

South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2011-2035



ADOPTED
DECEMBER
2020

www.southoxon.gov.uk/localplan

3 OUR SPATIAL STRATEGY

Introduction

- 3.1 Our spatial strategy sets out how we will deliver the vision and objectives set out in Chapter 2. It identifies the roles that Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town and Culham, the market towns, the villages and the countryside, including areas adjacent to Oxford City allocated for strategic development in this Plan will play in the future. It shows where new homes will be built, where opportunities to provide new jobs will be created, and where infrastructure and services will be required. It shows how we will work in partnership to deliver the strategy with those responsible for key services, including healthcare, education, transport, water supply and community safety and with others such as affordable housing providers.
- 3.2 Local planning authorities have a responsibility to plan positively and work collaboratively. We cannot plan in isolation, and South Oxfordshire has been working with, and continues to work with the other Oxfordshire authorities, supported by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, Local Enterprise Partnership, key stakeholders, our parish and town councils and infrastructure providers and with government. We have signed up to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal which commits the Oxfordshire authorities to delivering growth.
- 3.3 The Plan seeks to meet needs identified for South Oxfordshire as well as all the needs apportioned to the district arising from our neighbour Oxford City. A joint work programme with the other Oxfordshire authorities² identified the scale of Oxford City's unmet needs and how they can best be met.
- 3.4 All allocations made in the Core Strategy are retained and the Local Plan makes provision for housing to meet additional housing requirements identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014. The strategy has been updated to help address the key challenges facing the district now and to make best use of available opportunities.
- 3.5 Our strategy delivers sustainable development, supporting the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in national policy.

² Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council

The Strategy

3.6 Historically, growth in South Oxfordshire has been largely focused upon Didcot and the market towns of Thame, Wallingford and Henley-on-Thames. Other than Wallingford, these towns are located towards the boundary of our district and the historic focus of development to the periphery of the district has led to a reduction in development to support the investment in services and infrastructure in other areas.

3.7 The issues and options version of the Local Plan presented a series of potential options for the distribution of development within the district.

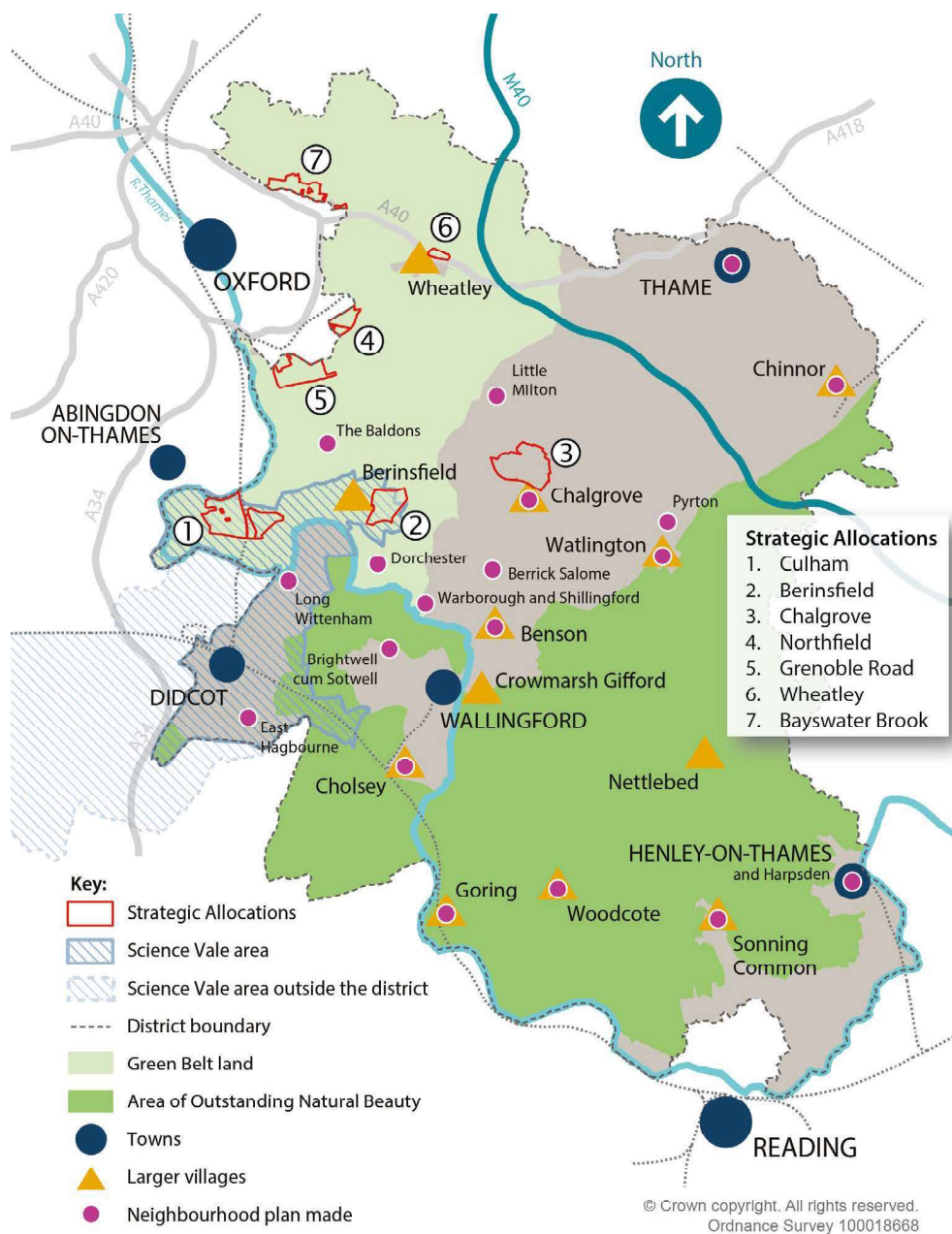
- a) Core Strategy approach
- b) Science Vale and 'sustainable settlements'
- c) All in Science Vale
- d) All in single new settlement
- e) Dispersal
- f) Next to neighbouring major urban areas (Reading/Oxford)
- g) Raising densities (from 25dph)
- h) Locating development in settlements where it could help fund projects.

Drawing on a combined approach to the distribution of new housing development enables a series of benefits to be delivered through the Local Plan

3.8 Each of these options was consulted upon and tested through the Sustainability Appraisal. The final strategy is to principally focus development at Science Vale and sustainable settlements (which include Towns and Larger Villages), where over 70% of housing will be located and to deliver elements of some of these options rather than favouring any one scenario in isolation. The strategy draws together the Core Strategy approach with development at Science Vale and next to the neighbouring major urban area of Oxford. It is also complemented by the location of development to fund regeneration and by the Local Plan raising densities. Drawing on a combined approach to the distribution of new housing development enables a series of benefits to be delivered through the Local Plan and this ensures that the housing needs of the district can be accommodated.

3.9 Our strategy supports the delivery of new housing and economic growth and translates our vision and objectives under inter-related spatial themes to:

- Support a strong network of vibrant settlements including the regeneration of town centres, making the whole district more sustainable, recognising the rural nature of South Oxfordshire and the effects generated by nearby major centres;
- Contribute to tackling climate change;



- Support a movement strategy that strengthens connections to key places, allows a choice of transport modes and manages traffic to improve environmental quality;
- Create a thriving economy in urban and rural areas with a range of work opportunities including more high value jobs and enable the up-skilling of our workforce to support existing and new businesses;
- Deliver sufficient new homes to meet the needs of the communities and economy supported by appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities;
- Maintain and enhance the built, historic and natural environment and ensure good quality developments and design.

- 3.10 The Local Plan seeks to build upon the existing settlement hierarchy and actively create a sustainable pattern of development throughout the district. It identifies strategic allocations at seven locations at Chalgrove, Culham, Berinsfield, Grenoble Road, Northfield, North of Bayswater Brook and Wheatley.
- 3.11 The spatial strategy supports growth in locations that help reduce the need to travel such as the focus at Science Vale, Towns and Larger Villages as well as allocations adjacent to the City of Oxford. Appendix 16 of the Local Plan highlights all elements of the Local Plan where the Plan helps to minimise carbon emissions, lower energy use and help to reduce the need to travel.

