



# CHARLBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2031

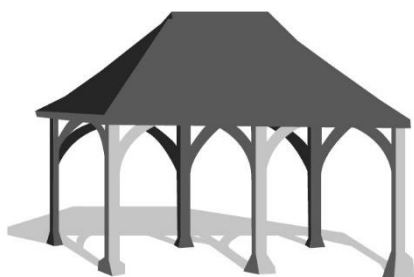
**The future for our thriving community**



Charlbury Street Fair by Maureen Sparling ©

**Charlbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2031**

Made on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021



**Charlbury**  
Town Council

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# Foreword

There are too many people that contributed to this plan to be thanked individually so we hope that you will forgive us for not naming each of you.

We are immensely grateful to all the volunteers who gave of their time and energy to this exercise to ensure Charlbury remains a great place to live.

This includes all those that either ran or participated in the various workshops, contributed to the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum (particularly during a time when there was a great deal of scepticism as to whether a plan was required), created, distributed and analysed the Town Survey, communicated progress via the Chronicle etc., and all those volunteers that worked on the Charlbury Character Assessment. Latterly this includes all those that worked with us in and with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to refine all these inputs into a document that can be enforced in planning terms.

This plan is submitted by the Town Council as the qualifying body and we would like to thank past and present council members for initiating this project and for their support for the Neighbourhood Forum, a group of volunteers drawn from the community, to formulate the plan on the council's behalf.

We also need to point out that the Advisory Group (later the Neighbourhood Forum) were initially working towards the production of a Community Led Plan covering a wide range of community related topics. Latterly it became evident that this had to be split to deliver two separate plans: A 'Neighbourhood Development Plan' and a 'Community Action Plan'.

The Neighbourhood Plan submitted here addresses planning related matters and has an important legal status within the planning system as defined by the Localism Act 2011. As such it has been prepared according to strictly defined regulations. By contrast, the Community Action Plan (CAP) aimed to compile the community's priorities and aspirations, proposing actions to be taken by the Town itself (albeit partly by also encouraging others such as the highways authorities to take action). This CAP has identified many issues requiring action: such as parking, road safety, support for aged or infirm, teenage activities etc. The Town Council plus other active community groups are working on these and we would really like to thank those who majored on this area of work and hope that they and many more will continue to give their time and expertise to the benefit of all residents particularly those that may not find life in Charlbury as easy as others may do.

Findings from the CAP have informed the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan and, where appropriate, some recommendations have been reflected within the Neighbourhood Plan as "Community Aspirations".

Our final thanks go to those all that take time to read, feedback comments and hopefully support this plan recognising that there are constraints on what can be done but that the plan strives to build on all that is good about Charlbury to make it an even better place to live, work and visit.

Many thanks to all.

Cllr Peter Kenrick  
Vice-Chairman - Charlbury Town Council

Graham Terry  
Chair – Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum

# Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan

## - An Overview



*People who live in Charlbury believe that it is a great place to live<sup>1</sup>.*

*Charlbury rated 5<sup>th</sup> Best Place in the Southeast to live in 2019 by The Sunday Times<sup>2</sup>.*

Charlbury is an attractive historic town in a beautiful location with good transport links. It has a vibrant and varied community offering a wide range of services, activities, clubs and facilities that are very well supported.

Charlbury has challenges to meet if it is to maintain this vibrant community. These include the shortage of modest housing required to meet local needs and an ageing population (slightly above average).

Charlbury Town Council declared a Climate Emergency on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 in recognition that climate change threatens life in Charlbury and across the world. We also acknowledge and welcome the climate emergency declarations by the UK parliament and West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). Charlbury welcomes WODC's determination to be carbon neutral by 2030. We recognise the challenges this imposes on communities such as ours within the district and are committed to positive action to address them.

The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan represents our opportunity within the present planning regime to retain all that is good about Charlbury whilst enabling appropriate development that addresses current challenges whilst sustaining and enhancing the features that people value and recognising the climate emergency.

The Plan describes in detail how this is to be achieved within the constraints set by national planning policies and those of West Oxfordshire. It sets out a positive vision for the future of Charlbury enabling the views, needs and aspirations of the local community to shape and direct development in the Town.

The Plan has used a wide-ranging evidence base including the views of local residents in response to the Town Survey of 2016, a Housing Needs Assessment commissioned by the Town Council and Assessments of the Parish Character and Local Green Spaces compiled with substantial assistance from many local volunteers.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Town Survey 2016, more than 90% Agree or Strongly Agree to the Question: "Charlbury is a great place to live with a strong community and lots of activities?"

<sup>2</sup> The Sunday Times survey of "Best Places to Live 2019" in association with HABITO

## **Charlbury 2031 – Our Vision**

***Charlbury will continue to be a thriving, active community, welcoming and supportive to people of all ages and circumstances to live, work and visit. Future development will focus on supporting this primary vision whilst recognising the declared Climate Emergency, sustaining and enhancing the built and natural environment and achieving biodiversity net gain.***

***The needs of the local community will be paramount in determining the scale and nature of future development whilst ensuring that Charlbury moves rapidly to become a more sustainable and carbon neutral community.***

***All future development must preserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting and respect its historic environment whilst ensuring that Charlbury continues to play an important role within the wider community as befits its good transport links and its status as a Rural Service Centre within the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.***

### **Housing**

The affordability of housing is recognised as a key issue for Charlbury<sup>3</sup>. A thriving and diverse community with a balanced age and social structure requires a mix of housing stock including properties affordable by those on lower incomes. Recent market housing in Charlbury has not generally provided for this need. The Plan seeks to redress this balance with policies that support the provision of a limited supply of new housing affordable by those on or below the median income for the town whilst achieving the highest level of energy efficiency.

### **Economy, Community, Transport and Movement**

Charlbury has good transport links and a wide range of community facilities when compared to neighbouring parishes. These features add to the vibrancy of the community and are highly valued by local residents. They also enable Charlbury to play an important service role to the wider area which in turn helps to ensure the ongoing viability of the community facilities. However, this service role also brings challenges in areas that the town survey identified as key concerns for residents, including support for local business and management of traffic and transport issues including parking. There are also challenges posed by the need to work towards becoming a carbon neutral economy to mitigate the impact of the climate emergency. The Plan seeks to address these matters through policies which reinforce Charlbury's service role, protect and enhance employment and services, support sustainable tourism, and consider traffic-related and environmental concerns.

### **Natural Environment and Green Space**

The beauty and importance of Charlbury's natural environment is acknowledged in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and through the town's inclusion within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Protection of this environment is very important to the local community. This Plan supplements the protections provided by the Local Plan 2031 and National Planning Policy Framework by identifying specific locations and issues of particular importance within the parish. These include the protection of important views (e.g. the view

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<sup>3</sup> West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 paragraph 9.6.5

across the Evenlode Valley), blue-green corridors for the protection of wildlife, biodiversity, water quality and trees.

A number of open spaces within the parish have been identified as being of particular importance to the community. These will be given additional protection by being designated as Local Green Spaces in the Plan<sup>4</sup>.

### **Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design**

Much of Charlbury's character and attractiveness derives from its many historic buildings and monuments and from its landscape setting which includes neighbouring Cornbury Park and Wychwood Forest. This is emphasised in the designation of the town and its surroundings as a conservation area. The Plan sets out policies to conserve and enhance this character and Charlbury's heritage assets, which include over 100 listed buildings. These policies supplement national policies and those of WODC.

A local Design Guide is included which identifies the distinctive features of different parts of the town and contains guiding principles for the design of new developments and for alterations to existing buildings. The aim is to ensure that Charlbury's distinctive character and identity is maintained for future generations whilst accepting the need to address the impacts of the climate emergency.

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<sup>4</sup> See section 7.4, Policy NE7 Local Green Space

# Section 1: Introduction & Context



Corner House – Photo by Peter Kenrick

## 1.1 Structure of the Plan

The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (the Plan) is divided into sections as below.

Section 1 (this section) defines the legal framework and background to the Plan.

Section 2 describes the town and community of Charlbury as it is today and summarises the challenges and aspirations for the future.

Section 3 sets out the aims and objectives of the Plan.

Section 4 describes the process adopted to produce the Plan.

Subsequent sections cover specific topics in more detail and include the formal policies to be applied to planning applications within the parish of Charlbury. The policies appear within blue boxes for easy identification and the policy numbers are prefixed according to topic as follows:

| Prefix | Section | Topic   |
|--------|---------|---|
| CH     | 5       | Housing   |
| ECT    | 6       | Economy, Community, Transport and Movement          |
| NE     | 7       | Natural Environment and Green Space                 |
| HE     | 8       | Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design |



In addition to the formal policies, several **Community Aspirations** are included in green boxes drawn from responses given to the town survey of 2016. Whilst these do not have the legal status of the formal policies, they provide an important indication of specific infrastructure improvements that members of the community would wish to progress if funding were available. These community aspirations, along with the Charlbury Infrastructure Delivery Plan (see Appendix B) provide a guide to priorities for the potential use of developer contributions arising from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Section 106 legal agreements and/or other sources.

A glossary of terms used in the Plan is included as Appendix F and acknowledgements are listed in Appendix G.

## 1.2 Planning Framework

The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (the Plan) sets out a positive vision for the future of the parish of Charlbury. The Plan aims to ensure that:

- The views and needs of the local community shape and direct development in the parish.
- The imperative to tackle the climate emergency is addressed in consideration of all development within the parish.

The plan includes policies addressing sustainable development, local housing needs and economic, environmental and design priorities. There are specific policies for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment of Charlbury and policies, together with design principles, for the type, location and character of any development proposed.

The Plan is a statutory document that must be considered in determining planning applications within the parish of Charlbury. It sits within the overall planning framework alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

The Plan is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local district plan and should not promote less development than set out for the area, nor undermine those strategic policies.

The Plan acknowledges that Charlbury lies within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('the AONB'), where "great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty"<sup>5</sup>. AONBs' have the "highest level of protection" in these respects. Development proposals within them are subject to different considerations than elsewhere. In particular, the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 takes a "more restrictive approach to new housing development" in its defined Burford-Charlbury sub-area, nearly all of which is within the AONB, than in other parts of the District.<sup>6</sup>

The Plan has taken into consideration the importance of Charlbury's conservation area, which has been widely drawn deliberately in recognition of the significance of the town's strong landscape setting. In the absence of a WODC conservation area appraisal, a detailed and comprehensive Character Assessment of the parish was carried out in preparation for this Plan.

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<sup>5</sup> NPPF para 172

<sup>6</sup> West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Paras 9.6.28 & 9.6.29

## 1.3 Policy Context

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a range of new rights and powers to enable local communities to shape new development in their community. It specifically provided for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans which allow local communities to define both general and specific planning policies for the development and use of land in their respective neighbourhood areas. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Localism Act 2011.

To meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, the Charlbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2031 (the Plan) must:

- have appropriate regard to national planning policy and guidance;
- have special regard to the preservation of listed buildings, their settings and/or associated features of special architectural or historical interest;
- have special regard to the preservation and/or enhancement of the Charlbury conservation area;
- contribute to sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031;
- be compatible with EU obligations.

In this regard, the Plan is compliant with the following policy documents:

- The NPPF as revised February 2019<sup>7</sup>
- The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 adopted September 2018<sup>8</sup>
- Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2018-2023 adopted October 2018<sup>9</sup>

## 1.4 Submitting Body

The Plan 2031 is submitted by Charlbury Town Council which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

## 1.5 Neighbourhood Area

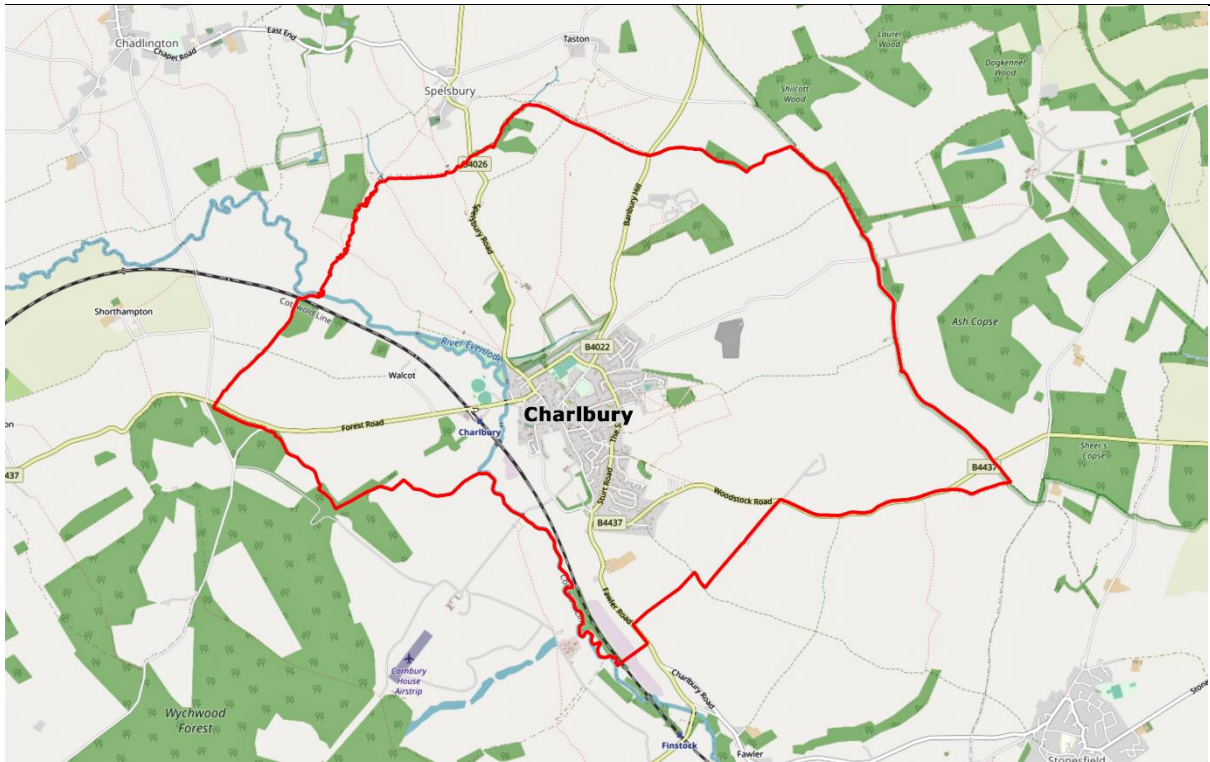
The Plan applies to the civil parish of Charlbury in West Oxfordshire. The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated by WODC on 17th September 2014. This followed a 6-week period of consultation to which there was one representation of support from Oxfordshire County Council. It covers all land within the Parish Boundary outlined in red in *Map 1* below. This area includes the town of Charlbury, the settlement of Walcot and the surrounding rural area including outlying farms.

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<sup>7</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Feb 2019, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1936509/Local-Plan-BOOK-WEB.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plan 2018-2023 <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Agenda-Item-08-Appendix-A-2.pdf>



Map 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area<sup>10</sup>

## 1.6 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

The Plan will apply from the date of its adoption until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2031 running concurrently with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. It is recognised that the concerns and priorities of local residents may change over this period. It may therefore be necessary to revisit and revise the plan from time to time. Charlbury Town Council, as the Neighbourhood Plan Authority, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor its delivery.

<sup>10</sup> Map © OpenStreetMap contributors

## Section 2: The Town of Charlbury



Photo by Alistair Ross

### 2.1 Charlbury Today

#### Location

Charlbury is a traditional Cotswold town located in West Oxfordshire. It lies 17 miles North West of Oxford in a rural area served by country roads. It is equidistant from the nearby towns of Woodstock, Witney and Chipping Norton which are all approximately 7 miles away.

#### Landscape

Charlbury's strong and highly valued landscape setting within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Beauty is an important feature of the town and has been a key consideration in the production of this Plan.

The town overlooks the river Evenlode with panoramic views of Cornbury Park and the Wychwood Forest to the west and of the gently sloping farmland of the upper Evenlode valley to the north-west. To the east there are open views across arable land framed by the extensive woodland of the Ditchley Estate. Within the town, many trees and green spaces contribute to its rural quality.

#### Character

Charlbury is a historic town whose character has been shaped by its history, landscape setting and local building materials. Charlbury developed from a 7<sup>th</sup> century monastic settlement into a small medieval settlement, with town status being acquired in 1256 when it was granted a market charter. Today, the historic centre retains its tight medieval street pattern. It is urban in character, with connected rows of unpretentious houses and shops in local stone which front directly on to the street. Outwardly, these houses date mainly from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when Charlbury became a prosperous market town because of its glove making

industry. A secondary settlement grew up at Hixet Wood around Lee Place. Further expansion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, largely to the east, has more than doubled the size of Charlbury. This expansion has involved both modern estates which blend sympathetically with their surroundings due to their materials, stone walls and landscaping, and piecemeal development.

Charlbury contains over a hundred listed buildings and four scheduled ancient monuments. The town together with some surrounding fields is a conservation area.

## Housing

The 2011 census identified that Charlbury had 1298 households and a population of 2830. The average of 2.18 people per household in Charlbury, compared to an average of 2.42 for the district and 2.40 for England.

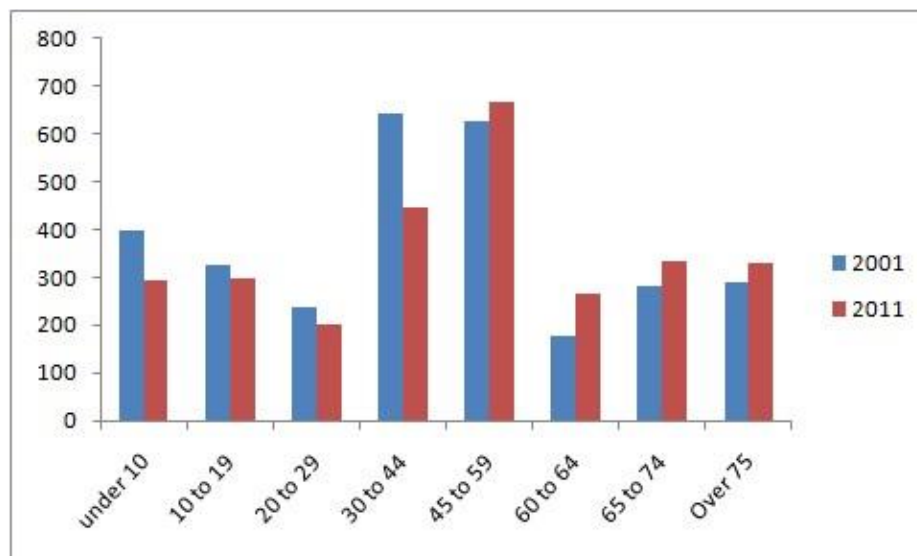
Charlbury also has a larger proportion of 5 bedroom, and larger, homes and 1 bedroom homes, but a relatively low proportion of 2 and 3 bedroomed homes and flats compared to the district and to England. A lack of suitable housing has limited the potential for downsizing by older residents. This in turn has limited the potential for younger first-time buyers, who are also restricted by the level of house prices and rents, to live in Charlbury.

Further details of the housing are found in the 2016 Town Survey, the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) commissioned by the Town Council and the Character Assessment.

## Demography

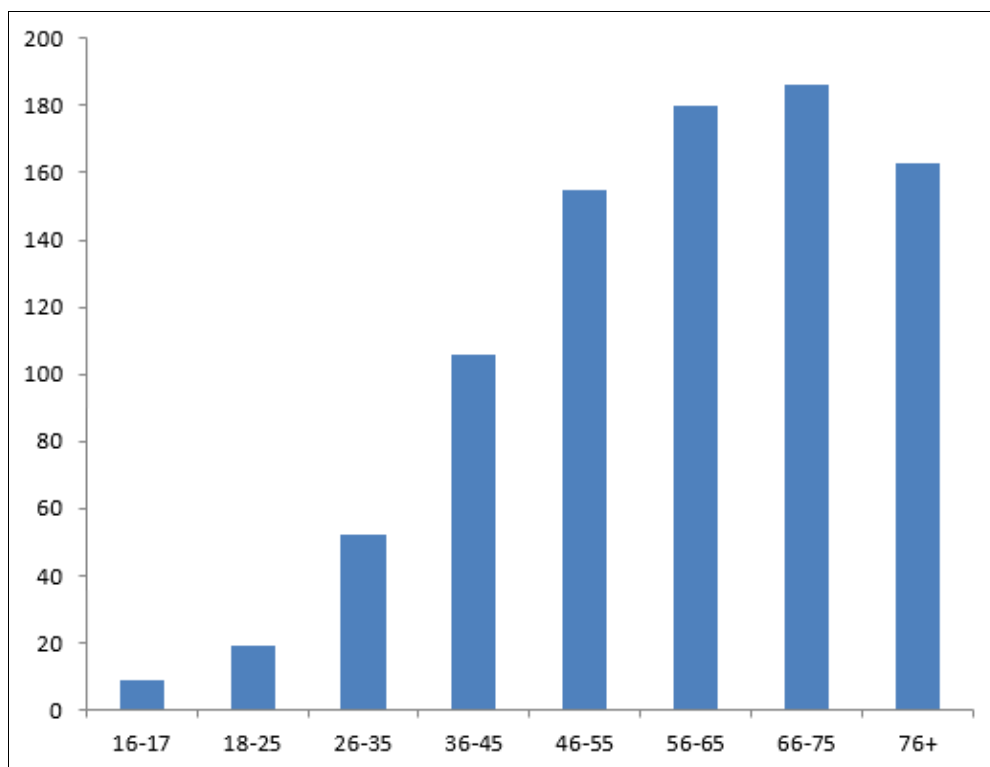
The population of Charlbury in the 2011 census<sup>11</sup> was 2830 with a significantly larger proportion of people aged over 45 (56.5%) compared to the district or to England. In terms of ethnicity, the population of Charlbury is predominantly white with 98% of residents being white and 93.4% of those being British white.

The 2011 census figure of 2830 represented a slight fall in population from the 2001 census figure (2984) with reductions recorded for younger age groups and particularly concentrated within the 30 to 44 range. Despite this reduction, the number of households increased slightly.



**Charlbury Population Profile from 2011 and 2001 Census figures**

<sup>11</sup> NOMIS official labour market statistics, Office for National Statistics ; [www.nomisweb.co.uk/](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/)



**Charlbury Population Profile of those responding to the Town Survey 2016**

### **Employment**

The 2011 census identified that 1453 residents aged 16-74 were in employment or self-employment. The key areas of employment were education (14.5%), wholesale & retail trade and motor vehicle repairs (13.6%), professional, scientific and technical (13%), health and social care (8.7%) and manufacturing (8.1%).

The 2016 Town Survey showed that the most common place of work for Charlbury residents was from home (30%). Other people work in Charlbury (20%), followed by Oxford (17%), London (10%) and then in a number of other locations, both in the UK and abroad.

### **Transport links**

Charlbury has a good rail connection to Oxford and London (via the North Cotswold line) and also has frequent bus services to Oxford, Woodstock, Witney and Chipping Norton.

### **Community life**

Charlbury is an active, lively and supportive community, demonstrated by the fact that it has well over 100 organisations and societies, run almost exclusively by volunteers. The numerous groups cater for a very varied set of interests. In fact, volunteering plays a fundamental role in the vibrancy of the community.

The town has a community-run Deli & Cafe, a community renewable energy project (Southill Community Energy), and a not-for-profit Preschool.

There are four churches, a Quaker meeting house, and an active Churches Together group. In addition to their key role, the churches also contribute to community life by providing venues for cultural and community activities. St Mary's Parish Church also publishes and distributes a monthly leaflet including details of community activities.

Volunteers organise a range of sporting activities for all ages and genders with growing membership. Active sports include cricket, football, tennis, badminton, pickleball, canoeing bowls and many more.

A range of cultural and creative activities are organised by volunteers including the Charlbury Festival (Art Society), Art Weeks, concerts, plays (including Youth Theatre), cinema (ChOC – Charlbury’s Own Cinema) and fringe music.

Care and support for the elderly is provided through All Together in Charlbury (ATIC), Meals on Wheels, Books on Wheels, the Day Centre and other activities organised by Age UK (mainly in the Community Centre).

Charlbury has 2 volunteer First Responders and a fire service crewed by retained firefighters.

Volunteers serve on the town council and on the Charlbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which advises West Oxfordshire District Council on planning matters relating to the Charlbury conservation area. Volunteers also serve as trustees and assistants with local charities (including the Corner House and War Memorial Hall and the Thomas Gifford Trust) and on management committees (including Nine Acres). In this way members of the community contribute to the effective management of town life and of the impressive range of community buildings and facilities available. Community facilities include the Corner House and War Memorial Hall, Charlbury Community Centre (including a sports hall and library), Nine Acres Recreation Ground (including football pitches, tennis courts, children’s play area and a pavilion) and the Charlbury Museum. Volunteers also work hard to raise money for the upkeep and improvement of these facilities.

Work to conserve our local environment is done by volunteers, including the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, the “Town Proud” Working Party, the Garden Society and the Wigwell Friends.

Volunteers and others within the community are also very active with environmental issues, locally and globally, working hard to raise awareness and crucially, to implement local initiatives to help Charlbury to reduce carbon emissions and become more sustainable. Volunteer groups working in this area include Sustainable Charlbury, Charlbury Green Hub, Charlbury Climate Action Network (Charlbury CAN) and Extinction Rebellion Charlbury.

Of particular significance in this area is Southill Community Energy, a community-owned solar farm mostly within Charlbury parish which generates power approximately equal to the requirements of Charlbury. This not-for-profit company generates funds for community benefit which will be used to fund local low-carbon projects in Charlbury, Finstock and Fawler. The site is also being managed for biodiversity and wildlife including the establishment of meadow and orchard areas.

Volunteers also work to support other charities and projects with a local, national and international focus, including support for refugees.

Residents are kept informed and involved in town life through the Charlbury Website ([www.charlbury.info](http://www.charlbury.info)) and the Charlbury Chronicle, a tri-monthly publication. Again, these important facilities are administered, edited and run by local volunteers.

Charlbury also hosts a number of annual events again run by local volunteers. These include the Charlbury Street Fair, the highly successful Riverside Music and Charlbury Beer Festivals.

Finally, the compilation of this Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan itself together with the associated Community Action Plan and vital supporting information would not have been





## Findings – the issues

The Survey also asked residents to identify the top three things about Charlbury that could be improved. There was no predefined list to choose from so respondents were free to write down any issues they chose. The most common issues raised for improvement were housing, retention of shops and town centre vibrancy, parking and transport (including roads and pavements). People said:

- “More affordable housing for the sake of young residents”
- “Bring back a butchers/greengrocers”
- “More parking and protection of residents’ parking”
- “Keep the buses going”

## 2.3 Climate Emergency

Charlbury Town Council declared a Climate Emergency on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 recognising that climate change threatens life in Charlbury and across the world. The declaration followed the presentation to the council of a petition including a total of 748 signatures including 561 with a confirmed Charlbury address, equating to nearly 20% of the population of the parish. It is recognised that climate change is a major world-wide issue but one which also needs to be tackled at the local level.

Charlbury Town Council also acknowledges and welcomes the climate emergency declarations by the UK parliament, Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). We welcome WODC’s determination to be carbon neutral by 2030 and recognise the challenges this imposes on communities such as ours within the district. Charlbury Town Council is committed to positive local action to address these challenges and this commitment is reflected throughout this Plan within policies and elsewhere.

In recognition of the climate emergency, the Town Council has set up an Environment Working Group which is actively working with the community to propose local actions and collaboration with WODC and others, to reduce carbon emissions with an aim to become carbon-neutral as rapidly as possible.

## 2.4 Key Challenges

The Town Survey (see Section 2.2) identified key concerns for Charlbury and has provided a clear mandate for many of the elements of the Plan, particularly housing, economy and transport. This was supplemented by consideration of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023.

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF Feb 2019 summarises the high-level objective of achieving sustainable development as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Neighbourhood plans must positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change.

### Key issues identified by residents:

- Deliver more low cost and affordable housing to provide homes for younger people and the elderly.
- Support existing shops, pubs and other businesses in order to maintain town centre vibrancy.
- Support continuing access to public transport.
- Promote safe movement by walking and cycling.

- Address concerns about the challenges of parking recognising that a third of the residents in traditional homes in the town centre do not have private off-road parking.
- Improve road safety, particularly at the Enstone Crossroads and on the Slade in the vicinity of the school.
- Address road safety issues arising from inappropriate on-street parking, particularly at near the junction of Nine Acres Lane and Thames Street.
- Protect the landscape, in particular the Evenlode Valley, and the green spaces within the town itself.
- Ensure access to open spaces and protect the environment and biodiversity, by supporting and encouraging volunteers to ensure that green spaces, nature reserves and footpaths are protected and can continue to be enjoyed by the community.
- Maintain and expand recreational facilities, especially for children.

Key considerations emerging from requirement for sustainable development, support for biodiversity and promotion of a carbon neutral economy in recognition of the climate emergency<sup>12</sup>

- Require new housing and extensions to be built to the highest environmental standards possible.
- Encourage the conservation and repair of existing buildings.
- Promote the move to a carbon neutral economy.
- Provide support to encourage a move to the use of electric vehicles.
- Encourage and support projects which seek to reduce carbon emissions (e.g. installation of solar panels, insulation improvements and retrofitting) provided these are consistent with other aspects of the plan. In the case of historic buildings such projects must also be in line with national guidance and be sympathetic to the character and heritage of those buildings.
- Encourage and support projects and other measures to enhance and increase biodiversity.

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<sup>12</sup> Biodiversity and climate change are priorities identified in national legislation, in the WODC Local Plan 2031 and Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023

# Section 3: Aims & Objectives

## 3.1 Aims

The priorities of the residents of Charlbury for the future of the town and the community were identified in the responses to the 2016 Town Survey and in input from other public engagement exercises. The set of aims and objectives set out below reflect these priorities.

The policies defined in later sections of the Plan are designed to address the aims and objectives by directing future developments in the town. However, it should be noted that the Plan alone cannot ensure that all of the aims are met.

The aims of the Plan are:

1. To promote and encourage Charlbury's outstanding community spirit.
2. To address the challenge of climate change actively at the local level.
3. To ensure that development in Charlbury is sustainable and meets the town's local housing needs.
4. To support Charlbury's role as a Rural Service Centre.
5. To conserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting and protect the environment.
6. To secure a sustainable future for Charlbury's historic environment.

## 3.2 Objectives

The objectives set out below build on the Plan's aims providing a greater level of focus. The first two aims with their objectives are of general relevance and are reflected throughout the Plan. Subsequent aims and objectives are addressed in specific sections of the plan as indicated.

| Aim 1  | Objectives   |
|--|--|
| To promote and encourage Charlbury's outstanding community spirit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To ensure that all residents are able to take a full and active part in the life of Charlbury.</li><li>• To seek contributions from new developments to support community facilities.</li><li>• To retain and enhance public transport links to the town.</li><li>• To make it easier for elderly and disabled residents to move around Charlbury.</li><li>• To enable everyone to access the town centre and key services safely by walking, cycling or public transport.</li></ul> |

**Aim 2**

To address the challenge of climate change actively at the local level.

**Objectives**

- To work towards national and WODC targets to become carbon neutral locally with the support of the community.
- To support new development that seeks to reduce carbon emissions beyond existing standards.
- To ensure that new development is sited so as to minimise additional traffic and hence to limit air pollution and carbon emissions.
- To promote more safe cycling and walking within Charlbury.
- To support initiatives to reduce carbon emissions within the town provided these are consistent with other aspects of the Plan (e.g. Aims 5 and 6) and national guidelines.

**Aim 3**

To ensure that development in Charlbury is sustainable and meets the town's local housing and employment needs.

