

# The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031

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**Part 1**  
**Adopted 20 July 2015**

July 2015

**Cherwell**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

## Policy SLE 1: Employment Development

B.38 The Council will, as a general principle, continue to protect existing employment land and buildings for employment (B class) uses. The Council will support existing businesses and will seek to ensure their operational activity is not compromised wherever possible. Inevitably, over the period of the Local Plan, businesses will relocate or close, leaving land and premises available for re-use or re-development.



B.39 Where existing employment sites have good transport links for commercial vehicles and the proposed use of these sites accords with the Local Plan we will encourage new development here to ensure the efficient use of land on these sites and in our towns, avoiding the need to use valuable countryside. This will not always meet the needs of some companies so new sites will be required.

B.40 We will create new employment sites for commerce and engineering/manufacturing to meet the needs of existing and new companies. We will also actively promote those sites for inward investment.

B.41 To promote growth we have allocated an increase in the amount of employment land in the District. This is focused more at Bicester in order to match the growth in housing and make the town more sustainable.

B.42 A flexible approach to employment development is set out in this Plan with a number of our strategic sites allocated for a mix of uses and many allowing for different types of employment. Employment development will be supported in a number of locations as long as it meets certain policy criteria. In all cases very careful consideration should be given to locating employment and housing in close proximity and unacceptable adverse effects on the amenity of residential properties will not be permitted. Live/work units will be encouraged in locations such as Banbury Canalside.

B.43 This Local Plan identifies strategic sites for employment use in Banbury and Bicester (see 'Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester', 'Policy Bicester 2: Graven Hill', 'Policy Bicester 4: Bicester Business Park', 'Policy Bicester 10: Bicester Gateway', 'Policy Bicester 11: Employment Land at North East Bicester', 'Policy Bicester 12: South East Bicester', 'Policy Banbury 6: Employment Land West of the

M40' and 'Policy Banbury 15: Employment Land North East of Junction 11'). A number of these sites have recent planning permissions and are under construction. The former RAF Upper Heyford site will also provide for employment uses. The sites identified in the Employment Trajectory in the Local Plan cover 200 hectares (gross) and result in approximately 20,500 jobs generated on B Use class land. There may be a slight change in jobs on sites due to site constraints such as flood risk and differing B use class mixes, which will be determined at the master planning stage. Further jobs will be generated generally through other means such retail and home working. Policies seek different types of employment units to ensure a range of employment uses are provided. Land is allocated taking account of economic evidence base, matching growth in housing and to cater for company demand, particularly for logistics. The Council's assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and take full account of relevant market and economic signals.

B.44 To ensure employment is located in sustainable locations, to avoid problems such as traffic on rural roads and commuting, employment development in the rural areas will be limited. This accords with the Council's strategy for focusing new housing development at Banbury and Bicester, ensuring housing and employment are located in the same place.

B.45 The new strategic employment sites set out in Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places' have been allocated because they:

- are, or will be accessible to the existing and proposed labour supply
- have good access, or can be made to have good access, by public transport
- have good access and transport links for commercial vehicles
- have the least effect on the natural environment.

B.46 The new allocated employment sites in Banbury and Bicester along with existing employment sites are considered to ensure a sufficient employment land supply.

B.47 The Local Plan Part 2 will consider where further, smaller, allocations need to be made in the urban and rural areas to support the delivery of a flexible supply of employment land. Where new small sites are proposed we will consider the most appropriate use class for the location. Opportunities for developing small 'hubs' of activity to meet local needs will be explored. New employment uses will be supported where appropriate in residential areas, where they are proposed on existing employment sites. Employment development will be focused at the more sustainable villages. These villages are also considered to be the most appropriate for any further employment development.

B.48 Policy SLE 1 applies to B use class employment development. The provision or the loss of jobs in general terms will be a material consideration for determining proposals for any use classes. The policy applies to sites which have planning permission for employment uses. Where any allocated or committed employment sites in the District remain undeveloped in the long term and there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for that purpose other uses will be considered. Policy SLE 2 will apply for proposals for main town centre uses.

## **Policy SLE 1: Employment Development**

Employment development on new sites allocated in this Plan will be the type of employment development specified within each site policy in Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. Other types of employment development (B Use class) will be considered in conjunction with the use(s) set out if it makes the site viable.

In cases where planning permission is required existing employment sites should be retained for employment use unless the following criteria are met:

- the applicant can demonstrate that an employment use should not be retained, including showing the site has been marketed and has been vacant in the long term.
- the applicant can demonstrate that there are valid reasons why the use of the site for the existing or another employment use is not economically viable.
- the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal would not have the effect of limiting the amount of land available for employment.

Regard will be had to whether the location and nature of the present employment activity has an unacceptable adverse impact upon adjacent residential uses.

Regard will be had to whether the applicant can demonstrate that there are other planning objectives that would outweigh the value of retaining the site in an employment use.

Employment development will be focused on existing employment sites. On existing operational or vacant employment sites at Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington and in the rural areas employment development, including intensification, will be permitted subject to compliance with other policies in the Plan and other material considerations. New dwellings will not be permitted within employment sites except where this is in accordance with specific site proposals set out in this Local Plan.

Employment proposals at Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington will be supported if they meet the following criteria:

- Are within the built up limits of the settlement unless on an allocated site
- They will be outside of the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated
- Make efficient use of previously-developed land wherever possible
- Make efficient use of existing and underused sites and premises increasing the intensity of use on sites
- Have good access, or can be made to have good access, by public transport and other sustainable modes
- Meet high design standards, using sustainable construction, are of an appropriate scale and respect the character of its surroundings
- Do not have an adverse effect on surrounding land uses, residents and the historic and natural environment.

Unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, employment development in the rural areas should be located within or on the edge of those villages in Category A (see Policy Villages 1).



**New employment proposals within rural areas on non-allocated sites will be supported if they meet the following criteria:**

- They will be outside of the Green Belt, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.
- Sufficient justification is provided to demonstrate why the development should be located in the rural area on a non-allocated site.
- They will be designed to very high standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of villages and the surroundings.
- They will be small scale unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the character of a village or surrounding environment.
- The proposal and any associated employment activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including on any designated buildings or features (or on any non-designated buildings or features of local importance).
- The proposal will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car.
- There are no suitable available plots or premises within existing nearby employment sites in the rural areas.

The Local Plan has an urban focus. With the potential for increased travel by private car by workers and other environmental impacts, justification for employment development on new sites in the rural areas will need to be provided. This should include an applicant demonstrating a need for and benefits of employment in the particular location proposed and explaining why the proposed development should not be located at the towns, close to the proposed labour supply.

Monitoring and review will be undertaken regularly.

Extensions to existing employment sites will be considered in the Local Plan Part 2.

## **Policy SLE 2: Securing Dynamic Town Centres**

B.49 We are looking to ensure that Bicester and Banbury have a strengthened role in achieving economic growth, as a destination for visitors, and in serving their rural hinterlands.



B.50 We are determined to secure dynamic town centres as the focus for commercial, retail and cultural activity at the heart of our District. The renewal and strengthening of the town centres is critical if the towns are to expand, with the creation of new retail, commercial and other employment generation (such as leisure) that reduces the overall level of out-commuting and maintains their role as the focal points of the District economy and their historic role as the heart of the community.

B.51 We envisage town centres that are:

- easy and pleasant to walk around
- attractive for shopping and going out
- easy to do business in
- have housing for all ages
- served by efficient public transport.

B.52 The increasing rationalisation of public assets (libraries, civic centres & public access points), is an opportunity to ensure multiple use of public sector buildings and so strengthen their role as a draw to secure additional footfall into the town centres.

B.53 In 2010 the Council commissioned an update to its 2006 PPS6 Retail Study. In 2012 a further study was commissioned which examines the capacity for comparison and convenience retail floorspace in the District. The study identified a need for comparison and convenience floorspace in the District to 2031. The town centres of both Banbury and Bicester will therefore need to grow. Sites have been identified in Banbury to accommodate growth. New retail will form part of proposals for Bolton Road Development Area, Canalside and Spiceball Development Area and in Bicester towards the improved Bicester Village Railway Station and through an expanded Bicester Village, which will be integrated more fully into the town ('Policy Banbury 7: Strengthening Banbury Town Centre' and 'Policy Bicester 5: Strengthening Bicester Town Centre').

B.54 We will support businesses affected by the redevelopment of strategic development areas by assisting their relocation and ensuring alternative land is available locally elsewhere.

