

B2 Theme Two: Building Sustainable Communities

Introduction

- B.81** In order to build sustainable communities, we will seek to provide an appropriate mix of housing within Cherwell, including housing to address the requirements of a growing and ageing population.
- B.82** We will require a mix of housing types, size and tenures, built to high design standards. We will also aim to secure mixed tenure as well as enabling new forms of housing such as community self-build and other imaginative solutions to housing need in the ~~d~~District to ensure new development results in balanced, mixed communities that have taken the housing needs of the district fully into account.
- B.83** We wish to ensure that new development fully integrates with existing settlements to forge one community, rather than separate communities (see 'Policy ESD 16: The Character of the Built Environment'). We will also require investment in a range of community infrastructure including education, health, leisure facilities and public open space appropriate to the scale of proposed developments (see Section D ~~The Infrastructure Delivery Plan~~).
- B.84** Cherwell's countryside, landscape and green spaces are important natural resources. They form the setting of our towns and villages, contribute to their identity and the well-being of Cherwell's communities, and provide recreation opportunities. The countryside's intrinsic character and beauty is important to the quality of life in Cherwell and remains an economically important agricultural resource.
- B.85** By focusing development in and around the towns of Bicester and Banbury we aim to ensure that the housing growth which the District needs only takes place in the locations that are most sustainable and most capable of absorbing this new growth (see Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'). We support town centre locations for housing to create lively centres that are lived in and generate added footfall to support retail and commercial activities.
- B.86** We aim to avoid development in inappropriate locations and coalescence with neighbouring settlements. Therefore, where appropriate, green buffers are ~~being~~ identified at the edges of the two towns (~~s~~See 'Policy ESD 15: Green Boundaries to Growth').
- B.87** New housing needs to be provided in such a way that it minimises environmental impact, including ~~through the elimination and control of minimising-pollution and and maximising air quality, and~~ the ~~effective and efficient~~ use of natural resources. It needs to be planned in a way that helps to reduce carbon emissions, reflects the functions of our settlements and protects or enhances the identity of our towns and villages and the sense of belonging of our residents (see Section B.3 ~~Theme Three:-~~ Policies for Ensuring Sustainable Development').
- B.88** Where appropriate we will encourage area renewal to invest in the physical infrastructure, community facilities and to improve the quality of the current housing stock, helping to secure better educational attainment, health and

well-being and improved employment opportunities (see 'Policy BSC 5: Area Renewal').

[B.88a](#) [In seeking to build sustainable communities the Council will support Town and Parish Councils and relevant Neighbourhood Forums in developing Neighbourhood Plans.](#)

Policy BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution

B.89 The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. It requires the Council to plan for at least 15 years of housing delivery, to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing, and to maintain a five year supply of deliverable sites with a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

[B.89a](#) [Although the South East Plan has recently been revoked, its housing requirements assessment of housing need has been central to were important -in the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan is informed by, and consistent with, the South East Plan's former housing requirement of 670 new homes per year. This level of development emerged in 2009 from a process of consultation, testing and public examination. It is generally consistent with both 2008 national household projections for the district \(641 per annum\) and 2011 interim projections \(688 per annum\) and is considered to be the appropriate and sustainable level of growth for the District.](#)

[B.89b](#) [An Oxfordshire wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment \(SHMA\) was produced in 2007, pre-recession, and is now considered to be significantly out-of-date. A local study \(SHMA Update and Review\) was published by the Council in 2012 to supplement the SHMA which confirms that the former South East Plan requirements the are generally consistent with 2008 based household projections. A new county-wide SHMA has also now \(in 2013\) been commissioned. The results are not yet known but will be considered jointly by all the Oxfordshire District Councils in due course. The following actions have therefore been agreed:](#)

["The Council undertakes to work cooperatively with all the other Oxfordshire local authorities to seek to jointly meet in full the objectively assessed need for housing across the Oxfordshire housing market area, to be informed by the 2013 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment \(SHMA\). The Council will first seek to accommodate its own housing need in full. If following the SHMA, any of the Oxfordshire authorities identify that they cannot fully accommodate their objectively assessed housing need, the Council will fulfil its statutory 'duty to co-operate' in partnership with all the other Oxfordshire authorities. As part of this, the Council will actively participate in any necessary joint work to identify and assess all options in accordance with national policy and Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\) regulations so as to establish how and where any unmet need can best be accommodated within the housing market area.](#)

[Any joint working will consider all options which may be contained within individual districts or may cross administrative boundaries. If following this joint work it is identified and agreed that any unmet housing need is required](#)

to be accommodated within this district one of the following approaches would be undertaken:

- a highly focussed partial review of the Local Plan; or
- appropriate land allocations would be made through a subsequent development plan document.

The appropriate approach will depend on the scale of the provision required."

