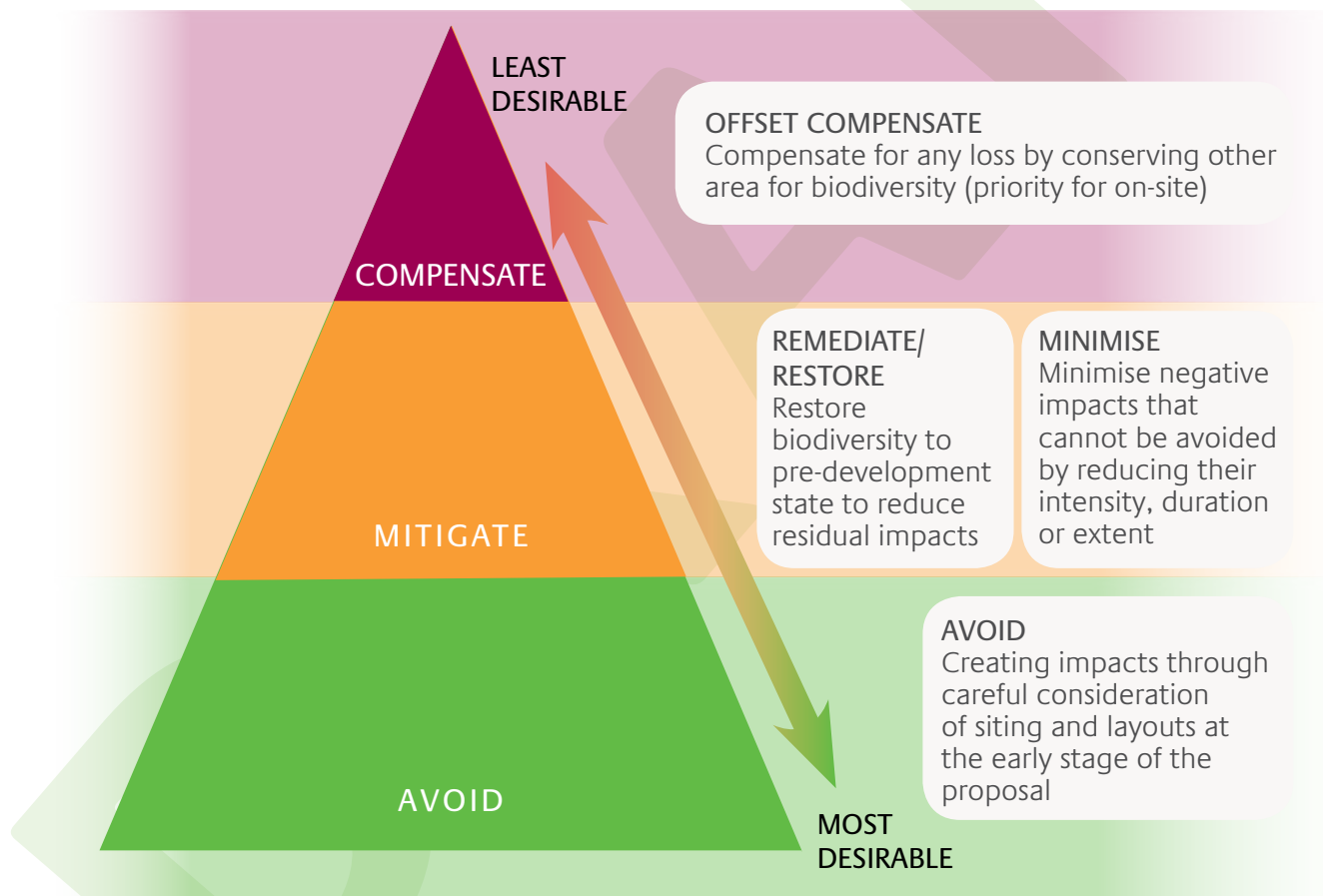


Figure 1: Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy

- 3.66. Net gain is additional to the hierarchy and will only be applied once the impacts of the development on biodiversity have been avoided, mitigated and compensated.
- 3.67. The net gain mitigation hierarchy takes the following approach:
- Avoid or reduce biodiversity impacts through site selection and layout;
 - Enhance and restore biodiversity on-site;
 - Create or enhance off-site habitats (either on other land which the developer owns, agreements with other landowners, or through the purchase of biodiversity units from third party habitat banks), and
 - Use national statutory biodiversity credits (as a last resort where there is no viable local alternative).
- 3.68. Where off-site delivery of BNG is required, this should take place as close as possible to the development site, focused on opportunities identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy or within the core or recovery zone of the NRN, with measures put in place to ensure biodiversity net gain is maintained long term.

Core Policy 12: Biodiversity Net Gain

Development will be required to demonstrate a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity (measured using the DEFRA biodiversity metric 3.1 or successor) by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value or geological value and soils, in addition to recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. At least 20% biodiversity net gain will be sought in the Nature Recovery Network Core and Recovery zones, and new urban extensions will be required to achieve 20% biodiversity net gain.

All major applications should be accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Ecological Enhancement Scheme, setting out how the site will be improved and maintained over a thirty-year period.

Delivery of biodiversity net gain should follow the mitigation hierarchy with gains delivered on site as first preference.

Where the required delivery of biodiversity net gain is not possible on-site, gain should be delivered as close as possible on projects identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy or within the core zone or recovery zone of the Nature Recovery Network, where they can secure the greatest benefits to Oxfordshire's wildlife and ecosystems.



QUESTION 7: Should we seek more than 10% biodiversity net gain if this means sacrificing other requirements?

Core Policy 13: Conservation Target Areas

- 3.69. Conservation Target Areas form a key part of the emerging NRN recovery zone. The Target Areas were identified to focus work to restore biodiversity at a landscape scale through the maintenance, restoration and creation of UK BAP priority habitats (habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act), and this is their principal aim. Addressing habitat fragmentation through the linking of sites to form strategic ecological networks can help species adapt to the impact of climate change and represent areas of greatest opportunity for strategic biodiversity improvement in the district. Development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of the target habitats and species of the target areas through avoiding habitat damage/ fragmentation and enhancing biodiversity.
- 3.70. Sixteen Conservation Target Areas lie wholly or partly within Cherwell District. The boundaries of the Conservation Target Areas are shown by the map (Appendix 9). General targets for maintenance, restoration and creation of habitats have been set for each area, to be achieved through a combination of biodiversity project work undertaken by a range of organisations, agri-environment schemes and biodiversity enhancements secured in association with development.
- 3.71. 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, or a financial contribution towards biodiversity initiatives in the Conservation Target Area. Further guidance on the approach to be taken is expected to be developed as part of the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Core Policy 13: Conservation Target Areas

Where development is proposed within or adjacent to a Conservation Target Area, biodiversity surveys and a report will be required to identify constraints and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Development that would have an adverse impact on the target habitats and species of a CTA will not be permitted. Where there is potential for development, the design and layout of the development, planning conditions or obligations will be used to secure biodiversity enhancement of the target habitats and species of the Conservation Target Area.

Core Policy 14: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

- 3.72. One approach to understanding the value of the natural environment for people is through an approach known as ‘natural capital’ and identifying the ‘ecosystem services’ it provides. We recognise the value of natural capital assets in terms of the ecosystem services they provide and will ensure that this is taken into account in the consideration of planning applications so that the wider benefits of natural capital are delivered.
- 3.73. The Natural Capital Map of Oxfordshire (2021) presents the natural capital assets present in Cherwell, whilst Cherwell’s Natural Capital Assets report (2021) provides a preliminary register of natural capital assets present in the district. Where an environmental impact assessment is required, planning applications will be expected to provide an assessment of the long-term impacts of the proposed development on natural capital and ecosystem services to enhance the design of new buildings and spaces across the site.

Core Policy 14: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

The Natural Capital Map of Oxfordshire will be expected to be used to inform the planning of development sites to ensure the protection of those areas with high value natural capital assets.

All new major development proposals will be supported by a natural capital assessment to demonstrate the impact of the development on the environment and any environmental net gain to be secured.

Core Policy 15: Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 3.74. The district’s green and blue infrastructure network is made up of many features. These can include parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green spaces, green and blue corridors (including cycleways, rights of way, canals and rivers), outdoor sports facilities, amenity green spaces, allotments, cemeteries/ churchyards, woodlands, green roofs and walls. Together, these assets offer a range of health and quality of life benefits for local communities and provide refuges for wildlife species inhabiting these environments. Establishing new linkages and reinforcing existing connections between these assets will often benefit the network as a whole.
- 3.75. Green and blue corridors consist of canals, rivers, woodland and hedgerows, together with public rights of way which offer routes for sustainable travel options as well as providing opportunities for wildlife migration. By enabling

species to explore new habitats and by enhancing green and blue corridors; species can adapt more easily to habitat loss. Development proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing green and blue corridors and maximise the opportunity to form new connections between existing green and blue infrastructure assets.

- 3.76. A draft Oxfordshire-wide Nature Recovery Network and Strategy has been produced. This will identify key locations for biodiversity gain that will build on the principles of Conservation Target Areas to focus efforts on habitat restoration and enable wildlife species to migrate over wider areas.
- 3.77. Our Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022) provides guidance to developers and other stakeholders on how to integrate green and blue infrastructure enhancements into proposals. It also spatially represents the current green and blue infrastructure network and provides recommendations to address challenges and opportunities to improve existing green and blue infrastructure provision.



Core Policy 15: Green and Blue Infrastructure

The Council will promote the protection and enhancement of sites that form part of the existing green and blue infrastructure (GBI) network and will support improving sustainable connections between sites in accordance with relevant policies within this Plan. The Council will work with developers and other relevant parties to encourage the inclusion of meaningful and integrated GBI in development proposals.

Regarding the planning of major developments, priority will be given to the role of GBI in responding to climate change, managing flood risk, protecting and enhancing heritage assets, supporting sustainable transport options, supporting biodiversity and the natural environment, and ensuring open space for sports and recreation is secured for the community.

Both strategic and non-strategic developments will be required to demonstrate strategies to both protect and enhance existing GBI and to also incorporate new GBI in the design approach for each site. Where applicable, applicants will be expected to demonstrate:

- i. How existing GBI identified on-site will be protected and incorporated into the layout, design and appearance of proposals;
- ii. Where connection(s) proposed between existing and new GBI on-site can be established including identifying opportunities for connectivity with off-site GBI;
- iii. How restored or re-created habitats can be accommodated within the proposed development and how biodiversity net gain can be achieved;
- iv. How existing trees and hedgerows will be protected both during and after development and the opportunities for increasing tree cover through new planting;
- v. How the existing and proposed built and natural landscape can be improved through the provision of GBI including for the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment;
- vi. How GBI will be provided along movement corridors for all modes of transport on-site (including motorised and non-motorised means of travel);
- vii. Where multi-functioning GBI can be achieved on-site, including to adapt and mitigate against climate change impacts, to protect and enhance biodiversity, manage flood risk, to improve air quality, and to promote health and well-being in the local community;
- viii. How the appropriate use and permanence of the Green Belt will be maintained and enhanced by existing and new GBI on-site, and
- ix. How existing and new GBI will be maintained and managed post development.

Financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and where it has been agreed that it will not be possible to provide on-site net biodiversity gains.

Core Policy 16: Air Quality

- 3.78. Development proposals that are likely to have an impact on local air quality, including those in, or within relative proximity to, existing or potential Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) will need to demonstrate measures/ mitigation that are incorporated into the design to minimise any impacts associated with air quality.
- 3.79. Where sensitive development is proposed in areas of existing poor air quality and/or where significant development is proposed, an air quality assessment will be required.
- 3.80. We will require applicants to demonstrate that the development will minimise the impact on air quality, both during the construction process and lifetime of the completed development.
- 3.81. Mitigation measures will need to demonstrate how the proposal would make a positive contribution towards the aims of the Council's *Air Quality Action Plan*.
- 3.82. Mitigation measures will be secured either through a negotiation on a scheme, or via the use of a planning condition and/or planning obligation depending on the scale and nature of the development and its associated impacts on air quality.

Core Policy 16: Air Quality

Development proposals that are likely to have an impact on local air quality, including those in, or within relative proximity to, existing or potential Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) will need to provide design mitigation measures to minimise any impacts associated with air quality.

Where development is proposed in areas of existing poor air quality and/or where significant development is proposed, an air quality assessment will normally be required. The Council will require applicants to demonstrate that the development will minimise the impact on air quality, both during the construction process and lifetime of the completed development.

Mitigation measures will need to demonstrate how the proposal would make a positive contribution towards the aims of the Council's *Air Quality Action Plan*. Mitigation measures will be secured either through a negotiation on a scheme, or via the use of a planning condition and/or planning obligation depending on the scale and nature of the development and its associated impacts on air quality.

Core Policy 17: Pollution and Noise

- 3.83. Pollution can take many forms including chemical, dust, light, noise, fumes, smell and vibration, all of which can have detrimental impacts on the environment and quality of life. These potentially adverse effects must be carefully considered in the assessment of any planning application and can be the basis for the refusal of an application if not adequately addressed. Developers are encouraged to have pre-application discussions with the Council to be advised on the specific requirements.
- 3.84. Assessments should:
- Identify the sensitive receptor(s) which may be affected by the proposed development, including residents, businesses, land users and sensitive environmental assets;
 - Consider the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or approved development, and
 - Demonstrate the measures which would be implemented to ensure adverse impacts would be avoided at source or, where this is not possible, outline the proposed management and mitigation measures to reduce effects to an acceptable level; and identify the significance of any residual effects.
- 3.85. Developers are expected to proactively monitor impacts and emissions to enable issues to be addressed swiftly. Close liaison with communities can support this approach, enabling feedback and dialogue on the need for and effectiveness of any mitigation measures.



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Core Policy 17: Pollution and Noise

Development will not be permitted if it results in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, noise nuisance, vibration, odour, light pollution, surface/ground water sources or land pollution.

In order to reduce, manage and mitigate noise to improve health and quality of life, residential and other development proposals should manage noise by:

- i. Avoiding significant adverse noise impacts on health and quality of life;
- ii. Mitigating and minimising the existing and potential adverse impacts of noise on, from, within, as a result of, or in the vicinity of new development without placing unreasonable restrictions on existing noise-generating uses;
- iii. Separating new noise-sensitive development from major noise sources (such as road, rail, air transport and some types of industrial use) through the use of distance, screening, layout, orientation, uses and materials – in preference to sole reliance on sound insulation;
- iv. Where it is not possible to achieve separation of noise-sensitive development and noise sources without undue impact on other sustainable development objectives, then any potential adverse effects should be controlled and mitigated through applying good acoustic design principles, and
- v. Promoting new technologies and improved practices to reduce noise at source, and on the transmission path from source to receiver.

Development should be designed to ensure that established noise and other nuisance-generating uses remain viable and can continue or grow without unreasonable restrictions being placed on them. Development proposals that have not clearly demonstrated how noise and other nuisances will be mitigated and managed will not be permitted.

Core Policy 18: Light Pollution

3.86. Light pollution mapping shows high levels of light pollution above Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and Yarnton. However, there are still significant areas of the district with relatively low levels of light pollution. Cherwell is ranked the 103rd darkest district out of 326 in England.

3.87. Artificial lighting is necessary in many circumstances including for public safety and enabling nighttime activities. Yet artificial lighting also has the potential to harm local amenity and wildlife, whilst also undermining people's enjoyment of the open countryside, areas of tranquility and dark skies.

- 3.88. Careful location and design of lighting can minimise the above impacts. Lighting schemes should therefore use best practice for the reduction of light pollution.

Core Policy 18: Light Pollution

In determining planning applications, the Council will seek to avoid unnecessary light pollution. Proposals for any external lighting scheme that requires planning permission will need to demonstrate that:

- i. The lighting scheme is the minimum required for its intended use;
- ii. Light pollution is minimised, and
- iii. There is no unacceptable impact on residential amenity, the character and appearance if the landscape, nature conservation or highway safety.

Core Policy 19: Soils, Contaminated Land and Stability

- 3.89. Contaminated land is land that has been polluted with harmful substances to the point where it now poses an unacceptable risk to health and the environment. Cherwell District has a history of industrial and defence land uses and we want to ensure that the impacts of these past and current land uses do not affect the health of people and the environment. Any site which is potentially contaminated will be required to carry out a site investigation and agree a scheme of mitigation with us to ensure that contaminated land issues are considered at the planning application stage.
- 3.90. A verification report will be required through condition in order to provide confirmation that the remediation work has been undertaken properly in line with best practice.
- 3.91. The term ‘poor ground conditions’ referred to in *Core Policy 49* may include, but is not limited to the following:
- Poorly consolidated made ground and fill material;
 - Soft, weak and wet natural soils;
 - Areas of shallow mine-workings and mineshafts.
- 3.92. The principal factors influencing agricultural production are climate, site and soil. These factors together with the interactions between them form the basis for classifying land into one of five grades, where 1 describes land as excellent (land of high agricultural quality and potential) and 5 describes land as very poor (land of low agricultural quality and potential). Land falling outside of these scores is deemed to be ‘primarily in non-agricultural use’, or ‘land predominantly in urban use’. The NPPF defines Grades 1-3a as ‘best and most

versatile' and states that planning policies should recognise the economic and other benefits of best and most versatile land.

Core Policy 19: Soils, Contaminated Land and Stability

Development proposals will not be permitted where the land is contaminated and not capable of appropriate remediation without compromising development viability or the delivery of sustainable development. For sites where land contamination is suspected, an adequate site investigation survey will need to be prepared (by a competent person) to demonstrate that land contamination issues have been fully addressed or can be satisfactorily addressed through the development.

Development proposals will not be permitted in locations where there are risks from land instability. Development proposals within areas known or suspected to be at risk of slope instability or poor ground conditions will need to demonstrate the following:

- i. Its structural integrity will not be compromised by slope instability;
- ii. The development does not exacerbate any instability on the site or elsewhere;
- iii. The development can tolerate ground conditions by special design, and
- iv. There is long-term stability of any structured built on made, filled or mined ground.

For sites suspected of land instability, an adequate site investigation survey will need to be prepared (by a competent person) to demonstrate that land instability issues have been fully addressed.

Applications for development on best and most versatile agricultural land will be resisted where the site has not been allocated in the development plan.

Core Policy 20: Hazardous Substances

3.93. In considering proposals for development which, may involve hazardous substances, we will need to be completely satisfied that the proposal will not constitute a hazard to our existing communities or the local environment. Similarly, existing consents will be an important consideration in the determination of sensitive uses such as housing.

3.94. Advice will be sought from the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) competent authority concerning off-site risks to the public arising from any proposed development which would introduce hazardous substances,

or of existing hazardous installations to proposed developments. Careful consideration will be given to the degree of risk and the likely hazard or consequence of an accident occurring.

Core Policy 20: Hazardous Substances

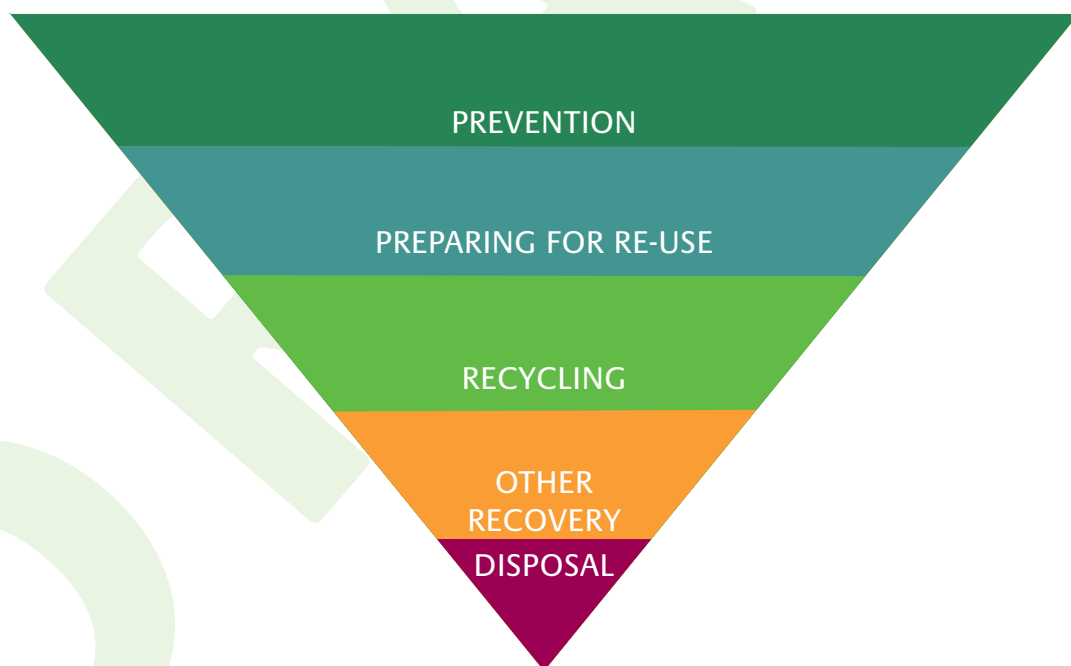
Proposals for development involving the use, movement or storage of hazardous substances, will only be permitted where the relevant authorities are satisfied that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure there is no unacceptable risk on human health, safety and the environment.

Development of a site in the vicinity of where hazardous substances already exist, will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that development will not constitute an unacceptable risk to human health, safety and the environment. Where necessary, appropriate measures to protect the public and the environment will be required.

Development Policy 1: Waste Collection and Recycling

3.95. To minimise waste and pollution, and to reduce the impact of waste on climate change, we expect future developments to support the application of the waste hierarchy (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Waste Hierarchy



- 3.96. Given the pressing urgency of climate change and the need to embed the principles of the circular economy into all areas of our society, we encourage developers to consider including community spaces that help reduce waste and build community cohesion through assets such as community fridges, space for the sharing economy (library of things), refill stations, space for local food growing etc.
- 3.97. In order to facilitate the sustainable management of waste in the future it is essential that all developments provide adequate facilities for the separation of waste and recyclables and for its satisfactory storage prior to collection. On-site facilities for separating or storing waste should be adequate to meet the needs of occupiers of any proposed new development. Such facilities should be well-designed so that they do not result in harm to the local environment, for example in terms of amenity or local character.
- 3.98. Specifications for the minimum standards for the type and scale of facilities and vehicular manoeuvrability needed for new commercial and mixed-use developments will be informed by the ADEPT report 'Making Space for Waste' (June 2010). All applications will be assessed against this guidance. Residential development should be designed in accordance with waste management policies in Cherwell District Council's waste planning guidance. Bin storage areas must be able to accommodate the correct number of mixed recycling, refuse and food recycling bins; be safe and easy to use for residents and waste collection crews and meet the requirements of the waste collection authority.



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Development Policy 1: Waste Collection and Recycling

Proposals for new development should include adequate facilities into the design to allow occupiers to separate and store waste for recycling and recovery unless existing provision is adequate. Such facilities should be well designed having regard to published guidance including (but not limited to) ADEPT 'Making Space for Waste' Designing Waste Management in New Developments: A Practical Guide for Developers and Local Authorities (2010).

The Council will support residential, commercial and mixed-use development proposals that:

- i. Provide adequate internal storage space within their premises to enable the occupiers to separate, store and recycle their waste;
- ii. Provide adequate, secure, external or communal storage facilities on site that allow for the separate storage and collection of waste, reusable items, recyclable materials and compostable waste;
- iii. Include on-site waste management, which minimises the need for waste transfer, where it is feasible to do so;
- iv. Allow for convenient and safe access to manage waste, including for older persons or persons with disabilities;
- v. Allow for convenient and safe access for waste collection services;
- vi. Implements high quality design solutions to minimise the adverse visual impact of waste facilities on site;
- vii. Enable waste from mixed-use schemes to be segregated in separate secured areas;
- viii. Provide innovative solutions to reduce waste at source, and
- ix. All major development proposals must be accompanied by a Waste Management Plan which demonstrates how the criteria set out above will be achieved.

Core Policy 21: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity Improvements

- 3.99. One of our key objectives for meeting the challenge of climate change is to ensure that housing and employment are located within sustainable locations. Encouraging sustainable transport modes, low-carbon technologies, and living closer to jobs, education, services and amenities can lead to reduced travel, reduced carbon emissions and generally more sustainable communities.
- 3.100. We have described earlier the benefits of Oxfordshire's and more specifically, Cherwell's good transport connections. However, Oxfordshire also experiences severe congestion in many places. Emissions originating from transport account for 20% of the County's total emissions, made worse due to the high numbers of people who live in rural areas. In addition, traffic congestion is a major cost to the local economy and has the potential to constrain future growth. If traffic growth continues due to an overreliance on the private car, many more of the district's urban and interurban routes will become increasingly congested.
- 3.101. Since our last Local Plan there have been improvements to rail infrastructure in Cherwell. This has included:
- A direct link from Oxford to Bicester via a new station at Oxford Parkway;
 - A new station at Islip;
 - Improvements to Bicester Village Station;
 - Fast services from Banbury and Bicester to London Marylebone.
- 3.102. Over the period to 2040, further improvements are planned to East-West Rail between Oxford and Milton Keynes, in particular, re-opening passenger services between Bicester and Bletchley, thus opening up this east-west corridor between Oxford and Cambridge. As well as passengers, our railways carry significant amounts of freight. There is an expectation that over the life of the plan some freight will be transferred to rail, and rail investments such as those identified in the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (2021) could help support a shift of freight movements to rail.

3.103. The County Council’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022-2050 (LTCP) sets out the transport strategy for the county. In addition, three initial supporting strategies for freight and logistics, active travel, and innovation were produced in 2021 and more are in production. The LTCP outlines a clear vision to deliver an inclusive and safe net-zero Oxfordshire transport system that enables all parts of the county to thrive, while also protecting the environment and making Oxfordshire a better place to live for all residents. It proposes to achieve this by reducing the need to travel, discouraging individual private vehicle journeys and making walking, cycling, public and shared transport the natural first choice.



3.104. Substantial investment and funding will be required to support net-zero carbon growth in Cherwell and across Oxfordshire. Our updated IDP, sets out how we intend to secure investment from the government, transport operators, the development industry, and other sources.

Improved Sustainable Transport & Connections

3.105. Making a difference to current travel patterns will require quality infrastructure for sustainable travel modes to make them our first choice. Proposals will therefore be required to plan for improved walking, cycling and public transport and provide these at an early stage of the development.

3.106. We will seek better connectivity, quality, accessibility and capacity of public transport and active travel. Our main transport corridors and facilities will need upgrading to enable efficient use of public transport and safe walking and cycling routes. We will work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, National Highways, Network Rail, and other public providers to bring forward improvements to infrastructure, services and freight movements. Development should support and enable these projects, where appropriate.

3.107. We will apply 20-minute neighbourhood principles and as well as a ‘Healthy Streets Approach’ to development and infrastructure provision to facilitate trips by walking and cycling alongside reducing health inequalities.

Core Policy 21: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity Improvements

The Council will support measures identified in the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and the area travel plans and work with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that transport improvements contribute positively to the attractiveness and safety of our places, quality of life in Cherwell, and respond sensitively to our natural and historic environment.

Area strategy policies for Bicester, Banbury, Kidlington and Heyford Park and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identify specific schemes addressing sustainable transport and connectivity.

All major development should take a 'decide and provide' approach to manage travel demand by reducing the need to travel, planning for sustainable travel modes, and providing for zero emission vehicle use. Development is expected to follow the transport hierarchy set out below.

The Council will give priority to the movement of people according to the following hierarchy and this should be reflected in development proposals and infrastructure provision:

- i. walking (including running, mobility aids, wheelchairs, and mobility scooters);
- ii. cycling and riding (bicycles, non-standard cycles, e-bikes, cargo bikes, e-scooters and horse riding);
- iii. public transport (bus, scheduled coach, rail, and taxis);
- iv. motorcycles;
- v. shared vehicles (car clubs and carpooling), and
- vi. other motorised modes (cars, vans, and lorries).

All strategic developments will be expected to provide direct bus access, rapid electric charging points, car and electric vehicle community sharing clubs and mobility hubs in accessible locations, preferably close to public services/amenities on site.

Cycle, motorcycle and car parking provision, including electric charging points, in new development should be made in line with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards and street design guidance and, where relevant, the Area strategies for Cherwell's Places and Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Core Policy 22: Assessing Transport Impact/Decide and Provide

- 3.108. This Plan seeks to increase the attraction of and opportunities for public transport. It has a strong focus on reducing the need to travel by private car and encouraging use of other modes of transport (travel choices), especially for shorter trips. It is important that new development can be accessed safely and that, to help manage car use, development is accessible by means of transport other than the private car. We will expect large-scale sites to should provide access for public transport vehicles.
- 3.109. Proposals will need to quantify the likely transport impacts that they will have and describe any mitigation measures to reduce them. Proposals that will generate significant amounts of transport movements will need to be accompanied by a transport assessment, and potentially a travel plan.
- 3.110. Further details can be found in Oxfordshire County Council's 'Decide and Provide': Requirements for Transport Assessments (September 2022).
- 3.111. The promotion of travel plans is essential to encourage residents and employees to make use of sustainable transport networks, and to inform them of the travel choices available. A key element of this is the marketing of public transport, cycling and walking.
- 3.112. We will seek infrastructure for electric and low emission vehicles where appropriate and viable, with reference to the Oxfordshire EV Infrastructure Strategy.



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Core Policy 22: Assessing Transport Impact/Decide and Provide

The Plan supports Oxfordshire's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 'decide and provide' approach to help the delivery of public transport and active travel improvements as well as to manage the County's road network in a manner which reduces traffic and congestion.

Development that generates a significant number of trips will be required to be located in an area with an appropriate level of public transport accessibility and where public transport capacity can accommodate the proposed increase in the number of trips, or where capacity can be increased to an appropriate level through contributions, or other infrastructure funding.

These developments will be required to submit a Transport Assessment or a Transport Statement and where relevant a Travel Plan. Transport Assessments should follow latest guidance from Oxfordshire County Council.

Development proposals should:

- i. Contribute towards the improvement of public transport and the improvement and delivery of walking and cycling routes that serve the site. This could be achieved through the design of development and/or through financial contributions appropriate to the scale and impact of the development;
- ii. Be expected to provide, or contribute to the provision of, new and/or improved public transport infrastructure and services proportionate to the projected number of additional trips arising from the development and considering cumulative impacts of other approved developments in the area;
- iii. Limit motor vehicle trips and identify and deliver highway safety measures at and around the development site, including temporary measures during the construction phase. This measure should reduce road danger and facilitate safer movements for all users and transport modes;
- iv. Comply with the latest Oxfordshire guidance on design, parking provision, servicing facilities and electric charging infrastructure.

Proposals to improve or provide new public transport infrastructure and facilities will be supported subject to:

- v. Being acceptable in terms of impact on the environment including townscape, public realm and amenity of adjoining areas;
- vi. Being designed to be safe, convenient, attractive and accessible for use especially for people with disabilities and specific mobility needs, and
- vii. Providing adequate cycle parking and ease of access on foot, including consideration of pedestrian desire lines.

Core Policy 23: Freight

3.113. The Council will work with partners to minimise freight trips on the road network and promote safe, clean and efficient freight movements.

Core Policy 23: Freight

Development proposals for logistics and distribution, that generate a significant number or intensity of transport movements, will be required to demonstrate that:

- i. They are conveniently located to enable direct routeing to the strategic road network;
- ii. There is no unacceptable impact on residential areas, local air quality, local amenity, or the highway network, and
- iii. There would be no unacceptable impact on landscape, local character and biodiversity.

Local delivery hubs that reduce traffic will be supported particularly where it would lead to a reduction in noise and emissions from local freight trips and enable sustainable last-mile movements.

Core Policy 24: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield Land and Housing Density

3.114. The NPPF requires that planning policies should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses and include minimum density standards. Managing the use of previously developed land is important in minimising the use of greenfield land, maintaining the appearance of our towns and villages and in assisting the well-being of our communities. It can also provide opportunities for enhancing biodiversity. This means ensuring that land is not underused and that we make the most of vacant and derelict land and buildings.

3.115. We will support the redevelopment of previously developed land within the built areas of our Main Towns, Local Services Centres and Larger Villages where there will be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. We will strive to ensure that any identified 'brownfield' regeneration sites are brought forward. The Council produces a Brownfield Land Register that identifies sites the Council considers to be suitable, available and achievable for residential development. It contains previously developed sites across the district with planning permission as well as sites without. We will continue to update and take into account its Brownfield Land Register in considering whether to identify land for new homes on previously developed land.

3.116. Housing development in Cherwell will be expected to make effective and efficient use of land. In order to help achieve this, in general, we are proposing that new housing should be provided at a net density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. However, the density of housing development will be expected to reflect the character and appearance of individual localities and development principles that are appropriate to the individual circumstances of sites.

Core Policy 24: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield Land and Housing Density

Housing development in Cherwell will be expected to make effective and efficient use of land. The Council will encourage the re-use of previously developed land in sustainable locations.

On all new housing developments, the following minimum densities (hectares – net) will be required unless specific local circumstances indicate that this would have an adverse effect on the character of the area, highway safety or the amenity of neighbours. Higher densities will be encouraged in locations where it will result in the optimum use of land, where there is good access to services and public transport routes, and where it would contribute to enhancing the character and legibility of a place.

- 45/hectares within existing settlements of Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington, and Heyford Park;
- 40/hectares urban extensions (less than 50 hectares);
- 30/hectares urban extensions (more than 50 hectares), and
- 30/hectares rural and other areas.





Theme 2: Maintaining and Developing a Sustainable Local Economy

Employment

Core Policy 25: Meeting Business and Employment Needs

- 3.117. Cherwell has a diverse economy with strengths in manufacturing, retail, health, and science and technology. The district is at the northern point of the Oxfordshire 'Knowledge Spine' linking the Science Vale Enterprise Zone and Oxford to Kidlington and Bicester. Cherwell also sits at the intersection between the Knowledge Spine and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc which is recognised as hosting one of the fastest growing economies in England.
- 3.118. Our key commercial centres are Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. The rural commercial market in the district is relatively small with only limited availability of industrial or storage units.
- 3.119. The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) identifies a need for between 274 and 283 hectares of employment land in Cherwell over the period 2021 to 2040. Our last local plan identified a significant amount of employment land and whilst much of this has been developed there still remains substantial areas of land available. In addition, we will need to take account of other permissions in place and development that has been completed on unallocated sites. We have completed an Employment Land Review (October 2022) and we have identified a number of additional potential employment sites across the District. We may need to plan for more and would welcome your views on this.



**QUESTION 8:
Should we identify further land for employment?**



**QUESTION 9:
We would welcome information from local businesses and landowners that would like to expand or potentially relocate. It will help inform an Employment Land Review and the further consideration of employment land needs.**

Core Policy 25: Meeting Business and Employment Needs

74.8 hectares of land is identified for future development on the following strategic and retained Local Plan 2015 allocations:

Site Name	Type of Site (Uses Class)	Available Development Land (Hectares)
Higham Way – Banbury	Mixed Use B2, B8 and E(g)	3.0
Canalside – Banbury*	Mixed Use B2, B8 and E(g)	7.5
Land East of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane – Bicester	Mixed Use B2, B8 and E(g))	40.0
Land adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41 – Bicester	Mixed Use B2, B8 and E(g)	6.3
Bicester Business Park (Bicester 4)**	Saved 2015 LP Allocation for B1 (a) and E(g)(i)	3.3
Begbroke Science Park	Science Park - E(g) (ii)	14.7

* the precise quantum of employment land at Canalside may be updated in the Publication Plan.

**Bicester Business Park is an existing 2015 Local Plan allocation with residual capacity of 3.3ha that is saved through this Local Plan.

Planning Applications for employment and business development will be supported at the allocated sites where they meet the requirements set out within the Site Development Templates shown by Appendix 3, and in accordance with the Area Strategies.

Proposals for employment-related development on unallocated sites will be supported in accordance with *Core Policy 27: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites*.

In addition to the strategic allocations identified above, an allowance of 15ha is made for non-strategic employment site allocations. These will be included within the Publication version of the Plan or through Neighbourhood Plans.



QUESTION 10:

Do you agree with our approach of focusing employment development on strategic sites at Banbury and Bicester?

Core Policy 26: Development at Existing Employment Sites

- 3.120. We believe it is important that we protect our existing employment sites to help ensure that an appropriate level of employment provision is provided across the district.
- 3.121. In seeking to protect our existing employment sites, we are proposing that where a site no longer has a reasonable prospect of being used for employment purposes, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the site is no longer viable for its present, or any other realistic and suitable, employment use. They must demonstrate that the site has remained un-sold or un-let for at least 12 months. In addition, applicants will need to provide evidence relating to the marketing of the site for its present use for a minimum period of 12 months up to the date at which the planning application was lodged. This should demonstrate that despite genuine and sustained attempts to sell or let a site on reasonable terms for employment use, they have failed to do so.
- 3.122. The site's potential contribution to the local and wider economy must be considered, both currently and in the long term, taking proper account of the economic cycle and the likely future needs of the economy. The Council will need to be satisfied that the change of use of the employment site would not jeopardise the provision of sufficient employment land across the district to meet the identified need.

Core Policy 26: Development at Existing or Allocated Employment Sites

Proposals for alternative uses to B2, B8 and E(g) uses on existing employment sites must demonstrate that the site has been marketed for the current permitted employment use for a minimum period of 12 months and has remained unsold or unlet.

Where there is no demonstrable prospect of land or premises being used for continued employment use, a mixed-use enabling development which incorporates employment space should first be considered. If a mixed-use scheme is not viable, the extent to which the proposed use generates new employment will be considered.



QUESTION 11: Do you agree with our proposed approach to the protection of employment sites?

Core Policy 27: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites

- 3.123. This Plan proposes a number of employment allocations with a strong focus on Banbury and Bicester. In addition, we want to support appropriate employment development on unallocated sites across the district, where there is a demonstrable need.
- 3.124. More widely, we are proposing that new employment activities can be accommodated with least impact on the landscape through the re-use, conversion or adaptation of suitable existing buildings. However, there is some flexibility for new employment buildings to come forward in the rural areas if there are no suitable existing buildings available for re-use subject to certain criteria being met.

Core Policy 27: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites

Proposals for new employment development (Use Classes E(g), B2 or B8) will be supported on unallocated sites in or on the edge of, the built-up area of Main Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages, where there are exceptional circumstances, provided that the benefits are not outweighed by any harmful impacts, taking into account the following:

- i. A demonstrable need for the employment that cannot be accommodated on existing allocated sites;
- ii. The effect on the amenity of nearby residents and businesses;
- iii. The provision of safe site access for pedestrians and cyclists and for all types of vehicles likely to visit the sites, and measures to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport where possible, and
- iv. The scale, nature and appearance of the employment development on, and its relationship with, the settlement, its character and its landscape setting.

Other proposals in Small Villages and the open countryside will be considered, provided that the following criteria are met in addition to criteria (i)-(iv) above:

- v. The proposal cannot reasonably be accommodated on existing employment land identified as vacant or developable, and
- vi. It can be demonstrated that the proposal will benefit the local economy and will not undermine the delivery of the strategic employment allocations.



QUESTION 12: Do you agree with our proposed approach for new employment development on unallocated sites?

Core Policy 28: Ancillary Uses on allocated Employment Sites

- 3.125. Providing facilities ancillary to the main business uses on large employment sites can help to make them more attractive to incoming firms and improves the quality of the working environment for employees. Ancillary facilities also help employment sites to develop sustainably by reducing the need for traffic movements.
- 3.126. It is important that any ancillary uses are necessary to support the main employment uses. The provision of larger scale retailing, such as food superstores and non-food retail warehouses, will not be supported.

Core Policy 28: Ancillary Uses on existing or allocated Employment Sites

Proposals for uses other than E(g) B2 and B8 business uses on allocated employment sites will only be permitted if the following criteria are satisfied:

- i. The development serves the occupiers of the employment site;
- ii. The use is ancillary to the main business or employment function of the wider site, and
- iii. The use, either alone or combined with other existing or proposed uses, would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of any town centre or shopping centre (including local centres) or the social and community vitality of a nearby village.

Conditions may be imposed to limit the scale of the operation and to restrict the range of activities proposed or goods sold, where necessary, to ensure that the criteria set out above are met.



QUESTION 13: Do you agree that ancillary uses should be allowed on employment sites?



Core Policy 29: Community Employment Plans

- 3.127. We believe that development should deliver the greatest benefit for local communities by maximising opportunities for local employment and education. Providing jobs and training for the local community offers the opportunity to generate and share increased economic prosperity.
- 3.128. Community Employment Plans (CEPs) prepared in partnership with developers, the Council, and training providers can play an important role in achieving this. A CEP is an employer-led initiative which can form part of planning obligations for significant developments. The measures contained within a CEP seek to mitigate the impacts of development through ensuring local people can better access employment, skills, and training opportunities arising from development. CEPs can also help to create the proper alignment between the jobs created and a local labour force with the appropriate skills.
- 3.129. CEPs can also reduce the need to source employees from outside of the area, reducing the need for longer distance commuting and thus helping our commitments towards addressing climate change. CEPs can support green skills training within construction and development by identifying opportunities on site for greener apprenticeships and work placements.
- 3.130. We are proposing to seek the preparation of CEPs for major development. Where a CEP is required, developers will be provided with a template as a basis. Through discussion with the Council, working in partnership with the LEP, appropriate targets and outcomes for the site-specific CEP will be agreed. The CEP will then be subject to regular review and monitoring meetings with the Council. We will provide assistance to identify appropriate local partner agencies and organisations to work with and support the developer to facilitate the timely delivery of the CEP.

Core Policy 29: Community Employment Plans

Proposals for major development should demonstrate how opportunities for local employment, apprenticeships, and training would be created, and seek to maximise the opportunities for sourcing local produce, suppliers and services, during both construction and operation.

The Council will require the submission of a site-specific Community Employment Plan (CEP) for the construction and operation of significant* development sites, using a planning condition or legal agreement. The CEP should be prepared in partnership with the District Council and any other partners to deliver the agreed CEP.

The CEP should cover, but not be limited to:

- i. Local procurement agreements;
- ii. Apprenticeships, employment and training initiatives for all ages and abilities, and
- iii. training and work experience for younger people including those not in education, employment, or training.

*Significant' is defined in the context of this policy as sites over 1,000 dwellings or 4,000m² of employment floorspace (Classes E(g), B2 and B8).

Core Policy 30: Rural Diversification

- 3.131. Diversification provides opportunities to generate additional income for rural businesses, reduces reliance on a single income stream, as well as reduce risk. It can contribute to a prosperous and viable rural economy in the rural areas. Our aim is to ensure that farm holdings can remain viable, and agricultural buildings can remain in use, without causing harm to the environment by new construction, and without increasing traffic hazards on rural roads.



Core Policy 30: Rural Diversification

In rural areas, proposals for economic activities that bring about rural diversification shall normally be permitted, providing that:

- i. The development is operated as part of a viable rural business (including farm holding) and contributes to the viability of the holding;
- ii. It is not detrimental to the character and appearance of existing buildings and their setting within the landscape;
- iii. Existing buildings are used in preference to new buildings or extensions;
- iv. Utilities and other infrastructure are available or can be provided, and
- v. There is access by means of an existing road; no highway hazards are created or increased; and road improvements incompatible with the character of the surrounding area are not required.



QUESTION 14: Do you agree with our proposed approach to rural diversification?

Tourism

Core Policy 31: Tourism

- 3.132. Tourism is a major contributor to Cherwell's economy with nearly 9,000 local jobs provided in the sector. In 2019, there were approximately 8.2 million visitors to the district contributing £495 million to the local economy.
- 3.133. The district's attractive countryside, historic villages and market towns, and the Oxford Canal contribute to its distinctive tourism offer. It also benefits from its location between London and Birmingham and its proximity to national attractions such as Blenheim Palace, Stratford upon Avon and Warwick Castle. However, Bicester Village is the largest visitor attraction in the district with more than 6 million visitors annually.
- 3.134. We recognise the significant contribution that tourism makes to the wider Cherwell economy, and we want to support further sustainable tourism developments, particularly those that can demonstrate direct benefits for the local 'visitor' economy, and which will sustain the rural economy.
- 3.135. Since our last Local Plan, a number of new hotels have been built in the district and new major visitor attractions currently being developed include Bicester Motion, a major attraction based on motorsport and aviation on the site of the former RAF Bicester. A Great Wolf Resort comprising a waterpark and 498 room hotel is currently under construction at Chesterton.

- 3.136. Tourism also benefits local programmes of events, including the arts, sports and festivals, where local traditions can be shared with visitors, including Banbury Canal Festival and Bicester Food Festival. These activities help to build local pride and provide opportunities for new businesses, business growth and development.
- 3.137. As a catalyst for economic growth and employment, tourism provides opportunities for an increase in demand for businesses as well as tourist attractions for both visitors and residents. It is important to ensure tourism works to the advantage of the district by attracting and dispersing visitors to discover and experience the wide range of attractions the district has to offer and to maximise opportunities to increase the number of overnight stays, length of visitor stay, and visitor spending.
- 3.138. Whilst supporting proposals for new or improved tourist facilities in sustainable locations, larger new attractions, which generate significant visitor numbers, we think are most appropriately located in or adjacent to our main towns. These locations have good public transport links and support active travel opportunities. We will also apply a town centre first approach for other visitor facilities, including for hotels and restaurants although other locations maybe acceptable taking into account specific locational and functional requirements.
- 3.139. In our rural areas visitor-related facilities may offer benefits to existing local communities, such as supporting local food producers, shops and pubs, or new recreational opportunities. Locating new visitor related development within or close to existing settlements will enable the potential wider community benefits to be realised whilst minimising the spread of development into the open countryside. In some cases, tourism development in the open countryside may be justified if associated with a particular countryside attraction or a farm diversification scheme. Existing buildings should be utilised wherever possible although replacement buildings should be considered where this would result in a more sustainable development.
- 3.140. There are a number of camping and touring caravan sites throughout the district. New or extensions to existing sites will need careful consideration to minimise visual or environmental impacts. Wherever possible, existing buildings should be used for associated facilities, such as club houses and shower blocks.
- 3.141. The location, scale and design of any new visitor related development must be appropriate to the area and its environmental impact will be carefully assessed and weighed against any economic and community health and wellbeing benefits. Where tourist accommodation is proposed in locations where new dwellings would not normally be permitted, we will impose planning conditions or require legal agreements restricting buildings to holiday accommodation use.

Core Policy 31: Tourism

New tourist and visitor facilities, including hotels, will be supported in accordance with the ‘town centre first’ principles and should be located within or adjacent to town or service centres and reuse appropriate existing buildings wherever possible.

New tourism and visitor facilities will also generally be supported in villages and the open countryside where they:

- Have a functional linkage with a specific countryside attraction;
- Secure the diversification of an agricultural enterprise;
- Complement the rural character of the area and deliver comprehensive long term recreational access, community or nature conservation benefits;
- Are unable to be reasonably located within or close to a town or service centre by the nature of the facility.



QUESTION 15: Do you agree with our proposed approach to tourism development?

Town Centres and Retail

Core Policy 32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses

- 3.142. Retail is very important to the local economy, being one of the top employers in Cherwell. Retail premises make up nearly a fifth of Cherwell’s business floorspace and from 2000 to 2019 Cherwell experienced a 36% growth in retail floorspace (89,000m²), performing strongly when compared to retail growth in Oxfordshire, and England.
- 3.143. In particular, Banbury and Bicester Town Centres, and to a lesser extent Kidlington village centre, are the main focus for shopping, commerce, leisure and other facilities serving Cherwell’s communities, businesses and visitors. They also play an increasingly important role as places to live.
- 3.144. However, notwithstanding recent growth, in common with many town centres across the country our urban centres have come under pressure in recent years, particularly with competition from other centres, and the shift to online retailing, which has been accelerated by the pandemic.
- 3.145. We are committed to supporting our town centres and to enhancing and strengthening their vitality and viability. In doing so we also recognise the

important role that further residential development, in appropriate town centre locations, can play in strengthening vitality and viability in the longer term.

- 3.146. In addition to our traditional high streets, there are also significant retail provision at out of centre locations, particularly at Banbury and Bicester. Many residential areas across the district are also served by small parades of local shops, restaurants and other community-based facilities.
- 3.147. Cherwell is home to Bicester Village Outlet Centre. Bicester Village is the district's most visited tourist destination. The Council recognises the role Bicester Village performs in the local economy and will continue to support its role as a major national and international destination, whilst at the same time ensuring that the vitality and viability of Bicester Town Centre is enhanced and protected.
- 3.148. In our villages and rural areas local shops provide a vital service for local communities and contribute significantly to their sustainability. The Council will seek to resist the loss of these vital local facilities.
- 3.149. In order to fully understand the retail and leisure development needs of the district, we commissioned a Town Centre and Retail Study in 2021. This study concluded that there was an over provision of comparison retail floorspace, in both Banbury and Bicester, and that overall, there was no additional need for comparison or convenience floorspace across the district up to 2040. The study also concluded that any further out of centre expansion to Banbury or Bicester's comparison fashion offer would be seriously detrimental to the vitality and viability of each of the town centres.
- 3.150. We are proposing that new retail development will continue to be focused on our town centres and all new development will be required to be built to high design standards. Town centre uses are those defined by the NPPF and include retail, leisure, cultural and community uses. We will also support the role that new restaurants and cafes can have in attracting people into our town centres and we will support uses that contribute to the evening economy in appropriate locations.
- 3.151. Based on the conclusions of the 2021 Town Centre and Retail Study we will resist further major out of centre retail development, due to the impact on the vitality and viability of our urban centres, particularly Banbury and Bicester.
- 3.152. We will continue to work with our local communities and other stakeholders to promote and enhance the attractiveness of our urban centres. Particular priorities highlighted by the Town Centre and Retail Study include the need for improvements to the public realm, accessibility, signage, publicity and design.

- 3.153. Outside the main shopping centres of Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and Heyford Park, local shopping requirements are met by a number of local shopping centres. These provide for the day to day convenience shopping needs of the population and complement the range of shopping facilities offered by the main centres.

Core Policy 32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses

The Council will promote the continued role and functions of its town/urban centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and public realm. The hierarchy of centres in the district is:

- Main Towns (Town Centres): Banbury, Bicester
- Local Service Centres (Local/Village Centre): Kidlington, Heyford Park

The boundaries of the Town Centres' and their respective Primary Shopping Areas are defined on the Policies Map and by Appendix 10.

To ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the Town Centres, the Council will apply a 'town centre first' approach to retail, services and other main town centre uses in accordance with the established hierarchy of centres.

Retail and other 'Main Town Centre Uses' will be directed towards these centres. Where such uses are proposed outside these centres the Council will apply the sequential approach as set out in the NPPF.

Where planning permission is required for any retail or leisure proposal outside these centres, they will be subject to an impact assessment, appropriate to the use. In Banbury, the threshold for such an impact assessment is over 2000m² (gross), 1500m² (gross) in Bicester and 350m² (gross) elsewhere.

The Council will support the provision of new local centres containing a small number of shops of limited size within the allocated strategic housing sites set out in this Local Plan and as specified within the Indicative Site Development Templates (Appendix 2).

The Council will support proposals for new small shops or extensions to existing shops within or adjacent to existing settlements that are required to serve local needs.



QUESTION 16: Do you agree with our proposed approach to retail development and town centres?

Core Policy 33: Primary Shopping Areas

3.154. Several changes to the Permitted Development Rights affecting change of use to and from retail have been introduced. Where prior approval is needed, the Council will interpret 'key shopping areas' referred to in the General Permitted Development Order as being designated Primary Shopping Frontages.

Core Policy 33: Primary Shopping Areas

Where planning permission is required, proposals resulting in the loss of an E Class Use at ground floor level within a primary shopping area must demonstrate that:

- i. The unit has been proactively and appropriately marketed for at least 12 months and it has been demonstrated that there is no longer a realistic prospect of the unit being used for E Class uses in the foreseeable future;
- ii. The proposal meets the needs of residents within the local neighbourhood, and
- iii. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.



QUESTION 17: Do you agree with the town centre and primary shopping frontage boundaries shown on the plans?



QUESTION 18: Do you agree that only within the primary shopping frontage area E use classes should be protected?



Development Policy 2: Outdoor Markets

- 3.155. Outdoor markets add to the vibrancy, social value and character of our towns and villages. Cherwell's markets are well established and popular with local communities and visitors and help support local businesses. However, if poorly designed and managed they can cause harm to surrounding areas in terms of congestion of local roads and pavements, generate rubbish storage and noise issues, and impact on access and accessibility.
- 3.156. We wish to see all of the outdoor markets in the district continue to thrive and will encourage a coordinated approach to their development and management.

Development Policy 2: Outdoor Markets

Proposals for new off-street permanent street markets, car boot sales, and temporary markets will be supported provided that:

- i. The scale, nature, and location would not harm existing shopping facilities or markets located within town centres;
- ii. There would not be an unacceptable impact on local amenity or the general environment;
- iii. Adequate provision is made for traders' parking, deliveries and servicing, set-up and storage of stalls, power supply and storage and disposal of refuse, and
- iv. There would not be an unacceptable impact on traffic flow or increase in traffic congestion in the area.

We will seek to maintain, and support the enhancement of, existing outdoor markets within the district. Developments that would adversely affect existing outdoor markets will not be permitted.

Where construction of a development could adversely affect an outdoor market, applicants should assess this impact and propose mitigation measures to ensure the outdoor market can continue to operate.

Development Policy 3: Shopfronts and signage

- 3.157. Outdoor advertisements and signs can impact on amenity and public safety, and therefore sometimes require advertisement consent. Well-designed signs and advertisements will integrate well with buildings and the character of an area as well as meeting the commercial need for the advertisement. However, obtrusive designs and inappropriately sited signs and advertisements can cause clutter and have a detrimental effect on visual amenity or on the character of an area, particularly in Conservation Areas.
- 3.158. The Council will ensure that new or changed shopfronts that require planning permission (or listed buildings consent) and adverts and signs that require advertisements consent are of a design, size and materials that complement the character of the host building and the surrounding public realm. Compromises may need to be made to 'corporate' designs in particularly sensitive areas to meet the requirements of the policy. For example, internally illuminated box fascias and projecting signs will not generally be appropriate in Conservation Areas.

Development Policy 3: Shopfronts and Signage

Proposals for new or altered shopfronts and advertisements, where consent is required, will only be permitted where the design, positioning, materials, colour, proportion and illumination are not detrimental to heritage significance, or visual or residential amenity. In particular:

- i. The design should respond to, and positively contribute to, the character and design of existing buildings and surroundings;
- ii. Public accessibility and safety should not be prejudiced;
- iii. Visual pollution and clutter should be avoided, and
- iv. Historic shop fronts should be retained.



Theme 3: Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities

Housing

Core Policy 34: District Wide Housing Distribution

Assessing Housing Need

- 3.159. The new Local Plan needs to be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using a 'standard method' in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.
- 3.160. In addition to the local housing need figures any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.
- 3.161. The 'standard method' is a formula based on nationally projected household growth for the local area and the housing affordability of the area (based on a house price and workplace earnings ratio). Some adjustment is required depending on local circumstances.
- 3.162. Under the standard method, Cherwell has a need for some 742 new homes per annum which would equate to 14,840 homes for the period 2020-2040. Oxford has a 'capped' need of 762 homes per annum.
- 3.163. Government guidance highlights that the standard method for assessing local housing need provides a minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour.
- 3.164. It states that there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates. This includes but is not limited to situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends because of:
- Growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);

- Strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or
- An authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground.

3.165. An Oxfordshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, 2022) was commissioned jointly by the Council with Oxford City Council to examine these issues. The Assessment recommends that housing need be understood on the basis of the projected share of employment across the county by 2040. It then presents four different alternative scenarios for housing need distributed according to that share of employment.

Area	Projected Percentage of need	Scenario 1: Standard Method	Scenario 2: Census Adjusted	Scenario 3: Cambridge Econometrics economic baseline	Scenario 4: Economic Development Led
Oxon	100%	3,388	4,721	4,406	5,830
Cherwell	22.9%	776	1,081	1,009	1,335
Oxford	30%	1,016	1,416	1,322	1,749
South Oxon	18%	610	850	793	1,049
Vale of White Horse	16.2%	549	765	714	944
West Oxon	12.8%	434	604	564	746

Table 1 Distribution of Housing Need by Distribution of Employment in 2040

- 3.166. The Assessment concludes that its evidence points to an overall scale of housing need above the minimum level of need arising from the Standard Method'. It states that the Standard Method underestimates housing need by not capturing demographic data post 2014, and not allowing for sufficient housing to match the level of job creation expected to 2040.
- 3.167. The Assessment also considers that the Economic Led scenario is overly optimistic in the present economic conditions.
- 3.168. Of the two middle scenarios, Cherwell and Oxford officers presently agree that Scenario 3 in the above table is most appropriate in current circumstances - a level of housing needed to support the level of workforce implied by an updated projection of economic growth for Oxfordshire.
- 3.169. The new projection, while accounting for the county's strong past performance, also reflects the negative shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, the

subsequent recovery, and the economic uncertainties surrounding ‘Brexit’. The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment is available to view alongside the draft Plan.

QUESTION 19: Do you have comments on the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment?

Calculating Overall Housing Need

3.170. Our current assumption is that Cherwell has need for some 1,009 homes per annum to meet its own projected needs. We also assume that Oxford has a need for some 1,322 homes per annum.

Oxford City Council published its own consultation paper on housing need in from February to March 2023. In that paper, it considered that Oxford had capacity to accommodate 457 homes per annum having regard to its administrative boundaries and constraints.

3.171. This may change. But on that basis, Oxford could have an unmet need of some 865 homes per annum.

3.172. Were that unmet need to be distributed to the other districts to the same percentages as previously occurred in 2014, Cherwell would accommodate approximately 33% of the unmet need.

3.173. Overall housing need could therefore be as shown below:

Projected Housing Need	
Cherwell’s housing need	1,009 per annum
Oxford’s housing need	1,322 per annum
Oxford’s current housing capacity	457 per annum
Oxford’s current unmet need	865 per annum
Indicative % of unmet need to Cherwell	32.8 %
Unmet need potentially distributed to Cherwell	284 per annum
Housing need to be met in Cherwell	1,293 per annum
Housing need to be met in Cherwell 2020-2040	25,860

Table 2: Projected Housing Need

3.174. The suggested figure of 1,293 homes per annum compares to a current figure 1,362 per annum (1,142 for Cherwell’s needs plus an average of 220 per annum for Oxford over 20 years).

3.175. We will keep this under review as the Plan process continues and continue to discuss the strategic priority of housing need across Oxfordshire with our neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.

Establishing a Potential Housing Requirement

Plan Period	2020 to 2040
Draft Plan requirement	25,860

Table 3: Draft Housing Requirement

3.176. We would need to deliver 25,860 homes by 2040 to meet our own needs and make a significant contribution to Oxford's potential unmet housing need.

3.177. But the housing requirement in a Local Plan is not necessarily the same as the housing need identified.

3.178. A Local Plan process needs to test whether housing need can be met and whether there are reasons to propose a different housing figure.

3.179. We have begun by examining our existing housing supply.

Understanding Existing Housing Supply

3.180. We already have a very significant level of housing supply. The Local Plan adopted in 2015 allocated land to meet Cherwell's need at the time and in 2020 we adopted a Partial Review of that Plan to help meet Oxford's needs. We have granted planning permissions for many homes and we expect others to be provided over the period to 2040.

3.181. Our last district-wide Local Plan was adopted in 2015. Housing delivery since then has generally been over Cherwell's requirement of 1,142 homes per annum.

Housing Delivery 2015-2022				
Year	District	Banbury	Bicester	Elsewhere
2015/16	1,425	353	367	705
2016/17	1,102	408	371	323
2017/18	1,387	616	355	416
2018/19	1,489	654	437	398
2019/20	1,159	598	284	277
2020/21	1,192	443	476	273
2021/22	1,175	511	341	323

Table 4: Housing Delivery

3.182. Our assessment of housing supply for the future may change but our current assessment for 2020-2040 is provided below:

	Housing Completions 2020-22	Deliverable Supply 2022-2040*	Developable Supply 2022-2040*	Totals
Banbury	954	2,273	1,871	5,098
Bicester	817	4,391	5,588	10,796
Heyford Park	136	643	1,103	1,882
Kidlington	109	32	0	141
Rural Areas	351	538	0	889
Partial Review Sites	0	1,090	3,310	4,400
Windfall Projection	0	1,000	0	1,000
Totals	2,367	9,967	11,872	24,206

Table 5: Housing Supply 2020-2040

*Appendix 3

3.183. Indicatively, this would suggest that we only need to identify a further 1,654 homes to meet the housing need identified (a need of 25,860 minus a current supply of 24,206).

3.184. However, there are a number of issues we need to consider:

- Can all our existing housing supply be reliably delivered within the suggested Plan period?
- Do we have larger scale developments with longer time frames for delivery?
- What does this supply tell us about meeting housing needs at Kidlington?
- Is there sufficient supply in the longer term to meet housing need arising from our rural areas?

3.185. North-West Bicester is our largest development site and is currently planned to provide for some 6,000 homes. We consider that about 3,000 of those homes may actually be delivered beyond 2040. We would not seek to preclude earlier delivery but need to be realistic about future delivery expectations.

3.186. This means that our existing supply falls from 24,206 to 21,206 homes by 2040.

Existing Housing Supply 2020-2040	Remaining Draft Requirement
21,206	4,654

Table 6: Existing Housing Supply 2020-2040

Assessing New Housing Supply

3.187. We have more work to do to assess housing land availability and housing potential. Work so far has suggested that the following development options may be appropriate.

Potential New Development Sites/Supply	
Banbury	
North of Wykham Lane	600
Withycombe Farm (conditionally approved)	230
Bicester	
South-East of Wretchwick Green	800
South of Chesterton/North-West of A41	500
Kidlington	
North of The Moors	300
South-East of Woodstock	450
Heyford Park	
South of Heyford Park	1,235
Rural Areas	
Indicative allocation	500
Total	4,615

Table 7: Potential Development Sites/Supply

3.188. We suggest potential policies in the area strategies that follow later in the draft Plan. At Appendix 2 we also provide summaries of the site opportunities and constraints.

3.189. A number of questions require consideration:

- Do we have the sites available to meet housing need whilst achieving sustainable development?
- Do we have demonstrable exceptional circumstances for the potential release of land North of The Moors at Kidlington?
- Would the suggested sites for Bicester enable continuity of supply whilst the existing North-West Bicester and Graven Hill sites are built-out?
- What additional allowance do we make for the delivery of non-strategic sites in our urban areas?
- Do we have sufficient contingency?
- Could we ensure a steady supply of new homes over the plan period?
- We are not suggesting any ring-fencing of supply for Oxford in the way that we did in the 2020 Local Plan Partial Review. Is this appropriate?
- How would we deliver sufficient affordable housing that we would expect to be provided as a percentage of new market housing?

3.190. Later in this emerging Plan, we suggest the replacement of two existing Local Plan policies – those for the Canalside redevelopment area and for Higham Way at Banbury. This could result in the loss of 168 and 150 homes from our existing housing supply. We will need to replace this supply in the next, proposed version of the Local Plan.

3.191. We also later suggest that an additional 1000 homes could be provided at North-West Bicester by replacing the existing Local Plan policy. However, these are not presently expected to contribute to overall housing supply by 2040.

Core Policy 34: District Wide Housing Distribution

Cherwell will provide 25,860 homes from 2020 to 2040:

Banbury	5,950	Bicester	9,100
Kidlington	900	Heyford Park	3,120
Rural Areas	1,390	Partial Review Sites	4,400
Windfall Projection	1,000		

A further 4,000 homes will be provided at North-West Bicester beyond 2040.

Current Summary of Housing Supply				
	Completions	Existing Supply to 2040	New Supply	Totals
Banbury	954	4,144	830	5,928
Bicester	817	6,979*	1,300	9,096
Kidlington	109	32	750	891
Heyford Park	136	1,746	1,235	3,117
Rural Areas	351	538	500	1,389
Partial Review Sites	0	4,400	0	4,400
Windfall Projection	0	1,000	0	1,000
Totals	2,367	18,839	4,615	25,821

*plus 4,000 beyond 31 March 2040

Table 8: Current Summary of Housing Supply

3.192. We will review these emerging proposals in light of further evidence on land availability and site suitability. We are also keen to know which Parish Councils might be interested in a specific allowance for Neighbourhood Plans.

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QUESTION 20: Do you have comments on our emerging housing distribution?

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QUESTION 21: Are there any Parish Councils seeking a specific housing requirement for Neighbourhood Plans?

Core Policy 35: Settlement Hierarchy

3.193. Our proposed Settlement Hierarchy is based on an assessment of a number of factors including population size, number and range of facilities and services, settlement characteristics, accessibility, local employment opportunities and the functional relationship with other settlements. Each defined settlement tier has a different role. We are proposing that the hierarchy has four main tiers as follows:

- Main Towns
- Local Service Centres
- Larger Villages, and
- Smaller Villages

3.194. Our strategy seeks to protect and enhance the services and facilities provided by our Main Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages. It focuses new homes, jobs and community facilities at these settlements.

3.195. In defining the Settlement Hierarchy, we have taken the opportunity to review the categorisation of villages.



Core Policy 35: Settlement Hierarchy

Development will be approved in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy and Settlement Classifications set out below:

Main Towns: Main Towns have the ability to support the most sustainable patterns of living through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities. Main Towns have the greatest long-term potential for development to provide the jobs and homes to help sustain, and where appropriate, enhance their services and facilities to support viable and sustainable communities in a proportionate manner.

Local Service Centres: Local Service Centres are large villages with a level of facilities and services and local employment to provide the next best opportunities for sustainable development outside the Main Towns.

Larger Villages: Larger Villages have a more limited range of employment, services and facilities. Unplanned development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities.

Smaller Villages: Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

The Settlement Classifications are: Classification/Settlement	Type of Development
<p>Main Towns Banbury, Bicester</p>	<p>Presumption in favour of sustainable development</p>
<p>Local Services Centres Kidlington(*), Heyford Park</p>	<p>Development beyond existing built limits will only be permitted on allocated sites</p>
<p>Larger Villages Adderbury, Ambrosden, Bletchingdon (part *), Bloxham, Bodicote, Deddington, Hook Norton, Kirtlington, Launton, Steeple Aston, Yarnton (*)</p>	<p>Development at settlements within the Green Belt will be considered against National Policy.</p>

<p>The Settlement Classifications are: Classification/Settlement</p>	<p>Type of Development</p>
<p>Smaller Villages Arncott, Balscote, Begbroke (*), Bourtons, Charlton on Otmoor (GB), Chesterton, Clifton, Cottisford, Cropredy, Drayton, Epwell, Fencott (GB), Finmere, Fringingford, Fritwell, Godington, Hardwick with Tusmore, Hempton, Lower Heyford, Upper Heyford, Horley, Hornton, Horton cum Studley (GB), Islip(GB), Mercott (GB), Middle Aston, Middleton Stoney, Milcombe, Milton, Mixbury, Mollington, Newton Purcell with Shelswell, Noke (GB), Oddington (GB), Shenington with Alkerton, Shipton on Cherwell (GB), Shutford, Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower, Souldern, Swalcliffe, Tadmarton, Thrupp (GB), Wardington, Weston on the Green (part GB), Wiggington, Wroxton,</p>	<p>Limited infill development within existing built areas or on allocated sites. Proposals will be supported where they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. In keeping with local character, and ii. Proportionate in scale, and iii. Meet local housing needs, and/ or provide local employment, services and facilities
<p>Open Countryside Those villages not included within the categories described above are considered to form part of the Open Countryside.</p>	<p>Development will not be appropriate unless specifically supported by other local or national planning policies.</p>

(GB) These settlements are washed over by Green Belt.

(*) These settlements are inset to the Green Belt. (part GB) These settlements are partly in the Green Belt.



QUESTION 22:
Do you agree with our settlement hierarchy proposals?

Core Policy 36: Affordable Housing

- 3.196. Cherwell has a high level of need for affordable housing. Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as comprising housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers.
- 3.197. Our Housing Strategy (2019-2024) has identified three strategic priorities, which includes the need to increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing.
- 3.198. There are a number of ways that affordable homes can be delivered. 'First Homes' are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing designed for first time buyers. First Homes are the government's preferred type of discounted housing for ownership and its planning practice guidance explains that they should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. They must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value and the discount, as a percentage of current market value, is passed on for each new occupier. Local authorities can apply a higher minimum discount of either 40% or 50% if a need can be demonstrated. The HENA analyses how first homes could be provided for and suggests that a 30% discount is reasonable, with the expectation that most First Homes will be 2-bedrooms.
- 3.199. The HENA analyses the need for affordable housing in terms of social/affordable rented housing and affordable home ownership. It identifies a significant need for affordable housing with a need of 660 social rented/affordable rented homes per year in Cherwell and 193 homes to meet affordable home ownership needs. The Council's interim Viability Assessment tested a range of requirements for affordable housing from 0 to 50% and for First Homes provided at 25%. It recommends an overall 30% affordable housing requirement on all sites.
- 3.200. We are proposing that all proposed developments that include 10 or more dwellings, or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings, will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.
- 3.201. There were 178 net affordable housing completions during 2021/22. In recent previous years the number of affordable homes completed has been above the Council's affordable housing target of 190 dwellings per year, for example 295 in 2020/21. From the 178 affordable homes completed there were 101 were affordable rented, 7 social rented and 70 in shared ownership. There continues to be limited delivery of social rented homes.

The Council's Housing Strategy explains how housing for social rent is the only truly affordable housing option for many people in Cherwell. The HENA does not recommend that there is a rigid policy for the split between social and affordable rented housing, although the analysis shows that both tenures of homes are likely to be required. The interim viability assessment tested a 70/30 split (affordable/social rent and affordable home ownership). We are proposing that 70% of affordable homes coming forward should be affordable/social rented.

- 3.202. Housing proposals (for residential use type C3) will need to provide affordable housing where they meet the thresholds in the Policy. Where the number of dwellings proposed falls below the relevant threshold, or the number of dwellings is not specified, the Council will consider whether sites reasonably have capacity to provide the number of dwellings that would trigger the requirement to provide affordable housing. The purpose of this is to ensure that the policy requirement is not being avoided through inappropriate planning such as ineffective or inefficient use of land or a mix of dwellings that does not reflect other housing policies or local needs.
- 3.203. We are proposing that affordable housing be met on site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
- 3.204. We will support proposals for community self-build or custom-build affordable housing particularly where it will result in suitable empty properties being brought into residential use.
- 3.205. There are requirements set out in the Partial Review policies (PR2, PR6 to PR9) for affordable housing, mix, house type and size. There is a separate mechanism (part of the Council's Housing Strategy) in place for ensuring that any affordable homes will be provided as part of the Cherwell contribution to unmet need for Oxford. It is proposed that at least 50 % of any additional unmet housing for Oxford being provided within this plan will be affordable homes.



Core Policy 36: Affordable Housing

All proposed developments that include 10 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings (gross), will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

First homes should make up 25% of all homes on sites and should have a discount of 30%. The majority of first homes should be 2 bedroom.

Affordable housing is expected to be met on site unless there are exceptional circumstances and where off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified.

Where this policy 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 only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances. All qualifying developments will be expected to provide 70% of the affordable housing as affordable/social rented dwellings and 30% as other forms of affordable homes. It is expected that these requirements will be met without the use of social housing grant or other grants.



QUESTION 23: Do you agree with the suggested policy for affordable housing?



QUESTION 24: Would you support maximising the delivery of affordable housing, and in particular the delivery of more social rented housing, if sacrifices were made in respect of other requirements?

Core Policy 37: Housing Mix

- 3.206. Another of our Housing Strategy priorities is to improve the quality and sustainability of our homes, building thriving, healthy and inclusive communities and enhancing opportunities for people to access suitable homes and to have housing choices.
- 3.207. This Local Plan aims, not only to increase the supply of housing, but to encourage an appropriate mix to enable households to more easily find and move to housing they can afford and that better suits their circumstances. The housing mix needs to enable movement through the market from one house type to another as the needs of households change. This movement frees up housing that might otherwise be unavailable. There is a need to provide a mix of housing that reflects the needs of an ageing population, a growth in smaller households, and that meets the requirements of families.
- 3.208. The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) examines the mix of homes that are needed by tenure and identifies the following mix:

Type	One Bedroom	Two Bedrooms	Three Bedrooms	Four + Bedrooms
Social/Affordable Rented	35-40%	25-30%	20-25%	10-15%
Affordable Home Ownership	20-25%	40-45%	25-30%	5-10%
Market Housing	5-10%	35-40%	35-40%	15-20%

Table 9: Mix of housing by size and type

- 3.209. The evidence shows that more people are working from home than has historically been the case and this trend is expected to continue despite the impacts of Covid 19 reducing. It is important we enable people to work from home and to set up businesses in their homes, as this will help to reduce costs and reduce the need for travelling. The Council will therefore encourage live/ work units to be provided in new developments forming part of the dwelling mix. Live/work units can help to create vibrant communities. The employment uses provided in these units will need to be ancillary to the residential use and have regard to residential amenity.
- 3.210. Providing for a mix of homes and helping to increase affordability could also include building modular homes, which are homes where sections are constructed at a factory and transported to the development site rather than being constructed on site.

Core Policy 37: Housing Mix

New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed, vibrant and inclusive communities. This should be in accordance with the Council's current evidence unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate through the Housing Register or where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints agreed through 'open book' scrutiny.

Information provided by developers on local market conditions and the characteristics of development sites will also be considered. The Council will encourage live/work units in new developments to help create vibrant communities.

Where appropriate, the provision of alternative building techniques including modular homes will be encouraged.

Core Policy 38: Specialist Housing

- 3.211. The need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. The evidence in the HENA shows a significant increase in people in older age groups and a significant need for all types of specialist housing for older people.
- 3.212. 'Extra care' housing, in particular, will be important in meeting the housing needs of an older population across all tenures. Extra care housing comprises self-contained accommodation for older and disabled people, which facilitates healthy, independent living for longer, by providing a range of support facilities on the premises and 24-hour care services. It can help people live longer in their own homes either securely alone or with partners or friends. It meets a need between traditional sheltered housing and residential care and can be purpose-built or adapted accommodation. People have their own front doors but also have the opportunity to benefit from communal facilities. Extra care can also contribute to achieving more social cohesion by providing an opportunity for community living and a better mix of housing within residential areas.
- 3.213. Our Housing Strategy identifies that 14.1% of Cherwell residents have a long-term limiting health issue or disability and 22% of households in Cherwell include someone with a long term health issue or disability. There is a need for a diverse range of supported housing including for people with learning disabilities, with physical disabilities and for vulnerable young people, including young parents.

There is also scope for technology to be provided in new homes to enable individuals of varying ability and older people to live more independently.

Core Policy 38: Specialist Housing

Housing sites will be expected to provide extra care dwellings (C3 use class) as part of the overall mix. The proportion of extra care housing units is to be agreed with the Council based on the nature of the site and proposals in question and having full regard to the evidence of need for these units.

Should it be agreed with the Council that extra care housing would not be desirable in a particular location, an equivalent amount of alternative specialist housing (use class C3) for older people will be required. Elsewhere, opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older and/or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities.

We will support residential care homes (C2 uses classes) and developments which provide for a mix of use classes C3 and C2 where the appropriate infrastructure is provided.

Core Policy 39: Residential Space Standards

Accessible and Adaptable Housing

- 3.214. There is a focus on supporting older people and those with a disability to live more independently at home. Supporting healthy independent living for longer can help to reduce preventable burdens of poor health, and the costs to health and social services. Providing more housing options for older people can free up homes that are under occupied.
- 3.215. Given the ageing population and the identified levels of disabilities amongst the population it will be essential for new housing to be built to accessibility standards to help people to maintain independence for longer. The HENA indicates that there will be an increasing demand in the future for specialist housing to meet the needs of the elderly and those with physical or learning disabilities and recommends that 10% of homes could meet M4(3) standards.
- 3.216. Category 1 requirements are mandatory within the *Building Regulations* and are classed as a visitable dwelling. Reasonable provision should be made for people to gain access to and use the dwelling and its facilities. A Category 2

dwelling is classed as accessible and adaptable and is optional in the *Building Regulations*. Provision must be sufficient to meet the needs of occupants with differing needs including some older and disabled people and to allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of the occupant over time. A Category 3 dwelling is classed as for a wheelchair user and is optional in the *Building Regulations*.

- 3.217. We are very keen to support people to live independently therefore such developments should be located in places where there is an opportunity to access services and facilities so that people feel less isolated and part of a community.
- 3.218. The most suitable locations are those closest to the centres of our main urban areas, although there may be other locations that are appropriate, such as within some of our larger villages. Housing schemes for older people and for people with disabilities should be located on sites within convenient reach of shops, community facilities and frequent public transport services. We will have regard to the overall need for this type of development and the use class that is proposed when considering planning applications.

Internal residential space

- 3.219. The quality of buildings and places, and how they integrate with the natural environment, have been shown to affect how people interact with them. Good quality development can create environments that promote wellbeing and happiness, as well as provide functional, well-built places.
- 3.220. Internal space within new dwellings is an important factor in creating homes that support a high quality of life and allow households to meet their current needs whilst also being flexible enough to accommodate changes in their circumstances.
- 3.221. The government has set out appropriate nationally described space standards for new developments. These space standards are predicated on the number of bedrooms and the number of people each new dwelling is intended to accommodate.
- 3.222. They are mandatory for all new homes developed under permitted development rights. This is in recognition of the fact that many have fallen below these standards in the past and created inappropriately sized homes. To be consistent with this approach we are proposing that all new dwellings, including newly formed dwellings through conversion, conform with nationally described space standards. The requirement to meet these space standards will ensure that all new housing provides good room sizes and levels of storage

to provide a decent standard of living, enable people to live in their homes for longer and to maximise the occupancy of affordable homes.

- 3.223. Separate Regulations apply to sleeping accommodation floor areas in licenced Homes in Multiple Ownership (HMOs).

External residential space

- 3.224. Outdoor amenity space can make an important contribution to improving the quality of life and well-being of residents, supporting and enhancing local biodiversity, moderating temperature, and assisting with flood prevention. Connecting with the natural environment has been further shown to lower stress, blood pressure and heart rate, whilst improving psychological wellbeing and inclusivity and encouraging physical activity with lifelong benefits.
- 3.225. Gardens provide a semi-natural habitat supporting a range of species and corridors for movement of wildlife through the local environment. Garden plants and trees help cool the air, combating high temperatures in summer and providing shelter and insulation in winter, thus helping to reduce heat stress and energy consumption. Vegetation and trees intercept intense rain, slowing runoff and so reducing the pressure on urban drains. Unlike hard surfaces, the soil in gardens naturally absorbs rainwater, helping to mitigate fluvial and surface water flooding, and builds community resilience to climate change.
- 3.226. We are proposing that external amenity space should be sufficient to accommodate:
- A table and chairs suitable for the size of dwelling;
 - Where relevant, provision of a garden shed for general storage (including bicycles if cycle storage is not provided elsewhere);
 - Space for refuse and recycling bins;
 - An area to dry washing;
 - Circulation space, and
 - An area for children to play in.
- 3.227. External residential space does not include car parking or turning areas. Suitable arrangements for access to refuse and recycling bins should be made to prevent bins being transported through dwellings and for scooter storage and charging facilities.
- 3.228. One-bedroom dwellings would not be expected to provide space for children to play due to the lower likelihood of children occupying these units. Dwellings with more than one bedroom would need to take space for children to play into account.

- 3.229. Where it is appropriate and viable to do so, flatted developments will need to provide high-quality shared amenity areas on-site to meet the needs of residents, including play space for children, in addition to private amenity space and cycle storage.

Core Policy 39: Residential Space Standards

Internal Residential Space

All new dwellings will achieve compliance with the nationally described space standards (or any successor standards/policy) as a minimum.

External Residential Space

New residential dwellings will be expected to have direct access to an area of private and/or communal amenity space. The form of amenity space will be dependent on the form of housing and could be provided as a private garden, roof garden, communal garden, courtyard balcony, or ground-level patio with defensible space from public access. The amount of outdoor amenity space should be appropriate to the size of the property and designed to allow effective and practical use of and level access to the space by residents.

Core Policy 40: Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing

- 3.230. Self and custom-build is the process by which an individual or association builds housing for their own use, either by undertaking the whole process themselves or by commissioning architects or builders to assist.
- 3.231. The *Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015* places a duty on local councils in England to keep a register of people who are interested in self-build or custom-build projects in their area. This register helps the Council understand the level of demand for self-build and custom-build plots in the district. During 2020/21 there were 35 self-build affordable housing completions in the district that took place at the Graven Hill site.
- 3.232. We are keen to encourage further provision of self and custom build housing in appropriate locations to aid in housing delivery, assist with affordability and to allow for innovative design solutions particularly where they support equality opportunity. We will monitor the demand for this type of housing and where possible will assist in the delivery of sites. Development proposals that involve the creation of low-cost or affordable housing, for instance via Registered Social Landlords or community groups, would be particularly supported as these would provide additional opportunities to meet the demands for affordable homes in the district.

Core Policy 40: Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing

Proposals for custom and self-build housing will be approved in suitable, sustainable locations subject to compliance with other relevant policies of this plan.

The Council will require all housing developments of 100 or more dwellings to include 5% of the residential plots to be serviced and made available for self-build which can include the partial completion for self-finish. This will be reviewed through the Council's Monitoring Report considering the need shown on the register.

Plots must be made available and marketed for an appropriate time (to be agreed with the local planning authority through the granting of planning permission for the site). If, following this marketing these plots have not sold, and sufficient evidence is provided that there is not likely to be market interest in the plot(s), the applicant will be able to develop the land for further market housing.

Core Policy 41: Sub-Division of Dwellings and Homes in Multiple Ownership

3.233. With high house prices and the significant need for affordable homes in the district, the conversion of existing housing to flats or maisonettes makes a relatively small but important contribution to the housing stock and meeting housing needs. However, sub-division can have negative impacts on amenity due to the increased occupancy that normally results from sub-division. The design and/or location of some residential areas within our urban areas has meant that houses in these areas have attracted higher levels of sub-division leading to concerns about parking and traffic congestion and loss of local character. It is also important the living conditions of residents of Home in Multiple Ownership (HMO) is satisfactory.

3.234. Subdivision of a building, including any part it, used as a dwellinghouse for use as two or more separate dwelling houses constitutes development and planning permission is required. However, planning permission is not required when converting from a dwelling house or flat to an HMO property, which is a small-shared house of up to six unrelated individuals.

Core Policy 41: Sub-Division of Dwellings and Homes in Multiple Ownership

Proposals for the conversion of existing dwellings to provide two or more self-contained units of accommodation or to a large HMO will be permitted provided that they would be unlikely to cause demonstrable harm to the amenities and privacy of neighbouring properties.

The Council will expect proposals to comply with parking standards. When considering proposals, the Council will have regard to the sites location in relation to the town centre and public transport provision, and the existing street parking conditions in the locality.

Development Policy 4: Residential Caravans

- 3.235. A caravan may be required for a temporary period for example to house a key worker or a family member while they construct or renovate their own house. In such cases, provided there are no overriding planning objections on highway, amenity or servicing grounds, a planning consent may be granted on a temporary basis and will only be granted on the understanding that alternative permanent accommodation is sought. Planning permissions may not automatically be renewed at the end of the specified time-period.

Development Policy 4: Residential Caravans

Planning permission will be granted for residential caravans to be located for a temporary period within the curtilage of a house or in close association with an existing land use provided that:

- i. The proposal does not cause demonstrable harm to the amenities of adjacent residents, or the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- ii. The proposal can provide a safe and convenient access, and
- iii. It is the intention of the applicant to seek alternative permanent accommodation prior to the expiration of the temporary consent.

Core Policy 42: Travelling Communities

- 3.236. We are required to plan for different groups in the community including for travellers. In August 2015, the Government published its amended Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) with its overarching aim to ensure fair and equal treatment for Travellers (gypsies and travellers, travelling showpeople, boat dwellers). It emphasised the need for local authorities to use evidence to plan positively and manage development for these groups. Gypsies, Travellers and travelling show people are entitled to specific types of accommodation that allow them to continue with their traditional and nomadic way of life.
- 3.237. The 2015 National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires Local Planning Authorities, in producing their Local Plan, to identify a 5-year supply of deliverable sites. In 2016 the Government also published draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for boat dwellers and caravans.
- 3.238. The Cherwell Local Plan (2015) Policy BSC 6: Travelling Communities provides a sequential and criteria-based approach for considering planning applications and sets out targets for the provision of pitches and plots. The targets in the policy are to provide 19 (net) additional pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers from 2012 to 2031 and 24 (net) additional plots for Travelling Showpeople from 2012 to 2031. The Council's 2022 AMR shows that as at 31 March 2022, the total supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches was 65, which is a net gain of 8 pitches since 1 April 2017, however there are no pending planning applications.
- 3.239. The most up to date assessment of need is the 2017 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). A new study is being completed and will be published along-side our proposed Submission Plan next year which will set out the Council's confirmed Policy approach, including the updated identified need for the plan period up to 2040. This will also include information about the needs of boat dwellers.
- 3.240. We think it is important that sites have access to services, facilities and potential sources of employment, promoting inclusive communities but which will not be out of scale with nearby settled communities. The distances set are considered a reasonable walking/cycling distance and limit the distance needed to travel by private car if this is necessary.

Core Policy 42: Travelling Communities

Sites for Gypsies and Travellers should be within 3km road distance of the built-up limits of our Main Towns, Local Service Centres or Larger Villages. Other locations will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Locations within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Oxfordshire Green Belt are unlikely to be considered acceptable.

The following criteria will be considered in assessing the suitability of sites:

- i. Access to GP and other health services;
- ii. Access to schools;
- iii. Avoiding areas at risk of flooding;
- iv. Access to the highway network;
- v. The potential for significant noise and other disturbance;
- vi. The potential for harm to the historic and natural environment;
- vii. The ability to provide a satisfactory living environment;
- viii. The need to make efficient and effective use of land;
- ix. Deliverability, including whether utilities can be provided cost effectively and without significant impact;
- x. The existing level of local provision, and
- xi. The availability of alternatives to applicants.



QUESTION 25: Do you agree with our approach for assessing the suitability of sites for travelling communities?

Landscape

Core Policy 43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

- 3.241. Cherwell enjoys a varied and distinctive local landscape character that is greatly valued by the community. A small part of the Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) is within the north-west of the district. We will use the policies in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan to assess any development proposals within the designated area.
- 3.242. The character of the Cherwell landscape is formed by many different factors including landform, drainage, geology, farming practices, land uses, ecology, settlement patterns and forms of enclosure. It is important that those features that positively add to the local character are protected wherever possible.

- 3.243. Cherwell falls within three areas of Natural England’s National Character Areas, which it uses to define a specific combination of landscape, geodiversity, biodiversity, history, culture and economic activity in the area. These are:
- NCA 95 Northamptonshire Uplands
 - NCA 107 Cotswolds
 - NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales
- 3.244. The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) defines 19 landscape character types across Cherwell. It identifies the ‘forces for change’ in a particular location and includes landscape/biodiversity strategies that set guidelines for how developments can contribute towards landscape character. Further landscape sensitivity character assessments have been undertaken to inform this Local Plan. Further landscape character assessments will also be prepared to inform our final plan.
- 3.245. We also recognise that local landscape features are important elements of our local landscape character and identity. Insensitive development can cause harm to the character and setting of such features and the surrounding countryside. Such important features include Muswell Hill, Crouch Hill, Madmarston Hill, the River Cherwell and Otmoor. Many form landmarks valued by our local communities.
- 3.246. Other key landforms and landscape features identified, particularly around Banbury and Bicester are:
- The open and agricultural setting and identity of the outlying villages surrounding Banbury and Bicester, many with locally distinctive historic cores;
 - Ironstone ridges and valleys;
 - Medieval ridge and furrow;
 - The historic villages and parkland of Hanwell and Wroxton;
 - Broughton Castle and Grade II Registered Park;
 - Crouch Hill, an important landmark overlooking Banbury and the surrounding area;
 - The landscape to the east of the M40 motorway at Banbury which retains a distinct historic pattern;
 - Salt Way and other ancient routeway and their setting;
 - The Sor Brook Valley;
 - The setting of the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridor;
 - Specific features at Bicester noted for their value include those showing notable ‘time depth’ including Former RAF Bicester, Wretchwick deserted medieval village, Bignell Park and the Roman roads;
 - Graven Hill and Blackthorn Hill that contrast with the relatively flat surrounding landform;
 - The River Ray floodplains, and
 - Cropredy Bridge Historic Battlefield.

- 3.247. Inward investment into the district should not come at the expense of the valued landscapes that make the district a pleasurable place to live and work. We recognise the need for landscape enhancement and that innovative changes to landscapes are sometimes required in order to reinforce aspects that make areas special. Development proposals should demonstrate how they represent a sensitive and contextual response to the landscape to ensure they respond positively to landscape areas and features.
- 3.248. Many of our settlements are located within or adjacent to landscapes valued by their local communities. There is therefore particular significance placed on the fringe areas of these settlements to ensure a sensitive transition is achieved between built environments and the open countryside. Development proposals set in close proximity to these fringe areas will need to give special regard to their impact on landscape character of nearby rural areas. Greater emphasis in terms of visual impact will be placed on proposals that would extend the boundaries of a settlement into the open countryside.
- 3.249. Development proposals will be expected to justify any loss of woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features that are important to the character of local landscapes as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value. Retention of these features should be prioritised, and any harm should be minimised and appropriately mitigated against.
- 3.250. Our most up to date landscape evidence and design guidance will be used to assess development proposals in terms of design and appearance to ensure that the type of development, scale and design enhance their immediate and wider setting with the landscape. Innovative design proposals using contemporary construction techniques and architectural styles will be assessed in terms of how they complement the landscapes in which they are located.
- 3.251. When considering the effect on landscape character, development proposals should not be viewed in isolation. The introduction of numerous clusters of built forms across a landscape can change the way the landscape is perceived and enjoyed. We will consider the cumulative impacts of developments on the landscape when considering development proposals to assess if the combined impact would cause excessive harm to the landscape and, therefore, be regarded as unacceptable.

Core Policy 43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

Development proposals will be expected to preserve the character and appearance of the landscape through the restoration, management and enhancement of existing areas, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- i. Cause an unacceptable visual intrusion into the open countryside;
- ii. Be inconsistent with local character;
- iii. Introduce disturbances to areas with a high level of tranquillity;
- iv. Cause coalescence between settlements;
- v. Harm the setting of natural and built landmark features, or
- vi. Reduce the historic significance of the landscapes.

All major developments proposals must be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Smaller development proposals may also require an assessment to be submitted if deemed appropriate, having regard to the type, scale, location and design of the proposed development.

In determining development proposals within or adjacent to the Cotswolds National Landscape, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the area's scenic beauty and landscape qualities, including its wildlife and heritage.

The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan will be used as supplementary guidance in decision making relevant to the National Landscape.

Development proposals within the National Landscape will only be permitted if they are small scale, sustainably located and designed, and would not conflict with the aim of conserving and enhancing the scenic beauty of the area.

Green Belt

Core Policy 44: The Oxford Green Belt

3.252. Part of the district falls within the Oxford Green Belt. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; with the most important attribute of Green Belts being their openness.

Core Policy 44: The Oxford Green Belt

The Oxford Green Belt boundaries within Cherwell District will be maintained in order to:

- i. Preserve the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;
- ii. Check the growth of Oxford and prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl;
- iii. Prevent the coalescence of settlements;
- iv. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, and
- v. Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed in accordance with current government policy and other relevant *Development Plan* policies.

Core Policy 45: Settlement Gaps

3.253. Each of our towns and villages has its own separate identity. It is important that development on areas of open land between them is avoided where this would lead to coalescence. Some gaps are more vulnerable than others and some rural communities may feel particularly threatened where they are in close proximity to urban areas. An example might be between Banbury and Bodicote. In addition, there are villages that are separated by small stretches of open land that should be preserved to maintain the villages' identity. An example of this might include the gap between Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower.

Core Policy 45: Settlement Gaps

Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlements character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements.

Development proposals, will only be permitted where:

- i. The physical and visual separation between the two separate settlements is not diminished;
- ii. Cumulatively, with other existing or proposed development, it does not compromise the physical and visual separation between settlements, and
- iii. It does not lead to a loss of environmental or historical assets that individually or collectively contribute towards their local identity.

Design

Core Policy 46: Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 3.254. Our places are at the heart of everything we do, whether for work, shop, for leisure and recreation, to visit and for living. It is therefore essential we support high quality and healthy places that are accessible and inclusively designed for people at different stages of life and with different abilities, including, children, young people, adults, families and the elderly. All new development should contribute to the creation or enhancement of well-designed and well-built places that are inclusive and benefit people and communities through all aspects of their life.
- 3.255. The National Design Guide, first published by government in 2019, addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics that are shown by Figure 3.
- 3.256. We are committed to securing exemplary standards of design across the district that contribute positively to vibrant, sustainable, safe and attractive places for our communities, whether in an urban or rural setting.
- 3.257. We also recognise that innovation and sustainability can provide the foundation to creating healthy and sustainable places. We will therefore promote exemplar architectural innovation in appropriate locations, for example, within our strategic site allocations.

- 3.258. Buildings are an important component of places and proposals for development. However good design also involves careful attention to other important components of our places. These can include:
- The context and setting of proposed places and buildings;
 - The existing and proposed hard and soft landscape;
 - Technical infrastructure, such as transport, utilities, and drainage, and
 - Social infrastructure that supports social, commercial, and leisure activities.
- 3.259. A well-designed place is therefore unlikely to be achieved by just focusing on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including the layout, the form and scale of buildings, their appearance, landscape, materials, their detailing, and supporting infrastructure.
- 3.260. Where appropriate, proposals should have regard to specific design advice contained in supplementary planning guidance covering the district. The Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD, Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Appraisal, Landscape Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Cotswolds National Landscape guidance documents are all key tools for interpreting local distinctiveness and informing high design quality.

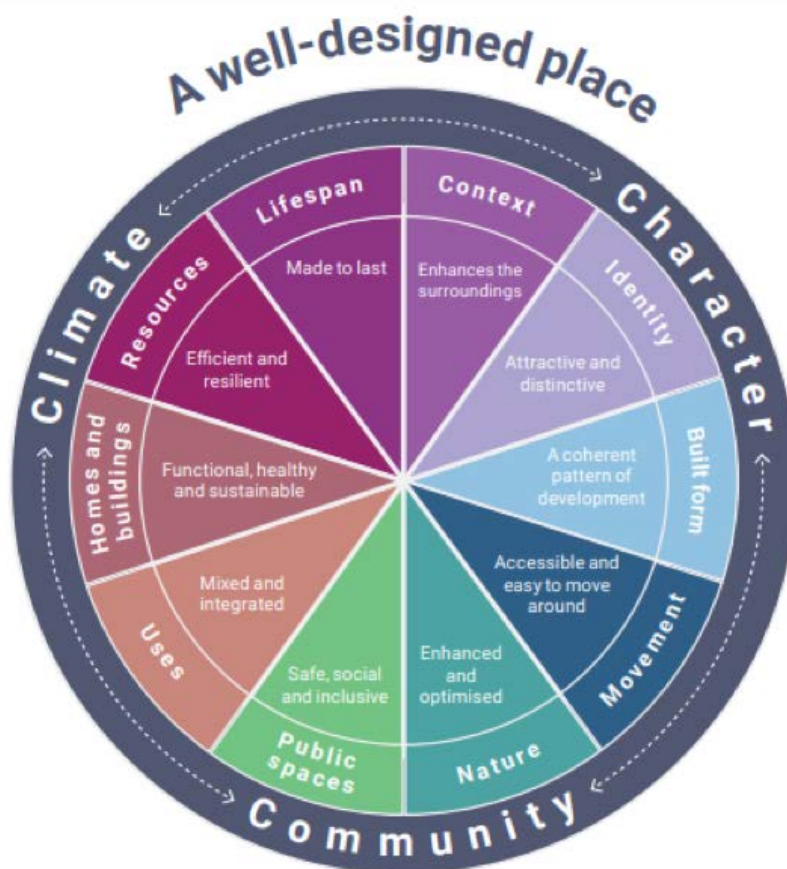


Figure 3: The ten characteristics of well-designed places
(National Design Guide)

3.261. Masterplans are an important tool used by designers to set out the strategy for a new development and to demonstrate that the general layout, scale and other aspects of the design are based on good urban design principles. The Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD sets out the principles of good design that must be demonstrated through the preparation of a masterplan as part of applications for major development and development of allocated sites. These, and other masterplans, should be produced in partnership with Cherwell District Council, the community and other stakeholders. For smaller developments, proposals need only be supported by a design and access statement which should provide a detailed design assessment proportionate to the scheme proposed.

Residential Extensions

3.262. The quality of both the urban and rural environments can very often be adversely affected by residential extensions. Insensitive designs and styles, together with the use of discordant materials, often detract from traditional street scenes within which modern developments may have otherwise been sympathetically introduced. The Council, in dealing with planning applications for house extensions, will therefore pay particular regard to details of scale, design and materials so as to ensure that the character of an area is maintained.

Public Realm

3.263. Investing in the quality of the public realm and the space between buildings is as important as investing in the quality of new buildings, all of which together, create the places in which we live, work, visit and enjoy. Design should always be inclusive, and the design of the public realm and outdoor spaces should cater for all potential users.

3.264. Good quality landscaping is a fundamental part of successful outdoor spaces. It is essential that landscape schemes/designs evolve alongside the architectural designs to ensure that there is a strong relationship between buildings and spaces. Trees and plants are important elements of any landscape scheme as they provide visual interest, add colour, shape and texture that help to frame outside spaces and make them more attractive. The careful choice of hard surface materials can have a big impact on the success and overall quality of outdoor spaces. In selecting materials for hard surfacing, thought should be given to their durability, compatibility with the local context, and relationship with the overall design vision. It is also important to consider practical issues of any landscape scheme, such as lifespan and climate resilience, it is important that the benefits are long term, and how maintenance requirements will be managed over time.

Public Art

3.265. Public art is an excellent way to add interest, create a sense of place and provide a focal point. The Council will work with developers to bring about the incorporation of public art into schemes where this is important to establish or reinforce a sense of place and identity. Public art should not be seen as an embellishment of a scheme or appear as an add-on or afterthought. Rather, it should be part of design considerations from the start and integrated into the overall design concept. Opportunities to reflect local culture and heritage should also be explored.

Secure by Design

3.266. High quality design means creating places that are safe for all, and where crime and disorder, including terrorism, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. New developments should be designed to meet the principles and physical security standards of the Secure by Design scheme. Secure by Design is proven to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and provides a well-established approach for designing safer developments to minimise opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour, and for creating spaces that reduce the fear of crime for everyone.

20 Minute Neighbourhoods

3.267. The 20-minute neighbourhood is about creating attractive, interesting, safe, walkable environments in which people of all ages and levels of fitness are happy to travel actively for short distances from home to the destinations that they visit and the services they need to use day to day, such as for shopping, school, community and healthcare facilities, places of work, green spaces, and more. These places need to be easily accessible on foot, by cycle or by public transport, and accessible to everyone, whatever their budget or physical ability, without having to use a car. This is partly why the strategy set out within this plan focuses development to the most sustainable and accessible places and where there are maximum opportunities for delivering enhancements, especially by using sustainable modes of transport. The 20-minute neighbourhood idea is also about strengthening local economies by keeping jobs and money local and thus facilitating local food production, to help create jobs and the supply affordable and healthy food, more locally for all.



Figure 4: 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

The Circular Economy

3.268. In addition to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept, the Local Plan also supports a ‘circular economy’ principle, that aims to keep resources in use as long as possible, extracting maximum value from them, minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency. This approach helps to minimise the use of new materials, and we will therefore encourage circular economy principles to be taken into account throughout the design process. These principles are:

- Building in layers – ensuring that different parts of the building are accessible and can be maintained and replaced where necessary;
- Designing out waste – ensuring that waste reduction is planned in from project inception to completion, including consideration of standardised components, modular build and re-use of secondary products and materials;
- Designing for longevity;
- Designing for adaptability or flexibility;
- Designing for disassembly, and
- Using systems, elements or materials that can be re-used and recycled.

Core Policy 46: Achieving Well Designed Places

All new development will be expected to complement and enhance its surroundings through sensitive siting, layout and high-quality design. Poorly designed developments will not be permitted. New development proposals should:

- i. Be designed to deliver high quality, safe, attractive, durable and healthy places for living and working;
- ii. Be designed to improve the quality, function, and appearance of its locality;
- iii. Deliver buildings, places and public spaces that can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions, including resilience to the effects of climate change;
- iv. Support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, through appropriate land uses, mix and densities;
- v. Adopt the principles of 20 Minute Neighbourhoods where appropriate;
- vi. Contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within Conservation Areas and their setting;
- vii. Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings. Development should be designed to integrate with existing streets and public spaces, and buildings configured to create clearly defined active public frontages;
- viii. Reflect or, in a contemporary design response, re-interpret local distinctiveness, including elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors, building and surfacing materials, mass, scale and colour palette;
- ix. Promote permeable, accessible and easily understandable places by creating spaces that connect with each other, are easy to move through actively and sustainably, and have recognisable landmark features;
- x. Demonstrate a holistic approach to the design of the public realm to create high-quality and multi-functional streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing. The principles set out in The Manual for Streets should be followed;
- xi. Consider the amenity of both existing and future development, including matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space;

- xii. Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation;
- xiii. Be compatible with up to date urban design principles, including Building for Life, and achieve Secured by Design accreditation consider sustainable design and layout at the outset, where building orientation and the impact of microclimate can be considered within the layout Incorporate energy efficient design and sustainable construction techniques, whilst ensuring that the aesthetic implications of green technology are appropriate to the context (also refer to the climate change policies set out within this plan);
- xiv. Integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible (see *Core Policy 50: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment* and *Core Policy 53: Green Infrastructure*). Well-designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the micro-climate, and air pollution and provide attractive places that improve people’s health and sense of vitality;
- xv. Use locally sourced sustainable materials where possible;
- xvi. Demonstrate high quality, inclusive and sustainable design with the provision of a safe, pleasant, convenient and interesting environment where the quality of the public realm is enhanced and the likelihood of crime and fear of crime is reduced, and
- xvii. Not harm the use or enjoyment of land and buildings nearby including living conditions in residential properties.

The design of all new development will need to be informed by an analysis of the context, together with an explanation and justification of the principles that have informed the design rationale. This should be demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement that accompanies the planning application.

The Council will require design to be addressed in the pre-application process on major developments and in connection with all heritage sites. For major sites/strategic sites and complex developments, masterplans and Design Codes will need to be prepared in conjunction with the Council and local stakeholders to ensure appropriate character and high-quality design is delivered throughout. Design Codes will usually be prepared between outline and reserved matters stage to set out design principles for the development of the site. The level of prescription will vary according to the nature of the site.

Active Travel

Core Policy 47: Active Travel – Walking and Cycling

- 3.269. Prioritising active travel infrastructure, including connections between town centres, villages and to transport hubs is vital to reducing emissions from transport, especially the private car. Reducing dependence on the private car will help the creation of a net-zero carbon transport network, and help tackle traffic congestion.
- 3.270. To increase uptake in active travel modes, specifically walking and cycling, we will give greater priority to walkers, cyclists, and public transport within our road space. We will also seek improvements to our public realm making our places more attractive for walking and cycling. Our objective of creating public spaces and green routes that are open and accessible to all help will also play a role in encouraging active travel.
- 3.271. The IDP (2022) outlines the planned improvement works to the district's transport network, including walking and cycling routes. Oxfordshire County Council's *Active Travel Strategy* supports the LTCP in its vision to create an inclusive and safe net-zero transport system, with a focus on active travel modes.
- 3.272. Additional guidance on encouraging walking and cycling is provided in Cherwell's Residential Design Guide SPD. The design criteria for accommodating pedestrians and cyclists are detailed in Oxfordshire's Walking and Cycling Design and Street Design guides.



Core Policy 47: Active Travel – Walking and Cycling

The Council will support the delivery of public realm improvements and infrastructure designed to create attractive places that make walking and cycling a safer, healthier, and more attractive as a travel choice.

New development and infrastructure proposals should:

- i. Promote walking and cycling by ensuring proposals give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists in the use of road space and provide for filtered permeability;
- ii. Deliver an improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposal. Provision should be inclusive and address disabilities and particular mobility needs;
- iii. Ensure that existing pedestrian and cycling routes and public rights of way are retained as continuous linear features and improved where appropriate;
- iv. Identify key pedestrian and cycling routes and their destinations and assess existing and predicted active travel movements to, through and from the site. They should provide safe, direct, and attractive routes that accommodate these movements and will be encouraged to support additional active travel movements;
- v. Reduce road danger from other transport modes;
- vi. Be expected to enable and contribute towards improvements and delivery of local and strategic active travel routes and links as identified in the Bicester, Banbury Kidlington and Heyford Park Area Strategies and associated IDP and LCWIPS, and
- vii. Ensure provision of cycle parking and active travel in line with Oxfordshire County Council latest guidance.

Core Policy 48: Public Rights of Way (PROW)

3.273. Cherwell benefits from many hundreds of miles of Public Rights of Way (PROW). They are a valuable resource for local people to support healthy and active lifestyles and they form an important component of our strategy for sustainable transport. PROW are protected in law. Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for managing and maintaining this extensive network alongside local councils and land-managers. It prepares an Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan, and a Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

3.274. We will expect new development to contribute towards mitigation measures for any part of the PROW network negatively impacted by development proposals.

Core Policy 48: Public Rights of Way

Public rights of way will be protected and enhanced to ensure access to public rights of way and the connectivity of these networks.

Any development that will result in the loss of a Public Rights of Way or significant reduction in amenity or connectivity will not be permitted. In exceptional cases, development that negatively affects a public right of way may be permitted where it is essential that an alternative route is provided or where an altered public right of way provides better access for users or more connections to wider networks. Any changes to public rights of way requires a separate legal process.

Health**Core Policy 49: Health Facilities**

- 3.275. The provision of health services in the district is overseen by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS), which has recently been formed to replace the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG). It works in partnership with others across the health and care system to plan and deliver joined up health and care services, and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area.
- 3.276. A Health and Wellbeing Board for Oxfordshire also exists to ensure effective joint working and cooperation throughout the system. The strategic focus of Oxfordshire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2023 is to:
- Prevent avoidable illnesses;
 - Reduce need for treatment, and
 - Lower the impact of illness by supporting independence and delaying the need for care.
- 3.277. As part of their work the Health and Wellbeing Board regularly produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) a study looking at current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of residents. The JSNA (2021) is a snapshot of local health circumstance, priority and need that can be directly applied to inform vision statements, healthy place-shaping and prioritise healthy urban design features to ensure developments are supportive of public health and the Local Plan Vision.

- 3.278. To ensure that development promotes and contributes to a healthy living environment, proposals should consider health outcomes as early as possible, including at the vision document and pre-application stage. All major development proposals will be required to undertake a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to maximise the opportunities for promoting healthy lifestyles within new development in accordance with *Core Policy 50*. HIAs should be prepared following the methodology set out in the Oxfordshire HIA toolkit.
- 3.279. We will continue to work closely with healthcare providers, partners and the NHS across its delivery bodies to:
- Ensure the provision of additional and reconfigured health and social care facilities;
 - Identify the anticipated primary care needs of local communities;
 - Identify the capacity needs of local communities, and
 - Meet the healthcare requirements of local communities.
- 3.280. Our last local plan identified a need for more GP provision in Bicester and some progress has been made in securing expanded facilities for the growing town. We do, however, recognise that further additional provision is required.
- 3.281. Primary care facilities for Banbury, the Kidlington area, and the rural areas more generally are also at or nearing capacity and this Plan seeks to address these capacity issues by supporting new health facilities in appropriate locations.

Core Policy 49: Health Facilities

The Council will support the provision, extension and co-location of health facilities in sustainable locations.

Facilities should:

- i. Be designed to accommodate a range of health-related services through multifunctional and adaptable facilities;
- ii. Be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and
- iii. Be informed by discussion with relevant health providers to ensure facilities meet the identified health needs of the communities they are intended to serve.

Core Policy 50: Creating Healthy Communities

- 3.282. Evidence suggests that only 10% of our health and well-being is determined by access to health care. The rest is largely influenced by our lifestyle, behaviours and interaction with urban and green and blue environments, which in turn influences our social, mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- 3.283. We know planning influences health, but do we really appreciate just how much? Cancer, mental health and dementia are things we will all experience directly or indirectly in our lives, and when they happen, there isn't anything we wouldn't give to have prevented it. The Local Plan, the policies it contains and the influence it has on planning will have more power to prevent these conditions than the NHS will ever be able to treat, and yet we often don't communicate it, and the opportunities to prevent them, and the often-disproportionate distribution to our most vulnerable members of society are lessened as a consequence.
- 3.284. We therefore consider that significant benefits for local people can be achieved by adopting the principles of Healthy Place Shaping as we plan for housing, infrastructure and the economy together with planning for our residents' health and well-being.
- 3.285. The principles of healthy place shaping are based on the following three concepts:
1. Shaping the built environment, green spaces and infrastructure at a local level to improve health and well-being;
 2. Working with local people and local organisations, schools etc to engage them in planning and enjoying the health benefits of places, facilities and services through 'community activation', and
 3. Re-shaping health, well-being and care services and the infrastructure which supports them to achieve health benefits, including health services, social care, leisure and recreation services, and community facilities.

Core Policy 50: Creating Healthy Communities

The Council will support and promote developments that aim to reduce health inequalities, promote healthier lifestyles and improve the health and well-being of our existing and new communities more generally by requiring all major developments to:

- i. Include health and wellbeing as a key section in Vision Documents and pre-application discussions and outline planning applications, communicating how the project supports the delivery of local health objectives, priorities and needs (as detailed in the JSNA);
- ii. Be supported by an appropriate and proportionate Health Impact Assessment;
- iii. Contribute towards shaping healthy communities by demonstrating that they adhere to the following principles to deliver high-quality sustainable places:
 - a. Address the projected health and wellbeing needs of an area, including addressing health inequalities and avoiding and mitigating any adverse health and sustainability impacts;
 - b. Design in opportunities for people to be more active e.g. street layout and public realm to encourage walking and cycling as modes of transport, open spaces/green spaces for play and recreation, sports and leisure;
 - c. Enable good mental wellbeing through reducing social isolation and loneliness by encouraging social community infrastructure and opportunities for people to meet and connect with one another;
 - d. Enable access to green spaces and connection with nature to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing and to deliver multiple benefits for people, place and the environment;
 - e. Provide diversity in the residential offer that improves accessibility, affordability and promotes inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods, and
 - f. Make it easier for people to make healthier food choices by promoting access to fresh, healthy and locally sourced food, for example by providing opportunities for food growing.