B.55 New retail development will continue to be focused in our town centres and all new development will also be required to be built to high design and building standards.

B.56 Town centre uses are considered to be the 'Main Town Centre Uses' defined by the NPPF including: retail, leisure, offices, arts, tourism, cultural and community uses. We will support the role that new restaurants and cafes have in the economy, of both towns in drawing people into the town centre. We will aim to attract new small businesses and to strengthen the draw of the town at the centre of its local hinterland. We will support uses which support the evening economy in appropriate locations.

B.57 The urban centres within the District offer an important focus for shopping, commerce and the provision of leisure and other services to meet the needs of local people and visitors. The main centres in the District are the town centres of Banbury and Bicester and the village centre of Kidlington. There is also other significant shopping floorspace in the following locations:

- Banbury Cross Retail Park
- various other edge of centre & out-of-centre large stores including a number of major food stores
- at various local centres within Banbury and Bicester.

B.58 In addition to the more traditional retail parks, food stores and local centres, Bicester Village Outlet centre shopping centre is recognised as providing a specialist role which complements the town centre. As the District's most visited tourist destination, Bicester Village serves both national and international catchments and makes a significant contribution to the local economy. The Council supports the expansion of Bicester Village, to complement, and help to improve connectivity with, the existing town centre.

B.59 As well as serving the population of their immediate communities and more widely within Cherwell District, the retail centres serve a wider population and draw trade from towns such as Southam, Daventry, Towcester, Buckingham, Witney, Chipping Norton and Shipston-on-Stour.

B.60 Each of the main urban centres within the District is unique and faces different challenges and opportunities. More information, and specific policies for each of the centres, is included within Section C (Policies Bicester 5, Banbury 7 and Kidlington 2). A number of general comments can, however, be made:

- Both Banbury and Bicester town centres lie at the heart of towns which have grown significantly in recent years and, which through the period of this Local Plan, will continue to do so.
- Banbury has seen significant retail growth since the mid 1990s with the expansion of the Castle Quay Shopping Centre and this has helped to meet its immediate shopping needs. There are opportunities to expand its retail role.
- Bicester town centre has seen less growth. However, the re-development of the Bure Place car park has begun to provide a substantial increase in shopping within the town centre (see Policy Bicester 6). Away from the town centre, the Bicester Village Outlet Shopping Centre was opened in 1995 and extended in 2000 and 2008. Bicester Avenue opened in 2007. Further developments in the town centre will need to ensure that the town remains accessible by all forms of transport for residents and visitors. Further growth at Bicester Village will also ensure its role as a major national and international retail draw continues with all the employment gain this brings to the town. It must, however, be integrated into an improved town centre.
- Parts of both Banbury and Bicester town centres lie within conservation areas which protect their historic core. Maintaining the quality of these areas is important and any development in these areas will need to preserve and enhance the character of these areas and historic environment.
- Kidlington centre is considerably smaller than the two town centres, however it plays an important role in serving the local population. Additional shopping floorspace was opened in the centre in 2004 and there is capacity for further floorspace in the period up to 2031.

B.61 The Council is committed to supporting its town centres and to maintaining and enhancing their vitality and viability and their associated infrastructure to create vibrant retail environments.

## **Policy SLE 2: Securing Dynamic Town Centres**

Retail and other 'Main Town Centre Uses' will be directed towards the town centres of Banbury and Bicester and the village centre of Kidlington in accordance with Policies Bicester 5, Banbury 7 and Kidlington 2. The Council will apply the sequential test as set out in the NPPF as follows:

- Proposals for retail and other Main Town Centre Uses not in these town centres should be in 'edge of centre' locations. Only if suitable sites are not available in edge of centre locations should out of centre sites be considered.
- When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

The Council will consider if the proposals satisfy the sequential test and if they are likely to have a significant adverse impact on one or more of the factors in the NPPF.

All proposals should comply with Policy SLE 4.

An impact assessment will also be required in accordance with requirements in the NPPF. The Council will require an impact assessment if the proposal is over 2000 sq. metres (gross) in Banbury, 1500sq. metres (gross) in Bicester and 350 sq. metres (gross) elsewhere.

Evidence in the Council's Retail Study will also be considered in determining applications if information is not provided by the applicant which is considered to supersede this evidence.

Proposals should comply with Policy ESD15.

The Council will support the provision of new local centres containing a small number of shops of a limited size within the strategic housing allocations on strategic sites set out in this Local Plan.

## **Policy SLE 4: Improved Transport and Connections**

B.69 The District has excellent road and rail links. New investment has substantially reduced the travel time from Banbury and Bicester to central London and Birmingham, with regular high quality train services via the Chiltern line. New investment is due in the Plan period to open up frequent rail links between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford reinforcing the role of Bicester. The M40 corridor provides links to the wider national motorway network and rail links help secure a central location for rail based freight movement.





B.70 The Local Plan promotes a series of proposals to support a modal shift away from an over reliance on the car to less energy intensive forms of transport. The strategy proposes more sustainable locations for housing and employment growth, whilst recognising the importance of the car in a rural District. The strategy seeks to avoid increasing the function of the towns as dormitory centres by strengthening their employment base and transport connection to those sites.

B.71 Over the life of the Local Plan public transport will continue to improve and become more demand responsive. The partners to the plan anticipate that support will be provided for the extension of real time timetable information across the network, across the whole District.

B.72 New development in the District will be required to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions to mitigate the transport impacts of development. This will support delivery of the infrastructure and services needed to facilitate travel by sustainable modes, whilst also enabling improvements to be made to the local and strategic road and rail networks.

B.73 Over the life of the plan there will be investment in the highway network as well as contributions from development to strengthen the road infrastructure of the plan area. This will include the South West Bicester Perimeter Road (Vendee Drive, already completed) and new highway improvements, including a potential relief road on the south east and south of Bicester, works to the A34 south from Bicester and improvements to junctions 9 and 10 of the M40, of which Junction 9 is programmed for early delivery. There will also be improvements to the Windsor Street/Upper Cherwell Street Corridor in Banbury to Hennef Way junctions and to the Bridge Street/Cherwell Street junction. The potential for a link road on the eastern side of the M40, to mitigate the impact of traffic on the approach to Junction 11 along Hennef Way will also be explored with the County Council and Highways England. Cherwell is working with Aylesbury Vale District Council to ensure the impacts of growth at Bicester and Aylesbury on the A41 are fully addressed and appropriate mitigation considered.

B.74 Phase 1 Improvements to Junction 9 of the M40 motorway are complete and Phase 2 is being progressed with the Department for Transport, Highways England and Oxfordshire County Council. The proposals to improve the rail link between Bicester and Oxford are also supported as it will promote more sustainable modes of transport and reduce congestion on the A34 and M40 trunk roads. These improvements will enable additional development capacity to be provided within the two towns.

B.75 The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan provides the strategic framework for transport in the County. It aims to support the local economy and the growth and competitiveness of the county; to make it easier to get around the county and improve access to jobs and services for all by offering real choice; to reduce the impact of transport on the environment and help tackle climate change; and to promote healthy, safe and sustainable travel. Our strategy for managing growth across the District is to locate development in sustainable locations and identify appropriate and deliverable measures to meet the transport needs of the District.

B.76 Integrated Transport and Land Use Studies for Banbury, Bicester and the Cherwell Rural Areas were completed on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council and have informed the Local Plan. More recent Movement Strategies have been produced for Bicester and

Banbury to support the preparation of Banbury and Bicester Masterplans. The Movement Strategies propose sustainable movement and access strategies.

B.77 Infrastructure will need to be provided which allows for more walking, cycling, the use of public transport and integration between modes. Cycling and walking in the two towns is a means to secure an effective integration between the established areas and new areas of development. Consideration will be given to the implementation of walking and cycling improvements which connect to employment areas, the town centre and key services and that link urban routes with the rights of way network. We will also seek improved public access to the River Cherwell valley in support of our policies to increase tourism and public well-being.

B.78 New rail investment provides the opportunity to both strengthen the role of the two towns and their locations as places to live and work. The new East - West rail project will strengthen the location of Bicester through a vastly improved connection and service links to Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford. Rail investment, including electrification, reinforces the critical role that rail has to play as the centrepiece of wider town centre regeneration in Banbury associated with Canalside redevelopment (Policy Banbury 1); and in Bicester, associated with the town centre and through to Bicester Village from an upgraded Bicester Village Station. Due to the implementation of strategic development proposals in the Plan including East West Rail, the new station at Water Eaton and a growth in employment opportunities at Kidlington and Bicester the Council would expect demand for an increased role for London-Oxford airport. The Council will work with London-Oxford Airport operators, the County Council and the Civil Aviation authority and other stakeholders to consider any proposals.