B.90 The Council has had regard to the NPPF by ensuring in particular that:

- Development is focused primarily on urban areas ~~in the first instance~~
- The Eco-Development at North West Bicester (see 'Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town') is delivered to support the transition to a low carbon future with 'Garden City' principles adopted
- The level and location of development in rural areas is sustainable. Rural areas are generally less sustainable than urban areas: there is a greater need to travel to employment, schools, shops and other services, and fewer public transport opportunities available. The Plan recognises this and takes account of relatively high levels of delivery in rural areas from 2006 to 2012
- The constraints of the district are considered. The capacity of the southern part of the District is particularly constrained. A large area is protected by the Oxford Green Belt (see Policy ESD 14) and the sensitive ecology of the area (see 'Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment') suggests that development should be limited
- The Plan provides for at least 15 years of housing delivery with a Plan period that extends to ~~for an additional period of five years i.e. 2006 to 2031 and over 15 years of housing delivery.~~

B.91 A longer plan period enables more realistic phasing of strategic development sites and assists the planning of infrastructure delivery.

B.92 The Plan meets its housing requirements by allocating strategic development sites at Bicester and Banbury, by making an allowance for small non-strategic urban and rural sites in sustainable locations and by including a realistic and reliable windfall allowance for (previously developed) sites of less than 10 dwellings. Development at villages will be considered against the Policy Villages 1: Village Categorisation, Policy Villages 2: Distributing Growth Across the Rural Areas and Policy Villages 3: Rural Exception Sites. Through the identification of 'green buffers', the Plan also identifies land where development would be inappropriate because of its environmental or historic significance.

B.93 The Plan supports s the objectives of the Council's Housing Strategy 2012-2017 to increase the supply of homes and to improve access to housing. It provides for new affordable homes for those in most housing need and seeks to ensure the opportunities for home ownership are widened. The Plan aims to extend choice, to provide high quality homes and development, and to

secure a mix of house types, size and tenure that meets housing need. This includes meeting the requirements of an ageing population through the provision of extra care, supported and sheltered housing and providing new forms of access such as community self-build or self-finish housing.

B.94 Overall housing delivery from 2006 to 2031 will be as set out in the policy below. Further delivery will be seen at the North West Bicester site (Policy Bicester 1) [-beyond 2031 but the Plan does not preclude earlier or faster delivery.](#)

B.95 (Para' Deleted)

B.96 (Para' Deleted)

Policy BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution

Cherwell district will deliver a wide choice of high quality homes by providing for 16,750 additional dwellings between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2031. 2,898 completions were recorded between 2006 and 2012 leaving 13,852 homes to be provided between 2012 and 2031. Housing will be delivered in accordance with the requirements set out below:

	Bicester	Banbury	Rest of District	Totals
Completions	224	1376	1298	2898
Permissions (10+)	1774	1245	1226	4245
Allocations	4793	2950	398	8141
Windfalls (<10)	103	383	980	1466
Totals	6894	5954	3902	16,750

Policy BSC2: The Effective and Efficient Use of Land – Brownfield Land and Housing Density

B.97 Managing the use of previously developed land is important in maintaining the appearance of our towns and villages and to the well-being of our communities. It can also provide opportunities for enhancing biodiversity. This means ensuring that land and buildings earmarked for development are not underused and that we make the most of vacant and derelict land and buildings.

B.98 The Plan provides for 9,607 homes in addition to existing planning permissions. From the Housing Trajectory (Section E.2), it is estimated that approximately 45% [of homes](#) can be delivered on previously developed land. The redevelopment of Banbury Canalside ('Policy Banbury 1: Banbury Canalside'), the MOD site at Graven Hill, Bicester ('Policy Bicester 2: Graven

Hill') and the former RAF Upper Heyford airbase (originally approved in 2010 – see 'Policy for Villages 5: Former RAF Upper Heyford') will be central to achieving this. The plan also includes a windfall allowance for small previously developed sites.

- B.99** It is also important to make efficient use of land. 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. In general, new housing should be provided at a net density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare.
- B.100** In considering development on smaller sites previously developed land within urban areas and within those villages identified by the Local Plan as being suitable places for additional residential development ('Policy ~~for Villages 12: Distributing Growth Across the Rural Areas~~') should generally be considered over previously undeveloped sites.

Policy BSC 2: 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 seek to deliver approximately 45% of new homes on previously developed land across the district. ~~and n~~New housing should ~~generally~~ be provided on net developable areas at a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there justifiable planning reasons for lower density development.

Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing

- B.101** Cherwell has a high level of need for affordable housing which is defined by the Government in the NPPF as comprising social rented, affordable rented and 'intermediate' housing (such as shared ownership) provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.
- B.102** The findings from the Council's 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment Review and Update 2012' are that the net housing need based on the ability to afford private rents is 186 homes per year or 831 homes per year based on the ability to buy an entry level property. By applying a social:affordable rent split based on affordability, the overall need is identified as being in the region of 300 homes per year. Assessing need is complex and the level of need will fluctuate. However, the need to provide affordable housing at viable levels is clear.
- B.103** The Council's Housing Strategy 2012-17 takes into account Government policy on the provision of affordable housing and the Homes and Community Agency's current funding regime. The additional value in the stock of affordable housing can be used by Registered Providers to secure finance for further investment in new housing.
- B.104** The Housing Strategy seeks to increase the supply of, and access to, affordable rented housing. It sets a target of delivering 750 affordable homes in total between 2012 and 2017 which include new homes, the acquisition of market homes by Registered Providers and bringing empty homes back into

use. The Housing Strategy highlights the importance of developing sustainable communities.

