

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031

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Part 1
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Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

A.28 The principles of 'sustainable development' are central to the planning system. The NPPF (paragraphs 11-16) sets out what is meant by the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and recommends that Policies in the Local Plan should follow this presumption.

A.29 The Framework recognises that sustainable development is about change for the better. It is about positive growth, making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. To achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly. They are mutually dependent.

A.30 In line with Government policy advice, the Council has adopted a positive approach in seeking to meet the objectively assessed development needs of the District. The policies in the Local Plan provide a clear framework to guide development that creates positive, sustainable growth, therefore following the presumption in favour of sustainable development, enabling proposals that accord with the Plan objectives to be approved without delay. This policy is therefore at the heart of decision making when assessing planning applications.

A.31 There may be instances where the Plan is silent or in future years, policies become out of date. To enable the Council to continue to take a sustainably positive approach to decision making, the applicant will need to assist by submitting evidence to demonstrate how the benefits of the proposal outweigh any adverse impacts.

A.32 The challenge here is to reconcile the need to deliver sufficient jobs and homes, supported by appropriate infrastructure to meet Cherwell's needs, whilst conserving the natural and built environment, minimising the need to travel and addressing climate change.

Policy PSD 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will always work proactively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (or other part of the statutory Development Plan) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or**
- specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.**

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 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 BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution

B.93 The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. It requires the Council to plan for at least 15 years of housing delivery, to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing, and to maintain a five year supply of deliverable sites with a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.



B.94 The Council is committed to meeting housing needs and accelerating delivery. Cherwell's housing needs are identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014. The SHMA identifies a need for 1,140 dwellings per annum equating to 22,800 dwellings from 2011 to 2031. The SHMA analysis includes an assessment of housing need based on demographic trends having regard to past shortfalls in housing delivery to 2011, consideration of 'committed economic growth', modelling of the level of housing provision that might be required to meet affordable need in full and wider evidence of market signals. Paragraph 9.58 of the SHMA states "For Cherwell District the evidence indicates a need for 1,142 dwellings per annum (2011-2031) to support the Strategic Economic Plan. This is based on supporting Committed Economic Growth..."

B.95 Cherwell District Council will continue to work under the 'Duty to Co-operate' with all other Oxfordshire Local Authorities on an on-going basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area and to meet joint commitments such as the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal (2014). As a first step Cherwell District Council has sought to accommodate the housing need for Cherwell District in full in the Cherwell Local Plan. Cherwell District Council recognises that Oxford may not be able to accommodate the whole of its new housing requirement for the 2011-2031 period within its administrative boundary. The urban capacity of Oxford is as yet unconfirmed. Cherwell District Council will continue to work jointly and proactively with the Oxfordshire local authorities and through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to assess all reasonable spatial options, including the release of brownfield land, the potential for a new settlement and a full strategic review of the boundaries of the Oxford Green Belt. These issues are not for Cherwell to consider in isolation. These options will need to be undertaken in accordance with national policy, national guidance, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations, and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to establish how and where any unmet need might best be accommodated within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. Joint work will need to comprehensively consider how spatial options could be supported by necessary infrastructure to ensure an integrated approach to the delivery of housing, jobs and services. Full public consultation will be central to a 'sound' process and outcome. If this joint work reveals that Cherwell and other Districts need to meet additional need for Oxford, this will trigger a partial review of the Local Plan, to be completed within two years of adoption, and taking the form of the preparation of a separate Development Plan Document for that part of the unmet need to be accommodated in the Cherwell District. The Council will engage in joint working on supporting technical work such as countywide

Sustainability Appraisal as required to support the identification of a sustainable approach to meeting agreed, unmet needs.

B.96 The Council is committed to meeting the District's objectively assessed needs and, as described above, to working with partner authorities (including the Oxfordshire Growth Board) to determine how any other unmet needs arising from the SHMA can be sustainably accommodated within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. The housing strategy of this Local Plan seeks to deliver growth in accordance with the NPPF's Core Planning Principles including:

- Providing a positive vision for the future of Cherwell: a strategic growth and investment approach to the towns; an enlarged settlement in the centre of the District, further development at the villages to sustain them.
- Proactively driving and supporting sustainable economic development by meeting the SHMA's Committed Economic Growth scenario.
- Seeking to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity by developing new neighbourhoods and achieving regeneration and redevelopment of key sites.
- Taking account of the different roles and character of Cherwell's places by promoting the vitality of Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington and their ability to serve their hinterlands, protecting the Oxford Green Belt and concentrating development in sustainable rural locations to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and to support thriving rural communities.
- Encouraging the effective re-use of existing land and buildings and bring forward sites that contain land of lesser environmental value such as at Graven Hill (Bicester 2), Canalside (Banbury 1), Bolton Road Development Area (Banbury 8), Higham Way (Banbury 19) and at the Former RAF Upper Heyford (Villages 5).
- Promoting strategic, mixed use developments conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance such as those of national importance at Former RAF Upper Heyford, actively encouraging wildlife potential such as at South East Bicester (Bicester 12) and Gavray Drive (Bicester 13), and making the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and supporting community well-being such as at the North West Bicester Eco-Town (Bicester 1).

B.97 In total, the Plan provides for five strategic development sites at Bicester in addition to the on-going construction of an urban extension at South West Bicester (Kingsmere) and a committed site at Talisman Road. It provides for 10 strategic development sites at Banbury, also in addition to an on-going urban extension at Bankside and committed sites at West of Warwick Road and Southam Road. The Plan makes allowances for non-strategic urban and rural sites in sustainable locations and includes realistic and reliable windfall allowances for (previously developed) sites of less than 10 dwellings. Development at villages will be considered against Policy Villages 1: Village Categorisation, Policy Villages 2: Distributing Growth Across the Rural Areas and Policy Villages 3: Rural Exception Sites.

B.98 The Plan supports the objectives of the Council's Housing Strategy 2012-2017 to increase the supply of homes and to improve access to housing. It provides for new affordable homes for those in most housing need and seeks to ensure the opportunities for home ownership are widened. The Plan aims to extend choice, to provide high quality homes and development, and to secure a mix of

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

B.99 Overall housing delivery from 2011 to 2031 will be as set out in the policy below. Further delivery will be seen at the North West Bicester site (Policy Bicester 1) beyond 2031 but the Plan does not preclude earlier or faster delivery.

Policy BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution

Cherwell District will deliver a wide choice of high quality homes by providing for 22,840 additional dwellings between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2031. 1,106 completions were recorded between 2011 and 2014 leaving 21,734 homes to be provided between 2014 and 2031. Housing will be delivered in accordance with the requirements set out below:

	Bicester	Banbury	Rest of District	Totals
Completions	365	213	528	1,106
Permissions (10+)	1,934	2,346	1,760	6,040
Allocations	7,726	4,344	2,350	14,420
Windfalls (<10)	104	416	754	1,274
Totals	10,129	7,319	5,392	22,840

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 BSC 7: Meeting Education Needs

B.140 The provision of primary and secondary education, along with early years and lifelong learning will be needed throughout the District to accommodate population growth. The demand for pre-school facilities is likely to increase due to changes in lifestyles and work patterns.