B.79 We will support expansions to the existing railway stations at Banbury and Bicester and in the villages to provide improved access to the wider rail network. Proposals should accord with other policies in the Plan.

B.80 At Bicester, the Graven Hill site ('Policy Bicester 2: Graven Hill') has the major potential to capitalise on the Network Rail Freight Route Utilisation Strategy (2007) for upgrading the national freight network. This will assist removing freight travelling north from Southampton on the A34, past Oxford and onto the M40 and A43, with consequential gains for the environment with reduced emissions.

B.81 This development will confirm Bicester's location as a Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) and a distribution hub within the regional economy, which will help consolidate its economic growth.

B.82 A skilled workforce is available at Bicester, one of the locational factors necessary for the RFI to operate successfully, as stressed in the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Policy Guide (DfT 2011). Recent studies from Cranfield and GVA Grimley show that logistics employment output is 30-40% greater than manufacturing. In addition, the range of jobs engaged in logistics has widened to include a higher proportion of elementary and process operatives skill levels employed compared with the manufacturing sector, and this proportion has been rising. Cranfield and GVA Grimley also revealed that wage levels are between 10 & 17% higher in the distribution sector than the manufacturing sector. At a time when UK manufacturing has declined, High Performance Engineering and Defence continue to grow, as does logistics. Bicester has a unique opportunity from the presence of all three sectors.

#### **Policy SLE 4: Improved Transport and Connections**

**The Council will support the implementation of the proposals in the Movement Strategies and the Local Transport Plan to deliver key connections, to support modal shift and to support more sustainable locations for employment and housing growth.**

**We will support key transport proposals including:**

- **Transport Improvements at Banbury, Bicester and at the Former RAF Upper Heyford in accordance with the County Council's Local Transport Plan and Movement Strategies**
- **Projects associated with East-West rail including new stations at Bicester Town and Water Eaton**
- **Rail freight associated development at Graven Hill, Bicester**
- **Improvements to M40 junctions.**

**Consultation on options for new link and relief roads at Bicester and Banbury will be undertaken through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) review process. Routes identified following strategic options appraisal work for LTP4 will be confirmed by the County Council and will be incorporated in Local Plan Part 2.**

**New development in the District will be required to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions to mitigate the transport impacts of development.**

**All development where reasonable to do so, should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. Encouragement will be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Development which is not suitable for the roads that serve the development and which have a severe traffic impact will not be supported.**

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

B.100 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.101 The Plan seeks to secure the redevelopment of a number of major previously developed sites comprising Banbury Canalside (Policy Banbury 1), Bolton Road and Spiceball in Banbury town centre (Policies Banbury 8 & 9), Higham Way near the railway station in Banbury (Policy Banbury 19), the MOD site at Graven Hill, Bicester (Policy Bicester 2), a Phase 2 to Bicester town centre redevelopment (Policy Bicester 6) and the former RAF Upper Heyford airbase (Policy Villages 5). The plan also includes a windfall allowance for small previously developed sites. Therefore, although the Plan allocates large areas of greenfield land to meet the District's development needs, the Council will strive to ensure that these important 'brownfield' schemes are delivered.

B.102 It is also important to make efficient use of land. In general, new housing should be provided at a net density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. However, the density of housing development

will be expected to reflect the character and appearance of individual localities and development principles that are appropriate to the individual circumstances of sites.

B.103 In considering development on smaller sites, the effective use of previously developed land within urban areas, and within those villages identified by the Local Plan as being suitable places for additional residential development (Policy Villages 1), will particularly be encouraged provided that it is not of high environmental value.

#### **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 encourage the re-use of previously developed land in sustainable locations. New housing should be provided on net developable areas at a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are justifiable planning reasons for lower density development.**

#### **Policy BSC3: Affordable Housing**

B.104 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.105 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 has identified a net need of 407 affordable homes per year. This is calculated by taking into account the backlog need, need from newly forming households, existing households falling into need and the supply of affordable housing. The SHMA points out that its needs model is based on evidence at a point in time and does not, for example, take account of the role which the Private Rented Sector plays in meeting the needs of households which require affordable housing. The Council's previous 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment Review and Update 2012' concluded 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 was 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.106 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.107 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.108 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.109 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.110 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.111 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.112 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.113 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.114 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.115 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.116 Financial contributions made under Policy BSC 3 will be secured by legal agreement for the provision of affordable housing.

B.117 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.118 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 (HCA) 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.119 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 11 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 11 or more dwellings (gross), will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.**

**At Kidlington and elsewhere, all proposed developments that include 11 or more dwellings (gross), or which would be provided on sites suitable for 11 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 Policy Villages 3: Rural Exception Sites.

**Policy BSC4: Housing Mix**

B.120 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.121 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.122 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment(SHMA 2014) provides conclusions on a strategic mix of housing for Oxfordshire over the next 20 years. The SHMA analyses the types and sizes of accommodation occupied by different ages of residents, projected changes in the population and estimates of future need and demand for different sizes of homes. The SHMA’s conclusions are shown below:

**SHMA Table 67: Conclusions regarding Mix of Homes, HMA Level**

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed

Market	5%	25%	45%	25%
Affordable	25-30%	30-35%	30-35%	5-10%
All Dwellings	15%	30%	40%	15%

B.123 The SHMA does advise, however, that at an individual local authority level, there is a greater need for 3-bed properties in Cherwell and that the overall mix identified is focused more towards smaller properties than the existing mix of homes in Oxfordshire.

B.124 The SHMA also advises that in applying policies for housing mix to individual development sites, regard should be had to "...the nature of the development site and character of the area, and to the up-to-date evidence of need as well as the existing mix and turnover of properties at the local level" (paragraph 7.40).

B.125 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.126 The NPPF recognises that a key driver of change in the housing market over the next 20 years will be the growth in the population of elderly people. 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 District Housing Strategy 2012-2017. The SHMA also highlights that an ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people will mean an increasing demand for specialist housing.

B.127 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.

#### **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.**

**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 housing for older and/or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. All proposals will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing.**

### **Policy ESD 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

B.177 The 2009 UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) set out some key projections of climate change across the UK over the 21st Century. Projected changes by the 2080s, based on a 50% probability level, include:

- increases in summer mean temperatures, particularly in southern England where increases of 3.9 degrees are projected
- decreases in summer precipitation, again particularly in southern England where decreases of 23% are projected
- increases in winter precipitation in southern England of 22%.



B.178 Changes as small as a 2°C global temperature rise will have serious impacts:

- rising sea levels
- extreme events such as droughts and heavy rainfall, leading to disruption to natural and man-made habitats
- communities across the UK may struggle to cope with the effects of warmer summers and wetter winters.

B.179 A Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) has been undertaken to better understand the impact of extreme weather in Cherwell and on the Council itself. The LCLIP reviewed extreme weather events experienced over a five year period (2003 – 2008), finding that within Cherwell flooding was by far the most significant event, with significant flooding occurring 6 times in a 5 year period, 2 of the events being serious and widespread (2003 and 2007). Heatwaves were found to have been infrequent in that 5 years period, but if they were to recur on the scale of 2003 this would have significant impacts on health, biodiversity and infrastructure (including damage to buildings by tree and drought related subsidence, roads, drainage systems and business closures).

B.180 There is increasing recognition that reducing carbon emissions is important in reducing and adapting to the impacts of climate change. The Climate Change Act 2008 has an objective of an 80% reduction (from a 1990 baseline) in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. This can be achieved by, for example, reducing dependence on private cars and locating new development in sustainable, accessible, locations, increasing energy efficiency, or by increasing the use of renewable or low carbon energy sources. It is particularly important to reduce carbon emissions from dwellings and business through increasing energy efficiency. Similarly it is important to ensure that we adapt to the inevitable changes to future climate. This applies to the built development, its location, design, layout and proposed land uses, as well as the natural environment, by seeking to reduce exacerbated habitat fragmentation by increasing landscape permeability and connectivity (see 'Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment', 'Policy ESD15 Built and Historic Environment' and 'Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure').

B.181 Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change are an important priority for the District and have been recognised in the following:

- the Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy 'Our District Our Future'
- the Council's Low Carbon Environmental Strategy
- the Council's signing of the Nottingham Declaration
- Eco Bicester: seeking to deliver sustainable building standards across the town.