Policy STRAT1: The Overall Strategy

- 1. Proposals for development in South Oxfordshire will be assessed using national policy and guidance and the whole of the Development Plan* and should be consistent with the overall strategy of:**
 - i) focusing major new development in Science Vale including sustainable growth at Didcot Garden Town and Culham so that this area can play an enhanced role in providing homes, jobs and services with improved transport connectivity;
 - ii) providing strategic allocations at Chalgrove, Culham, Berinsfield, Grenoble Road, Northfield, North of Bayswater Brook and Wheatley including necessary infrastructure and community facilities;
 - iii) close working with partner agencies, neighbouring local authorities, communities and other stakeholders to ensure the timely delivery of our strategy, which will deliver a significant amount of growth beyond the end of the plan period;
 - iv) supporting and enhancing the economic and social dependencies between our towns and villages;
 - v) supporting the roles of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford by maintaining and improving the attractiveness of their town centres through measures that include environmental improvements and mixed-use developments and by providing new homes, jobs, services and infrastructure;
 - vi) meeting unmet housing needs of Oxford City on strategic allocations adjacent to the boundary of Oxford near to where that need arises;
 - vii) supporting and enhancing the roles of the Larger Villages of Benson, Berinsfield, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Cholsey, Crowmarsh Gifford, Goring-on-Thames, Nettlebed, Sonning Common,

- Watlington, Wheatley and Woodcote as local service centres;**
- viii) supporting Smaller and Other Villages by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment to help secure the provision and retention of services;**
 - ix) protecting and enhancing the countryside and particularly those areas within the two AONBs and Oxford Green Belt by ensuring that outside of the towns and villages any change relates to very specific needs such as those of the agricultural industry or enhancement of the environment;**
 - x) supporting and enhancing our historic environment; and**
 - xi) contributing to tackling climate change.**

*The Development Plan is outlined in paragraph 1.12

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

- 3.12 Understanding the nature of our towns and villages and how they inter-relate and link with places outside the district is a vital part of our strategy. Movement patterns are complex and vary with the purpose of the journey. Some key services such as main hospitals and regional shopping centres will continue to be provided outside the district, particularly in Oxford and Reading.
- 3.13 The strategy can influence how services and employment are accessed and where new development is located within the district. It can support and influence where and how service providers deliver their services and encourage different and improved ways of delivery.
- 3.14 South Oxfordshire has around 140 settlements, although some are just isolated groups of houses with no community facilities. These vary considerably in size and character reflecting their natural setting and historical development. The settlements in the district have been categorised by the services and facilities they offer and a hierarchy of policies has been established on this basis. We looked at these against a range of criteria on employment opportunities, schools, health services, recreation and leisure opportunities and access to shops and public transport provision to prepare a settlement assessment and hierarchy³. Villages have been categorised as being either “Larger Villages”, with a wide range of services and facilities in sustainable locations, or “Smaller Villages” that have a more limited range of services. There is a clear distinction between the villages in the settlement hierarchy but we will be promoting development through this Plan to the most sustainable locations. We are directing development to the Larger Villages to complement the spatial strategy and will support those Neighbourhood Development Plan groups who

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³ Settlement Assessment
Background Paper, South
Oxfordshire December 2018

wish to promote development in the Smaller Villages. In addition, there are “Other Villages” which lie at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy, being hamlets or very small settlements with very limited or no services. Our Local Plan reflects the status of settlements in this assessment.

- 3.15 Our vision and objectives for South Oxfordshire recognise the rural nature of our district and the importance of our rural settlements in contributing to what makes South Oxfordshire such a beautiful and prosperous place to live. Our strategy for the Local Plan is to continue to ensure that all our communities thrive and that everyone has access to services within a short distance. This is achieved through our network of settlements and the settlement hierarchy, which ensures development takes place within the more sustainable locations of the district.

Meeting our Housing and Employment Needs

- 3.16 National Planning Policy is clear that local planning authorities should, as a minimum, provide for the objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in their area. They should also provide for any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas where this has been agreed through a statement of common ground.

- 3.17 The NPPF⁴ and Planning Practice Guidance⁵ expects local planning authorities to use the “standard method” to establish the minimum local housing need figure. For South Oxfordshire this results in an annual housing need of 627 homes a year. This figure represents the minimum annual housing need for South Oxfordshire. It does not automatically translate into the housing requirement for the Local Plan, which has taken into account other factors when determining the homes to plan for.

- 3.18 The Planning Practice Guidance⁶ explains that the standard method for working out housing need is just the starting point for working out how many homes to plan for. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors, might have on demographic behaviour. The Guidance states that Councils should consider uplifting the housing requirement for the Local Plan above the results of the standard method. It gives the examples of where a housing or growth deal is in place, where strategic infrastructure improvements are planned to support new homes, where an authority has agreed to take on unmet need from a neighbour (based on that authority’s standard method results), and where a recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) suggests higher levels of need.

⁴ Paragraph 60

^{5, 6} See Planning Practice
Guidance - Housing Needs
Assessment

8 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 Our “built environment” consists of all the man-made aspects of our surroundings. It includes not only buildings but the spaces between buildings such as parks and gardens, and social spaces such as squares, as well as the infrastructure that supports our daily activities such as streets, railways, utility networks and flood defences.
- 8.2 The way we develop our built environment has a direct impact on how successful and sustainable places and communities are. In South Oxfordshire we want to create places where people want to live, work and visit. Successful places allow us to carry out daily activities with ease and offer choice as to how to do them. These places should be designed for everyone and built to last.

High Quality Development

- 8.3 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, which is an important component of sustainable development. New development should create a sense of place and enhance the lives of those who live, work and visit there.
- 8.4 We are committed to securing the highest quality of design in new development of all types and scales in South Oxfordshire. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016) seeks to define high quality development, the principles to achieving it and raise the profile of high quality design throughout the district. It aims to address specific design issues that we have been experiencing within South Oxfordshire. We consider the Design Guide to be a vital tool that will help us create successful and sustainable places. The value and quality of the Design Guide has been demonstrated by it being shortlisted for two national awards. The Design Guide together with the policies in this Plan, will ensure that we can deliver our objectives for high quality developments.



Policy DES1: Delivering High Quality Development

1. All new development must be of a high quality design that:
 - i) uses land efficiently while respecting the existing landscape character;
 - ii) enhances biodiversity and, as a minimum, leads to no net loss of habitat;
 - iii) incorporates and/or links to a well-defined network of Green and Blue Infrastructure;
 - iv) is sustainable and resilient to climate change;
 - v) minimises energy consumption;
 - vi) mitigates water run-off and flood risks;
 - vii) takes into account landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping;
 - viii) provides a clear and permeable hierarchy of streets, routes and spaces to create safe and convenient ease of movement by all users;
 - ix) ensures that streets and spaces are well overlooked creating a positive relationship between fronts and backs of buildings;
 - x) clearly defines public and private spaces;
 - xi) provides access to local services and facilities and, where needed, incorporates mixed uses, facilities and co-locates services as appropriate with good access to public transport;
 - xii) provides a wide range of house types and tenures;
 - xiii) respects the local context working with and complementing the scale, height, density, grain, massing, type, and details of the surrounding area;
 - xiv) secures a high quality public realm that is interesting and aesthetically pleasing; and designed to support an active life for everyone with well managed and maintained public areas;
 - xv) does not differentiate between the design quality of market and affordable housing or the adjacent public realm;
 - xvi) is designed to take account of possible future development in the local area;
 - xvii) understands and addresses the needs of all potential users by ensuring that buildings and their surroundings can be accessed and used by everyone;
 - xviii) creates safe communities and reduces the likelihood of crime and antisocial behaviour as well as the fear of crime itself; and
 - xix) ensures a sufficient level of well-integrated and imaginative solutions for car and bicycle parking and external storage

including bins.

2. **Where development sites are located adjacent to sites that have a reasonable prospect of coming forward in the future, integration with the neighbouring site should form part of the proposal's design.**
3. **Where the Council is aware that adjacent or closely related sites with similar delivery timescales are coming forward together, a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive masterplan will be required to be prepared across all the sites.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, 7 & 8.

