

INTRODUCTION

For ease of reference all of the policies in this Local Plan are set out below. However policies should be used in conjunction with the supporting material contained in the relevant Chapters of this Plan.

THE ENVIRONMENT

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

POLICY BE1 - Environmental and Community Infrastructure.

Development will not be permitted unless appropriate supporting transport, service and community infrastructure is available or will be provided and appropriate provision has been made to safeguard the local environment. Contributions will be sought from developers and/or landowners in accordance with Government advice.

POLICY BE2 - General Development Standards

New development should respect and, where possible, improve the character and quality of its surroundings and provide a safe, pleasant, convenient and interesting environment.

Proposals for new buildings and land uses should clearly demonstrate how they will relate satisfactorily to the site and its surroundings, incorporating a landscape scheme and incidental open space as appropriate.

A landscape scheme accompanying detailed proposals for development should show, as appropriate, hard and soft landscaping, existing and proposed underground services, a phasing programme for implementation and subsequent maintenance arrangements.

Proposals will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

Quality of Development and Impact upon the Area:

- a) the proposal is well-designed and respects the existing scale, pattern and character of the surrounding area;
- b) new buildings or extensions to existing buildings are designed to respect or enhance the form, siting, scale, massing and external materials and colours of adjoining buildings, with local building traditions reflected as appropriate;
- c) the proposal creates or retains a satisfactory environment for people living in or visiting the area, including people with disabilities;
- d) existing features of importance in the local environment are protected and/or enhanced;
- e) the landscape surrounding and providing a setting for existing towns and villages is not adversely affected;
- f) in the open countryside, any appropriate development will be easily assimilated into the landscape and wherever possible, be sited close to an existing group of buildings.

Crime:

- g) good design has been used to help reduce the opportunities for crime.

Energy and Resources:

- h) regard has been given to:
 - i. principles of energy and resource conservation:
 - ii. provision for sorting and storage facilities to facilitate recycling of waste.

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POLICY BE3 - Provision for Movement and Parking

Development should make provision for the safe movement of people and vehicles, whilst minimising impact upon the environment. Within built-up areas priority should be given to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. Proposals will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

- a) safe and convenient circulation of pedestrians and cyclists, both within the development and externally to nearby facilities, with provision to meet the needs of people with impaired mobility as appropriate;
- b) safe movement of all vehicular traffic both within the site and on the surrounding highway network;
- c) provision for the increased use of public transport as appropriate to the scale of development;
- d) provision for the parking of vehicles, including bicycles and motorcycles, in accordance with the standards in Appendix 2.

Development which would have a significant impact on the highway network will not be permitted without the prior submission of a Transport Assessment.

POLICY BE4 Open space within and adjoining settlements

Proposals for development within or adjoining the built-up area should not result in the loss or erosion of:

- a) an open area which makes an important contribution to:
 - i. the distinctiveness of a settlement; and/or
 - ii. the visual amenity or character of the locality;
- b) a facility of benefit to local residents;
- c) an area of nature conservation value;
- d) common land or a village green.

When assessing any proposals for development which could affect existing open space, consideration will be given to the opportunity to:

- i) remedy deficiencies in provision, and
- ii) exchange the use of one site for another to substitute for any loss of open space.

POLICY BE5 - Conservation Areas

The special architectural, historic and environmental character or appearance of the Conservation Areas will be preserved or enhanced. Every effort will be made to ensure that this character or appearance is not eroded by the introduction of unsympathetic development proposals either within or affecting the setting of the designated area.

POLICY BE5A - Designation and Review of Conservation Areas

When considering areas for designation as a conservation area, and when reviewing existing areas, a detailed assessment of the elements that contribute to, and detract from, the area will need to be undertaken which fully demonstrates that the area has a special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

POLICY BE6 - Demolition in Conservation Areas

Applications for the demolition of unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area will only be permitted if:

- i. the structure to be demolished makes no positive contribution to, or has an adverse impact upon, the character or appearance of the area, or
- ii. the demolition forms part of redevelopment proposals that will positively enhance and improve the character and setting of the Conservation Area.

POLICY BE7 - Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings

The special interest of all listed buildings should be preserved or enhanced. Any additions or alterations shall be in scale and sympathy with the original character of the building. The use of traditional materials and building techniques will be encouraged and the imaginative use of modern materials and contemporary design will be considered in its context.

POLICY BE8 - Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building

Development should not detract from the setting of a listed building.