B.182 Consequently this Local Plan and its strategic objectives are focused on delivering sustainable development. Specifically, Strategic Objective 10 (see Section Strategy for Development in Cherwell) relates to climate change mitigation and adaptation (to reduce the intensity of climate change and to adapt to its effects) and this will be achieved through policies ESD 1 - 7.

B.183 The most sustainable locations for growth in the District are considered to be Banbury, Bicester and the larger villages as identified in Policies Villages 1 and Villages 2 as these settlements have a range of services and facilities, reducing the need to travel by car. Well designed and connected schemes which promote pedestrian movement can also assist in meeting this objective. (see 'Policy ESD 15 The Character of the Built and Historic Environment'). The Council will develop a sustainability checklist to aid the assessment of the sustainability of development proposals, which will be included in the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

### **Policy ESD 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

**Measures will be taken to mitigate the impact of development within the District on climate change. At a strategic level, this will include:**



- Distributing growth to the most sustainable locations as defined in this Local Plan
- Delivering development that seeks to reduce the need to travel and which encourages sustainable travel options including walking, cycling and public transport to reduce dependence on private cars
- Designing developments to reduce carbon emissions and use resources more efficiently, including water (see Policy ESD 3 Sustainable Construction)
- Promoting the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate (see Policies ESD 4 Decentralised Energy Systems and ESD 5 Renewable Energy).

The incorporation of suitable adaptation measures in new development to ensure that development is more resilient to climate change impacts will include consideration of the following:

- Taking into account the known physical and environmental constraints when identifying locations for development
- Demonstration of design approaches that are resilient to climate change impacts including the use of passive solar design for heating and cooling
- Minimising the risk of flooding and making use of sustainable drainage methods, and
- Reducing the effects of development on the microclimate (through the provision of green infrastructure including open space and water, planting, and green roofs).

Adaptation through design approaches will be considered in more locally specific detail in the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## Policy ESD 2: Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions

B.184 Whilst we need to promote renewable energy where appropriate (see 'Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction'), it would be counter-productive to encourage generation of renewable energy if energy is being wasted by inefficiency. As such Policy ESD 2 expresses our support for an 'energy hierarchy'.



B.185 An Energy Statement will be required for proposals for major residential developments (over 10 dwellings), and all non-residential development to demonstrate how the energy hierarchy has

been applied. The Energy Statement can form a standalone document or be part of the Design and Access Statement. The Council will produce a template for use in preparing energy statements.

B.186 Carbon emissions reductions can be achieved through a range of “allowable solutions”; measures which secure carbon savings off site. These have yet to be defined by the government but could potentially include investment in off site low and zero carbon technologies. The concept is relatively new and is seen as a way to enable developments to become carbon neutral where it is not possible to deal with all carbon emissions through on site measures. It will not always be cost effective or technically feasible to meet the zero carbon standard through on site measures and the government is therefore proposing that the zero carbon standard could be achieved by mitigating the remaining emissions off-site through the use of allowable solutions. The Council will support the implementation of the national approach to allowable solutions once defined and any additional implementation guidance required at a local level will be set out in the Local Plan Part 2 and the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD’.

### **Policy ESD 2: Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions**

**In seeking to achieve carbon emissions reductions, we will promote an 'energy hierarchy' as follows:**

- **Reducing energy use, in particular by the use of sustainable design and construction measures**
- **Supplying energy efficiently and giving priority to decentralised energy supply**
- **Making use of renewable energy**
- **Making use of allowable solutions.**

B.187 The detailed application of the energy hierarchy in assessing proposals will be explained in the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

B.188 Policies on each element of the energy hierarchy are set out in order below.

### **Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction**

B.189 Policy ESD 3 sets out the Council’s approach to implementing the first step of the energy hierarchy in Policy ESD 2 specifically, its encouragement for the use of sustainable design and construction measures.



B.190 The delivery of sustainable development is a fundamental theme of the Local Plan and the Council places a high priority on the achievement of sustainable construction.

B.191 The expectations in Policy ESD 3 will be applied flexibly. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate (with robust evidence) why the requirements cannot be met, for example where the application of the policy would conflict with other policy objectives, or where it can be satisfactorily shown that implementing the standards would not be feasible or financially viable, undermining delivery of the development. Negotiations will take place to ensure that sustainable construction is achieved as far as possible and we encourage discussion with the Council in the early stages of any development proposal. This policy will be subject to monitoring and review to ensure the standards and guidance remain appropriate and relevant. Any new national standards will need to be reflected in revisions to the local policy.

B.192 Sustainable design and construction issues will be considered and illustrated in more local detail in the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

### **Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction**

**All new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions in line with Government policy.**

**Cherwell District is in an area of water stress and as such the Council will seek a higher level of water efficiency than required in the Building Regulations, with developments achieving a limit of 110 litres/person/day.**

**All new non-residential development will be expected to meet at least BREEAM 'Very Good' with immediate effect, subject to review over the plan period to ensure the target remains relevant. The demonstration of the achievement of this standard should be set out in the Energy Statement.**

**The strategic site allocations identified in this Local Plan are expected to provide contributions to carbon emissions reductions and to wider sustainability.**

**All development proposals will be encouraged to reflect high quality design and high environmental standards, demonstrating sustainable construction methods including but not limited to:**

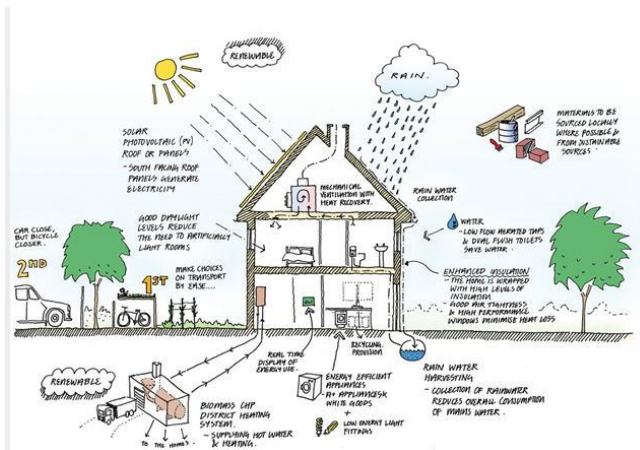
- **Minimising both energy demands and energy loss**
- **Maximising passive solar lighting and natural ventilation**
- **Maximising resource efficiency**
- **Incorporating the use of recycled and energy efficient materials**
- **Incorporating the use of locally sourced building materials**
- **Reducing waste and pollution and making adequate provision for the recycling of waste**
- **Making use of sustainable drainage methods**
- **Reducing the impact on the external environment and maximising opportunities for cooling and shading (by the provision of open space and water, planting, and green roofs, for example); and**

- Making use of the embodied energy within buildings wherever possible and re-using materials where proposals involve demolition or redevelopment.

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 independent economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an economic viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter.

#### Policy ESD 4: Decentralised Energy Systems

B.193 This policy sets out the Council's support for decentralised energy systems, the second step of the energy hierarchy in 'Policy ESD 2: Energy Hierarchy'.



B.194 The national Heat Strategy aims to ensure there is affordable, secure and low carbon heating in a nation where 70% of all heat currently comes from natural gas, a fossil fuel. Nearly half the energy we use in the UK is used for heating of one sort or another and 52% of natural gas consumed in the UK in 2011 was used to provide heat for buildings and industry (Heat Strategy, DECC, 2013). Our 'Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study' (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base) found that District Heating and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) will have an important role in delivering low carbon and renewable power and heat in the District. The Heat Strategy and the Carbon Plan (2011) both emphasise the urgent national need to decarbonise our heat supply in order to meet commitments to reduce carbon emissions (Climate Change Act 2008). The Local Plan seeks to tackle this by increasing thermal efficiency through better insulation of buildings ('Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction') and through Policy, ESD 4, by encouraging efficient heat delivery systems.

B.195 Briefly, District Heating involves the distribution of heat (for space heating and hot water) from a decentralised energy centre connected to local customers via a private heat distribution network, meaning that systems can be more efficient, avoiding losses over larger transmission and distribution networks. CHP systems involve the utilisation of 'waste' heat produced when fuel is burnt to generate electricity. Trigeneration, supplying chilled water for cooling, is also possible).