- 8.5 Creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental. Policy DES1 sets out the key design objectives that we consider critical in delivering high quality development. These must be considered at the outset and throughout the design process. The Council will support development that meets these objectives. Developers should also have regard to the principles and design criteria set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. New development should take account of all relevant guidance including the Government's priorities for well-designed places set out in the National Design Guide (2019), Oxfordshire County Council's Cycling Design Standards (2017), Walking Design Standards (2017) and Residential Road Design Guide 2nd Edition (2015) or updated versions of these documents. New development within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should meet the principles set out in the Chilterns Building Design Guide.
- 8.6 Securing high quality design is about more than just aesthetics. It is important that new development delivers sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in order to create successful places where people want to live, work and play. New development should be designed to meet the needs of all users including the young and elderly, disabled, parents and carers. It is important that the places that we create are safe. To ensure that the development we deliver is designed to reduce the opportunity for crime, as well as the fear of crime itself, proposals must, wherever possible, incorporate the principles set out in the "Secured by Design" scheme.
- 8.7 The quality of the spaces between buildings is as important as the buildings themselves. They are the setting for most movement and should be designed to support an active life for everyone. These should include areas allocated to different users for different purposes, including movement, parking, hard and soft surfaces, street furniture, lighting, signage and public art.

- 8.8 In the right locations, public art can play an important part in the design and place making of new developments and can make a contribution to the creation of a high quality public realm. It can make places more interesting, exciting and aesthetically pleasing. The Council will support the provision of public art within new development schemes in accordance with the Arts Development Strategy. The Council will encourage and promote quality art within new developments by encouraging partnership working between professional artists and craftspeople and encouraging local participation to help establish an identity for an area. The Council will particularly support proposals that use public art to make a positive contribution to the character of an area and that is of benefit to the local community by establishing civic or corporate pride and identity, encouraging public enjoyment and engagement and/or promoting the renewal of social skills.
- 8.9 Past developments in the district have not always taken account of future development coming forward on adjacent sites, this has undermined the integration of new development with existing communities.

Policy DES2: Enhancing Local Character

- 1. All new development must be designed to reflect the positive features that make up the character of the local area and should both physically and visually enhance and complement the surroundings.**
- 2. All proposals for new development should be informed by a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the design:**
 - i) has been informed by and responds positively to the site and its surroundings; and**
 - ii) reinforces place-identity by enhancing local character.**
- 3. Where a Character Assessment has been prepared as part of a made Neighbourhood Development Plan, a proposal must demonstrate that the positive features identified in the Assessment have been incorporated into the design of the development.**
- 4. Where there is no local Character Assessment a comprehensive contextual analysis of the local character should be prepared as part of an application. This should identify the positive features that make up the character of the area. The proposal must demonstrate that these positive features have been incorporated into the design of the development.**

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5. Proposals that have the potential to impact upon a Conservation Area or the setting of a Conservation Area should also take account of the relevant Conservation Character Appraisal.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

- 8.10 All proposals should take account of the local context, including the local character and existing features. Important local features, both within the landscape and built environment, in particular should be retained as part of the proposal. This should be set out on an opportunities and constraints plan.
- 8.11 National planning guidance emphasises the importance of promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness as well as being positive about good contemporary design. Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they reflect the special character of South Oxfordshire as well as the distinct character of the local area. This should be set out in the Design and Access Statement that supports the application.
- 8.12 The Council encourages communities preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans to consider what the positive features are in their local area and identify them as part of a made Plan. Where these local features have been identified as part of a made Neighbourhood Development Plan, proposals should demonstrate that they have been incorporated into the design. Where these local features have not been identified, proposals should include a comprehensive contextual analysis that identifies them.
- 8.13 In some cases developers have been selective in the features that they have identified as forming part of the local character and have not always considered whether the features form a positive part of the local character. To avoid developments reflecting previous poor quality design the Council may undertake its own contextual analysis if it is considered that the positive features of the local character have not been identified correctly.

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- 8.15 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 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 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.
- 8.16 Masterplans should be produced in consultation with South Oxfordshire District Council, the community and other stakeholders. As part of the masterplanning process site promoters and developers should also, where appropriate, explore the possibility of long-term stewardship of assets with the local community.

Policy DES5: Outdoor Amenity Space

- 1. A private outdoor garden or outdoor amenity space, or alternatively a shared outdoor amenity area should be provided for all new dwellings. The amount of land that should be provided for the garden or amenity space will be determined by the size of the dwelling proposed and by the character of surrounding development. Private outdoor sitting areas should not be overlooked by adjacent habitable rooms. They should also not be compromised by shading from buildings or shading, leaf litter and anxiety of established significant trees and hedges that would lead to future pressure to prune or remove these landscape features.**
- 2. Proposals for new development should demonstrate that the size, location and character of gardens and outdoor amenity spaces have been considered as an integral part of the design and not as an afterthought. These spaces should not be compromised by parking areas or garages.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 5, 6 & 7.

- 8.17 The relationship of a building with its plot is critical to how well it fits in with neighbouring development and to its impact on the overall character of the street. The extent of plot coverage also determines the external area available for private garden space. This policy and the Design Guide seek to ensure that reasonable standards of private amenity space are provided in new developments.

- 8.18 The Design Guide contains guidelines in respect of the recommended minimum size of private amenity space that should be provided, with the size relating to the number of bedrooms in the proposed dwelling. Used on their own, these standards would lead to uniform plot sizes and shapes that pay little regard to the character of the area. This policy, however, requires the character of the site and the surrounding development to be considered in determining the appropriate garden area, as well as the type of dwelling that is being provided. It also requires that private garden and outdoor sitting areas are designed to provide a reasonable degree of privacy, sunlight and outlook.
- 8.19 Often garden and outdoor amenity spaces, particularly communal areas provided for flatted developments, are identified at the end of the design process and consist of the leftover space surrounding the building(s). This tends to result in spaces of an inappropriate size and shape that bear no relation to the internal workings of the building and/or the requirements of the intended user(s). Gardens and outdoor amenity spaces should be considered from the beginning of the design process and throughout. The provision of garden and outdoor amenity spaces should not be compromised by the need for parking or garages.

Policy DES6: Residential Amenity

- 1. Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses, when considering both individual and cumulative impacts, in relation to the following factors:**
 - i) loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight;**
 - ii) dominance or visual intrusion;**
 - iii) noise or vibration;**
 - iv) smell, dust, heat, odour, gases or other emissions;**
 - v) pollution, contamination or the use of/or storage of hazardous substances; and**
 - vi) external lighting.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5, 6 & 7.

- 8.20 New dwellings should be designed to ensure adequate privacy for existing and new residents to enable them to enjoy their homes without undue intrusion from neighbours or the public. Buildings should also be orientated within their plots to maximise daylight and passive solar gain, with garden areas orientated to maximise sunlight. These objectives can be achieved by careful siting of properties,

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by ensuring that there are adequate distances between properties and through the erection of screen walls and fencing. Developments should be designed to avoid overshadowing of any adjoining dwelling or dwellings, although it is recognised that in high density housing schemes overlooking distances may not be so readily achievable. Innovative design approaches will therefore be sought to provide acceptable standards of privacy. The Design Guide contains detailed guidance.

Policy DES7: Efficient Use of Resources

- 1. New development is required to make provision for the effective use and protection of natural resources where applicable, including:**
 - i) the efficient use of land, with densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5 Residential Densities. Proposals which seek to deliver higher quality and higher density development which minimises land take will be encouraged;**
 - ii) minimising waste and making adequate provision for the recycling, composting and recovery of waste on site using recycled and energy efficient materials;**
 - iii) maximising passive solar heating, lighting, natural ventilation, energy and water efficiency and the re-use of materials;**
 - iv) making efficient use of water, for example through rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling, and causing no deterioration in, and where possible, achieving improvements in water quality (including groundwater quality);**
 - v) taking account of, and if located within an AQMA, is consistent with, the Council's Air Quality Action Plan;**
 - vi) ensuring that the land is of a suitable quality for development and that remediation of contaminated land is undertaken where necessary;**
 - vii) avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality; and**
 - viii) re-using vacant buildings and redeveloping previously developed land, provided the land is not of a high environmental value.**