POLICY BE9 - Change of Use of a Listed Building

A change of use of part or the whole of a listed building will only be permitted if its character and features of special architectural or historic interest would be protected. Proposals for a change of use should incorporate details of all intended alterations to the building and its curtilage, to demonstrate their effect on its appearance, character and setting.

POLICY BE10 - Conversion of Unlisted Vernacular Buildings

The conversion of unlisted vernacular buildings should not

- a) extensively alter the existing structure or remove features of interest;
- b) include extensions, or an accumulation of extensions, which would obscure the form of the original building.

Planning permission for conversion will only be granted if the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction and a structural survey shows that the building is capable of being converted to the proposed use without major or complete rebuilding, extension or alteration tantamount to the erection of a new building.

POLICY BE11 Historic Parks and Gardens

Development will not be permitted that adversely affects the character, setting, amenities, historical context or views within, into or from a Park and Garden of Historic Interest.

POLICY BE12 Archaeological Monuments

Development proposals that adversely affect the site or setting of nationally important archaeological monuments and monuments of local importance, whether scheduled or not, will not be permitted.

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POLICY BE13 - Archaeological Assessments

Prior to determining applications affecting sites and areas of archaeological potential, applicants may be required to provide an archaeological assessment and/or field evaluation to determine:

- a) the significance, character and importance of any archaeological monument or remain and
- b) the likely impact of the proposed development on such features
- c) the level of mitigation required to suitably protect the archaeological resource through preservation in situ or preservation by record including excavation, post excavation analysis and publication.

POLICY BE14 - Shop Fronts

New and altered shop fronts will only be permitted where the proposal:

- i. respects the whole elevation with particular regard to the degree of horizontal and vertical emphasis of the building and adjoining buildings;
- ii. retains and repairs any existing historic features in the shop front;
- iii. makes any blind or canopy an integral feature of a shop front and so that it is retractable;
- iv. uses either internal lattice, or removable grilles if a security shutter is proposed;
- v. incorporates fascias which are in scale, in their depth and width, with the overall shop front and the building and in particular, do not extend upwards beyond first floor sill level;
- vi. uses illumination of signs and fascias through external means only.

POLICY BE15 - Advertisements and Signs

Strict control will be exercised over advertisements and signs. Consent will only be granted where:

- i. signs and all other means of advertising are carefully designed to relate to the scale and character of the building and street frontage as a whole, particularly in Conservation Areas;
- ii. the use of inappropriate materials, colours, scale and designs of signs are avoided;
- iii. illuminated signs are designed to suit their context and the individual building or structure on which they are located;
- iv. a proliferation of signs or inappropriate standardised advertisement styles is avoided;
- v. advertisements do not adversely affect public safety.

POLICY BE16 - Feature Illumination

The use of floodlighting on landmark features and buildings will be permitted subject to the following criteria

- a) the means of lighting will be unobtrusively sited;
- b) the level and type of illumination will enhance the feature itself and the character and amenity of the area;
- c) the proposal will not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of surrounding occupiers;
- d) the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on nature conservation sites designated for their wildlife interest.

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POLICY BE17 - Telecommunications

Proposals for telecommunications development should:

- a) make use of existing buildings or structures for support and share facilities wherever possible;
- b) be sited and designed so as to minimise any visual impact on the street-scene, the appearance or setting of a building and on the environment generally, particularly Conservation Areas, the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the World Heritage Site;
- c) include a landscape scheme where appropriate to help mitigate the impact of the structure, ancillary compound and access roads.

Conditions will be imposed to require the removal of installations when they are no longer needed.

POLICY BE18 - Pollution

Planning permission will not be permitted for development which could give rise to unacceptable levels of pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to ensure that any discharge or emissions will not cause harm to users of land, including the effects on health and the natural environment.

POLICY BE19 - Noise

Planning permission will not be granted for:

- a) housing and other noise sensitive development if the occupants would experience significant noise disturbance from existing or proposed development;
- b) development including the use of land, if because of the noise it will create, the occupants of housing and other noise sensitive development would be exposed to significant noise disturbance, unless there is an overriding need for the proposal which cannot be met elsewhere.

POLICY BE20 - Protection for hazardous substances, installations and airfields

Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect safety near notifiable installations and safeguarded airfields.

POLICY BE21 - Light Pollution

The installation of external lighting and proposals for remote rural buildings will only be permitted where all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- a) the means of lighting is appropriate, unobtrusively sited and would not result in excessive levels of light;;
- b) elevations of buildings, particularly roofs, are designed to limit light spill;
- c) the proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of surrounding occupiers;
- d) the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the character of a town or village and its setting or of the wider countryside;
- e) the proposal will not be detrimental to an area of nature conservation interest.