B.196 The fuel source in both DH and CHP systems can be either non renewable or renewable (renewable heat installations will of course contribute to meeting national renewable energy targets). In the UK most DH networks are linked to a gas fired CHP system or use waste heat

generated from industrial processes. Some parts of rural Cherwell are without mains gas ('off-gas areas') and here biomass powered DH/CHP could be appropriate. The Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Map at Appendix 5 'Thematic Maps' shows the broad potential for decentralised heat supply in the District, illustrating any potential waste heat sources, the existing DH/CHP schemes in the District that could be extended, the off-gas areas in the District, and the typical major users of heat that could anchor a district heating system. This map should be used in combination with the DECC's mapping of areas of high heat demand density to inform more detailed feasibility assessments of the potential for DH/CHP in new developments in Cherwell. The Council will produce guidance and a template for use in preparing feasibility assessments.

#### **Policy ESD 4: Decentralised Energy Systems**

**The use of decentralised energy systems, providing either heating (District Heating (DH)) or heating and power (Combined Heat and Power (CHP)) will be encouraged in all new developments.**

**A feasibility assessment for DH/CHP, including consideration of biomass fuelled CHP, will be required for:**

- **All residential developments for 100 dwellings or more**
- **All residential developments in off-gas areas for 50 dwellings or more**
- **All applications for non-domestic developments above 1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace.**

**The feasibility assessment should be informed by the renewable energy map at Appendix 5 'Maps' and the national mapping of heat demand densities undertaken by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base ).**

**Where feasibility assessments demonstrate that decentralised energy systems are deliverable and viable, such systems will be required as part of the development unless an alternative solution would deliver the same or increased benefit.**

#### **Policy ESD 5: Renewable Energy**

B.197 This policy sets out the Council's support for renewable energy where appropriate, the third step in the energy hierarchy of 'Policy ESD 2: Energy Hierarchy', in order to contribute to national carbon emissions reductions and renewable energy generation targets. The Council will produce guidance and a template for use in preparing feasibility assessments. Planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy will be considered against Policy ESD 5 in addition to current government advice in the NPPF and NPPG.





B.198 Mapping of spatial opportunities for renewable energy has been undertaken in The Cherwell Renewable Energy and Sustainable Construction Study (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base) which sets out the potential for different types of renewable energy development in the District and maps the broad spatial opportunities for renewables. We have not allocated specific spatial opportunities for large scale renewable energy in this Local Plan, primarily because very few opportunities have been identified and even these are subject to constraints which require detailed investigation. We have however mapped the broad potential for District heating opportunities in Cherwell (see 'Policy ESD 4: Decentralised Energy Systems').

B.199 Based on local evidence available at the current time (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base) opportunities for large scale wind generation are considered to be limited and uncertain, although there is potential for scattered single turbines or small clusters. Policy ESD5 will apply to all proposals for wind turbine development including monitoring masts. In line with the UK Renewable Energy Strategy, the community ownership of wind power and other renewable energy schemes is encouraged within Cherwell.

B.200 Impacts on residential amenity are particularly pertinent in relation to wind turbines and wind farm development. To minimise adverse impacts on residential amenity, the Council will apply minimum separation distances between turbines and dwellings. Further guidance on separation distances is set out in the Council's "Planning Guidance on the Residential Amenity Impacts of Wind Turbines Development" document (2011).

B.201 There is increasing interest in the development of large scale solar PV arrays in Cherwell. The issues of local significance set out below will be relevant considerations in the determination of such proposals as well as the need to protect the District's high quality agricultural land (Grades 1 and 2).

B.202 Policy in relation to renewable energy generation in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is set out in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, produced by the Cotswolds Conservation Board, which has been adopted by this council as supplementary planning guidance.

#### **Policy ESD 5: Renewable Energy**

**The Council supports renewable and low carbon energy provision wherever any adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. The potential local environmental, economic and community**

**benefits of renewable energy schemes will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.**

**Planning applications involving renewable energy development will be encouraged provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact, including cumulative impact, on the following issues, which are considered to be of particular local significance in Cherwell:**

- **Landscape and biodiversity including designations, protected habitats and species, and Conservation Target Areas**
- **Visual impacts on local landscapes**
- **The historic environment including designated and non designated assets and their settings**
- **The Green Belt, particularly visual impacts on openness**
- **Aviation activities**
- **Highways and access issues, and**
- **Residential amenity.**

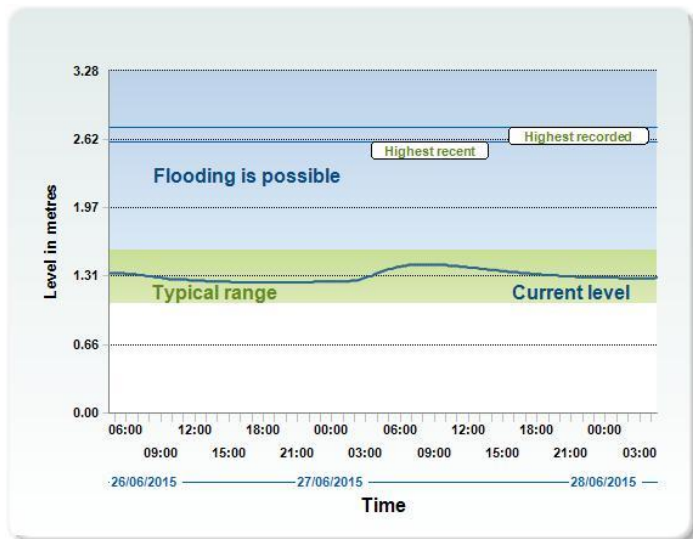
**A feasibility assessment of the potential for significant on site renewable energy provision (above any provision required to meet national building standards) will be required for:**

- **All residential developments for 100 dwellings or more**
- **All residential developments in off-gas areas for 50 dwellings or more**
- **All applications for non-domestic developments above 1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace.**

**Where feasibility assessments demonstrate that on site renewable energy provision is deliverable and viable, this will be required as part of the development unless an alternative solution would deliver the same or increased benefit. This may include consideration of 'allowable solutions' as Government Policy evolves.**

### **Policy ESD 6: Sustainable Flood Risk Management**

B.203 The risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses across the District is high, with large extensive floodplains a feature of our rural landscape. The District falls within three major river catchments. The River Cherwell forms part of the larger Thames catchment, which comprises about 80% of the District's total area covering much of the urban and rural development in the District. During flood conditions the River Cherwell also largely co-joins with the adjacent Oxford Canal. The Great Ouse catchment covers approximately 15% of the District's total area and the Warwickshire Avon catchment approximately 5%. Groundwater and sewer flooding have also occurred at various locations in the District. Flooding events are detailed in the Council's Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and further information is also provided in the Council's Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) (See Appendix 3: Evidence Base).



B.204 Properties at risk of flooding are dispersed across the District but there are clusters of properties at risk in Banbury and Kidlington (more than 100 properties in total). The SFRA also highlights that some rural settlements are potentially affected by fluvial flooding.

B.205 Construction work commenced in February 2011 on a Flood Alleviation Scheme for Banbury to protect the town centre and surrounding businesses from flooding and the scheme is now complete. The project was funded by the Environment Agency supported by Cherwell District Council and contributions from local landowners.

B.206 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 assigns local authorities with a responsibility for managing flood risk. In Cherwell District, Oxfordshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), with the District Council having an important supporting role to play as a Risk Management Authority. The probability of flooding can be reduced through the management of land, river systems and flood defences, and the impact reduced through influencing the type of development located in flood risk areas. The following policy will be used to manage and reduce flood risk in the District.

#### **Policy ESD 6: Sustainable Flood Risk Management**

**The Council will manage and reduce flood risk in the District through using a sequential approach to development; locating vulnerable developments in areas at lower risk of flooding. Development proposals will be assessed according to the sequential approach and where necessary the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and the benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

B.207 The above policy reflects government planning guidance on sustainable flood risk management set out in the NPPF and NPPG. The suitability of development proposals will be assessed according to the sequential approach and where necessary the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Defended areas should be sequentially tested as though the defences are not there. Applications will also be assessed against the Environment Agency's standing advice on flood risk.

B.208 The Council's Level 1 SFRA (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base) provides the framework for applying the sequential and exception tests in the District. The SFRA identifies and maps the risk of flooding across the District based on a range of data and taking into account predicted climate change impacts, and is a useful source of information in undertaking site specific flood risk assessments particularly in relation to specific locations across the District. The SFRA also highlights the biodiversity opportunities associated with the use of sustainable flood risk management techniques, for example in enhancing or creating priority habitats such as grazing marsh, wet grassland, wetlands and aquatic habitats (particularly so in the Conservation Target Areas - see 'Policy ESD 11: Conservation Target Areas').