*(This aim is principally addressed in Section 5)*

**Objectives**

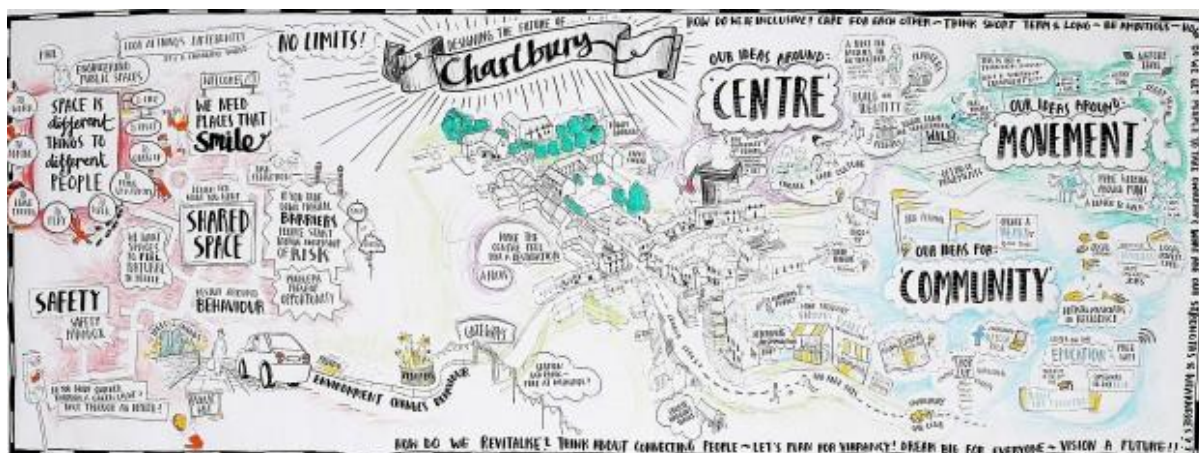
- To provide housing that supports a balanced demographic and a mix of household types.
- To enable more people of working age and especially key workers (e.g education and health workers) to live in Charlbury.
- To provide housing that is affordable to households on or below median income level.
- To provide sheltered housing as well as smaller homes suitable for first time buyers and those seeking to downsize.
- To ensure that affordable housing remains affordable for future residents and not just to initial occupants.
- To support Charlbury Primary School and ensure all children in Charlbury can attend the primary school if they wish to do so.
- To design and site new development where it does not exacerbate congestion and parking problems.
- To ensure that all new developments incorporate all necessary requirements to minimise flooding risk.
- To support new and existing employment opportunities, including home working.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Aim 4</b><br/>To support Charlbury's role as a Rural Service Centre.<br/><i>(This aim is principally addressed in Section 6)</i></p> | <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prioritise the town centre and support existing businesses and services.</li> <li>• To retain and enhance public transport links to the town.</li> <li>• To promote sustainable tourism such as walking and cycling in support of Charlbury's status as a Cotswold Gateway Town and Walkers are Welcome Town.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Aim 5</b><br/>To conserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting and protect the environment.<br/><i>(This aim is principally addressed in Section 7)</i></p> | <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To respect Charlbury's strong landscape setting within the Cotswolds AONB including important views into and out of the town.</li> <li>• To protect green spaces, trees and other features important for biodiversity.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Aim 6</b><br/>To secure a sustainable future for Charlbury's historic environment.<br/><i>(This aim is principally addressed in Section 8)</i></p> | <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To preserve and where possible enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation area.</li> <li>• To ensure that all work to historic buildings respects their character and significance.</li> <li>• To ensure that Charlbury's archaeological and landscape heritage is recognised and protected.</li> <li>• To ensure that new developments are well-designed and respect Charlbury's local character and distinctiveness.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

# Section 4: Process Summary

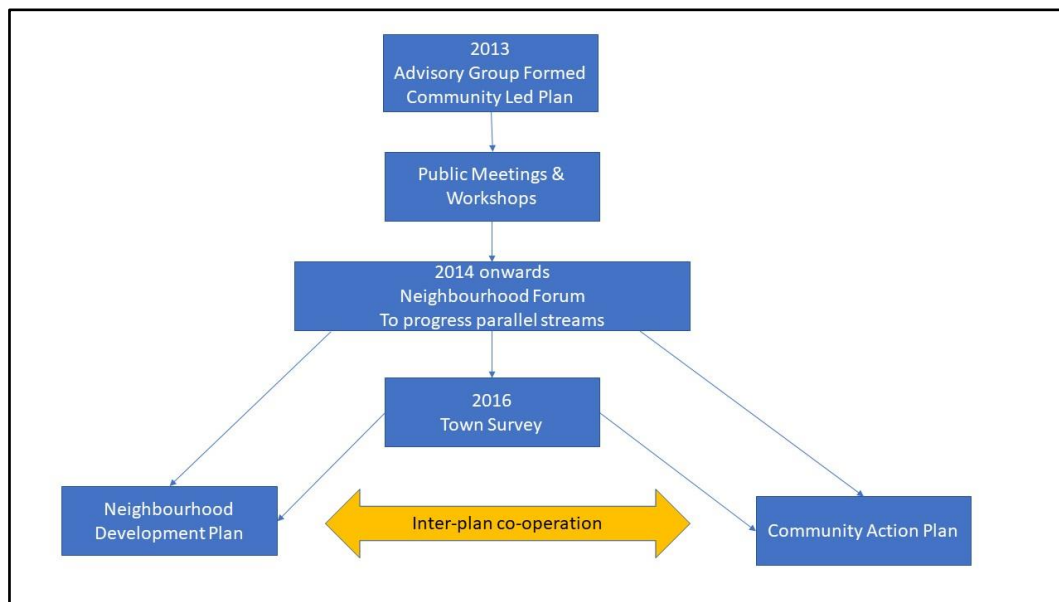


Visual Minutes from public meeting held in February 2014

## 4.1 Introduction

This section gives an overview of the process that has resulted in production of the Plan including the community engagement and consultation that has been undertaken. More detail is given in the separate Consultation Statement.

## 4.2 Strategic Plans for Charlbury



At the request of the Town Council, an advisory group was set up in 2013 to produce a strategic plan for Charlbury. Membership of the group was drawn from the community and the group reported regularly to the Town Council. Following advice from WODC and ORCC<sup>13</sup>, the decision was taken at that time to use the Community Led Plan (CLP) model for the plan

<sup>13</sup> Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, now known as Community First Oxfordshire (CFO)

but the option was left open to produce a separate Neighbourhood Development Plan should that be considered appropriate at a later stage.

During 2013 and early 2014, a series of public meetings, workshops and other events were held in the town to engage the community and to identify the issues and aspirations of importance to the people of Charlbury. The visual minutes shown at the head of this section were produced by an artist during one such public workshop held in February 2014.

Later that year, following external advice and considerable discussion, it was decided that preparations should be made to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan and that work should therefore be taken forward in two streams: a Community Action Plan (CAP) and a Neighbourhood Development Plan (this Plan).

To facilitate the parallel streams of work, the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum<sup>14</sup> was set up replacing the former advisory group. This umbrella group was able to ensure that the two streams of work were coherent and able to feed into each other.

### 4.3 Charlbury Town Survey

Early work of the Neighbourhood Forum focussed on public engagement and data collection culminating in the launch of a comprehensive town survey.

The Charlbury Town Survey was conducted in March/April 2016, and this has been a key piece of evidence guiding both this Neighbourhood Plan and the Community Action Plan. Questionnaires were delivered to every home in Charlbury. Residents were asked to complete a household survey form (one per dwelling) and individual survey forms (one for every person aged 16 or over living at the address). Completed surveys were returned by 620 households and 1,039 individuals, which is well over 40% of the population aged 16 and over (based on 2011 census figures).

The response rate was well above average for a survey of this type, according to people who have been involved in similar polls of local opinion on local issues in other towns and villages. The information we have about who filled in the questionnaires suggests that the make-up of the sample was reasonably representative of the community in Charlbury, although, as with any survey, a degree of caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the results. We received slightly higher response rates from owner-occupiers and older residents than people living in rented accommodation or at the younger end of the age range.

### 4.4 Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan

The parish of Charlbury was registered as a neighbourhood plan area in 2014 (see section 1.5 above).

Initial work focussed on data collection and the town survey as indicated in section 4.3 above.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group was set up in 2016 to produce the draft Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 on behalf of Charlbury Town Council. The Steering Group had 10 initial members, including three Town Councillors and two representatives of the Charlbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee. It was chaired by a Town Councillor and was required to report regularly to the Town Council.

To enhance the evidence base, the following three pieces of work were undertaken:

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<sup>14</sup> NOTE: Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum is NOT a designated neighbourhood forum for neighbourhood planning purposes. It serves as an advisory body to Charlbury Town Council, which is the qualifying body for this Plan (see section 1.4).

- A Housing Needs Assessment for the parish<sup>15</sup> – commissioned from consultants arc4;
- A Local Area Character assessment<sup>16</sup> - commissioned from Dr Kathryn Davies. Much of the work on this document was carried out by local volunteers under the guidance of Dr Kathryn Davies;
- Assessments of locations to be considered for protection as Local Green Spaces<sup>17</sup>. This work was carried out by local volunteers using a toolkit developed by Cotswold District Council and recommended to the steering group by WODC.

Consideration was given to the allocation of development sites and a formal call for sites was issued. Response to this was poor and it coincided with revisions to the then emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 in recognition of the special status of areas, such as Charlbury, within the Cotswolds AONB. Subsequently, and in line with the local plan revisions, it was therefore agreed that no sites would be proposed within the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan but a criteria-based approach would be taken to housing policy. This is explained further in Appendix A section A.2.

Taking account of the above work and evidence, this draft plan was drawn together by the steering group on behalf of the Town Council in readiness for formal pre-submission public consultation.

Following the 6-week pre-submission consultation, responses were documented, and revisions made to the draft plan which was then submitted to WODC along with a map of the Plan area, a Basic Conditions statement and a Consultation Statement.

Charlbury Town Council submitted the Neighbourhood Plan to West Oxfordshire District Council in August 2020. WODC then ran a 6 week Regulation 16 consultation after which responses to the consultation and the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan submission were sent to an Independent Examiner for examination. The Independent Examiner's report was received on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and this concluded that the Charlbury Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan subject to a series of recommended modifications. The Council has now made these modifications as specified in the Independent Examiner's Report to the Neighbourhood Plan and it is this version which is presented here in preparation for the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Referendum on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

## 4.5 Community Action Plan (CAP)

The CAP arose from the public meetings and workshops in 2014 to take forward actions and priorities that do not fall within the remit of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Subgroups were set up to look at different areas of interest and where appropriate they have been able to feed into the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

Following work from the CAP subgroups, a report was issued to the town council in February 2018 with recommendations for action. Further information is available in the Consultation Statement.

Information from this report assisted the town council in formulating the Infrastructure Delivery Plan included here as Appendix B.

<sup>15</sup> Parish of Charlbury – Housing Needs Assessment – Final Report – January 2018 by arc4

<sup>16</sup> Charlbury Parish Character Assessment – Summer 2018 by Dr Kathryn Davies and the residents of Charlbury

<sup>17</sup> Charlbury Local Green Space Assessments – 2018 by residents of Charlbury



## 4.6 Community Engagement

The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 is intended to be a community-owned plan, and at all stages it has been a priority to involve local people to ensure the plan reflects the priorities of the community. In addition to the town survey (see section 4.3), public meetings and open sessions have been held; information has been published on our websites [www.charlburyneighbourhoodforum.org.uk](http://www.charlburyneighbourhoodforum.org.uk) and [www.charlburynp.org.uk](http://www.charlburynp.org.uk); in the Charlbury Chronicle; and on the town website [www.charlbury.info](http://www.charlbury.info). These activities are described in more detail in the separate Consultation Statement.

## Section 5: Housing



### 5.1 Background

- 5.1.1 The policies in this chapter have been formulated following consideration of a wide body of evidence and relevant planning policies, including those in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) and the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, as well as the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) commissioned by the Town Council (Jan 2018).
- 5.1.2 The issues affecting Charlbury are explored in the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A).

5.1.3 The principal conclusions of the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A) can be summarised as follows:

- Conclusion 1:** The Neighbourhood Plan should take a criteria-based approach to new housing proposals, reflecting both national and local policies for development within an AONB, rather than seeking to allocate sites for them.
- Conclusion 2:** There is no 'identified need' (ref. Local Plan 2031) for any further open market housing up to November 2021, whether within the built-up area or on land adjoining it, nor is there likely to be for some time after that date.
- Conclusion 3<sup>18</sup>:** A need exists for (approx.) 23 'lower cost' or 'intermediate' homes that would fall within the current NPPF categories of 'affordable housing' (b-d) in the 5 year period to November 2021 but that the need for affordable housing for rent within NPPF category (a) during that period has been met.
- Conclusion 4:** The Neighbourhood Plan policies should seek to address the long recognised issue of affordability by as far as possible ensuring that any housing which is to be provided consists of dwellings which meet these identified local needs.

5.1.4 Based on this analysis, Charlbury is facing the following housing challenges:

- Challenge 1:** The high cost of housing creating a serious affordability problem, meaning that people who have grown up in the area cannot afford to live here, with consequential impacts for families and support networks.
- Challenge 2:** Significant numbers of residents are unable to afford to buy a home in the town but are not eligible for social rented housing.
- Challenge 3:** An ageing population which in the absence of specific policies (within a Neighbourhood Plan) is likely to become more unbalanced, with a majority of those moving to Charlbury being over 65.
- Challenge 4:** Younger people are needed in the town to sustain its services (both by using them and working in them) and without housing they can afford, the working population is expected to decline.
- Challenge 5:** Without policies to prioritise affordable housing<sup>19</sup> to meet local needs, scarce development land is likely to continue to deliver houses that are beyond the reach of local people and fail to meet the needs of the local community.

<sup>18</sup> Since the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A) was written, permission for Planning Application No 15/03099/FUL (the Rushy Bank housing scheme) has been issued. In addition to the 'extra care' facility, this scheme as approved will provide 25 homes, 7 within NPPF affordable housing category (a) and 6 homes expected to be within NPPF affordable categories (c) or (d). The remaining homes are expected to be classed as 'general market housing' (albeit with other provisions affecting them). Assuming the scheme proceeds as approved, there will therefore still be a need for approximately a further 17 dwellings in NPPF affordable categories (b-d) in the early part of the period covered by this Plan

<sup>19</sup> As now defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF – July 2018

## 5.2 Housing Objectives & Approach

5.2.1 In light of the above conclusions and challenges (and the considerations which led to them), the main objectives of housing policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan are:

- To meet Charlbury's housing challenges while conserving and enhancing the AONB and Conservation Area;
- To maintain a balanced age structure as far as possible;
- To enable elderly and disabled residents to continue living in Charlbury;
- To enable a greater number of people who work in Charlbury to also live here;
- To enable key workers (e.g. in schools, early years and health care) to live in Charlbury.

5.2.2 So far as is possible, this Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address these objectives by:

- supporting the provision of more housing options (e.g. shared ownership) for first time buyers, young families and people of working age on average or lower-than-average incomes;
- maintaining the existing stock of affordable rented housing and supporting a modest increase when necessary to meet identified needs within the parish;
- prioritising lower-cost housing, including smaller-sized terraced or semi-detached housing and flats (including self-build and custom build where these are providing lower-cost housing in perpetuity);
- supporting the provision of more housing adapted to the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities;
- preventing the use of scarce land for development of larger exclusive market housing, such as 4 (or more) bedroom detached houses, which fails to meet identified local needs.

## 5.3 Housing Policies - Meeting Charlbury's Needs

- 5.3.1 The purpose and intent of the Housing Policies is to meet the needs of the Parish as set out in the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A).

### Policy CH1: Meeting the needs of the parish of Charlbury

A modest level of new housing will be supported where it helps to reinforce the existing role of Charlbury as a rural service centre.

Proposals which would provide housing for people on lower incomes and smaller scale and discounted market housing and new affordable homes of a range of different tenures, including houses to buy and to rent will be particularly supported.

Within the built-up area, housing proposals on previously-developed land will be supported where they would deliver the Plan's housing objectives and would otherwise be in accordance with other relevant policies in both the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

On land adjoining the built-up area housing proposals on previously-developed land will be supported where they would deliver the Plan's housing objectives and would otherwise be in accordance with other relevant policies in both the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing proposals on the undeveloped land adjoining the built-up area which would provide for specific local housing need (either within the neighbourhood area or within the Burford-Charlbury sub-area as identified in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan) will be supported where the local need is evidence-based and where the resulting development would otherwise be in accordance with other relevant policies in both the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 5.3.2 A full explanation of the approach taken in this section is set out in Appendix A. Briefly, Policies OS2 and BC1 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP) collectively allow for a 'modest level of development' in Charlbury 'of an appropriate scale and type' to its role as a rural service centre. WOLP Policy H2 in turn allows for new dwellings on both undeveloped and previously developed land within the built-up area. Even there however, WOLP paragraph 9.6.28 applies a 'more restrictive approach to new housing development in the Burford-Charlbury sub-area' than elsewhere, largely because most of it is within the Cotswolds AONB.
- 5.3.3 The policy offers support to a variety of housing schemes. In their different ways the proposed development of such schemes should be supported by appropriate evidence, and in particular the way in which they would deliver local needs either locally (as identified in Appendix A) or elsewhere within the Burford-Charlbury sub area.
- 5.3.4 For the sake of certainty, only land which genuinely adjoins the existing built up area (as at the date of the Plan's adoption) will fall within the provisions of Policy CH1 above. Outlying elements such as the station complex or the Rushy Bank<sup>20</sup> development will not therefore be regarded as part of the built up area for future planning purposes.

<sup>20</sup> Development on land south of Forest Road, Charlbury under planning application reference 15/03099/FUL

## Policy CH2: Affordable Homes

Proposals for affordable housing schemes will be supported where they meet the requirements of Policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan. Proposals which address the specific affordable housing needs in Appendix A of this Neighbourhood Plan will be particularly supported.

## Policy CH3: Lower-cost Housing

Development proposals which include lower-cost housing homes will be supported where they otherwise comply with other relevant policies in this Plan and ensure that measures are in place to demonstrate that the future resale of the homes will be constrained and to ensure that the homes remain lower-cost in perpetuity.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

5.3.5 The Conclusions reached in the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A) show clearly that the predominant need in Charlbury is for affordable and lower cost housing, in particular for households who may not qualify for housing under the local authority housing allocation policy.

5.3.6 Lower cost housing is defined for the purposes of this Plan as being housing that is available for outright purchase but which is affordable to a first-time-buyer household whose income is no higher than the median income for the town. A £223,000 maximum sale price for lower cost housing was calculated in 2017 based on median household income within the town.<sup>21</sup> This will be revised during the lifetime of this plan to recognise any significant change as recorded by the Office of National Statistics. Lower cost housing may include self-build properties, custom-build properties, smaller-sized properties, flats or any other property. Policy CH3 requires that planning applications for lower cost housing should demonstrate how they will be retained as such in perpetuity. This could be achieved by a variety of means, including a Section 106 Agreement.

- **Note: Policy CH4: Rural Exception Sites** was deleted from the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft at examination.

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<sup>21</sup> Arc4 Parish of Charlbury Housing Needs Assessment paras 4.9 to 4.12

- **Note: Policy CH5: Maintaining Affordable Housing in the Parish** was deleted from the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft at examination.

### **Policy CH6: Size and type of homes**

All new development (except affordable rented housing, for which see CH7) should provide the following mix of dwelling sizes: at least 40% 1-2 bedrooms; approximately 40% 3 bedroom homes and no more than 20% 4+ bedroom homes; 5+ bedroom homes will only be supported where a specific local need can be demonstrated<sup>22</sup>.

New housing on land within the built-up area should aim to make efficient use of space but be in keeping with its immediate surroundings both spatially and in form, favouring higher densities in and around the town centre than away from it. Schemes on land adjoining the built up area will be considered on a case by case basis.

Further guidance is set out in Appendix C (Charlbury Design Guidance).

### **Policy CH7: Mix of affordable rented housing**

Development proposals for affordable rented dwellings which include the provision of dwellings which have been designed to cater for the specific needs of the aging population of the town and/or people with disabilities will be particularly supported where this approach is evidenced by the most up-to-date information available.

## **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 5.3.7 Current evidence identifies a particular need for smaller homes in Charlbury in general terms and for one- and two- bedroom houses in particular. This is reflected in the anticipated 65%/35% split between one/two and three/four-bedroom properties respectively in paragraph 5.64 of the Local Plan. In these circumstances the indicative mix of housing in the policy should be used as a guideline to inform the basis of any new housing proposals. Given Charlbury's aging population it is particularly important that some new social rented housing should be suitable for elderly and/or disabled people as recognised in Policy H4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

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<sup>22</sup> This is in general agreement with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 paras 5.71 to 5.76 on housing mix

### **Policy CH8: Subdivision of dwellings to create smaller units**

Development proposals to convert existing dwellings into smaller units will be supported where appropriate provision is made for any additional parking requirements and where the proposed physical alterations are consistent with the conservation and enhancement of the character and heritage of the town in general, and the building concerned in particular.

Development proposals should also demonstrate that any additional refuse and recycling bins can be accommodated in a sensitive way within the curtilage of the site concerned.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 5.3.8 This policy is consistent with Local Plan 2031 Policy H6, which provides for the subdivision of residential properties subject to certain conditions being met. There is currently significant under-occupation of housing in Charlbury, and this is likely to increase due to the predicted aging of the population.
- 5.3.9 Subdividing existing large dwellings is supported in principle by this Plan because it could be a sustainable way of meeting the needs of both property owners and the wider community. It could provide a means for older people to remain in a section of their own homes while releasing some equity from their property. It could also provide additional dwellings close to existing amenities without loss of green field sites. However, the possible impact on parking would need to be mitigated, especially for dwellings in the town centre.

### **Policy CH9: Development in residential gardens**

Development proposals within the Conservation Area should respect the relationship between the principal building and its wider curtilage and/or garden space.

Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on existing curtilages and/or residential gardens which make an important contribution to the character or the appearance of the Conservation Area will not be supported.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 5.3.10 Para 70 of the NPPF advises that: "Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area."
- 5.3.11 There has been significant development within residential gardens in the historic centre of the town over the years, which in some cases has had a negative impact upon the character of the town. With changing needs, it is understandable that development has taken place within many such gardens, particularly to provide new housing. It is still possible however to come across more open but private spaces within the town which make an important contribution to its character and appearance. A policy to resist development within them is therefore appropriate in addition to Conservation Area considerations.



### **Policy CH10: Needs of older people and those with disabilities**

Development that meets the particular needs of older people and those with disabilities currently living within the parish or with local connection to the parish, will be supported in principle. This includes accommodation that is suited to the needs of those with limited mobility, and accommodation that meets the Lifetime Homes standard.

Development of individual self-contained flats or annexes of 1 and 2 bedrooms which are suitable for older people or people with disabilities and which are within the curtilage of existing properties will be supported where such development is consistent with other policies within the plan including policy CH9.

Proposals to provide assisted living accommodation will be supported, subject to meeting the needs of the parish and being consistent with other relevant policies. Proposals to modernise or redevelop former assisted living accommodation to bring it back into such use will be particularly supported. Redevelopment proposals that would result in the long-term loss of assisted living accommodation will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation is no longer needed or commercially viable.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 5.3.12 Charlbury has an aging population and the town's housing stock needs to change to meet its needs. This is of particular importance because the town has a significant number of period properties which may be difficult or impossible to adapt to the needs of frail or disabled occupants. One way to address this issue is to enable people to create "granny flats" within their own properties where appropriate.
- 5.3.13 Charlbury currently has no sheltered housing or assisted living accommodation for the elderly so their provision is supported in principle.
- 5.3.14 The purpose of this Policy is to provide for and support those with existing local connections (e.g. elderly relatives of people already living in Charlbury). It is not intended to encourage development more suited to larger population centres

# Section 6: Economy, Community, Transport and Movement



## 6.1 Overview

6.1.1 This section deals with three very important and interlinked issues for the town: maintaining a thriving economy and town centre while managing the negative impacts of traffic and seeking to address the impacts of climate change.

6.1.2 The 2016 Town Survey showed that traffic, transport and parking were the top concerns of Charlbury residents.<sup>23</sup> The main issues raised were:

- Parking: protecting residents' parking, preventing dangerous and obstructive parking and providing more parking for visitors.
- Traffic speed and road safety: a number of danger areas were identified as priorities for improvement.
- Protecting public transport: Charlbury's bus services have been reduced and there was strong concern about further cuts.

6.1.3 The Town Survey also showed that most people felt there needed to be more employment opportunities in Charlbury, and that protecting shops and services was a high priority.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> 2016 Town Survey, responses to questions 3 and 76

<sup>24</sup> 2016 Town Survey, responses to questions 40 and 3 respectively

- 6.1.4 Charlbury once had a much greater number and variety of shops, as can be seen on Market Street and Sheep Street where there are numerous residential properties converted from shops and also some retail premises that are vacant or being used for non-retail purposes. This change has come about as a result of lifestyle changes. The Town Survey showed that 72% of people now do their main shopping at supermarkets outside Charlbury. It is very important that we protect and retain the town's remaining businesses as well as helping new businesses to set up.
- 6.1.5 This section sets out policies to promote employment, protect the town centre, manage traffic and parking problems and encourage increased walking and cycling.
- 6.1.6 It should be noted that all development proposals are expected to accord with all the policies in the Local Plan 2031 and this Neighbourhood Development Plan. Where policies in this section support particular types of development it is expected that they should also be consistent with policies on for example the natural and historic environment.

## 6.2 Economy

- 6.2.1 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Policy BC1 supports employment and the economy in Charlbury, specifically through:
- support for additional small-scale employment opportunities including sustainable tourism and rural diversification;
  - ensuring development has access to superfast broadband to facilitate home-working;
  - seeking the retention and development of local services and community facilities.
- 6.2.2 The Local Plan 2031 does not propose any major new developments for employment purposes in the Charlbury area. This Plan strongly supports the approach of the Local Plan 2031 on economy and employment, and the policies below add further detail while being fully consistent with the Local Plan 2031.

### Policy ECT1: Rural Service Centre Role

Development will be supported where it is shown to actively reinforce Charlbury's role as a rural service centre while protecting and enhancing the AONB and Conservation Area. Actively reinforcing the rural service centre role means doing one or more of the following:

- increasing the quantity and quality of employment opportunities within Charlbury;
- actively maintaining and enhancing services of local importance including shops, pubs, educational establishments (including early years), healthcare services and facilities for sport and recreation;
- enabling the town to attract and retain people to work in services of local importance.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.2.3 The Local Plan 2031 recognises Charlbury's important role as a "rural service centre", providing important services to residents of the parish and also to neighbouring villages. In the 2016 Town Survey, the most important local services identified were the Post Office (99% of those responding), pharmacy (95%), recycling centre (89%), medical centre (85%), car park (84%), pubs (84%) and farmers market (73%). Other important services both for Charlbury residents and people in nearby settlements are the train station, school, nurseries and preschool, library, museum, Co-op and other shops, community centre and sports clubs.
- 6.2.4 Attracting and retaining people to work in these services is an important part of the service centre role. People do commute from elsewhere to work in Charlbury, but there is very limited car parking in the town centre and also limited public transport. There is also anecdotal evidence of some services finding it difficult to attract staff (including for example the GP surgery in early 2018). It is therefore important to enable people who work here to also live here as far as possible. The homes section contains more information on the housing affordability problem in Charlbury and proposes some policies to attempt to address this to meet the needs of the town.
- 6.2.5 In the Town Survey 456 people (roughly three-quarters of those responding) agreed there was a need for more local employment opportunities, while 160 did not. When asked what type of employment was needed, the most common response was apprenticeships and other opportunities for young people.<sup>25</sup> Supporting local employment is an important objective of this Plan, because it helps keep the town alive and reduces the need for commuting, which in turn reduces traffic and congestion and aids the move towards a carbon neutral community.

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<sup>25</sup> 2016 Town Survey, questions 40 and 41

## **Policy ECT2: Protecting retail, employment and services**

Insofar as planning permission is required proposals which would retain the use of premises for Class E1 uses (retail, employment and the provision of local services), F1 (learning and non-residential) and F2 (local community), uses will be supported.

Proposals for changes of use of premises currently occupied by Class E, F1 and F2 uses for other uses, including for residential uses, will not be supported unless there is evidence that the premises are no longer commercially viable for Class E, F1 and F2 uses or that alternative facilities are available elsewhere in the neighbourhood area in accessible and convenient locations.

Insofar as planning permission is required, proposed change of use of former retail premises in Sheep Street and Market Street will be supported where they would provide employment opportunities or otherwise support the vitality and viability of the town centre through provision of community facilities, community projects or sustainable tourism.

Where the principle of a change of the premises concerned to residential use complies with the wider principles elsewhere in this policy, their conversion and adaptation should respect the character and appearance of any heritage assets in general terms and traditional shop fronts in particular.

Development proposals should safeguard existing independent accesses to upper floor accommodation. Proposals that would result in the loss of small flats above retail or commercial uses or the loss of residential units in outbuildings to the rear of retail or other commercial premises will not be supported.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 6.2.6 Protecting the town centre is one of the objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan. Local Plan 2031 Policy E5 aims to protect employment and retail within Charlbury by resisting applications for change of use of such premises anywhere in the town. This Plan strongly supports Local Plan 2031 Policy E5.
- 6.2.7 However, it is recognized that in parts of the town, most notably Sheep Street, there are a number of former retail premises no longer in retail use, which may be being used for storage or office space or may be vacant. It is considered that there is little prospect of all of these premises coming back into retail use. Appropriate changes of use could reinvigorate the town centre, provide new employment opportunities and improve the appearance of the area. Therefore this Plan proposes to be flexible about permitting changes of use where this would be in the best interests of the community. The change of use of some former retail premises to office space or other purposes that generate employment or otherwise support the vitality and viability of the town centre is therefore supported.
- 6.2.8 Community projects, often set up and run by volunteers, contribute in a significant way to the town's vitality but the availability of suitable and affordable premises for these projects can be an issue. The use of currently empty retail or other commercial premises to support such projects can help to enable such projects whilst bringing the premises back into use and improving the appearance and vibrancy of the town centre. This Plan welcomes such initiatives.

- 6.2.9 It is also recognised that accommodation above and behind shops is an important share of the town’s rental accommodation and in some cases provides lower-cost and smaller-size dwellings.

### **Policy ECT3: Facilities to support local businesses**

Development proposals that would support or complement homeworking will be supported. Proposals for the provision of office hubs and meeting spaces for home workers will be particularly supported.

### **Community Aspiration 1: Superfast Broadband**

All properties, both residential and business, to have access to superfast broadband.

## **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 6.2.10 The 2016 Town Survey revealed that 30% of Charlbury’s working population work from home some of the time.<sup>26</sup> This is consistent with Local Plan figures which indicate 35% of workers in the Burford-Charlbury subarea work at or mainly from home. Government statistics show that the percentage of people in rural areas working from home is increasing year on year.<sup>27</sup>
- 6.2.11 Supporting employment within the town, whether from home or in local businesses and services, is a high priority as this maintains the vibrancy of the town, reduces traffic associated with commuting and helps residents to enjoy a better work/life balance. Charlbury is fortunate to have access to high speed broadband. It is important that the town is able to keep up with developments as technology changes so that homeworkers and local businesses have the best possible access to the internet. In the Town Survey, 52 people responded that they would use flexible office space if it was available in Charlbury.<sup>28</sup> Therefore development of this sort of facility is supported in this Plan.

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<sup>26</sup> 2016 Town Survey, question 7

<sup>27</sup> ONS Labour Force Survey, quoted in *Rural Home Working Statistics*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rural-home-working>

<sup>28</sup> 2016 Town Survey, question 8

## **Policy ECT4: Sustainable Tourism**

Sensitively-sized and located development proposals for tourism and leisure activities which would consolidate the responsible enjoyment of the local environment, utilise existing facilities and assist local business and events will be supported.

In particular development proposals will be supported where they meet any or all of the following characteristics:

- Support and promote Charlbury's designations as a Walkers are Welcome Town and a Cotswold Gateway Town;
- Promote safe walking and/or cycling (e.g. by providing and/or clearly indicating safe routes to the town, bus and rail services; and by providing customers with details of recommended safe walks and cycle rides accessible directly from the premises);
- Promote and enable the use of public transport (e.g. highlighting bus and rail links in promotional material, both for access to Charlbury and for visits to local attractions);
- Facilitate the use of electric vehicles (e.g. by providing off-street charging points for customers);
- Limit the generation of additional traffic in the town (e.g. by provision of off-street customer parking; by promotion of local events, entertainments and amenities; and by encouraging use of local shops, catering and other services which are readily accessible on foot).

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

6.2.12 Tourism and leisure can provide additional employment within the town, capitalizing on its situation within the AONB and its historic character. Tourism also helps to support local shops and services, including public transport. Appropriate development that supports sustainable tourism is therefore supported.