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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

POLICY NE1 - Safeguarding the Countryside

Proposals for development in the countryside should maintain or enhance the value of the countryside for its own sake: its beauty, its local character and distinctiveness, the diversity of its natural resources, and its ecological, agricultural, cultural and outdoor recreational values.

POLICY NE2 - Countryside around Witney and Carterton

Only the following types of development are considered appropriate within the strategic gaps/buffer areas defined on the Proposals Map:

- a) buildings for agriculture or forestry that cannot be accommodated elsewhere;
- b) recreational and community uses of an open nature appropriate to the countryside;
- c) minor alterations and additions to existing buildings; and
- d) the conversion of appropriate existing buildings.

Development in the strategic gaps/buffer areas which would harm the rural character of an area or lead to the undesirable sprawl of a settlement will not be permitted.

POLICY NE3 - Local Landscape Character

Development will not be permitted if it would harm the local landscape character of the District. Proposals should respect and, where possible, enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive features of the individual landscape types.

NB. When considering proposals the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, the Lower Windrush Valley Project Report and the Windrush in Witney Project Report will be taken into account where appropriate.

POLICY NE4 - Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be given great weight when determining development proposals within or impacting upon the AONB.

Regard will be had to the economic and social well-being of the area and its communities.

Major development will not be permitted in the AONB unless:

- i) it is in the public interest in terms of any national considerations and the impact on the local economy; and
- ii) the lack of alternative sites outside the AONB and of meeting the need in some other way justifies an exception being made.

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POLICY NE5 - Oxford Green Belt

Within the Oxford Green Belt planning permission will not be granted for development, particularly new buildings, other than:

- a) for purposes of agriculture and forestry;
- b) essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt;
- c) the re-use of existing buildings (provided it does not have a materially greater impact than the present use, including any associated uses of land surrounding the building, on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it);
- d) limited infilling` within the built-up areas of Bladon and Cassington and limited affordable housing for local community needs, in accordance with Policy H12;
- e) limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings (provided the proposals do not result in a dwelling that is materially larger than the original dwelling).

Where new development is permitted in accordance with this policy, either within or where it would be visible from the Green Belt, it should be designed and sited to preserve the openness, rural character and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

POLICY NE6 - Retention of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of trees, woodlands or hedgerows, or their settings, which are important for their visual, historic, or biodiversity value. Removal will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would enhance the landscape quality and nature conservation value of the area.

POLICY NE7 - The Water Environment

Development should not have an adverse impact on the water environment. Initiatives which seek to restore or enhance the natural elements of this environment will be supported.

POLICY NE8 - Flood Risk

New development or intensification of existing development will not be permitted within areas at risk from flooding which is likely to:

- i. impede the flow of water;
- ii. result in the net loss of flood plain storage;
- iii. increase the flood risk elsewhere.

Within areas at risk of flooding an appropriate Flood Risk assessment must be undertaken when preparing development proposals.

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POLICY NE9 - Surface Water

New development or intensification of existing development will not be permitted where the additional surface water run-off would result in adverse impacts such as an increased risk of flooding, river channel instability or damage to habitats, unless appropriate attenuation and pollution control measures are provided.

POLICY NE10 - Water Resources

Development will not be permitted which increases the requirement for water unless adequate water resources either already exist or will be provided in time to serve the new development and without detriment to existing uses.

POLICY NE11 - Water Quality

Development should not have an adverse impact on the quality of surface or ground water supplies and resources.

POLICY NE12 - Renewable Energy

Proposals for the development of renewable energy schemes will be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

- i. there would not be an unacceptable impact upon the environment and resources of the area;
- ii. an unacceptable level of nuisance by reason of noise, safety, shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference or reflected light will not be created.

Within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, proposals will only be acceptable where they are small in scale and where it can be shown to be in the public interest and no alternative sites exist.

POLICY NE13 - Biodiversity Conservation

In determining planning applications, the Council will seek to safeguard, maintain and enhance priority habitats and species within the District. Development proposals should include measures to mitigate any effects upon features of nature conservation value, including where appropriate the provision of compensatory habitats or management.

POLICY NE14 - Sites of Nature Conservation or Geological Importance

Development that is likely to adversely affect a Special Area of Conservation, National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted. On locally designated sites of nature conservation importance, development that would damage biodiversity or geological interest will not be permitted unless the importance of the development outweighs the local value of the site and the loss can be mitigated.