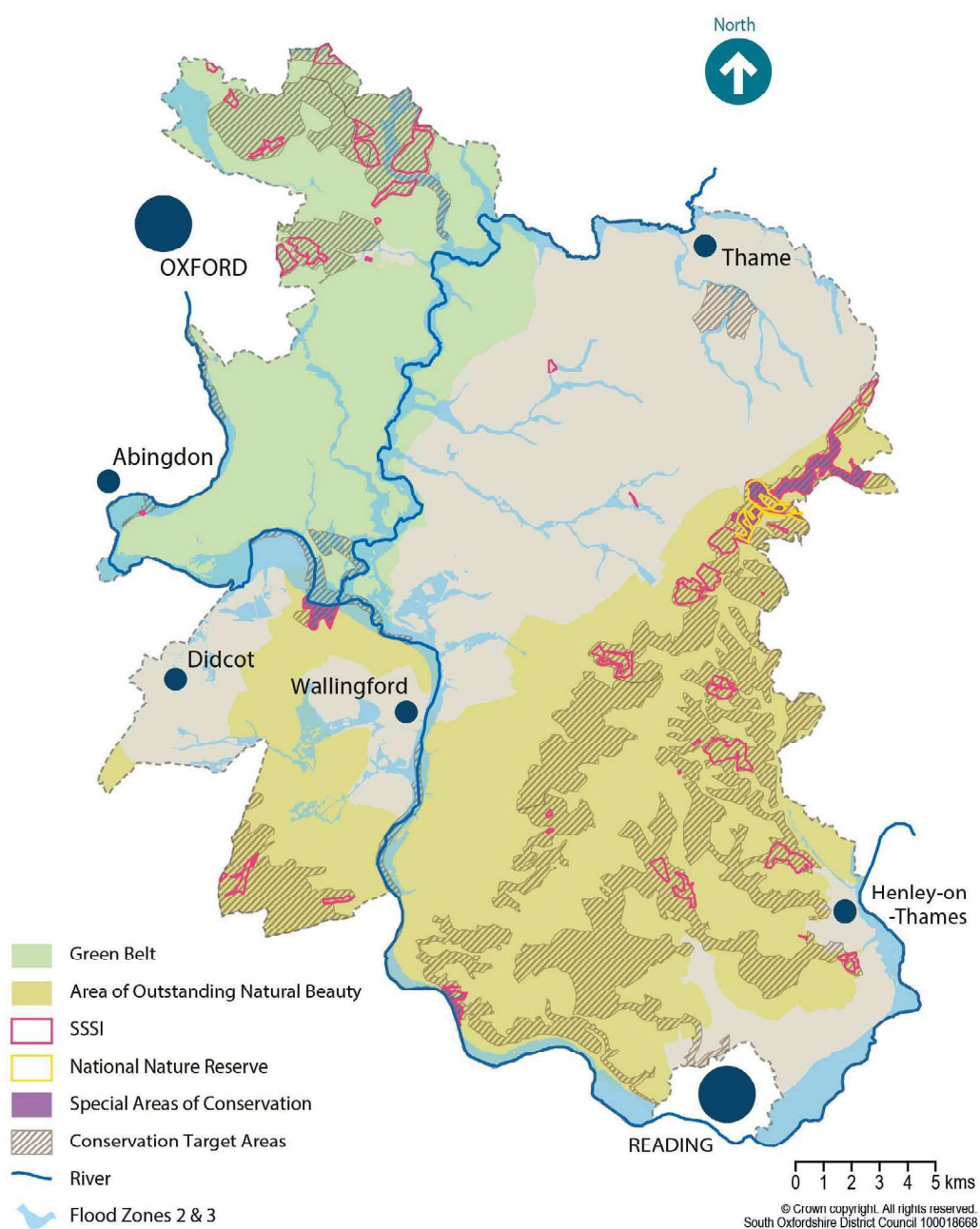
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7 NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

- 7.1 South Oxfordshire has a beautiful natural and built environment, which makes the district an attractive place to live and work. This environment also attracts visitors who contribute to the local economy.
- 7.2 The landscape of the district includes rolling downland, wooded hills, ancient woodlands, historic parkland, low-lying farmland, riverside meadows and strategic environmental assets including the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns AONB, the Green Belt and the River Thames and its tributaries. We encourage effective management of the AONB and the Green Belt.
- 7.3 The whole district is rich in biodiversity, including international, national and locally protected sites and habitats and forms a part of a wider ecological network across the County. Maintaining sustainable agricultural land and practices is important in preserving the district's rural character and landscape.
- 7.4 The valley and tributaries of the River Thames are highly attractive features of the landscape and its special visual and environmental qualities are for the most part unspoilt. The Thames Valley is noted for its peace, tranquillity, biodiversity and cultural heritage, which is essential to preserve. The long-distance Thames Path and the river itself provide a focus for recreation and leisure activities.
- 7.5 We will seek to ensure that the planning and design of development not only protects water supply and quality, but also protects and, where appropriate restores, natural river form and function, whilst maximising resistance and resilience to flood risk.
- 7.6 The district has a rich cultural history that has provided South Oxfordshire with over 3,500 listed buildings, 52 Scheduled Monuments, 13 Registered Parks and Gardens, a Registered Battlefield, and 72 Conservation Areas. Sadly in 2020 there are 14 sites on the Heritage at Risk Register. Parts of the district's natural environment and many historic assets are of national significance. These heritage assets³¹ help establish the distinctive character of South Oxfordshire. We seek to ensure the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of all our heritage assets as they make a positive contribution to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality.

³¹ Further information on nationally protected historic buildings is available on the Historic England website (www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/). Further information on Heritage at Risk is also available (www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/) The lists are updated periodically.



Landscape and Countryside

Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside

1. The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs):
 - Development in an AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible, enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB;
 - Development in an AONB will only be permitted where it is appropriate to the economic and environmental wellbeing of the area or promotes understanding or enjoyment of the AONB;
 - Major development in an AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest; and
 - Development proposals that could affect the special qualities of an AONB (including the setting of an AONB) either individually or in combination with other developments, should be accompanied by a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

AONB Management Plans will be a material consideration in decision making.
2. South Oxfordshire's landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscapes, in particular:
 - i) trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands), hedgerows and field boundaries;
 - ii) irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland;
 - iii) the landscapes, waterscapes, cultural heritage and user enjoyment of the River Thames, its tributaries and flood plains;
 - iv) other watercourse and water bodies;
 - v) the landscape setting of settlements or the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;
 - vi) topographical features;
 - vii) areas or features of cultural and historic value;
 - viii) important views and visually sensitive skylines; and

ix) aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquility, wildness, intactness, rarity and enclosure.

3. Development which supports economic growth in rural areas will be supported provided it conserves and enhances the landscape, countryside and rural areas.
4. The Council will seek the retention of important hedgerows. Where retention is not possible and a proposal seeks the removal of a hedgerow, the Council will require compensatory planting with a mixture of native hedgerow species.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

7.7 South Oxfordshire is a mainly rural district. Mid-year population estimates for 2014 from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) rank the district as 249th out of 326 districts in terms of population density, with an average of 202 people per square kilometre (the national average for England is 417 people per square kilometre).

7.8 The countryside and its relationship with our settlements contributes significantly to the district's character and is highly valued. Development should conserve and where possible, enhance the landscape setting of settlements. The Council will use its evidence base on the district's landscape which currently includes the Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Capacity Assessments and the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, to assess and determine development proposals.

Significant weight is also given to protecting non-designated landscapes, the countryside and Green Infrastructure assets from harm

7.9 Whilst supporting suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of local communities, great weight is given to conserving and enhancing the intrinsic character and beauty of our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection. Significant weight is also given to protecting non-designated landscapes, the countryside and Green Infrastructure assets from harm.

Trees and Hedgerows in the Landscape

7.10 Trees and hedgerows, individually and collectively, can make an important contribution to biodiversity and the landscape. They also absorb atmospheric pollution and have a beneficial influence on the climate. Development proposals should provide a net increase in tree canopy cover where this is

possible, having regard to other considerations including site size, heritage protection, landscape character, habitat protection, residential amenity, and the need to make the best use of land.

- 7.11 The Council will protect trees of significant amenity value which are worthy of retention and considered to be at risk, through Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas and planning conditions as appropriate, except in woodland subject to a Forestry Commission management agreement. When considering applications to carry out work to trees protected by an Order or Conservation Area, the Council will take account of good arboricultural practice, the effect of the trees on nearby properties, and the contribution they make to the visual quality of the area.