B.141 We will support the growth plans of schools across the District and recognise the important role that viable schools have to play in maintaining the quality of life of communities across the District. Oxfordshire County Council as the Local Education Authority is usually responsible for the provision of new schools and school places. It has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places. The District Council will work with the County Council and others to provide nursery, primary and secondary schools; further and higher education facilities; community learning facilities; special schools; free schools and other educational facilities. This will include for the strategic site allocations in the Local Plan. New schools will be provided where required, for example at North West Bicester (Policy Bicester 1) and South East Bicester (Policy Bicester 12). We will ensure sufficient primary and secondary school provision across the District to accommodate Cherwell's population growth. This may include seeking the provision of new schools, contributions towards these facilities or contributions towards expanding existing facilities. The County Council has identified the potential need for a new secondary school at Banbury with the location yet to be determined. A Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared. Upon completion it will provide further details on how developer contributions for education facilities will be sought.

B.142 The District has historically had a relatively low education and skills base. We will encourage development that will diversify and develop the skills base of the District into the future.

B.143 We will support the University Technology College proposal or other similar proposals for Bicester as an opportunity to strengthen the education and skills base of the town.

B.144 We will seek to ensure that the design of these schools is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of their users and the communities they serve and future changes to the demographic profile of the District. Where appropriate the use of school and college buildings and land after hours will be encouraged to support learning among the wider community and may be able to contribute towards recreation provision. New school buildings should be located in

sustainable locations on the edge or within the built up limits of settlements. New schools in the Green Belt and open countryside will be resisted. Policy ESD15 will apply.

Policy BSC 7: Meeting Education Needs

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

Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being

B.145 Planning decisions can have an effect on travel to work, schools, noise and air quality, access to services, climate change and social networks which can all contribute to health and well-being. The local environment has a fundamental impact on the health and well-being of local people. By providing facilities such as local open space this allows for activities such as walking and cycling, promoting healthy lifestyles. The Council will work with the local community to provide safe and accessible environments and to identify the need for and provide local facilities.

B.146 The Council will continue to work closely with the healthcare providers, partners and the NHS across its delivery bodies to:

- ensure the provision of additional and reconfigured health and social care facilities
- identify the anticipated primary care needs of local communities
- identify the capacity needs of local communities
- meet the healthcare requirements of local communities.

B.147 As part of the changes to the NHS brought about by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) ceased to exist on 31 March 2013. Their responsibilities were taken over by Clinical Commissioning Groups and the NHS Trust Development Authority. A Health & Wellbeing Board has been set up for Oxfordshire which is a partnership between Oxfordshire County Council, the NHS and the people of Oxfordshire designed to ensure that we all work together to improve health and wellbeing.

B.148 The Board's vision for Oxfordshire for 2016 is:

- more children and young people will lead healthy, safe lives and will be given the opportunity to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential
- more adults will have the support they need to live their lives as healthily, successfully, independently and safely as possible, with good timely access to health and social care services
- everyone will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and experiences to ensure that services meet their individual needs
- the best possible services will be provided within the resources we have, giving excellent value for the public.

B.149 There is a need for more GP provision in Bicester. New buildings should be located in sustainable locations on the edge or within the built up limits of settlements. New buildings in the Green Belt and open countryside will be resisted. Policy ESD 15 will apply.

Policy BSC 8: Securing Health and Well-Being

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

Policy BSC 9: Public Services and Utilities

B.150 Waste management and disposal is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council and the District Council will continue to consider the emerging Minerals and Waste Development Framework in the preparation of the Local Plan.



B.151 A new library is proposed for Banbury as part of the Spiceball Development Area (Policy Banbury 9). In Bicester a new library is proposed as part of the town centre redevelopment ('Policy Bicester 5: Strengthening Bicester Town Centre'). The new improved library services will be provided by Oxfordshire County Council.

B.152 The preparation of the Local Plan has highlighted the need for additional burial grounds to be provided in some locations. A new burial site for Bicester is being investigated ('Policy Bicester 9: Burial Site in Bicester'). In other cases the need for additional burial site provision will be more appropriately addressed through the Local Plan Part 2 and/or by way of planning application.

B.153 The Planning Obligations Draft SPD provides more details on the provision of public services as part of new development including emergency services (police, fire & ambulance) and places of worship.

B.154 Preliminary enquiries with utility companies have taken place with a view to identifying the infrastructure requirements and constraints to future development in the District. Gas, electricity and heat supply and investment in electricity infrastructure is provided by the private sector and the Council will continue to work with suppliers and distributors to provide the necessary services to strategic sites. Developers will need to take account of the location of existing services and will need to contribute financially to their relocation on development sites.

B.155 Thames Water, Anglian Water and Severn Trent Water provide the majority of the water supply and waste services in the District. Water services business plans are based on 5 year schedules and the scale of investment is substantial. Timelines vary on projects and the Council will work with the water companies to plan the delivery of specific projects.

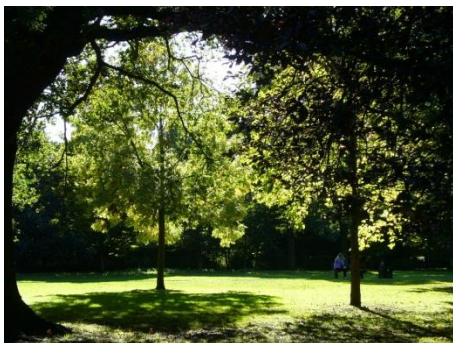
B.156 Telecommunications infrastructure will be provided as part of the strategic allocations, for example it is a requirement of the Eco-towns PPS that homes should be provided with connection to Superfast Broadband. As a result of the investment by the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS), Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council full District wide coverage will have been secured by 2017 to support increased business and residential use, supporting increased home working, new business formation and new service provision.

Policy BSC 9: Public Services and Utilities

The Council will support proposals which involve new or improvements to public services/utilities if they are required to enable the successful delivery of sites and where they accord with other relevant policies in the Plan. All new developments will be expected to include provision for connection to Superfast Broadband.

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

B.157 The Sustainable Community Strategy, "Our district, our future" 2010, seeks to ensure that social infrastructure grows at the same rate as our communities and that existing deficiencies in provision are addressed, and these aims are reflected in the objectives of this plan. The responsibility for provision of open space and recreation facilities in the District is shared between the County, District, Town and Parish Councils, private sports clubs and associations, and meeting the plan's objectives will therefore require effective partnership working.



B.158 The District's PPG17 Open Space Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment, Audit and Strategy 2006 and the subsequent Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies 2008 (see Appendix 3 Evidence Base) highlighted the need to protect all sites identified in the audit to ensure an adequate supply of open space provision.

B.159 Development proposals that would result in the loss of sites will be assessed in accordance with guidance in the NPPF and NPPG, and will not be permitted unless the proposal would not result in the loss of an open space of importance to the character or amenity of the surrounding area, an assessment has been undertaken which demonstrates that the site is surplus to requirements including consideration of all functions that open space can perform, or the Council is satisfied that a

suitable alternative site of at least equivalent community benefit in terms of quantity and quality is to be provided within an agreed time period. Sport England will be consulted on proposals affecting playing fields. Consideration will be given to the need to designate Local Green Spaces (green areas of particular importance to the local community) in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG, through the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2.

B.160 Alternative uses are only likely to be permitted in exceptional circumstances bearing in mind that all of the analysis areas as defined in the PPG17 assessment have deficiencies in at least two types of open space provision. A partial update of the assessment in 2011 indicated deficiencies of one or more types of provision. In addition, apparent "surpluses" in provision often compensate for shortfalls in other types of provision locally, and some larger areas of green space serve wider than local needs with usage catchments beyond the ward boundaries in which they are located.