Services and Facilities

Core Policy 51: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services

- 3.286. Our proposed Spatial Strategy aims to focus development in the most accessible parts of the district thus helping to ensure that development is well served by public transport links and the necessary physical, social and green infrastructure.
- 3.287. Our approach to infrastructure planning will seek to identify the infrastructure required to meet growth, and support site allocations. We will ensure delivery by:
- Working with partners, including central Government, and other local authorities, to provide physical, community and green infrastructure;
 - Identifying infrastructure needs and costs, phasing of infrastructure delivery, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery;
 - Updating our Developer Contributions SPD, and
 - Ensuring that development proposals demonstrate that infrastructure requirements can be met including the provision of transport, education, health, social and community facilities.
- 3.288. The Area Strategies provide details about our key infrastructure requirements.

Core Policy 51: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services

All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from development proposals. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by developers and/or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development.

Where infrastructure will serve more than one site, developers will be expected to collaborate to ensure the satisfactory delivery of the shared supporting infrastructure. In ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure requirements, development proposals must demonstrate that full regard has been paid to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and all other relevant policies of this plan.

If infrastructure requirements could render a development unviable, proposals should be supported by an independent viability assessment on terms agreed by the relevant parties including the Council and County Council, and funded by the developer. This will involve an open book approach. Where viability constraints are demonstrated by evidence the Council will:

- i. Prioritise developer contributions having regard to the detailed requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and/or
- ii. Use an appropriate mechanism to defer part of the developer contributions requirement to a later date, or
- iii. As a last resort, refuse planning permission if the development would be unsustainable without inclusion of the unfunded infrastructure requirements, taking into account reasonable contributions from elsewhere, including CIL.

The Council's Delivering Infrastructure Strategy will include a CIL Charging Schedule and a Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document that will provide more detail about its approach to securing developer contributions and how it will balance infrastructure funding through CIL and Section 106 agreements. Upon adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule, CIL will be used to pool developer contributions towards a wide range of new and improved infrastructure necessary to deliver new development.

Where not funded by CIL, infrastructure and services, including maintenance of the infrastructure, should be delivered directly by the developer through the development management process.

Infrastructure and services will be sought through the negotiation of planning obligations, levy, undertaking and/or other agreement as secured through the planning permission, to mitigate the direct impacts of development and secure its implementation.

Core Policy 52: Meeting Education Needs

- 3.289. The provision of new or extended primary and secondary education together with early years, tertiary and lifelong learning provision will be required during the plan period to meet the needs of our growing population.
- 3.290. We will support the growth plans of schools across the district and we recognise the important role that viable schools have to play in maintaining and contributing to community cohesion.
- 3.291. Oxfordshire County Council, as the Local Education Authority, has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places to meet demand across the district.
- 3.292. We will work with the County Council and others to provide nursery, primary and secondary schools, further and higher education facilities, community learning facilities, special schools, free schools and other educational facilities. This will include appropriate provision for the strategic site allocations set out in this plan.
- 3.293. Our support for education may include seeking the provision of new schools, contributions towards these facilities, or contributions towards expanding existing facilities. Our previous adopted Local Plan identified a need for a new secondary school at Banbury and a site to the south of the Longford Park development has been proposed. Oxfordshire County Council has advised that this school is still required, therefore we will continue to safeguard this land.
- 3.294. We will seek to ensure that new and extended schools are built to the highest sustainable construction standards. New facilities should also be designed to be flexible enough to accommodate the future changing needs of users and the communities they serve. Where appropriate, the use of school and college buildings and land after hours, will be encouraged to support learning across the wider community and community use of education facilities, for example sport and recreation facilities, will be supported.
- 3.295. Any new school buildings not identified within this plan should be located in sustainable locations on the edge or within the built-up limits of settlements.
- 3.296. The district has historically had a relatively low education and skills base. We will therefore encourage development that will diversify and develop the skills base of the district in the future. This will include the requirement for developers to produce and implement Community Employment Plans when developing major sites.
- 3.297. The Council's Developer Contributions SPD provides further details on how developer contributions for educational facilities will be sought.

Core Policy 52: Meeting Education Needs

The Council, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and others, will ensure the provision of pre-school, school, community learning, and other facilities that provide for the education needs, and skills development, of our communities. New educational buildings should be located in sustainable locations and built to net zero standards as required by *Core Policy 4*. Wherever possible, schools should be located within close proximity to other services and facilities to create community hubs.

Education facilities should be designed to:

- i. Achieve a high degree of environmental efficiency to minimise running costs;
- ii. Provide a safe, secure and pleasant learning environment;
- iii. Be located to promote sustainable and active modes of travel, and
- iv. Be designed to enable future expansion, if required.

Core Policy 53: Public Services and Utilities

- 3.298. Securing investment in strategic infrastructure such as water, waste, sewerage, electricity and digital connections helps address both current and future needs.
- 3.299. Gas, electricity and heat supply and investment in electricity infrastructure is provided by the private sector and the Council will continue to work with providers to ensure the necessary services to strategic sites are available. Developers should consult with the relevant utility companies in identifying the infrastructure requirements and constraints to a development site. Developers will need to take account of the location of existing services and will need to contribute financially to their relocation on development sites.
- 3.300. Thames Water, Anglian Water, and Severn Trent Water provide the majority of the water supply and waste services in the district. The Council will work with the water companies to plan the delivery of specific projects. The County Council are the Planning Authority for waste-water services in the County. The management and disposal of waste-water and sewage sludge is contained within Policy W10 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 Core Strategy. Planning application for waste-water treatment are also determined by the County Council in consultation with the district. The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan is part of the development plan, against which the District Council must consider planning applications.

- 3.301. The internet provides an opportunity to reduce the need to travel as recommended in the County Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. Good internet connectivity means that location is increasingly less important for businesses and enables greater possibilities for home-working. The Local Plan therefore recognises the role of the internet and seeks to promote it as a means of reducing the need to travel and supporting the economy. The provision of high-speed broadband will support new and relocating businesses as well as facilitating home-working for residents.
- 3.302. Increasing provision of gigabit capable broadband coverage across the district in line with the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire Programme will help deliver the rollout of next-generation mobile broadband particularly in rural areas. Development proposals will ensure there are connections to a number of internet providers offering high speed broadband and the latest mobile data connectivity where possible.
- 3.303. Oxfordshire currently has good levels of superfast broadband connectivity. Between 2014 and 2021 the Better Broadband for Oxfordshire programme has increased superfast broadband availability from 69% to 98% of premises across the county. In March 2022, approximately 22% of premises in the county had full fibre connectivity. The digital infrastructure program aims to achieve 99% superfast coverage and 23.5% gigabit capable coverage by the end of 2022.
- 3.304. We will ensure the provision of gigabit capable broadband connectivity to all new developments, and supports network enhancements including supporting infrastructure, to provide high speed broadband to all existing homes and businesses in the district. It is essential that the strategic site allocations provide appropriate infrastructure to ensure all properties can be connected to high-speed broadband without any further works post development.



Image: 2019 DC Studio/Shutterstock

Core Policy 53: Public Services and Utilities

The Council will support proposals that involve new or improvements to public services/utilities if they are required to enable the delivery of sites and where they accord with other relevant policies in the *Development Plan*.

The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to promote faster, more reliable and more comprehensive coverage of electronic communications and allow businesses and residents to access services and information more effectively, thereby helping to reduce the need to travel.

All new developments will be required to demonstrate that the necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to enable access to high-speed broadband and mobile data connectivity from a range of providers.

Core Policy 54: Local Services and Community Facilities

- 3.305. Local services and community facilities make a significant contribution towards the health, wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. They also assist in maintaining healthy and inclusive communities, sustainable travel patterns and local employment opportunities. Such facilities include town, village and neighbourhood shops, post offices, pubs, community centres and halls, theatres and museums, sports and leisure facilities, schools, libraries, doctor's surgeries and health centres, places of worship and other facilities which meet people's day to day needs.
- 3.306. The sustainability and social cohesion of our communities can be harmed when these facilities are lost, particularly in the rural areas.
- 3.307. In recognition of this, the Government, through the *Localism Act*, has introduced the Community Right to Bid whereby communities can apply for services and facilities which further the wellbeing or social interest of the local community to be listed as Assets of Community Value. We will have regard to these designations when considering planning proposals for a change of use.
- 3.308. We will resist the loss of local services and community facilities. In considering such proposals, the Council, in consultation with the local community, will take into account the importance of the facility to the local community particularly in meeting day to day needs.
- 3.309. To justify the loss of facilities, it will need to be demonstrated that they are no longer viable and are no longer required because equivalent or alternative provision will remain, or will be provided to meet local needs.



- 3.310. For commercially run facilities such as local shops and pubs, the Council considers that a robust marketing exercise is the most transparent way of demonstrating that such facilities are no longer viable. This allows local communities to consider making a bid to run or acquire premises of value through the Community Right to Bid.
- 3.311. In seeking to justify the loss of local services or community facilities, applicants will also be required to consider whether existing premises or sites can be adapted to retain a viable community facility or service. In the case of the potential loss of any healthcare facilities, the Council will have regard to relevant circumstances including any programme of modernisation/ rationalisation by the NHS.
- 3.312. In 2016/2017 the Council commissioned a 'Cherwell Community Spaces and Development Study (CCSDS) to provide evidence and policy proposals to inform community development and community indoor space provision in relation to new housing developments. The CCSDS Study recommended a local minimum standard of provision for community hall facilities required to meet the needs of residents generated by new development. That minimum standard is 0.185m² per person. The Study also supported the value of having a Community Development Worker available at an early stage in a new development to 'kick start' the process of bringing people together, developing new activities and putting in place the building blocks of a strong community. We will therefore seek financial contributions towards the provision of a community activation fund and community development worker for its strategic allocations.
- 3.313. We will apply this standard to all residential developments of 10 or more dwellings which generate a requirement for additional or improved community hall provision. This may include financial contributions and/or the provision of land and buildings to enable new community facilities to be provided or for existing facilities to be extended or improved.

Core Policy 54: Local Services and Community Facilities

The Council will support the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities, and will encourage partnership working to ensure that provision is maintained to meet the needs of local communities by:

- i. Protecting and enhancing the quality of existing facilities;
- ii. Improving access to existing facilities, and
- iii. Ensuring that development proposals contribute towards the provision of new or improved facilities where the development would generate a need which cannot be met by existing provision.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of community facilities and services will only be supported where it can be clearly shown that:

- iv. Appropriate alternative provision of at least equivalent suitability and accessibility, particularly by foot, will remain, and
- v. In the case of pubs, shops and other commercially run services and facilities, the existing use is no longer viable and is incapable of being made viable or adapted to retain a viable service or facility including as a community run enterprise. A robust marketing exercise will be required to demonstrate that the use or premises is unviable in accordance with separate guidance published by the Council.

In considering development proposals for the loss of local services and community facilities, the Council will have regard to whether a site or facility is registered as an Asset of Community Value.

Development Policy 5: Hot Food Takeaways

- 3.314. We are committed to improving health and well-being outcomes for its local residents, and to reduce health inequalities. One of the challenges we face in promoting healthy eating is the availability of foods high in fat, salt and sugar in local neighbourhoods, including the prevalence of hot food takeaways in some areas. We will therefore support opportunities for communities to access a wider choice of healthier food options and resist the proliferation of particular types of hot food takeaways in inappropriate locations, such as adjacent to schools and playgrounds.
- 3.315. Hot food takeaways also have the potential to cause nuisance to nearby residents due to general activity, particularly during the late evening, cooking odours, increased traffic movements and litter.

- 3.316. To minimise the likelihood of disturbance, hot food takeaways will be resisted in predominantly residential areas unless the premises are situated within a neighbourhood shopping centre or other commercial frontage. Even in those situations, permission may be refused if an existing residential property is likely to experience nuisance. In predominantly residential areas, we will seek to impose planning conditions to limit the late-night opening hours of hot food takeaways.
- 3.317. Proposals for hot food takeaways in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington town/ village centres are likely to be acceptable without restriction on hours of opening unless the proximity of existing residential property is such that any restriction would be justified in order to protect residential amenity.

Development Policy 5: Hot Food Takeaways

Proposals for hot food takeaways will only be permitted provided they:

- i. Would not result in significant harm to the amenity of local residents, or highway safety;
- ii. Would not result in harmful cumulative impacts because of any existing or consented outlets in the immediate vicinity, and
- iii. The proposal is not located within a five-minute walk of a school or playground, unless within an established local shopping centre.

Core Policy 55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

- 3.318. The responsibility for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the district is shared between ourselves, Oxfordshire County Council, local town and parish councils, education providers, and private sports clubs and associations. We will continue to work with these partners to deliver the required facilities to meet the needs of our communities.
- 3.319. Well designed, attractive and functional open space, including allotments and other community food growing schemes are essential for health and wellbeing, as well as the creation and maintenance of attractive, strong and vibrant communities. It can also play a role in biodiversity enhancement and mitigating the negative effects of climate change.

- 3.320. Our existing evidence, which is based on surveys undertaken in 2018, for open space and play provision recommended that the standards for play space set out in our 2015 Plan should be retained. This evidence is being reviewed and will inform the next stage of the Local Plan.
- 3.321. Our emerging Playing Pitch Strategy identifies shortfalls of provision to meet quantitative needs for football, rugby union and hockey (both natural grass pitches and artificial grass pitches) and recommends qualitative improvements to pitches for all pitch sports and associated facilities. It also identifies capacity shortfalls, particularly for tennis facilities.
- 3.322. Initial indications from the 2022 Built Facilities Study are that there is a requirement to continue to invest in indoor and built facilities in Cherwell. There is at least a need for new provision in the Bicester area in order to support expected population growth. This could take the form of an expansion of the existing leisure centre provision.
- 3.323. There is also a requirement for a long-term plan to replace/refurbish/possibly extend the swimming pool facilities at Kidlington and Gosford leisure centre.
- 3.324. All development proposals should investigate and maximise opportunities to enhance open space, play, sport and recreation facilities, particularly in areas of deficiency in quantity and quality. Where it is not feasible or appropriate to deliver new provision on site, new development can help to enhance existing provision locally.
- 3.325. All proposals, where appropriate, will be required to comply with the Council's local standards for the provision of open space as set out in Table 10 or any subsequent updates.
- 3.326. The minimum size of provision and thresholds for on-site provision are intended to act as a guide to developers. The precise composition of the provision will depend on the details of the proposal and its location. For example, combined play area schemes or other innovative proposals may be preferable to the provision of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs in some cases.
- 3.327. The underlying principles are that all new dwellings should contribute towards the provision of open space. Where on-site provision is not achievable or appropriate a financial contribution will be sought from developers towards the improvement of provision elsewhere in the locality. It may also be appropriate to seek green space provision or a contribution towards such provision in association with non-residential development.

3.328. In addition, we encourage developers to design schemes that provide ‘play friendly’ environments, such as pocket parks and play streets. Such schemes will need to be considered at the initial design stage and we will take measures to ensure that well maintained, attractive and safe environments for children’s play.

Type of Provision	Accessibility Standard	Minimum Size of Provision	Threshold for On-site Provision
Play space (combining provision for younger and older provision, including MUGAs)	5 minutes walk (400m) except for NEAPs 15minute walk (1200m)	LAP – 100m ² activity zone; 400m ² including buffer zone	10 dwellings
		LEAP – 400m ² activity zone; 3600m ² including buffer	50 dwellings
		NEAP – 1000m ² activity zone; 8500m ² including buffer	100 dwellings
		In some cases a combined all-age area of play will be preferable to the provision of LAPs/LEAPs/NEAPs. In addition, the provision of pocket parks, play streets and other innovative provision of pay will be encouraged in appropriate locations.	
General green space (parks and gardens, natural and semi natural/ amenity green space)	5 minute walk (amenity open space) (400m)	200m ²	10 urban dwellings
	15 minute walk other (1200m)		6 rural dwellings
Allotments/ Community Gardens	10 minute walk (800m)	0.2 ha	275 dwellings

Table 10: Local Cherwell Standards for Leisure Provision

- 3.329. The requirements from developments for new sports and recreation provision will be based on the Council's up to date evidence in conjunction with the Sport England's Playing Pitch Demand Calculator. This calculates a development's playing pitch requirements, associated costs for providing the required pitches and associated ancillary facilities (such as changing rooms and car parking) to meet the demand generated by the development.
- 3.330. Similarly, the requirements for built sports facilities will be assessed using Sport England's Built Facilities calculator and local evidence.
- 3.331. Sport England will be consulted on proposals which would result in the loss of sports and recreation facilities.



Core Policy 55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

All open spaces, sport and recreation facilities will be protected and where necessary enhanced to ensure access to a network of high-quality sport, play and recreation provision within the district.

The loss of open spaces, sports, play and recreation provision, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. An assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the provision and the function it performs is surplus to requirements, or
- ii. The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable, accessible location within the local catchment area, or
- iii. The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss.

New development is required to maximise opportunities to incorporate new publicly accessible, high quality and multi-functional open space and/or, where appropriate, enhance existing provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals.

In determining the nature of new or improved sports and recreation provision the Council will be guided by the most up to date evidence and Sports England's Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Calculators. The Council will also consult with Town and Parish Councils, together with potential users wherever possible, to ensure the provision meets local needs.

The Council will require children's play, and general green space to meet the minimum standards set out in Table 10.

Where it can be clearly demonstrated that proposals are not able to incorporate new provision or enhance existing provision to serve the new community, then an appropriate financial contribution may be requested, where such contributions will provide alternative or enhanced and conveniently accessible off-site open space provision.

Development proposals on open space will only be permitted where it:

- iv. Improves the quality of the open space and promotes inclusive access to a wide range of users and recreational interests;
- v. Is demonstrably ancillary to the use of open space and its primary function, e.g., play/sports fields;
- vi. Contributes to both the character and amenity of the area and are appropriate and proportionate to the function and nature of the open space, and
- vii. Does not have a detrimental impact on the environmental function of the open space.

Maintenance plans should be submitted at planning application stage for all new facilities to ensure their long-term quality and management.

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Core Policy 56: Local Green Space

- 3.332. Local Green Space designation affords local communities the opportunity to identify and protect green spaces of particular importance to them, subject to criteria being met as set out in national policy.
- 3.333. Once designated, the level of protection given to Local Green Space is similar to that given to the Green Belt, thereby preventing inappropriate development other than in very special circumstances.
- 3.334. There are a number of existing designated Local Green Spaces in the district that have been created by Neighbourhood Plans. We will continue to encourage future Neighbourhood Plans to consider whether it is appropriate to designate further local green spaces.
- 3.335. Several proposals for Local Green Space have been received through the preparation of this plan and these have been evaluated against the criteria contained in Government guidance.
- 3.336. Local Green Space does not have to be publicly accessible, or in public ownership, and designation does not confer any rights of public access. However, it is important that development proposals do not compromise the community value of a space, and that opportunities are taken to enhance any community use of the site wherever possible.


QUESTION 26: Would you like to propose any sites for consideration as Local Green Spaces?


Core Policy 56: Local Green Space

Development will not be permitted within a designated Local Green Space unless consistent with the national policy approach to development within the Green Belt. Inappropriate development within a designated Local Green Space will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.

The following sites are identified as Local Green Space as shown on the Policies Map and Appendix 7:

- Derwent Green - Bicester
- Gavray Drive - Bicester
- Langford – Bicester

The community value of a designated Local Green Space should be maintained and where appropriate, enhanced through improvements in access and community use, whilst also protecting the character of the space.

Any new development adjacent to a designated publicly accessible Local Green Space should provide active frontages to facilitate natural surveillance, as well as maintaining access points and the use of sensitive boundary treatments.

Historic Environment

Core Policies 57 - 59: Historic Environment and Archaeology

3.337. The conservation of our historic environment is key to protecting and enhancing the character of the district and ensuring that it continues to be an attractive place to live and work.

3.338. The district enjoys an extremely rich and varied historic environment, which contributes significantly to its culture, economy and tourism. This historic environment is not just limited to our built environment and archaeological sites, but also includes landscapes identified because of their history, archaeological, architectural, cultural or artistic interest.

3.339. Our 1995 Cherwell District Landscape Assessment identified four distinct landscape character areas in the district, with each displaying distinct settlement patterns, building materials and vernacular architecture to create a strong, locally distinctive urban and rural environment.

3.340. Throughout Cherwell, there are numerous designated heritage assets that enjoy statutory protection. These include approximately 2,300 Listed

Buildings, 60 Conservation Areas, 38 Scheduled Monuments and 11 nationally recognised registered parks and gardens that fall fully or partially within the district, and one historic civil war battlefield. The district also contains over 200 recorded archaeological sites. In some areas the MOD's presence has influenced the built environment with Bicester Airfield and the former RAF Upper Heyford recognised as being of national historic importance. The Oxford Canal Conservation Area runs north-south through the district.

- 3.341. In addition, there are many non-designated heritage assets, which although not having statutory protection, represent an important aspect of the district's heritage and play a significant role in defining the local character of our towns, villages and countryside. Not all significant heritage assets are formally designated, and nationally important non-designated heritage assets are of equal importance to designated heritage assets such as schedule monuments and listed buildings.
- 3.342. Non-designated heritage assets of particular local importance are known as Local Heritage Assets (LHA's), these include built structures formerly known as 'locally listed' buildings and significant landscape features such as village ponds. Many Local Heritage Assets have been identified as important within Conservation Area Appraisals. We anticipate that more examples will be identified as we undertake further appraisals and local communities, and other stakeholders will continue to have a role in identifying heritage assets.
- 3.343. Details of non-designated heritage assets, Local Heritage Assets, locally important historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and find spots, are held on the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.344. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment is a critically important part of sustainable development and a key element of this Local Plan. At the national level there is a presumption that heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced in a manner that is appropriate to their significance and also enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to current and future generations.
- 3.345. We have a rolling programme of reviewing Conservation Area Appraisals and may use Article 4 Directions to maintain the character of our historic environment, where appropriate.

- 3.346. When considering development proposals there will be a strong presumption in favour of protecting, sustaining and enhancing the significance of our heritage assets and their settings. The weight to be attached to that presumption, when assessed against meeting other needs, will be dependent on a variety of factors, including:
- The significance of the heritage asset: whether it is a designated heritage asset or a non-designated heritage asset;
 - The contribution of that part of the asset to be affected by the proposed development to the significance of the heritage interest, appearance and setting of the asset as a whole;
 - Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which have equivalent significant to schedule monuments, should be considered against policies for designated heritage assets.
- 3.347. In order to enable us to positively manage change by determining the appropriate balance between the need for any proposed development and the need to safeguard the heritage asset and its setting, applicants will be required to submit a Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment which assesses the significance of the asset, and of that part to be affected. The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record should be consulted as a minimum, and relevant Conservation Area Appraisals or design guidance notes where applicable. The Statement should provide detailed evidence to demonstrate that:
- The proposals have been formulated and any works designed with a full and proper understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, and the effect of the proposals on that significance;
 - The heritage asset is being put to the optimum viable use consistent with its physical conservation, and the conservation of its character and setting;
 - Opportunities to sustain, enhance, to better reveal, or avoid or minimise harm to the significance of the asset have been taken;
 - The need to be met by the development could not be met in a more beneficial or less harmful way.
- 3.348. Where a development site has archaeological interest, an archaeological desk-based assessment will need to be submitted along with any planning application for a site. Not all heritage assets have currently been identified, so the assessment will need to consider the likelihood of previously unidentified heritage assets being present on the site.

Core Policy 57: Historic Environment and Archaeology

All development proposals should conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of Cherwell District's historic environment, including the significance of its designated and non-designated heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation, in accordance with legislation, national policy and guidance for the historic environment.

In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving and/or enhancing the significance of designated heritage and non-designated assets, including:

- I. The special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, with regard to their character, fabric and their settings;
- II. The special architectural and historic interest, character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance;
- III. The special archaeological and historic interest of nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not), both with regard to their fabric and their settings, and
- IV. The special cultural, architectural and historic interest of Registered Parks and Gardens, and Registered Battlefields, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historical significance.

All applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to use appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets, their setting and historic landscape context of the application site, at a level of detail proportionate to the historic significance of the asset or area, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, a field survey. The Historic Environment Record should be consulted as a minimum. The level of assessment should be proportionate to the proposal and shall be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character.

Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desk top study, and where appropriate a field evaluation.

Development will not be permitted that would adversely affect archaeological remains and their settings unless the applicant can demonstrate that the archaeological resource will be physically preserved in situ, or if appropriate to their significance, a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals.

Where the loss of a heritage asset is considered acceptable, the developer will be responsible for making appropriate provision for a programme of archaeological investigation, recording, analysis and publication that will ensure the site is preserved by record prior to destruction. Such measures will be secured either by a planning agreement or by a suitable planning condition.

Proposals which would harm the significance of a designated or undesignated asset will not be approved, unless there is a clear and convincing justification in the form of substantive tangible public benefits that clearly and convincingly outweigh the harm, using the balancing principles set out in national policy and guidance.

Core Policy 58: Conservation Areas

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must conserve or enhance its special interest, character, appearance and setting. In particular special attention will be paid to:

- i. The location, form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development;
- ii. Views within, into or out of the Area;
- iii. The pattern of development and the effects to important green spaces, and other gaps or spaces between buildings and the historic street pattern which make a positive contribution to the character in the Conservation Area;
- iv. The wider social and environmental effects generated by the development, and
- v. Any loss or harm to features that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless the development would make an equal or greater contribution.

Applications for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:

- i. The building detracts from or does not make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area; or
- ii. The building is of no historic or architectural interest or is wholly beyond repair and is not capable of beneficial use; and
- iii. Any proposed replacement building makes an equal or greater contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest, character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be encouraged, thereby preventing harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.

Core Policy 59: Listed Buildings

Proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building, should:

- i. Conserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the building's fabric, detailed features, appearance or character and setting;
- ii. Respect the building's historic curtilage or context or its value within a group and/or its setting, including its historic landscape or townscape context, and
- iii. Retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design that is sympathetic both to the Listed Building and its setting and that of any adjacent heritage assets in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design, details and form.

Core Policies 60 & 61: The Oxford Canal

3.349. The Oxford Canal is an iconic structure running the length of the district through the attractive valley of the River Cherwell, and is of historic, ecological and recreational significance. Following an appraisal, the length of the canal through Cherwell District was designated as a Conservation Area in October 2012. The Conservation Area boundary has been drawn to include the towpath and towpath hedge, canal related earthworks and features including historic wharfs and locks, and woodland.

3.350. The biodiversity value of the canal is reflected in a number of statutory and non-statutory designations along the length of the canal. In terms of recreation, the canal is popular for boaters and anglers. A public footpath runs the length of the canal, and a section of the route is a public bridleway. The canal and towpath are owned and maintained by the Canal and River Trust, but the responsibility for any planning matters lies with the District Council.

Core Policy 60: The Oxford Canal

The Council will protect and enhance the Oxford Canal corridor which passes north to south through the district as a green transport route, significant industrial heritage, tourism attraction and major leisure facility through the control of development. The length of the Oxford Canal through Cherwell District is a designated Conservation Area and proposals that would be detrimental to its character or appearance will not be permitted. The biodiversity value of the canal corridor will also be protected.

The Council will support proposals to promote transport, recreation, leisure and tourism related uses of the Canal where appropriate, as well as supporting enhancement of the canal's active role in mixed used development in urban settings. The Council will ensure that the towpath alongside the canal becomes an accessible long-distance trail for all users.

Other than appropriately located small scale car parks and picnic facilities, new facilities for canal users should be located within or immediately adjacent to settlements. The Council encourages pre-application discussions to help identify significant issues and opportunities associated with a site and to consider appropriate design solutions to these and we will seek to ensure that all new development meets the highest design standards, and is supportive of health, wellbeing and equality.

Such schemes should not compromise the use or operation of existing navigable waterway features such as junctions or locks.

All new buildings, extensions and alterations to existing buildings adjacent to the Oxford Canal should be designed to a high standard that complements the traditional characteristics of a canalside setting in terms of design, materials and landscaping.





Core Policy 61: Residential Canal Moorings

Proposals for the siting of permanent residential moorings on the Oxford Canal will only be supported when:

- i. The site is within, or immediately adjacent to, the built-up limits of a settlement;
- ii. Adequate car parking is provided;
- iii. Moorings are compatible with adjacent land uses;
- iv. The number and density of boats at any one point is not so great that it would act as a barrier separating people from the waterway or be detrimental to the character of the canal. Moorings will not be permitted immediately adjacent to the tow path;
- v. They do not have negative impacts on navigation and navigational safety or operational requirements of the waterway;
- vi. The biodiversity of the water, its margins and nearby nature conservation sites will be maintained or enhanced;
- vii. There is adequate access for emergency services to ensure safety;
- viii. Sites have adequate accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to facilities and services including shops, healthcare, education and employment;
- ix. There is adequate access to or provision of facilities and servicing, including water supply, electricity and disposal facilities for sewage and waste;
- x. Use of any adjacent paths will not be impeded, and
- xi. The proposed development will not cause any significant adverse visual impacts or restrict the ambition for increased access to and opportunities to enjoy enhanced water related infrastructure facilities for all residents.

CHAPTER 4: **Banbury Area Strategy**

Banbury Vision 2040

- 4.1. In 2040 Banbury will continue to be a thriving, historic market town and an important economic and social focus for its residents, visitors, for business and for a large rural hinterland.
- The town will have a diverse economic base;
 - Over 5,000 homes will have been built by 2040 of which 30% will be affordable homes;
 - New services, facilities and cultural and recreation opportunities will have been provided;
 - The town will be healthier, with levels of deprivation reduced;
 - The town centre will be vibrant and at the heart of the town, a place to live, shop and access cultural and community facilities;
 - The quality of the public realm and built environment will have been improved and new developments will be designed to a high standard;
 - Air quality will have been improved and traffic congestion reduced;
 - There will be more opportunities for safe, convenient active travel routes. Public transport will have been improved;
 - There will be more natural and semi-natural open space accessible to the public, including new wooded areas and new linear parks/green corridors.

Banbury Policies

Core Policy 62: Banbury Strategy

- 4.2. To achieve this vision, our strategy for Banbury is as follows:

Overall Spatial Strategy

- Deliver committed development and provide for some limited additional growth reflecting the topographical, landscape and rural character constraints of the town's edge;
 - Revitalise, appropriately repurpose and seek further investment in the town centre, continue to improve its built and 'green' environment and public realm and further develop the nighttime economy;
 - Continue to support and strengthen the town's economy and diversify its skill base;
 - Encourage development proposals that will support education and help reduce deprivation;
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- Seek strategic transport improvements to encourage active travel, reduce congestion and pollution, and reduce cross town traffic by motorised vehicles.

Banbury Area Strategy

- Focus new development on previously developed land within the existing urban area, particularly in the vicinity of the town centre;
- Bring about Canalside regeneration, including enhancing the gateway to the town and improving access to the railway station, for the benefit of the whole town;
- Encourage residential development within the town centre on appropriate sites;
- Support the role of the town centre by resisting further major out of centre retail developments;
- Help reduce the level of deprivation by securing benefits achieved through specific development proposals and by economic growth and diversification;
- Secure a site that will provide a permanent home for Banbury United Football Club;
- Deliver a new secondary school for the town;
- Ensure new developments deliver improved community and health facilities;
- Deliver an improved and enhanced green infrastructure network across the town, including access to green spaces, the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridor, and children's play space, allotments and community gardens;
- Deliver schemes that reduce transport congestion, particularly along Hennef Way and in areas around the town centre;
- Ensure new developments strengthen the connection between the town centre and railway station, a key gateway to the town, and
- Ensure new developments deliver improved active travel routes in and around the town, radiating to surrounding villages.



QUESTION 27: What are your views on our aspirations for the Banbury area?

Housing

- 4.3. Since 2011, there has been an additional 4,123 homes delivered at Banbury (at 31 March 2022), with over a third (43%) of the total completions for the district at Banbury. Most of the new housing has been delivered on several large 'strategic' allocations on the edge the town, these include Hanwell Fields, to the north-west, and Longford Park in the south.
- 4.4. In addition to the houses already built, as of 31 March 2022, there were permissions (either outline or full) for a total of 2,341 additional homes at Banbury. These are primarily on sites allocated for housing in our last local plan. Many of these sites have been built, or are currently under construction.
- 4.5. In our 2015 Local Plan, less development was identified at Banbury compared to Bicester. Banbury has delivered more of its allocated sites but has not had the same strategic infrastructure challenges as Bicester.
- 4.6. Recent residential developments in the town centre have provided high quality accessible and affordable housing for those wishing to live in the town centre. It will be important that residential development in the town centre supports the growth of the town centre economy and complements surrounding areas. It should do this through good design and catering for all those wishing to live in the town centre such as down sizers, those that don't rely on access to a car and those who would prefer to live in the town centre in order to have easy access to services.
- 4.7. Within this context we think that there is scope for two additional housing allocations on the edge of the town: at Withycombe Farm, and north of Wykham Lane. We are also carrying out further work to understand the capacity for new housing development within the town, particularly within the town centre.



QUESTION 28: Do you think these sites in the Banbury area should be explored further for potential allocation for housing?

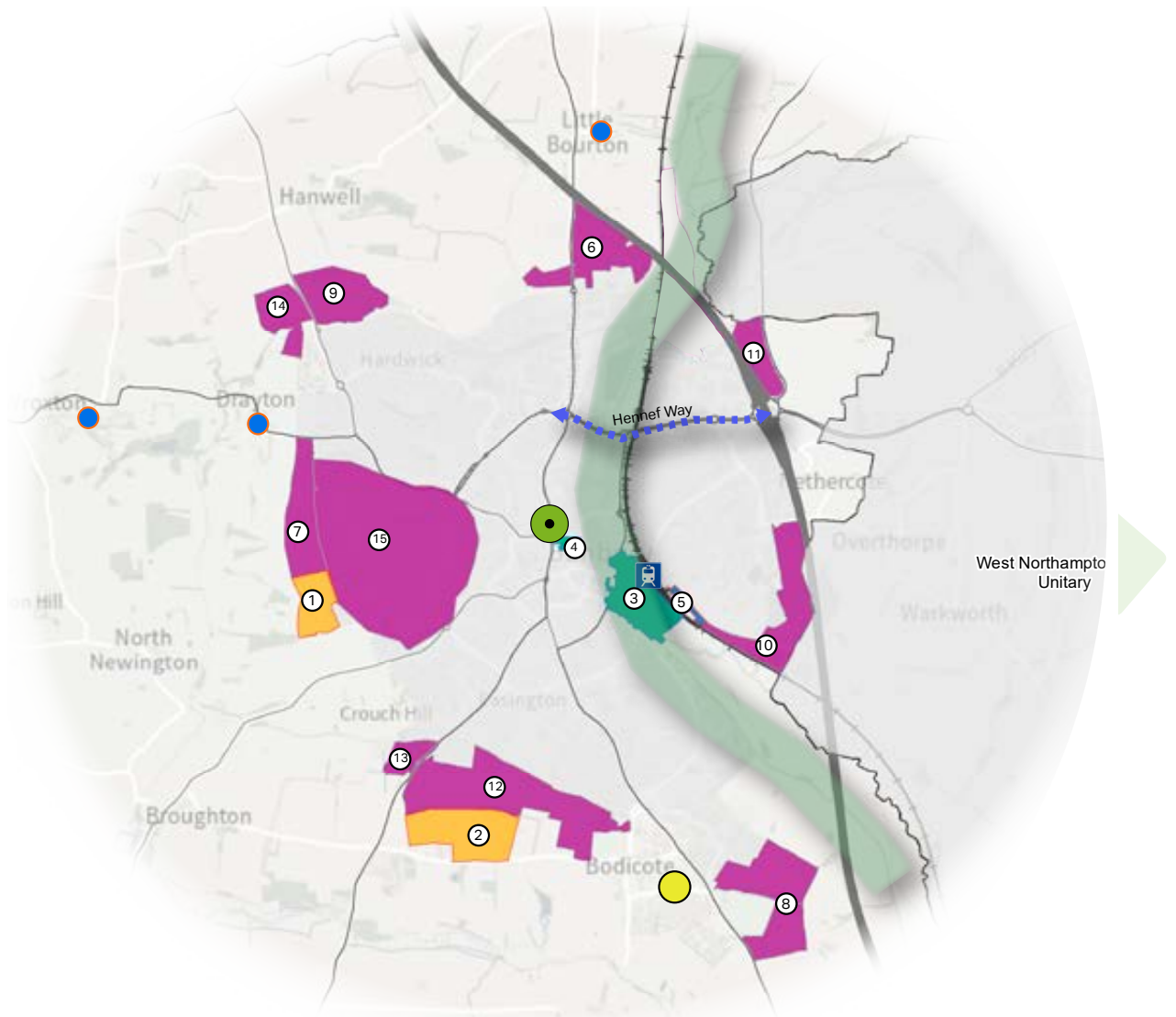


QUESTION 29: Are there any alternative housing sites for Banbury you wish to suggest?

The Economy

- 4.8. Banbury's economy is focused on manufacturing, distribution, service industries, local government, and health. The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy identifies the town as an important industrial area for motorsport, building on its links to Silverstone Park in neighbouring Northamptonshire.
- 4.9. The economy of the town benefits from its location on the M40, and its excellent transport links to Oxford, the South-East, and the Midlands. It also benefits from having the most employment floorspace in Cherwell.
- 4.10. Our last Local Plan (2015) recognised the importance of Banbury to the local economy by:
- Allocating approximately 60 hectares of employment land, most of which has now been developed;
 - Promoting the town as an important location for higher technology and knowledge-based industries;
 - Encouraging high-end manufacturing;
 - Maintaining an increase in motorsport industries;
 - Encouraging retailing and commercial leisure development;
 - Encouraging higher value distribution companies, and
 - Maximising the town's location and transport links.
- 4.11. The subsequent 2016 Banbury Masterplan embraced these aims and highlighted how, by driving the engineering economy and investing in infrastructure and skills, economic growth could be achieved.
- 4.12. We have generally been successful in delivering our objectives from 2015. Most of the allocated employment land has now been developed and there continues to be strong interest for employment land in or adjacent to the town. Much of this new development has been in the form of large logistics warehousing, but our evidence indicates that there is a strong unmet demand for smaller employment units to meet the needs of start-up firms, local businesses, or those that wish to expand in the local area.
- 4.13. To meet this identified need we are supporting a number of existing employment sites at Banbury where there is considerable potential for redevelopment. As we work towards our final plan we will be gathering more evidence to identify and support opportunities for smaller, non-strategic, employment sites.

Banbury Area Strategy Map



LEGEND

Local Plan 2040: preferred residential site allocation

① Withycombe Farm (LPR49)

② North of Wykham Lane (LPR52)

Local Plan 2040: preferred mixed-use site allocation

③ Canalside (LPR55)

④ Core Policy 14 (Site 2): Bolton Road

Local Plan 2040: preferred employment site allocation

⑤ Higham Way (LPR56)

Saved Allocations: Local Plan 2030

⑥ Hardwick Farm, Southam Rd (East and West)

⑦ West of Bretch Hill

⑧ Land at Bankside Phase 2

⑨ North of Hanwell Fields

⑩ Employment Land West of M40

⑪ Employment Land North East of Junction 11

⑫ Land South of Salt Way (East)

⑬ Land South of Salt Way (West)

⑭ Land at Drayton Lodge Farm

⑮ Bretch Hill Regeneration Area

Train Station

Road network improvements

Green infrastructure improvements

Local Plan 2040: Settlement Hierarchy

Main Towns

Local Service Centre

Large Village

Small Village

Core Policy 62: Banbury Area Strategy

Our over-arching priority for this area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development and support town centre regeneration.

Development in the Banbury Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in *Core Policy 35*:

Housing Delivery: 5,950 homes will be delivered at Banbury between 2020 and 2040 including the following strategic site allocations:

Site	Housing numbers 2020-2040	
North of Wykham Lane	600	New Site Allocation
Withycombe Farm	230	New Site Allocation
Canalside	-168	Replacing Policy Banbury 1 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 with a new allocation including 500 homes
Higham Way	-150	Replacing Policy Banbury 19 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 to allow for employment use

The following existing strategic site policies are retained and will not be replaced.

- Policy Banbury 2: Land to the West of Southam Road
- Policy Banbury 3: West of Bretch Hill
- Policy Banbury 4: Bankside Phase 2
- Banbury 5: North of Hanwell Fields
- Banbury 16: South of Salt Way West
- Banbury 17: South of Salt Way East
- Banbury 18: Land at Drayton Lodge Farm

A further allowance will be made for 'windfalls' of less than 10 dwellings on previously developed sites within the built-up area.

Employment: 10.5 hectares of employment land will be provided for business and employment growth in accordance with *Core Policy 25* in the following locations:

Site	Employment Hectares
Higham Way	3.0
Canalside – Regeneration	7.5
Total	10.5

Core Policy 63: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Banbury Area

- 4.14. We need to focus on supporting sustainable connectivity and ensuring new development is located where opportunities for sustainable development and transport can be maximised. Traffic congestion is an issue in Banbury, and so it is important that this Plan minimises and mitigates against additional traffic, and supports development where sustainable transportation and active travel can be utilised to the maximum extent.
- 4.15. The town's environmental and physical constraints, together with the canal, river and railway line running north-south through the town, make the delivery of a new strategic road network both challenging and costly. New and innovative solutions will be needed, and this work is being led by the County Council through the preparation of updated Area Travel Plans to support the recently adopted Local Connectivity Transport Plan Update (2022).
- 4.16. The current transport strategy is based on the need to improve connectivity to and from residential areas, employment locations and the town centre. The aim is to deliver infrastructure improvements to promote sustainable travel in and around the town by bus, walking, and cycling, and to increase capacity on the road network.
- 4.17. There has been investment in electric vehicle charging points in recent years and the take up of ultra-low emission vehicles in Banbury is significantly higher than the national average. Furthermore, Banbury also benefits from the highest share of active travel (23%) in the Oxfordshire towns.
- 4.18. However, there are still significant transport related issues that we need to address. These include:
- Transport and transport congestion, particularly along Hennef Way and in areas around the town centre;
 - Limited options for a new strategic route between the east and west of the town;
 - The need to strengthen the connection between the town centre and railway station;
 - The need to refurbish or relocate Banbury Bus Station;
 - The need for further improvements to bus services and access into and across the town centre, and
 - The continued improvement of cycling and walking routes radiating from the town centre to satellite settlements encouraging the adoption of alternative transport methods and easing the existing pressure on the road infrastructure.

- 4.19. In order to deliver growth in the Banbury Area, highways infrastructure has been identified to mitigate the impact of planned growth that is important to help secure a viable and sustainable future for Banbury and the Banbury Area. The package may be further refined through the development of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

Core Policy 63: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Banbury Area

Transport infrastructure at Banbury will be required as follows:

- New M40 junction/ enlarged slip roads at Southam Road in Banbury;
- Rejuvenating or relocating Banbury Bus Station;
- Re-designing Banbury Station forecourt to improve multi-modal interchange;
- Improving capacity of north south routes: Cherwell Street/ Bridge Street/ A4620 Windsor Street corridor;
- East-west strategic movements: Hennef Way corridor A422 Improvements;
- East-west strategic movements: Warwick Road Corridor Improvements;
- Review of Banbury Town Centre traffic circulation;
- Car parking routing and guidance system;
- Potential link road crossing from Tramway to Higham Way or a South East Link Road Promotion of Bankside to include bus services, and
- New spine road and increased level of bus service – east of Bloxham Road.

Core Policy 64: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Banbury Area

- 4.20. Our transport evidence to date lists the strategic transport improvements currently identified in the Local Transport Plan area strategies, and Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy for the Banbury area. We will need to test the impact of our Local Plan proposals on the transport network and take a view in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council on whether the schemes should be delivered during the lifetime of this Plan. At this stage we are just highlighting their potential for safeguarding.

Core Policy 64: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Banbury Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- Enlarged M40 slip roads at Southam Road in Banbury.

Development will not be permitted should it prevent the use of land for the delivery and implementation of the identified schemes (Appendix 5).



QUESTION 30: Are there other areas of land that you think should be safeguarded for transport schemes at Banbury?

Development Policy 6 : Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way

- 4.21. There is a particular need to help reduce emissions and achieve cleaner air in relation to Hennef Way. This Plan's proposed approach to maximising sustainable modes of travel will help with this objective, but we think further action is also required.
- 4.22. The Banbury Inner Relief Road from Oxford Road to Hennef Way was opened in June 1991. This road provides an important link between the south of Banbury and the motorway link road to the north, helping to reduce traffic congestion within the town centre and Grimsbury.
- 4.23. As the main purpose of the Inner Relief Road is to ease, as much as is possible, the town centre of local traffic generation and traffic generated by the M40, the function and safety of the Inner Relief Road would be negatively impacted by the creation of unnecessary access points to the road. We anticipate there will likely be improvement works to Hennef Way to address existing congestion issues and support growth within Banbury over the Plan period.

Development Policy 6 : Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way

The creation of new accesses onto the Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way that would affect the function and safety of the inner relief road will not be permitted, unless there is evidence to prove that a new access is essential. Any proposal for new accesses off the Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way will require approval from Oxfordshire County Council and National Highways.

Core Policy 65: Development in the Vicinity of Banbury Railway Station

- 4.24. Banbury Railway Station provides rail links across the country including services to London, Birmingham, Oxford and the South Coast. Banbury Railway Station also offers local rail services from Banbury to Bicester North and Didcot Parkway.
- 4.25. Demand on the rail network is expected to increase with the move towards increasing use of sustainable transport modes and future developments putting pressure on the rail network. The Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study 2021 indicates there will be additional capacity to the rail service between Oxford and Banbury from 2024.
- 4.26. We want to encourage the use of public transport and improve active travel routes by improving access to the railway station and its facilities. Over the Plan period we therefore intend to work with Network Rail, Chiltern Railways and Oxfordshire County Council to secure improvements to Banbury Railway Station to upgrade the services and support increasing passenger numbers. We recognise the opportunities that these improvements can bring and if required we will safeguard land needed for improvements to the line.
- 4.27. A significant increase in vehicular use of the Station Approach/Bridge Street junction, north of Canalside, would worsen congestion caused by right-turning movements and threaten the free flow of traffic on the Banbury Inner Relief Road (Cherwell Street) at the Bridge Street junction. The private roads leading from Station Approach also lack the width and alignment to accommodate a significant increase in traffic.
- 4.28. Planned Tramway Road improvements will support an improved road layout and facilities around the train station, improve bus journey reliability into the town centre from southern areas of the town, and reduce trips taken using the A4260/Bridge Street junction.
- 4.29. This scheme will also provide an important opportunity to improve access to the station for buses, cyclists and pedestrians, both generally and in particular between the station and the town centre and should reduce traffic and waiting times on Cherwell Street. All development proposals will be assessed against their impact upon the access to Banbury train station (Tramway Road improvements) scheme.
- 4.30. To eliminate any risk to railway operations and to ensure the safe operation of the railway, applicants must demonstrate that they have met any requirements set out by Network Rail.

Core Policy 65: Development in the Vicinity of Banbury Railway Station

Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to have the potential to impact the delivery of improvements to Banbury Railway Station, and in particular, any improvements proposed by Oxfordshire County Council including the Banbury Train Station (Tramway Road Improvements) Scheme (as shown by Banbury Tramway Road Improvements map and the Adopted Policies Map) should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.

Proposals for improvements to Banbury Railway Station will be supported where they demonstrate how they:

- i. Increase network capacity and access to the station and its facilities and to the town centre;
- ii. Facilitate and encourage non-car modes of transportation;
- iii. Improve the design and quality of the station and its facilities, and
- iv. Achieve an increase to the capacity of the station as a result of the development.



Banbury Tramway Road Improvements

Core Policy 66: Green and Blue Infrastructure in the Banbury Area

- 4.31. Banbury has a wide range of green spaces including formal sports pitches, play areas, parks and also Spiceball Country Park in the centre of the town. Most of these spaces are maintained and managed by Banbury Town Council.
- 4.32. The 2015 Local Plan included a long term objective to establish a series of open spaces based on the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridors linked by public footpaths/cycleways. This would create a linear park and thoroughfare from the north of the town and Grimsbury reservoir, to a new park at Longford Park south of Bankside.
- 4.33. The existing Spiceball Country Park forms the central section of the linear park, the new community park at Longford Park provides a focus at the southern end, and the Banbury Country Park provides a major component at the northern end of the town. The whole corridor is included within the North Cherwell Conservation Target Area.
- 4.34. In reviewing the development proposals for Canalside for this Plan, we now recognise that the canal/river corridor provides an even greater opportunity for an enhanced linear park, which could open up the canal frontage to the town centre, thereby creating a new, attractive public space at a key gateway to the town.
- 4.35. The corridor also offers potential for flat, traffic free and pleasant footpath/cycleway routes linking residential areas to employment areas, the town centre, railway station and bus station.



- 4.36. In terms of sports provision, the town has two indoor leisure centres at Spiceball and Woodgreen, together with some private leisure facilities. Local schools, including the North Oxfordshire Academy, also play an important role in providing sports facilities for the community. Our last Local Plan sought to secure a site for the relocation of Banbury United Football Club, adjacent to Banbury Rugby Club to the south of the town, and we continue to support this objective.

Core Policy 66: Green and Blue Infrastructure in the Banbury Area

The Council will require all development proposals to protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure and assets in the Bicester area as shown by maps in Appendix 6 and the Adopted Policies Map.

The Council will seek contributions towards the strategic projects identified in the Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the Bicester area including their enhancement and on-going management costs, including:

- i. The need for an improved interface between Spiceball Park and the canal/ river green corridor linking with the town centre. This should be delivered as part of the town centre enhancements and form a fundamental part of any development proposals;
- ii. The continued development of the country park extending the green corridor to the north of the town connecting the urban area with the rural hinterland beyond;
- iii. The greening of the town centre, improving east – west connectivity from People’s Park to an enhanced green corridor along the river/canal corridor;
- iv. The greening of the primary north – south vehicular route along the South Bar Street/ Horsefair corridor in conjunction with improved traffic solutions to ease congestion in these areas;
- v. The development of a new green, accessible link along the southern edge of the development to the south of Salt Way connecting new development and associated open space adjacent to the Bloxham Road in the west and Longford Park in the east, and
- vi. The connection of Salt Way to the improved north – south green corridor along the canal/ river corridor.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the schemes listed.

Core Policy 67: Horton Hospital Site

- 4.37. The Horton General Hospital in Banbury, which is part of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust (OUHT), is an acute general hospital serving the north of Oxfordshire and surrounding areas. It provides a wide range of services, including the Emergency Department. It is a major employer in the town, employing approximately 1,000 people.
- 4.38. The OUHT has made a commitment to the long-term future of the hospital and is seeking to make significant improvements to its services and facilities over the plan period. Many of the current buildings on the site are low-quality, single-storey buildings and there is scope for increasing the floorspace by redeveloping some of the buildings at an appropriate density and scale.
- 4.39. The original Victorian hospital building that fronts the Oxford Road is Grade II listed and so any redevelopment proposals would need to retain these buildings and protect them in accordance with the *Development Plan* as a whole.
- 4.40. We will encourage and support improved hospital related facilities on the site to serve our existing and future communities.

Core Policy 67: Horton Hospital Site

Proposals for redevelopment at the Horton Hospital will be supported where they provide:

- i. Further hospital related uses or improvements to existing medical services at the site; or
- ii. Other uses, which have a direct and demonstrable operational link, and provide benefit to the continued provision or improvement of hospital services at the site.

Improvements to public transport access will be required. Mitigation measures will be required to ensure that proposals do not lead to increased parking pressure on nearby residential streets.

The special architectural and historic interest of the original Grade II listed hospital buildings on Oxford Road will be protected in accordance with the wider *Development Plan* policies.

Primary Health Care

- 4.41. Evidence from the Oxfordshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) indicates that there is a pressing need for additional primary care space and associated infrastructure within Banbury. The Council will therefore support proposals for additional primary care facilities in the town, in appropriate locations. Such locations could include the town centre or on the Horton Hospital site. The Council will continue to work closely with the ICB and local GP practices to help secure improved primary care capacity across Banbury to meet the needs of its growing population.

Banbury's Built Heritage

- 4.42. Banbury has a rich and varied history, which is valued by residents and visitors. The town centre is characterised by its medieval street pattern and across the town there are numerous designated and non-designated heritage assets that contribute to Banbury's character. Within Banbury there are approximately 225 listed buildings. There are also three designated Conservation Areas. Banbury Conservation Area is centred on the town centre; Grimsbury Conservation Area lies to the east of the railway and canal; and the Oxford Canal is designated along its whole length, including through Banbury. The Council has a legal duty to protect these important heritage assets.

Banbury Town Centre and Areas of Change

- 4.43. A successful and vibrant town centre is important to the local economy and helps to engender local pride in the town. Independent retailers are well represented in Banbury, particularly in the High Street and along Parson's Street, and these are complimented by Castle Quay with its range of national retailers.
- 4.44. Since our last Local Plan there has been significant investment in the town centre with the recent opening of Castle Quay 2 to the east of the existing centre. This major investment by the Council provides a new hotel, cinema, leisure facilities, and restaurants in a canalside location.
- 4.45. We recognise that in recent years, due to changing retail habits and the impacts of the Covid pandemic, the town centre has suffered. As with many towns, the closure of some large high street chain stores has left several vacant units both in Castle Quay and in the wider town centre. Some smaller units have also closed. This has made some areas of the centre feel less vibrant and attractive to visitors.

4.46. To understand the current strengths and weaknesses and health of the town centre we commissioned a town centre and retail strategy to inform this Local Plan. This Strategy made the following recommendations for Banbury Town Centre:

- Contract the extent of the town centre to create a more compact layout and address the identified oversupply of retail floorspace;
- Resist Out of Centre Expansion as any further expansion will be seriously detrimental to the town centre;
- There should be greater encouragement for residential development in the town centre, to increase the vibrancy of the centre. This will create a stronger in-town community and provide a boost to the local economy from this captive market;
- Support town centre master-planning to ensure a comprehensive strategy;
- Opportunities should be explored to improve the outdoor markets so that they become stand-alone attractions, including by making the market square an attractive destination;
- The centre would benefit from further investment into its public realm and the quality of the environment, to create a more attractive and distinctive space. A Public Realm Strategy would be recommended to raise the profile of the centre;
- Open up the Oxford Canal to the town centre;
- Undertake a review of car parking provisions. Explore partnership options to provide charging points and to meet green agenda targets. Adopt a 'plain English' approach to car park messaging. Consider free car parking on market days to stimulate renewed interest in this struggling but important retail offer, and
- Raise the profile of the centre as a night-time economy destination. There should be a focus on managing the existing leisure-offer, and how the non-leisure-based night-time economy could be supported. Improvements to accessibility (particularly late-night transport), the public realm and the sense of safety are recommended.

4.47. The Study also identifies a number of sites suitable for redevelopment, together with areas that need regeneration. Building on the work of the retail consultants we have undertaken further technical and feasibility work and have identified the following sites as being important to meeting the Plan's objectives:

- Site 1: Banbury Canalside
- Site 2: Bolton Road/ Castle Street
- Site 3: Calthorpe Street and Marlborough Road
- Site 4: Bridge Street/ Concorde Avenue
- Site 5: George Street, Cherwell Street and Bridge Street

Core Policy 68: Banbury Canalside

- 4.48. The area of land between Banbury railway station and the town centre, and to the east and west of Tramway Road, is referred to as the Canalside site. It is currently occupied by a range of small businesses, railway carparking, some limited residential development, and Banbury United Football Club. The River Cherwell and Oxford Canal run through the area.
- 4.49. It is a prominent site immediately adjacent to the town centre and forms part of the gateway to the town for visitors arriving by train and by road. It is, however, currently a relatively unattractive environment that feels segregated and underused. There are vacant areas, high business turnover and industrial uses immediately adjacent to the river and canal towpath, creating a poor environment and experience for those using the canal and river for leisure purposes. Some have reported this area as feeling unsafe.
- 4.50. Our previous Plan made provision for a comprehensive residential led scheme for the site including 700 new homes, retail, office and leisure uses, public open space, enhancement of the canal and river corridor, new pedestrian and cycle links and crossings and new carparking. Since 2015, planning permission has been granted on a small number of sites within the wider allocated area, mainly for new apartments.
- 4.51. Many businesses remain and there continues to be a turnover of commercial uses within existing premises. Unfortunately, no significant re-development has taken place and the general character of the area remains largely unchanged, although Oxfordshire County Council is progressing plans for improvements to Tramway Road which will provide a bus-only link through the site to the railway station.
- 4.52. This Plan continues to identify this area for a mixed-use redevelopment; however, we now expect the development to be employment-led with residential development focused in the northern section of the site and along the Cherwell Street frontage.

Core Policy 68: Banbury Canalside

Development proposals that contribute towards the comprehensive regeneration of the Canalside Area will be supported, including the provision of 500 homes and around 7.5ha employment uses.

Proposals for smaller parcels will be supported where the development will positively contribute towards the comprehensive and integrated regeneration of the site as a whole.

Favourable consideration will be given to masterplanned and design reviewed proposals that receive a positive appraisal and demonstrate a high level of integration with the town centre and Banbury Railway Station.

Core Policy 69: Banbury Areas of Change

- 4.53. In addition to Canalside, we have identified other opportunities for development/regeneration. These opportunities could also help to deliver public realm enhancements as part of a wider vision for Banbury town centre. It is important that any proposals are consistent with the new emerging vision/masterplan for Banbury as part of an aspirational approach to delivering improvements to the public realm, support high quality design and achieve sustainable and successful communities.

Site 2: Bolton Road/Castle Street

- 4.54. This site lies immediately to the west of the Castle Quay shopping centre and to the north of Parson's Street. It comprises a large public car park, a number of smaller car parks and service areas associated with the commercial units fronting Parson's Street, a former car repair workshop, and a number of historic buildings. A former bingo hall is being redeveloped for housing for older people.
- 4.55. The 2015 Local Plan allocated this site for retail and other town centre uses and residential. Our recent evidence now indicates that town centre uses would not be appropriate in this location and the site is therefore allocated in this plan for a residential led mixed use development.

Site 3: Calthorpe Street & Marlborough Road

- 4.56. The site is within the designated Banbury Conservation Area and is suited for residential development, with the existing retail operators being relocated within the town centre.
- 4.57. The Council will support comprehensive and sensitive residential-led redevelopment proposals that incorporate the rebuilding of the frontages to Calthorpe Street and Marlborough Road. Proposals must preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Banbury Conservation Area. There is a need to provide walking and cycling permeability.

Site 4: Bridge Street/Concorde Avenue

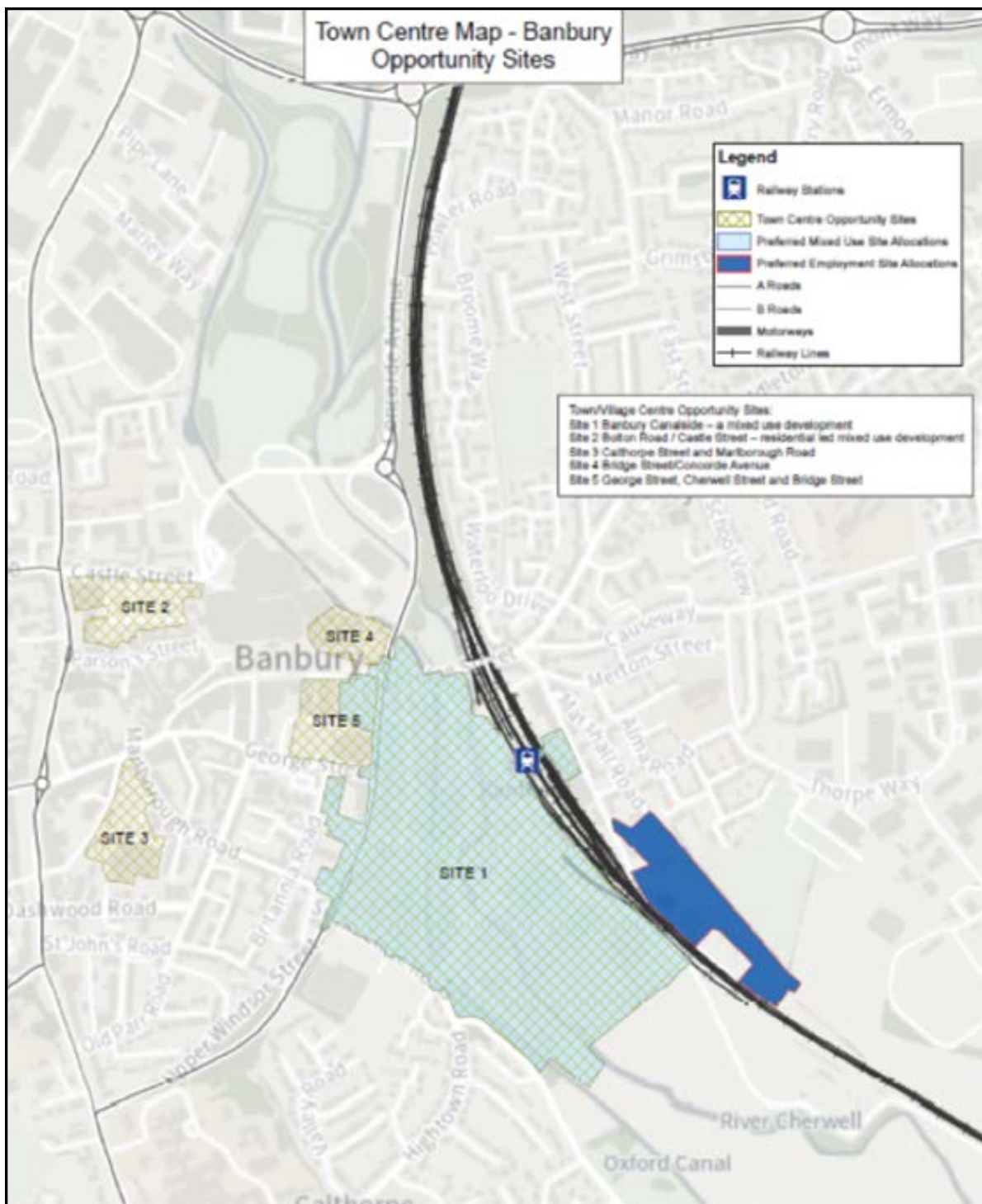
- 4.58. The site includes the bus station and the eastern end of Castle Quay shopping centre which has a number of vacant units. The site acts as a gateway to the town centre. This site is suited to mixed-use development, including cultural, community, health, and leisure facilities, and residential. Development of this site would require the bus station to be relocated in the town centre.

Site 5: George Street, Cherwell Street & Bridge Street

- 4.59. The site currently comprises a free-standing bowling alley, adjacent retail unit and car parking accessed from George Street, and retail, commercial and residential buildings fronting Bridge Street. The site is located on a key gateway to the town centre but the built environment, particularly around the Bridge Street/Cherwell Street junction is fragmented and poor. This Plan will support proposals for residential or mixed use proposals on this site which provide a high quality landmark gateway to the town centre.

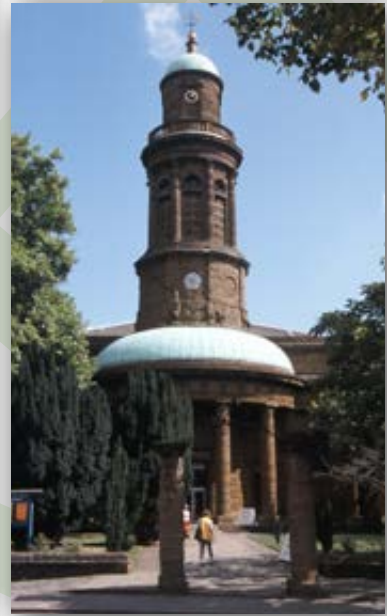
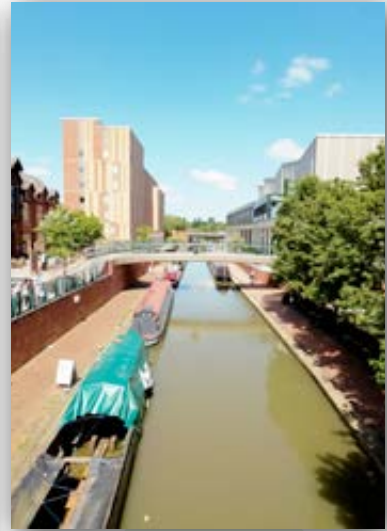


Banbury Town Centre Areas of Change



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Core Policy 69: Banbury Areas of Change

In addition to Site 1: Canalside, identified in *Core Policy 13*, there are four additional areas of change identified within or close to the centre of Banbury as listed below and shown on the Policies Map and Banbury Town Centre Areas of Change map:

Site 2: Bolton Road/Castle Street

Site 3: Calthorpe Street/Marlborough Road

Site 4: Bridge Street/Concorde Avenue

Site 5: George Street/Cherwell Street/ Bridge Street

These areas are supported as locations for change and/ or redevelopment in accordance with the following criteria where development should:

- i. Be of a high quality, with well-designed edges securing significant townscape improvements to Banbury;
- ii. Proposals for the individual sites are prepared through a comprehensive masterplan process providing an integrated solution to site access, traffic management, air quality management, whilst prioritising the pedestrian/ customer environment;
- iii. Be sensitive to any surrounding residential areas and the character and setting of the historic core and heritage assets and promote linkages to the historic core of the town centre;
- iv. Make a positive contribution to improving sustainable transport connectivity in Banbury, including an increase in capacity and the provision of improved facilities and providing for walking and cycling permeability;
- v. Be focused on providing access by sustainable modes of transport including improvements for pedestrians and cyclists such as managed cycle parking facilities, and with no increase in car parking above current levels;
- vi. Improve the public realm and by removing unnecessary signage and street furniture, and using a simple and durable palette of materials, and
- vii. Residential development will be supported on the identified sites, particularly above ground floors.

CHAPTER 5: **Bicester Area Strategy**

Bicester Vision 2040

- 5.1. In 2040, Bicester will continue to be a thriving historic market town and an important economic and social focus for its residents, visitors, and for business, achieving its Garden and Healthy New town objectives:
- The town will have a diverse economic base with 50 hectares of land developed for new employment;
 - Over 10,000 homes will have been built by 2040 of which 30% will be affordable homes;
 - New services, facilities and cultural and recreation opportunities will have been provided;
 - The town will be healthier, with levels of deprivation reduced;
 - The town centre will be vibrant and at the heart of the town, a place to live, shop and access cultural and community facilities;
 - The quality of the public realm and built environment will have been improved and new developments will be designed to a high standard;
 - Air quality will have been improved and traffic congestion reduced;
 - There will be more opportunity for safe, convenient active travel routes and public transport will have been improved;
 - There will be more natural and semi-natural open space accessible to the public, including new wooded areas.

Bicester Policies

Core Policy 70: Bicester Area Strategy

- 5.2. To achieve this vision, our strategy for Bicester is as follows:

Overall Spatial Strategy

- Deliver committed development and be the focus for additional development reflecting the town's on-going growth and transformation as a sustainable Garden Town and its regional and sub-regional location on the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor including and East-West Rail route;
- Continue to maximise the benefits of having key international and national destinations and economic activity to support further business investment;



- Support the continued improvement of the town's centre, its facilities, its public realm and 'green' environment;
- Resolve transport connectivity and infrastructure challenges and encourage active travel.

Bicester Area Strategy

- Deliver new high quality development helping to achieve climate change objectives;
- Provide new jobs and services reducing the need for out-commuting and travel to other locations;
- Provide new infrastructure alongside new homes and employment;
- Maximise opportunities for new development on previously developed land within the existing urban area, particularly in the vicinity of the town centre;
- Bring about coordinated town centre improvements and regeneration including the redevelopment of Market Square;
- Support the role of the town centre by resisting further major out of centre retail developments;
- Ensure new developments deliver improved community and health facilities;
- Deliver an improved and enhanced green infrastructure network across the town, including access to green spaces, children's play space, allotments, community gardens and a new cemetery;
- Protect and enhance areas of ecological importance and historic value;
- Deliver schemes that reduce transport congestion, including a potential new south east link road;
- Strengthen the connections between the town centre and Bicester Village;
- Ensure new developments deliver improved active travel routes in and around the town and to surrounding villages.



QUESTION 31: What are your views on our aspirations for the Bicester area?

Housing

- 5.3. Bicester has been a key location for housing growth for the District for a number of years. Since 2011, there has been an additional 3,220 homes delivered at Bicester (at 31 March 2022), with 29% of the total houses built in the district at Bicester. Most of the new housing has been delivered on several large ‘strategic’ allocations on the edge of the town, including at Bure Park and South West Bicester.
- 5.4. In addition to the houses already built, as of 31 March 2022, there were permissions in place for a total of 4,268 additional homes at Bicester. These are primarily on sites allocated for housing in our last Local Plan.
- 5.5. In our last Local Plan, Bicester was identified as the location to receive the most amount of new development with over 10,000 homes across five strategic housing sites. There has been some progress made on these sites, however Banbury has shown stronger delivery with more of the allocated sites delivering in accordance with the Local Plan targets.
- 5.6. Fewer new homes have been built in the town centre and we are exploring opportunities for this. We will aim to do this through good design and catering for all those wishing to live in the town centre such as those who would prefer to live in the town centre in order to have easy access to services.
- 5.7. This Plan sets out a proposed distribution of new housing across the district and suggests two additional strategic housing sites at Bicester (see Bicester Area Strategy Map) These are:
- i. South of Chesterton/North-West of A41;
 - ii. South-East of Wretchwick Green.
- 5.8. An extension to the existing site at North-West Bicester is also proposed providing for an additional 1,000 homes over that already identified.
- 5.9. It is proposed to retain other existing strategic housing site policies from the Local Plan 2011-2031.



QUESTION 32: Do you think these sites in the Bicester area should be explored further for potential allocation for housing?



QUESTION 33: Are there any alternative housing sites for Bicester you wish to suggest?

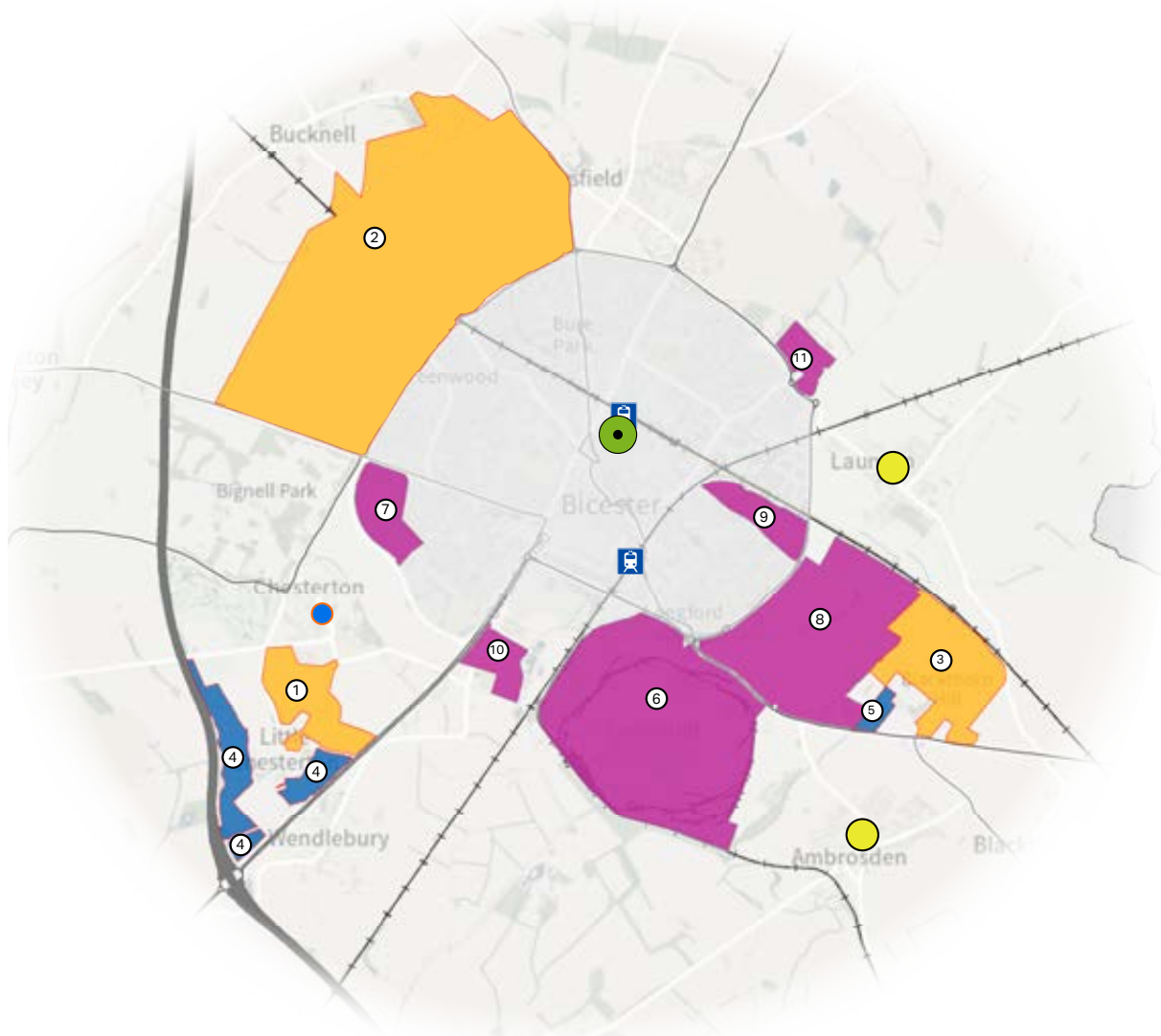
The Economy

- 5.10. Bicester supports a range of employment sectors, including service industries, distribution, defence, motorsports and manufacturing. The largest employment areas are located in the eastern and southern parts of the town. It has the second largest amount of employment floorspace in Cherwell after Banbury.
- 5.11. Bicester is identified in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) as a Living Labs Testbed. This involves a cluster of technology companies acting as ‘living labs’ to help develop technologies for environmental change, including the advent of connected and autonomous travel, all electric energy, smart homes and sustainable living.
- 5.12. The Oxfordshire LEP Investment Plan (2020) identifies potential for wider regeneration to transform Bicester from a traditional Oxfordshire County Market Town into a dynamic and vibrant economy drawing on attractions such as Bicester Village and Bicester Motion.
- 5.13. Our last Local Plan recognised the importance of Bicester to the local economy by:
- Allocating approximately 140 hectares of employment land;
 - Encouraging green technology and the knowledge-based and logistics sectors, exploiting its position in the Oxford/Cambridge Corridor;
 - Exploiting the towns transport connections;
 - Utilising the Ex-MoD land;
 - Creating new opportunities for additional retail, leisure and cultural activities in an extended town centre encouraging retailers and visitors to Bicester Town Centre;
 - Continuing to promote and expand Bicester Village where complementary to improving the town centre;
 - Improving its utilities infrastructure to improve its sustainability and self-sufficiency.
- 5.14. We have generally been successful in delivering our objectives from 2015. A significant proportion of the allocated employment land has now been developed and there continues to be strong interest for employment land at Bicester. Our updated employment evidence identifies that Bicester is the most suitable location for accommodating identified employment needs to 2040 and we propose to continue to focus new sites here.
- 5.15. This Local Plan proposes two new strategic sites for employment, at Junction 9 of the M40, and north of the A41 south east of Bicester. The policies for the existing sites identified in the 2015 Plan will be saved.

- 5.16. The site located adjacent to the M40 junction adjoins land which has recently gained planning consent for employment uses. The site north of the A41 is adjacent to Symmetry Park business park.
- 5.17. We will also need to consider the need for smaller, non-strategic employment sites to support local businesses and business start-ups.



Bicester Area Strategy Map



LEGEND

- Local Plan 2040: preferred residential site allocation**
- ① South of Chesterton and North-West of A41 (LPR37a)
- ② North-West Bicester (LPR33)
- ③ South-East of Wretchwick Green - Site A (LPR21a)
- Local Plan 2040: preferred employment site allocation**
- ④ Land East of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane (LPR38)
- ⑤ Land Adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41 (LPR21b)
- Saved Allocations: Local Plan 2015**
- ⑥ Graven Hill
- ⑦ South West Bicester Phase 2
- ⑧ South East Bicester
- ⑨ Gavray Drive
- ⑩ Bicester Gateway
- ⑪ Employment Land at North East Bicester

Train Station

Local Plan 2040: Settlement Hierarchy

- Main Towns
- Local Service Centre
- Large Village
- Small Village

Core Policy 70: Bicester Area Strategy

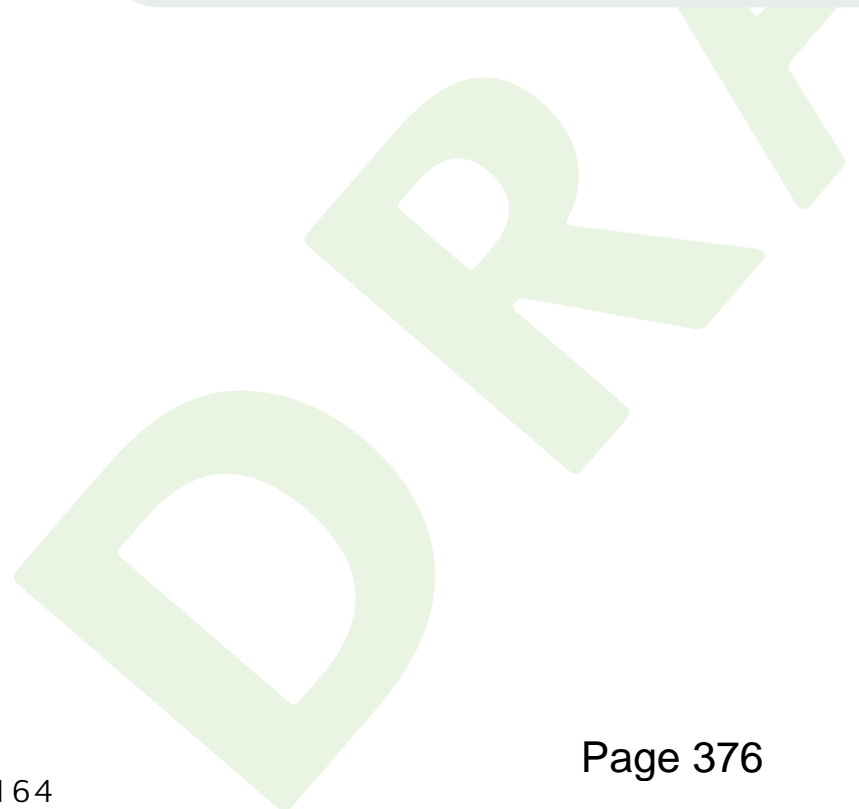
Our over-arching priority for this area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development along with supporting the enhancement of the town centre.

Development in the Bicester Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in *Core Policy 34*.

Housing Delivery: 9,100 homes will be delivered at Bicester between 2020 and 2040 including the following strategic site allocations:

Site	Housing Numbers		
	2020-2040	Post 2040	
South of Chesterton / North-West of A41	500	-	New Site Allocation
South-East of Wretchwick Green	800	-	New Site Allocation
North West Bicester	2,775*	4,000	Extended Site Allocation to provide an additional 1000 homes Replacing Policy Bicester 1 of the Local Plan 2011-2031

*225 completions recorded before 1/4/20



The following existing strategic site policies are retained and will not be replaced:

- Policy Bicester 2: Graven Hill
- Policy Bicester 3: SW Bicester
- Policy Bicester 12: SE Bicester
- Policy Bicester 13: Gavray Drive

A further allowance will be made for ‘windfalls’ of less than 10 dwellings on previously developed sites within the built-up area.

Employment: 49.6 hectares of employment land will be provided for business and employment growth in accordance with *Core Policy 25* on the following strategic employment sites:

Site	Employment Hectares
Land East of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane	40.0
Land Adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41, South East Bicester	6.3
**Bicester 4 (Bicester Business Park)	3.3
Total	49.6

** Bicester Business Park (Policy Bicester 4 in the 2015 Plan) is an existing allocation with residual capacity of 3.3ha beyond completions and extant planning permissions at 1st April 2022 that is being saved through this Local Plan.



QUESTION 34: Do you agree with the employment sites we have selected at Bicester to accommodate new employment development?



QUESTION 35: Are there any alternative sites to accommodate housing and employment needs that you think are more suitable?

Core Policy 71: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Bicester Area

- 5.18. Bicester is located near to two motorway junctions on the M40 and has good transport links to Banbury, Oxford, London and beyond. It currently suffers from some congestion on its main routes, particularly on the A41, and on those that provide access to the town centre.
- 5.19. The new Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2022) identifies a number of key projects in the Bicester Area Strategy:
- An on-going partnership with Highways England to improve connectivity to the strategic highway (M40 junctions 9 and 10);
 - Reviewing key county road links out of Bicester, including those that cross the county boundary (the A41) which is ongoing with Buckinghamshire Council;
 - Investigating options for infrastructure improvements and bus priority to enable greater reliability on the A41 corridor to/from Junction 9 to the A41 Bicester Services roundabout, with schemes for accessing Wendlebury;
 - Delivery of the bridge under the railway (A4095) as part of the project to deliver effective peripheral routes around the town;
 - A41 Study exploring options for the provision of a South-East Perimeter Road;
 - Working with the rail industry and the Department for Transport to develop a solution to the likely restrictions affecting the London Road as a result of the East-West Rail project and national rail programme;
 - Ongoing work to improve Bicester's bus services along key routes and providing improved public transport infrastructure;
 - Continuing to enhance pedestrian, cycle and public transport links on key routes;
 - Implementing Bicester town centre highway modifications on through routes in order to reduce through traffic in the town centre, constraining it to the peripheral routes and promoting more sustainable travel options in the town;
 - Developing a coordinated parking strategy, including for electric vehicles, in partnership with Cherwell District Council.
- 5.20. Oxfordshire County Council has also produced the Bicester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP; 2020) which includes a programme of measures to increase cycling and walking, and the Public Rights of Way Management Plan to 2025 which sets a strategy for the improvement and management of public rights of way in Oxfordshire.

- 5.21. The County Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP; 2021) proposes to create additional flexible bus services to connect rural communities with larger town centres and mobility hubs. New development at Bicester will be required to contribute towards the delivery of these routes and services.
- 5.22. The key challenges for Bicester's transport network include:
- Addressing the barriers created by the peripheral roads that segregate the town centre from the new residential areas;
 - Improving access to Bicester's hinterland by active travel and public transport;
 - Addressing capacity of the A41 and identifying a solution for the London Road Level crossing that enables access to and from the town centre;
 - Deliver a better environment for walking and cycling in Bicester town centre including at Market Square and for sustainable travel;
 - Improving the scope for and attractiveness of walking and cycling on Bicester's key routes.
- 5.23. In order to deliver growth in the Bicester Area, transport infrastructure has been identified to mitigate the impact of planned growth that is important to help secure a viable and sustainable future for Bicester and the Bicester Area. The package may be further refined through development of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

Core Policy 71: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Bicester Area

All development within the Bicester area will be required to contribute in accordance with *Core Policy 5: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services*. Within the Bicester Area this will include contributions towards the infrastructure identified within the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

- A south-east link road north of Wendlebury;
- Improvements associated with London Road level crossing changes;
- A bus priority route adjacent to the A41, on the Banbury Road, and
- The realignment of Howes Lane.



QUESTION 36: Are there any other transport schemes that you think should be delivered at Bicester?

Core Policy 72: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Bicester Area

- 5.24. We are proposing that Bicester accommodate a significant number of new homes and jobs to 2040. It is therefore important to secure highways improvements to accommodate this growth.
- 5.25. A south-east link road is identified in Oxfordshire County Council's Bicester Area Strategy. The road will connect the two sections of the A41 north of the village of Wendlebury. The exact location and alignment of the road will be confirmed as this Plan progresses.
- 5.26. Careful consideration will need to be given to ecological constraints, historic assets, the crossing of the railway line, the relationship with employment land and potential impacts on Wendlebury. The link road will be designed to support active travel and include separate walking and cycling routes.

Core Policy 72: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Bicester Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- Land for a south-east link road north of Wendlebury;
- A bus priority route adjacent to the A41, on the Banbury Road, and
- The realignment of Howes Lane.

Development will not be permitted should it prevent the use of land for the delivery and implementation of the identified schemes (Appendix 5).



QUESTION 37: Are there any other areas of land that you think should be safeguarded for transport schemes at Bicester?

Core Policy 73: Delivery of Green and other Strategic Infrastructure in the Bicester Area

- 5.27. Bicester’s Garden Town status and its designation as a Healthy New Town emphasises the importance of protecting, expanding, and enhancing its green infrastructure networks.
- 5.28. Our last Local Plan sought to secure an urban edge park around the town. Other key open spaces include Bure Park, Pingle Fields and Bicester Fields. Garth Park is the main town park providing a mix of recreation provision. Local Wildlife Sites at Gavray Drive, Graven Hill and Bicester Wetland Reserve also form part of the town’s Green Infrastructure network, and the Ray Conservation Target Area incorporates the first of these sites in the south-east of the town. The new Burnehyll Community Woodland is being created to the south-west of the town.
- 5.29. We have published a Green Infrastructure Strategy alongside this plan that identifies a number of opportunities for Bicester to develop a successful green infrastructure network.

Open Space and Recreation Facilities

- 5.30. Our emerging Playing Pitch Strategy identifies shortfalls of provision to meet quantitative needs for football (both natural grass pitches and artificial grass pitches) and rugby union, and recommends qualitative improvements to grass pitches for all pitch sports and associated facilities.
- 5.31. Initial indications from the 2022 Built Facilities Study are that there is a requirement to continue to invest in indoor and built facilities in Cherwell and there is a need for new provision in the Bicester area in order to support expected population growth. This could take the form of an expansion of the existing leisure centre provision.
- 5.32. We will expect that all the strategic allocations at Bicester will provide for open space and recreation. There is potential for each of the strategic sites in Bicester to become specialist hubs for different types of sports facilities and recreation. The provision of open space and recreation facilities at strategic sites will be confirmed as the Local Plan progresses. Areas of existing open space in Bicester will continue to be protected.

Core Policy 73: Delivery of Green and other Strategic Infrastructure in the Bicester Area

All development will be required to protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure and assets in the Bicester area, as shown by maps in Appendix 6 and the Adopted Policies Map.

Contributions will be sought towards the strategic projects identified in the Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the Bicester area including their enhancement and on-going management costs, including:

- Establishing an urban edge park around the outskirts of the town, by protecting the existing network of green spaces and securing new open space and linear route provision linked with public footpaths/ cycleways, to create a circular route with connections to the town centre and the countryside beyond;
- Establishing a green corridor containing a community woodland between Vendee Drive and Chesterton;
- The restoration and use of Stratton Audley Quarry for informal outdoor recreation, provided that the proposals are compatible with the site's designation as a Local Wildlife Site and partial SSSI;
- Extending and enhancing connections from residential areas to the town centre and outward from Bicester to and within; Ardley cutting and Quarry SSSI, Langford Meadows and Gavray wildlife meadows, Bignell Park and past the reservoir between Bicester and Chesterton, local nature sites surrounding Bicester Airfield, and to the south of Bicester;
- The greening of Sheep Street, Causeway and Church Street, Market Square, Garth Park, Bicester North Station, Bicester village station, and Bicester village;
- Re-naturalise and enhance Bicester's river corridors and floodplains as multi-functional areas: including Langford Brook at Langford Meadows, through South Bicester and beyond the A41 and the River Bure and the floodplain around Bure Park, and
- The establishment of new burial grounds in Bicester.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the schemes listed.



QUESTION 38: Is there other green and blue infrastructure you think should be delivered at Bicester?

Bicester Town Centre and Areas of Change

- 5.33. Bicester has a small, historic town centre with a market and retail centre. In recent years there has been significant investment in Bicester including the opening of Pioneer Square with a new seven screen cinema, large supermarket, multi-storey car park, smaller retail outlets, and civic buildings including a library and a new hotel. However, in common with many high streets, the closure of some shops has resulted in vacancies and empty units. This has made some areas of the centre feel less vibrant and less attractive to visitors. We recognise that a successful and vibrant town centre is important to the local economy, and engenders local pride in the town.
- 5.34. Bicester Village is a premium designer shopping and tourist destination of regional, national, and international significance comprising over 170 units. It is a key economic driver within Cherwell and employs around 3,500 people directly and many others indirectly.
- 5.35. Our 2022 Retail Study identified a number of challenges and opportunities for Bicester town centre. It recommended further investment into its public realm and the quality of the environment, to create a more attractive and distinctive space.
- 5.36. It flagged the opportunity for increased leisure and eating-out venues, which could go some way to repurposing vacant shopping units and also noted that although Bicester Market is popular it does not perform to its full potential.
- 5.37. The Retail Study also noted the lack of connections between the town centre and Bicester Village which should be improved. There are also opportunities for the town centre to capitalise on the visitors brought to Bicester Village by offering an alternative and complementary experience.
- 5.38. The Retail Study concluded that there was an over provision of comparison retail floorspace in both Banbury and Bicester, and that overall there was no additional need for comparison or convenience floorspace across the district up to 2040. The study also concluded that any further out of centre expansion to Banbury or Bicester's comparison fashion offer would be seriously detrimental to the vitality and viability of both town centres.
- 5.39. To ensure the long-term vitality and viability of Bicester town centre, we will apply a 'town centre first' approach to retail, services, and other main town centre uses. New retail development will continue to be focused in Bicester town centre and all new development will be required to be built to high design standards. We will resist further major out of centre retail development, due to the impact on the vitality and viability of Bicester town centre.

Core Policy 74: Bicester Areas of Change

5.40. We have identified a number of opportunity areas have been identified within and close to Bicester Town Centre.

Site 1: Claremont Car Park/ Deans Court:

This site lends itself to residential use given its proximity to the Town Centre and existing housing areas.

Site 2: Bure Place/ Wesley Lane/Sheep Street:

This site provides an opportunity for sensitive remodelling to provide public realm and design improvements and could include new restaurants or space for leisure operators fronting Bure Place. Residential units on upper floors would help improve the attractiveness of this area and improve footfall, vibrancy and greater commercial returns for the leisure, food and beverage sector.

Site 3: Market Place (Square):

This area offers the opportunity to become a focal point of the Town Centre and a venue for periodic events that could drive interest and footfall in Bicester. Removal of car parking would facilitate improvements to the public realm, including widening of pavements, enable outside seating for the nearby food and beverage traders and create an attractive 'café culture' environment where visitors will want to spend more time.

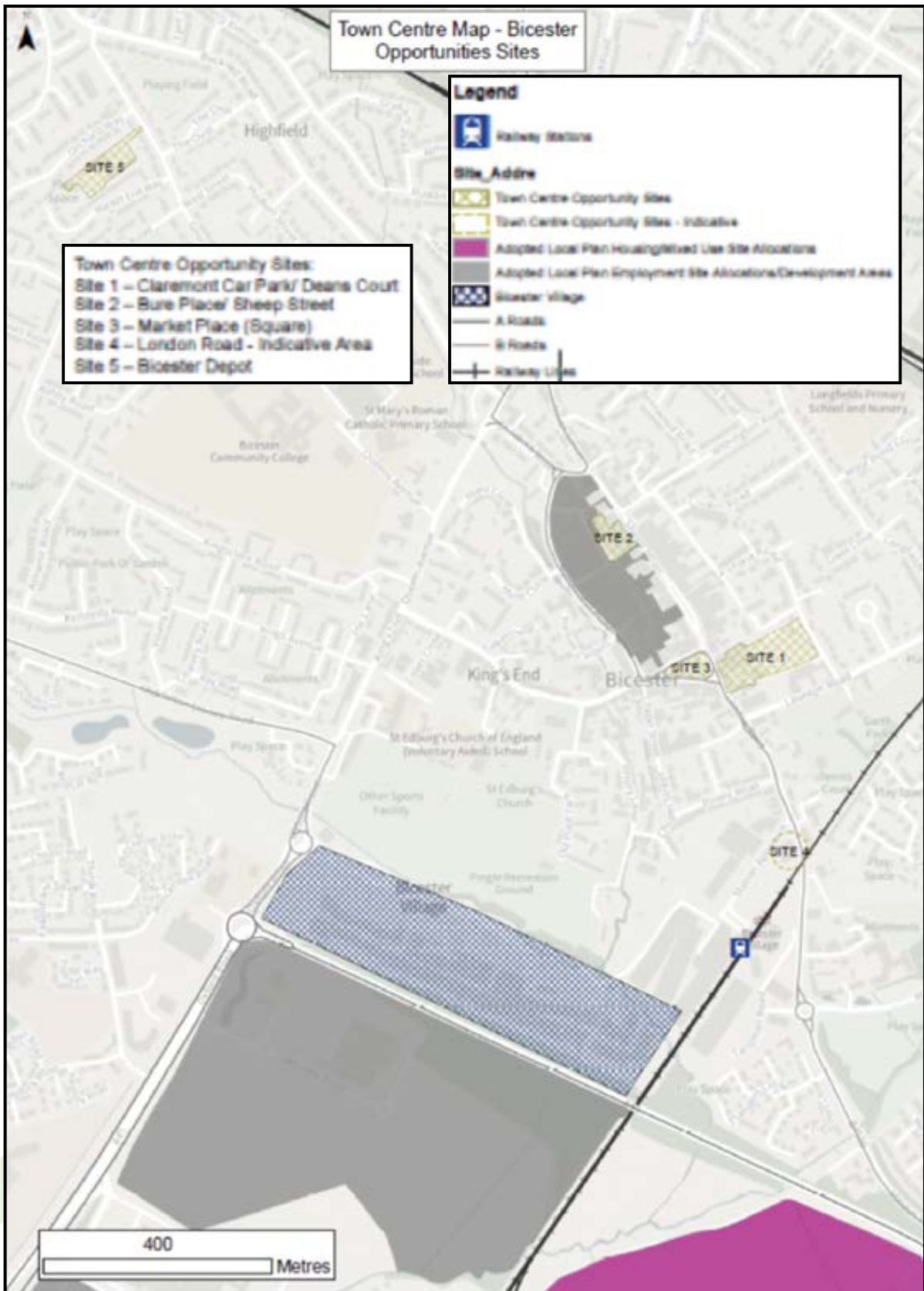
Site 4: London Road Area:

The upgrades to East West Rail will necessitate the existing level crossing being closed for up to 50 minutes every hour and so there is an opportunity to provide positive change to the area which could include new parking and cycling and pedestrian links across the railway line.

Site 5: Bicester Council Depot:

The Council owns this site which is currently used for Council functions. The site is surrounded by residential development and there is a need for Council operations to locate to another site in Bicester. A site at Graven Hill has been identified. The existing site could be suitable for redevelopment for residential development.

Bicester Town Centre Areas of Change



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Core Policy 74: Bicester Areas of Change

Five areas of change have been identified within or close to the centre of Bicester as listed below and shown on the Policies Map and Bicester Town Centre Areas of Change map, which are identified for specific change:

Site 1: Claremont Car Park/ Deans Court

Site 2: Bure Place/ Wesley Lane/Sheep Street

Site 3: Market Place (Square)

Site 4: London Road Area

Site 5: Bicester Depot

These areas are supported as locations for change and/ or redevelopment in accordance with the following criteria where development should:

- i. Be of a high quality, with well-designed edges securing significant townscape improvements to Bicester and provide opportunities for the 'greening' of Bicester town centre;
- ii. Proposals for the individual sites are prepared through a comprehensive masterplan process providing an integrated solution to site access, traffic management, air quality management, whilst prioritising the pedestrian/ customer environment;
- iii. Be sensitive to any surrounding residential areas and the character and setting of the historic core and heritage assets and promote linkages to the historic core and wider town centre;
- iv. Make a positive contribution to improving sustainable transport connectivity in Bicester, including an increase in capacity and the provision of improved facilities;
- v. Be focused on providing access by sustainable modes of transport including improvements for pedestrians and cyclists such as managed cycle parking facilities, and with no increase in car parking above current levels;
- vi. Improve the public realm, particularly in areas of historic value, such as Sheep Street and Market square, including by removing unnecessary signage and street furniture, and using a simple and durable palette of materials, and
- vii. Residential development will be supported within proposals for the identified sites, particularly on above ground floors.

Masterplanning of Bicester town centre will be supported.



QUESTION 39: Is there other green and blue infrastructure you think should be delivered at Bicester?



QUESTION 40: Are there any other measures should we be taking to improve Bicester town centre?

Bicester's Built Heritage

- 5.41. Bicester's interesting and varied history is perhaps not as widely known or appreciated as other places in the district. The Roman settlement of Alchester scheduled monument lies to the southwest of the town. The remains of an Augustinian priory founded between 1182 and 1185 survive within the town centre which is largely Medieval in origin focused on Sheep Street, King's End and the Causeway. Wretchwick deserted medieval settlement is in the south-east of the town. The historically important former RAF Bicester is now the home of Bicester Motion.
- 5.42. We have a duty to protect these important heritage assets. A key challenge for us is therefore to manage growth in a way that will not unacceptably harm the town's important heritage assets and local distinctiveness.



Core Policy 75: Former RAF Bicester

- 5.43. The Former RAF Bicester is an inter-war airfield situated immediately to the north-east of Bicester. Historically it comprised a 'Domestic Site' and 'Technical Site' together with the large open space of the flying field. The whole of the site is a Conservation Area and most of the buildings and structures are protected by listing and scheduling. In addition, a Local Wildlife Site and proposed extension to the Local Wildlife Site covers a large part of the site.
- 5.44. We worked with the MOD and English Heritage and prepared a planning brief for the site in 2009. This brief recognised the complex issues, and the unique opportunities, raised by the site and the need to maintain and re-use its historic buildings and the flying field. The brief proposed a 'conservation-led' approach to the site, recognising that finding a use that can best preserve the sensitive historic fabric of the buildings may require a flexible approach in terms of the use to which the buildings are put.
- 5.45. Since then significant development has taken place at Bicester airfield providing new jobs and as a key destination for motorsport, new technologies, and events for historic car ownership, reflecting the sites history. A number of companies now occupy converted and new buildings in the south-eastern part of the site. We are keen to support the continued development, particularly as a tourist and leisure destination.
- 5.46. We wish to secure appropriate uses for a long-lasting 'conservation-led' approach to the technical site and flying field. Our aim is to establish uses that will be complementary to, and help enhance, the character and appearance of the conservation area and the nationally important heritage value of the site. We will encourage a mix of uses that will best preserve the sensitive historic fabric and layout of the buildings and the openness of the grass airfield.

Core Policy 75: Former RAF Bicester

Conservation-led proposals for the former RAF Bicester site will be encouraged that help to secure a long-lasting, economically viable future for the technical site and flying field.

Proposals for heritage tourism uses, leisure, recreation, employment and community uses will be particularly encouraged. The development of hotel and conference facilities will also be supported as part of a wider package of employment uses.

All proposals will be required to accord with the latest Conservation Area Appraisal for the site and the 2009 Planning Brief.

Any proposals for the former RAF Bicester site should demonstrate how they will maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, protect listed, scheduled and other important buildings, their setting, and protect the sensitive historic fabric of the buildings and preserve the openness of the airfield. The biodiversity of the site should be protected and enhanced and habitats and species surveys (including a Great Crested Newt survey) should be undertaken.

The continuation of flying use will be supported at the site and opportunities for improving access to the countryside will also be encouraged.



QUESTION 41: Do you agree with our proposed approach to development proposals at Former RAF Bicester?

CHAPTER 6: **Kidlington Area Strategy**

Kidlington Vision 2040

- 6.1. In 2040 the Kidlington area will continue to be an attractive place to live, visit and invest:
- We will have delivered the 4,400 homes already planned to help Oxford's unmet housing needs;
 - Kidlington will be a local hub for employment and investment opportunities with attractive services and community facilities;
 - Our residents and visitors will enjoy a high quality of life with improved access to natural green spaces and affordable housing;
 - The area will be one of the best connected in Oxfordshire where people can and want to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Kidlington Policies

Core Policy 76: Kidlington Strategy

- 6.2. To achieve this vision, our strategy for the Kidlington area is to:

Overall Spatial Strategy

- Strengthen Kidlington's role as a Local Service Centre;
- Continue to support investment in key economic assets including the Village Centre, London-Oxford Airport, Begbroke Science Park and at Langford Lane;
- Improve the built and 'green' environment of Kidlington Village Centre;
- Ensure the successful implementation of the committed 4,400 homes to help Oxford's housing needs so that the planned benefits for the communities of Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Begbroke and Yarnton are delivered.

Kidlington Area Strategy

- Support a strong local economy with a focus on high value employment uses at Langford Lane and Begbroke centred on the Oxford Technology Park, London Oxford Airport and Begbroke Science Park;
- Deliver new planned neighbourhoods at Yarnton, Begbroke and Gosford and Water Eaton with community facilities and infrastructure supporting greener sustainable living.



- Support proposals that enhance the attractiveness and visibility of Kidlington's centre;
- Promote an enhanced role for Kidlington as a local service centre with new business and homes in/near the village's centre and an improved cultural and leisure/night economy offer;
- Improve access for all residents to high quality community facilities, sports and recreation spaces, and support improved health care facilities with the expansion of existing GP surgeries or a new facility;
- Securing high-quality well-designed and accessible buildings and public spaces;
- Provide enough market and affordable homes to address local needs;
- Protect and enhance the townscape and landscape that form the setting of Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Shipton on Cherwell and Thrupp, Begbroke and Yarnton and maintain their local distinctiveness;
- Protect and enhance areas of high natural capital value in the Cherwell Valley and the wider region including Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the proposed Otmoor, Bernwood and Ray Nature Park;
- Support increased access to nature, open spaces and the Green Belt with specific opportunities to 'green' Kidlington's centre and secure improvements to the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridors;
- Build on the area's excellent links to Oxford, Bicester and London by public transport and work with County and Parish councils to deliver safe and inclusive routes that facilitate car free movements as the first choice for residents and visitors;
- Support the delivery of Kidlington's Local Cycling and Walking Plan with new and enhanced walking and cycling routes linking Kidlington to the surrounding villages of Hampton Poyle, Islip, Yarnton, Begbroke, Thrupp, Shipton-on- Cherwell;
- Work with the Environment Agency, Thames Water and Oxfordshire County Council to mitigate surface water run off through appropriate sustainable drainage infrastructure and look for opportunities for betterment where flood risk is already present.



QUESTION 42: What are your views on our aspirations for the Kidlington area?

Housing

- 6.3. Over the next ten years some parts of the Kidlington area will see significant change, following the allocation of 4,400 new homes in the 2020 Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan. This is planned in six housing allocations located in the north of Oxford (PR6a and PR6b), Kidlington and southeast of Kidlington (PR7a and PR7b) and east and west of the A44 at Yarnton and Begbroke (PR8 and PR9).
- 6.4. We have prepared development briefs to help the delivery of these new neighbourhoods, guide their integration with the existing local communities and secure new schools and community facilities in the area.
- 6.5. In this Plan we need to consider the number and types of homes to support Kidlington's need for market and affordable housing. Although we have a very significant level of housing already committed in the adopted Local Plans, no land has been identified for allocation to address local needs of the Kidlington area.
- 6.6. The 2015 Local Plan stated that housing requirements and the development strategy for Kidlington could be achieved "without the need for a strategic review of the Green Belt in the District", and that "small scale affordable housing schemes to meet specifically identified local housing need may be met through the release of rural exception sites as part of the development control process, in accordance with Policy Villages 3".
- 6.7. In the past twenty-three years, there have been fewer than 500 new homes built in Kidlington and we know this is one of the most expensive places to buy a home in Cherwell.
- 6.8. The area's prosperity, good transport connections and proximity to Oxford are likely to explain higher property prices in this area. The recent increase on the subdivision of larger dwellings may be partly in response to this demand.
- 6.9. We consider Kidlington's future important social and economic role is unlikely to be achieved by relying on a rural strategy and being dependent on rural exception sites coming forward.
- 6.10. Within the current affordability context and the limited number of homes made available in the past for local needs, we think there is scope to explore the allocation of housing on the edge of Kidlington to support affordable homes and balance the needs of the growing local economy.

- 6.11. The availability of land outside Kidlington's urban area is constrained by the Oxford Green Belt. However, Kidlington is one of our most sustainable areas and we will need to weigh the importance of protecting the Green Belt with wider sustainability factors.
- 6.12. We have identified two sites for consideration: South-East of Woodstock and North of the Moors, the latter lying within the Oxford Green Belt.
- South-East of Woodstock is well connected by sustainable transport modes to a wide range of employment, services and facilities in the area;
 - North of the Moors is a sustainable site, well-connected to a wide range of existing local services and facilities, including public transport, but also makes limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes.
- 6.13. Both sites could contribute positively to supporting market and affordable housing in one of our most sustainable areas. Given their relatively large size, the sites could also help support much needed facilities and community infrastructure for existing and new residents.
- 6.14. We have prepared an illustrative map showing the extent of potential Green Belt review if North of the Moors was taken forward for allocation (Appendix 4).



QUESTION 43: Do you think these sites in the Kidlington area should be explored further for potential allocation for housing?



QUESTION 44: Are there any alternative housing sites for the Kidlington area you wish to suggest?

- 6.15. We are required to make as much use as possible of suitable brownfield and underutilised land before looking at countryside or Green Belt land. Before we can conclude that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to the Green Belt boundaries, we need to fully examine all other reasonable options.
- 6.16. Although we have not taken any formal views yet, we have followed up the 2017 Green Belt Site Study with an additional report. This is to understand the current context following the release of Green Belt land in the 2020 Local Plan Partial Review. Further work is being prepared.
- 6.17. We have identified opportunity areas within and near Kidlington's centre for mixed-use development including housing, but to make sure we make best use of urban capacity we will explore further the availability and suitability of small-scale housing sites within Kidlington's urban area before formally proposing land for allocation.

The Economy

- 6.18. Kidlington plays an important role in the wider economy of Cherwell. Its diverse economic base ranges from research and development to light industrial and commercial businesses and it has strong links with Oxford.
- 6.19. London Oxford Airport (Thames Valley area's primary regional and business aviation airport), the University of Oxford's Begbroke Science Park and the wider Langford Lane commercial area sit strategically in the Oxfordshire 'knowledge spine' halfway between Oxford and Bicester. Begbroke Science Park is an area identified in the *Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy* for further growth opportunities in advanced engineering and medical technology.
- 6.20. The 2011 Census travel to work data indicates there were c. 9,700 people living in Kidlington in employment and around 77% of those (8,100 people) were commuting to work. The majority of those commuting to work (44%) travelled to Oxford.
- 6.21. As 'small area data' is released from the 2021 Census we will gain a better understanding of how employment and travel to work patterns have changed in the area in the past decade. Nonetheless, we think there is an opportunity to improve the alignment of housing and employment in this area with its good connectivity to Oxford, Bicester and Oxford Parkway. This is likely to support further changes in commuting patterns aligned to sustainable transportation, especially to parts of Oxford and the District's main towns of Bicester and Banbury.
- 6.22. Our last Local Plan (2015) identified the need for a small-scale Green Belt Review around the employment clusters formed by the London Oxford Airport and Langford Lane industrial area, and Begbroke Science Park to support high value employment needs.
- 6.23. A review undertaken in 2016 concluded Green Belt exceptional circumstances exist and land for area A was removed from the Green Belt in the 2020 Local Plan Partial Review following the Plan's examination. At the time, it was noted that a new Technology Park had been granted permission in the Langford Lane area (area B) but that it would be for this emerging Plan to address the employment needs.
- 6.24. Since then, some 8 hectares of land were granted planning permission for a technology park at Langford Lane (currently under construction) and the 2020 Partial Review of the Local Plan reserved 14.7 hectares of land for the potential expansion of Begbroke Science Park. This Plan proposes the

allocation of 14.7 hectares of additional employment land to support the expansion of Begbroke Science Park.

- 6.25. Begbroke Science Park hosts the Oxford University departments of Engineering Science and Materials, the Oxford Materials Characterisation Service and a large number of successful spin-outs and start-ups leading on research and technology. The proposed expansion will support Oxford University in transforming the science park into an Innovation District and deliver the *Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy's* aspirations for the development of a major innovation quarter for UK and international collaboration and commercial research and development.
- 6.26. Retained Policy PR8 together with the allocation for the extension of Begbroke Science Park in this Plan will establish a highly sustainable and innovative urban neighbourhood with strong links to Kidlington Village Centre, to Oxford, and nearby communities of Yarnton and Begbroke.
- 6.27. A Development Brief for retained policy PR8 will guide the design principles for the delivery of the Science Park expansion and associated infrastructure and community facilities.



QUESTION 45: Do you agree with the employment sites we have selected at Kidlington to accommodate new employment development?



QUESTION 46: Are there any alternative sites to accommodate housing and employment needs that you think are more suitable?

- 6.28. Commercial development is already being delivered in the Technology Park at Langford Lane in recognition of the identified need in the 2015 Local Plan. A planning application for further commercial development at London Oxford Airport is currently pending determination.
- 6.29. We commissioned additional Green Belt evidence to help inform decisions on a small-scale review of the Green Belt in the Langford Lane area.
- 6.30. We consider there is a case to adjust the current Green Belt boundary on the southern side of Langford Lane to reflect the relationship between recently developed and open land following the development of the Oxford Technology Park.

- 6.31. We are also considering the appropriateness of adjustments to the Green Belt north of Langford Lane in and around the London Oxford Airport (LOA) area. However, this is far more complex. The distinction between the Business Park and functional airfield related development may preserve some contribution to safeguarding the countryside.
- 6.32. LOA benefits from permitted development rights for airport related development on the airport's operational land. *Core Policy 22* supports the continued use of LOA for commercial aviation and ancillary uses and guides proposals affecting the airport's operations.
- 6.33. The airport is a regional centre for commercial aviation and training. There may be opportunities for research and technology business to be established at or near the airport, but we would like to ensure the airport has sufficient land for operational purposes now and in the future without placing undue pressure on the larger site area where the potential harm to Green Belt purposes may be greater.
- 6.34. We have prepared an illustrative map showing the extent of potential Green Belt adjustments (Appendix 4).