B.209 Level 2 SFRA's have also been carried out to assess the level of flood risk for strategic site allocations in more detail (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base). The assessments provide site specific guidance for flood risk assessments, policy recommendations and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidance. The findings of the assessments will be taken into account in the final determination of planning applications at the strategic sites.

B.210 Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) will be required in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. The FRA should identify and assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from the development and demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed, taking climate change into account. Fluvial flood events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event with an allowance for climate change should be considered. For major developments in Flood Zone 1, the FRA should identify opportunities to reduce the probability and consequences of flooding. The FRA should also include investigation of the use of sustainable drainage systems (see 'Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS)).

B.211 Briefly, there are 3 levels of FRA, as follows:

- Level 1 - Screening: identify if a development site has flood risk issues
- Level 2 - Scoping: qualitative assessment to determine how flood sources affect the site and options available for mitigation
- Level 3 - Details: where the quality and/or quantity of information is insufficient to enable a robust assessment of the flood risks, further investigation will be required potentially involving hydraulic modelling.

B.212 An FRA does not need to go through every stage (i.e. if it is known that detailed modelling will be required, just a Level 3 FRA can be carried out). The Council's SFRA makes the following recommendations for FRAs undertaken in particular locations across the District, as follows:

Location	Site Specific FRA Requirement
Wherever applicable	Where a site is in close proximity of the Oxford Canal, the Level 3 FRA should include breach analysis.
Wherever applicable	Flood defended areas will require a FRA to include assessment of risk from catastrophic failure of defences.
Banbury	A detailed level 3 FRA is required for development within the River Cherwell Floodplain to include flood compensation.  Groundwater risk to be highlighted at Crouch Hill.
North East Bicester	A level 2 FRA using existing data can be applied.
South East Bicester	A level 3 FRA including hydraulic modelling will be required in the vicinities of these watercourses.
Kidlington	Where EA modelled data is available a level 2 FRA can be completed using existing modelled flood levels. Where no data is available a Level 3 FRA including hydraulic

	<p>modelling may be required for sites in close proximity to the Rowell Brook or the River Cherwell.</p> <p>A level 2 FRA to include detailed assessment of groundwater flood risk should be included at all sites.</p>
Rural Areas	There are village specific recommendations contained in the SFRA

B.213 Additional recommendations are included in the Level 2 SFRA for the proposed strategic site allocations.

B.214 We will work actively with the Environment Agency, the Local Lead Flood Authority, other operating authorities and stakeholders to ensure that best use is made of their expertise and so that spatial planning supports existing flood risk management policies and plans, River Basin Management Plans and emergency planning.

**Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

B.215 Policy ESD 7 sets out the Council's approach to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Potential flooding and pollution risks from surface water can be reduced by reducing the volume and rate of water entering the sewerage system and watercourses. Managing drainage more sustainably in this way can ensure that developments are better adapted to the predicted impacts of climate change in the South East, which include more intense rainfall events. Policy ESD 7 is supported by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 which presumes that SuDS will be used for all new developments and redevelopments in order to prevent surface water run-off from increasing flood risk, and sets out that national standards be published to address SuDS design, construction, operation and maintenance issues at a national level.

B.216 SuDS seek to manage surface water as close to its source as possible, mimicking surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development. Typically this approach involves a move away from piped systems to softer engineering solutions. SuDS are considered to be suitable for use in association with developments across the District. Where site specific Flood Risk Assessments are required to be submitted to accompany development proposals these should be used to investigate how SuDS can be used on particular sites and to design appropriate systems.

B.217 In considering SuDS solutions, the need to protect ground water quality must be taken into account, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. Where possible, multiple benefits including for recreation and wildlife should be delivered. Proposals must include an agreement on the future management, maintenance and replacement of the drainage structures.

B.218 All relevant organisations should meet at an early stage to agree on the most appropriate drainage system for the particular development. These organisations may include the Local Authority, the Sewage Undertaker, Oxfordshire County Council as the LLFA and Highways Authority,



and the Environment Agency. Highways SuDS will be adopted by Oxfordshire County Council but must be located on the most appropriate land, requiring consideration of the need to provide access for maintenance purposes, and topographical factors. Non-highway SuDS draining two properties or more will be adopted by the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) after Schedule 3 of the 2010 Act comes into force.

B.219 Advice on SuDS and their various techniques is provided in the Council's Level 1 SFRA (August 2008). All areas of the District are suitable for SuDS in one form or another but the SFRA contains maps of a range of geological and ground condition data which can be used to identify the general permeability of the underlying ground conditions (bedrock, superficial deposits and soil) and the vulnerability of the groundwater resources (aquifers), to determine which SuDS system might be suitable. However the SFRA's mapping of SuDS opportunity does not provide a detailed and definitive investigation at site specific level, and so further assessment may be required to further investigate SuDS opportunities on individual sites. The Level 2 SFRAs contain additional guidance relating to the use of SuDS on the proposed strategic site allocations.

#### **Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

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

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

**In considering SuDS solutions, the need to protect ground water quality must be taken into account, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. Where possible, SuDS should seek to reduce flood risk, reduce pollution and provide landscape and wildlife benefits. SuDS will require the approval of Oxfordshire County Council as LLFA and SuDS Approval Body, and proposals must include an agreement on the future management, maintenance and replacement of the SuDS features.**

#### **Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment**

B.261 Conservation of the historic environment and securing high quality urban design are very important in protecting and enhancing the character of the District and ensuring that Cherwell is an attractive place to live and work. Cherwell District is composed of four landscape character areas, which each display distinct, settlement patterns, building materials and styles of vernacular architecture to create a rural environment that is strongly locally distinctive. Each of the three urban areas also displays its own unique character.



B.262 The following features contribute to the distinctive character, appearance and high quality environment of Cherwell District:

- over 2,200 listed buildings and many others of local architectural and historical interest.
- currently 60 conservation areas
- 36 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 5 registered Historic Parks and Gardens and a Historic Battlefield, and 6 Historic Parks and Gardens considered as non-designated heritage assets
- three urban centres: Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington – with quite distinct characters, retaining their medieval street patterns
- the Oxford Green Belt (see 'Policy ESD 14: Oxford Green Belt')
- the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the north-west of the District (see 'Policy ESD 12: Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)')
- the District's waterways, in particular the River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal
- sites of ecological importance including 18 Special Areas for Conservation (see 'Policy ESD 9: Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC') and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

B.263 We will protect our historic environment; it is a major resource contributing to the local distinctiveness of the District. Conservation Areas and other heritage assets (including both designated and undesignated assets) form part of the historic fabric of the District and contribute to the character of the area and will be maintained. We will protect our Conservation Areas and other heritage assets from harmful growth as these help to define how the area looks and feels, both in the towns and villages. The Council has a rolling programme of Conservation Area Appraisals and review. We will maintain a local register of Buildings at Risk and use Article 4 Directions to maintain the character of our historic villages and towns. A Register of non-designated heritage assets is also being compiled. Further information on these measures is contained in the Design and Conservation Strategy for Cherwell.

B.264 The Council will protect and enhance the special value of these features individually and the wider environment that they create. The strategic policy on landscape protection can be found under 'Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement'. It is also important, however,

to provide a framework for considering the quality of built development and to ensure that we achieve locally distinctive design which reflects and respects the urban or rural landscape and built context within which it sits.

B.265 We will ensure that the new developments, area renewal and town centre expansions are safe places to live, work and visit through design standards by using tools such as 'secured by design', also through requiring CCTV where appropriate.

B.266 Design standards for new development whether housing or commercial development are equally important. High design standards are critical in the town and village centres where Conservation Areas exist, but more generally in ensuring development is appropriate and secures a strong sense of place and clear sense of arrival at points of entry into the towns and villages. Particular sensitivity is required where development abuts or takes place within designated Conservation Areas.

B.267 It is also important to take into account heritage assets located outside of the District which may be affected by development inside the District such as Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage Site.