NB This policy also applies to Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), proposed Special Protected Area (SPA) sites and proposed Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); such sites are afforded the same protection as those which are designated.

POLICY NE15 - Protected Species

Development that would have an adverse effect on a site supporting a specially protected species will not be permitted unless damage to the ecological interest can be prevented through compliance with conditions or planning obligations.

TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

POLICY T1 - Traffic Generation

Proposals which would generate significant levels of traffic will not be permitted in locations where travel by means other than the private car is not a realistic alternative.

POLICY T2 - Pedestrian and Cycle Facilities

Measures will be sought to protect, improve and extend facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, and particularly to extend the cycle and pedestrian route networks within and between settlements, within and through new development areas and through the countryside generally.

POLICY T3 - Public Transport Infrastructure

Measures which will protect and improve the number, frequency and quality of bus and rail services in West Oxfordshire, and which will improve facilities for users of public transport, will be permitted.

POLICY T4 - Major highway schemes

Land will be safeguarded for the following highway schemes, as shown on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps:

- Witney - Cogges Link
- Witney - West End Link (northern section)
- Witney - A40 Downs Road Junction.
- Carterton A40 Access Road (section between Minster Road and Curbridge Road, Brize Norton)
- Sutton Bypass (B4449)

POLICY T5 - Interchange Facilities

Public transport interchange facilities will be permitted.

POLICY T6 - Traffic Management

Traffic management schemes will be sought which:

- a) promote and give priority to the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians and cyclists, particularly on roads with significant or potentially significant pedestrian and cycle flows;
- b) promote safe and convenient movement of buses, particularly on routes into town centres, within town centres and on radial routes;
- c) reduce traffic conflicts, the potential for accidents and alleviate congestion;
- d) reduce environmental damage caused by traffic.

POLICY T7 - Travel Plans

Proposals for major new development that will potentially attract large numbers of traffic movements will be required to include a Travel Plan for that development.

POLICY T8 - New off-street public car parks

Proposals for new off-street public car parking areas will only be permitted where:

- a) they would ensure the continued vitality and viability of a town centre or of other facilities attracting visitors; or
- b) the local environment is being seriously damaged by on-street parking and alternative parking provision is essential.

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HOUSING

POLICY HI - Phasing

Development of the sites allocated in this Plan for residential development or mixed uses, including housing, will take place in accordance with the following phasing requirements:

First phase – planning permission on these sites may be granted prior to 1 April 2008:

Rock Hill, Chipping Norton

Buttercross Works, Witney

West of High Street, Witney

Second phase – planning permission on these sites will not be granted before 1 April 2008 unless monitoring of housing completions and outstanding commitments, including progress on the development of sites included in the first phase and any otherwise unidentified sites on previously developed land, suggests that additional land should be released either a) to ensure a five year supply of housing land in accordance with the annualised structure plan requirement or b) in order to satisfy a proven need for affordable housing in a particular settlement or its environs which cannot be met by any other means, including rural exception sites.

Cromwell Park, Chipping Norton

Shipton Road, Woodstock

Eynsham East

Newland, Witney

Cogges, Witney

North East Carterton Development Area (remaining)

Shilton Road, Carterton

The allocation at North Curbridge will not be granted permission for residential development until monitoring demonstrates an overriding need for its release either prior to 2011 or prior to a review of the plan strategy.

POLICY H2 - General residential development standards

Proposals for additional dwellings (including the conversion of existing buildings), replacement dwellings and extensions or alterations to existing dwellings should not:

- a) erode the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including important buildings and public and private open space;
- b) adversely affect features of historical, architectural or ecological importance and their setting;
- c) eliminate existing useful community facilities;
- d) create unacceptable living conditions for existing and new residents;
- e) create unsafe conditions for the movement of people and vehicles;
- f) set an undesirable precedent for other sites where in equity development would be difficult to resist and where cumulatively the resultant scale of development would erode the character and environment of the area.

Proposals for extensions or alterations to an existing dwelling to create a self-contained unit of accommodation may be subject to a condition ensuring the extra accommodation remains ancillary to the main dwelling.

POLICY H3 - Range and type of residential accommodation

Proposals for all new housing should use land efficiently. Based on the housing needs of the area, housing development of 6 or more dwellings or sites of 0.2ha or more shall provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types, including accommodation for the elderly and the disabled.

In addition, proposals for larger residential developments of 0.5 hectares or more should:

- a) be accompanied by a statement setting out the design approach for the proposed development;
- b) provide attractive, safe and convenient amenity open space, including play space where appropriate, commensurate with the scale and type of development.