- B.105** The Housing Strategy recognises the need for affordable homes, and aims to ensure that Cherwell is well-placed to maximise investment by Registered Providers and to respond to opportunities as they arise. A Delivery Plan will be prepared to implement the strategy, which seeks to maximise the resources available to support delivery, to maintain a close dialogue with Registered Providers, and to be innovative in the way affordable housing is provided.
- B.106** Securing new affordable housing on site as part of larger developments is the most significant way in which homes can be provided. Policy BSC3 therefore seeks to achieve this so that the supply of new homes reflects the high level of need.
- B.107** Housing proposals will need to provide affordable housing where they meet the qualifying thresholds. Where the number of dwellings proposed falls below the relevant threshold, or the number of dwellings is not specified, the Council will consider whether or not 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.
- B.108** An Affordable Housing Viability Study has been produced to assess the levels of affordable housing that could reasonably be required from new housing developments. In general, the higher land values in rural areas and at Kidlington allow for higher affordable housing requirements per site than at Banbury and Bicester where land values are lower.
- B.109** The Affordable Housing Viability Study demonstrates that in general affordable housing can be delivered in Cherwell without social housing grant or other grants. The Homes and Communities Agency expects that affordable housing requirements will be met without social housing grant and this assumption underpins this policy.
- B.110** Where scheme viability is a concern, consideration of the potential availability of grant or other grant, and negotiations on the mix, type and tenure of housing will take place using an 'open-book' economic viability assessment. Unless otherwise agreed it will use the Council's residual value based, appraisal model.
- B.111** The starting point for the mix of affordable housing to be secured will be Local Plan 'Policy BSC 4: Housing Mix', the Council's Housing Register and local housing need surveys. Credible information from Registered Providers and developers will also be considered.
- B.112** Discussions as to whether it would be appropriate to include a 'cascade' mechanism in legal agreements, potentially enabling the secured form and/or quantum of affordable housing to be varied, will only be entered into with the benefit of an 'open-book' economic viability assessment and having regard to the risks to delivery in each case.

- B.113** Financial contributions made under Policy BSC 3 will be secured by legal agreement for the provision of affordable housing.
- B.114** The Council will support proposals for community self-build or self-finish affordable housing particularly where it will result in suitable empty properties being brought into residential use.
- B.115** The Council has established a community self-build housing programme known as 'Build!' ® and has financial commitment (subject to contract) from the Homes and Community Agency for new build and for the refurbishment of empty homes. It is a member of a Government-Industry Self-Build Working Group and has contributed to a National Action Plan to develop community self-build.
- B.116** The Council's Housing Strategy 2012-17 includes a target of delivering the first 180 community self-build homes through its 'Build!' ® programme by 31 March 2015. The Council is also in the process of establishing a district-wide Community Land Trust which will help create the conditions for, and facilitate, community-led housing more generally Affordable housing will be expected to reach the HCA standards identified in the draft Planning Obligations SPD.

Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing

At Banbury and Bicester, 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.

At Kidlington, 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 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

Elsewhere, all proposed developments that include 3 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 3 or more dwellings (gross), will be expected to provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

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 intermediate affordable homes. Social rented housing will be particularly supported in the form of extra care or other supported housing. It is expected that these requirements will be met without the use of social housing grant or other grant.

Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, 'open-book' financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected so that an in house economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an external economic viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter.

Where development is demonstrated to be unviable with the above requirements, further negotiations will take place. These negotiations will include consideration of: the mix and type of housing, the split between social rented and intermediate housing, the availability of social housing grant/funding and the percentage of affordable housing to be provided.

The Council will require active consideration of proposals for community self-build or self-finish housing in particular where it [is to a high design standard](#) and will result in suitable empty properties being brought into residential use. Self-build and Self-finish should contribute towards meeting the need for affordable housing.

[Affordable Housing will also be delivered through](#) ~~(see also 'Policy for Villages 3: Rural Exception Sites')~~.

Policy BSC 4: Housing Mix

- B.117** The Local Plan aims not only to increase supply of housing but to encourage a mix that can help improve the functioning of the housing market system, make it more fluid, and enable households to more easily find and move to housing which they can afford and which better suits their circumstances.
- B.118** There is need to provide a mix of housing in Cherwell that reflects the needs of an ageing population, a growth in smaller households and which meets the requirements for family housing. The mix of housing needs to enable movement through the market from one house type to another as the needs of households change. This movement frees up housing which might otherwise be unavailable.
- B.119** Modelling work has been undertaken (SHMA Review and Update 2012) which examines 'housing careers' and household 'lifestages' and applies these to national household projections (2008 based) for Cherwell to determine the most appropriate mix of housing types and sizes to best meet the projected mix of households.
- B.120** The model provides an 'optimum' stock profile which would best fit the different lifestages projected to exist at that time for each household group. Although the model has to generalise, it also seeks to be as realistic as possible, for example by carefully considering the proportion of 'empty nester' households who might or might not 'downsize' over coming years.
- B.121** The estimates for each broad household group apply to the whole of the housing stock, not just new developments. However, the mix of new additions to stock gradually moves the overall mix towards the optimum profile.

B.122 The overall conclusion is that for the foreseeable future the direction of travel of planning should be to provide more moderately sized family homes which are affordable to those on average incomes, and more downsizing homes for sale which will appeal to 'empty nesters'.

