

PLANNING & REGULATION COMMITTEE – 15 APRIL 2019

POLICY ANNEX (RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER POLICIES)

Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2017 (OMWCS)

POLICY C1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A positive approach will be taken to minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and the aim to improve economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this plan will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application, or relevant plan policies are out of date, planning permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

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

POLICY C2: CLIMATE CHANGE

Proposals for minerals or waste development, including restoration proposals, should take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development from construction through operation and decommissioning. Applications for development should adopt a low carbon approach and measures should be considered to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and provide flexibility for future adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

POLICY C5: LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, AMENITY AND ECONOMY

Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on:

- the local environment;
- human health and safety;
- residential amenity and other sensitive receptors; and
- the local economy;
including from:
 - noise;
 - dust;
 - visual intrusion;
 - light pollution;
 - traffic;
 - air quality;

- odour;
- vermin;
- birds;
- litter;
- mud on the road;
- vibration;
- surface or ground contamination;
- tip and quarry-slope stability;
- differential settlement of quarry backfill;
- subsidence; and
- the cumulative impact of development.

Where necessary, appropriate separation distances or buffer zones between minerals and waste developments and occupied residential property or other sensitive receptors and/or other mitigation measures will be required, as determined on a site-specific, case-by-case basis.

POLICY C7: BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

Minerals and waste development should conserve and, where possible, deliver a net gain in biodiversity.

The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international nature conservation importance (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and European Protected Species) and development that would be likely to adversely affect them will not be permitted.

In all other cases, development that would result in significant harm will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for to result in a net gain in biodiversity (or geodiversity). In addition:

- (i) Development that would be likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other development) will not be permitted except where the benefits of the development at this site clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the Site of Special Scientific Interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- (ii) Development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees, will not be permitted except where the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.
- (iii) Development shall ensure that no significant harm would be caused to:
 - Local Nature Reserves;
 - Local Wildlife Sites;
 - Local Geology Sites;
 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation;
 - Protected, priority or notable species and habitats,

except where the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the harm.

All proposals for mineral working and landfill shall demonstrate how the development will make an appropriate contribution to the maintenance and enhancement of local habitats, biodiversity or geodiversity (including fossil remains and trace fossils), including contributing to the objectives of the Conservation Target Areas wherever possible. Satisfactory long-term management arrangements for restored sites shall be clearly set out and included in proposals. These should include a commitment to ecological monitoring and remediation (should habitat creation and/or mitigation prove unsuccessful).

POLICY C8: LANDSCAPE

Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they respect and where possible enhance local landscape character, and are informed by landscape character assessment. Proposals shall include adequate and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts on landscape, including careful siting, design and landscaping. Where significant adverse impacts cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensatory environmental enhancements shall be made to offset the residual landscape and visual impacts.

Great weight will be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and high priority will be given to the enhancement of their natural beauty. Proposals for minerals and waste development within an AONB or that would significantly affect an AONB shall demonstrate that they take this into account and that they have regard to the relevant AONB Management Plan. Major developments within AONBs will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest, in accordance with the 'major developments test' in the NPPF (paragraph 116). Development within AONBs shall normally only be small-scale, to meet local needs and should be sensitively located and designed.

POLICY C9: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Proposals for minerals and waste development will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated, including where necessary through prior investigation, that they or associated activities will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the historic environment.

Great weight will be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets: Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site; scheduled monuments; listed buildings; conservation areas; historic battlefields; registered parks and gardens; and non-designated archaeological assets which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument; and the setting of those assets.

Where an application would affect a non-designated heritage asset, the benefits of the proposal will be balanced against the scale of harm to or loss of the heritage asset and its significance.

Where, following assessment of an application, the loss (wholly or in part) of a heritage asset is considered acceptable in principle, the applicant will be required to record and advance understanding of that asset, proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance, and to publish their findings.

Proposals for mineral working and landfill shall wherever possible demonstrate how the development will make an appropriate contribution to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

POLICY C10: TRANSPORT

Minerals and waste development will be expected to make provision for safe and suitable access to the advisory lorry routes shown on the Oxfordshire Lorry Route Maps in ways that maintain and, if possible, lead to improvements in:

- the safety of all road users including pedestrians;
- the efficiency and quality of the road network; and
- residential and environmental amenity, including air quality.

Where development leads to a need for improvement to the transport network to achieve this, developers will be expected to provide such improvement or make an appropriate financial contribution.

Where practicable minerals and waste developments should be located, designed and operated to enable the transport of minerals and/or waste by rail, water, pipeline or conveyor.

