

CASSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2021 – 2041

Submission Plan

PUBLISHED BY

Cassington Parish Council for Pre-Submission consultation
under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations
2012 (as amended).

SEPTEMBER 2022

GUIDE TO READING THIS PLAN

Of necessity, this Neighbourhood Plan is a detailed technical document. The purpose of this page is to explain the structure and help you find your way around the plan.

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This section explains the background to this Neighbourhood Plan and how you can take part in and respond to the consultation.

2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

This section details many of the features of the designated area.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

This rather technical section relates this Plan to the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning policies of West Oxfordshire District Council.

4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

This section explains the community involvement that has taken place.

5. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

This key section firstly provides a statement on the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives. It then details Policies which are proposed to address the issues outlined in the Foreword and in Section 4. These Policies are listed in Table 1. There are also Policy Maps at the back of the plan.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

This section explains how the Plan will be implemented and future development guided and managed. It suggests projects which might be supported by the Community Infrastructure Levy which the Parish Council will have some influence over. Finally, it deals with a number of issues which although relevant are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.

FOREWORD

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FOREWORD

Cassington village is located to the north west of Oxford in an area to the north of the Thames. Archaeological evidence indicates the land has been farmed since the bronze age with continual evidence of agriculture in and around the village through Saxon times to the medieval age when St Peter's Church was constructed, a Grade 1 listed building. Cassington developed organically around two greens and much of the centre of the village, now forming the Conservation Area was built in the 17th Century. Substantial changes came to Cassington with the 1801 Enclosure Act with the Duke of Marlborough taking control of most of the land to the north of the village, re-routing the road through it, establishing local industrial sites and farms in the surrounding area. Since then, the village has grown slowly and now represents one of the few small villages lying close to Oxford in contrast to surrounding rapid development in West Oxfordshire and Cherwell districts numbering from tens to thousands of houses.

Many of the residents of Cassington village feel incredibly privileged to live in a place where there is a real sense of community. Village amenities including the school, public houses, the church, the Sports Pavillion, sports fields, allotments and Village Hall contribute to highly connected social networks where people know each other, enjoy their leisure time with each other and support each other during times of adversity. This sense of community is unusually strong in Cassington and something treasured by all of us. Given the pressures of development on the districts surrounding Oxford and the very limited infrastructure, especially related to transport and drainage, it was felt that the village residents should give their views on what constitutes sustainable planning for the future of Cassington including for green infrastructure. As a result, the production of the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan was requested by the Cassington Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Plans are important tools for planners, planning committees and developers as well as communities. They allow communities to identify what is important to them and how they would like to see the places where they live develop in the future. Together with the associated Green Infrastructure Plan they identify how a community can develop sustainably including consideration of human well-being, protection of biodiversity and minimising climate footprint both in terms of building and in subsequent operation of settlements (e.g. sustainable transport links).

This Neighbourhood Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan were prepared by a Neighbourhood Planning Committee comprising residents of Cassington, including a representative from the Parish Council. Funding was obtained from the government's support programme for neighbourhood plan preparation and support throughout the process by Oneil Homer Ltd. As such both plans have been prepared based on local knowledge by local people. During the preparation of the Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure plans village residents were kept informed of progress and consulted on their thoughts on what policies and wider considerations were appropriate for Cassington. We hope the results of this process lays out guidance for a vision of the future sustainable development of Cassington Village owned by the village residents.

It remains for me to thank all those involved including the members of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee (Jonty Ashworth; Piers Beeton; Ian Finlay; Barbara King; Anne Luttmann-Johnson) Oneil Homer (Leani Haim); the Parish Council (Hugh Thomas, David Butlin, Barbara King, Chris Metcalf, Julie Perrin and Clerk, Tracey Cameron) and the residents of Cassington who have contributed their time and thoughts to the completion of this process.

Alex Rogers, Chair of the Cassington Neighbourhood Planning Committee

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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Cassington Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), on 8 December 2020. The area coincides with the parish boundary (see Plan A on page 4). The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations of 2012 (as amended).

1.2. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to March 2040. The Plan will form part of the development plan for the West Oxfordshire District, alongside the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. A Local Plan Review is due to start at the end of 2022 with the emerging Local Plan period to 2041. The Neighbourhood Plan has adopted the emerging Local Plan period due to the location of the Parish in the Green Belt.

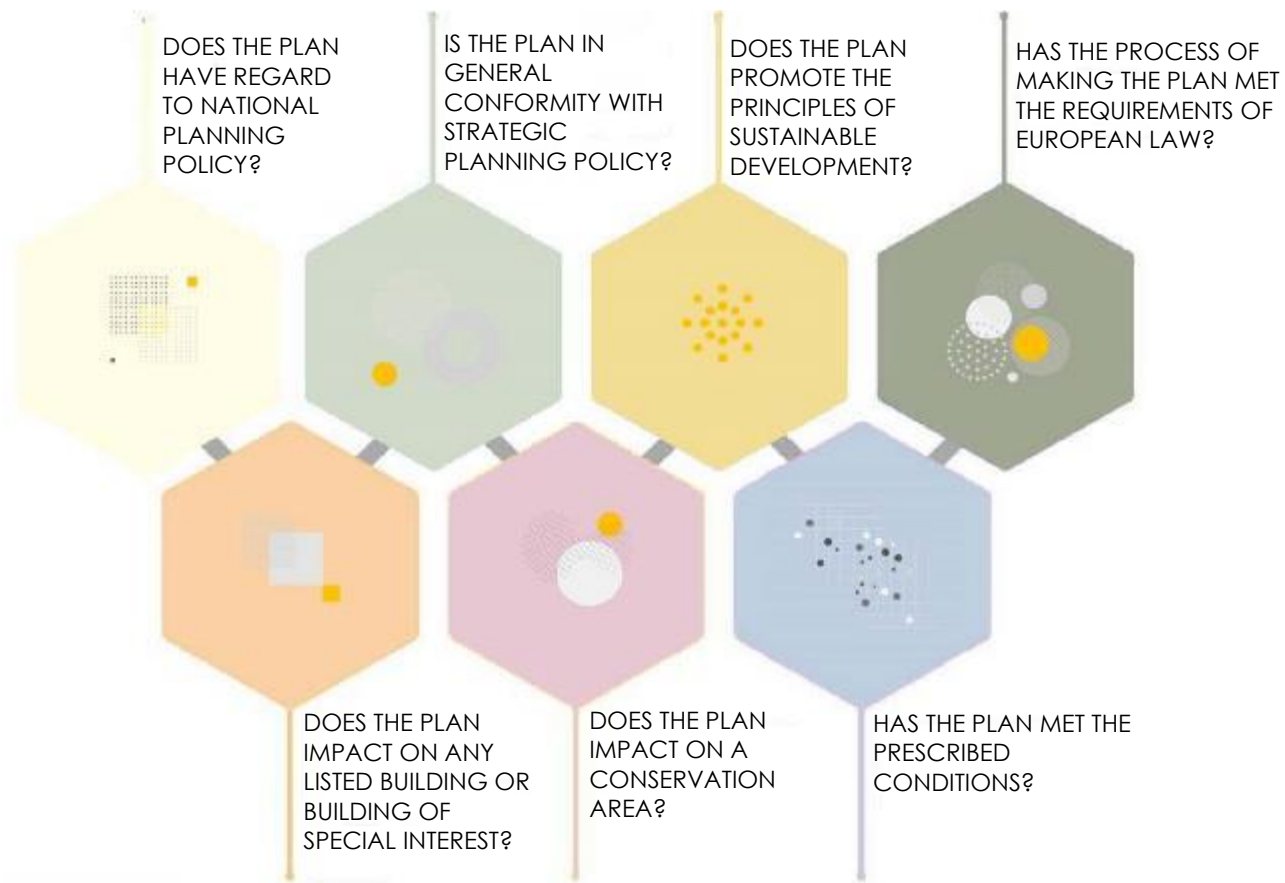
1.3. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to manage the quality of development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes part of the Council's statutory development plan and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided in the neighbourhood area. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning. Although there is scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet all of the relevant basic conditions (see Figure 2 overleaf).

1.4. In addition, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to an independent examiner that it has successfully engaged with the local community and stakeholders in preparing the Plan. If the examiner is satisfied that it has, and considers the Plan meets the above conditions, then the Plan will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority (over 50%) of the turnout votes in favour of the Plan, then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the neighbourhood area.

THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

1.5. In February 2022 the Government published for consultation its White Paper, 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom'¹, which proposes to make changes to planning system. It indicates that there is still a future for neighbourhood planning in that system. It remains unknown when any proposed changes will be implemented..

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>



1 Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions

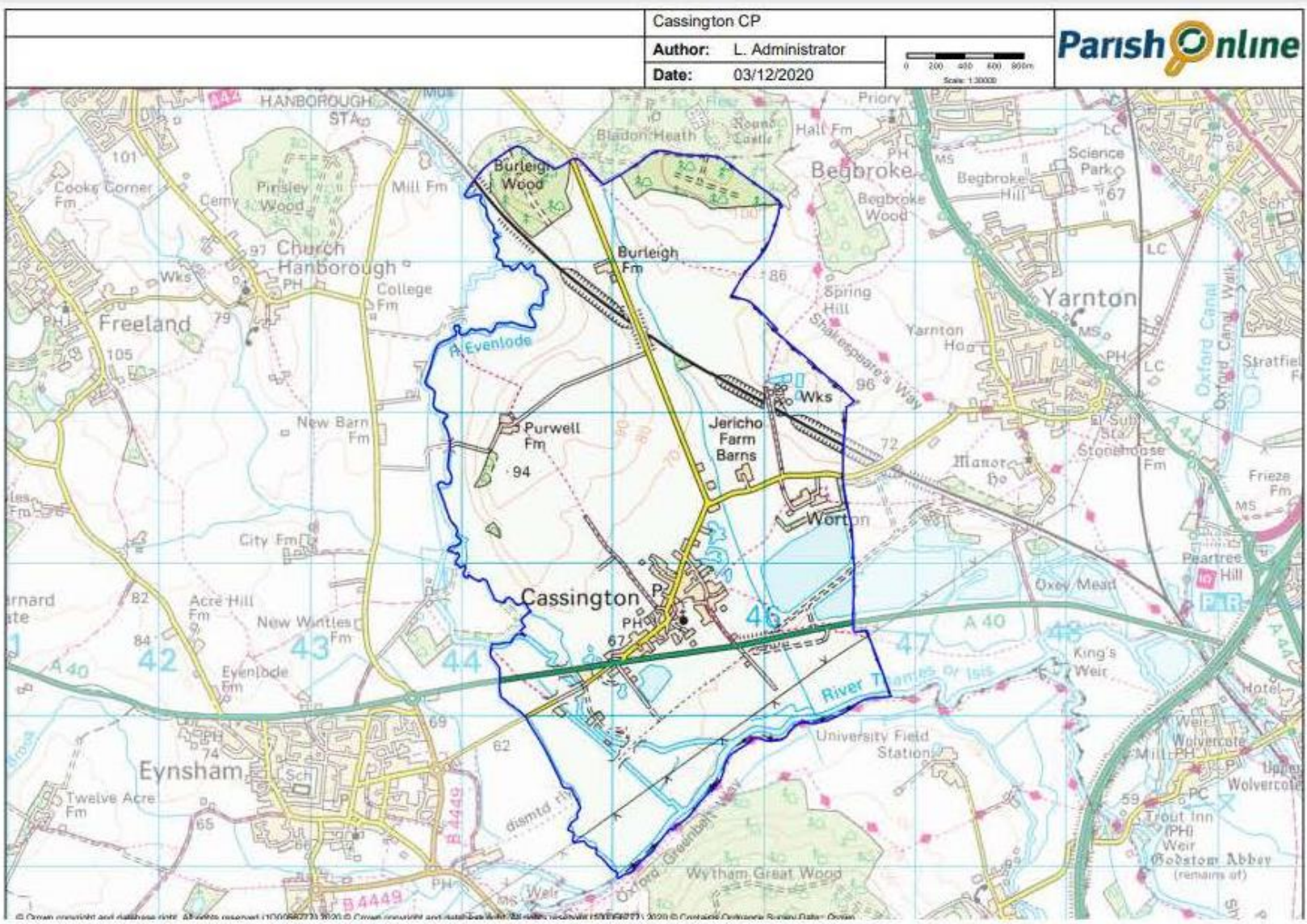
THE PRE-SUBMISSION PLAN

1.6. A draft Pre-Submission Plan was published for consultation 6 January 2022 – 28 February 2022 in line with the Regulations. The Parish Council has reviewed the comments received from the local community and other interested parties and has made changes to this final version. They have also updated some of the reports included in the appendices of the plan.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & THE HABITATS REGULATIONS

1.7. WODC has confirmed in its screening opinion that the proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan do not have the potential for significant environmental effects and therefore no strategic environmental assessment is necessary in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended).

1.8. The screening opinion also confirms that a habitats regulations assessment is not required as per the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).



Plan A: Designated Neighbourhood Area

2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

2.1 The village of Cassington lies to the north of the Thames, in the District of West Oxfordshire, approximately 8km from the centre of Oxford which lies to the south east. The village is surrounded by arable farmland especially to the north, east and west. To the south lies Lowland Meadows and Floodplain Grazing Marsh located along the northern banks of the river Thames. These meadows date back to medieval times and include Oxey Mead, Pixey Mead, Yarnton Mead, Cassington Meadows and Oxford Meadows. These sites are either Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The entire Parish of Cassington is washed over with green belt. Lying 1.5km to the south west is the village of Eynsham and approximately 3km to the north east lies the village of Yarnton which is in the district of Cherwell. The nearest main service centre to Cassington other than Oxford, is Witney, which lies about 10km directly to the west, along the A40.

2.2 Cassington is a village of approximately 300 households. The 2011 census recorded a population of 750 people. The only other settlement in the Parish is the hamlet of Worton which lies about 1km to the east. This village was a similar size to Cassington in medieval times but now comprises just half a dozen dwellings as well as a café, an organic food shop, a function hall, stables and a range of rental buildings for small businesses. On the eastern side of Worton is the Agrivert food digestion facility used for converting food waste to energy.

2.3 Demographic statistics are not available for Cassington alone but are aggregated with those for Eynsham. The statistics in this section are drawn from the Local Insight Profile for "Eynsham and Cassington Ward" area published by Oxfordshire County Council and the District Data Service (published February 2021). These indicate that 17.9% of the population are children of age 0-15, 56.2% are of working age and 25.9% are aged 65 and above. The figures for aged 65+ are above those of West Oxfordshire (21.8%) and considerably above the national average of 18.4% indicating that Cassington and Eynsham have a higher-than-average proportion of people in this age category. Whilst West Oxfordshire has shown a steady increase in population since 2001. Eynsham and Cassington showed negligible growth until 2010 when the population began to grow to a level of 6-7% annual increase in 2014, remaining at this level since. Most households in the Cassington and Eynsham Ward are married households (929) whilst the next largest category is pensioner households (669). There are 295 one person households (below age 65), 222 cohabiting households and 105 households comprising lone parent families with cohabiting children.