B.161 The PPG17 Assessment and subsequent Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies established the current and future deficiencies in open space and recreation provision together with recommendations as to how deficiencies should be met. These comprise a combination of improving or enhancing existing provision, using existing open space of one type of provision to meet deficiencies in another type of provision, or through new provision. These assessments and strategies were undertaken before the distribution of development over an extended plan period had been established and further work will be undertaken in conjunction with the Bicester and Banbury Masterplans, the Kidlington Framework Masterplan and the Local Plan Part 2 to update future needs and define new provision for open space. More detail on open space is set out under Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places' and in Section D 'The Infrastructure Delivery Plan'. The quality standards as set out in the strategies, together with information contained in the PPG17 study on the quality and value of open space sites, will be used as a guide in considering enhancements to existing provision. The identification of sites for new provision, other than those identified on the Policies Map (see Appendix 5: Maps) and related to the strategic sites identified in the Local Plan, will be included in the Local Plan Part 2.

B.162 Proposals for new development will be expected to contribute to open space, sport and recreation provision in accordance with Policies BSC 10, BSC 11 and BSC12 below.

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

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

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

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

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

Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision- Outdoor Recreation

B.163 The PPG17 Assessment set out recommended standards of open space provision. These were updated as part of the Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategy and a further partial update has been undertaken since the Draft Core Strategy (2010), with the findings being reflected in the policy below. The strategies set out local standards for each typology of open space, but in recognition of the multi-functional nature of many areas of open space, and the need for flexibility in determining the precise composition of provision in new development, combined quantitative standards of provision were recommended. Should the additional analysis work referred to in paragraph B.161 above result in amendments to the open space standards, the standards will be updated in the Local Plan Part 2 and the Developer Contributions SPD.

Table 7: Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation

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

			<p>NEAP- 1000 sq m activity zone; 8500 sq m including buffer</p> <p>NB In some cases a combined all-age area of play will be preferable to provision of LAPs/LEAPs/NEAPs.</p>	100 dwellings for a NEAP and LEAPs/LAPs.
<p>Outdoor sports provision (combining tennis courts, bowling greens, golf courses and playing pitches) (to be accompanied by changing facilities where appropriate)</p>	1.13 ha per 1000 people	<p>Football, rugby, cricket: 10 minute walk (800m) urban areas, 10 minute travel time (8km) rural areas</p> <p>Tennis courts: 15 minute walk (1200m) urban areas, 15 minute travel time (12km) rural areas</p> <p>Bowling greens, golf courses: 15 minute travel time (12km)</p> <p>Hockey: 20 minute travel</p>	0.12 ha	65 dwellings

		time.		
Allotments	0.37 ha per 1000 people	10 minute walk (800m)	0.2 ha	275 dwellings

Note: See Glossary for terms: MUGAs, LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs

Table 8: Qualitative Standards of Provision

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

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

B.164 The minimum size of provision and thresholds for on-site provision are intended to act as a guide to developers, however the composition of provision will depend on the details of the proposal and its location. For example, combined play area schemes to cover all age groups may be preferable to provision of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs in some cases. Similarly, the smallest size site where on-site provision for outdoor sports is likely to be possible is 65 dwellings as this would generate a requirement sufficient for two tennis courts; however this will not be appropriate for all sites of that size. In addition, open space intended to maintain character or improve connectivity between sites needs to be large enough to be functional, irrespective of the standards.

B.165 Detailed guidance on the implementation of this policy is set out in the Planning Obligations Draft SPD. The general principles underlying the policy are that all new dwellings should contribute

towards the provision of open space. For larger developments (10 dwellings or more in urban areas and 6 dwellings or more in rural areas), provision should be made on site unless this is not possible or appropriate.

B.166 For smaller developments where on-site provision is not achievable, a financial contribution will be sought from developers towards the improvement of provision elsewhere, where appropriate schemes can be identified within the defined catchment. The identification of schemes for which financial contributions will be sought will be defined in the Developer Contributions SPD. In some cases catchment areas will relate to wards, in some to villages and in others to clusters of villages, having regard to accessibility standards outlined above and the likelihood of development coming forward at a rate sufficient to provide the identified schemes.

B.167 The nature of the development including the size and type of each dwelling and their anticipated occupancy rate will be taken into account in determining the contribution required. It may also be appropriate to seek green space provision, or a contribution towards such provision, in conjunction with other forms of development.

Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision - Outdoor Recreation

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

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

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

Policy BSC 12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

B.168 The PPG17 Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities Assessment (2006) indicated an under-supply of sports hall and swimming pool provision in the District but concluded that the sports centre modernisation programme would address these deficiencies.



B.169 In terms of future needs to 2026, the assessment indicated that the projected shortfall in swimming pool and sports hall provision could be met through sports centre modernisation combined with dual use agreements to allow public use of school facilities out of school hours. The use of village/community halls for sporting facilities was also highlighted and a survey of village and community halls is currently being undertaken to assess the adequacy of provision. The PPG17 assessment only covered the period to 2026 and in view of the extended plan period and increased level of growth associated with it, a review of indoor sport, recreation and community facilities provision is being undertaken. Initial indications are that there will be a deficiency in sports hall provision by 2031 with unmet demand being particularly noticeable around Bicester. There will be some unmet demand in swimming pool provision by 2031, with a capacity issue at existing facilities and deterioration in attractiveness at the older facilities through aging. Unmet demand could be addressed by the provision of new facilities or increasing the capacity and quality of existing facilities. Further location specific information is included in Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. The findings will be used to determine whether additional facilities are needed and inform the application of Policy BSC12.

B.170 Should the additional analysis work referred to in paragraph B169 above result in amendments to the indoor sports standards, the standards will be updated in the Local Plan Part 2 and the Developer Contributions SPD. The local standards of provision developed by the PPG17 study are set out below:

Table 9: Local Standards of Provision - Indoor Recreation	
Facility Type	Local Quantity Standard per 1000 Population
Sports Hall	0.315 badminton courts
Swimming Pool	9.31m ² swimming water area
Squash Courts	0.059 courts
Health and Fitness	5.28 stations

Indoor Bowls	0.045 rinks
STPs	0.046 pitches
Athletics Tracks	0.0012 8 lane facility

Table 10: Local Quality Standards

Design and technical standard	All new build and refurbishment schemes to be designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes, which provide detailed technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities.
Facility operation and management standard	All leisure providers to follow industry best practice principles in relation to a) Facilities operation, b) Customer relations, c) staffing and d) Service and development review. The detail of internal systems, policies and practices underpinning implementation of these principles will correlate directly to the scale of facility, varying according to the position of the facility within the levels of the established hierarchy.
Accessibility standard	15 minutes travel time.

B.171 Additional guidance on how the policy and the above standards will be applied is contained in the Planning Obligations Draft SPD. Development proposals will be expected to contribute towards provision commensurate with the needs generated by the development.

Policy BSC 12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

The Council will encourage the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities, and encourage partnership working to ensure that built sports provision is maintained in accordance with local standards of provision by the following means:

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

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.

