9: BUILDING DESIGN AND USE

Historic built environment policies

9.1 Chipping Norton has a high density of listed and locally listed buildings, reflecting a particularly rich historic environment borne out of its Cotswolds location and prominence as a market town that was at the centre of the wool trade. A market has been held here since the 13th century, the word ‘Chipping’ stemming from the word ‘Cheaping’, meaning a market.

9.2 Within the town there is one Grade I listed building (Church of St Mary’s), 10 Grade II* listed buildings and 114 Grade II listed buildings1. All lie within the town’s designated Conservation Area. There are also 468 locally listed structures within the Conservation Area. The Grade II* listed buildings are: Church Street (north side) nos. 1 to 4 (consecutive, Almshouses); High Street nos. 7, 15, 20 and White Hart Hotel; Market Place nos. 15, 16, 20 and The Town Hall; New Street (south side) King’s Head Court; and Bliss Tweed Mill.

9.3 The historic core of the town has changed little over the centuries, ensuring a real sense of place and an anchor for the town’s newer 20th and 21st century housing developments.

9.4 Other elements aside from buildings contribute to the town’s character. These include, for example, stone boundary walls. All these elements can add up to create the special sense of place that the town enjoys. It therefore stands that where these traditional assets exist they should be preserved for future generations.

9.5 Trees within the Chipping Norton Conservation Area help to soften the townscape and create cooling spaces on hot days. Similarly, open spaces such as Chipping Norton Common contribute to the appearance of the town and its rural setting, providing a valuable amenity for local residents.

9.6 The special character of Chipping Norton includes, though is not limited to, Bliss Mill and its setting, St Mary’s and its church yard and setting, Castle Mound, Pool Meadow, the Regulated Pasture (common owners), tree-lined approaches to the town, remaining burgage plots between Albion Street and High Street, and Market Place. Any proposal should have due regard to the WODC document ‘Chipping Norton Conservation Area Character Appraisal’ (adopted in September 2013) and the general design principles linked with it.

BD1: Historic built environment

The parish’s designated heritage assets and their settings including listed buildings, the Conservation Area, scheduled monuments and assets above above and below ground, will be preserved or enhanced. Proposals for development will take into account their significance and contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

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 as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).

1WODC, Chipping Norton Conservation Area Appraisal, Sept. 2013
Figure 9.1: Location of the Conservation Area and all nationally Listed buildings
BD2: Conservation Area

The special character or appearance of the Chipping Norton Conservation Area should be preserved or enhanced.

New development including proposals that involve the alteration or extension of a building within or adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area will generally be supported subject to compliance with all of the following criteria:

• The form, design, scale and materials respect the host building (where applicable) and the Conservation Area, the townscape and any landscape setting
• The siting respects the significant open spaces and significant trees shown on Figure 9.1 and the wider townscape
• Any open space that makes a significant contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area is not reduced in size
• Historic features such as stone boundary walls, are preserved or enhanced and
• Major, minor and landscape views identified on Figure 9.1 are preserved or enhanced.

9.8 The West Oxfordshire Design Guide\(^2\) sets out the design features that make West Oxfordshire special. It includes a section on local character that outlines typical walling and roofing materials associated with different areas of the district, including the ‘Northern Valleys and Ridges’ which Chipping Norton lies within. All development should have due regard to the latest version of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide.

9.9 The preservation and enhancement of the existing historical built environment is essential if the town is to retain its attractive townscape. This will prove essential to the town’s economy as it seeks to position itself to attain a greater share of the local tourist market.

9.10 Full descriptions of Chipping Norton’s built environment and the individual components that contribute to its character can be found in the WODC document ‘Chipping Norton: Conservation Area Character Appraisal’\(^3\). The document includes a map and full list of all listed and locally listed buildings. This Plan supports the use of this document as a guideline for development and alterations within the Conservation Area of the town.

9.11 Chipping Norton is currently undergoing an appraisal of its heritage assets through the English Heritage-funded project ‘Early Fabric in Historic Towns’. This is likely to increase understanding of the historic interest and significance of many of the town’s buildings.