2.4 Unemployment in the Cassington and Eynsham Ward (4.6%) is below the national average (6.4%). In line with these figures the proportion of residents in the Cassington and Eynsham Ward claiming benefits (6.5%) is below the national average (11.7%). Of the seven domains of deprivation (employment, income, health & disability, education, skills and training, crime, living environment, barriers to housing and services), the Cassington and Eynsham Ward score zero on every domain (national average of 19.5-21%) apart from

barriers to housing and services, where 22.4% of the population are affected, higher than the national average of 21.4%. This is indicative of issues with housing supply and access to services in the area. The average annual household income in the Cassington and Eynsham Ward is £52,551, considerably higher than the national average of £43,966. However, average house prices in the ward are considerably higher than the national average with a short supply locally particularly of the most affordable properties (Band A and Band B). Levels of health and education are better in the Cassington and Eynsham Ward than in West Oxfordshire as a whole and nationally.

2.5 Cassington parish lies on the north bank of the river Thames at its confluence with the Evenlode and covers 2,299 acres (930 hectares). It contains the hamlet of Worton and the site of the deserted medieval hamlet of Somerford. The parish boundary follows the Thames on the south, streams of the Evenlode in the west, and field boundaries on the east and north-east; in the north the parish extends into Burleigh wood which in the later 13th century was claimed by both Cassington and Bladon, and the boundary there is probably later than that in the rest of the parish. The streams which form the southern part of the eastern boundary were straightened in the earlier 19th century and were in 1982 little more than drainage ditches. By the end of the 18th century the main branch of the Evenlode flowed out of Cassington parish to Eynsham mill and then turned west to flow past Cassington mill, cutting off the south-west corner of the parish. The Thames has also changed its course slightly, leaving a small strip of Cassington, once an island, on its southern bank. A small brook which rises on Bladon heath and flows south through the parish to the Thames formed the boundary between the villages of Cassington and Worton; the southern part of its course was straightened at enclosure in 1801. A smaller stream flows from north to south through Cassington village and then through drainage ditches into the Thames.

2.6 The land rises from 60 m on the wide alluvial flood plain of the Thames to high points of 111 m on Worton heath and 102 m in Burleigh wood on the northern boundary, and 98 m. at Purwell Farm in the west. Along the western boundary the land slopes steeply down to the Evenlode at 65 m. Most of the parish is open farmland, but Burleigh wood and Worton heath on the northern boundary are both wooded. The latter was a 19th- and 20th-century plantation, having been rough pasture and furze in 1797. Burleigh wood was said to have been taken into Wychwood forest by Henry II, and although by 1300 the Evenlode formed the eastern boundary of the forest, leaving Burleigh outside it, the area has remained woodland.

2.7 Cassington is unusual in remaining a relatively small village close to Oxford. It is surrounded to the north, east and west by rapidly growing rural service centres including Eynsham, Woodstock, Long Hanborough (all West Oxfordshire District), Yarnton and Begbroke (Cherwell District). Significant major development has already taken place within the local area with the Eynsham / Cassington Ward being particularly targeted with the further expansion of Eynsham village to the west (approximately 1000 homes) on top of new estates built over the last 10 years to the east of the village and the plans for a further 2,200 homes in the Saltcross Garden Village lying on the northern side of the A40 opposite

Eynsham, covering 531 acres of countryside with further options of expanding this development to the north. Woodstock has 300 homes currently being built and planning applications for a further 300 approved. Long Hanborough has new developments including 50 homes at Myrtle Farm, 25 at Oliver's Garage, 169 at Church Road, 120 at Hanborough Park, and 32 at Vanbrugh Meadows. North Leigh has also been subject to new development at Marlborough Gardens (50 houses), Shepherd's Walk (76 houses) and Bluebell Gardens (10 houses) and Freeland a further 41 houses at Oakland Grange. Cassington lies on the border of Cherwell District Council who through a now adopted Local Plan Partial Review include the loss of Green Belt land around Begbroke and Yarnton, fusing the villages and building approximately 4,400 new properties in the process. These developments are materially relevant to the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan as local infrastructure such as the transport network, provision of school places and drainage and sewerage are already under significant pressure. Cassington itself has had two developments in the last 10 years, Barrow Court and Williams Court (20 houses), the former built on green belt land, the latter a brown-field development for rental properties.

2.8 Cassington has a number of businesses located within its boundaries including a building materials reclamation yard, a nursery, a physiotherapy unit, a facility for the storage of equipment for fairground entertainers, as well as two public houses. Much of the surrounding land is devoted to agriculture and there are several farms to the north of the village. Close by on the Yarnton Road, at Jericho Farm and in the hamlet of Worton there are also rental units for small businesses as well as Worton Hall, a venue for meetings and celebratory activities such as wedding receptions, and the Worton Café and organic food shop. There are also business premises located at the southern end of Burleigh Road. The presence of the main A 40 road, built through the parish in 1931 and 1932, has attracted some light industry to the south-west corner of the parish, notably at the junction with the Eynsham road; firms established there include the Evenlode Truck Centre (1951) and Smith's Ready Mix Concrete Ltd. A number of people within the village also operate from home in small business enterprises which include rural industries (e.g. farming, landscaping and gardening), building and renovation of properties, recruitment and other activities. The majority of small businesses in West Oxfordshire (72.6%) employ 0-4 people. The largest employment sectors in Cassington and Eynsham are in retail (15%), education (12%), and health and social work (10%) with many people travelling to work in the major urban centre of Oxford or the service centres of Witney, Carterton and Kidlington (including Oxford Airport). A higher proportion of the population of Cassington and Witney than the national average work in managerial occupations, professional or associated occupations, and skilled trades whilst employment in administrative / secretarial and elementary occupations is lower than the national average.

2.9 Oxford being the location of two major universities and a large number of private and publically-funded schools is a major driver of employment in education. The universities also have driven the development of high technology companies including through surrounding science and industrial parks (e.g. located at Begbroke, around Oxford Airport, Eynsham, Witney). Oxford is the regional retail centre although the lack of public transport provision and cost of parking in the city means that many people in Cassington use nearby

villages or services centres for convenience shopping (e.g. Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Woodstock) and the retail and leisure facilities in larger towns in West Oxfordshire and Cherwell such as Witney, Kidlington and Bicester. The average distance to the place of work for West Oxfordshire is 9.1km, above the national average of 4.6km.

2.10 Cassington and the surrounding area has been occupied for at least 3000 years with evidence of Neolithic, Bronze Age, Saxon and Roman activities uncovered in archaeological investigations at Purwell Farm, Worton Farm, Cassington Mill and even at the recent construction site of houses built by Blenheim Estates along the Cassington-Yarnton Road. Within its boundaries there is a Saxon Cemetery and much evidence of previous occupation. The Anglo-Saxon name 'caersentun', meant 'tun where cress grows and by the time of the Domesday book in the 11th century it was known as Cersetone. The population of Cassington and the nearby hamlet of Worton fluctuated through medieval times. There was also the village of Somerford just north of the Thames but this was abandoned in the 14th Century. The church of St Peters was constructed in 1123 by Geoffrey de Clinton and Eynsham Abbey. Godstow Abbey also built up an estate in the area but from the 14th century onwards the local economy declined possibly as a result of absentee landlords. The Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th Century led to further decline in the village as land holdings were broken up and sold off, mainly to Christ Church College, Oxford and to the Blenheim Estate.

2.11 Cassington village is divided by a small stream into two parts, known in the 20th century as the upper and lower village although both are on the same level; they may have been called west and east ends in the 16th century when property in the east end of Cassington was recorded. The main village streets, the Yarnton or Eynsham road and Bell Lane, form a V pointing northwards; a footpath, diverted southwards in the 19th century by the building of the school, links the upper and lower village. The upper village centres on a large, roughly triangular green. The surname 'at green' recorded in 1316 suggests that the green was an early feature of the village topography, but its exact form has changed from time to time. In 1797 it was smaller and further north than in 1982, on land later occupied by the 19th-century school and vicarage garden. On the western side of the green is a row of 18th- and 19th-century terraced cottages, including the Red Lion inn, of local rubble with thatched or tiled roofs. There is another terrace of similar date on the west side of the Yarnton road, north of the green, and a short terrace of heavily restored houses, some occupied as alms-houses in 1982, in Church Lane. The church lies on the southern edge of the upper village, north-west of the former manor house, Reynolds Farm, and away from the main streets. The 19th-century village school stands on the north-east side of the green, and south of it is its later 20th-century replacement. The other notable 19th-century addition to the upper village was Manor Farm, formerly Cassington House, a red brick building of two storeys with attics, set back from the road in a large garden.

2.12 The lower village centres on a small green. On the east side of it is the former Bell Inn, from which a datestone of 1688 has been recovered. On the south is the Old Manor, an L-shaped building of coursed rubble with a stone tiled roof, built c. 1735 by Roger Bouchier, fellow of Worcester College, Oxford. It comprises a large room, called in 1783 a dining

room, which rises almost the full height of the house, two smaller rooms on the ground floor and two on the first floor, all with their original panelling. The kitchen and servants' quarters were in an outbuilding across a small courtyard. The house has no connexion with any manor; its name, first recorded c. 1930, may have been given it by the historian Henry Minn who occupied the house from that date. In Horsemere Lane, leading south from the green, are a number of 18th century cottages, including Bell Cottage dated 1727 and Thames Mead Farm, the former Godstow manor house. In Bell Lane, which runs north from the green to the Yarnton road, is Lime Cottage, a substantial 18th-century house extended in the 19th century, and a terrace of largely 18th-century cottages repaired in 1836. Several terraced cottages and a larger house, Ivydene at the start of the footpath to Worton, were added to the lower village in the 19th century, as was the Primitive Methodist chapel of 1870 on the footpath between the upper and the lower village.

2.13 Significant changes were brought to Cassington with the inclosure of 1801. Roads were substantially altered, with the road to Bladon being straightened and moved eastwards and that to Eynsham being moved around 1/4 mile to the north. Between 1800 and 1802 the duke of Marlborough also built a short canal from the Thames to a wharf on the Cassington to Eynsham road. It was at this point that the farms lying to the north of the village were built. The L-shaped Burley farmhouse and outbuildings were built soon after inclosure (the date 1801 is on one of the roof timbers), but the builders re-used earlier material including 18th- century beams, doors and mouldings, and a datestone of 1605. Purwell Farm, whose plan is almost identical to that of Burley Farm, was also built immediately after inclosure, again re-using 18th-century materials. The materials may have come from houses in Cassington village demolished by the Blenheim estate. Jericho Farm was built in 1804.

2.14 Since the 1920s Cassington, like other villages near Oxford, has grown considerably. Much of the development has been along the Eynsham road, where 12 council houses were built c. 1930. There has been much infilling in the village, notably at the Tennis, west of Bell Lane, and in Elms Road in the upper village, and in Bell Close and St. Peter's Close in the lower, where estates of council and private houses have been built. This building seems to have been based on availability of land within the village. The Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal (2008) describes much of the 20th-century infill found in the village (most notably The Tennis and St. Peter's Close) as not responding with sensitivity to the appearance and aesthetic quality of Cassington's historic core. However, it identifies the recent corner development on the east side of the street between the upper green and St. Peter's Church as entirely in keeping with the form, scale and detailing of the village.

2.15 Worton consists of a single street; at its west end is the Old Rectory, a small 17th- or 18th-century building of local rubble which was greatly enlarged c. 1840; it was in the earlier 19th century the farmhouse for the rectory estate. At the east end of the street is Rectory Farm, dated 1808 and surrounded by modern farm buildings. Between the two houses are several 19th- or possibly 18th-century cottages, recently restored.

2.16 The core of Cassington Village, including the 12th Century church of St Peter's and the buildings of 17th and 18th Century origin, has been designated a Conservation Area. The church is a Grade 1 Listed building and 12 of the houses are Grade 2. A number of features in the graveyard of the church are also listed Grade 2 and the village War Memorial was designated as Grade 2 listed just in 2020.

2.17 The most significant areas for biodiversity close to Cassington are the Lowland Meadows and Floodplain Grazing Marsh located to the south of the village along the northern side of the Thames. These meadows date back to medieval times and include Oxey Mead, Pixey and Yarnton Meads, Cassington Meadows and Oxford Meadows. These sites are either Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). They host a spectacular diversity of meadow plants, including the snake's head fritillary, insects and some species of wetland birds such as curlews and lapwings as well as wildfowl from the river. 97% of this type of habitat was lost between 1930 and 1984 (Wildlife Trusts, 2012) so it is a nationally scarce community of plants and animals. To the south of the River Thames there are more flood meadows as well as Wytham Woods (SSSI), an area which is notable as being a site where the University of Oxford has run long-term experiments and observations on many aspects of ecology. It is a semi-ancient woodland with parts dating back to the ice age and hosts 500 species of plants, a wealth of woodland habitats, and 800 species of butterflies and moths amongst other animals.

2.18 To the north of Cassington there are several semi-natural woodlands. Pinsey Woods is a good example, which has a combination of natural woods with a considerable diversity of plants as well as conifer plantations which are of little value for nature. There are also small patches of lowland meadow and semi-improved grassland.

2.19 Both within and surrounding Cassington are several zones within the Natural England Habitat Network. These include areas of habitat restoration (e.g. Worton gravel pits), Network Enhancement Zone 1 (fields to the east of Cassington) Network Enhancement Zone 2 (south of A40) and Network Expansion Zone (areas surrounding the village especially to the north west and south). These are detailed in the Green Infrastructure Plan.

2.20 Other potentially restricting factors in terms of development in Cassington exist. One that concerns residents is flooding. Cassington is at low risk of flooding from the River Thames to the south and the River Evenlode to the west. However, the village is at risk from surface flooding events even at a 1 in 30-year event. Elm's Road appears to be particularly vulnerable from these events which result from surface water draining off the fields to the north of Cassington. This is consistent with flooding of properties on Elm's Road in 2007. Foxwell Court, St Peter's Close, Horsemere Lane, Foxwell End and Reynold's Farm are also at risk of flooding from extreme surface water events. Outside the village Jericho Farm and Worton are also vulnerable to flooding and the road junction to Worton Farm was flooded over the winter of 2020/2021. Following the 2007 flood events action was taken to mitigate future surface-water flooding including the clearing of previously blocked drains and the building of a drainage pond behind the south west corner of the playing fields. Since this

time there have been no further property flooding events in Cassington village although the threat remains.