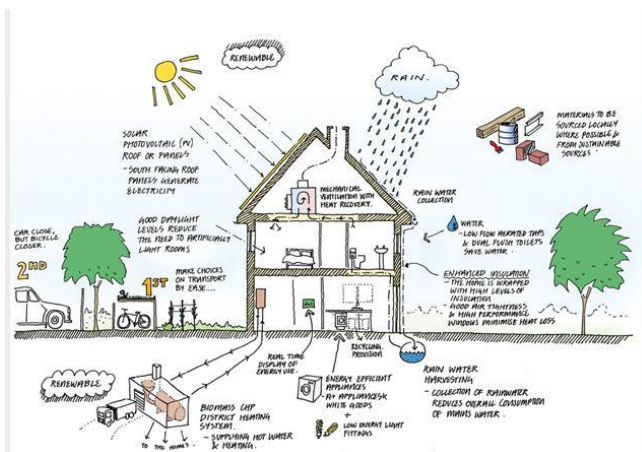
All development proposals will be encouraged to reflect high quality design and high environmental standards, demonstrating sustainable construction methods including but not limited to:

- **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 1000m² 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:

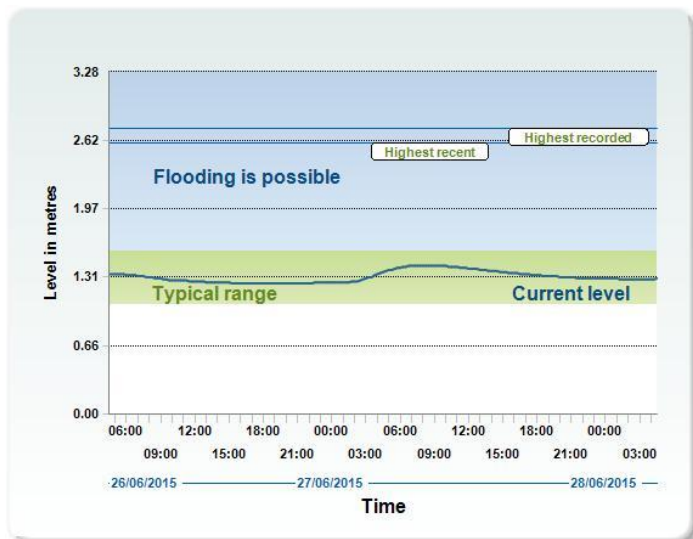
- **All residential developments for 100 dwellings or more**
- **All residential developments in off-gas areas for 50 dwellings or more**

- All applications for non-domestic developments above 1000m2 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 SFRAs 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 Biceser	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 modelling may be required for sites in close proximity to the Rowell Brook or the River Cherwell. A level 2 FRA to include detailed assessment of groundwater flood risk should be included at all sites.
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.

Our Core Assets

Policy ESD 8: Water Resources

B.220 In considering development proposals, the Council will use Policy ESD 8 together with 'Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction', 'Policy ESD 6: Sustainable Flood Risk Management' and 'Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS) to reduce the impact of development on the water environment, maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainability in water use. This will assist in contributing to the objectives of the Water Framework Directive which seeks to protect and enhance the quality of water bodies, and indicates that development should not result in any deterioration in the status of surface water bodies. Some development can remediate contaminated land which may be having an adverse impact on controlled water and human health. These policies together with Policy ESD 8 are also intended to help deliver the actions contained in the Thames River Basin Management Plan. These actions highlight the importance of development proposals contributing to an improved water environment, through the use of sustainable design and construction techniques for water efficiency, water quality and sustainable flood management, and the incorporation of appropriate green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements.



B.221 Research carried out by the Environment Agency and set out in the Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMs) shows that Cherwell District lies within an area of serious water stress and the Upper Cherwell area (including Banbury) has been over abstracted. Policy ESD 8 will be used to ensure that new development is located in areas where adequate water supply can be provided from existing and potential water supply infrastructure. In addition 'Policy ESD 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change' and 'Policy ESD 3: Sustainable Construction' will ensure new development incorporates water efficiency measures, reducing demand.

Policy ESD 8: Water Resources

The Council will seek to maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainability in water use.

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

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

Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

B.233 Development proposals likely to affect a site of international ecological importance will need to be accompanied by a thorough Habitats Regulations Assessment of the potential effects of the development on that site of international importance, to enable the Council to determine whether the development would result in significant adverse effects on the integrity of the site. Any development that is unable to demonstrate that it would not have a significant adverse effect upon the integrity of a European site, having taken account of proposed mitigation, will be refused. This is in accordance with the precautionary principle enshrined in the Habitats Directive. Where there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest and the Council is unable to conclude no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC, the authority will notify the Secretary of State to allow the application to be called in for determination. In these situations compensatory measures to protect the site must be put in place.



B.234 Sites of national importance comprise Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves. Cherwell District has 18 SSSIs but does not contain any National Nature Reserves.

B.235 Sites of regional/local importance comprise Local Geological Sites (LGSs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), non-statutory nature reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation including Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs- formerly known as County Wildlife Sites), ancient

woodland, aged or veteran trees and UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats (habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act). Cherwell contains 13 LGSs, 3 LNRs, 83 Local Wildlife sites (completely or partly within the District), 16 proposed LWSs and 8 proposed LWS extensions (as of August 2013). The sites are indicated on the biodiversity map at Appendix 5: Maps, but it must be acknowledged that the number and location of sites changes over time as surveys and re-surveys take place. A living list of Local Wildlife Sites and associated maps are available at <http://www.tverc.org>. Sites of regional/local importance also include the habitats of those species of principal importance for biodiversity (as identified in Section 41 of the NERC Act).

B.236 It is not just designated sites that are of importance to the biodiversity resource of the District. Areas adjacent to designated sites can be of value as they can form part of the overall ecological unit and may provide important linkages. Also landscape features such as hedgerows, woods, trees, rivers and riverbanks, ponds and floodplains can be of importance both in urban and rural areas, and often form wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Similarly it is not just greenfield sites that can be of value; previously developed land can also make an important contribution to biodiversity. Some development can remediate contaminated land which may be having an adverse impact on ecology. It is important that any features of value are identified early in the planning process so that adequate measures can be taken to secure their protection. Developers will be expected to incorporate and enhance such features within a site wherever possible and adequate measures should be taken to protect them from damage during construction. Networks of habitats will be protected from development and where possible strengthened by it.

B.237 Relevant habitat and species surveys and associated reports will be required to accompany planning applications which may affect a site of known biodiversity value or the biodiversity/natural environment of the local area. A biodiversity survey and report will also be required where it is likely that previously unrecorded biodiversity interest may be present which could be affected by the development. All developments around Bicester will require surveys carried out for the brown hairstreak butterfly. Surveys should include consideration of the site's value as a wildlife corridor and the contribution it makes to ecological networks. In addition to identifying biodiversity impacts, biodiversity surveys and reports should identify opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements.

B.238 There are a number of features which can be incorporated into developments to encourage biodiversity including green roofs and walls, SUDs, using native and locally characteristic species in landscaping schemes, using landscaping to link up existing areas supporting biodiversity and including features such as bird and bat boxes. The Council is compiling further guidance on the incorporation of features to encourage biodiversity which will form part of the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

B.239 Consideration will be given to the introduction of a tariff based approach to securing biodiversity improvement through development. Further information on the use of planning obligations to secure contributions from development towards biodiversity will be contained in the final Developer Contributions SPD.

Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment will be achieved by the following:







- In considering proposals for development, a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources, and by creating new resources
- The protection of trees will be encouraged, with an aim to increase the number of trees in the District
- The reuse of soils will be sought
- If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then development will not be permitted.
- Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of international value will be subject to the Habitats Regulations Assessment process and will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no likely significant effects on the international site or that effects can be mitigated
- Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of biodiversity or geological value of national importance will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm it would cause to the site and the wider national network of SSSIs, and the loss can be mitigated to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity
- Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of biodiversity or geological value of regional or local importance including habitats of species of principal importance for biodiversity will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm it would cause to the site, and the loss can be mitigated to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity
- Development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity
- Relevant habitat and species surveys and associated reports will be required to accompany planning applications which may affect a site, habitat or species of known or potential ecological value
- Air quality assessments will also be required for development proposals that would be likely to have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity by generating an increase in air pollution
- Planning conditions/obligations will be used to secure net gains in biodiversity by helping to deliver Biodiversity Action Plan targets and/or meeting the aims of Conservation Target Areas. Developments for which these are the principal aims will be viewed favourably
- A monitoring and management plan will be required for biodiversity features on site to ensure their long term suitable management.

Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

B.248 The Cherwell Local Plan 1996 identified Areas of High Landscape Value - land of particular environmental quality - where the Council would seek to conserve and enhance the environment. This Local Plan adopts a character-based approach to seek to conserve and enhance the countryside and landscape character of the whole District, and so Areas of High Landscape Value are not proposed to be retained. Policy ESD 13 therefore seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive and highly valued local character of the entire District. The Council will use the CPRE's Tranquillity Map of Oxfordshire available at <http://www.cpre.org.uk> as a guide in assessing areas of tranquillity. Further guidance will be contained within the Local Plan Part 2.

Examples of landscape types (Popup full image)

Landscape Types

	Clay Vale
	Farmland Plateau
	Farmland Slopes and Valley Sides
	River Meadowlands
	Upstanding Village Farmlands
	Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes

B.249 Opportunities for landscape enhancement can also be provided by land in the Council's ownership, and on other land by agreement.

B.250 The relationship between the District's towns and the adjoining countryside and the avoidance of an abrupt transition from built development to open farmland requires special attention to the landscaping of existing and proposed development. This interface is important in determining the relationship between the urban areas and on the character of the countryside. Where new development will extend the built up limits of the towns the Council will seek a masterplan and well-designed approach to the urban edge. This could incorporate the enhancement of existing hedgerows and woodlands and new areas of woodland planting and hedgerows to be incorporated as part of the development, to ensure the satisfactory transition between town and country. These considerations can equally be applied where extensions to villages are required. Landscape mitigation for the proposed strategic sites will be negotiated on a site by site basis.

B.251 In order to understand the local landscape character of Cherwell a Landscape Assessment was undertaken in 1995. The findings of this assessment informed the Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan policy and the Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance. These documents identified four distinct character areas - the 'Cherwell Valley', 'Ironstone Downs', 'Ploughley Limestone Plateau' and 'Clay Vale of Otmoor'. The guidance states how development can complement the most important aspects of the character of that part of the District. More recently the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) looked in detail at the landscape types across the District as well as the biodiversity resource. It identifies the 'forces for change' in a particular location and includes landscape/biodiversity strategies which set guidelines for how developments can contribute towards landscape character. Further landscape assessment work has been undertaken to inform the Local Plan and the Masterplans being prepared for Bicester and Banbury (see Appendix 3: Evidence Base).

B.252 One of the most important elements of the landscape which can add to the character and identity of an area are natural landscape features. Such features include Muswell Hill, Crouch Hill, Madmarston Hill, the River Cherwell and Otmoor, which all make those areas distinct and create a sense of place. Many form local landmarks valued by the local communities. The Council's Landscape Evidence Base documents identify the key landform and landscape features of value which include the following features around Banbury and Bicester:

- the open and agricultural setting and identity of the outlying villages surrounding Banbury and Bicester, many with locally distinctive historic cores
- ironstone ridges and valleys
- the historic villages and parkland of Hanwell and Wroxton
- Broughton Castle and Grade II Registered Park
- Crouch Hill: an important landmark overlooking Banbury and the surrounding area
- the landscape to the east of the motorway at Banbury which retains a distinct historic pattern
- Salt Way and its setting
- the Sor Brook Valley
- the setting of the Oxford Canal and River Cherwell corridor
- specific features at Bicester noted for their value include those showing notable 'time depth' including Former RAF Bicester, Wretchwick deserted medieval village, Bignell Park and the Roman roads
- Graven Hill and Blackthorn Hill which contrast with the relatively flat surrounding landform
- the River Ray floodplains.

B.253 The Council will seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value. Proposals which would result in the loss of such features will not be permitted unless their loss can be justified by appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to the satisfaction of the Council.

B.254 In order that development conserves and enhances the character of the countryside, the Council will carefully control the type, scale and design of development, including the materials used, taking into account the advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary SPG and the OWLS.

B.255 In addition to this policy, many villages have conservation areas and in considering development proposals within or adjacent to them, special attention will be given to the preservation or enhancement of their character and appearance under 'Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment'.

Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

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

- **Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside**
- **Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography**
- **Be inconsistent with local character**
- **Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity**
- **Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or**
- **Harm the historic value of the landscape.**

Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate.

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.

Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure

B.274 Green infrastructure comprises the network of green spaces and features in both urban and rural areas including the following: parks and gardens (including historic parks and gardens), natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors (including cycleways and rights of way), outdoor sports facilities, amenity green space, children's play space, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas, river and canal corridors, woodlands, nature reserves, green roofs and walls.



B.275 Securing adequate green infrastructure is an important component of achieving sustainable communities. Green Infrastructure networks can deliver both environmental and social benefits including conserving and enhancing biodiversity, recreation, landscape, water management, social and cultural benefits to underpin individual health and well-being, contributing to local distinctiveness and helping communities to be more resilient to the effects of climate change. Policy ESD 17 will be used to secure an adequate green infrastructure network in Cherwell District.

B.276 Many sites which contribute to the District's green infrastructure network are not in the Council's ownership or control and partnership working will therefore be required to plan, provide and manage the network to achieve the objectives of the policy.

B.277 Within Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington the key components of green infrastructure are areas of open space, sport and recreation, sometimes linked by public rights of way. Public rights of way are protected in law and comprise four types: footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOAT). The County Council has responsibility for Public Rights of Way, and as such publishes a Rights of Way Improvement Plan and promotes routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders in order to encourage sustainable access to the countryside. In recognition of the health benefits of walking, cycling and horse riding this Council also promotes a number of circular walks and rides. Elsewhere in the District the dominant strategic features include the River Cherwell and Oxford Canal corridors, statutory designated sites such as Local Nature Reserves, and other areas such as RSPB Otmoor reserve and BBOWT reserves. The Conservation Target Areas (indicated on the Policies Map) are the most important areas for biodiversity in the District where targeted conservation action will have the greatest benefit, and form an important component of the green infrastructure network of the District which can be enhanced over the period of the plan.