POLICY H4 - Construction of new dwellings in the open countryside and small villages

Proposals for the construction of additional new dwellings in the open countryside and in all villages and groups of houses not listed in Figure 5.2 will only be permitted if there is a genuine essential agricultural or other operational need for a full-time worker to live on the site and:

- a) the need cannot be met through the use of existing buildings on or close to the enterprise or in any other way; and
- b) the proposed dwelling is of a size appropriate to both its functional requirement and the financial viability of the enterprise; and
- c) the enterprise is in operation, is economically viable and is capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time.

An occupancy condition will be imposed on a new dwelling permitted in response to an essential operational need as well as on appropriate existing dwellings on the holding. The condition will limit occupation of agricultural dwellings to:

- i. a person employed or last employed in agriculture or forestry, or
- ii. to a widow or widower of such a person, or
- iii. to any resident dependants.

Conditions restricting occupancy will only be removed where it is clearly demonstrated that the dwelling is no longer required to serve the needs of the agricultural community in the area as a whole.

Where appropriate, a legal agreement will be sought tying the provision of a new agricultural dwelling to buildings and land comprising the agricultural holding.

POLICY H5 - Villages

New dwellings will be permitted in the villages in Group A (listed in Figure 5.2) in the following circumstances:

- a) infilling; and
- b) the conversion of appropriate existing buildings.

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POLICY H6 - Medium-sized villages

New dwellings will be permitted in the villages in Group B (listed in Figure 5.2) in the following circumstances:

- a) infilling;
- b) rounding-off within the existing built up area; and
- c) the conversion of appropriate existing buildings.

POLICY H7 - Service centres

New dwellings will be permitted in the towns and villages in Group C (listed in Figure 5.2) in the following circumstances:

- a) infilling;
- b) rounding-off within the existing built up area;
- c) the conversion of appropriate existing buildings; and
- d) on sites specifically allocated for residential development in this plan.

Note: Infilling is defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage. However, all gaps may not be appropriate for infill development. Some may form important features in the village and/or allow attractive views to be gained of features beyond the site. In assessing proposals for infill development particular regard will be given to Policy BE4. Infilling may include the redevelopment, alteration or extension of existing buildings to create new dwellings.

Note: Rounding off is defined as residential development on a site within the existing built up areas of a settlement that would be a logical complement to the existing pattern of development, would not extend that settlement into open countryside and would not conflict with other policies of this Plan. Such sites will be previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the associated curtilage.

POLICY H8 - Sub-division of existing dwellings

Proposals for the sub-division or conversion of an existing dwelling into two or more units of residential accommodation will be permitted if:

- a) the site lies within the existing built-up area of a village or town listed in Figure 5.2; or
- b) the proposal involves a large property in a small village or in the open countryside where its continued existence in residential use cannot be secured in any other way;

and the proposal meets all of the following criteria:

- i. there would be no harm to the amenity of the occupants of the proposed dwellings or of nearby properties; and
- ii. the character or appearance of the building would not be adversely affected; and
- iii. the proposal would not result in over-development.

POLICY H9 - Conversion of existing buildings to residential use within villages and towns

Policy deleted.

POLICY HI0 - Conversion of existing buildings to residential use in the countryside and small villages

The conversion of an existing building to a dwelling outside the built up area of the settlements listed in Figure 5.2 will be permitted in the following exceptional circumstances and where retention of the building meets overall sustainability objectives:

- a) the building is not suitable or reasonably capable of re-use for employment purposes, recreational or community uses, visitor facilities or tourist accommodation and it is demonstrated that its retention can only be secured through its conversion to residential use or,
- b) there is an essential operational need for a dwelling in accordance with the provisions of Policy H4

In addition the following criteria should be met:

- c) the building is of substantial construction and capable of accommodating residential use without major reconstruction or significant enlargement and,
- d) the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

POLICY HI1 - Affordable housing on allocated and previously unidentified sites

Taking into account the housing needs of the area and subject to any site specific constraints, an element of affordable housing will be sought as part of residential development schemes on the following basis:

- a) on land allocated in this plan for residential development or mixed uses including housing; 30% on sites in the towns of Witney and Carterton and up to 50% in the remainder of the District ;
- b) on unallocated land, which comes forward in accordance with the locational policies of this plan, up to 50% affordable housing will be sought where:
 - i) the site is in Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton or Eynsham and has an area of 0.5 ha or greater or when 15 or more dwellings are proposed; or
 - ii) elsewhere, when a development of 2 or more dwellings is proposed.