2.21 A further flood risk to the village is the existence of an ageing high-pressure water line which runs from Farmoor Reservoir to Banbury which lies to the north of the village. This buried water main crosses the track leading to Purwell Farm where there are several concrete manhole covers. The main has failed previously in other locations and has caused considerable flooding issues and may represent a significant risk to village households and even possibly a threat to life. There are also concerns with respect to the ability of the local drainage and sewerage system to sustain further development around the village and local area.

2.22 It is also noted that in October 2021 Cassington was subjected to a Category T2/T3 (moderate to strong) tornado which caused significant damage to trees as well as to buildings, walls and other items. The same day a Category T4 (severe) tornado struck Burleigh Wood to the north of the village. This is the second occurrence of tornados in the area in and around Eynsham and Cassington in less than 10 years. Whether these are exceptional events or whether occurrence of such extreme weather is increasing is unknown at the present time.

2.23 Exploitation of the gravel along the Thames began in the 1930s and continued for c. 30 years but had ceased by 1982. It has left its mark on the landscape around Cassington, including the filled gravel pits south of Worton and land lowered to the east of Purwell Farm. Valuable resources remain in the vicinity of the village especially to the south and west mainly comprising sharp sand and gravel and Fuller's earth.

2.24 Transport is significant problem in West Oxfordshire. Cassington has limited access to public transport with a single bus stop outside of the village on the A40 and a relatively limited bus service into Oxford. The A40 is extremely congested with more than 22,000 journeys a day where it passes Cassington. A cycle route is available to Oxford but to reach other destinations in the local area requires the use of roads, many of which are dangerous for cyclists. Asides from making road journeys difficult congestion in and around Cassington is also a source of air and noise pollution. Although there are plans to place bus lanes on the A40 as well as an 800-space park and ride at Eynsham, plans to build many more houses in the area will likely mean issues of congestion remain or get worse. A railway has now been suggested which will run to the north of Cassington, but no stop is planned to service the village. It is important that plans for development within Cassington and around it consider the impacts on the already significant traffic congestion problems in the vicinity of the village. Potential mitigations to reduce dependence on private motor vehicles are discussed in the Green Infrastructure report.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Parish lies within West Oxfordshire District situated in the county of Oxfordshire. WODC is the local planning authority for the area.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The following paragraphs of the latest NPPF version published in July 2021 are considered especially relevant:

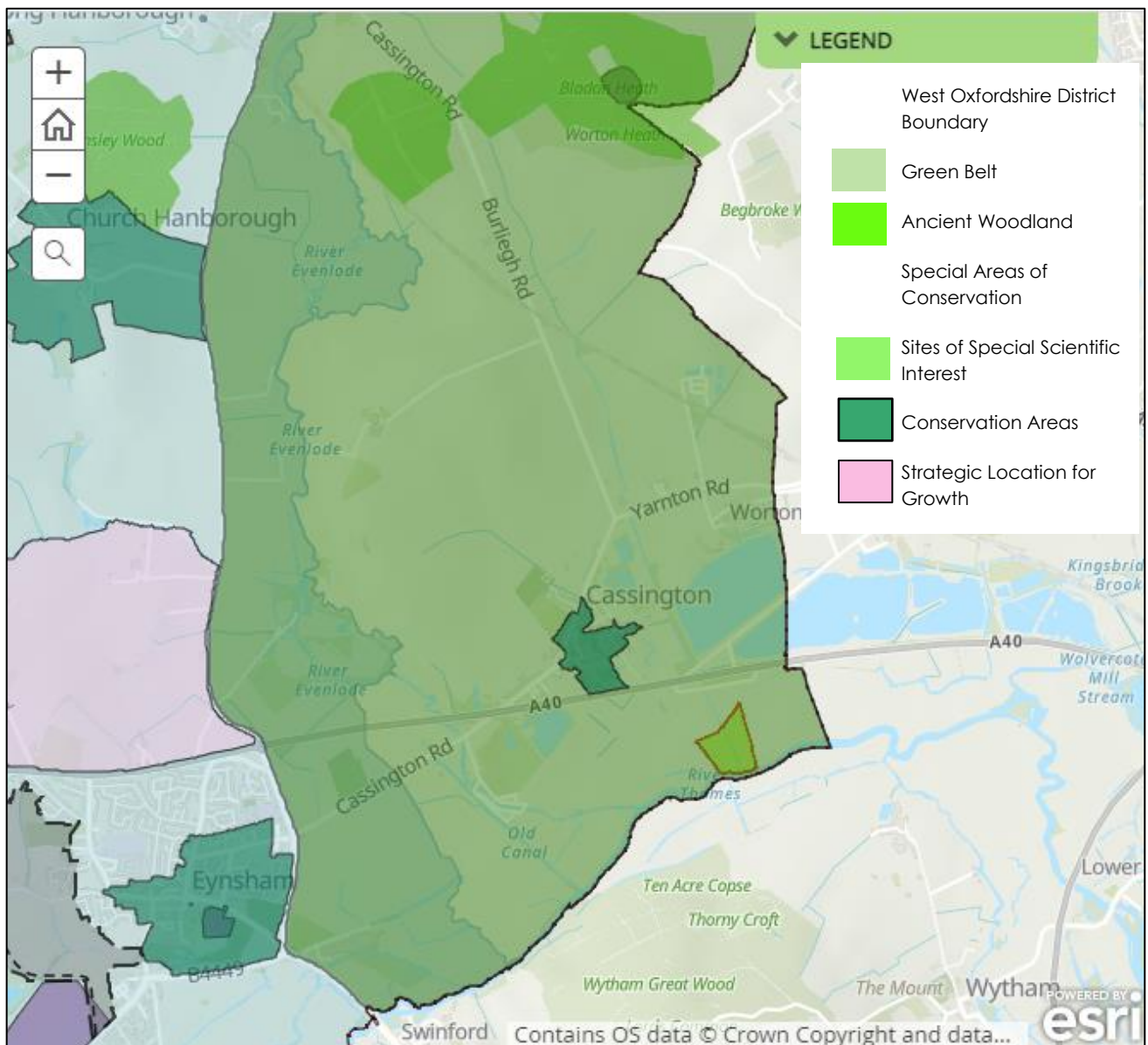
- Neighbourhood planning (§28 - §30)
- Healthy and Safe Communities (§92)
- Community facilities (§93)
- High quality design (§128)
- Proposals affecting the Green Belt (§149)
- The Natural Environment (§174)
- Biodiversity (§179)
- The Historic Environment (§190)

3.3 The Government has also set out a requirement for the provision of First Homes in a Written Ministerial statement on 24 May 2021. These requirements were subsequently incorporated into National Planning Practice Guidance. As the Parish is 'washed over' by Green Belt, First Homes Rural Exception Sites is unable to come forward in The Parish. However, this does not preclude First Homes forming part of the affordable housing contributions through infill or Rural Exception Sites allowed for by adopted policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan. It is anticipated that the forthcoming Local Plan will deal with this matter appropriately.

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY

3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan which primarily comprises *The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted 27 September 2018) and the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy*.

3.5 Cassington is defined as a 'Village' in the settlement hierarchy and remains 'washed over' by the Oxford Green Belt in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP 2031) (see Plan B overleaf). The WOLP 2031 makes no development allocations in The Parish and defaults to National Planning Policy provisions on the Green Belt for managing development proposals. The WOLP 2031 includes a very large 'Salt Cross Garden Village' north of Eynsham on the western boundary of the Parish.



Plan B: WOLP 2031 Policies Map

3.6 The most relevant policies in the WOLP 2031 are set out below:

- **Policy OS2 Locating Development in the Right Places** – which includes a settlement hierarchy defining Cassington as a ‘Village’ and sets out a series of key design principles to shape sustainable development including defaulting to National Planning Policy provisions on the Green Belt for managing development proposals.
- **Policy OS4 High Quality Design** – requiring new development to respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality.
- **Policy H1 Amount and Distribution of Housing** – requiring 5,596 homes in the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area (of which the Parish is a part). 2,750 of this total is to meet Oxford’s unmet housing need and will be delivered through a strategic urban

extension to the west of Eynsham and 'Salt Cross Garden Village' to the north of the A40 on the western boundary of Cassington.

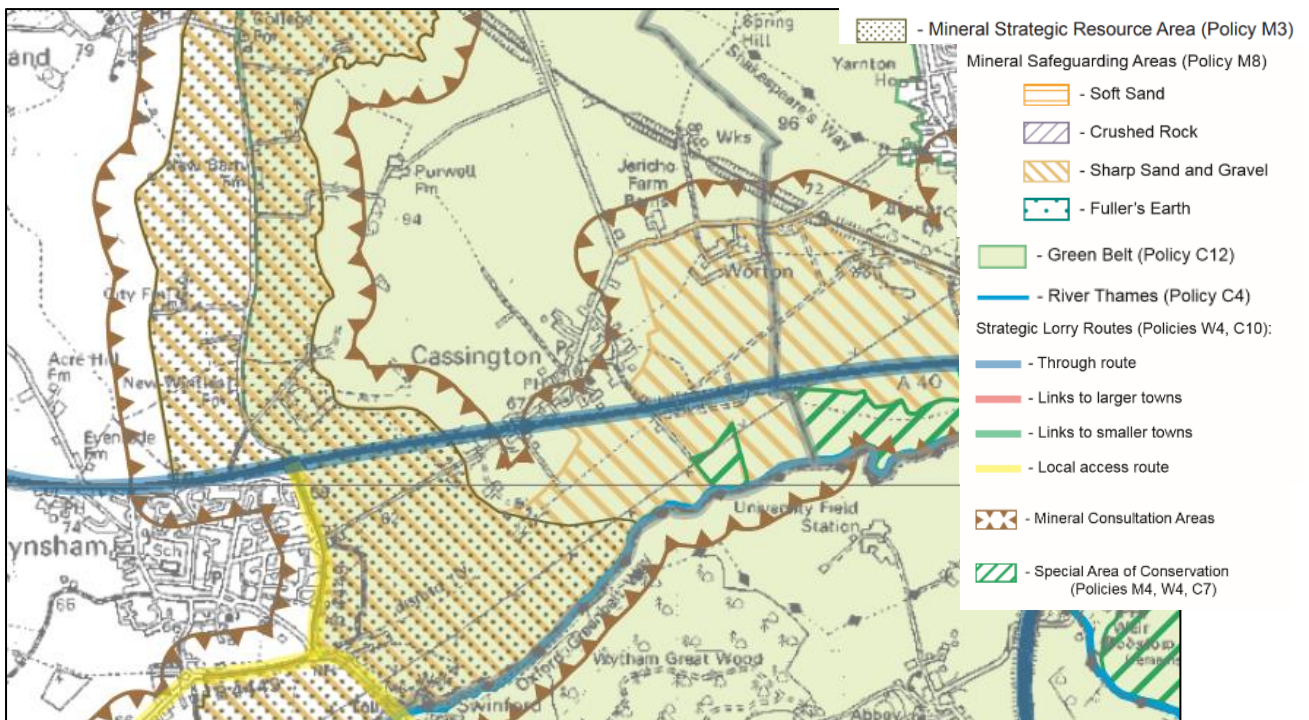
- **Policy H2 Delivery of New Homes** – allowing additional development in Villages in certain circumstances. For Cassington this would mean defaulting to National Planning Policy provisions on Green Belt in managing development proposals. Whilst §140 allows for detailed amendments to Green Belt boundaries through neighbourhood plans, WOLP 2031 does not establish a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries which is a requirement in the first instance (see Policy EW10).
- **Policy H3 Affordable Housing** – defining the Parish as lying within a High Value Zone where 50% affordable housing provision is required on schemes of > 10 homes.
- **Policy H4 Type & Mix of Homes** – requiring housing schemes to provide or contribute towards the provision of good, balanced mix of property types and sizes
- **Policy E5 Local Services and Community Facilities** - supporting the development and retention of local services and community facilities to meet local needs and to promote social wellbeing, interests, interaction and healthy inclusive communities.
- **Policy T1 Sustainable Transport** – giving priority to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a good range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised, due to opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- **Policy T3 Public Transport, Walking and Cycling** – requiring all new development to be located and designed to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- **Policy EH2 Landscape Character** – requiring new development to respect and enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive natural and manmade features of the local landscape.
- **Policy EH3 Biodiversity** - ensuring development does not prevent the achievement of the aims of the Conservation Target Areas and protecting the Cassington Meadows SAC from development which will have an adverse impact.
- **Policy EH4 Public Realm and Green Infrastructure** – protecting and enhancing existing areas of public space and green infrastructure assets and creating new multi-functional areas of space to achieve improvements to the network.
- **Policy EH9 Historic Environment** – requiring all development proposals to conserve or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of the historic environment, and to conserve or enhance heritage assets, and their significance and settings (in relation to the Cassington Conservation Area and to its wealth of listed buildings)
- **Policy EH10 Conservation Areas** – permitting proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting.
- **Policy EH11 Listed Buildings** – permitting proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building
- **Policy EH12 Traditional Buildings** – setting requirements for determining applications that involve the conversion, extension or alteration of traditional buildings

- **Policy EH13 Historic Landscape Character** – setting requirements for determining applications that affect the historic character of the landscape or townscape
- **Policy EW10 Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area Strategy** – proposing that the focus of new development to locations outside the Parish and limits new development in The Parish to meeting local community and business needs, steering development towards the rural service centres and larger villages. The policy also seeks to protect the Oxford Green Belt.

3.7 The Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP) was submitted for examination in February 2021. Following hearing sessions in June – July 2021 the inspector confirmed that the AAP examination is now paused to enable the District Council to undertake some additional work on the phasing of key infrastructure. Alongside this Grosvenor Developments Ltd working on behalf of the landowners at the garden village site submitted an outline application in July 2020 which is currently under consideration.