QUESTION 47: Should this Plan adjust Green Belt boundaries in the Langford Lane area in response to recently developed land?



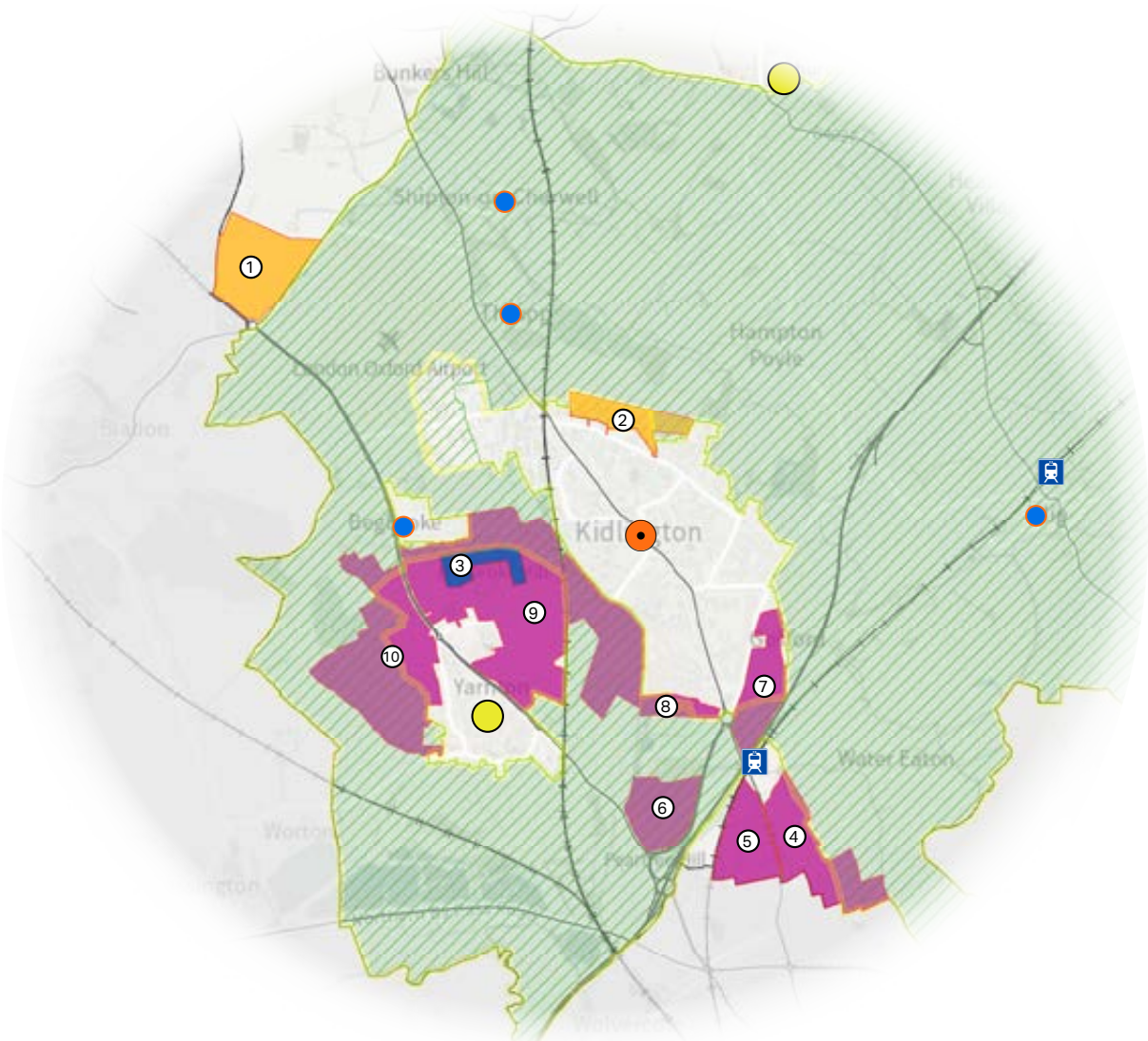
QUESTION 48: Should land for employment use be identified at London Oxford Airport?



Kidlington Area Heritage

- 6.35. The heritage and history of Kidlington and surrounding villages is closely related to the setting of the River Cherwell, their proximity to Oxford and the 19th century developments of the Oxford Canal and railway.
- 6.36. The villages are predominantly inset within the Oxford Green Belt, which amongst other purposes, intends restraining development pressure which could affect the character of Oxford City and its heritage setting.
- 6.37. The Oxford Canal is a designated Conservation Area along its whole length, including through Kidlington. Many of the Canal bridges and locks are listed.
- 6.38. The 13th Century Grade I Listed Church of St Mary the Virgin is the focal point of the Church Street character area, prominent in views from across the flood meadows of the River Cherwell and forms an important view to the wider setting of Hampton Poyle Conservation Area north of the River Cherwell.
- 6.39. Begbroke's Conservation Area, west of the A44 includes nine buildings and their grounds. The special character of the Conservation Area is the use of local materials in traditional styles within large maturely vegetated plots, bordered by dry stone walls. Care should be taken to ensure that the open parts of the Conservation Area and the land which make up its setting and impact positively on its appearance remain open.
- 6.40. In the wider setting, the World Heritage Site (WHS) of Blenheim Palace, registered park and associated setting on the southeast edge of Woodstock are of high significance. The setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, the ancient route of the 'Ridgeway' along the West Oxfordshire/Cherwell Border and the proximity of Bladon Conservation Area are also important heritage considerations.
- 6.41. The grounds of Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (WHS) are situated to the east of the A44 in close proximity to London Oxford Airport that sits in the Oxford Green Belt. To the north of the airport and adjoining Woodstock's boundary there are the buried remains of a Roman villa and associated fields, the designated Blenheim Villa Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).
- 6.42. North of Campsfield Road, existing woodland belts contain views of the approach to Woodstock and other wooded areas such as Campsfield Wood, in contrast with the openness of the landscape to the south.

Kidlington Area Strategy Map



LEGEND

- Local Plan 2040: preferred residential site allocation**
- ① South East of Woodstock/Upper Campfield Road (LPR002)
- ② North of the Moors (LPR8a)
- Local Plan 2040: preferred employment site allocation**
- ③ Begbroke Science Park (LPR63)
- Saved Allocations: Local Plan Partial Review**
- ④ Land East of Oxford Road
- ⑤ Land West of Oxford Road
- ⑥ Land at Frieze Farm
- ⑦ Land SE Kidlington
- ⑧ Land at Stratefield Farm
- ⑨ Land East of the A44
- ⑩ Land West of Yarnton

- Train Station
- Green Belt
- Proposed Green Belt Boundary
- Local Plan 2040: Settlement Hierarchy**
- Main Towns
- Local Service Centre
- Large Village
- Small Village

Core Policy 76: Kidlington Area Strategy

Our over-arching priority for this area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and employment together with the infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development.

Development in the Kidlington Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in *Core Policy 34*.

Housing Delivery: 900 homes will be delivered at Kidlington between 2020 and 2040 including the following strategic site allocations:

Site	Housing numbers 2020-2040	
South-East of Woodstock	450	New Site Allocation
North of the Moors	300	New Site Allocation

The following existing strategic site policies are retained and will not be replaced:

- Policy PR6a – Land East of Oxford Road
- Policy PR6b – Land West of Oxford Road
- Policy PR6c – Land at Frieze Farm
- Policy PR7a – Land South East of Kidlington
- Policy PR7b – Land at Stratfield Farm 1
- Policy PR8 – Land East of the A44
- Policy PR9 – Land West of Yarnton

A further allowance will be made for ‘windfalls’ of less than 10 dwellings on previously developed sites within the built-up area of Kidlington.

Employment: 14.7 hectares of employment land will be provided for business and employment growth on new strategic employment allocations as follows:

Site	Employment Hectares
Begbroke Science Park – Expansion	14.7

Core Policy 77: London-Oxford Airport

- 6.43. The London Oxford Airport (LOA) operates as a private airport and is the area's primary regional and business aviation centre. LOA is the only commercial airport between Birmingham and London Heathrow and makes a significant contribution to the local and regional economy as a major infrastructure facility, local employer and supports the growing knowledge base and innovation sector in the area.
- 6.44. Current airport activities include general and business aviation uses, pilot training base (CAE Oxford Aviation Academy) and aircraft maintenance. Airbus Helicopters UK's headquarters are based at the airport. Complementary activities include aerospace/aviation related industries and research and development.
- 6.45. Construction of a new c. 7,000m² hangar with two bays including rear offices, stores and workshops commenced in 2021.
- 6.46. LOA intends to set a programme for the replacement of existing older hangars with new facilities. It will be important that the airport's future and modernisation plans embrace all opportunities for carbon reduction, from the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (lifecycle carbon reduction of up to 80% compared to the traditional jet fuel) to more efficient aircraft design, and the development of future technologies like electrification.
- 6.47. LOA benefits from permitted development rights which in consultation with the Council could allow airport related development on the airport's operational land. A section 106 agreement restricts the airport's maximum annual operating capacity to 160,000 movements per year.
- 6.48. Support will be given to appropriate aviation related development proposals and the airport's contribution to the local and regional economy. The Council will seek clear mitigation measures effectively addressing any aviation related environmental or health concerns.
- 6.49. Airport safeguarded areas refer to a designated zone of exclusion, in which the Aerodrome Operator can, in consultation with the Local Planning Authority, consult on development proposals to protect the environment surrounding the airport from development. Reasons for preventing development would include activities that have the potential to impact the aerodrome's safe operation,

or sensitive development that would likely be negatively and inappropriately impacted by the aerospace itself. Safeguarding ensures:

- i. Buildings and structures in the area do not pose a danger to aircraft;
- ii. The integrity of radar and other electronic aids to navigation are not affected;
- iii. Inappropriate lighting is not present, to avoid confusion with aeronautical lighting;
- iv. No increase in wildlife risk (e.g. bird strikes);
- v. Operations that could create interference through construction processes are prevented;
- vi. Aircraft are not impacted by potential 'glint & glare' from development (e.g. solar panels).

6.50. LOA's safeguarded airspace measures two nautical miles (3.704km) in radius, centred around the Airfield Reference Point, the mid-point of the main instrument runway.

6.51. Airport related development within the safeguard area, and elsewhere, must be held to the same standards as other development, as set out within the supporting policies.

Aircraft noise

6.52. Aircraft noise is generally exempt from the general noise nuisance controls. The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for the control of aircraft noise. However, the Civil Aviation Authority indicates the overall policy is that noise issues are best handled at a local level by the airport and the relevant local authority, engaging with people who are affected by noise.

6.53. In order to determine whether or not any specific development is likely to increase 'noise nuisance' from aircraft, the Council will seek to assess the impact of that development in terms of:

- i. The number, location, duration and frequency of aircraft activities or movements;
- ii. The noise levels and sound frequencies (Hz) associated with individual aircraft activities or movements;
- iii. The noise levels and sound frequencies (Hz) associated with overall aircraft activities or movements;
- iv. Seasonality of aircraft activities or movements;
- v. The time of day at which aircraft activities or movements take place.

Core Policy 77: London Oxford Airport

The Council will support the continued use of London Oxford Airport for commercial aviation and ancillary uses.

It will consult with the airport operator on proposals in the airport's safeguarded areas, as shown by the Policies Map and Appendix 11. Development that may be a hazard to aircraft safety will not be permitted.

In consultation with the Airport Operator, the Council will ensure that:

- i. Areas included in airport safeguarding areas are protected from development, and
- ii. Sensitive uses such as housing, education and hospitals are not located in areas significantly affected by aircraft noise without acceptable mitigation measures.

Development proposals at the airport should include mitigation measures to address any environmental and health impacts, particularly in respect of noise, air quality, health, and climate change in compliance with other *Development Plan* policies.

Any proposals for development on the wider airport, that fall within the Oxford Green Belt, will need to comply with related *Development Plan* policies, including for development in the Green Belt.

Core Policy 78: Delivery of Strategic Transport within the Kidlington Area

6.54. The Kidlington area is one of the best connected in Oxfordshire. The Oxford Road/Banbury Road (A4260) and Woodstock Road (A44) link Kidlington and surrounding villages with Oxford City centre, Woodstock and the north of Cherwell. The A34, A40 and Oxford Parkway railway station provides easy access to Bicester, Oxford, London and the wider region.

6.55. Langford Lane and Upper Campsfield Road (A4095) to the north and Frieze Farm to the south are important east-west connecting routes between the A44 and A4260 corridors.

6.56. The A34 is a major strategic route carrying freight from Southampton to the Midlands. It crosses the western edge of Kidlington and Gosford as it runs from Bicester Junction 9 of the M40 to Peartree interchange north of Oxford.

- 6.57. The local road network suffers from congestion on its main routes, particular on the accesses to Oxford. The concentration of major road and rail intersections exacerbate congestion in this area.
- 6.58. Traffic congestion and the ability to travel between villages and main centres without the use of a car is a challenge. However, work with Oxfordshire County Council and other partners has secured well-served bus routes providing easy access to Oxford and Bicester and main employment areas, the construction of the Oxford Parkway railway station has improved rail connections to Bicester and London and further public transport improvements are under construction on the A44.
- 6.59. We know there is already a high level of cycling commuting in Kidlington and the walking and cycling proposals in the Kidlington LCWIP will extend safe active travel opportunities to rural areas by linking Kidlington to the villages of Hampton Poyle, Islip, Yarnton, Begbroke, Thrupp and Shipton-on-Cherwell.
- 6.60. Our 2020 Local Plan and the recently adopted *Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (November 2022)* set out a clear strategy and infrastructure program for investing on public transport and active travel in the Kidlington area. Our focus on this Local Plan is to secure their delivery. We will make the most of the locational advantage and good public transport links in the area to support an ambitious shift to car-free travel.
- 6.61. It is important we bring together within this Plan transport and green infrastructure and deliver east-west active travel improvements across the Oxford Canal and the greening of Kidlington's centre as covered by *Core Policy 80*.
- 6.62. The Water Eaton and Peartree Park and Ride sites on the boundary with Oxford provide approximately 1,800 car parking spaces between them. Their main function is the removal of private vehicles from the main corridors into Oxford to help reduce congestion.
- 6.63. In the 2020 Local Plan we indicated the location of a potential Park & Ride on the A44 within London Oxford Airport land to help reduce congestion on the A44 and the A4260 into Oxford and Kidlington.
- 6.64. Oxfordshire County Council are further exploring the future of Park & Rides and their potential to function as transport hubs and electric vehicle charging facilities. We will continue to discuss with the County Council any opportunities to reduce congestion in these corridors and propose to safeguard in principle land for this facility in *Core Policy 78*.

- 6.65. Transport infrastructure is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, the type of facility and its design would need to preserve openness and not be in conflict with the purpose of including land within the Green Belt.

Core Policy 78: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Kidlington Area

In order to deliver the growth in the Kidlington Area, transport infrastructure has been identified to mitigate the impact of planned growth that is important to help secure a viable and sustainable future for Kidlington and the Kidlington Area. The package may be further refined through development of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

Transport infrastructure in the Kidlington area will be required as follows:

- i. Improved bus services and facilities along:
 - a. The A44/A4144 corridor linking Woodstock and Oxford;
 - b. The A4260/A4165 (Oxford Road) linking Kidlington, Gosford, Water Eaton and Oxford;
 - c. Langford Lane, and
 - d. A44 P&R/ Transport Hub.
- ii. The enhancement of the off-carriageway Cycle Track/ Shared Use Path along the western side of the A44 and the provision of at least one pedestrian and cycle and wheelchair crossing over the A44;
- iii. The prioritisation of the A44 over the A4260 as the primary north-south through route for private motor vehicles into and out of Oxford;
- iv. Improved rapid transit/bus services and associated Super Cycleway along the A4260 into Oxford;
- v. Improvements to the public realm through the centre of Kidlington associated with (d) above;
- vi. The provision of new and enhanced pedestrian, cycling and wheelchair routes into and out of Oxford, and
- vii. The provision of the proposed cycle route network in Kidlington's Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP).

All development within the Kidlington area will be required to contribute in accordance with *Core Policy 51: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services*. This will include contributions towards the infrastructure identified within the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan.



QUESTION 49: Do you have any comments on the transport schemes proposed for the Kidlington area?

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Core Policy 79: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Kidlington Area

6.66. Our transport evidence to date lists the strategic transport improvements currently identified in the Local Transport Plan area strategies, and Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy for the Kidlington area. We will need to test the impact of our Local Plan proposals on the transport network and take a view in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council on whether the schemes should be delivered during the lifetime of this Plan. At this stage we are just highlighting their potential for safeguarding.

Core Policy 79: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Kidlington Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- Improved bus services and facilities along the A44/A4260;
- A44 P&R/Transport Hub, and
- Proposed cycle and walking route network in Kidlington's Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP).

Development will not be permitted should it prevent the use of land for the delivery and implementation of the identified schemes (Appendix 5).



QUESTION 50: Are there any other areas of land that you think should be safeguarded for transport schemes in the Kidlington area?

Core Policy 80: Kidlington Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 6.67. The Kidlington area has a good range of community facilities. Recreational spaces and sports grounds at Orchard and Park Hill recreation grounds, Ron Groves, Exeter Close and Stratfield Brake provide green space, sports and play facilities serving the wider area alongside smaller green spaces and play parks.
- 6.68. Six primary schools at Kidlington, Gosford and Yarnton, a secondary school at Gosford Hill and further planned primary and secondary schools at Begbroke and Water Eaton will serve current and future education needs.
- 6.69. The Integrated Care Board, local GP practices and parish and district councils have explored opportunities for new health care facilities to extend the patient

capacity of the two GP practices. Exeter Hall has been the preferred location for a health hub for some time but with the local GP practices already at capacity, other opportunities including increasing capacity at Yarnton may need to be secured if feasibility work undertaken by the Parish Council shows Exeter Hall cannot accommodate a health centre expansion.

- 6.70. Evidence supporting the 2015 Local Plan and the 2016 Kidlington Master Plan indicated a shortage of parks and gardens, allotments and playing pitches in the area.
- 6.71. Our 2020 Local Plan addressed this shortage with new natural and seminatural open spaces, recreational areas and formal sports provision including c. 4 hectares of land for strategic sports provision south-east of Kidlington complementing key sports facilities at neighbouring Stratfield Brake.
- 6.72. We will deliver this commitment and set up new policies in the emerging Plan seeking the protection of existing and planned facilities and setting standards for new provision through new development.
- 6.73. The leisure centre at Gosford and health & fitness offer at Langford Lane provide for indoor sports facilities but further facilities will be required to 2040. The planned secondary school at Begbroke is expected to offer shared use of a new four-court sports hall and the swimming facilities at Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre will require expansion.
- 6.74. The 2020 Local Plan Partial Review addressed some of the green Infrastructure and recreational open space opportunities along the canal identified in the 2016 Master Plan and provides for additional facilities in the area including the need for new and improved community and strategic infrastructure including education, health, sports and community facilities is being considered through the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that accompanies this Plan to ensure facilities are secured from new development.
- 6.75. The River Cherwell and Oxford Canal are important green infrastructure corridors for biodiversity and active travel connecting Kidlington towards Oxford and gives access to the wider countryside beyond. Open spaces and areas of high natural and landscape value stretch along the river and canal lengths and frame the setting of Kidlington, surrounding villages and that of Oxford. The area includes open spaces such as the woodland and wetland habitats at Stratfield Brake, Begbroke Wood Local Wildlife Site and Rushy Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest as well as the open spaces in the Lower Cherwell Conservation Target Area. All of which contribute to Oxfordshire's nature recovery network.

- 6.76. The Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2022 has been prepared to ensure we, our partners and local community, have a framework which supports increased access to nature, open space and the Green Belt, help us conserve our heritage, landscape and natural environment, makes us more resilient to climate change and support active travel.
- 6.77. In the Kidlington Area, the strategy addresses the network of green spaces and routes, landscape and water features shaped by the canal and River Cherwell as well as the greening of Kidlington's urban area. The strategy identifies area specific opportunities and sets projects for the protection of green spaces and increased wider benefits to people and biodiversity. Importantly, it sets the area in a wider natural context with links to important spaces within the Oxford Meadows and Farmoor conservation target area and the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation further south.
- 6.78. Priorities to 2040 include:
1. Protecting the function of the river Cherwell floodplain;
 2. Protecting areas of green space of high natural capital and nature recovery value surrounding Kidlington and surrounding villages set within the two conservation target areas: Lower Cherwell Valley CTA and Oxford Meadows and Farmoor CTA;
 3. Improving blue corridor connectivity along the canal and river corridors;
 4. Supporting active travel through integrated green infrastructure to help reduce daily commutes to Oxford;
 5. Supporting improvements to the River Cherwell's water quality.

Core Policy 80: Kidlington Green and Blue Infrastructure

The Council will require all development proposals to protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure and assets in the Kidlington area as shown by maps in Appendix 6 and the Adopted Policies Map.

The Council will seek contributions towards the strategic projects identified in the Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the Kidlington area including their enhancement and on-going management costs, including:

- i. Expanding and enhancing Kidlington's network of footpaths and trails;
- ii. Enhancing the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell blue corridors;
- iii. New and enhanced access to the canal and river, and
- iv. Greening Kidlington village centre and supporting walking and cycling.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the schemes listed.



QUESTION 51: Do you have any comments on the green and blue infrastructure proposed for the Kidlington area?

Core Policy 81: Kidlington Areas of Change

- 6.79. In the past ten years, recent retail/town centre developments, with office and residential uses above and public realm improvements, have helped consolidate the village centre. Today, the centre has a strong service offer and very low vacancy rates.
- 6.80. Looking to 2040, investing in village centre spaces and improving their accessibility and visibility will be key to support Kidlington's role as a local service centre.
- 6.81. The recent completion of a 100-room hotel at Langford Lane has helped increase the accommodation offer in the area. Enhancements to the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridors and a focus on strengthening the village centre and public realm will increase opportunities for leisure activities and improve the attractiveness of the area as a destination.
- 6.82. Our Retail and Town Centre Study made specific recommendations for the village centre and its spaces including:
- i. Prioritise improvements to the public realm and arrival experience to the centre:
 - Improve the attractiveness of the Banbury Road/Oxford Road approach to the village centre to enhance arrival experience;
 - Provide of a gateway to the village centre;
 - Increase the visibility Kidlington Centre as a whole and Kidlington Centre arcade including further signage, and
 - Improvements to make the west of High Street/Watts Way area a focal point and increase its use.
 - ii. Encourage clustering of evening economy/leisure uses for example around the pedestrianised square (west of High Street/Watts Way);
 - iii. Improve the availability of private & affordable housing and senior living in the village centre;
 - iv. The village centre boundary should broadly reflect the existing boundary except for a residential dwelling to the west of the Black Bull Public House which is recommended to be removed, and
 - v. Drawing a compact Primary Shopping Area.

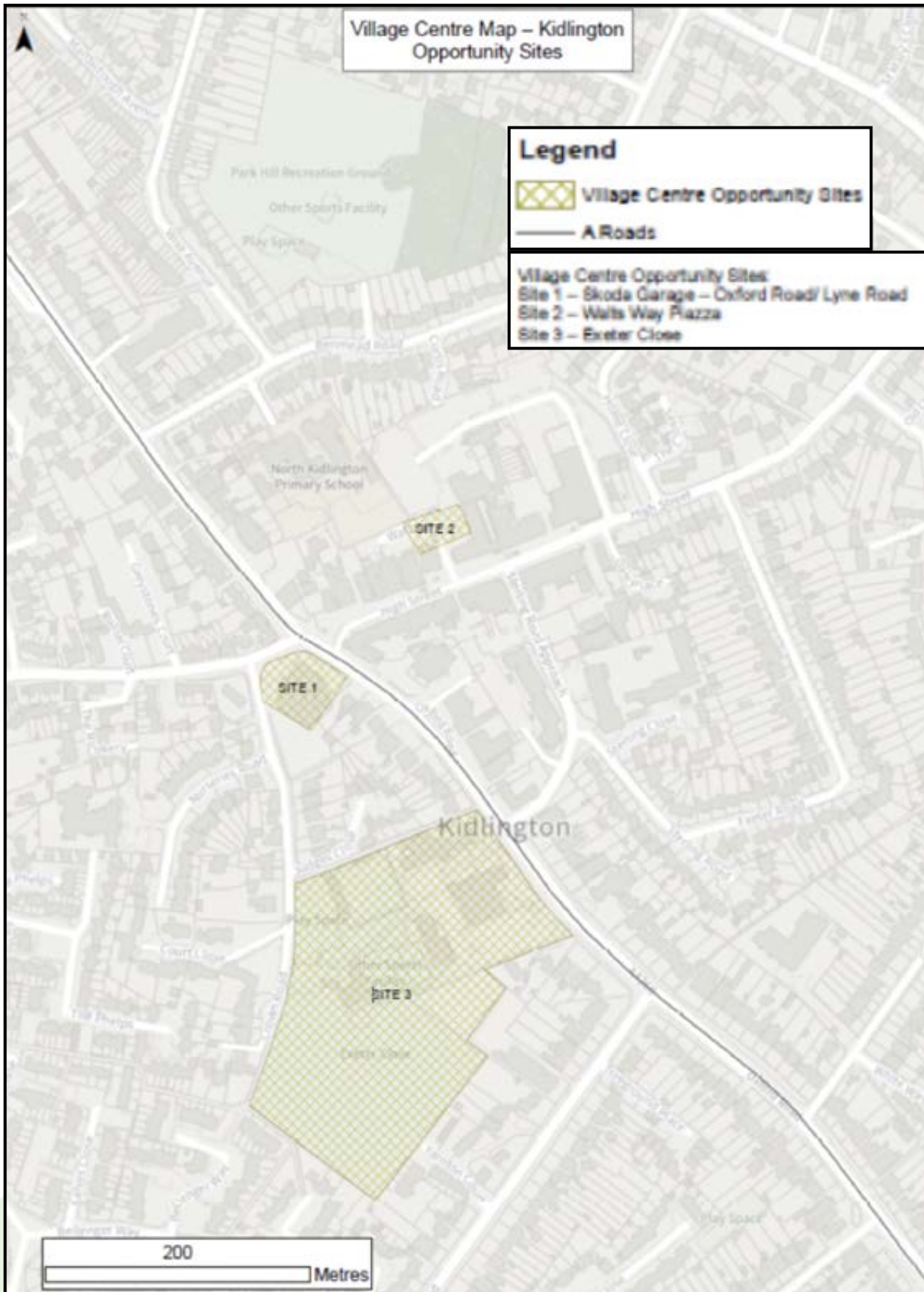
- 6.83. Our latest evidence indicates we should be directing retail development to the Primary Shopping Area only and leisure uses to the village centre as a whole. This is to avoid overprovision of retail floorspace and support stronger relationships and connections between retail uses.
- 6.84. We propose a minor amendment to the village centre boundary and a primary shopping area.
- 6.85. Saved Policies PR6a and PR8 will enable the provision of a small-scale neighbourhood centre at Gosford and Water Eaton in proximity to the Oxford Parkway and at Yarnton on the east side of the A44 to support existing and planned communities in the area.



QUESTION 52: Do you have any views on the proposed changes to the village centre?

- 6.86. The Town Centre and Retail Study identifies two sites with regeneration opportunities within and close to Kidlington village centre:
Site 1: Skoda Garage, Oxford Road/Lyne Road
Site 2: Watts Way Piazza.
- 6.87. Further technical and feasibility work will need to be carried out to understand the potential of these opportunity areas, but the sites are considered important to improve the visibility and attractiveness of the village centre and secure public realm enhancements. Any future proposals should not preclude the delivery of these village centre improvement opportunities.
- 6.88. The 2016 Kidlington Framework Master Plan identified a number of other sites with regeneration potential, the Co-op car park has now been completed but Exeter Close has property constraints which affect the consideration of development proposals.
- 6.89. Exeter Close is an important civic space in the vicinity of the village centre with uses including a community hall, medical practice, recreational open space and sports provision.
- 6.90. We are proposing a criteria-based policy to guide the development of sites 1 and 2 and have also included Exeter Close. We are committed to continue working with partners to deliver this site if an appropriate development proposal comes forward.

Kidlington Town Centre Areas of Change



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Core Policy 81: Kidlington Areas of Change

Three principal areas of change have been identified within or close to the centre of Kidlington as listed below and shown on the Policies Map and Kidlington Town Centre Areas of Change map:

Site 1: Skoda Garage – Oxford Road/ Lyne Road

Site 2: Watts Way Piazza

Site 3: Exeter Close

These areas are supported as locations for change and/ or redevelopment in accordance with the following criteria where development should:

- i. Be of a high quality, with well-designed edges securing significant townscape improvements to Kidlington;
- ii. Proposals for the individual sites are prepared through a comprehensive masterplan process providing an integrated solution to site access, traffic management, air quality management, whilst prioritising the pedestrian/ customer environment;
- iii. Be sensitive to any surrounding residential areas and the character and setting of the historic core and heritage assets and promote linkages to the village centre;
- iv. Make a positive contribution to improving sustainable transport connectivity in Kidlington, including an increase in capacity and the provision of improved facilities;
- v. Be focused on providing access by sustainable modes of transport including improvements for pedestrians and cyclists such as managed cycle parking facilities, and with no increase in car parking above current levels, and
- vi. Improve the public realm and by removing unnecessary signage and street furniture, and using a simple and durable palette of materials.

Residential development will be supported within proposals for the identified sites, particularly above ground floors.



QUESTION 53: Do you have any views on the areas of change identified?



QUESTION 54: Are there any other opportunity areas or sites that we should be including?

CHAPTER 7: **Heyford Park Area Strategy**

Heyford Park Vision 2040

- 7.1. Heyford Park will continue to make a significant contribution to delivering homes and jobs in Cherwell.
- 7.2. By 2040, Heyford Park will be a distinct place with its own facilities and employment opportunities but well related to Bicester and the wider rural area in Mid Cherwell.
- 7.3. The new community will grow and prosper, taking proper account of the area's sensitive environment and the importance of its heritage legacy.
- 7.4. New development will be supported, if able to boost infrastructure and deliver sustainable transport links. Our vision for Heyford Park is:
- The approved (2022) masterplan for Heyford Plan will be delivered;
 - Additional development on land to the south will be well integrated with the 2022 masterplan vision and help secure further infrastructure and improved transport links;
 - Heyford Park will be a local service centre for the wider community in Mid Cherwell well connected to Bicester;
 - New services, community facilities, and cultural and recreation opportunities will be delivered;
 - The area will be an attractive location for business and a focus for creative industries in Oxfordshire;
 - Public transport will have improved;
 - New and improved walking and cycling routes will be created within Heyford Park and to the wider countryside;
 - Preservation of the historic environment and environmental improvement of the former airbase will be secured;
 - Environmental and recreational improvements to the wider area beyond Heyford Park will be delivered, including to the Canal and River corridors with improved public access and an enhanced natural environment.



Heyford Park Policies

Core Policy 82: Heyford Park Strategy

7.5. To achieve this vision, our strategy for Heyford Park is as follows:

Overall Spatial Strategy

- Ensure the implementation of the committed growth at Heyford Park to fully establish the new settlement already planned;
- Provide for the future expansion of Heyford Park to meet future housing and infrastructure needs should highway capacity limitations be resolved.

Heyford Park Area Strategy

- Successful implementation of the approved masterplan (2022);
- Delivery of further transport investment to avoid unacceptable impacts on the highway network and support sustainable modes of travel;
- Helping to improve the range of employment, community facilities and infrastructure and further enhance the sustainable transport and connectivity credentials of the area;
- Recognise the potential for additional development to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the new community at Heyford Park;
- Providing the future potential for additional development later in the plan period on land south of Heyford Park to provide approximately 1,235 new dwellings.



QUESTION 55: Do you have any views on our aspirations for Heyford Park?

Housing

- 7.6. A masterplan was approved in 2022 to guide the delivery of the 2015 Local Plan allocation and ensure the planned new settlement responds sensitively to the environmental and heritage context of the site.
- 7.7. This Plan provides an opportunity to further improve the sustainability, connectivity and infrastructure associated with the development in the longer-term. However, it is recognised that further development will be dependent on the successful delivery of the development already approved and further investment in sustainable transportation.
- 7.8. We will also need to consider the relationship of the new community at Heyford Park with other places in Cherwell.
- 7.9. Further work will be needed before we can take a formal view on the proposal, but it is unlikely we would be looking at delivering this further development before 2031.
- 7.10. We will explore further any opportunities to maximise development in the adopted Heyford Park site before formally proposing land for allocation. Notwithstanding, we do not consider that intensification should be considered at the expense of protecting the environmental and heritage value of Heyford Park.
- 7.11. However, we think it is reasonable to explore a new role for Heyford Park as a local service centre well related to Bicester and supporting services and facilities for its own needs and those of the nearby rural communities.



QUESTION 56: Do you agree with the local service role for Heyford Park proposed in Core Policy 3?

The Economy

- 7.12. Heyford Park has proved to be an attractive business location and the *2020 Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan* earmarks its potential to become a hub for creative industries.
- 7.13. Our 2015 Local Plan proposed some 120,000m² of floor space for commercial uses supporting the residential allocation in Policy Villages 5.
- 7.14. We do not have enough information at this time to take a view on whether further employment land is needed at Heyford Park and make no recommendations for further employment allocation but may need to revisit this approach once more detailed employment evidence is available.



QUESTION 57: Do you think we should be considering employment uses alongside the potential allocation for more homes in the longer term at Heyford Park?

Delivery of Green and other Strategic Infrastructure in the Heyford Area

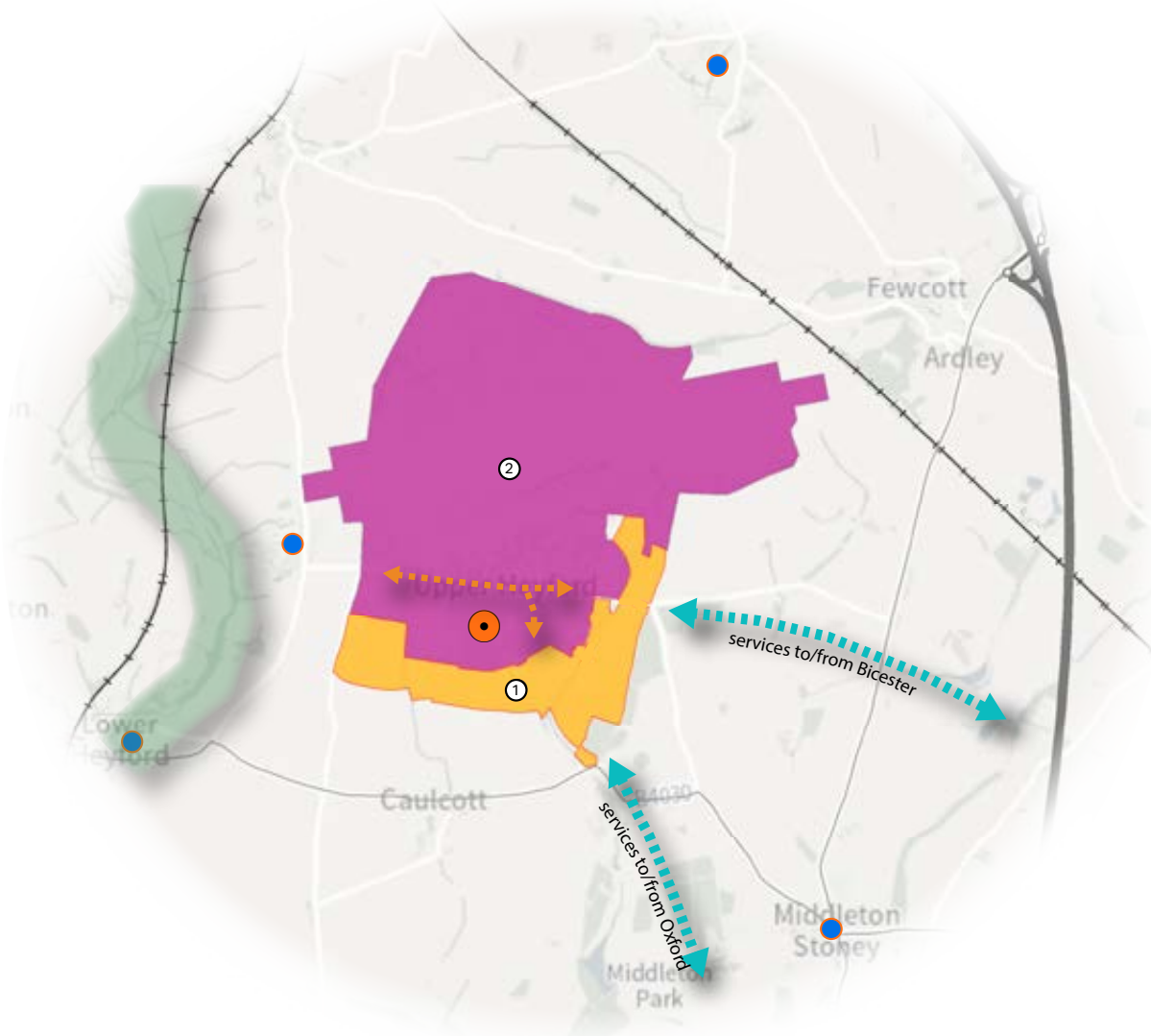
- 7.15. Existing community facilities at Heyford Park include a secondary school, nursery and a village centre. The approved 2022 masterplan application for the site has helped secure further leisure and education provision and food and non-food retail opportunities.
- 7.16. The existing local centre is expected to provide for the majority of the needs of the new community with higher order services located in the nearby settlements of Bicester and Oxford.
- 7.17. Our Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022) has identified areas near to Heyford Park for green infrastructure improvements linked to the river Cherwell corridor and Oxford Canal which provide an opportunity to serve the residents of Heyford Park as well as providing for ecological, ecosystem services and public access enhancement.
- 7.18. The study describes a larger cluster of protected habitat lies further to the east at Upper Heyford - including the Ardley Trackways SSSI, the linear Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI, as well as multiple local wildlife sites at the former RAF Airfield and at Stoke Wood.
- 7.19. The following opportunities have been identified for the Heyford Area:
- Preventative upstream flood mitigation, including nature-based solutions, which would minimise impacts downstream;
 - The creation of a nature-rich “green lung” through the central part of Cherwell, enhancing access to the landscape along the green-blue spine of the River Cherwell and allowing for landscape-scale nature recovery;
 - The creation of a landscape-scale River Cherwell Waterway Park;
 - Restoration of the health of the River Cherwell and Oxford Canal -enhancing water quality through vegetation, floodplain restoration, and the removal of barriers;
 - New spaces for habitat and recreation - connecting Steeple Aston and Lower Heyford, providing a Gateway to Upper Heyford, and nature-exploration park at Somerton near Bestmoor SSSI;
 - Green corridor connections - connections provided to Ardley Trackways SSSI, between the Oxford Canal and Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford Station with enhanced canal access.



Heyford Park's Historic Environment and Landscape

- 7.20. The former RAF Upper Heyford airbase in its entirety is designated as a conservation area, reflecting the role that the airbase played in the Cold War years. It contains a number of Scheduled Monuments identified as 'Cold War Structures' at the former Upper Heyford designation as well as five listed buildings.
- 7.21. Heyford Park is surrounded by open countryside in an area containing historic rural villages, important landscapes, views and vistas. Rousham Conservation Area also lies partly within this area and includes the designated landscape to the north of Rousham House.
- 7.22. The 2007 RAF Upper Heyford Planning Brief is still relevant document today. It provides detailed heritage and landscape information and sets out key principles to maintain the central open character and functional appearance of the site's former flying field and the preservation of buildings of international and national importance on site.
- 7.23. The proposed extension to Heyford Park extends into a small part of the Rousham Conservation Area and lies adjacent to the Heyford Park Conservation Area.
- 7.24. New proposals within the Heyford Area will therefore need to take account of important views and vistas, seek to limit of the impact of development on the surrounding countryside and preserve and enhance the historic environment.

Heyford Area Strategy Map



LEGEND

Local Plan 2040: preferred residential site allocation

① South of Heyford Park (LPR42a)

Saved Allocations: Local Plan 2015

② Former RAF Upper Heyford

Train Station

Green infrastructure improvements

Public transport and active travel infrastructure improvements

Wider public transport improvements

Local Plan 2040: Settlement Hierarchy

Main Towns

Local Service Centre

Large Village

Small Village

Core Policy 82: Heyford Area Strategy

Our over-arching priority for this area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and employment together with the infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development as part of a comprehensive approach.

Development in the Heyford Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in *Core Policy 35*.

Housing Delivery: 1,235 dwellings will be delivered through a new strategic site allocation:

Site	Housing Numbers 2020-2040	
South of Heyford Park	1,235	New Site Allocation

The following existing strategic site policy is retained and will not be replaced:

- Policy Villages 5: Former RAF Upper Heyford

Development will be supported on the newly allocated site after 2030 in the interests of:

- i. First ensuring the delivery of the approved (2022) masterplan under Saved Policy Villages 5, and
- ii. Securing further sustainable transport infrastructure investment necessary to support the additional homes.

QUESTION 58: Do you have any comments on the potential allocation at Heyford Park?

QUESTION 59: Do you have any views on the principle of phased development at Heyford Park subject to implementation of the approved masterplan and the delivery of transport infrastructure?

Core Policy 83: Delivery of Strategic Transport Infrastructure within the Heyford Area

7.25. The development of a further 1,235 homes at Heyford Park could help improve the long-term sustainability of this new community but will need to be designed around a clear transport strategy and it is likely to require a significant package of transport and other infrastructure.

- 7.26. We need to undertake more work in consultation with the County Council and other infrastructure providers before we firm up Local Plan proposals, but we consider there is merit in exploring further growth at Heyford Park if public transport infrastructure can be delivered.
- 7.27. We propose additional growth at Heyford Park should be contingent on the delivery of the necessary infrastructure, coming forward later in the Plan period.
- 7.28. There are planned improvements to the bus services between Heyford Park and Bicester and the additional development provides opportunities to deliver improvements to this service and to other destinations, including Banbury.
- 7.29. New development should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport and minimising the need to travel by private car. Layouts should enable a high degree of integration and connectivity with the existing and planned communities at Heyford Park and which maximise the potential for walkable neighbourhoods with a legible hierarchy of routes.

Core Policy 83: Delivery of Strategic Transport Schemes within the Heyford Area

Transport infrastructure for the development of the additional 1,235 homes at Heyford Park will include:

- i. Extended walking/cycling provision including eastwards along Camp Road and westwards connecting to Lower Heyford station through public rights of way improvement utilising the canal towpath;
- ii. A new spine road within the new proposed allocation to accommodate buses and to provide for active travel;
- iii. Walking/cycling connections through the new development linking Lower Heyford Road to Camp Road via Tait Drive;
- iv. A commuter cycle route to Bicester linking to an improved bridleway to Bicester to the east of Heyford Park;
- v. Mobility hubs with cycling provision and electric car charging points;
- vi. Appropriate contributions necessary to capacity upgrades to M40 Junction 10 along with wider highway capacity improvements, and
- vii. Upgrading of the access road to the B430 to the east of Heyford Park.

Core Policy 84: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Improvements within the Heyford Area

7.30. Our transport evidence to date lists the strategic transport improvements currently identified in the *Local Transport Plan* area strategies, and *Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy* for the Heyford area. We will need to test the impact of our Local Plan proposals on the transport network and take a view in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council on whether the schemes should be delivered during the lifetime of this Plan. At this stage we are just highlighting their potential for safeguarding.

Core Policy 84: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes in the Heyford Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- A new spine road within the new proposed allocation to accommodate buses and to provide for active travel;
- A commuter cycle route to Bicester linking to an improved bridleway to Bicester to the east of Heyford Park;
- Capacity upgrades to M40 Junction 10 along with wider highway capacity improvements, and
- Upgrading of the access road to the B430 to the east of Heyford Park.

Development will not be permitted should it prevent the use of land for the delivery and implementation of the identified schemes (Appendix 5).



QUESTION 60: Are there any other areas of land that you think should be safeguarded for transport schemes in the Heyford area?

Core Policy 85: Ardley Railway Station

7.31. The Heyford area is already served by a railway station at Lower Heyford on the line between Oxford and Banbury. However, there was originally a station at Ardley on the Chiltern main line that runs between Birmingham and London, which closed in 1963. To ensure that opportunities for sustainable public transport and connectivity in the area is maximised, especially in the longer-term, land is safeguarded for a railway station at Ardley on the railway line to the south of the settlement of Ardley.

- 7.32. Reinstating Ardley’s railway station is a long-term aspiration promoted by the developers of Heyford Park. We do not know at this stage Network Rail’s position on a business case for the station. Nevertheless, we consider this Plan should not preclude any opportunities for supporting strategic sustainable transport and where possible it should help their delivery. The potential location of the station is shown at Appendix 5.

Core Policy 85: Ardley Railway Station

The reopening of Ardley Railway station for passenger services will be supported. The Council will work with Network Rail and others to ensure opportunities to deliver a new passenger railway station are brought forward during the plan period.

Land at the original Ardley station is safeguarded to support the delivery of a new station and suitable access to it.

Development will not be permitted should it prevent the use of land for the delivery and implementation of the identified scheme (Appendix 5).

DRAFT

CHAPTER 8: Rural Areas Strategy

Rural Areas Vision 2040

- 8.1. There is a need for some limited housing and employment development at our larger and more sustainable villages to help sustain local services and enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Our vision is that by 2040:
- Housing and employment growth will have been managed to protect the character, appearance, heritage and identity of our villages;
 - Our most important landscapes will have been protected or enhanced;
 - We will have continued to meet local community and business needs and created sustainable housing and employment opportunity;
 - We will have directed most development in our rural areas to our larger and best served villages with most opportunity for sustainable travel choices, particularly those better connected by public transport to nearby urban areas;
 - Farming and rural business will have had the opportunity to thrive within the context of a more restrictive policy context for the countryside.

Core Policy 86: Rural Areas Strategy

- 8.2. To achieve this vision we will deliver the following strategy:

Overall Spatial Strategy

- Protect the identity and character of our villages and rural areas, and avoid unplanned development in the open countryside;
- Provide for limited development to meet local community and business needs and help support the vitality of these more rural settlements and the viability of existing businesses and farms;
- Direct the development of new housing to the larger and more sustainable villages that offer a wider range of services and are more well connected to our urban areas than the smaller villages;
- Maintain the designated Green Belt but consider a limited release at Kidlington to meet local housing needs if there are exceptional circumstances to do so;
- Protect the Cotswolds National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).



Rural Areas Strategy

- Development opportunities to meet identified local needs;
- tight management of speculative development and the avoidance of comparatively less sustainable development outcomes;
- Greater emphasis on development being supported by sustainable transport and active travel opportunity;
- Greater emphasis on development being designed and supported by infrastructure to support health and well-being;
- Protection and enhancement of our environmental and heritage assets.



QUESTION 61: Do you have any views on our aspirations for our Rural Areas?

Housing

- 8.3. We have housing need to meet in our rural areas with newly forming households, those unable to access the housing market or affordable housing, and those whose housing needs have changed over time.
- 8.4. Developing in rural areas can, relative to urban areas, often be very economically attractive to developers.
- 8.5. We need to carefully manage development pressures to provide for local need to be met in a way that benefits local communities, does not lead to unacceptable pressure on local infrastructure, can be supported by sustainable and active travel options and which does not cause damage to the environment that makes our rural areas attractive and distinctive.
- 8.6. We are suggesting that the final Plan should identify sites at our most sustainable villages to accommodate 500 additional new dwellings.
- 8.7. We have already had a large number of suggested sites submitted to us. We have begun our assessments, although these have not yet been finalised. This document is therefore not proposing specific sites.
- 8.8. A number of parishes are preparing neighbourhood plans and we will support them to identify potential housing sites within their plans, if they wish to do so.

- 8.9. We have also asked earlier whether any other Parish Councils are seeking a specific housing requirement for Neighbourhood Plans.
- 8.10. In addition we expect small site ‘windfalls’ of less than 10 dwellings (known as windfalls) to emerge for consideration against *Core Policy 35* (Settlement hierarchy).

Core Policy 86: Rural Areas Strategy

In accordance with the spatial strategy and *Core Policy 34: District Wide Housing Distribution*, the 500 dwelling non-strategic housing requirement for the rural area will only be met by site specific allocations in this Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan.

Development Policy 7: Rural Exception Sites

- 8.11. Most of our rural areas have high house prices and a limited supply of affordable homes. We will therefore continue to support rural exception sites that provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs. In some cases we will also need to consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would make a scheme more viable. In these circumstances we will ensure that the inclusion of any element of open market housing must benefit the provision of rural affordable housing and must not inflate the ‘threshold land value’ (the minimum land value likely to trigger an owner to sell the land).



Development Policy 7: Rural Exception Sites

The Council will support development for small scale affordable housing schemes within or immediately adjacent to villages to meet specific, identified local housing needs that cannot be met through the development of sites allocated for housing development.

Arrangements will be secured to restrict the occupancy of the housing to ensure that it continues to meet local needs in perpetuity.

Market housing for private rent or sale will only be considered on rural exception sites when:

- i. The number of market homes does not exceed 25% of the total number of homes proposed;
- ii. The market housing is shown to be required to secure the viability of the proposal. Development costs must be justified;
- iii. No alternative, suitable site is available to provide a rural exception site following a robust site search;
- iv. The market housing ensures that no additional subsidy for the scheme is required;
- v. The development has the support of the local community, and
- vi. The total number of dwellings and the scale of the development is in keeping with the settlement categorisation, character and form of the village and its local landscape setting.

Development Policy 8: New Dwellings in the Countryside

- 8.12. National guidance states that rural housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Development of isolated homes in the countryside should generally be avoided. There are some exceptions, for example, where there is an essential need for a rural worker, or where the design is of exceptional quality.
- 8.13. We also recognise that it may be beneficial to permit the replacement of a dwelling in the open countryside, for example where an existing dwelling is unfit or substandard. There may also be opportunities to improve the quality of local environments through the re-development of some brownfield sites.
- 8.14. Where planning permission is given for a rural worker in the open countryside we will impose an appropriate occupancy condition. Such conditions will only be removed if it can clearly be demonstrated that there is no need for a rural worker's dwelling in the locality.

- 8.15. Planning applications will need to provide sufficient details to enable an assessment of the size, nature and viability of the existing or proposed enterprise together with details of the number and tenure of existing dwellings related to the holding or estate. Where there is any doubt that a dwelling is required for the proper functioning of an enterprise, or where a new business is being proposed, it will be necessary to supply adequate financial information to demonstrate that the proposals are sound (covering a three-year period).
- 8.16. Our preference is that new dwellings should be through the conversion of existing rural buildings, to use land efficiently and reduce impacts on the countryside. Where a new build dwelling is proposed we will normally expect them to reflect the local vernacular and be closely related to existing buildings in the interest of protecting the appearance and open character of the countryside.

Development Policy 8: New Dwellings in the Countryside

The Council will permit the development of an agricultural worker's dwelling if there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

Dwellings beyond the built up limits of settlements which are not essential for rural workers will not be permitted unless one or more of the following apply:

- i. The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate small scale development that secures the future of associated heritage assets;
- ii. The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings;
- iii. The development would involve the one for one replacement of an existing dwelling;
- iv. The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling, and
- v. The development is for an individual dwelling where the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - Is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas, and
 - Would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Development Policy 9: Conversion of a Rural Building to a Dwelling

- 8.17. The conversion of rural buildings to dwellings will help contribute towards meeting the district's housing needs and can allow farms to diversify and remain economically viable. However, it is also important that employment opportunities continue to be provided in our rural areas and that farms continue to thrive.

- 8.18. Many conversions of farm buildings to dwellings do not need planning permission, but where they do we will prioritise employment re-use over residential conversion to promote the diversification of the rural economy.
- 8.19. Permitted development rights may be removed to ensure there is no further inappropriate alteration to the form, character and setting of the dwelling.

Development Policy 9: Conversion of a Rural Building to a Dwelling

The conversion of a rural building to a dwelling will be permitted provided that:

- i. The applicant has made every reasonable attempt to secure suitable employment re-use;
- ii. The building's form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings;
- iii. The building is of permanent and substantial construction, evidenced through a structural engineers report appropriate to the building;
- iv. In the case of a building beyond the built-up limits of a village, conversion can be achieved without major rebuilding or major extension and without inappropriate alteration to its form and character;
- v. The proposal would not harm the special character and interest of a heritage asset or its setting;
- vi. The proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the countryside or the immediate setting of the building, and
- vii. There are no significant transport, highways and noise impacts.



QUESTION 62: Do you support our preliminary proposals for housing in our rural areas?



QUESTION 63: Are there any potential rural housing sites you wish to suggest?

The Economy

- 8.20. We recognise that our rural economy is diverse and provides benefits to our rural communities. We will continue to support the sustainable economic growth of our rural businesses, including farming. Proposals for employment development on unallocated sites will be considered against *Core Policy 27*.
- 8.21. In addition, we want to identify a number of smaller employment sites in our rural areas. Work is ongoing to identify suitable sites.



QUESTION 64: Do you know of any potential new rural employment sites?

CHAPTER 9: **Implementing the Plan**

Core Policy 87: Delivery and Contingency

- 9.1. This Plan, when finalised, will set out how the district will develop over the Plan period to 2040, identifying where homes, jobs, services and infrastructure will be delivered, and the types of distinctive and characterful places that the Plan would like to create.
- 9.2. Monitoring allows us to understand whether policies are working as intended. It enables decisions to be taken that are well-informed and based on an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of policies based on evidence.
- 9.3. Monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan is critical in ensuring the successful delivery of the current Plan and to shape the development of any future development plan for the district.
- 9.4. Each year the Council must produce reports which assess the implementation of the Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2040 and the extent to which its strategic objectives and policies are being achieved.
- 9.5. The Sustainability Appraisal also plays an integral role in monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of Local Plan policies.
- 9.6. Following this consultation, we will prepare the proposed Plan – the ‘Regulation 19’ stage. A monitoring framework will then be prepared to monitor the effectiveness of the proposed Policies.



Monitoring allows us to understand whether policies are working as intended.

Core Policy 87: Delivery and Contingency

The Council will monitor progress towards the achievement of indicators and targets set out within the Monitoring Framework. The Annual Monitoring Report will be produced on at least an annual basis and will be used to establish whether the implementation of the Plan, either in part or as a whole, is being effectively actioned. Where there is evidence to suggest that policy-specific targets listed in the Monitoring Framework have not been met, contingency measures and actions listed in the Monitoring Framework will apply.

Contingency measures may include one or more of the following:

- i. Seeking to accelerate delivery on other permitted or allocated sites;
- ii. Seeking alternative sources of funding if a lack of infrastructure is delaying development or causing significant problems as a result of new development;
- iii. Identifying alternative deliverable sites that are in general accordance with the Spatial Strategy of the Plan, and
- iv. Undertaking a full or partial review of the Local Plan, if investigation indicates that its strategy, either in whole or in part, is no longer appropriate.



QUESTION 65:
Do you have any comments on these measures?

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Appendix 1

Retained Policies List

A review of the 1996 saved policies and adopted Local Plan (2015) and Partial Review Plan (2020) policies was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Local Plan Review 2040. It was concluded that it is not necessary to save any of the 1996 Local Plan saved policies within this iteration of the Local Plan, therefore each of these policies is either replaced or no longer relevant. There are a small number of adopted Local Plan (2015) and Partial Review (2020) policies that are proposed to be retained in this Plan. The table below summarises how each policy is to be considered. Any retained allocations listed below are included in the accompanying Retained Allocations Document.

Policy Number and Description	Proposed to be Retained, Replaced or Other	Proposed Replacement Policy
CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES		CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2040
GB2 Outdoor Recreation in The Green Belt	Replaced	CP44: The Oxford Green Belt
GB3 Major Development Sites in The Green Belt	Replaced	CP44: The Oxford Green Belt
H16 White Land at Yarnton	Policy no longer relevant	Scheme has been delivered
H17 Replacement of Dwellings	Policy no longer relevant	N/A
H18 New Dwellings in the Countryside	Replaced	DP8: New Dwellings in the Countryside
H19 Conversion of buildings in the Countryside	Replaced	DP9: Conversion of a Rural Building to a Dwelling
H20 Conversion of Farmstead Buildings	Replaced	DP9: Conversion of a Rural Building to a Dwelling
H21 Conversion of Buildings in Settlements	Replaced	CP35: Settlement Hierarchy
H23 Retained Caravans	Replaced	DP4: Residential Caravans
H26 Residential Canal Moorings	Replaced	CP61: Residential Canal Mooring
S22 Provision of Rear Servicing, Kidlington	Policy no longer relevant	Village centre scheme and part pedestrianisation of High Street delivered
S26 Small Scale Ancillary Retail Outlets in the Rural Areas	Replaced	CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses
S27 Garden Centres in the Rural Areas	Replaced	CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses
S28 Proposals for Small Shops and Extensions to Existing Shops Outside Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington Shopping Centres	Replaced	CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses
S29 Loss of Existing Village Services	Replaced	CP54: Local Services and Community Facilities
TR1 Transportation Funding	Replaced	CP51: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services CP21: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity Improvements CP47: Active Travel – Walking and Cycling
TR7 Development Attracting Traffic on Minor Roads	Replaced	CP22: Assessing Transport Impact/ Decide and Provide
TR8 Commercial Facilities for the Motorist	Policy no longer relevant	N/A
TR10 Heavy Goods Vehicles	Replaced	CP22: Assessing Transport Impact/ Decide and Provide
TR11 Oxford Canal	Replaced	CP60: The Oxford Canal
TR14 Formation of New Accesses to the Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way, Banbury	Replaced	DP6: Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way

TR16	Access Improvements in the Vicinity of Banbury Railway Station	Replaced	CP21: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity Improvements CP47: Active Travel – Walking and Cycling CP22: Assessing Transport Impact/ Decide and Provide
TR22	Reservation of Land for Road Schemes in the Countryside	Policy no longer relevant	Schemes largely delivered or not progressed
R5	Use of Redundant Railway Lines and Disused Quarries for Recreation Purposes	Replaced	CP47: Active Travel – Walking and Cycling CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
T2	Proposals for Hotels, Motels, Guest Houses and Restaurants within Settlements	Replaced	CP31: Tourism
T3	Land Reserved for Hotel and Associated Tourist or Leisure Based Development, in Vicinity of Junction 11 of the M40, Banbury	Policy no longer relevant	Site built out
T5	Proposals for new Hotels, Motels, Guesthouses and Restaurants in the Countryside	Replaced	CP31: Tourism
T7	Conversion of Buildings Beyond Settlements to Self-Catering Holiday Accommodation	Replaced	CP31: Tourism
AG2	Construction of Farm Buildings	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
AG3	Siting of New or Extension to Existing Intensive Livestock and Poultry Units	Replaced	CP17: Pollution and Noise
AG4	Waste Disposal from Intensive Livestock and Poultry Units	Replaced	CP17: Pollution and Noise DP1: Waste Collection and Recycling
AG5	Development Involving Horses	Policy no longer relevant	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
C5	Protection of Ecological Value and Rural Character of Specified Features of Value in the District	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
C6	Development Proposals Adjacent to the River Thames	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
C8	Sporadic Development in the Open Countryside	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape CP45: Settlement Gaps
C11	Protection of the Vista and Setting of Rousham Park	Replaced	CP57-59: Historic Environment and Archaeology
C14	Countryside Management Projects	Policy no longer relevant	N/A
C15	Prevention of Coalescence of Settlements	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape CP45: Settlement Gaps

C18	Development Proposals Affecting a Listed Building	Replaced	CP59: Listed Buildings
C21	Proposals for Re-Use of a Listed Building	Replaced	CP59: Listed Buildings
C23	Retention of Features Contributing to Character or Appearance of a Conservation Area	Replaced	CP58: Conservation Areas
C25	Development Affecting the Site or Setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument	Replaced	CP57-59: Historic Environment and Archaeology
C28	Layout, Design and External Appearance of New Development	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places
C29	Appearance of Development Adjacent to the Oxford Canal	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places CP60: The Oxford Canal
C30	Design Control	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places
C31	Compatibility of Proposals in Residential Areas	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places
C32	Provision of Facilities for Disabled People	Replaced	CP46: Achieving Well Designed Places CP50: Creating Healthy Communities
C33	Protection of Important Gaps of Undeveloped Land	Replaced	CP45: Settlement Gaps
C34	Protection of Views of St Mary's Church, Banbury	Replaced	CP57-59: Historic Environment and Archaeology CP59: Listed Buildings CP62: Banbury Area Strategy
C38	Satellite Dishes in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings	Replaced	CP57-59: Historic Environment and Archaeology CP58: Conservation Areas CP59: Listed Buildings
C39	Telecommunication Masts and Structures	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
ENV1	Development Likely to Cause Detrimental Levels of Pollution	Replaced	CP17: Pollution and Noise
ENV2	Redevelopment of Sites Causing Serious Detriment to Local Amenity	Replaced	CP17: Pollution and Noise CP19: Soils, Contaminated Land and Stability
ENV6	Development at Oxford Airport, Kidlington Likely to Increase Noise Nuisance	Replaced	CP77: London Oxford Airport
ENV10	Development Proposals Likely to Damage or be at Risk from Hazardous Installations	Replaced	CP20: Hazardous Substances
ENV11	Proposals for Installations Handling Hazardous Substances	Replaced	CP20: Hazardous Substances
ENV12	Development on Contaminated Land	Replaced	CP19: Soils, Contaminated Land and Stability
OA2	Protection of Land at Yarnton Road Recreation Ground, Kidlington for a New Primary School	Policy no longer relevant	N/A

Policy Number and Description	Proposed to be Retained, Replaced or Other	Proposed Replacement Policy
CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2015-2031		CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2040
SLE 1 Employment Development	Replaced	CP25: Meeting Business and Employment Needs CP26: Development at Existing Employment Sites CP27: New Employment Development at Unallocated Sites CP28: Ancillary Uses on Allocated Employment Sites
SLE 2 Securing Dynamic Town Centres Uses	Replaced	CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail CP33: Primary Shopping Areas
SLE 3 Supporting Tourism Growth	Replaced	CP31: Tourism
SLE 4 Improved Transport and Connections	Replaced	CP21: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity Improvements CP47: Active Travel - Walking and Cycling CP22: Assessing Transport Impact/ Decide and Provide
SLE 5 High Speed Rail 2 - London to Birmingham	Policy no longer relevant	High Speed Rail 2 is a national infrastructure project that is dealt with through PINS with the decision-making framework in the <i>Planning Act 2008</i> (as amended) and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure planning applications. Provisions in SL5 covered by other Policy requirements.
BSC 1 District Wide Housing Distribution		CP34: District Wide Housing Distribution
BSC 2 The Effective and Efficient Use of Land - Brownfield Land and Housing Density	Replaced	CP24: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield Land and Housing Density
BSC 3 Affordable Housing	Replaced	CP36: Affordable Housing
BSC 4 Housing Mix	Replaced	CP37: Housing Mix CP38: Specialist Housing
BSC 5 Area Renewal	Replaced	CP24: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield Land and Housing Density
BSC 6 Travelling Communities	Replaced	CP42: Travelling Communities
BSC 7 Meeting Education Needs	Replaced	CP52: Meeting Education Needs
BSC 8 Securing Health and Wellbeing	Replaced	CP49: Health Facilities
CP50: Creating Healthy Communities		
BSC 9 Public Services and Utilities	Replaced	CP53: Public Services and Utilities
BSC 10 Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision	Replaced	CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

BSC 11 Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation	Replaced	CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
BSC 12 Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities	Replaced	CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
ESD 1 Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change	Replaced	CP1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
ESD 2 Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Energy Solutions	Replaced	CP3: The Energy Hierarchy and Efficiency
ESD 3 Sustainable Construction Development	Replaced	CP4: Achieving Net Zero Carbon CP5: Carbon Offsetting
ESD 4 Decentralised Energy Systems	Replaced	CP1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
ESD 5 Renewable Energy	Replaced	CP2: Zero or Low Carbon Energy Sources CP6: Renewable Energy CP4: Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development
ESD 6 Sustainable Flood Risk Management Management	Replaced	CP7: Sustainable Flood Risk
ESD 7 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Replaced	CP8: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
ESD 8 Water Resources	Replaced	CP9: Water Resources
ESD 9 Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC	Replaced	CP10: Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC
ESD 10 Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	Replaced	CP12: Biodiversity Net Gain CP11: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity
ESD 11 Conservation Target Areas	Replaced	CP13: Conservation Target Areas
ESD 12 Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape CP11: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity
ESD 13 Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement	Replaced	CP43: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
ESD 14 Oxford Green Belt	Replaced	CP44: The Oxford Green Belt
ESD 15 The Character of the Built and Historic Environment	Replaced	CP57-59: Historic Environment and Archaeology CP58: Conservation Areas CP59: Listed Buildings
ESD 16 The Oxford Canal	Replaced	CP60: The Oxford Canal
ESD 17 Green Infrastructure	Replaced	CP15: Green and Blue Infrastructure
Bicester 1 North West Bicester Eco-Town	Replaced	CP70: Bicester Area Strategy Appendix 2: Indicative site development templates
Bicester 2 Graven Hill	Retained	N/A
Bicester 3 South West Bicester Phase 2	Retained	N/A
Bicester 4 Bicester Business Park	Retained	N/A
Bicester 5 Strengthening Bicester Town Centre	Replaced	CP70: Bicester Area Strategy CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses

Bicester 6	Bure Place Town Centre Redevelopment Phase 2	Policy no longer relevant	Scheme has now been delivered.
Bicester 7	Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Replaced	Open space requirements replaced by CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation CP73: Delivery of Green and other Strategic Infrastructure in the Bicester Area
Bicester 8	Former RAF Bicester	Replaced	CP75: Former RAF Bicester
Bicester 9	Burial Site Provision in Bicester	Retained	N/A
Bicester 10	Bicester Gateway	Retained	N/A
Bicester 11	Employment Land at North East Bicester	Retained	N/A
Bicester 12	South East Bicester	Retained	N/A
Bicester 13	Gavray Drive	Retained	N/A
Banbury 1	Banbury Canalside	Replaced	CP62: Banbury Area Strategy Appendix 2: Preferred site development templates
Banbury 2	Hardwick Farm, Southam Road (East and West)	Retained	N/A
Banbury 3	West of Bretch Hill	Retained	N/A
Banbury 4	Bankside Phase 2	Retained	N/A
Banbury 5	North of Hanwell Fields	Retained	N/A
Banbury 6	Employment Land West of M40	Retained	N/A
Banbury 7	Strengthening Banbury Town Centre	Replaced	CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses CP69: Banbury Areas of Change
Banbury 8	Bolton Road Development Area	Replaced	CP69: Banbury Areas of Change Appendix 2: Preferred site development templates
Banbury 9	Spiceball Development Area	Policy no longer relevant	The Spiceball Development Area is almost complete.
Banbury10	Bretch Hill Regeneration Area	Retained	N/A
Banbury11	Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Replaced	Open space requirements replaced by CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation CP66: Green and Blue Infrastructure in the Banbury Area
Banbury12	Land for the Relocation of Banbury United FC	Retained	N/A
Banbury13	Burial Site Provision in Banbury	Retained	N/A
Banbury 14	Cherwell Country Park	Retained	Cherwell Country Park boundary updated.
Banbury 15	Employment Land North East of Junction 11	Retained	N/A
Banbury 16	South of Salt Way - West	Retained	N/A
Banbury 17	South of Salt Way - East	Retained	N/A
Banbury 18	Land at Drayton Lodge Farm	Retained	N/A
Banbury 19	Land at Higham Way	Replaced	CP62 Banbury Area Strategy

Kidlington 1 Accommodating High Value Employment Needs	Replaced	Small scale review of the Green Belt to accommodate identified high value employment needs has been undertaken. Policy covered by CP25: Meeting Business and Employment Needs CP76: Kidlington Area Strategy CP26: Development at Existing Employment Sites CP27: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites.
Kidlington 2 Strengthening Kidlington Village Centre	Replaced	CP81: Kidlington Areas of Change, CP32: Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Uses CP33: Primary Shopping Areas
Villages 1 Village Categorisation	Replaced	CP35: Settlement Hierarchy
Villages 2 Distributing Growth across the Rural Areas	Replaced	CP86: Rural Areas Strategy
Villages 3 Rural Exception Sites	Replaced	DP7: Rural Exception Sites
Villages 4 Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Replaced	CP55: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
Villages 5 Former RAF Upper Heyford	Retained	N/A
INF 1 Infrastructure	Replaced	CP51: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services

Policy Number and Description	Proposed to be Retained, Replaced or Other	Proposed Replacement Policy
CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN PARTIAL REVIEW 2020		CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2040
PR1 Achieving Sustainable Development for Oxford's Needs	Retained	N/A
PR2 Housing Mix, Tenure and Size	Retained	N/A
PR3 The Oxford Green Belt	Replaced	CP44: The Oxford Green Belt
PR4a Sustainable Transport	Retained	N/A
PR4b Kidlington Centre	Retained	N/A
PR5 Green Infrastructure	Retained	N/A
PR6a Land East of Oxford Road, North Oxford	Retained	N/A
PR6b Land West of Oxford Road, North Oxford	Retained	N/A
PR6c Land at Frieze Farm	Retained	N/A
PR7a Land South East of Kidlington, Kidlington	Retained	N/A
PR7b Land at Stratfield Farm, Kidlington	Retained	N/A
PR8 Land East of the A44, Begbroke	Retained	N/A
PR9 Land West of Yarnton, Yarnton	Retained	N/A
PR11 Infrastructure Delivery	Retained	N/A
PR12a Delivering Sites and Maintaining Housing Supply	Replaced	CP34: District-Wide Housing Distribution
PR12b Sites Not Allocated in the Partial Review	Replaced	CP34: District-Wide Housing Distribution
PR13 Monitoring and Securing Delivery	Replaced	CP87: Delivery and Contingency

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Appendix 2

Indicative Site Development Templates

Introduction

Core Policy 25: Meeting Business and Employment Needs and *Core Policy 34: District Wide Housing Distribution* set out the level of new employment and housing development we think Cherwell needs up to 2040, and our current preferred approach to delivering that growth.

This section presents Indicative Site Development Templates for the sites identified in Core Policies 25 and 34.

The Indicative Site Development Templates identify key constraints and opportunities for each site, and we would welcome your views and comments on these.

Indicative site development templates

Banbury

- LPR52: North of Wykham Lane
- LPR49: Withycombe Farm
- Core Policy 14 (Site 2): Bolton Road
- LPR55: Canalside
- LPR56: Higham Way

Bicester

- LPR21A: South-East of Wretchwick Green (Site A)
- LPR33: North-West Bicester
- LPR37A: South of Chesterton and North-West of A41
- LPR21B: Land adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41 – Bicester
- LPR38: Land East of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane

Kidlington

- LPR8A: North of The Moors
- LPR2: South East of Woodstock/Upper Campsfield Road
- LPR63: Begbroke Science Park

Heyford

- LPR42A: South of Heyford Park

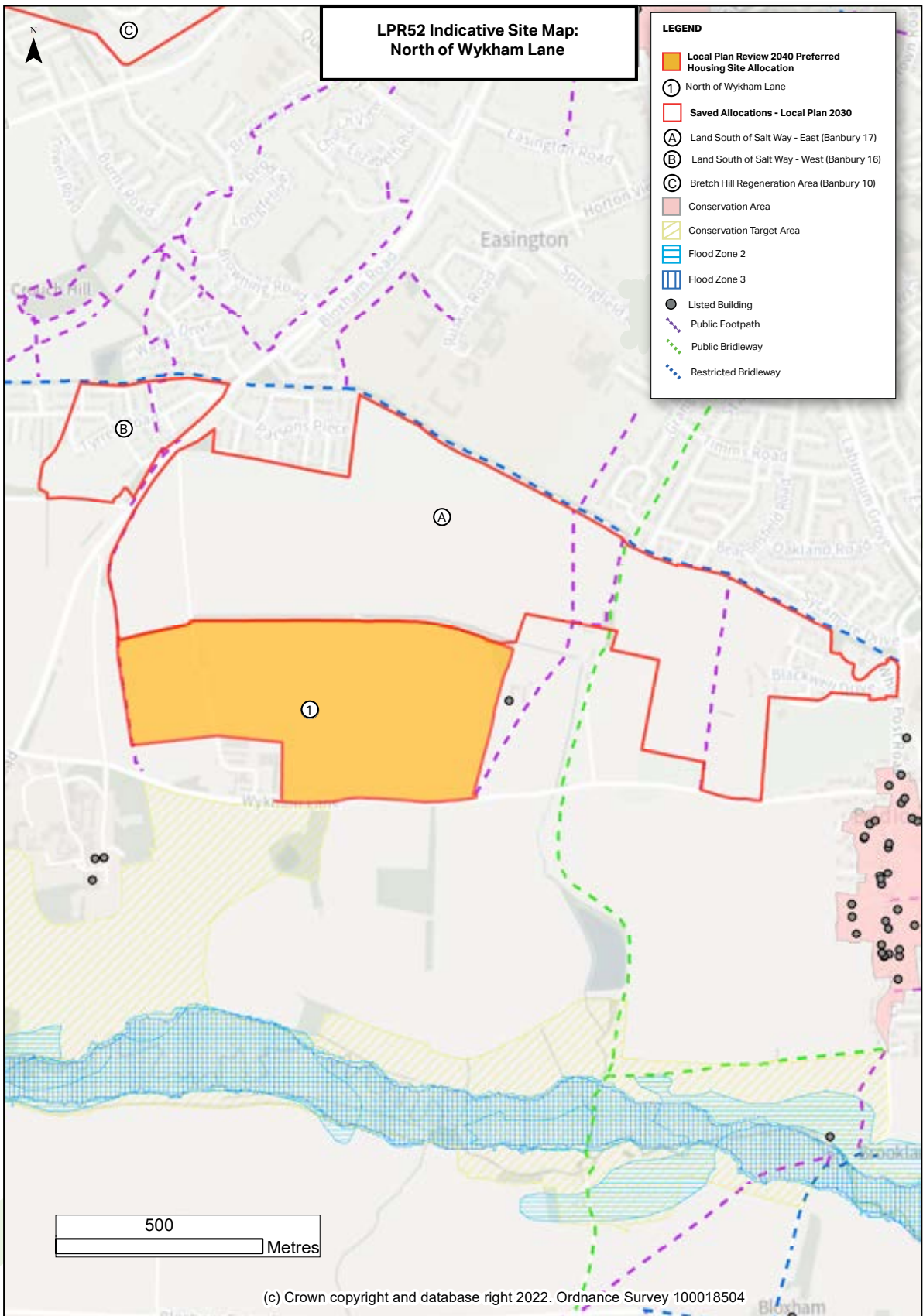
Site Reference	LPR52: North of Wykham Lane
Area	Banbury
Site Area	32.39 ha
Site Capacity	Housing, indicative capacity of 600 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The site is adjacent to the Northern Valleys Conservation Target Area;
- A Public Right of Way runs north-south along the length of the western boundary of the site;
- The site is located within the 'Wider Landscape Zone' of the Nature Recovery Network;
- The Grade II Listed Wykham Farmhouse lies immediately to the east of the site;
- A waterway skirts the northern boundary of the site;
- Rural character and transport capacity of Wykham Lane.

Key Opportunities:









- Opportunity to develop a new neighbourhood of approximately 600 dwellings as an add onto the existing development allocation immediately to the north (Banbury 17);
- Opportunities to deliver improved pedestrian and cycle routes including the Salt Way and Bodicote Circular Walk;
- Contribution towards the expansion of Bishop Loveday Primary School, the expansion of secondary school capacity in Banbury and additional primary healthcare provision;
- Provision of biodiversity net gain through the provision of lowland meadows, hedgerows and trees, and
- Opportunities to create new linear parks.



**LPR52 SOUTH OF SALTWAY/WYKHAM LANE:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|------------------------|---|-------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Lowland meadow areas |  | Walking and cycling network |  | Hedgerows |  | Trees |  | Sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) |
|  | Waterbody |  | Public Right of Way |  | Accessible green space | | | | |

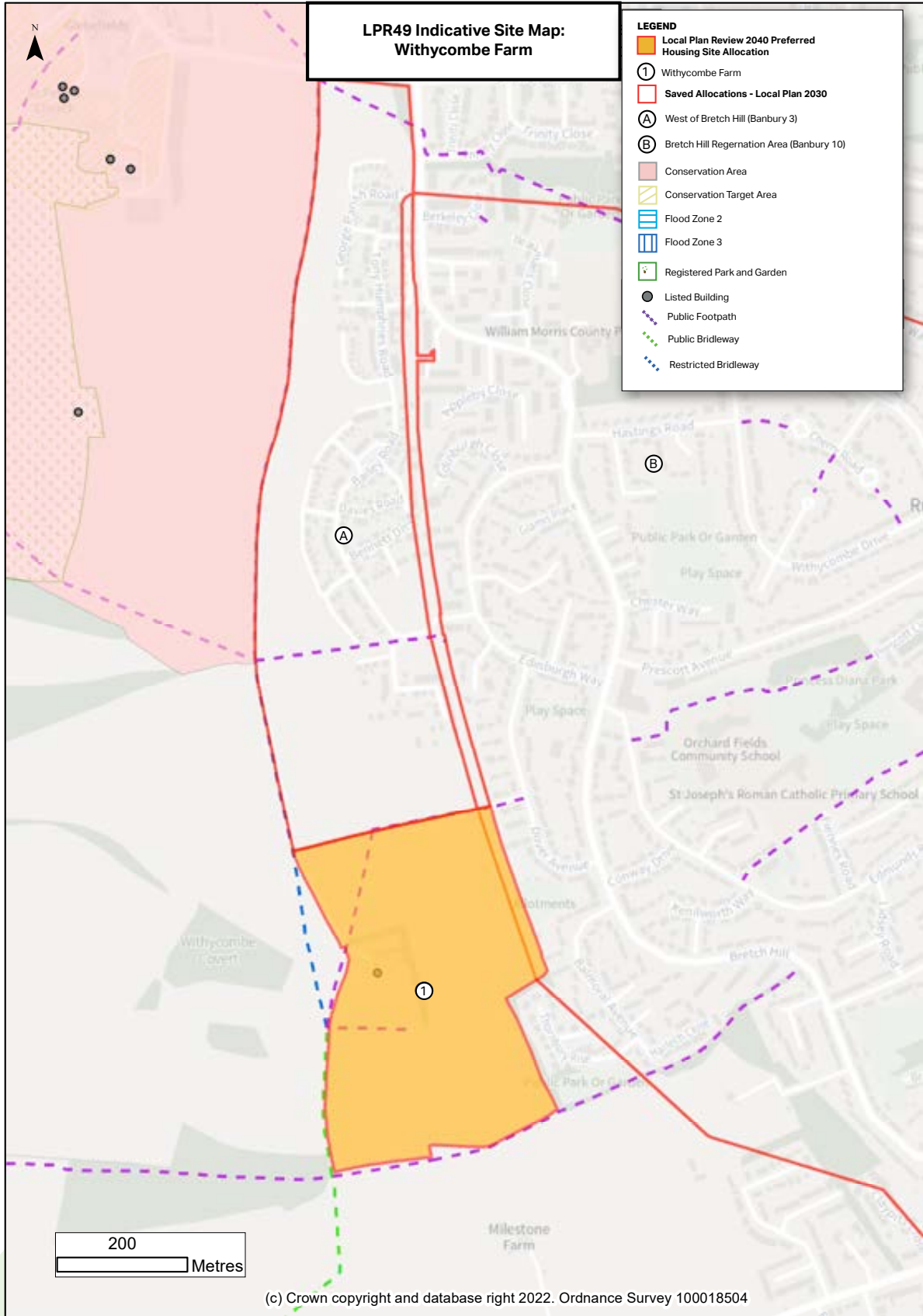
Site Reference	LPR49: Withycombe Farm
Area	Banbury/Drayton
Site Area	15.55 ha
Site Capacity	Housing, indicative capacity of 230 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The site is located within the Nature Recovery Network “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- The Sor Brook and Priority Habitat lowland meadows pass 1km to the west of the site;
- The Banbury Circular Walk skirts along the western border of the site;
- Public Right of Ways pass across the northern corner of the site towards Bretch Hill and along the site boundaries;
- Potential transport impacts on Parklands/Warwick Road/Orchard Way roundabout;
- Potential landscape impact on Sor Brook Valley to the west of the site.

Key Opportunities:

- The delivery of a high quality and sustainable urban extension to the west of Banbury which is well integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Opportunity to provide active travel connections between the site and adjacent residential areas, the Banbury Circular Walk, nearby services and facilities within Bretch Hill and the wider Banbury area;
- Opportunities for tree planting to re-connect existing areas of woodland across the site and to deliver a defined street tree network;
- Opportunities to enhance the existing Public Rights of Way network, and
- Options to provide improved access to local bus services.



**LPR49 WITHYCOMBE FARM:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

Nature-rich green spaces	Walking and cycling network	Woodland planting	Hedgerows	Trees
NRN: Core Zone	Public Right of Way	Accessible green space		

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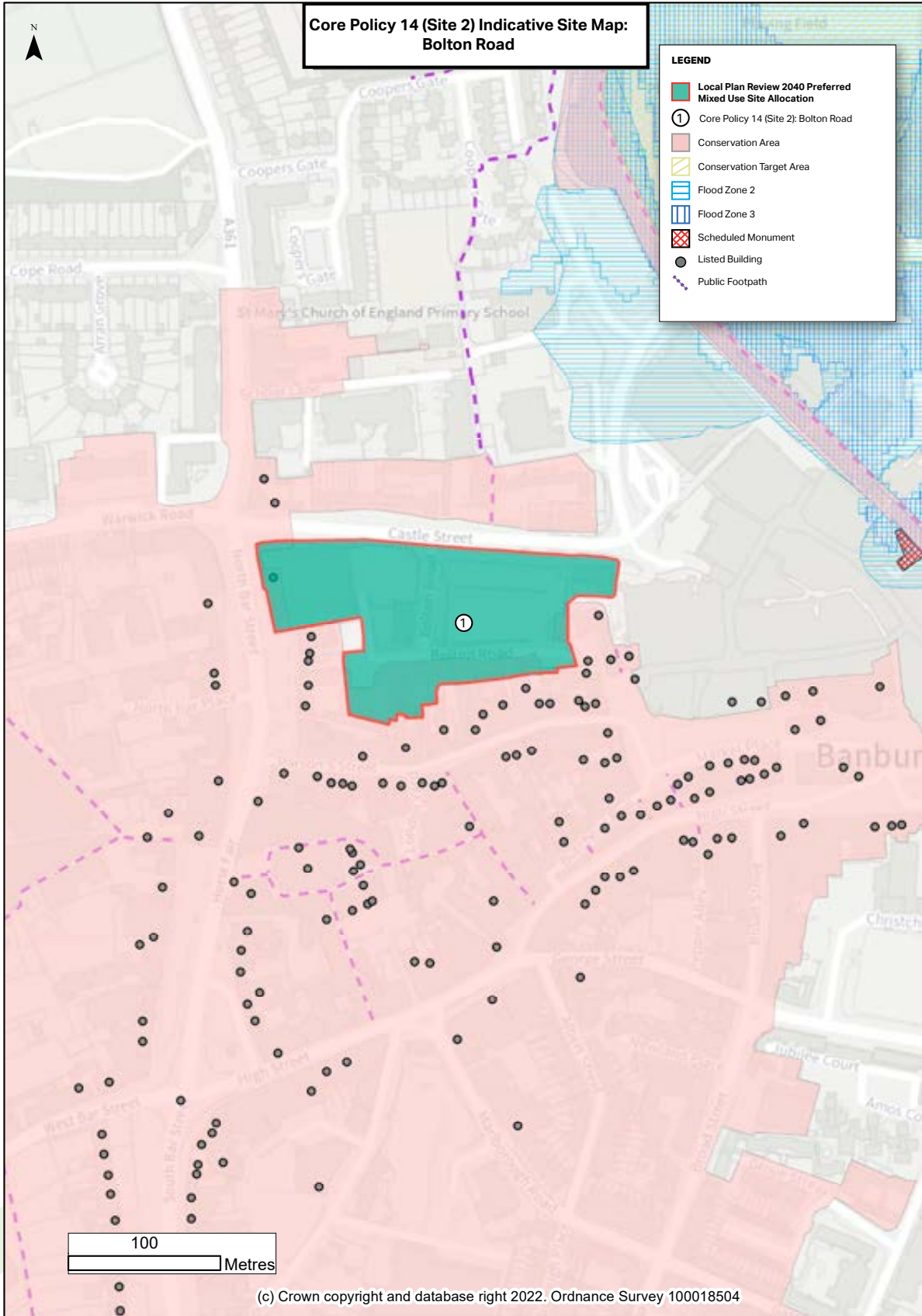
Site Reference	Core Policy 14 (Site 2): Bolton Road
Area	Banbury
Site Area	2 ha
Site Capacity	Residential-led mixed use development, indicative capacity of 200-300 dwellings
Site Type	Brownfield

Key Constraints:

- A complex mix of uses and ownership arrangements on-site, including a large public surface car park, a number of smaller car parks and service areas associated with properties fronting Parsons Street, and a number of historic buildings;
- The site of former offices and bingo hall is currently being redeveloped as retirement apartments.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to deliver a high-quality, residential led mixed use redevelopment which integrates well with the town centre;
- Options to create high-quality and vibrant public realm;
- Opportunities to provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle links between the site and town centre routes such as Parsons Street and North Bar Street;
- Opportunity for a pocket park, and
- Opportunity for a low-car people-friendly development.



**CORE POLICY 14 (Site 2) BOLTON ROAD:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

	Pocket parks		Community/ 'garden' streets		Street trees		Rain gardens/ SuDs features		Accessible green space		Public Right of Way
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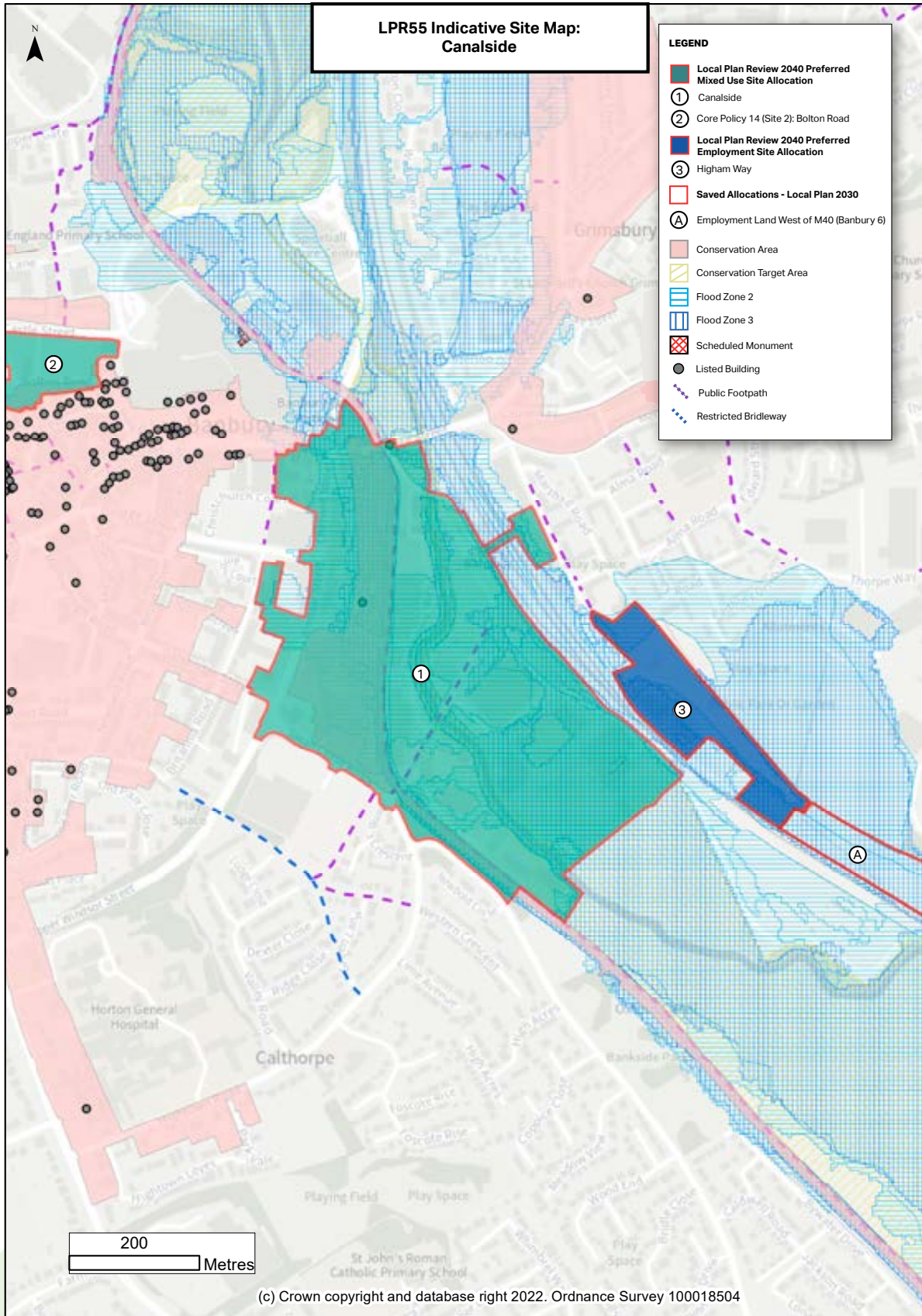
Site Reference	LPR55: Canalside
Area	Banbury
Site Area	25.57ha
Site Capacity	Mixed use, indicative capacity of 500 dwellings.
	Circa 7.5ha of employment land
Site Type	Brownfield

Key Constraints:

- The River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal pass through the site.
- Multiple and complex landownerships. The Oxford Canal is a designated conservation area;
- There are a number of listed buildings and structures within the site;
- Large areas of the site are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3;
- Located within the Nature Recovery Network Zone;
- The North Cherwell Conservation Target Area runs through the centre of the site along the river corridor;
- There is one Public Right of Way which crosses east-west through the site along Tramway Road;
- A twin foul rising main crosses the site from Canal Street to the football ground;
- Home of Banbury Utd FC;
- Multiple small business premises within the site.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to deliver a high quality, well designed, sustainable, employment-led mixed-use redevelopment of a key gateway site adjacent to the town centre;
- Potential inclusion of live/work units;
- Opportunity to develop a new sustainable neighbourhood of approximately 500 homes, primarily within the northern and western parts of the site, including the Oxford Canal corridor;
- The retention of approximately 7.5 hectares of employment uses (Use Class E(g) B2, B8), primarily to the east of the River Cherwell;
- Opportunity to reserve a site of up to 0.5 hectares for a new primary care facility;
- Options to relocate Banbury United Football Club;
- Provision of new pedestrian routes and cycleways across the site including across the canal and River Cherwell;
- Potential options to improve junction arrangements on Bridge Street and Cherwell Street;
- Delivery of improved public transport services, including a bus route through the site, and
- Provision of a linear park(s) and natural space concentrated along the canalside/ riverside, including a natural buffer through the site along the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell for riparian planting and additional tree cover.



**LPR55 CANALSIDE:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

'Grey to green' linear park/play area	Strengthening Oxford Canal trail	Footbridge	Woodland planting	Flood Zones 2 and 3
Waterbody	Public Right of Way	Accessible green space	NRN: Core Zone	

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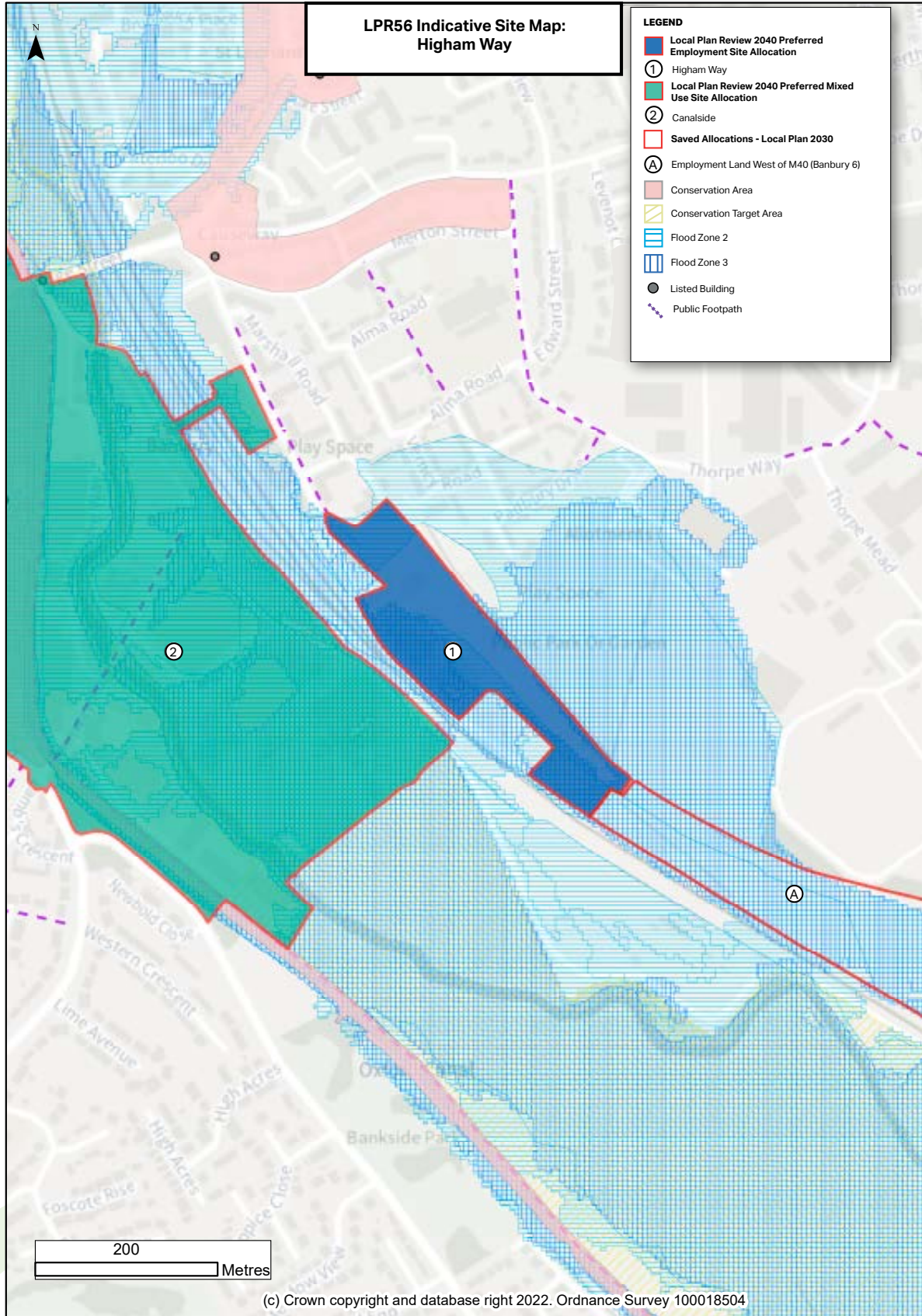
Site Reference	LPR56: Higham Way
Area	Banbury
Site Area	3.17 ha
Site Capacity	Employment site
Site Type	Brownfield

Key Constraints:

- The North Cherwell Conservation Target Area is close to the site to the west. The site is bordered by areas of priority habitat grassland;
- The eastern half of the site is located within the NRN “Wider Landscape Zone” and the western half of the site is located within the NRN “Recovery Zone”;
- There is one Public Right of Way which terminates at the northern edge of the site;
- Banbury Castle lies 500m north-west of the site and there could be ephemeral medieval remains in the area;
- The site may include protected species, including reptiles.

Key Opportunities:

- A regeneration opportunity extending to 3.17 hectares directly to the south-east of Banbury Town Centre capable of accommodating high quality, well-designed employment development;
- Development should incorporate energy efficiency measures and support climate change resilience;
- Opportunity to develop an active travel hub;
- The Public Right of Way should be connected through the site to provide onward links to the town centre;
- Opportunity to develop a footbridge or crossing over the railway;
- Opportunity to protect and enhance this area as part of the surrounding landscape context to the adjacent North Cherwell Conservation Target Area, and
- Opportunities for tree planting along the railway corridor and proposed streets.



**LPR56 HIGHAM WAY, BANBURY:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

-  Walking and cycling network
-  Flood Zones 2 and 3
-  Footbridge
-  Public Right of Way
-  Tree planting
-  Accessible green space
-  Sustainable urban drainage (SuDS)

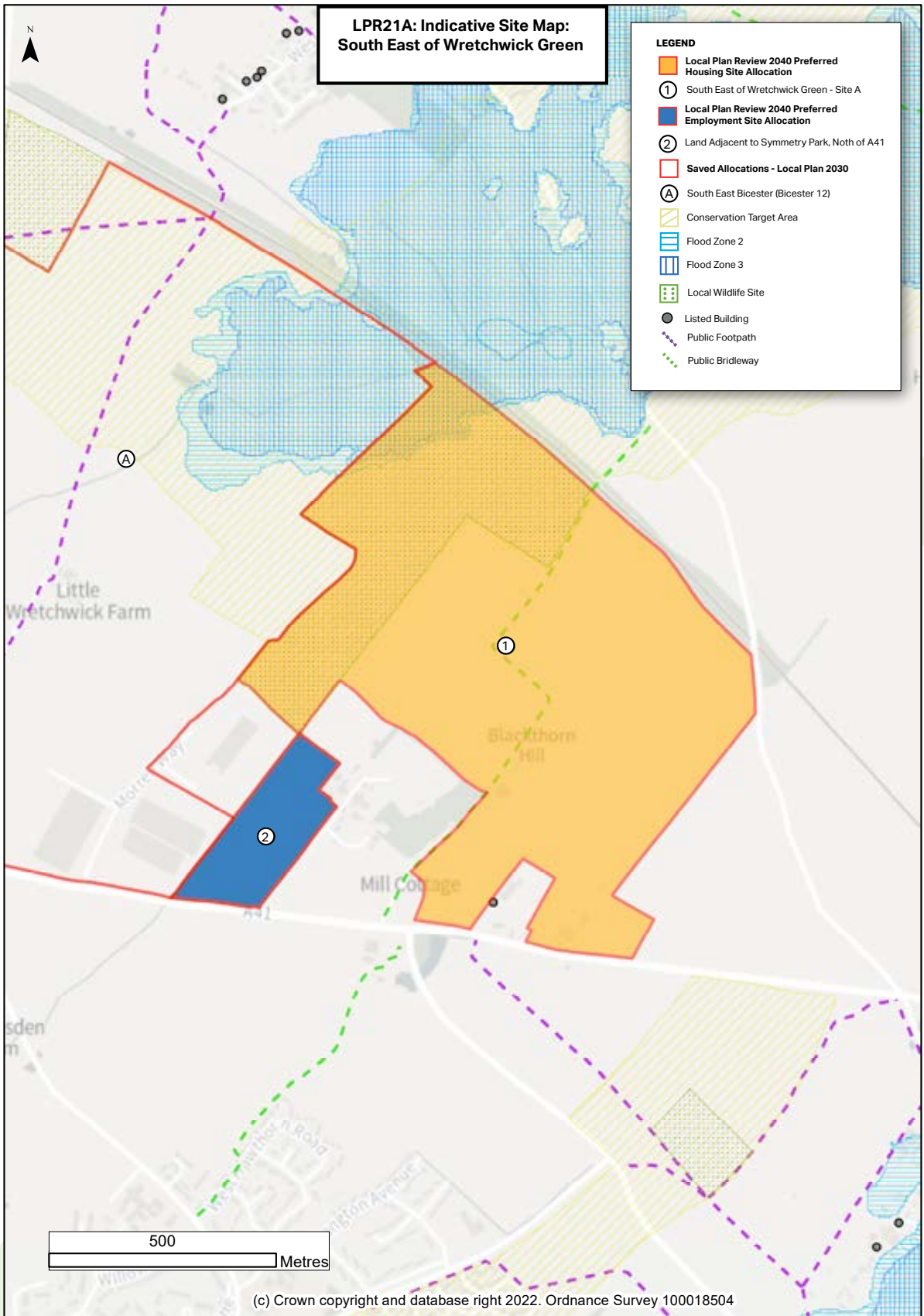
Site Reference	LPR2 1A: South-East of Wretchwick Green - Site A
Area	South-East Bicester
Site Area	75ha
Site Capacity	Housing, 800 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- Blackthorn Hill Local Wildlife Site and part of the River Ray Conservation Target Area are located in the north of the site;
- The Windmill, Blackthorn Hill is a listed building located to the south of the site;
- An area of Flood zones 2 and 3 in the north of the site;
- Potential landscape impact on the wider countryside;
- Sensitivities include the sloping landform of Blackthorn Hill and the open and rural setting of the landscape, and
- Approximately one-quarter of the site is designated as a local wildlife site.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to deliver a high-quality and sustainable development of approximately 800 homes, with strong connections to Bicester town centre and surrounding employment areas;
- Opportunities to improve and enhance the existing transport corridor along the A41;
- Potential options for a mobility hub or strategic bus service and other such as a park and ride, cycle parking and EV charging facilities;
- Opportunities to improve Public Rights of Way and provision of additional footpaths and cycleways linking the site to surrounding areas, including Symmetry Park;
- Provision of a bus route through the site;
- Opportunities to establish ecological corridors and strategic-scale linear green spaces, and
- Biodiversity enhancement areas to be provided including speciesrich grassland and native woodland planting on-site.



**LPR21A SOUTH EAST OF WRETCHWICK GREEN- SITE A:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

 Hedgerows	 Reconnect PROWs and cycleways	 Tree planting	 Strategic scale linear green space	 Accessible green space
 Local Wildlife Site	 Public Right of Way	 Flood Zones 2 and 3		

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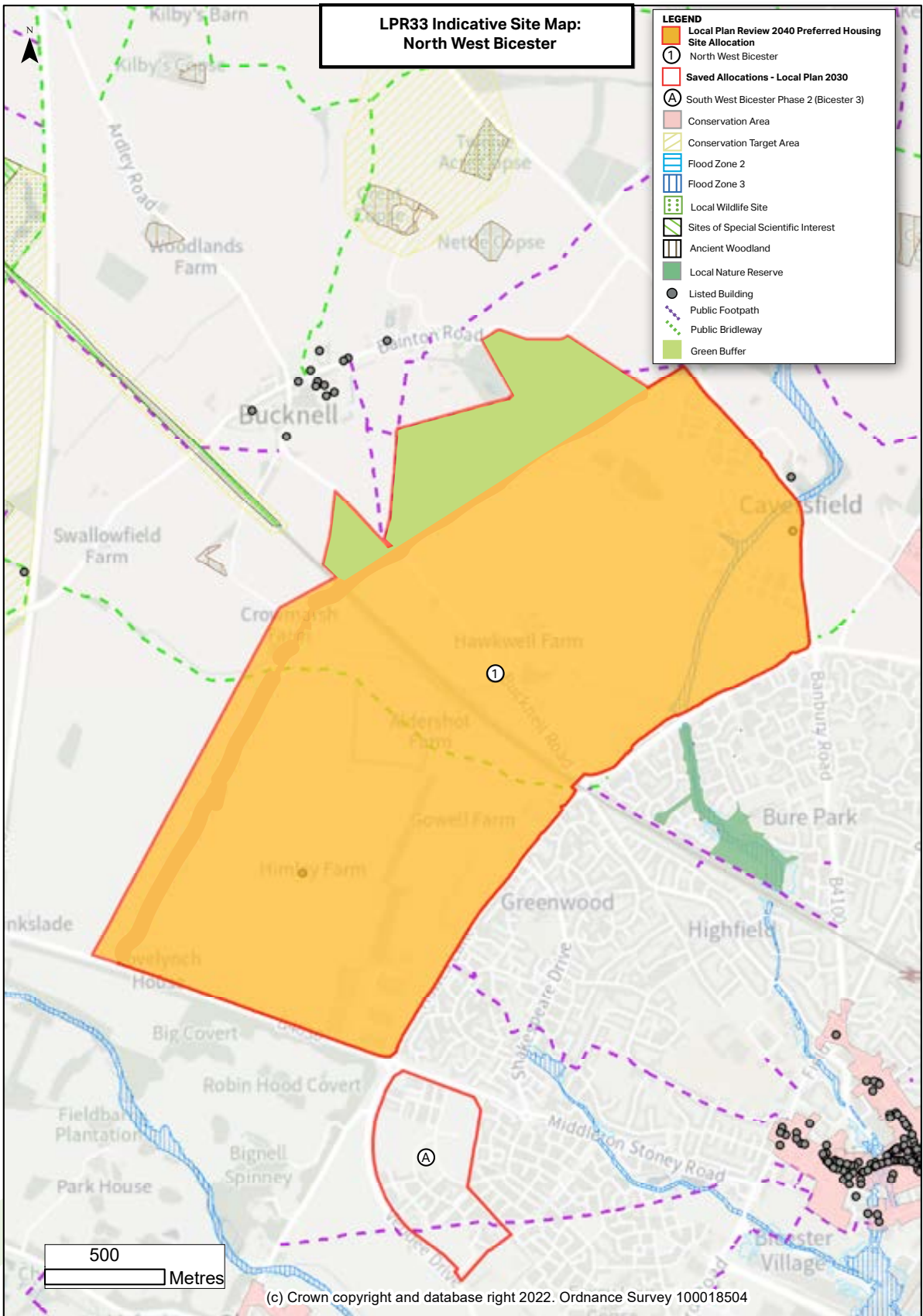
Site Reference	LPR33: North-West Bicester
Area	Bicester
Site Area	454ha
Site Capacity	7000 dwellings plus associated community uses, open space and employment
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- Bignell Park; a historic parkland landscape, lies to the southwest of the site;
- The site has a number of existing Public Rights of Way;
- The site is within an area of archaeological interest;
- There are three Grade II listed buildings within the site and some notable historic buildings within the surrounding area;
- The site is located within the Nature Recovery Network “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- Town Brook crosses the middle of the site leading to some areas of fluvial flood risk;
- The village of Bucknell lies immediately to the north of the site.

Key Opportunities:








- Opportunity to develop an exemplar zero carbon mixed-use development to include a total of 7,000 new homes;
- The opportunity to provide a range of well-designed, and sustainably constructed housing that integrates well with the local area and which demonstrates innovation;
- The provision of affordable housing;
- The provision of local cultural, recreational, social, retail and education facilities within walkable neighbourhoods;
- Many opportunities to conserve and positively enhance local features, habitats and character including through the provision of extensive areas of green infrastructure (at least 40%) and biodiversity enhancements of at least 20% biodiversity net gain;
- Opportunity to create a permanent and extensive green buffer between the new North West Bicester community and Bucknell village;
- The provision of a total of 10 hectares (including completed development) of employment land in the south-east of the site (use classes B and E(g));
- The provision of new active travel routes, and
- Delivery of key infrastructure including local green spaces, children’s play areas outdoor sports facilities, new primary schools, an extension to Gagle Brook School, a secondary school, community facilities, a large GP surgery and other health-related facilities.



**LPR33 NORTH-WEST BICESTER:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

 Hedgerows	 Walking and cycling network	 Woodland planting	 Accessible green space
 Local Wildlife Site	 Public Right of Way	 Strategic linear park space	

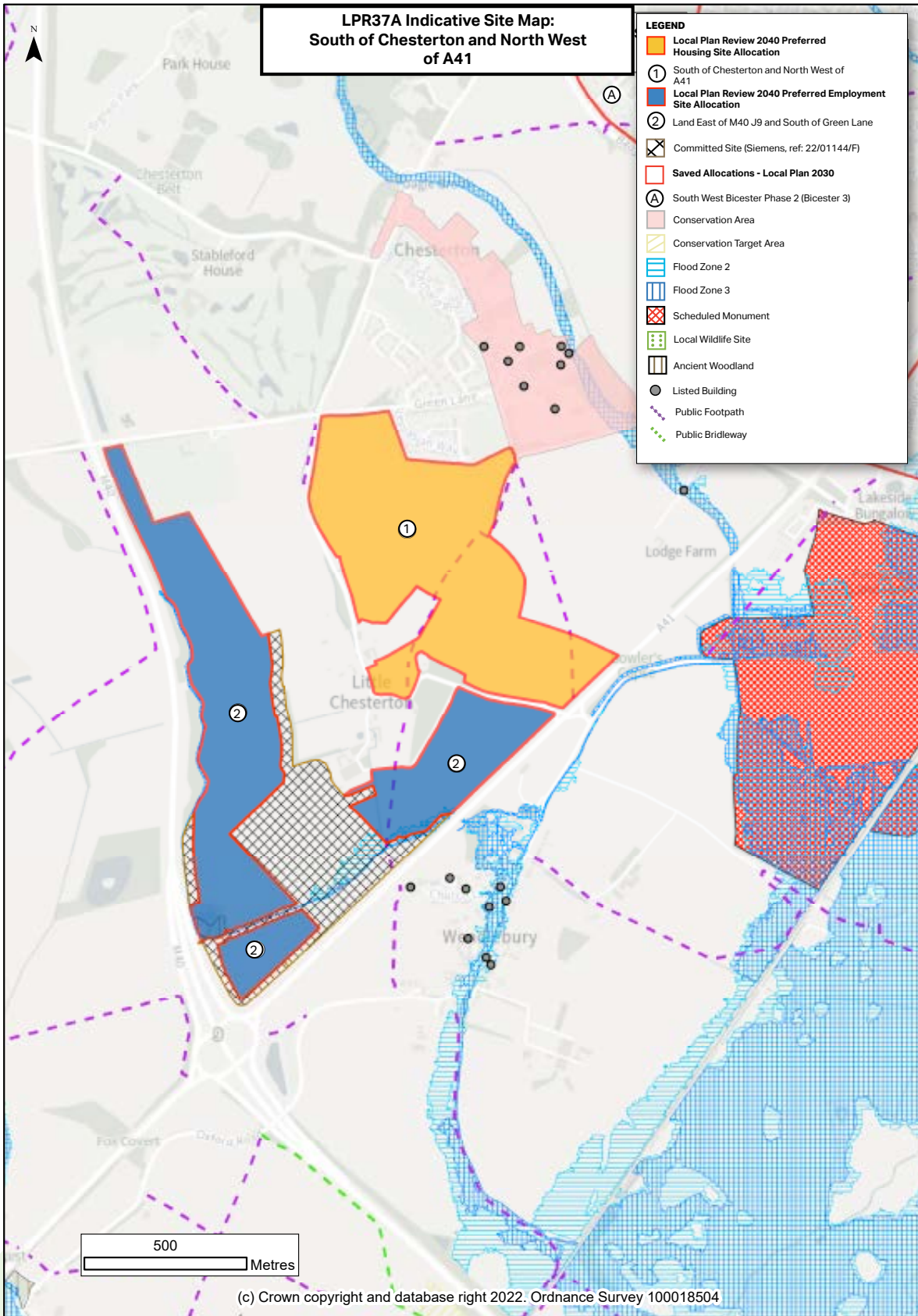
Site Reference	LPR37A: South of Chesterton and North-West of A41
Area	Chesterton
Site Area	42.37ha
Site Capacity	500 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- Infrequent bus service serving Chesterton with the closest bus stop located approximately 500m to the east on Green Lane;
- The site is located within the Nature Recovery Network “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- Public Rights of Way across the site;
- The village of Chesterton and the Chesterton Conservation Area are immediately to the north of the site;
- High voltage power lines cross the site.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to develop a new well designed, sustainable neighbourhood of approximately 500 dwellings;
- Opportunity to provide improved public transport services for Chesterton;
- Opportunity to deliver extensive active travel improvements including enhancement of footpath and cyclepath connectivity with the town centre, employment areas and rail stations;
- Opportunity for a strategic linear green public open space which connects with Chesterton village;
- Opportunity for woodland planting, particularly along the western boundary;
- Opportunity to provide new formal sports facilities and children’s play areas;
- Contributions towards expanded school provision, including special educational needs;
- Contributions to the Byrnehill community woodland and a blue and green corridor along Vendee Drive, and
- New biodiversity enhancement areas including through species-rich grassland and native woodland planting within areas of open space to achieve 20% biodiversity net gain.