B.278 Assessments of open space, sport and recreation provision highlighted various deficiencies in both urban and rural areas of the District, as detailed in Section C 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. In addition an assessment by Natural England and the Forestry Commission indicated a lack of accessible natural green space provision in the district compared to their standards, with 72% of Cherwell's households meeting none of its requirements. This reflects the relatively low numbers of country parks and common land in the District; however there are a number of smaller areas of open space, and countryside which is accessible solely by Public Rights of Way, which was not taken into account in the initial Natural England analysis. The District has developed its own local standards of provision in accordance with government advice, which differ from those advocated by Natural England. Other than provision in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington there are few accessible large areas of green space within the District; however parks such as Blenheim, Rousham and Stowe

are located in close proximity to it. The Council's proposed country park to the north of Banbury will also help to address this issue.

B.279 Protection and enhancement of open space, sport and recreation sites and sites of importance to nature conservation will assist in maintaining the green infrastructure network. Green corridors consist of canals, river corridors and hedgerows, together with public rights of way. These can provide areas for walking, cycling and horse riding and also provide opportunities for wildlife migration, which on a strategic scale can help to address the impact of climate change on biodiversity. Development proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing green corridors, and maximise the opportunity to form new links between existing open spaces.

B.280 Development proposals, particularly on larger sites, can offer the opportunity to improve the green infrastructure network. Policy BSC 11 usually requires open space provision on site and biodiversity enhancements secured by 'Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment' can contribute to the network by maintaining existing habitats and reducing fragmentation. The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems can contribute to green infrastructure provision and can perform dual roles of helping to alleviate flooding and being beneficial to biodiversity. New landscaping areas, particularly in the case of the strategic sites, will be required to assimilate development into the landscape and assist in the transition between the urban edge and rural areas. Effective links in these areas can enable the urban fringe to provide a recreational resource, providing accessible countryside within walking distance of urban dwellers. Proposals should include details of management and maintenance of green infrastructure to ensure areas are secured in perpetuity. Further guidance on green infrastructure provision is provided in the South East Green Infrastructure Framework - from Policy to Practice (available at <http://strategy.sebiodiversity.org.uk>).

B.281 In Banbury and Bicester successive local plans have sought to establish a series of open spaces in the towns, and this plan includes proposals for a new country park in Banbury ('Policy Banbury 14: Cherwell Country Park'). Additional detail is contained under Section C: 'Policies for Cherwell's Places'. The key open space components of existing green infrastructure provision in Banbury and Bicester are shown on the maps for each town (Appendix 5: Maps). Green infrastructure provision will be examined in more detail and progressed through the town masterplans and the Local Plan Part 2. A county level Green Infrastructure Strategy is also being formulated with the District Council being represented on the stakeholder working group.

B.282 South of the Canalside development (Policy Banbury 1) the opportunity exists to turn part of the existing floodplain of the River Cherwell into a managed habitat. This will be explored in more detail through the preparation of the Banbury Masterplan.

Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure

The District's green infrastructure network will be maintained and enhanced through the following measures:

- Pursuing opportunities for joint working to maintain and improve the green infrastructure network, whilst protecting sites of importance for nature conservation
- Protecting and enhancing existing sites and features forming part of the green infrastructure network and improving sustainable connectivity between sites in accordance with policies on supporting a modal shift in transport (Policy SLE 4: Improved Transport and Connections), open space, sport and recreation (Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision), adapting to climate change (Policy ESD 1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change), SuDS (Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)), biodiversity and the natural environment (Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment), Conservation Target Areas (Policy ESD 11: Conservation Target Areas), heritage assets (Policy ESD 15) and the Oxford Canal (Policy ESD 16)
- Ensuring that green infrastructure network considerations are integral to the planning of new development. Proposals should maximise the opportunity to maintain and extend green infrastructure links to form a multi-functional network of open space, providing opportunities for walking and cycling, and connecting the towns to the urban fringe and the wider countryside beyond
- All strategic development sites (Section C: 'Policies for Cherwell's Places') will be required to incorporate green infrastructure provision and proposals should include details for future management and maintenance.

Strategic Development: Bicester 1 - North West Bicester Eco-Town

C.37 Following the (now revoked) South East Plan's publication, North West Bicester was identified in Annex A of the Eco-towns PPS (2009) as one of the four potential locations for the development of an eco-town. An eco-town development of 6,000 homes will be developed on land identified at North West Bicester in accordance with the standards set out in the former Eco-Towns PPS. It was expected that the development will be substantially completed within the plan period but that has been reviewed as part of the housing trajectory.



C.38 The Policies map and the inset map for Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town (Appendix 5: Maps) identify the location and the area of the eco-town proposals.

C.39 Proposals should ensure:

- zero-carbon development as defined in the Eco-Towns PPS and Eco Bicester One Shared Vision
- delivery of a high quality local environment
- climate Change Adaptation - eco town standards are met on water, flooding, green infrastructure and biodiversity
- homes that achieve at least Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- employment - At least 3,000 jobs within the plan period (approximately 1,000 jobs on B use class land on the site within the plan period). An economic strategy will be required and there should be local sourcing of labour, including providing apprenticeships during construction.
- transport - at least 50% of trips originating from the development to be made by means other than the car
- promotion of healthy lifestyles
- provision of local services and facilities
- green infrastructure and Biodiversity - 40% of the total gross site area will be provided as green space of which at least half will be public open space
- sustainable management of waste.

C.40 The development will be designed as an exemplar, incorporating best practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living. It will allow Government, business and communities to work together to develop greener, low carbon living. A masterplan for the North West Bicester site will be required to demonstrate how proposals will achieve the standards set out in the Eco-Towns PPS and Eco Bicester One Shared Vision. Development will be considered on the basis of a masterplan for the whole development area, to ensure that development takes place in an integrated, coordinated and planned way, whilst recognising that phasing of development within the overall masterplan strategy will be required. It will integrate with and complement the function and urban form of Bicester and reinforce the role of Bicester town centre as the primary retail and service centre.

C.41 The eco-town concept of more sustainable living in new communities provides the opportunity to completely rethink how transport, employment, retail and other services are provided as well as providing new homes to standards which are more challenging than would normally be required for new development. Biodiversity projects will be incorporated as part of the masterplanning process. The proposed eco-town at North West Bicester provides the potential to test a wide range of innovative and emerging technologies due to its scale.

C.42 The Council will continue to work with central Government, the promoters of North West Bicester, the local community and other partners to ensure the delivery of an exemplary eco-town that achieves the highest environmental standards.

C.43 The North West Bicester Eco-Town is central to both our District-wide strategy and our strategy for Bicester. Delivering an eco-town is considered to be one of the most sustainable means of accommodating strategic growth at Bicester to 2031. The development will provide a new community to the highest environmental standards and with its own local services and facilities. The masterplan will include employment areas, schools, services and facilities and extensive green and

public open space to maximise the opportunity for town wide economic, community and environmental gains. At the same time the Eco-Town will integrate with and complement the function and urban form of Bicester.

C.44 The land at North West Bicester is the least constrained direction of growth on the urban fringe for delivering growth on this scale. The proposals for North West Bicester will however need to consider the impact on the surrounding area including the villages of Bucknell and Caversfield.

Employment

C.45 An economic strategy will be produced to support the proposals for the eco-town at North West Bicester. It should demonstrate how access to employment will be achieved and deliver a minimum of one employment opportunity per new dwelling. For North West Bicester, this will mean providing access to work and 6,000 jobs by the end of the delivery of the North West Bicester Eco-Town development. The Local Plan estimates that over 3,000 homes will be provided by 2031 and therefore sets a target of approximately 3,000 job opportunities associated with the project to be provided within this period.