POLICY HI2 - Affordable housing on rural exception sites

Small-scale affordable housing schemes will be permitted which satisfy the particular local needs of:

- a) long-standing local residents;
- b) persons who have family links with the parish or appropriate adjoining parishes, and/or
- c) persons who have full-time employment in the locality,

and whose needs cannot be satisfied in any other way, provided that:

- i. the housing will remain affordable in perpetuity for local people on low incomes;
- ii. the proposal is well-related to the existing built-up areas and does not adversely affect the character and quality of the local environment.

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POLICY HI3 - Gypsies

Proposals for residential and transit caravan sites to meet the needs of gypsies will be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

- a) the site is not located within the Oxford Green Belt, a conservation area or site of special scientific interest;
- b) the character and appearance of the surrounding area is not adversely affected;
- c) the size of the site and proposed screening is appropriate for the area;
- d) local services and facilities are located within a reasonable distance from the site;
- e) satisfactory amenity is retained for residents of existing and proposed housing in the area;
- f) satisfactory arrangements are made for the movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the site and public highway and for parking provision.

POLICY HI4 - Residential mobile homes

Proposals for residential mobile homes will be permitted for a temporary period only if all the following criteria are met:

- a) there is a genuine need for a residential mobile home on the site;
- b) the need for residential accommodation cannot be met through use of existing buildings;
- c) the character and appearance of the area is not adversely affected;
- d) the proposal is well related to existing or proposed buildings and/or screened by landscape features.

POLICY HI5 - Travelling showpeople

Sites to accommodate travelling showpeople will be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

- a) the site is not located within the Oxford Green Belt, a conservation area or site of special scientific interest;
- b) the character and appearance of the surrounding area is not adversely affected;
- c) the size of the site and proposed screening is appropriate for the area;
- d) local services and facilities are located within a reasonable distance from the site;
- e) satisfactory amenity is retained for residents of existing and proposed housing in the area;
- f) satisfactory arrangements are made for the movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the site and public highway and for parking provision.

EMPLOYMENT

POLICY E1 - Employment Allocations

The following sites as shown on the Proposals Map are allocated for employment uses:

Witney – off Downs Road (Witney Proposals 7 & 8)

Chipping Norton depot site

Lakeside Industrial Estate, Standlake

POLICY E2 - New Employment Sites in Towns and Larger Villages (Group C)

Within or adjoining the larger settlements in the district (Group C), the development of a small estate of up to a maximum of one hectare for employment purposes will be permitted where there is a lack of land available for employment purposes in the immediate area and where the development would not jeopardise the overall policies of restraint contained in the Development Plan. Development on these estates will be limited to:

- a) firms occupying units of less than 500 square metres; or
- b) firms whose sources of supply, commercial linkages, labour supply and markets make the specific location necessary for them.

POLICY E3 - Individual Premises

The development of new sites for single employment uses, commensurate with the scale and character of the locality, will be allowed within or next to settlements listed in Groups B and C in Figure 5.2 in Chapter 5.

Elsewhere the development of new build sites for employment will not be allowed unless the building:

- a) provides accommodation ancillary to an existing dwelling where the occupant(s) work directly from home; or
- b) is required to secure the diversification of a farming enterprise.

POLICY E4 - Re-use of Vernacular Buildings

The use of vernacular buildings for employment purposes will be permitted provided the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and is of permanent and substantial construction.

POLICY E5 - Re-use of Non-vernacular Buildings

The use of non-vernacular buildings, including modern farm buildings, in the countryside for employment purposes will only be allowed where all the following criteria are met:

- a) the form, bulk and general design of the building(s) are in keeping with the surroundings;
- b) the building is within or adjoining an existing settlement, or forms part of an agricultural holding and will form part of a farm diversification scheme;
- c) the scale and type of employment use is suitable for the building and the location;
- d) the building is capable of being converted to an employment use without excessive rebuilding or enlargement which would be tantamount to the erection of a new building.

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POLICY E6 - Change of Use of Existing Employment Sites

The change of use of existing premises and sites with an established employment use to non-employment uses will not be allowed unless:

- a) it can be demonstrated that the site or premises are not reasonably capable of being used or redeveloped for employment purposes; or
- b) the site or premises is considered unsuitable on amenity, environmental or highway safety grounds for employment uses; or
- c) substantial planning benefits would be achieved by allowing alternative forms of development.

POLICY E7 - Existing Businesses

Proposals for the expansion of existing established businesses either within, adjoining or adjacent to the existing premises that are commensurate with the scale and character of the locality will be permitted.