**LPR37A LAND SOUTH OF CHESTERTON AND NORTH WEST OF A41:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
|  Hedgerows |  Walking and cycling network |  Woodland planting |  Accessible green space |
|  Conservation Area |  Public Right of Way |  Strategic green space | |

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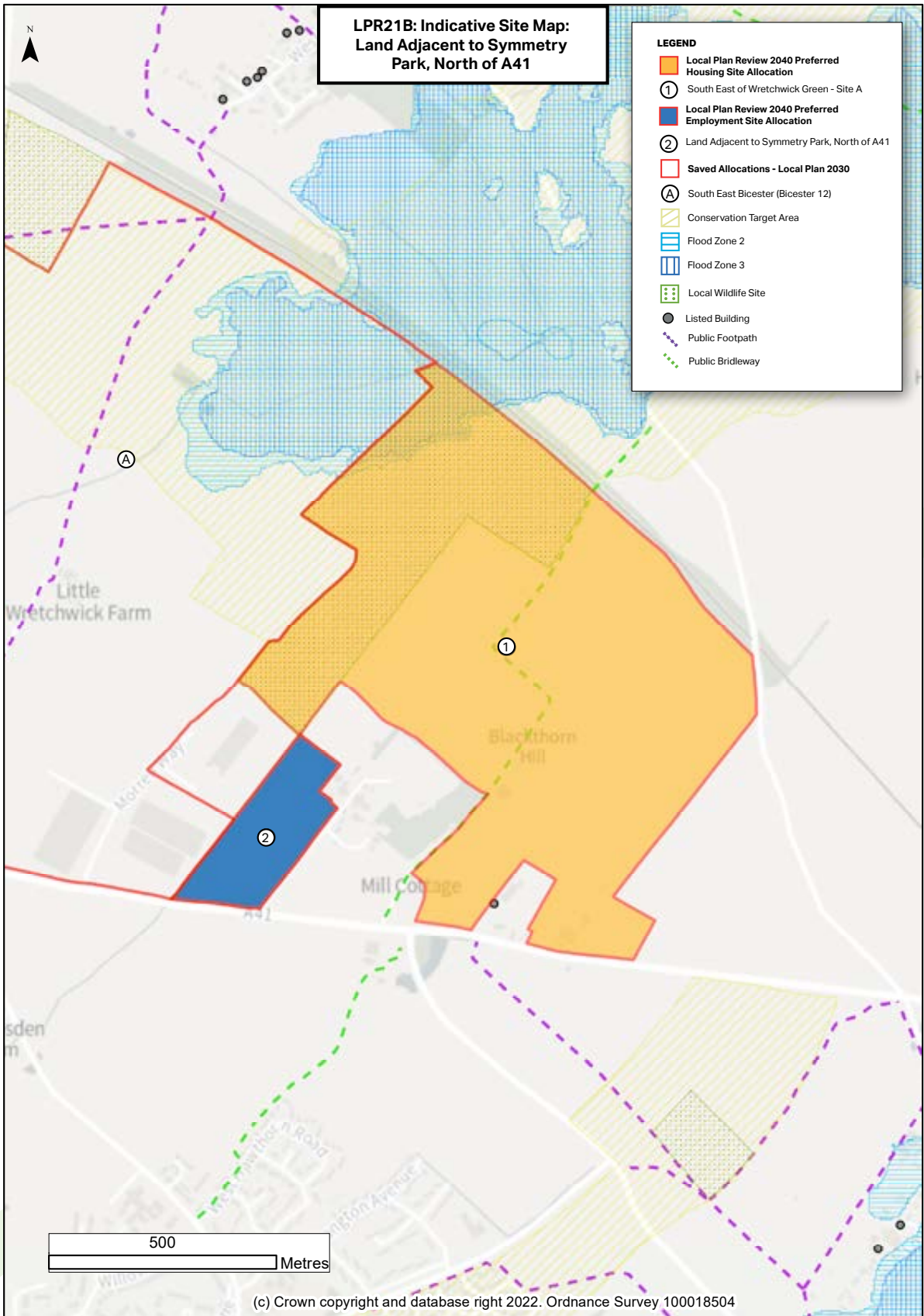
Site Reference	LPR21B: Land adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41
Area	Bicester
Site Area	6.32ha
Site Capacity	Employment uses E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

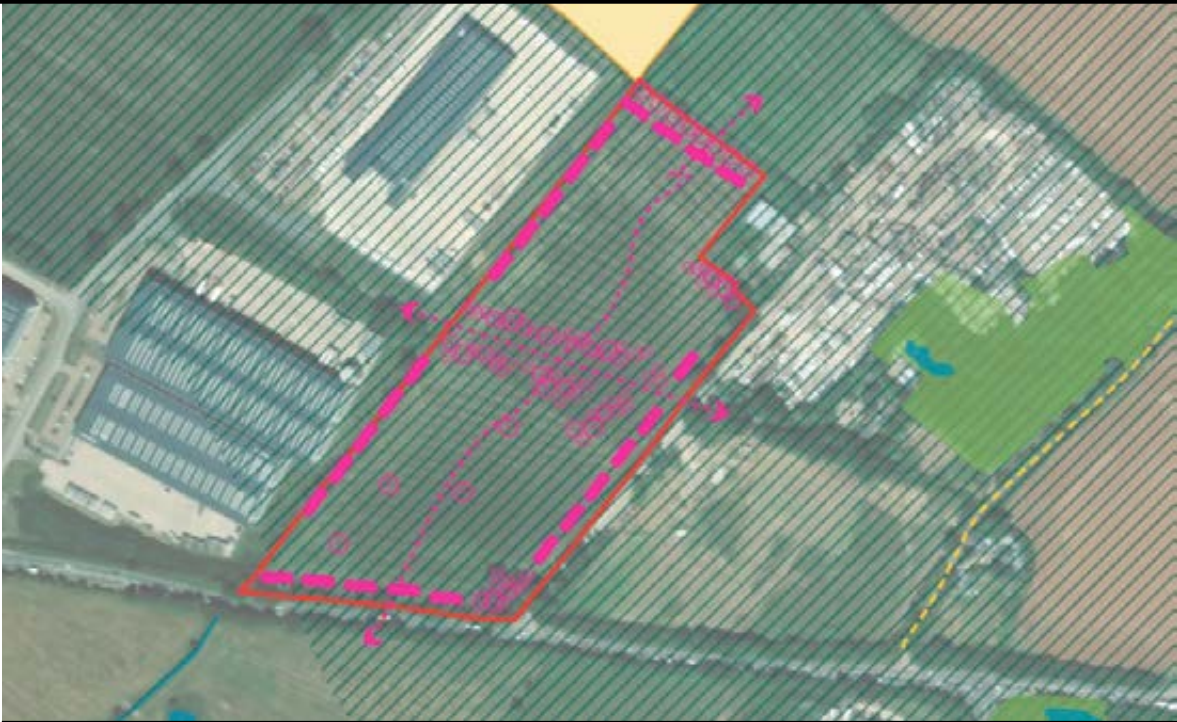
- Arncott Bridge Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located just over 2.5km to the south-east; Stratton Audley Quarries SSSI 4km to the north and Long Herdon Meadow SSSI 4.71km to the east of the site;
- Blackthorn Hill Local Wildlife Site and the River Ray Conservation Target Area are located immediately to the north;
- Sensitivities include the sloping landform of Blackthorn Hill and the open and rural setting of the landscape.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to provide over 6 hectares of land for employment development;
- Opportunities for structural planting and landscaping within the site to provide for the enhancement, restoration and creation of wildlife corridors;
- Opportunity to provide green infrastructure links within and beyond the development site;
- Provision of accessible public transport services, including bus stops and bus routes where necessary;
- The provision of cycleways and footpaths with onward connections to Symmetry Park;
- Provision of safe pedestrian and cycle access to/from the site and along the A41, and
- Provision of new green links, with connections to the adjacent employment sites and proposed residential site.



**LPR21B LAND ADJACENT TO SYMMETRY PARK, NORTH OF A41 - BICESTER:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

	Hedgerows		Green links to surrounding area		Tree planting/nature-rich landscaping		Accessible green space
	Local Wildlife Site		Public Right of Way		Waterbody		

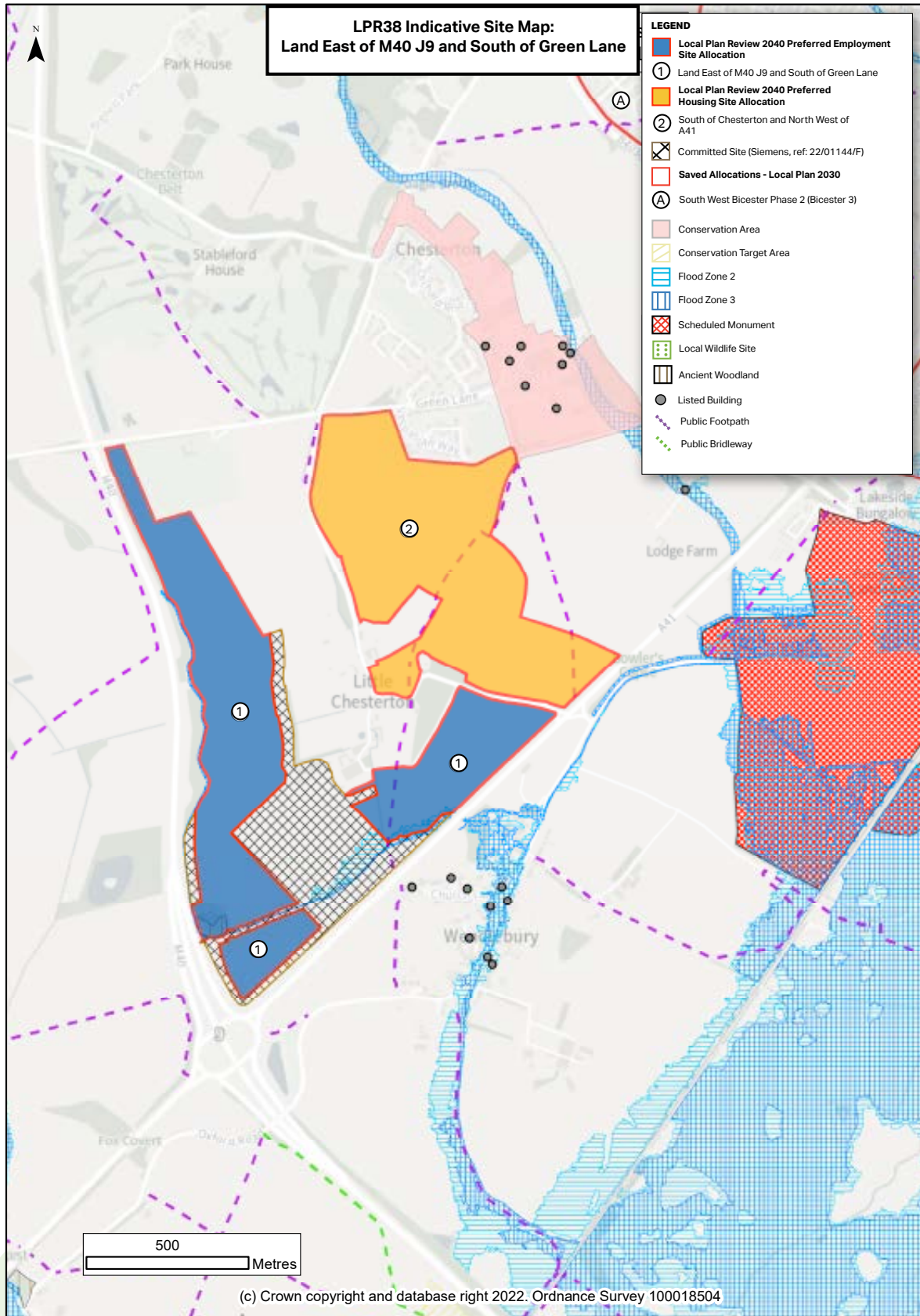
Site Reference	LPR38: Land east of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane
Area	Chesterton/Wendlebury,
Site Area	45.80ha
Site Capacity	40ha Employment floorspace E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The site is located within the Nature Recovery Network “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- A public right of way crosses the middle of the site and connects to Chesterton, Bicester and Wendlebury;
- Likely significant archaeological and other heritage assets within the site;
- Ancient woodland located in the south of the site adjacent to the M40;
- Wendlebury Brook crosses the south of the site.

Key Opportunities:


- Opportunity to deliver a high quality distinctive, sustainable and energy efficient employment development that integrates well with the local area and provides a positive gateway into the town;
- Provision for safe pedestrian and cycle access to/from the site and along the A41;
- Provision of accessible public transport services, including bus stops and bus routes where necessary;
- Opportunities for wetland habitats along the existing waterways on the edges of the site.



**LPR38: LAND EAST OF M40 J9 AND SOUTH OF GREEN LANE:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

	Key routes lined with SuDs and tree planting		Green walking and cycling routes		Woodland planting		Wetland habitats
	Waterbody		Flood Zones 2 and 3		Public Right of Way		Accessible green space

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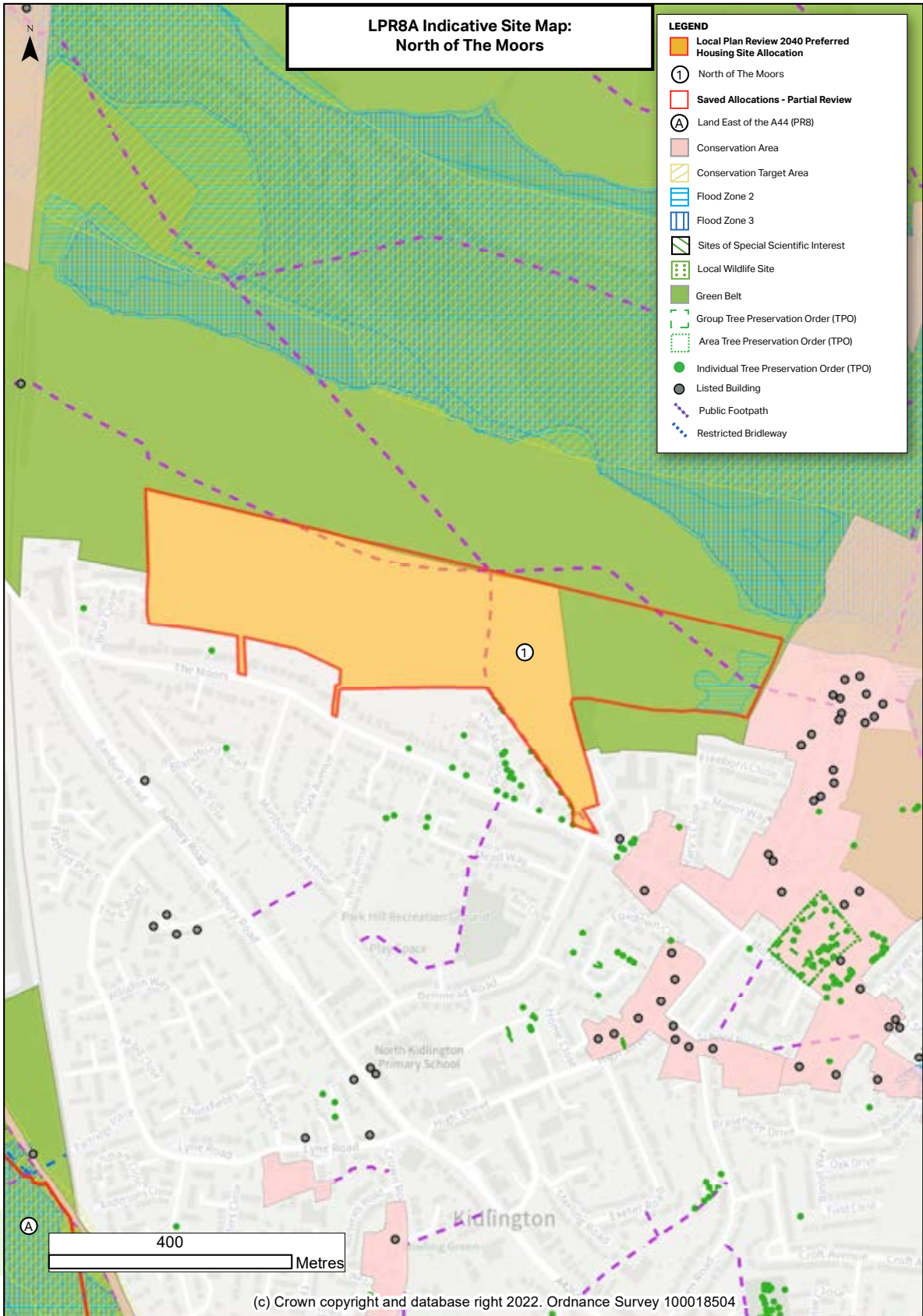
Site Reference	LPR8A: North of The Moors
Area	Kidlington
Site Area	21.5 ha
Site Capacity	Housing, indicative capacity 300 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The site is adjacent to Church Street Conservation Area and located in the proximity of Listed Buildings and four other Conservation Areas;
- Key views across the site towards the spire of St Mary the Virgin Church;
- The site is an area of archaeological interest related to Iron Age, Roman and medieval settlement;
- A medieval moat is situated to the east of the site;
- The site is located within the 'Recovery Zone' of the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network';
- The site is adjacent to the Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area and the setting of the River Cherwell Valley to the north;
- There are two Public Right of Ways east and north of the site;
- Part of the site falls within Flood Risk Zone 2;
- There are groups of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and individual TPOs on-site;
- The site is within the Oxford Green Belt;
- Limited options for vehicular access.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to deliver a high quality, sustainable new neighbourhood for Kidlington of approximately 300 homes;
- Opportunity to establish new woodland and a green linkage to the District Wildlife Site to the northeast;
- Opportunity to extend the National Cycle Network through the site;
- The provision of bus priority and walking/cycling improvements to the A4260;
- Opportunities to deliver formal and informal open space, a village green, play space, pitches, allotments and community food growing space, and
- Opportunity to establish a new woodland which links to the Thrupp Community Forest.



**LPR8A NORTH OF THE MOORS:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

-  Hedgerows
-  Connect and enhance PROWs
-  Woodland planting
-  Wetland habitats and SuDs
-  Accessible green space
-  Conservation Area
-  Public Right of Way
-  Flood Zones 2 and 3

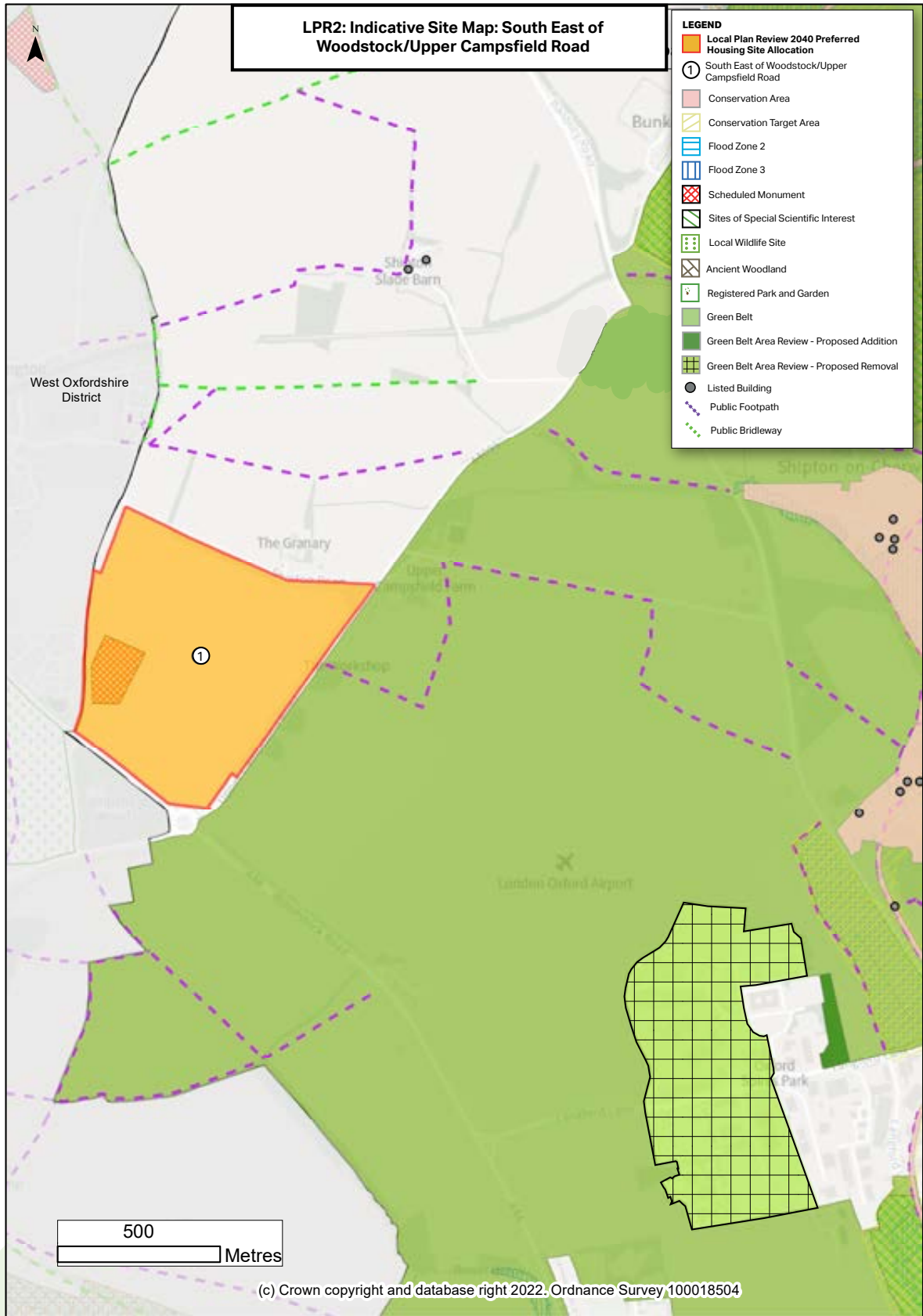
Site Reference	LPR2: South-East of Woodstock /Upper Campsfield Road
Area	Shipton on Cherwell
Site Area	48.71 ha
Site Capacity	Housing, indicative capacity of 450 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The majority of the site is located within the NRN “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage Site and SSSI, is located to the west of the site;
- Blenheim Village Scheduled Monument is located in the southwestern part of the site;
- Multiple Public Rights of Way connect to the site boundary;
- Areas of broadleaved woodland at the northern and eastern boundaries;
- High voltage power lines cross the site;
- A main badger sett is present on the north-eastern area of woodland at the site;
- Common lizards have been recorded at the site;
- The site is of Local or County importance for most bat species.

Key Opportunities:








- Opportunity to deliver a high-quality residential development of approximately 450 homes, that is well-integrated with the Woodstock and Kidlington communities;
- Opportunity to link the primary street/spine road with the Park View development;
- Opportunity for the development proposal to benefit from the proposed A44 Transport Hub/Park & Ride;
- Opportunities to contribute towards the expansion of Woodstock CE Primary School and/or contribute towards a new primary school;
- Opportunities to enhance the coverage of meadow and grassland habitat on-site, and
- Options to incorporate natural play areas and green space within the setting of the Blenheim Villa scheduled monument.



**LPR2 SOUTH EAST OF WOODSTOCK/UPPER CAMPSFIELD ROAD:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

-  Lowland meadow areas
-  Walking and cycling network
-  Woodland planting
-  Green space and natural play
-  Accessible green space
-  NRN: Core Zone
-  Public Right of Way

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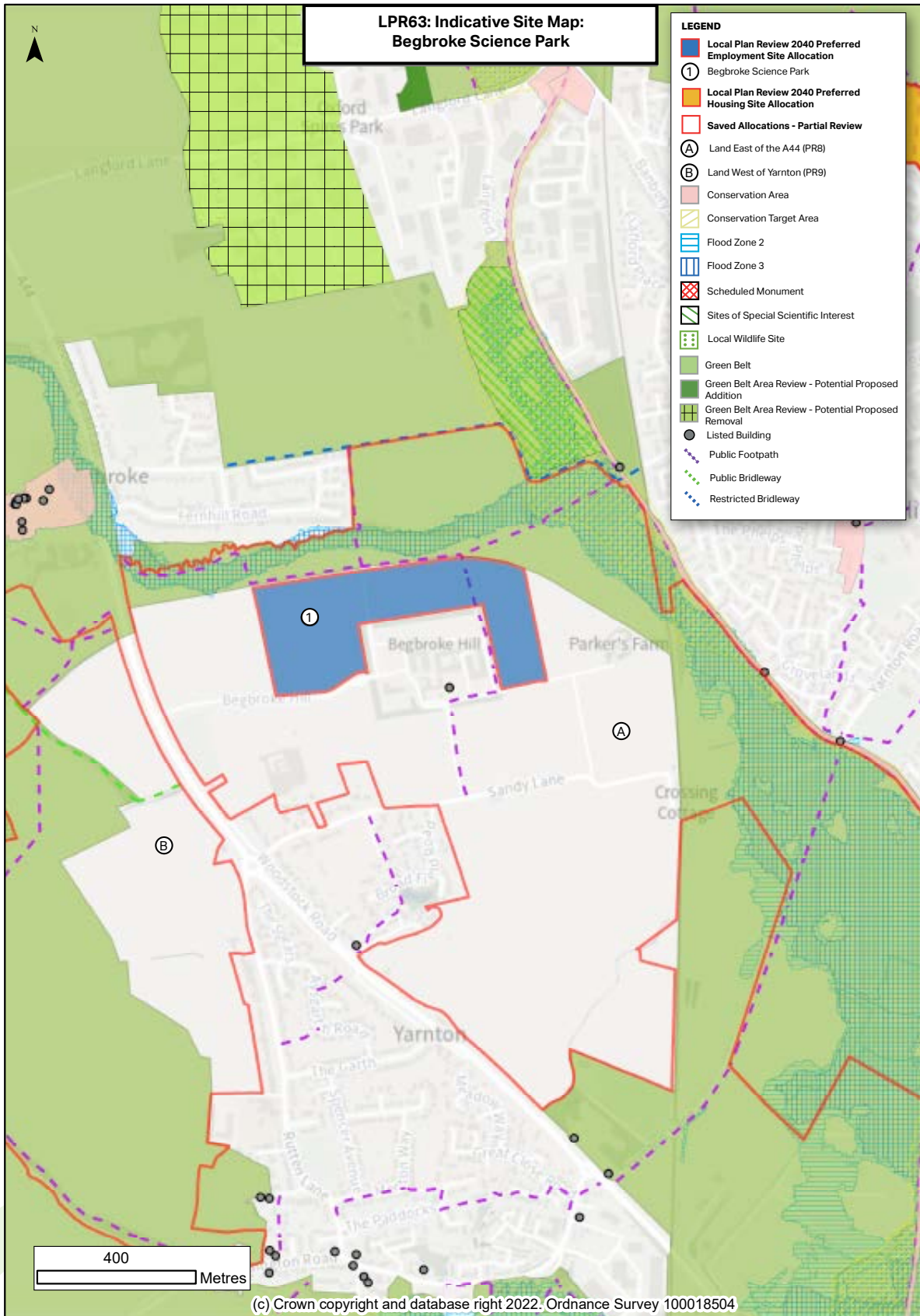
Site Reference	LPR63: Begbroke Science Park
Area	Begbroke
Site Area	14.74ha
Site Capacity	14.74ha Employment – focus on R&D (class E(g)(ii))
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- The site is located within the Nature Recovery Network (NRN) “Wider Landscape Zone”;
- The Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area is 100m to the east of the site;
- The site is situated along the southern edge of the wooded Rowel Brook, a tributary to the River Cherwell, and is 200m south-west of Rushy Meadows SSSI;
- Two Public Right of Ways cross north-south through the middle of the site and along the northern site boundary along Rowel Brook;
- High voltage power lines cross the site;
- The site lies directly south of Rowel Brook and Flood Zone 3 brushes along the northern site boundary;
- The northern boundary lies adjacent to a Thames Water foul sewage pumping station.

Key Opportunities:

- Opportunity to deliver high quality and sustainable high-tech employment floorspace that integrates well with the local area and the adjacent proposed new residential neighbourhood;
- Opportunities for enhanced cycling and walking connections;
- Opportunities to deliver enhanced wetland, woodland and meadow habitats;
- Opportunity to establish wooded areas, particularly along the northern boundary of the site along the Rowel Brook Corridor, and
- Opportunity to explore nature-based solutions to flooding on the site.



**LPR63 BEGBROKE SCIENCE PARK:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



- KEY:**
- Reconnected PRoW and cycle routes
 - Accessible green space
 - Enhancements to Rowel Brook
 - Woodland planting and street trees
 - Flood Zones 2 and 3
 - Public Right of Way

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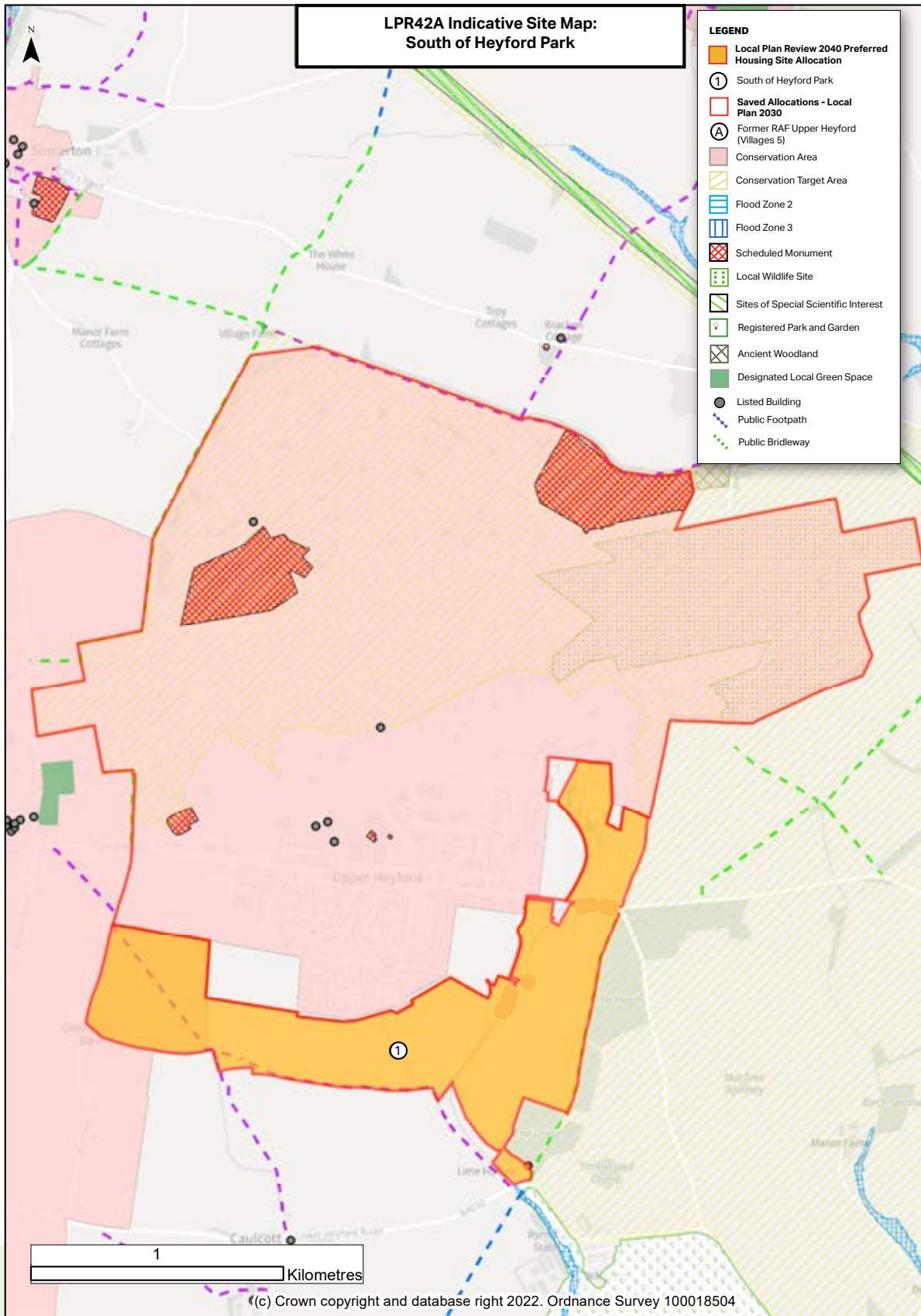
Site Reference	LPR42: South of Heyford Park
Area	Heyford Park
Site Area	105ha
Site Capacity	1,235 dwellings
Site Type	Greenfield

Key Constraints:

- Some of the wider Heyford Park site is within the Ardley and Upper Heyford Conservation Target Area;
- The River Cherwell and Oxford Canal corridor lie to the west of the site;
- North of the proposed site, on the flying field, is a local wildlife site; The Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI is located approximately 2km northeast of the site;
- A small watercourse runs north-south through the site;
- The site borders a District Wildlife Site;
- Middleton Park, a registered park and garden, lies to the south of the site;
- The Grade 1 listed Rousham Park is to the southwest;
- The Rousham and former RAF upper Heyford Conservation Areas adjoin the site;
- There is a Mineral Safeguarding Area south-east of Heyford Park.

Key Opportunities:









- Opportunity for a high quality, sustainable development of approximately 1,235 homes that integrates well with Heyford Park.
- Opportunities to expand the existing Heyford Park 2 form entry allthrough school;
- Opportunity for a new spine road connecting Camp Road and Kirtlington Road;
- Opportunities for additional community facilities, including health and leisure facilities;
- Opportunities to deliver a strategic green space with natural play areas and new wooded areas along the waterway network, and
- Opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancement areas which include species-rich grassland and native woodland planting.



**LPR42A SOUTH OF HEYFORD PARK:
Indicative Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure**



KEY:

 Strategic green space and nature-based play	 Network of footpaths	 Woodland planting	 Hedgerows
 Waterbody	 Conservation Area	 Public Right of Way	 Accessible green space

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Appendix 3

Housing: Developable and Deliverable Supply

This table provides the current assessment of future housing supply from existing deliverable and developable sites from 1 April 2022 (i.e. in addition to recorded housing completions at 31 March 2022).

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Category/Site Name & Address	Conclusion	Deliverable	Developable	Total
Banbury				
Banbury 1 - Banbury Canalside Canalside	Deliverable	19	649	668
Banbury 2 - Hardwick Farm, Southam Road (East and West) Land East of Southam Road	Deliverable	109	0	109
Banbury 3 - West of Bretch Hill West of Bretch Hill	Deliverable	132	0	132
Banbury 4 - Bankside Phase 2 Bankside Phase 2	Developable	0	825	825
Banbury 5 - North of Hanwell Fields North of Hanwell Fields	Deliverable	95	0	95
Banbury 8 - Bolton Road Bolton Road	Deliverable	80	120	200
Banbury 16 - Land South of Salt Way and West of Bloxham Road Land South of Salt Way and West of Bloxham Road	Deliverable	154	0	154
Banbury 17 - South of Salt Way South of Salt Way - East	Deliverable	1148	0	1148
Banbury 18 - Drayton Lodge Farm Drayton Lodge Farm	Deliverable	320	0	320
Banbury 19 - Land at Higham Way Land at Higham Way	Developable	0	150	150
Land North and West of Bretch Hill Reservoir Adj to Balmoral Avenue Land North and West of Bretch Hill Reservoir adj to Balmoral Avenue, Banbury	Deliverable	49	0	49
Banbury - Unallocated Sites (10 or More Dwellings)				
Bankside Phase 1 (Longford Park)	Deliverable	14	0	14
Land Adjoining and West of Warwick Road	Deliverable	17	0	17
Magistrates Court, Warwick Road, Banbury	Deliverable	23	0	23
Land to the rear of 7 and 7A High Street	Deliverable	14	0	14
OS Parcel 6372 South-East of Milestone Farm, Broughton Road, Banbury	Developable	0	49	49
Land Opposite Hanwell Fields Recreation, Adj to Dukes Meadow Drive, Banbury	Developable	0	78	78
Banbury - Small Sites (1 to 9 Dwellings)	Deliverable	99	0	99
BANBURY SUB-TOTAL		2273	1871	4144



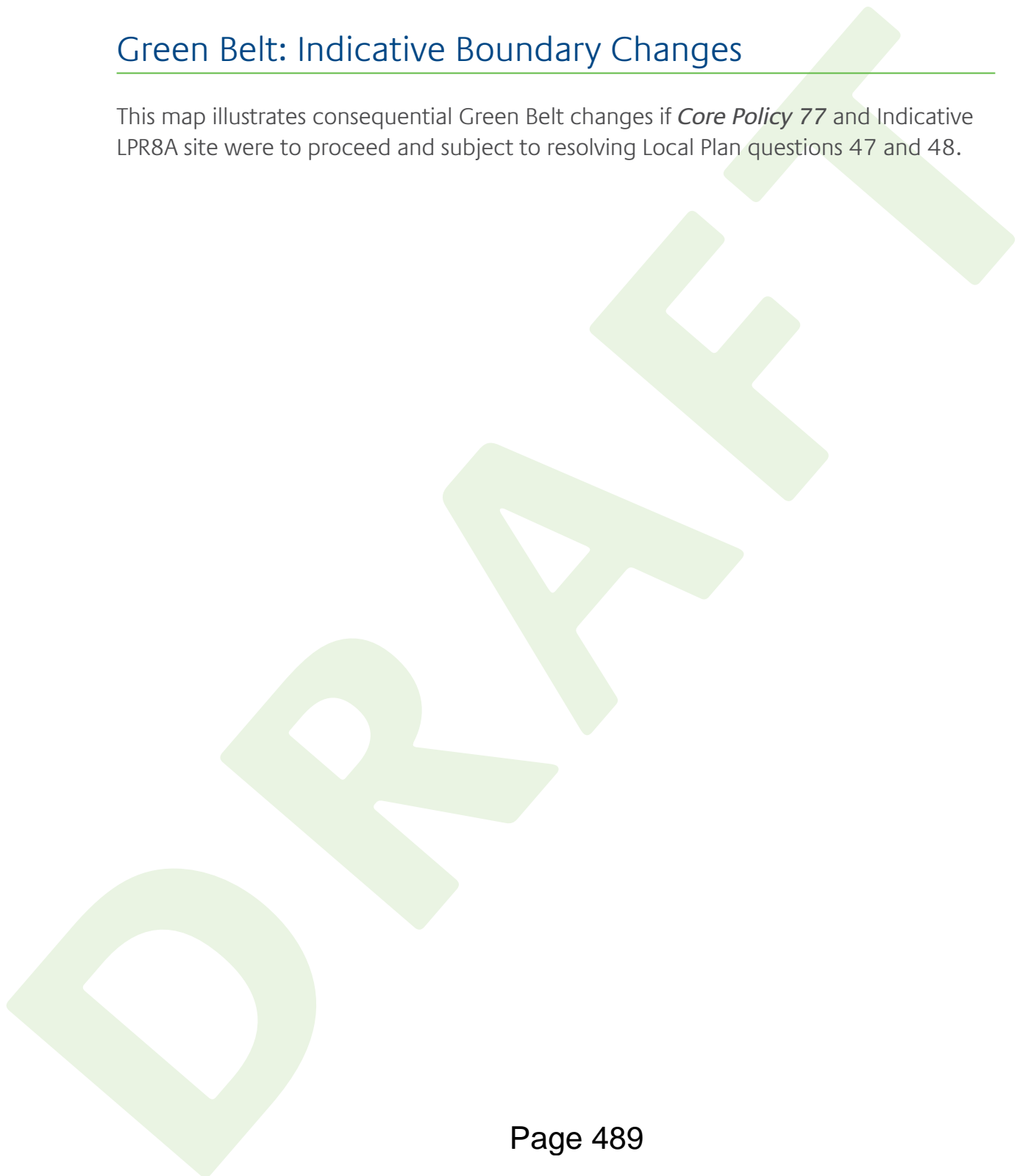
Category/Site Name & Address	Conclusion	Deliverable	Developable	Total
Bicester				
Bicester 1 – Northwest Bicester				
North-West Bicester Eco-Town Exemplar Project	Deliverable	609	5088	5697
Bicester 2 - Graven Hill				
Graven Hill	Deliverable	1456	200	1656
Bicester 3 – Southwest Bicester Phase 2				
South-West Bicester Phase 2	Deliverable	396	0	396
Bicester 10 - Bicester Gateway Business Park				
Bicester Gateway Business Park, Wendlebury Road, Bicester	Deliverable	273	0	273
Bicester 12 – South-East Bicester (Wretchwick Green)				
South-East Bicester (Wretchwick Green)	Deliverable	1500	0	1500
Bicester 13 - Gavray Drive				
Gavray Drive	Developable	0	250	250
Bicester Kingsmere (Southwest Bicester) - Phase 1				
Kingsmere (South-West Bicester) - Phase 1	Deliverable	113	0	113
Bicester Land South of Church Lane (Old Place Yard and St Edburgs)				
Land South of Church Lane (Old Place Yard and St Edburgs)	Deliverable	3	0	3
Bicester Cattle Market				
Cattle Market	Developable	0	40	40
Bicester - Unallocated Sites (10 or More Dwellings)				
Kings End Antiques, Kings End, Bicester	Developable	0	10	10
Inside Out Interiors, 85-87 Churchill Road, Bicester	Deliverable	7	0	7
Bicester - Small Sites (1 to 9 Dwellings)				
	Deliverable	34	0	34
BICESTER SUB-TOTAL		4391	5588	9979
Heyford Park				
VILLAGES 5 - FORMER RAF UPPER HEYFORD				
Former RAF Upper Heyford	Deliverable	643	1103	1746
HEYFORD PARK SUBTOTAL		643	1103	1746
Kidlington				
Other Areas - Unallocated Sites (10 or more dwellings)				
Kidlington Green Social Club, 1 Green Road, Kidlington	Deliverable	32	0	32
KIDLINGTON SUB-TOTAL		32	0	32
Other Areas				
Other Areas - Unallocated Sites (10 or More Dwellings)				
Land at Merton Road, Ambrosden	Deliverable	84	0	84
Land at Tappers Farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote	Deliverable	46	0	46
Land North of Hempton Road and West of Wimborn Close, Deddington	Deliverable	14	0	14
Land North of Oak View, Weston on the Green	Deliverable	10	0	10
Land North of Shortlands and South of High Rock, Hook Norton Road, Sibford Ferris	Deliverable	25	0	25
Land North of Station Road, Bletchington	Deliverable	3	0	3
Land North of the Green and adj. Oak Farm Drive, Milcombe	Deliverable	6	0	6
Land South and Adj. to Cascade Road, Hook Norton	Deliverable	12	0	12
Land South of Home Farm House, Clifton Road, Deddington	Deliverable	15	0	15
Land to the South and adjoining to South Side, Steeple Aston	Deliverable	10	0	10

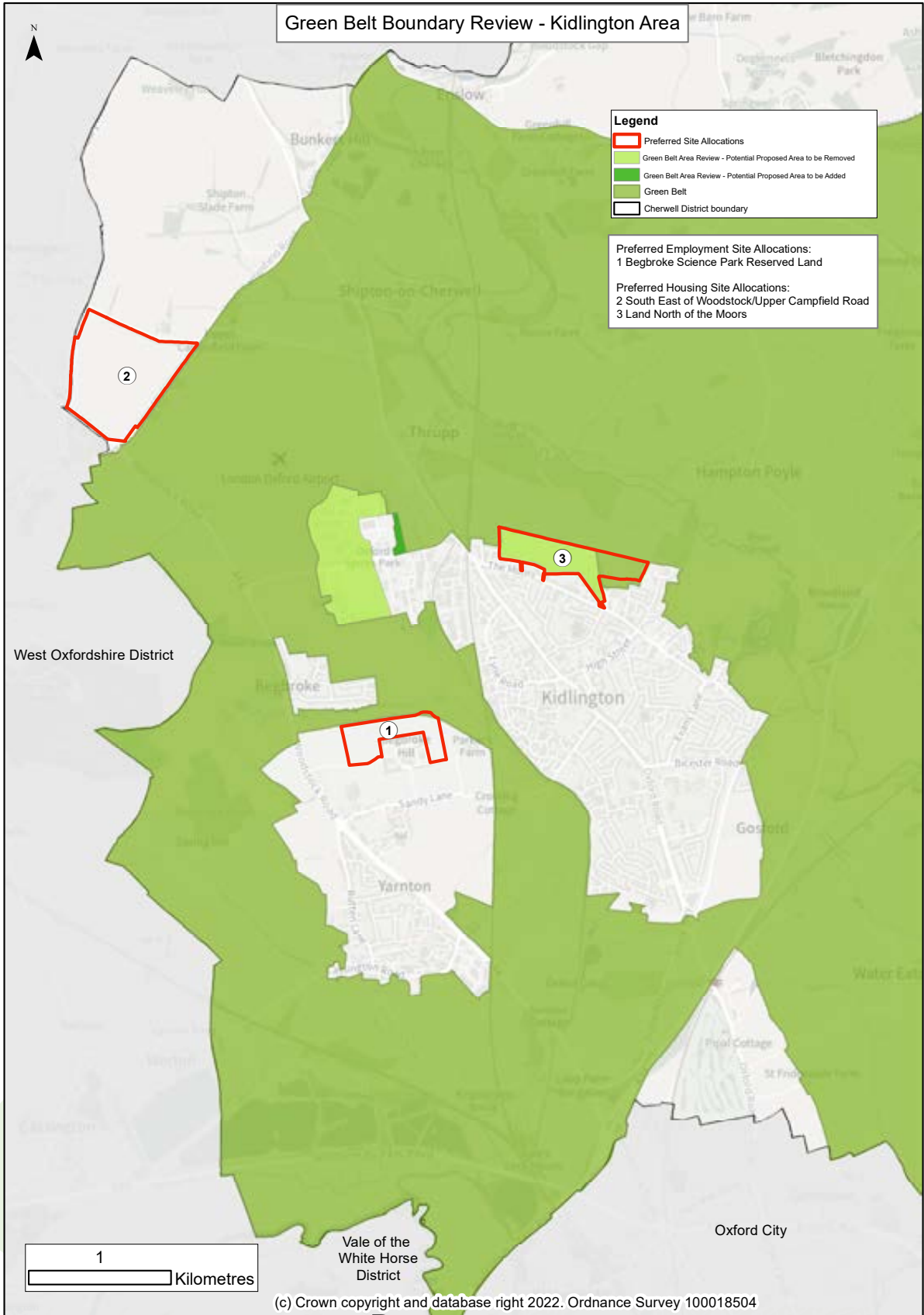
Category/Site Name & Address	Conclusion	Deliverable	Developable	Total
Other Areas - Unallocated Sites (10 or More Dwellings)				
OS Parcel 9100 Adjoining and East of Last House Adjoining and North of Berry Hill Road, Adderbury	Deliverable	40	0	40
OS Parcel 9507 South of 26 and adjoining Fewcott Road, Fritwell	Deliverable	28	0	28
South-East of Launton Road and North-East of Sewage Works Blackthorn Road, Launton	Deliverable	32	0	32
Stone Pits, Hempton Road, Deddington	Deliverable	18	0	18
The Ley Community, Sandy Lane, Yarnton	Deliverable	10	0	10
Other Areas - Small Sites (1 to 9 dwellings)	Deliverable	185	0	185
OTHER AREAS SUB-TOTAL		538	0	538
Partial Review				
Partial Review Sites - Oxford's Unmet Need				
Land East of Oxford Road, North Oxford	Developable	0	690	690
Land West of Oxford Road, North Oxford	Developable	0	670	670
Land East of the A44, Begbroke	Developable	0	1950	1950
Land South-East of Kidlington, Kidlington	Deliverable	430	0	430
Land at Stratfield Farm, Kidlington	Deliverable	120	0	120
Land West of Yarnton, Yarnton	Deliverable	540	0	540
PARTIAL REVIEW SUBTOTAL		1090	3310	4400
Windfall sites				
Small Windfall Sites - District-wide allowance	Deliverable	600	0	600
Large Windfall Sites - District-wide allowance	Deliverable	400	0	400
WINDFALL PROJECTION SUB-TOTAL		1000	0	1000
TOTAL		9967	11872	21839

Appendix 4

Green Belt: Indicative Boundary Changes

This map illustrates consequential Green Belt changes if *Core Policy 77* and Indicative LPR8A site were to proceed and subject to resolving Local Plan questions 47 and 48.





Appendix 5

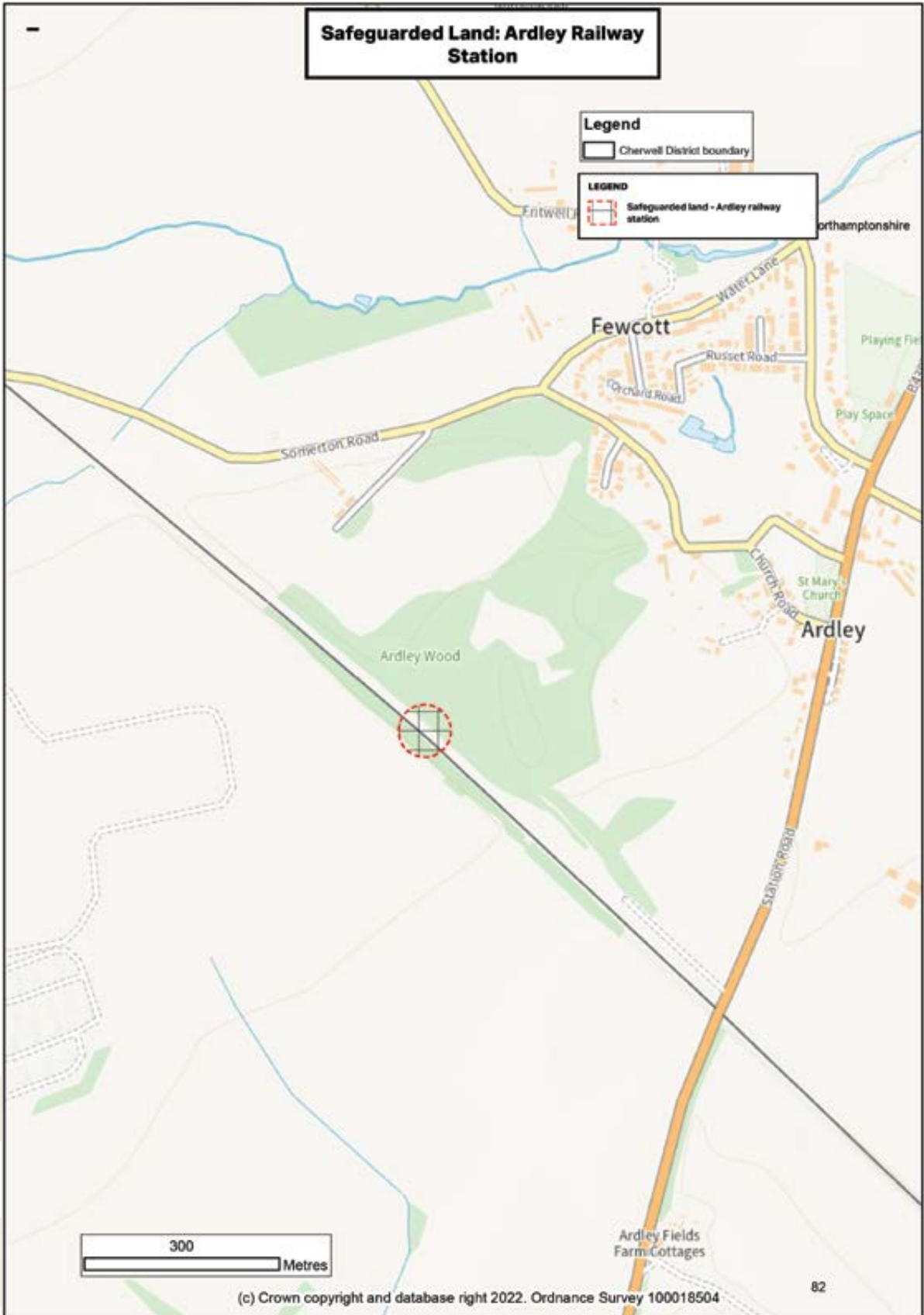
Indicative Safeguarded Infrastructure Maps

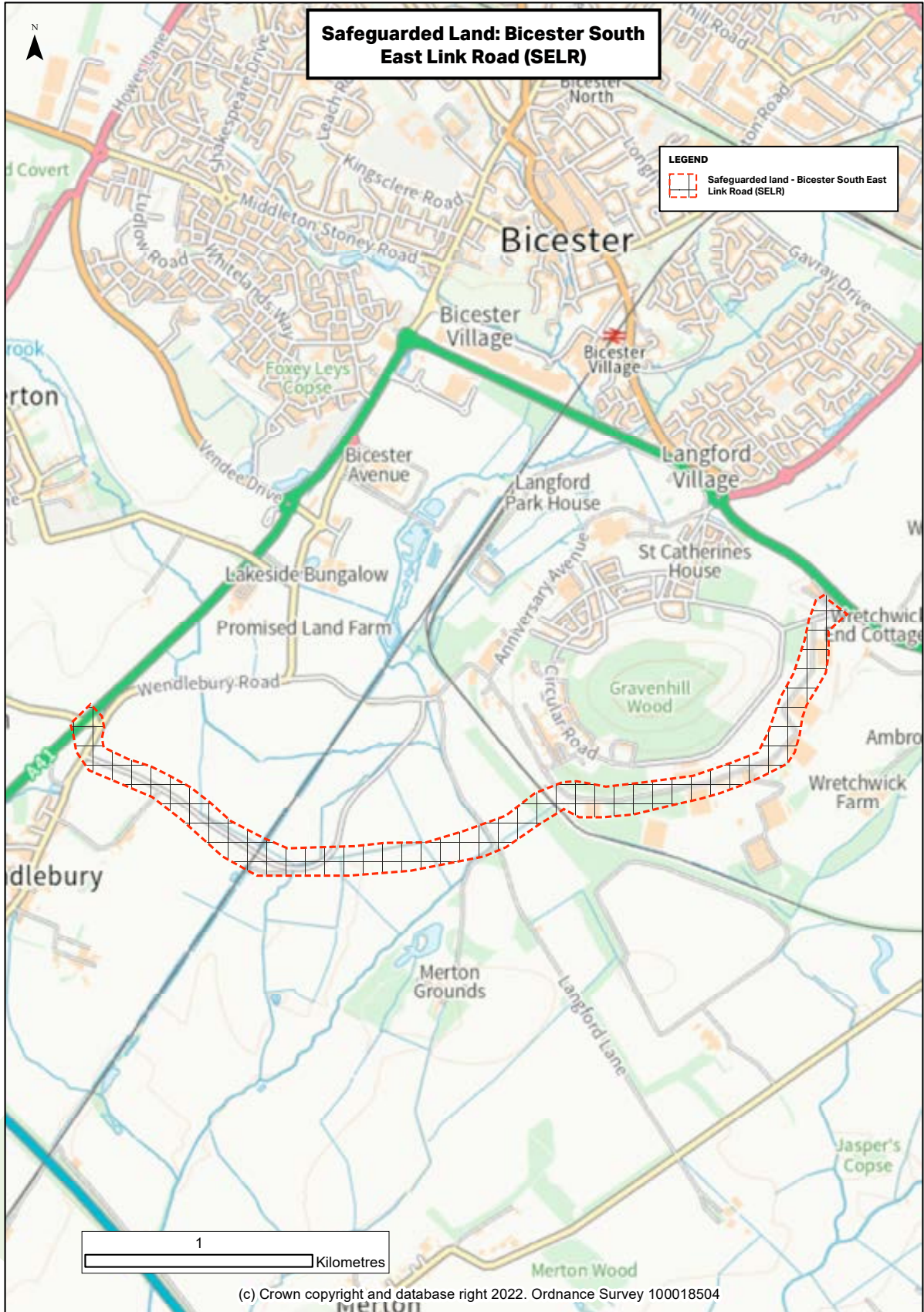
The areas shown in the following maps does not seek to show a precise alignment for the transport schemes, which will need to be informed by detailed design work, carried out in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant parties.

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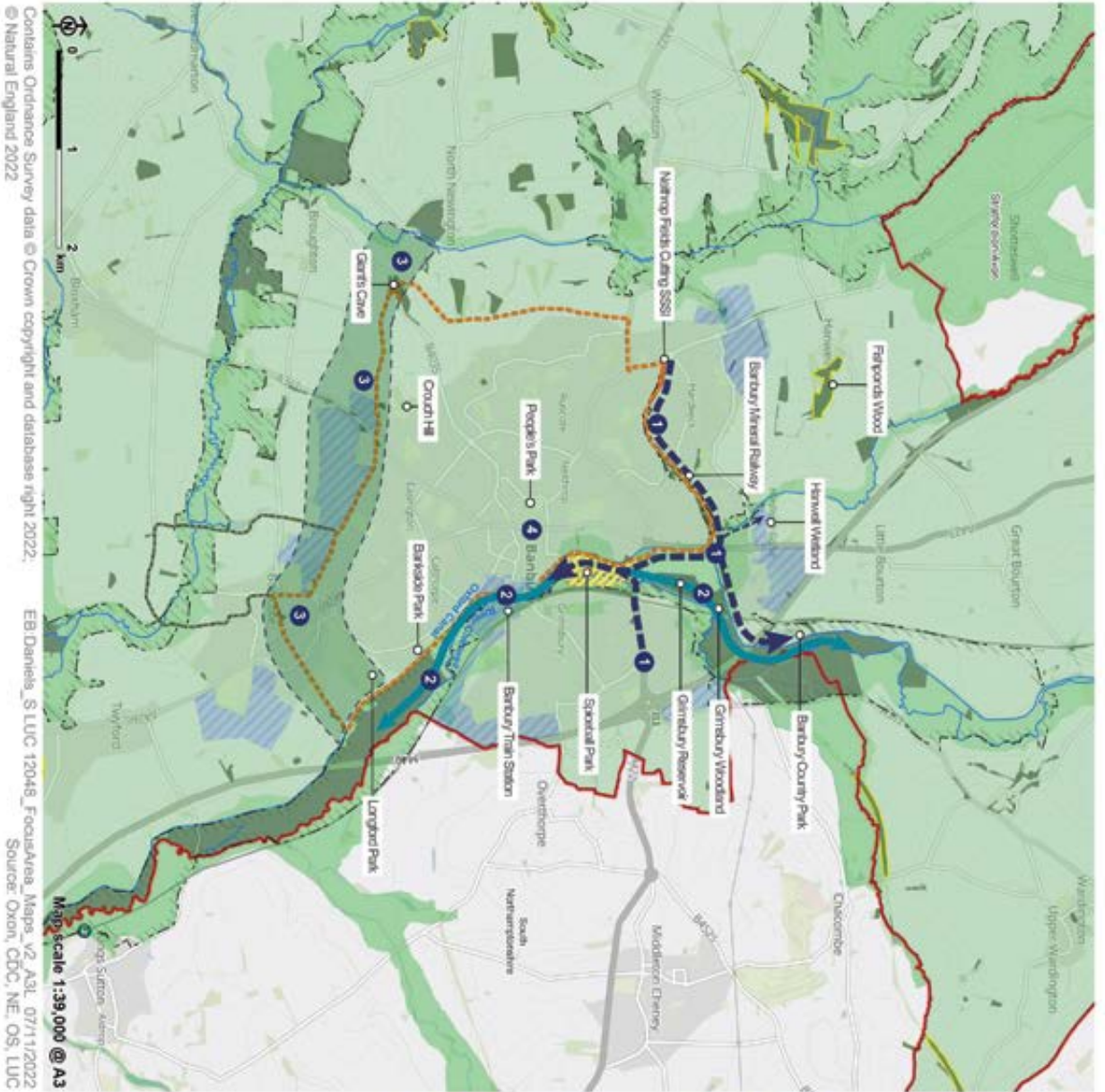
Appendix 6

Biodiversity Green Infrastructure

The Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy includes five 'focus areas' within the district. These include:

- Banbury;
- Bicester;
- Kidlington;
- Otmoor, Bernwood and Ray;
- Mid-Cherwell River Corridor.

Maps for each are presented overleaf.



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 EB Daniels, S LUC 12048_FocusArea_Maps_V2_A3L_07/11/2022
 Source: Oxo, CDC, NE, OS, LUC
 Map scale 1:39,000 @ A3



Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
 Cherwell District Council
 Figure 1: Focus Area Barbury

- Existing GBI**
- Cherwell District
 - Local Authority boundary
 - Committed Strategic Development Site (inc. open space) (2015 Local Plan and 2020 Partial Review)
 - County park
 - Nationally designated sites**
 - Locally designated sites***
 - Conservation target area
 - Barbury Circular Walk
 - Bodicote Circular Walk
 - Rivers
- Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network**
- Core Zone
 - Recovery Zone
 - Wider Landscape Zone
- Strategic Projects for Barbury's GBI network**
- 1 Green corridor connections
 - 2 Restoring the Cherwell River corridor
 - 3 Greening the Salt Way
 - 4 Greening the town centre

Note:

- * Sites include: Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
- ** Sites include: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ramsar and National Nature Reserve
- *** Sites include: Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve



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Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
Cherwell District Council

LUC

Figure 2: Focus Area Bleasler

- Cherwell District
- Local Authority boundary
- Committed Strategic Development Site (inc. open space) (2015 Local Plan and 2020 Partial Review)
- Nationally designated sites**
- Locally designated sites***
- Conservation target area
- Rivers

Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network

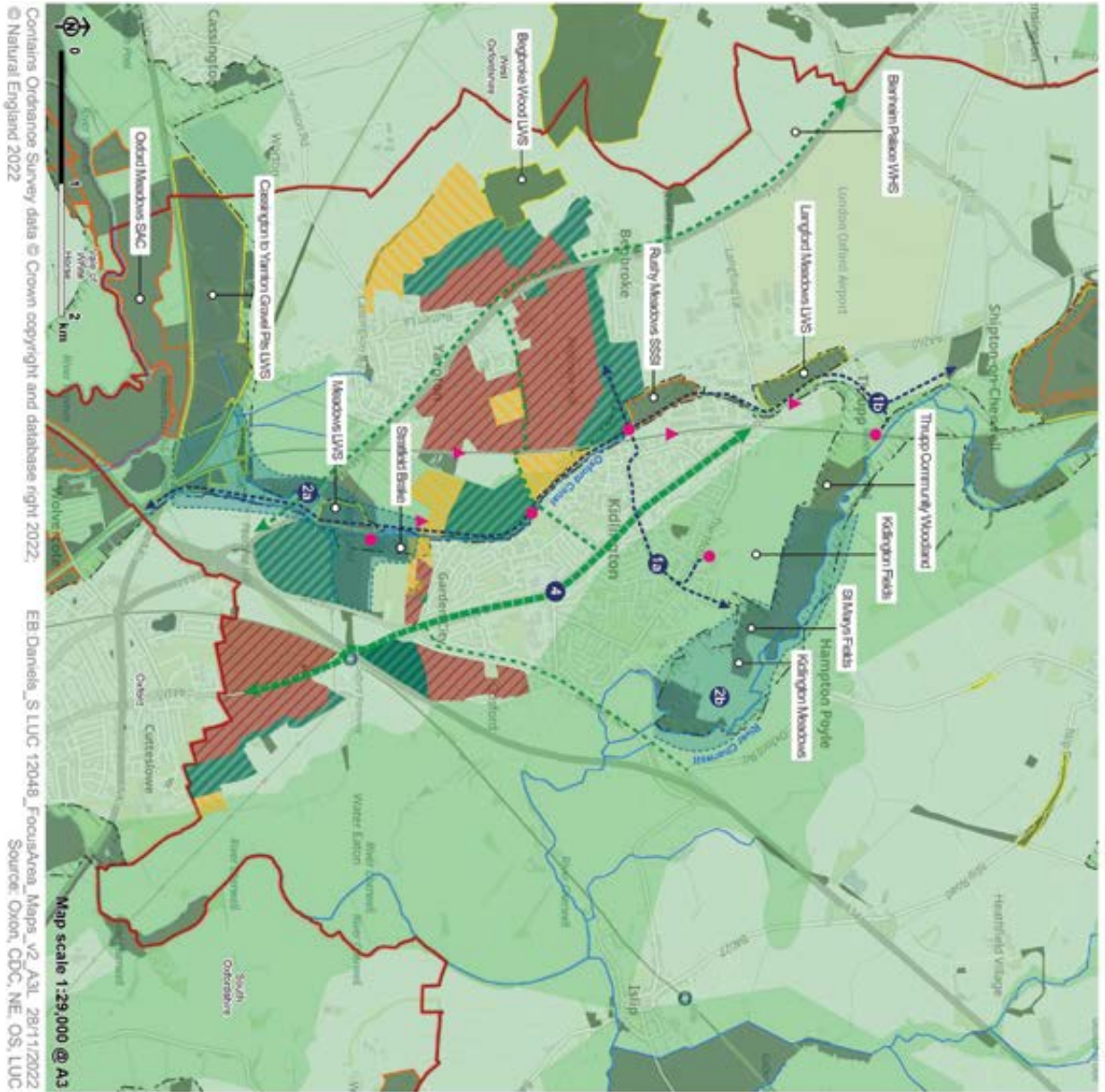
- Core Zone
- Recovery Zone
- Wider Landscape Zone

Strategic Projects for Bleasler's GBI network

- 1 Green corridor connections
- 2 Greening the town centre
- 3 Green corridors
- 4 Restoring river corridors

Note:

- ** Sites include: Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
- *** Sites include: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ramsar and National Nature Reserve
- **** Sites include: Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve



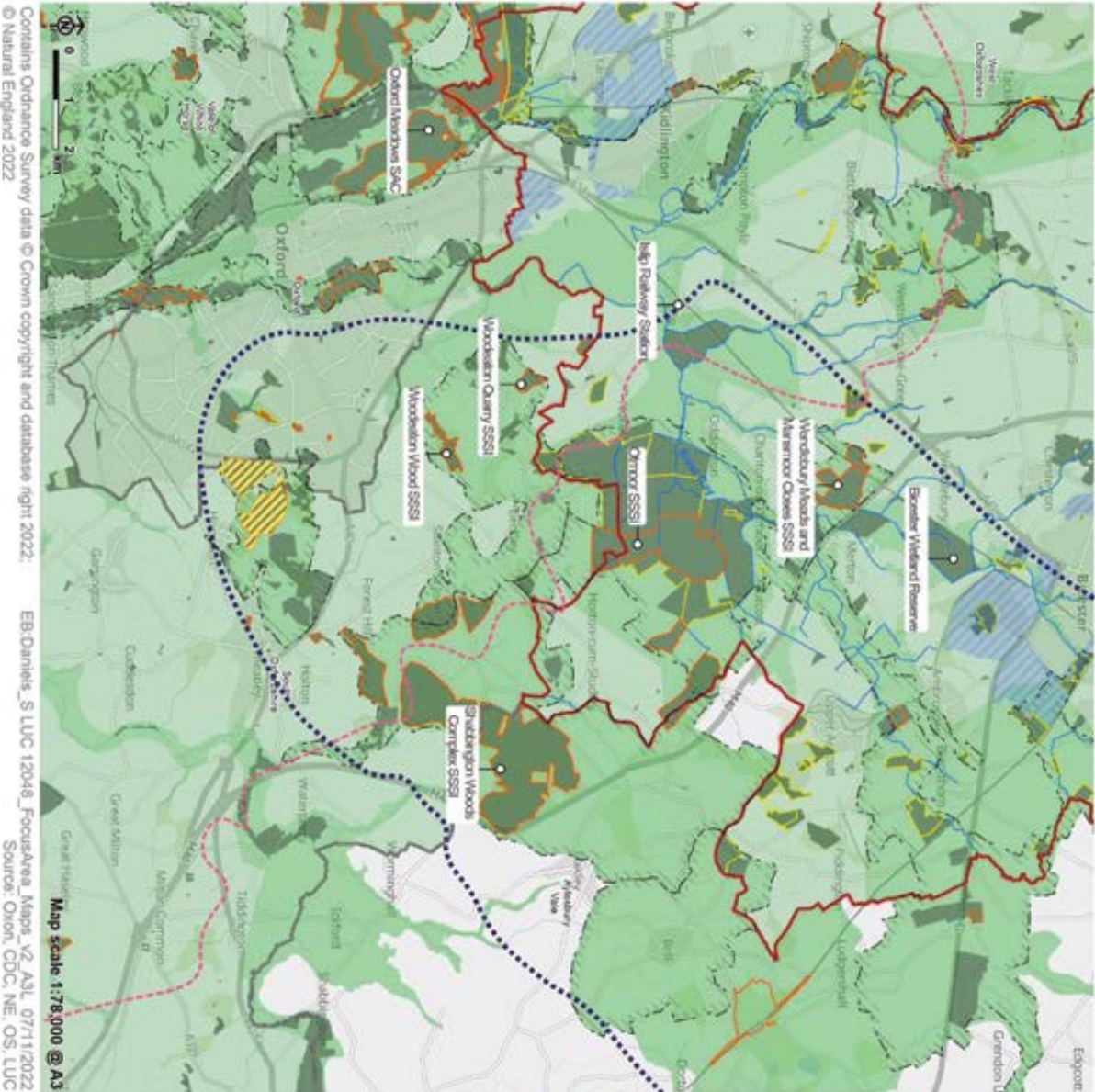
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Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
 Cherwell District Council



Figure 4: Focus Area Kidlington

- Existing GBI**
- Cherwell District
 - Local Authority boundary
- Committed Strategic Development Site (2015 Local Plan and 2020 Partial Review)**
- Built Development
 - Public open space
 - Other open space
 - Internationally designated sites*
 - Nationally designated sites**
 - Locally designated sites***
 - Conservation target area
 - Rivers
- Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network**
- Core Zone
 - Recovery Zone
 - Wider Landscape Zone
- Strategic Projects for Kidlington's GBI network**
- 1 Growing and enhancing green corridors
 - 1a Oxford Canal - Lyne Road - High Street - St Marys
 - 1b Langford Meadows - Thripp Community/Woodland
 - 2 Enhancing wildlife and recreational connectors along blue corridors
 - 2a Stalkid Brake - Oxford Meadows SAC connection
 - 2b Access along River Cherwell
 - 3 New and enhanced access to the canal and river
 - 3a Enhanced access points
 - 3b New footbridges or crossing
 - 4 Greening Kidlington village centre, improving walkability
- Note:**
- * Sites include: Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
 - ** Sites include: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ramsar and National Nature Reserve
 - *** Sites include: Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve



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Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
Cherwell District Council

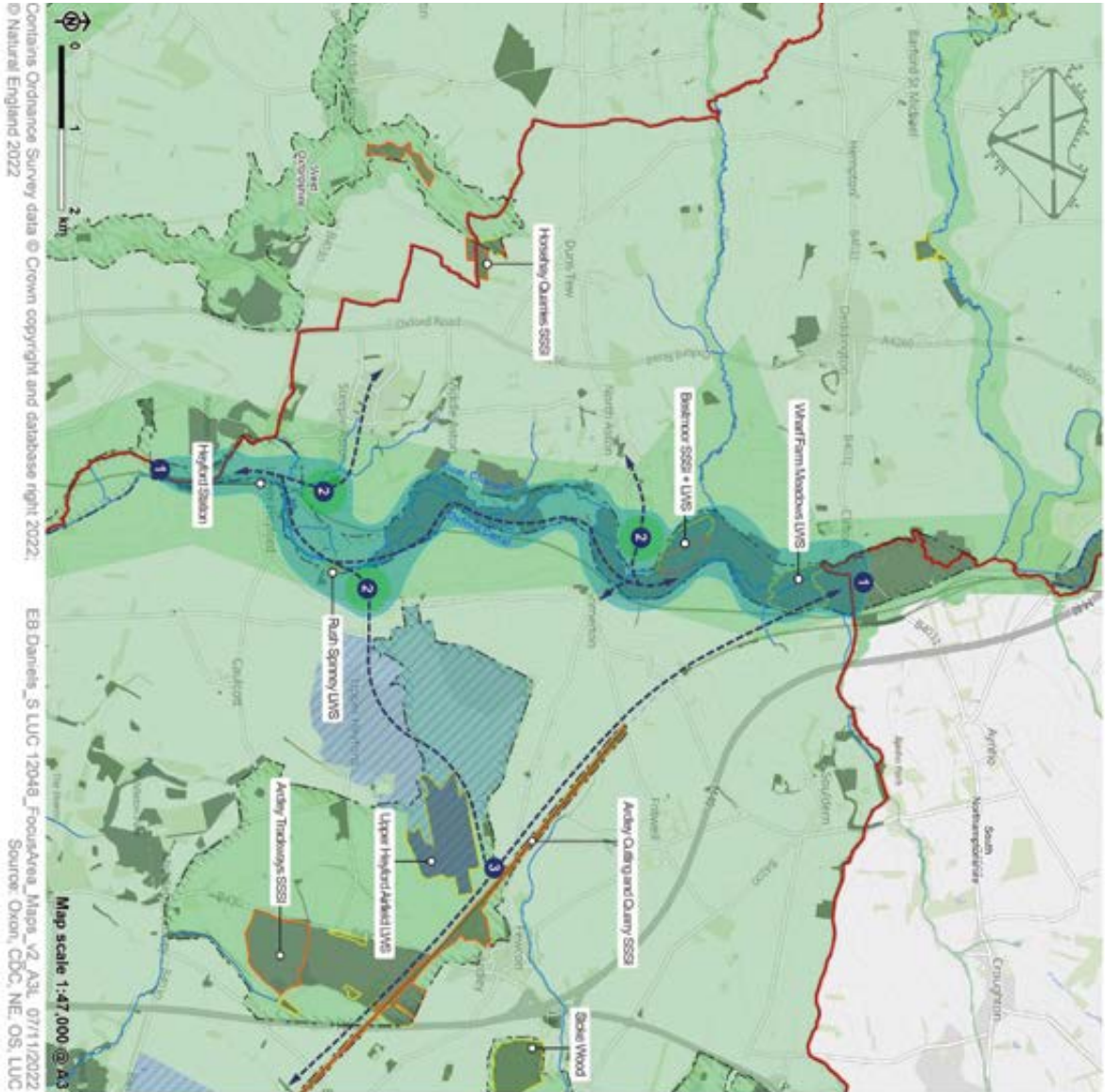


Figure 5: Focus Area Oirmoor

- Cherwell District
 - Local Authority boundary
 - Committed Strategic Development Site (inc. open spaces) (2015 Local Plan and 2020 Partial Review)
 - Country park
 - Internationally designated sites* Nationally designated sites**
 - Locally designated sites***
 - Conservation target area
 - Rivers
- Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network**
- Core Zone
 - Recovery Zone
 - Wider Landscape Zone
 - BBO/WT Project area boundary
 - Oxfordshire Way

Note:

- ** Sites include: Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
- *** Sites include: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ramsar and National Nature Reserve
- **** Sites include: Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve



Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
Cherwell District Council

LUC

Figure 3: Focus Area Chervell River

- Existing GBI**
- Cherwell District
 - Local Authority boundary
 - Committed Strategic Development Site (inc. open space) (2015 Local Plan and 2020 Partial Review)
 - Nationally designated sites**
 - Locally designated sites***
 - Conservation target area
 - Rivers
- Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network**
- Core Zone
 - Recovery Zone
 - Wider Landscape Zone
- Strategic Project for Mid-Cherwell's GBI network**
- 1 Restoring the River Cherwell and Oxford Canal
 - 2 New spaces for habitat and recreation
 - 3 Green corridor connections
- Note:**
- * Sites include: Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area
 - ** Sites include: Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ramsar and National Nature Reserve
 - *** Sites include: Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve

Appendix 7

Local Green Space

These maps present the Local Green Spaces proposed by *Core Policy 56*.

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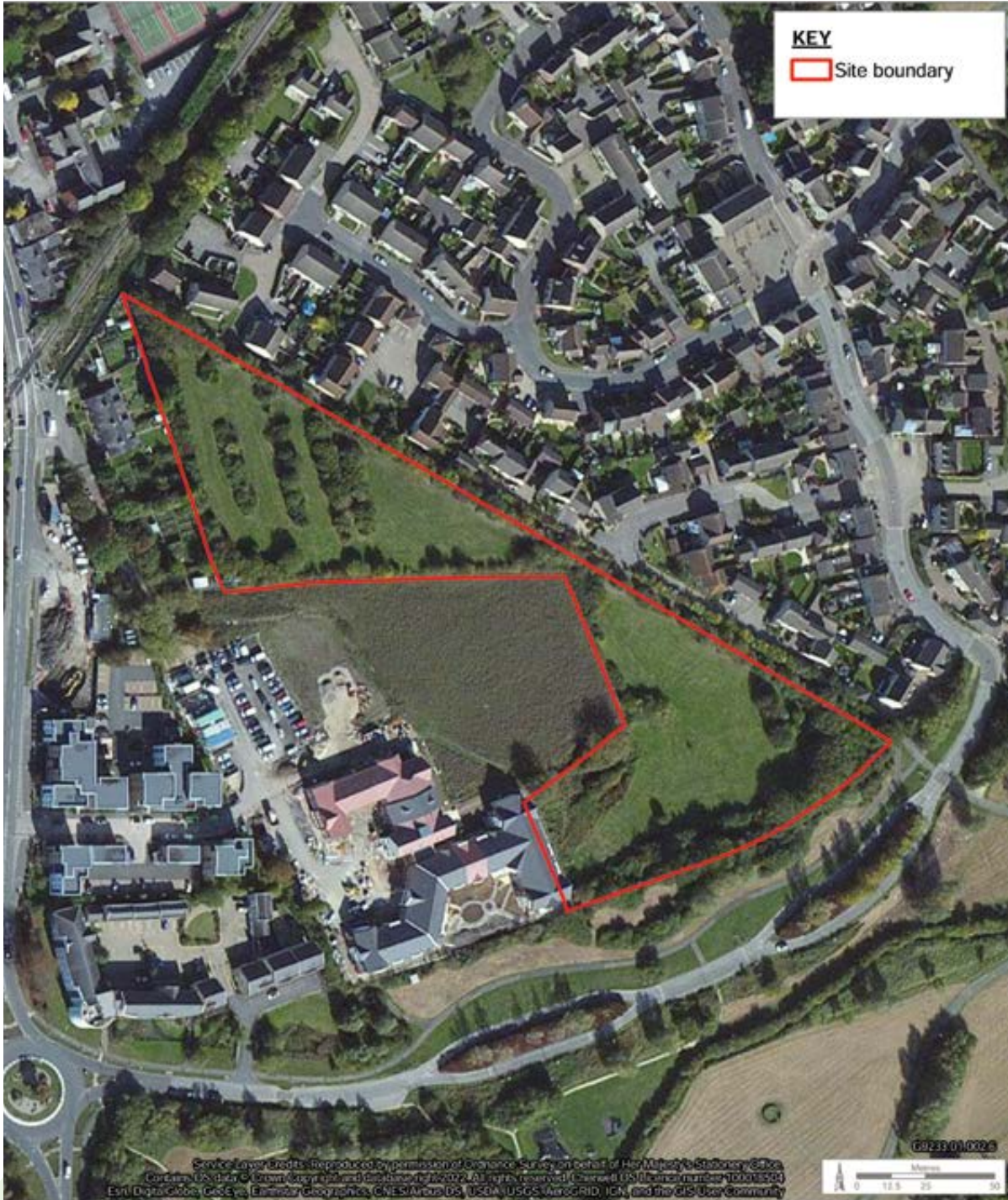
Derwent Green, Bicester



Gavray Meadows, Gavray Drive



Langford Community Orchard, Bicester



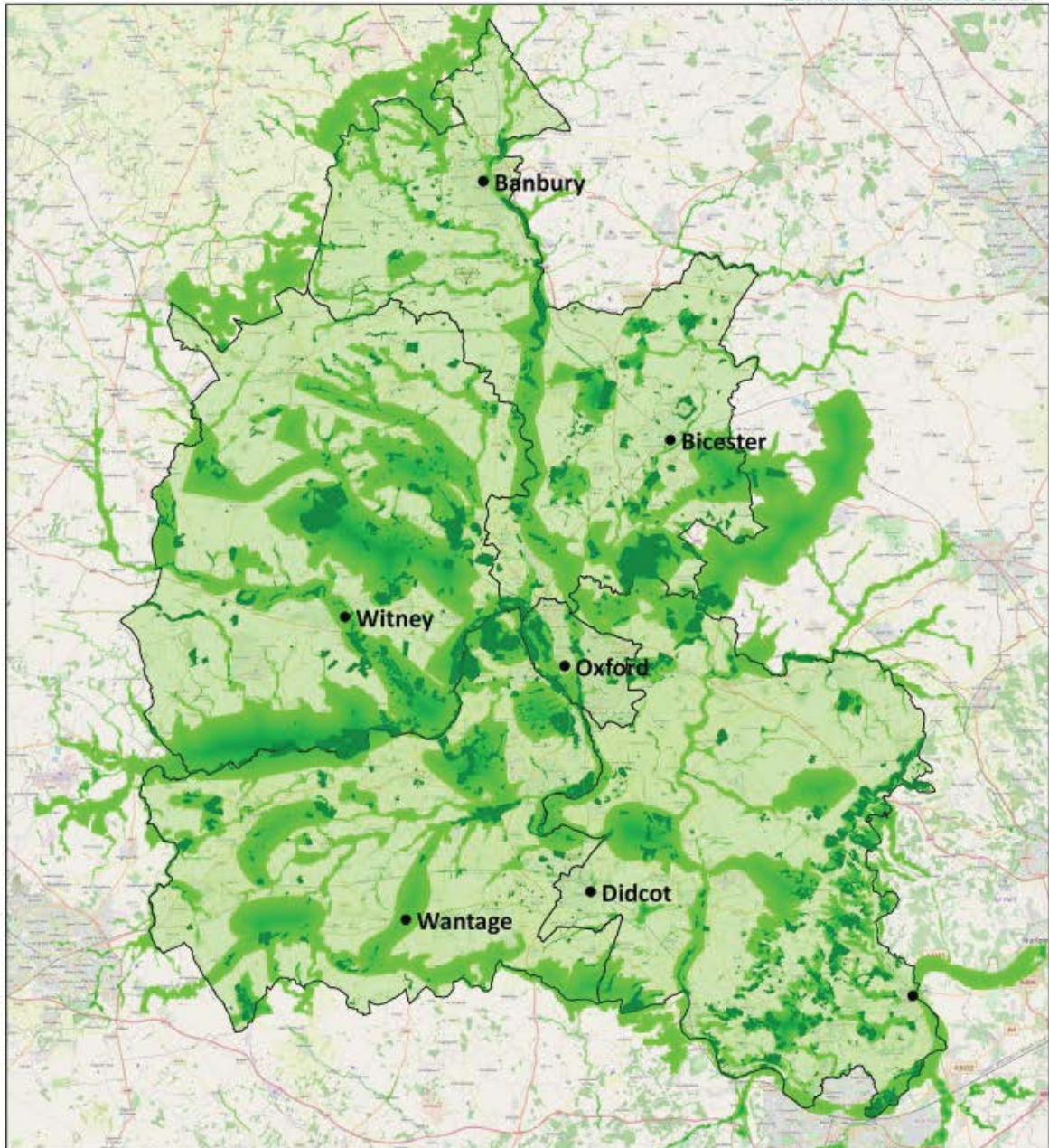
Appendix 8

Nature Recovery Networks

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Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network



Key

- Nature Recovery Network
- Core Zone
 - Recovery Zone
 - Wider Landscape Zone

- Boundaries
- District Boundaries

0 5 10 km

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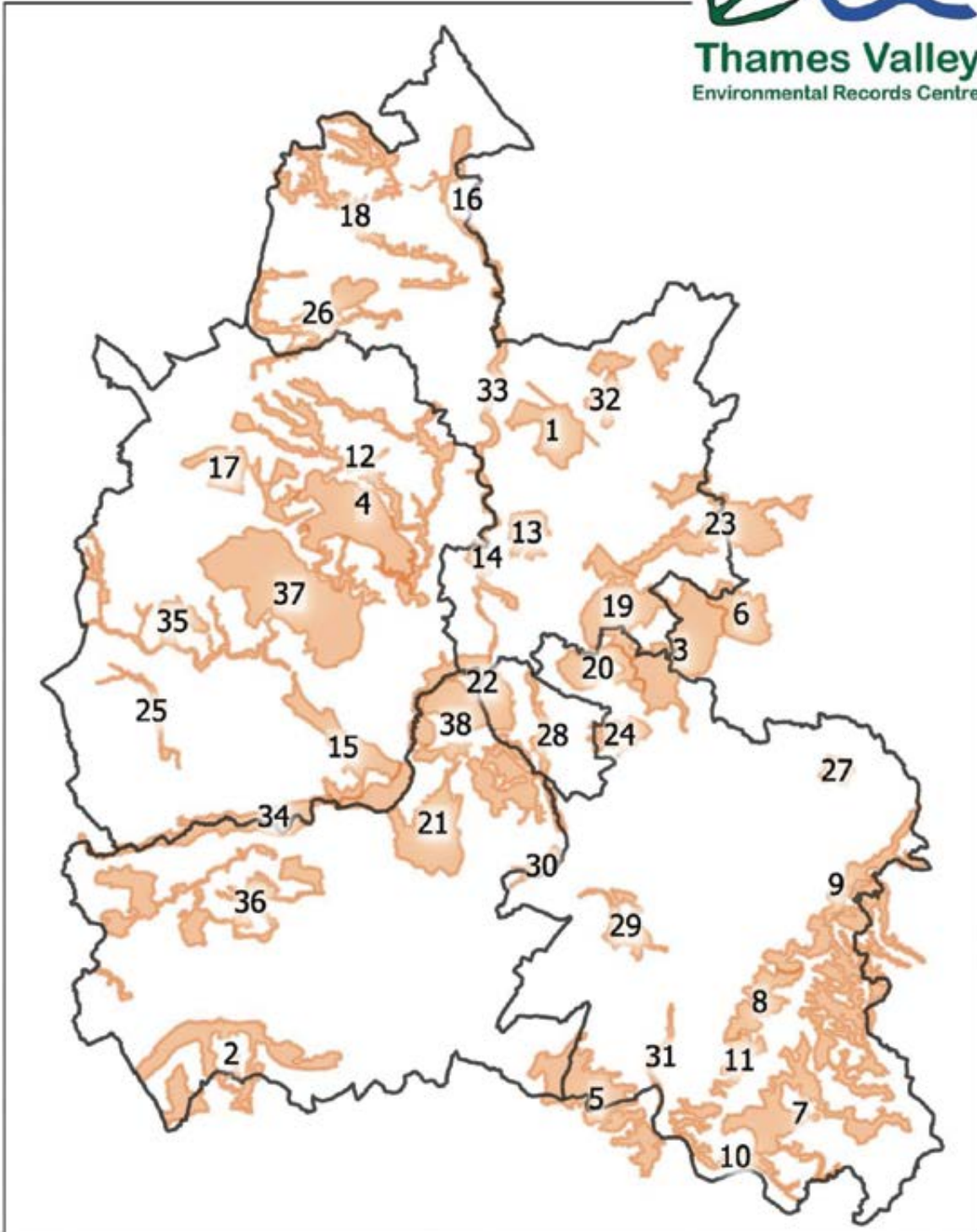
Appendix 9

Conservation Target Areas

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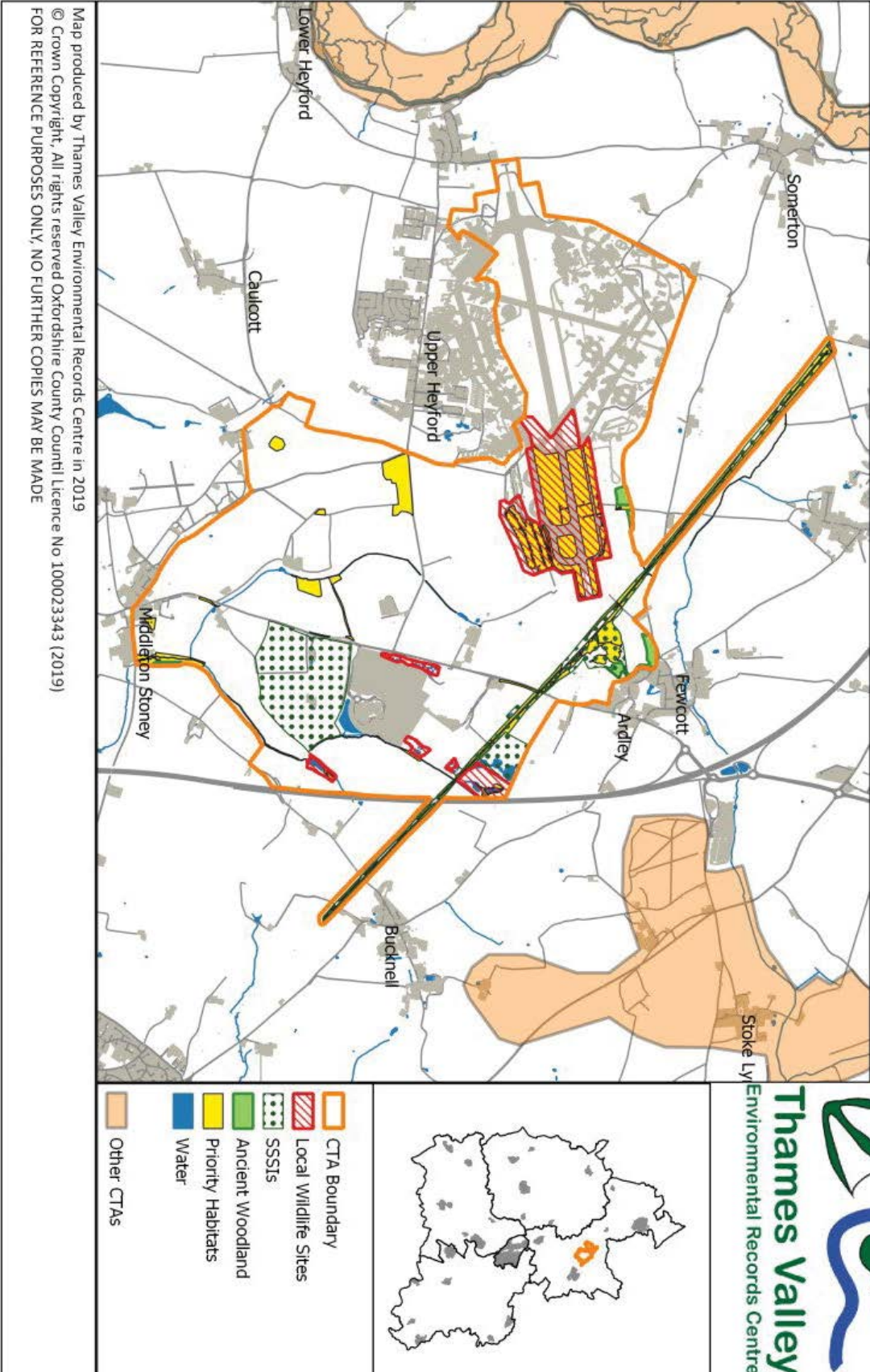
Oxfordshire Conservation Target Areas



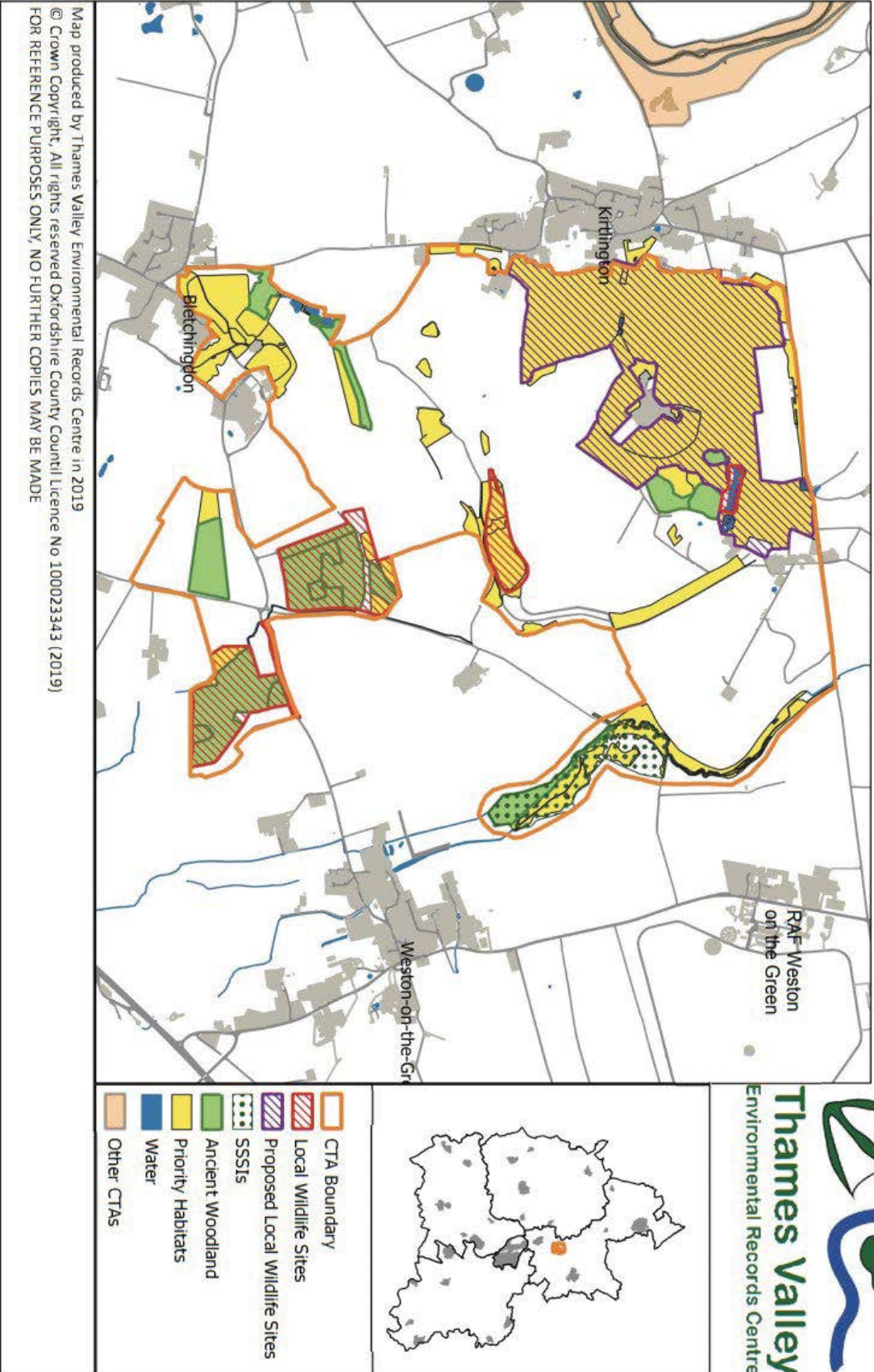
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Ardley and Upper Heyford Conservation Target Area

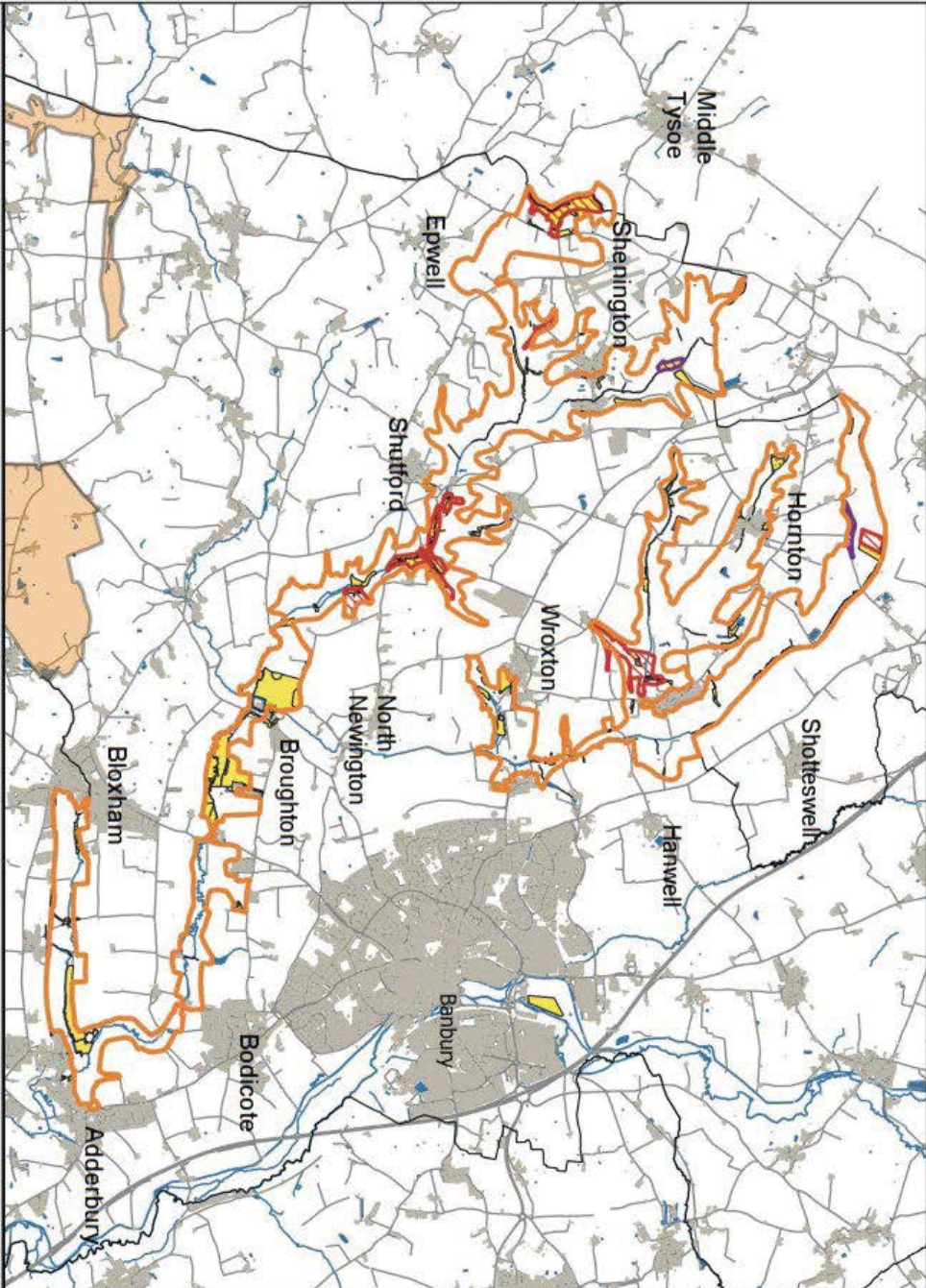


Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods Conservation Target Area

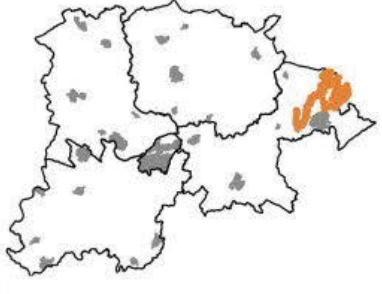




Northern Valleys Conservation Target Area



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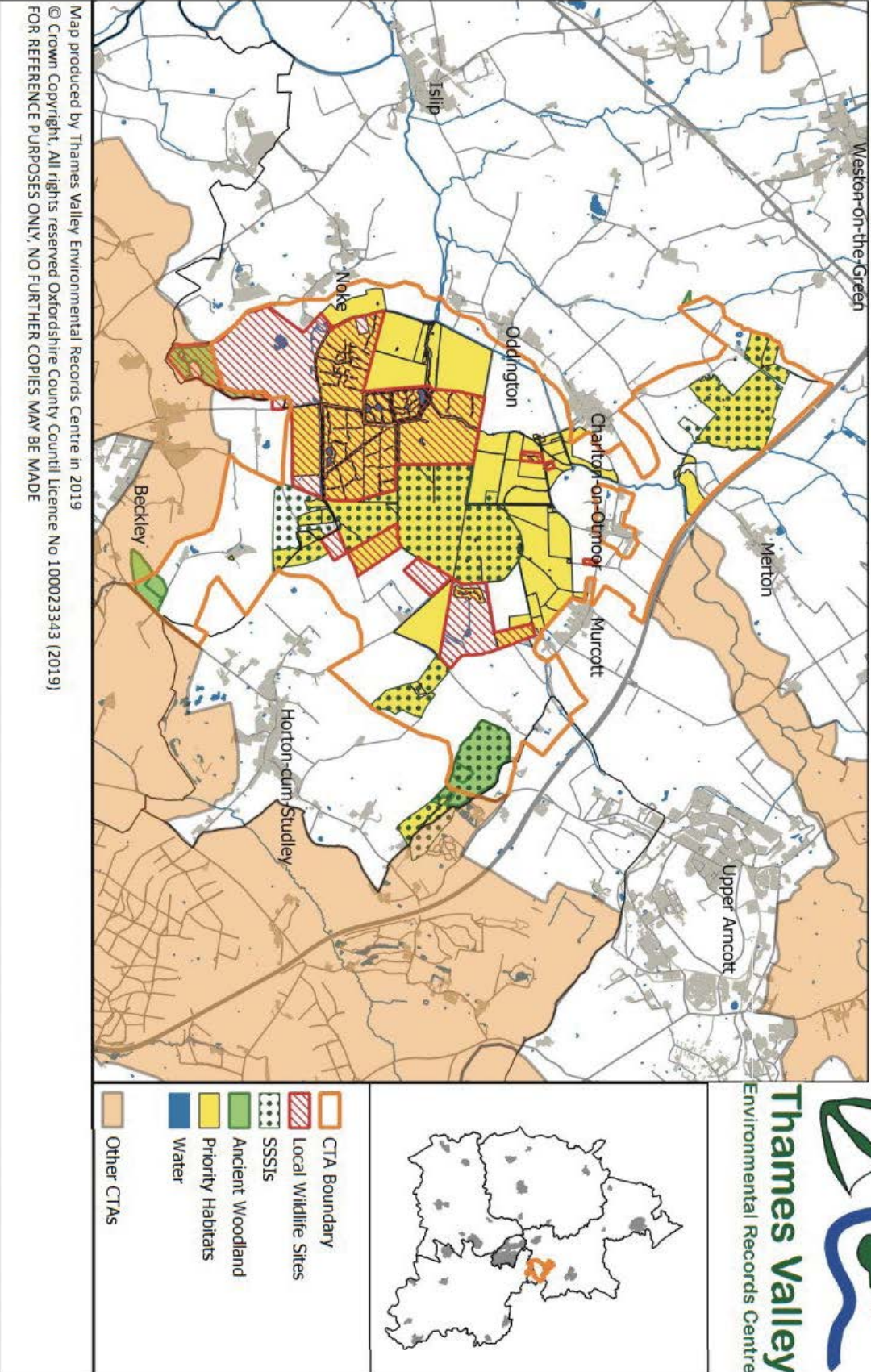
	CTA Boundary
	Local Wildlife Sites
	Proposed Local Wildlife Sites
	Ancient Woodland
	Priority Habitats
	Water
	Other CTAs



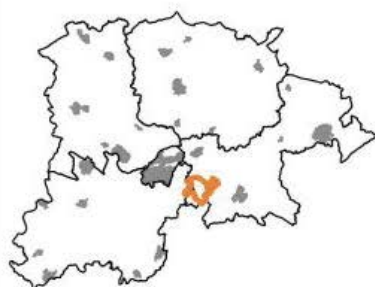
Thames Valley
Environmental Records Centre



Otmoor
Conservation Target Area

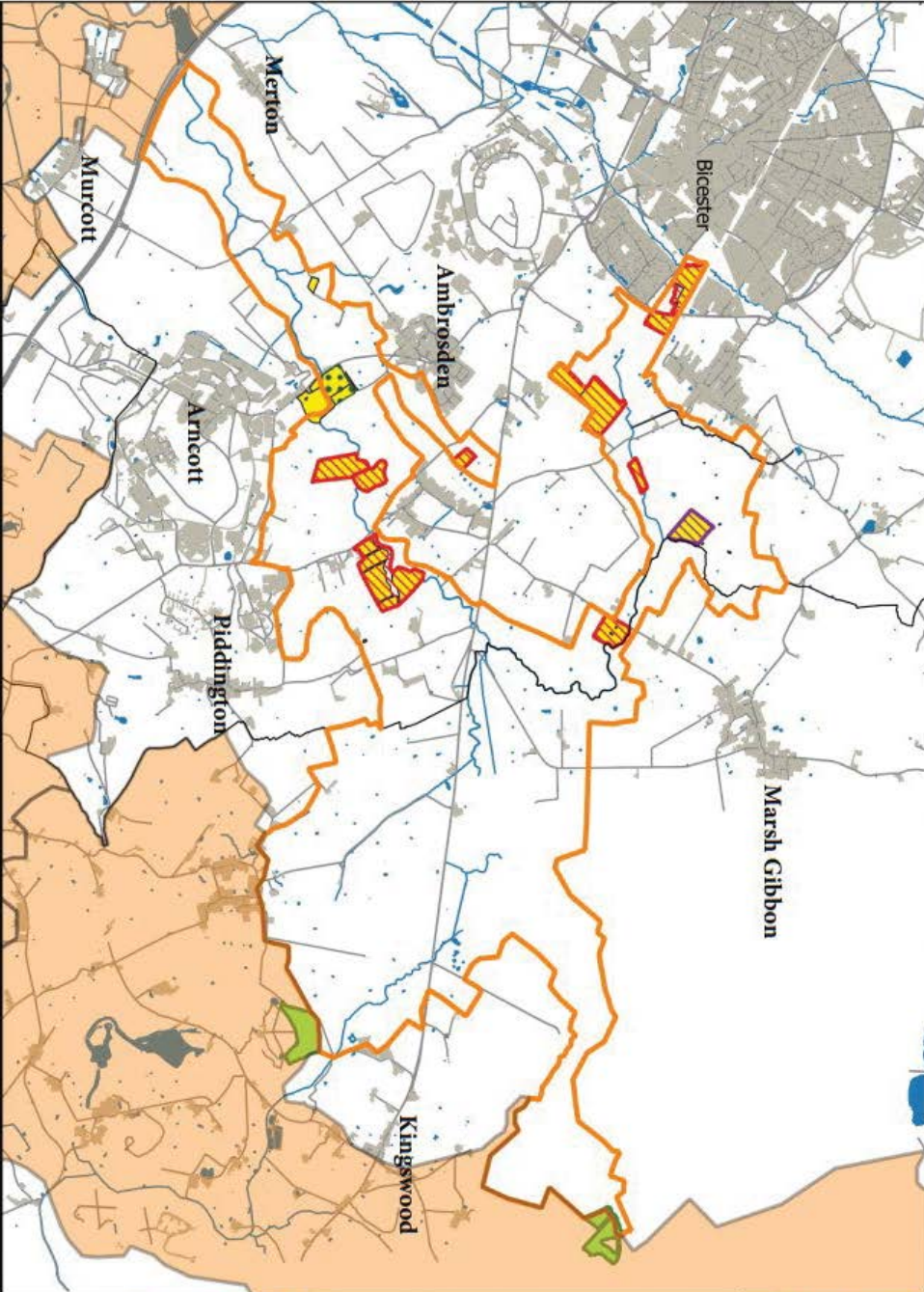


Thames Valley
Environmental Records Centre



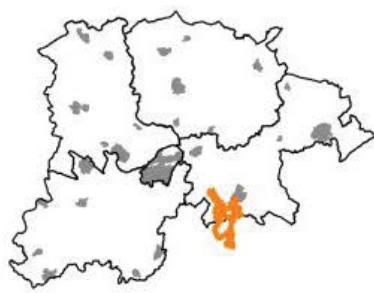


Ray
Conservation Target Area

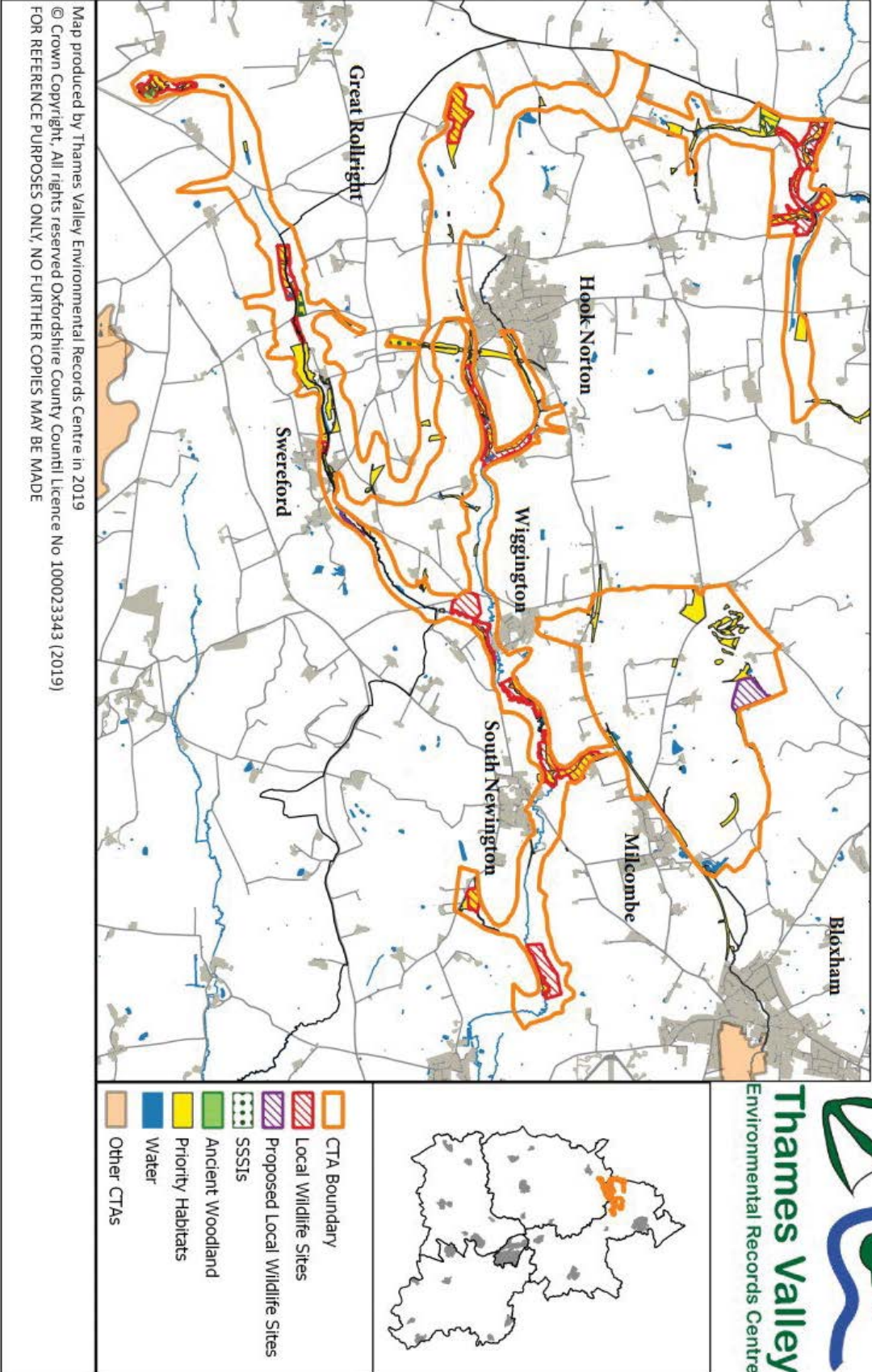


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- CTA Boundary
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Proposed Local Wildlife Sites
- SSSIs
- Ancient Woodland
- Priority Habitats
- Water
- Other CTAs