6.2.13 Charlbury's position in the easternmost edge of the Cotswolds along the Evenlode valley adjacent to Wychwood Forest make it a potentially desirable tourist destination. The many footpaths and cycle routes coupled with access by car or public transport offer a number of routes around the Town to cater for everyone and make Charlbury suitable for development of a reasonable level of tourism. Charlbury's designation as a Walkers are Welcome Town and a Cotswold Gateway Town recognize and support this. In this context Policy ECT4 takes a sensitive approach to such development. Development proposals will be considered in the round and in the context of the wider development plan. In this regard Policy E4 of the Local Plan will be an important consideration together with other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan (mainly the natural environment and heritage policies).

6.2.14 Although there is no wish to become a major tourist destination such as Woodstock or Burford development of a more modest level of tourism is supported by this Plan. Existing facilities at Banbury Hill Farm and Cotswolds Camping are successful and beneficial to the town, community and local area.

- 6.2.15 Central to this is the maintenance of public transport links. Provision of suitable tourist facilities is supported as is the maintenance and signage of footpaths and cycleways. Proposals to improve or add to the number of these are also strongly encouraged. Additional waymarked paths are being established as part of the Cotswold Gateway Town initiative.
- 6.2.16 The people of Charlbury are happy to share the beauty of their surroundings and there are several Cotswold Voluntary Wardens in the Town as well as keen cyclists promoting SusTrans networks. As is now recognized in national policy there are substantial health benefits in visiting the countryside and Charlbury has much to offer.
- 6.2.17 The boosting of the local economy is also possible through sustainable tourism. There needs to be ready access to refreshments especially out of hours. Visitor accommodation is also required at different levels. There is also a need for good tourist information in the Town and creation of a Tourist information Centre would be welcome. All of these would provide a boost to the economy of Charlbury.

### 6.3 Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities

- 6.3.1 Charlbury has good facilities for sports, recreation and culture for a community of its size. Facilities of particular note are the new Community Centre, the Corner House and War Memorial Hall, Nine Acres recreation ground incorporating tennis courts, football pitches and a children's play area, the cricket club, the bowls club and the Mill Field bordering the River Evenlode used by the canoe club. The community places a high value on the green spaces in and around the town which are used for walking, dog exercising, sport and play. A skate park, football area and children's play area are provided adjacent to Ticknell Piece.
- 6.3.2 Although excellent children's playground facilities are available at Nine Acres, provision could be improved for children living in the East and South sections of the town, some of whom are too far from play facilities (see below).
- 6.3.3 Charlbury also has reasonable provision of public meeting spaces, as noted in section 2.1 (Charlbury Today), notably the Corner House, Memorial Hall and the new Community Centre (incorporating the library). Other important community assets include the Post Office (now located within the Co-op); the four pubs (one of which, The Bull, is already registered as an Asset of Community Value); and the preschool. Maintaining existing sport, recreation and community facilities is a priority.

#### Policy ECT5: Protection of Community Facilities

Developments that would lead to the loss of existing community facilities will not be supported, unless it can be clearly shown that alternative facilities providing an equal or improved level of service and access for users will remain. Where these facilities are currently run commercially, detailed consideration should be given to the possibility of maintaining the facility or service on a community run basis as part of any demonstration that the current use is unviable.



## Community Aspiration 2: Community Assets

Where important community facilities are at risk of being lost or significantly harmed, the Town Council will consider whether there is a case to designate the building as an Asset of Community Value. Whilst it is recognised that such a designation does not guarantee protection against change of use, it serves to demonstrate the importance of the facility to the community and provides an opportunity for a community organisation or group to acquire the asset for the benefit of the community.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.3.4 Loss of community facilities due to property being sold and developed for other uses is a particular problem for rural areas, where there may be no other suitable sites to host the facility. Examples of the sorts of community facilities which are important in Charlbury would include public meeting spaces, the pharmacy, shops, pubs, sports facilities, the recycling centre and early years services.
- 6.3.5 The Localism Act 2011 allows buildings or land of community value to be registered on the local planning authority's register of Assets of Community Value (ACV). This then means if the building or land comes up for sale, the Town Council or other community organisations will be offered an opportunity to bid to acquire the asset on behalf of the local community. Whilst ACV designation does not guarantee protection against change of use it does serve to demonstrate the importance of the asset to the community and will be taken into account by WODC in considering any proposal for loss of service or community facilities in line with Local Plan 2031 policy E5. In this context Policy ECT5 has been designed to provide a local approach to and iteration of Policy E5 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

## Policy ECT6: Children's Play Areas

New residential proposals should make appropriate provision for new children's play facilities within the development. In particular new residential developments in locations remote from current facilities at Nine Acres and Ticknell Piece should demonstrate how they have accommodated appropriate play areas within their layouts.

Where the provision of play facilities on the site concerned is inappropriate or would be too small to have any significant benefit, proportionate developer contributions based on the scale of the development concerned will be sought to assist in the provision and/or maintenance of other play equipment close to the proposed development.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.3.6 Charlbury has an excellent children's playground at Nine Acres Recreation ground and facilities at the play area at Ticknell Piece Road are currently being upgraded with funding from the Town Council and local residents. However, provision in other parts of the town is not adequate. Many of the town's larger estates are located some distance from Nine Acres and Ticknell Piece, often separated by busy roads and hills. These estates have no separate facilities.

- 6.3.7 National standards set by “Fields in Trust” recommend a distance of 400 metres from dwellings to a Locally Equipped Area for Play (intended for younger children who can go out to play independently)<sup>29</sup>. This equates to about a 5 minute walk.
- 6.3.8 West Oxfordshire District Council’s Open Space Study sets standards for quantity and accessibility of different types of open space. For children’s playgrounds, it recommends 480 metres or a 10 minute straight line walk. [reference: West Oxfordshire Open Space Study, 2013 – 2029].
- 6.3.9 The table below gives a number of examples of roads in Charlbury that exceed these recommended distances from playgrounds.

| Road/area         | Distance from Ticknell Piece Road play area (metres) | Distance from Nine Acres play area (metres) |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Sturt Close       | 1,000  | 1,100                                       |
| Woodfield Drive   | 750  | 850   |
| Jefferson’s Piece | 500  | 500   |
| Little Lees       | 950  | 1000  |

## 6.4 Parking

- 6.4.1 The narrow streets in the historic town centre are an important part of the character of Charlbury, but they also pose difficulties for traffic and parking. Most properties on the central roads do not have private parking and their residents need to park on street. Visitors to the houses, shops, businesses and churches can struggle to find parking. The Spendlove car park is very convenient for the Co-Op, medical centre and nearby businesses, but fills up at peak times. There is also the issue of railway station users parking on street, either to avoid parking charges at the railway car park or because it is full.
- 6.4.2 Inconsiderate parking can cause considerable disruption and danger to road users and pedestrians. The town has had particular problems with parked cars causing buses to get stuck in the town centre and creating dangerous conditions for pedestrians at the bottom of Nine Acres Lane.
- 6.4.3 The streets of Charlbury are not just a route for cars but are also used by pedestrians, cyclists, buses and others. They are important for the community as a meeting place, as a venue for community events such as the Annual Street Fair, as part of national walking routes, and the occasional stage for events such as the Tour of Britain cycle race.

<sup>29</sup> **Fields in Trust** guidelines from the document “Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard (England)” See <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England-Apr18.pdf>

- 6.4.4 Policy ECT7 addresses these important issues. The policy applies throughout the neighbourhood area. The policy is particularly relevant in the historic core of the town given the age and design of properties and their lack of car parking facilities. The first part of the policy recognises that some developments may propose alternative parking facilities to replace spaces that otherwise would be lost. Plainly a series of imaginative responses may arise during the Plan period on a case-by-case basis. However, in general terms the replacement spaces should make provision for the existing arrangements for residents, for disabled people or any other particular group.

### **Policy ECT7: Parking**

New development proposals should make adequate provision for on-site parking by residents and visitors. Where development results in loss of existing parking, it should make provision for at least an equivalent number of parking spaces.

Proposals for extensions and alterations of existing buildings should not result in a net reduction of parking spaces.

Proposals for appropriate additional public parking in or near the town centre will be supported where they respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of residential premises in the immediate location.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 6.4.5 Policy ECT7 has been developed to be consistent with Local Plan 2031 Policy T4, LTP4 policy 11 and the County Council parking standards. However, given the existing parking problems within Charlbury, and the fact these were a top priority in responses to the Town Survey, there is justification for this Plan to go further than the Local Plan 2031 and County Council parking standards.
- 6.4.6 It is important that any new development makes adequate provision for the additional parking needs it may generate and does not reduce or place extra pressure upon the existing on-street parking.
- 6.4.7 The nature of Charlbury means there are few opportunities for providing additional parking spaces for residents and users of local shops and services. Should suitable land become available for use as additional parking this would be encouraged in order to support local businesses and services and to reduce existing parking pressures. For example, the movement of the Post Office could result in such an opportunity. Another opportunity could be for additional parking on Nine Acres, which is discussed in the Local Green Spaces section.
- 6.4.8 Charlbury's streetscape is important to the character of the town and surrounding area as recognised in the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment and in the Charlbury Design Guidance (Appendix C, section C.4). In accordance policies 24 and 25 of Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4), this plan seeks to avoid the negative impacts of transport within the Cotswolds AONB and the Charlbury Conservation Area.

### **Policy ECT8: Station Car Park**

Proposals for the expansion of the station car park will be supported where they protect the landscape of the Evenlode Valley and the Cotswolds AONB, minimise light pollution and are designed to ensure that they have no unacceptable harm on views into and out of the town, noise pollution and dark skies environment in the neighbourhood area.

### **Community Aspiration 3: Residents' Parking**

A residents' parking scheme that discourages use of on street parking spaces by rail station users is supported, provided that it meets the needs of the community (including residents, workers and businesses) and visitors to the town.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 6.4.9 Charlbury is an important station on the Cotswolds line and passenger numbers have been increasing. There is a high demand for parking at the station and there is concern that rail users are adding to pressure on parking spaces in the town centre.
- 6.4.10 Overflow parking from the railway station is currently exacerbating parking problems within Charlbury Town Centre. It is important to accommodate this demand without negatively impacting the AONB.
- 6.4.11 The railway station is located within a particularly sensitive area of the AONB. There are opportunities to expand the capacity of the car park without increasing the footprint of the car park.
- 6.4.12 Policy ECT8 addresses these issues. Whilst it is a supportive policy it should read within the context of Policies NE1-NE4 of this Plan. In this context, any extensions to the car park should be designed to respect their location in the Cotswolds AONB in general, and in the Evenlode Valley in particular, the general tranquillity of the town and the overall dark skies environment.

## 6.5 Walking and Cycling

- 6.5.1 Promoting cycling and walking benefits everyone, because it should help reduce traffic and parking problems in the town centre. A large proportion (75%) of people walk to get around the Town and it is important to ensure that new developments also have walking access. It also helps people to stay healthy and fosters a sense of community, because pedestrians will stop and talk to each other. Some houses on the edges of Charlbury do not have a pavement linking them to the town which makes walking unsafe, particularly for young children and frail or disabled residents. Some residents are discouraged from walking or cycling to the town centre, school and railway station because their homes are too far away and/or access is along roads that are not well suited to walking and cycling due to being very busy, having no pavement or being poorly surfaced (e.g. Crawborough). Promotion of walking and cycling within this plan acknowledges and supports the priorities of the Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-2023)<sup>30</sup>. Policy ECT9 sets out the Plan's approach to this important matter. Its implementation will assist in safeguarding the sustainability and safety of the neighbourhood area. It has been designed to be complementary to the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4. Policies 19 and 34 of that Plan are particularly important to Charlbury. Proposals which make the town centre safer and more accessible to cyclists and pedestrians (including wheelchair users and buggies), and which respect the town's historic character would be actively supported and encouraged by both parts of the policy.

### Policy ECT9: Walking and Cycling

New residential developments should promote and enable safe and attractive walking and cycling routes to the town's main facilities wherever practicable. Where the principal access to a development site cannot offer a safe walking route, the proposal should incorporate an alternative pedestrian access to a safe path or footway whenever possible. Where appropriate and proportionate to the development concerned, developer contributions will be sought to enable improved pedestrian and cyclist access. New development which cannot provide safe pedestrian access will not be supported.

Development proposals which provide new or improved links between different parts of the town for pedestrians and cyclists will be supported. Development proposals which would directly or indirectly improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists along the B-road approaches to the town or provide alternative safe cycle routes avoiding these road will be particularly supported. Development proposals which would detract from safety, directness, access, attractiveness and convenience of existing pedestrian and cycle routes will not be supported.

<sup>30</sup> Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-2023) was produced by the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, a partnership between local government, the NHS and the people of Oxfordshire.

### **Policy ECT10: Easy access for all**

Development proposals should demonstrate how they would address the movement needs of people of all ages and abilities on pavements, pathways and road crossing points, having due regard to the need to conserve and enhance the historic and natural environment in accordance with other policies within this Plan.

Development proposals which make the town more accessible for wheelchair users, mobility scooters, buggies and people with disabilities will be particularly supported.

### **Community Aspiration 4: 20mph Speed Limit Zone**

Introduction of a 20mph speed limit within the Town Centre is supported.

## **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 6.5.2 It is important that any new housing is designed and sited in such a way as to enable access to the town's main facilities (namely the town centre, school, bus stops and railway station) on foot or by bicycle. Otherwise congestion and parking problems will worsen, and residents in new developments could feel isolated from the town centre and the community.
- 6.5.3 New development may also be able to make a positive contribution by improving pedestrian and cycle links between existing parts of the town. For example, Woodstock Road has no footway beyond a certain point and this makes it hazardous for pedestrians accessing properties further down the road and also for walkers crossing between the footpath from Woody Lane and the footpath to Stonesfield.

## **6.6 Public Transport**

### **Policy ECT11: Public Transport**

Development proposals should take into account the need to maintain and enhance public transport links, and ensure that future residents can walk to bus stops safely and easily.

Development proposals that would enhance access to bus stops will be supported.

### **Community Aspiration 5: Improving usability of Bus Stops**

Proposals that make it easier for all residents to use bus stops are supported, including by improving pavements, providing safer road crossing points near bus stops, providing additional seating at bus stops and inclusion of electronic information.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.6.1 There was considerable concern expressed in the 2016 Town Survey about cuts to Charlbury's public transport. While for the most part this is outside the scope of this Plan, it will be important that any new development is sited in such a way that new residents are able to access public transport. We also note that LTP4 policy 34 seeks support for public transport provision and that, where appropriate, Oxfordshire County Council will seek financial commitments to this end.
- 6.6.2 Also where new development is able to improve access to public transport for existing residents, e.g. by providing new shortcuts or safer walking routes, this is welcomed.

## 6.7 Electric Vehicles

### Policy ECT12: Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Development proposals for new homes should include provision for charging electric vehicles within the boundary of the site concerned.

### Community Aspiration 6: Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Provision of electric vehicle charging points within car parks and other appropriate locations within the town is supported and is to be encouraged.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.7.1 The government has announced its intention to end the sale of diesel and petrol vehicles entirely by 2035. At the time of writing Oxford City Council was consulting on proposals for a phased ban of diesel and petrol vehicles to be implemented between 2020 and 2035. It is important that Charlbury plays its part in enabling the changeover to electric vehicles by helping to develop the infrastructure needed, particularly as many of our residents will want to drive into Oxford where the ban could be in place very soon. Policy ECT12 sets out the Plan's approach to this important matter. It has been designed to be complementary to the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4. Policy 22 of that Plan is particularly important to this initiative in the neighbourhood plan (and to its associated Community Aspiration).
- 6.7.2 As noted in section 2.3, Charlbury Town Council has declared a climate emergency and is keen to promote and enable the use of electric vehicles. Convenient and reliable access to charging facilities is a fundamental requirement to facilitate the transition to electric vehicles.

## 6.8 Road Safety

### Policy ECT13: Sturt Road & The Slade

Development proposals which would access directly onto Sturt Road or The Slade and/or increase traffic volumes on these roads should demonstrate that they are capable of being safely accommodated into the local highways network. In particular they should demonstrate that they do not unacceptably increase the parking issues in this part of the town, increase congestion or increase danger to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, especially at school pick up and drop off times.

Proposals which would contribute directly or indirectly to improvements of road safety on Sturt Road and The Slade will be supported.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.8.1 Sturt Road and The Slade form part of the B4022 as it passes through Charlbury. This is the busiest route in Charlbury, being the main route towards Witney and Oxford. Significant safety concerns in this area were highlighted in the Town Survey, particularly either side of the school entrance.<sup>31</sup> Speeding traffic is a frequent problem, especially when descending the steep hill on the Slade, and this has been evidenced by the community speedwatch initiative.
- 6.8.2 The speed and (at peak times) volume of traffic, combined with poor visibility in places and lack of crossings, mean that it can be difficult crossing this main route, especially for people who have mobility problems or who are accompanying young children.
- **Note: Policy ECT14: Safe travel to Charlbury Primary School** was deleted from the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft at examination.

### Community Aspiration 7: Improving Safety of Travel to/from School

All projects to encourage safe school travel are supported in principle provided that they have the support of the school and the community, including proposals for a drop off zone, traffic calming around the school entrance and provision of a permanent crossing point outside school.

<sup>31</sup> 2016 Town Survey question 48, 705 people agreed or strongly agreed that the Slade either side of the school was a danger area; 509 agreed or strongly agreed that Sturt Road and The Slade in general were a danger area.



## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.8.3 The Slade either side of Charlbury Primary School was one of the top two danger areas highlighted in the Town Survey. One third of those responding felt it was unsafe dropping their children at school. Visibility is restricted due to a hill and bend in the road, and at school pick-up and drop-off times large numbers of cars park on The Slade. This reduces the road coming up the hill towards the school to a single lane, with poor visibility. The lack of parking space can sometimes result in inconsiderate or even dangerous parking in the area. At school pick up and drop off times warning lights advise lower speeds (20mph) and a school crossing supervisor helps children cross the road. However, these safety measures are not in place at other times, for example when children are leaving after school clubs.
- 6.8.4 The Community Action Plan has put forward some ideas for improving safe travel to school, including using visual means to slow traffic (change in road surface and/or artwork depicting children) and provision of a safe drop off point. These ideas were still being developed at the time of writing. This Plan seeks to be supportive in principle of any proposals coming forward that have the support of the community and the school.
- 6.8.5 Community Aspiration 7 support the aims of LTP4 policy 20.

### Policy ECT15: Enstone Road Crossroads

Development proposals which would access directly on to the Enstone Road crossroads and/or increase traffic volumes at the junction should demonstrate that they are capable of being safely accommodated into the local highways network. In particular they should demonstrate that they do not unacceptably increase the parking issues at this junction, increase congestion or increase danger to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, especially at school pick up and drop off times.

Where it is appropriate to do so development proposals which would directly or indirectly generate and increase in traffic at the junction should contribute towards improvements to this part of the highways network.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 6.8.6 The Enstone crossroads is where the B4022 meets Nine Acres Lane and Enstone Road. It was highlighted in the Town Survey as one of the top two danger areas in Charlbury. It is a frequently used crossing point for pedestrians walking to and from town and the playing field. There is a bus stop at the junction, and a stile exit from the Nine Acres playing field.
- 6.8.7 There have been a number of accidents at this crossroads, due to a combination of poor visibility caused by bends in the approach roads, excessive speed and drivers not realizing they need to give way when coming from either The Slade or Nine Acres Lane.
- 6.8.8 It is also a difficult crossing for pedestrians (especially pushchair or wheelchair users) due to the narrow pavement on The Slade and poor visibility due to bends on The Slade and the approach from Enstone. Improving safety at this junction is a high priority and some proposals have been put forward.

6.8.9 Policy ECT15 addresses this important matter. The approach to developer contributions in the second part of the policy takes account of the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations (Regulation 122) which provide a broader context for this issue. They require that developer contributions should be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Where these tests are met the improvements could include junction redesign, improved road marking, improved signage and enhancements to the footway.

### **Community Aspiration 8: Improving Pedestrian and Traffic Safety**

Projects designed to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users on arterial roads and at junctions within the parish are supported in principle, especially on roads which also serve as residential streets and/or pedestrian access routes to the town centre or other important locations. Priority will be given to locations identified by residents as particularly unsafe (e.g. Enstone Road crossroads, Woodstock Road and Fowler Road).

Such projects may include measures such as traffic calming, further speed restrictions or improved pedestrian crossing points.

Any such projects must also be consistent with the policies within this Plan. In particular, they must seek to protect the character of the conservation area and the Cotswolds AONB.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

6.8.10 Community Aspiration 8 complements policies ECT13 and ECT15, recognising that proposed developments are unlikely to be able to deliver or fund the measures required.

# Section 7: Natural Environment and Green Space

## 7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1 Charlbury has a beautiful landscape setting. Its inclusion in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty rightly reflects the importance of the relationship between the town and its surroundings. There is also a rich wildlife within the town and the wider parish. Conserving Charlbury's strong landscape setting and protecting the environment and biodiversity are important aims for this Plan (see section 3.1, Aim 5).
- 7.1.2 Charlbury's hillside location above the river Evenlode means that there are few places where the town might be extended without a highly visible and negative impact on its landscape setting and on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is a key consideration for any new development proposed outside the built-up area. Even within the built-up area, glimpsed views of the town and surrounding countryside are important to the character of the town.
- 7.1.3 Charlbury Parish lies within the Cotswolds Valley Nature Improvement Area<sup>32</sup>, which has been identified as an area where there are opportunities for habitat creation that would have great benefits for wildlife, in particular to help species migrate to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 7.1.4 In addition, there are three Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) within the parish.<sup>33</sup> CTAs are areas that have been identified as of highest priority for wildlife conservation and habitat creation. Between them, the three CTAs cover a large part of the undeveloped land outside the built-up area of the town.
- 7.1.5 The landscape and wildlife of the area was also investigated in the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study<sup>34</sup> (OWLS) published in 2004. The importance of the farmland slopes and valley sides landscape along the Evenlode valley to biodiversity were highlighted.
- 7.1.6 The richness of the natural environment and the potential for enhancing this during the lifetime of this neighbourhood plan are of great importance in addressing the challenges of the declared climate emergency and loss of biodiversity at a local level (see also section 2.3). It is vital that opportunities are taken for developments to make significant steps in the progress towards a net zero carbon economy in the lifetime of this plan.
- 7.1.7 National policy makes provision for local communities to identify green areas of particular importance to those communities, where development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. Policy NE7 of this Plan (see section 7.4) identifies a number of such sites for designation as Local Green Space.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/cotswolds-nia-summary.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> These are the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks CTA, the North Evenlode Valleys CTA and the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Valley CTA.

<sup>34</sup> <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/>

- 7.1.8 The steep-sided valley of the River Evenlode means it is prone to flooding during heavy rainfall. It is important that new development does not increase the risk of flooding by increasing the rate of surface water run-off in the town. Where possible opportunities should be taken to reduce the rate of surface water run-off. As noted in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan the Evenlode Catchment area is important in the catchment based approach to water quality in the Thames River Basin and the current poor quality of water requires urgent attention. Policy NE8 of this Plan (see section 7.5) seeks to ensure that developments within the parish do not have any adverse impact on flood risk or water quality.
- 7.1.9 Policy NE9 of this Plan (see section 7.6) seeks to ensure that development seeks to achieve excellent environmental performance. Improvement of the energy efficiency of homes is an essential step towards the target to become carbon neutral in recognition of the declared climate emergency (see also section 2.3).

## 7.2 Landscape Character

### **Policy NE1: Protecting the Cotswolds AONB**

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the natural beauty, landscape and countryside of the Cotswolds AONB, including its wildlife and heritage.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty and take account of policies in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, Position Statements and any relevant associated guidance.

Development proposals for affordable housing that meet identified needs of the town will be supported provided they are consistent with the great weight that must be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape, natural scenic beauty, wildlife and heritage of the area.

## **Policy NE2: Protecting Important Views**

Development proposals should respect important views of the town from its surrounding landscape, from the town to the countryside and within the town within the context provided by the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998), its Character Area 6 (The Lower Evenlode Valley) and the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment (2018).

Development proposals should be designed and arranged to ensure that important views are safeguarded.

In particular development proposals should take into account the following views:

- the Evenlode Valley and the registered landscape of Cornbury Park from the town, (particularly from Fiveways and the “promenade” along Grammar School Hill);
- towards the town and its skyline across the Evenlode Valley from Forest Road, Cornbury Park and the public footpaths to Finstock, Walcot and Shorthampton;
- the town from Banbury Hill and Grammar School Hill;
- down Church Street, along Sheep Street towards Hixet Wood and down Park Street towards open country;
- glimpses of the town, church tower and out to open country from elevated locations such as Dancers Hill.

Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on important views in the neighbourhood area by virtue of their layout, height, scale, massing or materials will not be supported.

## **Policy NE3: Protecting the Evenlode Valley**

Development proposals to the west of the existing building line along Pound Hill, Dairy Court, Mill Lane, Dyers Hill, Church Lane, Shilson Lane, Grammar School Hill and Fowler Road, Charlbury will only be supported where they have an acceptable visual impact on the landscape or if it can be robustly demonstrated that the consequent public benefit outweighs any harm to the landscape, that a similar benefit cannot be achieved by a development in another location (either in the Neighbourhood Plan area or elsewhere) and that any detriment to the landscape has as far as practicable been minimised and mitigated.

## **Policy NE4: Tranquility and Dark Skies**

Development proposals should maintain and, where practicable, improve the tranquillity and the dark skies environment in and around Charlbury.

In particular, proposals for the installation of artificial external lighting will only be supported where they include lighting levels at the lowest level possible to achieve the effect required.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 7.2.1 The whole of the parish of Charlbury is located within the Cotswolds AONB, which is a prime consideration in any development. The above policies are consistent with Local Plan 2031 policy EH1 which places great weight on conservation of the AONB, and EH2 which seeks to conserve and enhance the character and features of the landscape, including its tranquillity and dark skies. They are also consistent with the Cotswolds Management Plan and with the National Planning Policy Framework policy on protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 7.2.2 Within an AONB, the NPPF further requires that the scale and extent of development should be limited (Paragraph 172). In the Burford-Charlbury Sub Area, the Local Plan 2031 states that any proposed development within the AONB will be expected to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty (para 9.6.47 and policy BC1).
- 7.2.3 Policy NE1 sets out to add local value to the policy approach already established nationally (in the NPPF) and locally (in Policy EH1 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan) and the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.
- 7.2.4 Charlbury is identified in the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998) as a key settlement in Character Area 6, the Lower Evenlode Valley. Key sensitivities include the prominence and sensitivity of the urban edge to the north and west, the need to maintain distant views across the valley from the north and east, and the sensitivity of the skyline to the east and of the valley floor and valley sides to the west. These findings were endorsed by the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment (2018)<sup>35</sup> which placed particular emphasis on the importance of views to the character of the town and the wider parish. Policy NE2 is consistent with Local Plan 2031 policies regarding views within Conservation Areas (EH10), and historic parks and gardens (EH14).
- 7.2.5 The Evenlode Valley is Charlbury's most distinctive landscape feature and of critical importance to its setting. The strong landscape of the Evenlode Valley to the west of the town is highly sensitive to development and therefore visual impact will be a key consideration for any proposed development in this area. Its contribution to the AONB is recognised in the 1998 Landscape Assessment. The views it provides between the town, Cornbury Park and the former royal forest of Wychwood to the west place the town in its historic and landscape context. The Charlbury Parish Character Assessment (2018) considers such views to be of great significance. A specific policy protecting the Evenlode Valley (NE3) is therefore appropriate.
- 7.2.6 In accordance with Local Plan 2031 policy OS2, the coalescence and loss of identity of separate settlements should be avoided. Specifically, there is a need to protect the separation of the hamlet of Walcot from the built area of Charlbury. This would be under threat from any development on the field between the Walcot and Forest Road. This field was considered and assessed for designation as a local green space but is not so designated in this Plan.

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<sup>35</sup> The Charlbury Parish Character Assessment (2018) is available at <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/>

- 7.2.7 Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) envisages a sequential test where major development would have a significant adverse impact on an AONB, and paragraph 195 applies a public benefit test to developments that would harm a designated historic asset. Given the great local significance of the Evenlode Valley in the landscape setting of Charlbury and its vulnerability to even small-scale developments, similar forms of test are appropriate here.
- 7.2.8 The value of the landscape was recognised and was frequently mentioned in the Town survey as being of particular importance to residents. Biodiversity and in mitigating the harm of climate warming are also of considerable importance.
- 7.2.9 Charlbury's dark skies are an important part of its character, allowing stars to be seen at night. A map produced by the Cotswolds Conservation Board shows Charlbury to be one of the towns with the lowest levels of light pollution in the Cotswolds (rated 2, on a scale of 1 to 5).<sup>36</sup> The importance of tranquillity and dark skies within the Cotswolds is explained in two Cotswold Conservation Board Position Statements: on Dark Skies and Artificial Light – March 2019; and on Tranquillity – June 2019<sup>37</sup>. Policy NE4 addresses this important issue. The second part of the policy supports only those proposals for external lighting which are designed to deliver the minimum level of lighting for identified purposes (such as pedestrian access and/or safety issues). As part of this assessment new lighting should avoid casting light to areas where it is not needed, and into any neighbouring homes in particular. Whilst it is not directly a policy matter existing light pollution should be reduced or removed where possible.

### 7.3 Biodiversity and Blue/Green Infrastructure

- 7.3.1 Charlbury is home to a number of legally protected and notable species as well as important habitats, as a result the parish is subject to a number of protections and designations. The principles set out in the Cotswolds Management Plan for improving biodiversity are that wildlife sites should be better, bigger, more and joined up.<sup>38</sup>
- 7.3.2 In addition, there are three Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) within the parish.<sup>39</sup> CTAs are areas that have been identified as of highest priority for wildlife conservation and habitat creation. They provide a focus for coordinated delivery of biodiversity work, showing where the greatest gains can be made from habitat enhancement, restoration and creation, as these areas offer the best opportunities for establishing large habitat areas and/or networks of smaller habitats. As such, they are useful in the development and delivery of resilient ecological networks and Blue/Green Infrastructure.
- 7.3.3 Between them, the three CTAs cover a large part of the undeveloped land outside the built up area of the town. Their boundaries also include surrounding land which can buffer and link areas thereby creating important larger and better-connected landscapes.