TOWN CENTRES AND SHOPPING

POLICY SH1 - New Retail Development

Proposals for retail development, other than to meet purely local needs, will be located according to the following sequence:

- 1) within the town centres
- 2) on the edge of the town centres
- 3) in out of centre locations that are, or can be made, readily accessible by a choice of means of transport.

Proposals for retail and other town centre uses in locations other than town centres will only be permitted where:

- i) a need for the development has been established;
- ii) the sequential approach has been followed and there are no suitable sequentially preferable sites available;
- iii) the development would not harm either directly or cumulatively the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre or planned measures to improve it;
- iv) the development proposed is appropriate in nature and scale to the location;
- v) the proposal accords with other policies in the plan with regard to traffic impact, amenity and environment.

POLICY SH2 - New Development in Town and Local Centres

Policy deleted.

POLICY SH3 - Changes of Use in Town Centres

In the town centres in Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Burford and Woodstock the following proposals will be permitted:

- a) the change of use of existing premises to shops (Class A1) except for proposals in Burford and Woodstock which would:
 - i) result in the loss of a permanent dwelling unless it can be demonstrated that the existing residential use does not provide satisfactory accommodation, or
 - ii) fall outside the central policy areas defined on the Inset Maps for Burford and Woodstock.
- b) The changes of use of ground floor retail premises in the primary shopping frontages defined on the Witney and Chipping Norton Inset Maps to other uses only where the proposed use would be of overall benefit to the shopping activities along the designated frontage.

Other proposals for the change of use of existing premises within the central policy areas of Burford and Woodstock which would result in the loss of a permanent dwelling will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the existing residential use does not provide satisfactory accommodation.

Policy Checklist

POLICY SH4 - Shopping Facilities for the Local Community

Proposals for small scale individual shops or groups of shops (Class A1), or other small-scale retail premises to meet the daily needs of the local community will be permitted within towns and villages, provided all the following criteria are met:

- a) the site would be readily accessible by bicycle and on foot;
- b) the proposal would not harm the vitality and viability of an existing town centre or an established village centre for shopping;
- c) there is no detrimental impact on the amenity of occupiers of residential property from noise, fumes, smell, lighting, activity levels or hours of operation at the site.

POLICY SH5 - Retention of Local Shops and/or Post Offices

Proposals which would result in the loss of a shop and/or post office serving the local community will not be permitted unless:-

- a) the existing use is not viable; or
- b) there is no demonstrable loss to the range of goods and services available within or adjoining the settlement.

POLICY SH6 - Retail Uses on Employment Sites

Policy deleted.

POLICY SH7 - Farm Shops

Where farm shops in the open countryside require planning permission they will be allowed provided that:

- a) it can be demonstrated that the shop is needed to sell goods produced on the farm unit and that any imported goods will remain ancillary to the sale of local produce; and
- b) they do not seriously undermine or erode the viability and vitality of shopping provision in existing villages.

POLICY SH8 - Garden Centres

Proposals for the expansion of existing garden centres or for new centres will only be permitted where they are located on land within or adjacent to medium or larger sized settlements, and provided that they are accessible by a choice of means of transport.

TOURISM, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

POLICY TLC1 - New Tourism, Leisure and Community Facilities

Permission will be granted for:

- a) visitor-related proposals which respect and enhance the intrinsic qualities of the District;
- b) community facilities to meet local needs;
- c) the recreational and cultural use of land on a small scale to meet local needs;
- d) new recreational and cultural buildings where they are essential to the existing use of the associated land and are appropriate in scale, design and siting.

Proposals for leisure, tourist and community developments will not be allowed where they would have an adverse impact on the character or environment of the countryside or on towns and villages within the District or would generate unacceptable levels of traffic on the local highway network.

POLICY TLC2 - Use of Existing Buildings

Proposals for the change of use/conversion of existing buildings to visitor accommodation or the extension or upgrading of such accommodation will be permitted provided:

- a) there is adequate off-street parking or other public parking available and that any such works required to provide such parking will not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of the area;
- b) the scale of the proposals does not generate a level of activity which would have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the area or the reasonable amenities of adjoining dwellings;
- c) the existing building should be capable of conversion to visitor accommodation without excessive alteration or rebuilding which would damage its character or setting; and,
- d) the character and setting of the existing building is not damaged.

Where the proposals are for the use of rural buildings such as barns and chapels, the building or group of buildings should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area, be of substantial construction and be capable of accommodating the proposed use without major reconstruction or significant enlargement.

In locations where residential accommodation would not normally be permitted the Council will impose planning conditions or seek legal agreements restricting the buildings to holiday use.