Swere Valley and Upper Stour
Conservation Target Area

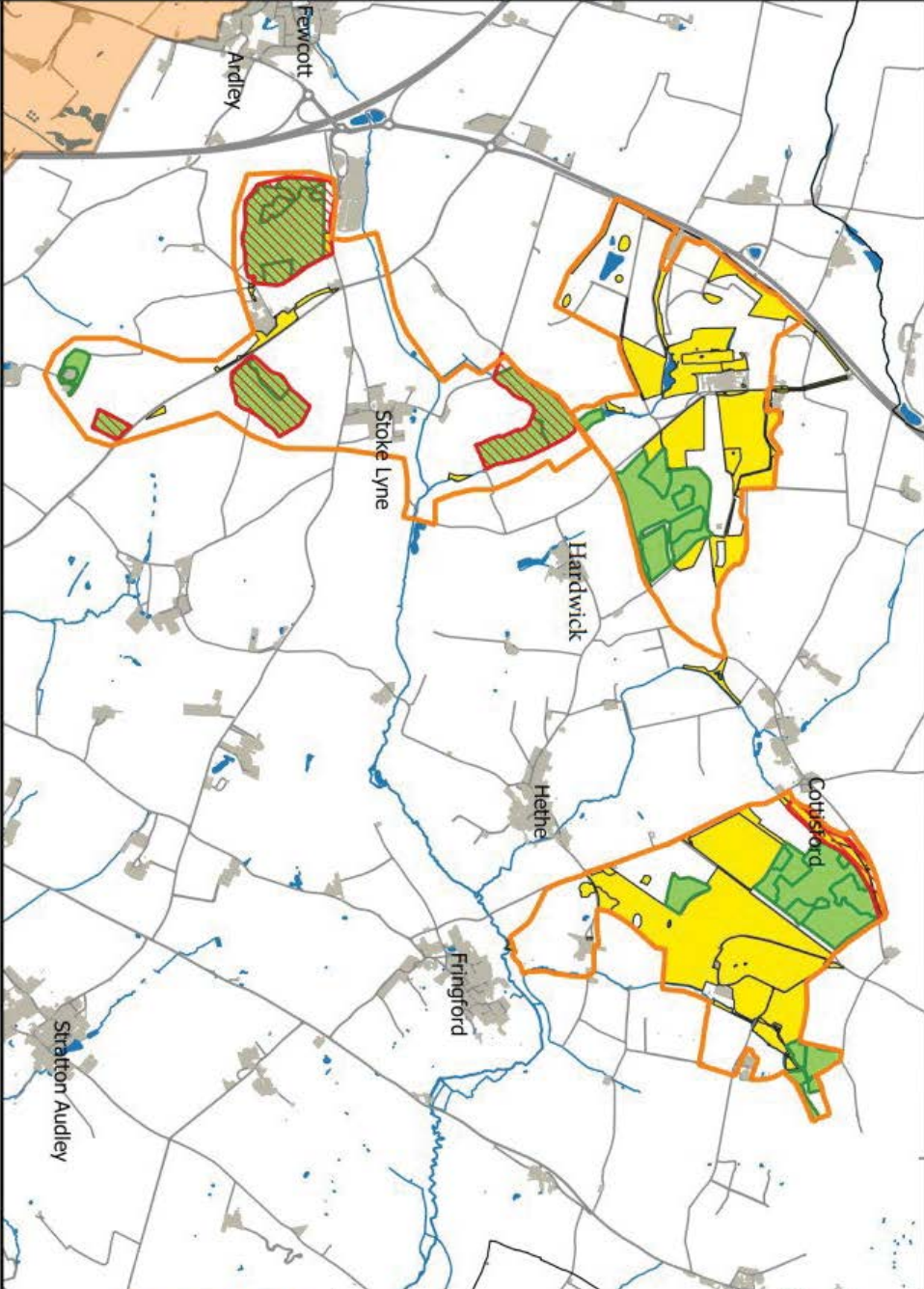


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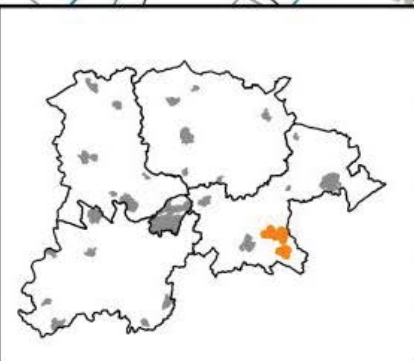
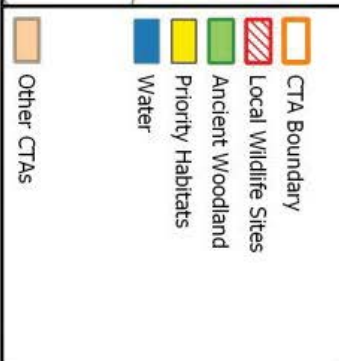




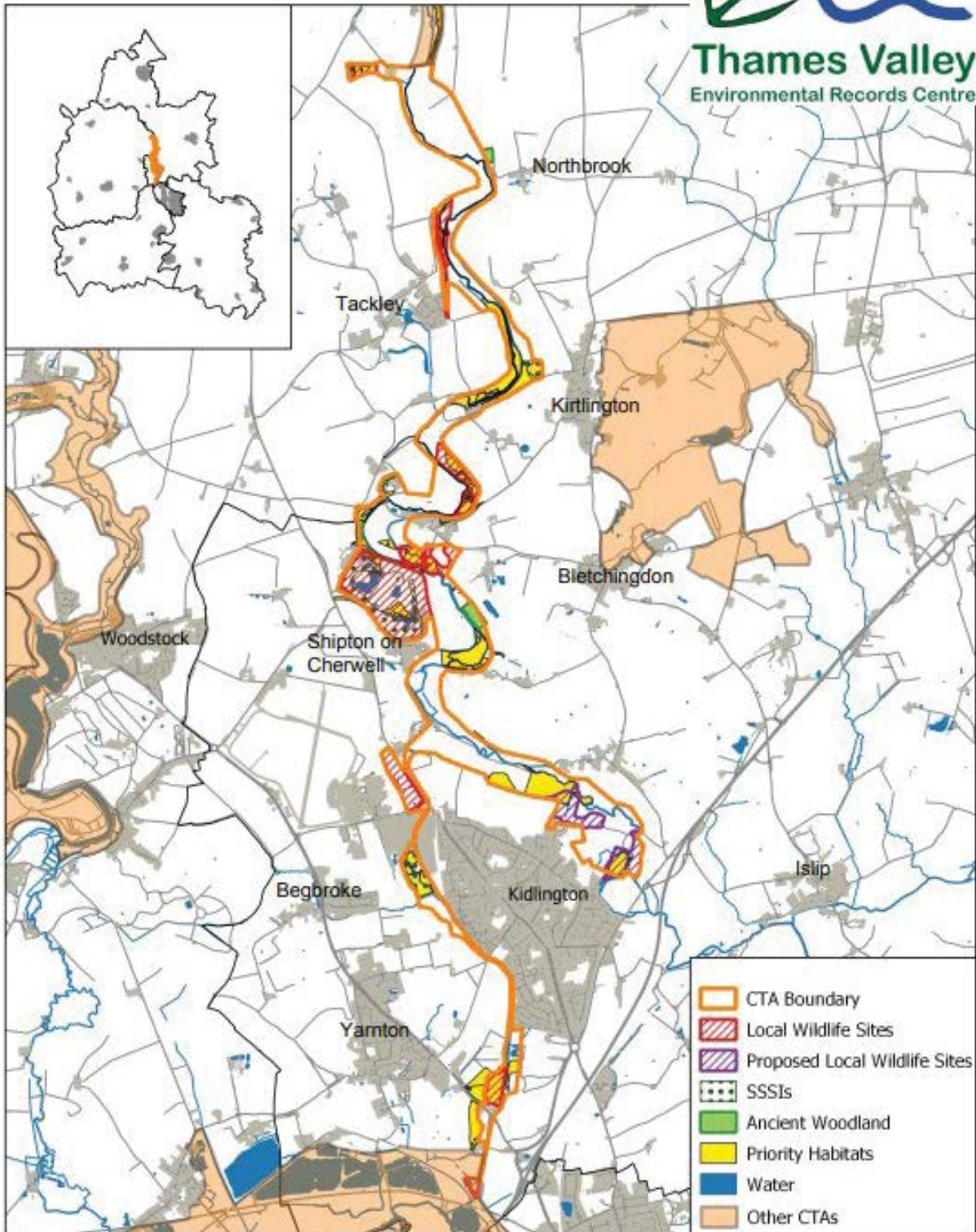
Tusmore and Shellswell Park Conservation Target Area



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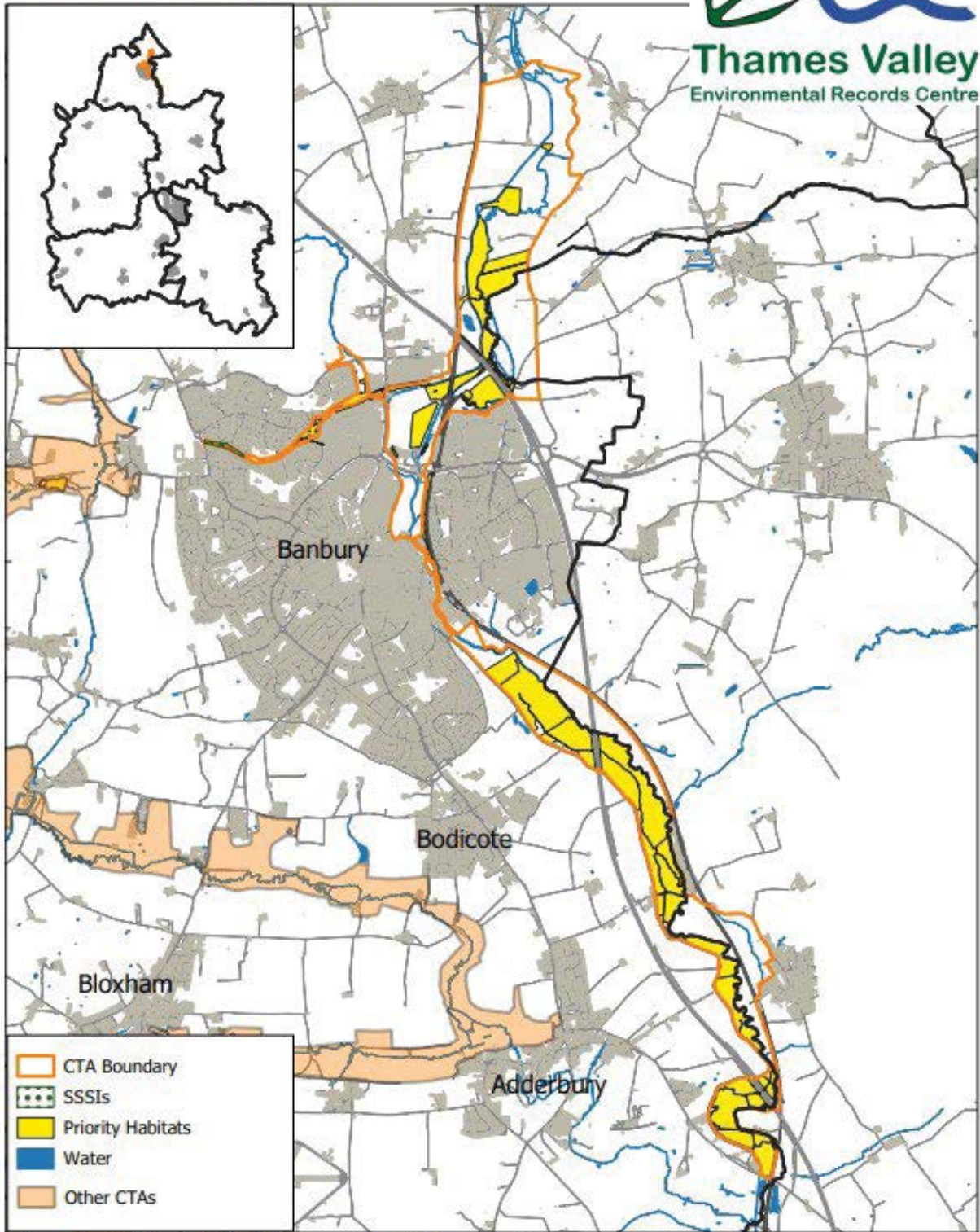
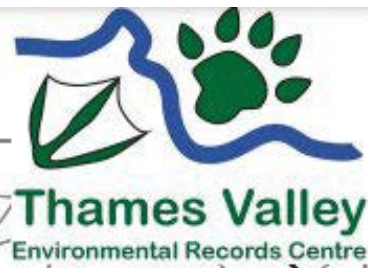
Lower Cherwell Valley
Conservation Target Area



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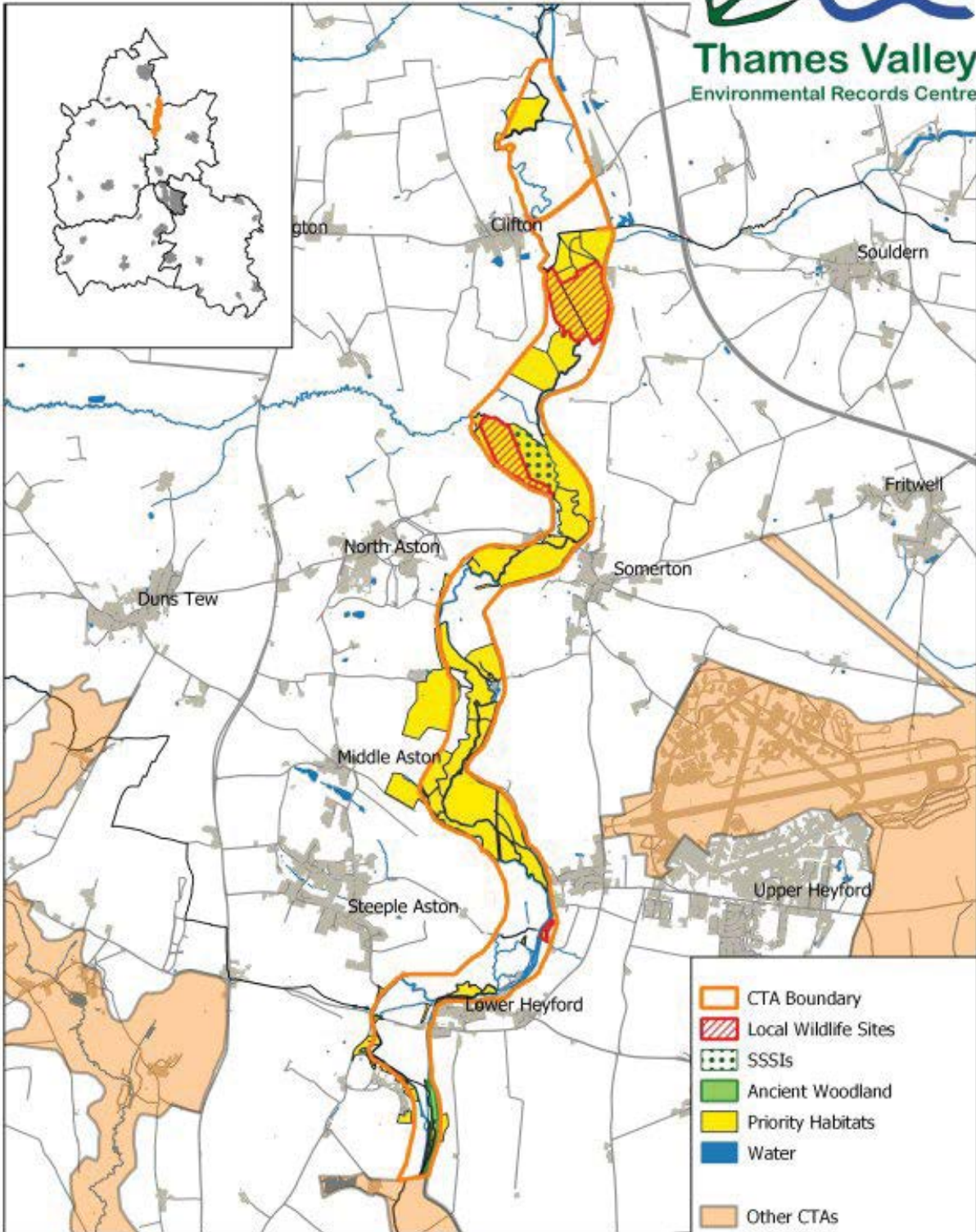


North Cherwell Conservation Target Area



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Upper Cherwell
Conservation Target Area



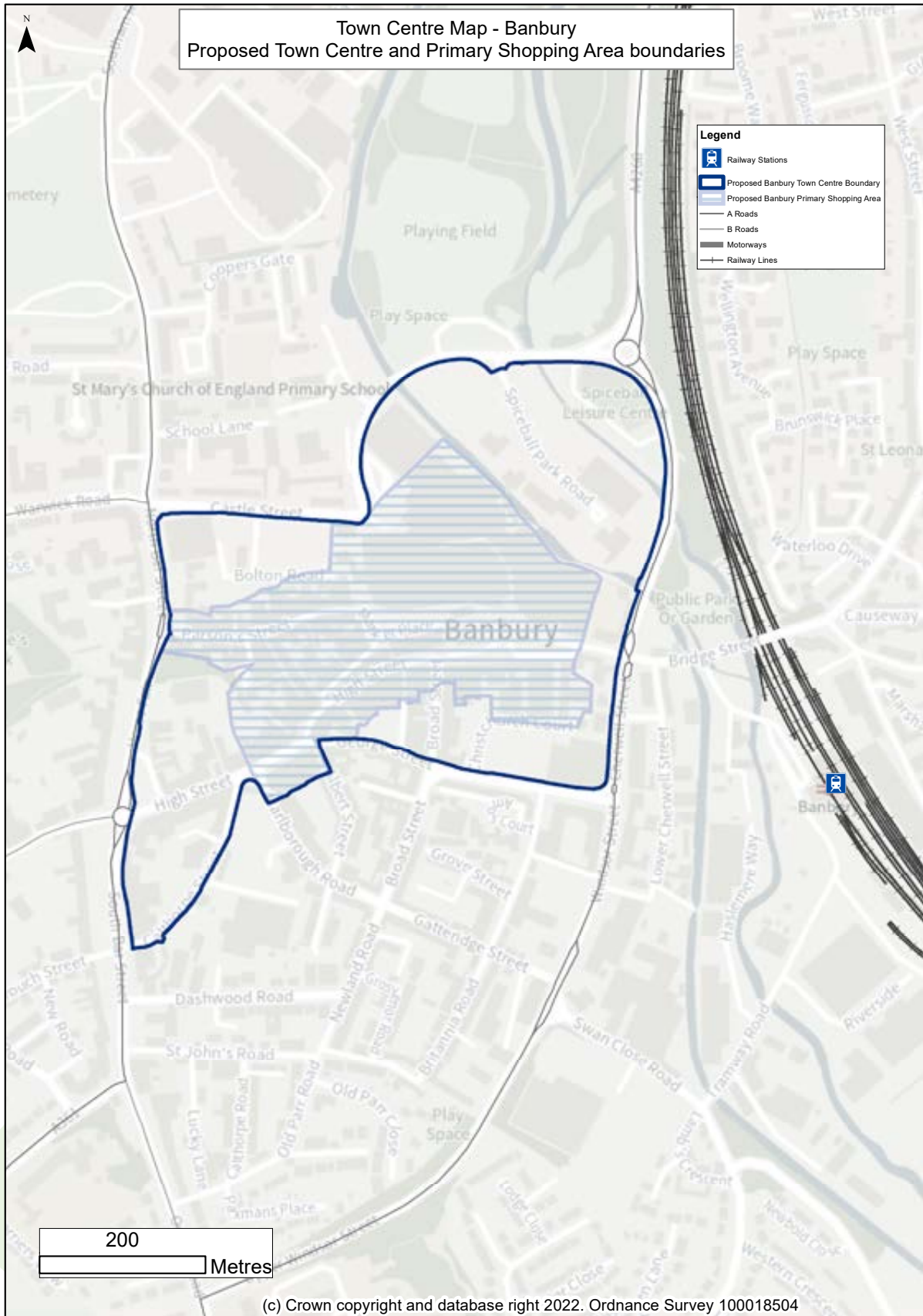
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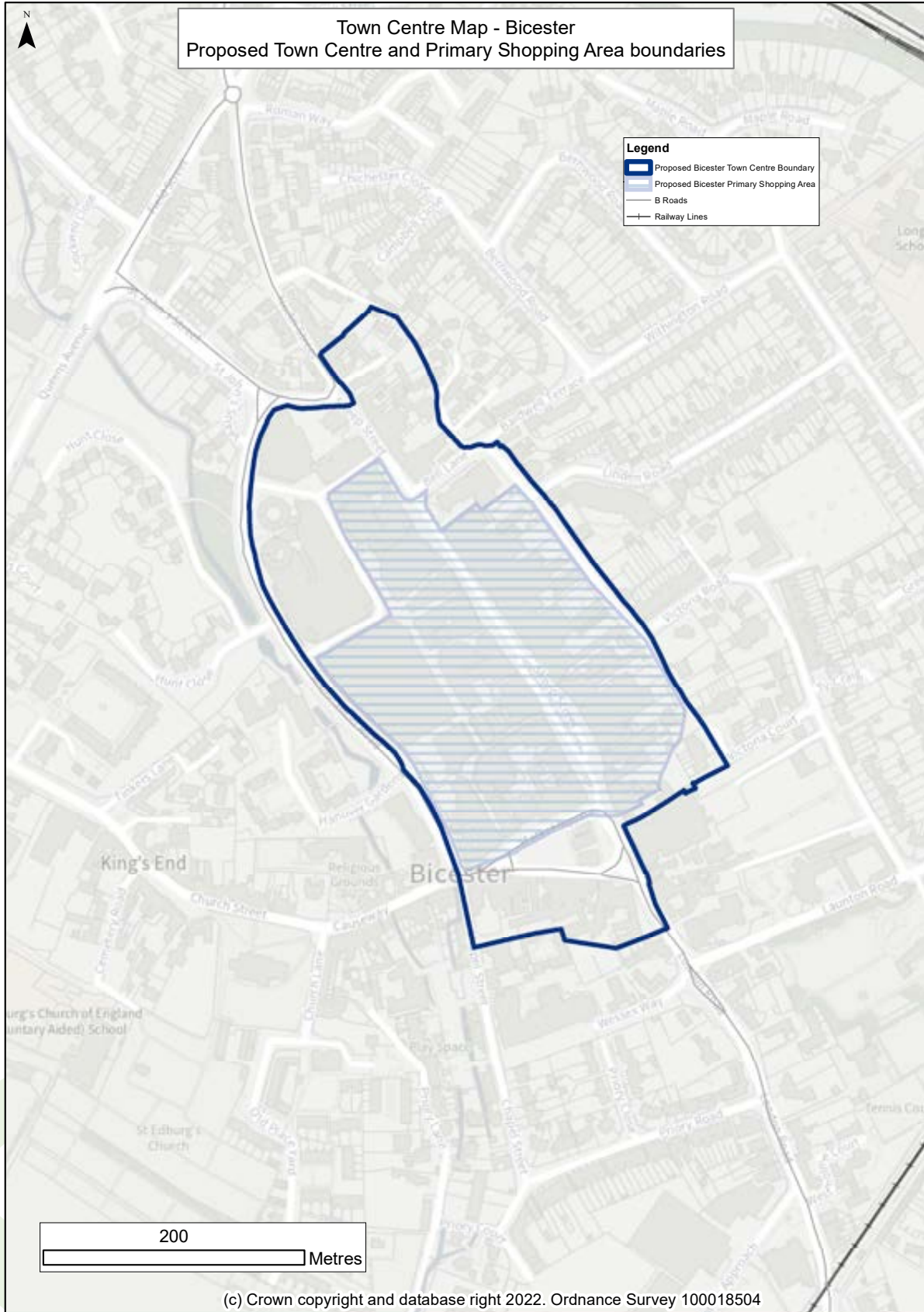
Appendix 10

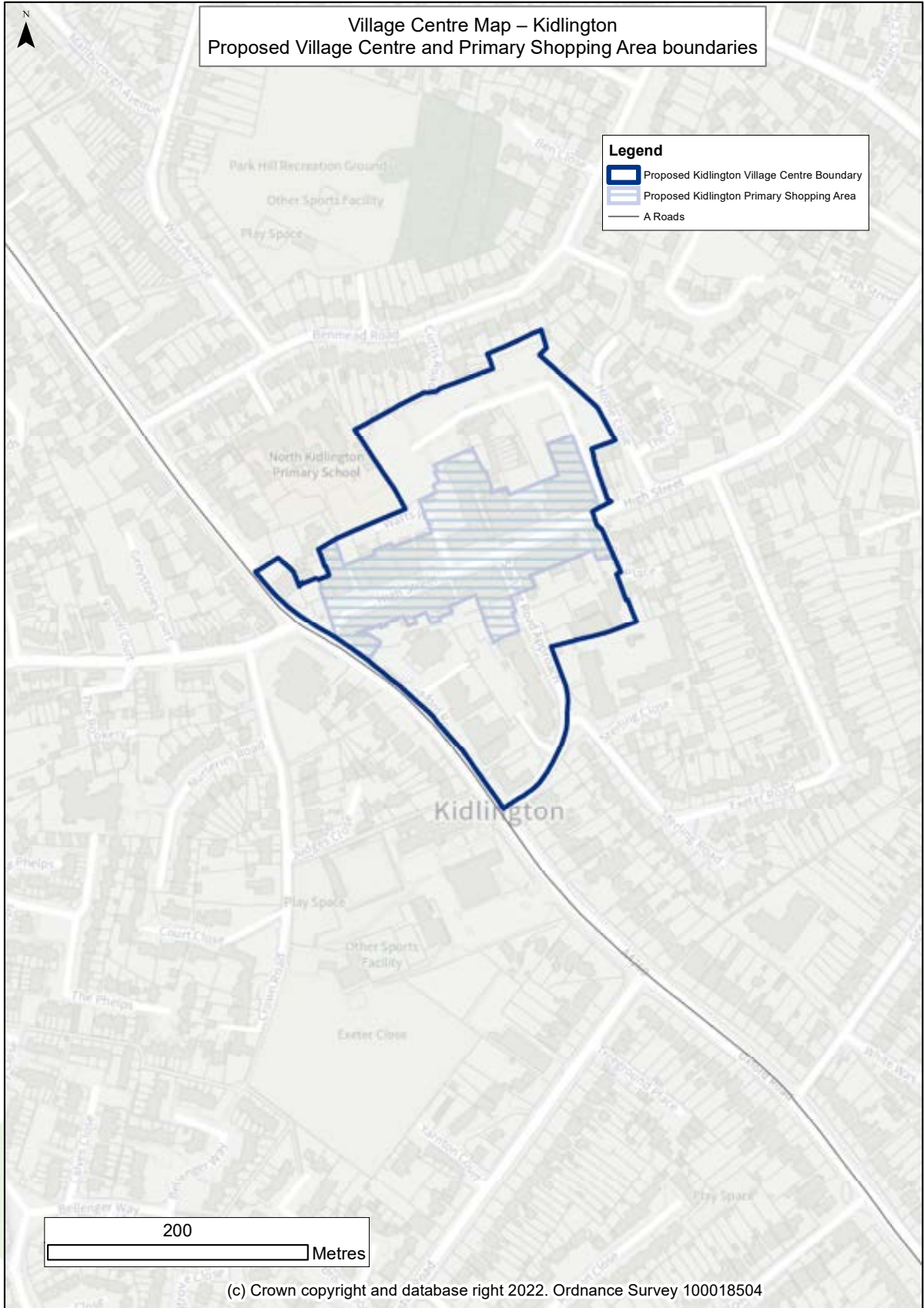
Primary Shopping Area Maps

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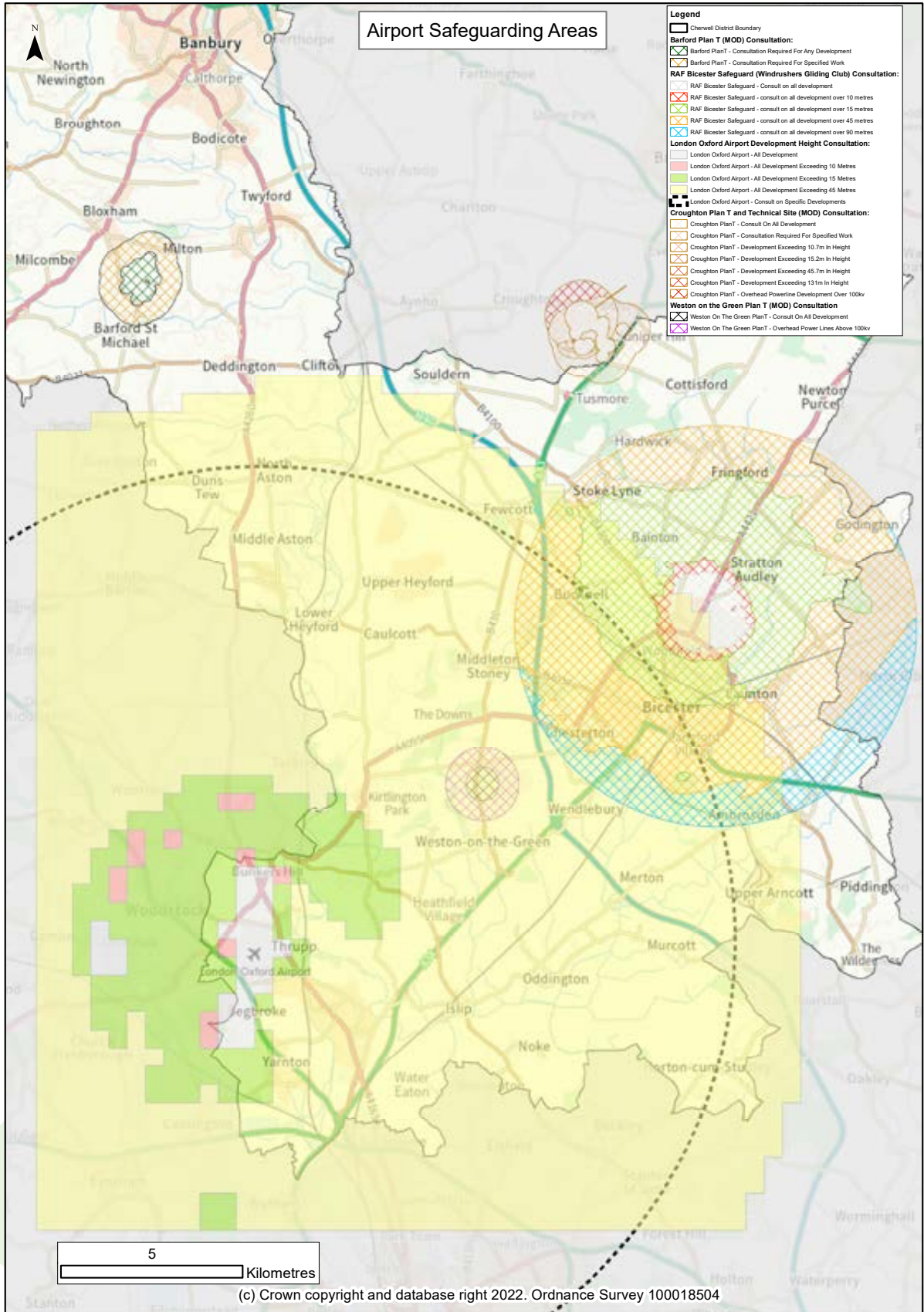


Appendix 11

Airport Safeguarded Areas

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Appendix 12

Local Plan Reference List

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Appendix 13

Glossary

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Accessible Green Space Standards

Model standards devised by Natural England for the provision of ‘natural’ greenspace, i.e. accessible areas that also provide Accessible Green Space Standards potential wildlife habitat. The model sets out that no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace of at least 2 hectares in size; that there should be at least one accessible 20 hectares site within 2km of home; that there should be one accessible 100 hectares site within 5km of home; and that there should be one accessible 500 hectares site within 10km of home.

Access to Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)

ANGSt is a tool in assessing current levels of accessible natural greenspace, and planning for better provision. The three underlying principles of ANGSt are: a) Improving access to greenspaces b) Improving naturalness of greenspaces c) Improving connectivity with greenspaces ANGSt sets a maximum recommended standard on walking distance people should have to travel to have access to accessible natural greenspace.

Active travel

‘Active travel’ (or active transportation or mobility) means walking or cycling as an alternative to motorised transport (notably cars, motorbikes/mopeds etc) for the purpose of making everyday journeys.

Adoption

The approval, after independent examination, of the final version of a Local Plan by a local planning authority for future planning policy and decision making.

Affordable Housing

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).

Air Quality Management Area

The monitoring locations for Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are chosen to target areas where air pollution is expected to be high, areas where members of the public spend an hour or more near busy roads, and areas that represent a background level that is not impacted by road traffic or industrial sources. These monitoring locations give us a picture of the air pollution levels across the Borough.

Ancient Monument

Any scheduled monument, or any other monument, which in the opinion of the Secretary of State, is of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, artistic or archaeological interest attributed to it.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report produced at least annually assessing progress of the LDS and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being successfully implemented.

Appropriate Assessment

A process required by European Directives (Birds Directive 79/409/EEC and Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC) to avoid adverse effects of plans, programmes and projects on Natura 2000 sites and thereby maintain the integrity of the Natura 2000 network and its features.

Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Area Action Plan (AAP)

A type of Development Plan Document focused upon an area which will be subject to significant change.

Article 4 Direction

These are a means by which a local planning authority (LPA) can bring within planning control certain types of development, or changes of use, which would normally be permitted development (i.e. not require an application for planning permission).

Better Broadband for Oxfordshire Project

Better Broadband for Oxfordshire is a £25m project to bring fibre broadband to over 90 per cent of homes and businesses in the county by the end of 2015. It is a collaboration between Oxfordshire County Council, the Government (through BDUK) and BT that will boost the local economy by creating and protecting jobs.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is seen as the total complexity of all life, including not only the great variety of organisms, but also their varying behaviour and interactions.

Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity it encourages developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.

Blue infrastructure

Blue infrastructure refers to water elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains and water treatment facilities.

BREEAM

This is the world's leading sustainability assessment method for masterplanning projects, infrastructure and buildings. It recognises and reflects the value in higher performing assets across the built environment lifecycle, from new construction to in-use and refurbishment.

Brexit

Brexit refers to the withdrawal process of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU).

Building Regulations

Building regulations are minimum standards for design, construction and alterations to virtually every building. The regulations are developed by the UK government and approved by Parliament.

Carbon sequestration

Often referred to as carbon dioxide removal, this is the longterm removal, capture or sequestration of greenhouse gasses, particularly carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to slow or reverse atmospheric CO₂ pollution and to mitigate or reverse global warming. In practice this could be through the storage of carbon in plants, soils, geologic formations, and the ocean. The most effective way for achieving this in Eastleigh Borough is through the absorption of CO₂ by trees and other vegetation.

Climate Change

The lasting and significant change in weather patterns over periods ranging from decades to hundreds of years, impacting on river and sea levels and the rate of flows on watercourses.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Climate change adaptation: Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Code for Sustainable Homes

Provides a comprehensive measure of sustainability of a new home by rating and certifying new homes against nine categories of sustainable design: energy/CO₂, pollution, water, health and well-being, materials, management, surface water run-off, ecology and waste. The Government has announced its intention to wind down the code and include its element in *Building Regulations*.

Community Forest

An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme to revitalise countryside and green space in and around major conurbations.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Community Right to Build Order

An Order made by the local planning authority (under the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Comparison retail

Retail items not bought on a frequent basis, for example televisions and white goods (fridges, dishwashers etc).

Conservation Area

An area designated by the District Council under Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* as an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are additional controls over demolition, minor developments and the felling of trees.

Conservation Target Areas (CTA)

These are county-wide important areas of landscape that present the best opportunities for prioritising the conservation, enhancement and re-creation of designated sites and important habitats.

Consultation

A process by which people and organisations are asked their views about planning decisions, including the Local Plan.

Convenience retail

The provision of everyday essential items, such as food.

Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000

Provides for public access on foot to certain types of land, amends the law relating to public rights of way. It also places a duty on local authorities to produce management plans for each AONB and to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONBs when performing their functions.

Decentralised Energy

Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually, but not always, on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies.

Deliverability

To be considered deliverable sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and, in particular, that the site is viable.

Designated Heritage Asset

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Design code

A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Design guide

A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.

Design and Access Statement

A report accompanying and supporting a planning application as required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 as amended. They provide a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

Development Plan

The statutory term used to refer to the adopted spatial plans and policies that apply to a particular local planning authority area. This includes adopted Local Plans (including Minerals and Waste Plans) and Neighbourhood Development Plans and is defined by Section 38 of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Documents which make up the Local Plan. All DPDs are subject to public consultation and independent examination.

Duty to Cooperate

A statutory duty placed on public bodies to cooperate constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

Eco-innovation hub

A 'green technology' cluster of environmental goods and services businesses.

Embodied Energy

The energy bound up in making a building's materials, transporting them to the site and constructing the building.

Employment Land

A designation that has defined boundaries and is used to safeguard areas in the district for employment uses, both existing and proposed, as designated by the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Employment Land Review (ELR)

An evidence base study to assess the quantity, quality and viability of the district's employment land supply and forecast the future demand for employment land over the next planning period.

Employment uses

Commercial, Business and Service uses as defined in Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020.

Evidence Base

The information and data collated by local authorities to support the policy approach set out in the Local Plan.

Examination

The process by which an independent Planning Inspector considers whether a Development Plan Document is 'sound' before it can be adopted.

Exception Test

The Exception Test provides a method of managing flood risk while still allowing necessary development to occur. The Exception Test is only appropriate for use when there are large areas in Flood Zones 2 and 3, where the Sequential Test alone cannot deliver acceptable sites, but where some continuing development is necessary for wider sustainable development reasons, taking into account the need to avoid social or economic blight.

Extra Care Housing

Extra Care Housing is a type of self-contained housing that offers care and support that falls somewhere between traditional sheltered housing and residential care.

Five Year Housing Land Supply

Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

Flood and Water Management Act 2010

An Act to make provision about water, including provision about the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion. The Act makes County Councils responsible for leading the coordination of flood risk management in the area as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Flood Zone 1

Land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. This is the zone at lowest flood risk.

Flood Zone 2

Land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding; or Land having between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding.

Flood Zone 3/Flood Zone 3a

Land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding; or Land having a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of sea flooding. This is the zone at the highest flood risk.

Flood Zone 3b

This zone comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood. Local planning authorities should identify in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessments areas of functional floodplain and its boundaries accordingly, in agreement with the Environment Agency.

Geodiversity

The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green Belt

A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped.

Green Corridors

Green spaces that provide avenues for wildlife movement, often along streams, rivers or other natural features. They often provide pleasant walks for the public away from main roads.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure includes sites protected for their importance to wildlife or the environment, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. Together they provide a network of green space both urban and rural, providing a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits.

Gypsies and Traveller

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA)

HRA is required under the European Directive 92/43/ECC on the "conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora for plans" that Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) may have an impact of European (Natura 2000) Sites. HRA is an assessment of the impacts of implementing a plan or policy on a Natura 2000 Site.

Habitats site

Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Hazardous substance

Any material that has the intrinsic nature of being toxic, explosive, prone to ignite, radioactive, corrosive or otherwise detrimental to human, animal and/or environmental health.

Historic Environment Record

Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use. Oxfordshire County Council hold the Historic Environment Record for the County.

Housing Market Area

A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work Housing Need The quantity of housing required for households who are unable to access suitable housing without financial assistance.

Housing Need Assessment (HNA)

An assessment of housing need and affordable housing need.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

An indicative measure of deprivation for small areas across England.

Infilling

The filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.

Infrastructure

All the ancillary works and services which are necessary to support human activities, including roads, sewers, schools, hospitals, and services and facilities etc.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

The IDP's role is to identify all items of infrastructure needed to ensure the delivery of the growth targets and policies contained in the Local Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) Plan. This ensures that an appropriate supply of essential infrastructure is provided alongside new homes, workplaces and other forms of development.

Intermediate Affordable Housing

Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. These can include shared equity products and other low cost homes for sale or rent.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity

All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

LAP

Local Area for Play

Large sites

Defined as 10 or more dwellings (net gain) and at least 1,000m² of floorspace (or net gain).

Larger Village

Larger Villages are defined as settlements with a more limited range of employment, services and facilities, where unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities.

LEAP

Local Equipped Area for Play

Lifetime Homes Standards

Incorporates 16 design criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life.

Listed Building

Buildings and structures which are listed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are being of special architectural and historic interest and whose protection and maintenance are the subject of special legislation.

Local Development Documents (LDDs)

The collective term for Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and other documents containing statements relating to planning policy and the development and use of land.

Local Development Order (LDO)

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

A Local Development Scheme is a statutory document required to specify (among other matters) the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the Local Plan for the area. It sets out the programme for the preparation of these documents.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

Areas of natural heritage that are at least locally important.

Local Plan

The plan for the local area which sets out the long-term spatial vision and development framework for the District and strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision.

Local Service Centre

Local Service Centres are defined as Larger Villages or neighbourhoods of larger settlements with a level of facilities and services and local employment to provide the next best opportunities for sustainable development outside the Market Towns.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

A group of people and organisations from the local community including from public, private, community and voluntary sectors within a local authority area, with the objective of improving the quality of life of the local community.

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

A transport strategy prepared by the local highways authority (the County Council).

Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act introduced changes to the planning system (amongst other changes to local government) including making provision for the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies, introducing the Duty to Cooperate and Neighbourhood Planning.

Major Development (Large-Scale)

A Large-Scale Major Development is one where the number of residential dwellings to be constructed is 200 or more or 1,000m² of industrial, commercial or retail floor space. Where the number of residential dwellings or floor space to be constructed is not given in the application a site area of 4 hectares or more should be used as the definition of a major development. For all other uses a large-scale major development is one where the floorspace to be built is more than 10,000m², or where the site area is more than 2 hectares. The definition for major development in the AONB differs.

Major Development (Small-Scale)

A Small-Scale Major Development is one where the number of residential dwellings to be constructed is between 10 and 199 inclusive. Where the number of dwellings to be constructed is not given in the application a site area of between 0.5 hectares and less than 4 hectare should be used as the definition of a small-scale major development. For all other uses a small-scale major development is one where the floorspace to be built is between 1,000m² and 9,999m² or where the site area is between 1 hectare and less than 2 hectares. The definition for major development in the AONB differs.

Market Town

Market Towns are defined as settlements that have the ability to support the most sustainable patterns of living within Cherwell through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities.

Material Consideration

This is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision. This can include issues such as overlooking/ loss of privacy, parking, noise, effect on listed building and conservation area, or effect on nature conservation etc.

Minerals resources of local and national importance

Minerals which are necessary to meet society's needs, including aggregates, brickclay (especially Etruria Marl and fireclay), silica sand (including high grade silica sands), coal derived fly ash in single use deposits, cement raw materials, gypsum, salt, fluorspar, shallow and deep-mined coal, oil and gas (including conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons), tungsten, kaolin, ball clay, potash, polyhalite and local minerals of importance to heritage assets and local distinctiveness.

MUGA

Multi-Use Games Area

National Landscape

Areas of National Landscape designations are defined by a set of special qualities which contribute to the areas outstanding scenic quality and underpin the necessity for their designation. A small area of the Cotswolds National Landscape falls within the District.

National Planning Policy (NPPF)

This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied at a local level. The NPPF is a material consideration when deciding on planning applications or appeals.

National Nature Reserves

National Nature Reserves (NNRs) were established to protect some of our most important habitats, species and geology, and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research.

National trails

Long distance routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.

Nature Recovery Network

An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

Natural Flood Management

Managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

NEAP

Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play.

Neighbourhood Plans

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*).

Non-designated Heritage Assets

These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as "locally listed".

Non-strategic policies

Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

Out of town

A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Open space

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Oxford/Cambridge corridor

A spatial concept focused on the economic influence of Oxford and Cambridge. The aim of this is to promote and accelerate the development of the unique set of educational, research and business assets and activities.

Oxfordshire City Deal

The Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal sets out the actions the region will take to create new jobs, support research and businesses, and improve housing and transport.

Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation

The Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation outlines matters on which the six local authorities in Oxfordshire will continue to cooperate. In particular, the document sets out how the parties involved will manage the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, should any of the local planning authorities in Oxfordshire not be able to meet their full objectively assessed housing need.

Performance Engineering

Advanced manufacturing/high performance engineering encompass activities which are high in innovation and the application of leading edge technology, and which form a network of businesses which support, compete with and learn from each other.

Permission in principle

A form of planning consent which establishes that a site is suitable for a specified amount of housing-led development in principle. Following a grant of permission in principle, the site must receive a grant of technical details consent before development can proceed.

Planning condition

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation

A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The Government's planning guidance supporting national planning policy.

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

This Act amended the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. The *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* introduced a new statutory system of regional and local planning and has since been amended by the *Localism Act 2011*.

Planning Inspectorate

The Government body responsible for providing independent inspectors for planning inquiries and for examinations of development plan documents.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS)

Formerly produced by central Government setting out national planning policy. These have been replaced by the NPPF.

Policies Map

Maps of the local planning authority's area which must be reproduced from, or based on, an Ordnance Survey map; include an explanation of any symbol or notation which it uses; and illustrate geographically the application of the policies in the adopted development plan. Where the adopted policies map consists of text and maps, the text prevails if the map and text conflict.

Preferred Options

This is a non-statutory stage of consultation of the Local Plan setting out the preferred options for growth in the area, based on the findings of previous consultations. South Oxfordshire District Council chose to undertake a second iteration of Preferred Options consultation in Spring 2017.

Previously developed land or Brownfield land

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Priority habitats and species

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*.

Regeneration

The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

Regulations

This means “The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended” unless indicated otherwise. Planning authorities must follow these when preparing Local Plans.

Renewable and low carbon energy

Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment (wind, water, the movement of the oceans, sun and from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions.

River Basin Management Plan

River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) are drawn up for the 10 river basin districts in England and Wales as a requirement of the water framework directive. Cherwell District Council is covered within the Thames River Basin Management Plan (2015).

Rural exception sites

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

Safeguarding zone

An area defined in Circular 01/03: Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas, to which specific safeguarding provisions apply.

Saved Policies

Policies in historic development plans that have been formally 'saved' and which continue to be used until replaced by a new Local Plan.

Section 106 Agreement

A legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. They are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

Self-build and custom-build housing

Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the *Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015* (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Sequential Test

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types of location of land before others. For example, brownfield housing sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. With regard to flood risk, it seeks to locate development in areas of lower flood risk (Flood Zone 1) before considering Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Setting of a heritage asset

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Settlement Gap

Areas of predominantly undeveloped land between settlements that have been defined to protect the individual identity of those settlements and prevent their coalescence (the merging together of separate settlements to form one single settlement).

Settlement Hierarchy

A way of identifying and classifying settlements within the Vale and provides a guide to where development may be sustainable according to the role and function of the settlement.

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Sites designated by Natural England under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*.

Site Specific Allocations

Site specific proposals for specific or mixed uses or development. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.

Smaller Village

Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

South East Plan (SEP) (now revoked)

One of the former Regional Spatial Strategies revoked by Government. The South East Plan was approved in May 2009 and set out the long term spatial planning framework for the region for the years 2006-2026. It was revoked by the Government in March 2013 with the exception of two policies.

Spatial Strategy

The overview and overall approach to the provision of jobs, homes and infrastructure over the plan period.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

An area designated to protect the habitats of threatened species of wildlife under EU Directive 92/43.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The SCI sets out standards to be achieved by the local authority in relation to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all DPDs and in development management decisions. It is subject to independent examination. In respect of every DPD the local planning authority is required to publish a statement showing how it complied with the SCI.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

An assessment of the environmental effects of policies, plans and programmes, required by European legislation, which will be part of the public consultation on the policies.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SRA)

An assessment carried out by local authorities to inform their knowledge of flooding, refine the information on the Flood Map and determine the variations in flood risk from all sources of flooding across and from their area.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

An assessment of the land capacity across the district with the potential for housing and employment.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

SHMAs are studies required by Government of local planning authorities to identify housing markets, and their characteristics, that straddle District boundaries. Their purpose is to inform Local Plans in terms of housing targets, housing need, demand, migration and commuting patterns and the development of planning and housing policy.

Strategic policies

Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*.

Strategic Site

A broad location considered as having potential for significant development that contributes to achieving the Spatial Vision of an area.

Submission

The stage at which a Development Plan Document is sent to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Documents which provide guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

Sets an overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of an area.

Sustainable Development

A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The NPPF taken as a whole constitutes the Government’s view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

SuDS seek to manage surface water as close to the source as possible, mimicking surface water flows arising from a site prior to the proposed development. Typically SuDS involve a move away from piped systems to softer engineering solutions inspired by natural drainage processes.

Sustainable transport modes

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The process of assessing the economic, social and environmental effects of a proposed plan. This process implements the requirements of the SEA Directive. Required to be undertaken for all DPDs.

Town centre

Area defined on the policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance.

Transport assessment

A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and measures that will be needed deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement

A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel Plan

A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.

Travelling Showpeople (Planning definition)

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading,

educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.

Unallocated Sites

Unallocated sites are housing sites that come forward which are not allocated in the *Development Plan*. These include both greenfield land and previously developed land. Predicted delivery rates are based on past trends.

Valued landscape

Important local landscapes that contribute to the quality of the natural and local environment.

Watercourse

Main rivers, (larger rivers, brooks and streams) and ordinary watercourses (headwaters and smaller brooks and streams). Watercourses as defined in s72(1) *Land Drainage Act 1991*.

Wildlife corridor

Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites

Unidentified sites that are approved for development.

Zero Carbon

A dwelling whose carbon footprint does not add to overall carbon emissions. However, the Government have stated that zero carbon will only apply to those carbon dioxide emissions that are covered by *Building Regulations*.



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Cherwell Local Plan Review

Interim SA Report

August 2023



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM is commissioned to undertake Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of the Cherwell Local Plan Review (LPR). Once in place, the LPR will establish a strategy for growth to 2040, allocate sites to deliver the strategy and establish the policies against which planning applications will be determined.
- 1.1.2 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to minimising adverse effects and maximising the positives. SA is required for Local Plans.¹

1.2 SA explained

- 1.2.1 It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2.2 In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as the **SA Report**) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that appraises the effects of implementing “the plan and reasonable alternatives”. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.2.3 More specifically, the SA Report must answer the following **three questions**:
- What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
 - including appraisal of ‘reasonable alternatives’
 - What are the SA findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan
 - What are next steps?

1.3 This Interim SA Report²

- 1.3.1 At this current stage of the plan-making process, the Council is consulting on a draft version of the LPR under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations.
- 1.3.2 This report is published with the intention of informing the consultation and subsequent preparation of the final draft (‘proposed submission’) version of the LPR.

Structure of this report

- 1.3.3 Despite the fact that this is an ‘Interim’ SA Report, and does not need to provide the information required of the SA Report, it is nonetheless helpful to structure this report according to the **three questions** above.
- 1.3.4 Before answering the first question, there is a need to further set the scene by setting out:
- the plan’s aims and objectives; and
 - the scope of the SA.

Commenting on this report

- 1.3.5 This report can be referenced as part of comments on the draft plan and/or comments can be made specifically on any part of this report. Further guidance is provided below, including under ‘next steps’.

¹ Since provision was made through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it has been understood that local planning authorities must carry out a process of Sustainability Appraisal alongside plan-making. The centrality of SA to Local Plan-making is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 require that an SA Report is published for consultation alongside the ‘Proposed Submission’ plan document.

² See **Appendix I** for further explanation of the regulatory basis for answering certain questions within the SA Report and, in turn, this Interim SA Report, as well as a ‘checklist’ explaining more precisely the regulatory basis for presenting certain information.

2 Plan aims and objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The aim here is to briefly introduce the:

- context to plan preparation, including the current adopted local plan for Cherwell;
- the plan area (ahead of more detailed discussion elsewhere in the report);
- the plan period; and
- the objectives that are in place to guide plan preparation (the 'plan scope').

2.2 Context to plan preparation

2.2.1 Once in place the Cherwell Local Plan Review (LPR) will be known as the Cherwell Local Plan 2040, and will largely supersede the adopted local plan, comprising the Cherwell Local Plan (adopted in 2015) and its Partial Review (adopted in 2020, dealing with Oxford's unmet housing needs), which look to 2031.

2.2.2 The requirement to regularly review the local plan stems from paragraphs 22 and 68 of the NPPF, which require local plans to look ahead over at least a 15 year period, and paragraph 33, which states: *"Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy..."*

2.2.3 A key task is to consider allocation of new sites to deliver growth over-and-above 'completions' (sites that have already been delivered) and 'commitments' (sites with an extant planning permission or allocation). Focusing on planning for new homes, current understanding (subject to change) is that 'existing supply' from completions (2,367 homes) and commitments to 2040 totals (17,839 homes), plus windfall can be anticipated (~1,000). Also, a further 3,000 homes are committed and anticipated to deliver post 2040.

2.2.4 There is also a need to consider *when* the existing supply is due to come forward and seek to bolster the supply trajectory through the LPR, with a view to a steady trajectory over the entire course of the plan period (albeit that NPPF paragraph 68 supports flexibility for the latter years).

2.2.5 Wider key context comes from:

- Legislation, policy and guidance - the Government has signalled its intention to make significant changes to the English planning system and, in May 2022, published its Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, followed by draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2022. Whilst acknowledging that these changes may have significant implications for plan making in the future, the Government has reiterated the importance of maintaining progress to get up to date local plans in place. The LPR is therefore based on the 2021 NPPF (but mindful of proposed changes), the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The LPR must also be prepared having regard to Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). A primary consideration, central to the NPPF (para 11), is a requirement to maintain an up-to-date local plan that meets objectively assessed development needs, as far as is consistent with sustainable development.
- The Duty to Cooperate - the plan must be prepared taking account of objectives and policies established by various organisations in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate established by the Localism Act 2011. For example, there is a need to work closely with Oxfordshire County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), statutory environmental consultees, infrastructure providers and neighbouring local authorities. There are a wide range of important 'larger than local' considerations in the Oxfordshire context, including those that were being considered through the process of preparing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, prior to the plan-making process being halted in August 2022. Another key body with a strategic remit is [England's Economic Heartland](#); and there is also a need to be mindful of work across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc (Ox Cam), in particular the newly formed [Oxford to Cambridge Partnership](#).
- Neighbourhood planning - the LPR must naturally take account of 'made' and emerging neighbourhood plans, with made neighbourhood plans for Adderbury, Bloxham, Hook Norton, Mid Cherwell and Weston-on-the-Green, and several others in preparation. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the local plan, but it is equally the case that neighbourhood plans inform the local plan preparation.

2.3 The plan area

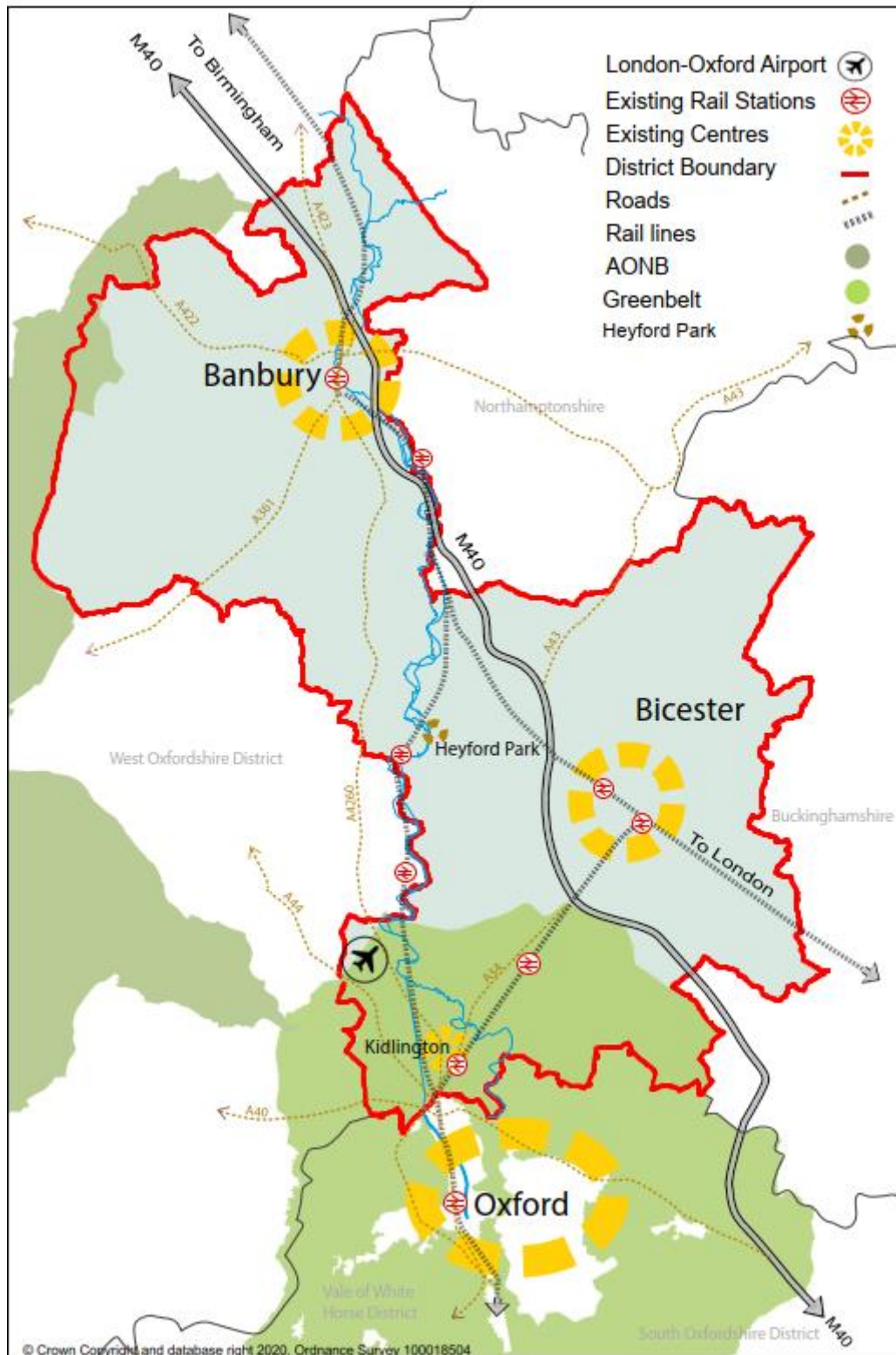
- 2.3.1 Although it is one of the fastest growing areas in the South East, Cherwell remains a predominantly rural district. It has a population of approximately 150,000 people mainly concentrated in the three urban centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. Banbury is the largest settlement with 32% of the population, Bicester has 24% and Kidlington 13%. The rural area accounts for the remaining 31% of the population.
- 2.3.2 Over the last twenty years the population of Cherwell has grown by over 16% and it is forecast to grow further to approximately 170,000 by 2043. Much of this increase is as a result of significant housing and employment growth directed by previous local plans, particularly at Banbury and Bicester. The argument for growth largely reflects the district's location at the fulcrum of two nationally significant 'knowledge sector' economic growth areas: the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the Oxfordshire Knowledge spine.
- 2.3.3 Cherwell has excellent transport links, with the M40 motorway passing close to Banbury and Bicester, direct rail links from Banbury and Bicester to London, Birmingham and Oxford, and a forthcoming East West Rail (EWR) link between Bicester and Milton Keynes. The Oxford to Bicester EWR link is already running, via a new station at Oxford Parkway (close to Kidlington), which links to London via Bicester.
- 2.3.4 The district is characterised by distinctive and diverse towns and villages, with a total of 80 town and parish councils. Most of the villages and hamlets retain their traditional character and, in total, there are 60 conservation areas and approximately 2,300 listed buildings. There is also a large number of scheduled monuments (38) and nationally registered parks and gardens (10), plus there is a historic civil war battlefield, and Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site is adjacent to the district boundary. Also, Bicester Airfield and former RAF Upper Heyford are of national historic importance.
- 2.3.5 Cherwell's natural environment is also varied and highly valued, including as a contributor to local character and due to generating wide-ranging 'ecosystem services'. The River Cherwell and Oxford Canal run north-south through the district; there are Ironstone Downs in the north west (including a very small area within the Cotswolds AONB / 'national landscape'); the Ploughley Limestone Plateau features in the east; and in the south is the expansive low lying landscape of the Upper Ray Meadows and Otmoor.
- 2.3.6 Part of the internationally important Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies in the south west of the district, north of the boundary with Oxford City, and there are also several nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) as well as a network of locally designated sites, identified areas of non-designated 'priority habitat' and wider landscape-scale areas of biodiversity importance.
- 2.3.7 Much of the southern part of the district lies within the Oxford Green Belt, and the relationship between this part of the district and the internationally important city of Oxford is an ongoing strategic planning consideration. The Local Plan (2015) directed growth, over the period 2011-31 primarily to Bicester (44%) and Banbury (32%), as well as to Upper Heyford (10%), but the Partial Review (2020) then allocated a further 4,400 homes in the Kidlington area to meet the district's share of Oxford's unmet needs.
- 2.3.8 The plan area is shown in Figure 2.1, overleaf.

2.4 The plan period

Cherwell Local Plan 2040

- 2.4.1 The current local plan, which was adopted in 2015 (with the Partial Review then adopted in 2020) covers the period 2011 to 2031. The Local Plan Review (LPR) is likely to be adopted in 2024/25 and should cover a period of 15 years from plan adoption, hence an appropriate end date is 2040. The plan period begins in 2020 as this is the 'base date' for key evidence studies, notably the Oxfordshire Housing and Economic Growth Needs Assessment (HENA), commissioned by CDC and Oxford City Council.
- 2.4.2 In this light, objectively assessed development needs are calculated over the period 2020 to 2040, and the LPR must ensure that these needs will be met, as far as is consistent with sustainable development (and mindful of NPPF para 68, which allows for flexibility in respect of meeting needs over latter years).
- 2.4.3 Additionally, there is a need to be mindful of NPPF paragraph 22, which states: "*Where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery.*"

Figure 2.1: The plan area



N.B. the Bicester to Milton Keynes section of East West Rail is set to open in Spring 2024. Further information is provided at: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/railway-upgrade-plan/key-projects/east-west-rail/bicester-to-bletchley-milton-keynes/>

2.5 Plan objectives

2.5.1 A list of objectives, to guide plan-making, was first published as part of the Options consultation in 2021, before being subjected to modest refinement and adjustment. The objectives are presented below:

2.5.2 Local plan objectives are of key importance to the SA process, both because of their importance to the plan, and because of the legal requirement to define, appraise and consult on reasonable alternatives taking account of “*the objectives... of the plan.*”

Meeting the challenge of climate change and ensuring sustainable development

- Promote net zero carbon new developments, with high sustainable construction standards, and low embodied carbon to ensure new developments deliver the highest viable energy efficiency, including the use of decentralised energy; and support a local zero- carbon energy system that reduces Cherwell’s reliance on global fossil fuels and prioritises community energy.
- Deliver developments that efficiently use local natural resources (particularly water) and, that minimise and are resilient to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and heatwaves.
- Improve air quality. Protect and maximise opportunities for biodiversity net gain and the enhancement of Cherwell’s natural capital assets, such as soils, woodlands, hedges and ponds in order to capture and store carbon.
- Maintain and improve the natural and built environment including biodiversity, landscape, green Infrastructure and waterways and by ensuring new development achieves high quality design standards and conserves and enhances the natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets of Cherwell.
- Prioritise active travel and increase the attraction of and opportunities for public transport, ensuring high standards of connectivity and accessibility to services for all. Reduce dependency on the private car as a mode of travel, facilitating the creation of a zero-carbon transport network.

Maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy

- Support a strong and sustainable economy within the district, including the visitor economy and agriculture, and ensure sufficient land is allocated to meet our identified needs.
- Increase education, training and skills, and encourage investment in the local workforce; improve and enhance digital connectivity and infrastructure, to support a sustainable and resilient economy, reduce inequality and help to reduce unnecessary transport.
- Support Cherwell’s urban centres, including where beneficial, redevelopment and renewal, to maintain and enhance their vitality, viability, distinctiveness and safety.
- Recognise the economic benefits of preserving and enhancing the character and beauty of Cherwell’s built and natural heritage, and landscape, and the wider benefits from its natural capital and ecosystem services to ensure Cherwell remains attractive to business and as a place to live, work and visit for current and future communities.

Building healthy and sustainable communities

- Meet the housing needs of all sectors of Cherwell’s communities, in a way that creates sustainable, well designed, safe, inclusive and mixed communities, promoting inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods.
- Create sustainable, well designed, distinctive places where healthy behaviours (being active, having opportunities to access a healthy diet, and having good social connections) are the norm and which provide a sense of belonging, safety, and a sense of community.
- Focus development in Cherwell’s sustainable locations, making efficient and effective use of land, conserving and enhancing the countryside, landscape, the natural environment, and the setting of its towns and villages.
- Protect and enhance the historic environment, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets and archaeology, and promoting inclusive access to local assets where appropriate.
- Provide sufficient accessible, well maintained good quality services, facilities and infrastructure, to meet health, education, transport, open space, sport, recreations, cultural, social and other community needs.

3 The SA scope

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The scope of the SA refers to the breadth of sustainability issues and objectives that are taken into account as part of the assessment of reasonable alternatives and the emerging plan. It does not refer to the scope of the plan (discussed above) or the scope of reasonable alternatives (discussed below, in Part 1).

3.2 Consultation on the scope

3.2.1 The Regulations require that: *“When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the Environmental Report [i.e. the SA Report], the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”*. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.³ As such, these authorities were consulted on the SA scope in 2020; this involved publication of a Scoping Report, which was then subsequently updated to reflect comments received.⁴ The SA scope was then slightly adjusted ahead of publication of the Interim SA (ISA) Report in 2021.

3.3 The SA framework

3.3.1 Table 3.1 presents the list of topics/objectives that represents the core of the SA framework. The list of objectives is unchanged from that presented in the Scoping Report (2020), but the SA framework has been adjusted as follows:

- Objectives are placed under broad topic headings (this approach was taken in the 2021 ISA Report).
- ‘Flood risk’ is moved to sit under the ‘climate change adaptation’ topic heading, as flood risk is invariably a key climate change adaptation issue for local plans, whilst other adaptation issues are cross-cutting, in that they can be discussed under other topic headings (e.g. biodiversity, communities).
- The ‘communities’ related topic headings have been grouped together (bar ‘housing’, given that this is a centrally important matter for local plans) to allow for greater flexibility, and ensure a concise appraisal.
- The two objectives relating to ‘the economy and employment’ can appropriately be considered together (as per the approach taken in the 2021 ISA Report). They are distinct objectives, but lend themselves to a single, rounded discussion of the issues, opportunities and impacts.
- ‘Waste’ is moved to sit under the broader heading of ‘land soils and resources’, mindful that minerals and waste is planned for jointly within Oxfordshire and given that local plans have a relatively limited role to play in respect of sustainable waste management.

3.3.2 Comments on the SA scope are welcomed at the current time. It is important that the SA scope responds to the evolving scope of the plan and reasonable alternatives, and the latest evidence-base. It is also important that the SA framework is conducive to supporting a concise and accessible appraisal.

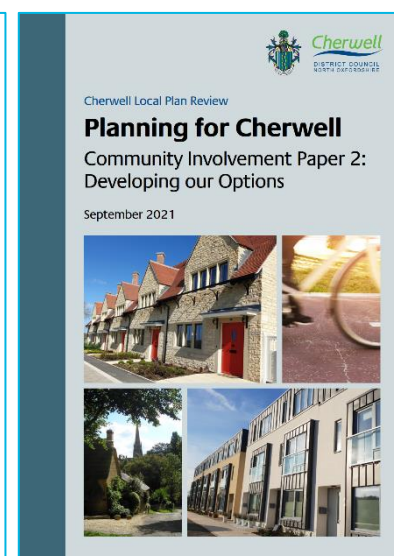
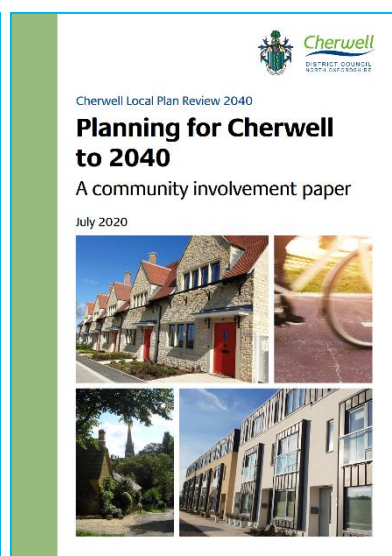
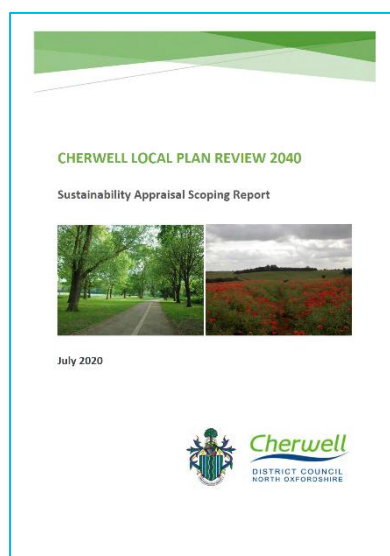
Table 3.1: The SA framework

Topic	Objective
Air and wider environmental quality	Protect and where possible improve air quality and prevent light pollution
Biodiversity	Conserve and enhance the district’s biodiversity and geodiversity
Climate change mitigation	Minimise the district’s contribution to climate change
Climate change adaptation (flood risk)	Support the district’s adaptation to unavoidable climate change Reduce the risk from all sources of flooding

³ In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these bodies were selected because *‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes.’*

⁴ The Scoping Report is available at: www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/11671/sustainability-appraisal-scoping-report

Topic		Objective
Communities	Communities	Create and sustain vibrant communities including preventing noise pollution
	Crime	Reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime
	Digital infrastructure	Ensure that digital infrastructure meets the needs of current and future generations
	Education and skills	Maintain and improve levels of education and skills in the population overall
	Health	Improve the health and wellbeing of the population and reduce inequalities in health
	Poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion	Reduce poverty and social exclusion
Employment & economic growth		Ensure high and stable levels of employment across the district Sustain and develop economic growth and innovation and support the long-term competitiveness of the district
Historic environment		Protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the district's historic environment
Homes		Ensure the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home
Land, soils and resources		Conserve and enhance soil and the efficient use of land Reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste
Landscape		Protect and enhance landscape character and the district's countryside
Transport		Encourage efficient patterns of movement, promote sustainable travel and reduce the need to travel by car
Water		Maintain and improve water quality and resources



The SA scope was consulted on in 2020, and then subject to minor refinement in 2021

Part 1: What has plan-making / SA involved up to this stage?

4 Introduction to Part 1

Overview

4.1.1 Plan-making has been underway since 2020, with two consultations having been held prior to this current consultation, and one Interim SA Report having been published - see Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Overview of the plan-making / SA process

	Plan-making	SA
2020	Community Involvement Paper	Scoping Report
2021	Options consultation	Interim SA Report
2022-2023	Explore options / reasonable alternatives	
2023	Draft Plan consultation	Interim SA Report
2024	Publication of the Proposed Submission Plan	SA Report
	Submission to Secretary of State	

4.1.2 The focus here, within Part 1, is not to relay the entire ‘backstory’ of the plan-making / SA process, or to provide a comprehensive audit trail of decision-making over time. Rather, the aim is to report work undertaken to examine **reasonable alternatives** in 2022 and 2023. Specifically, the aim is to:

- explain the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with - see **Section 5**
- present an appraisal of the reasonable alternatives - see **Section 6**
- explain the Council’s reasons for selecting the preferred option - see **Section 7**

4.1.3 Presenting this information is in accordance with the regulatory requirement to present an appraisal of ‘reasonable alternatives’ and ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’ within the SA Report (N.B. this is not the SA Report, but aims to present the information required of the SA Report).

What about earlier stages of SA?

4.1.4 A considerable amount of work was completed and published for consultation in the 2021 Interim SA Report, including work to explore reasonable alternatives. Specifically, the report presented an appraisal of broad **growth quanta alternatives** for each of the district’s five sub-areas in turn.

4.1.5 Work completed in 2021 was an input to the process of establishing reasonable alternatives in 2022, as discussed below. However, findings of earlier work stages naturally become out-of-date and superseded, such that there is little to be gained from reporting findings in detail.

Reasonable alternatives in relation to what?

4.1.6 The legal requirement is to examine reasonable alternatives (RAs) taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan (see Section 2). Following discussion of plan objectives with officers, it was determined appropriate to focus on reasonable alternatives in the form of ‘**growth scenarios**’, defined as alternative approaches to the supply of land, including by allocating sites (NPPF paragraph 68), in order to meet objectively assessed development needs and wider plan objectives. The aim is to appraise alternatives / scenarios that go to the very core of the plan (see the plan objectives in Section 3), ensuring that decision makers and stakeholders are provided with a clear mutually exclusive choice.⁵

⁵ As well as defining reasonable alternatives mindful of the plan objectives, it was also considered appropriate to focus on ‘growth scenarios’ given the potential to define ‘do something’ alternatives that are meaningfully different, in that they will vary in respect of ‘significant effects’. The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is clear that SA “*should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of the plan*”

What about site options?

- 4.1.7 Whilst individual site options generate a high degree of interest, they are not RAs in the context of most local plans, because there is no mutually exclusive choice to be made between them. Were a local plan setting out to allocate one site, then site options would be RAs, but that is rarely if ever the case. Rather, the objective is invariably to allocate a *package* of sites that, taken together (as a ‘strategy’), will serve to meet needs and deliver on wider plan-objectives (e.g. around infrastructure delivery). This suggests a definition of RAs as *alternative packages of sites*. Nonetheless, consideration is naturally given to the merits of site options as part of the process of establishing growth scenarios – see Sections 5.3 and 5.4.

Is the focus on housing sites?

- 4.1.8 Establishing a supply of land to meet housing needs is typically a focus of attention, but local plans are also tasked with meeting wider development needs. This includes needs in respect of employment land, which is a key consideration for Cherwell, as understood from the Oxfordshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, 2022), which both explores both housing and employment land needs.
- 4.1.9 In this light, reasonable growth scenarios for the Cherwell LPR must be defined in terms of both housing and employment land. The discussion presented below is somewhat housing-led, but employment land issues / options are considered throughout, and a summary is presented in Section 5.5.

What about other aspects of the plan?

- 4.1.10 As well as establishing a spatial strategy, allocating sites etc, the local plan must also establish policy on thematic district-wide issues, as well as site-specific policies to guide decision-making at the planning application stage. Broadly speaking, these can be described as development management (DM) policies.
- 4.1.11 However, it is a challenge to establish DM policy alternatives that are genuinely reasonable.⁶ Consideration was given to possible reasonable DM policy alternatives, but on balance it was determined appropriate to focus attention only on appraising the emerging preferred options (see Section 9).
- 4.1.12 Comments on reasonable DM policy alternatives are welcomed through the current consultation.

Structure of this part of the report

- 4.1.13 This part of the report is structured as follows:
- **Section 5** – explains a process leading to the definition of growth scenarios
 - **Section 6** – presents a summary appraisal of the growth scenarios
 - **Section 7** – presents a statement by officers in response to the appraisal.

Whose responsibility?

- 4.1.14 It is important to be clear that: selecting reasonable alternatives is the responsibility of the plan-maker (CDC), with AECOM acting in an advisory capacity; appraising the reasonable alternatives is the responsibility of AECOM; and selecting the preferred option is the responsibility of the plan-maker.

Commenting on this part of the report

- 4.1.15 Comments are particularly welcomed on:
- the decision to focus on ‘growth scenarios’ (**this section**);
 - the growth scenarios selected, with reference to the selection process (**Section 5**);
 - the appraisal of growth scenarios (**Section 6**); and
 - Officers’ response / reasons for supporting the preferred approach (**Section 7**).

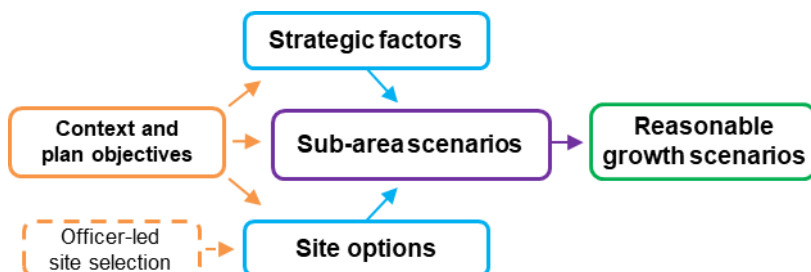
⁶ To be ‘reasonable’ alternatives must be meaningfully different to the extent that it is possible for an appraisal to differentiate between them in terms of significant effects, where significance is defined in the context of the plan as a whole. Also, it is important to bear in mind that ‘no policy’ is not a reasonable alternative to ‘a policy’. This is because ‘no policy’ is the baseline (and so cannot lead to significant effects *on the baseline*)

5 Defining growth scenarios

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The aim here is to discuss the process that led to the definition of reasonable growth scenarios.

Figure 5.1: Establishing reasonable growth scenarios



Structure of this section

5.1.2 This section of the report is structured as follows:

- **Section 5.2** – explores **strategic factors** with a bearing on growth scenarios;
- **Section 5.3** – considers individual **site options**, as a key input to growth scenarios;
- **Section 5.4** – explores growth scenarios for individual **sub-areas** within the district; and
- **Section 5.5** – draws upon the preceding sections to define **reasonable growth scenarios**.

A note on limitations

5.1.3 It is important to emphasise that this section does not aim to present an appraisal of reasonable alternatives. Rather, the aim is to describe the *process* that led to the definition of reasonable alternatives for appraisal. This amounts to a relatively early step in the plan-making process which, in turn, has a bearing on the extent of evidence gathering and analysis that is proportionate, also recalling the legal requirement to present an “**outline of the reasons for selecting alternatives...**” [emphasis added].

5.2 Strategic factors

Introduction

5.2.1 The aim of this section of the report is to explore strategic factors with a bearing on the definition of reasonable growth scenarios. Specifically, this section of the report explores:

- Quantum – how many new homes are needed (regardless of capacity to meet needs in practice)?
- Distribution – which broad areas within the district are more suited and less suited to housing growth; and what development typologies are supported / not supported, e.g. strategic versus non-strategic?

Quantum

5.2.2 This section sets out the established Local Housing Need (LHN) figure for the district, before exploring arguments for the Local Plan providing for a quantum of growth either above or below LHN.

Background

5.2.3 A central tenet of plan-making process is the need to **A**) establish housing needs; and then **B**) develop a policy response to those needs. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains:

“Assessing housing need is the first step in the process of deciding how many homes need to be planned for. It should be undertaken separately from... establishing a housing requirement figure and preparing policies to address this such as site allocations.”

- 5.2.4 With regards to (A), the NPPF (paragraph 61) is clear that establishment of **LHN** should be informed by an *“assessment conducted using the standard method... unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects... demographic trends and market signals”* [emphasis added].
- 5.2.5 With regards to (B), many local authorities will respond to assessed LHN by providing for LHN in full or, in other words, setting the housing **requirement** at LHN and identifying a **supply** through policies sufficient to deliver this housing requirement (at a suitable rate/trajectory over time, which will typically also necessitate a supply ‘buffer’ to mitigate against the risk of unforeseen delivery issues). However, under certain circumstances it can be appropriate to set a housing requirement that *departs* from LHN.

Cherwell’s LHN

- 5.2.6 A three-step standard method for calculating LHN was first published by the Government in 2017, and then a fourth step (the ‘cities and urban centres uplift’; not relevant to Cherwell) was added in 2020.
- 5.2.7 It is also important to note that the PPG was updated in late 2018 to require that the household growth projections used as an input to the method must be the 2014-based projections, rather than more recent projections. The PPG explains that the change was made in order to:⁷ *“provide stability... ensure that historic under-delivery and declining affordability are reflected, and to be consistent with the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.”* PPG updates in 2020 confirmed this approach.
- 5.2.8 The Oxfordshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, 2022), commissioned by Cherwell District Council and Oxford City Council, considers LHN for Oxfordshire as a whole, before then considering ways of distributing LHN across the county.
- 5.2.9 With regards to Oxfordshire’s LHN, the HENA explores four scenarios:
- “Standard Method 2014” (as above) = 3,388 dpa
 - “CE Baseline Trend” – aims to balance homes and employment on the assumption of a continuation of recent economic trends, as understood from work by Cambridge Econometric, CE = 4,406 dpa
 - “2021 Census Adjusted” – the standard method adjusted to reflect 2021 Census data rather than the 2014-base household projections that are the default basis for the standard method = 4,721 dpa.
 - “Economic Development Led” – aims to balance homes and employment on the assumption of high economic growth in line with that discussed in the LEP’s LIS Investment Plan = 5,830 dpa.⁸
- 5.2.10 The HENA presents an assessment of these four scenarios, concluding that there are good reasons for focusing attention on the two middle scenarios. These two scenarios were then discussed further, leading to an agreement between Cherwell and Oxford City to plan for the CE Baseline Trend scenario, such that Oxfordshire’s LHN is taken to be 4,406 dpa for the purposes of preparing the Cherwell LPR.
- 5.2.11 With regards to the methodological approach to distributing Oxfordshire’s housing need between the five component Oxfordshire local authorities, the HENA considers four alternative approaches:
- 5.2.12 With regards to the methodological approach to distributing Oxfordshire’s housing need between the five component Oxfordshire local authorities, the HENA considers four alternative approaches:
- Distribute according to the standard-method derived LHN figure for each local authority – assuming that the CE Baseline Trend scenario is applied, which leads to an LHN figure for Cherwell of 965 dpa. It is also important to note that Oxford City’s LHN is 991 under this scenario / distribution method.
 - Distribute according to employment in 2021 – assuming that the CE Baseline Trend scenario, this leads to a Cherwell LHN of 949 dpa (i.e. a slight decrease) and an Oxford City LHN that is 18% higher.
 - Distribute according to employment in 2040 – assuming that the CE Baseline Trend scenario, this leads to a Cherwell LHN of 1,009 dpa (i.e. a 5% increase on 965 dpa), but notably leads to an Oxford City LHN that is 33% higher (than 991 dpa). Specifically, Oxford City’s LHN is 1,322 dpa.
- 5.2.13 The HENA recommends that the latter distribution is used, such that Cherwell’s LHN is **1,009 dpa**.

⁷ See paragraph 4 and 5 at: [gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments)

⁸ The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Investment Plan (2020).

Is it reasonable to explore setting the housing requirement at a figure above LHN?

- 5.2.14 There is a clear argument for setting the housing requirement at a figure above LHN in order to account for **unmet needs** from Oxford City, which are significant, with a recent consultation paper published by the City Council identifying that: A) LHN is 1,322 dpa; B) and there is capacity for 457 dpa; hence C) unmet need is 865 dpa. This is subject to change but represents a sound basis for planning at the current time.
- 5.2.15 The final consideration is then in respect of how Oxford City's unmet need should be split between the surrounding four districts. This is a key matter for ongoing consideration, but it is currently fair to assume that 32.8% would be directed to Cherwell, as per the split agreed in 2014 that fed into the Cherwell LP Partial Review (2020). As such, the current assumption is that the LPR will provide 284 dpa unmet need.
- 5.2.16 As such, there is a clear basis for setting the housing requirement at 1,009 dpa + 284 dpa = **1,293 dpa**.
- 5.2.17 Aside from unmet need, another consideration is the following from the Government's Planning Practice Guidance: "An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes." This matter is discussed in Section 6.

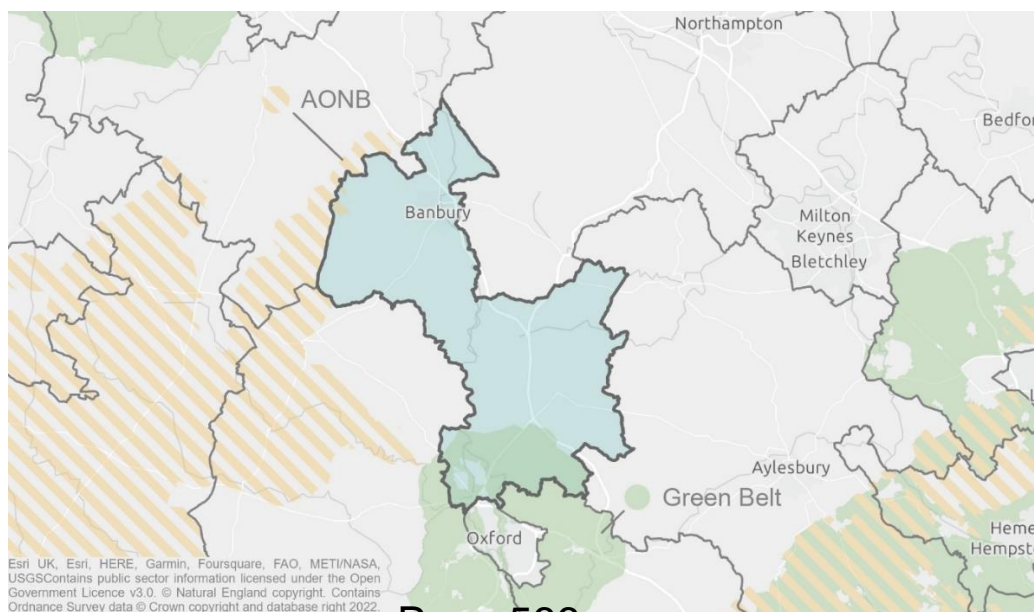
Is it reasonable to explore setting the housing requirement at a figure below LHN?

- 5.2.18 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states: "... strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, **unless**: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole." [emphasis added]
- 5.2.19 In the Cherwell context, there are few arguments for lower growth on the basis of "areas or assets of particular importance". Whilst parts of the district are constrained in these terms (N.B. NPPF footnote 7 provides further detail), this is not the case for the majority of the district.
- 5.2.20 There are also arguments for lower growth to reflect an alternative approach to distributing LHN across Oxfordshire and/or an alternative approach to distributing Oxford City's unmet housing needs (as discussed above). With regards to the possibility of using the Standard Method to calculate Oxfordshire's LHN (as discussed above), the HENA presents a strong case for this being unreasonable.

Conclusion on housing quanta options to examine further

- 5.2.21 There is a need to focus attention on growth scenarios involving supply sufficient to enable the LPR housing requirement to be set at **1,293 dpa**, or 25,860 homes in total (2020-2040). However, there is also a need to remain open to the possibility of modestly **higher growth** and **lower growth** scenarios. Further discussion of quanta options is presented in Section 5.5, after having considered supply options.

Figure 5.2: A selection of strategic (NPPF footnote 11) constraints across the sub-region



Broad distribution

Introduction

5.2.22 This is the second of two sections examining ‘strategic factors’ of relevance to the matter of defining reasonable growth scenarios for the LPR. The aim is to explore broad distribution as well as the question of broad growth typologies that are supported, e.g. strategic versus non-strategic sites.

5.2.23 This section might be structured thematically, spatially or chronologically. On balance, a decision was made to structure this section under the following sub-headings:

- Introduction to the spatial context within Cherwell
- Subregional context
- Overarching aims of the local plan review

N.B. there is a very wide range of evidence that might feasibly be reviewed here. The aim here is to present an **introductory discussion**, with other sources of evidence can be reviewed later in the report.

Introduction to the spatial context within Cherwell

5.2.24 An important starting point is an understanding of the distribution of completions and commitments – see Table 5.1. With regards to the “elsewhere” category, data is only available to enable the completions figure to be further broken down for the two most recent monitoring years – see Table 5.2.

Table 5.1: Breakdown of recent completions and commitments

Sub area	Percentage of completions (2015 – 2022)	Percentage of commitments
Banbury	40%	20%
Bicester	29%	48%
Elsewhere	30%	32%

Table 5.2: Further breakdown of the “elsewhere” area

Sub area	Percentage of recent completions (2020 – 2022)	Percentage of commitments
Heyford Park	23%	26%
Kidlington	18%	0%
Rural Areas	59%	8%
Partial Review sites (N.B. Kidlington area)	0%	66%

5.2.25 In this light, there is a case for exploring five sub-areas within the district: Banbury; Bicester; Kidlington (area); Heyford Park; and the rural area. These areas are discussed below (with a single discussion for Banbury and Bicester in the round), plus there is a brief discussion of the possibility of a new settlement, which would amount to a significant departure from the current growth strategy.

Banbury and Bicester

5.2.26 Both towns have been a focus of growth over recent years and decades (Banbury more so than Bicester, with Banbury’s percentage completions figure even higher (43%) looking back to 2011). Nonetheless, there is a clear need to explore options that would see a further concentration of growth at both towns.

5.2.27 Banbury is the larger town, but Bicester has extensive commitments following the adopted Local Plan (2015), and is associated with a more readily apparent strategic growth opportunity, given its [Garden Town](#) status and position within the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine and the Oxford to Cambridge (Ox Cam) Arc.

- 5.2.28 The broad strategy of directing growth to Bicester more so than Banbury remains valid at the current time, i.e. for the purposes of considering reasonable growth scenarios. No 'headline' new evidence has emerged, since the time of the adopted Local Plan (2015), to suggest the need for a change of tack; indeed, additional strategic support for a focus of growth at Bicester comes from a range of sources. For example, the Government's Ox Cam Arc aspirations have emerged since 2015; and Bicester now benefits from an improved rail service (albeit the improvement was envisaged at the time of preparing the adopted plan). It is also the case that the existing and committed employment offer at Bicester is very strong, with six strategic employment sites (Table 1 of the adopted Local Plan) totalling 138.5 ha, in comparison to a total of 48 ha at Banbury. However, take-up of employment land has been primarily for warehousing and distribution uses, reflecting Bicester's excellent road links, which have a low jobs density. There is an ambition to balance the employment offer more towards knowledge sectors with a higher jobs density.
- 5.2.29 In summary, there are a range of high level arguments to support a focus of growth at Bicester over-and-above Banbury (which is not to suggest that there are not important growth-related opportunities at Banbury, perhaps most notably around town centre regeneration, as discussed further below). However, there are also wider factors that must be taken into account when considering more precisely the appropriate balance of growth between the towns – see further discussion in Section 5.4.

Kidlington

- 5.2.30 The Kidlington area is set to see high growth compared to the wider rural area, following the Partial Review (2020), which allocated land for 4,400 homes in the vicinity of Kidlington (although only a proportion directly abuts Kidlington). In this light, and for a range of other reasons, the current proposal is that Kidlington should sit within a second tier of the hierarchy as a 'service centre'.
- 5.2.31 Kidlington links closely with the surrounding villages of Yarnton and Begbroke, as well as to land within Cherwell at the northern edge of Oxford (between Oxford and Oxford Parkway Station), including land allocated to come forward as an urban extension to Oxford. These settlements are all surrounded by the Oxford Green Belt. Also, Kidlington links to the village of Islip (also within the Green Belt, and where there is a train station) and to Woodstock (within West Oxfordshire and beyond the Green Belt).
- 5.2.32 The broad strategy was a focus of [appraisal](#) and consultation in 2021 (as per Bicester and Banbury). At that time the broad assumption was that Kidlington would see limited or low growth housing growth, given the Green Belt constraint (but there was consideration of Green Belt release for employment).
- 5.2.33 Kidlington is very-well linked to Oxford, via bus services along strategic road corridors, and via a strategic cycle route, plus Oxford Parkway Station is nearby. Furthermore, the Kidlington area is a significant employment hub, making a key contribution to the success of the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine. In this light, the option of further strategic growth cannot be ruled out, despite the Green Belt constraint.

Heyford Park

- 5.2.34 The former airbase of RAF Heyford was originally identified as a location for a new settlement in 1996, and by the time of the Local Plan (2015) 761 homes had been consented. The Local Plan (2015) then allocated land for a further 1,600 homes and 1,500 jobs (building on the existing employment offer), through Policy Villages 5, with the Spatial Strategy explaining: *"Away from the two towns, the major single location for growth will be at the former RAF Upper Heyford base which will deliver 2,361 homes."*
- 5.2.35 The allocation was made mindful of the very high degree of historic environment / heritage constraint affecting the former airfield, which is designated as a conservation area in its entirety.
- 5.2.36 The Options consultation document (2021) then explained: *"To date approximately 680 dwellings have been built, together with associated community facilities... Housing delivery continues to progress at the site, and there is continuing interest in and around the site for additional development."*
- 5.2.37 The document went on to point out that the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document published in 2021 served to highlight the option of further strategic growth at Heyford Park, and then presented two alternative courses of action: A) limit further growth, beyond that which is committed; and B) allocate land for further strategic growth. These alternatives were then appraised in the Interim SA Report.
- 5.2.38 More recently, an application for 1,750 homes and a range of other uses was approved in 2022 (ref. [18/00825/HYBRID](#)), broadly in line with adopted Local Plan allocation.

- 5.2.39 The adopted Local Plan allocation (2015) discussed the importance of “*a comprehensive and lasting approach to the whole site*” and securing “*a lasting arrangement on this exceptional large scale brownfield site*”. These sentiments hold true at the current time, i.e. there is potentially an opportunity for further growth in order to secure realisation of a vision for Heyford Park as a unique service centre, including one with a high proportion of local jobs per household. However, securing transport infrastructure upgrades, and better alignment with transport objectives more generally, is a prerequisite for further growth.
- 5.2.40 The current proposal is that Heyford Park should sit within the settlement hierarchy as a service centre.

The rural area

- 5.2.41 There are two categories of villages within the rural area:
- Larger villages – are Adderbury, Ambrosden, Bletchington, Bloxham, Bodicote, Deddington, Hook Norton, Launton, Steeple Aston and Yarnton.
- Of these, one village (Bodicote) naturally falls within the ‘Banbury sub-area’, two (Launton and Ambrosden) within the ‘Bicester sub-area’ and one (Yarnton) within the ‘Kidlington sub-area’. The other seven larger villages are considered under the ‘Rural sub-area’ heading in Section 5.4.
- Smaller villages – certain smaller villages are best discussed under the Banbury, Bicester or Kidlington sub-area headings in Section 5.4, but the great majority fall under the ‘Rural’ sub-area heading.
- 5.2.42 This broad area has seen significant recent growth (see Table 5.2), including 351 homes completed over the two year period 2020-2022, and there is significant further committed growth (538 homes). This includes significant growth from ‘speculative’ sites that have recently gained planning permission at appeal, following a refusal by CDC, after weight being given to the lack of a demonstrable five year housing land supply (as measured against the housing requirement set out in the adopted local plan). The concern can be that such sites do not come forward alongside new infrastructure, relative to ‘plan-led’ growth.
- 5.2.43 Overall, it is difficult to reach a conclusion on whether there is a strategic argument for increasing the proportion of district-wide growth directed to the rural area, through the LPR. On the one hand, recently completed and committed growth amounts to a rate of growth above that envisaged by the adopted Local Plan.⁹ However, on the other hand the strategy in the adopted plan amounted to a limited or modest growth strategy. On balance, the option of modestly raising the proportion of district-wide growth directed to the rural area cannot be ruled out as unreasonable (on the basis solely of strategic arguments).
- 5.2.44 This is mindful of strategic arguments around supporting the vitality of rural villages, including by ensuring sustainable levels of patronage for village services / facilities and retail. However, it is recognised that there are also strategic transport arguments against dispersing growth to rural areas. Also, it is recognised that growth issues and opportunities vary greatly from village-to-village, plus there is a need to consider the role of neighbourhood plans. The rural area is discussed further below, in Section 5.4.

New settlements

- 5.2.45 Finally, with regards to the existing strategy, there is a need to consider the matter of new settlements. The NPPF encourages consideration of new settlements (para 73), and the adopted Local Plan supported a new community at Heyford Park, but that represented something of a unique opportunity, as discussed.
- 5.2.46 One other new settlement option was also considered at the time of preparing the Partial Review (see page 119 of the SA Report) but rejected quite early in the process. Also, it is noted that all four of the other adopted Oxfordshire local plans include a focus on new settlements.¹⁰
- 5.2.47 On balance, it is reasonable to consider new settlement options further, despite the fact that allocation of a new settlement would represent a significant departure from the current strategy. Options are discussed in Sections 5.3 and 5.4.

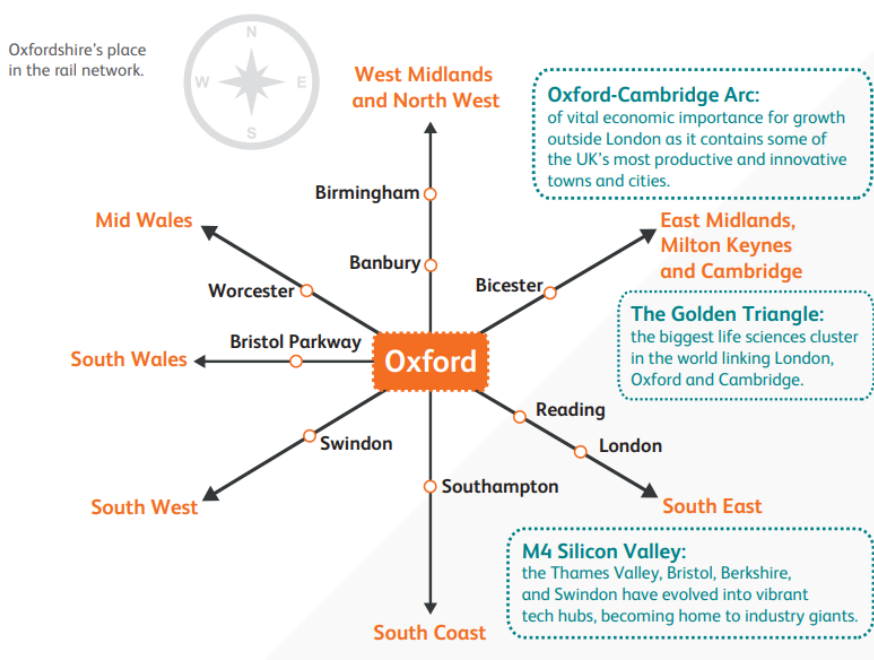
⁹ Specifically, Policy Villages 2 stated: “A total of 750 homes will be delivered at Category A villages [to 2031]. This will be in addition to the rural allowance for small site ‘windfalls’ and planning permissions... as at 31 March 2014.”

¹⁰ The West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2018) directs a high proportion of growth to “Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village” (2,200 homes), albeit the new village will be very closely linked to Eynsham; the South Oxfordshire Local Plan supports a stand-alone new settlement at Culham (3,500 homes) as well as two strategic village expansions (Chalgrove, 3,00 homes; and Berinsfield, 1,700 homes); whilst the Vale of White Horse Local Plan (Part 2 adopted in 2019) supports a new garden village at Dalton Barracks (up to 4,500 homes in the long term), albeit the site relates very closely to the existing village of Shippon.

Subregional context

- 5.2.48 The discussion above has already served to introduce a number of the 'larger-than-local' reasons for giving careful consideration to the scale, distribution and types of growth supported through the local plan. Key objectives relate to supporting economic growth, but there are also a range of wider objectives with a bearing on the question of how to distribute growth optimally, within the sub-region and within Cherwell.
- 5.2.49 The figure below is an introduction to Oxford, Banbury and Bicester's sub-regional links. Discussion under subsequent headings then gives consideration to key sub-regional strategies.

Figure 9.1: Oxford in the sub-regional context, from the Oxfordshire ORCS, 2021



Oxford to Cambridge Arc / Partnership

- 5.2.50 In July 2021, the Government consulted on a 'vision' for the Arc, although anticipated subsequent work on 'spatial framework' was not progressed. Key figures within the [Vision document](#) deal with:
- **Productivity** – Figure 3.1 of the document shows that Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita is very high compared to the national picture and select other sub-regions nationally. The ambition is that: “By 2050, the Arc will be the world leading place for high-value growth, innovation and productivity.”
 - **Economic clusters** – Figure 3.2 in the document shows the location of hubs for a range of key sectors, with the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine clearly evident. Bicester is not explicitly shown, but it is important to note the level of committed employment growth: 119 ha as of 2021.
 - **Transport** – Figure 4.1 serves to clearly highlight a gap in east-west connectivity in the western part of the Arc, although this is set to improve, with the Oxford to Bletchley section of East-West Rail currently under construction. Poor connectivity is barrier to growth and leads to problematic traffic congestion along certain road corridors, including the A34 corridor, with implications for safety and bus services.
- 5.2.51 As well as an economic growth opportunity, the inherent characteristics of the Arc suggest an **environmental opportunity**. The Arc is broadly associated with a vale landscape associated with two river systems, bounded to the north and south by sensitive raised land. Within this vale landscape, in addition to the valued river corridors, a key defining feature is a series of three mid-vale ridges, associated with valued habitats and historic environment assets. In this light, there is an opportunity to develop and implement a vision that sees the Arc develop as one of the key national bio-regions, with clear goals set around biodiversity / nature recovery and wide ranging ecosystem service provision. In Cherwell, this translates as a need to recognise the Ox Cam Arc-wide strategic importance of the two key Thames tributaries – the Cherwell and the Ray – with perhaps the primary consideration being the Upper Ray Meadows, including Otmoor, and close links between this area and the Bernwood Forest.
- 5.2.52 More recently, the focus is on taking work forward through the [Oxford to Cambridge Partnership](#).

England's Economic Heartland

- 5.2.53 England's Economic Heartland (EEH) is a partnership of councils and local enterprise partners, focused on coordinating investment in strategic infrastructure, particularly **transport infrastructure**. Oxfordshire is located at the southwest extent of the EEH area, on the boundary with Transport for the South East.
- 5.2.54 The EEH Regional Transport Strategy (2021) describes a “once in a generation opportunity” to:
- Improve the resilience of a transport system that is already under strain; one where congestion and unreliability acts as a brake on sustainable growth;
 - Reduce reliance on the private car in a region where average journeys are longer, and car use higher than the national average;
 - Address the carbon impact of the transport system, where emissions are currently higher and growing faster than the national average;
 - Support rural communities and businesses, a demographic much larger than the national average; and
 - More widely, address the extent to which poor transport connectivity serves to perpetuate inequality.
- 5.2.55 The next stage of the Regional Transport Strategy will involve a series of Connectivity Studies for key corridors, with Cherwell intersecting three of the ten: the M40 corridor; the Oxford to Milton Keynes corridor; and the Peterborough – Northampton – Oxford corridor.
- 5.2.56 EEH has also recently published strategies for both bus and active travel. With regards to the active travel strategy, this includes a review of Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans (LCWIPs) in the area. In Cherwell LCWIPs have been completed for Bicester and Kidlington, and Banbury's is in preparation.

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)

- 5.2.57 OxLEP is very active, having produced a Strategic Economic Plan in 2016, a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) in 2019 and several more recent publications, including a LIS Investment Plan in 2020 and a Net Zero report in 2021. The following, from the LIS Investment Strategy, is a helpful summary of the ambition:
- “Oxfordshire has one of the highest concentration of innovation assets in the world with universities, and science, technology and business parks at the forefront of global innovation in transformative technologies and sectors such as Fusion Technology, Autonomous Vehicles, Quantum Computing, Cryogenics, Space, Life Sciences, and Digital Health. Together, they provide a rich and economically critical network of employment, R&D and creative nodes which offer significant opportunities to scale-up, develop new products and services, so enabling the UK to compete on the international stage in new exciting markets.”*
- 5.2.58 Within the LIS, [Figure 6](#) presents six principles underpinning the ambition to ‘build a world leading innovation ecosystem’, with the following of particular relevance to the current task:
- Liveable place – there is a need to meet housing needs and focus on ‘place’;
 - Keystone assets – key economic assets are discussed further below; and
 - Talent proposition– amongst other things, schools capacity is a key consideration.
- 5.2.59 Elsewhere, the LIS Investment Plan explains: *“Oxfordshire’s Local Industrial Strategy is built around the five pillars of Ideas, People, Business Environment, Infrastructure, and Place.”* Investment priorities are then placed in a series spatial ‘bundles’, which can be seen in Figure 5.4. Bundles of key relevance are:
- **Begbroke Science Park** (investment bundle 1) – the Plan describes a *“wider A44 corridor vision to double capacity at Begbroke including new station & linking to Oxford Airport & Oxford Parkway.”* However, the timetable for both the A44 Rapid Transit Line and Begbroke Station schemes is uncertain.
 - **Living labs testbest** (investment bundle 2) – there is support for *“smart living pilots at scale using emerging technologies integrated into major housing development to tackle Grand Challenges.”* As well as a focus on Bicester, there is also a focus on Heyford and the “Banbury Industrial Zone”.
 - **Motorsport Valley** (investment bundle 4) – this applies to both Bicester and Banbury.
 - **Upper Heyford Creative City** (investment bundle 5) – discussed further in Section 5.4.
- 5.2.60 With regards to the OxLEP Net Zero Pathways report (2021), this is a key consideration for the task of arriving at, and then appraising, reasonable growth scenarios. It is discussed further below.

Figure 5.4: Priority investment bundles from the LIS Investment Plan

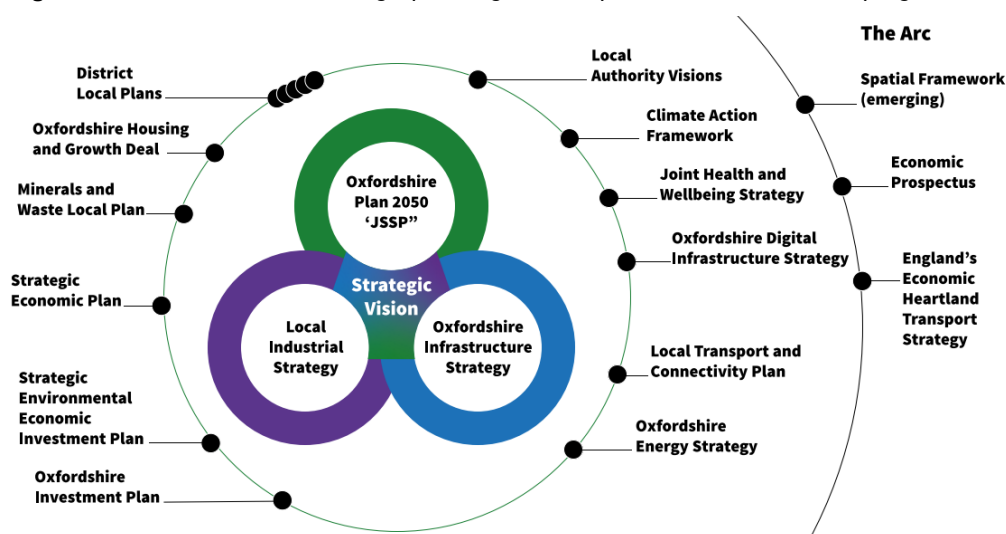


The Oxfordshire Plan

5.2.61 Despite the plan no longer being progressed, work to develop a strategic [vision](#) for the County remains relevant, as does the definition of ‘good growth’ in the Oxfordshire context. Also, there is a need to recall why an Oxfordshire Plan was seen as necessary, including around realising transformational opportunities, perhaps most notably in terms of infrastructure delivery. Coordinated planning across Oxfordshire is now the focus of the [Future Oxford Partnership](#), including with the following stated aims:

- Coordinate local efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits.
- Support the development of local planning policy that meets the national aim of net zero carbon by 2050, and contributes towards biodiversity gain whilst embracing the changes needed for a low carbon world.