<sup>36</sup> Cotswold Conservation Board Position Statement on Dark Skies and Artificial Light – March 2019, Appendix A <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Cotswolds-Dark-Skies-Artificial-Light-Position-Statement.pdf>

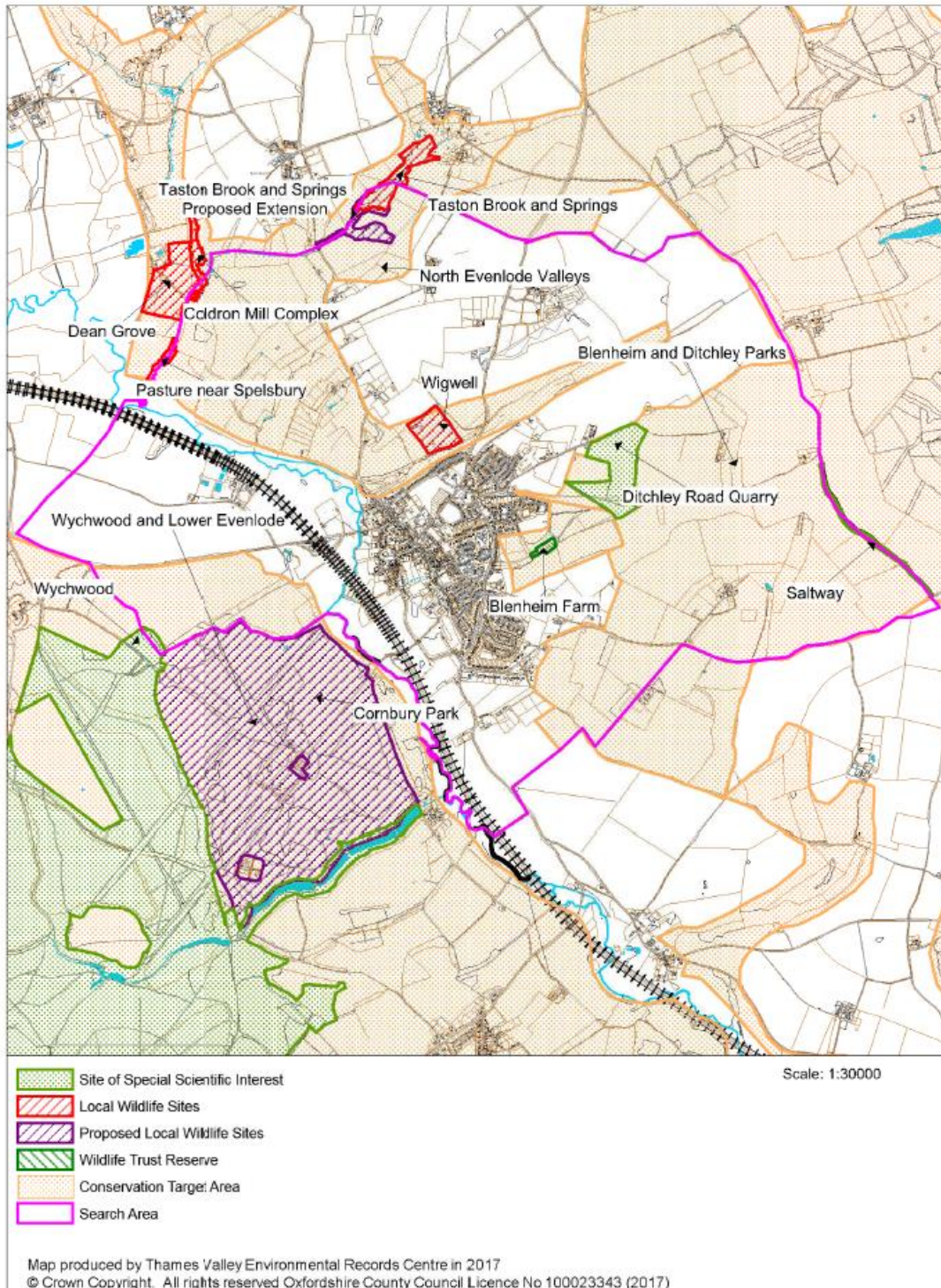
<sup>37</sup> CCB Position statement on Tranquillity – June 2019 <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Tranquillity-Position-Statement-FINAL-June-2019.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Cotswolds Management Plan 2018 – 2023, policy CE7 (Biodiversity)

<sup>39</sup> These are the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks CTA, the North Evenlode Valleys CTA and the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Valley CTA.

7.3.4 A biodiversity report was commissioned from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) to identify protected species, sites and habitats within the parish of Charlbury. This forms part of the evidence base to this Plan and can be viewed at <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/>. **Map 2**, shown below is taken from this report.

**Charlbury Parish  
Designated Wildlife Sites**



**Map 2 - designated Wildlife Sites**



## Policy NE5: Biodiversity and Trees

Charlbury's natural environment should be protected and with where practicable enhanced to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity, as set out in Local Plan 2031 policy EH3 and Cotswolds Management Plan policy CE7. Charlbury's SSSI and designated wildlife sites will be protected.

Development proposals will not be supported in the three Conservation Target Areas as identified on Map 2. Development proposals in areas adjacent to the Conservation Target Areas will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that they would have no detrimental effect on the integrity and biodiversity value of the identified Areas.

Where appropriate development proposals should incorporate measures that contribute to delivering overall gains for biodiversity, and in particular the aims of the relevant Conservation Target Area in achieving net gains for each of the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan Targets.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 7.3.5 It is important to recognise that new development does not only bring a risk of causing further damage to local wildlife but also provides an opportunity to enhance and create habitats and to restore key ecological functions. This is of particular importance when considering any developments which adjoin Conservation Target Areas or Blue/Green corridors.
- 7.3.6 Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) identify some of the most important areas for wildlife conservation in Oxfordshire, where targeted conservation action will have the greatest benefit. Particular emphasis must be given to meeting the aims of the 3 CTAs within the Charlbury parish as defined in the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan. These aims are to achieve net gains for each of the following:
- **Lowland mixed deciduous woodland** – management, restoration and creation;
  - **Parkland (including veteran trees)** – management;
  - **Wood pasture** – management and restoration;
  - **Limestone (lowland calcareous) grassland** – management, restoration and creation;
  - **Hedgerows** – management and creation;
  - **Arable fields** – management and creation (particularly for arable wildflowers);
  - **Ponds** – management and creation.
- 7.3.7 All new developments in areas adjacent to the CTAs will provide an enhanced wildlife friendly environment by installing such things as swift boxes, bat roosts and hedgehog gates where they are appropriate. Developments with boundaries to green space will augment and enrich wildlife corridors by suitable planting of indigenous trees (see paragraph 7.3.12), shrubs and locally appropriate wildflower mixes, with measures in place for appropriate management to ensure on-going, habitat-rich wildlife areas which deliver net gains in biodiversity.
- 7.3.8 Given the emphasis on the creation of woodland and wooded parkland as part of the CTAs, all opportunities for new woodland planting will be encouraged and supported.

- 7.3.9 Development should retain existing trees, hedgerows and habitats which are important for their historic, visual or biodiversity value unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh any loss. In particular, development proposals must take account of, and retain and include, individual trees or groups of trees of local importance and significance or of high biodiversity value. Sufficient space will be retained around trees to ensure their longevity.
- 7.3.10 Where it is necessary for new trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be planted, either to replace those lost in the process of development or to provide landscaping and screening for new development, native species which are in keeping with local woodland species and which are of high value to wildlife, including pollinators, should be selected wherever possible. See paragraph 7.3.12 for a list of suggested local species. Where non-native or ornamental trees are lost, they should be replaced where their visual or historic context makes this appropriate.
- 7.3.11 Strong support will be given to the retention of natural boundary treatments and the provision of new areas of natural planting and habitat creation as part of new developments. This will help to promote wildlife corridors which may include managed road verges and hedgerows and, where appropriate, provide natural screening to help integrate new development with existing built-up areas.
- 7.3.12 Trees, hedgerows and other habitat features are important to both the character of the town and its biodiversity. Where development involves new planting, it is important that species are selected which will support the existing network of wildlife and which fit in with the character of the area. Suitable local species which could be used are; Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Willow (*Salix caprea*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) Birch (*Betula pendula* and *B. pubescens*), Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*) and Field maple (*Acer campestre*), and for larger trees, Lime (*Tilia*) and in wetter areas, Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). For smaller trees and hedgerow trees planting should include Hawthorn, (*Crataegus spp*) , Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*) and Guelder Rose (*Viburnum*), and along the river margins, Willow (*Salix cinerea*) along with Hawthorn and Alder. The 1993 Charlbury Nature Appraisal<sup>40</sup> also identifies appropriate species found to be present at that time within the parish and provides a useful guide for the selection of species for planting. Policy NE5 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework policy on biodiversity (paragraphs 174 to 177) which encourage opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments.

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<sup>40</sup> Nature Conservation Appraisal of the Parish of Charlbury in West Oxfordshire pp 120-123. Part 2 Case Study of "Nature Conservation Appraisal: A Practical Guide" by Nicola Bourdillon & Alan Spicer of Oxford Brookes University - 1993

## **Policy NE6: Blue/Green Infrastructure**

Blue and green infrastructure in the neighbourhood area should be protected and, where practicable, enhanced.

The Plan identifies the following three blue/green corridors (as shown in Map 3) which play an important role in framing the settlement of Charlbury:

- **The Sandford Slade Blue/Green Corridor;**
- **The Wigwell Blue/Green Corridor; and**
- **The Evenlode Blue/Green Corridor.**

Development proposals will not be supported within these corridors unless they are designed to manage the land concerned in an appropriate and sensitive fashion.

## **Justification & Supporting Information:**

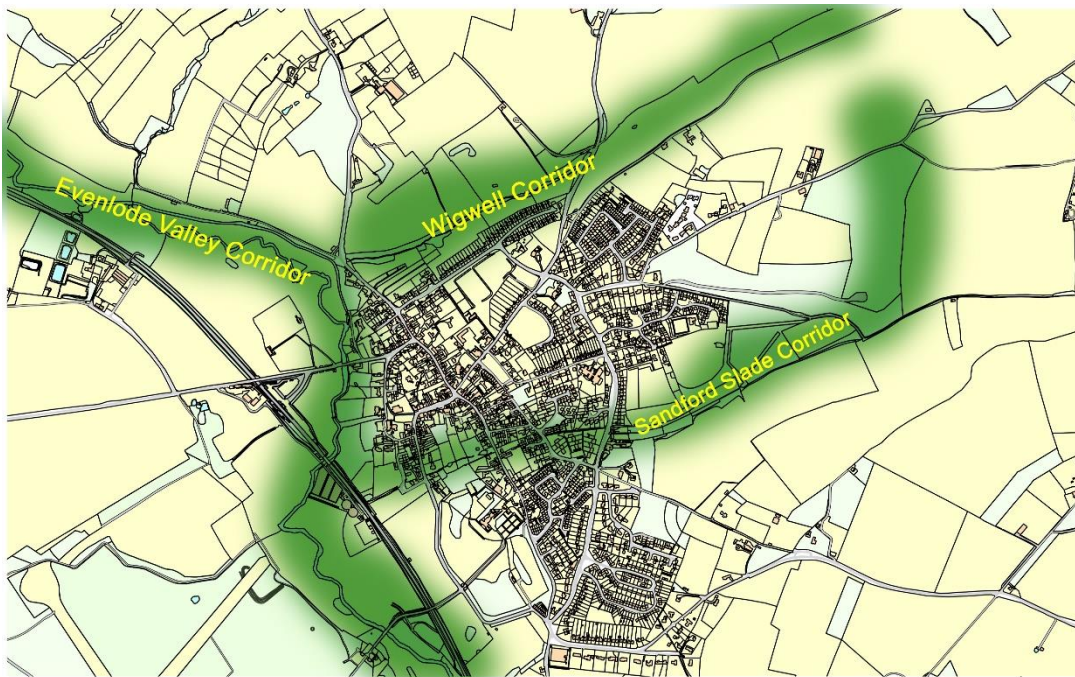
- 7.3.13 Green infrastructure is defined in planning policy as: “a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities”.<sup>41</sup>
- 7.3.14 Some sections of the blue/green corridors are designated as Local Green Space in Policy NE7 but it must be recognised that protection of sections not so designated is also essential.
- 7.3.15 The importance of protecting and improving the quality of water along the Evenlode Valley is recognised. The blue/green corridors proposed will play an important role in achieving this. It is vital to minimise pollution of the water source in these areas through implementation of sustainable drainage (SuDS) in all developments.
- 7.3.16 The importance of Blue/Green Infrastructure is set out in the Local Plan 2031, particularly policy EH3. Green spaces are an important part of the character of Charlbury and make a big contribution to quality of life in the town (as was noted in the Character Assessment) as well as to biodiversity. Where green spaces are accessible to the public they benefit health and recreation.
- 7.3.17 Blue/Green spaces that are interlinked to form “blue/green corridors” (see Map 3 below) are particularly valuable for wildlife as they allow animals, plants and insects to move freely from one green space to another. This ability to move will be important to allow species to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This is a key principle of the biodiversity policy set out in the Cotswolds Management Plan. Many of the spaces included within these blue/green corridors were considered and assessed for possible designation as Local Green Spaces and further details, photographs and more detailed maps are therefore included in Appendix E.2 and in the supporting document “Local Green Space Assessments”. The latter document also includes information for spaces assessed but not chosen for designation.

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<sup>41</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12

7.3.18 Where blue/green corridors are accessible to the public they are important for recreation and quality of life, as they provide pleasant and tranquil routes from built up areas into the countryside. It is recognized that public access is not appropriate for all green spaces, and that there is a need to balance the benefits of increased public access with the needs of landowners and occupiers, as well as with safety and nature conservation concerns.

7.3.19 The Wigwell blue/green corridor follows the path of the Wigwell brook. The corridor runs along the northern edge of the town, linking Clarke's bottom (an important area of unimproved grassland), Wigwell nature reserve (also of high wildlife importance), Glebelands, Pound Hill triangle and the Mill Field (where the brook joins the river Evenlode). The quality of water flowing through this brook is higher than other water courses and should be protected and improved where possible.



Map 3 - Blue/Green Corridors

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7.3.20 The Sandford Slade blue/green corridor begins at the Quarry, part of which is protected as a geological SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). This area is not accessible to the public and has important species including ground nesting birds. The corridor runs from the quarry, through Centenary Wood, and into Blenheim Nature Reserve. From here it follows the valley of Sandford Slade, a large part of which is accessible via public footpaths. A spring emerges in the land behind Blenheim Farm and Slade Cottage, creating a stream which follows the valley bottom to join the river Evenlode on the west side of the town, although in places it runs underground or has been covered over. Some green space has already been lost to development in Sandford Slade, however remaining important green spaces (field behind Lee Place Cottages, Stream by police houses, land and stream behind the Bell) are proposed for designation. The stream emerges again in the land between Grammar School Hill and the railway line. The quality of water in this stream is also of importance and developments should not decrease but seek to enhance this.

- 7.3.21 The Evenlode blue/green corridor following the River Evenlode through the Neighbourhood Plan area. Most of the land along this corridor is not accessible to the public, the exception being Mill Field, owned and managed by Charlbury Town Council for the benefit of the public. However it is essential that opportunities to improve flood management and to reduce pollution through sustainable drainage (SUDS) systems are considered. Surface water management must be considered from the beginning of the development planning process and throughout – influencing site layout and design.
- 7.3.22 The three proposed blue/green corridors are important because they provide inter-connected green space and waterway that is of value to biodiversity, allowing species to move through the urban area. The proposed corridors are also important to the character of the town, as they are valleys that define the limits of the historic town. The importance of the minor valleys to the local landscape is noted in the 1998 West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, as well as in the recent Charlbury Parish Character Assessment which also emphasises the particular importance of the strong urban edge to the town along the Evenlode Valley.
- 7.3.23 The two secondary valleys which form the Wigwell and Sandford Slade green corridors and define the limits of the historic town are described respectively in the 1998 Landscape Assessment as attractive and particularly sensitive and as an important local landscape feature that is vulnerable to change. Their significance in the topography and character of Charlbury is further underlined in the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment.
- 7.3.24 Any development proposals bordering the three proposed blue/green corridors should enhance the surrounding area by providing hedges, green strips and biodiverse combinations of indigenous and local provenance plants in seeded area of limestone grassland, trees and shrub species that will attract pollinators, bird and other wildlife in features. Where practicable, development proposals bordering the corridors should enhance flood reduction/protection capacity of the tributaries and create buffer zones with planting to improve the infiltration of water.
- 7.3.25 The former town quarry is an important site for wildlife, biodiversity and carbon sequestration. The site, which is not currently accessible to the public for safety reasons, supports significant populations of red-listed farmland bird species, such as the linnets and yellow hammer, which are flourishing there despite suffering nationally catastrophic declines. The Wychwood Project's Bird Aid project has been operating and monitoring in this area for many years and their evidence shows this to be a key site. Thousands of native trees were planted through the site over 20 years ago and other habitats have established by natural succession since then leading to a significant increase in biodiversity. The site is also important for carbon sequestration, not only into the trees but also through soil formation as the native woodland becomes established. Overall, the ecological importance of this site cannot be overstated.

## 7.4 Local Green Spaces

- 7.4.1 National policy makes provision for local communities to identify green areas of particular importance to those communities, where development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. These Local Green Spaces can be designated through the local plan or through neighbourhood plans. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 does not designate any Local Green Space, although policy EH3 (Public Realm and Green Infrastructure) sets out policies to protect and enhance existing public space and green infrastructure.
- 7.4.2 Neighbourhood plans, when produced, should seek the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure, including Local Green Spaces where designated, as well as including the designation of new Local Green Spaces where appropriate.
- 7.4.3 Local communities are encouraged to include new and robustly justified Local Green Spaces within their neighbourhood plans where this designation does not prevent identified development needs being met.
- 7.4.4 This Plan identifies 12 sites within the parish of Charlbury for designation as Local Green Space. The locations of these sites are shown in **Map 4** below. Detailed maps of each site are included in Appendix E.2 and at a larger scale in the supporting document “Local Green Space Assessments”. The selection of these sites has been guided by the advice in “Local Green Spaces– a toolkit for local communities in Cotswold District,” a toolkit which has also been recommended by WODC.
- 7.4.5 Policy NE7 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the local green spaces within the Plan period, they can be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the District Council. In particular it will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the ‘very special circumstances’ required by the policy.

## Policy NE7: Local Green Space

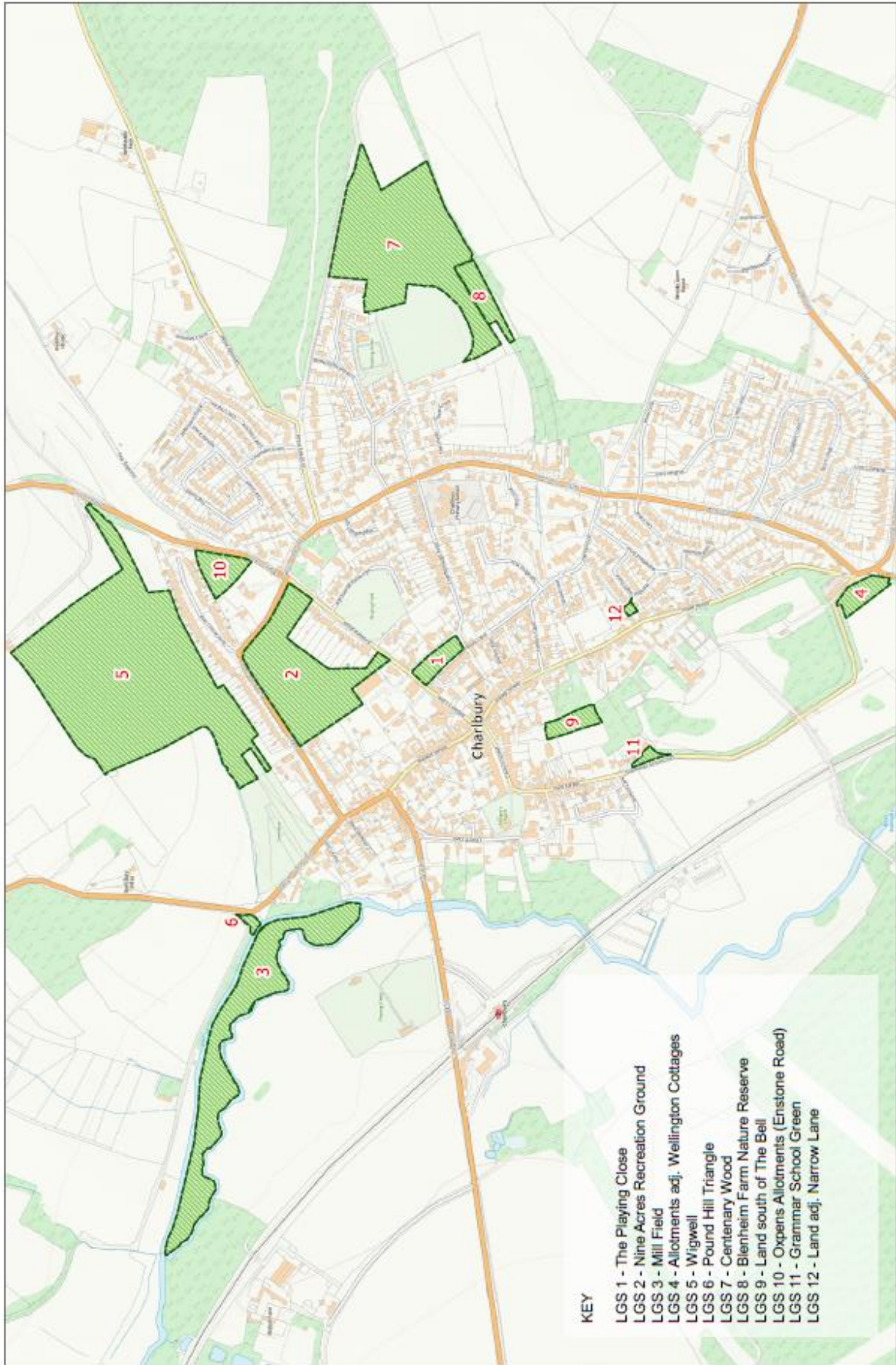
The following green spaces (as shown in Map 4) are designated as local green spaces.

- LGS1 – The Playing Close
- LGS2 – Nine Acres Recreation Ground
- LGS3 – Mill Field
- LGS4 – Allotments adj. Wellington Cottages
- LGS5 – Wigwell
- LGS6 – Pound Hill Triangle
- LGS7 – Centenary Wood
- LGS8 – Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve
- LGS9 – Land south of The Bell
- LGS10 – Oxpens Allotments (Enstone Road)
- LGS11 – Grammar School Green
- LGS12 – Land adj. Narrow Lane

Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 7.4.6 The sites above have all been assessed following the approach set out in the Cotswold DC Local Green Space toolkit. A summary of the rationale for each designated site is given in E.2 and the full assessments can be viewed in the separate document “Local Green Space Assessments” at <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/>.
- 7.4.7 A number of the sites are located within the three “blue/green corridors” described in section 7.3 above. The interlinked nature of these green spaces gives additional value for biodiversity, beauty and recreation.



Map 4 - Local Green Spaces



## 7.5 Flood Risk & Water Quality

### Policy NE8: Flood Risk and Water Quality Management

Development proposals should not increase flood risk in Charlbury or elsewhere along the Evenlode Valley.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems will be required for all developments and measures should be taken to reduce surface water run-off for greenfield sites.

Development proposals should not result in increased surface water run-off unless appropriate mitigation measures are included with the details of the proposal, including proposals for the long-term maintenance of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

Development proposals having adverse effect on quality of water in the Evenlode Catchment Area will not be supported.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 7.5.1 The steep-sided valley of the River Evenlode means it is prone to flooding during heavy rainfall. This was seen in June 2018 when heavy rainfall resulted in surface water flooding and closure of The Slade (B4022). There has been significant river flooding in Charlbury and nearby villages in the Evenlode Valley in the recent past, particularly in 2007.<sup>42</sup> This Plan seeks to reduce flood risk in Charlbury and elsewhere along the Evenlode valley, in accordance with Local Plan 2031 Core Objective 15 and Local Plan 2031 policy EH7.
- 7.5.2 It is important that new development does not increase the risk of flooding by increasing the rate of surface water run-off in the town. Where possible opportunities should be taken to reduce the rate of surface water run-off. Standards for SuDS<sup>43</sup> should be applied wherever appropriate. This will help manage flood risk within the town and beyond. Additional measures to reduce flood risk include use of permeable surfaces and the planting of trees and shrubs.
- 7.5.3 Recent development in Charlbury has often involved construction of private roads and privately owned SuDS or traditional drainage systems, however there may not be an incentive for the owner to maintain adequate drainage. It is therefore important that arrangements are in place to maintain surface water drainage systems in the long term. An integrated approach to rural Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should be taken where adjacent landowners can play their part in reducing flood risk and improving the quality of the water in the river and its tributaries, building in the blue-green corridor elements.
- 7.5.4 As noted in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan the Evenlode Catchment is important in the catchment based approach to water quality in the Thames River Basin. The current poor quality of water requires urgent attention and developments should contribute to the improvement of water quality and recognise the importance of this resource. This is essential to play a part in meeting the Water Frameworks Directive.

<sup>42</sup> WODC Parish Flood Report for Charlbury, July 2008 see <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/134616/Charlbury-flood-report.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> Sustainable Drainage Systems Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems DEFRA 2015.

- 7.5.5 The achievement of this objective requires a combination of better riparian management, education and working with the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and Thames Water to ensure all new developments will not pose any further risk to the quality of the water in the river and its tributary streams.

## 7.6 Environmental Design Standards

### Policy NE9: Environmental Design Standards

Development proposals for new buildings should demonstrate how they would achieve excellent environmental performance.

Developments which comply with the highest available standards such as Passivhaus or BREEAM Excellent Home Quality Mark standards will be supported.

New developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, which incorporate energy and water efficiency measures will be supported where they avoid unacceptable harm to heritage assets and to the Cotswolds AONB.

Development proposals for zero carbon homes will be supported.

### Justification & Supporting Information:

- 7.6.1 Policy NE9 is consistent with Local Plan 2031 policy OS4 & the West Oxfordshire Design Guide.
- 7.6.2 This policy recognises the climate emergency declared by Parliament, by WODC and by Charlbury Town Council and seeks to address the WODC target to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 7.6.3 Home Quality Mark provides advice and guidance to enable new developments in terms of design and construction quality. It demonstrates the home's environmental footprint and its resilience to flooding and overheating. It ensures building to the highest environmental standards and provides resilience and cost effectiveness for the future.
- 7.6.4 The establishment of an environmental working group by the Town Council reflects the local concern for this issue and the need to have appropriate measures for building design which achieve the highest level of environmental performance is recognised as being most important in addressing it at a local level.

# Section 8: Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design

## 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 In the 2016 Town Survey the attractiveness of Charlbury's location, both for its natural and historic environment, was more frequently cited than anything else as one of the three things that residents most liked about living in Charlbury. Historic buildings, views and the landscape setting of Charlbury also figured prominently in responses to a question asking which features should be protected. Charlbury's historic environment is a complex tapestry of buildings, landscape and archaeological features created over many centuries which demands careful conservation and into which any new development must be sensitively woven.

## 8.2 Outline Historical Development

8.2.1 Charlbury has its origins in an Anglo-Saxon monastery (a 'minster') founded by the Irish missionary St Diama in the mid to late 7th century. Its site, on a bluff above a river valley and commanding an extensive view upstream, is characteristic of early minsters. Equally significant is the town's relationship with the royal hunting forest that probably surrounded it almost from the first, hunting having been established as an elite activity at least as early as the 8th century. An early routeway along the east side of the Evenlode valley, which now forms Pound Hill, Thames Street, Market Street, Sheep Street and Hixet Wood, may also be pre-Conquest in origin. By the end of the 13th century the settlement had developed into a small market town with the compact nucleated urban form still recognisable today. To the west of Market Street, in an area bounded by Dyers Hill, Church Lane and Priory Lane, lay the probable site of the Anglo-Saxon minster. Along Market Street and Sheep Street, arable ploughlands to the east were apparently developed as burgage plots with houses, farms and other tenements being built along the routeway. Cutting across the southern part of minster precinct and obliterating its southern boundary, a typical funnel-shaped market place leading from the routeway down to the church was created, probably following the grant of a market by Eynsham Abbey, the manorial overlord, in 1256. Although the fortunes of the town and its market fluctuated, with a difficult period in the later 14th and early 15th centuries, its main streets were probably built up by the end of the mediaeval period. The community remained small and reliant on agriculture.

8.2.2 From the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the development of Charlbury was influenced by the presence of the great estates of Ditchley and Cornbury whose owners held the manor successively from St John's College Oxford and whose property included much of Charlbury and its surrounding land.

8.2.3 The centuries after 1500 saw a gradual replacement of the medieval buildings, some following a fire in 1666, but with the exception of the development of Hixet Wood to service Lee Place and a small group of buildings in the Slade to the east of the town, little expansion took place up to 1800. The surviving buildings, of local stone, are generally plain in character without the architectural pretensions of, for example, Chipping Norton or Woodstock.

- 8.2.4 Thomas Pride's map of 1761 confirms the extent of the town's development by that date. The medieval street layout was modified only by the diversion in the 18th century of what is now Grammar School Hill to create the grounds of Lee Place. The pattern of roads and tracks, some of ancient origin, radiating north and east from the town and connecting Charlbury with the surrounding settlements, survives today with only minor variations.
- 8.2.5 During the 19th century considerable building took place within the existing town, partly driven by the growth of the gloving industry and the consequent increase in population. The railway arrived in 1853. The built-up area expanded along Sheep Street, Fishers Lane, Hixet Wood, Pound Hill and around the Playing Close, where the British Schools were established from 1815. New buildings included chapels, a new vicarage, a town hall and YMCA, numerous glove factories and a brewery. Expansion beyond the existing settlement limits was, apart from the station, more modest: Wellington, now Fiveways house and the cottages to the south c.1820, a toll house and two substantial mid-century houses for the Quaker Albrights at the top of the Enstone Road, a few isolated villas in the Slade, and cottages, probably for agricultural-workers, in the Ditchley Road. Groups of semi-detached villas which appeared in Crawborough in the last decades of the 19th century hinted at things to come.
- 8.2.6 The inter-war years saw the beginnings of the major expansion of the town, mainly to the east, that was to come in the second half of the 20th century as Charlbury developed as a commuter centre and more than doubled in size. Council houses along Enstone Road (1919) were followed by others in Sturt Road and Woodstock Road (1930s and 1940s). From the 1950s the pace accelerated with more council housing along Nine Acres Lane, Sturt Road, Hughes Close and the Slade. Large detached houses set in spacious grounds gradually characterised the Woodstock Road approach to the town. Extensive developments of market housing followed in the 1960s, 70s and early 80s on both sides of the Slade south of Crawborough, at Woodfield Drive, Nine Acres Close and in and around The Green. Ticknell Piece swallowed up further fields beyond the Slade in the 1990s. The new estates have been complemented by infill or replacement developments in or adjacent to the town centre (for example, Tanners Court, Dairy Court, Shilson Lane, Park Street, the Playing Close, Fishers Lane, Pooles Lane) which increased the density of the historic settlement. Facilities including the 1940s Memorial Hall, a modern fire station and the Spendlove hub with its supermarket, surgery, community centre and car park support 21st-century Charlbury. With the annual street fair and regular farmers' markets, these help to compensate for the loss of the historic market and many former shops in the old town centre.

### 8.3 Statutorily Designated Historic Assets

- 8.3.1 There are 113 listed buildings in the parish, most of them in the historic town centre. Only one, the parish church of St Mary, is grade 1. Lee Place is listed grade II\* and the remainder are grade II.
- 8.3.2 Of the four scheduled ancient monuments, two are sections of Grim's Ditch. The others are the ornamental fishponds and garden earthworks at Walcot and an earthwork, probably of a Romano-Celtic temple near Lees Rest Farm.
- 8.3.3 Cornbury Park, a grade II\* registered historic garden and park, lies mainly outside the parish apart from the section of the entrance drive on the east bank of the river Evenlode.

- 8.3.4 A widely drawn Conservation Area, first designated in 1974 and enlarged in 1991, covers the whole town and parts of the surrounding fields.

## 8.4 Archaeological Finds and Sites

- 8.4.1 There are approximately 50 entries relating to archaeological finds or sites in Charlbury parish in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record. Most of these relate to chance surface finds from field-walking, most often of flint tools or arrowheads from the Neolithic or Bronze Age periods or to Romano-British pottery scatters or sherds. Two Iron Age banjo enclosures have been identified, one SW of Banbury Hill Farm and one in the vicinity of Dustfield Farm, east of Charlbury. A possible section of Grims Ditch, thought to date from the late Iron Age, was investigated between Park Street and the river in 2006. The parish contains two deserted medieval villages, at Cote to the north of Charlbury and SE of Walcot, both of which contained visible earthworks until ploughed for arable c1980. Sherds of medieval pottery have been found to the west of the Evenlode and at a site in the town centre. Also recorded is the still- visible evidence in the field between the river and railway station, of the former road towards Burford before it was straightened c1800.