B.123 The need for housing for those with care needs is also significant. '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 enables independent living 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 in achieving more social cohesion by providing an opportunity for community living and a better mix of housing within residential areas.

B.124 Evidence produced for the Council's former Housing Strategy for Older People (2010-2015) identified a requirement for an additional 788 units from 2010 to 2026 to meet extra care and 'enhanced sheltered' needs. Extra care remains an important housing option in the new district Housing Strategy 2012-2017.

B.125 An assessment of the development viability of extra care housing (2011) concluded that the inclusion of extra care housing within mixed tenure schemes will not significantly impact on the viability and deliverability of housing. Consultation with providers suggests that schemes will need to comprise at least 45 dwellings to make the provision of support and care facilities operationally viable.

B.126 (Para' Deleted)

B.127 (Para' Deleted)

Policy BSC 4: 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 and inclusive communities.

The mix of housing will be negotiated having regard to the Council's most up-to-date evidence on housing need and available evidence from developers on local market conditions.

Strategic housing sites of at least 400 dwellings will be expected to provide a minimum of 45 self-contained extra care dwellings as part of the overall mix. 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 accommodation housing for older people and other supported housing for those with specific

living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. All proposals ~~for extra care housing~~ will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing.

Policy BSC 5: Area Renewal

- B.128** Helping to create opportunity for all and positively renew and regenerate areas with challenging social conditions in parts of the District is important to the delivery of the objectives of the Local Plan.
- B.129** The 'Brighter Futures in Banbury' initiative brings together key agencies to address issues of deprivation in the town and a number of projects are being pursued targeting western Banbury, together with Grimsbury in eastern Banbury.
- B.130** Area renewal is one way to help improve particular wards, with development proposals ~~supported~~ that would help to address some of the issues. Regeneration measures to be supported include housing investment and new retail, community facilities and other investment from a multi-agency partnership. Measures will be taken to provide local employment opportunities and the local recruitment of labour. Area renewal will help improve the community fabric of the area, help improve social opportunities ~~and~~, improve health and well-being ~~and~~, educational attainment ~~and employment opportunities~~.
- B.131** Measures will include new housing and associated facilities and improvements to the built environment. ~~They -It~~ will also ~~include the enhance the built environment and~~ provision of ~~de~~ opportunities for contributions and linkages to long-term community based projects and schemes designed to specifically help community development.
- B.132** Planning permission will be granted for small scale redevelopment/renewal proposals that would result in improvements to the existing housing stock, retail and community facilities and services, and local employment. ~~including o~~ opportunities for redevelopment in the defined area ~~that would contribute to area renewal will be sought. using Area action programmes as the required means of delivery.~~

Policy BSC 5: Area Renewal

We will support area renewal proposals that direct investment to improve the physical and community fabric of ~~the District~~ ~~defined area~~, to improve social outcomes, improve health and well-being, educational attainment and employment outcomes.

Policy BSC 6: Travelling Communities

- B.133** National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (March 2012) requires Local Planning Authorities to assess the need for new sites, to develop fair and effective strategies to meet need and to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- B.134** The Government is aiming to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply. It wishes to enable the provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure having regard to the need to protect local amenity and the local environment. It advises that traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt should be considered to be inappropriate development.
- B.135** The Council is required to set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers, and plot targets for travelling showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities. It is required to identify and update annually a five year supply of deliverable traveller sites and to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15.
- B.136** Cherwell presently (31 March 2012) has seven private Gypsy and Traveller sites providing 70 household 'pitches' (including 16 pitches approved but not yet constructed). A Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment (January 2013) commissioned with two adjoining authorities concluded that the District needed to provide a further 15 pitches from 2012 to 2027 including five pitches from 2012 to 2017.
- B.137** Cherwell also has four Travelling Showpeople sites providing 14 household 'plots'. A Needs Assessment for Travelling Showpeople (2008) produced for all Oxfordshire Councils concluded that Cherwell had a need for a further 12 plots by 2018 in addition to the 14 existing; thereby producing a total of 26 plots. Until such time that a further review of need is undertaken, a 3% compound growth rate has been applied to household formation which increases the total number of plots required by 2031 to 38 - an increase of 24 plots.
- B.138** 'Policy BSC 6 : [Travelling Communities](#)' provides a sequential and criteria based approach for identifying suitable locations for new traveller sites whether through site allocations in the Local Neighbourhoods DPD or in the determination of planning applications.
- B.139** The policy seeks to secure sites that will provide suitable living environments in locations that are as sustainable as is reasonably possible. It will be important to identify sites that will enable access to services, facilities and potential sources of employment, which will promote inclusive communities but which will not be out of scale with or dominate nearby settled communities. Site identification will need to include the re-provision of pitches from a site in Banbury which is likely to be redeveloped as part of the Banbury Canalside proposals (see 'Policy Banbury 1: Banbury Canalside').
- B.140** Applications for planning permission for sites not allocated in the forthcoming Local Neighbourhoods DPD will be expected to demonstrate that the site

proposed is required to meet an identified need.

Policy BSC 6: Travelling Communities

Cherwell district will provide for 15 additional pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers from 2012 to 2027. It will also provide an additional 24 plots for Travelling Showpeople from 2012 to 2031.