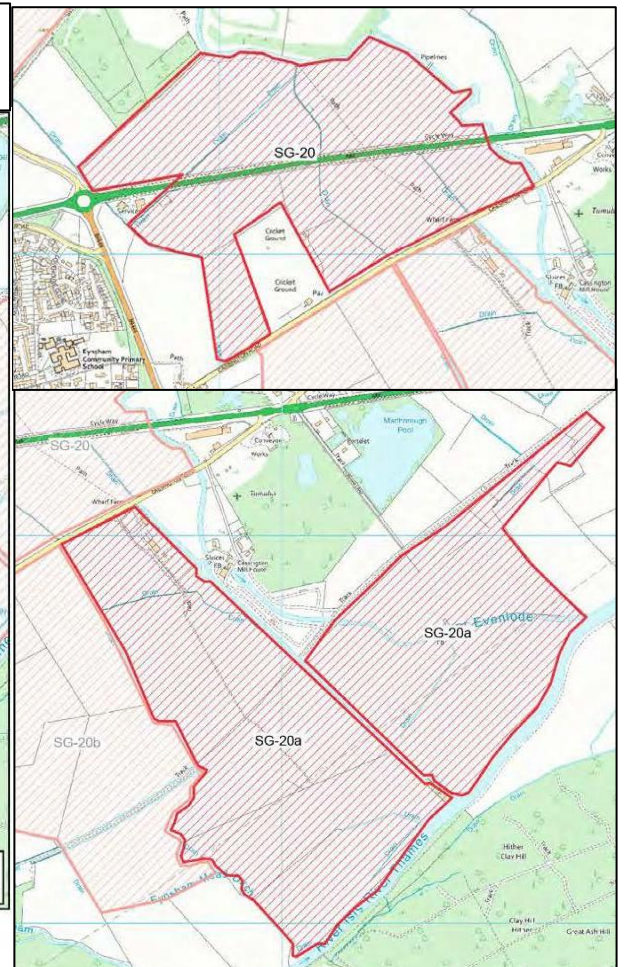
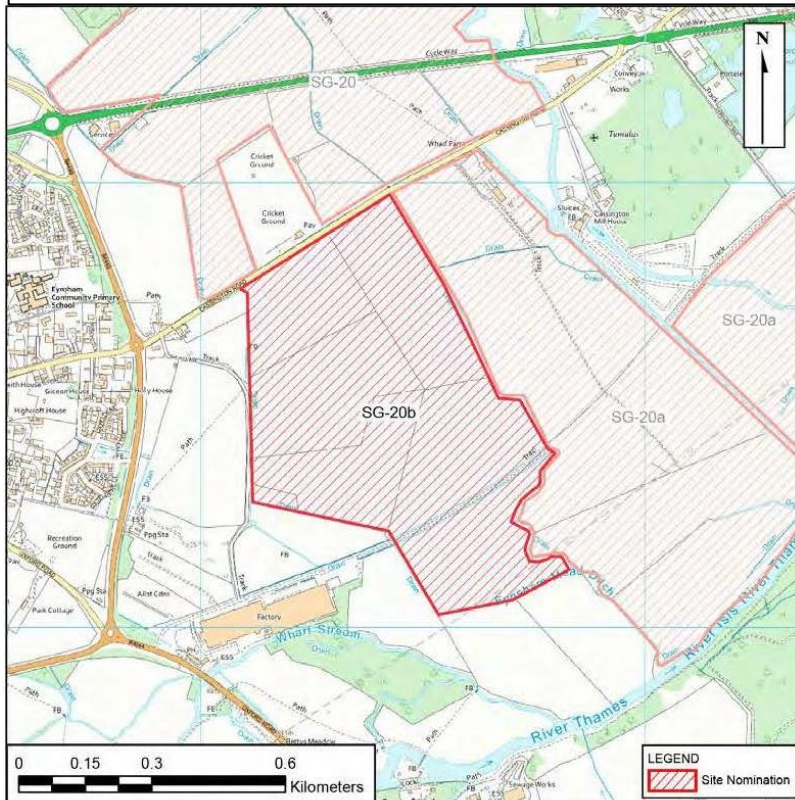
3.8 Western parts of the parish are designated as a Mineral Strategic Resource Area for sharp sand and gravel (Policy M3) and southern parts of the parish is designated as a Minerals Safeguarding Area for sharp sand and gravel (Policy M8) in *the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy* (see Plan C overleaf). The A40 is defined as a Strategic Lorry Through Route (Policies W4 and C10). *The Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations* is currently being prepared. It will provide and identify sites for minerals and waste management development and allocate sites required to provide additional capacity. The latest version included Land between Eynsham and Cassington as a preferred option for a new quarry for sand and gravel extraction.

3.9 In January – March 2021 a consultation on an updated Site Assessment Methodology and Interim Sustainability Appraisal was consulted on ahead of a revised preferred options consultation. There is currently a delay in the production of this next consultation and an updated Minerals and Waste Development Scheme setting out a revised timetable is currently being prepared and was expected to be published in October. Three nominations for Land between Eynsham and Cassington is currently being considered, see Plan D overleaf. As minerals and waste matters are defined as 'excluded development' for Neighbourhood Plans, the Parish Council will continue to engage in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan preparation process.



Plan C: Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Part 1 Policies Map

**Plan D: Minerals and Waste Site Allocations Part 2
nominated sites**



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3.10 As part of the Housing and Growth Deal secured by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is a strategic planning document that will provide a strategic policy framework for the administrative county area of Oxfordshire. A consultation on the scale and broad locations of spatial growth options, among other matters, ran until 8 October with adoption anticipated in May/June 2023.

3.11 The consultation anticipates that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will contain a mix of the five spatial options presented:

- Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations – the options exclude new significant level growth at villages and new settlements do not form part of this strategy option.
- Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth – the option focusses on new or extended urban extension on the edge of the City.
- Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs – the A40 corridor is considered to be included in this option. The consultation anticipates a new national rail strategy from Government to be published shortly which will be taken into account in the next stage of the process.
- Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations – no business locations are identified in The Parish, however other areas such as at Eynsham, Yarnton and north Oxford in close proximity to The Parish are included in this option.
- Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities – the option includes extensions to allocations, such as that identified in the WODC and Cherwell Local Plans. It is noted that limited rural growth will feature in the next stage of the process.

3.12 It is clear that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will also have an impact on the village. As the Neighbourhood Plan is expected to be examined prior to the adoption of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, its reasoning and evidence base has been taken into consideration during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, and it will prepare for potential growth in the area through expressing the identity of the existing village community, particularly through the Cassington Green Infrastructure Plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING POLICY

3.13 The made neighbourhood plan of Eynsham, adjacent to Cassington, sets out a vision that seeks to ensure that both new and existing residents will enjoy the same benefits of living in Eynsham as current residents do with new development making the area more attractive.

CASSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA

3.14 The Conservation Area was designated by West Oxfordshire District Council in 1992 (see Plan B). Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, to

protect areas of special interest as opposed to individual buildings. Since 1967 some 8,000 conservation areas have been designated in England, including 51 in West Oxfordshire District. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

3.15 The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character. The Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the special character and details contributions to its appearance.

4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

4.1 During the preparation of the Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure plans village residents were kept informed of progress and consulted on their thoughts on what policies and wider considerations were appropriate for Cassington. The Neighbourhood Planning Committee also verbally reported to the Parish Council on progress. O'Neill Homer, the consultants contracted to assist with development of the Neighbourhood plan also were in regular touch with the Parish Council. The Green Infrastructure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan were presented to the public, mainly villagers, on the 26th June, 2021 at the Cassington Village Hall. This meeting was aimed at informing the village on the contents of the Green Infrastructure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan which was being put together by O'Neill Homer for the Parish Council. It included a presentation on the Green Infrastructure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan and a display of the slides in the presentation for viewing by the public. A questionnaire on the Green Infrastructure and Neighbourhood Plans was also put together to obtain feedback for further input to both the Green Infrastructure and Neighbourhood plans. Any verbal feedback from the meeting was also noted for inclusion. For those not able to attend the meeting, the presentation, the Green Infrastructure Plan and the Questionnaire were all placed on the Parish Council website. The slides for the presentation were also displayed in the Sports Pavillion during the late summer Cassington Picnic for the village on the 4th September, 2021 and further questionnaires distributed for attending residents. Finally, the questionnaire was also circulated in the September 2021 issue of the Cassington and Worton News (CAWN), the village magazine which is circulated by post to most residents of the village.

4.2 The questionnaire was designed to collect information on a range of issues related to the Green Infrastructure and Neighbourhood Plans. It is available at: <https://cassington-pc.gov.uk/documents/neighbourhood-plan-questionnaire/>. Sixty residents of Cassington returned the questionnaires and responses were analysed and presented graphically in the Analysis of Village Questionnaires and available at: <https://cassington-pc.gov.uk/documents/neighbourhood-plan-questionnaire-analysis/>. The most common class of respondents was between 51 and 70 years of age with most people having lived in the village for between 1 – 30 years (largest class was 1-10 years). Some residents have been in Cassington for more than 70 years. Most households comprised two adults.

4.3 The areas of flood risk mitigation, traffic issues, maintaining the character of the village and maintaining its outdoor spaces were all viewed as important by the majority of respondents. Biodiversity and climate mitigation were viewed as less of a priority, although they still scored highly for the majority of village residents. These issues were the focus of the Green Infrastructure report which subsequently informed the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.4 Residents were asked about the importance of village amenities including the school, church, village hall, green spaces, sports facilities, children's play facilities, public houses, the forest school and Worton Café. All amenities were considered as highly

important by the residents with the forest school and Worton Café being rated slightly lower probably as they are used by fewer people in the village. When asked what amenities were missing from the village, a village shop was by far what most respondents felt was needed. Other important amenities included a bus stop and a better footpath network. These results were consistent with what had been covered in the Green Infrastructure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan but some are non-planning matters or matters which planning has a limited impact on.

4.5 Questions 8 and 9 gathered the views of residents on transport and traffic. 40% of residents felt that traffic through the village was unsafe mainly because of speeding vehicles and the narrowness of roads and footways. The overwhelming view from residents was that Cassington suffered from a significant lack of sustainable transport options. The largest need identified was for improved connectivity to regular bus services as is discussed above. Second in terms of priority is improved cycle path links with several mentioning a cycle link to Long Hanborough and the railway station as being particularly useful but also links to Yarnton and through to Botley in Oxford. These topics are specifically addressed in the Green Infrastructure Plan and reflect planning issues at local to district level.

4.6 Residents were asked about the level of housing development appropriate for the village, what type of housing was required and where it should be built. Most residents felt the village should grow from between 10 to 20 houses per annum. The greatest need was perceived to be for 1-2 bedroom and 3-bedroom houses, although there was some support for rental properties and 4-bedroom houses. Preferred building sites included brown-field and infill housing although there was some support for building in the surrounding area. Least support was for building on the green spaces in the village. Again, these responses are reflected in the Green Infrastructure report and have been considered in the Neighbourhood Plan. They are a useful guide for developers who may consider building in the village.

VISION

“Cassington will have grown successfully as a community whilst protecting the openness and permanence of the Green Belt. New homes have addressed local need and these schemes have been well-designed to ensure the rural character of the village has been preserved and the significance of the Conservation Area has been sustained and enhanced.

The community has worked successfully with landowners to improve access and links for people and wildlife that surround the village and connect it with the wider countryside. Whilst change in the wider area has been significant, it has provided opportunity for improved connectivity of the multi-functional green infrastructure network of the Parish.”

OBJECTIVES

To protect and improve the ecological value and connectivity of the green infrastructure assets of the village and wider parish.

To create and integrate a safe and convenient walking and cycling network to serve the village and improve access to the wider countryside.

To conserve the special heritage assets of the village and its landscape setting.

To manage growth in the village through sensitive infill and affordable housing schemes that meet local needs.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE POLICIES

5.1 The following policies relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area of Cassington Parish. They focus on specific planning matters that are of greatest interest to the local community.

5.2 There are many parts of the Parish that are not affected by these policies, and there are many other policy matters that have been left to the adopted and forthcoming West Oxfordshire Local Plan to cover. This has avoided unnecessary repetition of policies between this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, though they have a mutual, helpful inter-dependence. It is anticipated that WODC will take the content of this Neighbourhood Plan into consideration during the preparation of the new Local Plan 2040.

5.3 Each policy is numbered and titled, and it is shown in bold italics. Where necessary, the area to which it will apply is shown on the Policies Map attached to the document. After each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy, how it will be applied and, where helpful, how it relates to other development plan policies.

POLICY CAS1: CASSINGTON NATURE RECOVERY NETWORK

- A. The Parish contains a variety of green and blue infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. The Neighbourhood Plan designates this as a Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of promoting nature recovery and for mitigating climate change. The Network comprises Cassington Meadows SSSI, woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi-improved grassland and other land of biodiversity value.**
- B. Development proposals that affect the Network must maintain and improve the functionality of the Network, including delivering at least 10% net gain to general biodiversity assets, in the design of their layouts and landscaping schemes.**
- C. Proposals that will lead to the loss of land lying within the Network and that will undermine its integrity or affects its functionality will be resisted, unless suitable alternative provision can be provided. Development proposals that will lead to the extension of the Network, which includes the delivery of additional allotments for the use of the village, will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.**

5.4 The policy defines the presence of green and blue infrastructure assets in the Parish with a view to protect them from harmful development and to encourage better habitat connectivity in the future. By doing so it supports WOLP Policies EH3 and EH4 on Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

5.5 The Cassington Green Infrastructure Plan attached as Appendix A shows that Cassington village, Jericho Farm and Worton are vulnerable to surface-water flooding. Historic natural flood management practices have improved the rate of occurrences but properties within the parish remains vulnerable. Despite the alteration of the natural environment within the confines of Cassington village and the surrounding land as a result of agriculture and transport development significant biodiversity remains within the village and in some areas of surrounding land. Some of this biodiversity is under threat from growing human influence in the village and surrounding areas.