## 8.5 The Charlbury Parish Character Assessment

- 8.5.1 Since the Charlbury Conservation Area does not yet have a conservation area appraisal prepared by West Oxfordshire District Council, the Town Council commissioned a Local Area Character Assessment of Charlbury parish to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. This was produced by a qualified conservation professional working with groups of residents using a variety of sources and surveys. A consultation on the draft report was held during May 2018. The final *Charlbury Parish Character Assessment* is available as a supporting document to this Plan.
- 8.5.2 The Character Assessment set out to articulate the character of the town and its wider parish and to understand its significance, in order to ensure that change would be accommodated in a sensitive way that enhanced the character of the area. It described the general context of the parish and its historical development, and summarised the character of three broad areas drawing on the results of surveys carried out by local residents. Key aspects of heritage significance were discussed and positive and negative features identified. Following the NPPF definition, the heritage significance of each character area was established to enable policies to conserve or enhance it to be developed. The articulation of heritage interest was informed by Historic England's *Conservation Principles* 2008 and the draft revised *Conservation Principles* 2017.
- 8.5.3 The detailed survey work, for which the parish was divided into five sub-areas, forms an appendix to the main volume. While this provides important evidence for the Character Assessment, it does not form part of it.
- 8.5.4 The overall findings of the Character Assessment were summarised thus:

*The parish of Charlbury lies in the Evenlode valley within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It comprises the small market town of Charlbury, the historic hamlet of Walcot and the surrounding attractive countryside of rolling hills. The historic market town is constructed largely of local building materials and fits comfortably into its landscape context. It has a strong vernacular character clearly expressing its history and functions. The historic core is compact and clearly defined. Major expansion in the latter part of the twentieth century is mainly to the north east and south and is, on the whole,*

*discreetly accommodated so that the impact on the outstanding landscape is minimal. There are strong links to the surrounding countryside via a network of ancient paths and tracks.*

*Attractive views are a key characteristic of the parish as a whole. There are stunning views of the town from the surrounding countryside and spectacular sweeping views from the town looking out, particularly along the Evenlode valley. Closed views within the town feature the attractive vernacular buildings and public open spaces whilst some feature enticing paths leading out into open countryside.*

*Much of the twentieth-century housing development has sought to reflect its setting through the use of local or artificial stone although other locally distinctive features have not generally been followed. Some exceptions stand out as reminders of how sensitive the landscape is to interventions.*

#### 8.5.5 The Character Assessment concluded with a more detailed assessment of significance of Charlbury's historic environment:

##### **Summary of significance**

*Like all settlements with origins as early as the seventh century, and with evidence of earlier Roman occupation, the town and the surrounding countryside will have considerable archaeological potential.*

*What makes Charlbury distinctive is its compact urban form, apparently largely unchanged for the last 700 years. This comprises an early core settlement around the church, a typical funnel-shaped market (Church Street) and an early routeway along Thames Street, Market Street and Sheep Street, with a built-up street frontage lined with buildings of an urban character. There are some secondary settlements within the parish boundary, notably at Walcot and Hixet Wood. Hixet Wood developed around Lee Place, the only secular building in Charlbury to match the significance of the church, and in the town's topography it forms an important counterpoint to the primary settlement, divided from it by the green lung of Sandford Slade.*

*Charlbury's historic buildings have a generally unpretentious architectural character, being largely built of random limestone rubble, often faced with self-coloured render. Windows have timber lintels, and (in the few cases where they have escaped sashing) timber mullions and transoms. Chimney stacks are typically in brick. Ashlar is rare to non-existent before the nineteenth century, and a remarkable number of buildings have curved rather than quoined corners. This is probably due to lack of local dimension stone, although the comparative poverty of the town and the influence of local Quaker families and their lack of pretension may also be contributory factors. Twentieth-century developments have generally been unobtrusive, using a palette of materials and colours sympathetic to the local tradition, while some – notably Woodfield Drive and Sandford Park – are of considerable architectural and townscape distinction and are significant in their own right.*

*The town's relationship to its setting is critical, and is rightly reflected in its designation as part of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It lies at the point where the upland plateau west of Enstone is cut through by the river Evenlode, which turns south through a comparatively narrow defile having flowed through a wide floodplain valley between Shipton and Spelsbury. The primary*

*settlement lies on a low bluff above the river, dominating the valley but sitting well below the high ground to the east. For over a millennium much of the land around the town, principally to the west and south-east, formed part of the royal forest of Wychwood; within the parish Lee Place, Walcot and Lees Rest all probably originated as hunting lodges. As a result, views both of and from the town that place it in its landscape context are of great significance. These include the view of the town from Banbury Hill, where it is seen against its forest backdrop; the view of the church from Dancers Hill; the focussed views down Church Street, Park Street and Sheep Street; and above all the view of the Evenlode valley and the registered landscape of Cornbury Park from the “promenade” along Grammar School Hill. This is the town’s finest and most distinctive feature, and of the highest significance.*

## 8.6 Historic Environment Policies

- 8.6.1 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 sets out a range of policies, both strategic and specific, designed to conserve and enhance the district’s rich historic environment and to ensure that new development respects the distinctive character and significance of its towns, villages and landscape and is of high-quality design. In Chapter 8, more detailed principles for the conservation and enhancement of the Historic Environment introduce eight policies, the first general and the remainder specific to different types of historic asset.
- 8.6.2 This Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to duplicate these existing policies but to supplement them with more detailed local policies that respond to the distinctive character, quality and significance of Charlbury’s historic environment. The aim is to ensure that this is fully recognised and understood when development proposals which may affect it are considered.

### **Policy HE1: Protecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

The Plan identifies non-designated heritage assets in Appendix D.

Development proposals should have regard to non-designated heritage assets and to the contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the Charlbury Conservation Area.

The effect of an application on the appearance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

## Justification & Supporting Information:

- 8.6.3 Conserving buildings and sites which have particular importance to the character of the local area or which have local historic value is an important objective of this Plan. Many of Charlbury's historic buildings are already statutorily protected as listed buildings. They are known as 'designated historic assets'. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (paragraphs 8.85-86) makes provision for unlisted buildings and sites of particular local importance to be identified as locally listed buildings or sites. Such buildings and sites are known as 'non-designated heritage assets'. Policy HE1 has been designed to be applied in association with Policies EH9 and EH16 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan. In this context the identification of the non-designated heritage assets in Appendix D brings clarity on the approach in the neighbourhood area.
- 8.6.4 The advice provided by Historic England (*Local Heritage Listing* Historic England Advice Note 7 2016) has been taken into account in proposing Charlbury buildings and sites for inclusion on the West Oxfordshire local list. In the absence of existing selection criteria, criteria have been devised in accordance with the Historic England guidance. See Appendix D, section D.1.
- 8.6.5 The Charlbury Parish Character Assessment prepared as part of the evidence base for this Plan demonstrated that Charlbury's distinctive historic character reflects the materials that were easily obtainable locally: chiefly the Chipping Norton limestone rubble that could conveniently be extracted from shallow delves and locally felled timber, generally used instead of stone for lintels and window mullions. It was only with the coming of the railway in 1853 that other materials such as Welsh slate, brick and worked dimension stone started to become more common. The extent of the town on the cusp of this change is shown on the Tithe Award map of 1847. Many of the buildings that survive from before this date are now statutorily listed, but there are other traditional buildings that survive substantially in the form shown on the 1847 map which are unlisted but nevertheless make a significant positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and are critical to the distinctive character of the town. They have been identified on the Local List in Appendix D. Also included on the List are a number of later buildings associated with the town's Quaker heritage or its farming and gloving industries, or which illustrate other aspects of its social, economic or architectural history.
- 8.6.6 Appendix D contains one site of archaeological interest, a particularly impressive survival of ridge and furrow in the field known as Glebelands, to the east the Spelsbury Road just north of the town. This site is not included in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER contains records of a number of other non-designated archaeological sites in Charlbury parish which will be covered by Local Plan Policies EH9 and EH16, and these have deliberately not been duplicated in Appendix D.



## **Policy HE2: Locally Appropriate Design**

New development should positively enhance the character and appearance of its immediate locality. New development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, should maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the town and contribute to local distinctiveness and enhance the character and quality of its surroundings. In particular new development should respond positively to the Guiding Principles in the relevant geographic section of the Charlbury Design Guidance included as Appendix C.

Development proposals which detract from the character or the appearance of the neighbourhood area or which conflict with the relevant Guiding Principles in the Charlbury Design Guidance will not be supported.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 8.6.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development (para 124) and that plans should set out a clear design vision and expectations so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable (para 125). To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, the NPPF encourages plans to include design guides that provide a framework for creating 'distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design' while allowing a suitable degree of variety where this is justified (para 126). The NPPF is also clear that permission should be refused for poorly designed development that fails to take into account local design standards or style guides included in plans or supplementary planning documents (para 130).
- 8.6.8 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 requires new development to respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality, contribute to local distinctiveness and where possible enhance the character and quality of the surroundings (strategic policy OS4). Designers are expected to provide evidence for their design approach and to have regard to design guidance.
- 8.6.9 The Charlbury Design Guidance (see Appendix C) supplements the West Oxfordshire Design Guide by providing more detailed guidance specific to the parish. It draws on the Character Assessment prepared as part of the evidence base for the Plan and the survey work by local volunteers that helped to inform it. This divided the parish into three areas:
- the historic core of the town;
  - the suburbs that surround the old town largely to the east and are predominantly a post war development;
  - and the open countryside beyond the edge of the settlement.
- 8.6.10 The first three parts of the Guidance reflect these broad areas. Each begins with a description of main characteristics of the area and seeks to identify features that contribute positively to its particular character and, where relevant, to its local distinctiveness. This is followed by a set of guiding principles aimed at ensuring that any development, including alteration or extension to existing buildings, maintains and enhances rather than erodes Charlbury's character, design quality and sense of place.

- 8.6.11 Part 4 of the Guidance covers streetscape design. In its section on promoting sustainable transport, which covers highways design, the NPPF requires development to create places that are safe, secure and attractive, avoid unnecessary street clutter and respond to local character and design standards (para 110). The survey work lying behind the Character Assessment identified that highway design and maintenance was currently having a significant negative impact on the quality of the parish's built environment, [and improvements have been identified as a priority in the Town Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan].
- 8.6.12 Although highways work carried out by the County Council is permitted development under Part 9 Class A of the GPDO, the County's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) has as one of its policies the avoidance of negative environmental impacts and where possible the provision of improvements, particularly in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Conservation Areas and other areas of high environmental importance (Policy 24). In paragraph 177 of the LTP4 the Council commits itself to ensuring that transport decisions are informed by an understanding of landscape and townscape character. It recognises that materials, signing and lining can have a negative impact on character and tranquillity, and says that it will use tools such as Historic England's *Streets for All* streetscape manual as well as local landscape and townscape character assessments. This commitment is to be welcomed, and the Design Guidance therefore contains a fourth section specifically on streetscape and highways design. As well as informing the highways authority's work in the town, it will also be of use in prioritising infrastructure improvements and in determining applications for other development that may have an impact on streetscape.

### **Policy HE3: Archaeology**

Development proposals should be located and designed to take account of the archaeological importance of the town centre and its setting.

Development proposals which involve significant ground disturbance within the historic town centre (bordered by Church Lane, Dyers Hill, Market Street and Church Street) or significant internal alterations to listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets (including those identified in Appendix D) should be accompanied by proportionate field evaluation assessments.

### **Justification & Supporting Information:**

- 8.6.13 The National Planning Policy Framework says that where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (paragraph 189). The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 requires applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to use appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets at a level of detail proportionate to their significance, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, original survey, sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character (Policy EH9).

- 8.6.14 The curvilinear road-pattern of the centre of the historic town, bounded by Market Street, the upper part of Dyers Hill, Church Lane and Priory Lane (and possibly by property boundaries south of Church Street), has been convincingly identified as the site of a 7th-century minster founded by the Irish missionary bishop St Diuma, and as the likely centre of the Middle Anglian region referred to by the Venerable Bede as Infepingum. (J. Blair, *Minster Churches in the Landscape*, in D. Hooke (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (1988) 35-58, p.49, and subsequent literature). Over the past thirty years, the value of investigating archaeologically the historic cores of villages and small towns has become clear. Field evaluation in advance of development that would involve significant ground disturbance in the historic core of the town will therefore generally be needed to determine whether Anglo-Saxon or later medieval evidence is likely to survive, to be followed if necessary, by full excavation and reporting. This does not preclude the possibility that field evaluation may also be appropriate elsewhere in the Plan area, particularly where archaeological sites are recorded in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 8.6.15 It is known that many of the traditional buildings in the town conceal earlier (possibly medieval) fabric behind 18th- or 19th-century facades. It is therefore important that they are inspected internally and the impact is assessed by an experienced architectural historian before applications are determined that would involve significant internal alterations to listed buildings or to non-designated heritage assets including those set out in Appendix D.
- 8.6.16 Policy HE3 provides a policy context for this important matter. Its first part sets out the policy approach. The second part identifies the information which will be required to support development proposals in specific parts of town.

# Appendix A Housing Need and Policy Analysis

## A.1 Introduction

This Analysis has been carried out to inform and support the housing policies proposed for the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (“the CNP 2031”). The following policy and evidential documents were considered in preparing it:

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (“the NPPF”)
- The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 adopted in September 2018 (“the Local Plan 2031”)
- Cotswold Conservation Board publications incl. AONB Management Plan 2018, Landscape Character Assessment, Position Statements, in particular on Neighbourhood Plans, Housing & Development in the AONB and Affordable Housing
- The West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment 1998
- The Charlbury Town Survey 2016
- Report on ‘Housing and Demography in the Burford-Charlbury Sub-area’ prepared for the Local Plan 2031 examination by Peter Brett Associates (“the Brett Report”)
- Housing Needs Assessment for Charlbury commissioned by Charlbury Town Council for the purposes of this Plan, provided by Arc4 consultants (Jan 2018).

## A.2 Policy Context

The NPPF was revised in February 2019. Though it must be taken as a whole, of particular relevance to Charlbury are paragraphs 14, 37, 69 on neighbourhood plans, 77-79 on rural housing, 83-84 on the rural economy, 99-101 on the Local Green Space designation and 172 in relation to AONBs.

Statements of special importance to the housing section of the CNP 2031 are that:

- *The scale and extent of development within (these) designated areas (incl. AONBs) should be limited (para 172).*
- *In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs (para 77).*
- *To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (para 78).*

The Local Plan 2031 was finally adopted in September 2018 and covers the period from 2011, when the previous Local Plan expired, to 2031. Again, while a great deal of it is relevant to Charlbury, some policies and provisions are of particular importance to the CNP 2031 and especially to the provision of housing. These include Policies OS2 (Locating development in the right places), H1 (Amount and distribution of housing), H2 (Delivery of new homes), EH1 (Cotswolds AONB), EH2 (Landscape Character) and BC1 (Burford-Charlbury sub-area strategy).

The Local Plan 2031 divides the district into ‘sub-areas’ for policy purposes but imposes no requirement for further housing within the Burford-Charlbury sub-area beyond the 774 dwellings either committed or completed between 2011 and 1 April 2017. That does not however mean that no further development will be permitted in the sub-area and on the District Council’s own figures, the 774 figure had already increased to 858 by 31/03/18.

The Local Plan 2031 also leaves open the possibility that additional local housing needs might be identified through Neighbourhood Plans<sup>44</sup>. While it no longer includes an allowance for (or expectation of) further ‘windfall’ residential development (in the sub-area), as above, planning permission may still be granted for it where it is “shown to accord with national and local policy, including Policies H1, H2, OS2 and EH1 of the Local Plan” (para 5.21).

Further details are given of the “more restrictive approach to new housing development” to be taken than in the other sub-areas at paras 9.6.28 and 9.6.29. The latter states that “it will need to be convincingly demonstrated that a scheme would give rise to benefits to the specific settlement or the sub-area (eg meeting identified local housing needs) and which would clearly outweigh any likely harms”. On the face of it, that applies to schemes both *within* as well as on the edge of the built-up areas. It does not automatically follow therefore that permission should be granted for new housing just because a particular site is within the built-up area. Further, “housing proposals on undeveloped land *adjoining* built-up areas ... will only be supported where there is convincing evidence of a specific local housing need such as needs identified through a neighbourhood plan” (para 5.39).

Before the draft Local Plan 2031 was modified (to remove any further housing ‘requirement’ within the sub-area) landowners within the parish were invited to notify the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group of any land they wished to be considered for allocation within the CNP 2031, whether for residential use or other purposes. Only 2 sites were put forward. Preliminary assessments were carried out on them by members of the Steering Group experienced in planning matters. The initial conclusions were that one site was not likely to be suitable for development (and was not pursued by the owner) while part of the second might be suitable, subject to a full assessment in due course. By that time however the draft Local Plan 2031 had been modified as described above. Moreover, 3 sites within the sub-area which the District Council had put forward for possible allocation for housing, including one at Charlbury, were removed from the draft Plan as the Inspector was not satisfied that there was a need for them.

Local Plan 2031 policy BC1 continues to provide that development in Charlbury “will be of an appropriate scale and type that would help to reinforce (its) existing service centre role.” The Town Council shares that view but regrets the omission from the adopted version of the Local Plan 2031 of the pre-modification paragraph 9.6.27. Its deletion was not recommended by the Inspector. The Council regards it as an accurate summary of the town’s potential for development and it is therefore recited in this Paper.

“At Charlbury, capacity for further housing within the town is ... limited. There are no large previously developed sites and the historic core forms a tight settlement with little potential for new housing, even on small sites. Even within the post-war housing estates, there are few possibilities for intensification of development. The sensitivity of Charlbury’s strong landscape and environmental setting mean that significant development on the fringes of the town is unlikely to be acceptable although there is some scope for additional development .... of an appropriate scale and type.”

In their earlier (2013) Position Statement on Housing and Development the CCB recognised that “simply increasing the rate of building of market housing will not solve the problems of

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<sup>44</sup>Local Plan 2031 Paragraphs 5.20 & 9.6.29

affordable housing or loss of local services.” The Statement called for priority to be given not just to protection of the environment but to “meeting local affordable housing need.” Picking up on the modifications recommended to the Local Plan 2031, in particular the Inspector’s rejection of proposed site allocations in the AONB, Policy CE12 of the 2018 AONB Management Plan states that “development in the Cotswolds AONB should be based on robust evidence of local need arising *within the AONB*” (our emphasis) with priority given to the provision of affordable housing.

**Conclusion 1: Collectively, the above national and local policies create a criteria based approach to proposals for housing development within the AONB. Despite the findings below as to local (i.e. parish) needs, and in the absence of any obviously acceptable and deliverable sites, the Neighbourhood Plan should therefore adopt a similar approach, rather than seeking to designate sites for development.**

Neither Local Plan 2031 policy BC1 nor the omitted paragraph 9.6.27 go – or went - further in defining what is meant by ‘development of an appropriate scale and type’. This Paper and the CNP 2031 as a whole is thus an attempt to put more flesh on those bones.

### **A.3 Charlbury’s Housing Needs**

Is there a need for new housing in Charlbury and if so, how much and of what kind? To answer that, it is first necessary to ask what is meant by ‘need’?

Need does not equal demand. New houses at full market price appear to sell easily in the parish but that does not necessarily mean they “would give rise to benefits to the specific settlement or the sub-area” nor that they would “meet a specific local housing need” as the above Local Plan 2031 paragraphs require. Indeed, as set out below, there is good reason in many cases to think the opposite.

For the purposes of the CNP 2031, ‘local housing need’ is thus defined firstly, as the needs arising from the existing community or those with genuine local connections and secondly, as such provision as may be needed to maintain the parish as a demographically mixed and viable community in the future. Given the “more restrictive approach to new housing development” to be taken in the sub-area cited above, that does not imply an expectation of growth beyond the objective of meeting those needs.

Estimates of the amount and type of new housing that may be needed have thus been developed for this Neighbourhood Plan based on the Housing Needs Assessment (“the HNA”) commissioned by the Town Council and the results of the 2016 Town Survey. The HNA only provided figures for the 5 year period to 2021 because of the difficulty in accurately predicting housing needs any further ahead for a small settlement. Account has also to be taken of new developments since November 2016, when the Town Survey results were published, in order to assess what may still be needed over that 5 year period. The HNA also concluded (at 7.34) “that the conditions exist that will give rise to unmet housing requirements on an ongoing basis”. The town’s housing needs will thus need to be reviewed at some point during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Local Plan 2031 recognises that affordability is a “key issue” in the Charlbury area (para 9.6.5). That is entirely borne out by the results of the Town Survey and by the findings of both the Brett Associates Report and the Housing Needs Assessment. Some might regard it as a statement of the obvious but collectively these documents provide the evidence to demonstrate it.

The documents speak for themselves but it is worth highlighting some of those findings. The Town Survey and the HNA found that an estimated 128 existing households wished to move

within Charlbury but could not, the main reasons being lack of housing they could afford and/or its unsuitability. Further, an estimated 121 people left the town in the 5 years before the survey owing to housing costs. By its nature, this figure only covered individuals who had left, not full households. It is therefore most likely an under-estimate.

The HNA also compared house prices in Charlbury to local incomes, with average prices being more than 8 times the average household income. A first-time buyer on the 25<sup>th</sup> local income percentile could not afford to buy any property in Charlbury; and a household on the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (i.e. average income for the town) could afford only the cheapest properties. It also found that “if housing affordable to local newly forming households is not provided .... the population will become increasingly unbalanced across the age groups” (para 7.28).

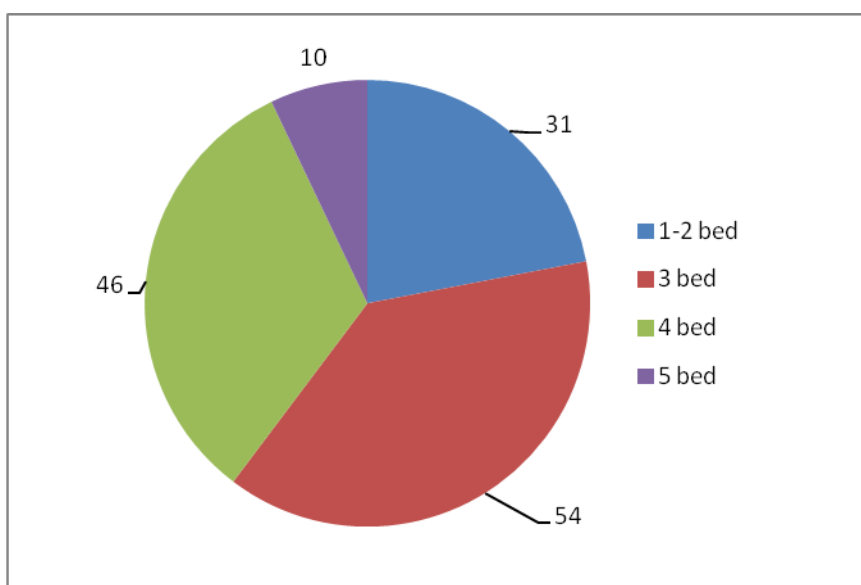
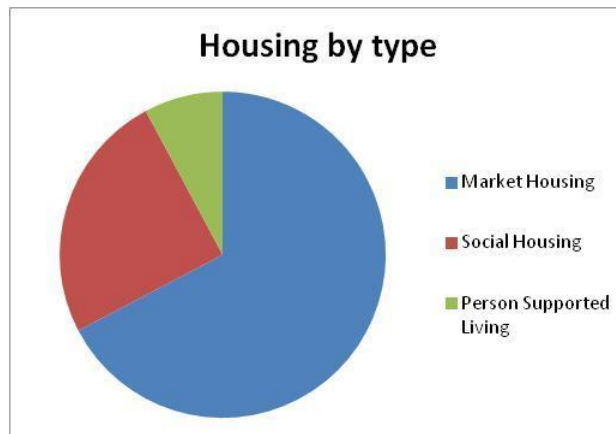
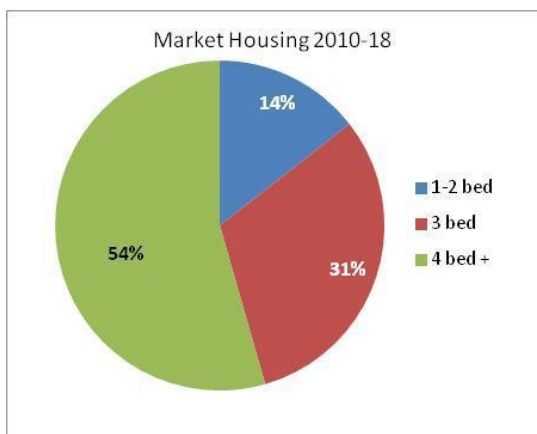
The Brett Report reached matching conclusions. It was commissioned by WODC as part of the Local Plan 2031 examination process (at the Inspector’s request). The consultants reported on the level of housing need in the sub-area and the demographic implications of different levels of housing provision. A major conclusion, in short, was that all of the levels of additional provision they considered would result in population increases but that the bulk of any such increase (as much as 70-80%) would be from inward migration by people in the 65+ age group.

The (Brett) Consultants did not however distinguish between different types or size of housing nor did they examine local needs at parish level (reinforcing the need for this Neighbourhood Plan to do so). It is again a statement of the obvious (and see below) that the vast majority of large detached houses, perhaps costing £1million or more, will only be affordable by those of a certain age with well established equity behind them – and as the Brett report has shown, they will mostly be drawn from outside the (sub-) area. That is not in any way a criticism of the purchasers – Charlbury is an immensely attractive place to live – but provision at that level does nothing to meet the needs of the existing population nor to ensure a well balanced community into the future.

Some reservations attach to the principal conclusions of the HNA in its assessment of the number of dwellings needed over the period 2016-2021, in particular for market housing. First (like the Brett Report), it does not distinguish between different types or size of market housing in arriving at a total of 45. Second, its estimation of need for market houses is based in part on people’s wishes as stated in the Town Survey which may not reflect true “need” as defined above; and it does not capture those households who have had to leave Charlbury due to being unable to afford housing. Neither does it reflect those on lower incomes who wish to move to Charlbury but cannot afford full price market housing nor equally does it sub-divide the ‘affordable housing’ figure. Perhaps most importantly, as above, the figures have to be adjusted to take account of completions (including those actually begun) since November 2016, when the Town Survey findings were published.

As to affordable housing (in the current NPPF sense), no reason has been found to question the overall figure of 45 dwellings needed over the 5 year period. It is notable however that the ‘local connection’ required in West Oxfordshire’s nomination scheme for ‘social’ housing, set out at HNA 6.2, gives rise to a rather different picture to the level of *demand* described (and disputed) in the Local Plan 2031 examination. This is discussed at paras 6.42-6.46 of the HNA. The discrepancy arises, as at HNA 6.46, because applicants are encouraged to list more than one area of *choice* to increase their chances of success. As in the opening sentence to this section, demand does not equal need arising within or from the parish.

To give as full a picture as possible, data on housing applications approved by WODC since 2010 have been compiled as follows:



**House Completions 2010-18 by number**

As the above table shows, some 141 homes were provided or committed in the period 2010-2018.

One significant development which has been approved but not commenced is the Rushy Bank scheme.<sup>45</sup> At the time of writing, this was believed to be in the final stages of agreement of terms between the developer and WODC and is therefore included (as indeed it has been in the Local Plan 2031 figures – see Local Plan 2031 Table 9.6b) in the above tables.

Refining the figures to the period from November 2016 to February 2019 (the time of writing) however, and including only actual completions or those under construction, gives a total of 79 dwellings, 55 of them at market prices with 19 as ‘social rented’ housing (as opposed to the wider definition of ‘affordable’ in the revised NPPF) and 3 as ‘shared ownership’. (Source: S106 Agreements on 15/00567 & 16/02306).

It is therefore clear that the HNA figure of 45 ‘market’ dwellings over the 5 year period has already been well exceeded, and may well have increased further by the time the CNP 2031 is adopted, with no further need anticipated for them for some time after that.

<sup>45</sup> Development on land south of Forest Road, Charlbury under planning application reference 15/03099/FUL



At the time of writing the permission for the Rushy Bank development was still awaited. The exact composition of the housing has thus yet to be confirmed but if the scheme proceeds, it is expected to provide a total of 29 dwellings, including 7 affordable units and 20 custom or self build units (10 at a discount on market value). It would therefore add a further 12 dwellings at full market value. The 12 bed 'supported living facility' would also count towards the total number of dwellings for Local Plan 2031 purposes.

It cannot be said with absolute certainty that there will be no further need for full price market housing in the later years of the Plan period, especially in the lower price brackets. Given the findings of the Brett Report in particular however, it is extremely unlikely that there will be a need for the type of larger detached houses mentioned above and the CNP 2031 policies should reflect that.

**Conclusion 2: That there is no 'identified need' for any further open market housing up to November 2021, whether within the built-up area or on land adjoining it, nor is there likely to be for some time after that date.**

It is necessary at this point to distinguish between 'social rented' housing provided via e.g. a housing association and other housing within the wider NPPF definition of 'affordable' – loosely described as 'intermediate' or 'low cost' housing, including shared ownership schemes. Aside from any 'social' provision in the Rushy Bank scheme, it was not known at the time of writing how many of the 19 'social' units (or of the 3 shared ownership units) so far provided will be or have been occupied by those with existing local connections. It is to be hoped that those occupiers without such connections will be mainly of working age households who are most likely to help to sustain local services, both as providers and consumers, and to maintain a balanced population (appropriate to Charlbury's role as a rural service centre). That said, the fact that 19 'social rented' units have already been provided, with another 7 likely at Rushy Bank, means that the emphasis for the remaining 26 (HNA's 45-19) affordable homes should be in the 'intermediate' or 'low cost' categories. Put another way, the 'social' units will not meet the needs of first-time buyers, young families and working people who cannot afford properties at open market value but who do not qualify for 'social' housing. Three dwellings are shown as shared ownership under permission 15/00567, leaving a need for a further 23 units. That would reduce by 10 if the Rushy Bank development proceeds as anticipated – and still further if the 7 'social' units are included as part of the total.

The HNA also looked at affordable housing schemes intended to help people purchase a property at a discounted price: starter homes, shared ownership and new build help to buy. It calculated that a starter home sold at a 30% discount would still be unaffordable to first time buyer households on the average local wage.

It also found that a shared ownership scheme offering a 50% share of ownership would not be affordable to those on the average local wage but ownership with a 25% share could be affordable. It further showed that housing under new build right to buy would also be affordable for first time buyers on the average local wage. However this option only provides a discount for the initial buyer, so the long term benefit to the community is doubtful.<sup>46</sup>

All that said, and at the risk of repetition, as the HNA went to say (7.28): "If housing affordable to local newly forming households is not provided, then they will seek housing that they can afford elsewhere. Overall the population will become increasingly unbalanced across the age groups." The imperative therefore is for imaginative scheme(s) that will address that issue while taking account of the HNA findings on affordability.

<sup>46</sup> Arc4 Parish of Charlbury Housing Needs Assessment Sections 4.14 to 4.16 and Figure 17

For better or worse, the NPPF provision for ‘entry-level exception sites’ at para 71 does not apply within AONBs. Some provision may be possible on a rural exception site, which “seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection”. At the time of writing however, no such site has been put forward.

**Conclusion 3: That a need currently exists for some 23 homes that would fall within the current NPPF categories of ‘affordable housing’ (b-d) over the 5 year period (though this may reduce by 10 if the Rushy Bank scheme proceeds as anticipated).**

One word of caution is that these figures should not be seen as definitive but rather as approximate, given the uncertainties attaching to the projections and calculations (see HNA), as well as the mix of housing at Rushy Bank. They are also based on research of the S106 Agreements on the 2 permissions cited, which may not reflect the final arrangements in practice.

## A.4 What sort of Housing?

As the above diagrams show, since 2010, some 40% of all housing development, and over 50% of market housing, in Charlbury has been of 4 or more bedroom homes. This is not in line with the proportions set out at para 5.75 of the Local Plan 2031. While we do not have full data on the selling prices of the market housing, the number of larger homes can only have exacerbated the problem of affordability.

**Table1: Breakdown of new homes by size of homes in Local Plan 2031 and Neighbourhood Plan compared with actual recent development in Charlbury**

|   | 1 bed       | 2 bed | 3 bed       | 4 bed       | 5 + |
|---|-------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-----|
| <b>Local Plan 2031 guide figures</b>              | 5%          | 28%   | 43%         | 24%         | 0%  |
| <b>Neighbourhood Plan 2031 anticipated</b>        | 40% minimum |       | Not defined | 20% maximum | 0%  |
| <b>Actual development in Charlbury since 2010</b> | 22%         |       | 38%         | 40%         |     |

The HNA found that “according to the housing register, the mix of affordable homes needed is overwhelmingly 1 and 2 bedroom homes” (para 7.20). As above, that finding relates more to ‘social’ housing than to the wider NPPF categories. Some 17 of the 19 ‘social’ units so far completed since 2016 were of that size. As at HNA paras 7.30-7.32 however there is likely to be a need also for homes with more bedrooms in the ‘intermediate’ and ‘low cost’ categories.