To meet these requirements, and in order to provide and maintain a five year supply of deliverable sites, allocations will be made in the Local Neighbourhoods Document and planning permissions will be granted for suitable sites.

Locations outside of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt will be considered. In identifying suitable sites with reasonable accessibility to services and facilities the following sequential approach will be applied:

- 1. within 3km road distance of the built-up limits of Banbury, Bicester or a Category A village**
- 2. within 3km road distance of a Category B village**
- 3. within 3km road distance of a Category C village and within reasonable walking distance of a regular bus service to Banbury or Bicester or to a Category A or Category B village.**

Other locations will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

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

- a) access to GP and other health services**
- b) access to schools**
- c) avoiding areas at risk of flooding**
- d) access to the highway network**
- e) the potential for noise and other disturbance**
- f) the potential for harm to the historic and natural environment**
- g) the ability to provide a satisfactory living environment**
- h) the need to make efficient and effective use of land**
- i) deliverability, including whether utilities can be provided**

Policy BSC 7: Meeting Education Needs

B.141 The provision of primary and secondary education, along with early years and lifelong learning will be needed throughout the district to accommodate population growth. The demand for pre-school facilities is likely to increase due to changes in lifestyles and work patterns.

B.142 We will support the growth plans of schools across the district and recognise the important role that viable schools have to play in maintaining the quality of life of communities across the district. Oxfordshire County Council as the Local Education Authority is usually normally responsible for the provision of

new schools and school places. It has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places. The District Council 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 for the strategic site allocations in the Local Plan. New schools will be provided where required, for example at North West Bicester (~~'Policy Bicester 1 - North West Bicester Eco-Town'~~) and Banbury Canalside (~~'Policy Banbury 1 - Banbury Canalside'~~). We will ensure sufficient primary and secondary school provision across the District to accommodate Cherwell's population growth. This may include seeking the provision of new schools, contributions towards these facilities or contributions towards expanding existing facilities. A draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared. Upon completion it will provide further details on how developer contributions of how for education facilities will be sought should be provided for.

- B.143** The ~~d~~District has historically had a relatively low education and skills base. We will encourage development that will diversify and develop the skills base of the district into the future.
- B.144** We will support the University Technology College proposal or other similar proposals for Bicester as an opportunity to strengthen the education and skills base of the town.
- B.145** We will seek to ensure that the design of these schools is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of their users and the communities they serve and future changes to the demographic profile of the district. Where appropriate the use of school and college buildings and land after hours will be encouraged to support learning among the wider community and may be able to contribute towards recreation provision. New school buildings should be located in sustainable locations on the edge or within the built up limits of settlements. New schools in the Green Belt and open countryside will be resisted. Policy ESD16 will apply.

Policy BSC 7: Meeting Education Needs

The ~~District~~ Council will work with partners to ensure the provision of pre-school, school, community learning and other facilities which provide for education and the development of skills. New schools buildings should be located in sustainable locations. The co-location of other services and facilities with schools should be considered to create community hubs.

Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being

- B.146** Planning decisions can have an effect on travel to work, schools, noise and air quality, access to services, climate change and social networks which can all contribute to health and well-being. The local environment has a fundamental impact on the health and well-being of local people. By providing facilities such as local open space this allows for activities such as walking and cycling, promoting healthy lifestyles. The Council will work with the local community to provide safe and accessible environments and to identify the need for and provide local facilities.

B.147 ~~The Cherwell District Council~~ will continue to work closely with the 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.

B.148 ~~Since 2007, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) has continued to work with the District Council as a partner. It has begun work on the strategic planning of investment including tele-health care and a new Bicester Hospital.~~**B.148** ~~— The Public Health Strategy for Oxfordshire was developed through the Healthier Communities and Older People Programme Board of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and was discussed by all the major partnerships in the County and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Partnership Steering Group. Its aims are:~~

~~□ To improve overall life expectancy in all parts of Oxfordshire by 1 year by 2012~~

~~□ To tackle health inequalities and so reduce the gap in all-age, all-cause mortality rates by 10% by 2012 between the top 20% and bottom 20%~~

~~□ To “add life to years” by improving health and well-being as measured by a range of specific indicators.~~

B.149 ~~Since 2007, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) has continued to work with the District Council as a partner. It has begun work on the strategic planning of investment including tele-health care and a new Bicester Hospital.~~

B.150 ~~As part of the changes to the NHS brought about by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) ceased to exist on 31 March 2013. Their responsibilities were taken over by Clinical Commissioning Groups and the NHS Trust Development Authority. The health sector is currently undergoing radical change. GP Consortia will be taking control of over 80% of the NHS budget. A Health & Wellbeing Board has been set up for Oxfordshire which is a partnership between Oxfordshire County Council, the NHS and the people of Oxfordshire designed to ensure that we all work together to improve health and wellbeing. s are being set up to monitor and oversee the new arrangements. By April 2013 Public Health will have moved to Oxfordshire County Council, which has a statutory duty to ensure that the Health & Wellbeing Board, local authorities, public health and the GP Commissioning Consortia work effectively together to develop a strategy to deliver successful health outcomes and protect the health and well being of the population of Oxfordshire.~~

B.150a ~~The Board’s -vision for Oxfordshire for 2016 is:~~

- ~~More children and young people will lead healthy, safe lives and will be given the opportunity to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential.~~

- More adults will have the support they need to live their lives as healthily, successfully, independently and safely as possible, with good timely access to health and social care services.
- Everyone will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and experiences to ensure that services meet their individual needs.
- The best possible services will be provided within the resources we have, giving excellent value for the public.