Figure 5.5: The Oxfordshire strategic planning context, prior to a decision not to progress the JSSP



5.2.62 The following stages of work to explore Oxfordshire-wide spatial strategy options also remain of note:

- Growth typologies – a consultation in 2019 presented seven typologies, including urban intensification, new settlements, growth clusters and growth along transport corridors. In practice, there is a clear need to remain open minded to all seven of the growth typologies in the Cherwell context.
- Refined typologies – work in 2020 explored typologies with added spatial definition. Notable typologies included a focus on: strategic road junctions; new settlements with new strategic transport connections; and broad locations shown to have least environmental value and/or most opportunity for enhancement.
- Spatial strategy options – five (again, not entirely mutually exclusive) options were a focus of the 2021 consultation, namely: 1) Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations; 2) Focus on Oxford-led growth; 3) Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs; 4) Focus on strengthening business locations; 5) Focus on supporting rural communities.

5.2.63 Focusing on the Oxfordshire Local Plan work completed in 2021, implications for Cherwell LPR reasonable growth scenarios (albeit with limited weight / importance) include:

- **New settlements** – none of the 2021 options suggested a particular focus on new settlements (beyond those already ‘planned for’, e.g. Heyford Park). However, new settlements could have formed part of the strategy under certain options, most notably Option 4 (sustainable transport corridors). Oxfordshire Plan work served to highlight the possibility of considering new settlement options well-linked to Oxford or along sustainable transport corridors, but no detailed areas of search were identified.
- **Focus on Oxford** – this option from 2021 serves as a reason to remain open to the possibility of exploring whether exceptional circumstances exist to justify Green Belt release, plus the discussion under several of the other options lends support for considering the possibility of further growth in the Kidlington area. However, it is noted that Option 2 from the 2021 consultation (Focus on Oxford) received the fewest statements of support, and the most objections, through the consultation.
- **Heyford Park** – was discussed as a potential location for further strategic growth under Options 1 and 4 in 2021 but is less suited from a perspective of seeking an Oxford and transport corridors focus.

Overarching aims of the local plan review

- 5.2.64 Finally, set out below is a discussion of broad distribution issues / opportunities in respect of the three Cherwell LPR ‘overarching themes’ in turn.

Maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy

- 5.2.65 Strategic housing growth directed to existing settlements could be supportive of economic objectives, mindful of notably different ‘offers’ (e.g. knowledge and creative sectors at Kidlington and Upper Heyford; automotive sectors and traditional industry at Banbury) and established objectives (e.g. the need to diversify the employment offer at Bicester, away from a dominance of warehousing). There is also a need to be mindful of the implications of housing growth-related traffic generation for economic objectives.
- 5.2.66 There are arguments for housing growth in support of economic objectives at all four top tier settlements, although perhaps less so Banbury. The town is home to the greatest number of jobs, but there is perhaps less case for housing growth from a perspective of supporting growth and change in respect of the local employment land offer. A key opportunity for Banbury is in respect of town centre regeneration, which is a matter with relatively limited bearing on the reasonable growth scenarios at the current time.

Meeting the challenge of climate change and ensuring sustainable development

- 5.2.67 A key Oxfordshire-wide [Pathways to Zero Carbon](#) report (2021) presents a range of key messages of relevance to the task of arriving at reasonable growth scenarios for the Cherwell LPR, notably around:

- **Transport** – broad distribution issues and opportunities are relatively well understood, with a need to direct growth to the most accessible and well-connected locations, support investment in sustainable transport corridors / strategic transport infrastructure and recognise that growth at scale can lead to opportunities, including around supporting trip internalisation and high rates of walking and cycling.

Directing growth to rural villages is generally not supported from a transport decarbonisation perspective. For example, recent work to appraise 48 scenarios for the Greater Cambridge Plan served to highlight a spatial strategy of supporting growth at villages as performing very poorly – see Option 5 in Figure 5.6.

- **Built environment** – relevant issues / opportunities are less well-understood. Considerations include:
 - The potential to require and achieve ‘operational emissions’ standards that go beyond the requirements of Building Regulations is heavily dependent on development viability which, in turn, relates to spatial strategy and site selection, and can lead to a clear argument for economies of scale.
 - Certain sites can be associated with a particular locational or scheme-specific opportunity, in terms of minimising operational emissions, notably in respect of supporting district-scale heat networks.
 - Minimising non-operational emissions, including from embodied carbon, is increasingly a focus of attention nationally, with a need to support ‘modern methods of construction’, including modular buildings, which can serve as an argument in favour of strategic growth locations / concentrations.
- **Low carbon innovation** – as discussed above, there is a need to support knowledge and high tech economy hubs, and also new / growing communities as ‘living labs’. For example, North West Bicester eco-town ([Elmsbrook](#)) has recently been discussed widely as a national low carbon exemplar.
- **Strategic renewables** – typically means solar farms, in the Oxfordshire context. This is less relevant to spatial strategy and site selection, recalling that schemes typically feed into the national grid (such that there is not necessarily a benefit to bringing schemes forward as part of strategic development).
- **Land use and carbon sequestration** – there is naturally a need to take account of the full range of ‘ecosystem services’ provided by areas of habitat that might be impacted by development; however, the carbon sequestration role of habitats is not likely to be a primary consideration in the Cherwell context. With regards to tree-planting, or other habitat creation aimed at carbon sequestration, it is important not to focus overly on ‘mitigating’ emissions in this way, at the risk of a reduced focus on avoiding emissions in the first instance, plus there is a need to ensure the right type of tree planting in the right locations.

- 5.2.68 Overall, the Pathways to Net Zero report is clear that there is a need for **a very high level of ambition**, and this must translate into spatial strategy and site selection. Many decarbonisation opportunities can be foreclosed without early, strategic consideration at the local plan-making stage of the planning process.

- 5.2.69 The necessary level of ambition is evident from Cherwell’s ambition to achieve district-wide **net zero by 2030** (which is [more ambitious](#) than four of the other Oxfordshire authorities). Net zero by 2030 may well not be achievable (see Figure 5.7), but the necessary level of ambition is clear nonetheless.

Figure 5.6: Emissions scenarios to inform the Greater Cambridge Plan (Etude & Bioregional, 2021)

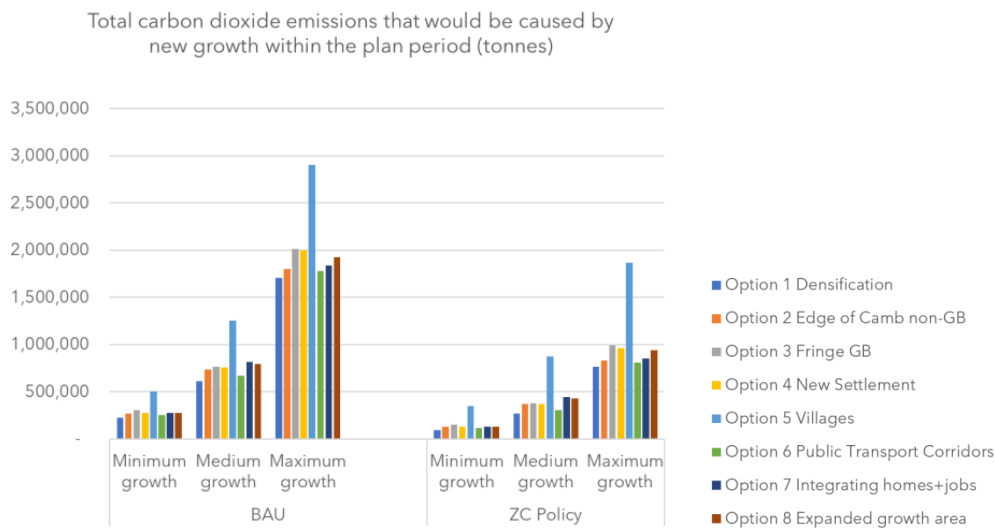


Figure 5.7: An infographic from the Pathways to Net Zero report (2021)

Shattering myths

“We should plant trees to offset our emissions”	“We need a more skilled & qualified workforce”	“Electric vehicles are coming to save us”	“Net-zero can be achieved by 2030”	“Fossil fuels are needed for economic growth”	“It all comes down to individual behaviours”
... we need to protect existing trees, but planting new trees can remove only a small fraction of current emissions, and we need to restore a mix of native ecosystems to reverse biodiversity loss.	... the skills challenge is not just a supply problem, we also need demand for skills, driven by markets for zero-carbon solutions.	... switching to cleaner fuels is insufficient for net-zero. We also need to reduce our transport demand and complete more of our journeys by walking, cycling, public and shared transport.	... without relying on offsets, the scale of investment, technological and lifestyle change, without national policy support, is unrealistic.	... renewable energy and other zero-carbon solutions represent opportunities for more efficient use of resources. Unlike spending on fossil fuels, investment can be kept local.	... while lifestyle change and sustainable choices will be crucial, these are influenced by infrastructures, systems of provision and social norms. Reshaping these requires action from myriad actors

Building healthy and sustainable communities

5.2.70 Key considerations relate to:

- Housing needs** - in the knowledge that there will be needs associated with specific settlements. The implications of unmet needs from Oxford for the consideration of growth locations are quite well understood; however, locally arising needs from elsewhere (e.g. Banbury) are more difficult to pinpoint.

With regards to affordable housing needs, a primary consideration is the need to support development locations / schemes where viability is likely to be strong. This can serve as a reason for supporting strategic growth locations (subject to consideration of infrastructure costs), as well as a degree of geographic dispersal and a variety of sites, such that there is variety of ‘housing products’ on the market.

More generally, a diversity of housing sites, in terms of geographical location and type, is important from a perspective of ensuring a robust housing supply trajectory, i.e. avoiding unanticipated drops in supply.
- Community infrastructure** – there are no known ‘headline’ opportunities to be addressed, e.g. directing growth so as to deliver a new secondary school to help address an existing need. However, clearly there is a need to direct growth so as to avoid overburdening existing community infrastructure, and there is clear merit to schemes that will deliver new community infrastructure capacity alongside housing, particularly where the effect will be to also benefit the existing community (‘planning gain’). Supporting [20 minute neighbourhoods](#), where possible, is an important objective.

- **Traffic congestion** – is an issue perhaps most notably at Banbury, where the great majority of traffic enters and leaves the town via the A422 Hennef Way, leading to implications for functioning of junctions along the road, including Junction 11 of the M40. The Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) along Hennef Way is understood to be associated with some of the worst levels of pollution in Oxfordshire.
- **Place-making** – many lessons on good place-making have been learned over recent years locally, perhaps most notably through planning for strategic growth at Bicester, in line with its status as a national Garden Town and Healthy New Town. Heyford Park is potentially a location where there is a need for further intervention, potentially to include strategic growth, in support of place-making.

It is also clearly the case that place-making objectives – alongside wide-ranging other objectives – serve as a reason for supporting town centre regeneration schemes, with the Options consultation document (2021) including a particular focus on Banbury Canalside, and the subsequent [Town Centres and Retail Study \(2021\)](#) identifying a series of development opportunities within all three of the top tier urban areas. However, supply from such sites is often challenging to bring forward / associated with delivery risk. There will be potential to explore urban capacity in more detail subsequent to the current consultation.

Conclusion on broad distribution issues / options

5.2.71 On the basis of the discussion above, the following key messages emerge:

- There is a strong argument for *broadly* rolling forward the existing strategy, particularly the strategy of directing a high proportion of growth **Bicester** and **Banbury**, and to Bicester in particular.
- There are strategic arguments in support of growth in the **Kidlington** sub-area and at **Heyford Park**; however, it is difficult to reach a broad conclusion on scale at this stage in the process (see Section 5.4).
- There are limited strategic arguments in support of a **new settlement** (beyond Heyford Park). However, the option cannot be ruled out at this stage in the process (again, see further discussion in Section 5.4).
- There are limited strategic arguments for dispersing growth to the **rural area**, although consideration might be given to a limited boost to the rate of growth, in so far as sustainability considerations allow.
- In light of the recent Cherwell experiences, and also mindful of the Oxfordshire context (e.g. support for 'living labs' and decarbonisation ambition) there is support for **strategic growth locations**. However, there is a need to carefully consider place-making objectives (e.g. avoiding 'sprawl'), and there are also clear arguments for **a mix of sites**, in terms of geographical spread and size / type.
- There are myriad **other strategic factors** that must feed-in to work to establish reasonable growth scenarios, e.g. maximising urban supply, avoiding environmental constraints / realising environmental opportunities, climate change adaptation and Green Belt protection. These factors all feed-in below.
- The discussion in this section has focused on broad distribution issues / options in respect of housing growth, but there are also significant considerations in respect of **employment land** – see Box 5.1.

Box 5.1: Employment land broad strategy

Any strategic sites in contention for an employment allocation must align with broad distribution objectives, notably around: transport connectivity (particularly connectivity to the M40, A34 and A41); 'sustainable transport' connectivity; and supporting strategic employment agglomerations and spatial concepts (Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine, Banbury Industrial Zone, Motorsport Valley, Heyford Creative City). Furthermore:

- Bicester - there is a need to balance high demand for warehousing/distribution with strategic objectives around boosting the offer of higher value employment aligned with the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine.
- Kidlington - there is certainly a growth opportunity, particularly in the Research and Design (R&D) sector, given a relatively central location in the Oxford Knowledge Spine; however, the Green Belt is a constraint.
- Heyford Park - there is a need to support enhanced efforts to invest in the sensitive refurbishment and repurposing of existing buildings within the conservation area. There is also a need to be mindful of nearby M40 Junction 10, where there are currently large-scale speculative employment applications.
- Banbury - perhaps the primary opportunity is in respect of making best use of brownfield land within the urban area; however, land is also being promoted for significant employment growth to the east of the M40.
- Rural area - engagement with the local businesses, including through the Employment Land Review (2021) has served to highlight the importance of smaller employment sites, including within the rural area, with a view to supporting businesses not suited to strategic sites, ensuring they can grow and relocate if necessary. As such, allocation of non-strategic sites will be considered subsequent to the current consultation.

5.3 Site options

5.3.1 This section considers:

- A key starting assumption; and
- The site selection process led by CDC that led to a shortlist of site options.

Starting assumption

5.3.2 In 2022 it was determined appropriate for the Regulation 18 draft plan to focus attention on ‘**strategic allocations**’, defined as sites in excess of 3 ha in size (considered to represent a very conservative definition of what is ‘strategic’; others might consider a 3ha site simply a ‘medium’ sized site). This was with a view to expediting the plan-making process, and in the knowledge that supply from non-strategic sites (including via neighbourhood plans) can be considered subsequent to the current consultation.

Identifying strategic site options

5.3.3 A starting point was site options for consideration within the emerging Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (**HELAA**). Once finalised, the HELAA is expected to present a long list of sites that are available, achievable and potentially suitable for allocation, classifying each as either ‘deliverable’ (could come forward within five years) or ‘developable’ (could come forward later in the plan period).

5.3.4 There was then a need to identify potential **strategic site options** reasonably in contention for allocation within the draft plan. Strategic site options might comprise either a single HELAA site or a cluster of HELAA sites and must be suitably well-linked to one of the four higher order settlements (see Figure 5.8). The process of identifying strategic site options was led by CDC officers.

5.3.5 Ultimately a long list of 63 potential strategic site options, known as **LPR sites**, was established – see Figure 5.9. These sites – plus select other sites – are all discussed further in Section 5.4.

Figure 5.8: Well-connected locations in proximity to a higher order settlement

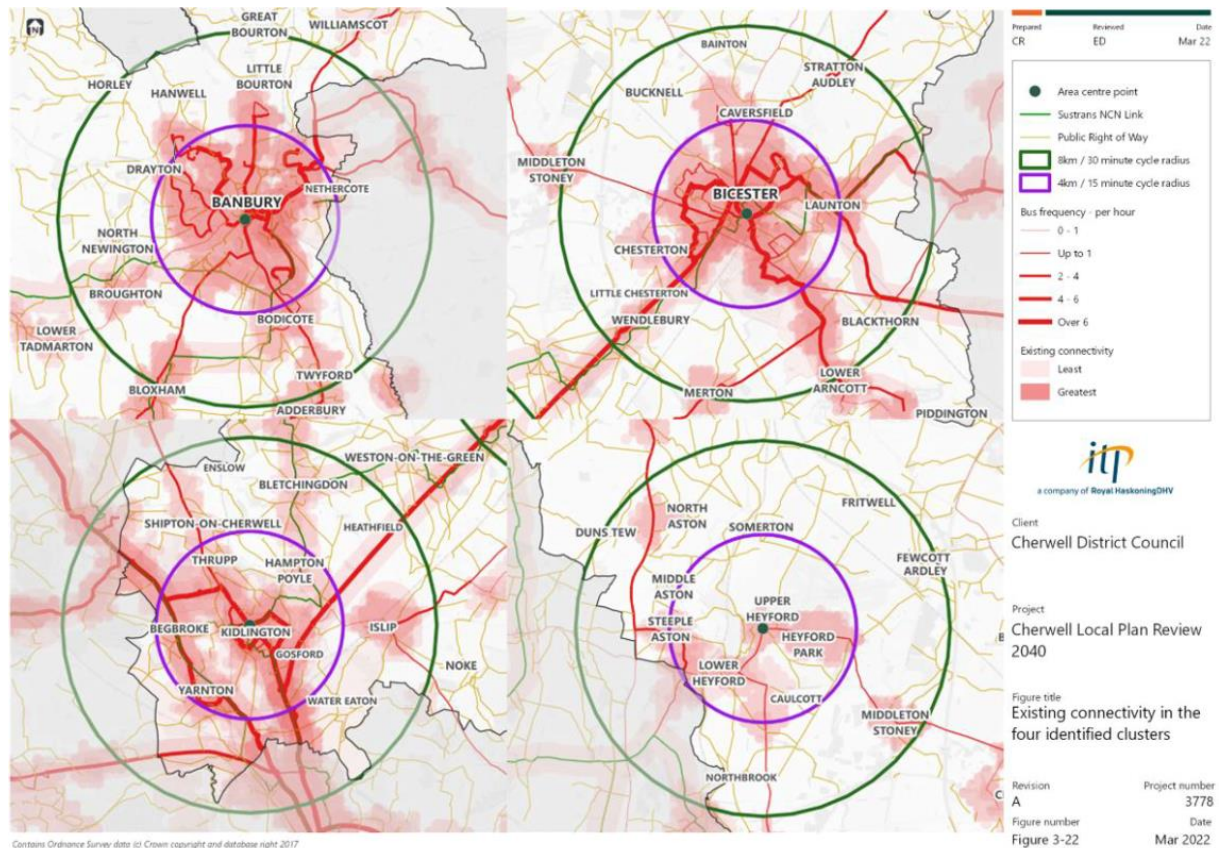
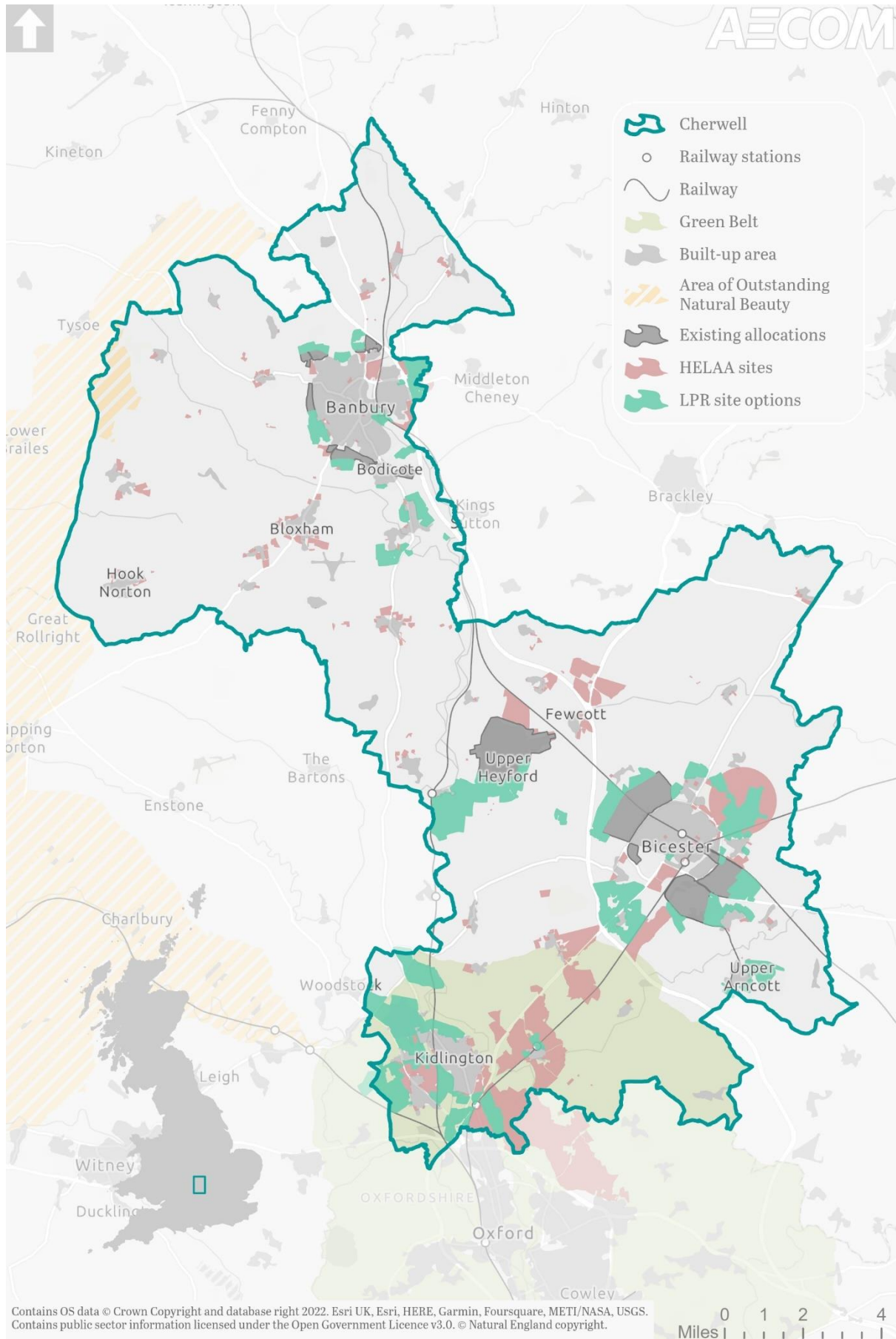


Figure 5.9: Site options that fed-into the process of defining growth scenarios, plus HELAA sites for context



5.4 Settlement scenarios

Introduction

- 5.4.1 Discussion has so far focused on A) 'top down' consideration of housing quantum and broad distribution; and B) 'bottom-up' consideration of site options. The next step is to consider each of the district's sub-areas in turn, exploring how sites might be allocated in combination, or 'sub-area scenarios'.

What sub-areas?

- 5.4.2 Section 5.2 has already introduced the following five sub-areas:

- Banbury;
- Bicester
- Kidlington;
- Heyford Park; and
- the rural area.

- 5.4.3 It is recognised that the sub-areas must be defined loosely, particularly in respect of villages linked closely to a higher order settlement. Also, it is recognised that ongoing consideration must be given to the possibility of sub-dividing sub-areas, where it is the case that a particular location within a sub-area is associated with particular strategic planning related issues or opportunities.

Methodology

- 5.4.4 For each sub-area informal consideration is given to reasonable alternative approaches that might be taken to allocation ('growth scenarios'), mindful of site specific, sub-area-specific and district-wide strategic considerations. The focus is on the 63 LPR sites plus select other sites.
- 5.4.5 The ultimate aim is to reach a conclusion on the sub-area-specific scenarios that reasonably need to be taken forward to Section 5.5, where sub-area scenarios are combined in order to arrive at district-wide scenarios. The aim is *not* to present a formal appraisal of reasonable alternatives.
- 5.4.6 Equally, the aim is not to discuss all site options to precisely the same level of detail. Rather the focus is on those site options *judged* to be a more marginal, i.e. where the question of whether or not to take the site forward is relatively finely balanced, mindful of site specific, settlement specific and strategic factors.
- 5.4.7 This approach is taken mindful of the legal requirement, which is to explain reasons for arriving at reasonable alternatives in "outline" terms and given that site options are not reasonable alternatives. N.B. it is important to reiterate that those sites 'progressed' to Section 5.5 are then explored in more detail.

N.B. views on the approach taken and the outcomes of the work are welcomed. It is recognised that the recent Government consultation on Local Plan-making Reform includes a focus on being vision-led and – in AECOM's view – the sub-area scale is well suited to supporting vision-led plan-making. The current plan document includes a strong focus on strategy and policy for sub-areas / settlements, and the aim of work here (within the Interim SA Report) is to supplement that.

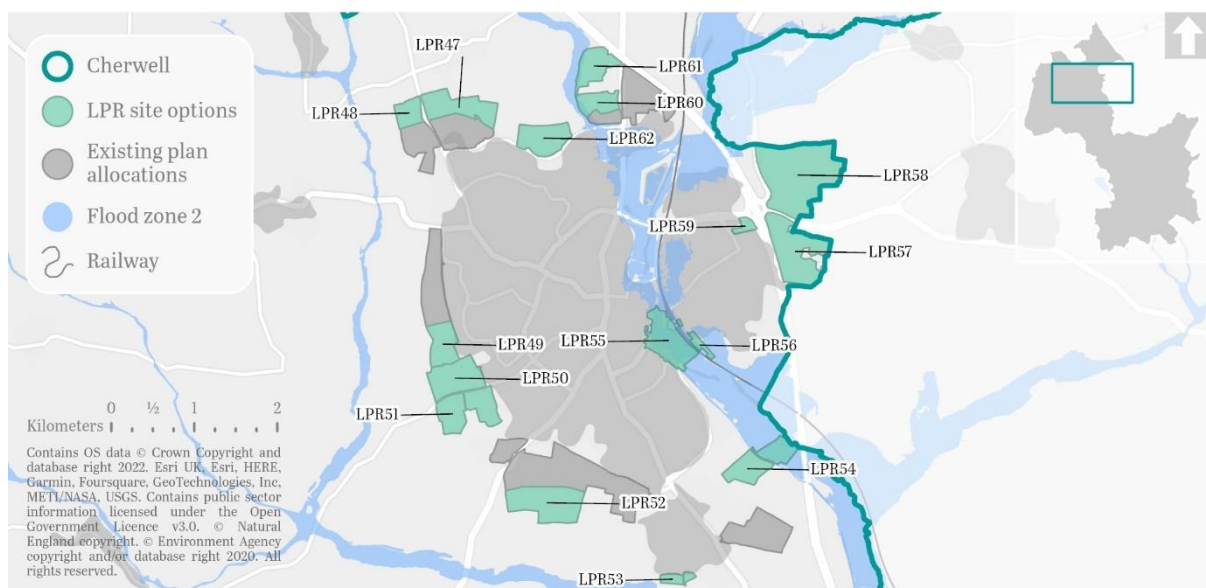
Banbury

- 5.4.8 As per the discussion in Section 5.2, Banbury is associated with *relatively* limited growth opportunity, in comparison to Bicester, and there are significant constraints to growth. However, there is nonetheless a clear need to direct a reasonable proportion of growth to Banbury, as the district's largest town.
- 5.4.9 With regards to spatial strategy, an important starting point is the linked topics of topography, landscape, built form and historic character. The valued historic core is associated with the River Cherwell valley and the associated Oxford Canal corridor. From here, directions / potential directions of growth as follows:
- **West** (including northwest / southwest) – this is the primary direction of 20th and early 21st century residential expansion. There is a clear argument for seeking to retain containment within the Cherwell valley, avoiding the town's built form 'spilling' into the valley of the Sor Brook.

- **East** – the Grimsbury residential neighbourhood was an early area of expansion, in the late 19th century and early 20th century. This was then followed by the M40 in the second half of the 20th Century, and it is now the case that industrial areas have expanded as far as the motorway ('Banbury Industrial Zone'). There is a strong argument for drawing upon the motorway for the purposes of containment, also mindful of the district's boundary with West Northamptonshire. However, on the other hand, there are certain arguments for (further) employment land east of the motorway, given the importance of road connectivity.
- **North** – the key defining feature is the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal / Railway corridor and associated valley topography. A series of industrial areas came forward in the late 20th Century, followed by two residential neighbourhoods more recently: one to the west that is quite well-contained in landscape / topography terms; and one to the east (most recently, following a local plan allocation), which is well-contained by the M40. There is one further modest committed site, which has permission for 90 homes.
- **South** – again, a key defining feature is the river / transport corridor and valley, plus there is the village of Bodicote, associated with raised ground to the west, which has expanded significantly beyond its historic core. This area has been a focus of recent growth, plus there is extensive committed growth.
- **Adderbury** – is located some way to the south of Banbury (a circa 30-minute cycle distance; see Figure 5.9, also mindful of topography), albeit there is relatively good bus connectivity, with the Transport Assessment, 2022, identifying the A4260 south of Banbury as the highest quality road corridor in the Banbury area. There is also a need to consider road traffic, given that the village is near equidistant between M40 junctions. Adderbury is a historic village associated with the Sor Brook, and also the former railway line to Chipping Norton / Cheltenham. There is an extensive conservation area with a large number of listed buildings (it was historically a much larger village than Bodicote), with the village having expanded to the north in the 20th Century (Twyford), before more recent expansion to the southwest; however, recent and committed growth is relatively low. There are a number of sizeable HELAA sites, such that there is feasibly the potential for strategic growth, particularly at Twyford. However, this option is **ruled-out** on balance (such that options are not discussed further). This is because of the number of sequentially preferable locations for growth district-wide, including at villages more closely linked to a higher order settlement (Bodicote, Chesterton, Ambrosden, Launton).

5.4.10 Finally, there is a need to note **town centre** regeneration opportunities (over-and-above Bicester). Canalside is a key site adjacent to the town centre, which is an option for allocation. However, there are several other town centre opportunity sites as discussed within the Town Centre and Retail Study (2021), which concludes a need for a town centre masterplan to “ensure a comprehensive strategy and delivery.” In turn, additional town centre housing supply may be identified prior to plan finalisation.

Figure 5.10: Strategic site options at Banbury



5.4.11 From Figure 5.10, an immediate point to note is the two adjacent strategic site options located close to the **town centre**. Both are existing allocations within the adopted local plan that have not delivered to date, but where the principle of redevelopment remains strongly supported. The latest situation is that:

- **LPR55** (Canalside) - is allocated for 700 homes in the adopted Local Plan, and the working assumption at the current time is that the allocation will be rolled forward. However, there may be a need to reduce this figure to ~500 homes, including to account for flood risk and integration of employment uses. One option is to no longer expand the town centre into the site, given a need to consolidate the town centre, and to ensure a clearer distinction between housing and community uses to the west of the river and employment to the east, as well as a stronger focus on green / blue infrastructure.
- **LPR56** (Higham Way) - is allocated for 150 homes in the adopted local plan, and the working assumption is that the existing allocation will be rolled forward. However, there may well be a need to reconsider this, including considering the possibility of an employment only scheme, including due to flood risk.

5.4.12 The remaining strategic site options form a number of clusters. Beginning with sites to the **north**, most of these sites are all judged to perform relatively poorly. Specific comments are as follows:

- **LPR62** – the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (henceforth ‘Landscape Study’, 2022) considers a large parcel of land (BAN14) stretching from land south of Hanwell in the west to the Hanwell Brook in the east. The land slopes significantly from west to east (towards the brook), such that there are long distance views. For this reason, and due to the nearby Hanwell Conservation Area, the study assigns an overall ‘medium-high’ sensitivity rating, such that it can be considered relatively sensitive in landscape terms. There is little reason to suggest this sensitivity score would not apply to LPR62 (which comprises more than 1/3 of BAN14), plus land here is equidistant between strategic road corridors. A primary school is near adjacent, but there is a clear argument for avoiding expansion north of Dukes Meadow Drive in this area. There is a planning application for 78 homes on part of the site (ref. [21/03426/OUT](#)).
- **LPR60** – would involve a northwards extension of the aforementioned committed site for 90 homes, located to the east of the Hanwell Brook and to the west of the A423. The Landscape Study assigns overall ‘moderate’ sensitivity to land in this area (BAN15) but is clear that sensitivity is lowest adjacent to the Banbury settlement boundary, i.e. where there is already a committed site for 90 homes. Land within the site rises to the northeast, towards an adjacent crematorium, and drops away to the west, towards the Hanwell Brook, such that there is considered to be a landscape constraint. The site benefits from direct access onto the A423, as well proximity to employment and community infrastructure delivered over recent years alongside housing growth (although this part of Banbury is distant from a secondary school). However, the Transport Assessment (2022) does not identify this as one of the higher quality A-road corridors at Banbury. On the other hand, it states:

“... A423 Southam Road... there is scope for this route to be enhanced for walking and cycling in particular, with width available within or close to the highway expansion. Key challenges are the industrial nature of the road towards the town centre, and the rural edge towards Hanwell View.”

It follows that **LPR61**, which is located further north, can also be ruled-out. Allocation of both sites (potentially in combination with growth to the west of Hanwell Brook) could feasibly support targeted investment in the Hanwell Brook corridor, along which there is currently no priority habitat, nor any public access (other than Hanwell Brook Wetland, adjacent to the Banbury settlement edge). Also, the possibility of improved flood storage to benefit the extensive urban areas at risk of flooding downstream could be explored (although this is not considered to be a realistic option to explore at the current time).

- **LPR47/48** – are the final options for consideration at the northern extent of the town and would involve further extending a strategic urban extension that is currently under construction, located either side of the B4100. This road corridor is supported by the Transport Assessment (2022) as one of Banbury’s better performing road corridors; however, it is obviously the case that links to Oxford and Bicester are relatively poor, and the town centre is distant (see Figure 5.8). The road is associated with a linear plateau, with the land falling away to valleys to the west (Sor Brook) and east (Hanwell Brook), but there is space for further expansion on the plateau, with the Landscape Study assigning ‘low-moderate’ (east) and ‘moderate’ (west) sensitivity. A key issue is guarding against linear ‘sprawl’ along the road corridor.

Land to the east of the road (LPR47) might be a first port of call, given the Landscape Study, and given the potential for limited development alongside greenspace / landscaping to secure a long-term defensible gap to the Hanwell Conservation Area. However, it is noted that the existing strategic urban extension to the east of the road (i.e. south of LPR47) is strongly bounded at its northern extent by a thick tree line that seemingly follows the route of a historic track (shown on the pre-1914 OS map). Furthermore, LPR47 includes two public footpaths that converge at the Grade I parish church, as well as another historic track (shown on the pre-1914 OS map). It is also noted that the field directly north of LPR47, which might feasibly form a landscape gap to the conservation area, potentially has a degree

of historic character itself (shown on the pre-1914 OS map as seemingly part of the landscaped grounds of Hanwell Castle), plus there is an [observatory](#) at Hanwell, and hence a degree of light sensitivity.

A final consideration is agricultural land quality, with all land north of Banbury having been surveyed in detail, and found to comprise a mixture of grade 2, grade 3a and grade 3b quality land. All of the sites other than LPR61 are shown to include significant grade 2 quality land.

- 5.4.13 Moving anti-clockwise, the next port of call is **LPR49**, which would involve a southern extension to the west of Banbury strategic urban extension that is currently under construction. The combined site – i.e. the committed site plus LPR49 – is located near to the western extent of a plateau, with land to the west dropping quite steeply towards the valley of the Sor Brook, and with the start of the valley marked by a series of small woodlands. However, there is space available for development without risking built form spilling into the valley, and this is reflected in the findings of the Landscape Study, which assigns an overall 'low-moderate' sensitivity score, and the proposal reflected in a planning application (250 homes; ref. [22/02101/OUT](#); now approved subject to conditions) is for a significant greenspace buffer at the western extent of the site. Also, at the western edge of the site is a public bridleway that forms part of the Banbury Fringe Walk, which helps to reduce any concerns regarding problematic future development 'creep' to the west. A primary constraint is an adjacent Grade II listed farmhouse, and there is also a need to note that road access would be via existing estate roads, plus the site is not located on a primary transport corridor. Furthermore, the site has been surveyed and found to comprise grade 2 agricultural land. However, the site is overall considered to be subject to relatively low constraint, and warrants being taken forward.
- 5.4.14 The next sites to consider are **LPR50** and **LPR51**, which are located either side of the B4035. Landscape is again a key consideration here, with the Landscape Study assigning 'moderate-high' sensitivity, reflecting the fact that the B4035 is associated with a shallow valley, with land rising to the north (LPR50) and south (LPR51). The very northern extent of LPR50 is now a committed site for 49 homes, but this is not thought likely to have a significant bearing on the landscape sensitivity of LPR50 overall. On the one hand, land here benefits from good access onto the B4035; however, on the other hand: the road serves a rural area, and so is unlikely to be served by a frequent bus service; there is no cycle path along the road; and there are potentially sensitive views from the road (subject to hedgerow height and leaf cover) to rising land on the approach to / upon leaving Banbury. There are also potentially sensitive views across this land to / from Crouch Hill (located just to the south), from the Banbury Fringe Walk and/or from Saltway Farm Shop. Overall, this is considered a sensitive rural gateway to Banbury. However, on the other hand, it is noted that land here has been surveyed in detail and found to comprise grade 3b quality agricultural land, such that it is *not* classed as best and most versatile, in contrast to sites discussed above. On balance, these two sites are judged to perform relatively poorly, but this is quite finely balanced in the case of LPR50, which could potentially have *relatively* limited landscape sensitivity (also, it is noted that the surface water flood zone along the valley affects LPR51 more so than LPR50). The possibility of a joint scheme involving LPR50 and LPR49 (adjacent to the north), could feasibly be considered, with a view to securing improved road access to LPR49, but this has not been proposed by the site promoters.
- 5.4.15 Moving to the south of Banbury, the next site to consider is **LPR52**, which would involve a southern extension to a committed strategic urban extension. The series of committed sites to the south of Banbury together amount to a very significant extension of the town in this direction, which can broadly be described as comprising land to the south of Salt Way, which is a historic track that is now a bridleway and forms part of the national cycle network. The committed scheme directly to the north of LPR52 is well-contained at its southern boundary by a tree belt; however, there is considered to be landscape capacity for a further southern extension, taking the urban extension to the next logical boundary to the south, namely Wykham Lane. Land in this area is very gently descending to the south, towards the valley of the Sor Brook; however, the potential to utilise Wykham Lane as a defensible boundary means that there are few concerns regarding long-term development creep, and the Landscape Study assigns 'low-moderate' sensitivity. There is historic environment constraint, with a Grade II listed farmhouse adjacent to the east, a cluster of listed buildings at Wykham Farm to the south west, another historic farm adjacent to the south (shown on the pre-1914 OS map; now offering a farm shop and café) and the Bodicote Conservation Area to the east (including the sensitive junction of Wykham Lane and Bodicote High Street), plus there are a number of popular footpaths in the vicinity. However, there is understood to be good potential to deliver greenspace / landscaping as mitigation, plus the proposal is not to allow road access to Wykham Lane.

Also, the land here has been surveyed in detail and found to comprise grade 2 quality agricultural land, in contrast to the committed site to the north, which includes significant 3b (non-BMV) quality land.

5.4.16 There is also a need to carefully consider implications for the work that has been completed over a number of years to masterplan and plan for infrastructure around the committed urban extensions in this area. Focusing on the scheme directly to the north of LPR52, permission was granted in 2019 for 1,000 homes (ref. 14/01932/OUT), following a planning application having been submitted in 2014, which potentially serves to indicate a challenging process. Figure 5.11 is taken from the most recent submitted Design and Access Statement (2017) and shows that the scheme will deliver (or facilitate delivery of) a range of infrastructure alongside housing, including by providing land for a primary school and to enable expansion of the adjacent secondary school. It can also be seen that a new east-west link road between the A361 and A4260 corridors is central to the committed scheme but would be less central to an expanded scheme. Figure 5.12 then shows a concept plan – as submitted by the site promoters in 2020 – for a potential southern extension (LPR52). It can be seen the proposal is for primarily residential.

Figure 5.11: Land use across the committed Wykham Park scheme (1,000 homes), north of LPR52

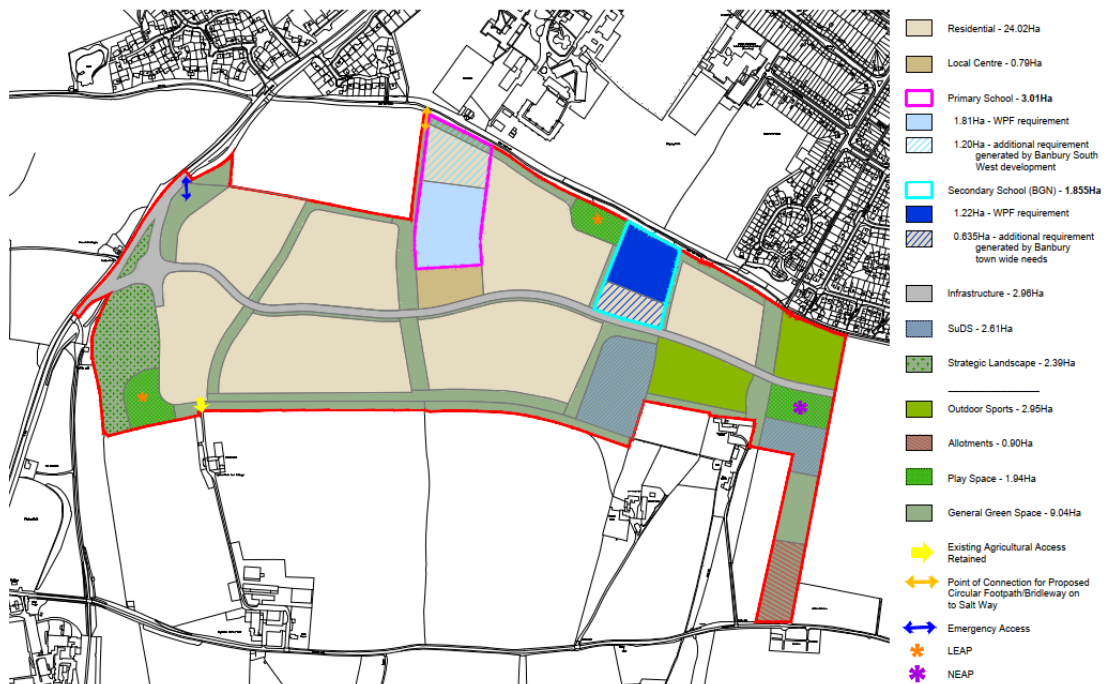
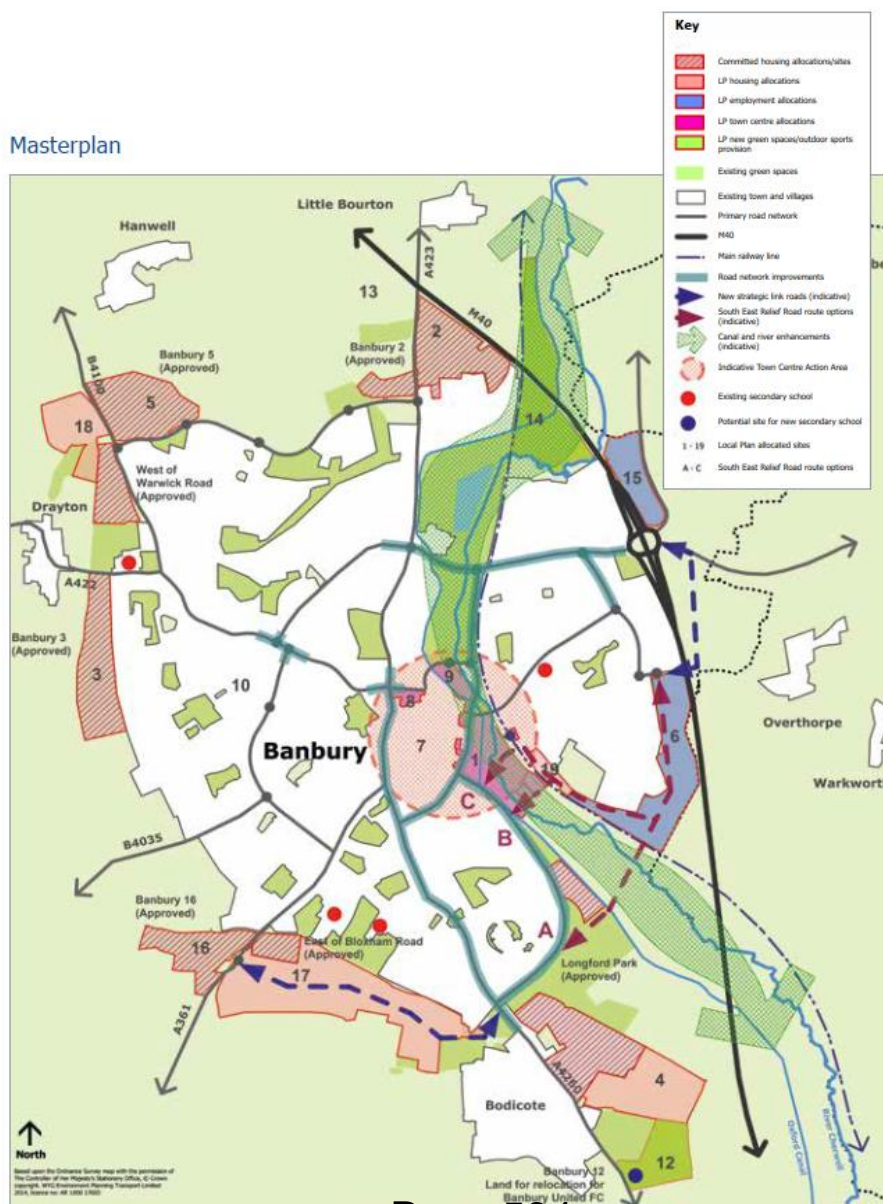


Figure 5.12: Promoter’s concept plan for LPR52



- 5.4.17 Moving to the east, **LPR53** is associated with Bodicote, which is quite well-connected in transport terms, with good cycle connectivity and access to the A4260, which links Banbury to Bicester and Oxford, plus Bodicote forms part of a cluster of larger villages, along with Bloxham and Adderbury. The Landscape Study does not examine this site; however, there is likely to be a degree of landscape sensitivity, with land at the southern extent of Bodicote gently falling away towards the Sor Brook, plus there is a high concentration of public rights of way nearby, including a bridleway that forms part of national cycle network. However, it is historic environment constraint that is potentially a foremost consideration, with the strong likelihood that expansion to the south of Bodicote would generate significant car trips through the village conservation area, plus there is historic environment value associated with the Sor Brook. Taking these constraints into account, alongside an understanding that Bodicote is a larger village in the settlement hierarchy, and mindful of the level of recent / committed growth at Bodicote and nearby (including a recent expansion to the south, adjacent to the A4260), LPR53 is judged to perform relatively poorly.
- 5.4.18 Moving to the east of Bodicote, **LPR54** is clearly sensitive in landscape terms, not linking directly to the settlement edge, and being closely associated with the Cherwell valley. The proposal is for recreational / leisure uses, and this is an option that could be revisited subsequent to the current consultation.
- 5.4.19 A further consideration in this area is the possibility of a southeast relief road (see Figure 5.13) to ease the current situation whereby a high proportion of traffic enters and exists the town via the problematic A422 Hennef Way. However, it is not clear that this remains a realistic possibility at the current time. N.B. Figure 5.13 also clearly shows the committed new link road between the A361 and A4260 corridors.

Figure 5.13: The key diagram presented within adopted Banbury Vision (2016)



5.4.20 The final sites to consider are located to the east of Banbury, namely **LPR57**, **LPR58** and **LPR59**, which are considered to only warrant consideration for employment, given the concentration of employment land at the eastern edge of Banbury (albeit the option of a mixed use community south of the A422 has been proposed). However, there are clear landscape sensitivities, with the Landscape Study assigning 'moderate-high' landscape sensitivity, particularly mindful of the Overthorpe Ridge. Land to the south of the A422 might benefit from relatively good containment (as opposed to risking sprawl along the A361), but Nethercote is a hamlet / farmstead with a degree of historic character, plus there are clearly links to the nearby Overthorpe Conservation Area, on raised land to the east. The site promoters point to the potential to deliver a new road link between the A422 and the Overthorpe Road / M40 crossing (see the blue-dotted line in Figure 5.13). However, this potential road link should not be conflated with a southeast relief road. It is not clear the extent to which this new road link would deliver strategic benefit to Banbury (particularly in terms of relieving traffic along the Hennef Way), other than in terms of enabling employment growth east of the M40 *whilst avoiding worsening* the current situation. The Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2022) draws a [distinction](#) between the two road options.

5.4.21 In **conclusion**:

- Firstly, with regards to LPR55 (Canalside) and LPR56 (Higham Way), and to reiterate, the working assumption for the purposes of arriving at reasonable growth scenarios is that both sites will deliver homes *as per* their existing allocations; however, in practice there may well be a significant reduction.
- The sequentially preferable greenfield site for housing is considered to be LPR49, with support for 230 homes (the application now approved subject to conditions if for 'up to' 250 homes). There is also support for this scheme from a delivery perspective, as it is in the control of the same housebuilders currently delivering the site adjacent to the north, such that it should be able to deliver early.
- The next sequentially preferable site is considered to be LPR52, albeit there are a range of detailed matters for further consideration, including around effective masterplanning in conjunction with the committed scheme to the north. The current assumption is delivery of 600 homes, but this will need to be reviewed on the basis of further detailed work. Assuming no unforeseen challenges, particularly around masterplanning and infrastructure, then this site is also thought to be associated with relatively low delivery risk, as per LPR49, although it would clearly deliver later in the plan period.
- Allocation of both LPR49 (230 homes) and LPR52 (600 homes) would mean delivery of 830 homes in total, over-and-above completions and commitments (with the commitments figure reflecting an assumption that Canalside will deliver 500 homes (not 700) and Higham Way nil homes (not 150)).
- This is a reasonable quantum of housing growth for Banbury, mindful of: strategic factors (discussed above and in Section 5.2); levels of recent and committed growth at the town; and the potential for additional housing land supply being identified within the town centre prior to plan finalisation. Simply removing LPR52, such that LPR49 is the only new allocation, would result in too few homes at Banbury.
- The next sequentially preferable sites to consider might be LPR47 (to the north/northwest) and LPR50 (to the west). However, on balance, growth scenarios involving allocation of one or both of these sites (either to deliver higher growth or in place of LPR52) are judged to be unreasonable at the current time.
- With regards to employment land, the situation is currently in a state of flux, but there could be a net increase at Canalside (N.B. there is already extensive employment land) and Higham Way could well deliver employment land (3.2 ha) instead of housing. See further discussion in Section 5.5.

5.4.22 In **summary**, and focusing only on housing, there is one reasonable growth scenario involving allocation of LPR49 and LPR52 to deliver 830 homes over-and-above completions and commitments.

Table 5.3: One reasonable housing growth scenario for the Banbury sub-area

Site	Scenarios		Notes on assumptions etc.
	1	2	
LPR49	230	-	Has outline permission 'subject to conditions' for up to 250 homes.
LPR52	600	-	Further work to masterplan given adjacent committed site.
Total	830	-	May need to revisit / explore other options post consultation.

Bicester

- 5.4.23 As per the discussion in Section 5.2, there is a clear argument for rolling forward the existing strategy of directing a greater proportion of growth to Bicester than to Banbury (i.e. the adopted local plan strategy), given that Bicester is associated with fewer constraints and a clear strategic growth opportunity.
- 5.4.24 With regards to growth opportunity, key considerations include: a position at the northern extent of the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine; a central position within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, with a new rail link to Bletchley (Milton Keynes) due to open in 2024; excellent connectivity to the M40 and also the A34 (a key route linking the port of Southampton to the Midlands and beyond); good links to Aylesbury Garden Town via the A41 and also a good train service to London; a desire to support a shift away from a dominance of warehousing and logistics employment uses, to a more mixed portfolio of sites, to include support for more knowledge sector jobs; the recent success of Elmsbrook, as the first delivered phase of the committed NW Bicester Ecotown scheme, which has gained national attention as an exemplar low carbon development (e.g. see www.ukgbc.org/solutions/case-study-elmsbrook/); and the emerging success of Graven Hill – which is currently building-out – as England’s largest self-build housing scheme.
- 5.4.25 Bicester also has an established status as a garden town and a healthy town, which serves to highlight the potential for growth to bring with it benefits to the local community (‘planning gain’). However, there is a concern regarding infrastructure capacity to support growth, perhaps most notably in respect of transport infrastructure, with a key issue being the lack of a southern link road, which leads to concerns regarding traffic and supporting modal shift to walking / cycling and public transport.
- 5.4.26 With regards to spatial strategy, a key point to note is that whilst landscape and associated environmental constraints to growth (also agricultural land quality constraints) are overall considered to be relatively low, Bicester is far from a ‘blank canvass’ for further growth, including due to infrastructure capacity issues. Bicester has expanded in a largely concentric fashion from its central historic core (Bicester was a small market town until the latter 20th Century), but there are a range of broad spatial considerations:
- **Southwest** (north of the A41) – the sector of land between the A41 and the Middleton Stoney Road has been developed as a major new community (Kingsmere) over the past 15 years. An important new link road between the two radial road corridors was successfully delivered as part of an early phase, as well as significant new community infrastructure, and the road forms a natural western boundary to Bicester, serving to ensure that a landscape gap is maintained to historic village of Chesterton (where a community woodland is in development, in line with adopted Local Plan Policy Bicester 7). However, options for further growth in this sector do require consideration, given good transport connectivity.
 - **Northwest** – this is the location of the committed NW Bicester Ecotown, which has faced delivery challenges, including relating to fragmented land ownership, and the challenge of delivering a realigned Northwest Bicester ring road (A4095, Howes Lane), although the first phase (Elmsbrook) has now been delivered, at the eastern extent of the wider site, and a number of other planning applications have been approved or are currently under consideration. The historic village of Bucknell (including a Grade I listed parish church) is to the north, and a constraint to further expansion. However, on the other hand, expansion of Bicester as far as Bucknell (beyond which is slightly rising land associated with a modest density of small woodland patches) and the M40 is an option to consider. To the northwest is Ardley (including land proposed to be safeguarded for a reopened train station), M40 J10 and Heyford Park.
 - **Northeast** – this sector is associated with Caversfield Parish, to the west of the A4421, and Bicester Airfield to the east. At the western extent of this area, directly to the east of NW Bicester Ecotown, is Caversfield House, which is not itself listed, but which is associated with landscaped grounds and a Grade II* listed church, plus there is an associated historic farmstead. To the east is then an area known as Caversfield, comprising military housing originally built to serve RAF Bicester. The airfield itself, which remains in use as an aerodrome, and is the home of Bicester Heritage Business Park, is then to the east of the A4421. The entire airfield is a designated conservation area, and a key sensitivity is the cluster of 26 Grade II listed buildings at its southwest extent. As well as heritage and tourism constraint, land to the east of Bicester has relatively poor transport connectivity.
 - **East** – to the southeast of the airfield is a recently delivered new employment site and a stream associated with a significant flood plain. Beyond this is a sector of land that comes into consideration as a potential location for growth, albeit it is not very well linked in transport terms (noting employment land at the eastern extent of Bicester). Also, there is a potential concern regarding eastwards sprawl across a flat and relatively featureless landscape.

Moving to the south, there are two railway corridors (East West Rail, which is under construction, and the Chiltern Line to London), with the village of Launton located in between, which has a strong historic core, albeit no conservation area. There is the option of modest expansion as far as defensible boundaries, namely the railway lines and a flood risk zone.

- **Southeast** – this is the location of a major committed urban extension, which gained permission for 1,500 homes in 2018, with the employment land now having been delivered, adjacent to the A41. There is the possibility of further expansion, drawing upon the railway line to London and the A41 for containment, also mindful of Blackthorn Hill, which is a low hill in an otherwise very flat and low-lying landscape, and mindful of the sensitive landscape of the Upper Ray Meadows further to the southeast. The A41 is a strategic transport corridor; however, there are challenges in respect of connectivity to/from the M40 and Oxford, given: the missing southern link road; nearby growth at Graven Hill; nearby Bicester village; and the B4100 (London Road) level crossing, particularly given forthcoming East-West Rail.
- **South** – the majority of land in this sector, between the settlement edge and the flood risk zone / meadows of the River Ray, is committed, most notably the new community at Graven Hill, but also Bicester Park and Bicester Gateway Business Park, plus there is a large scheduled monument (the site of a Roman town). Land feasibly available for further development is primarily located: between Graven Hill and the flood risk zone to the south; and between Ambrosden / the flood risk zone to the south east. There are transport connectivity challenges, as per the discussion of land to the southeast of Bicester.

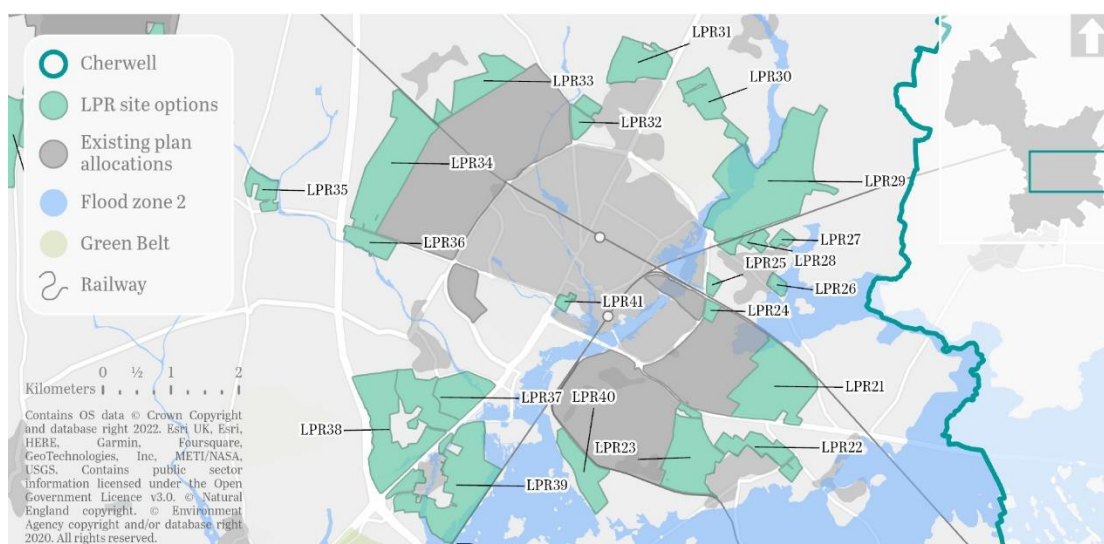
At this point it should be noted that options for a new southern sector of the Bicester ring road have been under consideration since the time of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4, 2016).

Also, there is a need to briefly mention Upper Arccott, where the option of strategic growth is considered to perform poorly relative to options at Bicester and village locations more closely aligned with transport objectives, such that it is **ruled out** as unreasonable (and so not discussed below). There is low historic environment constraint, but notable biodiversity constraint (albeit possibly also some opportunity).

- **Chesterton and Wendlebury** – to the southwest of Bicester, located either side of the A41, are the smaller / small villages of Chesterton and Wendlebury. This area comes into consideration as a potential location for growth given good transport connectivity, with good potential to cycle to Bicester, and very good bus connectivity - and the potential for employment land close to M40 J9. Growth here could also assist with delivering a southern link road, albeit this should not be overstated, as growth anywhere at Bicester might reasonably be required to contribute funding, given the scheme’s strategic importance.

Weston-on-the-Green – the option of strategic growth here has been proposed, potentially in the form of a new settlement, given that Weston-on-the-Green is a smaller village (without a primary school). However, this option performs poorly, given transport connectivity, specifically links to Bicester to the east and Oxford to the west, and so is **ruled-out**. Alternative new settlement options are discussed below (Islip and Shipton Quarry) that would (or could) support good access to a train station. Also, at Weston-on-the-Green it would be a challenge to secure landscape containment, given a flat and expansive landscape. Development creep northwards, towards an airfield associated with slightly raised ground, could be envisaged. A preferable strategy is to focus growth at, or closer to, Bicester.

Figure 5.14: Strategic site options at Bicester



5.4.27 From Figure 5.14, a logical starting point is the cluster of site options associated with **NW Bicester Ecotown**, where there is a need to revisit the adopted local plan allocation, given delivery challenges. There is also a need to be mindful of the work that has been undertaken through planning applications; however, equally, planning applications are subject to change, and LPR represents an opportunity to take a strategic, plan-led approach, mindful of lessons learned since the [Masterplan](#) was published in 2014.

5.4.28 Key components of the NW Bicester Ecotown site are:

- Hawkswell Village (ref. [21/04275/OUT](#)) – is a pending application for 3,100 homes, comprising the majority of the eastern half of the wider Ecotown allocation. A key point to note is that the application site extends north significantly beyond the boundary of the NW Bicester Ecotown allocation (an extra 45 ha), closing the gap to the village of Bucknell; however, the proposal is to deliver green / open space in this area, thereby helping to secure a long-term defensible landscape buffer to Bucknell. Figures 5.15 and 5.16 are taken from the Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the application.
- Elmsbrook / Firethorn – is at the eastern extent of the area. Elmsbrook has delivered as an exemplar scheme (393 homes) that has gained national attention. The remainder of this area primarily comprises the Firethorn site, which recently gained permission at appeal for 530 homes (ref. [21/01630/OUT](#)).
- Remaining land including Himley Village – the bulk of land here has been granted planning permission in the past (most notably [14/02121/OUT](#) and [14/01641/OUT](#)), but there are delivery challenges, including given the challenge of delivering a realigned section of the Bicester ring road.

Figure 5.15: The Hawkswell Village application in the NW Bicester and wider Bicester context

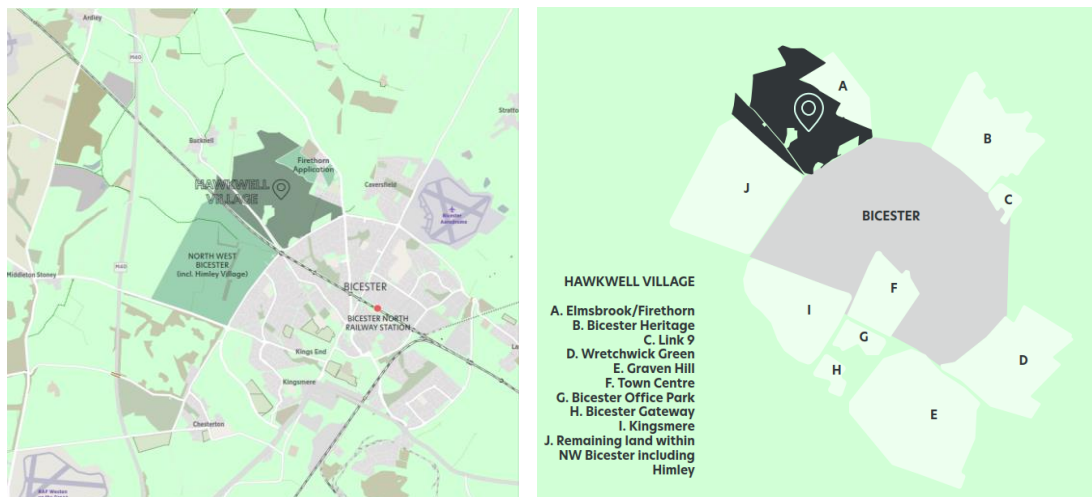


Figure 5.16: The promoter’s concept masterplan for Hawkswell Village (from the current application)



- 5.4.29 One clear option for the LPR is to support an extended red line boundary (**LPR33**), as per the Hawkswell Village application, and to support an uplift in the number of homes across the Ecotown as a whole, taking account of detailed work completed through planning application processes and with a reasonable assumption made regarding the final sector of land (at the north west extent, either side of Langford Brook) where there is yet to be any planning application submitted. The built form would be higher density than previously envisaged, but there would be new strategic green / open space at the northern extent of the scheme / south of Bucknell, and the effect would be to support viability and ultimately deliverability.
- 5.4.30 In contrast, the use of **LPR34** for green / open space would not bring the benefit of securing a defensible landscape buffer to Bucknell (and, indeed, would risk a poor use of land that might alternatively be considered for development). With regards to the option of allocating LPR34 for development, this would not necessarily serve to address the deliverability challenges with respect to the existing allocated site. The time for considering any expansion of the Ecotown would be once it is further along the path to delivery. A further consideration is adjacent Ardley Cutting SSSI, although this is potentially a green infrastructure [opportunity](#) as well as a constraint.
- 5.4.31 There are also two smaller sites that would link closely to the Ecotown, namely LPR32 and LPR36. However, it is again generally the case that there is limited argument for expanding the built form of the Ecotown at the current time. Also, these are smaller sites that are less 'strategic' in nature, i.e. would deliver little in support of strategic objectives, aside from new housing. Finally, there are certain site-specific issues, particularly proximity to heritage assets. In the case of **LPR36**, this is adjacent to Bignell Park, which is not a registered park and garden, but is nonetheless valued (also in biodiversity terms), albeit the possibility of growth supporting improved access might feasibly be explored. With regards to **LPR32**, an issue is maintaining a landscape gap to / protecting the setting of historic Caversfield.
- 5.4.32 In **conclusion**, with regards to NW Bicester, there is strong support for a higher density scheme within the current committed site, with the site boundary extended to include land to the south of Bucknell (LPR33), which would be used primarily to deliver open / greenspace. The current proposal is to support delivery of an additional ~1,000 homes, which is a significant increase in capacity / density, such that this figure will need to be kept under review, including with a view to ensuring a scheme with a strong green and blue infrastructure network integrated throughout (also a good mix of homes, to include family housing, and good space standards). However, at the current time, it is not clear that there is an alternative, lower growth figure that would achieve the deliverability objectives.
- 5.4.33 Moving clockwise, **LPR31** is relatively unconstrained in a number of respects, but is judged to perform relatively poorly in terms transport connectivity and links to Bicester / relationship with the existing settlement edge, mindful of distance to the town centre and limited community infrastructure offer at Caversfield, e.g. there is no primary school. There would also be a concern regarding north-eastwards development creep along a flat and relatively featureless landscape, although the potential for well-targeted woodland creation to bound the northeast extent of a development scheme can be envisaged.
- 5.4.34 With regards to **LPR30**, the proposal is for leisure/recreational uses, given that land here comprises a former quarry that is now designated as a local wildlife site (also a geological SSSI), plus there is a need to consider relationship with the adjacent airfield conservation area.
- 5.4.35 Next is **LPR29**, which is a reasonable option to consider for employment growth, given the current focus of employment land at the eastern edge of Bicester. However, it is generally the case that land east of Bicester is less-well linked in transport terms. There are limited constraints in some respects, and it is noted that the nationally available (low accuracy) agricultural land quality dataset suggests grade 4 quality land (in contrast to land north of Bicester, where the dataset suggests grade 3). However, there is a large area of surface water flood risk, including related to the adjacent railway, and there is a need to be mindful of downstream flood risk affecting Bicester, albeit it is primarily (or exclusively) employment areas that are at risk. Also, it is noted that the Landscape Study assigns 'moderate' sensitivity to land here, which amounts to relatively high sensitivity in the Bicester context (there is a notable density of footpaths in this area), and there is a potential concern regarding effective containment, i.e. a risk of 'sprawl'.
- 5.4.36 The next sites to consider are those associated with **Launton**. An immediate point to note is that LPR26 was granted permission at appeal for 72 homes in 2018 (ref. [17/01173/OUT](#)), and then LPR27 was granted permission at appeal in 2022 (ref. [21/04112/OUT](#)), which serves to limit arguments for further housing growth, plus there is a need to consider in-combination traffic impacts, given a single lane (signalised) bridge over the railway, between Launton and Bicester.

5.4.37 In this context, and in the wider Bicester context, the remaining sites are judged to perform poorly:

- **LPR25** – could be a reasonable option to consider for employment land, specifically as an extension to Bicester Park. The possibility of further growth in this broad area might be considered, given road links to Bicester via the A4421, which has recently been upgraded as part of East West Rail works, to include a cycle path. However, it is nonetheless the case that the road link to Bicester is indirect, given intervening employment land. Also, the Landscape Study identifies land here as relatively sensitive in landscape terms, noting that Launton is a ‘well-defined nucleated’ village. It is also noted that there is a high density of historic field boundaries (shown on the pre-1914 OS map), as well as two public footpaths that link nearby communities to Launton, including its two public houses and grade 1 listed church.
- **LPR28** – might deliver a modest expansion to Launton itself, and benefits from being located on the Bicester side of Launton, but is adjacent to the Grade I listed parish church, manor farm (where there is a Grade II* listed tythe barn) and the railway line.

5.4.38 The next sites to consider are those that would deliver an extension to the committed SE Bicester strategic urban extension. Figure 5.17 shows the masterplan for the primary component of the committed site (Wretchwick Green), which was granted permission in 2018, subsequent to the bulk of employment land (Symmetry Park) gaining permission earlier (now part complete). There are a number of constraints to further expansion of the scheme to the east (**LPR21**), namely: a large local wildlife site, associated with an area of ‘lowland meadow’ priority habitat; Blackthorn Hill, which is associated with two windmills, one of which is Grade II listed, as well as a bridleway; overall ‘medium-high’ landscape sensitivity, according to the Landscape Study (such that this is one of the two most sensitive Bicester landscape parcels); a degree of surface water flood risk; and the possibility of better quality agricultural land than the adjacent committed site (according to the nationally available dataset). However, transport connectivity terms, the option of further expansion of Bicester in this direction performs well, relative to the alternatives, with good connectivity to the A41, and good cycle connectivity to the town centre / railway station, albeit the B4100 / EWR level crossing is a constraint, given East-West Rail (although [options](#) for addressing the constraint are under consideration), and there is a wider concern regarding connectivity to the M40 / Oxford in the absence of a southern link road (discussed above). Figure 5.18 shows one of the maps presented within a vision document received from the site promoter in September 2021.

5.4.39 Finally, there is a need to consider **LPR24**, which comprises a local wildlife site, and is adjacent to the committed “nature conservation area” shown in the figure below.

Figure 5.17: The committed Wretchwick Green (SE Bicester) strategic urban extension



Figure 5.18: The LPR 21 site promoter's vision for a 'gateway' and linked green spaces



5.4.40 Moving west, the next sites to consider would involve an extension to the committed Graven Hill scheme and/or Ambrosden. Considerations include:

- **LPR40** – performs relatively poorly, given clear access challenges / poor transport connectivity, mindful of: current access by rural lanes; the adjacent military railway / sidings; adjacent existing / former MOD MOD buildings that fall outside of the current Graven Hill masterplan (Figure 5.16; also the masterplan presented as part of planning application [21/03749/F](#)); and an area of scrubland or tree planting.
- **LPR23** – might feasibly be delivered in part in order to deliver an extension to Graven Hill or, alternatively, in full in order to deliver comprehensive growth between Graven Hill and Ambrosden.
 - The former option may have a degree of merit, given good potential to draw upon an area of priority habitat woodland / surface water flood risk (including an area of former quarry) as an eastern boundary. Development might relate quite well to the eastern extent of the Graven Hill scheme, as understood from the current masterplan (Figure 5.18), and could potentially link well to the A41; however, the southern extent of Graven Hill (not shown in Figure 5.18) is set to deliver extensive employment land. A constraint is a historic farm at the northern extent of the site, associated with two Grade II listed buildings; however, it is noted that the farm is set well-back from roads in the area, and there are no public rights of way in the area, so there could be an opportunity to increase appreciation. It is also noted that the nationally available dataset suggests grade 4 quality agricultural land in this area.
 - The latter option (development of LPR23 in full) would involve breaching the area of woodland / surface water flood risk, and closing the landscape gap to Ambrosden. The concern is that development here would amount to an extension to Ambrosden more so than an extension to Bicester, given challenges in respect of linking to the A41. Specifically, there is an area of land between the site and the A41 that has not been made available for development. Were this land to be made available, then the possibility of comprehensive growth in this area - completing the expansion of Bicester as far as Blackthorn Hill or Blackthorn / the Upper Ray Meadows (bounded to the north by the railway line) - might be considered. Comprehensive growth might be in combination with other LPR sites in the vicinity, and might facilitate delivery a southern link road (discussed above). However, the unavailable land in question is significantly affected by surface water flood risk. Also, it is noted that the nationally available dataset shows grade 3 quality land in this area, associated with Blackthorn Hill. Ambrosden is clearly associated with the hill, and there is an argument for retaining this characteristic feature. Finally, there is a need to be mindful of the proposal to deliver a major new area of employment land at the southern extent of Graven Hill (see the committed Graven Hill masterplan at [21/03749/F](#)).

- **LPR22** – would involve expansion of Ambrosden. There is some opportunity here, but there is no reason to suggest any particular benefit to developing LPR22 in full, i.e. there is limited ‘strategic’ growth opportunity. Considerations include: transport connectivity, e.g. noting the cycle path along Ploughley Road, to the north; in-combination traffic impacts, mindful of nearby committed and further potential strategic growth; maintaining Ambrosden’s association with Blackthorn Hill; quite weak field boundaries in this area; grade 3 quality agricultural land (according to the national dataset); significant recent housing growth, most recently a site granted permission at appeal for 84 homes to the west of the village (which will generate traffic through the village); and two pending planning applications to the east of the village.

Figure 5.19: The current Graven Hill Masterplan (gravenhill.co.uk)



5.4.41 The final sites to consider are located to the southwest of Bicester, associated with Chesteron, Wendlebury and Junction 9 of the M40. Specifically:

- **LPR39** – is associated with Wendlebury, which has a strong rural and historic character, having expanded little since the extent shown on the pre-1914 OS map, and is notably located on National Cycle Route 51, which passes between Bicester (including the nearby Graven Hill new community, via Langford Lane) and the countryside villages to the west / Kidlington. However, it is recognised that the parish church is only Grade 2 listed (i.e. the lowest grade), and is located at the northern extent of the village, near adjacent to the A41. Also, it is recognised that the Landscape Study assigns ‘low-moderate’ sensitivity, and that the national dataset suggests grade 4 quality agricultural land.

A large area of land is being promoted for a 2,800 home new community, to include making land available for a southern link road. However, the proposed scheme would extend east well-beyond the extent of LPR39; specifically, it would extend significantly east of the railway line to Oxford, where all land is affected by flood risk and there is extensive floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat (according to the nationally available dataset), associated with the Upper Ray Meadows, with a wetland SSSI located ~2km downstream. The proposal is to address flood risk by land raising, but this approach would risk conflicting with the nationally required sequential approach to avoiding flood risk, given alternative sites available that are located outside of flood risk zones. There is also a notable flood risk channel associated with Wendlebury itself, although there is a proposal (as part of the 2,800 home scheme) to deliver a new relief channel to address this. Finally, it is understood that archaeological constraint is likely to extend beyond the scheduled monuments adjacent to the north of the site (a Roman town).

- **LPR38** – is an option to deliver a strategic new employment area, given excellent road connectivity, namely a location at the junction of the A41 and the M40. This would be a major extension to a large scheme adjacent to the motorway junction that now has planning permission (ref. [22/01144/F](#)) for “a new high quality combined research, development and production facility of 54,000 sq m designed specifically for Siemens Healthineers” that would create “up to 1,200 skilled jobs... when the facility is fully operational” (plus the scheme would assimilate an existing facility at Eynsham). Looking beyond the Siemens site, there is the potential to comprehensively plan for a wider employment area and then, in turn, potentially the entire sector of land between Chesterton / Bicester Golf Club and the A41. Also, it is noted that land adjacent to the north is permitted to deliver a major new sports facility (ref. [19/00934/F](#)). The landscape in this entire sector has ‘low-medium’ sensitivity, according to the Landscape Study, and this is grade 4 agricultural land, according to the national dataset (none of the land has been surveyed in detail). However, there are a range of sensitivities, including some flood risk, including associated with some priority habitat, and the small hamlet of Little Chesterton, where there are no listed buildings, but nonetheless a sense of rural / historic character (albeit appreciation by nearby communities could be relatively limited, e.g. in comparison to Wendlebury).
- **LPR37** – were LPR38 to come forward as a new strategic employment area, then it would increase the argument for strategic growth south of Chesterton (LPR37), in order to largely ‘complete’ the expansion of Bicester in this sector. Chesterton is a smaller village in the settlement hierarchy, but there is a primary school, e.g. in contrast to the nearby smaller village of Weston-on-the-Green. There are also limited constraints in some respects, notably in terms of landscape sensitivity and agricultural land quality (discussed above). However, a primary argument for strategic growth in this area relates to transport connectivity, given an established ambition to develop the A41 corridor as a route that prioritises bus travel and walking/cycling. There is already a park and ride, serving the S5 ‘Stagecoach Gold’ service and a high quality cycle route into Bicester, albeit this is somewhat distant from developable part of LPR37 (as discussed below). The A41 ambition was discussed in LTP4 (2016), and then an update is presented in the Oxfordshire LTCP (2022; see [page 168](#)). It is also important to note that there is good potential to achieve good road access to land here from the existing road network.

With regards to constraints to growth, a key consideration is the Chesterton Conservation Area, which extends to the southern extent of the town, albeit the southern extent of the conservation area may have relatively low sensitivity. More generally, there is a need to note that a Roman Road (Akeman Street) passed through Chesterton. However, there would be good potential to mitigate historic environment impacts through masterplanning, plus it is noted that a 63 homes scheme has recently been delivered at the southern extent of the village. Beyond historic environment constraint, there is a need to note several narrow flood channels passing through the site, although these are mostly associated with field boundaries, suggesting good potential to integrate with green infrastructure. Also, it is noted that a planning application for 147 homes south of Chesterton was recently refused (ref. [23/00173/OUT](#)).

Finally, with regards to LPR37, there is a need to note that the eastern half of the site is only being promoted for employment land, which is not supported, given the aspiration of consolidating the built-form of Bicester. Specifically, there is a clear argument for strategic housing-led growth at Chesterton to integrate with Bicester, via an improved A41 corridor, whilst retaining Chesterton’s local character and identity. There is the possibility of reimagining this corridor, with a focus on active and public transport, including linking the P+R to Bicester Village, if and when a southern link road is delivered.

5.4.42 Finally, **LPR41** comprises sports pitches adjacent to the north of Bicester Village, and to the south of Bicester Community Hospital, in close proximity to the town centre. An application has recently been submitted for a new 1.8-hectare community park, together with a new car and cycle hub and improvements to guest services at Bicester Village; see <https://bicesterpublicconsultation.co.uk/>. A key consideration is ensuring a strategy for Bicester Village that aligns with long term plans for the A41 corridor, with an aspiration for greater use of a Park and Ride to access Bicester Village.

5.4.43 In **conclusion**:

- There is strong support for an expanded Northwest Bicester Ecotown, which will be referred to as simply Northwest Bicester. The current assumption is delivery of an additional 1,000 homes (subject to review). However, the effect of the LPR will not be to boost supply in the plan period, over-and-above what has delivered and what is already committed. The assumed supply in the plan period is 2,775 homes.
- There is support for further growth at Bicester, given broad-strategic factors. However, the ‘points of the compass’ and site-specific discussions presented above have served to highlight a range of challenges.

- The next best performing strategic site options are judged to be: A) LPR37 (west only, known as LPR37a), which would involve ~500 homes south of Chesterton, alongside strategic employment growth to the west (LPR38); and B) LPR21 (majority of the site, bar a small area that is not available), which would involve an 800 home expansion of the Southeast Bicester (Wretchwick Green) committed site, plus a 6.3 ha employment site adjacent to the A41 and the recently Symmetry Park site.
- Both sites are associated with constraints/challenges (notably impacts to Chesterton in the case of LPR37 and biodiversity / landscape constraints in the case of LPR21). However, both are quite strongly supported in transport terms, and overall once account is taken of the strategic context - i.e. arguments for growth at Bicester - and the potential alternative sites / locations for growth.
- Focusing on LPR21, the current assumption is 800 homes, but there will be a need to review this prior to plan finalisation, balancing constraints with a desire to achieve economies of scale in order to secure, for example, investment in new / upgraded transport and community infrastructure. In particular, there will be a need to consider whether it is appropriate to extend development beyond Blackthorn Hill.
- With regards to LPR37, there is a clear argument for consolidating growth in this area, in combination with strategic employment growth to the west, and with a focus on A41 corridor ambitions. However, only the western part of LPR37 is available for housing at the current time.
- These two allocations would deliver 1,300 homes, over-and-above completions and commitments, plus significant new employment land. This is potentially a reasonable quantum of growth. However, on the other hand, there is a need to explore the option of higher growth, given the strategic context.
- It is considered reasonable to explore the potential for further strategic growth to the south of Bicester, mindful of the southern link road issue. Also, land here is found to perform well in terms of 'accessibility' by the Transport Assessment (2022; see Figure 3-21). However, it is difficult to identify a preference for growth in the vicinity of: A) Wendlebury (LPR39); or B) Graven Hill / Ambrosden (LPR23).
- On balance, LPR39 at Wendlebury is taken forward, including with a view to exploring implications for A41 corridor ambitions, and mindful that the scheme would make land available for the western section of a southern link road. Also, land here is being very actively promoted, which is contrast to LPR23, where the site promoters have not submitted a concept masterplan since 2016, despite suggesting in 2020 that an updated masterplan would be submitted at the next consultation (i.e. in 2021). Having said this, the current proposal for a 2,800 home scheme comprising LPR39 is not supported. There is no certainty regarding an appropriate scale of growth that avoids flood risk zones, but ~1,000 homes is assumed, at this early stage. It is recognised that 1,000 homes here would risk not being seen as an extension to Bicester, but this is an issue that warrants being explored in detail. Growth here would have the benefit of being well-contained by flood zones and a large scheduled monument.
- Other strategic site options are ruled out as unreasonable at the current time, in light of the discussion of site-specific and Bicester-wide constraints / issues presented above.
- With regards to employment land, the emerging preferred option involves 6.3 ha at Southeast Bicester (LPR21) and 40 ha adjacent to M40 J9 (LPR38). These sites, in combination with committed sites, would deliver a high employment growth strategy for Bicester, and one that is strongly focused on the strategic transport corridors, such that it is difficult to foresee other available sites as realistic contenders. However, further consideration could be given to the option of employment in the eastern part of LPR37.

5.4.44 In **summary**, and focusing on housing, there are two reasonable growth scenarios involving: **A)** allocation of LPR21 (part) and LPR37 (part) to deliver 1,300 homes over-and-above completions and commitments; and **B)** additional allocation of LPR39 for ~1,000 homes.

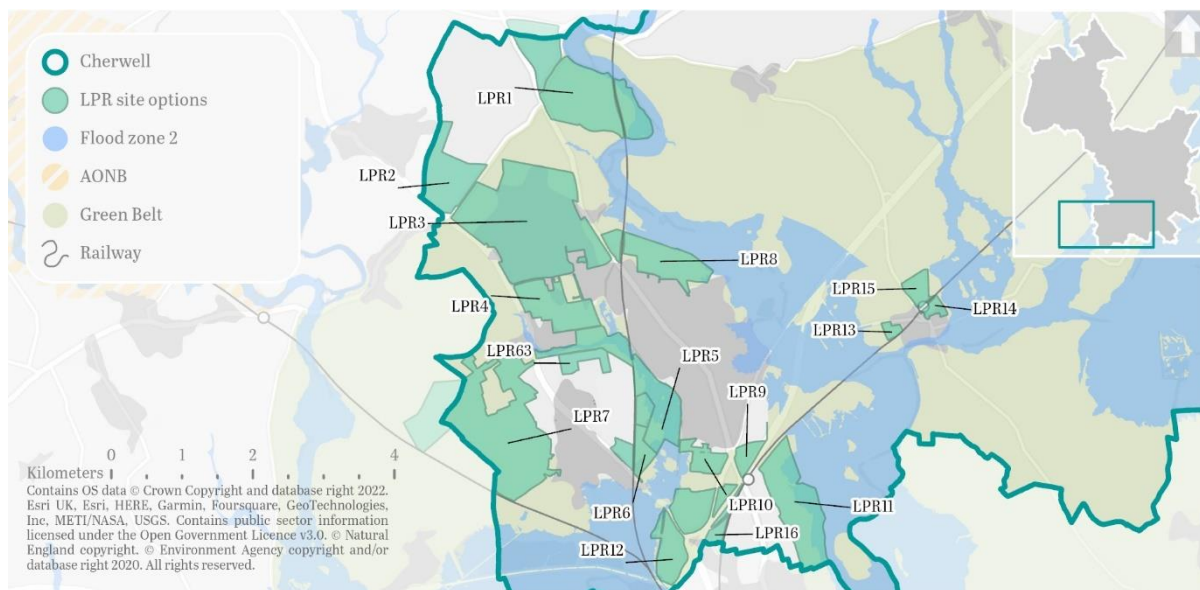
Table 5.4: Two reasonable housing growth scenarios for the Bicester sub-area

Site	Scenarios		Notes on assumptions etc.
	1	2	
LPR34	-	-	All NW Bicester plan period supply (2,775 homes) counted in commitments.
LPR37a	500	500	Masterplanning needed to address Chesterton and sustainable transport.
LPR21	800	800	Will need to consider possibility of containing growth west of B'thorn Hill.
LPR39	-	1,000	A range of challenges / uncertainties, given proposed 2,800 home scheme.
Total	2,300	3,300	Commitment to strategic growth at Bicester must be kept under review.

Kidlington

5.4.45 As per the discussion in Section 5.2, there are certain arguments for directing further strategic growth to the Kidlington area, relating to: proximity to Oxford, an established and growing employment offer that contributes significantly to the success of the wider Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine; and strong transport connectivity. Also, Kidlington itself (as opposed to the wider sub-area, including Yarnton/Begbroke and the Oxford-edge) is associated with notably low recent / committed growth, as a percentage increase in dwelling stock, in comparison to Banbury and Bicester, which is potentially a factor influencing relatively high house prices. However, on the other hand, the majority of the area falls within the Oxford Green Belt, and across the wider sub-area there is considerable committed growth following the Partial Review (2020).

Figure 5.20: Strategic site options at Kidlington



5.4.46 Strategic site options can be categorised as follows:

- The edge of Woodstock
- The edge of Oxford
- Yarnton / Bebroke
- Kidlington
- Islip
- New settlement options

5.4.47 Each of these areas / categories is considered in turn below.

The edge of Woodstock

5.4.48 **LPR2** is notably located outside of the Green Belt, and is well-connected in transport terms, given: a location at the intersection of the A44 (a key strategic public transport and cycling corridor) and the A4095, which links to Bicester and Witney; and excellent potential to cycle to employment opportunities (Langford Lane / Oxford City Airport). The site is quite well-contained in landscape terms, in that it is bounded to the west by the Woodstock urban edge (a site under construction) and by roads on the other sides (along with thick hedgerows / tree belts). However, an issue is that the site contains a scheduled monument (Blenheim Villa) as well as a wider area of archaeological interest at its western extent, plus there is significant noise pollution associated with the road junction. The implication is that there is a clear need to focus built form at the northeast corner of the site and deliver a large area of greenspace across the remainder of the site. This was the approach reflected in a recent planning application for 500 homes (ref. [22/01715/OUT](#)); however, that application has now been withdrawn. Officers believe an appropriate capacity could be lower, at ~450 homes (N.B. the site has a longer planning history, including a 2014 application for 1,500 homes, plus land for a primary school, across both this site and the site now under construction to the east).

- 5.4.49 The current planning application would involve 67% green / open space within the site, and this would also have the benefit of largely avoiding concerns regarding impacts to nearby Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. However, the effect will be to separate the new community from Woodstock, the centre of which is at the western extent of the town (~1.5km distant). This could be deemed appropriate, given that the built form would be quite well contained (i.e. the scheme would represent something of a “one off”, as opposed to reflecting a strategy for lower density expansion).
- 5.4.50 However, a key issue is access to a primary school, as there would be no potential to deliver one onsite. Further work is needed to identify the most appropriate strategy.

The edge of Oxford

- 5.4.51 There are three LPR sites here, which are judged to perform poorly. Taking the sites from west to east:
- **LPR12** – land to the west of the A34 is isolated from Oxford (specifically the committed Oxford North mixed use strategic urban extension) by the Peartree Interchange, nor would it link to Kidlington, given that adjacent land (within both LPR12 and a Partial Review allocation) is reserved for a golf course. This is particularly the case given that the masterplan for Oxford North (on the basis of the outline planning permission, [18/02065/OUTFUL](#)), proposes employment land at its northwest extent (adjacent to the A34). Also, the site is constrained by proximity and functional links to the Oxford Meadows SAC and the Oxford Canal Conservation Area, and this parcel of land could potentially contribute to green infrastructure connectivity between the Thames and Cherwell river corridors, in combination with the Golf Course reserve site and the proposed strategic greenspace southeast of Kidlington (LPR9). The site might be better suited to employment, but visual links to the Oxford Canal would likely be a constraint. With regards to the golf course reserve site itself, whilst the need for a golf course has yet to be confirmed, at the current time it is too early to consider any alternative use. Finally, development within the remaining eastern part of LPR12 would be isolated from the committed north Oxford urban extension, given intervening transport infrastructure and priority habitat, plus there is a general need to consider the importance of a landscape / Green Belt gap between Oxford and Kidlington.
 - **LPR16** – was removed from the Green Belt through the Partial Review, but is clearly constrained by the adjacent strategic transport infrastructure. The land would likely link to current development within Oxford City, as opposed Partial Review allocation 6b (670 homes) to the east, given the railway line. As such, the development of the site will be dependent on integration with proposals in Oxford City. The emerging City Plan to 2040 proposes housing development at Pear Tree Farm.
 - **LPR11** – would involve extending Partial Review allocation 6a (690 homes plus a local centre and a primary school). There is an argument for this on account of the adjacent Parkway station, and because the River Cherwell flood risk zone might form a long term defensible Green Belt boundary. However: an extended scheme would deliver little over-and-above the committed scheme, other than additional housing; it is generally the case that issues / options in this area were considered at the time of preparing the Partial Review, and the committed scheme involves a proposal for new greenspace to form a defensible Green Belt boundary, and also mindful of heritage assets at St. Frideswide Farm (including a Grade II* listed farmhouse). The Landscape Study assigns LPR11 only ‘medium’ sensitivity; however, there is a clear sensitivity regarding encroachment on the River Cherwell corridor (mindful that public accessibility along the river corridor could potentially be enhanced in the future). An expanded scheme drawing on field boundaries and/or the flood risk zone as a defensible boundary (also mindful of significant surface water flood zones) could feasibly be explored, but the effect would be to delay the scheme coming forward and delivering much needed new housing for Oxford).

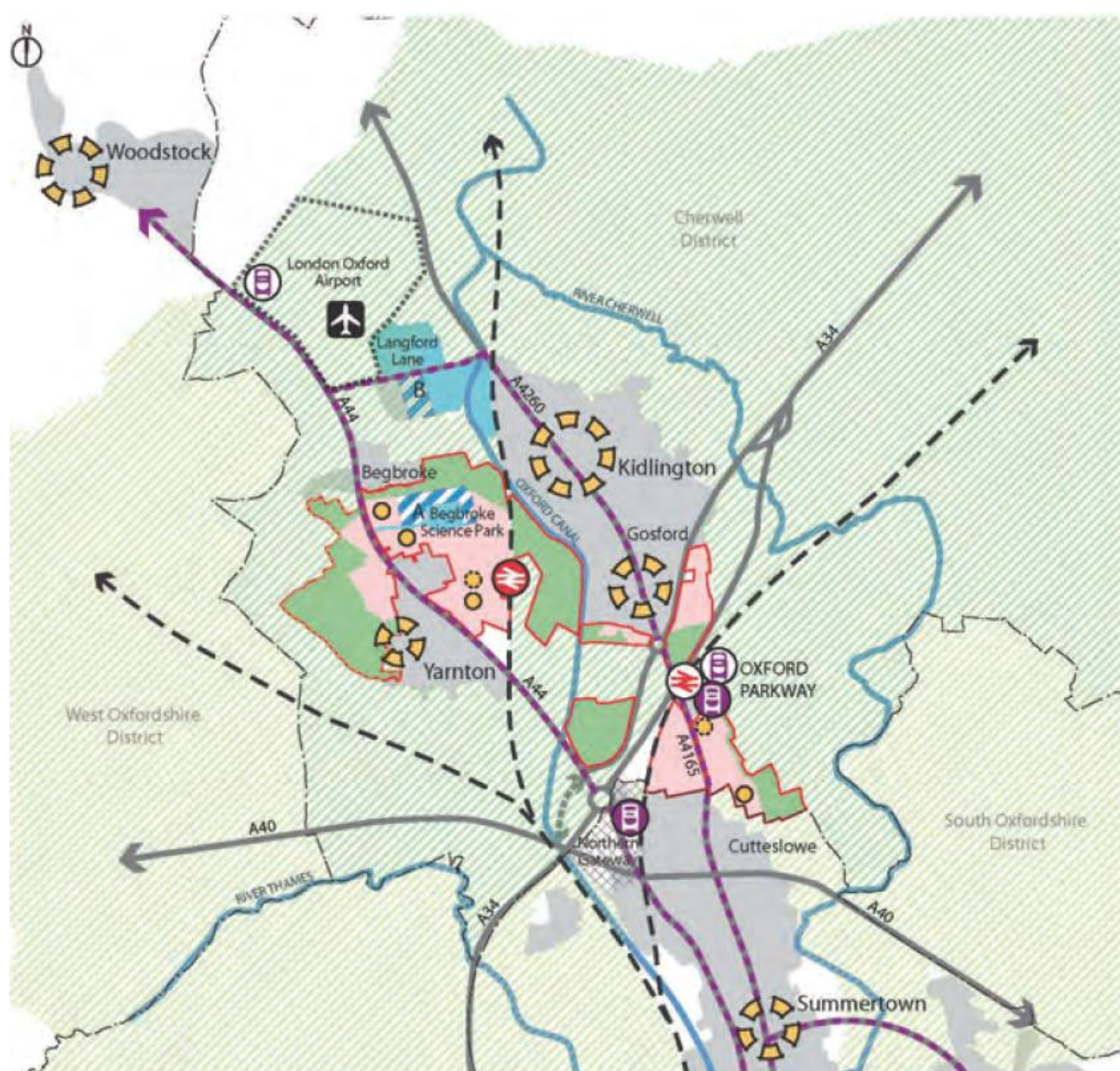
Yarnton / Begbroke

- 5.4.52 Beginning with **LPR63**, this is strongly supported for employment, specifically an extension to Begbroke Science Park, with the land having been removed from the Green Belt and safeguarded for employment through the Partial Review. The six remaining sites perform relatively poorly. From west to east:
- **LPR7** – comprises planned greenspace and ‘retained agricultural land’ within Partial Review allocation PR9, as well as land to the west. The option of further growth in this direction is not supported from a range of perspectives - including Green Belt, landscape and biodiversity – mindful of the close consideration given to issues / opportunities and options through the Partial Review process.

- **LPR4** – would involve extending Begbroke to the north, and closing the gap to the Langford Lane employment area. There are two fields feasibly in contention for allocation, with the western field constrained by airport flight path, such that it likely only comes into contention for employment land. The eastern field might deliver housing and/or employment, but is sensitive from a Green Belt perspective (albeit the landscape study assigns only ‘low-medium’ sensitivity), and is within ~200m of a SSSI. A third and final part of the site comprises current built form, including an ambulance station.
- **LPR5** – is strongly associated with planned strategic green / open space and the Rowel Brook corridor.
- **LPR6** – comprises a number of component parts:
 - The northern-most section would be separated from planned built form to the west by the railway line, and would abut strategic greenspace to the east, such that this land contributes strongly to Green Belt purposes. The indicative location for a train station /halt is adjacent; however, the station is a developer aspiration, with Partial Review allocations not dependent on its delivery. There are a range of planned or potential upgrades for this line / services along the line (see the [Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study, 2021](#)), and associated infrastructure (including a realigned Sandy Lane / new Sandy Lane crossing).
 - Land to the south comprises the site of a former sewage treatment works, and again would not directly link to current or planned built form, given the railway line. There is also a sensitive railway line crossing to the south, and some established habitats onsite.
 - Land to the south is again on the ‘wrong side’ of the railway line, such that it is somewhat sensitive in Green Belt terms and would not link well to Yarnton. The part of the site abutting the A44 is currently in an industrial/commercial use, and could potentially be considered for an intensification of this use, but it is not clear that the land is available and, in any case, any development would be non-strategic.
 - Land to the west of the railway line was removed from the Green Belt and safeguarded through the Partial Review. However, there are sensitivities onsite, in the form of sports pitches (for which there is a need locally) and two listed buildings (one a pub) with mature gardens including many mature trees. The eastern part of the site is relatively unconstrained but would not deliver a strategic allocation.
- **LPR10** – feasibly comes into consideration as the Green Belt Study (2022) identifies that the land makes a more limited contribution to Green Belt purposes. However, the land comprises sports pitches (for which there is an identified need) and a planned nature conservation area (Policy PR7b).
- **LPR9** – is proposed for strategic green / open space, through Policy PR7a, and this is reflected in a current planning application for 370 homes (ref. [22/00747/OUT](#)).

Kidlington

- 5.4.53 The primary site to consider here is **LPR8**, where the Green Belt study (2022) notably concludes only a ‘moderate’ (land closest to the settlement boundary) and ‘moderate-high’ (adjacent to the river corridor) contribution to Green Belt purposes. Furthermore, the option of development here has merit in wider planning and sustainability terms, such that there is potential to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release. In particular, the site benefits from excellent proximity and walking/cycling connectivity to strategic employment land (Langford Lane / Oxford City Airport, also Begbroke Science Park) and Kidlington centre. Also, there is an argument for housing growth at Kidlington, which is associated with relatively low recent and committed housing growth, as a proportion of dwelling stock, relative to Banbury and Bicester, which could have a bearing on relatively high house prices (also, anecdotal evidence suggests a prevalence of properties being sub-divided), albeit there is high committed growth in the wider sub-area. As well as a need to ensure a new defensible Green Belt boundary, and avoid encroachment on the River Cherwell corridor, a key sensitivity is the Kidlington Conservation Area, which abuts the site to the east, including a prominent grade 1 listed church. There is also a need to consider the Oxford Canal, to the west, where a Grade II listed canal bridge is linked to the conservation area by a historic footpath that passes adjacent to the site, via a Grade II listed railway bridge.
- 5.4.54 The other LPR site in this area is **LPR3**, which comprises the entirety of Oxford City Airport. There is an argument for reviewing the Green Belt to remove existing employment land, and there is also the option of considering a modest eastwards expansion of this thriving employment area into the Green Belt, noting that some of the land here makes only a ‘moderate’ contribution to Green Belt purposes. With regards to the wider airport, this is not a realistic option at the current time, including as the airport is well-used, serving an extensive area (e.g. Silverstone) and with a clear role in the local economy. The airport benefits from permitted development rights, supportive of airport related development.

Figure 5.21: The Partial Review Key Diagram

Islip

- 5.4.55 The focus here is on the three small-scale LPR sites – namely LPR13, LPR14 and LPR15 – with the option of large-scale strategic growth (potentially in the form of a new settlement) discussed below.
- 5.4.56 Of these three sites, **LPR15** is judged to perform relatively poorly, given Green Belt sensitivity, albeit the site is previously developed (specifically a fuel depot, with structures still onsite). The other two sites – **LPR13** and **LPR14** – make a ‘moderate-high’ contribution to Green Belt purposes, according to the Green Belt Study (2022), and it is LPR14 that appears to be preferable site in transport terms, given that it is near adjacent to the train station and the primary school, and because there is the potential to reach the A34 without needing to pass through the conservation area (or, at least, its core). However, the site has been discussed as having a capacity of between 40-170 homes (mindful of an onsite grade 2 listed farmhouse, and also the near adjacent conservation area), such that it may well not be a strategic site in the district-wide context (and it is not clear that the site would deliver any strategic benefit to Islip, other than new housing). Islip appears not to have seen any significant housing development for at least 20 years (on the basis of clear satellite imagery from 2004) and, indeed, from a review historic OS maps it appears that the only significant housing growth for perhaps 50 or more years has involved a small number of homes (circa 30-40) to the west of the railway line. Another consideration is potentially around reaching / breaching capacity at the village primary school (the views of OCC on this matter would be welcomed).

New settlement options

- 5.4.57 Section 5.2 explains that there is limited strategic argument for a new settlement, but also that there are a range of housing and employment growth quanta options that must be taken into consideration. It is more challenging to rule out the option of a new settlement under higher growth scenarios.
- 5.4.58 There is a long list of three new settlement options feasibly in contention: Weston-on-the-Green, Islip and Shipton Quarry. However, Weston-on-the-Green has already been discussed above, and is considered to be the sequentially least preferable option of the three, particularly on transport grounds, albeit it is located outside of the Green Belt, whilst the other two sites are located within the Green Belt.
- 5.4.59 This leaves two options associated with the Kidlington sub-area: Islip (**LPR15**) and Shipton Quarry (**LPR1**). Both are associated with a wide range of issues / opportunities; however, on balance, Shipton Quarry is considered to be the preferable option to explore further. Islip already benefits from a rail station, whilst the proposal at Shipton Quarry is to deliver a new station; however, there are clear Green Belt and historic environment sensitivities at Islip; and, whilst flood risk zones could assist with containment, there are challenges associated with slightly raised land directly to the northwest of the village and the former fuel depot directly to the northeast. There are clear sensitivities at Shipton Quarry, including as the site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and a geological SSSI; however, the site benefits from being located at the edge of the Green Belt, with part of the site associated with relatively low Green Belt sensitivity; and the potential for sensitive development that addresses the biodiversity / geology constraint can be envisaged. Much detailed work has been undertaken in support of proposals at both locations, with quite a wide range of options explored, serving to highlight the challenging nature of the sites. Focusing on Shipton Quarry, the most recent proposal is for 2,500 homes, with the potential for a second phase extending the site further to the west also discussed; however, there is a concern that insufficient consideration is given to the onsite constraints, and so it is judged appropriate to assume 2,000 homes.

Conclusion

- 5.4.60 In conclusion, there is strong support for allocation of LPR2, to the east of Woodstock, for 450 homes, albeit the site is not without its issues, perhaps most notably in terms of access to a primary school, which will need to be a focus of further discussions, testing etc. There is also strong support for an extension to Begbroke Science Park (LPR63). Allocation of these two sites only is a reasonable growth scenario.
- 5.4.61 However, it is also appropriate to test a higher growth scenario involving additional allocation of LPR8, to the north of Kidlington (300 homes), mindful of Kidlington-specific factors (housing needs, access to employment) and site specific factors (the site performs well in a number of respects).
- 5.4.62 Furthermore, it is reasonable to progress the option of a new settlement at Shipton Quarry (LPR1) for testing. It is also reasonable to assume that LPR1 and LPR8 would not be allocated in combination.
- 5.4.63 In **summary**, and focusing only on housing, there are three reasonable scenarios involving: **A**) allocation of LPR2 for 450 homes over-and-above completions and commitments; **B**) scenario (A) plus additional allocation of LPR8 for 300 homes; and **C**) scenario (A) plus additional allocation of LPR1 for 2,000 homes.

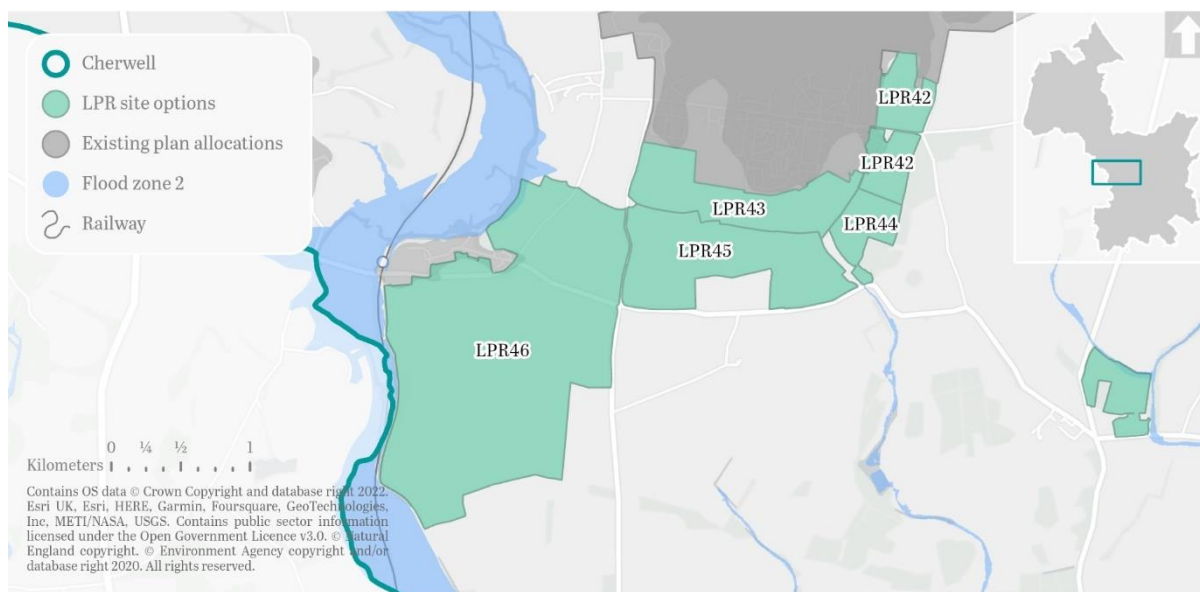
Table 5.5: Three reasonable housing growth scenarios for the Kidlington sub-area

Site	Scenarios			Notes on assumptions etc.
	1	2	3	
LPR2	450	450	450	A number of issues to explore further, notably access to a primary school.
LPR8	-	300	-	A Green Belt site, but allocation is supported from a number of perspectives.
LPR1	-	-	2,000	Considerable uncertainty regarding extent / size and configuration of scheme.
Total	450	750	2,450	Sub-area is constrained by Green Belt, but there are arguments for higher growth

Heyford Park

- 5.4.64 It is relatively straightforward to arrive at reasonable growth scenarios for Heyford Park, relative to the three sub-areas discussed above. There are clear arguments for exploring additional growth, and any further additional growth must be comprehensive rather than piecemeal; however, there is also a need to consider the option of no further growth at Heyford Park, e.g. noting relatively poor transport connectivity.
- 5.4.65 With regards to the site options in contention, there is clear support for testing the option of allocating **LPR42, LPR43 and LPR44** in combination for 1,235 homes, which would take the total number of homes at Heyford Park to around 4,000. Allocation of these sites in combination could achieve a new defensible long term boundary and support the adopted 2022 masterplan for the committed growth area. There is also the wider context of the site promoter’s long term vision to invest in sensitive, heritage-led intensification within the more challenging parts of the airfield conservation area (the promoters have suggested that the settlement might ultimately comprise around 5,500 – 6,000 homes).
- 5.4.66 The southern boundary to LPR43 is not strong, and land is available to the south (**LPR45**); however, LPR45 is more sensitive in landscape terms and historic environment terms. The southern extent of Heyford Park is discussed in Section 6.
- 5.4.67 Finally, there is a need to briefly mention **LPR46**, which is judged to perform very poorly, relative to other growth options, given the majority of the site being within the Rousham, Lower Heyford and Upper Heyford Conservation Area, plus there are wider constraints associated with the Cherwell Valley.

Figure 5.21: Strategic site options at Heyford Park



- 5.4.68 In **summary**, there are two reasonable growth scenarios involving: **A)** no further allocation; and **B)** allocation of LPR42, LPR43 and LPR44 for 1,235 homes over-and-above completions and commitments.

Table 5.6: Two reasonable housing growth scenarios for Heyford Park

Site	Scenarios		Notes on assumptions etc.
	1	2	
LPR42, 43 & 44	-	1,235	Need to consider in a broader context (temporal and geographical)
Total	0	1,235	Leading ~4,000 homes in total (promoters also suggest a longer term vision)

The rural area

- 5.4.69 As discussed in Section 5.2, there are broad strategic **arguments for supporting housing growth** across the rural area. These primarily relate to the need to maintain vibrant rural communities, with a balanced population, and maintaining the vitality of village centres and services/facilities more generally. For example, declining birth rates nationally (see ONS data [here](#)) can create a challenge for maintaining school rolls in rural areas, particularly if combined with a reduction in children from towns attending schools in rural areas (e.g. because a new school has opened in the town). For example, Islip is discussed, above, as a rural settlement that has seen very limited housing growth over recent years and decades.
- 5.4.70 However, and as discussed in Section 5.2, there are also broad strategic **arguments for limiting housing growth** in the rural area, particularly from a transport and, in turn, decarbonisation perspective. It is recognised that there is an ongoing national switch-over to electric vehicles, but EVs are not without their issues, including from a perspective of greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion / road safety. Also, there is a need to be mindful that recent and committed growth across the rural villages is highly variable, particularly as some villages have seen recent ‘speculative’ development (see para 5.2.43).
- 5.4.71 Broad strategic arguments for higher versus lower growth were also explored through a formal alternatives appraisal at the time of the Options consultation (2021; see Section 7 of the ISA Report), which concluded:
- “Option 1 [lower growth] is preferable in respect of certain environmental topics, where the rural area is relatively constrained, or faces particular growth-related issues. Specifically, Option 1 is judged to be preferable in respect of air quality, climate change mitigation, the historic environment and transport (with several of these issues are inter-related, namely issues relating to air quality, climate change mitigation and transport). As for Option 2 [higher growth], this is supported in respect of ‘housing’ objectives, primarily because significant rural housing needs are thought likely to exist.”*
- 5.4.72 The emerging view is that the LPR should make provision for growth of around 500 homes at non-strategic sites across the rural area over the 20 year plan period, over-and-above completions and commitments. The matter of distribution and specific sites will then be a focus of further work subsequent to the current consultation. One key consideration will be the following conclusion of the Transport Assessment (2022):
- “The second highest level of connectivity are villages located close to the major road network in close proximity to the two largest towns. Bloxham to the south-west of Banbury is located on the A361 with good bus and cycle links. With key employment centres nearby and good bus links Ambrosden to the south east of Bicester scores well. Similarly, located south of Bicester is Wendlebury which also scores highly. This is largely due to its proximity to connections along the A41 and the national cycle route which runs through the village. The lower score reflects the challenge that connectivity may be limited to fewer travel modes. Chesterton... Bodicote and Twyford / Adderbury... also score relatively well.”*
- N.B. Bloxham has seen significant housing growth over the past ~10 years, including sites permitted at appeal, although there is no significant committed growth. Ambrosden is associated with significant committed growth, plus nearby recent / committed / potential future strategic growth (inc. Graven Hill). Wendlebury is discussed above a location where there is the option of considering strategic growth.
- 5.4.73 A strategy involving 500 homes across the rural area (over and above completions and commitments) is considered to represent a strategy that strikes an appropriate balance. Lower growth (e.g. 250 homes) and/or higher growth (e.g. 750 homes) could feasibly be appraised, but it would be challenging to draw meaningful conclusions without knowledge of the specific sites involved, whilst broad / high-level arguments in favour of lower growth versus higher growth are quite well-understood, as discussed.
- 5.4.74 In summary, there is only one reasonable growth scenario for the rural area, at the current time, involving support for 500 homes at non-strategic allocations, over-and-above completions and commitments.