Where minerals and/or waste will be transported by road:

- a)** mineral workings should as far as practicable be in locations that minimise the road distance to locations of demand for the mineral, using roads suitable for lorries, taking into account the distribution of potentially workable mineral resources; and
- b)** waste management and recycled aggregate facilities should as far as practicable be in locations that minimise the road distance from the main source(s) of waste, using roads suitable for lorries, taking into account that some facilities are not economic or practical below a certain size and may need to serve a wider than local area.

Proposals for minerals and waste development that would generate significant amounts of traffic will be expected to be supported by a transport assessment or transport statement, as appropriate, including mitigation measures where applicable.

POLICY M2: PROVISION FOR WORKING AGGREGATE MINERALS

Provision will be made through policies M3 and M4 to enable the supply of:

- sharp sand and gravel - 1.015 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 18.270 million tonnes
- soft sand - 0.189 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 3.402 million tonnes

- crushed rock - 0.584 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 10.512 million tonnes
- from land-won sources within Oxfordshire for the period 2014 – 2031 inclusive.

Permission will be granted for aggregate mineral working under policy M5 to enable separate landbanks of reserves with planning permission to be maintained for the extraction of minerals of:

- at least 7 years for sharp sand and gravel;
- at least 7 years for soft sand;
- at least 10 years for crushed rock;

in accordance with the annual requirement rates in the most recent Local Aggregate Assessment, taking into account the need to maintain sufficient productive capacity to enable these rates to be realised.

POLICY M3: PRINCIPAL LOCATIONS FOR WORKING AGGREGATE MINERALS

The principal locations for aggregate minerals extraction will be within the following strategic resource areas, as shown on the Policies Map:

Sharp sand and gravel

in northern Oxfordshire (Cherwell District and West Oxfordshire District):

- The Thames, Lower Windrush and Lower Evenlode Valleys area from Standlake to Yarnton;

in southern Oxfordshire (South Oxfordshire District and Vale of White Horse District):

- The Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey;
- The Thames Valley area from Caversham to Shiplake.

Soft sand

- The Corallian Ridge area from Oxford to Faringdon;
- The Duns Tew area.

Crushed rock

- The area north west of Bicester;
- The Burford area south of the A40;
- The area east and south east of Faringdon.

Specific sites (new quarry sites and/or extensions to existing quarries) for working aggregate minerals within these strategic resource areas will be allocated in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document, in accordance with policy M4.

Specific sites for extensions to existing aggregate quarries (excluding ironstone) outside the strategic resource areas may also be allocated in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document provided they are in accordance with policy M4.

Sites allocated for sharp sand and gravel working (including both new quarry sites and extensions to existing quarries, including any extensions outside the strategic resource areas), to meet the requirement in policy M2 will be located such that

approximately 25% of the additional tonnage requirement is in northern Oxfordshire and approximately 75% of the additional tonnage requirement is in southern Oxfordshire, to achieve an approximately equal split of production capacity for sharp sand and gravel between northern and southern Oxfordshire by 2031.

POLICY M5: WORKING OF AGGREGATE MATERIALS

Prior to the adoption of the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document, permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals where this would contribute towards meeting the requirement for provision in policy M2 and provided that the proposal is in accordance with the locational strategy in policy M3 and that the requirements of policies C1 – C12 are met.

Permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals within the sites allocated further to policy M4 provided that the requirements of policies C1 – C12 are met.

Permission will not be granted for the working of aggregate minerals outside the sites allocated further to policy M4 unless the requirement to maintain a steady and adequate supply of aggregate in accordance with policy M2 cannot be met from within those sites and provided that the proposal is in accordance with the locational strategy in policy M3 and the requirements of policies C1 – C12 are met.

Permission will exceptionally be granted for the working of aggregate minerals outside the sites allocated further to policy M4 where extraction of the mineral is required prior to a planned development in order to prevent the mineral resource being sterilised, having due regard to policies C1 –C12.

Permission will exceptionally be granted for borrow pits to supply mineral to associated construction projects, having due regard to policies C1 – C12, provided that all of the following apply:

- the site lies on or in close proximity to the project area so that extracted mineral can be conveyed to its point of use with minimal use of public highways and without undue interference with footpaths and bridleways;
- the mineral extracted will only be used in connection with the project;
- it can be demonstrated that supply of the mineral from the borrow pit would have less environmental impact than if the mineral were supplied from an existing source;
- the borrow pit can be restored without the use of imported material, other than that generated by the project; and
- use of the borrow pit is limited to the life of the project.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs, permission for working of ironstone for aggregate use will not be permitted except in exchange for an agreed revocation (or other appropriate mechanism to ensure the non-working) without compensation of an equivalent existing permission in Oxfordshire containing potentially workable resources of ironstone and where there would be an overall environmental benefit.