C.46 The precise nature and location of these jobs will be set by a masterplan being prepared for the North West Bicester allocation. The draft masterplan shows that about 10 hectares of employment land is required at North West Bicester. This would provide for business space for offices, workshops, factories and warehousing (B1, B2 and B8 uses), but not for retail and leisure jobs which would be located in local centres. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 B use class jobs would be located at the North West Bicester site. The remainder would be provided through other uses including home working. Some jobs are likely to be located away from the site, for example in the town centre or on other employment sites.

North West Bicester Development Standards

C.47 The North West Bicester Eco-Town will play a major role in delivering the strategic growth identified for Bicester during and beyond the plan period. The One Shared Vision for Eco Bicester is expected to guide the delivery of higher environmental standards while the proposals for the North West Bicester Eco-Town will act as a catalyst for the transition of the town as a whole towards a more sustainable community.

C.48 The Vision aims to "Create a vibrant Bicester where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time in sustainable ways..." (Eco Bicester One Shared Vision December 2010).

C.49 Proposals for development at North West Bicester will be required to meet the eco-town development standards set out in the Eco-Towns PPS. Other sites in Bicester will be required to meet the improving building standards set at national level and District-wide standards set out in policies ESD 1-5.

C.50 Further guidance on the approach to design and sustainable construction in Cherwell will be set out in the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

Policy Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-Town

Development Area: 390 hectares

Development Description: A new zero carbon(i) mixed use development including 6,000 homes will be developed on land identified at North West Bicester.

Planning permission will only be granted for development at North West Bicester in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan for the whole area to be approved by the Council as part of a North West Bicester Supplementary Planning Document. The Council will expect the Masterplan and applications for planning permission to meet the following requirements:

Employment

- **Land Area – a minimum of 10 ha, comprising business premises focused at Howes Lane and Middleton Stoney Road, employment space in the local centre hubs and as part of mixed used development**
- **Jobs created –At least 3,000 jobs (approximately 1,000 jobs on B use class land on the site) within the plan period**
- **Use classes – B1, with limited B2 and B8 uses**
- **It is anticipated that the business park at the South East corner of the allocation will generate between 700 and 1,000 jobs in use classes B1, B2 and B8 early in the Plan period**
- **A Carbon Management Plan shall be produced to support all applications for employment developments**
- **An economic strategy to be produced to support the planning applications for eco-town proposals demonstrating how access to work will be achieved and to deliver a minimum of one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport**
- **Mixed use local centre hubs to include employment (B1(a), A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1 and D2)**
- **New non-residential buildings will be BREEAM Very Good with the capability of achieving BREEAM Excellent.**

Housing

- **Number of homes – Up to 6,000 (3,293 to be delivered within the plan period)**
- **Affordable Housing – 30%**
- **Layout to achieve Building for Life 12 and Lifetime Homes standards**
- **Homes to be constructed to be capable of achieving a minimum of Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes on completion of each phase of development, including being equipped to meet the water consumption requirement of Code Level 5**
- **The provision of extra care housing**
- **Have real time energy monitoring systems, real time public transport information and Superfast Broadband access, including next generation broadband where possible. Consideration should also be given to digital access to support assisted living and smart energy management systems.**

Infrastructure Needs

- **Education – Sufficient secondary, primary and nursery school provision on site to meet projected needs. It is expected that four 2 Forms of Entry primary schools and one**

secondary school will be required. There should be a maximum walking distance of 800 metres from homes to the nearest primary school.

- Health – to provide for a 7 GP surgery to the south of the site and a dental surgery
- Burial Ground – to provide a site of a minimum of 4 ha for a burial ground which does not pose risks to water quality (this may contribute to the Green Infrastructure requirements)
- Green infrastructure – 40% of the total gross site area will comprise green space of which at least half will be publicly accessible and consist of a network of well managed, high quality green/open spaces which are linked to the open countryside. This should include sports pitches, parks and recreation areas, play spaces, allotments, the required burial ground (possibly a woodland cemetery) and SUDS.
- Planning applications shall include a range of types of green space and meet the requirements of Policy BSC11
- Access and Movement – proposals to include appropriate crossings of the railway line to provide access and integration across the North West Bicester site. Changes and improvements to Howes Lane and Lords Lane to facilitate integration of new development with the town.
- Community facilities – to include facilities for leisure, health, social care, education, retail, arts, culture, library services, indoor and outdoor sport, play and voluntary services. The local centre hubs shall provide for a mix of uses that will include retail, employment, community and residential provision. Education, health care, community and indoor sports facilities will be encouraged to locate in local centres and opportunities for co-location will be welcomed. Provision will be proportionate to the size of the community they serve. Each neighbourhood of approximately 1,000 houses to include provision for community meeting space suitable for a range of community activities including provision for older people and young people. A site of 0.5 ha for a place of worship to be reserved for future use.
- The submission of proposals to support the setting up and operation of a financially viable Local Management Organisation by the new community to allow locally based long term ownership and management of facilities in perpetuity
- Utilities – Utilities and infrastructure which allow for zero carbon and water neutrality on the site and the consideration of sourcing waste heat from the Ardley Energy recovery facility. The approach shall be set out in an Energy Strategy and a Water Cycle Study. The Water Cycle Study shall cover water efficiency and demand management, water quality and how it will be protected and improved, WFD compliance, surface water management to avoid increasing flood risk and water services infrastructure improvement requirements and their delivery, having regard to the Environment Agency’s guidance on Water Cycle Studies. Zero Carbon (see PPS definition) water neutral development is sought. Development proposals will demonstrate how these requirements will be met.
- Waste Infrastructure – The provision of facilities to reduce waste to include at least 1 bring site per 1,000 dwellings positioned in accessible locations. Provision for sustainable management of waste both during construction and in occupation shall be provided. A waste strategy with targets above national standards and which facilitates waste reduction shall accompany planning applications.

Monitoring

- Embodied impacts of construction to be monitored, managed and minimised (ET21)
- Sustainability metrics, including those on zero carbon, transport, water and waste to be agreed and monitored for learning, good governance and dissemination (ET22).

Key site specific design and place shaping principles

- Proposals should comply with Policy ESD15.
- High quality exemplary development and design standards including zero carbon development, Code Level 5 for dwellings at a minimum and the use of low embodied carbon in construction materials, as well as promoting the use of locally sourced materials.
- All new buildings designed to incorporate best practice on tackling overheating, taking account of the latest UKCIP climate predictions.
- Proposals should enable residents to easily reduce their carbon footprint to a low level and live low carbon lifestyles.
- Layout of development that enables a high degree of integration and connectivity between new and existing communities.
- A layout that maximises the potential for walkable neighbourhoods.
- New footpaths and cycleways should be provided that link with existing networks, the wider urban area and community facilities with a legible hierarchy of routes to encourage sustainable modes of travel
- A layout which makes provision for and prioritises non-car modes and encourages a modal shift from car use to other forms of travel.
- Infrastructure to support sustainable modes of transport will be required including enhancement of footpath and cyclepath connectivity with the town centre, employment and rail stations. Measures to ensure the integration of the development with the remainder of the town including measures to address movement across Howes Lane and Lords Lane
- A well designed approach to the urban edge, which relates development at the periphery to its rural setting and affords good access to the countryside, minimising the impact of development when viewed from the surrounding countryside
- Development that respects the landscape setting and that demonstrates enhancement, restoration or creation of wildlife corridors to achieve a net gain in biodiversity
- Consideration should be given to maintaining visual separation with outlying settlements. Connections with the wider landscape should be reinforced and opportunities for recreational use of the open countryside identified. Development proposals to be accompanied and influenced by a landscape/visual and heritage impact assessment
- Careful consideration of open space and structural planting around the site to achieve an overall improvement in the landscape and visual impact of the site
- No development in areas of flood risk and development set back from watercourses which would provide opportunity for green buffers. Proposals should include a Flood Risk Assessment.
- Maximisation of the sustainable transport connectivity in and around the site
- Consideration and mitigation of any noise impacts of the railway line.