Biodiversity

Policy ENV2: Biodiversity - Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species

1. **The highest level of protection will be given to sites of international nature conservation importance (Special Areas of Conservation). Development that is likely to result in a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on such sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).**
2. **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are of national importance. Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either on its own or in combination with other developments) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh any harm to the special interest features and the SSSI's contribution to the local ecological network. In such circumstances, measures should be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements) that would mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.**
3. **Development likely to result, either directly or indirectly to the loss, deterioration or harm to:**
 - **Local Wildlife Sites**
 - **Local Nature Reserves**
 - **Priority Habitats and Species**

possible, having regard to other considerations including site size, heritage protection, landscape character, habitat protection, residential amenity, and the need to make the best use of land.

- 7.11 The Council will protect trees of significant amenity value which are worthy of retention and considered to be at risk, through Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas and planning conditions as appropriate, except in woodland subject to a Forestry Commission management agreement. When considering applications to carry out work to trees protected by an Order or Conservation Area, the Council will take account of good arboricultural practice, the effect of the trees on nearby properties, and the contribution they make to the visual quality of the area.

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3. **Development likely to result, either directly or indirectly to the loss, deterioration or harm to:**
 - **Local Wildlife Sites**
 - **Local Nature Reserves**
 - **Priority Habitats and Species**

- Legally Protected Species
- Local Geological Sites
- Ecological Networks (Conservation Target Areas)
- Important or ancient hedges or hedgerows
- Ancient woodland and veteran trees

will only be permitted if:

- i) the need for, and benefits of the development in the proposed location outweigh the adverse effect on the interests;
 - ii) it can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the interests; and
 - iii) measures will be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate or as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.
4. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) will be refused planning permission, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons justifying the granting of planning permission.
5. Where development has the potential to affect a proposed wildlife site the developer must undertake surveys and assessments to determine whether the site meets the criteria for Local Wildlife Site status.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

- 7.12 The level of protection and mitigation should be proportionate to the status of the habitat or species and its importance individually and as part of a wider network.

Policy ENV3: Biodiversity

1. Development that will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district will be supported. All development should provide a net gain in biodiversity where possible. As a minimum, there should be no net loss of biodiversity. All proposals should be supported by evidence to demonstrate a biodiversity net gain using a recognised biodiversity accounting metric.

2. **Development proposals which would result in a net loss of biodiversity will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that alternatives which avoid impacts on biodiversity have been fully explored in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy*. In the absence of alternative sites or layouts, development proposals must include adequate mitigation measures to achieve a net gain of biodiversity. Where harm cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated, appropriate compensation measures will be sought, as a last resort, through planning conditions or planning obligations (depending on the circumstances of each application) to offset the loss by contributing to appropriate biodiversity projects to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.**
3. **Planning permission will only be granted if impacts on biodiversity can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated fully.**

*For more information please refer to section 5.2 of BS 42020:2013

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

7.13 Adequate information must be provided, prior to planning decisions being made, to assess the impact on biodiversity where reasonably likely to occur. The use of conditions to require the submission of ecological information, after the grant of planning permission, will only be considered in wholly exceptional circumstances where the need for such surveys could not have reasonably been foreseen by the applicant or the Council.

7.14 South Oxfordshire supports a rich variety of natural habitats and species. Many of these habitats are of national and international significance. These include:

Table 8a: Natural habitats and species

International	4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
National	38 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
Local	150 confirmed or proposed Local Wildlife Sites ³³ 4 Local Nature Reserves 5 Local Geological Sites

7.15 In addition, there are numerous other important natural habitats, which are priority habitats of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity (under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act)³⁴.

7.16 In Oxfordshire a series of Conservation Target Areas (CTA)³⁵ have been identified

³³ A current list of Local Wildlife Sites is available on the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre website (www.tverc.org/cms/). The list is updated periodically so should be referred to for the most up to date list of conservation sites

³⁴ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents

³⁵ www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/

which form the Ecological Network for the County. The CTA provide the best opportunities for targeted conservation action. They connect and buffer important habitats and species assemblages and have been designed to provide resilience to future climate change. Development proposals that would affect the integrity of these networks will be resisted or discouraged.

- 7.17 Development should contribute to the conservation of ecological networks, protected sites and priority habitats. All development should consider how it can improve biodiversity, and loss can only be permitted when there are unavoidable impacts that cannot be mitigated and compensation is provided to achieve a net gain. We will apply a form of Biodiversity Accounting to help understand if development proposals will achieve no net loss.

Biodiversity: Watercourses

Policy ENV4: Watercourses

- 1. Development of land that contains or is adjacent to a watercourse must protect and where possible, enhance the function and setting of the watercourse and its biodiversity. As a last resort development should provide mitigation for any unavoidable impacts.**
- 2. Development should include a minimum 10m buffer zone along both sides of the watercourse to create a corridor favourable to the enhancement of biodiversity. Where a 10m wide buffer zone is not considered possible by the local planning authority, (for example in dense urban areas where existing development comes closer to the watercourse) a smaller buffer zone may be allowed, but should still be accompanied by detailed plans to show how the land will be used to promote biodiversity and how maintenance access to the watercourse will be created. Wherever possible within settlements a minimum 10m buffer should be maintained.**
- 3. Proposals should avoid the culverting of any watercourse. Opportunities taken to remove culverts will be supported.**
- 4. Outside settlements, proposals for mooring stages will not be permitted. Proposals for posts, earthworks or facing riverbanks with piles and planking will not be permitted except under exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the Environment Agency. Where it is necessary to protect a riverbank from erosion, the protective measures must be designed to maintain and enhance the special**

- 5. Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. In some circumstances, further survey, analysis and recording will be made a condition of consent.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.

- 7.41 Historic battlefields, landscapes, parks and gardens are an important part of the district's heritage and environment. They comprise a variety of features including the open space itself, views in and out, archaeological remains and, in the case of parks or gardens, a conscious design incorporating planting and water features, and frequently buildings. The Green Infrastructure and biodiversity value of historic landscapes is also important. There is a need to protect such sites and their settings and to encourage sympathetic management wherever possible.
- 7.42 A number of the most important sites have been included on the "Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England". Registered Parks and Gardens are included on the National Heritage List for England. Registered sites are of national importance, but the district has several other sites of regional or local importance that should also be protected from harm, and enhanced where possible.

Environmental Protection and Pollution

Policy ENV11: Pollution - Impact from Existing and/or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)

- 1. Development proposals should be appropriate to their location and should be designed to ensure that the occupiers of a new development will not be subject to individual and/or cumulative adverse effect(s) of pollution. Proposals will need to avoid or provide details of proposed mitigation methods to protect occupiers of a new development from the adverse impact(s) of pollution.**

2. Unless there is a realistic potential for appropriate mitigation, development will not be permitted if it is likely to be adversely affected by pollution. Factors can include, but are not limited to:
 - noise or vibration;
 - smell, dust, odour, artificial light, gases and other emissions;
 - air pollution, contamination of the site or its surroundings and hazardous substances nearby;
 - land instability; and
 - any other relevant types of pollution.
3. Opportunities to mitigate and/or remediate the impacts of pollution on the natural environment should also be considered wherever possible and related to a development.
4. Development on contaminated land will not be permitted unless the contamination is effectively treated by the developer to prevent any harm to human health and the natural environment (including controlled waters).

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

Policy ENV12: Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)

1. Development proposals should be located in sustainable locations and should be designed to ensure that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on human health, the natural environment and/or the amenity of neighbouring uses.
2. The individual and cumulative impacts of development on human health, the natural environment and/or local amenity will be considered when assessing development proposals.
3. The consideration of the merits of development proposals will be balanced against the adverse impact on human health, the natural environment and/or local amenity, including the following factors:
 - noise or vibration;
 - smell, dust, odour, artificial light, gases and other emissions;
 - air pollution, contamination of the site or its surroundings and hazardous substances nearby;

- **land instability; and**
- **any other relevant types of pollution.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6, 7 & 8.

7.43 “Pollution” is anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light. Pollution can also include legacy contamination of soils and groundwater, ground conditions and land instability, natural hazards or sources of pollution from former activities such as mining.

7.44 In determining planning applications, the Council will consider whether the proposal is an acceptable use of the land, the cumulative impact of the proposal and also consider the impact of the proposed use. Amongst other matters, the Council will consider proposals in terms of how it may be affected by sources of pollution and how a proposal may cause pollution. The Council will prevent new development from being put at risk from or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of pollution or land instability. Development should be appropriate for its location. The Council will also consider the future remediation of the land.