POLICY M8: SAFEGUARDING AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources in the Mineral Safeguarding Areas shown on the Policies Map are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:

- The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or
- The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or
- The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.

Mineral Consultation Areas, based on the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, are shown on the Policies Map. Within these areas the District Councils will consult the County Council on planning applications for non-mineral development.

POLICY M9: SAFEGUARDING MINERAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing and permitted infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals in Oxfordshire is safeguarded against development that would unnecessarily prevent the operation of the infrastructure or would prejudice or jeopardise its continued use by creating incompatible land uses nearby.

Safeguarded sites include the following rail depot sites which are safeguarded for the importation of aggregate into Oxfordshire:

- Hennef Way, Banbury (existing facility);
- Kidlington (existing facility);
- Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay (existing facility); and
- Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarry (permitted facility);

as shown on the Policies Map; and

- any other aggregate rail depot sites which are permitted, as identified in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Other safeguarded sites will be defined in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document.

Proposals for development that would directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the use of a site safeguarded for mineral infrastructure will not be permitted unless:

- the development is in accordance with a site allocation for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or
- it can be demonstrated that the infrastructure is no longer needed; or
- the capacity of the infrastructure can be appropriately and sustainably provided elsewhere.

POLICY M10: RESTORATION OF MINERAL WORKINGS

Mineral workings shall be restored to a high standard and in a timely and phased manner to an after-use that is appropriate to the location and delivers a net gain in biodiversity. The restoration and after-use of mineral workings must take into account:

- the characteristics of the site prior to mineral working;

- the character of the surrounding landscape and the enhancement of local landscape character;
- the amenity of local communities, including opportunities to enhance green infrastructure provision and provide for local amenity uses and recreation;
- the capacity of the local transport network;
- the quality of any agricultural land affected, including the restoration of best and most versatile agricultural land;
- the conservation of soil resources
- flood risk and opportunities for increased flood storage capacity;
- the impacts on flooding and water quality of any use of imported material in the proposed restoration;
- bird strike risk and aviation safety;
- any environmental enhancement objectives for the area;
- the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity appropriate to the local area, supporting the establishment of a coherent and resilient ecological network through the landscape-scale creation of priority habitat;
- the conservation and enhancement of geodiversity;
- the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment; and
- consultation with local communities on options for after-use.

Planning permission will not be granted for mineral working unless satisfactory proposals have been made for the restoration, aftercare and after-use of the site, including where necessary the means of securing them in the longer term.

Proposals for restoration must not be likely to lead to any increase in recreational pressure on a Special Area of Conservation.

Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan (OMWLP) 1996 (saved policies)

There are no relevant saved policies.

Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (CLP 1996) (saved policies)

POLICY C1: NATURE CONSERVATION

The council will seek to promote the interests of nature conservation. Development which would result in damage to or loss of sites of special scientific interest or other areas of designated wildlife or scientific importance will not normally be permitted. Furthermore, the council will seek to ensure the protection of sites of local nature conservation value. The potential adverse affect of development on such sites will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

POLICY ENV1: POLLUTION CONTROL

Development which is likely to cause materially detrimental levels of noise, vibration, smell, smoke, fumes or other type of environmental pollution will not normally be permitted.

POLICY TR7: DEVELOPMENT ATTRACTING TRAFFIC ON MINOR ROADS

Development that would regularly attract large commercial vehicles or large numbers of cars onto unsuitable minor roads will not normally be permitted.

POLICY TR10 – HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES

Development that would generate frequent heavy-goods vehicle movements through residential areas or on unsuitable urban or rural roads will not be permitted. The council will resist proposals for the establishment of heavy-goods-vehicle operating centres where they would create traffic problems or adversely affect the amenity of residential areas or villages.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (CLP)

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 (though 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

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 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 SLE5: HIGH SPEED RAIL 2 – LONDON-BIRMINGHAM

The design and construction of the High Speed 2 Rail Link must minimise adverse impacts on the environment, the local economy and local communities and maximise any benefits that arise from the proposal.

The implementation of HS2 will also be expected to:

- Deliver high quality design to protect communities and the environment from noise and visual intrusion
- Manage the construction to minimise the impact on communities and the environment
- Adopt sustainable procurement and construction methods
- Minimise adverse social and economic impacts, by maintaining accessibility and avoiding the severance of communities and agricultural holdings
- Ensure that community and other benefits are fully realised.