Table 5.7: One reasonable housing growth scenario for the rural area

Site	Scenarios		Notes on assumptions etc.
	1	2	
Non-strategic allocations	-	500	The matter of supply from non-strategic sites in the rural area will be revisited subsequent to the current consultation, including with consideration given to the possibility of delegating allocation to neighbourhood plans.
Total	0	500	

5.5 Reasonable growth scenarios

Introduction

- 5.5.1 Having gone through a process (see Figure 5.1) involving consideration of strategic factors (Section 5.2), site options (Section 5.3) and settlement scenarios (Section 5.4), the final task is to draw together the understanding generated in order to arrive at a single set of reasonable growth scenarios for appraisal and consultation (so as to discharge a central requirement of the SA process, as understood from Regulation 12(2) of the SEA Regulations, which is to appraise and consult upon “reasonable alternatives”).
- 5.5.2 In practice, this involves considering ways of combining the sub-area scenarios introduced above, also mindful that additional supply will come from completions and commitments in the plan period (20,206 homes) and from windfall sites (1,000 homes).¹¹ Total supply from these sources is 21,206 homes.¹²

Combining sub-area scenarios

- 5.5.3 A summary of the reasonable sub-area scenarios is presented in Table 5.8. N.B. for the Kidlington sub-area, it is appropriate to differentiate between Green Belt (LPR8 and LPR1) and non-Green Belt (LPR2).
- 5.5.4 In summary, there is:
- one reasonable growth scenario for the Banbury sub-area, for the non-Green Belt part of the Kidlington sub-area and the rural sub-area;
 - two reasonable growth scenarios for the Bicester sub-area and Heyford Park; and
 - three reasonable growth scenarios for the Green Belt part of the Kidlington sub-area.

N.B. Tables 5.8 deals only with supply over-and-above completions, commitments and windfall.

Table 5.8: Summary of the sub-area scenarios

Sub area		Scenarios
Banbury		One scenario: 830 homes
Bicester		Two scenarios: 1,300 or 2,300 homes
Kidlington	Green Belt	Three scenarios: 0, 300 or 2,000 homes
	Non- Green Belt	One scenario: 450 homes
Heyford Park		Two scenarios: 0 or 1,235 homes
Rural area		One scenario: 500 homes
Total over-and-above completions, commitments and windfall	Minimum	3,080 homes
	Maximum	7,315 homes

- 5.5.5 There are 12 feasible combinations of the sub-area scenarios introduced above (three scenarios for Kidlington Green Belt, combined with four scenarios (2 x 2) for Bicester and Upper Heyford). As such, there are twelve feasible growth scenarios for the district / LPR as a whole.
- 5.5.6 There is an argument to suggest that all bar the two or three highest growth scenarios would provide for too few homes, in that supply does not exceed the clear preferred housing requirement figure (1,293 dpa; see Section 5.2) or does not exceed it by a sufficient amount (a ‘supply buffer’). However, on balance it is considered reasonable to test all 12 combinations. This is because there is an expectation that additional supply can be identified subsequent to the current consultation (notably within urban areas).

¹¹ Completions are sites that have been delivered since the start of the plan period. Commitments are sites with planning permission (either full or outline) or an existing allocation. Windfall sites are those that can be anticipated to come forward despite not having an allocation in the plan, because they are otherwise in accordance with policy, typically within settlement boundaries.

¹² Assumes Canalside and Higham Way deliver in line with LP 2,115 and NW Bicester delivers 2,775 homes in the plan period.

5.5.7 There also is an argument for ruling out the scenario that would see support for Shipton Quarry ahead of higher growth at Bicester or further growth at Heyford Park; however, on balance it is kept 'in the mix'.

5.5.8 A final consideration is employment land, with options / scenarios discussed in Box 5.1. The conclusion of the discussion presented in Box 5.2 is that there is only one reasonable scenario at the current time.

Conclusion

5.5.9 The 12 reasonable growth scenarios are presented in Table 5.9 and across the subsequent maps. These are the 'reasonable' growth scenarios, for appraisal and consultation, at the current time. This is on the basis of the process set out across this section of the report as a whole (as summarised in Figure 5.1).

5.5.10 Final points to note are as follows:

- There is invariably a need to make simplifying assumptions in order to arrive at a manageable number of scenarios, given the aim of arriving at scenarios that reflect the objectives of the LPR (such that they are essentially in the form of alternative key diagrams). A key motto is that "*the phrase all reasonable alternatives does not equate to all conceivable alternatives*,¹³ and there is clear precedent on the need for proportionality, in respect of the task of arriving at reasonable alternatives.
- To reiterate, it is recognised that a number of the scenarios arguably involve a quantum of housing growth that is unreasonably low. Equally, it is recognised that there is a strategic case for exploring higher growth. However, the 12 growth scenarios identified are considered reasonable given the current stage of the plan-making process and given an expectation that additional sources of supply will be identified prior to the Regulation 19 stage. At the current time it is not possible to identify a reasonable higher growth scenario on the basis of the discussion of sub-area scenarios presented in Section 5.4.
- 12 growth scenarios is more than is ideal, from a perspective of seeking to support understanding and engagement. At the next stage the aim will be to arrive at fewer scenarios.

Box 5.2: Employment land supply options / scenarios

The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, 2022; see Errata Note 2023) identifies that there is a headline need for ~280 ha of new employment land over the plan period. This is an important headline figure, although there is also a need to account for specific needs within this, e.g. for specific types of employment land.

Potential allocations are:

- Land East of M40 J9, Bicester (40 ha).
- Begbroke Science Park, 14.7 ha.
- Land adjacent to Symmetry Park, Bicester (6.3 ha).
- Canalside, Banbury (potentially 7.5 ha, but much uncertainty given existing employment onsite and further work needed in respect of masterplanning and integration of new homes, with 700 homes assumed above).
- Bicester Business Park – N.B. already an allocation in the 2015 Local Plan (3.3).
- Higham Way, Banbury 3 ha (instead of housing, which is the assumed use discussed above).

Supply from these sites totals 74.8 ha, and additionally it is reasonable to assume some additional land will be identified at non-strategic sites subsequent to the current consultation (as per discussion in Box 5.1).

The difference between this identified supply (74.8 ha) and the identified need (~280 ha) is in the region of 200ha. There is also a need to factor in completions and commitments (e.g. the committed site to the north of the A41 to the west of Bicester, as discussed above). However, even after having done so there is thought likely to be a supply shortfall at the current time, perhaps in the region of 50ha.

In this light, there is a clear case for exploring the possibility of at least one further employment land allocation. However, it is not possible to pinpoint any site or sites at the current time, for the purposes defining reasonable alternative growth scenarios. There will be a need to revisit this subsequent to the current consultation.

Potential locations are discussed further in Section 6 (under the Employment and economic growth heading).

¹³ Paragraph 170 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Inspector's Report (2021); available [here](#).

Table 5.9: The reasonable growth scenarios (with constants greyed-out and high growth indicated with blue text)

Scenario		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Completions / commitments ¹⁴		20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	20,206	
Windfall ¹⁵		1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Strategic Allocations	Banbury	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	
	Bicester	1,300	2,300	1,300	2,300	1,300	2,300	1,300	2,300	1,300	2,300	1,300	2,300	
	Kidlington	GB	0	0	0	0	300	300	300	300	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
		Non-GB	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450
	Heyford Park	0	0	1,235	1,235	0	0	1,235	1,235	0	0	1,235	1,235	
Rural area		500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	
Total new homes		24,286	25,286	25,521	26,521	24,586	25,586	25,821	26,821	26,286	27,286	27,521	28,521	
Per annum (pa)		1,214	1,264	1,276	1,326	1,229	1,279	1,291	1,341	1,314	1,364	1,376	1,426	
% over 1,293 pa*		-6	-2	-1	3	-5	-1	0	4	2	6	6	10	

Notes on RAG shading

As discussed in Section 5.2, there is a clear case for setting the housing requirement at 1,293 homes per annum.

This being the case, there is a need to highlight those scenarios involving total supply less than the housing requirement as **red**. Also, there is a need to ensure a 'supply buffer' i.e. a situation whereby the supply exceeds the housing requirement, with a view to ensuring the resilience of the plan, i.e. ensuring that unforeseen delays to delivery (which are fairly inevitable) do not lead to a situation whereby the housing requirement cannot be provided for such that the plan is deemed out of date and the district is subject to the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" (NPPF paragraph 11). On this basis, scenarios involving total supply at or only marginally in excess of the requirement (1,293 homes) are highlighted **amber**.

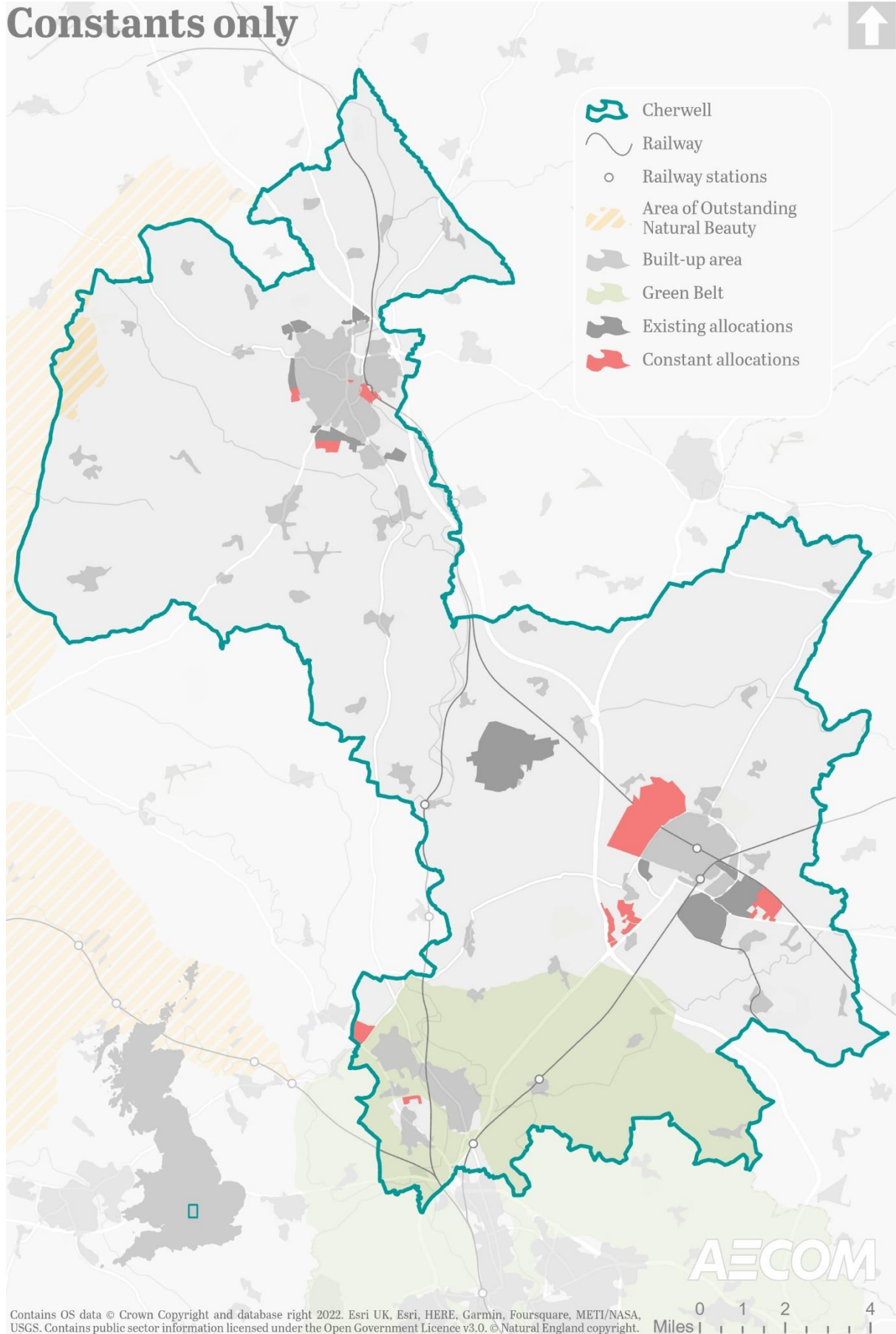
However, it is important to reiterate that the all of the 12 scenarios presented above are considered reasonable at the current stage in the plan-making process on the basis of an expectation that it will be possible to identify further sources of supply subsequent to the current consultation / prior to finalisation of the proposed submission plan (Regulations 19) including within the district's urban areas.

Also, there could be the potential to explore the possibility of a [stepped housing requirement](#).

¹⁴ Completions since the start of the plan period (1st April 2020) total 2,367 homes whilst commitments total 17,839 homes. Importantly, the commitments figure assumes that NW Bicester will deliver 2,775 homes in the plan period; however, in practice it could well deliver more. Also, the commitments figure assumes that two existing allocations (Canalside and Higham Way) will deliver 850 homes in total, as per their existing LP allocations, but in practice the figure will likely be lower (perhaps 500 homes).

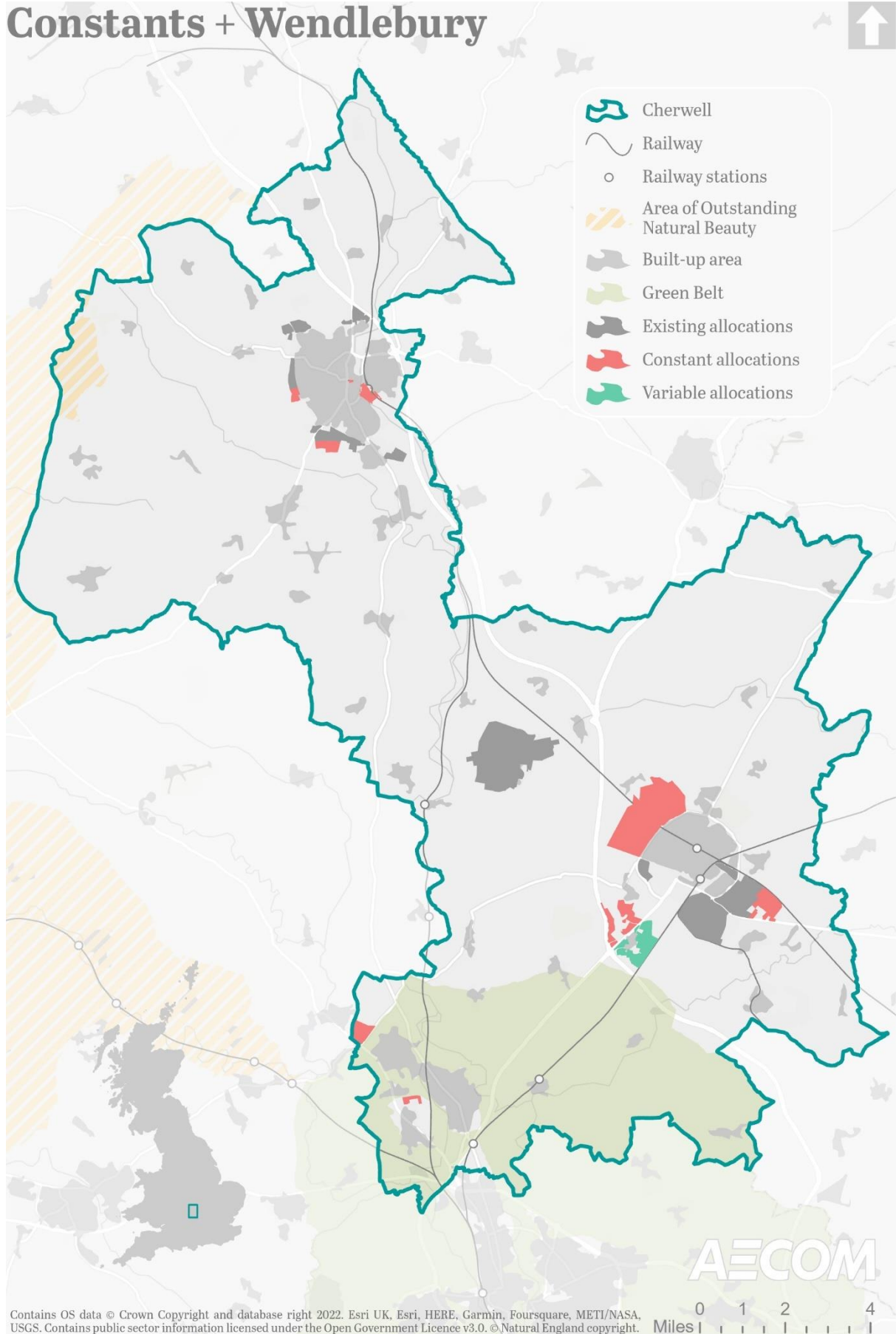
¹⁵ Windfall breaks down as 600 homes at small sites and 400 at larger sites. The total windfall figure (1,000 homes) is considered to be conservative, and could well be adjusted upwards prior to plan finalisation.

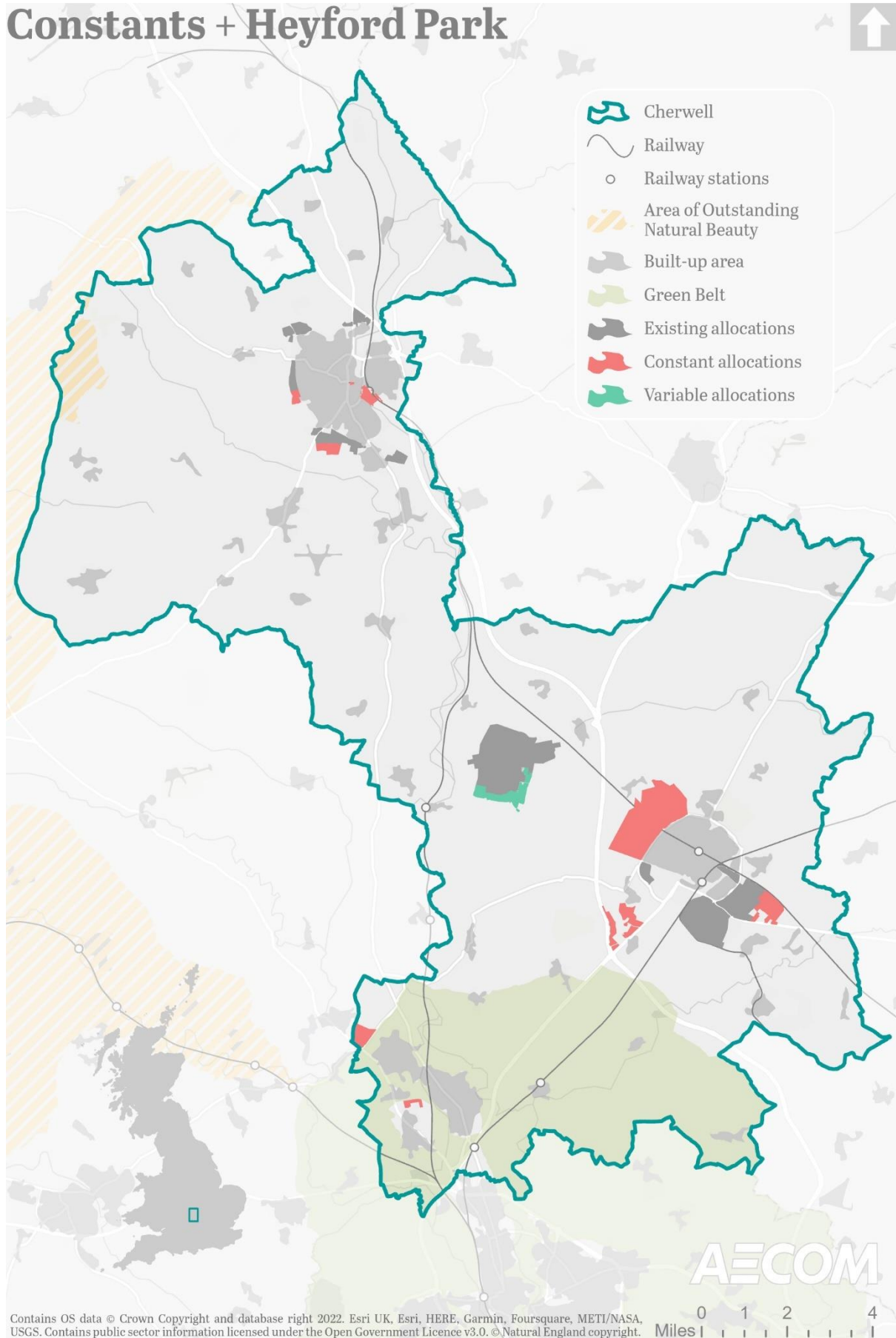
Constants only



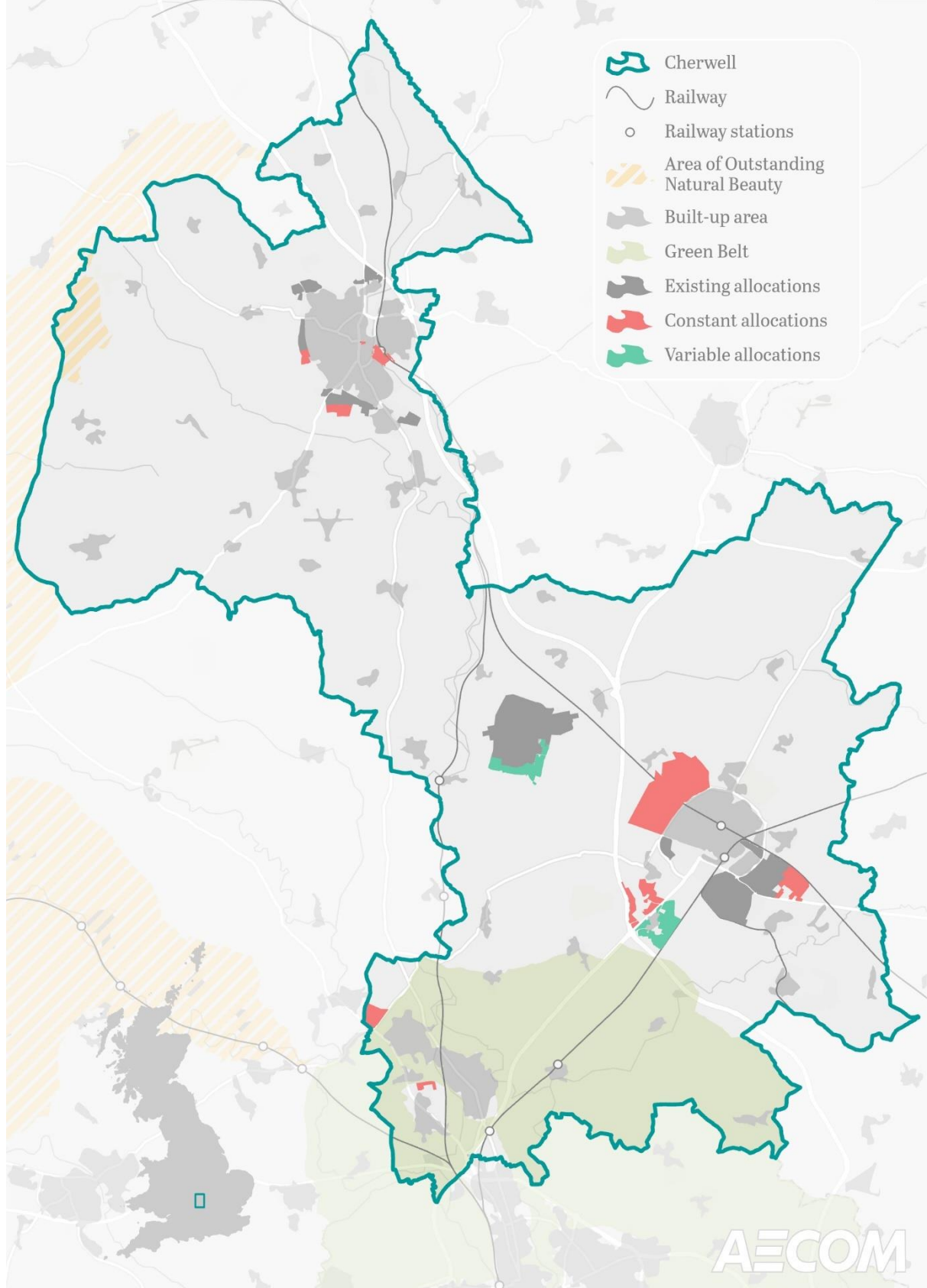
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Constants + Wendlebury



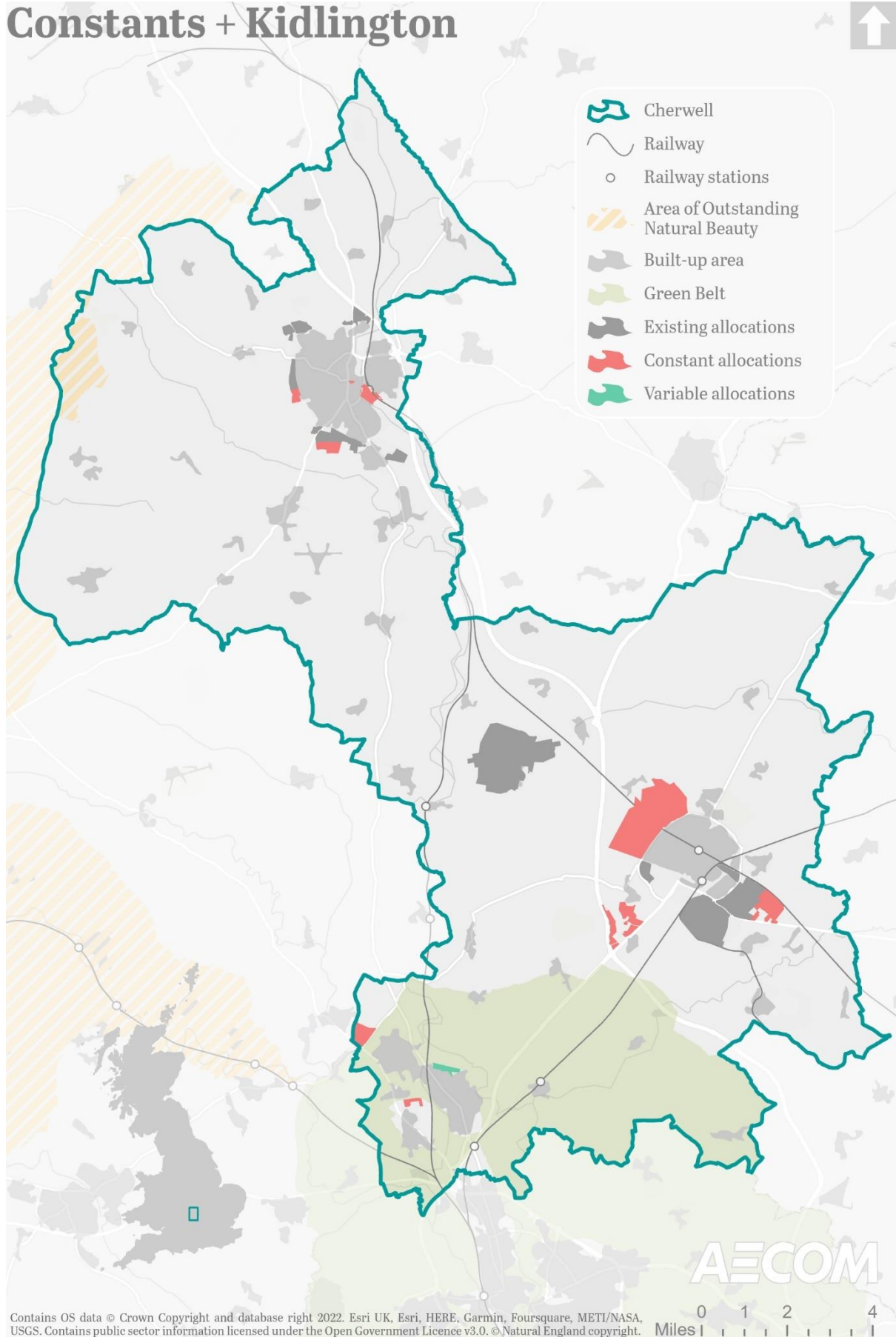


Constants + Wendlebury + Heyford Park



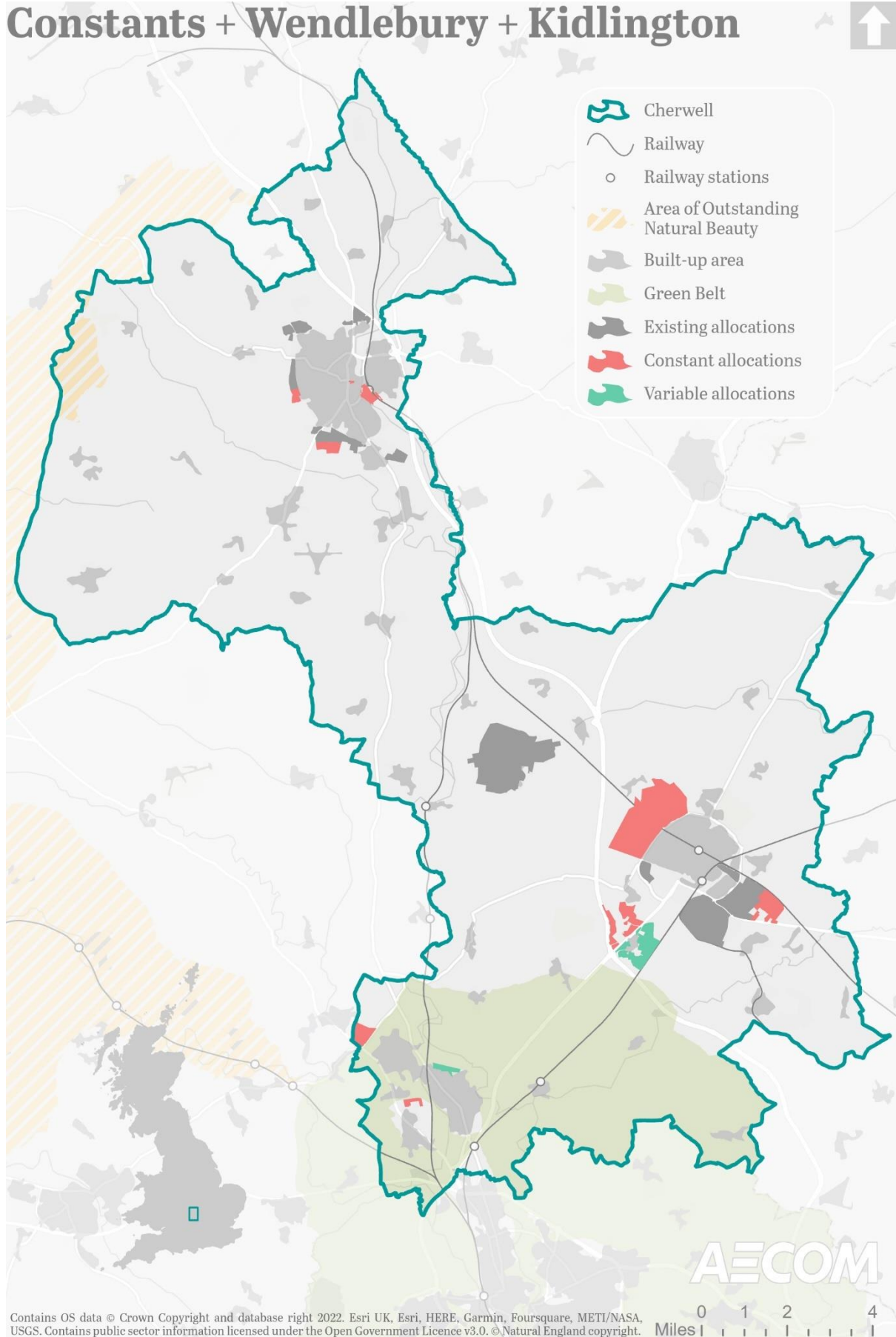
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Constants + Kidlington

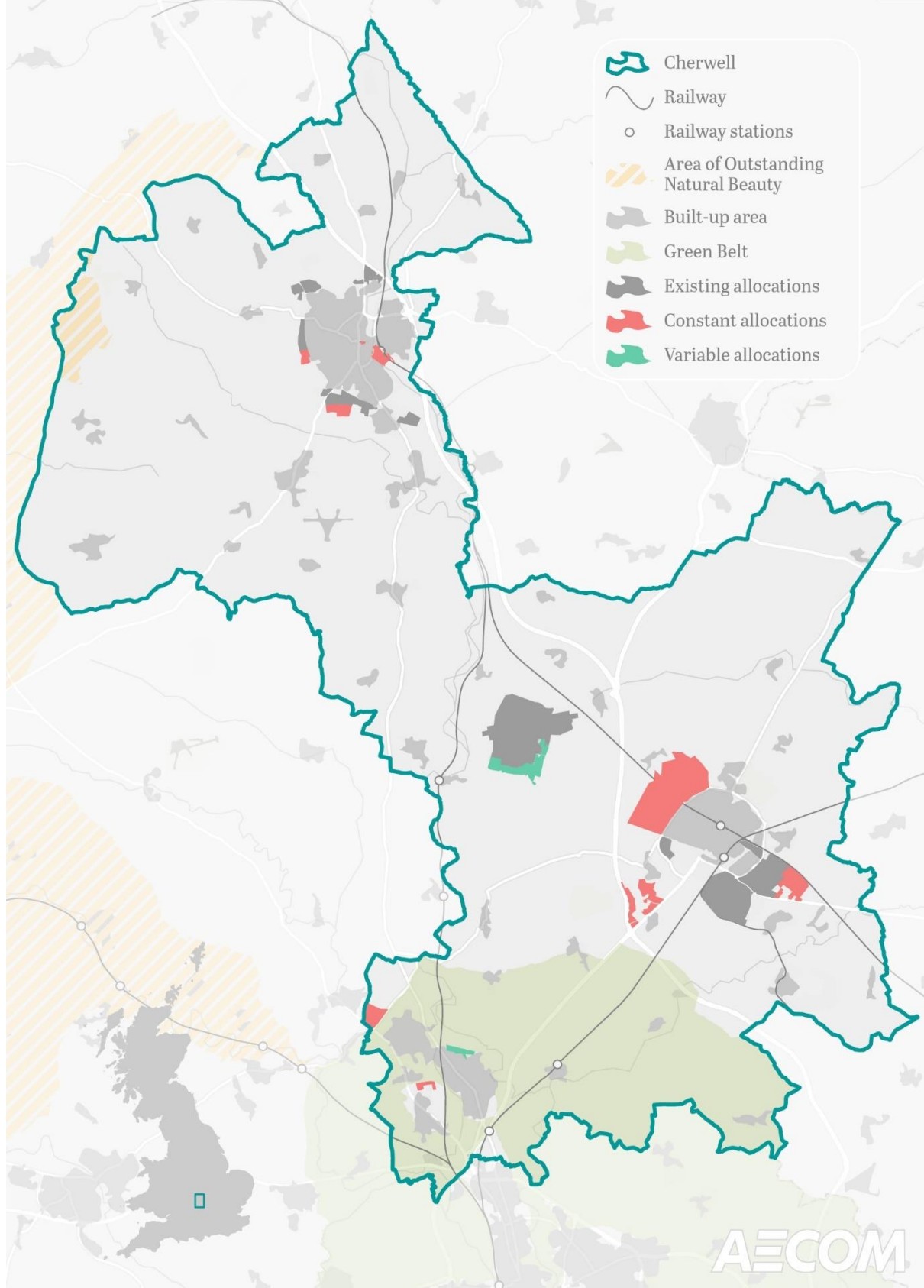


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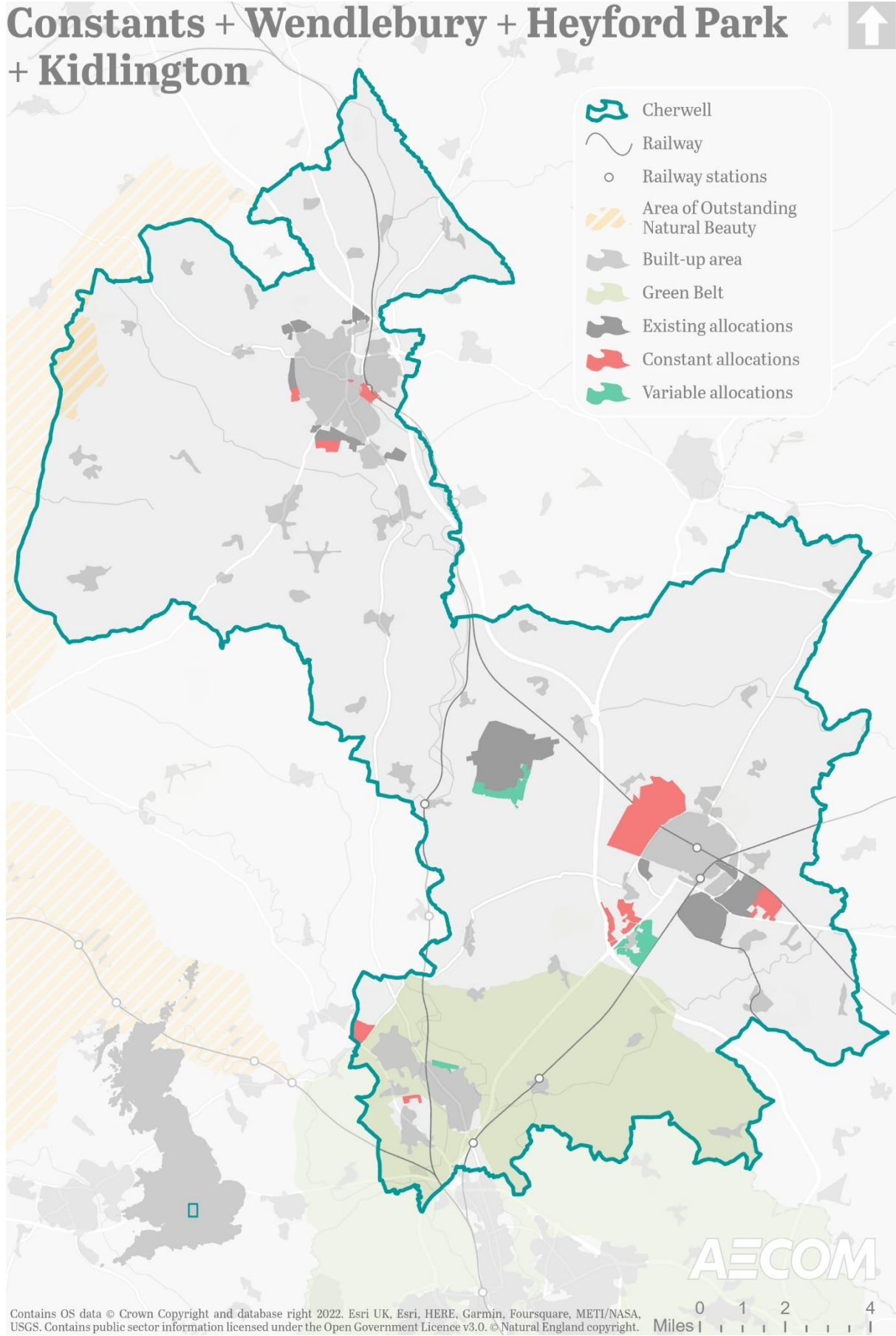
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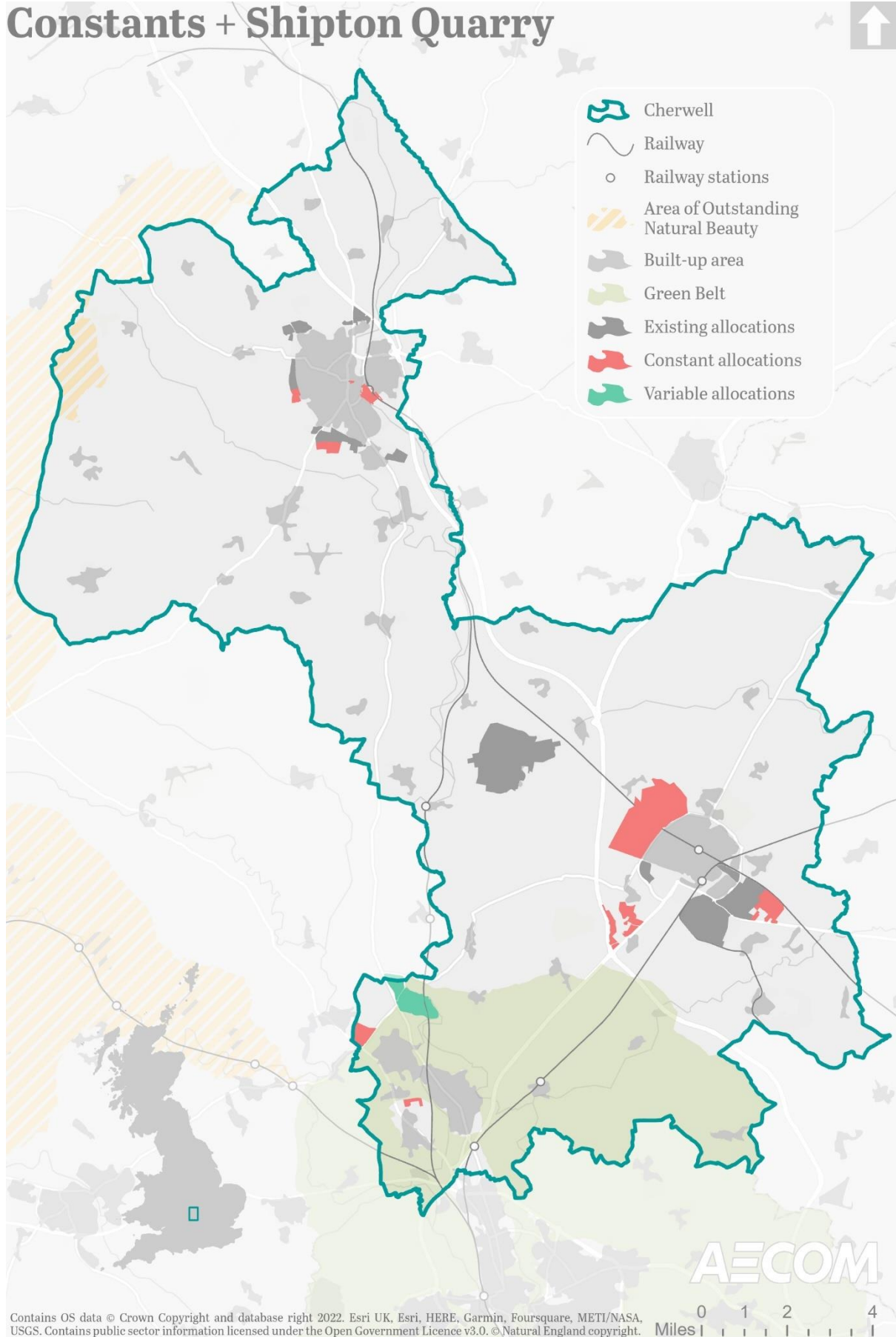
Constants + Heyford Park + Kidlington



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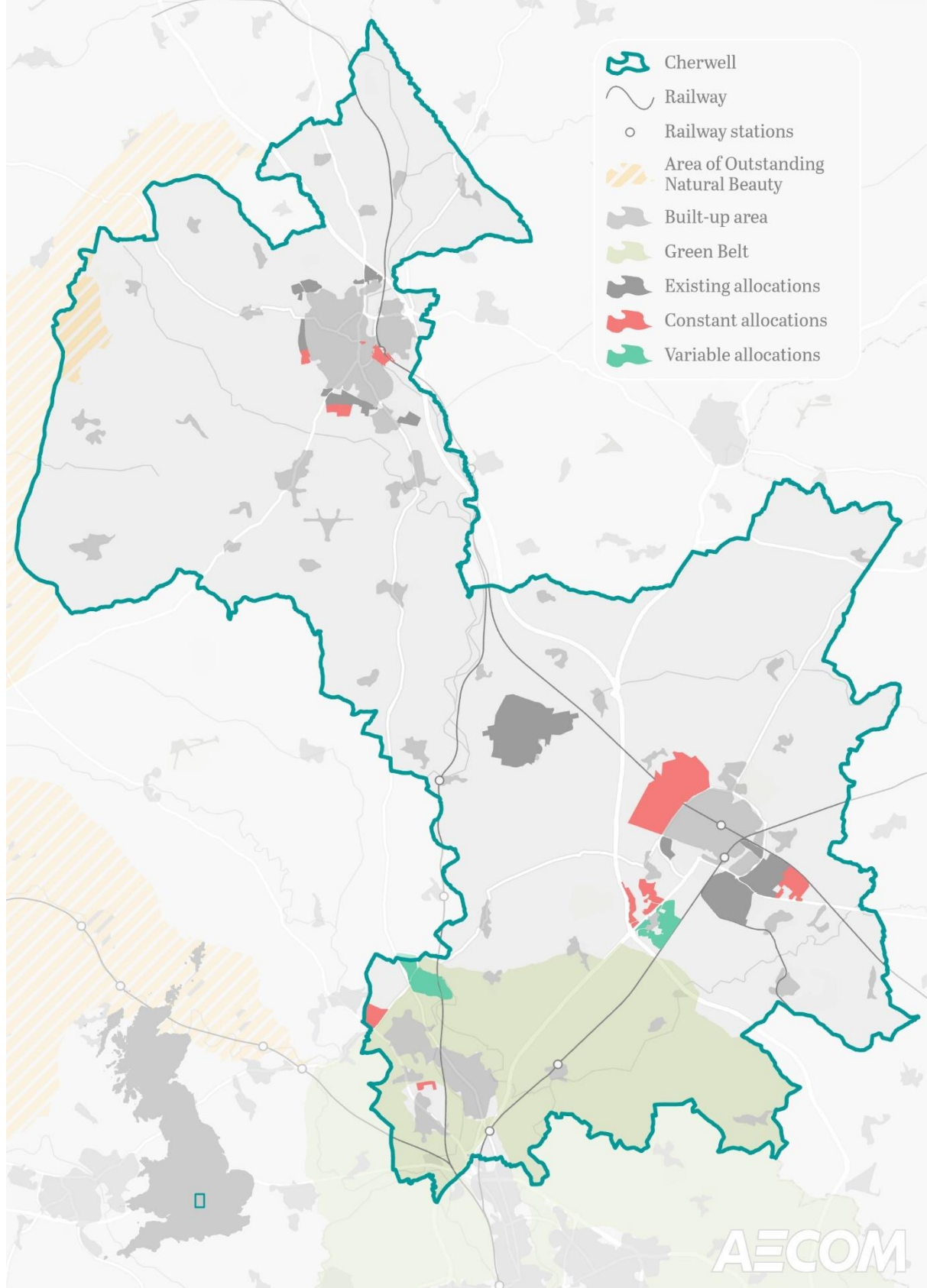


Constants + Shipton Quarry



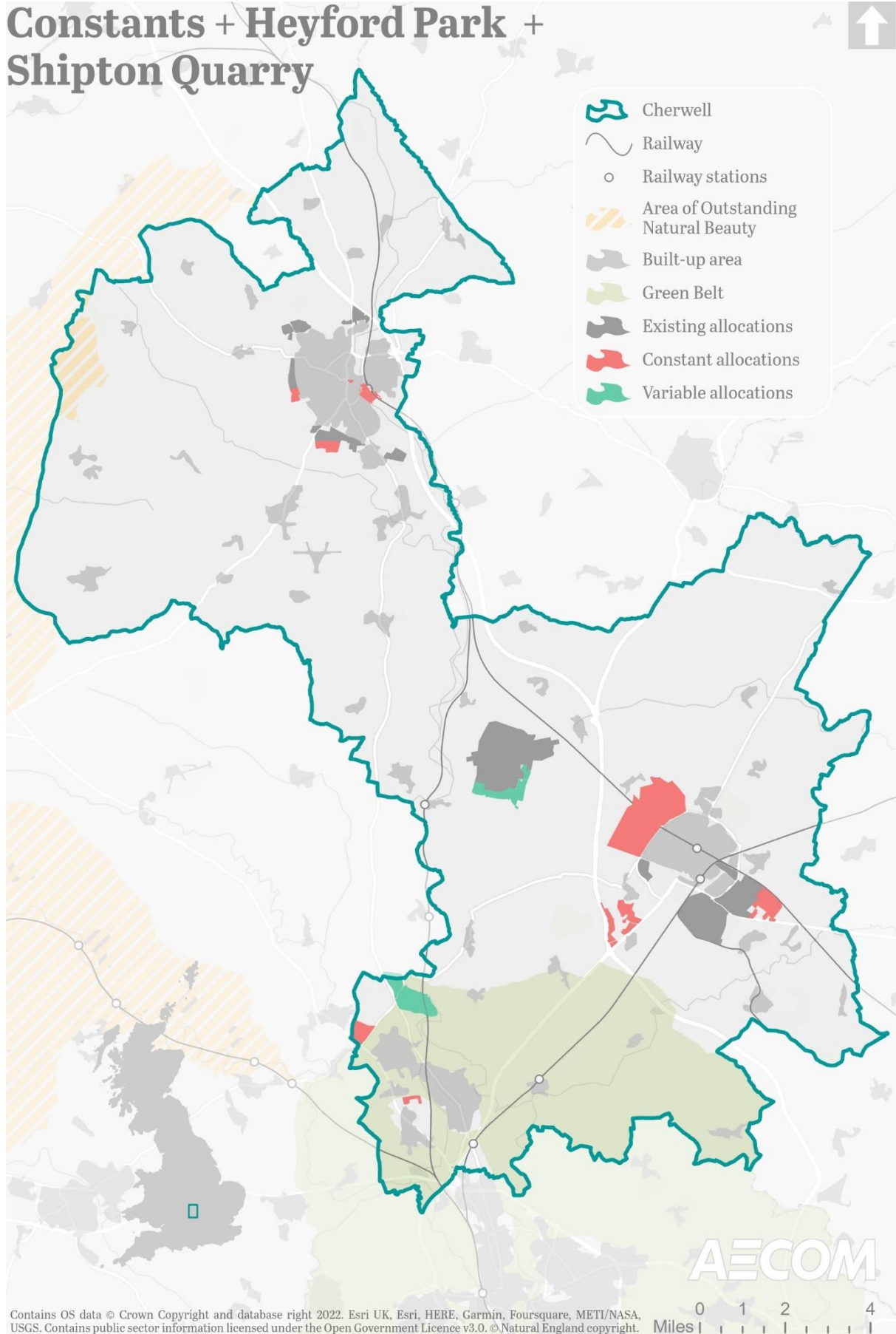
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Constants + Wendlebury + Shipton Quarry



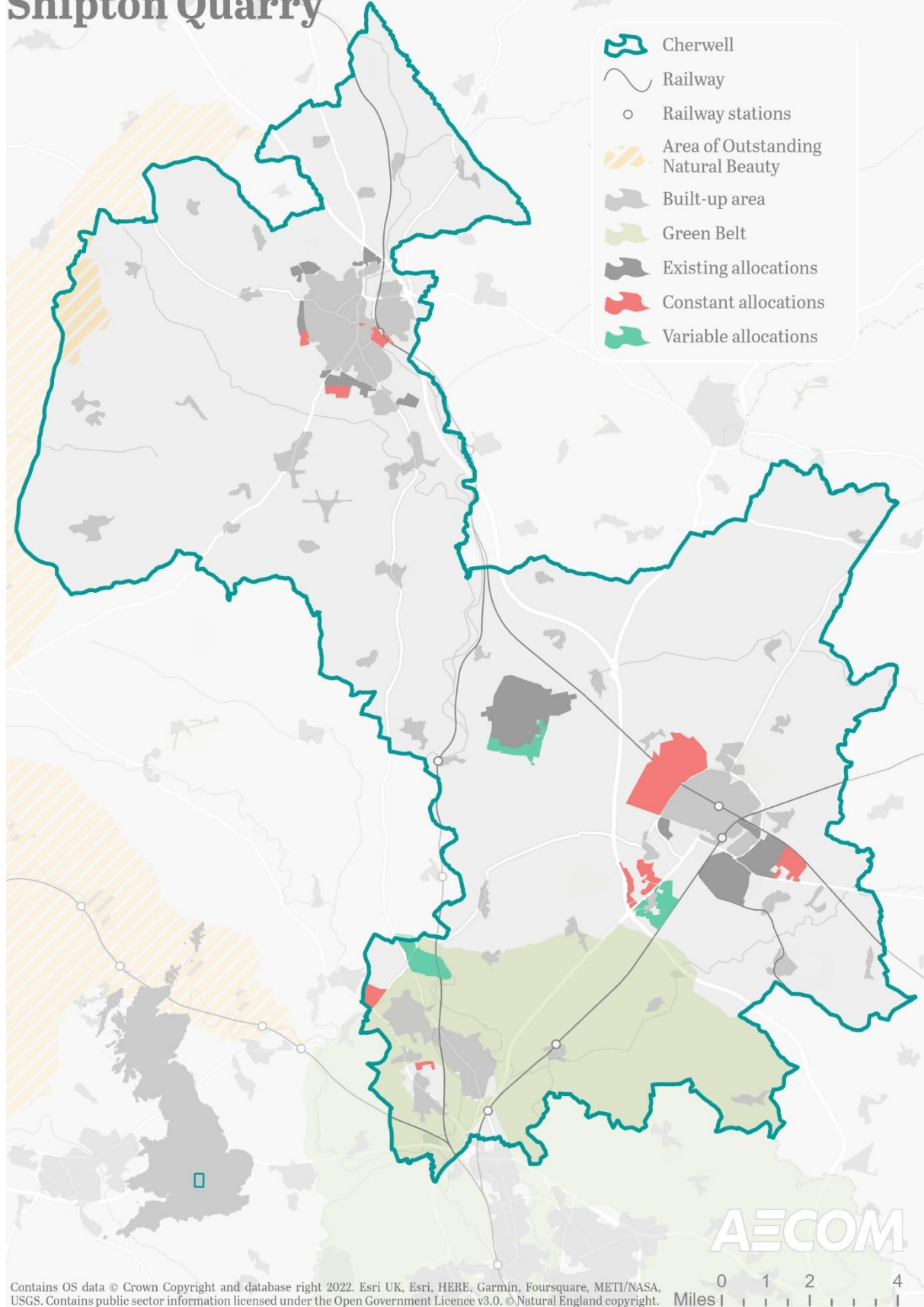
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Constants + Heyford Park + Shipton Quarry



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Constants + Wendlebury + Heyford Park + Shipton Quarry



6 Growth scenarios appraisal

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The aim of this section is to present an appraisal of the reasonable growth scenarios introduced above and further introduced in Table 6.1. To reiterate (see Section 4), these are the “reasonable alternatives”.
- 6.1.2 In summary, the scenarios vary in terms of four site allocations, which are considered to be those that are most marginal, on the basis of the process set out in Section 5. For each site there is a need to explore both: A) allocation versus non-allocation; and B) in-combination issues/impacts with the other three sites (with one exception; specifically, the scenarios reflect an assumption that higher growth at Kidlington would not be supported in combination with allocation of a new settlement at Shipton Quarry).

Table 6.1: The reasonable growth scenarios – summary

Scenario	Completions, commitments, windfall, constant allocations plus allocation of...	Total homes (2020-2040)	Homes per annum	Employment
1	-	24,286	1,214	As discussed in Box 5.2, the approach to employment land supply is held constant across the scenarios.
2	Wendlebury,	25,286	1,264	
3	Heyford Park	25,521	1,276	
4	Wendlebury, Heyford Park	26,521	1,326	
5	Kidlington	24,586	1,229	
6	Wendlebury, Kidlington	25,586	1,279	
7	Heyford Park, Kidlington	25,821	1,291	
8	Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	26,821	1,341	
9	Shipton Quarry	26,286	1,314	
10	Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	27,286	1,364	
11	Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	27,521	1,376	
12	Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	28,521	1,426	

6.2 Appraisal methodology

6.2.1 The appraisal is presented under 12 headings – one for each of the topics that together comprise the SA framework – before a final section presents conclusions, including a summary appraisal matrix. Under each heading, the aim is to:

- 1) rank the scenarios in order of performance (with a star indicating best performing); and then
- 2) categorise the performance in terms of ‘significant effects’ using **red** / **amber** / **light green** / **green**.¹⁶

6.2.2 Further points to note on methodology are as follows:

- Variable sites – are a primary focus of the appraisal here, although ‘constant’ site are taken into account when reaching conclusions on significant effects. Constant sites are a focus of appraisal in Section 9.
- Assumptions – there is a need to make a range of assumptions, e.g. around the nature of schemes that would come forward, infrastructure delivery etc. The appraisal aims to strike a balance between exploring and explaining assumptions on the one hand whilst, on the other hand, ensuring conciseness.
- Site specific materials – typically submitted by site promoters, are taken into account with due caution, given a risk of bias and mindful that site-specific proposals are subject to change.

¹⁶ **Red** indicates a significant negative effect; **amber** a negative effect of limited or uncertain significance; **light green** a positive effect of limited or uncertain significance; and **green** a significant positive effect. No colour indicates a neutral effect.

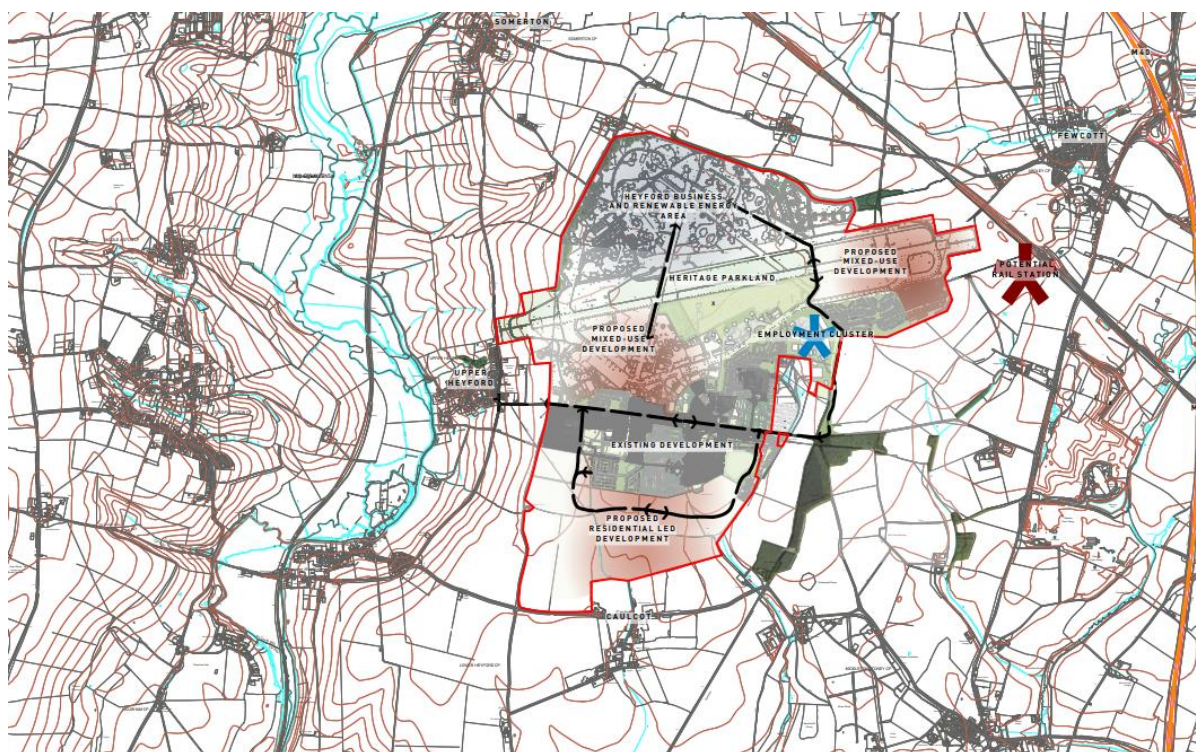
Air and wider environmental quality

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1

- 6.2.3 **Banbury** is an air quality hotspot in the district, with a particularly problematic Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) along the A422 Hennef Way, which sees heavy traffic, as the main road linking to the M40 (albeit few if any sensitive receptors intersect the AQMA). However, the approach to growth at Banbury is held constraint across the reasonable growth scenarios. Banbury is discussed further in Section 9.
- 6.2.4 There is also an AQMA constraining the centre of **Bicester**, intersecting a number of properties and an important walking / cycling route, including in the vicinity of Bicester Community Hospital. Bicester is one of the three 'variables' across the growth scenarios, and so there is a need to carefully consider the air quality implications of higher growth (Scenarios 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12).
- 6.2.5 The assumed location for higher growth (Wendlebury), would lead to traffic through the AQMA, e.g. car journeys towards Milton Keynes. However, there is a need to factor-in good rail connectivity (including to Milton Keynes, following EWR), excellent access to the M40, the potential for good cycle connectivity and also the timing of development relative to the anticipated national switch-over to EVs.
- 6.2.6 Also, and importantly, higher growth at Bicester could facilitate delivery of a southern link road, which could (subject to further investigation) do much to address current issues of traffic congestion and air quality. The Wendlebury site in question might help to deliver the western sector of this road; however, it is important to be clear that any strategic growth locations at Bicester would likely be required to contribute to required strategic road infrastructure. If the road can be delivered then there would be good potential to reduce traffic along the A41 to the west of Bicester, potentially enabling the road corridor to be reimagined as a public transport and walking / cycling corridor, acting as a 'gateway' to Bicester Garden Town and linking growth locations / Bicester P&R (which could develop into a 'transport hub') to Bicester Village and the town centre. Further discussion of the Wendlebury growth option is presented below.
- 6.2.7 With regards to Bicester, a further consideration is the risk of further growth at **Heyford Park**, leading to increased Bicester-bound traffic (and noting that the Bicester P&R is slightly out of the way for those travelling from Heyford Park). Also, and importantly, further growth at Heyford Park would lead to increased traffic through a number of rural villages, for example Middleton Stoney. This may not lead to concerns in respect of air quality but does give rise to related concerns in respect of wider environmental quality / health and road safety. However, the intention is that further housing growth would deliver transport improvements, including an improved bus service and a new commuter cycle link to Bicester.
- 6.2.8 Also, whilst it is not clear that the additional housing growth under consideration here (1,235 homes on mainly greenfield land to the south of Heyford Park) would *directly* lead to increased trip internalisation, it could do so *indirectly*, over time, if the effect is to support investment in sensitive, heritage-led development (including repurposed historic buildings) of the former airfield, which is a conservation area. A site promoter response to the Options consultation (2020) state: "*Heyford Park has the potential for higher levels of containment given the provision of employment and residential development and opportunities to secure 20 minute neighbourhoods... [our] concept plan illustrates that approximately 5,000 dwellings and 5,500 jobs (approximately 110,000sqm) can be accommodated at Heyford Park to meet Oxfordshire 2050 needs.*" Their proposal in 2020 was for a total of 5,500 homes and 5,500 jobs in the long-term (potentially by 2050), i.e. a settlement with a homes to jobs ratio of 1:1. However, given the sensitivities, there is no certainty regarding achievability of the promoter's long term vision.
- 6.2.9 Figure 6.1 presents the site promoter's 2050 concept plan. It is important to note the following context:

- A [masterplan](#) for the committed part of Heyford Park was approved in 2022. Additional development on land to the south is being explored on the basis of being capable of integration with the 2022 masterplan vision and help secure further infrastructure and improved transport links.
- The current 'proposed residential led development' to the south of the 'existing development' (specifically 1,235 homes by 2040) does not extend as far south as indicated in the figure below and extends further to the east (as far as the linear area of woodland known as the Heath).
- The intention is for the 1,235 homes residential led development to deliver a new road link, along the lines of what is shown in the figure below, which should help to improve bus services / connectivity.
- The current proposal is for the LPR to safeguard land at Ardley for a new / reopened train station.

Figure 6.1: 2050 concept plan submitted by the site promoter in 2021



- 6.2.10 The other two sites that are a variable across the reasonable growth scenarios - **Kidlington** (North of the Moors) and **Shipton Quarry** - are associated with a range of transport-related issues and opportunities, but it is difficult to relate these to air quality objectives, with any confidence. Kidlington is in proximity to Oxford City, where there is an area-wide AQMA; however, it is not clear that proximity serves to indicate constraint over-and-above the other sites in question, recognising that Oxford is a sub-regional hub.
- 6.2.11 Finally, related to air quality, are matters relating to **environmental quality / health**. As well as the matter of Heyford Park generating traffic through rural villages, which is discussed above, another concern potentially relates to Wendlebury. Specifically, noise pollution could be an issue, given the location of the site between the M40, the A41 and EWR, plus the site might be bisected by a link road (as discussed). However, the majority of the land directly adjacent to the M40 falls outside of the site red line boundary, as it is currently in use as a solar farm, and land adjacent to the railway is constrained by flood risk. Land closest to the M40/A41 junction might be well suited to employment, but this would be subject to viability.
- 6.2.12 In **conclusion**, it is a challenge to differentiate between the scenarios with any confidence. On the one hand, there are a range of site-specific issues and concerns, perhaps most notably in respect of Heyford Park. However, on the other hand, development at all of the sites in question could potentially serve to support the achievement of strategic transport objectives (including Heyford Park, where there is an opportunity to support improvements to transport connectivity in the longer term).
- 6.2.13 Having said this, Shipton Quarry is a location for growth that would represent a major departure from existing strategy, and is not being factored in to ongoing work being led by the County Council, including the [Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan](#). Also, there is potentially a concern with the transport implications of growth at both Shipton Quarry and Heyford Park, given shared road corridors.

- 6.2.14 Matters are discussed further below, under ‘Transport’.
- 6.2.15 On balance, it is only possible to confidently flag a concern with the lowest growth scenario, which would risk pressure for growth elsewhere, within a constrained sub-region, at locations where growth would not align well with transport objectives, and associated air quality objectives (also mindful that growth could come forward in the relatively short term, whilst the EV switchover remains ongoing).
- 6.2.16 With regards to significant effects, there is a need to account for those site allocations that are a constant across the reasonable growth scenarios, as well as the proposal to support 500 homes across non-strategic sites, at locations to be identified subsequent to the current consultation. There is also a need to account for an improving baseline situation, due to the national switch-over to EVs. On balance, broadly **neutral effects** are predicted, even for Scenario 1, but with some uncertainty.

Biodiversity

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3

- 6.2.17 Of the four sites that are a variable across the reasonable growth scenarios, it is **Shipton Quarry** that is subject to greatest biodiversity constraint, recognising that the entire central part of the site – specifically that part of the site that comprises the former quarry – is designated as a local wildlife site (LWS).
- 6.2.18 On the one hand, the habitats present presumably largely result from recent quarrying activities, as opposed to comprising semi-natural habitats that have developed as a result of many decades or centuries (potentially many centuries) of land use. This could serve to indicate relatively good potential to deliver extensive built form within the LWS – along with high quality green and blue infrastructure – without leading to major conflicts with strategic biodiversity objectives (given an assumption of carefully targeted compensatory habitat enhancement and creation, such that an overall biodiversity net gain is achieved in line with the legislator requirement under the Environment Act). However, on the other hand, the position of the LWS within the landscape could serve to indicate particular value and sensitivity. Specifically, there is a need to be mindful of the close association of the LWS with the River Cherwell corridor, and it is due to this close association that the LWS is identified as falling within a Conservation Target Area.
- 6.2.19 The site promoters point to the potential for development to deliver targeted biodiversity enhancements. However, there have been major changes to specific proposals over recent years, which serves to highlight the extent of the challenge. Specifically, whilst in 2020 the proposal was to retain the main area of existing ponds as a “primary nature conservation ‘bowl’”, by 2021 the proposal had evolved significantly, with an ‘ecology park’ proposed for land to the east of the railway line and adjacent to the River Cherwell (where the land is currently under arable cultivation, and subject to flood risk). There is clear merit to the idea of a biodiversity-focused country park to the east of the railway line, given the association of the land here with the Oxford Canal and a large meander of the River Cherwell. However, at this stage, it is far from clear that a suitably high net biodiversity gain could be achieved – as measured at a suitable landscape scale (e.g. at the scale of the River Cherwell corridor) – given the LWS constraint, and despite the proposal to deliver a well-targeted, biodiversity-focused new country park.
- 6.2.20 The concept masterplans received from the site promoter in 2020 and then in 2021 are presented below, as Figure 6.2 and 6.3. In 2020 the proposal was for 1,500 – 2,000 homes, with the potential for a second phase involving land to the northwest (~2,000 homes). The latest proposal, on the basis of the information submitted in 2021, is for 2,500 homes (at 40 dwellings per hectare, dph) with the potential for a second phase involving 2,500 homes across land to the west. Also shown below, as Figure 6.4, is a Google Earth image from 2006, showing extensive vegetation across the site (more than shown by the latest imagery).

6.2.21 Finally, it is important to note that much of the former quarry is also designated as a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), on account of exposed geological strata. It is not clear that this is a major constraint to development, given the potential to retain exposed strata and greatly increase the ability for the public to access, understand and appreciate the SSSI (the site is not currently accessible). However, this is a matter that warrants further consideration, in discussion with Natural England. The proposal in 2020 was for a primary area of retained geological strata to link closely with the main area of open space (i.e. open space shown at the western extent of Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Concept plan for Shipton Quarry, as submitted by the site promoter in 2020



Figure 6.3: Concept plan for Shipton Quarry, as submitted by the site promoter in 2021

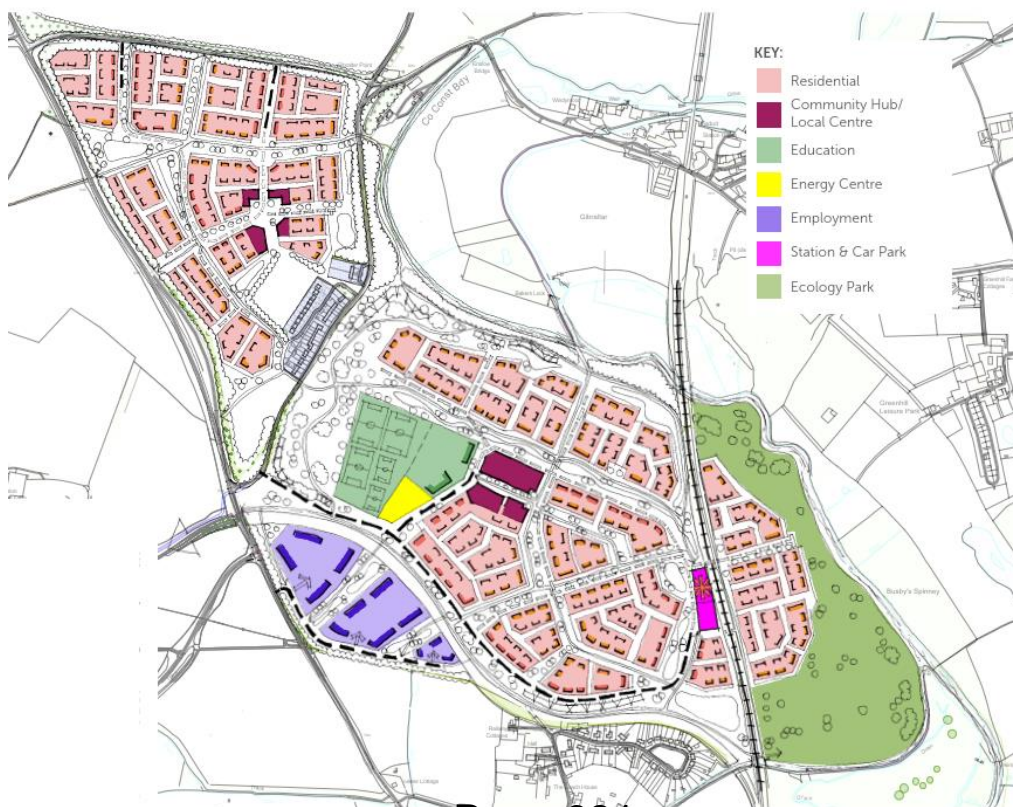


Figure 6.4: Satellite imagery from 2006 (Google Earth)

- 6.2.22 The next ‘variable’ site for consideration is **Wendlebury** which – it is assumed – would come into consideration as an allocation in order to deliver a higher growth strategy at Bicester. The site promoters suggest a 2,850 home scheme, involving significant development to the east of the railway line to Oxford (see Figure 6.5); however, the assumption here is that development would *not* extend beyond the railway line, primarily on account of flood risk and biodiversity constraints to the east. Specifically, nearly all land to the east of the railway line falls within a fluvial flood risk zone, and much of the land is identified as floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat by the nationally available (albeit there is no designated LWS, and satellite imagery shows some recent arable cultivation). The site promoters propose to address flood risk by “land raising and lowering”; however, there is a clear need to avoid flood risk in the first instance, as far as possible, in line with the sequential approach (discussed further below). With regards to land lowering, it is recognised that this could support targeted wetland habitat creation, and also that the site promoters suggest the potential to achieve a 20% biodiversity net gain overall. However, there is no certainty regarding the potential for this strategy to prove successful, from a biodiversity perspective, and there is a need for caution given that land here is sensitive on account of its association with the Upper Ray Meadows [Living Landscape](#), and noting that Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSI is less than ~2km downstream. The land in question (i.e. the priority habitat east of the railway line) does not fall within a Conservation Target Area, but it is identified by the Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022) as falling within the [Core Zone](#) of the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network.
- 6.2.23 With regards to the assumed option of a ~1,000 home scheme to the west of the railway line (avoiding built development within the flood risk zone), this is thought to give rise to relatively limited concerns, from a biodiversity perspective, although there would still be a need to carefully consider hydrological linkages to the SSSI downstream. It is important to be clear that the entire Wendlebury Area falls within the extent of the Upper Ray Meadows and Bernwood Forest Living Landscape, within which the Wildlife Trust focuses its conservation efforts. The Living Landscape is discussed within the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022), under the ‘Otmoor, Bernwood and Ray’ [heading](#).
- 6.2.24 The other two sites in question are considered to be fairly unconstrained, from a biodiversity perspective.
- 6.2.25 With regards to **Heyford Park**, the eastern extent of a southern extension (1,235 homes) would envelop a tree belt and abut a woodland, and both features link to the woodlands of Middleton Park (in turn, the main woodland falls within a conservation target area). These features appear on the pre-1914 OS map, but there is limited priority habitat (according to the national dataset), and there might be some potential for expansion of the woodland (it is associated with a historic bridleway) and/or improved management.

Figure 6.5: Concept plan for Wendlebury (N.B. larger than assumed here), as submitted by the site promoter



6.2.26 With regards to **Kidlington** (North of the Moors), the firm assumption is that a long term defensible Green Belt gap would be retained to the River Cherwell corridor, to the north, although development would impact on a series of hedgerows that intersect the site, which are shown on the pre-1914 OS map (N.B. the hedgerow at the northern extent of the site has been recently planted). It is also noted that Rushy Meadows SSSI is located less than 1km distant, to the southwest; however, there is much intervening built form, and generally in the vicinity of the SSSI, and significant hydrological connectivity seems unlikely. The possibility of access arrangements impacting on an area of trees with TPOs is another consideration.

N.B. Kidlington is also in relative proximity to the internationally important Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC). However, the distance involved (~4km) serves to limit concerns around potential impact pathways. Matters are explored through a stand-alone Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

6.2.27 In **conclusion**, it is fair to flag a concern with Shipton Quarry, at this early stage, ahead of further detailed work and consultation with key stakeholder organisations, including Natural England, the Wildlife Trust and the Canal and Rivers Trust. The site is closely associated with the River Cherwell corridor – which is a conservation priority area – which serves to indicate a degree of sensitivity, albeit also potentially opportunity. There is also a potential concern regarding Wendlebury, on account of the close association of land here with the Upper Ray Meadows broad landscape, which is another conservation priority area of sub-regional and potentially wider importance (in combination with the Bernwood Forest, to the south); however, concerns are considered quite limited, on the assumption of a scheme that is far more modest in scale than that currently proposed by the site promoter.

6.2.28 With regards to growth quantum, on balance it is considered appropriate to flag a concern with the lowest growth scenario, which could lead to increased pressure for growth elsewhere within a constrained sub-region. With regards to the highest growth scenarios - Scenarios 11 and 12 - it could feasibly be the case that growth at both Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry is supportive of an ambition to deliver strategic enhancements along the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor (in terms of wide-ranging natural capital and ecosystem service objectives), but this is highly uncertain at this stage in the plan-making process.

6.2.29 With regards to **significant effects**, there are concerns with one of the sites that is held constant across the growth scenarios, namely SE Bicester (800 homes; see further discussion in Section 9). This being the case, **uncertain or moderate negative effects** are predicted for the worst performing scenarios.

Climate change adaptation

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
★ 1	2	★ 1	2	★ 1	2	★ 1	2	★ 1	2	★ 1	2

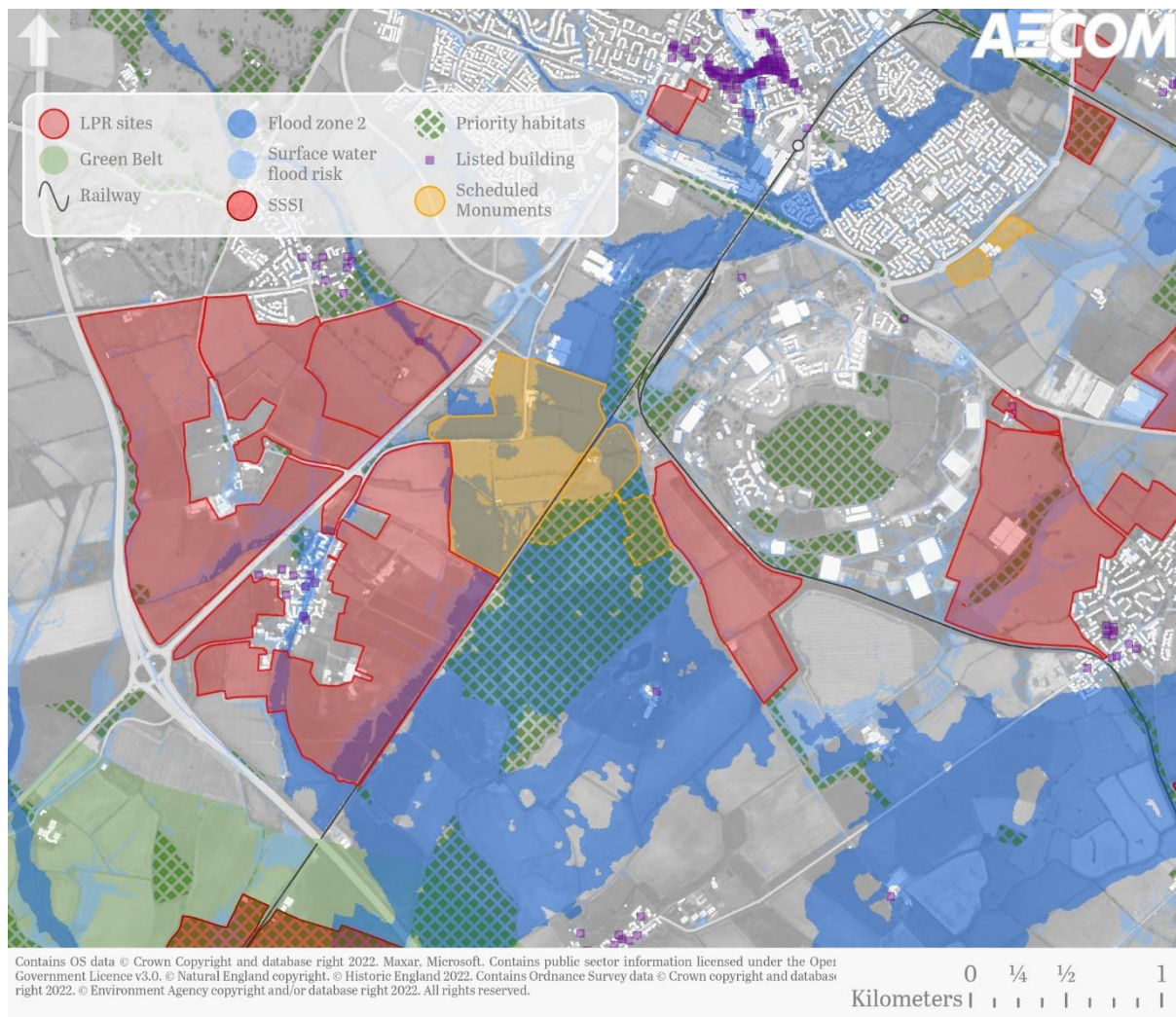
6.2.30 The key consideration here is the need to avoid development - in particular new homes - encroaching on fluvial flood risk zones, noting the possibility of expanded flood risk zones under climate change scenarios. A secondary consideration is surface water flood risk, noting that it is often possible to deal effectively with surface water flood risk through masterplanning and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Another consideration is development impacting on water flows and, in turn, down-hill / down-stream flood risk; however, it is difficult to pinpoint issues / opportunities ahead of detailed work, and it is typically the case that SuDS can be implemented to ensure no net worsening of run-off rates, and often a betterment.

6.2.31 Taking the four variable site options in order of flood risk constraint, beginning with the least constrained:

- **Heyford Park** – is associated with raised land between river valleys (the Cherwell and the Ray), and accordingly there are no fluvial flood risk zones intersecting the current site in question (a southern extension for 1,235 homes by 2040) or the wider Heyford Park site (which could come into consideration for additional growth, e.g. by 2050). However, there are two surface water flood channels passing through the site, which could feasibly be associated with a degree of fluvial flood risk upon closer investigation. Both of these follow field boundaries, which serves to suggest good potential to avoid new homes intersecting the flood zone, with the eastern-most of the two following a notable tree belt (discussed above under ‘Biodiversity’). Furthermore, this eastern flood channel is associated with a wastewater treatment works (WwTW), which is discussed further below.
- **Kidlington** (North of the Moors) – is closely associated with the River Cherwell corridor, but the firm proposal is to retain a Green Belt buffer between the site and the fluvial flood risk zone. The fluvial flood zone intersects the eastern extent of the site; however, there is a strong argument for delivering green / blue infrastructure within this part of the site in any case, to address historic environment constraint.
- **Shipton Quarry** – the nationally available datasets showing fluvial and surface water flood risk serve to indicate limited constraint. However, there is a clear need to sense check and confirm the situation, ahead of any further detailed work to explore the possibility of a new settlement, given the inherent characteristics of the site, namely significantly lowered land (i.e. a quarry) adjacent to the River Cherwell. The main promotional document received from the site promoters includes a section on flood risk, but this presents limited detail, for example stating: *“There is also a medium to high risk of flooding from River Cherwell, thus a detailed flood risk assessment must be completed and will be submitted with any planning application for the scheme.”* It is recognised that developments within former quarry sites are not uncommon, but there is a need to ensure a proactive, and plan-led approach to flood risk.
- **Wendlebury** (Bicester) – is heavily constrained by flood risk, given the close association of land to the southwest of Bicester with the extensive floodplains of the Upper Ray Meadows, which is a recognised landscape area, of at least sub-regional significance, as discussed above under ‘Biodiversity’. The assumption here, for the purposes of exploring reasonable growth scenarios (through appraisal and consultation) is that built form (particularly residential) would avoid fluvial flood risk zones, in line with the nationally required sequential approach to avoiding flood risk, hence the assumption is a ~1,000 home scheme as opposed to the 2,800 homes scheme proposed by the site promoters. However, even a ~1,000 home scheme would likely be constrained on account of flood risk (subject to further investigation), noting: A) land to the east of Wendlebury is bounded on all sides by fluvial flood risk zones, such that there is a need to consider the potential for safe access and egress during a major flooding event, albeit it is recognised that the flood zone to the north is very narrow; and B) the surface water flood zone extends notably beyond the fluvial flood zone in the vicinity of the railway line. There are three further points to make, regarding links between flood risk and development options in this area:

- Wendlebury itself is significantly affected by a fluvial flood risk channel, with numerous homes intersecting the flood risk zone. The site promoters propose to proactively address this, by delivering a ‘flood bypass’ of the existing village, which is potentially a significant opportunity for ‘planning gain’. However, this proposal is made in the context of a proposed 2,800 home scheme (to include extensive development within the existing fluvial flood risk zone), hence it will be for the site promoters to confirm that the flood bypass could be delivered as part of a more modest scheme, e.g. ~1,000 homes.
- With regards to existing flood risk affecting Wendlebury, there is also a need to consider planned and potential upstream development, within sites LPR37 and LPR38, as discussed above, in Section 5. In short, there is significant committed growth, and the potential for significant further growth over-and-above that which is committed, including 500 homes to the south of Chesterton, which is the firm assumption here (i.e. 500 homes south of Chesterton is a ‘constant’ across the growth scenarios). All of the land here drains to Wendlebury, specifically two recognised streams and two further surface water flood channels (i.e. all four channels converge at Wendlebury), hence there is a need for caution, albeit there could also be the potential for development within LPR37 and LPR38 to deliver a betterment, in terms downstream flood risk affecting Wendlebury. Indeed, this is understood to be a matter that has been a focus of the planning application process for the recently permitted strategic employment scheme within LPR38 (ref. [22/01144/F](#)), which will involve rerouting a stream corridor.
- In general, the flood risk ‘picture’ is quite complicated in the vicinity of the A41 corridor southwest of Bicester, and Bicester as a whole, because this is low lying land associated with a high density of tributaries of the River Ray (including several that converge at Wendlebury). The situation is not helped by the fact that only one tributary is named on the OS map, namely the Gagle Brook. This is potentially a barrier to strategic planning for growth alongside flood risk management / climate change resilience. Figure 6.6 aims to present an overview of the flood risk picture affecting Bicester.

Figure 6.6: A map to inform strategic planning for growth alongside flood risk management at SW Bicester



- 6.2.32 In **conclusion**, there is a clear need to flag a concern with the option of growth at Wendlebury, albeit through further detailed work it may be possible to identify the potential for strategic growth in this area that does not give rise to a concern, from a flood risk perspective, and there may be the potential to address existing flood risk affecting Wendlebury, leading to a significant betterment / planning gain. There are also question-marks regarding flood risk at Shipton Quarry, which would require further investigation. A further consideration is the possibility of growth at both Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry (Scenarios 11 and 12) enabling or facilitating investment in strategic flood water attenuation / natural flood risk management along the River Cherwell corridor, to the benefit of locations downstream at risk, within Kidlington and Oxford; however, it is not possible to suggest an opportunity with any certainty at this stage.
- 6.2.33 With regards to **significant effects**, it is considered to predict moderate or uncertain negative effects for all scenarios, mindful of the package of sites that is a constant across all of the growth scenarios. See further discussion in Section 9.

Climate change mitigation

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	★1	★1	★1	2	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1

- 6.2.34 The scope of discussion here focuses on per capita greenhouse gas emissions from the **built environment**, mindful that alignment of the reasonable growth scenarios with strategic transport objectives is a focus of discussion under other topic headings.
- 6.2.35 A detailed discussion of the potential for the LPR to support strategic objectives around minimising per capita built environment greenhouse gas emissions and, in turn, support rates of decarbonisation in line with district, county and national net zero carbon targets, is presented in Section 9.
- 6.2.36 The focus of discussion here is in respect of the potential for each of the reasonable growth scenarios to support a focus of growth at strategic-scale scale schemes, and to support higher density mixed use communities, with a view to minimising per capita built environment emissions.
- 6.2.37 In this respect, **Shipton Quarry** *potentially* performs well, as a location for growth, relative to the other three site options that are a variable across the growth scenarios. This is on account of the scale of the proposed scheme (the site promoters suggest 2,500, with the potential for a further phase of 2,500, but the assumption here is simply ~2,000 homes). There is also *some* potential for a nucleated built form, specifically within the eastern part of the site (see Figure 6.3), where the new community would be somewhat centred on a local centre and train station, where there might be potential for higher densities (and land levels may support this). Also, it is noted that an employment area is proposed near adjacent to the eastern residential area, which could lead to an opportunity to balance demand for heat and power across the day. Finally, it is worth noting that the potential for hydropower could feasibly be explored.
- 6.2.38 However, the latest proposal is for a scheme that is less nucleated than that previously proposed in 2020 (Figure 6.2), plus the built form could become less-nucleated-still, were the proposed second phase to eventually come forward, to the west of the A4260. Also, there is a need to consider the possibility of abnormal development costs impacting on the availability of funds to direct towards planning for renewable energy infrastructure (see Section 9) or achievement of the highest standards of building design.
- 6.2.39 It is also helpful and appropriate to review materials received from the site promoter, including with a view to building an understanding of their commitment to directing limited funds to built environment decarbonisation focused measures (i.e. in a way that maintains overall development viability); however, (as discussed above) site specific proposals are naturally subject to change, including in response to local plan policy. The intention is for the Cherwell LPR to set stringent policy on built environment decarbonisation, as discussed further below, in Section 9.

- 6.2.40 With regards to the latest promotional document received from the site promoters, it is notable for dedicating four of the first five sections to a high level discussion of climate change policy, but then subsequently providing very little detail regarding the merits of the site (most importantly) or the specific proposed scheme (which is subject to change), from a built environment decarbonisation perspective.
- 6.2.41 In particular, there is very little information provided to evidence a conclusion that supporting growth at Shipton Quarry would lead to an opportunity over-and-above other competing strategic growth locations (N.B. it is recognised that the site is associated with a strategic transport opportunity, namely a new train station). Rather, the document primarily presents high level statements that could apply to any strategic site, for example: *“A new energy centre is located centrally which will be used to help power activity within the new settlement.”* It is recognised that built environment decarbonisation is a fast moving policy area, such that there is a need to ‘future proof’ proposals, but there is nonetheless a need to take a proactive strategic approach. The other main commitment is very high level: *“The intention is to create a truly sustainable eco-community with low carbon... buildings designed to a highly insulated ‘fabric first’ approach supplemented with renewable energy options and network energy systems... This would work in conjunction with the wider sustainable measures of sustainable travel, ecological enhancements, sustainable drainage, and potential carbon sequestration.”*
- 6.2.42 **Heyford Park** is the next largest scheme, with the current proposal involving 1,235 homes. With regards to the characteristics of the site, the proposed configuration of growth is somewhat linear, and the existing community will (modestly) separate the new community from the local centre and employment land. With regards to the commitments set out under the “Sustainability and energy” heading within the briefing note received from the site promoters in September 2022, there is a focus on listing out headline commitments from the permitted 2018 planning application, with the explanation: *“This approach will be continued in any future development.”* This cannot be described as proactive, given the extent to which understanding built environment decarbonisation issues/opportunities has moved on since 2018; for example, combined heat and power (CHP, with generators typically housed in ‘energy centres’) is no longer seen as a low carbon technology, due to decarbonisation of the national grid. Also, the following statement is unclear: *“There are also opportunities to fully offset energy consumption with low carbon housing and large scale solar provision energy and other renewable technologies.”* However, it is important to reiterate that developer proposals are subject to change and will ultimately need to demonstrate conformity with the emerging local plan policies, which are set to significantly update the current policy requirements locally.
- 6.2.43 The next site for consideration is **Wendlebury**, where the site promoters have proposed a 2,800 home scheme, but the current assumption is delivery of ~1,000 homes. The promotional material received through the Options consultation (2021) does include a clear commitment to net zero development, with a helpful distinction made between operational / in use emissions and non-operational emissions (e.g. embodied emissions in building materials). However, the terminology / commitments are not defined with any precision, which leaves them open to interpretation (see further discussion in Section 9), and leaves open the potential for confusion (and even ‘greenwash’). Beyond this, the promotional material does not present any built environment decarbonisation-related masterplanning proposals (e.g. ground solar linking to large scale battery storage (e.g. within ‘energy centres’), which is likely to be necessary to enable net zero developments, albeit there will likely also be a major role for smaller scale battery storage to balance power supply and demand, including EV batteries). However, there is a proposal to deliver a Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) facility at the site, with a view to delivering ‘offsite construction’ of homes (likely to include ‘modular’ construction) not only for Wendlebury, but also for other development sites in the sub-region. This is a considerable opportunity, as there is an urgent need nationally to support MMC.¹⁷ However, it is unclear whether the facility would remain a viable option under a ~1,000 home scenario.
- 6.2.44 The final variable site option is **Kidlington** (North of the Moors), which is a smaller site (~300 homes). This is a site that is not likely to be associated with any abnormal development costs, and development viability is relatively strong at Kidlington, so there is every potential to bring forward development in line with district-wide policy on built environment decarbonisation (see Section 9). However, the size of the site – also mindful of its somewhat linear shape, and a potential need for modest densities, at least in part, given constraints – could feasibly mean that the built environment decarbonisation opportunity is lower than is the case for the sites discussed above.

¹⁷ For example, a recent “net zero whole life carbon roadmap for the built environment” prepared by the UK Green Building Council’s (UKGBC) concludes the following under the banner of ‘non-operational’ emissions: *“Embodied carbon emissions make up approximately 50% of building lifecycle emissions, yet are currently unregulated, and measurement and mitigation within design and construction is entirely voluntary. Solving the issues is now a demand and supply issue...”*

- 6.2.45 In **conclusion**, the key consideration here is support for directing growth to large strategic sites, which tend to be associated with a built environment decarbonisation opportunity over-and-above smaller sites. There is an argument to suggest that Heyford Park may be associated with less opportunity than is the case for Shipton Quarry or Wendlebury, but this is not clear at this relatively early stage. Moving forward, it will be important for site promoters to present information - on the built environment decarbonisation opportunity that enables differentiation between their site and others, rather than generic statements.
- 6.2.46 Focusing on the highest growth scenario (Scenario 12), there is no potential to suggest that higher growth is inherently problematic, despite the fact that higher growth would make meeting the *local* net zero ambition (net zero by 2030) more challenging, because climate change is a *global* issue, such that there is a need to focus on per capita emissions. There is an argument for supporting a focus of growth at three large strategic sites; however, this argument assumes that opportunities associated with strategic growth locations that can be discussed in theory would be realised in practice. One final consideration is supporting growth within Cherwell where development viability (as understood simply on the basis of house prices; see Section 4 of the HENA, 2022) is not as high as elsewhere in Oxfordshire.
- 6.2.47 With regards to significant effects, on the one hand climate change is a global issue such that the significance of local actions is inherently limited. However, on the other hand, there are stringent targets and commitments in place, which will prove very challenging to meet unless urgent action is taken, and decarbonisation features as a central pillar – indeed *the* central pillar – of the LPR. On balance, it is appropriate to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects** under all scenarios at this stage. There should be the potential to reach more positive conclusions as part of equivalent work at the next stage.

Communities

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1

- 6.2.48 There are a **range of objectives** that fall under the broad 'communities' heading, including relating to crime, digital infrastructure, education and skills, health and poverty / disadvantage and social exclusion. However, it is considered appropriate to present a single, rounded discussion, at this stage.
- 6.2.49 A headline consideration is the need to ensure that new and existing communities have good access to **community infrastructure** with capacity. As part of this, there is a need to avoid creating or exacerbating capacity issues and support growth strategies that would deliver new or upgraded community infrastructure, including in response to existing issues / opportunities (such that there is 'planning gain'). Another issue can also be ensuring community infrastructure has sufficient patronage/use to remain viable, although this is primarily an issue for rural areas (e.g. primary schools), so less relevant here.
- 6.2.50 Beginning with **Shipton Quarry**, there is a good opportunity to deliver a comprehensive new community, with a clear sense of place within the landscape, including mindful of the potential to focus development on the quarry, railway line and the meander of the River Cherwell / bend in the Oxford Canal. Also, a scheme could relate suitably well to higher order settlements at Woodstock and Kidlington. However, the discussion of a possible western expansion, which would break the boundary of the A4260 (Banbury Road) and risk closing the landscape gap to Woodstock, potentially runs contrary to the above statements.
- 6.2.51 A further consideration is that development here would have *relatively* limited impact on existing communities, albeit there would be impacts to the adjacent community of Shipton-on-Cherwell. Also, and more generally, the River Cherwell corridor is a historic settled landscape (see further discussion below).
- 6.2.52 **Heyford Park** southern expansion is also generally supported, from a communities perspective. As has been discussed, there is a broad aim to reach a critical mass, in terms of homes and jobs, and support the achievement of a long term vision for the site as a whole (including the airfield conservation area).

- 6.2.53 It is not clear that the new proposed southern extension (1,235 homes) will *directly* deliver new *strategic* community infrastructure to the benefit of the existing / wider community (i.e. community infrastructure over-and-above that which is needed to 'consume the smoke' of the new proposed homes). However, there will always be benefits associated with directing developer contributions towards the delivery of improvements to local community and green infrastructure that can be accessed by existing communities, and there is considered to be a particular opportunity, in this respect, at Heyford Park. Also, as has been discussed, there is an expectation that growth will directly support improved transport connectivity.
- 6.2.54 With regards to the matter of impacts to existing communities: on the one hand, there is likely to be relatively low concerns in respect of impacts to the existing community at Heyford Park; however, on the other hand, there is a need to consider impacts to the series of rural villages that encircle Heyford Park. This is primarily in terms of road traffic (on the assumption that maintenance of a landscape gap to Upper Heyford can be assumed in perpetuity, given the conservation area designation), which serves to highlight the importance of securing strategic transport infrastructure upgrades, and increased trip internalisation.
- 6.2.55 Moving on to **Wendlebury**, there is a need to recall the current assumption of a ~1,000 home scheme, in contrast to the much larger scheme proposed by the site promoters. A primary consideration here is potentially impacts to Wendlebury, which is a historic parish. Development would wrap around the existing community, and so clearly lead to impacts, albeit there would be the potential for mitigation, and there would be the potential to deliver significant new infrastructure to the benefit of the existing community, e.g. a primary school and improved road and cycle connectivity. Also, there may be an opportunity to address the flood risk that currently affects the village, as discussed. Other wider considerations are then in respect of the potential to deliver comprehensive western expansion of Bicester, as far as the M40 and flood risk zones, via growth at Wendlebury in-combination with mixed use growth to the north of the A41, including with a long term aspiration to transform transport connectivity / support modal shift, as discussed above.
- 6.2.56 The final site in question is **Kidlington** (North of the Moors), which is associated with fairly limited communities-related issues and opportunities, as a smaller site that would form a fairly modest extension to a higher order settlement. The site benefits from good proximity to the centre of Kidlington, and the proposal is to deliver significant new green space (e.g. a village green and/or a cricket pitch, subject to further investigation). There is a need to consider the public footpaths passing through / adjacent to the site, as well as road access (the Moors is a link road, between main road, shown by the Transport Assessment (2022) to experience significant peak time traffic), but no particular issues are envisaged at this stage. There are also considerations around meeting local housing needs, as discussed further below.
- 6.2.57 Aside from access to community infrastructure, a related consideration is access to **green / blue infrastructure**, including high quality countryside. In this respect, Shipton Quarry and Kidlington are both considered to perform well, particularly given their association with the River Cherwell and canal corridor.
- 6.2.58 With regards to Heyford Park, the proposed development location is associated with a raised plateau landscape, somewhat distant from the river / canal corridor to the west; however, there is still reasonable access to the countryside via public rights of way, including via a historic bridleway (Aves Ditch). The possibility of growth supporting increased accessibility to Middleton Park might feasibly be explored.
- 6.2.59 Finally, with regards to Wendlebury, there is reasonable access to the expansive landscapes of the Upper Ray Meadows via public rights of way, including a bridleway that links M40 J9 to Otmoor. However, there is a concern regarding impacts to route 51 of the National Cycle Network (NCN), which currently links expanding Bicester Garden Town to high quality countryside to the west, via quiet rural lanes and the historic village of Wendlebury, where there is a historic and presumably popular public house.
- 6.2.60 In **conclusion**, all the variable site options in question are associated with a degree of merit, from a communities perspective, subject to further discussions with key stakeholder organisations. All sites would give rise to certain tensions with existing communities (perhaps least so Kidlington, as a smaller site), and it is not clear that any would deliver specific *strategic* community infrastructure (e.g. a secondary school) to the benefit of existing communities; however, it is possible to pinpoint some significant potential for growth to benefit existing communities and so deliver 'planning gain'.
- 6.2.61 In this light, it is difficult to differentiate between the growth scenarios, beyond highlighting a concern with Scenario 1, as a low growth scenario that could lead to pressure for growth at sites that are problematic, from a communities perspective. For example, there could be pressure for small urban extensions that deliver little in the way of new community infrastructure, and potentially lead to problematic pressure on existing infrastructure (although there are also certain 'communities' arguments for dispersing growth).

6.2.62 With regards to **significant effects**, there is a need to consider the package of allocations that are a constant across the reasonable growth scenarios, as discussed in Section 5 and Section 9. These sites are associated with a range of communities-related issues / opportunities. In this light, **mixed effects** are predicted at this stage (see further discussion in Section 9).

Employment & economic growth

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
3	2	2	★1	3	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1	★1

6.2.63 As discussed in Section 5.5, under all scenarios there is likely an employment land undersupply as measured against the objectively assessed need figure established through the HENA (2022), albeit there will be much potential to boost supply subsequent to the current consultation.

6.2.64 The approach to employment land allocation is broadly held constant across the growth scenarios. However, all of the variable site options bar Kidlington would deliver some new employment land:

- **Shipton Quarry** - would deliver significant new employment land (see Figures 6.2 and 6.3). There is no identified need to support new employment land in this area; however, there is merit to delivering employment land as part of any new settlement, and new employment here would be quite closely linked to the existing and growing strategic employment hub at Kidlington / Begbroke / Oxford City Airport (located only ~2km to the south), such that there could be an argument for extending the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine spatial concept to the north, to include a new settlement at Shipton Quarry. There could also be merit to new employment land closely linked to an expanding Woodstock.
- **Wendlebury** – would likely deliver some modest employment land, specifically adjacent to the M40 / A41 junction. Also, as has been discussed, development at Wendlebury could be supportive – and potentially quite strongly supportive – of long term aspirations for delivering transport and connectivity improvements at Bicester, which is a significant consideration from a perspective of seeking to ensure the town is able to realise it’s potential as a focal point for employment / economic growth at the junction of the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine and the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. The possibility of a delivering a Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) facility has also been discussed (albeit in the context of 2,800 home allocation), which could be supportive of sub-regional growth objectives.
- **Heyford Park** – it is not anticipated that the 1,235 home extension would directly deliver any new employment land. However, as discussed, it could well be supportive of the 2022 approved masterplan for the committed land at Heyford Park. There could feasibly be further opportunity in respect of using historic buildings for employment; however, there are significant sensitivities. It is understood (from the site promoter’s submission to the Options consultation, 2021), that Heyford Park currently supports ~100 businesses, including within Creative City (which involved refurbishing six buildings). Also, the recently granted planning permission for 1,175 homes (18/00825/HYBRID) includes some new employment land. It is understood that the ratio of homes to jobs within Heyford Park will be around 1:1 once the consented scheme(s) come forward, which serves to highlight (when taken into account alongside the heritage context) the potential to foster a unique employment land offer, despite a relatively rural location.

6.2.65 Finally, with regards to **Kidlington**, whilst the site would not deliver new employment land, there is a need to consider that the site is located within walking / easy cycle distance of a major employment land hub.

6.2.66 Another important consideration is the matter of supporting **Oxford**, which is key strategic importance from an economic growth perspective – e.g. [Figure 2](#) from the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Strategy (2021), which is repeated below as Figure 9.1. At this stage it is not clear that there are any unmet needs for employment land that might need to be provided for within Cherwell; however, providing for Oxford’s unmet housing needs is vitally important, from a perspective seeking to support economic growth objectives.

6.2.67 Finally, with regards to further employment land (only) options that might be considered subsequent to the current consultation, considerations include:

- There may be relatively limited argument for considering sites at Bicester given that the emerging preferred/potential allocations would contribute to an overall high employment growth strategy.
- There is little or no opportunity at Heyford Park, aside from supporting effective and sensitive reuse of existing buildings within the conservation area.
- With regards to the Kidlington area, there are omission sites that could deliver on employment growth objectives, but these sites are constrained by the Green Belt.
- This leaves Banbury, where attention focuses on the option of further strategic employment land to the east of the M40. This is a highly desirable location for warehousing and distribution uses (albeit the market for such uses could be subject to change over coming years). However, there are constraints to development east of the M40 at Banbury as discussed in Section 5.4 (also it is not clear that a new link road would deliver strategic benefit to Banbury). Furthermore, warehousing and distribution uses are relatively footloose, e.g. in contrast to industries associated with the Oxford Knowledge Spine, hence it is difficult to suggest that not allocating new supply at Banbury would be to the detriment of sub-regional objectives, because the need could likely be met elsewhere. A priority for Banbury is providing for locally arising needs and delivering employment land associated with town centre regeneration.

6.2.68 In **conclusion**, it is appropriate to flag a concern with the lower growth scenarios, as economic growth could be constrained and/or there would be risk of an imbalance between employment and housing growth (albeit this is partly a transport matter, given potential for in-commuting). Delivering limited new employment land at Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry and/or Wendlebury is supported, whilst housing growth at Kidlington is supported from a perspective of delivering new homes relatively close to Oxford.

N.B. under the highest growth scenarios there could be an argument for additional employment land to ensure a balance between housing and employment growth (and under this scenario there would be a need to account for varying jobs densities across sectors, including low density within warehousing).

6.2.69 With regards to **significant effects**, the key consideration is an assumed employment land shortfall under all scenarios (see further discussion in Section 9), albeit there will be the potential to address this subsequent to the current consultation / prior to finalising the plan for publication under Regulation 19. There is a need to provide for employment land needs both in order to support the realisation of strategic economic growth and productivity objectives and also with a view to collocating jobs and homes in order to avoid problematic commuting patterns (including from a decarbonisation perspective).

Historic environment

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

6.2.70 All four of the variable site options are subject to a degree of historic environment constraint:

- **Kidlington** (North of the Moors) – stands out as potentially subject to the highest degree of constraint, despite being a smaller site (~300 homes), on account of the adjacent Kidlington Conservation Area, which includes a prominent Grade I listed church and a high density of Grade II listed buildings. There is also a need to account for the historic footpath that runs adjacent to the site, linking the conservation area to the Oxford Canal (and specifically a listed bridge), via a listed bridge over the railway. However, the firm proposal is to avoid or suitably mitigate impacts by delivering a large area of open space at the eastern extent of the scheme, as a buffer to the conservation area. Also, the proposal is that growth will not extend beyond the railway and so not encroach on the Oxford Canal. It is also important to note that

the eastern extent of the Moors is associated with a degree of historic character, with two Grade II listed buildings, including one that would be near adjacent to the likely new access junction for the development site, and is associated with a series of trees with TPO designation. It is also understood that there is likely to be archaeological constraint affecting the site (to be confirmed).

- **Heyford Park** – is likely the next most constrained of the variable site options.
 - This is primarily on account of the proposed development being located adjacent to two conservation areas. With regards to the Rousham, Lower Heyford and Upper Heyford Conservation Area, the primary concern is potentially associated with road traffic impacts to Lower Heyford, where there is a train station, and via which there is access to the A4260, which is the most direct route to Kidlington and Oxford. With regards to the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area (N.B. the site actually intersects to a small extent), it will be for Historic England to comment in detail, but the current assumption is that development (of mainly greenfield land to the south of the conservation area) would give rise to limited concerns, and could give rise to an opportunity, in terms of supporting investment in sensitive, heritage-led intensification within the conservation area in the long term.
 - Aside from matters relating to the two conservation areas, there is a need to consider the possibility of problematic traffic through other historic villages, such as Ardley and Somerton, where there are designated conservation areas, as well as traffic past Grade II listed Middleton Stoney Park. However, in practice there is an expectation that development will not come forward before 2030 or without clear mechanisms in place to ensure the necessary transport infrastructure is forthcoming.
 - Finally, there is a need to note that the both the western and eastern site boundaries comprise historic linear features, namely Portway to the west (a Roman Road) and Aves Ditch to the east (not a scheduled monument, but nonetheless of ancient origin and of clear historic environment value).
- **Shipton Quarry** – is potentially subject to similar degree of constraint as is the case for Heyford Park. This reflects its association with the River Cherwell corridor, which is a landscape strongly associated with historic settlement, and its position adjacent to the Oxford Canal Conservation Area. In particular, the cluster of villages to the immediately to the south (Shipton-on-Cherwell, Hampton Gay and Thrupp) is associated with a blanket conservation area, and a notable feature is two churches in close proximity, on either side of the river, although it is noted that one of the churches is only Grade II listed, with the other Grade II*. Also, at Enslow, to the north, the Oxford Canal Conservation broadens-out, to take in an area historically associated with a mill, a wharf and a former railway station. Finally, it is important to note that there is a small scheduled monument (a long barrow) within the greenfield part of the site located to the northwest of the quarry. The feature is below ground (the field in question is under arable cultivation, and the outline of the archaeological feature is barely visible on historic satellite imagery, if at all), but it is an important constraint nonetheless. In this light, it is concerning that it is not highlighted or mentioned as a constraint within the promotional materials that have been provided to date.
- **Wendlebury** – is *potentially* the least constrained of the four variable site options, given no designated conservation area, a parish church that is only Grade II listed (the lowest grade, plus it is located near adjacent to the A41) and a total of just nine Grade II listed buildings within the village. However, it is nonetheless the case that the village has a clear historic character, and is likely quite highly appreciated by the residents of an expanding Bicester Garden Village, including given its location on NCN Route 51.