5.6 Alongside Cassington Meadows SSSI, there is a variety of other priority habitat areas in the Parish. A number of these assets form part of the Core Zone of the Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network prepared by Wild Oxfordshire. A large part of the Parish has also

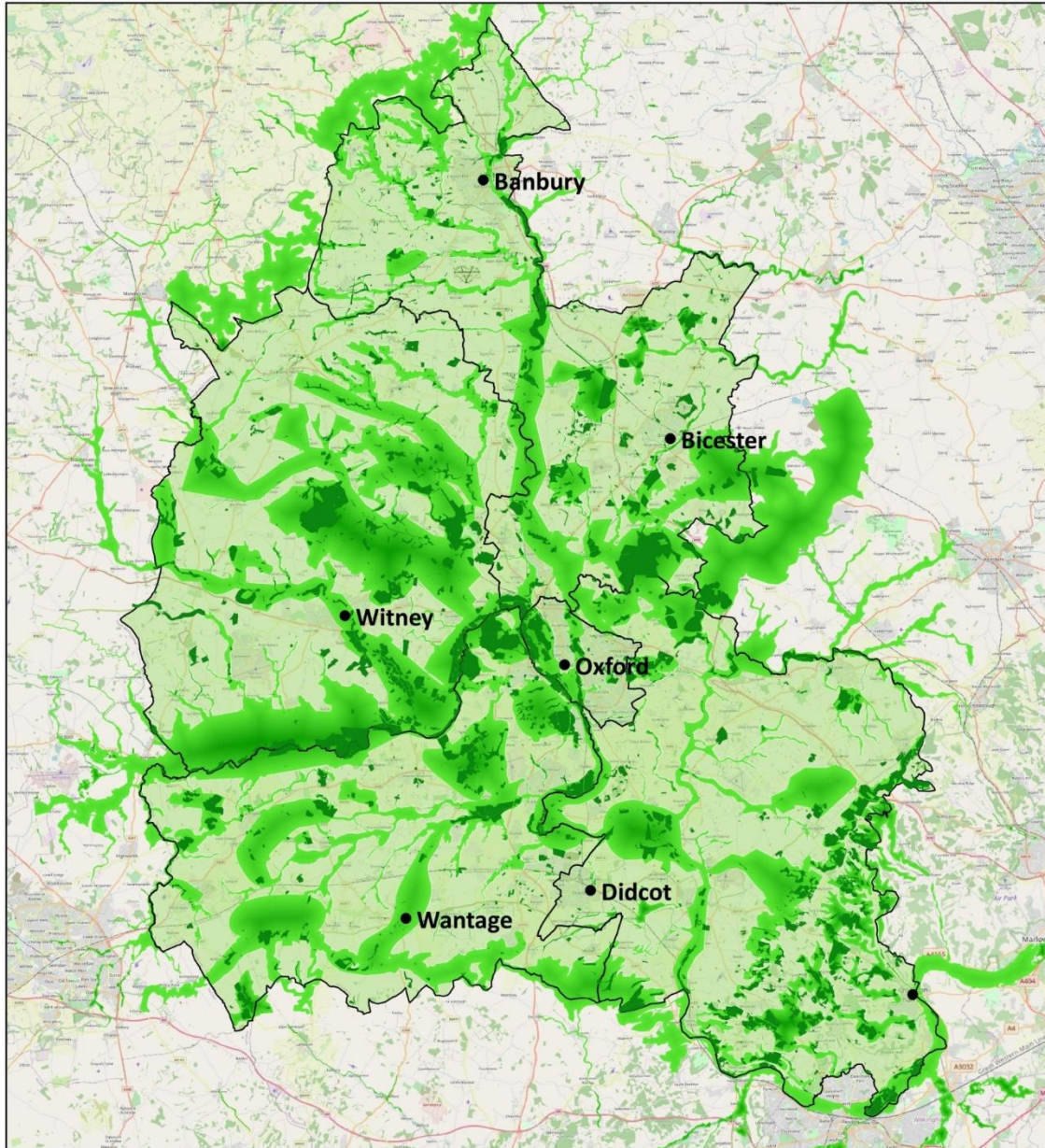
been identified as a Recovery Zone. Although it is not expected that the village will see any significant development in the plan period, there may be the opportunity from even modest schemes that lie within or adjoin an asset, that are acceptable in other planning terms, to enhance or connect these assets which may also play a part in delivering the aims of the Recovery Zone of the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network (see Plan E overleaf). Opportunities include proposed wildlife corridors as shown in the Policies Map, and schemes making provision for wildlife in the design of their proposals, particularly swift bricks, house martin nest boxes, bat box bricks, insect bricks and hedgehog holes in fences between gardens and external natural environments.

5.7 The policy therefore requires that all development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. The Policy Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network, for example in complementing existing biodiversity value through the design of the landscape scheme. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

5.8 The Network will become more valuable over time, and although the majority of these features are physically attached to enable habitat connectivity, some features of the Network are not. This does not devalue their integral biodiversity or recreational value and at some point in the future an opportunity may arise to achieve similar connectivity. The Neighbourhood Plan also signals to the Responsible Authority that it should consider that natural flood management measures and habitat provision will play a major role in its future Local Nature Recovery Strategy in terms of its application in Cassington.

5.9 The restoration of mineral sites can often bring positive environmental impacts and could improve the biodiversity and the Nature Recovery Network within an area. If a planning application was submitted for mineral extraction, it would be a County Matter application. As a County Matter, the development would therefore be excluded under part 61K of the Localism Act 2011. That being the case, Policy CAS1 would have no effect on for example a proposal to extract mineral from the site. However, once the site has been worked and restored, the policy would come into effect for any future development.

Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network



Key

Nature Recovery Network

- Core Zone
- Recovery Zone
- Wider Landscape Zone

Boundaries

- District Boundaries

0 5 10 km



Map produced by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre in 2020
 Contains TVERC data
 Contains OS data (c) Licence number 100023343
 Contains OpenStreetMap data
 Contains Environment Agency information (c) Environment Agency and/or database right

Plan E: Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network, Source: Wild Oxfordshire

POLICY CAS2: ACTIVE TRAVEL

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Active and Sustainable Travel Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of supporting active travel in the Parish.**
- B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should sustain, and where practicable, enhance the multi-functionality of the Network by virtue of their layout, means of access and landscape treatment.**
- C. Proposals that will harm the functioning or connectivity of the Network will not be supported. Proposals which fragment the routes should be resisted, unless this can be replaced in a way that improves the overall Network.**

5.10 The policy seeks to encourage safe, accessible and convenient means of walking and cycling in the parish. It refines WOLP Policy T1 by providing a local element to its provisions and reflects the aims of WOLP Policy EH4 that aims to protect and enhance existing green infrastructure.

5.11 There are 5 main footpath routes out of the village. Few of the paths are suitable for those who require the use of mobility aids, such as wheelchairs or scooters; or for parents with babies in prams or buggies and many crossing points are hazardous and unpleasant. There is only one cycle path close to Cassington, the A40 cycle paths which are located at present both on the north and south side of the carriageway. There are, however, several issues with this cycle track. Public transport is also lacking in Cassington and the only bus stops are located on the A40.

5.12 The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes, through tree planting for example. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission. The extension of, and improvements to, existing paths has been identified as opportunities to improve the Network and these are shown on the Policies Map at the end of this document.

POLICY CAS3: DARK SKIES

A. All development proposals should be designed to minimise the occurrence of light pollution. The Parish Council will expect such schemes to employ energy-efficient forms of lighting that also reduce light scatter and comply with the current guidelines established for rural areas by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP).

B. Proposals for all development will be expected to demonstrate how it is intended to prevent light pollution. Information on these measures must be submitted with applications, and where a development would potentially impact on light levels in the area, an appropriate lighting scheme will be secured by planning condition.

5.13 Cassington village has never had street lighting installed which means there is a low level of disturbance to both people living in the village from streetlights and also to nature. This also makes the village a good location for star gazing with telescopes. At present the majority of residents are against installation of street lighting so new housing developments, modifications to the roads, such as traffic calming and other developments in the future should either maintain the “no street lights” policy or use lighting that is designed not to cause light pollution.

5.14 Many councils across England support measures to protect and enhance the dark night sky. The policy reflects the purpose and objectives of policies EH2 and EH8 on Pollution and Artificial Light of the WOLP. For all proposed developments, factors that will be considered when deciding the appropriateness of artificial lighting, include the location, the hours of operation, the quantity of lights proposed, brightness and control, and direction of the beam.

POLICY CAS4: CASSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA

Development proposals should sustain and enhance the historic environment, particularly the special architectural and historic significance of the designated Cassington Conservation Area and its setting. Features identified as positive characteristics of the Conservation Area and its immediate setting are defined in the Cassington Design Code attached as Appendix B, to which all proposals must have full regard.

POLICY CAS5: DESIGN CODE FOR CASSINGTON VILLAGE

Development proposals in Cassington Village should have full regard to the essential design considerations and general design principles set out in the Cassington Design Code attached as Appendix B.

5.15 The policies establish the importance of high-quality design of new development in the Conservation Area, its setting and the remainder of the village to maintain and enhance its character. It directs applicants bringing forward proposals in and around the village to the design codes contained in the Cassington Design Code attached at Appendix B. The content of the Code forms part of the policy , but has been attached as an Appendix purely for practical presentational reasons.

5.16 The Code refines the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2015 and establishes the principles of essential design considerations within the two distinct area typologies of the village, its nucleated core and linear extensions. These design considerations set out features of each typology that make it distinctive, and the extent of each is defined in the Design Code Document. In turn it complements Policies OS4 and EH9 of the WOLP by highlighting particular characteristics of the Parish.

5.17 The policies require that development proposals demonstrate, where relevant to the nature and location of the proposal, that full regard has been paid to the Code. The policies do not advocate pastiche or historic solution, however it is important that any new development demonstrates a connection with local character and place making.

POLICY CAS6: LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS

A. In addition to the locally listed building identified in the Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings and structures, as shown on the Policies Map, as Locally Listed Buildings by way of their local architectural or historic interest for the application of WOLP Policy EH9 Historic Environment:

i. The Bell

ii. Manor Farmhouse

iii. Drystone Walls in various locations in the village

5.18 The policy identifies certain buildings or structures as Locally Listed Buildings (also known as non-designated heritage assets) in order to give them additional protection as heritage assets, in recognition of the important contribution they make to the special character of the Parish in line with Policy EH9 of the WOLP.

5.19 The appraisal in the Design Code Document attached as Appendix B identifies and describes their local interest in addition to those Locally Listed Buildings identified as part of the Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal in 2007.

POLICY CAS7: LOCAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following community facilities, as shown on the Policies Map:

- i. St Peter's Church of England School**
- ii. Upper and Lower Village Greens**
- iii. Cassington Village Hall**
- iv. St Peter's Church**
- v. Cassington Allotments**
- vi. The Pavilion, Sports Field and Recreational Equipment**
- vii. Red Lion Public House**
- viii. The Chequers Public House**
- ix. Marlborough Pools**

B. Development proposals which would affect the use of the identified community facilities of the policy will be determined against the provisions of Policies E5 (Local Services and Community Facilities) and EH5 (Sport, recreation and children's play) of the WOLP.

C. Proposals to change the use of part of a community, open space, sport or recreation facility that is surplus to requirements will be supported where it can be clearly evidenced that they will not undermine the overall viability and importance of the community, open space, sport or recreation facility concerned.

5.20 The policy supplements and refines existing development plan policy on community, open space, sport or recreation facilities and by seeking to ensure that the long-term potential value of land in community use is not lost without good reason. Given the small

nature of the village, the loss of any of these facilities would be significantly detrimental, so even though a specific type of community use may no longer be viable, the opportunity to retain the premises or land in this use cannot be lost.

5.21 In addition to existing development plan policies which protect these facilities and encourages new facilities, the policy also allows for a partial change of use of a facility, it this is intended to help secure its longer-term viability. This may be an important way of putting to use space that is no longer needed, but which can make a financial contribution to sustaining the facility. However, such changes must be shown not to undermine the community functions of the use.

5.22 The Use Class Order of September 2020 now deems such these uses as either Class F2 ('Local Community Uses') or in the case of the school and St Peter's Church, F1 ('Learning and non-residential Institutions'). The pubs are now deemed 'sui generis' (i.e. not included in any class of uses). A description of each facility and its community value is provided in the Green Infrastructure Plan attached as Appendix A. Collectively, these facilities are cherished by the community and offer a valuable and vital resource to support community life, and therefore warrant the protection of policies.

POLICY CAS8: ZERO CARBON BUILDING

A. All development must be 'zero carbon ready' by design to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.

B. Wherever feasible, all buildings should be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m²/year. Where schemes that maximise their potential to meet this standard by proposing the use of terraced and/or apartment building forms of plot size, plot coverage and layout that are different to those of the character area within which the proposal is located, this will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that the scheme will not have a significant harmful effect on the character area.

C. All planning permissions granted for new and refurbished buildings should demonstrate that they have been tested to ensure the buildings will perform as predicted and will include a planning condition to require the provision of a Post Occupancy Evaluation Report to the Local Planning Authority within a specified period, unless exempted by Clause B. Where the Report identifies poor energy performance and makes recommendations for reasonable corrective action, the applicant must demonstrate that those actions have been implemented before the condition will be discharged.

D. All planning applications for major development are also required to be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its entire life.

E. An Energy Statement will be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the policy (except for householder applications). The statement will include a passive design capacity assessment to demonstrate how opportunities to reduce the energy use intensity (EUI) of buildings over the plan period have been maximised in accordance with the energy hierarchy. Designers shall evaluate the operational energy use using realistic information on the intended use, occupancy and operation of the building to minimise any performance gap.

5.23 The policy context for encouraging higher energy efficiency standards at the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan scale is complex. Background information has therefore been

set out in Appendix C. The policy may also appear rather technical, but it is a temporary measure as in due course, it is expected that the new Local Plan, if not national policy itself, will make such provisions across the District. The policy is in five parts, the combination of which is intended to deliver a step change in the energy performance of all new developments in the Parish and, in doing so, encourage and incentivise the use of the Passivhaus or equivalent standard of building design. Along with the passive design capacity assessment, it is anticipated that designers will demonstrate compliance using a design for performance methodology such as the Passivhaus Planning package or CIBSE TM34 Operational Energy. Achieving this level of performance will make a significant contribution to mitigating climate change that the Neighbourhood Plan can deliver.

5.24 Clause A of the policy requires developers to ensure they address the Government's climate change targets and energy performance at the very initial stages of design. 'Zero Carbon Ready' by design means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits ('free heat') of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost. Applicants are directed to the Net-Zero Carbon Toolkit created by Cotswold District Council and two partner councils, WODC and Forest of Dean District Council. The toolkit is available as a resource for private and public sector organisations to use and adopt.²

5.25 Its Clause B requires all schemes, no matter what their intended use or size other than householder extensions, to use the Passivhaus Planning Package (PHPP) or equivalent design methodology for all buildings where it is feasible to do so. This means that the applicant must demonstrate those factors that make its use unfeasible, for example, the topography and orientation of the site.

5.26 In respect of scheme viability, any extra-over cost of building to the 'zero carbon ready' Passivhaus standard (now less than 5%) will diminish to zero well within the period of this Plan, as per both the Governments Regulatory Impact Assessments, research by the Passivhaus Trust, and the viability assessment published by Cornwall Council. The policy will also ensure that expensive and unnecessary retrofit costs are not passed down to building occupiers in the future, particularly in an area which has relatively high property values. Scheme viability will not therefore be acceptable as a reason for not using the Standard, unless the applicant can demonstrate the scheme has abnormal costs to accommodate.

5.27 The policy requires that the scheme density (measured by dwelling units/Ha) is assessed against that of the local 'character area', as set out in the Design Code attached at Appendix B, in the Design & Access Statement. Outside of such areas, the applicant may define the 'character area' that is relevant for the purpose of this exercise.

² <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/how-to-achieve-net-zero-carbon-homes/>

5.28 Proposals seeking to apply the PHPP must be able to demonstrate that the Passivhaus standard can be achieved. Prior to commencement a 'pre-construction compliance check' completed by a Passivhaus Designer accredited by the Passive House Institute (PHI) will be required and secured by condition. Upon completion a Quality Approved Passivhaus certificate for each building will be required prior to occupation, again secured by condition.

5.29 Clause C requires the developer of a consented housing development scheme of any size to carry out a Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) including actual metered energy use, and to submit the report to the local planning authority. It will be implemented by attaching a planning condition, which will only be discharged once the report has been submitted and any recommended actions to rectify any performance gap with the design stage assessment are carried out by the developer. Passivhaus certified schemes will not fail in this way and they are therefore exempted from this policy requirement. In the absence of supplementary guidance from the WODC on POE, guidance has been included in Appendix D.