HS2 is a national infrastructure project. The line of the railway and associated works will be established and authorised by the way of primary legislation, requiring a Hybrid Bill to be introduced to Parliament which, if passed, will become an Act of Parliament. Cherwell District Council will work with High Speed 2 Ltd, with the aim of influencing the design and construction of the route through Oxfordshire.

Recognising that the decision to authorise the railway and associated works will sit with Parliament, the Council's involvement will be focused on seeking the best outcome for the environment, local communities and businesses affected by the proposed railway scheme.

The Council will work with HS2 Ltd to:

- Develop a route-wide planning regime to be included within the Hybrid Bill, which supports the Council's aspirations for a well designed, sustainably constructed railway.
- Support work necessary to ensure a robust Environmental Impact Assessment is carried out to determine significant environmental effects of the railway in Cherwell District.

- Support the development and implementation of a Code of Construction Practice to address the construction impacts of the scheme.
- Achieve its sustainability objectives.

The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) 2018-2031

POLICY PT1: TRAVEL PLANS

Developers of any residential development of 10 or more dwellings, or any non-residential development will be required to provide an independent Traffic Assessment to identify the impact of the proposed development on any of the traffic “hot-spots” in the MCNP area shown on Policy Map Fig. 19. The Traffic Assessment should include the impact on pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, in order to promote sustainable travel.

Any works of mitigation recommended by that assessment as necessary to reduce the impact of traffic, and avoid residual cumulative impacts that are severe, should be funded through developer contributions (see policy PC1), in accordance with paragraph 173 of the NPPF. Proposed works of mitigation should have reference to Appendix F, being a list of proposals agreed by parish councils and the MCNP Forum, as updated from time to time.

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) (saved policies)

POLICY G2: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The district’s countryside, settlements and environmental resources will be protected from adverse developments.

POLICY C6: BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

In considering proposals for development, the maintenance and enhancement of the biodiversity resource of the district will be sought. Full account of the effects of development on wildlife will be taken. Where there is any significant loss in biodiversity as part of a proposed development, the creation and maintenance of new landscape features, habitat links and wildlife corridors of appropriate scale and kind will be required to ensure there is no net loss in biodiversity resources.

POLICY CON5: THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Proposals for development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will be refused.

POLICY CON7: PROPOSALS AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would harm the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The following will be required when considering proposals for development in conservation areas:

- (i) the design and scale of new work to be in sympathy with the established character of the area; and
- (ii) the use of traditional materials, whenever this is appropriate to the character of the area.

The contribution made to a conservation area by existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, open spaces and important views will be taken into account. Proposals for development outside a conservation area which would have a harmful effect on the conservation area will not be permitted.

POLICY EP2: NOISE AND VIBRATIONS

Proposals which would by reason of noise or vibrations have an adverse effect on existing or proposed occupiers will not be permitted, unless effective mitigation measures will be implemented. In addition, noise sensitive development will not be permitted close to existing or proposed sources of significant noise or vibrations.

POLICY EP6: SURFACE WATER PROTECTION

Developers will be required, wherever practicable, to demonstrate that the surface water management system on any development accords with sustainable drainage principles and has been designed as an integral part of the development layout. The system should effectively mitigate any adverse effects from surface water un-off and flooding on people, property and the ecological value of the local environment.

POLICY D2: PARKING

Planning permission will not be granted for developments that fail to incorporate adequate, safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles. Vehicle parking should be provided in a discreet and sensitive manner.

South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (adopted 2012) (SOCS)

POLICY CSS1: THE OVERALL STRATEGY

Proposals for development in South Oxfordshire should be consistent with the overall strategy of:

- (i) focusing major new development at the growth point of Didcot so the town can play an enhanced role in providing homes, jobs and services with improved transport connectivity;
- (ii) supporting the role of Henley, Thame and Wallingford by regenerating their town centres through measures that include environmental improvements and mixed-use developments and by providing new houses, employment, services and infrastructure;
- (iii) supporting and enhancing the larger villages of Berinsfield, Benson, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Cholsey, Crowmarsh Gifford, Goring, Nettlebed, Sonning Common, Watlington, Wheatley and Woodcote as local service centres;

- (iv) supporting other villages in the rest of the district by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment and by the provision and retention of services; and
- (v) outside the towns and villages, and other major developed sites, any change will need to relate to very specific needs such as those of the agricultural industry or enhancement of the environment.