Given also the findings of the Town Survey as to the number of older people wanting but unable to downsize, smaller properties are likely to appeal both to them and to newly forming households. The HNA also found (7.16) however that demand from down-sizers was mainly for 3 bedroom bungalows.

With one third of the population (HNA 3.21-3.22) already over 65, and a lack of sheltered accommodation in the town, additional provision specifically intended for the elderly may also be appropriate. This in turn would help to free up other properties more suited to larger households, though there can be no guarantee they would be 'affordable' in the wider sense if on the open market.

**Conclusion 4: That the Neighbourhood Plan policies should seek to address the long recognised issue of affordability by as far as possible ensuring that any housing which is to be provided is housing which meets local needs at prices that local people can afford (see HNA 7.37-7.39).**

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20/04/19

### **Addendum: Dated 13/08/19**

Since the above paper was written, 2 appeal decisions have been published of direct relevance to it, in particular on the issue of local housing need and how it should be assessed.

The first<sup>47</sup> involved a proposal for 68 dwellings on 'land adjoining the built-up area' of Stonesfield. At para 60, the Inspector concluded:

"Policy BC1 (of the Local Plan 2031) identifies that development will be .... limited to meeting local housing needs. Therefore, in considering housing need within the context of the policy framework in the development plan, I take the view that local housing need means *need of a specific settlement*" (my emphasis).

He went on (paras 73-76) to discuss the "limitations in the use of the Affordable Housing Register", which he did not consider "to be a robust mechanism to constitute clear and convincing evidence of a need for 34 affordable homes in Stonesfield" (para 75). He pointed out that "only 2 of the 52 names on the AHR said they wished to live in Stonesfield only." Much the same is probably true of Charlbury, where 95 households were listed on the register in June 2017.

The second proposal<sup>48</sup> was for 3 ("large") dwellings at Woodstock Road, Charlbury. At para 6, the Inspector found that "At best, and only due to the more recent planning approval at The Grange .... the site could be considered to adjoin the built-up area". At para 10 she stated: "I have no evidence before me to support that the proposed dwellings are necessary to meet local housing needs or that the scheme would give rise to benefits to the specific settlement or sub-area which would clearly outweigh any harms", concluding at para 20 that there was no evidence of "a shortage of larger houses."

The Inspector was also concerned with the scheme's potential impact on the character and appearance of the area. She made a more widely applicable comment however at para 16, thus: "All of Charlbury, and a notable amount of surrounding land, was designated as a CA which I find is indicative of the surrounding land's importance to the historic, rural, setting of Charlbury."

<sup>47</sup> APP/D3125/W/18/3209551 dated 21/06/19

<sup>48</sup> APP/D3125/W/19/3221190 dated 08/07/19

Both these decisions therefore provide considerable support for the approach taken on these issues in this Paper and in the Neighbourhood Plan more widely.

# Appendix B Infrastructure Delivery Plan

## Charlbury Town Council – Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Issue 1, October 2018

### **What is the purpose of this document?**

In order to efficiently allocate future funding, and capitalise on funding opportunities that may become available, Charlbury needs to identify its priorities for infrastructure spending. This document lists these priorities. This is a living document 'owned' by Charlbury Town Council, which will be revised annually (or more frequently if required) as new projects are identified and existing ones completed.

### **Where did these projects come from?**

As part of the Neighbourhood Forum project, a Town Survey was issued to every household in Charlbury in 2016. The Community Action Plan group collated and analysed the responses from this survey, summarising them in an issue list in spring 2018. In addition, the Town Council has its own infrastructure aspirations and regularly consults with the community.

### **What does 'Infrastructure' mean?**

Infrastructure is “the broad range of services and facilities needed to support society”. Broadly, infrastructure projects in this list will be those covered by capital funding. Occasionally (as in the case of bus service subsidies) long-term revenue funding may be appropriate.

### **What isn't included?**

Future opportunities for housing development are covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and are expressly not included in this document. Projects which are entirely within the purview of individual private-sector or third-sector organisations, with no opportunity for council support or third-party funding, are not included.

\* **NOTE:** The inclusion of “Delivery Partners” in the list of projects below does not imply their agreement or commitment to any project at this time. This merely identifies partners with whom the town council would seek to work to progress each project in the future if and when an opportunity arose to take that project forward.

| Project and location  | Source    | Delivery partners*<br>(excluding CTC)   | Estimated cost          | Funding sources | Priority and timescale | Comments   |
|---|-----------|---|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Roads and transport</b>  |           |   |                         |                 |                        |  |
| Rework on-road town centre parking  | CAP / CTC | OCC                                     | [cost of traffic order] | CTC             | High – 2018-2019       | Being progressed by CTC  |
| Residents' parking scheme for town centre   | CAP / CTC | OCC, WODC, GWR                          |                         |                 |                        | Traditionally resisted by WODC – could need funding commitment by GWR or similar |
| Enstone Road crossroads redesign and safety improvements                              | CAP       | OCC                                     | study ~ £5k             |                 |                        |  |
| Slade / Primary School redesign and safety improvements                               | CAP       | OCC                                     | study ~ £5k             |                 |                        |  |
| Town Centre roads redesign and safety improvements                                    | CAP       | OCC                                     | study ~ £5k             |                 |                        |  |
| Dropped kerbs and pavement accessibility improvements, esp. for young and older users | CAP       | OCC                                     |                         |                 |                        |  |
| 20mph limit throughout town centre  | CTC       | OCC                                     | fully funded            | CTC / S106      | High – 2018-2019       | Being progressed by CTC  |
| 'Missing link' footpath alongside Enstone Road allotments                             | CTC       | CTC, OCC                                |                         |                 |                        |  |
| Footpath on Woodstock Road  | CTC       | CTC, OCC, landowners                    |                         |                 |                        |  |
| Improve traffic-free walking and cycling access to the countryside                    | CTC       | CTC, OCC, landowners, Sustrans          |                         |                 |                        |  |
| Additional bus services to meet social need, presumed community-led                   | CAP       | CTC, OCC, West Oxon Community Transport |                         |                 |                        |  |
| Provide cycle lanes on the Slade and other non-20mph roads                            | CAP       | OCC                                     |                         |                 |                        |  |

|  |                              |  |         |                                       |                  |  |
|--|------------------------------|--|---------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Provide cycle parking by the Co-op   | CAP                          | OCC, Midcounties Co-op                   |         |                                       |                  |  |
| <b>Community facilities</b>  |                              |  |         |                                       |                  |  |
| New Football & Sports Club   | Football & Sports Club / CTC |  | ~ £160k | CTC via Public Works Loan Board, WODC | High – 2019-2020 | Being progressed                       |
| More shops, including at town centre properties currently with planning use classes  | CAP                          | Landowners (including TGT, CHMHMC), WODC |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Refurbish Ticknell Place play area   | CAP                          |  |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Provide and support teenage-friendly spaces, including rubbish bins                  | CAP                          | TGT                                      |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Provide traffic-free cycle path for children (possibly on Nine Acres)                | CAP                          | OCC                                      |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Playing Close wheelchair/buggy accessibility   | CAP                          | TGT                                      |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Nine Acres wheelchair/buggy accessibility from both Nine Acres Lane and Enstone Road | CTC / CAP                    | OCC                                      |         |                                       |                  | Design exists for Nine Acres Lane ramp |
| Mill Field wheelchair / buggy accessibility  | CAP                          |  |         |                                       |                  |  |
| Corner House refurbishment and accessibility improvements                            | CHMHMC / CTC / CAP           | CHMHMC                                   |         | inc. WODC                             |                  |  |

CAP = Community Action Plan

CHMHMC = Corner House & Memorial Hall Management Committee

CTC = Charlbury Town Council

TGT = Thomas Gifford Trust

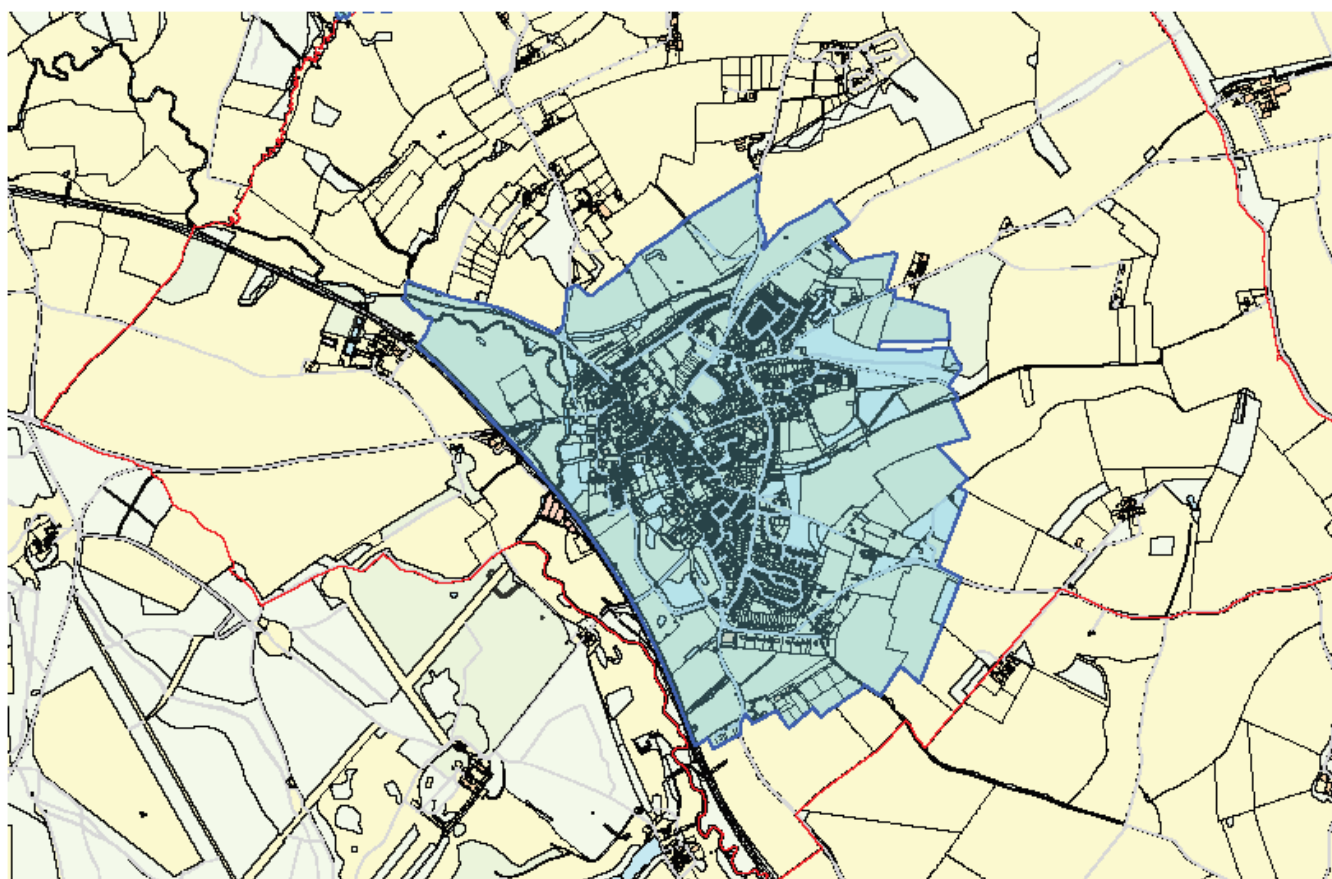
OCC = Oxfordshire County Council

WODC = West Oxfordshire District Council

# Appendix C Charlbury Design Guidance

## Introduction

Charlbury's historic environment is protected in a number of ways. Many of its buildings, particularly in the historic town centre, are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. This means that consent is needed for their demolition, alteration or extension. In addition, the whole town is designated as a conservation area (see **Map 5** below). Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Charlbury's conservation area is widely drawn to acknowledge the importance of its distinctive setting and views into and out from the town.



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**CHARLBURY CONSERVATION AREA**  
Scale 1:18000 at A4. Map created 9 July 2019.

Map 5 - Charlbury Conservation Area

Development within a conservation area should positively enhance its character or appearance. This design guidance seeks to ensure that any new development, or alteration or extension to existing buildings, maintains and enhances rather than erodes the character and distinctiveness of the town. It builds on the excellent guidance given in the *West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016* by identifying features and character of particular local importance to Charlbury, and should be read as a supplement to it and in conjunction with it.

In recognition of the declared climate emergency, particular attention is drawn to parts 12 and 16 of the *West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016* which contain important guidance on sustainable building design and



greener traditional buildings. This guidance is not duplicated here but should be read in conjunction with policies in this Plan relating to design, in particular policy NE9 relating to Environmental Design Standards.

The Charlbury Design Guidance recommends no particular style for development within the town. The key principle is that it should respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the place, contribute to local distinctiveness and enhance the character and quality of its surroundings. Many modern housing developments, including those in a so-called 'traditional' or 'vernacular' style, adopt a standardised design formula which, with minor differences in materials, can be found across the country. But by looking closely at the existing character of Charlbury, its buildings, streets and open spaces, it is possible to identify those features which contribute positively to its local distinctiveness and to the special character of its conservation area.

The *Charlbury Design Guidance* draws on the Local Area Character Assessment prepared as part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan. This divided the parish of Charlbury into three broad character areas: the historic core of the town; the suburbs which surround the old town largely to the east and are predominantly a post-war development, and the open countryside beyond the built-up area. Inevitably, there is variation within each area but enough in common to make some useful generalisations about their distinctive character and features.

The first three parts of the Guide reflect these broad areas with minor variations. Each begins with a description of main characteristics of the area, seeking to identify features that contribute positively to its particular character and, where relevant, to its local distinctiveness. This is followed by a set of guiding principles aimed at ensuring that any development, including alteration or extension to existing buildings, maintains and enhances rather than erodes Charlbury's character, design quality and sense of place.

A concluding section covers streetscape design in the town and surrounding parish. As well as informing the highways authority's work in the town, this will be useful in prioritising infrastructure improvements and in determining applications for development that may have an impact on Charlbury's streetscape.

## **C.1 Part 1: Development in the historic areas of the town and affecting outlying historic buildings**

### *The historic town centre*

The centre of Charlbury is resolutely urban in character. Its streets are densely built with long connected rows of houses directly on the street frontage or with very small front gardens; the main gardens are to the rear. The street pattern is quite simple. Streets join one another at right angles, with some smaller yards and groups of houses opening off the main thoroughfares.

The vernacular materials are natural, cream to honey-coloured, local stone, laid as coursed rubble rather than dimension stone, with local stone slate roofs. Some buildings are, or were previously, rendered. There is some use of Welsh slate but this arrived only from the mid-19th century and is not distinctive to the area. Houses tend to be in a plain vernacular style with little ornamentation. A few of the older ones have curved corners. Most have pitched roofs at around 45° with eaves parallel to the street. The three-story houses, of which there are a number, tend to have shallower pitches with slate roofs. Dormers set in the roofs are common but gables are not a frequent feature. Chimneys are predominantly of brick although there are some stone examples. The chimney stacks are generally not external to the wall of the house. Lintels over doors and windows and sills are much more often of timber than stone. Most of the windows are timber sashes rather than casements. Stone mullions are not a vernacular feature of Charlbury. Ground floor bay windows are quite common on former shops in the town centre, some with distinctive paired sash windows. Where entrance doors have canopies, they are normally flat, occasionally pedimented, on timber brackets rather than hipped or gabled.

In most cases boundaries are formed by traditional stone walls, sometimes quite high, rather than wooden fences. Cement capping is more common than stone on edge coping in the town centre. Some town centre houses have front areas enclosed by railings. The street and pavement surfaces are utilitarian and plain. The use of blue 19th-century pavilion bricks is a distinctive feature in some parts of the town. Kerbs are shallow

and made of individual stone blocks. Footpaths between groups of houses are a feature of parts of the town and provide valuable pedestrian access and a sense of permeability.

Individual trees can be important in the street scene. Historic public spaces such as the churchyard and Playing Close punctuate the otherwise densely built up historic core with formal areas of grass and trees.

The most successful recent infill developments within the historic town are small rows of houses, built in local stone and arranged in terraces.

### *Hixet Wood*

Charlbury's secondary historic settlement at Hixet Wood shares some of the same characteristics as the town centre. Its vernacular buildings are of local stone, some rendered, with roofs of stone slates or Welsh slate. Eaves are similarly straight but there are fewer dormers. Most houses have timber lintels and stone or brick chimneys. The majority are situated on or close to the road, a number at right angles to the street frontage. But while there are several terraces, and cottages and houses often abut one another, the plots are more loosely arranged than in the town centre, with visible gardens and yards. Local stone walls predominate and narrow passages run between some plots. The old cottages are generally more modest in character than the town centre houses. There are some surviving sash windows but it is likely that most would once have had small casements. These have now been replaced by a variety of modern windows.

### *Outlying Historic Buildings*

Charlbury contains a small number of historic buildings built beyond the historic limit of the town but now embraced by the 20th-century suburbs. Most are of local stone with Welsh rather than stone slate roofs although Wellington Cottages of c1820 combine a stone slate roof with an early use of brick for the walls. The early seventeenth-century Thatched Cottage in the Slade is the only surviving thatched building in Charlbury. Next door, Blenheim Farmhouse retains its 18th-century leaded casement windows. Distinctive features of the Enstone Road toll house include its canted front elevation and ornamental cresting on its roof.

## **Guiding Principles**

### ***Alterations***

#### **C.1.1 External alterations** should:

- Respect the character and appearance of the building, its context and its local distinctiveness;
- Avoid the loss of or damage to significant features such as, but not limited to, roofs, chimneys, windows including old glass, doors and railings;
- Adopt paint colours for external joinery that reflect the character and appearance of town
- Maintain the unity of design where the building is one of a uniformly- designed group.

#### **C.1.2 Former shop fronts**

Every effort should be made to retain former shop fronts where they are a significant feature of the building and contribute to the character or appearance of the street or area.

Proposals for the removal of a former shop front should assess:

- the significance of the shop front, including whether it is an original feature of the building or the result of a later conversion
- its contribution to the character and appearance of the street or area and to local distinctiveness
- the quality of its design and construction
- its compatibility with the proposed new use

#### **C.1.3 Internal alterations** should:

- Respect the original plan or layout of the building
- Use lightweight reversible partitions wherever possible when spaces have to be divided

- Avoid the loss of or damage to significant historic features such as windows, doors, staircases, chimney-pieces or other internal fittings or decoration; fit secondary glazing or internal shutters to reduce heat loss rather than replacement windows
- Use materials which either match or are distinct from the existing fabric as appropriate

C.1.4 **Alterations to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings** should follow the advice provided by Historic England.

### ***Extensions***

C.1.5 **Extensions** should:

- Have regard to the advice in section 14 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide;
- Respect the character and appearance of the building, its context and its local distinctiveness.

In particular, they should:

- Respect historic boundaries including ancient field boundaries and follow the existing urban grain;
- Preserve significant historic features and fabric;
- Be subservient to the existing building in footprint, height and volume;
- Keep the same or a smaller span and the same roof pitch;
- Normally use the same palette of materials;
- Respect the unity of the whole where the building forms part of an overall design such as a terrace or group;
- Retain significant trees wherever possible.

Extensions to the street front should normally match the design of the existing elevation in proportion, materials and key features such as doors and windows.

More flexibility of design may be appropriate with rear extensions, particularly to unlisted buildings, with scope for high-quality modern designs that reflect the advice in section 14.4 of the WODG and the principles above.

### ***New development in a historic context***

C.1.6 Successful new developments will:

- Display an understanding of the site, its significance and setting.
- Respect the character of their surroundings.
- Respect historic boundaries including ancient field boundaries and follow the existing urban grain.
- Maintain Charlbury's local distinctiveness by taking inspiration from the buildings found in the historic town rather than using generic designs.
- Favour linked terraces and other housing types and density that reflect the historic context.
- Employ high-quality design whether in a traditional or modern style. Where modern designs are used, take care to reinforce the distinctive sense of place by employing a palette of local materials including local stone.
- Incorporate important existing features of the site such as walls, trees and hedges
- Reflect the street pattern, boundaries and layout of the existing settlement: avoid sinuous road layouts and wide visibility splays, using traditional kerbs and appropriate surfaces. Use stone walls in preference to boarded fencing.
- Ensure that new landscaping is well-integrated with its surroundings.

## C.2 Part 2: Development in the post 1900 suburbs

Although the whole of Charlbury lies within the conservation area, not all its areas are of special architectural or historic interest. The suburbs surrounding the historic settlement to the north, east and south-east consist predominantly of modern housing, much of it built since 1950. However, these areas not only provide the setting for the historic town but also make an important, often positive, contribution to the character and appearance of Charlbury as a whole.

The guidance below attempts to identify the key characteristics of some of the post- 1900 housing development to help householders, planners and developers when considering changes to buildings or new development in this area. The guiding principles that follow are not intended to be prescriptive but to encourage the sensitive care and treatment of Charlbury's more recent heritage and to maintain its own particular character.

### *The post-1900 suburbs*

The modern housing surrounding Charlbury's historic centre to the north, east and south-east varies in date, style and density.

The first housing development beyond the limit of the historic settlement was the group of semi-detached villas at the top of Crawborough which appeared at the very end of the 19th century. Solidly built of local stone with Welsh slate roofs, some with bay windows, others with ashlar stone dressings, they are typical of much late Victorian housing but unique in Charlbury. Also in stone with slate roofs but very different in character are the first council houses built along the Enstone Road in 1920. Distinctive features of their cottagey style include long gables, narrow slate roofs above the ground floor windows and small-paned timber casements.

The major expansion of Charlbury came in the second half of the 20th century. With the exception of some modest examples by local builders, most developments employ standard designs of their period which can be found across the country. The use of local stone or artificial substitutes for houses and boundary walls helps many of them to blend with the earlier parts of the town. Otherwise they make few concessions to the local distinctiveness and particularity of place which is the hallmark of vernacular building. In contrast to the historic centre, detached and semi-detached houses, including some bungalows, predominate with relatively few terraces apart from the former council houses and social housing. Density is generally much lower, with more green space, trees and shrubs. Most houses have front and back gardens and many have garages. Layouts tend to be suburban in character with sinuous connecting roads marked by wide visibility spays.

The post- war housing of the 1940s and 50s is mainly (former) council or social housing, a mixture of semi-detached houses, terraces and bungalows built in a plain workmanlike style. The materials are usually a light brick or pebbledash with tiled roofs. Designs vary; both straight eaves, often ornamented with a cut brick cornice, and gabled elevations are found – for example on opposite sides of Sturt Road or Nine Acres Lane. Most of the original small-paned casement windows or landscape windows incorporating top-hung opening lights have now been replaced with modern uPVC casements. Simple open gabled or flat-roofed porches have progressively been enclosed. Most of these houses have generous front gardens often with traditional stone walls. Sturt Close is an early example of a circular road layout. Hughes Close is distinctive as a formal arrangement of simple bungalows around a diamond shaped, partly communal, space. Most of the former council housing has undergone a high degree of personalisation of doors, windows and other features since it was sold in the 1980s but some examples of the original designs survive. Upgrading of the remaining social housing has also taken place.

Developments from the 1960s and 70s also generally use natural or artificial stone, sometimes in combination with render. They are notable for their white-painted exterior timber, including barge-boards, panels and landscape picture windows with top hung opening lights. Split, V-slope or monopitch roofs characteristic of the period are sometimes found, as at Sandford Park, while narrow monopitch or flat roofs above the ground floor, often linking to garages tend to be a common feature of front elevations. Some houses such as those in Sandford Rise and Hanover Close, sit in large expanses of communal grass; in Sandford Park linked groups of bungalows cascade down a grassy slope, with communal garages concealed at the top of the hill. In other cases, individual front gardens are open plan without walls or fences. Hill Close is a good example. Woodfield

Drive (1969), singled out for mention in Pevsner's *Oxfordshire North and West*, exhibits a different approach with well-proportioned but plain terraced housing in buff brick arranged in a consciously picturesque manner partly above a raised pavement. Other examples of 60s and 70s housing can be found at Lee Heights, Lee Close, Little Lees, The Green and Chartwell Drive.

The 1980s and 90s saw a return to more 'traditional' styles employing picturesque asymmetry, typically with gables including above timber porches, dormers, and bay and casement windows. Stone gable vents are a signature feature of the 1990s developments. Most houses and boundary walls are of stone or artificial stone with tiled roofs and are arranged in informal groups usually around areas of grass trees and other planting. Ticknell Piece is good example of this type of layout. Tanner's Court from the 1980s also adopts a consciously picturesque style, responding to the site by its use of different levels. It is unusual in incorporating some three story 'town' houses approached up steps with garages at ground floor level. Dark metal casement windows, soldier-course brick lintels and railings also feature.

The most recent, post 2000, housing has favoured further development of the generic modern 'Cotswold' style employing stone, artificial stone and sometimes render with a profusion of gables not found in Charlbury's historic streets. Small enclaves of large detached houses are more frequent, and local distinctiveness has been challenged by a greater variation in roofing materials including imported black slate and red tile. Stone walls continue to feature but hard landscape, often of brick paving, has tended to replace front gardens in developments such as Dairy Court and the extension to Elm Crescent. Stone rather than timber lintels and large areas of glazing with metal folding windows are common.

Not all of Charlbury's post-war housing is estate-based. Along Woodstock Road and Stonesfield Lane, is a distinctive area of individual large inter-war and post-war houses, mainly of traditional but eclectic design, set in extensive plots with mature planting. High hedges, shielding the houses from the road, are a characteristic feature. The town is also home to a distinctive group of individually commissioned modern houses, most in or near the historic centre and designed by a locally-based architect.

## **Guiding Principles**

### **C.2.1 External Alterations.**

Successful external alterations will:

- Respect the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings
- Wherever possible, retain or reproduce features that make a significant contribution to the design of the building such as original roof profiles, chimneys, doors and windows.
- Adopt paint colours that fit in with the character and appearance of the neighbouring buildings
- Have regard to the unity of the whole where the building is part of a consistently-designed group.
- Follow the advice of *Historic England*, where the alterations are designed to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings.

### **C.2.2 Extensions.**

Successful extensions will:

- Have regard to the advice in section 14 of the WO Design Guide.
- Respect the character and appearance of the building and its context.

In particular, they will:

- Respect any historic boundaries including ancient field boundaries and follow existing the grain of the area
- Be subservient to the existing building in footprint, height and volume.
- Keep the same or a smaller span and, where appropriate, the same roof pitch
- Wherever possible and appropriate, retain or reproduce features that make a significant contribution to the design of the building such as roof profiles, doors and windows.

- Normally use a similar palette of materials as the existing building
- Respect the unity of the whole where the building forms part of an overall design such as a terrace or group.
- Retain trees and other planting which contribute to the character of the area where possible.

Greater design flexibility can be appropriate with rear extensions which offer scope for high-quality modern designs that reflect the advice in section 14.4 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide.

### C.2.3 **New development within the existing settlement.**

Successful new developments will:

- Display an understanding of the site and its setting.
- Respect the character of their surroundings.
- Respect any historic boundaries including ancient field boundaries and follow existing the grain of the area
- Contribute to Charlbury's local distinctiveness by taking inspiration from the buildings found in the historic town (see Part 1 of this Guide) rather than using generic designs
- Favour housing types and density that meet local housing needs.
- Employ high-quality design whether in a traditional or modern style. Where modern designs are used, take care to reinforce the distinctive sense of place by employing a palette of local materials including local stone.
- Incorporate existing features of the site such as walls, trees and hedges
- Ensure that new landscaping is well-integrated with its surroundings.
- Favour traditional stone walls over boarded fencing.

## **C.3 Part 3: Development beyond the existing settlement**

### *The open countryside*

The built-up area of Charlbury has a clear edge, particularly on the west, and gives way quite sharply to open countryside on all sides. A gently rolling limestone plateau east of the town steps down steeply to the Evenlode valley in the west as it turns south and narrows. The valley provides stunning views in both directions, towards Cornbury Park and ancient Wychwood Forest and to the open country north of the town. The valley bottom which contains the railway is predominantly pasture, its sides defined by belts of pines that integrate it with Cornbury's designed landscape. To the north-west, the valley broadens, its sides sloping gently to a wide floodplain. Here small and medium- sized fields, both arable and pasture, are typically bounded by hedges and mature trees, and interspersed with areas of woodland. Ancient tracks and roads, often tree-lined, link the town to the surrounding fields, isolated mainly 19th-century farms and to the medieval settlement and manor of Walcot.

The patchwork of fields to the north-west and north of the town indicates early enclosure of the former open fields with some surviving evidence of ridge and furrow. Field boundaries shown on Pride's map of 1761 can still be seen. The few farm buildings are generally of local materials and in a traditional style although often accompanied by the more intrusive structures of modern farming.

The overall character is of an attractive and unspoilt landscape of some historic interest, offering stunning views particularly along the Evenlode valley and providing a memorable and much-valued setting for the town.

### **Guiding Principles**

#### **C.3.1 Alterations and extensions to traditional buildings**

Development involving the conversion, extension or alteration of traditional buildings should follow the guidance in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide section 14 on alterations and

extensions and section 15 on conversion of agricultural buildings to ensure that the form and character of the building and features of interest are retained.

The guiding principles in Section C.1 of this Guidance relating to development in the historic environment involving alterations and extensions should also be followed where relevant.

**C.3.2 New development in the open countryside** - including development on greenfield sites beyond the edge of the existing settlement.

A successful new development will:

- Display an understanding of the site, its significance and its setting.
- Conserve the significant features, character and distinctiveness of the site and its surroundings including walls and boundaries, hedgerows, trees, woodland and water bodies. Incorporate important existing features of the site, including built features, into the new development wherever possible.
- Respect historic boundaries particularly ancient field boundaries and tracks.
- Evaluate and safeguard archaeological features.
- Favour housing types and density that suit the character of the site and its context.
- Maintain local distinctiveness by taking inspiration from vernacular historic buildings found in Charlbury or in its surrounding countryside as appropriate rather than using generic designs.
- Use local materials particularly local stone.
- Employ high-quality design whether in a traditional or modern style. Where modern designs are used, take care to reinforce the distinctive sense of place by employing a palette of local materials including local stone.
- Reflect traditional street patterns found locally. Avoid sinuous road layouts, wide visibility splays and concrete kerbs. Use appropriate surfaces. Avoid boarded fencing and use hedges or stone walls in preference.
- Ensure that new landscaping is rural in character and well-integrated with its surroundings.
- Preserve significant views that cross the site.

**C.3.3** Development on sites on the edge of the existing settlement should also create satisfactory links with the existing settlement.

## **C.4 Part 4: Streetscape design**

Paragraph 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework covers highways design, and requires development to create places that are safe, secure and attractive, to avoid unnecessary street clutter and to respond to local character and design standards. The Charlbury Character Assessment emphasised the important contribution made by the design and condition of Charlbury's streetscape to its character and appearance.

The guidance that follows draws on the valuable advice in Historic England's Streets for All publication on highway and public realm works in historic places and the Cotswolds Conservation Board's position statement on the management of roadside verges. It supplements the guidance given in section 18 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide by focussing on issues of particular relevance to Charlbury.

For the purposes of highway design and maintenance, Charlbury can be identified as having four character areas.

### **C.4.1 The Historic Town Centre**

For this purpose the historic town centre is defined as Church Street, Park Street, Church Lane, Dyers Hill to the east of Church Lane, Thames Street, Market Street, Browns Lane and Sheep Street. Here, buildings generally front directly onto the highway. In a few cases there is a narrow front garden, usually fenced with iron railings. Some properties, such as the churchyard

and the Quaker burial ground, are bounded by stone walls built of ashlar or mortared limestone rubble, but there are no boundary hedges and few dry stone walls.

### **Guiding Principles**

Highway improvements and traffic management schemes, including 20mph zones, traffic calming measures and parking restrictions, should:

- minimise the impact on the environment;
- maintain kerb lines to retain the historic form of the streets;
- use natural and where possible local materials (local limestone kerbs survived in Church Street until the 1980s);
- avoid colour-contrasting surfaces;
- consider using traditional stone setts to reduce traffic speeds and define entry points;
- keep signage and road markings to a minimum.

In accordance with Chapter 3 paragraph 13.4.5 and Chapter 5 paragraph 12.5.3 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2019, prohibition of waiting markings ('yellow lines') should be 50mm wide and use BS 381C 353 (deep cream).