5.30 The policy complements Policy EH6 of the WOLP. However, in the absence of any current adopted policy in West Oxfordshire covering the energy performance of new buildings, Clause D requires all development proposals that are not householder applications to be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emissions Assessment, RICS methodology is preferred³. The assessment will enable the design team to understand and respond to the lifetime consequences of their design decisions and to design for adaptability, longevity and disassembly; contributing to resource efficiency (Clause A) and contributing to the 'circular economy'⁴. This requirement will be added to the West Oxfordshire Validation Checklist for outline and full planning applications applying to proposals in the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan area until such a time that there is a district-wide requirement.

5.31 Clause E requires an Energy Statement to be submitted to cover the following:

- an assessment of the proposal to minimise regulated and unregulated emissions, the embodied emissions and the emissions associated with maintenance, repair and replacement of the new building(s), as well as its dismantling, demolition and eventual material disposal
- a calculation of the energy and carbon emissions covered by the Future Homes Standard and Building Regulations and, separately, the energy demand and carbon emissions from any other part of the development that are not covered by the Future Homes Standard or Building Regulations

³ <https://www.rics.org/uk/upholding-professional-standards/sector-standards/building-surveying/whole-life-carbon-assessment-for-the-built-environment/>

⁴ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/design_for_a_circular_economy_web.pdf

- the proposal to reduce carbon emissions beyond the Future Homes Standard and Building Regulations through the energy efficient design of the site, buildings and services
- the proposal to further reduce carbon emissions through the use of zero or low emission decentralised energy where feasible
- the proposal to further reduce carbon emissions by maximising opportunities to produce and use renewable energy on-site, utilising storage technologies where appropriate
- the proposal for a demand-side response, specifically through installation of smart meters, minimising peak energy demand and promoting short-term energy storage
- an analysis of the expected cost to occupants associated with the proposed energy strategy

5.32 Every new build or redevelopment project in the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan Area provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting our climate change targets for 2050. This new information requirement need not be an unreasonable expectation of even the smallest schemes for new buildings. Land values in the Cassington area are high relative to build costs and ought to be sufficient to ensure requirements to tackle improving energy and carbon performance are viable.

POLICY CAS9: INFILL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for the construction of new dwellings on land within the built up area of the village that has not been previously developed will only be considered as appropriate infill development in the Green Belt if the site forms a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage to either Eynsham Road, The Green or Yarnton Road and is effectively enclosed on at least three of its sides by buildings of the same height as the proposed buildings.

Cassington is located within the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area which is anticipated will accommodate 5,596 new homes. The majority of these new homes will be provided through strategic allocations. A shortfall of around 289 new homes are expected to come forward from unallocated windfall sites across the sub-area. Cassington is defined as a 'Village' in West Oxfordshire's settlement hierarchy and as it is washed over by the Oxford Green Belt, unallocated windfall residential development can only be considered appropriate if it meets the exceptions of §149(e) 'limited infilling in villages', (f) 'limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites)' & (g) 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would: – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or – not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority' of the NPPF and the relevant criteria of WOLP Policies OS2 and H2. Otherwise, proposals must demonstrate the very special circumstances for inappropriate development in the Green Belt or they must be of another use and type to be excepted by the other provisions of §149 and §150 or be in accordance with Policy CAS10 (in respect of §149(f)). There are no strategic policy provisions for the CNP to make any provision to meet any housing requirement through the conventional method of site allocations in a neighbourhood plan as a washed over village in the Green Belt.

5.33 In order to relate the provision in §149 (e) for limited infilling in villages to the form and character of Cassington, the policy confines the definition of 'limited' to the main road frontage through the village, as opposed to backland development. It also confines the definition to apply only to land that is enclosed by surrounding development to such an extent that its development would appear in character with the built-up area, rather than becoming an extension to it. This approach meets the requirements of WOLP Policy OS2 which supports limited development which respects the village character and local distinctiveness. The exceptions of §149 (f) and §149 (g) of the NPPF will continue to apply to these types of residential schemes alongside the relevant criteria of WOLP Policies OS2 and H2.

POLICY CAS10: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of up to a total of 10 affordable homes either within or adjoining the built up area of the village over the plan period.**
- B. Proposals for residential development within the built up area of the village will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with the development plan.**
- C. Proposals for residential development comprising only affordable housing on land outside the built up area of the village will be classed as 'Rural Exception Sites' and will only be supported if:**
 - i. The scheme comprises up to 10 affordable dwellings of 1 or 2 beds type and of a tenure mix of 25% affordable home ownership products and 75% affordable housing for rent (including both affordable rent and social rent) unless there is clear evidence of need that would support an alternative tenure mix;**
 - ii. The site adjoins the built up area of the village;**
 - iii. The scheme design protects the privacy of existing and future residents; and**
 - iv. An appropriate means of highways and pedestrian access can be secured.**

5.34 The first part of the policy establishes the goal of delivering affordable homes to meet local needs. In January 2021, the Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council identified a need for approximately 10 affordable homes to benefit the village. It is acknowledged that there is a considerable demand for housing in the West Oxfordshire and adjoining Cherwell Districts, but there are large developments of many hundreds of homes planned to meet this demand in nearby Eynsham/Salt Cross and Yarnton/Begbroke as well as in North Oxford in more sustainable locations.

5.35 The infill residential development provided for by Policy CAS9 may meet some, but not all, of this local need within the village. It is therefore acknowledged that additional land may be needed to deliver the remaining affordable homes, which may be outside the built up area of the village but remain appropriate development in the Green Belt as provided for §149(f) of the NPPF.

5.36 The second part relates to proposals in the village that accord with Policy CAS9 or the other relevant §149 NPPF exceptions. It defers to the development plan minimum threshold at which affordable housing must be delivered.

5.37 The third part relates to proposals adjoining the village and sets out how 'limited affordable housing' of §149(f) of the NPPF strikes the balance at Cassington between delivering new homes and preserving the essential open character of the Green Belt. The Housing Needs Survey identified that local need diverges from the indicative mix and tenure for affordable homes sought by the WOLP 2031 with a 92% need for 1 and 2 bedroom homes. It is therefore reasonable for the policy to require that only this type of home should be supported.

5.38 In respect of the tenure mix, the Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council identified a greater need for social or affordable rented accommodation, with evidence of some need of shared ownership or starter home accommodation. The policy therefore makes provisions for this as a starting point for provision.

5.39 To minimise the effects of a scheme on the openness of the Green Belt the policy not only limits the scale of development to 10 or fewer homes but also requires schemes to adjoin the built up area of the village. The types of schemes that may come forward are likely to involve the development of land behind an existing residential frontage and the policy therefore seeks to ensure that such development avoids creating issues surrounding privacy, amenity and access.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan policies will be implemented through the determination of planning applications for development in the Parish by WODC.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

6.2 The planning authority will use a combination of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies to inform and determine its planning application decisions. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications made in the Parish and it will be made aware of any future planning applications or alterations to those applications by WODC. It will seek to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been identified and applied correctly by applicants and by officers in their decision reports.

6.3 Where necessary, the Parish Council may seek to persuade the Secretary of State to call-in a planning application that it considers is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan but which the planning authority has deemed to consent. Similarly, it may also seek to persuade the Secretary of State to recover an appeal of a refused application, where the conflict with one or more Neighbourhood Plan policies has been important in the reasons for refusal. In both cases, the Parish Council will do so if it considers matters of national policy significance (for neighbourhood planning) are raised.

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

6.4 Although the scale of development likely to be consented in the Parish during the plan period is likely to be very limited, there may be opportunities through S106 agreements (or through the Community Infrastructure Levy) to secure financial contributions to invest in improving local infrastructure. Should an opportunity arise, the Parish Council will review the evidence base and community consultations for the neighbourhood plan to inform its view in liaising with WODC. A preliminary list has been set out below:

- Traffic management measures informed by traffic modelling of effect of major housing development proposals in West Oxfordshire and Cherwell and a safe crossing or traffic calming to reduce the speed of vehicular traffic through the centre of the village to enable a safe crossing point on the main road through Cassington.
- Mitigating pollution from the A40 including reducing vehicle journeys within and to/from and through the village, road surfacing, planting of trees and other forms of acoustic barriers;
- Creation of a Greenway by connecting Footpath 1 to Long Hanborough;
- Improvements to the accessibility of footpaths, increasing the connectivity of Cassington with the wider cycle route network and better public transport links, particularly links to the three railway stations around Cassington;
- Pedestrian crossing on the A40 (see Green Infrastructure Plan) as part of the A40 HIF2 improvement scheme and on the roundabout on the B4449 connecting Eynsham to

the Cassington – Eynsham Road – currently the A40 HIF2 Infrastructure Scheme includes the following active travel provision in the Cassington Area:

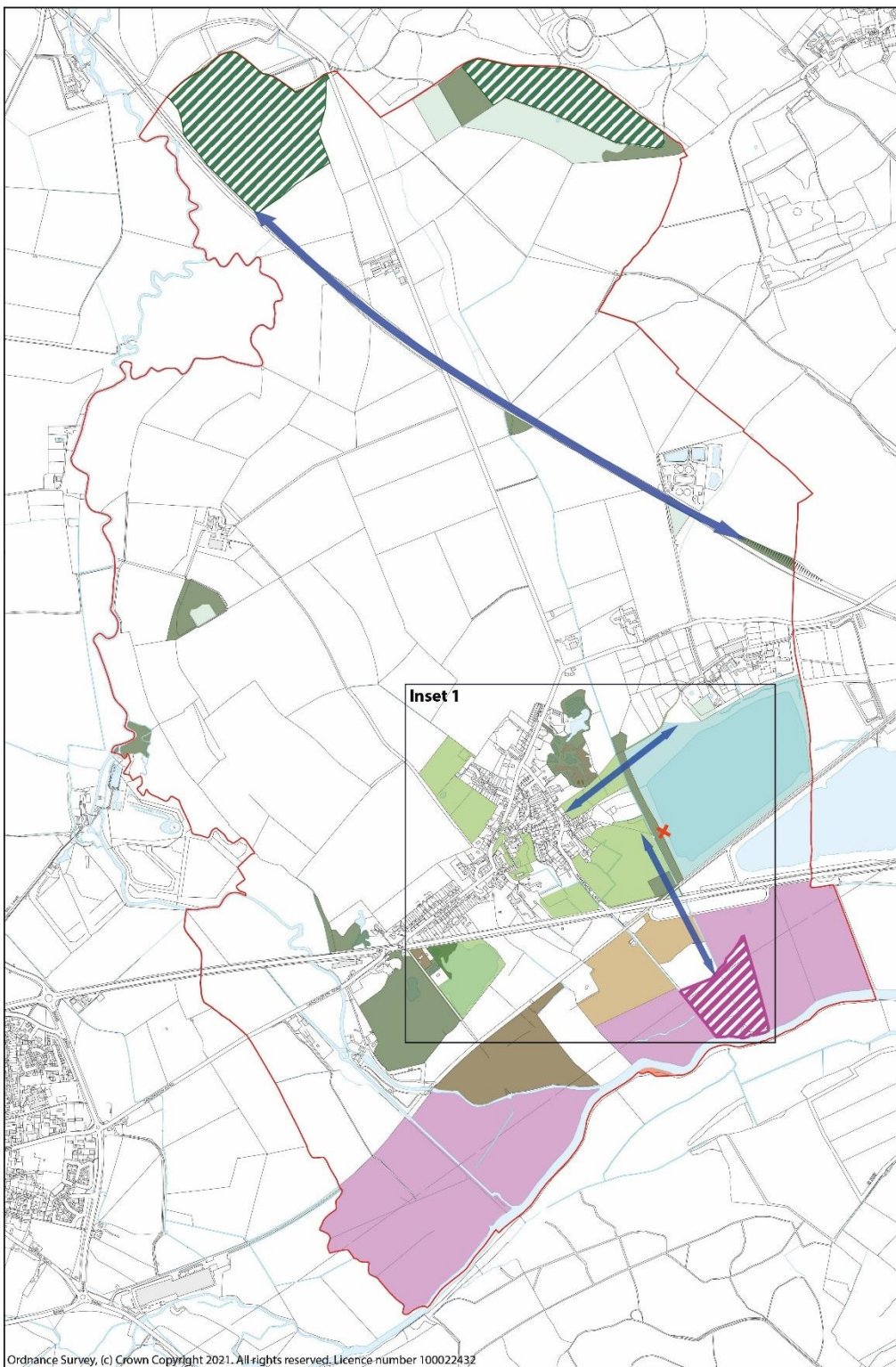
- Widened and improved shared use pathways with adequate drainage provision for pedestrians and cyclists on the north and south sides of the A40;
 - In line controlled crossings on the north and south arms of Lower Road roundabout;
 - A crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, just to the west of the A40/Eynsham Road crossing, slightly removed from where they are at present, to align with the proposed slightly moved bus stops;
 - A new single stage toucan crossing on the north side of the A40 at the junction with Eynsham Road;
 - A new controlled toucan located west of Horsemere Lane will provide a safe pedestrian and cycle crossing of the A40 and access for the new bus stops at this location.;
- Improvements of junctions with the A4095 and roads leading to Cassington to improve safety for cyclists;
 - Replacement footpath/route of Footpath 4 as a result of the development of Saltcross village;
 - Small bird hide to view birds on the western gravel pit at Worton Farm and/or at Marlborough Pools for both leisure and educational purposes.

OTHER NON-PLANNING MATTERS

6.5 During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there have been many ideas for improving or addressing current problems in the parish that lie outside the scope of the land use planning system to control. The Parish Council has noted these issues and will take them forward through its day-to-day business and in partnership with the local community and relevant parties. These include:

- Engaging with landowners and relevant organisations in relation to maintenance of the network of drainage ditches, especially those around Elm's Road and culverts to the south of the Eynsham/Yarnton Road including road improvements to ensure sufficient means of drainage are in place and maintained;
- Development of an emergency plan in collaboration with Thames Water and West Oxfordshire District Council for the eventuality of a flood originating from the Farmoor to Banbury high pressure water main;
- Engaging with landowners to the north of the village in relation to measures to prevent surface water flooding resulting from intense rain events and rapid movement of water from fields towards the Thames;

- Request from WODC that air quality monitoring is put in place for Cassington to assess the threat from increasing traffic levels through the village and along the A40;
- Ensure that the Parish Council has effective representation on the consultative committee for London Oxford Airport to try and prevent air traffic from significantly increasing over the village;
- Better maintenance of footpaths and cycleways;
- Applying for a decrease in the speed limit on the Burleigh Road to 50mph from its currently unrestricted limit;
- Provision of cycle racks in strategic locations in Cassington and surrounding villages / work locations to improve accessibility for cyclists;
- Discussions with surrounding landowners to explore the scope for land management measures that improve biodiversity and reduce the risk of surface flooding to the village;
- Where land becomes available through sale the Parish Council should consult with the village to look into the possibilities for purchase through charitable fund raising or through grants to increase space for nature and to enhance the Local Nature Recovery Network;
- Consideration of whether further applications for Asset of Community Value status should be made for other village amenities;
- Boring of a water hole for provision of water on the allotments should also be moved forward by the Allotment Association and the Parish Council;
- Calls for further ideas for amenities, amenity improvement and improvement of green space for people and nature in the village. Ideas could include the provision of a community well-being area, further allotments, a village orchard, provision of small areas of forest, restoration of hedgerows or other village projects;
- Creation of an advice package for elderly residents on how to access grants for adaptation of housing, identifying reliable or specialist traders who undertake such works, and how to access other services or community care options that they may need (e.g. Homeshare);
- Consultation with Churchfields Care Home or other care providers on the possibility of developing a new model of support for elderly people wishing to remain living semi-independently in their own homes.