7.45 Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. Proposals should avoid or provide assessments of and mitigation for all significant adverse impacts from pollution. Further information on requirements and standards is available from the Council’s Environmental Protection Team.

7.46 The Council will also consider that existing businesses and uses may wish to develop in continuance and will therefore consider the effect nearby proposals may have on these existing businesses and uses.

7.47 The Council will consider proposals against current local and national standards, guidance, legislation and/or objectives. This will include consideration of the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality. There are currently three Air Quality Management Areas within South Oxfordshire at Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford and Watlington. The adjoining urban areas of Oxford City and Reading town centre, and the town centre of Abingdon-on-Thames are also designated Air Quality Management Areas.

- 7.48 The Council is empowered under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 to regulate the presence of hazardous substances, so that they cannot be kept or used above specified quantities. National Planning Practice Guidance provides further advice on how the planning system deals with hazardous substances. Development of new installations where hazardous substances are handled will be carefully controlled.

Waste Collection and Recycling

Policy EP3: Waste Collection and Recycling

1. **Development proposals for residential use must ensure:**
 - i) **adequate facilities are provided for the sorting, storage and collection of waste and recycling;**
 - ii) **sufficient space is provided for the storage and collection of individual or communal recycling and refuse containers; and**
 - iii) **access is provided that is safe for existing users/residents and for refuse and recycling collection vehicles.**
2. **Development proposals for non-residential use must ensure:**
 - i) **sufficient space is provided for the storage of communal recycling and refuse containers; and**
 - ii) **provision is made that is adequate for the proposed use. The location and design of recycling and refuse provision should be integral to the design of the proposed development.**
3. **In assessing recycling and refuse provision, the following points should be considered:**
 - i) **the level and type of provision, having regard to the above requirements and relevant space standards;**
 - ii) **the location of the provision, having regard to the need to provide and maintain safe and convenient access for occupants, while also providing satisfactory access for collection vehicles;**
 - iii) **the impact of the provision on visual amenity, having regard to the need to minimise the prominence of the facilities and screen any external provision;**
 - iv) **the impact of the provision on health and amenity of neighbouring development and the proposed development; and**
 - v) **the security of the provision against scavenging pests, vandalism and unauthorised use.**

- 4. Recycling and refuse storage should be separate from cycle storage, car parking and key circulation areas.**
- 5. Development will not be permitted if recycling and refuse provision that meets the above requirements cannot feasibly or practicably be provided.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4 & 8.

- 7.49 In promoting good design it is important to ensure that proper provision is made for waste and recycling, storage and collection, and that opportunities are taken for incorporating re-use and recycling facilities in all new developments.
- 7.50 Policy DES7 encourages developers to make provision for the effective use of resources, including minimising waste and making provision for the recycling of waste on site.
- 7.51 In combination with Policy DES7, Policy EP3 requires that adequate facilities for the sorting, storage and collection of waste are provided on all new developments and seeks to further encourage sustainable waste management initiatives.
- 7.52 Refuse and recycling storage and collection facilities should be designed and provided with regard to the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council's Waste Planning Guidance which can be found on the Council's website.

Flood Risk

Policy EP4: Flood Risk

- 1. The risk and impact of flooding will be minimised through:**
 - i) directing new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding;**
 - ii) ensuring that all new development addresses the effective management of all sources of flood risk;**
 - iii) ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and**
 - iv) ensuring wider environmental benefits of development in**

- 4. Recycling and refuse storage should be separate from cycle storage, car parking and key circulation areas.**
- 5. Development will not be permitted if recycling and refuse provision that meets the above requirements cannot feasibly or practicably be provided.**

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 - ii) ensuring that all new development addresses the effective management of all sources of flood risk;**
 - iii) ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and**
 - iv) ensuring wider environmental benefits of development in**

relation to flood risk.

2. The suitability of development proposed in Flood Zones will be strictly assessed using the 'Sequential Test' and where necessary the 'Exceptions Test'. A sequential approach should be used at site level.
3. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1 a FRA should accompany all proposals involving:
 - sites of 1 hectare or more;
 - land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems;
 - land identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or
 - land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where development would introduce a more vulnerable use.
4. All development proposals must be assessed against the current South Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment or any updates and the Oxfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to address locally significant flooding. Appropriate mitigation and management measures must be implemented and maintained.
5. All development will be required to provide a Drainage Strategy. Development will be expected to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and ensure that run-off rates are attenuated to greenfield run-off rates. Higher rates would need to be justified and the risks quantified. Development should strive to reduce run-off rates for existing developed sites.
6. Sustainable Drainage Systems should seek to enhance water quality and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 8.

7.53 Areas of South Oxfordshire are at risk of flooding and the impact of climate change is important. Climate change allowances should be taken into consideration in Flood Risk Assessments as set out in National Planning Practice Guidance. The planning system has an important role to play in minimising flooding, the risk of flooding and increasing resilience. Only appropriate development should take place in areas at risk from flooding, and development

should be directed away from areas of the highest risk. A sequential, risk-based approach to locating development, referred to as applying the Sequential Test, and if necessary, the Exception Test should be applied, taking into account climate change.

7.54 The Council will uphold the sequential approach to flood risk. Neighbourhood planning groups considering proposed development within areas at risk of flooding must apply the Sequential Test to the whole neighbourhood area. If necessary, the Exception Test should also be applied. The Environment Agency provide bespoke advice where developments in high flood risk areas require a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Should mitigation be required, the Council will expect those measures to be in the application proposals and part of the development.

7.55 Where the redevelopment or change of use of a previously developed site in Flood Zone 2 or 3 is proposed, opportunities should be taken to:

- reduce vulnerability to flooding by promoting less vulnerable and water compatible uses; and
- reduce the built development footprint, thus improving floodplain storage and flow paths.

Minerals Safeguarding Areas

Policy EP5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

1. **Minerals are a non-renewable resource, therefore to safeguard future potential extraction, development will be directed away from Minerals Safeguarding Areas.**
2. **Where development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas cannot be avoided, developers are encouraged to extract minerals prior to non-mineral development taking place, where this is practical and environmentally feasible.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objective 7.

7.56 Minerals Safeguarding Areas as identified in Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Core Strategy are shown on the Policies Map.

4 DELIVERING NEW HOMES

4.1 One of our main objectives of this Plan is to deliver new homes in places where people want to live and that they can afford. In Chapter 3: Our Spatial Strategy it sets out where these houses will go in a sustainable and achievable manner that meets our spatial strategy. This chapter provides details of the houses built so far and provides a forecast of future house building in the district. This chapter also contains policy direction for Neighbourhood Development Plans and a contingency if they fail to deliver, and policies for affordable housing, our preferred tenure mix and policies for infilling, redevelopment and householder development.

Sources of Housing Supply

4.2 The NPPF directs us to significantly boost the supply of housing. This means we need to consider not only the number of homes that we are planning for, but ensuring the homes come forward at the right pace to meet demand. The NPPF recognises the role that small and medium sized sites can play in achieving quicker housing delivery, a point that is also reiterated in the Letwin Review of Build-Out Rates¹¹. Our strategy reflects this, and we have sought to rely on a mix of site sizes to best ensure a robust supply of housing throughout the plan period.

4.3 The housing supply in this Plan is made up from a diverse set of sources:

- Strategic allocations made in this Plan
- Retained Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011 allocations
- Existing planning commitments
- Small scale (non-strategic sites) to be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans or identified in this Plan where Neighbourhood Development Plans are not being progressed
- Sites not yet identified that will come forward through the development management process in accordance with the policies in this Plan, known as windfalls.



¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-build-out>

We expect
windfall
development
to take place in
accordance with
the Development
Plan

4.4 The allocations within this Plan are largely on strategic development sites except for allocations at Nettlebed, and would not fall within the definition of a smaller or medium sites. However, the Council's supply of housing does include a significant proportion of sites on less than 1ha, and on other smaller sites of less than 100 homes. We expect these smaller sites to deliver quicker than the larger strategic allocations. The sources of smaller housing sites are expected to be:

- Windfall and infill development which is permitted across all of our settlements
- Sites allocated / to be allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans

4.5 We expect windfall development to take place in accordance with the Development Plan, which will focus speculative development to infill sites within settlements. Since 2011 we have delivered on average 145 dwellings per annum from windfall sites. We have taken a conservative approach to forecasting this forward and consider that 100 homes per year could be reasonably achieved. As this will be focused on infill sites within settlements, we expect most of these developments to be smaller housing sites.