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\(^2\)WODC, West Oxfordshire Design Guide
\(^3\)WODC, Chipping Norton: Conservation Area Character Appraisal, Sept. 2013

Justification

9.7 The questionnaire results forming part of the initial consultation with residents and local businesses highlighted the importance of the town’s pleasant physical environment, with 93% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that this element of the town makes it a desirable place to live.
9.12 The Neighbourhood Plan encourages the recording by developers of any historic fabric which would otherwise be lost in the course of development. The Plan therefore strongly supports the intention of WODC to oblige developers to protect and record heritage assets as outlined in paragraphs 8.84 and 8.89-8.90 of the pre-submission West Oxfordshire Local Plan. It also supports any additional guidance from English Heritage when it becomes available.

9.13 Records of archaeological sites, finds and all designations may be found in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record held by Oxfordshire County Council. Email archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk for further information. Oxfordshire County Council is also completing a Historic Landscape Character project, which is due to be made available in 2016.

Relevance to planning framework
NPPF paras 7, 9, 17, 57, 126, 131, 132; WODC Local Plan BE1-2, BE4-7, BE8, BE10, BE12, H2, NE6; Pre-submission Local Plan CO2, 3, 13, 14 and paras 4.43-4.35, 8.75-8.92

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan objectives
OB2, OB7, OB8

4WODC, West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, March 2015
Housing typology policies
9.14 Housing costs are higher than the national average, with affordability issues common among those with even average salaries\(^5\). Social housing comprises 17.3% of the housing stock, higher than the West Oxfordshire average of 12.5%\(^6\).

9.15 The consultation process found a desire for a wide mix of housing, particularly affordable housing for young people, families and those on low incomes.

9.16 WODC’s emerging Local Plan allocates a Strategic Development Area for housing within Chipping Norton. The remaining housing requirement will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, speculative ‘windfall’ development on unidentified sites that come forward in accordance with the Local Plan’s general housing policies, and other sites identified as being potentially suitable and deliverable in WODC’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)\(^7\).

BD3: Affordable housing
Qualifying residential developments should meet a range of households’ needs for affordable housing\(^8\) to either rent or buy.

Affordable housing schemes that meet the housing needs of households who have connections with Chipping Norton and its local community will be encouraged. Households may have connections with the town because of current or previous residence, family associations, employment reasons or because of other social, health and wellbeing considerations. Someone has a local connection to Chipping Norton if they:
• Live here in permanent accommodation

• Have lived here for three years out of the last five years before applying for affordable housing, or ten years in total
• Are employed here or have the offer of a job here
• Have close family who have lived here for at least five years
• Are threatened with homelessness and WODC has a duty to secure accommodation.

BD4: Housing for the elderly and disabled
Housing developments that increase the choice of different types of housing available to older\(^9\) and disabled people in the town will be supported including:
• Specialised housing provision that meets both the housing and care needs of people
• Accessible housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities
• Housing that offers people the opportunity to move into more manageable accommodation that better meets their needs as they grow older.

BD5: Housing for young people and families
Housing developments that will enable younger people and families that have connections to Chipping Norton (as defined in policy BD3) to set up a new home in the town will be supported.

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\(^5\)DCA, West Oxon Housing Needs Assessment Update, 2011
\(^6\)ONS 2011 Census
\(^7\)LDF Update, Aug 2014: www.westoxon.gov.uk/ldf
\(^8\)Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
\(^9\)Persons of 55+ years
9.17 Within West Oxfordshire 96% of concealed households cannot afford a deposit for a one-bedroom flat without parental assistance, while 83.8% of new households forming cannot afford to rent in the private market\textsuperscript{10}.

9.18 According to the Housing Needs Assessment 2011, the income needed to buy a one-bedroom flat in Chipping Norton was £28,200, meaning that 80.3% of concealed households were unable to buy\textsuperscript{10}. Furthermore, 32.0% of recently formed households were unable to buy a one-bedroom flat in the town. The recent revival of the property market is likely to have exacerbated this situation.

9.19 Within the social rented sector there is a significant undersupply of one-bedroom units with demand vs supply at 14.6:1. This stock size represents 56.9% of the total Housing Register.

9.20 As of 3 December 2014 the number of applicants on the WODC housing waiting list specifically requesting a property within Chipping Norton was 179\textsuperscript{11}, an increase of 38% on just nine months earlier. Of this number 120 are applicants of working age seeking a one- or two-bedroom property, while 41 applicants of retirement age seek a similar home. Combined, this represents an application weighting of 90% for one- and two-bedroom properties. In addition to the housing waiting list there are a further 61 transfer applicants within the town.