#### **Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment**

**Successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.**

#### **New development proposals should:**

- **Be designed to deliver high quality safe, attractive, durable and healthy places to live and work in. Development of all scales should be designed to improve the quality and appearance of an area and the way it functions**
- **Deliver buildings, places and spaces that can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions**
- **Support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, through appropriate land uses, mix and density/development intensity**
- **Contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting**
- **Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non designated 'heritage assets' (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF and NPPG.**

Regeneration proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets, particularly where these bring redundant or under used buildings or areas, especially any on English Heritage's At Risk Register, into appropriate use will be encouraged

- Include information on heritage assets sufficient to assess the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Where archaeological potential is identified this should include an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings. Development should be designed to integrate with existing streets and public spaces, and buildings configured to create clearly defined active public frontages
- Reflect or, in a contemporary design response, re-interpret local distinctiveness, including elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors, building and surfacing materials, mass, scale and colour palette
- Promote permeable, accessible and easily understandable places by creating spaces that connect with each other, are easy to move through and have recognisable landmark features
- Demonstrate a holistic approach to the design of the public realm to create high quality and multi-functional streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing. The principles set out in The Manual for Streets should be followed
- Consider the amenity of both existing and future development, including matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space
- Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation
- Be compatible with up to date urban design principles, including Building for Life, and achieve Secured by Design accreditation
- Consider sustainable design and layout at the masterplanning stage of design, where building orientation and the impact of microclimate can be considered within the layout
- Incorporate energy efficient design and sustainable construction techniques, whilst ensuring that the aesthetic implications of green technology are appropriate to the context (also see Policies ESD 1 - 5 on climate change and renewable energy)
- Integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible (see Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment and Policy ESD 17 Green Infrastructure ). Well designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the micro climate, and air pollution and provide attractive places that improve people's health and sense of vitality
- Use locally sourced sustainable materials where possible.

The Council will provide more detailed design and historic environment policies in the Local Plan Part 2.

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

**planning application. The Council expects all the issues within this policy to be positively addressed through the explanation and justification in the Design & Access Statement. Further guidance can be found on the Council's website.**

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

B.268 The appearance of new development and its relationship with its surrounding built and natural environment has a significant effect on the character and appearance of an area. Securing new development that can positively contribute to the character of its local environment is therefore of key importance. This policy identifies a number of key issues that need to be addressed in the design of new development.

B.269 These issues are as relevant in urban areas as in rural locations and also in recent development as in historic areas. The policy seeks to protect, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated 'heritage assets'. The NPPF defines these as 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'. Heritage assets with archaeological interest will require the submission of relevant assessment. In sensitive locations severe constraints may direct the design approach, but in many cases the Council will not wish to prescribe a specific design solution. Designs need to be sensitive and complimentary to their surroundings but this does not require merely replicating existing styles and imitating architectural details; modern interpretation is possible if informed by a full contextual analysis and proposals promote and reinforce local distinctiveness.

B.270 Our urban areas will see significant growth during the period of the Local Plan, and will need to adapt and respond to these pressures both within their existing boundaries and beyond, while retaining their unique character and heritage. A balance will need to be struck between making best use of land and respecting established urban character and creating new and vibrant sustainable neighbourhoods. Applicants should also have regard to national guidance and best practice advice on design, including on public space, street design, trees in the street scene, public buildings, housing, work environments inclusive design, tall buildings and eco-towns, e.g. guidance published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment CABI (now merged with the Design Council). English Heritage has also published much guidance on integration of development into the historic environment. Applicants will also need to have regard to policies from Oxfordshire County Council, such as the Parking Policy.

B.271 Our rural areas will need to accommodate new development which reinforces the locally distinctive character by being sensitive in its location, scale, materials and design, reflecting the traditional pattern of development within the settlement, balancing making best use of land with respect for the established character and respecting open features that make a positive contribution. A large proportion of rural settlements fall within conservation areas, where the

quality and special interest of the area is protected. Council publications, such as its Countryside Design Summary, which analyses settlement types, and Appraisals of the District's Conservation Areas, which analyse the special qualities and identify those features that make a positive contribution to the character of the place, will assist in understanding a settlement. National guidance includes Natural England's guidance on undertaking Village Design Statements.

### **Strategic Development: Banbury 7 - Strengthening Banbury Town Centre**

C.155 Banbury town centre is the largest shopping and service centre in the hierarchy of the District's centres. It is a regional centre which draws in visitors from south Warwickshire, and south Northamptonshire, as well as from a rural hinterland within Oxfordshire. The town centre has substantial shopping floorspace as well as leisure, cultural, commercial and civic uses.



C.156 The historic heart of the town centre is the Market Place, and much of the town centre lies within the Banbury conservation area. The town centre has, however, grown significantly in recent years to the east with the opening of the Castle Shopping Centre in 1974 and its expansion into the Castle Quay Shopping Centre in 2000. There are an increasing number of vacancies in Banbury town centre. Focusing development in the town centre will contribute to addressing this issue.

C.157 The Council has worked with the Banbury Town Centre Partnership to develop a strategy for Banbury and this has informed the preparation of the Local Plan. The spatial strategy identifies a vision for the town centre and from this a number of themes emerge:

- We need to create more natural flows of people between the various quarters of the town centre.
- We need to encourage a broad mix of uses within the town centre and ensure there is a 'human dimension' throughout the day.
- The town centre should be accessible by a variety of transport options.
- We should make the most of our assets (our waterways, built and cultural heritage) using features and focal points to create and maintain the uniqueness and sense of community ownership.
- We should promote a wide variety of activities at all times of the year.
- We need to reflect and adapt to changes yet protect the asset of the town centre.
- The Retail Assessment carried out in 2012 identified a number of sites where it was considered that there is development potential. This work has been further supported by other work for the Canalside, Bolton Road and Spiceball Development Areas. On the basis of



this work, the following sites are identified as being of strategic importance in meeting the Plan's objectives:

- Canalside (Policy Banbury 1) - This area is identified as a strategic housing allocation to deliver a housing-led mixed-use regeneration of this area. This area will form an important link between the railway station and new housing to the south and the heart of the town centre.
- Bolton Road Development Area (Policy Banbury 8) - This is a major opportunity for the regeneration of this area through mixed use development.
- Banbury Spiceball Development Area (Policy Banbury 9) - Including land at the former Spiceball Sports and Leisure Centre, this site provides a unique opportunity to regenerate this area and introduce new retail and provision for the night economy as well as improved arts and cultural uses within an expanded town centre.

C.158 Land at Calthorpe Street also provides the opportunity to regenerate this historic part of the town centre which has experienced vacancies. It provides the opportunity to deliver a mixed use scheme including car parking. Opportunities for the site will be explored further in the Banbury Masterplan.

C.159 In addition, the Banbury Bus Station is an important site that links the existing Castle Quay shopping centre, Canalside and the Spiceball Development Area. It will be redeveloped within this plan period as part of a major investment programme to strengthen the town centre.

C.160 The boundary for the town centre is to be extended to facilitate additional town centre development that will broaden the attraction of central Banbury and assist economic growth. The existing boundary combines the town centre shopping area and town centre commercial area as previously set out in the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 (see Map Banbury 7, Appendix 5). This Local Plan extends the town centre to include the Spiceball Development Area (Policy Banbury 9).

C.161 The Plan also includes an area of search in the interest of extending the town centre into the northern part of the Canalside site (Policy Banbury 1) which includes the railway station. The regeneration of the Canalside area provides an opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the eastern edge of the town centre and take advantage of the river and canal corridor. Detailed planning of the Canalside area is continuing and therefore an area of search has been identified for further consideration in the Local Plan Part 2. This will be supported by further work through the Banbury Masterplan and Canalside SPDs.

C.162 Land at Bolton Road (Policy Banbury 8), another key development site, already lies within the town centre.

C.163 The Primary Shopping Frontage is that defined in the Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011 (reproduced at Map Banbury 7, Appendix 5). Any further, non-strategic review of the Town Centre Shopping Area, the Town Centre Commercial Area or the Primary Shopping Area will be undertaken through preparation of Local Plan Part 2.

C.164 In 2010 the Council commissioned an update to its 2006 PPS6 Retail Study and this identifies the capacity for comparison and convenience floorspace in each of the District's urban centres up to

2026. In the light of recent changes facing the retail sector this study has itself been followed by a further examination of retail needs through to 2031 and the opportunity that exists to strengthen Banbury's retail offer. In 2012 a study was commissioned and produced by CBRE which identifies the capacity for comparison and convenience retail floorspace in the District to 2031. A strategy for sites to accommodate retail floorspace is identified for Banbury. With proposals at Spiceball expected to deliver a new supermarket and some A3 uses and Bolton Road proposed to deliver new dwellings on a significant proportion of the site, land at Calthorpe Street is likely to contribute to ensuring that the retail needs of an expanding town are met. Following the CBRE study our Plan aims to help strengthen the retail base of the town centre, supporting the growth of retailers, particularly independent retailers and the night economy, to encourage dwell time and help generate new employment. The Local Plan identifies land within Banbury town centre that will help meet Banbury's identified need as well as positioning Banbury to compete on a regional basis.