4.6 In South Oxfordshire we currently have 19 made Neighbourhood Development Plans. The majority of the sites allocated in these plans are on smaller sites, with only a handful of sites extending over 100 homes in total.

4.7 However, the strategic allocations are still an important part of the delivery of the Local Plan and to the achievement of our vision and objectives. As set out in our spatial strategy chapter, we propose six large scale developments and a brownfield redevelopment opportunity. Together, these sites have a potential capacity for around 14,600 new homes. However, we do not expect these to all be built before 2035 and so the Local Plan only counts 11,785 homes towards the Plan requirement.

4.8 The Plan already made provision for around 16,360 new homes through the rolling forward of allocations in our adopted Core Strategy and the Local Plan 2011, the commitments in made Neighbourhood Development Plans and the granting of planning permissions. 7,178 of these committed new homes have been built since 2011.

4.9 The previously allocated sites of the Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011 will continue to be saved within this Local Plan (some of these sites are currently under construction or complete, whilst others have yet to start).

Table 4a: Sites previously allocated in the Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011

Allocation	Indicative dwelling capacity
Great Western Park	2,587
Ladygrove East	642
Vauxhall Barracks	300
North East Didcot	2,030
Orchard Centre Phase 2	300
Mongewell Park	166
Wallingford greenfield neighbourhood	555
Townlands Hospital, Henley-on-Thames	62

- 4.10 The Council continues to support the creation of Neighbourhood Development Plans across the district. Table 4b sets out where Neighbourhood Development Plans have been made, and the homes these plans allocate, at the time of publication. The made plans allocate new homes as follows:

Table 4b: Neighbourhood Development Plan allocations

Neighbourhood Development Plan	Net number of dwellings
<i>Towns</i>	
Henley-on-Thames	500
Thame	775
<i>Larger Villages</i>	
Benson	561
Chalgrove	320
Chinnor	0
Cholsey	189
Goring	94 (+10 to 16)*
Sonning Common	195 (+44)*
Watlington	260
Woodcote	76 (+36)
<i>Smaller Villages</i>	
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	67
Dorchester on Thames	0
East Hagbourne	74
Little Milton	0
Long Wittenham	0
The Baldons	15
Warborough and Shillingford	29
<i>Other Villages</i>	
Berrick Salome	0
Pyrton	15

*to include reserve sites

- 4.11 The various sources of the housing supply for the Local Plan are summarised on Table 4c below.

Table 4c: Expected sources of housing supply

Supply of new homes to come forward	Net number of dwellings to 2035
Committed components of housing supply	16,360
Completions (1 April 2011 to 1 April 2020)	7,178
Commitments (as at 1 April 2020)	
Sites under construction, with planning permission and allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2011 and Core Strategy	9,182
New components of housing supply	13,696
New strategic allocations delivering in the plan period *	11,785
Outstanding market town allocations to be made through Neighbourhood Development Plans	454
Outstanding Larger Village allocations to be made through Neighbourhood Development Plans	211
Nettlebed allocations	46
Windfall allowance	1,200
Total	30,056

* strategic allocations continue to deliver housing beyond the plan period, and will deliver a total of 14,600 homes.

- 4.12 Within South Oxfordshire, new housing will be planned in order to deliver the scale and distribution of housing development set out in Chapter 3: Our Spatial Strategy. Whilst the overall level of development required to support the existing and future needs of South Oxfordshire, and a proportion to assist Oxford City in meeting its commitments of the Growth Deal, amounts to 23,550 new homes, the Local Plan provides for development that exceeds these requirements. This provides additional flexibility to enable the management of our housing land supply trajectory going forwards and to respond to changing circumstances.

Policy H1: Delivering New Homes

- Residential development (including general market housing and affordable housing within land use class C3, specialist accommodation for older people within land use class C2 or use class C3, and residential caravan and mobile home development) will be permitted at sites allocated or carried forward by this Plan and on sites**

that are allocated by Neighbourhood Development Plans. Where Neighbourhood Development Plans are not progressed in Larger Villages and market towns, planning applications will be considered against the housing delivery targets for the Towns and Larger Villages set out in this Plan.

2. The Development Plan contains a range of site types and sizes that will be developed with different time scales and that are dependent on different infrastructure. The Council has developed a detailed development trajectory (shown at Appendix 8) that will provide the annual delivery targets for this plan period.
3. Residential development on sites not allocated in the Development Plan will only be permitted where:
 - i) it is for affordable housing on a rural exception site or entry level housing scheme; or
 - ii) it is for specialist housing for older people in locations with good access to public transport and local facilities; or
 - iii) it is development within the existing built-up areas of Towns and Larger Villages as defined in the settlement hierarchy (shown in Appendix 7); provided an important open space of public, environmental, historical or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view harmed; or
 - iv) it is infilling, and brownfield sites within Smaller and Other Villages as defined in the settlement hierarchy; or
 - v) it is brought forward through a Community Right to Build Order; or
 - vi) there are other specific exceptions/circumstances defined in a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or Neighbourhood Development Orders; or
 - vii) it would bring redundant or disused buildings into residential use and would enhance its immediate surroundings; or
 - viii) the design is outstanding or innovative and of exceptional quality and would significantly enhance its immediate setting.
4. The residential development of previously developed land will be permitted within and adjacent to the existing built-up areas of Towns, Larger Villages and Smaller Villages. The Council will also support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.
5. Proposals that will bring empty housing back into residential use will be encouraged.

6. The Council will support development which provides for the residential needs of all parts of our community, including Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, caravan dwellers and boat dwellers. Proposals for new residential caravan and mobile home sites to accommodate people who do not meet the planning definition for Gypsies and Travellers set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015, or legacy definition, will be considered in accordance with this policy. Planning permission for single residential caravans or mobile homes will only be given in exceptional circumstances and on a temporary and personal basis.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

Didcot

Policy H2: New Housing in Didcot

1. At Didcot, provision will be made for around 6,399* new homes between 2011 and 2035. This provision will be at:

Location	Indicative dwelling capacity
Ladygrove East (saved from the Local Plan 2011) (H2a)	642
Didcot North East (saved from the Core Strategy) (H2b)	2,030
Great Western Park (saved from the Local Plan 2011) (H2c)	2,587
Vauxhall Barracks (saved from the Core Strategy) (H2d)	300
Orchard Centre Phase II remaining site (saved from Core Strategy) (H2e)	300
New: Didcot Gateway (H2f)	300
New: Hadden Hill (H2g)	74
New: Land south of A4130 (H2h)	166
Total	6,339

*Some of the dwellings proposed in Policy H2 have already been completed since 2011 and some are on sites that have planning consent (including outline planning permission or with a resolution to grant permission).

2. Land within the allocation at Ladygrove East will be developed to deliver approximately 642 new homes. Proposals will be expected to deliver a network of public urban spaces and public greenspaces (not

work with the developers of major strategic sites to ensure that such housing is delivered as part of the strategic allocations. Strategic site masterplans should demonstrate how needs for specialist accommodation for older people have been incorporated in the site layout and design.

- 4.73 The Council will work with the County Council and Homes England to secure sites and obtain funding, to deliver suitable housing that enables older people and people with other specialist housing needs to live independently.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 4.74 The overall scale of need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the district is small in comparison to wider housing needs, but the Council has a responsibility to address these needs. It is important that the Local Plan develops a fair and effective strategy to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, particularly through the identification of land for pitches.