POLICY TLC3 - New Build Tourist Accommodation

The construction of new hotels or other visitor accommodation in the open countryside and in smaller settlements will only be permitted when they are proposed:

- a) in association with acceptable wider leisure and sporting facilities which either
 - i. already exist, or
 - ii. are being proposed on land that has been damaged or scarred by development, where the proposed leisure and sporting facilities will enhance and improve the visual qualities of the area; or
- b) as part of a farm diversification project, where the visitor accommodation will remain ancillary to the farm business, will be small in scale and will be integrated within a group of existing farm buildings which are also being converted.

Policy Checklist

POLICY TLC4 - Touring Holiday Caravan and Camping Sites

Proposals for touring caravan and camping sites will be permitted provided:

- a) there are no overriding environmental or amenity objections. The proposed development should be well screened and should not have a substantial adverse effect on the locality in terms of noise and other disturbance;
- b) in the Lower Windrush Valley they take account of the comprehensive after-use proposals for the areas of gravel extraction as set out in the County Minerals and Waste Local Plan;
- c) existing buildings worthy of retention are utilised for the provision of associated facilities. Where new buildings are essential these must be designed to a high standard and be sensitively sited.

POLICY TLC5 - Existing Outdoor Recreational Space

Development proposals should not result in the loss of existing recreational open space (including school playing fields, allotments and amenity areas) unless:

- a) the development is for buildings and/or facilities ancillary to, or enhancing, the amenity or recreational value of the open space; or
- b) alternative provision of at least equivalent suitability and accessibility, particularly by foot, is made; or
- c) there is clear evidence that now, and in the future, the land will no longer be needed for its current purpose or for recreational uses by the wider community.

POLICY TLC7 - Provision for Public Art

The Council will seek a contribution for art provision to comprise:

- a) specific art provision within or as part of the development;
- b) an agreed art provision in the public realm; or
- c) an appropriate financial contribution towards an identified major public art project(s) within West Oxfordshire.

This policy shall apply to the following forms of development:

- i. residential
 - new build units of ten units or more;
 - significant conversions or refurbishment of existing buildings;
- ii. significant retail, commercial or leisure proposals, where the gross floor area is 1000 square metres or more;
- iii. significant development proposals by utility operators and Local Authorities.

POLICY TLC8 - Public Rights of Way

The existing public rights of way network will be safeguarded and, where appropriate, improved access to the countryside will be sought, with additional public rights of way for walkers, horseriders and cyclists.

POLICY TLC9 - The Thames Path

Development along the Thames riverside will only be allowed if it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not remove, narrow or materially impair the Thames Path National Trail.

Policy Checklist

POLICYTLC10 - River Thames

The further provision or extension of permanent base moorings and associated facilities will only be allowed in suitable locations off the main river channel of the River Thames.

POLICYTLC11 - Lower Windrush Valley

Proposals for leisure after-uses in the Lower Windrush Valley Project Area will be allowed where:

- a) the rural character of the area or waterside setting and any nature conservation interest is not adversely affected eg. ribbon development around a lake will not be permitted;
- b) any buildings are well designed and sensitively located and are of modest scale to ensure that the development does not create an intrusive or discordant feature in the landscape;
- c) the proposed development takes account of the comprehensive after-use proposals for the area, as set out in the County Minerals and Waste Local Plan and would not prejudice proposals to secure new rights of way.

POLICYTLC12 - Protection of Existing Community Services and Facilities

Development proposals should not result in the loss of useful local services and facilities unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) the existing use is not viable; or
- b) adequate and accessible alternative provision remains or will be provided.

Policy Checklist

WITNEY

POLICY WIT1 - Buttercross and Church Green

In the area south of Corn Street and Langdale Gate defined on the Central Area Inset Map the change of use of existing premises to shopping/commercial use or any further intensification of existing shopping/ commercial uses will not be allowed except where the proposed use would be incidental to the primary permitted use of the building (eg. working at home).

POLICY WIT2 - High Street, Bridge Street and Staple Hall

In High Street north of its junction with Witan Way and in Bridge Street and the Staple Hall area as defined on the Central Area Inset Map, the change of use of existing buildings to residential use will be permitted. Further intensification of shopping and commercial uses will not be permitted where increased traffic congestion or highway problems would result.

POLICY WIT3 - Windrush in Witney

Development on land within or where it would be visible from the Windrush in Witney Policy Area defined on the Witney Inset Maps should protect and enhance the intrinsic landscape, character, ecology and cultural value of the valley.