Another important consideration is the location of an extensive scheduled monument adjacent to the north of the site, which is the site of the Roman settlement of Alchester (considerable detail / indicative detail is shown on the [pre-WWI OS map](#)). The site promoters discuss the potential to support access to / appreciation of the scheduled monument, which is supported; however, it could well be the case that there is high archaeological sensitivity within the site, linked to the scheduled monument.

Also, there is also a need to consider the impacts of a possible new southern Bicester link road (albeit there is a likelihood of the link road continuing to be considered as an option regardless of development). The site promoters suggest this might follow the route of the lane located to the south of the bulk of the scheduled monument, which is clearly less sensitive than the lane to the north (which the promoters suggest could be downgraded to a cycle / pedestrian route); however, there is still a potential concern.

6.2.71 In **conclusion**, it is considered appropriate to conclude support for the lowest growth scenario. This reflects the fact that national designations constrain all of four of the variable sites (albeit three are also potentially associated with heritage-related opportunities around targeted investment and increased access / appreciation).

6.2.72 With regards to **significant effects**, it is appropriate to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects** under all scenarios, mindful of the package of sites that are held constant across the growth scenarios, which does include certain sites subject to notable historic environment constraint. However, it is recognised that all sites are ‘strategic’ in scale, and at such sites there is invariably good potential to avoid or suitably mitigate historic environment impacts through masterplanning, landscaping and design measures, and there can also be the potential to enhance appreciation of historic environment assets and historic landscapes. Historic England may wish to comment further through the current consultation, including in respect of growth-related historic environment constraints and opportunities at Heyford Park.

Homes

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
12	10	9	5	11	8	7	4	6	3	2	1

- 6.2.73 As discussed in Section 5.2, whilst there is a clear argument for setting the housing requirement at 1,292 dpa, there are also certain arguments for higher growth. There is also an argument for ensuring a ‘supply buffer’ over-and-above the housing requirement, with a view to ensuring that the housing requirement is met in practice, over the course of the plan period (i.e. avoiding a situation whereby the district is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, albeit under such a scenario the presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply, potentially serving to realign housing supply with the requirement).
- 6.2.74 Assuming that the housing requirement is set at 1,293 dpa, then the supply buffer across the growth scenarios would vary between -8% (Scenario 1) and 9% (Scenario 12), as set out in Table 5.9 above.
- 6.2.75 Even a supply buffer of 9% is potentially somewhat low (a supply buffer of between 5 and 10% is arguably appropriate) such that there could be a need to set the housing requirement at a figure below 1,292 dpa (to achieve a sufficient supply buffer). This would mean not meeting local housing needs (LHN), as understood on the basis of the analysis presented in the HENA (see Section 5.2) and/or relying overly on the other Oxfordshire districts to provide for Oxford City’s unmet needs.¹⁸
- 6.2.76 However, the key point to note is that there will be the potential to boost supply subsequent to the current consultation, including by identifying additional deliverable and developable supply from within the urban areas (most notably Banbury). N.B. where allocations are made within urban areas there is a need to ensure that this supply is not double counted as part of the windfall assumption.
- 6.2.77 As such, it could potentially be the case that even under Scenario 1 (i.e. the lowest growth scenario) it would ultimately (by the Regulation 19 stage) be possible to set the housing requirement at LHN.
- 6.2.78 Equally, under Scenario 12 the Council might ultimately be in a position whereby it can consider setting the housing requirement at a figure above LHN, e.g. to reflect economic growth objectives. As discussed within the HENA (also see Section 5.2), there is an argument to suggest that higher housing growth (e.g. 1,400 dpa) could represent a strategy that involves meeting LHN *if* LHN is defined so as to reflect the aspirations of the Oxfordshire LEP’s Local Industrial Strategy Investment Plan. The case for potentially boosting the housing requirement to reflect economic growth ambitions was set out succinctly in the recent Draft NPPF (December 2022; see [paragraph 66](#)), albeit proposals remain in draft at the time of writing.

¹⁸ It is important to note, from the HENA, that a proactive approach to housing growth in Oxfordshire, over the past 20 years, has helped to address the issue of housing unaffordability. Paragraph 4.2.5 of the HENA explains that “stronger new-build development thus correlates to...weaker house price growth relative to the region.”

- 6.2.79 However, this is not the most likely scenario, including mindful of the current economic climate. Were it to transpire that economic growth is higher than that which is anticipated under a 1,292 dpa housing requirement scenarios, then housing growth could be boosted through the next local plan review.
- 6.2.80 There can also be an argument for higher growth in order to more fully meet **affordable housing needs**, mindful of the following statement within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG; Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220): *"An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes."*
- 6.2.81 Cherwell's affordable housing needs are set out in the HENA, which presents the outcomes of two models. The first model suggests that all housing schemes would need to deliver affordable housing at a rate of 50% in order to meet Cherwell's affordable housing needs in full, whilst the other suggests a rate of 35%. Also, there is a need to be mindful of affordable housing need in Oxford City, which is very acute, as set out in the HENA. However, the analysis is "indicative", including because *"the relationship between affordable housing need and overall housing need is complex."* The HENA does not recommend a boost to the housing requirement due to affordable housing needs, but concludes: *"The analysis is... set out with the intention of informing the setting of housing targets within local plans, alongside other components of this HENA."* The HENA also concludes: *"In setting policies for affordable housing, in terms of the percentage requirement to be met through eligible development schemes, viability evidence will be a key driver."* In practice, it is understood that 35% affordable housing is likely to prove challenging in the Cherwell context, given development viability and other competing funding objectives, e.g. around infrastructure and decarbonisation; however, this is a matter for discussion in Section 9.
- 6.2.82 Finally, with regards to the specific site options that are a focus of this current appraisal (i.e. those that are a variable across the growth scenarios), there are three points to make:
- Kidlington – is supported as a medium sized site not thought likely to be associated with issues that could delay delivery or lead to arguments for reduced affordable housing. Also, Kidlington is associated with relatively low recent and committed housing growth, as a proportion of dwelling stock, relative to Banbury and Bicester, which could have a bearing on relatively high house prices (also, anecdotal evidence suggests a prevalence of properties being sub-divided), albeit there is high committed growth in the wider sub-area. Finally, as has been discussed, Kidlington benefits from proximity to Oxford.
 - Shipton Quarry and Wendlebury – are in relatively close proximity to Oxford, and as larger site options there would be potential to deliver a good mix of housing onsite, potentially to include specialist housing, and there would also be the potential to consider provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, if necessary (on the basis of an understanding of needs, as discussed further in Section 9).
 - Heyford Park – the site promoters seek to emphasise that there is a 'delivery model' in place that leads to low delivery risk and also low risk of unforeseen cost issues, e.g. that could have a bearing on affordable housing delivery. They emphasise *"a delivery model that provides a wide range and choice of products and includes the Private Rental Model (PRS). There is a wide range and choice of market housing together with affordable homes (affordable homes are delivered by Heyford Regeneration)..."*
- 6.2.83 In **conclusion**, the alternatives are ranked in order of total growth quantum.
- 6.2.84 With regards to **significant effects**, it is appropriate to predict differential significant effects, ranging from **significant negative effects** to **positive effects of uncertain or moderate significance**.
- N.B.** to reiterate, the scenarios perform significantly better on the assumption that considerable additional supply will be identified subsequent to the current consultation.

Land, soils and resources

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1

6.2.85 A foremost consideration here is the need to avoid the loss of agricultural land classed as ‘best and most versatile’ (BMV), which the NPPF defines as that which is grade 1 (highest quality), grade 2 or grade 3a. The nationally available agricultural land quality dataset shows significant variation in agricultural land quality across the borough; however, this dataset has low accuracy (it does not differentiate between grades 3a and 3b) and very low spatial resolution, such that it must be used with caution. Another dataset is available showing agricultural land quality with a much higher degree of resolution and accuracy, namely the “post 1988” dataset (which reflects the outcomes of field surveys); however, this dataset is very patchy.

6.2.86 Taking the sites in turn:

- **Heyford Park** – is potentially the most constrained, in that it is most likely to comprise BMV agricultural land, on the basis of the nationally available provisional dataset. Specifically, whilst it shows the great majority of the site to comprise ‘Grade 3’ quality land (which may or may not be BMV), the eastern extent of the site is shown to comprise Grade 2 quality land (which is likely to be BMV in practice).
- **Kidlington** – comprises Grade 3 quality land, according to the nationally available dataset.
- **Shipton Quarry** – is obviously partly degraded land, namely a former quarry, but the proposal is also to develop significant areas of agricultural land to the north, south and east of the quarry. The national dataset shows Grade 3 quality land in this area, although there is also a notable band of Grade 4 quality land (i.e. land that is not likely to be BMV in practice) following the river corridor.
- **Wendlebury** – is strongly associated with an area of land that the national dataset shows to be Grade 4 quality, such that it is not likely to comprise BMV agricultural land in practice.

N.B. it is unfortunate that none of these key site options have been surveyed in detail (‘post 1988 criteria’). Site promoters are encouraged to submit survey work to the national register, with a view to informing the local plan process, as opposed to waiting until the planning application stage (given limited or no potential to avoid / mitigate loss of agricultural land through the development management process).

6.2.87 A further consideration is the need to avoid sterilisation of minerals resources that could potentially be viably extracted, with Heyford Park intersecting a Minerals Safeguarding Area, as understood from the [policies map](#) of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2017). However, it is also important to note that safeguarding is not absolute, as explained by the Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance (Mineral Products Association, 2019): “Allocation of sites for non-minerals development within MSAs and proximate to safeguarded minerals infrastructure sites should be avoided where possible... However, safeguarding is not absolute. Where other considerations indicate that a proposed site allocation within an MSA is appropriate... [employ] mitigation measures to reduce the... amount of resource sterilised.”

6.2.88 In **conclusion**, it is fair to highlight Heyford Park as likely subject to a degree of constraint. With regards to growth quantum, it is not possible to suggest that lower growth is preferable, as Cherwell District does not stand-out as relatively constrained in the sub-regional context. For example, South Oxfordshire has a notably higher coverage of land shown to be Grade 2 quality land by the nationally available dataset.

6.2.89 With regards to **significant effects**, having taken account of the package of site allocations that are a constant across all scenarios, it seems likely that there would be a significant loss of BMV land under any scenario, such that there is a need to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects** across the board. The most constrained site is likely to be the proposed allocation to the south of Banbury, which is shown by the national dataset to comprise Grade 2 quality land.

Landscape

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

6.2.90 A landscape study has been prepared recently to inform plan-making, and its findings are reported in Section 5 of this report, which deals with the process of arriving at reasonable alternative growth scenarios. Taking the sites in turn:

- Kidlington** (North of the Moors) – is located within the Oxford Green Belt; however, the Green Belt Study (2022) identifies the site (specifically, the part of the wider Green Belt parcel that is under consideration for removal from the Green Belt) as making only a ‘moderate’ contribution to Green Belt purposes. The Landscape Study (2022) does not assess the site; however, there is likely to be a degree of sensitivity, given the footpaths passing through and adjacent to the site, which are likely to be quite popular walking routes, and also mindful of the adjacent Kidlington Conservation Area. On the other hand, the site benefits from strong containment, in landscape terms, on the assumption that there would not be further development ‘creep’ to the north or west, i.e. a long term defensible Green Belt buffer would be maintained between the northern edge of Kidlington and the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor. It could be suggested that the effect of development would be to increase the close association of Kidlington with the River Cherwell, albeit the village was historically associated with a transport corridor following slightly raised ground between the River Cherwell and the Rowel Brook corridors. A final point to note is that the land does rise slightly, within the site, away from the settlement boundary.
- Shipton Quarry** – is the next site for consideration, mindful that the quarry and land to the east and south falls within the Oxford Green Belt, with only the proposed land parcel to the northwest falling outside of the Green Belt. There is likely to be some capacity in Green Belt terms, including mindful of the location of the site at the very edge of the Green Belt, and the Landscape Study assigns the site ‘low-medium’ sensitivity (with the assumption that the scheme would extend beyond the quarry). There is also good potential for effective containment in most directions, namely containment provided by the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor to the south and east, and a notable hill (Whitehill) to the north (also a thick hedgerow / tree belt). However, there is a concern regarding development creep / sprawl to the west of the A4260, with the site promoters suggesting that a further 2,500 homes could be delivered here in the future. It is commendable for the site promoters to be open about their long term aspirations; however, there would be a concern regarding the potential for effective containment of growth within a relatively flat and featureless landscape, given the location of Woodstock to the west, albeit there would be some potential to draw on topography to form a defensible long term boundary, ensuring that any new settlement remains firmly associated with the Cherwell valley / corridor.
- Wendlebury** - has a strong rural and historic character, which is likely to be recognised and appreciated, as has been discussed above. However, the Landscape Study assigns only ‘low-moderate’ sensitivity, and there would be the potential for growth to be very well contained by the M40 and flood risk zones.
- Heyford Park** – is associated with a raised plateau landscape, between the valleys of the River Cherwell to the west and the River Ray to the east, hence there is inherently a degree of concern regarding development ‘spilling’ down-hill over time. However, the current proposed development site (1,235 homes to the south of the airfield conservation area) is quite well contained on three sides, namely by a conservation area to the west, the built form of the existing settlement / airfield conservation area to the north and by the blanket conservation area covering the Cherwell valley settlements to the west. It is only to the northeast and to the south where containment is less strong. In particular, there is a clear concern regarding further development creep to the south, as far as Lower Heyford Road. The site promoters have not expressed an interest in further growth in this direction, but there will nonetheless be a need to give consideration to maintaining a long term landscape buffer to the road, from which links areas of historic environment sensitivity, and from which there are quite expansive views.

- 6.2.91 In **conclusion**, the appraisal is finely balanced, but overall there is judged to be support for Wendlebury and Heyford Park over Kidlington and Shipton Quarry. With regards to growth quantum, it is not clear that there are any in-combination concerns, and it could feasibly be the case that directing growth to both Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry supports targeted investment in enhancements along the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor, as has been discussed under other headings. It would not be appropriate to conclude an inherent concern with higher growth, given that the effect could be to reduce pressure for growth on constrained neighbouring local authorities (particularly noting the Cotswold AONB, plus Oxford has an inherently sensitive urban edge and sensitive relationship with river corridors).
- 6.2.92 With regards to **significant effects**, having taken account of the package of site allocations that is held constant across the growth scenarios, it is considered appropriate to predict broadly **neutral effects**. However, a number of the 'constant' sites are associated with a degree of constraint, e.g. SE Bicester.

Transport

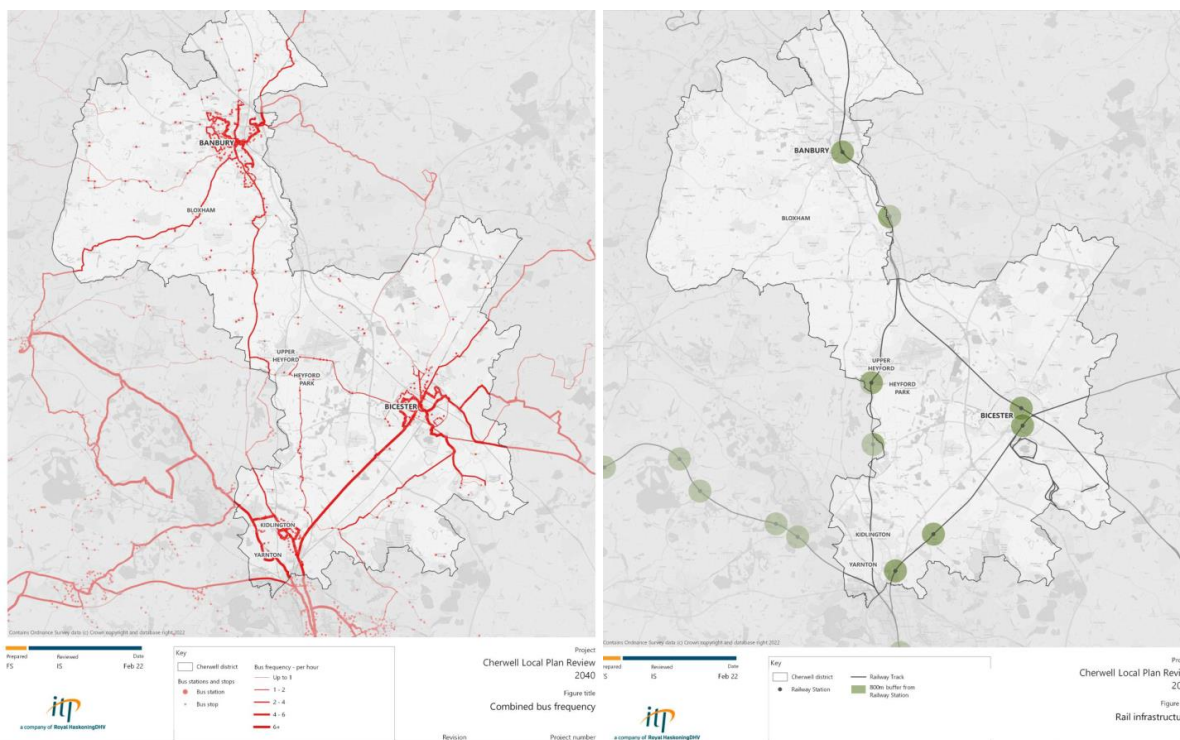
1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
5	3	4	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2

- 6.2.93 Supporting the achievement of transport objectives is of great importance locally, and there is a need for a strategic approach, informed by work led by the County Council. Transport objectives have close ties to a wider range of other planning and sustainability objectives, including in respect of decarbonisation, health / wellbeing and economic growth. With regards to decarbonisation objectives, it is important to be clear that supporting the achievement of strategic transport objectives is one of the primary mechanisms by which local plans can serve to minimise per capita greenhouse gas emissions and, in turn, support the achievement of decarbonisation targets (although the role of local plans in terms of minimising per capita emissions from the built environment should not be overlooked, as discussed above).
- 6.2.94 As an initial point, there is merit to favouring large mixed use schemes that will tend to support, or enable: a degree of self-containment, i.e. a situation whereby residents' need to travel beyond the local area is minimised and, in turn, there are relatively high rates of walking and cycling; good access to high quality transport infrastructure (with capacity), in particular public transport infrastructure, such that longer trips (in particular commuting trips at peak times) can be made in such a way that minimises per capita greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion; masterplanning best practice, including mobility hubs and high quality active travel infrastructure; and 'Future mobility' interventions and related digital solutions, e.g. around transport on demand.
- 6.2.95 In this light, and building upon the discussion presented under 'Air quality', considerations include:
- **Heyford Park** – is associated with a raised location between transport corridors, and the Transport Assessment (2022) assigns an overall connectivity score of 3 (out of 7), which is lower than that assigned to Kidlington (7) and eight villages. However, a key aim of directing further growth to Heyford Park is to support investment in transport infrastructure, and support an improved bus service, and it is noted that the intention is to phase development in line with infrastructure delivery. Also, and as discussed, an effect of growth through the LPR could be to support the approved 2022 masterplan, and feasibly even additional longer term growth and investment (see discussion under 'Air quality'), potentially supportive of self-containment / trip internalisation. Finally, there is a need to be mindful of the wider context, in particular the potential for a new train station at Ardley, with the LPR set to safeguard the site in question.
 - **Shipton Quarry** – is also associated with some inherent transport challenges, on account of its location near equidistant between the district's two main road corridors, namely the A44 and the A34. However, there are also a range of transport-related arguments in favour of the site and the specific proposed scheme. In particular, there is a firm commitment to deliver a new train station, albeit this would not be centrally located within the site. Also, the site benefits from good proximity to Kidlington (most

importantly) and Woodstock. Furthermore, there is merit to the proposed scheme, with transport infrastructure, innovation etc seemingly a central pillar of the masterplanning concept, plus the proposal to deliver significant new employment land onsite is supported. However, as per all the sites in question, there is a need to be mindful that the proposed scheme is subject to change. Indeed, the assumption here is that the scheme would deliver ~2,000 homes, mindful of onsite constraints (notably biodiversity and historic environment), in contrast to the ~2,500 homes discussed by the site promoter.

- **Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry** – allocation of both sites in combination (Scenarios 11 and 12) could well lead to transport challenges, given shared road corridors, and distance to primary road corridors.
- **Wendlebury** – is ~3.5km from Bicester town centre, and development could be supportive of strategic transport objectives for Bicester. In particular, higher growth at Bicester – and potentially growth at Wendlebury in particular – could facilitate delivery of a southern link road, which could (subject to further investigation) do much to address current issues of traffic congestion. More specifically, the effect could be to greatly reduce traffic along the A41 to the west of Bicester, potentially enabling the road corridor to be reimagined as a public transport and walking / cycling corridor, acting as a ‘gateway’ to Bicester Garden Town and linking growth locations / Bicester P&R (which could develop into a ‘transport hub’) to Bicester Village and the town centre. However, as noted in Section 5, this should not be overstated, as growth anywhere at Bicester might reasonably be required to contribute funding, given the scheme’s strategic importance. Ultimately, there is much uncertainty at this stage, including because the current assumption is a scheme of ~1,000 homes, in order to avoid flood risk zones and associated biodiversity constraint, which is in contrast to the ~2,800 homes discussed by the site promoter. There could be a need for considerable investment to achieve good road access to the site.
- **Kidlington (North of the Moors)** – is broadly supported, from a transport perspective, given excellent potential to walk / cycle to key destinations, including: schools and other services / facilities in Kidlington; strategic employment areas at Kidlington / Oxford City Airport and Begbroke; and Oxford Parkway Station. However, it is recognised that there is no rail connectivity (the Partial Review key diagram presents an indicative location for a new train station between Yarnton and Kidlington, but delivery cannot be assumed), and that the site is located between primary bus corridors. There is also a need for further work to confirm the potential to achieve good access to the site from the Moors.

Figure 6.7: Two key figures from the Cherwell LPR Transport Assessment (2022), showing bus connectivity (left, e.g. highlighting a limited frequency service for Heyford Park) and the location of existing train stations (right)



6.2.96 In **conclusion**, there is a concern with Scenario 1, as the effect could be problematic in-commuting and/or pressure for growth elsewhere in Oxfordshire, at locations that perform less well in transport terms. It is also appropriate to flag Heyford Park as performing less well, in transport terms, than the other three variable sites (albeit there are certain transport-related arguments in favour of further growth).

6.2.97 With regards to **significant effects**, it is appropriate to predict differential significant effects, ranging from **significant negative effects** to **moderate or uncertain positive effects**, given the strategic importance of the issues. With regards to the package of sites that are held constant across the reasonable growth scenarios, it is fair to say that all have been identified as suitable / potentially suitable for allocation largely on the basis of strong performance in transport terms. However, it is nonetheless the case that several are associated with certain transport-related issues, as discussed in Section 9.

N.B. there is some uncertainty ahead of further work on transport strategy. The Transport Assessment (2022) explains: “At the time of writing an Area Strategy is being developed for Cherwell as part of the Oxfordshire LTCP. This may introduce new / alternative sustainable transport projects...”

Water

1. Constants only	2. Wendlebury	3. Heyford Park	4. Wendlebury, Heyford Park	5. Kidlington	6. Wendlebury, Kidlington	7. Heyford Park, Kidlington	8. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	9. Shipton Quarry	10. Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	11. Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	12. Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	★ 1	2	2

6.2.98 **Wastewater treatment** is typically the issue that has the greatest bearing on the consideration of local plan reasonable alternative growth scenarios. Capacity at existing treatment works can often be increased to accommodate increased flows (at least hydraulic capacity of the works; biological and chemical capacity of the receiving water course to accept an increase in treated water can prove more challenging). However, there are cost implications, and a risk of unforeseen issues and delays. As such, there is merit to directing growth to locations with existing capacity and/or no barriers to increased capacity.

6.2.99 However, there is currently limited available evidence to enable differentiation between the degree of constraint affecting existing treatment works and, in turn, the merits of competing growth locations that are a variable across the 12 reasonable alternative growth scenarios. Evidence comes from the Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study (2021), which was prepared with a view to informing the Oxfordshire Plan, prior to a decision being made not to progress the plan; however, the report’s conclusions are high level:

“An assessment of wastewater treatment capacity found that there are significant differences in the percentage of existing treatment capacity which would be used up by growth, depending on the spatial option selected, with the greatest pressure coming from Option 2 which focusses all growth around Oxford. Whilst this spatial scenario would be highly likely to require a very significant expansion of treatment capacity at Oxford, and possibly at Abingdon and other smaller works close to the City, this does not necessarily make this an unfavourable option. Large upgrades at a small number of key works may be more efficient than upgrading large numbers of much smaller treatment works...”

6.2.100 As a general point, it is fair to say that large scale strategic growth locations can tend to be associated with a degree of merit, relative to a strategy involving greater dispersal of growth across smaller sites. They provide an opportunity to arrange infrastructure in an idealised way and can support innovative systems, including an ‘integrated’ approach to water management, which links: sourcing water (typically abstraction from an aquifer, but also rainwater harvesting and wastewater reclamation); managing demand (e.g. an ambitious target is 85 l/p/d); wastewater treatment (as discussed); discharge of treated wastewater (which can be important for avoiding low flows); and the recharging of groundwater (large strategic sites give rise to an opportunity in respect of careful planning of high quality SuDS).

- 6.2.101 In this light, there is a need to flag **Kidlington** (North of the Moors) as a smaller site option. Also, it will be important to confirm that there are no issues around wastewater treatment at **Heyford Park**, given the location of the site on a raised plateau between river corridors, and also noting that the existing treatment works for Heyford Park is located within the current proposed development site.
- 6.2.102 With regards to **Shipton Quarry**, it is notable that the promotional materials reviewed to date includes discussion of 'foul water drainage' (i.e. sewer connections), but does not include any discussion of wastewater treatment. With regards to **Wendlebury**, the site promoters explain that *"the outline strategy for the majority of the site is likely to rely on conveying wastewater directly to Bicester Sewage Treatment Works approximately 1.5 km to the north-east of the site. This would be via a new rising main from a terminal pumping station built on the site. The site levels are such that there would be a further two pumping stations in addition to the terminal pumping station."*
- 6.2.103 With regards to the **supply of water** (both for homes / businesses and riverine / wetland habitats), this is not likely to be something that has a significant bearing on the choice between LPR growth scenarios, because the issues are sub-regional (and the assumption must be that lower growth in Cherwell would necessitate higher growth elsewhere in Oxfordshire). The Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study concludes:
- *"The Thames Water WRMP demonstrates how the Swindon and Oxfordshire (SWOX) water resource zone has moved into a situation of supply-demand deficit and, without intervention, this will increase as a result of population growth, climate change and sustainability reductions."*
 - *"The WRMP goes on to outline a set of demand management and supply improvement measures to address this. Key to this is development of the Abingdon Reservoir by 2037... although it should be noted that this is currently being evaluated alongside other Strategic Resources Options."*
 - *"The Standard Method and Business-As-Usual household growth forecasts being considered by the Oxfordshire Plan are all at or below the Thames Water forecast. The Transformational rate of growth would be above what Thames Water has planned for; however, this is a long-term plan with opportunity for Thames Water to respond to changing demands. Furthermore, demand for water in the SWOX [zone] is also dependent upon growth in neighbouring planning authorities."*
- 6.2.104 In **conclusion**, on the basis of the limited available evidence it is possible only to flag a degree of concern with the higher growth scenarios (also mindful that these two scenarios would see growth at Heyford Park, which could feasibly be associated with challenges from a wastewater management perspective).
- 6.2.105 With regards to **significant effects**, it is appropriate to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects** under all scenarios at this stage, ahead of further evidence-gathering, including through consultation with Thames Water and the Environment Agency. As per the discussion presented above, under 'Transport', it would be greatly appreciated if stakeholder could provide their views on the reasonable alternative growth scenarios, with a view to ensuring a suitably strategic and proactive approach to water.

Appraisal summary

The table below present a summary of the appraisal of reasonable growth scenarios presented above. Within each row, the aim is to **1)** rank the scenarios in order of performance (with a star indicating best performing); and then **2)** categorise the performance in terms of 'significant effects' using **red** / **amber** / **light green** / **green**.¹⁶

Table 6.2: The reasonable growth scenarios – summary appraisal findings

Scenario <i>Constants plus growth / higher growth at...</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Constants only	Wendlebury	Heyford Park	Wendlebury, Heyford Park	Kidlington	Wendlebury, Kidlington	Heyford Park, Kidlington	Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Kidlington	Shipton Quarry	Wendlebury, Shipton Quarry	Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry	Wendlebury, Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry
Topic	Rank of preference and categorisation of effects											
Air quality	2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Biodiversity	2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	3	3	3	3
Climate change adaptation	★	2	★	2	★	2	★	2	★	2	★	2
Climate change mitigation	2	★	★	★	2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Communities	2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Economy	3	2	2	★	3	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Historic environment	★	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Homes	12	10	9	5	11	8	7	4	6	3	2	★
Land	2	2	2	2	2	★	2	2	★	★	2	★
Landscape	2	★	★	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Transport	5	3	4	2	3	2	2	2	2	★	2	2
Water	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	2	2

Discussion

An immediate point to note is the number of **red and amber scores** assigned. However, in a number of cases there is an expectation that concerns could be allayed through further work. For example, and in particular, there is the potential to identify additional housing and employment land supply subsequent to the current consultation.

A second point to note is that **Scenario 1** (lowest growth) is shown to perform relatively poorly in wide ranging respects. The reasons for this are quite clear in terms of socio-economic topics, but more nuanced in terms of environmental topics, reflecting a view that: A) Cherwell does not stand-out as constrained in the sub-regional context (in certain respects); and B) lower growth in Cherwell would lead to pressure for higher growth elsewhere.

On the basis of the appraisal matrix there is strong reason to suggest that Scenario 1 performs poorly overall. However, there is a need to apply caution, before reaching any such conclusion. This is because the SA topics cannot be assumed to have equal importance, or 'weight' in the decision making process. If the Council, as decision-makers, to assign particular weight to climate change adaptation, historic environment and water objectives, then Scenario 1 might be seen to perform well overall.

With regards to the other eleven scenarios, the appraisal shows a mixed picture, with all scenarios associated with pros and cons. Focusing on **higher growth scenarios**, these perform well in terms of socio-economic objectives, but give rise to tensions in respect of certain environmental objectives. In particular, higher growth scenarios risk generating conflict with biodiversity, historic environment, landscape and water objectives, but this is dependent on the specific sites involved.

Unsurprisingly, the appraisal does serve to highlight clear arguments for supporting one of the **middle growth scenarios**. For example, Scenarios 7 and 8 perform very similarly, with the only difference being that Scenario 8 performs better in terms of 'homes' (as a higher growth scenario) and worse in terms of 'climate change adaptation' (because the site that would deliver additional growth is subject to flood risk, namely Wendlebury).

Having made these opening remarks, the following bullet points aim to briefly summarise performance of the growth scenarios under each of the topic headings in turn:

- **Air quality** - on the one hand, there are a range of site-specific issues (see discussion below under 'transport'). However, on the other hand, development at all of the sites in question could potentially serve to support the achievement of strategic transport objectives. On balance, it is considered appropriate to only flag a concern with the lowest growth scenario, which would risk pressure for growth at locations elsewhere within a constrained sub-region, potentially at locations where growth would not align with transport objectives.
- **Biodiversity** - it is fair to flag a concern with Shipton Quarry (at this relatively early stage, ahead of further detailed work and consultation). The site is closely associated with the River Cherwell corridor (a key strategic asset / priority area), which serves to indicate a degree of sensitivity, albeit also potentially opportunity. There is also a potential concern regarding Wendlebury, on account of the close association of land here with the Upper Ray Meadows broad priority landscape, which is of sub-regional and potentially wider importance; however, concerns are considered quite limited, on the assumption of a fairly modest scheme of ~1,000 homes.
- **Climate change adaptation** - there is a clear need to flag a concern with the option of growth at Wendlebury, albeit through further detailed work it may be possible to identify the potential for strategic growth in this area that does not give rise to a concern, from a flood risk perspective, and there may be the potential to address flood risk affecting the existing village of Wendlebury, leading to a significant betterment / planning gain. There are also question-marks regarding flood risk at Shipton Quarry, which would require further investigation. A further consideration is the possibility of growth at both Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry (Scenarios 11 and 12) enabling or facilitating investment in strategic flood water attenuation / natural flood risk management along the River Cherwell corridor (along with wider enhancements), to the benefit of locations downstream at risk. N.B. the 'amber' score across all scenarios reflects a concern with one of the constant allocations.
- **Climate change mitigation** - the key consideration here is support for directing growth to large strategic sites, which tend to be associated with a built environment decarbonisation opportunity over-and-above smaller sites. However, there is a need for further work to confirm site specific opportunities at all three of the larger strategic sites in question, namely Shipton Quarry (which does have the benefit of being a larger site, and with some potential for a nucleated built form and a good mix of uses onsite), Heyford Park and Wendlebury. Another important consideration is directing growth to locations that benefit from strong development viability.

There is no potential to suggest that higher growth is inherently problematic, despite the fact that higher growth would make meeting the *local* net zero ambition (net zero by 2030) more challenging, because climate change is a *global* issue, such that there is a need to focus on per capita emissions.

With regards to significant effects, the conclusion reflects the fact that there are stringent targets and commitments in place, which will prove very challenging to achieve / honour, unless urgent action is taken, and decarbonisation features as a central pillar – indeed *the* central pillar – of the LPR.

- **Communities** - all the variable site options in question are associated with a degree of merit, from a communities perspective, subject to further discussions with the County Council etc. All sites would give rise to certain tensions with existing communities (perhaps least so Kidlington, as a smaller site), and it is not clear that any would deliver specific *strategic* community infrastructure to the benefit of existing communities (e.g. a secondary school); however, it is possible to pinpoint some significant potential for growth to benefit existing communities and so deliver 'planning gain'. In this light, it is difficult to differentiate between the scenarios, beyond highlighting a concern with low growth, which could lead to pressure for more piecemeal growth.
- **Economy** – as discussed in Section 5.5, under all scenarios there is currently a significant employment land undersupply as measured against the objectively assessed need figure established through the HENA (2022); however, there will be the potential to address this subsequent to the current consultation / prior to finalising the plan for publication under Regulation 19. There is a need to provide for employment land needs both in order to support the realisation of strategic economic growth and productivity objectives and also with a view to collocating jobs and homes in order to avoid problematic commuting patterns. Delivering limited new employment land at Heyford Park, Shipton Quarry and/or Wendlebury is supported, whilst housing growth at Kidlington is supported given close proximity to Oxford.
- **Historic environment** - it is considered appropriate to conclude support for the lowest growth scenario (Scenario 1). This reflects the fact that national designations constrain all of four of the variable sites (albeit three are also potentially associated with heritage-related opportunities).
- **Homes** - it is appropriate to rank the alternatives in order of total growth quantum. As things currently stand it is only under the highest growth scenarios where there is confidence in the ability to set the housing requirement at 1,923 dpa, which is the emerging preferred housing requirement, accounting for locally arising need and a proportion of unmet need from Oxford City. However, as discussed, there will be potential to boost supply subsequent to the current consultation, including through further consideration of urban capacity.
- **Land** - it is fair to highlight Heyford Park as likely subject to a degree of constraint, in terms of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. With regards to growth quantum, it is not possible to suggest that lower growth is preferable, as Cherwell does not stand-out as relatively constrained in the sub-regional context.
- **Landscape** – the appraisal is finely balanced, but overall there is judged to be support for Wendlebury and Heyford Park over Kidlington and Shipton Quarry. With regards to growth quantum, it is not clear that there are any in-combination concerns, and it could feasibly be the case that directing growth to both Heyford Park and Shipton Quarry supports targeted investment in enhancements along the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor, as discussed. It would not be appropriate to conclude an inherent concern with higher growth, mindful of constraints affecting the other Oxfordshire authorities (including AONB and the setting of Oxford).
- **Transport** – there is a concern with Scenario 1, as the effect could be problematic in-commuting and/or pressure for growth elsewhere in Oxfordshire, at locations that perform less well in transport terms. It is also appropriate to flag Heyford Park as performing poorly in transport terms, relative to the other three variable sites (albeit there are certain transport-related arguments in favour of further growth). With regards to significant effects, it is appropriate to predict differential significant effects, ranging from significant negative effects to moderate or uncertain positive effects, given the strategic importance of the issues. There is a clear need for proactive strategic planning across Oxfordshire in support of the achievement of transport objectives.
- **Water** - on the basis of the limited available evidence it is possible only to flag a degree of concern with the higher growth scenarios (also mindful that these two scenarios would see growth at Heyford Park, which could feasibly be associated with challenges from a wastewater management perspective).

As a final point, stakeholder organisations are strongly encouraged to comment on the merits of the reasonable alternative growth scenarios, from a perspective of seeking to ensure that the LPR supports the realisation of strategic objectives as far as possible. Such comments would represent a proactive approach to addressing issues of key strategic importance, and could support timely progression of the LPR.

7 The preferred approach

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 As discussed, it is not the role of the appraisal to arrive at a conclusion on which of the growth scenarios is best, or 'most sustainable' overall. Rather, it is the role of the plan-making authority to arrive at that conclusion, informed by the appraisal. This section presents the response of CDC to the appraisal.

7.2 Selecting the preferred scenario

7.2.1 The following statement explains CDC officers' reasons for supporting **Growth Scenario 7**.

Statement provided by officers in light of the appraisal

7.2.2 Under Growth Scenario 7 the identified housing supply (1,291 dpa) is slightly below the proposed housing requirement of 1,293 dpa (which reflects 1,009 locally arising need and 284 dpa unmet need from Oxford City). However, there will be the potential to boost supply subsequent to the current consultation.

7.2.3 The appraisal shows Scenario 7 to perform well in a number of respects, with a ranking of "1" under seven topic headings, and positive effects on the baseline predicted under three headings. However, the appraisal also serves to highlight a number of tensions with sustainability objectives, and drawbacks relative to alternative growth scenarios. There is much potential to address the issues and challenges highlighted by the appraisal through further work on site selection and through DM policy.

7.2.4 With regards to the two 'variable' site options that are supported under Scenario 7:

- Heyford Park - it is recognised that this is a challenging location for growth from a transport perspective, but the strategy is specifically designed to deliver new transport infrastructure / service upgrades and precludes additional development coming forward before 2030 or without clear mechanisms in place to ensure the necessary infrastructure is forthcoming. The approach will also support improved containment / trip-internalisation in the longer-term. It is acknowledged that this part of the district is relatively constrained in terms of comprising better quality agricultural land; however, it might well be the case (following further investigations), that the land is only grade 3a quality, i.e. the lowest grade of land classed as 'best and most versatile'. There is also a need for further work in respect of wastewater infrastructure, plus there is a clear need for further close working with Historic England regarding the historic environment / heritage constraint (in respect of the former airfield and more widely).
- Kidlington (North of the Moors) – is within the Oxford Green Belt, but contributes to Green Belt purposes only to a limited extent, and the appraisal is supportive of growth here in terms of a range of sustainability objectives, such that a case can be built for the 'exceptional circumstances' necessary to justify Green Belt through a local plan. Heritage is a key constraint, but work completed to date has served to indicate good potential to avoid and suitably mitigate significant adverse effects. There is also a need for more work to confirm access arrangements, and in respect of wider transport connectivity. Finally, it is recognised that, as a smaller site, there may be a lower built environment decarbonisation opportunity in comparison to large-scale strategic growth locations; however, there is a clear need for a mixed portfolio of development sites, as part of the overall LPR supply. Also, the site is considered likely to perform quite well in terms of minimising transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.

7.2.5 With regards to the two variable site options that do *not* feature in Scenario 7, the merits of these options are recognised, e.g. the potential to deliver a new train station at Shipton Quarry, and the potential for growth at Wendlebury to align with strategic transport objectives for Bicester. However, each of these sites is also associated with issues and drawbacks, and it is noted that the appraisal flags concerns with the specific schemes that have been proposed by the site promoters to date. Scenarios involving allocation of one or both of these sites are considered to perform relatively poorly, on balance, but this matter could be revisited prior to plan finalisation, taking account of consultation responses received.

Part 2: What are the appraisal findings at this stage?

8 Introduction to Part 2

- 8.1.1 The aim here is to present an appraisal of the Draft Plan, as currently published for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations.
- 8.1.2 In practice, the appraisal builds upon the appraisal of Growth Scenario 7 presented in Section 6. Specifically, the appraisal revisits the appraisal of Growth Scenario 7 with added consideration given to:
- site allocations that are a ‘constant’ across the growth scenarios appraised in Section 6; and
 - draft policies (both district-wide and site-specific).

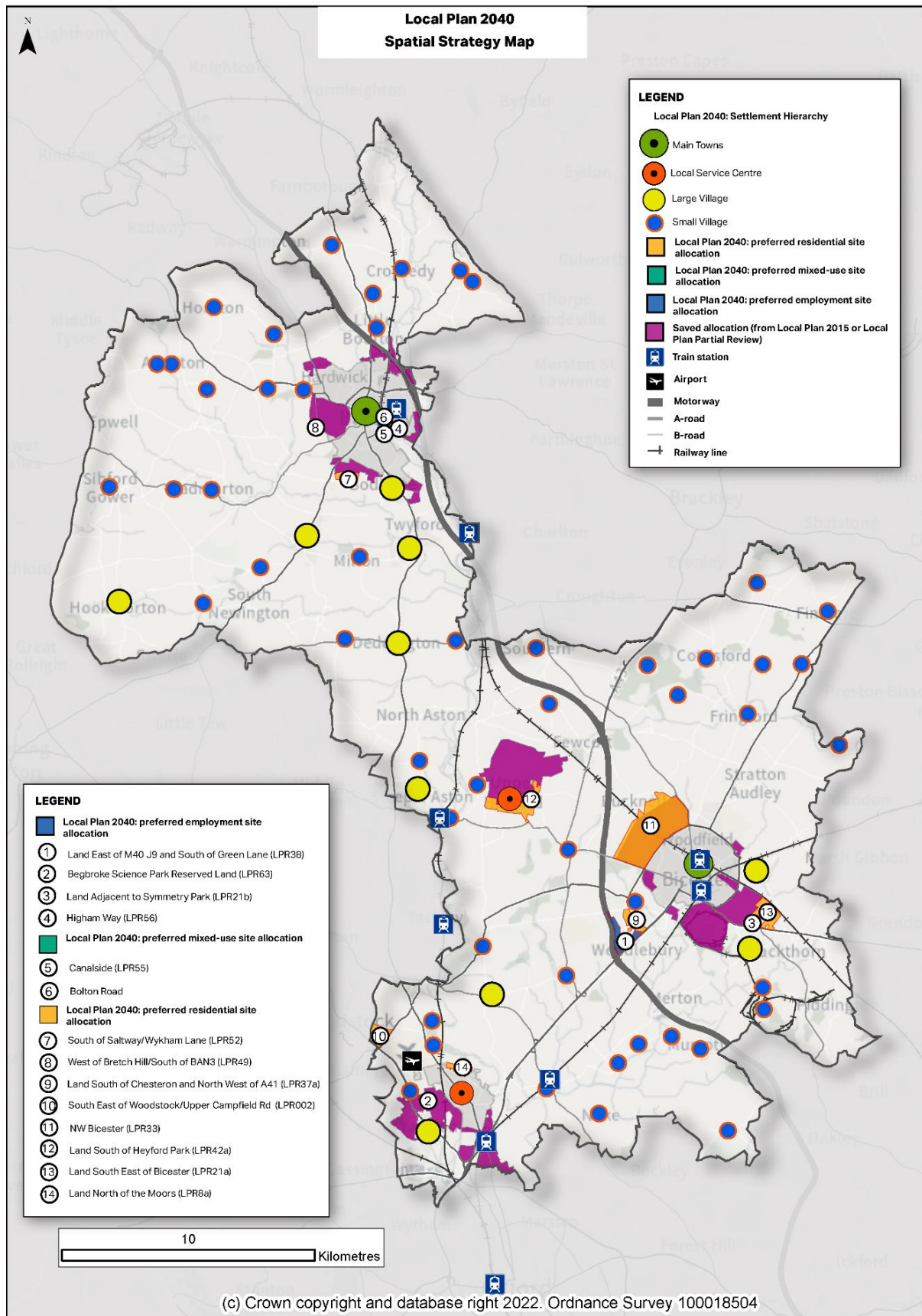
Overview of the plan

- 8.1.3 The plan presents 87 core policies, the first 61 of which are presented under three overarching themes. Policies 1 to 24 come under theme one – meeting the challenge of climate change and ensuring sustainable development – which deals with brownfield land and housing density alongside biodiversity, climate change and transport. Policies 25 to 33 come under theme two – maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy – which deals with allocated employment sites alongside other topics related to employment. Finally, policies 34 to 61 come under theme three – building healthy and sustainable communities – which deals with housing, the local landscape, services and facilities, and the historic environment. Following this, policies 62-86 deal with area strategies, which cover each of the district’s individual sub-areas in turn – Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and Heyford Park – as well as the rural area. The plan also presents nine development policies, which complement the core policies. Furthermore, the appendices to the plan document present ‘site templates’, which set out the key issues and proposals for each of the site allocations.
- 8.1.4 The appraisal focuses on the spatial strategy / package of proposed allocations / proposed approach to land supply in order to established needs, particularly in respect of housing/accommodation and employment land. The strategy is reflected in a key diagram, which is reproduced below as Figure 8.1.

Appraisal methodology

- 8.1.5 Appraisal findings are presented across 12 sections below, with each section dealing with a specific sustainability topic. For each sustainability topic the aim is to discuss the merits of the Draft Plan, as a whole, before reaching an overall conclusion on significant effects. Specifically, the regulatory requirement is to “identify, describe and evaluate” significant effects.
- 8.1.6 Conclusions on significant effects are reached on the basis of available evidence and understanding of key issues and opportunities, mindful of the guidance presented within the Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations. Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the local plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by knowledge gaps in respect of the baseline (both now and in the future). In light of this, there is a need to make considerable assumptions regarding how the plan will be implemented ‘on the ground’ and the effect on particular receptors. Assumptions are discussed in the appraisal text where necessary.
- 8.1.7 The appraisal aims to strike a balance between, on the one hand, a need to be systematic with, on the other hand, a need for conciseness and accessibility. The aim is *not* to systematically discuss each and every element of the plan in respect of each element of the SA framework.
- 8.1.8 At this current stage (Regulation 18), there is an emphasis on conciseness, mindful of the concerns raised by the DLUHC Committee (August 2022), who [emphasised](#) a need to: “*streamline the current bureaucracy and overcomplication associated with... assessments.*”
- 8.1.9 Specifically, the intention is to keep each appraisal to circa one page. This approach is undertaken mindful that considerable detail is presented above in respect of reasonable alternatives (Sections 5 and 6), and mindful that there will be the potential to add further detail to the draft plan appraisal at the next stage (Regulation 19), when the local plan and its supporting evidence base will be more fully formulated.
- 8.1.10 It is important to be clear that, as stated within the plan document, the aim of the consultation is: “to prompt discussion and feedback...” The Draft Plan will require further work and refinement before being finalised for publication under Regulation 19.

Figure 8.1: The key diagram



9 Appraisal of the draft plan

9.1.1 This section presents an appraisal of the current 'draft plan' consultation document as a whole. The appraisal is presented as a series of narratives under the SA framework (see Section 3).

9.2 Air and wider environmental quality

9.2.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- **Banbury** - is an air pollution hotspot, particularly linked to high levels of traffic to and from M40 J11. As such, the relatively modest level of growth proposed through the LPR is supported. The Transport Assessment (TA, 2022) strongly supports Canalside / Higham Way (e.g. see the summary assessment matrix in the report's executive summary, and Table 5-3 of the report, which presents key conclusions), and there is now an opportunity to direct new homes away from the railway line, relative to the previous approach for the two sites, which is supported, from an air / environmental quality perspective.

However, neither of the proposed greenfield allocations are directly linked to a 'green' rated transport corridor (see Figure 5.1 in the TA), and Table 5-3 of the TA, which presents key conclusions, assigns modest overall transport scores to both sites. Focusing on bus connectivity, the Table 5-3 is quite supportive of the smaller allocation, but for the larger allocation, to the south of Banbury, it finds only that the western part of the site (where there are heritage sensitivities) has "reasonable" connectivity. The wider context is the new link road between the two radial A-road corridors, along which there might be the potential to support a bus service.

- **Bicester** - is also associated with a problematic air quality management area (AQMA). The proposed relatively high growth strategy should assist with funding strategic transport infrastructure upgrades, most notably a southern Bicester link road (which would allow the A41 to be prioritised for public transport and walking/cycling). Neither of the new proposed allocations about the current urban edge, but the TA (2022) is fairly supportive of both sites, ranking them 'mid table' amongst the full suite of proposed allocations (see the table on page iv of the TA). In the case of Chesterton, the proposed allocation links to a strategic employment growth location, to the west; however, an area of land is unavailable to the east, which would ideally be planned for in conjunction with the current proposed allocation, in order to ensure a comprehensive approach to infrastructure delivery alongside new housing (the TA discusses this at paragraph 5.29). In the case of SE Bicester Extension, the overall score in the TA (11) is quite low, but the TA explains that "*A41 bus priority may assist future sustainable transport.*" Also, the current proposal is for the scheme to be separated from the committed scheme by a large local wildlife site, and for the new scheme to be split into two parts, separated by Blackthorn Hill. Whilst this is tentatively supported from a green infrastructure perspective, there will be a need to carefully consider the potential for all-weather walking / cycling through these green assets, e.g. to reach the local centre to the north.
- **Kidlington** - the two proposed allocations are shown by the TA to be the strongest performing in transport terms other than the two brownfield allocations at Banbury. The site east of Woodstock will be separated from Woodstock by a large area of greenspace, to account for a need to protect a scheduled monument (and further work is needed to identify the most appropriate strategy for primary school provision, ideally within walking distance), but the site is very well-connected to strategic public transport (bus) corridors. Noise pollution from the adjacent A-roads is a constraint but is explicitly addressed as part of the current planning application. As for the proposed allocation Kidlington itself (North of the Moors), the site is not located directly on a strategic public transport corridor, and there is a need to confirm access arrangements, but there will be excellent potential to walk and cycle to key destinations.
- **Heyford Park** - is discussed in detail in Section 6. There are naturally challenges given Heyford Park's location, including in terms of public transport connectivity and problematic traffic through rural villages, but the proposed growth strategy aims to support investment in transport infrastructure, a higher frequency bus service and (potentially, in the long term) higher rates of trip internalisation.
- The **broad strategy** of meeting housing and employment needs, including unmet housing needs from Oxford, is supported (subject to further work to boost supply, as discussed above in Section 6, and below under the 'housing' heading), given the alternative of increased pressure for growth at locations outside the district that are potentially less well-connected in transport terms.

- There is also the matter of assuming 500 homes at **non-strategic sites** at larger villages. This approach is supported, as it is thought to strike an appropriate balance (see Section 5.4). Higher growth could risk problematic car dependency / travel, but lower growth could risk village services / facilities. It is also important to note that the TA shows accessibility / connectivity to vary significantly between villages.
- With regards to **development management policy**, the key matter is clarifying expectations of developers in respect of site-level infrastructure delivery and developer contributions towards strategic infrastructure delivery, primarily in terms of transport infrastructure, but also community infrastructure (with a view to supporting trip internalisation and modal shift to walking / cycling). The plan presents many encouraging proposals, but these will need close review prior to plan finalisation, including in discussion with site promoters and stakeholder organisations, and including from a viability perspective.

9.2.2 In conclusion, as per the discussion in Section 6, it is appropriate to predict **neutral effects** at this stage, albeit with some uncertainty. The strategy / proposed package of allocations warrants further scrutiny and, whilst development management policy is supported, there is a need to avoid false comfort, ensuring that a suitably proactive approach is taken to addressing strategic transport objectives through the plan.

9.3 Biodiversity

9.3.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- The approach to growth at **Bicester** warrants being a focus of attention, from a biodiversity perspective, particularly given the sensitive landscape of the Upper Ray Meadows, to the south of the town. In particular, there is a concern regarding the proposed SE Bicester Extension allocation (800 homes), as a large local wildlife site (LWS), comprising lowland meadows priority habitat (linked to a flood risk zone), lies between the committed urban extension and the new proposed allocation. It could be that development supports an enhancement (over-and-above what would occur under a baseline scenario), and an overall biodiversity net gain, but this is unclear at this stage, e.g. noting the likely need for transport infrastructure to pass through the LWS (albeit likely only in the form of an all-weather walking / cycling route). There is also a need to question the strategy of extending beyond Blackthorn Hill, given sensitive landscapes further to the southeast. However, the site promoters vision for a series of linked green spaces is noted (see Figure 6.18). With regards to the Chesterton area, which is proposed for housing and employment growth, the key consideration is a series of flood / surface water flood channels (see Figure 6.5), mindful of a SSSI ~3km downstream, albeit there is limited priority habitat.
- There is also a need to consider the proposal to deliver a higher density scheme within the committed **Northwest Bicester** strategic allocation, with a compensatory increase in delivery of strategic greenspace adjacent to the site, in the form of a new area of open / recreational space between the site and Bucknell. The implications of this shift for the achievement of biodiversity objectives are not entirely clear at this stage and could warrant further investigation (e.g. comparative net gain scores).
- At **Banbury** the proposed allocations give rise to relatively limited biodiversity concerns. To the west of the town there is a need to avoid a risk of 'sprawl' beyond the confines of the Cherwell valley into the sensitive valley of the Sor Brook, but the proposed allocation here does not give rise to any significant concerns in this respect, given clear potential to deliver strategic greenspace along its western boundary.
- The proposed allocations at **Kidlington** also give rise to relatively limited biodiversity concerns, given a firm proposal for the site at Kidlington itself (North of the Moors) not to encroach on the River Cherwell corridor, and given an expectation of strategic greenspace at its eastern extent. However, there is a need to confirm whether the proposed primary access point would impact on an area of trees with TPOs. The proposed allocation to the east of Woodstock is also subject to limited constraint, although there are significant tree belts along two sides of the site, which comprise priority habitat. Finally, the proposed extension of Begbroke Science Park is in proximity to a SSSI, but the SSSI is located upstream, and is already strongly associated with existing and committed nearby built form, plus there is a need to recall that the principle of extending the science park is already agreed, following the Partial Review (2020).
- **Heyford Park** gives rise to limited concerns, from a biodiversity perspective, although there is a need to consider the treatment of a tree belt and an adjacent area of woodland. See discussion in Section 6.
- The **broad strategy** of including a focus at larger strategic sites is supported, because such sites can give rise to a particular opportunity in respect of masterplanning with biodiversity in mind, and also supporting investment in offsite interventions in support of strategic objectives. For example, there is the potential for growth at Heyford Park to support strategic investment in the River Cherwell corridor – with a focus on biodiversity and wide-ranging other natural capacity / ecosystem service objectives.

However, it is noted that the three largest allocations will extend existing committed urban extensions (also, the East of Woodstock will extend a site under construction). This serves to highlight the importance of realising opportunities for comprehensive growth, with a view to realising opportunities for infrastructure investment and effective masterplanning, including in support of green / blue infrastructure.

- With regards to **development management policy**, it is again the case that the primary consideration is providing strategic guidance in respect of the expectations on developers, in terms of avoiding areas of sensitivity and delivering enhancements. Early clarity can assist with effective masterplanning and ensuring green/blue infrastructure feeds into viability calculations alongside wider infrastructure. The current Chesterton site template is notable for identifying a preferred green infrastructure corridor (also the potential for offsite contributes to green infrastructure along nearby along Vendee Drive (to the east), and this is one of just two sites (the other NW Bicester) with identified potential for 20% BNG.
- Also, and importantly, **Core Policy 12** (Biodiversity net gain, BNG) sets out to go beyond the statutory minimum requirement (10%), by requiring: “At least 20% biodiversity net gain will be sought in the Nature Recovery Network Core and Recovery zones, and new urban extensions will be required to achieve 20% biodiversity net gain. This is strongly supported, from a biodiversity perspective. It is also noted that the plan includes a strong focus on setting out strategic green / blue infrastructure priorities, and so it will be important to consider the circumstances under which developers might fund such schemes in order to generate biodiversity credits, for the purposes of biodiversity net gain calculations.

9.3.2 In conclusion, as per the discussion in Section 6, overall **neutral effects** are predicted. There will be a need to take close account of consultation responses received from key stakeholder organisations, and there is a need for further detailed work ahead of plan finalisation, e.g. for SE Bicester Extension.

9.4 Climate change adaptation

9.4.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- A key issue is the extensive fluvial flood risk affecting **Canalside** at Banbury, particularly given current uncertainty in respect of proposals for the site. The site is an existing allocation for 700 homes, but there is an identified opportunity to deliver fewer homes and a greater amount of employment land, which would be preferable from a flood risk perspective, as employment land has relatively low susceptibility.

The site is protected by a flood protection scheme upstream, but there is naturally a degree of residual risk; also, and importantly, there is a need to review the degree and nature of risk taking into account climate change scenarios, through a Level 2 SFRA.

The site is allocated for 700 homes in the adopted local plan (2015), such an adjusted allocation could well represent an improvement on the baseline situation. However, there remains uncertainty at the current time, before a final decision is made on the proposed intensity of uses on the site, accounting for both new homes and employment land. Also, climate change has come more to the fore since 2015.

Housing-led brownfield regeneration schemes in areas of flood risk are not uncommon nationally, given good potential to mitigate flood risk, including through: avoiding vulnerable uses on the ground floor; measures to ensure safe access / egress; flood resistant design (e.g. to prevent water from entering); and flood resilient design (e.g. to ensure structural integrity is maintained and to facilitate drying / cleaning). However, given climate change concerns, there is nonetheless a need to question the merits of directing new homes to areas that have historically been seen as appropriate for less vulnerable uses.

There is also a need to note that the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance on flood risk has recently been updated, including in respect of downstream impacts, for example stating: “*Whilst the use of stilts and voids below buildings may be an appropriate approach to mitigating flood risk to the buildings themselves, such techniques should not normally be relied upon for compensating for any loss of floodplain storage. This is because voids do not allow water to freely flow through them, trash screens get blocked, voids get silted up, they have limited capacity, and it is difficult to stop them being used for storing belongings or other materials.*” Downstream flood risk is potentially an issue; however, there is a need to account for the fact that there is already extensive built form across the site, so it could well be that there is the potential to maintain or enhance the current flood storage capacity of the site (which isn’t to say that there are not alternative uses that could deliver more flood storage capacity still).

Finally, there is a need to consider adjacent Higham Way, which is also affected by fluvial flood risk. The likelihood appears to be that the plan will ultimately support employment uses on the site (only), but the door is currently left open to rolling forward the existing 2015 allocation for 150 homes. Downstream flood risk is potentially more of an issue here, as there is more limited existing built form on the site.

Ultimately, for both sites, there is a need to balance flood risk with the benefits of development (as reflect in their existing allocations). These sites clearly benefit from being located in very close proximity to Banbury train station and town centre, and so are supported from a decarbonisation perspective. Focusing on the proposed Canalside scheme, it will support town centre regeneration and green / blue infrastructure objectives, and a high density scheme might support a fifth generation heat network.

It is also important to note **policy requirements** around detailed flood risk investigations and preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, there is a need for confidence, at the local plan-making stage, that flood risk can be sufficiently addressed alongside an intensification of uses.

- Elsewhere, there are limited concerns. There is a series of fluvial / surface water flood channels in the **Chesterton** area (see Figure 6.5), and there is a need to be mindful of downstream flood risk affecting Wendlebury, but there will be good potential to integrate flood zones as part of a blue infrastructure strategy, and high quality sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should serve to ensure no increased downstream flood risk. The other site notably subject to constraint is **SE Bicester Extension**, where there is some surface water flood risk either side of Blackthorn Hill, where new homes are proposed.

9.4.2 In conclusion, as per the discussion in Section 6, taking a precautionary approach at this stage in the process, it is appropriate to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects**. It will be important to undertake further work to demonstrate that a sequential approach is being taken to avoiding flood risk.

9.5 Climate change mitigation

9.5.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- Focusing on built environment greenhouse gas emissions, as per the discussion in Section 6, and all other things being equal, there can be support for **larger strategic sites** over-and-above smaller sites. This is because such sites can be associated with economies of scale, which can help to make investment on decarbonisation focused interventions more of a viable proposition, and because opportunities can be realised through strategic masterplanning, for example higher density mixed use areas around local centres or transport hubs, which might support a district-scale heat network and/or large scale battery storage facilities distributed through the scheme to balance power supply (typically from rooftop solar) and demand over the course of the day. In this light, there is a degree of support for the proposed strategy, and it is not clear that there is a reasonable alternative strategy that performs better (see Section 6). However, this matter – of exploring growth at scale and/or growth directed to sites where strong viability, in order to realise decarbonisation opportunities – warrants further scrutiny.
- The largest of the proposed allocations is **Heyford Park**. The scale of the scheme should serve to indicate a degree of site-specific built environment decarbonisation opportunity; however, as discussed in Section 6, there is a need for further work to confirm that this is the case in practice. Also, there is a need to consider greenhouse gas emissions from transport, as discussed under other headings. In short, there are both challenges and opportunities (notably a significantly improved bus service).
- The next two largest sites are then at **Banbury** (South of Saltway) and **Bicester** (SE Bicester Extension); however, both schemes are of limited scale (600 homes and 800 homes respectively). N.B. both schemes will extend existing committed strategic urban extensions (see discussion under ‘Biodiversity’).

In the case of SE Bicester Extension, the proposal is for the scheme to be split into two distinct parts, either side of Blackthorn Hill, and the smaller eastern part is proposed to form a ‘linear village’, which might be questioned from a decarbonisation perspective. Also, there is an understood need for considerable investment in infrastructure (including transport and green infrastructure), such that it will be important to confirm funding available for decarbonisation measures. Finally, it is noted that the “Towards a net zero carbon community” section within the submitted vision document (September 2021; N.B. this pre-dates the emerging plan policies) does not discuss built environment emissions.

- The two proposed allocations at **Kidlington** are smaller, and there is no proposal to deliver a local centre of employment as part of the scheme. However, both sites seem unlikely to be associated with any abnormal development costs and could generally be associated with strong viability, which could well be supportive of ensuring houses built to the ‘net zero’ standards. Indeed, this is was the proposal as part of a recent planning application for the East of Woodstock site (see Part 6 of the Design and Access Statement, [here](#)); however, that application has now been withdrawn and it is not possible to assume what any future application would be able to viably offer. Also, it is worth noting that the site has a longer planning history, including a 2014 application for 1,500 homes across both this site and the site now under construction to the west.

- There is also a need to consider **NW Bicester**, where the current proposal is to support an extended scheme with a higher density built form, leading to an additional 1,000 homes, with a view to supporting viability and ultimately deliverability. NW Bicester has been promoted as an Ecotown for a decade now, such that the decarbonisation ambition has been subject to considerable scrutiny. Most recently:
 - Permission was recently (July 2023) granted at appeal for a 530 homes scheme (Ref. [21/01630/OUT](#)) adjacent to the Elmbrook part at the eastern extent of the NW Bicester allocation, which is the only part of the allocation to have delivered to date, and has gained national attention as a low carbon exemplar. The appeal decision explains that the 530 home scheme (known as “Firethorn”, which is the name of the developer) will deliver “True Zero Carbon”, which is defined as: “*over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings... are zero or below.*” The key question is whether / the extent to which there is allowance for offsetting, as opposed to achieving zero carbon onsite, which is a matter discussed within the [appeal decision](#). Ultimately, the approach taken to net zero is considered highly ambitious; however, the implication is that “*the appeal development cannot viably provide for 30% affordable housing... whilst delivering a True Zero Carbon development... and mitigating its infrastructure impacts... However, the appellant has offered a minimum of 10% affordable housing, which will require a reduced developer margin.*”
 - The current 3,100 home Hawkswell Village planning application (ref. [21/04275/OUT](#); 3,100 homes) has not been reviewed in detail as part of this appraisal (see discussion in Section 5.4). However, it may be the case that a higher density built form increases the potential to deliver one or more heat networks, and the proposal to deliver an adjacent small solar farm is also noted. There is a need to consider whether this would feed the national grid, which would make it quite a different proposition (potentially from an energy hierarchy perspective) to rooftop solar directly feeding the development.
- With regards to **development management policy**, the proposed approach is supported, as it appears to suitably push the boundaries of what is likely to be viable (subject to further investigations), reflecting the urgency of the issue (i.e. the 2030 net zero ambition). We make a number of suggestions:
 - Firstly, and most importantly, there will be a need for close scrutiny of the extent to which there is allowance for residual onsite emissions to be offset, recognising that offsetting sits at the bottom of the energy hierarchy, and is inherently associated with risks and uncertainties.
 - Secondly, there is a need to consider whether it might be possible to consolidate the current series of policies into one, with a view to supporting clarity and ease of understanding for the public, given the central importance of this issue (it will be an aspect of the local plan that generates a high degree of interest, and the local plan has an important educational role). The national policy environment is complex and constantly evolving, but a number of authorities have adopted, or are proposing, concise ‘energy-based’ net zero policies – see Box 9.1. These policies typically involve a clear focus on: A) space heating demand of less than 15kWh/m²/yr; B) overall energy use of less than 35kWh/m²/yr; C) on-site renewable generation equivalent to onsite use; and D) offsetting only if absolutely necessary.
 - Thirdly, there is a need to consider whether a specific requirement should be set for specific developments, or categories of development (e.g. strategic versus non-strategic), albeit it is recognised that doing so could prove a complex and ultimately challenging exercise.
 - Fourthly, use of the “be clean, be lean, be green, be seen” hierarchy should be reviewed. The distinction between “be lean” and “be green” is not as intuitively clear as might ideally be the case; and, whilst “be seen” is a key,¹⁹ it does not appear to feed through into policy.
 - Finally, the supporting text should be reviewed for conciseness and clarity, with a view to clear messaging suited to the task of building public understanding, interest and capacity to engage in respect of the decarbonisation agenda. As stated within recent CSE/TCPA research (see footnote): “*Empowering people with the skills to make their case must go hand in hand with enhancing their knowledge of the challenges and opportunities which will shape the future.*”

As part of ensuring clear messaging, there is a need to ensure that there is not an undue focus on sequestration, at the expense of avoiding emissions in the first instance. Also, the text might explain that whilst transport emissions are set to decrease rapidly, due to the national switch-over to EVs, emissions from the built environment risk staying stubbornly high without policy intervention.

¹⁹ [Research](#) on *Spatial planning for climate resilience and Net Zero* published by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) was published in July 2023. With regards to the “be seen” stage of the energy hierarchy, the research explains: “*The system of assessing, monitoring and enforcing the energy and carbon performance of buildings requires a radical overhaul to make it fit for purpose. This could be achieved (in part) through requiring developers to submit in-use energy and carbon data from new developments to be sampled from smart meters installed in new buildings.*”

Box 9.1: Discussion of recent local plan policies requiring net zero development

The Bath and Northeast Somerset (B&NES) Partial Update (2023) was the first to include a net zero policy requirement. A [press release](#) explains their approach, which can be described as “energy based” and with a requirement for onsite net zero (i.e. without resorting to offsetting) if possible (as per all the following examples).

The B&NES Partial Update was followed by the Cornwall Climate Change DPD (see paragraph 172 of the [Inspector’s Report](#); also paragraphs 165 to 168). Also, two recent draft local plans proposing net zero regulated emissions (onsite if possible) are [Stafford](#) and [Wiltshire](#).

However, conversely, a net zero requirement was removed by the [Inspector’s Report](#) for the Salt Cross Area Action Plan in early 2023. This was also recently the case for the Lancaster Local Plan (see examination document [EX/INS/10](#)). Similarly, in the case for the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, the Inspectors’ [letter](#) concluded “no local circumstances and substantive evidence” in respect of the proposed net zero policy. Most recently, the West Berkshire Inspector has [questioned](#) whether the Council’s proposed net zero requirement is justified.

9.5.2 In conclusion, the proposed development management policy is strong, which is a key consideration, but there is also a need to maintain a focus on realising decarbonisation opportunities through spatial strategy and site selection. On balance, **neutral effects** are predicted, mindful of the level of decarbonisation ambition necessary if local and national net zero targets are to be achieved. Whilst the LPR would likely have a positive effect on the baseline (a scenario whereby development comes forward in a less well-planned manner) is sufficient in light of the District’s 2030 net zero target.

9.5.3 Moving forward, as well as inputs from stakeholder organisations with an interest in decarbonisation, site promoters are encouraged to submit detailed evidence to demonstrate the potential to viably minimise onsite emissions, ideally to zero carbon. As part of this, it will be important to take account of the latest national precedents, including in respect of definitions of net zero, particularly in terms of “onsite” net zero versus net zero with an allowance for offsetting.

Communities

9.5.4 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- A headline key issue relates to the potential for residents of the proposed **East of Woodstock** allocation to access a primary school, as there would be no potential to deliver one onsite. Further work is needed to identify the most appropriate strategy.

In other respects this site is quite strongly supported, from a ‘communities’ perspective, particularly as the current the current planning application would involve 67% greenspace within the site (could be higher in practice, as current proposed allocation is for 50 fewer homes than the application). The greenspace will have the effect of separating the new community from Woodstock, but the centre of Woodstock would still be within a reasonable distance (~1.5km).

- The next site for consideration is **SE Bicester Extension**. The proposal here has certain merit, from a ‘communities’ perspective, particularly in terms of the proposal to increase access to Blackthorn Hill, as a new area of accessible parkland (potentially assisting in terms of building an appreciation of Bicester in its landscape setting, and therefore supporting local ‘sense of place’). Also, there could be benefit associated with improved walking/cycling connectivity between Ambrosden and Launton (the current bridleway passes along Blackthorn Hill, but then hits something of a dead-end, in the form of a road with no footpath). However, the furthest point of the proposed site (east of Blackthorn Hill), would be ~3.5km from the centre of Bicester ‘as the crow flies’, and there are barriers to movement (albeit potential for good bus connectivity). Also, the local centre within the committed adjacent SE Bicester urban extension would be approach 1.5km distant, and there are barriers to movement, in the form of employment land, Blackthorn Hill and a local wildlife site (LWS; in turn, a related consideration is the potential to deliver an all-weather walking / cycling route through the LWS). The distance from the further point of the proposed eastern ‘linear village’ (according to the site promoter’s vision document received in 2021) to the local centre would be considerably further than 1.5km via an all-weather route (i.e. avoiding crossing the hill).
- Another site of note is the proposed 500 home allocation to the south of **Chesterton**, because of the effect on the existing village. It will be important to ensure a comprehensive approach to growth with a view to most fully realising opportunities for new / upgraded community, transport and green / blue infrastructure, with a view to securing ‘planning gain’, i.e. benefits to the existing community. Perhaps of primary importance is supporting long term aspirations for reimagining the A41 corridor in this area

as a public transport and walking / cycling corridor, although the ability to achieve this vision is likely to be largely dependent on the potential to deliver a southern Bicester link road.

- There is also a need to briefly consider the proposal to support an additional 1,000 homes at the existing **NW Bicester** allocation, specifically through a higher density built form in combination with an extension to the existing site to deliver a new area of strategic parkland between the northern edge of the built form and the village of Bucknell. There are clearly arguments in support of the proposed new area of strategic parkland; however, proposals do warrant scrutiny (N.B. there is a current planning application), potentially balancing development viability / deliverability considerations with objectives around ensuring a scheme with a strong green and blue infrastructure network integrated throughout (also a good mix of homes, to include family housing, and good space standards).
- The other proposed allocations raise fewer issues. At **Kidlington**, it is understood that there will be a need for further discussions with the site promoters of 'North of the Moors' in respect of the potential to deliver strategic greenspace (e.g. a village green and/or a sports pitch); also there is a need to confirm the potential for safe and suitable access arrangements, including mindful of TPOs and heritage constraints. The proposed allocation west of **Banbury**, is perhaps not ideal from an access perspective, given access from estate roads, but it is understood that the access arrangements have been found to be satisfactory (there is a current pending planning application), and there is a bus route nearby. Finally, with regards to the allocation south of Banbury, there are no immediate concerns, but there is generally a need to confirm plans for community infrastructure, given extensive nearby committed growth.
- With regards to **Banbury**, there is also a need to note the overall limited growth strategy, given that certain wards are in the 20% most deprived areas in England. However, the focus on Canalside is supported, and it is not clear that there is any alternative strategy that would perform better, from a perspective of supporting regeneration, or otherwise addressing relative deprivation. Also, it is anticipated that town centre regeneration sites will be examined for allocation subsequent to the current consultation. The current consultation document identifies 'Areas of Change', which is supported.
- With regards to **development management policy**, as per discussion above, the key matter is clarifying expectations of developers in respect of site-level infrastructure delivery and developer contributions towards strategic infrastructure delivery. The plan presents many encouraging proposals, but these will need close review prior to plan finalisation, including from a viability perspective.

A wide range of other proposed development management policies are broadly supportive of communities objectives, and some will warrant further scrutiny prior to plan finalisation (potentially to include detailed examination through a viability study) to ensure that they will be most effective in practice, in terms of addressing development-related issues and realising opportunities.

9.5.5 In conclusion, at the current time there is considered to be a need for further work regarding site specific policy, and to confirm arrangements for ensuring suitable access to community infrastructure. As such, **neutral effects** are predicted. However, at the next stage, in light of further work (also accounting for consultation responses received), it will likely be possible to predict positive effects on the baseline (which, it is important to recall, is one whereby the lack of a local plan leads to problematic unplanned growth).

9.6 Economy and employment

9.6.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- As discussed in Section 6, current identified supply falls significantly below established need; however, there will be the potential to boost employment land supply subsequent to the current consultation.
- Site-specific considerations include:
 - Higham Way – is supported as an employment site, as it comprises brownfield close to Banbury town centre and train station and is subject to flood risk. However, it also remains under consideration for housing, as per the current allocation in the adopted Local Plan (2015).

- Canalside – similar to Higham Way, whilst the current Local Plan allocation for housing (700 homes) remains ‘on the table’, there is also the option of moving to a scheme involving considerably more employment land, including mindful of onsite flood risk. There is a considerable element of existing employment land, so there is a degree of uncertainty regarding the net increase in employment land;
- Land East of M40 J9 and South of Green Lane – will extend the recently permitted Siemens Healthineers strategic site, as discussed in Section 5.4, ensuring a comprehensive approach to employment land in this area, and supporting a wider vision for the A41 corridor west of Bicester.
- Land Adjacent to Symmetry Park, North of A41, South East Bicester – will extend the employment land that was recently delivered as the first phase of the committed SE Bicester strategic urban extension (N.B. its rapid delivery serves as evidence for the high demand for employment land in this area).
- Begbroke Science Park – land was reserved through the Partial Review (2020).
- Aside from meeting the headline total quantitative need figure set out in the HENA (2022), there is also a need to consider the need for **specific types of employment land**, with the HENA focusing attention on: offices; R&D; industry; and warehousing. There is a need for further work to confirm the situation, but it is understood that there is flexibility across the proposed allocations, with only Begbroke Science Park allocated with a clear expectation of delivering a very specific type of employment land (R&D).
- Also, there is a need to account for **wider objectives**, e.g. relating to regeneration / place-making and locally arising needs. This includes the objective of diversifying employment land at Bicester, ensuring that it is builds a reputation as a central hub within the Ox Cam Arc, albeit it also has an important role to play in terms of warehousing / distribution, given its excellent road transport connectivity.
- Linked to this, there is an established need to ensure a diverse employment land supply offer by allocating new **smaller employment sites**, both at higher order settlements (less so Kidlington, perhaps most notably at Bicester) and in the rural area. This will assist with ensuring economic resilience, and is a matter that will be considered further subsequent to the current consultation.
- A further consideration is supporting **housing growth** in locations well linked to strategic employment hubs, which is a notable reason in support of a good proportion of Oxford City’s unmet housing need being directed to Cherwell, and also in support of directing growth to the Kidlington area. Similarly, the proposed higher housing growth strategy at Bicester could be supportive of investment in strategic road infrastructure, which in turn could support the town’s economic role.
- Finally, with regards to **Heyford Park**, whilst it is not anticipated that the 1,235 home extension would directly deliver any new employment land, it may be supportive of long term aspirations for sensitive development / redevelopment / refurbishment / repurposing of buildings within the airfield conservation area, including with a focus on employment floorspace, as discussed in detail within Section 6.
- With regards to **development management policy**, a range of policies are supportive of ‘economy and employment’ objectives, including those that deal with assigning policy protection to employment land. Core Policy 77: London-Oxford Airport is of note, as the airport plays and important economic role.

9.6.2 In conclusion, there is a need to flag **moderate or uncertain negative effects** at the current time; however, there should be the potential to conclude positive effects – and hopefully *significant* positive effects – at the Regulation 19 stage, subsequent to further work having been completed, including site selection work with a view to significantly boosting the identified employment land supply. It is important to recall that meeting employment land needs is important in wide-ranging respects.

9.7 Historic environment

9.7.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- All the proposed housing **allocations** are subject to a degree of constraint, but there are not thought to be any concerns regarding in-combination impacts. The following reflects a broad order of concern:
 - North of the Moors, Kidlington – is discussed in detail in Section 6. It is significantly constrained by its proximity to the Kidlington Conservation Area and its prominent Grade I parish church, but there is good potential to avoid or suitably mitigate effects, particularly through an extensive greenspace buffer.

- East of Woodstock – is constrained on account of its proximity to Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site. However, the land in question is not thought likely to contribute significantly to setting of the Palace or its associated landscaped parklands, including mindful of the influence of road infrastructure in the area, plus there is as a small intervening patch of woodland. The firm proposal is to concentrate development in the northeast corner of the site, so as to avoid and suitably buffer a scheduled monument (also a wider area of archaeological interest), which also serves to reduce concerns regarding Blenheim Palace. The scheduled monument is a below ground feature, but a current planning application identifies the potential to enhance appreciation through public art.
- South of Chesterton – is near adjacent to the Chesterton Conservation Area, which extends to the southern extent of the village. However, the proposed allocation comprises the western part of site LPR37, as discussed in Section 5, whilst it is the eastern part that is seemingly the more constrained. Also, the southern extent of the conservation area mainly comprises open space / parkland, with the village's historic core located slightly further to the north. More generally, there is a need to note that a Roman Road (Akeman Street) passed through Chesterton, between Cirencester and Aylesbury (this could indicate the likelihood of archaeology). However, there would be good potential to mitigate historic environment impacts through masterplanning, plus it is noted that a 63 homes scheme has recently been delivered at the southern extent of the village. Finally, there is a need to consider that development would coalesce Chesterton and the small hamlet of Little Chesterton, which has a modest degree of historic character, with most of buildings visible on pre-1914 OS map, and given an association with a network of historic lanes, footpaths and field boundaries / streams / drainage channels; however, the Landscape Study (2022) does not raise any such concerns.
- Heyford Park – warrants being placed within the middle of this list, as there is a degree of uncertainty, at this stage, regarding historic environment / heritage concerns, ahead of consultation with Historic England. There are a range of issues (also potentially opportunities), perhaps most notably in respect of the RAF Heyford Conservation Area. Matters are discussed in detail in Section 6.
- South of Banbury Extension – is associated with land that gently descends to the south, towards the valley of the Sor Brook, which is valued historic landscape. However, the potential to utilise Wykham Lane as a defensible boundary means that there are few concerns regarding long-term 'creep'. A Grade II listed farmhouse adjacent to the east, a cluster of listed buildings at Wykham Farm to the south west, and another historic farm is adjacent to the south (shown on the pre-1914 OS map; now offering a farm shop). Also, the Bodicote Conservation Area is to the east (where Wykham Lane meets the high street), plus there are a number of popular footpaths in the vicinity. However, there will not be road access to Wykham Lane, and there is good potential to deliver greenspace as mitigation.
- Southeast Bicester Extension – Blackthorn Hill is associated with a Grade II listed windmill (and also a second windmill); however, the proposal is to enhance access to Blackthorn Hill, and the potential for enhanced appreciation of the listed windmill can be envisaged (see Figure 5.18).
- Canalside – this is a historic industrial area, with a range of Victorian industrial buildings, mixed with more modern industrial buildings, and there is one Grade II listed building (the Old Town Hall).
- West of Banbury – there is an adjacent Grade II listed farmhouse, but clear potential to deliver a significant landscape buffer, noting topographical / landscape constraints, as discussed below.
- With regards to **development management policy**, it is again the case that the primary consideration is providing strategic guidance in respect of the expectations on developers, in terms of avoiding historic environment / heritage impacts, and realising any opportunities. Also, the wider suite of proposed thematic development management policies is proposed supportive of historic environment objectives.

9.7.2 In conclusion, there are a range of sensitivities and potential development related issues / impacts, but emerging site specific policy serves to demonstrate good potential to avoid or suitable mitigate impacts, and there will be the potential to further refine and strengthen policy through further work, including in light of advice provided by Historic England. As such, **moderate or uncertain negative effects** are predicted.

9.8 Homes

9.8.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- The key proposal is to set the housing **requirement** at 1,293 dwellings per annum (dpa), which is supported as it reflects locally arising housing and a proportion of Oxford City's unmet housing need (see discussion in Section 5.2).

- The identified housing **supply** (1,291 dpa) is slightly below the proposed housing requirement, which naturally generates a degree of concern, given a clear argument for identifying a level of supply in excess of the requirement (a ‘supply buffer’), as discussed.²⁰
- However, there will be the potential to **boost supply** subsequent to the current consultation, including via increased urban supply. Also, further work will confirm the currently identified supply, e.g. NW Bicester might be able to deliver more than 2,775 homes in the plan period and/or it might be fair to assume more than 1,000 homes from windfall sites (whilst avoiding double counting with urban supply).
- The next matter to consider is whether the proposed housing supply is suitably weighted towards locations that are well-suited to providing for Oxford City’s **unmet needs**. The proposed strategy is supported, particularly given the level of growth at Bicester, which is well connected to Oxford via short and frequent rail journeys. It is important to recall that the majority of the unmet need is already planned for at sites around Kidlington, which are ‘saved’ by the emerging plan.
- **Affordable housing** needs is another matter that relates to spatial strategy, as well as to development management policy, as there can be an argument for setting the housing requirement above LHN, in order to meet affordable housing needs more fully, and there is a need to direct housing towards sites with strong development viability, as far as possible, in order to support affordable housing delivery. The proposal is to require 30% affordable housing across the district, in accordance with the viability study, which goes some way to meeting the affordable housing need in full (see discussion in Section 6).

It will be important to further scrutinise the spatial strategy, prior to plan finalisation, from an affordable housing needs perspective. Equally, there will be a need to explore ‘whole plan viability’, specifically the balance between setting requirements of developers, in terms of the funds that must be directed to affordable housing and other policy asks (e.g. decarbonisation, space standards, accessibility standards, biodiversity net gain), and ensuring deliverable housing sites. A 530 home scheme at NW Bicester recently gained permission at [appeal](#) despite providing for only 10% affordable housing (although this was reflective of particular site-specific issues, plus there is a claw back mechanism to secure greater affordable housing contributions if viability improves).

- A final matter for consideration here is meeting **specialist accommodation** needs. In particular, meeting the needs of Travelling Communities (Gypsies and Travellers, and also Travelling Showpeople) is a key issue nationally. The implications of not meeting Traveller accommodation needs are wide ranging. For Travellers, poor accommodation can be a barrier to maintaining the traditional way of life, can lead to tensions with settled communities and certainly contributes to issues of relative deprivation, with Travellers tending to have poor outcomes in terms of health and wellbeing, educational attainment and a range of other indicators. Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) is a national organisation focused on the needs of Travellers. FFT present a [vision for change](#) under four headings: Health, Hate, Accommodation and Education. FFT also collates publications, research etc, for example:
 - No place to stop: Research on the five year supply of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller sites in the South East of England (2020), which found: *“Only 8 local authorities, out of 68... in the South East of England, had identified a 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites for Gypsies and Travellers.”*
 - An overview of unmet need for pitches on Traveller sites in England (2021): *“Only 13 permanent sites and five transit sites with any available pitches... in all of England.”*
 - How to tackle health inequalities in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities (date unknown) – notably reports the findings of a 2019 Parliamentary Women and Equalities Committee inquiry on “Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities”. The committee chairperson found:²¹

“Gypsy Roma and Traveller people have been comprehensively failed by policy makers and public services for far too long... the Government must stop filing this under ‘too difficult’ and set out how it intends to improve health, education and other outcomes for these very marginalised communities who are all too often “out of sight and out of mind...”

²⁰ The aim of the supply buffer is to avoid a situation whereby the district faces supply issues (i.e. loss of a five year housing land supply, as measured against the committed housing requirement, or poor performance against the Housing Delivery Test) and so is subject to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, leading to housing coming forward at unallocated sites, which will often be sub-optimal in terms of planning and sustainable development objectives. This has been an issue for the district over recent years, with a number of significant housing developments at villages gaining permission at appeal, despite being refused by the Council for clear planning reasons, under the presumption in favour of sustainable development (which, in practice, leads to a ‘tilted balance’ in favour of granting planning permission so as to correct the district’s poor housing land supply position). As well as a supply buffer, there is also the potential to explore the possibility of a stepped housing requirement.

²¹ See <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/328/women-and-equalities-committee/news/102045/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-communities-comprehensively-failed-by-policy-makers/>

As well as setting development management policy to guide planning applications, there will be a need to allocate land for pitches / plots to meet identified needs as far as possible.

As part of the 'site selection' process, there is typically a need to consider broad strategy options, for example exploring questions around such matters as: the merits of new sites versus intensification and/or expansion of existing sites; the appropriate size of sites; whether it is appropriate to deliver new sites as part of strategic housing-led developments; the extent to which needs should be met in close proximity to where they arise from; and whether certain sites can be associated with delivery risk (e.g. sites within strategic development locations). There is also inevitably a need to explore the distinction between the needs of those who meet the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) definition, versus those who do not, mindful of latest precedents. The first step is to complete an assessment of needs.

The current consultation document explains that a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) will be undertaken subsequent to the current consultation, and so it could transpire that there is a need for further work to allocate one or more sites, and it is noted that there is also a need to consider the accommodation needs of boat dwellers. Core Policy 42 (Travelling Communities) suggests that sites should be within 3km of town or village, but there can be good potential to deliver suitable sites in closer proximity, i.e. within walking distance of services and facilities. By way of an example, Surrey Heath Borough recently consulted on a preferred approach involving four allocations, of which three were much closer than 3km to a service village, and the one relatively isolated site was proposed for a very specific reason, namely an extension to a Travelling Showpeople site. There could also be a need to consider the possibility of delivering pitches within new strategic allocations (either housing-led or employment), although this can lead to a delivery risk.

- 9.8.2 In conclusion, there is a need to flag **moderate or uncertain negative effects** at the current time, despite support for the proposed housing requirement, because the identified supply may be insufficient to provide for the housing requirement in practice. However, there should be the potential to conclude positive effects – and hopefully *significant* positive effects – at the Regulation 19 stage, subsequent to further work having been completed, with a view to significantly boosting the identified housing land supply. It is important to recall that meeting housing needs is important in wide-ranging respects.
- 9.8.3 In addition to housing land supply, there is a need for further work to build evidence and understanding around matters such as the size of supply buffer that is appropriate (if any), meeting affordable needs (informed by viability work) and meeting Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

9.9 Land, soils and resources

- 9.9.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:
- Supporting housing growth at **Canalside**, as well as an intensification of employment uses, is clearly supported, in terms of making the best use of brownfield land so as to reduce pressure on greenfield.
 - In this respect, the proposed change to the **NW Bicester** strategic allocation is of note. On the one hand, there is potentially support for higher density development. However, on the other hand, the implication is the need to allocate productive agricultural land (south of Bucknell) for greenspace.
 - Both of the proposed greenfield allocations at **Banbury** are rare examples of sites that has been surveyed in order to establish agricultural land quality with confidence. At both sites, the land is found to comprise Grade 2 quality land, i.e. land that comfortably falls within the bracket of 'best and most versatile' (BMV; which the NPPF defines as land that is Grade 1, Grade 2 or Grade 3a quality). With regards to the proposed allocation to the west of the town, the field in question is quite small, given the recent loss of the northern part of the field to development, which potentially serves to reduce concerns. With regards to the proposed allocation to the south, it is noted that the land in question comprises notably higher quality agricultural land than is the case for the committed site to the north. This presumably reflects the association of the new proposed allocation with the valley of the Sor Brook.
 - At **Bicester** there is overall lower agricultural land quality, particularly to the south and southeast of the town. None of the proposed allocations have been surveyed in detail, but are quite unlikely to comprise BMV land, on the basis of the nationally available provisional (i.e. low resolution and low accuracy) dataset, and going by land that has been surveyed in detail around the town (which finds there to be extensive Grade 3b quality land). With regards to the proposed allocation to the southeast of the town, it is noted that adjacent committed site to the west has been surveyed in detail and found to comprise Grade 3b quality land, but that the nationally available dataset shows a band of better quality (provisionally Grade 2 quality) land associated with Blackthorn Hill.

- At **Kidlington** none of the surrounding land is shown (by the dataset available at magic.gov.uk) to have been surveyed in detail, which is perhaps surprising given the extent of committed allocations following the Partial Review (2020). However, with regards to the proposed allocation east of Woodstock, the adjacent committed site has been surveyed in detail and found to comprise Grade 3b quality land. The nationally available provisional dataset serves to suggest that both of the proposed allocations comprise 'Grade 3' quality land, which in practice may or may not be land that is BMV (N.B. the nationally available dataset does not distinguish between Grades 3a and 3b). At Kidlington there is perhaps also a need to question whether the effect of allocation will be to affect the potential for productive use of the remaining agricultural fields to the north, between the proposed allocation and the river corridor; however, it might be that there are no significant concerns in this respect.
- At **Heyford Park** – it is similarly the case that none of the land surrounding the airfield has been surveyed in detail, which is surprising given that Heyford Park has been identified as a strategic growth location / option for a number of years. The nationally available provision dataset shows the land in this area to be primarily Grade 3, but there is also some Grade 2 quality land in the vicinity, which could potentially intersect with the eastern extent of the proposed allocation (recalling that the dataset is low resolution).

A further consideration is the need to avoid sterilisation of minerals resources that could potentially be viably extracted, with Heyford Park intersecting a Minerals Safeguarding Area, as understood from the [policies map](#) of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2017). However, as discussed in Section 6, this may not serve as a significant constraint in practice (to be confirmed).

- With regards to **development management policy**, Core Policy 6 (Renewable Energy) is of note, which identifies the need to avoid loss of BMV agricultural land as a key criterion when considering planning applications for new solar farms. In this respect, there is a need to consider that there is quite notable broad variation in agricultural land quality across the district, although areas of lower quality agricultural land can tend to be associated with sensitivities in other respects, e.g. biodiversity.

9.9.2 In conclusion, there is inevitably release significant areas of greenfield land that is currently in productive use for agriculture, reflecting the need to identify a supply of 'deliverable' and 'developable' sites for the plan period as a whole (NPPF paragraph 68). The district is not highly constrained in agricultural land terms, and the proposed lower growth strategy for Banbury is noted, but overall there will likely be a significant loss of BMV land, hence there is a need to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects**.

9.10 Landscape

9.10.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:

- **Landscape sensitivity** assessment has been a key input to site selection, as discussed in Section 5.4.
- At **Banbury**, there is quite a high prevalence of landscape sensitivity around the settlement edge (see the 'points of the compass' discussion in Section 5.4), but efforts have clearly been made to direct growth away from the most sensitive areas. In particular, the proposed allocation to the west of the town has relatively limited landscape sensitivity (on the assumption of a strong landscape buffer at its western extent, to avoid concerns regarding further development creep to the west, which would risk the town 'spilling' into the valley of the Sor Brook). The landscape study assigns 'low-moderate' sensitivity to this site and also the larger proposed allocation to the south of the town; however, the latter site is notably associated with the valley of the Sor Brook. Furthermore, it will extend an existing committed scheme, which currently is set to be quite well-contained at its southern boundary by a tree belt; however, there is considered to be landscape capacity for a further southern extension, taking the urban extension to the next logical boundary to the south, namely Wykham Lane. Given that Wykham Lane will form a strong defensible boundary, here are few concerns regarding long-term development creep.
- **Bicester** is generally associated with lower landscape sensitivity, but there is significant variation around the perimeter of the town, including mindful of key viewpoints including higher ground, main roads, rural lanes and footpaths. The proposed extension to the existing NW Bicester allocation is broadly supported, from a landscape perspective, as the effect will be to secure a long term defensible landscape gap between Bicester and the village of Bucknell. Also, there are fairly limited sensitivities associated with land to the south of Chesterton, with the Landscape Study (2022) assigning 'low-medium' sensitivity. However, the proposed allocation to the southeast of Bicester is associated with some notably landscape sensitivities, given relationship to the settlement edge and Blackthorn Hill. The landscape study assigns 'medium-high' sensitivity, such that this is one of the two most sensitive Bicester landscape parcels. There will be good potential to masterplan and design the scheme so as to minimise landscape impacts,

and it is recognised that there are also potentially opportunities associated with increasing access to Blackthorn Hill (where there is a historic windmill, and from where it may be possible to gain some appreciation of Bicester in its landscape setting), but there is clearly a degree of inherent constraint.

- At **Kidlington** the two proposed allocations are not covered by the Landscape Study (2022), but have been examined by studies completed in the past, specifically to inform the Partial Review (2020). Overall, both sites are considered to have relatively limited landscape sensitivity, as relatively flat sites benefiting from quite strong landscape containment. The site to the east of Woodstock is quite well-contained in landscape terms, in that it is bounded to the west by the Woodstock urban edge (a site under construction) and by roads on the other sides (along with thick hedgerows / tree belts). Also, the proposal is to deliver a very significant amount of new strategic greenspace within the site. With regards to the site to the north of Kidlington, the potential to achieve a new defensible Green Belt boundary is obviously a key consideration, which has been considered in detail and will undoubtedly be given further consideration ahead of plan finalisation. Heritage constraint to development here has been discussed above, including views of the Grade I listed (and highly prominent) parish church from footpaths that pass through and adjacent to the site. There is also some slightly raised land within west of the site.
- With regards to **Heyford Park**, the Landscape Study (2022) assigns low-medium sensitivity, but there are a number of inherent issues, given a raised plateau landscape. A key issue is the landscape gap to the Lower Heyford Road, as discussed in Section 6.
- Finally, with regards to the **employment allocations**, there can be inherent landscape sensitivities; however, both of the primary allocations – namely the two at Bicester – are closely associated with major road corridors. Also, the largest of the proposed allocations would extend a recently committed site.
- With regards to **development management policy**, an important question is in respect of the degree to which masterplanning parameters are set through the local plan, including with a view to providing confidence that landscape impacts will be minimised, versus allowing flexibility for masterplanning at the planning application stage, with a view to avoiding delivery issues. As a minimum, it is expected that areas for strategic greenspace within site boundaries will be identified, as per the Partial Review (2020).

9.10.2 In conclusion, as per the conclusion in Section 6, it is considered appropriate to predict **neutral effects**. A number of the sites are associated with landscape sensitivity, and the proposed release of Green Belt is noted, but the lower growth strategy for Banbury is supported. Also, subject to further work subsequent to the current consultation (as discussed), there is support for taking an overall proactive approach to meeting development needs, given that Cherwell is located within a constrained sub-region.

9.11 Transport

9.11.1 The following bullet points present a discussion of select key issues / opportunities and potential impacts:
N.B. please also see discussion in earlier sections, including Air quality.

- Beginning with the matter of **broad strategy**, the discussion in Section 6 sets out broad support for the preferred growth scenario in terms of its alignment with strategic transport objectives. In particular, there is broad support for a strategy whereby objectively assessed development needs are proactively met through local plans, as well as support for a strategy that includes a strong focus on directing new homes to strategic development sites. Supporting growth at Bicester over-and-above Banbury is supported, for the reasons set out above under the ‘air quality’ heading, and there is also support for the two Kidlington allocations, from a transport perspective. Heyford Park is less well-connected in transport terms, but a key aim of further growth is to secure improvements to transport infrastructure and bus services. Also, as discussed in detail above, the effect of growth could be to support achievement of a long term vision for Heyford Park as a service village with a strong degree of self-containment.
- Further **site specific comments** are as follows:
 - West of Banbury – the proposed allocation to the west (now committed) is located between strategic transport corridors, but there is a bus route nearby. Road access will be via estate roads.
 - South of Banbury – will extend an existing committed strategic allocation, which had been masterplanned to ensure good access to a distributor road and a local centre. The western part of the site links to a main road corridor and has “reasonable bus connectivity”, according to the Transport Assessment (2022), but this part of the site may need to be delivered as greenspace.

- South of Chesterton – is very well located on a strategic transport corridor, but a key issue will be securing good walking and cycling connectivity to Bicester town centre and rail station.
- Southeast of Bicester – is well located on the A41, but there are challenges in respect of accessing Bicester town centre (including due to a problematic EWR level crossing) and accessing Oxford / the M40, in the absence of a southern Bicester link road. There is also the need for further work to confirm walking / cycling connectivity from southern extent of the site to a local centre and Bicester town centre.
- North of Kidlington – this site is broadly supported, from a transport perspective, but there is a need to confirm the potential for good road access from the Moors.
- With regards to **development management policy**, this is clearly something that is a considerable focus of the current consultation document. Just taking Banbury as an example, core policies deal with “delivery of strategic transport schemes”, “safeguarding of land for strategic transport schemes” and “development in the vicinity of Banbury Rail Station”, whilst there is a development management policy dealing specifically with the matter of “Banbury Inner Relief Road and Hennef Way”.

9.11.2 In conclusion, as per the discussion in Section 6, it is possible to predict **moderate or uncertain positive effects** on the baseline, recalling that the baseline situation is one whereby there is problematic unplanned growth in Cherwell and elsewhere within a sub-region where aligning growth with strategic transport objectives is of paramount importance. Given the clear focus of thematic core / development management policies on transport it may be possible to upgrade this conclusion ahead of plan finalisation. It will also be important to take account of detailed transport modelling, which will inform plan finalisation.

9.12 Water

- 9.12.1 With regards to the **spatial strategy** / package of proposed allocations, there is little potential to comment further, over-and-above the discussion presented in Section 6. There are no clear reasons to suggest any significant concerns, in respect of water resources or water quality, but there is a need to gather further evidence, including through consultation with the Environment Agency and the water company.
- 9.12.2 With regards to thematic core / **development management policy**, the current consultation document explains: *“In considering development proposals, the Council will use Core Policy 9 together with Core Policy 7: Sustainable Flood Risk Management and Core Policy 8: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the impact of development on the water environment, maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainability in water use.”*
- 9.12.3 In conclusion, as per the discussion in Section 6, it is appropriate to predict **moderate or uncertain negative effects** at this stage, ahead of further evidence-gathering.

9.13 Overall conclusions on the LPR

- 9.13.1 The first point to note is that the appraisal predicts “moderate or uncertain negative effects” under six of the twelve sustainability topic headings. However, there will be the potential to address the identified concerns subsequent to the current consultation / prior to plan finalisation.
- 9.13.2 In particular, in respect of ‘**Housing**’ and ‘**Economy**’ objectives, subsequent to the Council having undertaken further work aimed at boosting supply it should be possible to predict positive effects, and potentially significant positive effects, at the next stage. Focusing on housing, the proposed ‘requirement’ is supported (1,293 dpa), but the identified supply currently falls slightly short of the requirement.
- 9.13.3 Equally, after having undertaken further work, including accounting for the consultation response received from the Environment Agency, it should be possible to reach a more positive conclusion in respect of the plan’s performance under both the ‘**Climate change adaptation**’ and ‘**Water**’ headings.
- 9.13.4 The final two predicted negative effects are then: ‘**Historic environment**’, in terms of which it may be that negative effects of some significance are unavoidable, but there will nonetheless be the potential to improve the plan’s performance / reduce tensions, including in light of advice provided by Historic England; and ‘**Land**’, in terms of which negative effects are likely to be unavoidable.
- 9.13.5 The second point to note is then the predicted “moderate or uncertain positive effect” under the ‘**Transport**’ topic heading. Assuming that housing and employment land supply can be boosted subsequent to the current consultation, then there is overall quite strong support for the proposed spatial strategy / package

of proposed allocations. A proactive approach to meeting objectively assessed needs is strongly supported, given Cherwell's location within a sub-region where the need for growth to align with strategic transport objectives is of key importance and, as part of this, there is a need to avoid speculative development (i.e. at sites not allocated within a local plan). Achievement of transport objectives, including opportunities to secure new and upgraded strategic transport infrastructure, is a clear focus of proposed thematic core / development management policies, including within the sub-area sections. However, certain of the proposed allocations give rise to a degree of tension with transport objectives.

- 9.13.6 Neutral effects are then predicted under the remaining five topic headings, namely: '**Air quality**' – one key issue relates to the question of whether growth at Bicester will help to deliver a southern link road; '**Biodiversity**' – the proposed allocation at SE Bicester is notably adjacent to a large adjacent local wildlife site, but there could still be the potential to realise a suitable level of biodiversity net gain, potentially in excess of the nationally required 10%; '**Climate change mitigation**' – whilst the proposed policy approach is considered suitably ambitious, there is a need to account for the latest national context / precedents, and there is also a need to further scrutinise the spatial strategy / package of proposed allocations from a perspective of fully realising decarbonisation opportunities; '**Communities**' – there is a need for further work around access to community infrastructure, and one key issue is resolving the matter of access to a primary school from the east of Woodstock allocation; and '**Landscape**' – a number of the sites are associated with landscape sensitivity, and the proposed release of Green Belt is also noted (although Green Belt is not a landscape designation), however, the lower growth strategy for Banbury is supported, as is the overall proactive approach to meeting development needs (subject to further work to boost supply), given that Cherwell is located within a constrained sub-region.

Cumulative effects

- 9.13.7 The SEA Regulations, which underpin the SA process, indicate that stand-alone consideration should be given to 'cumulative effects', i.e. effects of the local plan in combination with other plans, programmes and projects. In practice, this is an opportunity to discuss potential long term and 'larger than local' effects:
- **Housing needs** – this is a primary larger than local consideration, with all local plans needing to consider known, likely or potential unmet needs from closely linked neighbouring areas. The proposed housing requirement reflects a proactive approach to providing for Oxford's unmet needs.
 - **The economy** – there is a need to ensure that employment land is provided in line with regional and national objectives. In this light, the LPR focus on supporting strategic employment growth at Bicester is supported, as well as employment (and housing) growth at Kidlington, as both settlements fall within with Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine and the Ox Cam Arc. There is pressure for further warehousing floorspace at Banbury, but this is resisted on balance, noting that such uses are relatively footloose. A further consideration is the sub-regional value of Oxford City Airport (e.g. supporting Silverstone).
 - **Transport corridors** – many of the key strategic opportunities around growth facilitating new or upgraded strategic transport infrastructure are 'local', rather than cross-boundary, e.g. aspirations for the A41 corridor at Bicester, and improved sustainable transport connectivity at Upper Heyford. However, there are also a range of cross-border considerations, e.g. bus services linking growth locations to Oxford, and A44 corridor considerations in respect of growth at Woodstock.
 - **Oxford Meadows SAC** – the possibility of in-combination impacts is a focus of a stand-alone Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), the conclusion reached that there are no significant concerns.
 - **Landscape scale nature recovery** – this is a key larger than local consideration, with a particular need to focus attention on: A) the River Cherwell / Oxford Canal corridor; and B) the Upper Ray Meadows (which link to the Bernwood Forest). Both broad landscapes are of Ox-Cam wide, and hence arguably national, significance. Strategic growth associated with, or nearby to, these broad landscapes could lead to funds being directed towards the realisation of strategic ambitions. A Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is forthcoming, under the Environment Act 2021, but steps must be taken in the interim.
 - **Green Belt** – there is a need to maintain the integrity of the Oxford Green Belt. In this respect, the key point to note is that the proposed Green Belt allocation makes only 'moderate' contribution to purposes.
 - **Decarbonisation** – 'Bicester Eco-town' has been discussed nationally for at least a decade. In turn, there is a strong argument for a national exemplar strategy. One matter for consideration could be the possibility of seeking to deliver a sub-regional modern methods of construction (MMC) facility.
 - **Agricultural land** – self-sufficiency of food projection is increasingly a key national consideration.
 - **Water** – is a larger than local consideration. A 'Phase 1' Oxfordshire [study](#) was completed in 2021.

Part 3: What are the next steps?

10 Plan finalisation

Publication of the Local Plan

- 10.1.1 Subsequent to the current consultation it is the intention to prepare the proposed submission version of the local plan for publication in-line with Regulation 19 of the Local Planning Regulations 2012. This will be a version that the Council believes is 'sound' and intends to submit for Examination. Preparation of the Proposed Submission ('Publication') Local Plan will be informed by the findings of this Interim SA Report, responses to the current consultation, further evidence gathering and further appraisal work.
- 10.1.2 The SA Report will be published alongside the Proposed Submission ('Publication') Local Plan. It will provide all the information required by the SEA Regulations 2004.

Submission, examination and adoption

- 10.1.3 Once the period for representations on the Publication Local Plan / SA Report has finished the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by the Council, who will then consider whether the plan can still be deemed 'sound'. If this is the case, the plan will be submitted for Examination, alongside a summary of the main issues raised during the consultation. The Council will also submit the SA Report.
- 10.1.4 At Examination, the Inspector will consider representations (alongside the SA Report) before then either reporting back on soundness or identifying the need for modifications. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the Local Plan, these will be prepared (alongside SA if necessary) and then subjected to consultation (with an SA Report Addendum published alongside if necessary).
- 10.1.5 Once found to be 'sound' the Local Plan can be adopted by the Council. At that time a 'Statement' must be published that sets out certain information including 'the measures decided concerning monitoring'.

11 Monitoring

- 11.1.1 There is an increased focus on monitoring nationally, in light of the proposal to reform plan-making to ensuring a clearer focus on achieving clear 'outcomes'.
- 11.1.2 At the current time, in-light of the appraisal findings presented in Part 2 (i.e. predicted effects and uncertainties), it is suggested that monitoring efforts might focus on:
- Agricultural land – it is possible to monitor loss of agricultural land by grade.
 - Biodiversity – the new net gain regime presents an opportunity for innovative monitoring.
 - Climate change adaptation – potentially monitor housing in close proximity to a fluvial flood zone (in addition to intersecting); also the 1 in 30 year surface water flood zone.
 - Climate change mitigation – it could be appropriate to monitor the proportion of new homes linked to a heat network and or a decentralised ('smart') power network; also the proportion of homes delivered to standards of sustainable design and construction that exceed building regulations. More generally, there is a need to carefully consider how local plan monitoring links to monitoring of borough-wide emissions.
 - Development creep – new permitted sites adjacent to committed or recent schemes could be monitored.
 - Employment land requirements – will require close monitoring, given evolving regional and national context. In particular, the needs of the warehousing / distribution sector are subject to change.
 - Housing – the Council already monitors numerous housing delivery related matters through the Authority Monitoring Report, and indicators should be kept under review. There could be an argument for monitoring affordable housing delivery by district sub-area / viability zone. Regular monitoring of the accommodation needs of travelling communities is also important, with the last assessment in 2017.
 - Transport – consideration should be given to innovative methods of monitoring the uptake of 'sustainable transport' modes within new communities, plus there is a need for ongoing monitoring of traffic hotspots.
 - Water – ongoing consideration should be given to any risk of capacity breaches at Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) and other risks to the status of water courses.

Appendix I: Regulatory requirements

As discussed in Section 1, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 explains the information that must be contained in the SA Report. However, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. Table A links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2, whilst Table B explains this interpretation. Table C then presents a discussion of more precisely how the information in this report reflects the requirements.

Table A: Questions answered by the SA Report, in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements

		Questions answered	As per regulations... the SA Report must include...
Introduction		What's the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
		What's the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	What's the SA scope?	What's the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
		What are the key issues and objectives that should be a focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
Part 1	What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives assessment / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan
Part 2	What are the SA findings at this current stage?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan
Part 3	What happens next?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A description of the monitoring measures envisaged

Table B: Interpreting Schedule 2 and linking the interpretation to our report structure

<u>Schedule 2</u>	<u>Interpretation of Schedule 2</u>	
<i>The report must include...</i>	<i>The report must include...</i>	
(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level	
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues & objectives?</i>
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal	
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> [Part 1 of the Report]
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.	
	The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> [Part 2 of the Report]
	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan	
	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> [Part 3 of the Report]

Table C: 'Checklist' of how and where (within this report) regulatory requirements are reflected.

Regulatory requirement	Information presented in this report
Schedule 2 of the regulations lists the information to be provided within the SA Report	
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Section 2 ('What's the plan seeking to achieve') presents this information.
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	These matters were considered in detail at the scoping stage, which included consultation on a Scoping Report. The outcome of scoping was an 'SA framework', which is presented within Section 3 in an adjusted form.
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	
d) ... environmental problems which are relevant... ...areas of a particular environmental importance...;	
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The Scoping Report presented a detailed context review and explained how key messages from this (and baseline review) were then refined in order to establish an 'SA framework', which is presented within Section 3. With regards to explaining " <i>how... considerations have been taken into account</i> ", Section 7 explains 'reasons for supporting the preferred approach', i.e. how/why the preferred approach is justified in-light of alternatives appraisal.
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.	Section 6 presents alternatives appraisal findings in respect of reasonable growth scenarios, whilst Section 9 presents an appraisal of the local plan as a whole. All appraisal work naturally involved giving consideration to the SA scope and the potential for various effect characteristics/dimensions.
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Section 9 presents recommendations.
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Sections 4 and 5 deal with 'reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with', with an explanation of reasons for focusing on growth scenarios / certain growth scenarios. Section 7 explains 'reasons for supporting the preferred approach', i.e. explains how/why the preferred approach is justified in-light of the alternatives (growth scenarios) appraisal. Methodology is discussed at various places, ahead of presenting appraisal findings.
i) ... measures envisaged concerning monitoring;	Section 11 presents this information.
j) a non-technical summary... under the above headings	The NTS is a separate document.
The SA Report must be published alongside the draft plan, in-line with the following regulations	
Authorities... and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)	This Interim SA Report is published alongside a draft version of the plan in order to inform consultation and plan finalisation.
The SA Report must be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.	
The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure.	This Interim SA Report will be taken into account when finalising the plan for publication (as discussed in Section 10).

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