9.21 Taken as a percentage of the population\textsuperscript{12} of Chipping Norton, the waiting list corresponds to 2.8% of the total – a similar figure to Witney (3.0%) though less than neighbouring Charlbury (3.8%) and nearby Woodstock (4.9%).

9.22 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies that lower quartile house prices in Oxfordshire are on average nine times higher than annual lower quartile incomes in the county (the Government’s preferred indicator of the affordability of market housing). This is significantly above the national average of 6.6 times\textsuperscript{13}.

9.23 The SHMA expresses concern over rising house prices, stating that this has lead to ‘an increasing proportion of households renting homes for longer, and more young people... living with families or in shared accommodation’. It highlights a 30% increase in households living in overcrowded homes between the 2001 and 2011 censuses and adds: ‘these factors point strongly towards a need to deliver more homes in the future in order to ensure that young households can form a home or get a foothold on the housing ladder’. It suggests 274 new affordable homes are needed per year to 2031 in West Oxfordshire. The SHMA also suggests that around 70% of market housing should be two and three-bed properties.

9.24 Qualifying residential developments, as outlined in Policy BD3, will be determined in accordance with the relevant adopted local plan policy.

\textsuperscript{10}DCA, West Oxon Housing Needs Assessment Update, 2011
\textsuperscript{11}WODC housing waiting list supplied by WODC.
\textsuperscript{12}Population data from Census 2011
\textsuperscript{13}GL Hearn, Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Assessment summary - Key findings on housing need, Mar 2014
9.25 Smaller housing units will see increasing demand as the local population continues to age; population projections to 2031 signal significant growth in the over 55 category with an increase of 54.1% against a general population increase of 23.6% during this period. The SHMA suggests the housing market in West Oxfordshire should deliver a mix of dwelling sizes to 2031 as follows: 1 bedroom – 23.3%; 2 bedrooms – 43.7%; 3 bedrooms – 30.4%; and 4+ bedrooms – 2.6%, in order to bring about a more balanced housing offer\textsuperscript{14}.

9.26 This Plan’s definition of a local connection to Chipping Norton is a town-scale execution of WODC’s district-wide criteria for eligibility for social housing\textsuperscript{15}.

9.27 To ensure opportunities for local people the application of these criteria on a town-wide scale is appropriate.

\textbf{Relevance to planning framework}

\textit{NPPF} paras 7, 9, 17, 47, 50; \textit{WODC Local Plan} H3, H11; Pre-submission Local Plan CO6 and paras 5.1-5.3, 5.36-5.53 5.67-5.89, 5.94-5.95

\textbf{Relevant Neighbourhood Plan objective}

OB5

\textsuperscript{14}Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Assessment, April 2014
\textsuperscript{15}www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/housing/register-for-housing/how-we-assess-housing-applications/
**Self-build policies**

9.28 Until recently the process of building your own home was almost universally referred to as ‘self-build’. In 2011 the Government’s ‘Housing Strategy for England’ introduced the term ‘custom-build housing’ to more accurately reflect the variety of ways in which people can have their own home built for them. The term ‘self-build’ is now used to describe homes which are largely self-organised or built as a DIY project. The self-build policies in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan refer to both self- and custom-built units.\(^{16}\)

9.29 In the UK 10-15% of new homes are self or custom built compared to at least 50% in most other developed countries. Self and custom builders can support the area’s economy by stimulating the local supply chains and providing local employment.\(^{17}\)

9.30 Self- and custom-built units also have the potential to provide better quality homes built to a higher standard of sustainability/energy efficiency. They offer the chance to express individual architectural style (in conformity with local planning standards) and are generally cheaper to build than equivalent units, offering a valuable route to affordable housing. As they are more likely to be built by local residents, they can enhance the area’s sense of community while allowing bespoke housing tailored to meet the exact requirements of those involved.\(^{17}\)

9.31 The residents’ questionnaire identified housing and employment opportunities as the least favourable aspects of living in Chipping Norton. Over half of respondents (56%) disagreed that local employment opportunities make them want to live in the town. One third (33%) felt the right housing is not available in Chipping Norton. Self-build has the potential to address both these areas.