B.150b There is a need for more GP provision in Bicester. New buildings should be located in sustainable locations on the edge or within the built up limits of settlements. New buildings in the Green Belt and open countryside will be resisted. Policy ES16 will apply.

Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being

The Council will support the provision of health facilities in sustainable locations which contribute towards health and well-being including the replacement of the Bicester Community Hospital.

Policy BSC 9: Public Services and Utilities

- B.151** Waste management and disposal is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council and the District Council will continue to consider the emerging Minerals and Waste Development Framework in the preparation of the Local Plan.
- B.152** A new library is proposed for Banbury as part of the Spiceball Development Area ('Policy Banbury 9: [Spiceball Development Area](#)'). In Bicester a new library is proposed as part of the town centre redevelopment ('Policy Bicester 5: Strengthening Bicester Town Centre'). The new improved library services will be provided by Oxfordshire County Council.
- B.153** The preparation of the Local Plan has highlighted the need for additional burial grounds to be provided in some locations. A new burial site for Bicester is being investigated ('Policy Bicester 9: Burial Site in Bicester'). In other cases the need for additional burial site provision will be more appropriately addressed through the Development Management DPD and/or by way of planning application.
- B.154** The draft Planning Obligations SPD provides more details on the provision of public services as part of new development including emergency services (police, fire & ambulance) and places of worship.
- B.155** Preliminary enquiries with utility companies have taken place with a view to identifying the infrastructure requirements and constraints to future development in the District. Gas, electricity and heat supply and investment in electricity infrastructure is provided by the private sector and the Council

will continue to work with suppliers and distributors to provide the necessary services to strategic sites. Developers will need to take account of the location of existing services and will need to contribute financially to their relocation on development sites.

- B.156** Thames Water, Anglian Water and Severn Trent [Water](#) provide water supply and waste services in the District. Water services business plans are based on 5 year schedules (~~2005-2010~~) and the scale of investment is substantial. Timelines vary on projects and the ~~District~~ Council will work with the water companies to plan the delivery of specific projects.
- B.157** Telecommunications infrastructure will be provided as part of the strategic allocations, for example it is a requirement of the Eco-towns PPS that homes should be provided with high speed broadband.

Policy BSC 9: Public Services and Utilities

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

Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision

- B.158** The Sustainable Community Strategy, “Our district, our future”, seeks to ensure that social infrastructure grows at the same rate as our communities and that existing deficiencies in provision are addressed, and these aims are reflected in the objectives of this plan. The responsibility for provision of open space and recreation facilities in the district is shared between the County, District, Town and Parish Councils, private sports clubs and associations, and meeting the plan’s objectives will therefore require effective partnership working.
- B.159** The District’s PPG17 Open Space Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment, Audit and Strategy 2006 and the subsequent Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies 2008 (Local Plan evidence base) highlighted the need to protect all sites identified in the audit to ensure an adequate supply of open space provision.
- B.160** Development proposals that would result in the loss of sites will be assessed in accordance with guidance in the NPPF and will not be permitted unless the proposal would not result in the loss of an open space of importance to the character or amenity of the surrounding area, an assessment has been undertaken which demonstrates that the site is surplus to requirements including consideration of all functions that open space can perform, or the Council is satisfied that a suitable alternative site of at least equivalent community benefit in terms of quantity and quality is to be provided within an agreed time period. Sport England will be consulted on proposals affecting playing fields. Consideration will be given to the need to designate Local Green Spaces (green areas of particular importance to the local community) in accordance with advice in the NPPF, through the preparation of the Local Neighbourhoods DPD.

- B.161** Alternative uses are only likely to be permitted in exceptional circumstances bearing in mind that all of the analysis areas as defined in the PPG17 assessment have deficiencies in at least two types of open space provision. A partial update of the assessment in 2011 indicated deficiencies of one or more types of provision. In addition, apparent "surpluses" in provision often compensate for shortfalls in other types of provision locally, and some larger areas of green space serve wider than local needs with usage catchments beyond the ward boundaries in which they are located.
- B.162** The PPG17 Assessment and subsequent Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies established the current and future deficiencies in open space and recreation provision together with recommendations as to how deficiencies should be met. These comprise a combination of improving or enhancing existing provision, using existing open space of one type of provision to meet deficiencies in another type of provision, or through new provision. These assessments and strategies were undertaken before the distribution of development over an extended plan period had been established and further work will be undertaken in conjunction with the Bicester and Banbury Masterplans, [the Kidlington Framework Masterplan](#) and the Local Neighbourhoods DPD to update future needs and define new provision for open space. More detail on open space is set out under Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places' and in Section D 'The Infrastructure Delivery Plan'. The quality standards as set out in the strategies, together with information contained in the PPG17 study on the quality and value of open space sites, will be used as a guide in considering enhancements to existing provision. The identification of sites for new provision, other than those identified on the Proposals Map and related to the strategic sites identified in the Local Plan, will be included in the Local Neighbourhoods DPD.
- B.163** Proposals for new development will be expected to contribute to open space, sport and recreation provision in accordance with Policies ~~y~~-BSC 10, ~~:-~~'[Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision](#)', ~~Policy~~-BSC 11 ~~and~~ ~~:-~~'[Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation](#)' and ~~Policy~~-BSC12: ~~:-~~'[Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities](#):' below.

Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision

The Council will encourage partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space, sport and recreation provision is secured through the following measures:

- **Protecting existing sites**
- **Addressing existing deficiencies in provision through qualitative enhancement of existing provision, improving access to existing facilities or securing new provision, and**
- **Ensuring that proposals for new development contribute to open space, sport and recreation provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals.**

In determining the nature of new or improved provision the Council will be guided by the evidence base and consult with town and parish councils, together with potential users of the green space wherever possible, to ensure that provision meets local needs.

Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, 'open-book' financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected so that an in house economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an external economic viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter.

Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision- Outdoor Recreation

B.164 The PPG17 Assessment set out recommended standards of open space provision. These were updated as part of the Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy and a further partial update has been undertaken since the Draft Core Strategy, with the findings being reflected in the policy below. The strategies set out local standards for each typology of open space, but in recognition of the multi-functional nature of many areas of open space, and the need for flexibility in determining the precise composition of provision in new development, combined quantitative standards of provision were recommended. Should the additional analysis work referred to in paragraph B162 above result in amendments to the open space standards, the standards will be updated in the Development Management DPD and the Developer Contributions SPD.

Table 8: Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation

Type of provision	Quantitative standard	Accessibility standard	Minimum size of provision	Threshold for on-site provision
General green space (parks and gardens/ natural semi-natural/ amenity green space)	2.4 ha per 1000 urban dwellers	5 minute walk (amenity open space) (400m)	200 sq m	10 urban dwellings
	2.74 ha per 1000 rural/urban edge dwellers	15 minute walk other (1200m)		6 rural/urban edge dwellings
Play space (combining provision for younger and older children including	0.78 ha per 1000 people	5 minutes walk (400m) except for NEAPs 15 m walk (1200m)	LAP- 100 sq m activity zone; 400 sq m including buffer	10 dwellings (for a LAP)
			LEAP- 400 sq m activity zone; 3600 sq m including buffer	50 dwellings (for a LEAP and LAP)
				100 dwellings

MUGAs)			NEAP- 1000 sq m activity zone; 8500 sq m including buffer NB In some cases a combined all-age area of play will be preferable to provision of LAPs/LEAPs/NEAPs.	for a NEAP and LEAPs/LAPs.
Outdoor sports provision (combining tennis courts, bowling greens, golf courses and playing pitches) (to be accompanied by changing facilities where appropriate)	1.13 ha per 1000 people	Football, rugby, cricket: 10 minute walk (800m) urban areas, 10 minute travel time (8km) rural areas Tennis courts: 15 minute walk (1200m) urban areas, 15 minute travel time (12km) rural areas Bowling greens, golf courses: 15 minute travel time (12km) Hockey: 20 minute travel time.	0.12 ha	65 dwellings
Allotments	0.37 ha per 1000 people	10 minute walk (800m)	0.2 ha	275 dwellings

Table 9: Qualitative Standards of Provision

Parks and Gardens	A welcoming, clean, well maintained site that is free from vandalism and graffiti and provides a range of facilities for all users, with a good variety of well kept flowers, trees and shrubs and ancillary
-------------------	--

	facilities that will enhance the user's visit and feeling of safety. The site should reflect local traditions and allow for the viewing of public art.
Natural / semi-natural green space	A publicly accessible, spacious, clean and litter free site with clear pathways and natural features that encourage wildlife conservation and biodiversity. Sites should be maintained to protect nature conservation interest, with interpretive signage and safety features where appropriate.
Amenity green space	A clean and well-maintained green space site with well kept grass and varied vegetation and large enough to accommodate informal play. Sites should have appropriate ancillary facilities (benches, litter bins) and landscaping in the right places, providing a spacious outlook and overall enhancing the appearance of the local environment.
Play provision	A site providing a suitable mix of well-maintained formal equipment and an enriched play environment to encourage informal play and recreation by children and young people. A safe and secure location with good access to the site that includes ancillary facilities such as teen shelters and seating.
MUGAs	Safe and secure locations with good access to sites that include ancillary facilities such as teen shelters and seating.
Tennis courts	<p>Courts should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be free from dog fouling, vandalism, graffiti and litter. • have level, well-drained and good quality surfaces • have good quality ancillary facilities • have maintenance and management that ensures safety and effective usage
Bowling greens	<p>Greens should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be free from dog fouling, vandalism, graffiti and litter. • have level, well-drained and good quality surfaces • have good quality ancillary facilities • have maintenance and management that ensures safety and effective usage
Golf courses	Courses should:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be free from dog fouling, vandalism, graffiti and litter. • have level, well-drained and good quality surfaces • have good quality ancillary facilities • have maintenance and management that ensures safety and effective usage
Allotments	A clean, well kept secure site that encourages sustainable communities, biodiversity and healthy living with appropriate ancillary facilities to meet local needs, clearly marked pathways to and within the site.
Churchyards / cemeteries	A well maintained, clean and safe site with the provision of seating areas, clear footpaths and car parking either on the site or nearby. The site will encourage biodiversity by providing varied vegetation and aim to be an oasis for quiet contemplation.
Green corridors	Clean, well maintained safe and secure routes with clear, level and well drained paths, which are provided by the protection and reinforcement of existing vegetation. The green corridor should provide links to major open spaces, urban areas and community accommodation such as seating and toilets where appropriate.
Civic spaces	A clean, safe, litter and graffiti free community site which encourages a sense of place where local distinctiveness and traditions can be celebrated. The civic space will provide public art and ancillary facilities, where appropriate, to accommodate a wide range of uses.