Policy H14: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 1. The provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople will be delivered through:**
 - i) **safeguarding authorised sites;**
 - ii) **extending existing sites, where possible, to meet the needs of existing residents and their families;**
 - ii) **delivery within the following strategic allocations:**
 - **4 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Didcot North East (carried forward from Core Strategy) as shown on the policies map;**
 - **3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre (STRAT9) as shown on the policies map;**
 - **3 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers at Land at Chalgrove Airfield (STRAT7) as shown on the policies map.**
- 2. Additional proposals for pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling**

Showpeople not set out in Part 1 of this policy, will be permitted where it has been demonstrated that the following criteria have been met:

- i) the capacity of the site can be justified to meet needs for further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, or extensions to existing sites;
- ii) the site is not located within the Oxford Green Belt unless very special circumstances are demonstrated;
- iii) the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the amenity of neighbouring properties, and is sensitively designed to mitigate visual impacts on its surroundings;
- iv) there are no adverse impacts on the significance of heritage assets;
- v) the site has safe and satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access to the surrounding principal highway network. The site will be large enough to enable vehicle movements, parking and servicing to take place, having regard to the number of pitches/plots on site;
- vi) the site can be provided with safe electricity, drinking water, sewage treatment and waste disposal facilities; and
- vii) no significant barriers to development exist in terms of flooding, poor drainage, poor ground stability or proximity to other hazardous land or installation where other forms of housing would not be suitable.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 2, 4, 5 & 6.

Policy H15: Safeguarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

1. **Proposals that result in the loss of an authorised and permanent site for residential use by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:**
 - i) the site is no longer suitable for such use and suitable alternative provision is made for the use on a site of equal or better quality with equal access to services; or
 - ii) that there is no need for Traveller pitches in the district.
2. **Appropriate, detailed and robust evidence will be required to**

Water

Policy INF4: Water Resources

- 1. All development proposals must demonstrate that there is or will be adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve the whole development. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users. When there is a capacity constraint and improvements to off-site infrastructure are not programmed, the developer should set out how the infrastructure improvements will be completed prior to occupation of the development. For phased development proposals, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and water treatment capacity.**
- 2. New developments are required to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres/head/day (l/h/d) for new homes.**
- 3. Proposals that increase the requirement for water will only be permitted where adequate water resources either already exist or can be provided without detriment to existing abstraction, river flows, groundwater flow to and from springs, water quality, biodiversity or other land uses.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 4, 6, 7 & 8.

- 6.33 Demand for water in the district continues to increase and it is appropriate, therefore, that new development minimises the pressure on existing resources. Measures to reduce the demand for water should be incorporated into new development. Where there is an adverse impact on water resources, including groundwater, planning conditions and planning obligations may be imposed to mitigate the adverse effects of the development and to secure water conservation measures. The Water Cycle Study identifies areas of South Oxfordshire where water supply and/or wastewater infrastructure or treatment upgrades are required to serve proposed growth. These constraints, and the timing of measures to address them, should be taken into account when phasing new development. This is particularly important for development within Chalgrove, Didcot, Thame, Wheatley and around Oxford which have been identified as having significant constraints.

- 6.34 Thames Water is the water and wastewater service provider for South Oxfordshire. Thames Water is responsible for the planning and implementation required to provide a secure supply of water to their customers which supports future growth. Thames Water will therefore advise on the capacity of their network to supply water to a new development. The Environment Agency has a wider role to regulate the use of water and licenses water for use by private abstractors and water companies. The Council will continue to work with both organisations to ensure water matters are appropriately evidenced and taken account of in growth plans.



6.25 In planning for new development, there are several key considerations in relation to transport access and movement that need to be accommodated at both the design and delivery stage. For most new development, this will be looked at as part of the Transport Assessment, and, where relevant, a site Travel Plan. The Travel Plan will need to take into account the needs of all those travelling to/from the new development, including disabled people, and their need for accessible transport. Transport also needs careful consideration as part of the wider master planning and site design development. For example, how parking provision is planned and delivered will need to take account of the urban design principles set out in Chapter 8 of the Plan.

6.26 Promotion of sustainable transport access and provision of on-site facilities will also need to take account of wider environmental impacts and issues such as air quality, particularly where Air Quality Management Areas are in place.

Policy TRANS5: Consideration of Development Proposals

1. Proposals for all types of development will, where appropriate:

- i) provide for a safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network;
- ii) provide safe and convenient routes for cyclists and pedestrians, both within the development, and including links to rights of way and other off-site walking and cycling routes where relevant;
- iii) provide for covered, secure and safe cycle parking, complemented by other facilities to support cycling where relevant;
- iv) be designed to facilitate access to high quality public transport routes, including safe walking routes to nearby bus stops or new bus stops;
- v) provide for appropriate public transport infrastructure;
- vi) be served by an adequate road network which can accommodate traffic without creating traffic hazards or damage to the environment;
- vii) where new roads, pedestrian routes, cycleways and street lighting are to be constructed as part of the development, they should be constructed to adoptable standards and be completed as soon as they are required to serve the development;
- viii) make adequate provision for those whose mobility is impaired;
- ix) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other low-emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations;
- x) provide for loading, unloading, circulation and turning space;

- xi) **be designed to enable the servicing of properties by refuse collection vehicles;**
- xii) **provide for parking for disabled people;**
- xiii) **provide for the parking of vehicles in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards, unless specific evidence is provided to justify otherwise; and**
- xiv) **provide facilities to support the take up of electric and/or low-emission vehicles.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, 6, 7 & 8.

6.27 Demand for use of rail services is growing strongly, and there are plans to significantly improve rail services operating to and through South Oxfordshire²⁹. In the short-term, there is a focus on enhancing rail services to Didcot, complemented by measures to expand the station and improve access by car, bus, walking and cycling. Any upgrades in this area will need to take account of proposals developed as part of Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan. In the longer-term there is likely to be a need for upgrades at Culham and other smaller stations such as Cholsey and Goring-on-Thames in association with significant infrastructure investment and to serve new areas of homes and jobs. At a strategic level, this needs to be informed by assessment of capacity and options for improvements across Oxfordshire and the wider area. Examples of upgrades could be expansion or enhancements of car or cycle parking, and are likely to be informed by development of Station Travel Plans. There will be a need to ensure that such improvements are delivered in a way that do not significantly impact on the environment or surrounding residential areas.

Policy TRANS6: Rail

1. **Where required, and not covered within the scope of permitted development, planning permission will be granted for proposals which:**
 - i) **improve rail services in South Oxfordshire;**
 - ii) **improve access to rail services including for disabled people; and/or**
 - iii) **improve facilities at railway stations such as car and cycle parking and upgrades to interchanges provided that there are no significant adverse effects on the environment or amenities of residents.**

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 1, 4, & 6.

²⁹ www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Western-Route-Study-Final-1.pdf

Appendix 7

Settlement Hierarchy

Towns

Didcot
Henley-on-Thames
Thame
Wallingford

Larger Villages

Benson	Goring
Berinsfield	Nettlebed
Chalgrove	Sonning Common
Chinnor	Watlington
Cholsey	Wheatley
Crowmarsh Gifford	Woodcote

Smaller Villages

Aston Rowant	Littleworth (near
Aston Upthorpe / Aston	Wheatley)
Tirrold	Long Wittenham
Beckley	Marsh Baldon
Berrick Salome	Moulsford
Binfield Heath	North Moreton
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	Nuneham Courtenay
Britwell Salome	Peppard Common
Burcot	Playhatch
Checkendon	Rotherfield
Clifton Hampden	Peppard
Cuddesdon	Sandford-on-
Culham	Thames
Dorchester	Lower Shiplake
East Hagbourne	Shiplake Cross
Ewelme	South Moreton
Forest Hill	South Stoke
Garsington	Stadhampton
Great Milton	Stanton St John
Harpsden	Stoke Row
Highmoor Cross	Sydenham
Holton	Tetsworth
Horspath	Tiddington
Kidmore End	Towersey
Kingston Blount	Warborough &
Lewknor	Shillingford NE of
Little Milton	A4074
	Whitchurch-on-Thames

Other Villages

Bix	Moreton
Brightwell Baldwin	North Stoke
Chazey Heath	North Weston
Chiselhampton	Nuffield
Christmas Common	Postcombe
Crays Pond	Preston Crowmarsh
Crocker End and Catslip	Pyrton
Crowell	Roke
Cuxham	Rotherfield Greys
Drayton St Leonard	Russell's Water
Dunsden Green	Shillingford (SW of
Emmington	A4074)
Gallowstree Common	Sonning Eye
Great Haseley	Stonor
Greys Green	Tokers Green
Henton	Toot Baldon
Highmoor	Waterperry
Ispden	West Hagbourne
Kingwood Common	Whitchurch Hill / Hill
Lower Assendon	Bottom
Middle Assendon	Witheridge Hill
Milton Common	
Mongewell	