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**BD6: Provision of self-build plots**

Developments over 100 units in size should allocate at least 5% of dwelling plots for self- and custom-builders. The allocation of plots should also take into account the need as identified by West Oxfordshire District Council. Developers should undertake activities to sub-divide the site into plots and provide supporting infrastructure such as roads and services. Only where it can be robustly demonstrated that the provision of on-site plots is uneconomic and alternative off-site provision cannot be made will this requirement be waived. In addition to the proportional allocation of larger developments, the provision of new sites specifically for self-build is strongly supported.

**BD7: Allocation of self-build plots**

Dwellings may only be built on self/custom-build-allocated sites by individuals, or builders or developers acting on behalf of individuals or a community group of individuals. Those wishing to purchase a self/custom-build plot should demonstrate that they intend to live in the property once it is completed. Dwellings should be constructed within three years of purchase and should be built with due regard to the West Oxfordshire Design Guide or its future equivalent.

Where plots have been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and remain unsold, the plot(s) may be offered to West Oxfordshire District Council or a Housing Association before being built out by the developer.

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\(^{16}\)NaSBA, A second progress report to Government on the implementation of the Action Plan to promote the growth of self build housing, August 2013

\(^{17}\)NaSBA, An Action Plan to promote the growth of self-build housing, July 2011
Justification

9.32 Finding suitable self-build plots is the greatest hurdle to projects of this type. A recent analysis of users of the Self Build Portal found that 41% believed this to be the case, with obtaining planning (12%) and securing finance (10%) the next biggest hurdles.\(^{18}\)

9.33 Nationally there is strong demand for self-build plots. A 2011 survey by the Building Societies Association found that 53% of consumers would consider building their own home if they had the opportunity.\(^{19}\) The majority were attracted by the ability to have control over the design and layout of their home; they also felt a self-build home would be cheaper than buying on the open market.

9.34 Another survey by the Norwich and Peterborough Building Society showed that 30% of the population would like to tackle a self-build project in the next five years. Up to 400,000 searches for self-build plots are made on property website Rightmove every month.\(^{19}\)

9.35 Evidence collected by WODC suggests that there are 427 potential custom/self-builders seeking suitable plots within West Oxfordshire.\(^{20}\) The Council states it is ‘keen to support increased delivery [of custom build and self-build housing] to promote greater diversity in the local housing stock, innovative design and more affordable and sustainable construction’.

9.36 According to National Custom & Self Build Association\(^{21}\): ‘The Government wants to double the size of the sector over the next decade so that custom built homes become a ‘mainstream’ source of housing. It is keen on growing the sector for the following reasons:

- It is important to the national economy (it’s value is estimated at £3+ billion per year)
- It makes an important contribution to housing output, and creates an opportunity to diversify housing supply
- There is growing public demand for this type of housing
- It protects/creates local jobs and strengthens local supply chains in the construction sector (each self build sustains two construction jobs)
- It offers choice and is often better value for money
- It reflects the Government’s Localism ambitions
- It can provide opportunities to achieve a diverse mix of housing in both urban and rural areas.’

9.37 Neighbouring planning authority Cherwell District Council proactively supports self builders through its Build! project which aims to deliver 250 new homes in Banbury and Bicester during 2014 and 2015 alone.\(^{22}\)

9.38 Allocating a modest provision for self-builders within Chipping Norton will help to address the demand within this town. It could also help to deliver a route to more affordable owner-occupied housing.

Relevance to planning framework

NPPF paras 7, 9, 17, 47, 63; WODC Local Plan n/a; Pre-submission Local Plan CO6 and paras 5.99-5.107

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan objective

OB5

\(^{18}\)NaSBA, A second progress report to Government on the implementation of the Action Plan to promote the growth of self build housing, Aug. 2013


\(^{20}\)WODC, West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, Mar 2015, para 5.105

\(^{21}\)NaSBA, Planning for Custom Build Housing: A Best Practice Guide, November 2012

\(^{22}\)www.cherwell.gov.uk/build
**Bicycle and bin storage policy**

9.39 Clutter on pavements and streets is common on and around refuse collection day. This not only contributes a detrimental aesthetic to the street scene but can lead to scattering of refuse on windy days.

9.40 Chipping Norton’s low uptake of cycling may start to be addressed by making cycling more accessible. Offering convenient, well-placed cycle storage will help with this.