- **Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including the provision of a bus route through the site with buses stopping at the railway stations and at new bus stops on the site**
- **Contributions to improvements to the surrounding road networks, including mitigation measures for the local and strategic highway network, consistent with the requirement of the Eco-Towns PPS to reduce reliance on the private car, and to achieve a high level of accessibility to public transport services, improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and the provision and implementation of a Travel Plan to maximise connectivity with existing development**
- **Provision of a Transport Assessment**
- **Measures to prevent vehicular traffic adversely affecting surrounding communities.**
- **Significant green infrastructure provision, including new footpaths and cycleways, enhancing green modal accessibility beyond the site to the town centre and Bicester Village Railway Station, and adjoining developments. Public open space to form a well connected network of green areas suitable for formal and informal recreation**
- **Preservation and enhancement of habitats and species on site, particularly protected species and habitats and creation and management of new habitats to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity including the creation of a local nature reserve and linkages with existing BAP habitats**
- **Sensitive management of open space provision to secure recreation and health benefits alongside biodiversity gains.**
- **A Landscape and Habitats Management Plan to be provided to manage habitats on site and to ensure this is integral to wider landscape management.**
- **Careful design of employment units on site to limit adverse visual impact and ensure compatibility with surrounding development**
- **The provision of public art to enhance the quality of the place, legibility and identity**
- **The retention and respect for important existing buildings and heritage assets with a layout to incorporate these and consideration of Grade II listed buildings outside the site**
- **Take account of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the site**
- **Provision of sustainable drainage in accordance with Policy ESD 7: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), taking account of the recommendations 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 assessment of whether the site contains best and most versatile agricultural land, including a detailed survey where necessary.**
- **A soil management plan may be required to be submitted with planning applications.**
- **Undertake a staged programme of archaeological investigation.**

**The definition of zero carbon in eco-towns is that over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco-town development as a whole are zero or below.*

Strategic Development: Bicester 7 - Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

C.79 The evidence base studies have identified a number of existing deficiencies and future shortfalls of open space, sport and recreation provision in Bicester.



C.80 Some of these deficiencies can be met through improvement to the quality of and access to existing facilities and using existing areas of one type of open space to meet deficiencies in another type. In addition some new provision will be required to meet Bicester's growth; the potential locations will be identified in the Bicester Masterplan and Local Plan Part 2.

C.81 The Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan (2008) indicated that existing deficiencies in playing pitch provision could be addressed through conversion of adult to junior football pitches, developing dual use agreements for community access to schools facilities, and new pitches to be provided as part of the committed development at South West Bicester. Existing deficiencies identified in the Green Space Strategy (2008) were partially updated in 2011 (see Appendix 3 Evidence Base). Some of the existing deficiencies in open space provision will require the allocation of land through the Local Plan process, as follows:

- 11.69 ha parks and gardens
 - ha natural/semi-natural green space
- 8.18 ha allotment provision.

C.82 The Playing Pitch and Green Space Strategy estimated that the following additional provision was required to meet needs to 2026:

- 4 junior football pitches
- 2 mini-soccer pitches
- 2 additional cricket pitches
- 2 additional rugby pitches
- 7ha park
- 3.4ha natural/semi-natural space through new provision/public access agreements to privately owned sites
- 4.2ha of amenity open space
- 6.58ha of children's play space to be met through new equipped play areas and additional play opportunities using other open space
- 1 Multi Use Games Area
- 3 tennis courts
- 2.6ha of allotments.

C.83 The Playing Pitch and Green Space Strategies were formulated before the amount and preferred distribution of development in Bicester over an extended plan period had been established, and, as a result, future needs are being updated. Indoor sports provision needs are being updated. Initial indications are that there is the potential for provision of an additional sports hall to meet demand to 2031, with some unmet demand for swimming pool provision.

C.84 'Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision', 'Policy BSC 11: Local Standards of Provision- Outdoor Recreation' and 'Policy BSC12: Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities' will all be used to help address existing deficiencies in provision and future development needs, in addition to 'Policy Bicester 7: Meeting the Need for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'.

C.85 The proposed strategic allocations shown on the Policies Map (Appendix 5: Maps) will be expected to make provision on site for open space and recreation to meet the needs of the new development. Whilst new development can only be expected to make provision for its own needs, the most effective way of planning for some of the current and future requirements may be through integrating provision with the planning of strategic sites. Overall open space provision and green infrastructure requirements are being examined in more detail as part of the Bicester Masterplan work. Any additional non-strategic allocations required will be contained in the Local Plan Part 2.

C.86 The proposed urban edge park is the continuation of a long term objective to address the poor distribution of open space in Bicester. The policy aims to maximise the value of existing open spaces by increasing their accessibility and linking them to each other through a network of footpaths/cycleways, and create new areas of open space to contribute towards the network of provision, improving green infrastructure links. The core of the network is currently centred to the north, south and east of the town centre, formed by areas such as Pingle Field, Bicester Fields, and land in the Town Council's ownership adjacent to Skimmingdish Lane. Committed development at South West Bicester will contribute to the network. In addition there are a number of areas in private ownership used informally for recreation purposes which contribute to the network, albeit there is currently no secured public access.

C.87 The proposed strategic allocations at North West Bicester, Graven Hill, South West Bicester, South East Bicester and at North East Bicester provide a major opportunity to extend the network around the town, and in combination with the urban edge park should offer the opportunity to help address the existing shortfalls in parks and gardens and natural/semi-natural provision together with some of the estimated future needs of the town. The proposed network will be investigated further to enable land allocations to be indicated in more detail within the Bicester Masterplan and Local Plan Part 2 as appropriate.

C.88 Stratton Audley Quarry (Elm Farm Quarry) is the subject of an extant planning permission for infilling to form a country park, with the planning consent having been partially implemented. In view of the site's designation as a Local Wildlife Site only low intensity recreation use of the site is likely to be appropriate. However the site is close to the edge of Bicester making it easily accessible to the town's residents and could assist in the establishment of long distance links from the town to the villages and countryside beyond.

As part of measures to address current and future deficiencies in open space, sport and recreation provision in the town we will:

- **Seek to establish an urban edge park around the outskirts of the town, by protecting the existing network of green spaces and securing new open space and linear route provision linked with public footpaths/cycleways, to create a circular route with connections to the town centre and the countryside beyond**
- **Seek to establish a community woodland between the South West Bicester link road and Chesterton**
- **Encourage proposals for the restoration and use of Stratton Audley Quarry for informal outdoor recreation, provided that the proposals are compatible with the site's designation as a Local Wildlife Site and partial SSSI.**

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.**