#### **Policy Banbury 7: Strengthening Banbury Town Centre**

**Shopping, leisure and other 'Main Town Centre Uses' will be supported within the boundary of Banbury town centre. Residential development will be supported in appropriate locations in the town centre except where it will lead to a loss of retail or other main town centre uses.**

**The change of use of sites used for main town centre uses in the town centre for residential development will normally be permitted if proposals contribute significantly to the regeneration of the town centre. Mixed use schemes will be encouraged.**

**A1 uses will not be permitted within the existing Town Centre Commercial Area.**

**Only A1 and A3 uses will be permitted on the ground floor in the primary shopping frontage. Residential development will not be permitted within the primary shopping frontage unless above ground floor level.**

**The Council will identify an extension to the Town Centre within the defined 'Town Centre Extension - Area of Search'. Prior to this retail and other main town centre uses will only be supported within the 'Area of Search' should they form part of a package of proposals to help deliver the aims for Banbury Canalside and be in accordance with Policy Banbury 1.**

**In all cases proposals for town centre uses will be considered against Policies SLE2, ESD10 and ESD15.**

#### **Strategic Development: Banbury 8 – Bolton Road Development Area**

C.165 Land at Bolton Road will be developed to provide new shopping, residential and other town centre uses. The site lies immediately to the west of the Castle Quay Shopping Centre and to the north of Parsons Street. It comprises a large multi-storey car park, a number of smaller car parks and service areas associated with commercial units fronting Parsons Street, a former car repair workshop, a Bingo Hall and a number of historic outbuildings.

C.166 The PPS6 Assessment carried out for the Council in 2006, its subsequent review 'The Retail Study Update 2010' and the initial Bolton Road site analysis identified that this site could offer suitable accommodation for larger retailers and should be given the greatest priority by the Council.

The site offers an ideal opportunity to provide significant additional retail floorspace adjacent to the current Shopping Centre and presents the potential to provide a link through to Parsons Street to improve pedestrian circulation in this area capitalising on the recent pedestrianisation of Parsons Street.

C.167 The Council is preparing a masterplan for the Bolton Road site in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It will set out the capacity and mix of uses that should be supported on the site to ensure a comprehensive and viable scheme that sits well with the Conservation Area that it sits alongside. The aim is to secure a mix of convenience and comparison shopping on the site, together with other uses including high quality residential and leisure uses at the heart of Banbury. The site will connect and integrate with the Castle Quay shopping centre, and link through to Parsons Street, strengthening the role of the independent sector to increase footfall. We intend to secure a high quality mixed use development on the site which would also provide the option for food retailing. The site provides the opportunity to provide high quality residential development in a town centre location.

### **Policy Banbury 8: Bolton Road Development Area**

**Development Area: 2 hectares**

**Development Description: Bolton Road is located in a prominent location on the northern edge of Banbury Town Centre. The Council will seek the redevelopment of the area to include a range of town centre and high quality residential uses that will regenerate and enliven this part of the town centre. Proposals should respect and enhance the historical setting, and include the creation of a high quality public realm, which ensures successful integration and connectivity with the rest of the town centre.**

#### **Employment**

- **Use classes:**
- **Retail: including small scale class A1, A3 including boutique stores**
- **Hotel (C1)**
- **Leisure (D2)**
- **Ancillary Residential (C3)**
- **Car parking.**

#### **Housing**

- **200 dwellings – Residential use would be acceptable in conjunction with the wider retail and leisure proposal.**

#### **Infrastructure Needs**

- **Education – Contributions towards primary and secondary school provision**
- **Access and Movement – Improved links between the site and Parsons Street**
- **Community facilities – Replacement of the Bingo hall is required. A contribution towards indoor sports provision may be required.**
- **Utilities – off site improvements to utilities network may be required.**

## Key site specific design and place shaping principles

- Proposals should comply with Policy ESD15
- A high quality landmark mixed use development in Banbury Town Centre that will support the regeneration of this area and its integration in to the wider town centre
- Pedestrian and cycle linkages that enable a high degree of integration and connectivity with existing networks, particularly between Parsons Street, North Bar Street and Castle Street integrating these areas through well considered connections, building configuration and public realm
- Residential development that is designed to a very high quality considering the impact on the conservation area
- A transport assessment and Travel Plan to accompany development proposals
- Provision of high quality routes to allow for accessibility to public transport services and sustainable modes of travel
- A high quality design, with the use of high quality materials in light of the adjoining historical setting
- A design which respects and enhances the conservation area and the historical grain of the adjoining areas especially the Grade II listed building to the west of the site
- The creation of a high quality public realm with careful consideration of street frontages and elevation treatment to ensure an active and vibrant public realm
- Height and massing sensitive to the surroundings, ensuring there is no adverse effect on important views/vistas
- There is an opportunity for low key, high end development, formed along new lanes that connect the area to Parsons Street
- Architectural innovation is expected where large scale buildings and car parking areas are proposed to ensure that these objectives are met
- Provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identity
- Take account of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the site
- The incorporation of SuDS (Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)), taking account of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Demonstration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures including exemplary demonstration of compliance with the requirements of policies ESD 1 – 5.
- An archaeological field evaluation to assess the impact of the development on archaeological features.

## Additional requirements for this site include:

Development proposals will be expected to be in accordance with a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the site. A comprehensive approach to site planning and delivery is preferred with proposals being for the whole site accompanied by a detailed masterplan. A phased approach may be permitted provided that they clearly demonstrate that proposals will contribute towards the creation a single integrated community and coherent development. In order to achieve continuity in design and delivery of the vision, a small-scale piecemeal approach would not be appropriate.

**The Council will expect an application to demonstrate it has complied with the SPD and has taken into account and planned for the known or anticipated implications of the proposals on remaining areas.**

### **Policy INF 1: Infrastructure**

D.7 Infrastructure as defined in the Planning Act 2008, covers a wide range of infrastructure types and can include schools, sports facilities, transport, culture, green infrastructure, community, health and social care facilities among others.

D.8 Infrastructure is a critical underpinning for the development strategy of the District. Infrastructure such as transport, energy, water, waste and communications, as well as community infrastructure in education and health are essential to meet the needs of residents. Other infrastructure types relate to quality of life and environmental protection or enhancements.

D.9 Although the Council wishes to secure all infrastructure items identified in the IDP, given the resources available to us and our partners, it is likely we will have to prioritise infrastructure items at some point in time.

D.10 The criterion for including items in the IDP is that they have an important role in achieving the vision of the Plan and enable the delivery of strategic policies. The IDP provides a category for each infrastructure item, depending on the level of risk it poses to the delivery of the Local Plan.

D.11 Infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of development in order to achieve the vision and objectives of the Plan. The approach to infrastructure provision is set out within Section B: 'Policies for Development in Cherwell' and Section C: 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. Infrastructure will need to be provided and phased alongside development and the Local Plan sets out the key elements of infrastructure requirements.

D.12 The Integrated Transport Studies for the two main urban areas and the rural areas, together with the Movement Strategies for the urban areas, as well as updated evidence studies undertaken in 2014, provide the evidence to support the provision of new and improved transport infrastructure.

D.13 The Local Transport Plan sets out the likely transport infrastructure requirements and priorities for Cherwell aimed at tackling congestion, promoting sustainable travel, safer roads and improving the street environment. The specific schemes and projects are included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan in Appendix 8.

D.14 Cherwell's future success depends on key public bodies such as the District Council, Town and Parish Councils and Oxfordshire County Council working together on the sustained implementation of this strategy over the long term.

D.15 This plan seeks to support growth by securing infrastructure to ensure development is sustainable and takes into account existing infrastructure deficits. Infrastructure to support housing and employment development is essential to the creation of sustainable communities. The plan considers the physical, social and green infrastructure needed to enable the amount of development proposed taking into account its type and distribution.

## **Policy INF 1: Infrastructure**

**The Council's approach to infrastructure planning in the District will identify the infrastructure required to meet the District's growth, to support the strategic site allocations and to ensure delivery by:**

- **Working with partners, including central Government, and other local authorities, to provide physical, community and green infrastructure**
- **Identifying infrastructure needs and costs, phasing of development, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery**
- **Completing a Developer Contributions SPD to set out the Council's approach to the provision of essential infrastructure including affordable housing, education, transport, health, flood defences and open space**
- **Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that infrastructure requirements can be met including the provision of transport, education, health, social and community facilities.**