B.165 The minimum size of provision and thresholds for on-site provision are intended to act as a guide to developers, however the composition of provision will depend on the details of the proposal and its location. For example, combined play area schemes to cover all age groups may be preferable to provision of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs in some cases. Similarly, the smallest size site where on-site provision for outdoor sports is likely to be possible is 65 dwellings as this would generate a requirement sufficient for two tennis courts; however this will not be appropriate for all sites of that size. In addition, open space intended to maintain character or improve connectivity between sites needs to be large enough to be functional, irrespective of the standards.

B.166 Detailed guidance on the implementation of this policy is set out in the draft Planning Obligations SPD. The general principles underlying the policy are that all new dwellings should contribute towards the provision of open space. For larger developments (10 dwellings or more in urban areas and 6 dwellings or more in rural areas), provision should be made on site unless this is not possible or appropriate.

- B.167** For smaller developments where on-site provision is not achievable, a financial contribution will be sought from developers towards the improvement of provision elsewhere, where appropriate schemes can be identified within the defined catchment. The identification of schemes for which financial contributions will be sought will be defined in the Developer Contributions SPD. In some cases catchment areas will relate to wards, in some to villages and in others to clusters of villages, having regard to accessibility standards outlined above and the likelihood of development coming forward at a rate sufficient to provide the identified schemes.
- B.168** The nature of the development including the size and type of each dwelling and their anticipated occupancy rate will be taken into account in determining the contribution required. It may also be appropriate to seek green space provision, or a contribution towards such provision, in conjunction with other forms of development.

Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation

Development proposals will be required to contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation, together with secure arrangements for its management and maintenance. The amount, type and form of open space will be determined having regard to the nature and size of development proposed and the community needs likely to be generated by it. Provision should usually be made on site in accordance with the minimum standards of provision set out in 'Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation' above. Where this is not possible or appropriate, a financial contribution towards suitable new provision or enhancement of existing facilities off site will be sought, secured through a legal agreement.

North West Bicester Eco-development proposals for open space will be considered against the requirements of 'Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town'.

[Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, open-book financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected so that an in-house economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an external viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter.](#)

Policy BSC 12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

- B.169** The PPG17 Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities Assessment indicated a current under-supply of sports hall and swimming pool provision in the district but concluded that the sports centre modernisation programme would address these deficiencies.
- B.170** In terms of future needs to 2026, the assessment indicated that the projected shortfall in swimming pool and sports hall provision could be met through sports centre modernisation combined with dual use agreements to allow public use of school facilities out of school hours. The use of village/community halls for sporting facilities was also highlighted and a survey of village and community halls is currently being undertaken to assess the adequacy of provision. The PPG17 assessment only covered the period

to 2026 and in view of the extended plan period and increased level of growth associated with it, a review of indoor sport, recreation and community facilities provision is being undertaken. Further location specific information is included in Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. The findings will be used to determine whether additional facilities are needed and inform the application of 'Policy BSC12: ~~Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities~~' below.

B.171 [Should the additional analysis work referred to in paragraph B170 above result in amendments to the indoor sports standards, the standards will be updated in the Development Management DPD and the Developer Contributions SPD.](#) The local standards of provision developed by the PPG17 study are set out below:

Facility Type	Local Quantity Standard per 1000 Population
Sports Hall	0.315 badminton courts
Swimming Pool	9.31m2 swimming water area
Squash Courts	0.059 courts
Health and Fitness	5.28 stations
Indoor Bowls	0.045 rinks
STPs	0.046 pitches
Athletics Tracks	0.0012 8 lane facility

Design and technical standard	All new build and refurbishment schemes to be designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes, which provide detailed technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities.
Facility operation and management standard	All leisure providers to follow industry best practice principles in relation to a) Facilities operation, b) Customer relations, c) staffing and d) Service and development review. The detail of internal systems, policies and practices underpinning implementation of these principles will correlate directly to the scale of facility, varying according to the position of the facility within the levels of the established hierarchy.

Accessibility standard	15 minutes drive <u>travel</u> time.
------------------------	---

B.172 Additional guidance on how the policy and the above standards will be applied is contained in the draft Planning Obligations SPD. Development proposals will be expected to contribute towards provision commensurate with the needs generated by the development.

Policy BSC12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

The Council will encourage the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities, and encourage partnership working to ensure that built sports provision is maintained in accordance with ~~the standards set out in 'Local Standards of Provision – Indoor Recreation' above~~, by the following means:

- Protecting and enhancing the quality of existing facilities
- Improving access to existing facilities
- Ensuring that development proposals contribute towards the provision of new or improved facilities where the development would generate a need for sport, ~~and~~ recreation and community facilities which cannot be met by existing provision.