Property boundaries adjacent to the highway should maintain the tradition of iron railings and mortared stone walls. Hedges, dry stone walls and close boarded fences should generally be avoided.

## **C.4.2 The Historic Suburbs**

This covers Hixet Wood and Grammar School Hill, and the historic lanes that have been absorbed into the built-up area of the town such as Pound Hill, Enstone Road, Pooles Lane, Fishers Lane, Dancers Hill and Woodstock Road. Here the former rural character of the highway is marked by the survival of grass and wildflower verges, the frequent absence of footways (and hence of kerbstones) and (except in the case of Lee Place) the use of hedges or dry stone walls as property boundaries.

### **Guiding Principles**

Highway works should:

- minimise the impact on the environment
- wherever possible retain soft verges, which in parts of Enstone Road, Dyers Hill and Hixet Wood take the characteristic medieval form of raised banks
- avoid raised concrete kerbs; where it is necessary to protect a verge that would otherwise be damaged by heavy traffic, consideration should be given using stone setts
- where a new footway needs to be provided, ways should be sought to preserve the historic rural character of the highway with its verges, walls and hedges
- where possible, the four unadopted roads, Bayliss Yard, Crawborough, Woody Lane and Stonesfield Lane, should continue to be surfaced with compacted local limestone hoggin.

In accordance with Chapter 3 paragraph 13.4.5 and Chapter 5 paragraph 12.5.3 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2019, prohibition of waiting markings ('yellow lines') should be 50mm wide and use BS 381C 353 (deep cream).

Property boundaries adjacent to the highway should aim where appropriate to continue the tradition of hedges and dry stone walls. Close boarded fences should be avoided.

## **C.4.3 The Modern Estates**

### **Guiding Principles**

The modern estates lie within the Cotswolds AONB and the Charlbury Conservation Area and generally respect the locality by adopting a sympathetic colour palette, often making use of



local stone. In accordance with Chapter 3 paragraph 13.4.5 and Chapter 5 paragraph 12.5.3 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2019, prohibition of waiting markings ('yellow lines') should therefore use BS 381C 353 (deep cream).

The inscribed memorial megaliths that now form the entrance to Hughes Close are a significant feature in the town and should not be obscured by unnecessary signage.

#### **C.4.4 The Open Countryside**

##### **Guiding Principles**

The open countryside outside the built-up area of the town provides many of the most valuable views of the town and its wider landscape setting within the AONB, and signage and road markings should therefore be kept to a minimum. Lighting and illuminated signs should be avoided. Following paras 1.12.2 and 1.12.3 of Chapter 4 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2019, grey backing boards are to be preferred, and if exceptionally yellow backing boards are used they should not be reflectorised.

Roadside verges provide an important habitat for plants, birds, small mammals and insects, and act as valuable wildlife corridors along which species can move and spread. Management is therefore critical. Verges should not be left uncut, as wild flowers will disappear and more aggressive vegetation will take over, but they should not be cut during spring and early summer before flowering plants have had a chance to set seed. Arisings should be removed, as if they are left to mulch down this will tend to enrich the soil and favour rank plants such as nettle, dock and comfrey at the expense of flowering species and the wildlife that depends on them. Hedgerow trees, particularly the scots pines along Forest Road identified in the Charlbury Character Assessment, should be protected and consideration given to planting successors.

Where new footways are required for safety reasons, care should be taken to preserve verges, hedges and any dry stone walls.

Care should be taken to protect any surviving historic milestones.

#### **C.4.5 Street Lighting**

The generic advice in Historic England's *Streets for All* can be commended.

##### **Guiding Principles**

- In order to protect tranquillity and dark skies, over-provision of lighting should be avoided
- No historic lampposts survive in the town, and well-designed modern street lights are often a better choice for historic areas than catalogue 'heritage' lamps
- Where possible, lights should be mounted on buildings, fittings should be chosen that provide light only where it is needed, and attention should be given to their daytime appearance
- Consideration should be given to energy efficiency
- Consideration could be given to using a consistently warmer tone in the historic town centre, which in 1895 was lit by twenty gas lamps and nine oil lamps, and elsewhere a whiter tone more reminiscent of moonlight.

# Appendix D Proposed Local List

## D.1 Criteria

In the absence of existing selection criteria, the following criteria have been devised in accordance with the Historic England guidance.

| No. | Criterion                           | Explanation   |
|-----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1   | Age                                 | A. Buildings earlier than 1850 retaining a significant proportion of original fabric.<br>Selection guided by 1847 Charlbury Tithe Map ( <i>candidates for national listing</i> )<br><br>B. Other traditional buildings earlier than 1850 retaining original fabric.<br>Selection guided by 1847 Charlbury Tithe Map |
| 2   | Rarity                              | Judged against local characteristics  |
| 3   | Architectural/aesthetic interest    | A. Design quality in terms of local style, materials or other locally-distinctive features<br><br>B. Other design quality   |
| 4   | Group value                         | Part of a group of assets with an architectural/aesthetic or historical relationship  |
| 5   | Historic interest                   | Historical association eg with local/national figures or events   |
| 6   | Archival interest                   | Value enhanced by a significant contemporary/historic record  |
| 7   | Archaeological interest             | Evidential value  |
| 8   | Designed landscape interest         | Designed landscapes, parks or gardens locally important for their design or social history. Can complement LGS designation  |
| 9   | Social or economic historical value | Illustrative of the economic or social history of the parish  |
| 10  | Communal value                      | Contributing to local identity or collective memory   |
| 11  | Landmark status                     | For communal or historical associations or striking aesthetic value   |

## D.2 Local List Proposals

The following buildings within the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan area, are proposed for inclusion within the local list. The criteria for inclusion (as detailed in section D.1 above) are referenced for each building proposed.

| Street              | Building or feature         | Criteria |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Bayliss Yard</b> |                             |          |
| north side          | 1 and 2 The Cottage OX7 3RS | 1B, 9    |
| south side          | Chantry Cottage OX7 3RS     | 1B       |

| Street               | Building or feature                       | Criteria |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| <b>Brown's Lane</b>  |   |          |
| south side           | 2, Brown's Cottage                        | 1B       |
| <b>Church Lane</b>   |   |          |
| east side            | Hazel Cottage OX7 3PX                     | 1B       |
| <b>Church Street</b> |   |          |
| south side           | Chapman's House OX7 3PP                   | 1B, 5,9  |
| <b>Crawborough</b>   |   |          |
|                      | Little Egypt OX7 3TX                      | 1B       |
| <b>Dancer's Hill</b> |   |          |
| west side            | Hawthorne Villa, OX7 3RZ                  | 9        |
| <b>Ditchley Road</b> |   |          |
| north side           | 1-15 Ditchley Road , OX7 3QS              | 3A,9     |
| <b>Dyer's Hill</b>   |   |          |
| north side           | Baptist Chapel OX7 3QD                    | 9,10     |
|                      | 1 and 2 Dyers Hill OX7 3QD                | 1B,4     |
| south side           | Old Toll House (part) OX7 3QG             | 9,11     |
| <b>Enstone Road</b>  |   |          |
| west side            | Hazeldene OX7 3QR                         | 3B,5,9   |
| east side            | Wychwood House OX7 3QR                    | 3B,5,9   |
| <b>Fishers Lane</b>  |   |          |
| north side           | St Teresa's RC Church                     | 9,10     |
|                      | Oakstone OX7 3RX                          | 1B       |
|                      | The Yew Tree OX7 3RX                      | 1B       |
|                      | Hill View OX7 3RX                         | 1B       |
|                      | Mount View OX7 3RX                        | 1B       |
|                      | Talbot Cottage, 6 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX    | 1B       |
|                      | Rose Tree Cottage, 5 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX | 1B       |
|                      | 4 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX                    | 1B,9     |
|                      | Glover Cottage OX7 3RX                    | 1B,9     |
|                      | 1 and 2 Bath Cottages OX7 3RY             | 1B       |
| <b>Hixet Wood</b>    |   |          |
| west side            | Ivy Cottage OX7 3SA                       | 1B       |
|                      | 1 and 2 Hillside Cottages OX7 3SA         | 1B       |
|                      | 1,3,5,6 and 8 Hixet Wood OX7 3SA          | 1B       |
|                      | Lee Place wall                            | 4, 11    |

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| <b>Hixet Wood (cont.)</b>                 |   |           |
| east side                                 | The Rise Cottage OX7 3SB                              | 1B        |
|   | Stable Cottage OX7 3SB                                | 1B        |
|   | 1 and 2 Narrow Lane OX7 3SN                           | 1B        |
|   | Lowe's Cottage OX7 3SB                                | 1B        |
|   | Rose Cottage OX7 3SB                                  | 1B        |
|   | Park Cottage OX7 3SB                                  | 1B        |
|   | Somer Cottage OX7 3SB                                 | 1B        |
|   | Crantock OX7 3SB                                      | 1B        |
|   | Halcyon Drift Terrace OX7 3SB                         | 1B        |
|   | Whispership Cottage OX7 3SB                           | 1B        |
|   | Hix Cottage OX7 3SB                                   | 1B        |
|   | Cobwebs OX7 3SB                                       | 1B        |
|   |   |           |
| <b>Hundley Way</b>                        | Oxpens OX7 3QE  | 1B,9      |
|   |   |           |
| <b>Market Street</b>                      |   |           |
| east side                                 | Alder House OX7 3PH                                   | 1B        |
|   | Rosies OX7 3PH  | 1B        |
| west side                                 | The Rose and Crown OX7 3PL                            | 3B, 9,11  |
|   | Corn Mill House OX7 3PL                               | 1B        |
|   | Griffin House OX7 3PJ                                 | 1B,2,7    |
|   | Bramley House OX7 3PJ                                 | 1B        |
|   |   |           |
| <b>Nine Acres Lane</b>                    |   |           |
| north side                                | Nine Acres Cottage (garage) OX7 3QZ                   | 1B        |
|   |   |           |
| <b>Park Street</b>                        |   |           |
| east side                                 | Church View Cottage OX7 3PS                           | 1B        |
|   | Round the Back - former YMCA building only<br>OX7 3PS | 2,9,10    |
|   | 8 Park St OX7 3PS                                     | 1B        |
|   |   |           |
|   | 11 Park St OX7 3PS                                    | 1B        |
|   | Grammar School Cottage OX7 3PS                        | 1B        |
|   | Bay Well  | 2,10      |
|   | 1-8 Wellington Cottages OX7 3AA                       | 2,9       |
| west side                                 | Sessions Cottage OX7 3PT                              | 1A,3A,5,9 |
|   |   |           |
| <b>Priory Lane<br/>(off Park St to W)</b> |   |           |
| north side                                | Dolly's Cottage OX7 3PT                               | 1B        |
| south side                                | Coopers Cottage OX7 3PT                               | 1B        |
|   | Dragon's Cottage OX7 3PT                              | 1B        |
|   |   |           |

|                       |  |           |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Playing Close</b>  |  |           |
| east side             | Merry's OX7 3QP  | 1B        |
|                       | Wormwood Cottage OX7 3QP incorporating former Fire Engine House/Lockup | 9, 1B     |
| <b>Pooles Lane</b>    |  |           |
| east side             | Chimney Cottage OX7 3RT  | 1B        |
|                       | Kuzniks OX7 3RT  | 1B        |
|                       | Twissel Cottage (part) OX7 3RT   | 1B        |
| west side             | Stone Cottage OX7 3RT  | 1B        |
|                       | End Cottage OX7 3RT  | 1B        |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>Pound Hill</b>     |  |           |
| east side             | Cemetery Lych Gate   | 10        |
|                       |  |           |
| west side             | Reeves Barn OX7 3Q OX7 3RR   | 1B        |
|                       | Stratford Cottage OX7 3QN  | 1B        |
|                       | Pound Cottage OX7 3QN  | 1B        |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>Sheep St</b>       |  |           |
| east side             | Providence House - rear range OX7 3RR                                  | 1B        |
|                       | 37 Sheep St OX7 3RR  | 9         |
|                       | Hone Cottage OX7 3RR   | 1B        |
| west side             | Old Farmhouse OX7 3RR  | 1B        |
|                       | Caigers (ex V&G) OX7 3RR   | 1B, 9     |
|                       | Yew Tree Cottage OX7 3RR   | 1B        |
|                       |  |           |
|                       |  |           |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>Shilson Lane</b>   |  |           |
|                       | 4,5,6,7 Shilson Lane OX7 3PD (façade on Park St only)                  | 5.9.11    |
|                       | Wood Barn, 9 Shilson Lane OX7 3PD                                      | 1B        |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>Spelsbury Road</b> |  |           |
|                       | Field known as Glebelands  | 7         |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>Sturt Road</b>     |  |           |
|                       | Fiveways House OX7 3AB   | 1B,9      |
|                       |  |           |
| <b>The Slade</b>      |  |           |
| west side             | Laburnham Cottage OX7 3SJ  | 1B        |
| east side             | Sandford Mount OX7 3SJ   | 3B, 9, 11 |
|                       | Ivy Cottage OX7 3SJ (old glove factory)                                | 9         |
|                       | Yew Cottage OX7 3SJ (----- ditto -----)                                | 9         |
|                       | Mulberry Cottage OX7 3SJ (----- ditto -----)                           | 9         |
|                       |  |           |

|                      |                                     |    |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Thames Street</b> |                                     |    |
| east side            | Milton Cottage OX7 3QQ              | 1B |
|                      | Peartree Cottage OX7 3QQ            | 1B |
|                      | Old Bakery OX7 3QQ                  | 1B |
| west side            | Thames Cottage, 3 Thames St OX7 3QQ | 1B |
|                      | 1-4 Thames Gardens OX7 3QQ          | 1B |

### D.3 Local List Descriptions

This section provides an explanation of the significance of the buildings and sites proposed for inclusion in the local list indicating how they meet the relevant criteria set out in section D.1.

*Note: Where buildings meet more than one criterion, they are listed under each criterion but described only once with appropriate cross-references. Names of buildings and sites are given in **bold** where they are described and in italics elsewhere.*

#### Criterion 1A

*Sessions Cottage, Park Street (see 9.1 and also 3A and 5).*

#### Criterion 1B

The largest number of buildings proposed for local listing fall within selection **criterion 1B: traditional buildings earlier than 1850 retaining original fabric** but which do not meet the criteria for inclusion in the statutory list. They have been identified as candidates for local listing using the evidence of the 1847 Charlbury Tithe map and by external visual inspection.

Most of these buildings are found in or close to the historic town centre or in the secondary settlement of Hixet Wood associated with Lee Place. While many are modest in character and features such as windows and doors or roof-covering have undergone alteration, they represent the character and distinctiveness of the area in their use of the local stone, usually with timber lintels, in their vernacular form and in their relationship to one another. Since most are still in residential use, internal access is not normally possible. However, from the few studies that have been done, it seems likely that a number may retain interior features of historic interest such as roof structure, ceiling beams, partitions, panelling, floors, cellars, fireplaces or possibly other decoration dating back to the seventeenth or eighteenth century if not earlier. Identifying them as a group through inclusion on the Local List will ensure that their local significance is not overlooked.

- *1 and 2 The Cottage, Bayliss Yard OX7 3RS (see 9.4)*
- **Chantry Cottage, Bayliss Yard OX7 3RS**
- **2, Brown's Cottage, Brown's Lane**
- **Hazel Cottage, Church Lane OX7 3PX**
- *Chapman's House, Church Street OX7 3PP (see 9.1 and also 5)*
- **Little Egypt, Crawborough OX7 3TX**
- **1 and 2 Dyers Hill OX7 3QD (see 4)**
- **Oakstone, Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- **The Yew Tree, Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- **Hill View, Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- **Mount View, Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- **Talbot Cottage, 6 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- **Rose Tree Cottage, 5 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX**
- *4 Fishers Lane OX7 3RX (see 9.1)*
- *Glover Cottage OX7 3RX (see 9.1)*
- **1 and 2 Bath Cottages OX7 3RY**
- **Ivy Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SA**
- **1 and 2 Hillside Cottages Hixet Wood OX7 3SA**
- **1,3,5,6 and 8 Hixet Wood OX7 3SA**

- *Lee Place wall, Hixet Wood (see 4)*
- **The Rise Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Stable Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **1 and 2 Narrow Lane Hixet Wood OX7 3SN**
- **Lowe's Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Rose Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Park Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Somer Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Crantock Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Halcyon Drift Terrace Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Whispership Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Hix Cottage Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- **Cobwebs Hixet Wood OX7 3SB**
- *Oxpens Hundley Way OX7 3QE (see 9.4)*
- **Alder House Market Street OX7 3PH**
- **Rosies, Market Street OX7 3PH**
- **Corn Mill House Market St OX7 3PL**
- *Griffin House Market St OX7 3PJ (see 2 and also 7)*
- **Bramley House Market St OX7 3PJ**
- **Nine Acres Cottage (garage) Nine Acres Lane OX7 3QZ**
- **Church View Cottage Park Street OX7 3PS**
- **8 Park St OX7 3PS**
- **11 Park St OX7 3PS**
- **Grammar School Cottage, Park St OX7 3PS**
- **Dolly's Cottage Priory Lane OX7 3PT**
- **Coopers Cottage Priory Lane OX7 3PT**
- **Dragon's Cottage Priory Lane OX7 3PT**
- **Merry's, The Playing Close OX7 3QP**
- *Wormwood Cottage The Playing Close OX7 3QP incorporating former Fire Engine House/Lockup (see 9.4)*
- **Chimney Cottage Pooles Lane OX7 3RT**
- **Kuzniks Pooles Lane OX7 3RT**
- **Twissel Cottage (part) Pooles Lane OX7 3RT**
- **Stone Cottage OX7 3RT**
- **End Cottage OX7 3RT**
- **Reeves Barn Pound Hill OX7 3RR**
- **Stratford Cottage Pound Hill OX7 3QN**
- **Pound Cottage OX7 3QN**
- **Providence House Sheep St OX7 3RR**
- **- rear range**
- **Hone Cottage Sheep St OX7 3RR**
- **Old Farmhouse Sheep St OX7 3RR**
- *Caigers (ex V&G) Sheep St OX7 3RR (see 9.2)*
- **Yew Tree Cottage Sheep St OX7 3RR**
- **Wood Barn, 9 Shilson Lane OX7 3PD**
- *Fiveways House, Sturt Rd OX7 3AB (see 9.4)*
- **Laburnham Cottage, The Slade OX7 3SJ**
- **Milton Cottage Thames St OX7 3QQ**
- **Peartree Cottage Thames Street OX7 3QQ**
- **Old Bakery Thames St OX7 3QQ**
- **Thames Cottage, 3 Thames St OX7 3QQ**
- **1-4 Thames Gardens OX7 3QQ**

## Criterion 2

- **Griffin House, Market Street** (*also 1B and 7*)  
An unexceptional double-fronted stone rubble house of two storeys with stone slate gabled roof and stone chimneys. Sash windows and central panelled door under timber lintels. However, revealed in the end gable during restoration is a small timber window with timber lintel and timber diamond-section mullions, presumably of 16C or earlier date. As one of only two such examples in the town, the other being the listed Bull Inn, this makes it of exceptional local interest and archaeological value.
- *Former YMCA hall now 'Round the Back, Park Street* (see 9.4 and also 10)
- **Baywell, Park Street** (*also 10*)  
One of Charlbury's most distinctive and picturesque features: an historic well covered by a small circular roof of local stone slate, supported on four stout oak posts. It lies in pasture beside the entrance to the drive to Cornbury Park amid the spectacular scenery of this part of the Evenlode valley. The well gave its name to this area of Charlbury, certainly from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and probably from the more distant past. There is some evidence that the well formerly lay within a cottage garden.
- *1-8 Wellington Cottages, Park Street* (see 9.4)

## Criterion 3A

- *1-15 Ditchley Road* (see 9.4)
- *Sessions Cottage, Park Street* (see 9.1 and also 1A and 5)

## Criterion 3B

- *Hazeldean, Enstone Road* (see 9.1 and also 5).
- *Wychwood House, Enstone Road* (see 9.1 and also 3B, 5).
- **Rose and Crown, Market Street** (*also 9.4 and 11*)  
The historic Rose and Crown inn occupied the present site from at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was almost certainly medieval in origin. Although it was only partly damaged by a fire in 1905 in an adjoining shop, its owners took the opportunity to demolish the ancient pub and rebuild. The style of the present building could be described as sub- Arts and Crafts, with an overhanging hipped roof and the tall chimneys characteristic of its period. Local stone and stone slates make some concession to its surroundings but other detailing is standard for its date. Popularity with the local community, its unique architectural character in Charlbury and its landmark position in the town centre qualify it for local listing. With the three storey building of 1890 on the opposite corner and the former butchers shop also of c1905 adjoining it to the west, it belongs to an unexpected if not much admired group of buildings that dominate Charlbury's central crossroads.
- *Former YMCA hall now 'Round the Back, Park Street* (see 9.4 and also 2 and 10)
- **Sandford Mount, The Slade** (*also 9.4 and 11*)  
A large late Victorian House on a prominent site at the top of The Slade overlooking the town and Evenlode Valley. It was improved by the architect Ernest R Barrow (1869-1948) of the partnership Brown and Barrow. Barrow designed a number of large houses in the Old English Style during the 1890s but not is not clear how much he was responsible for at Sandford Mount. Of local stone with stone mullioned bay windows, and a tall gable chimney, the house has a severe cliff-like quality, relieved by its timber- framed upper storey, matching timber balcony and hipped roofs. With its substantial outbuildings and backed by well- wooded grounds, Sandford Mount makes a picturesque composition in southward views along the Slade. The house is now divided into flats.



#### **Criterion 4**

- **1 and 2 Dyers Hill** (also 1B)  
An 18<sup>th</sup> century terrace of two cottages, remodelled and extended (3 Dyer's Hill) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of local stone rubble with timber lintels and tiled roof. Two storeys and attic with dormers. Large paned sash windows. Doors 20<sup>th</sup> century. Group value with the listed 4-6 Dyer's Hill, 3 Dyer's Hill and Victoria Terrace.
- **Lee Place wall, Hixet Wood** (also 11)  
A dramatically high wall of local stone rubble forming part of the boundary wall of the listed Lee Place which dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Of unknown date but probably 17<sup>th</sup> century in origin. A memorable feature of the Hixet Wood streetscape.

#### **Criterion 5**

- *Chapman's House in Church Street* (see 9.1 and also 1B)
- *Hazeldean, Enstone Road* (see 9.1 and also 3B).
- *Wychwood House, Enstone Road* (see 9.1 and also 3B).
- *Sessions Cottage, Park Street* (see 9.1 and also 1A and 3A)
- *4,5,6,7 Shilson Lane Façade of former Wesley-Barrell factory (façade on Park Street only)* (see 9.4 and also 11)

#### **Criterion 6**

None

#### **Criterion 7**

- Griffin House, Market Street (see 2 and also 1B)
- **Field known as Glebelands, off Spelsbury Road**  
One of the best surviving examples of medieval 'ridge and furrow' in Charlbury parish not currently included in the Oxfordshire HERS.

#### **Criterion 8**

None

#### **Criterion 9 (Social and Economic)**

##### **9.1 Buildings associated with the Charlbury Quakers**

Quakers, particularly the Spendlove, Albright and Sessions families, played an important role in the public life of Charlbury during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Friends' Meeting House, built in 1776, is statutorily listed as are most of the houses and former shops associated with these families. These include the Corner House at the southern end of Market Street where Robert Spendlove was born in 1726 and died a very wealthy man in 1822, Albright House in Church Street, owned by Edward Spendlove in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and lived in by two generations of Albrights in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the mercer's shop in Market Street (now 10-11 Market Street) run by the first William Albright from 1771 and later by his son, and Gothic House, also owned by the Albrights in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Spendlove relations also lived at The Willows in Church Lane and the house, previously News and Things, in Sheep St, for a time while the brewer, James Sessions, lived at what is now

Melody House on the corner of Fishers Lane and Sheep Street. Four buildings with Quaker connections not on the statutory list are proposed for the Local List:

- **Chapman's House in Church Street** (*Also 1B, 5*)  
A handsome three bay 18<sup>th</sup> century town house, possibly with earlier origins. Stone rubble, previously rendered. Early 19C door with reeded surround. Top storey added c 1825 when the whole façade was rendered. Double-height 19C stone bay window and 19C shop-front. Bought by the second William Spendlove (1777-1852) who moved there from Market Street in 1825. The family shop selling groceries, pharmaceuticals and drapery was on the ground floor. From 1841 his son, John Marshall Albright, and his wife lived there until they built Hazeldean (qv). in 1858. Description of the house and shop in the 1840-50s in *Charlbury of our Childhood* pp. 23-29.
- **Hazeldean** (*Also 3B, 5*).  
One of a pair of large mid 19C stone villas built on opposite corners of the Enstone Road crossroads, Hazeldean was built for John Marshall Albright, when he retired from running the family shop in Church Street, in 1858. According to his niece, Caroline Pumfrey, the architect was 'Wilkinson of Oxford', presumably William Wilkinson. Well outside the settlement when it was built, the house is in a picturesque mid- Victorian style. Of stone quarried on the site, it has canted bays, arched windows and hipped roofs with overhanging eaves supported on brackets, and tall chimneys.
- **Wychwood House** (*Also 3B, 5*)  
Built in 1863 for Joseph Albright, a first cousin of John Marshall Albright, in a similar style to Hazeldean with prominent eaves bracketing. Now much extended. Having left the Quakers for the Church of England, Joseph served as churchwarden at St Mary's parish church almost until his death in 1891.
- **Sessions Cottage, Park St.** (*Also 1A, 3A, 5*).  
A two bay 17<sup>th</sup> century stone cottage of two storeys with later, or rebuilt, attic gables. Casement windows and entrance door beneath timber lintels. Evidence of lost adjoining cottage on N elevation. Internal features include timber ceilings with chamfered beams, some with flat-stepped stops, fireplaces with large timber lintels, and a spiral stone stair. The house served the Quaker brewer, John Sessions, in his trade in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Later members of the Sessions family ran the brewery next door from 1830 to 1894. The house was also used as a wool store and more recently as the office of the Wesley Barrel factory next door. It has served industrial and business purposes as well as domestic and reflects changing commercial activities in the town.

### 9.2 Buildings associated with the Charlbury gloving industry

Gloving seems to have arrived in Charlbury in the 1700s and became its most important industry after agriculture during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of the buildings associated with it, such as Oxford House, formerly the Glovers Arms and Redding Wyck House, a glove factory until 1967, both in Market Street, are listed. Others, including the 19<sup>th</sup> century tannery and associated workshops in Weaver's Bottom, the late 19C Dykes, Boots and Farmer factory in Fisher's Lane, and the Poole's Lane factory, built 1936, have been demolished. Surviving cottages formerly lived in by glove factory owners George Boots and Frederick Farmer in 1891 include the listed Knaves Knoll on Dancer's Hill and Mount Pleasant close by. Falcon Villas on Hundley Way were built in 1926 for glove cutters at the former Fownes of Worcester factory – now three cottages - nearby. Two more former glove factories – that of Bury and Shire in the yard behind Redding Wyke House (built c 1920) and part of the Hydac premises in Woodstock Road – built 1933 and closed in 1968 - can still be identified.

Five buildings associated with the glove industry are proposed for local listing:

- **1 and 2 The Cottage, Bayliss Yard** (*Also 1B*)  
Former glove factory or warehouse, owned by Samuel Pritchett, Charlbury's largest mid Victorian glove manufacturer, from 1847 until 1872. Pritchett employed around 84 workers in

1851 as well as 822 women sewers and also owned a draper's and a grocer's shop. In 1872, his property included the tannery, and newly-built workshops in Weaver's Bottom, later acquired by William Bowen (see **Hawthorn Villa** below). A three storey rectangular building of local stone with a stone slate roof sited end on to Bayliss Yard, the former 'glove manufactory or warehouse' was subsequently converted into two cottages).

- **Hawthorn Villa, Dancer's Hill**

A late Victorian villa c 1890 on Dancer's Hill above the former tannery site (now Tanner's Court). Double fronted, of local stone with a slate gable roof and two brick gable chimneys. Its red brick window surrounds including a central first-floor oculus - a feature found elsewhere in Charlbury - and grey brick surround to the central front door give it an industrial flavour suited to this area of Charlbury. In 1891, the newly-built house was the residence of William Bowen, a glove manufacturer from Chipping Norton who had acquired the nearby glove workshops and tannery in 1876.

- **Glover Cottage and 4 Fisher's Lane** (Also 1B)

Pair of adjoining stone cottages. Two storeys with slate roof and central brick chimneys. Stonework of Glover Cottage shows evidence of alterations including blocked openings. Windows under curved stone-on-edge lintels on east gable and one blocked on main elevation. Otherwise replacement doors and windows on main elevation of both cottages under timber lintels. Said to be converted from a former glove factory (local information).

- **Caigers, Sheep Street** (Also 1B)

Part of former farmhouse (see also **Old Farmhouse, Sheep St** in 1B), probably added in the 19C. Slate roof. Stone relieving arch. Late 19 or early 20C timber shop windows with modern glazing. Occupied by the glove manufacturer Samuel Pritchett (see **1 and 2 The Cottage** above), who settled in Charlbury around 1840. The room behind his shop was used for cutting gloves which were sent to home-workers – mainly women- for sewing. He also had a draper's and grocer's shop.

- **Former Youth Hostel, now Ivy, Yew and Mulberry Cottages, The Slade.**

Built as a glove factory for Messrs Fownes of Worcester in 1896. Stone, two storeys, 8 bays by 2 bays with full height external stone chimney on main elevation and slate roof. Ground floor windows have arched stone heads – timber lintels on first floor (not inspected). The factory manager and his wife lived in the adjacent villa (listed). In 1926 they built Falcon Villas in Hundley Way, named after the Fownes logo, for their cutters.

### 9.3 Churches, chapels and other religious buildings

There are four churches and chapels and a Friends' meeting house in Charlbury, all still in use. Of these the Parish Church of St Mary, the Methodist Church and the Friends' Meeting House, are statutorily listed, St Mary's being the town's only Grade 1 listed building. The two remaining churches, significant in the life of the community and in the streetscape, and one former chapel are proposed for the Local List.

- **St Teresa's RC Church, Fisher's Lane** (Also 10)

Catholic recusancy does not seem to have been strong in Charlbury parish in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Before 1829, worship took place in private houses, served by visiting priests. After Catholic Emancipation, there were churches at Chipping Norton and Radford Hill but no permanent chapel in Charlbury until St Teresa's was opened in 1931. Built originally for the Primitive Methodists in 1853 and subsequently used by the Salvation Army and as a laundry, the building occupies a slightly-elevated site at the west end of Fisher's Lane. It is a simple, single storey structure of coursed local stone rubble with round-arched windows. Modest apsidal chancel added in 2000 by PCA Architects in the same style and material. Small plain cross on front gable. White-rendered interior with modern fittings by the same architect. Fine carved wood *Stations of the Cross*. Small garden entered under an arch from Sheep Street provides an attractive green oasis beside the church.

- **Charlbury Baptist Church, Dyers Hill** (*Also 10*)  
A Baptist Chapel was opened at the top of Dyer's Hill in 1853 but the present building dates from 1866. Plain, of local stone in Gothic Early-English style with slate roof. Lower gabled aisle/range on west side. Plate-tracery window in the front gable above the gabled porch, possibly added later. Memorial inscriptions - to George Baughan who contributed to the cost of the first chapel and Mr and Mrs Bliss of Chipping Norton - laid in 1885 either side of the entrance arch. Lancet windows to side elevations. Interior contains a baptistery enlarged c 2000. Quiet garden to rear.
- **37 Sheep Street**  
Built as the Providence Chapel c1856 by Henry Aldred a local draper for the Hyper- Calvinists, a little-known evangelical Protestant sect. Converted into a cottage by 1873. Two bays, of local stone with red brick dressings and a Welsh slate gable roof. Upper floor has two half dormers with timber sashes. Ground floor now a modern shop front.