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Cassington Neighbourhood Plan - Nature Recovery - November 2021

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Parish Boundary | Deciduous Woodland | Good Quality Semi-Improved Grassland | Opportunities |
| CUL1 Nature Recovery | Other Woodland | No main habitat but additional habitat exists | Wildlife Corridors |
| Cassington Meadows SSSI | Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh | Open Mosaic Habitat | Potential Bird Hide |
| Ancient Woodland | Lowland Meadows | Other Important Open Spaces | |




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
Cassington Neighbourhood Plan - Nature Recovery - Inset 1 - November 2021


 Parish Boundary


CUL1 Nature Recovery

 Cassington Meadows SSSI

 Deciduous Woodland

 Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

 Good Quality Semi-Improved Grassland


 No main habitat but additional habitat exists

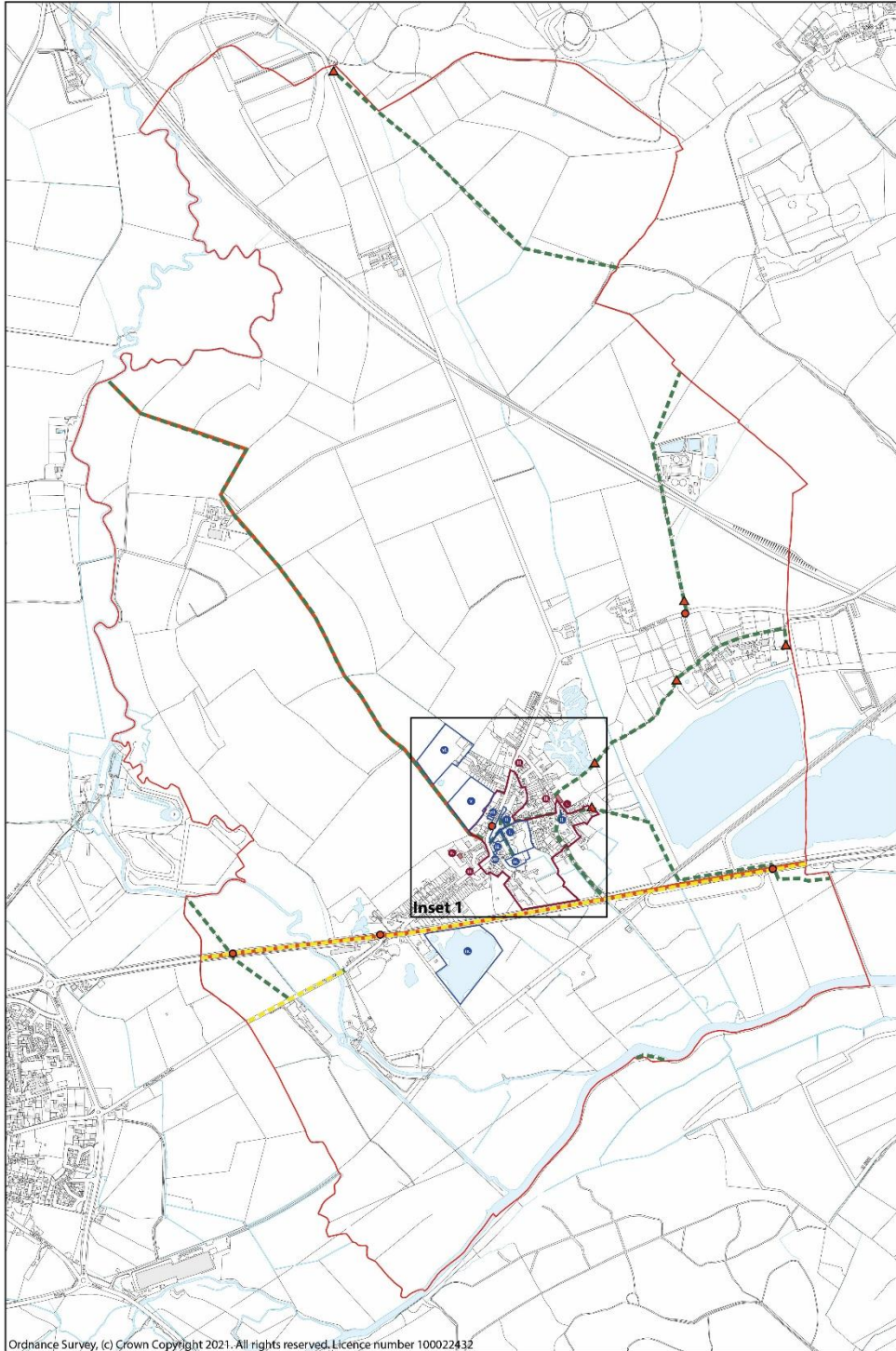
 Open Mosaic Habitat

 Other Important Open Spaces

Opportunities

 Wildlife Corridors

 Potential Bird Hide

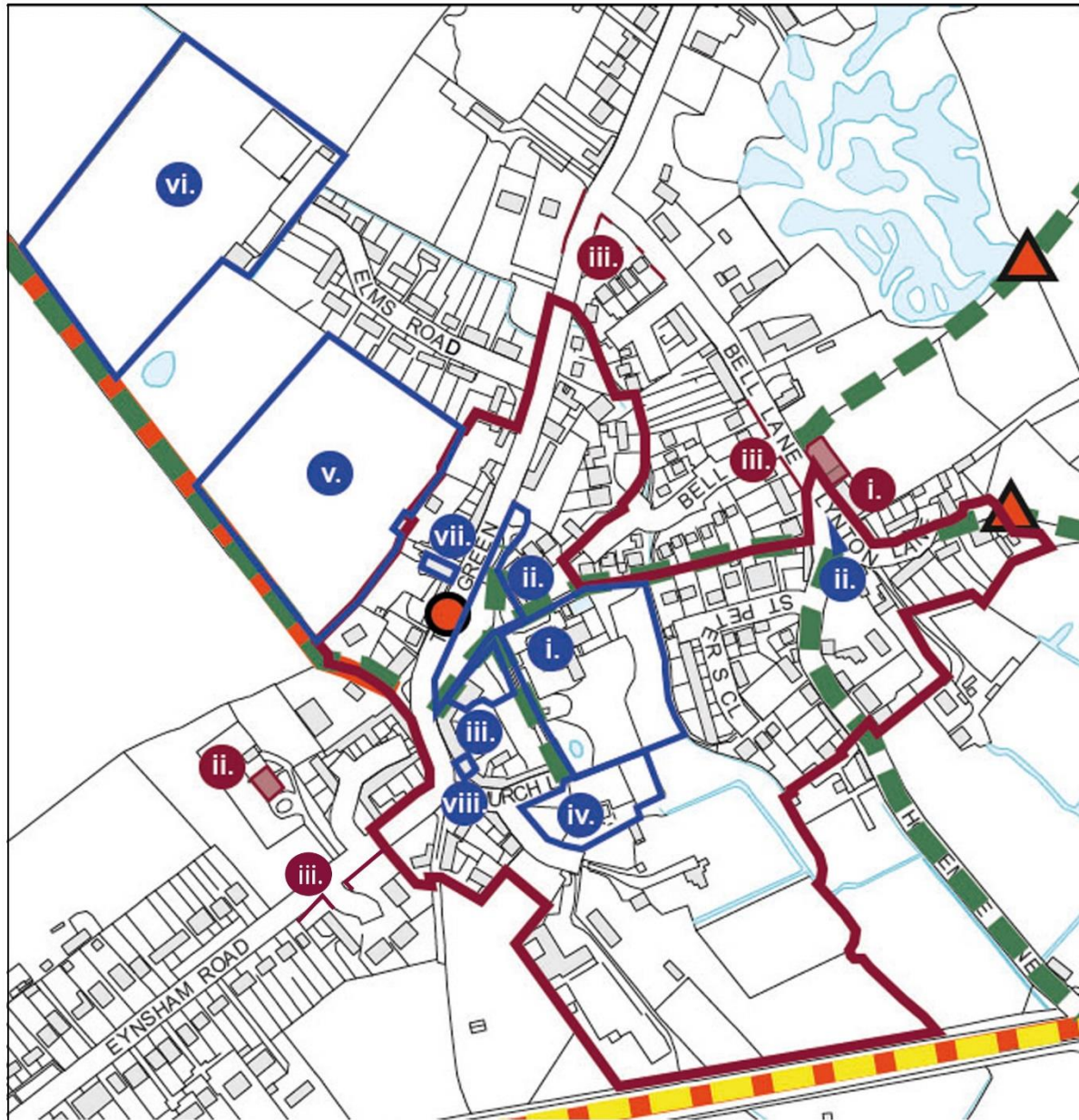











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Cassington Neighbourhood Plan - Policies Map - November 2021

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Parish Boundary |  CAS4 Cassington Conservation Area |
| CAS2 Active Travel |  CAS6 Locally Listed Buildings |
|  Existing Pedestrian Routes | i. The Bell |
|  Existing Cycle Routes | ii. Manor Farmhouse |
|  Existing Stiles | iii. Drystone Walls in various locations in the village |
|  Hazardous Crossing Points |  CAS7 Local Services and Community Facilities |
|  Improving Existing Routes | i. St Peter's Church of England School |
| | ii. Upper and Lower Village Greens |
| | iii. Cassington Village Hall |
| | iv. St Peter's Church |
| | v. Cassington Allotments |
| | vi. The Pavilion, Sports Field and Recreational Equipment |
| | vii. Red Lion Public House |
| | viii. The Chequers Public House |
| | ix. Marlborough Pools |

**Cassington Neighbourhood Plan
Policies Map - Inset 1 - November 2021**



-  Parish Boundary
- CAS2 Active Travel**
 -  Existing Pedestrian Routes
 -  Existing Cycle Routes
 -  Existing Stiles
 -  Hazardous Crossing Points
 -  Improving Existing Routes
-  **CAS4 Cassington Conservation Area**
-  **CAS6 Locally Listed Buildings**
 - i. The Bell
 - ii. Manor Farmhouse
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 - i. St Peter's Church of England School
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 - iv. St Peter's Church
 - v. Cassington Allotments
 - vi. The Pavilion, Sports Field and Recreational Equipment
 - vii. Red Lion Public House
 - viii. The Chequers Public House
 - ix. Marlborough Pools

APPENDIX A – THE CASSINGTON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

APPENDIX B – THE CASSINGTON DESIGN CODE

APPENDIX C – ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS

1. The UK Parliament declared an environment and climate emergency⁵ in May 2019, followed by West Oxfordshire District Council in January 2020. The Climate Change Act 2008⁶ is the basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are reduced and that climate change risks are prepared for. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements and commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 'net zero' by 2050.
2. Policy EH6 of the WOLP 2031 was adopted in September 2018 prior to Government committing the UK in law to 'net zero' by 2050 as per the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended)⁷ and emission cuts of 78% by 2035 to bring UK Law in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) Sixth Carbon Budget Report, and the Paris Agreement commitments⁸.
3. The Energy White Paper published in December 2020 sets out the government's Vision and 10-point transition plan for how the UK will reach the UK target of 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050. The White Paper confirms the government's intention to ensure significant strides are made to improve building energy performance to meet this target. This means that by 2030 all new buildings must operate at 'net zero', the means by which this can be achieved is described in the diagram overleaf.
4. Planning plays an important role in minimising our contribution to and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change. It can provide a positive and encouraging framework for change and can resist harmful development. The CCC highlights that we need to build new buildings with 'ultra-low' levels of energy use. The CCC also makes a specific reference to space heating demand and recommends a maximum of 15-20 kWh/m²/yr for new dwellings^{9,10}.

⁵ 'Emergency' – "a sudden serious and dangerous event or situation which needs immediate action to deal with it"

⁶ Amended by the 2050 (Target Amendment Order) 2019

⁷ The Climate Change Act established a long-term legally binding framework to reduce emissions, initially committing the UK to reducing emissions by at least 80% below 1990/95 baselines by 2050. In June 2019, following the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C and advice from the independent Committee on Climate Change, the CCA was amended to commit the UK to achieving a 100% reduction in emissions (to net zero) by 2050. 2019 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions: BEIS Feb 2021 ([Link](#))

⁸ The Govt communicated to the UN the UK's contribution to the agreement on 12 Dec 2020

⁹ The UK housing: Fit for the future? report published by the Committee on Climate Change in February 2019 recommends ultra-low levels of energy use and a space heating demand of less than 15-20 kWh/m²/yr. ([Link](#))

¹⁰ The costs and benefits of tighter standards for new buildings report, produced by Currie & Brown and AECOM for the Committee on Climate Change's UK housing: Fit for the future? Report ([Link](#))

Net Zero Operational Carbon

Ten key requirements for new buildings

By 2030 all new buildings must operate at net zero to meet our climate change targets. This means that by 2025 all new buildings will need to be designed to meet these targets. This page sets out the approach to operational carbon that will be necessary to deliver zero carbon buildings. For more information about any of these requirements and how to meet them, please refer to the: UKGBC - Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework; BBP - Design for Performance initiative; RIBA - 2030 Climate Challenge; GH A - Net Zero Housing Project Map; CIBSE - Climate Action Plan; and, LETI - Climate Emergency Design Guide.