**BD8: Bicycle and bin storage**

New development should ensure that satisfactory provision is made for a) convenient, safe and secure bicycle storage and b) convenient, safe, closed refuse and recycling bin storage wherever possible and as an integrated part of the design and layout of any scheme.

**Justification**

9.41 The West Oxfordshire Design Guide offers guidance for storing bins and recycling boxes. This Plan supports the implementation of its recommendations in all new developments.

9.42 Adequate secure cycle storage is likely to make the uptake of this sustainable form of transport both easier and more probable, thereby reducing carbon emissions. With such a low level of cycling uptake within the town providing cycle storage could mark a small but significant step towards improving cycling rates.

**Relevance to planning framework**

- **NPPF** paras 7, 9, 17, 30, 35, 57-58;
- **WODC** Local Plan BE2, T2; Pre-submission Local Plan CO1, 2, 11, 18 and paras 4.33-4.35, 8.72, 7.3, 7.14

**Relevant Neighbourhood Plan objectives**

- OB2, OB4, OB10

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23WODC, West Oxfordshire Design Guide
Water management policies

9.43 Feedback from the consultation process emphasised the importance to residents of energy efficiency in new development and the prudent use of water. With temperatures set to rise over the coming years and summers predicted to become drier, it is important that the root causes of climate change and its potential impacts are addressed.

9.44 The eastern side of town sits above the Ground Source Protection Zone for the public water supply at Old Chalford. The quality of water in this Principal Aquifer will need to be protected in the instance of any new development within this area.

http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/

Figure 9.2: Map showing area of the local Ground Source Protection Zone
BD9: Sustainable drainage systems

New developments of ten or more dwellings and major commercial development will be expected to provide and incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless it is demonstrated that this would be inappropriate.

BD10: Water supply and sewerage

As much of Chipping Norton is underlain by a Principal Aquifer, foul water from all development should connect to the foul sewer so as to avoid groundwater pollution. Developers should work with the local planning authority and infrastructure providers to demonstrate that adequate water supply and sewerage infrastructure capacity exists both on and off sites to serve developments being proposed and that any development would not lead to problems for existing users.

Where there is a capacity problem and no improvements are programmed by the water company, then the developer needs to contact the water company (Thames Water) to agree what improvements are required and how they will be funded prior to commencement of the development.

9.46 New development over the coming decades is one of the most accessible means of taking action through preventative measures. Sustainable drainage systems will help to alleviate the impact of downpours arising from summer storms and winter rains.

9.47 Water requires considerable energy to treat and distribute. West Oxfordshire lies within an area of ‘serious’ water stress\(^26\). Many day-to-day uses such as garden and car washing and toilet flushing do not require potable, treated water.

9.48 In addition to sustainable drainage systems, the collection of rainwater on site could save energy and reduce the load on the local water supply system. Stalling runoff would help to reduce the impact of storm events and unusually wet periods. The promotion and adoption of water efficient practice in new developments will help to manage water resources and work towards sustainable development.

9.59 Particular encouragement will be given to the provision of water butts in new developments to reduce treated water consumption within the garden while also minimising runoff. Where feasible new development could also incorporate rainwater harvesting and/or grey water recycling techniques in order to reduce household water consumption further.

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Justification

9.45 Climate change is a very real threat to global security. By 2050 the median prediction is that temperatures will have risen by 2°C in Central England, bringing substantially wetter winters and drier summers\(^25\). To help mitigate these effects it is important that local development takes its contribution seriously.

\(^{25}\)http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/
\(^{26}\)WODC, West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, Mar 2015, para 8.57
9.51 Overloading of existing water and sewerage infrastructure could lead to supply problems and ineffective treatment of sewerage. In some circumstances it may be necessary for developers to carry out appropriate studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to overloading.

9.52 Further information for developers on water/sewerage infrastructure can be found on Thames Water’s website at www.thameswater.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/corp/hs.xsl/558.htm or by emailing developer.services@thameswater.co.uk or calling 0800 0093921.

**Relevance to planning framework**

- **NPPF** paras 7, 9, 17, 93-96, 99, 103, 110;
- **WODC** Local Plan BE2, NE7, NE10-12;
- Pre-submission Local Plan CO15-18 and paras 4.22-4.31, 8.44, 8.57

**Relevant Neighbourhood Plan objective**

OB10