POLICY CS1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Planning applications which accord with the policies in the Development Plan (including, where relevant, Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning permission will also be granted where relevant policies in the Development Plan are out of date or silent unless:

- Any adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in the Framework or other material considerations indicate that development should be restricted.

POLICY CSM1: TRANSPORT

The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to:

- (i) in partnership with the Vale of White Horse District Council, actively seek to deliver the transport infrastructure and measures which improve movement in Didcot and within the Didcot/Wantage and Grove corridor, in particular linking Didcot with the major employment sites at Harwell and Milton Park as identified in the County Council's LTP3 SVUK area Strategy and Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Study;
- (ii) actively seek to ensure that the impact of new development on the strategic and local road network, in particular the Milton, Chilton and Marcham junctions of the A34 and the road links and junctions identified in the Council's Evaluation of Transport Impact and County Council's Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Study is adequately mitigated (see Policy CSM2);
- (iii) support improvements for accessing Oxford;
- (iv) work with the authorities affected by cross Thames travel in the Reading area to ensure that traffic and environmental conditions in South Oxfordshire are improved by the implementation of measures which also improve access to Reading;
- (v) support measures which enable modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking particularly where these support the network of settlements in the district;
- (vi) promote and support traffic management measures and environmental improvements which increase safety, improve air quality, encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and/or make our towns and villages more attractive;

- (vii) adopt a comprehensive approach to car parking aimed at improving the attraction of our town and village centres;
- (viii) encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- (ix) promote electronic communications allowing businesses to operate throughout the district and to provide services and information which reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport; and
- (x) cater for the needs of all users.

POLICY CSM2: TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS AND TRAVEL PLANS

Proposals for new developments which have transport implications that either arise from the development proposed or cumulatively with other proposals will need to submit a transport assessment. Appropriate provision for works and/or contributions will be required towards providing an adequate level of accessibility by all modes of transport and mitigating the impacts on the transport network.

The assessment should (notwithstanding OCC requirements):

- (i) illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes of transport;
- (ii) show the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site;
- (iii) detail the proposed measures to improve access by public transport, cycling and walking to reduce the need for parking and reduce transport impacts;
- (iv) illustrate the impact on the highway network and the impact of proposed mitigation measures where necessary; and
- (v) include a travel plan where appropriate.

Travel plans will be required, implemented and monitored (notwithstanding OCC requirements):

- (i) for all major developments comprising residential, employment, shopping or leisure uses or services; and
- (ii) for other small developments comprising residential, employment, shopping or leisure or education facilities which would generate significant amounts of travel.

POLICY CSEN3: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The district's designated historic heritage assets, both above and below ground such as:

- nationally designated assets including listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, historic battlefields and Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
- conservation areas; and
- their settings

will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

This will be carried out through:

- conservation area appraisals/reviews;
- management plans;
- designating new conservation areas where appropriate;

- the determination of planning, listed building consent and other relevant applications.

Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

POLICY CSQ3: DESIGN

Planning permission will be granted for new development that is of a high quality and inclusive design that:

- responds positively to and respects the character of the site and its surroundings, particularly the historic significance and heritage values of the historic environment, enhancing local distinctiveness and ensuring that new development is of a scale, type and density appropriate to the site and its setting;
- improves the quality of the public realm with well designed external areas, and, where appropriate a clear structure of open spaces;
- provides and/or links into green infrastructure where available;
- is designed to create safe communities and reduce the likelihood and fear of crime;
- creates a distinctive sense of place and is easy to understand through the use of vistas, landmarks and focal points;
- ensures high levels of accessibility and ease of use by all modes of transport both within the site and with the wider area, also making sure that any new development is properly integrated with existing development ensuring accessibility to local services; and
- is adaptable to changing requirements and constructed with materials appropriate to the area.

All proposals for new development should be accompanied by a design and access statement to show how they have responded to the above criteria.

POLICY CSB1: BIODIVERSITY

A net loss of biodiversity will be avoided, and opportunities to achieve a net gain across the district will be actively sought.

Opportunities for biodiversity gain, including the connection of sites, large-scale habitat restoration, enhancement and habitat re-creation will be sought for all types of habitats, with a primary focus on delivery in the Conservation Target Areas.

The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international nature conservation importance (Special Areas of Conservation and European Protected Species).

Damage to nationally important sites of special scientific interest, local wildlife sites, local nature reserves, priority habitats, protected or priority species and locally important geological sites will be avoided unless the importance of the development outweighs the harm and the loss can be mitigated to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.