Low energy use

- 1** Total Energy Use Intensity (EUI) - Energy use measured at the meter should be equal to or less than:

 - **35 kWh/m²/yr** (GIA) for residential¹

For non-domestic buildings a minimum DEC B (40) rating should be achieved and/or an EUI equal or less than:

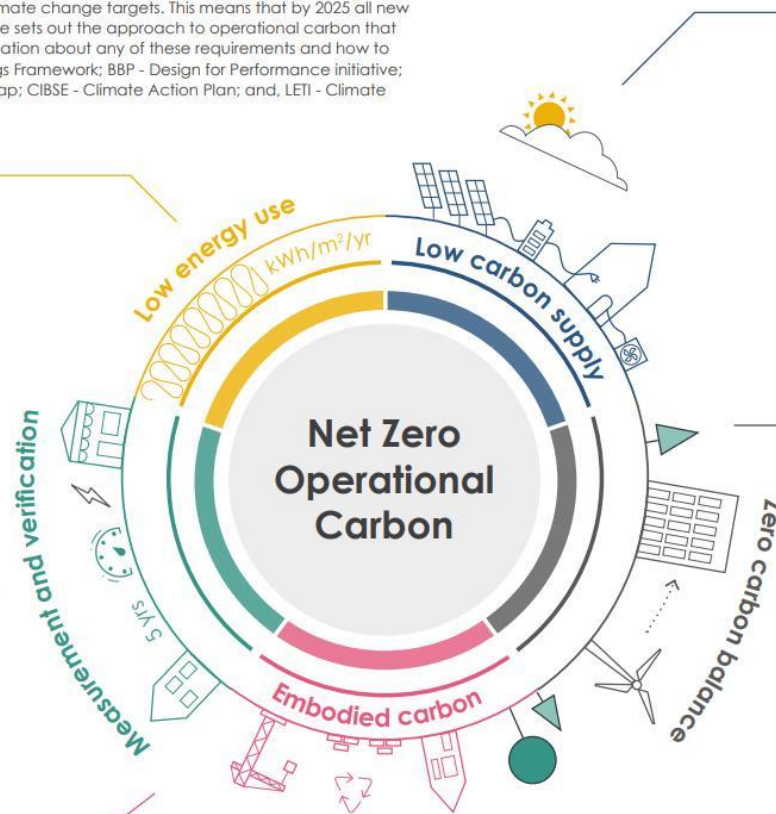
 - **65 kWh/m²/yr** (GIA) for schools¹
 - **70 kWh/m²/yr** (NLA) or **55 kWh/m²/yr** (GIA) for commercial offices^{1,2}
- 2** Building fabric is very important therefore space heating demand should be less than **15 kWh/m²/yr** for all building types.

Measurement and verification

- 3** Annual energy use and renewable energy generation on-site must be reported and independently verified in-use each year for the first 5 years. This can be done on an aggregated and anonymised basis for residential buildings.

Reducing construction impacts

- 4** Embodied carbon should be assessed, reduced and verified post-construction.³



Low carbon energy supply

- 5** Heating and hot water should not be generated using fossil fuels.
- 6** The average annual carbon content of the heat supplied (gCO₂/kWh) should be reported.
- 7** On-site renewable electricity should be maximised.
- 8** Energy demand response and storage measures should be incorporated and the building annual peak energy demand should be reported.

Zero carbon balance

- 9** A carbon balance calculation (on an annual basis) should be undertaken and it should be demonstrated that the building achieves a net zero carbon balance.
- 10** Any energy use not met by on-site renewables should be met by an investment into additional renewable energy capacity off-site OR a minimum 15 year renewable energy power purchase agreement (PPA). A green tariff is not robust enough and does not provide 'additional' renewables.

Notes:

Note 1 - Energy use intensity (EUI) targets
The above targets include all energy uses in the building (regulated and unregulated) as measured at the meter and exclude on-site generation. They have been derived from: predicted energy use modelling for best practice; a review of the best performing buildings in the UK; and a preliminary assessment of the renewable energy supply for UK buildings. They are likely to be revised as more knowledge is available in these three fields. As heating and hot water is not generated by fossil fuels, this assumes an all electric building until other zero carbon fuels exist. (kWh targets are the same as kWh_{thermal}). Once other zero carbon heating fuels are available this metric will be adapted.

Note 2 - Commercial offices
With a typical net to gross ratio, 70 kWh/m² NLA/yr is equivalent to 55 kWh/m² GIA/yr. Building owners and developers are recommended to target a base building rating of 6 stars using the BBP's Design for Performance process based on NABERS.

Note 3 - Whole life carbon
It is recognised that operational emissions represent only one aspect of net zero carbon in new buildings. Reducing whole life carbon is crucial and will be covered in separate guidance.

Note 4 - Adaptation to climate change
Net zero carbon buildings should also be adapted to climate change. It is essential that the risk of overheating is managed and that cooling is minimised.

Developed in collaboration with:



Supported by:



5. A 'net zero' carbon building is therefore first and foremost an energy efficient building in which the amount of energy used for heating or cooling is minimised, as is the demand on the energy supply network.
6. This approach unequivocally focuses on the Energy Hierarchy – BE LEAN, BE CLEAN, BE GREEN, BE SEEN – the latter requiring comprehensive post occupancy monitoring, verification and rectification (if necessary) to ensure buildings perform in the way approved at design stage, ensure planning commitments are delivered and any 'performance gap' issues are resolved.
7. There is a significant weight of evidence that buildings rarely live up to their designers expectations when completed and occupied, and depart significantly from the standards against which they were certified at design stage. This is known as the 'performance gap' and is a widely acknowledged problem¹¹. Research indicates this gap can be anything from 50% increase in energy use than designed for, to 500%.
8. The consultation on the 'Future Buildings Standard' announced in January 2021 aims to 'radically improve' the energy performance of new homes ensuring they are 'zero carbon ready' by 2025. This means having high levels of energy efficiency and fabric performance that produce 75 to 80 per cent lower carbon emissions than houses built to current standards.
9. By 'Zero Carbon Ready' the Government has confirmed this means that no further retrofit work will be necessary to enable them to become zero carbon homes. To do otherwise, as the Consultation Impact Assessment (CIA) confirms, would create homes which are not fit for purpose and would pass on a significant financial liability to future homeowners, many of whom may be struggling to meet the purchase price or rental costs of their new home in the first place. It could also unnecessarily push householders into fuel poverty. A Climate Change Committee Report in 2019¹² confirmed the costs of achieving higher energy performance standards via retrofit can be five times the cost (about £25000 per home) compared to designing these requirements into new buildings from the outset.
10. In the absence of policy direction, new buildings in the district will require retrofit will require retrofit which will result in disturbance to future occupiers and may contribute to pushing householders into fuel poverty. A recent appeal decision¹³ notes *"It seems to me folly to build new houses now that will commit owners to potentially expensive and disruptive alterations as the UK moves to decarbonise heating of its housing stock."* East Hampshire District Council have also confirmed that it will demand zero-carbon homes in its new Local Plan with the leader of the Council echoing the Planning Inspector's position: *"It is ridiculous that homes being built now will need to be retro-fitted with*

¹¹ Section 3.3. The Future Buildings Standard consultation, Jan 2021

¹² The Costs and Benefits of tighter standards for new buildings; Final Report for Climate Change Committee 2019

¹³ APP/K1128/X/20/3252613

energy-saving measures in 10 or 15 years' time. Today's homes should be built to meet tomorrow's challenges."¹⁴

11. In January 2021, the Government in their response to the Future Homes Standard (FHS) consultation¹⁵, acknowledged the legislative framework had moved on since the publication of the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) in March 2015 (HCWS488). The response confirmed that to provide certainty in the immediate term, the Government would allow local energy efficiency standards for new homes to be set locally. This is further supported by the legal opinion supplied by the Environmental Law Foundation in relation to the North Hinksey Neighbourhood Plan which confirms that the WMS from March 2015 appears to have been superseded by subsequent events and should not be read in isolation¹⁶. To all intents and purposes the WMS is no longer relevant to plan making.
12. The NPPF states at paragraph 148 that:

*"The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate...it should help to shape places in ways that contribute to **radical** reductions in greenhouse gas emissions..." (Plan emphasis)*
13. The NPPF also makes clear that 'landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping' all contribute to well-designed places which are both efficient and resilient to climate change¹⁷. The Government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - October 2021 confirms a commitment to review the NPPF to make sure it contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation as fully as possible.
14. There are a number of ways in which climate change may be mitigated in a local area using land use and development management policies. Neighbourhood plans are well suited to providing this policy framework in the interim, where there is an absence of up to date strategic policies at the Local Plan level. Aside from ensuring sustainable patterns of land uses in settlements, policies can be used to minimise the energy demand of buildings, to store carbon and to generate renewable energy. National planning policy encourages each of them but does not specify precisely how a local area should go about realising opportunities.
15. There are practical ways that each can be delivered in a local area. The Passivhaus standard has been shown to be the most effective means of improving the energy performance of new and existing buildings. The more buildings, of all uses, that meet this

¹⁴ Council calls for zero-carbon homes, November 2021 ([Link](#))

¹⁵ The Future Homes Standard : 2019 Consultation on changes to Part L (conservation of fuel and power) and Part F (ventilation) of the Building Regulations for new dwellings. Summary of response received and Government response; MHCLG. Exec Summary Page 4. ([Link](#))

¹⁶ Appendix 1 Evidence and arguments for binding Energy Efficiency policies in neighbourhood plans ([Link](#))

¹⁷ National Design Guide: 10 Characteristics of Well Designed Places.

standard, the better. And storing emitted carbon in plant life can reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide that is increasing global temperatures. The more that storage capacity in the local area is increased, the greater the contribution to reducing the pace of temperature increases.

16. The Government's Heat and Building's Strategy highlights the need for local, as well as national, level to achieve Net Zero and refers specifically to the 'Local Climate Action' chapter in the Net Zero Strategy. A key commitment of that Strategy being to promote best practice...and share successful net zero system solutions. Policy CAS8 is therefore intended as an interim measure until WODC review and update their current policy.
17. Policy CAS8 will ensure the updated legal framework will apply in the Parish, whereas in the intervening period since its adoption, WOLP policy has become inconsistent with this framework and hence falls short of the Local Planning Authority's duty to act under Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and reflected in NPPF (2021) paragraphs 152 and 153 and footnote 53 ("Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change", "in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008"). As such, the Parish Council will willingly offer this policy to WODC to help frame a District-wide policy in the new Local Plan.
18. Furthermore, Policy CAS8 also applies the 'precautionary principle' which provides the basis to anticipate, avoid and mitigate threats to the environment. Hence, the policy acknowledges the CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget recommendation that delaying action or a failure to follow the critical dates in the 'balanced pathway'¹⁸ will require costly corrective action in the future¹⁹.
19. The Government addressed the CCC's recommendation head on in their response to the Future Homes Standard consultation²⁰. Confirming that 'it is significantly cheaper and easier to install energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures when homes are built, rather than retrofitting them afterwards'. Failure to implement Policy CAS8 on new development will add to the existing and costly retrofit burden that will be required of the existing housing stock in the Parish; only adding to the costs across the area as a whole.
20. In respect of the impact of Policy CAS8 on scheme viability, any extra-over cost of building to the 'zero carbon ready' Passivhaus Standard – UK evidence is indicating that this is already less than 5% and will fall to zero well within the period of this Neighbourhood Plan, as per both the Government's and CCC's impact assessments and research by the Passivhaus Trust. The policy will ensure that expensive and unnecessary retrofit costs are not passed down to building occupiers in the future,

¹⁸ The Sixth Carbon Budget: The UK's Path to Net Zero; Committee on Climate Change, December 2020. Table 3.2a page 112. ([Link](#))

¹⁹ *ibid* (vi): Paragraph 5.3 'Retrofit Costs'.

²⁰ *ibid* (vii): Paragraph 1.4 'Net zero emissions and climate change.'

particularly in an area which has relatively high property values. Scheme viability will not therefore be acceptable as a reason for not using the Standard, unless the applicant can demonstrate the scheme has abnormal development costs to accommodate.

21. Policy CAS8 only applies to [the parish] and therefore, by definition, is non-strategic (NPPF §28) nor is it considered to undermine WOLP Policies (NPPF §29). The NPPF confirms “all plans should” mitigate climate change (NPPF §11a). The policy has both ‘regard to’ the NPPF and advice issued by the Secretary of State, including the Governments response to the FHS consultation, while also supporting and upholding the general principle that the WOLP and its vision in particular are concerned with, while providing “a distinct local approach” (PPG ID:41-074). It supports the WOLP ‘as a whole’ including its vision and objectives which require the delivery of high environmental standards and mitigating climate change.

22. In the Parish Council's judgement, the approach taken in Policy CAS8 and the neighbourhood plan as a whole is consistent with the law as it currently stands and its interpretation of paragraphs 8(2)(a)&(e) of Schedule 4B of the TCPA 1990²¹.

²¹ BDW Trading Limited vs Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council and Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan (2014 - EWHC 1470 - Paragraph 82)
Crownhall Estates Ltd vs Chichester DC and Loxwood PC (2016 EWHC 73 - Paragraph 29ii)

APPENDIX D – POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION GUIDANCE NOTE

Pulling on latest guidance and best practice, this guidance note sets out how Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) should be undertaken.

1.01 Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) is the method of obtaining feedback on a building's energy performance 'in use', to ensure it measures up to the commitments made by the team that designed and built it. It offers significant potential to address the performance gap and occupant satisfaction.

1.02 Where a monitoring regime to ensure the 'as designed' building performance targets are achieved in practice for all new and refurbished buildings is required, it is important that data is collected robustly, following good practice POE principles. It is therefore recommended that for residential development the POE methodology in section 11.4 of the Home Quality Mark ONE: Technical Manual: England, Scotland & Wales SD239 (2018)58, or as updated, is used as a guide for meeting this requirement. For non-residential buildings the BSRIA Soft Landings and Design for Performance framework (BG 76/2019), or as updated, may be used.

1.03 Applicants are required to set out in their Energy Statement how their monitoring regime, based on the HQM, BSRIA or similar methodology, will work in practice and be independently verified by a third party. The Energy Statement to be submitted with the planning application.

1.04 As each new or refurbished building comes into use, the developer must ensure performance monitoring and data collection for all relevant parameters for one whole year is carried out once the building is substantially occupied, in line with good POE practice for residential or non-residential uses. This verification process should entail, after appropriate commissioning has taken place, comparison of the 'as designed' parameters (energy, carbon, air quality and overheating risk) to monitoring data under the same categories, to assess and compare actual performance.

1.05 In order to account for seasonality, a minimum of 12 months monitoring data is required. On the other hand, to account for actual weather, the modelling results can be adjusted with degree days for the relevant year.

1.06 A 'performance gap metric', which will compare designed and actual performance (e.g. a percentage difference) for each of the 4 required parameters (energy, carbon, air quality and overheating risk) should be issued at POE stage. This needs to be issued for both the 'central' scenario and the 'lowest acceptable performance /reasonable worst-case scenario' as a minimum, with multiple scenarios considered if at all possible.

1.07 The process and reporting methodology used for the POE will need to be repeatable, so that performance can be monitored for at least 2 annual space heating cycles.

1.08 A report will then be required to be submitted to both building owners/occupiers and to South Oxford District Council, which states the performance gap metric and identifies any reasons for deviation from predicted energy usage, carbon emissions, indoor air quality and overheating performance, as well as recommendations for reasonable corrective action that will be taken to reduce or eliminate the performance gap.

1.09 The submission of the monitoring report to owners/occupiers and the council must be secured by planning condition, to be determined at the time of application based on case-specific factors. The applicant must demonstrate that the reasonable corrective actions committed to in the monitoring report, and subsequently agreed by South Oxfordshire District Council, have been implemented through another annual heat cycle before the condition will be discharged.