#### 9.4 Other buildings

- **1-15 Ditchley Road** (*Also 3A*)  
A row of cottages, built in 1867-8, to house agricultural workers. Despite later internal alteration, and some modern windows, their formal design and distance from the town centre at that date is unusual for Charlbury. It is possible that they were built as estate cottages by the Ditchley Estate. Built of local stone, they are of harmonious proportions and attractive as a group. Nos 1-9 were for labourers (7 and 9 are now one house), No. 11 is double-fronted and 15 was previously a barn.
- **Old Toll House, Dyer's Hill** (*Also 11*)  
The lower floor of the present cottage nearest to the river and bridge is the surviving portion of the toll house erected c 1800 to serve the newly - turnpiked road from The Duke of Marlborough Arms north of Woodstock to Burford via Charlbury. It is built of local stone. An upper story was added in 1876 when the bridge was raised. World War II gun ports guarding the bridge survive in the west wall. The cottage has subsequently been extended to the east.
- **Oxpens Barns, Hundley Way** (*Also 1B*)  
A group of barns between Enstone Road and Hundley Way on the NE edge of Charlbury. Built of local stone, they are probably of 18<sup>th</sup> century date, perhaps with earlier origins. Now converted to a residence.
- *The Rose and Crown, Market Street* (See **3B** and also 11)
- **Former YMCA hall now 'Round the Back, Park Street** (*Also 2 and 10*)  
The former YMCA was built in 1889 on land given by the Quaker, Arthur Albright, in the yard behind his Royal Oak temperance hotel and coffee house in Church Street. He also provided nearby a reading room and a lecture room soon enlarged to become a town hall for the community.  
  
Like the now-demolished town hall, the YMCA makes no concession to the local vernacular, being built of fiery red brick with blue brick door and window dressings and a Welsh slate roof, topped by a central ventilator. A plaque commemorates its founder, Joseph Albany Bowl (d 1951). It is a distinctive building in Charlbury, albeit tucked away from the street frontage and an interesting relic of the town's 19<sup>th</sup> century social history.
- **Fire Engine House (Wormwood Cottage)** (*Also 1B*)  
Previously the old Blind House or lock-up, this building was converted to house a horse-drawn fire engine after the Charlbury Volunteer Fire Brigade was founded in 1881. It was replaced by a new fire station in Brown's Lane in 1927. A single storey stone building now incorporated into Wormwood Cottage, it was previously free standing with a wide opening and doors in the front elevation to accommodate the fire engine. These have since been replaced by windows. Above is a stone with the words *Engine House*.

- **4,5,6,7 Shilson Lane Façade of former Wesley-Barrell factory (façade on Park Street only)** (*Also 5 and 11*)  
This was the street elevation of Charlbury Brewery in Park Street, run by the Quaker brewer and maltster James Sessions (1792- 1860) and then by his son Charles until his death in 1891. John Sessions, an earlier member of the family, is known to have been a brewer in neighbouring Sessions House in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. After 1891, the brewery became a wool depot and warehouse and finally the factory of Wesley Barrell until its closure during the 1990s. Its façade was retained and incorporated when the site was redeveloped for housing. Built of local stone to accommodate a classic saw-tooth factory roof, its date is unknown although such roofs were an early 19<sup>th</sup> century invention. Its profile remains a striking landmark in Park Street.
- **Fiveways House, Sturt Road** (*Also 1B*)  
Built c1810 at Fiveways, the southern entrance to Charlbury, and known as Wellington House after its owner, Mary Wellington. A symmetrical two storey, three bay detached villa built of local stone with Welsh slate gabled roof and (later) sash windows. When built, it was isolated from the town centre and even from the main part of Hixet Wood, its only neighbours being the row of adjacent cottages (qv) built at the same time and the Baywell Toll House. Despite the twentieth-century development that now surrounds it, it remains a prominent and modestly handsome building at the entrance to the town.
- **1-8 Wellington Cottages** (*Also 2*)  
A terrace of cottages, known as New Cottages in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, built c 1820 just outside the southern entrance to Lee Place. Unique in Charlbury at that date in being of brick, although the two gable ends are of stone. Two storeys under a stone slate roof with brick chimneys. Each cottages is of two bays. Ground floor windows have segmental brick arches with timber lintels on the upper storey. Small iron-railed front gardens. Although doors and windows now much altered and some cottages are whitewashed or rendered but they remain a distinctive feature of this corner of Charlbury.

## **Criterion 10**

- *Charlbury Baptist Church, Dyers Hill* (See **9.3**)
- *St Teresa's RC Church, Fisher's Lane* (See **9.3**)
- *Former YMCA hall now 'Round the Back, Park Street* (see **9.4** and also 2)
- *Baywell, Park Street* (See **2**)
- **Cemetery Lych Gate, Pound Hill**  
The cemetery was opened c 1887 and this lych gate is likely to have been erected then or shortly after. It is a timber structure in oak resting on two side posts carrying a wall-plate which is braced at the ends to support the roof structure. The steeply-pitched tiled roof has half gables below which are arched timber fascias to front and rear, and is topped by a metal cross. The ornamental timber fences to either side share the same design as the two gates of the main structure: open panels of simple rails below and diagonal crosses above. The gates have hinges with tripartite leaf terminations typical of their period.  
  
Structures of this kind, mainly at the entrance to churchyards, became very common in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, influenced both by the prevailing enthusiasm for medieval design and the Arts and Crafts movement. While the Charlbury gate is by no means unique, it remains an important expression of the town's collective memory and a small but significant landmark.

## **Criterion 11**

- *Old Toll House (part), Dyer's Hill* (See **9.4**)
- *The Rose and Crown, Market Street* (see **3B** and also 9.4)

- *4,5,6,7 Shilson Lane Façade of former Wesley-Barrell factory (façade on Park Street only)* (see **9.4** and also 5)
- *Sandford Mount, The Slade* (see **3B** and also 9.4).

# Appendix E Local Green Space

## E.1 Introduction

At the recommendation of West Oxfordshire District Council, the assessments have been carried out using the toolkit issued by Cotswold District Council. The assessments were carried out by local volunteers.

This appendix summarises the location of sites and rationale for designation. The full appraisals for each site are available in the supporting document “Local Green Space Assessments” which is available for download from <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/>.

All designated sites fall within the Cotswold AONB.

Unless otherwise specified herein all designated sites are local in character, in close proximity to Charlbury, under 20ha and are not extensive tracts of land nor do they have any known current planning applications.

Unless specified herein all LGS designated sites within the Charlbury Conservation Area as defined by West Oxfordshire District Council.

The importance of Wildlife Corridors has been considered when selecting sites.

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## E.2 Sites Designated as Green Space

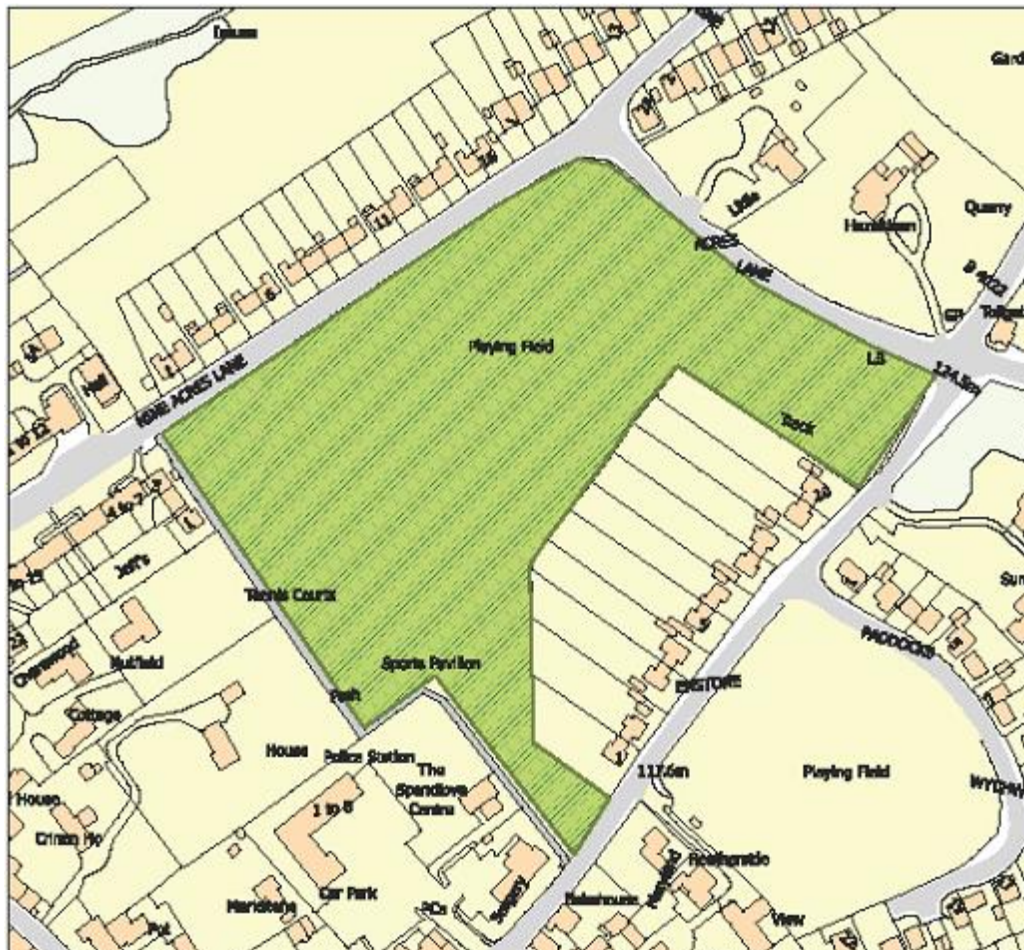
The sites designated as Local Green Space are:

- LGS1 – The Playing Close
- LGS2 – Nine Acres Recreation Ground
- LGS3 – Mill Field
- LGS4 – Allotments adj. Wellington Cottages
- LGS5 – Wigwell
- LGS6 – Pound Hill Triangle
- LGS7 – Centenary Wood
- LGS8 – Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve
- LGS9 – Land south of The Bell
- LGS10 – Oxpens Allotments (Enstone Road)
- LGS11 – Grammar School Green
- LGS12 – Land adjacent to Narrow Lane

*Together these Local Green Spaces allow the town “to breathe”.*







**Rationale:** Location of playing fields, tennis courts and children's play area equipped with locally financed equipment. Since gifted to the town in the 1920s, Nine Acres has felt very much part of the local area. Further housing has been built beside and beyond it making it feel even more local and contained within the town.

**Setting:** Central to the town and adjacent to Community Centre and Sports & Social Club with views across surrounding countryside.

**Ownership:** Charlbury Town Council who approve designation

**Access and Usage:** Freely accessible and crossed by a footpath.

## LGS3 – Mill Field

**Rationale:** Mill Field forms a natural boundary to the built up area of the town and is the only area accessible from the town directly to the River Evenlode. The River Evenlode is notified by English Nature as grade 1B” it later describes the river where it runs by Mill Field; “The River Evenlode is a species –rich winding river ”. Trees, grasses, reedbeds and wild flowers provide an excellent habitat for wildlife. The site is a section 41 habitat of principle importance, being floodplain grazing marshland. The field is regularly flooded providing protection for downstream areas. 597 out of 727 survey responses relating to Mill Field were either passionate or very passionate about its protection.

**Setting:** Situated in a beautiful and tranquil location between the River Evenlode and associated historic Mill Stream.

**Ownership:** Charlbury Town Council who are aware and support designation.

**Other Support:** 597 out of 727 survey responses relating to Mill Field were either passionate or very passionate about its protection.

**Access and Usage:** Freely accessible crossed by a footpath leading to circular walks around the town and linking with the Oxfordshire Way. In almost constant use walkers, dog walkers, picnickers and the site of an annual free music festival (Riverside).



**LGS4 - Allotments adj.  
Wellington Cottages**



**Rationale:** It is a highly visible part of the town being adjacent to the Fiveways Junction, the main route into the town from Witney and Oxford. This means it is strongly connected physically and visually to the local area. The low stone wall allows extensive views over the allotments and beyond to the Wychwood Forest in Cornbury Park. The site in conjunction with the field behind is part of a valuable wildlife habitat. The site supports slow worms, abundant Roman snails (*Helix*), common lizards, common toads, grass snakes and the occasional adder. The allotments, grassland and surrounding spinneys have diverse and plentiful bird life.

**Setting:** Allotments near Wellington Cottages, Fiveways Junction, Charlbury. The site forms an important part of the southern approach to Charlbury.

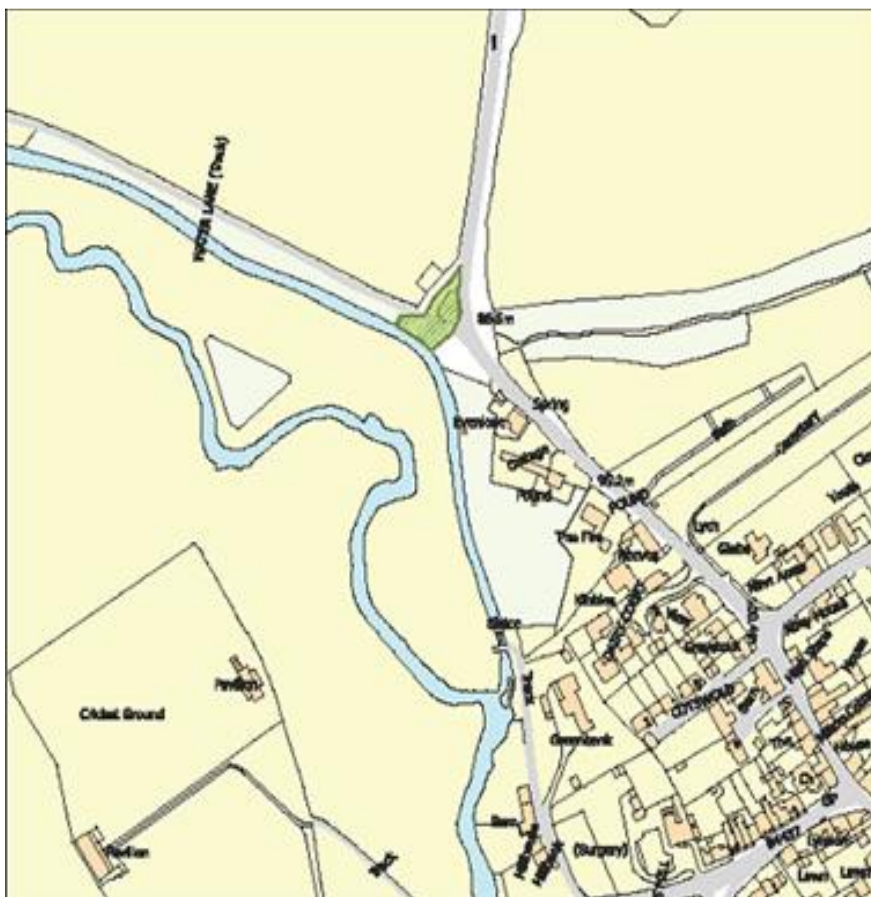
**Ownership:** Blenheim Estate. Owner does not support the designation arguing that the site does not meet the conditions set down in the NPPF and that designation is unnecessary as the site's location within the Cotswolds AONB and the Charlbury Conservation Area already affords adequate protection.

**Support:** There is strong support for designation of this area from Wellington Cottage Allotments Association.

**Access and Usage:** The allotments are available to the whole community; although they are allocated upon application they provide an opportunity socially for others to pass by and stop to talk and admire what is being produced.



## LGS6 - Pound Hill Triangle



**Rationale:** Sometimes referred to as Watery Lane Triangle, in historic times this was an access point to the Mill stream and a place where animals were led to water. It now serves as a starting or resting point for walkers.

**Setting:** Located on a bend on the road at the entrance to Charbury, the triangle provides a welcoming view across The Mill Field (also proposed as a LGS) which is separated from it only by the mill stream. It also marks the exit from and entry to the town of two well used footpaths, Watery Lane and Oxfordshire Way.

**Ownership:** Unknown – No owner recorded in Land Registry. Managed by Town Council who support designation. No known objections.

**Access and Usage:** Whilst there is a road close by, it is still considered to be a tranquil spot because of the attractive views it offers of the Mill Stream and Mill Field. A bench (with a plaque denoting it a favourite place) also contributes to its tranquil nature, offering a resting point for walkers to enjoy the Mill Stream.

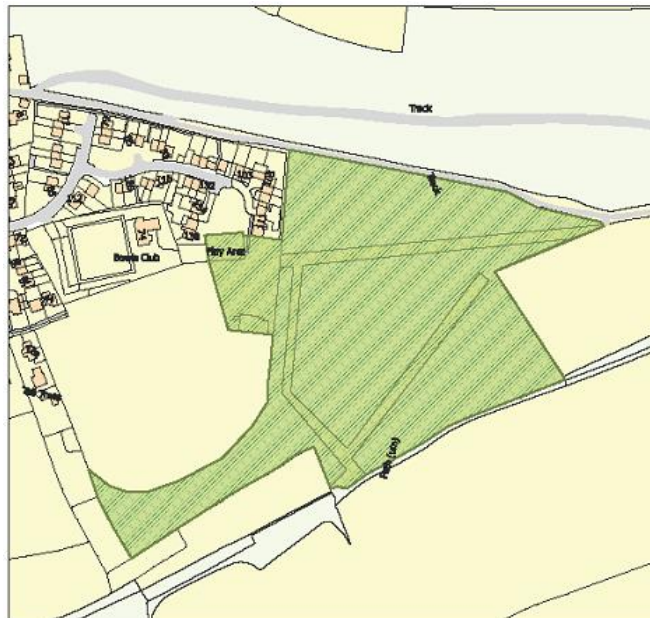


## LGS7 - Centenary Wood

**Rationale:** This site is particularly important being to the East of the town which is some distance from the historic centre and other facilities . The site caters for a complete mix of children’s and adult activities all in a setting that also caters for walking, picnicking and wildlife. It is the only woodland area accessible directly from the town. Planting and facilities have been largely done by volunteers and as such is a valued community asset.

**Setting:** The site borders the built up area of the town. The skate park, football pitch and play area are well-used local facilities. The centenary wood itself was planted in phases from 1988 onwards for the enjoyment of local residents. Formal and informal footpaths through this site are well used and link the built up area with open country beyond

**Ownership:** Oxfordshire County Council. Owner is aware and does not oppose designation.



**Access and Usage:** Freely accessible, this area is well used by the whole Community of Charlbury and particularly those living on Ticknell Piece Road and the Slade. The skate park is the only outdoor recreation facility for young people (as opposed to children) in Charlbury. The play park and football pitch are an important area for children to play, as the neighbouring houses (on Ticknell Piece and the Slade) are some distance from the main play park at Nine Acres. Work carried out for the Charlbury NDP has shown that a number of residential areas in Charlbury do not have a children’s play park sufficiently close by (according to the standards set by Fields in Trust, and adapted by WODC for its Open Space Study). Without this play park, a much greater area of Charlbury would be lacking in outdoor play facilities.



## LGS8 - Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve

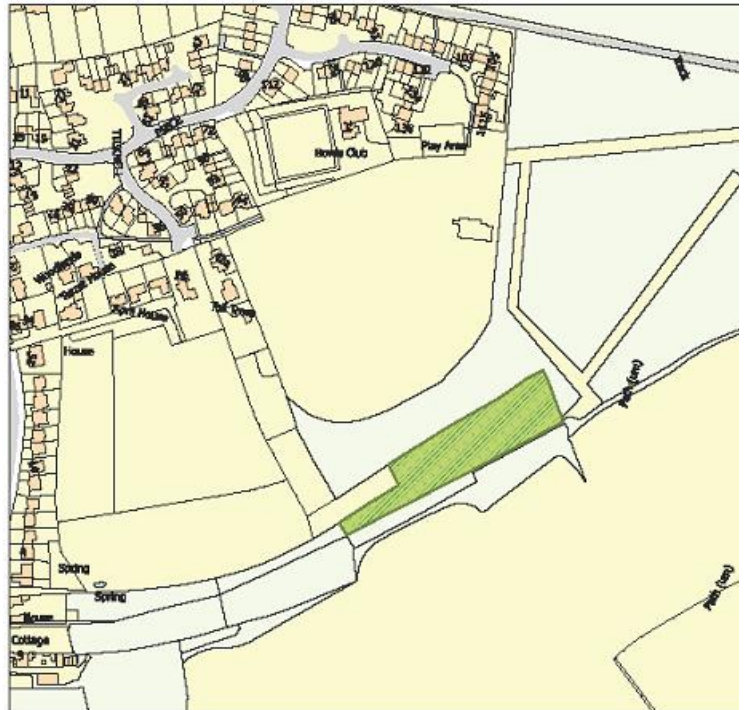
**Rationale:** This area is managed as a wildlife reserve accessible to all. The site has been monitored for the past 30 years and is used as a resource for educating the local community about nature and conservation. Beaver scouts and children from the local school have visited for specific events to learn about wildlife.

**Setting:** The site is part of Sandford Slade, which is the green valley running east west through the town towards the Evenlode River. The reserve features an abundance of wild flowers and fauna and is maintained by BBOWT volunteers.

**Ownership:** Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Owner is aware and supports designation.

**Access and Usage:** Freely accessible. There is a public footpath running through the site connecting the centre of the town with Centenary Woodland, the skateboard park, and the national footpath network beyond. The site contains notice boards indicating wildlife highlights.

**Other:** This site was given to BBOWT for a community nature reserve in 1987 so that it could be safeguarded as a wild flower meadow. From that time on, Friends of Blenheim Farm Community Nature Reserve have continually organised volunteer work parties to manage the site and extend the range of habitats for wildlife. On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, BBOWT and local volunteers created a pond to further extend the biodiversity of the site. Throughout this time, local people have attended events and have continued to walk through the site and enjoy the increasing beauty, the increase in wild flowers, butterflies, dragonflies etc.



## LGS9 - Land south of The Bell

**Rationale:** There are a number of historical references to this site which remains a great favourite for many in the town. A number of local events take place here ranging from children's drama / singing to Morris dancing.. It is felt particularly important to protect the wildlife corridor along and around the stream at the bottom of the site. Also significant is the contribution the open space and trees to reducing run-off and the risk of flooding.

**Setting:** this site comprises the land and stream behind The Bell public house, widely known locally as "The Bell garden" leading down to the "slade" stream which itself feeds into the River Evenlode. The site is surrounded by classic Cotswold stone houses and is beautiful in its own right with a mature orchard, stream and a more wild area at the bottom. The stream at the bottom bounds the grounds of historic Lee Place. This area provides part of a green corridor through the town, from the Blenheim Farm Nature reserve and Brewers Bottom, along the stream adjacent to Sandford Park, and through the wild area behind the police houses. An important aim in protecting it is to preserve a safe passage for animals, birds and reptiles to move through the built up area safely.

**Ownership: Greene King.** The owner has been informed but has not responded.

**Access and Usage:** There is no public right of way but the gardens are used frequently by locals and visitors



The stream, bridge and wild area beyond





## LGS11 – Grammar School Green

**Rationale:** Whilst small this site is visually very impactful forming a green space between the old Grammar school (now pre-school), the dry stone boundary wall of historic Lee Place and the a road which forms a natural boundary to the built up area of the town. Given its unknown ownership and significant visual impact it is considered to be worthy of protection as an LGS.

**Setting:** This site is in a prominent position when entering the historic centre of the town. It is a space made when the road was re-aligned over 200 years ago, and so therefore reflects part of Charlbury's history. It has extensive views over the valley and makes a pleasant evening spot to sit on the bench and see the sunsets, especially in the summer.

**Ownership:** Ownership of the site is unclear. It was believed to belong to the Charlbury Exhibition Foundation (owners of the old Grammar School) but when contacted they responded stating they do

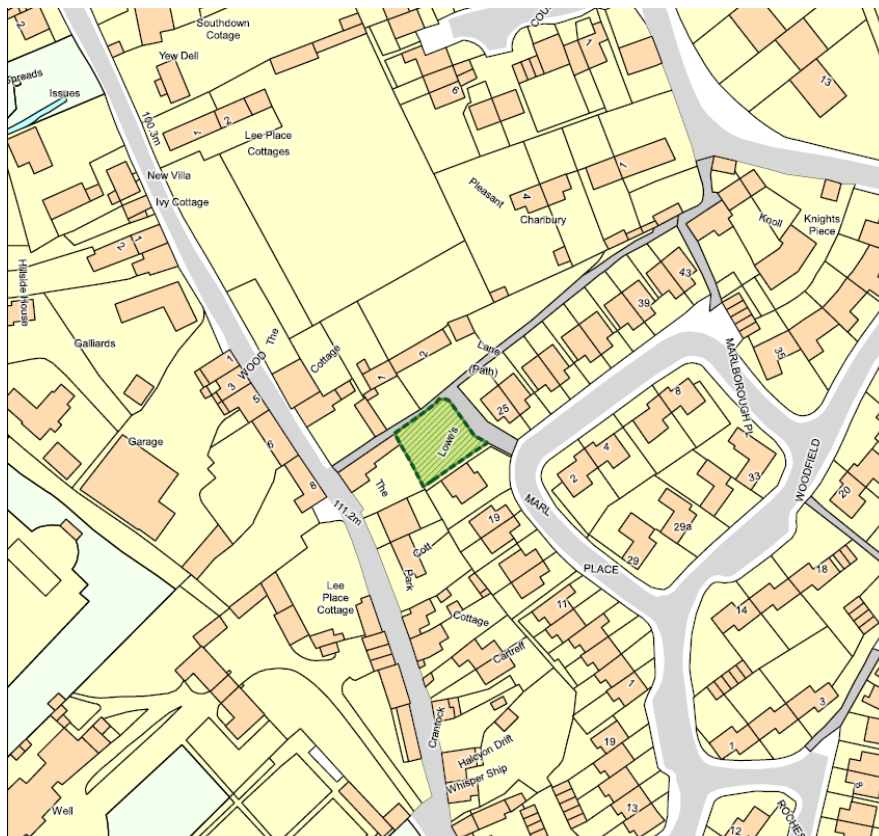


not own the site. We have been unable to identify another owner.

**Access and Usage:** there are no barriers to access and it serves the whole town, and especially the children who attend the Pre-school. It has the feel of a village green.



## LGS12 - Land adj. Narrow Lane



**Access and Usage:** As can be seen from the map this site is located on a path connecting various parts of the town. It is freely and regularly used as such. Children use the green as a playspace as this area of the town is quite distant from alternative play areas.

**Rationale:** This site provides an open space for what otherwise would be a very dense and claustrophobic pathway. It adds a huge amount of character to this part of the town not only for the surrounding buildings but the many people that use it as a thoroughfare. Development of this site would be extremely damaging to the character of this area and therefore needs the protection afforded as a LGS.

**Setting:** On an attractive walking route through the town it not only provides breathing space to adjoining properties but also has extensive views over the town.

**Ownership:** Believed to belong to Mr Ron Lawrence, although this is not confirmed. No record shown on the Land Registry. The presumed owner has been contacted but has not responded to our letter. In July 2020 we were notified by Mrs. Trish McCallum, the owner of 21 Marlborough Place, that she owned a 3-foot strip of this land adjacent to her property. At her request, this strip has therefore now been excluded from the designated site as reflected in the map shown above.



Alleyway leading to site

# Appendix F Glossary of Terms

## **Affordable housing (also see low cost housing)**

In this plan references to 'affordable housing' relate to the definition of affordable housing given in Annex 2 of the **NPPF** (February 2019). This defines it as: *housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:*

*a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).*

*b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.*

*c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.*

*d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.*

## **Community Action Plan (CAP)**

A plan produced by the **Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum** for the Town Council expressing the priorities and aspirations of the community for its future.

## **Charlbury Conservation Area**

The area comprising the town and adjacent fields designated as a conservation area by West Oxfordshire District Council in 1974 and extended in 1991. The map of the conservation area\* is included as **Map 5** within Appendix C of this Plan. The map can also be downloaded from <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1643267/Charlbury-CA-Map.pdf> .

A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' Under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, planning authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when considering planning applications.

### **Charlbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee**

A committee formed at the instigation of West Oxfordshire District Council in 1976 to act as a local advisory committee to the Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee. Its purpose is not only to consider all planning applications affecting the Charlbury Conservation Area but also to advise on all steps to maintain, improve and enhance its character and appearance. Members include Town and District Councillors as well as representatives from the community with knowledge of and expertise in conservation.

### **Charlbury Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)**

A plan produced by Charlbury Town Council detailing priorities for infrastructure projects required to support the town and community in the future. Issue 1 (October 2018) of this plan is included as Appendix B to this Plan.

### **Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum**

An advisory group was set up in 2013 at the request of Charlbury Town Council to produce a strategic plan for Charlbury. Membership of the group was drawn from the community and the group reported regularly to the Town Council. In 2014, the decision was taken to take the work forward in two parallel streams to produce a Community Action Plan (CAP) and a separate Neighbourhood Development Plan (This Plan). To facilitate this and to ensure that the two streams were coherent, the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum was established as an umbrella group replacing the former advisory group.

NOTE: Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum is NOT a designated neighbourhood forum as defined by legislation for neighbourhood planning purposes. It serves as an advisory body to the Town Council which is the qualifying body for this Plan (see 1.4).

### **Charlbury Parish Character Assessment – Spring 2018**

A report commissioned by Charlbury Town Council to provide evidence of the character of the parish and its significance to support the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. Production of the report involved a comprehensive assessment of the town and surrounding countryside carried out by community volunteers supported by a conservation professional who also compiled the final report. The report is available for download from <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/> together with an appendix which contains the detailed evidence gathered by the community volunteers during the assessment.

### **Climate Emergency**

Recognition of the urgent need to restore the climate to a safe condition and the importance of measures that need to be implemented to accomplish this at maximum scale and speed.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

A planning charge for development, levied by the local planning authority to help deliver infrastructure required. At the time of writing, CIL had not been implemented by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

### **Conservation (for heritage policy)**

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

### **Designated Wildlife Sites**

Defined areas, identified and selected for their nature conservation value

### **Housing Needs Assessment**

A review of current and future requirements for housing in Charlbury commissioned by Charlbury Town Council in 2017 providing an assessment of quantity, size and type of housing required up to 2021. This document plus an executive summary are available as for download from <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/> .

### **Local Green Spaces (LGS)**

Areas and open spaces of particular importance to the communities which are considered to require protection from development.

### **Local Need (housing)**

Housing needs of residents of the parish or those who have existing family or employment connections within the parish.

### **Local Plan 2031**

West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 adopted September 2018. A statutory document setting out the overall planning framework for the District from 2011 – 2031. This Neighbourhood Plan must be in accord with this. The Local Plan 2031 is available for download at <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1936509/Local-Plan-BOOK-WEB.pdf>

### **LTP4**

LTP4 is Oxfordshire County Council's current local transport plan. Its full title is "Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031. The plan is available for download at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/policy-and-overall-strategy> .

### **Lower-cost housing**

Housing that is available for outright purchase but which is affordable to a first-time-buyer household whose income is no higher than the median income for the town

### **Market Housing**

Property for sale or rent where cost is determined in a free market by demand and supply

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The current version of the NPPF was published in February 2019 and is available for download at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

## **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

A group set up by Charlbury Town Council with a remit to produce this Neighbourhood Development Plan for consideration by the council. Membership of the group includes three town councillors as well as other community representatives. Two councillors must be present at each meeting.

## **Open Space**

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

## **Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)**

A study published in 2004 which highlighted the importance for biodiversity of the farmland slopes and valley sides landscape along the Evenlode valley. The study is available for download at <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home> .

## **Rural Exception Site (RES)**

A small site that would not normally be approved for housing development but which can be used for **affordable housing** in perpetuity to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

## **Rural Service Centre**

A settlement with good transport links providing shops and services for the surrounding area.

## **Setting (of a heritage asset)**

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve.

## **Significance (for heritage policy)**

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting as defined above.

## **Town Centre**

Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area.

## **Town Survey 2016**

A survey of all Charlbury residents carried out in 2016 by Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum. The published results are available for download at [http://www.charlburyneighbourhoodforum.org.uk/?page\\_id=281](http://www.charlburyneighbourhoodforum.org.uk/?page_id=281)

## **Wildlife corridor**

Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

## **Windfall site**

Site proposed for development by a developer but not specifically identified within a Local or Neighbourhood Development Plan.

# Appendix G Acknowledgements

The Town Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (listed at the foot of this note) would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and organisations who contributed to the creation of this Plan and without whose help we could not have reached this point. There are numerous others who participated in workshops, delivered surveys and helped in other ways who are not listed here but we thank them too. If you think that others should be included here please let us know at [charlburynp@gmail.com](mailto:charlburynp@gmail.com).

## Other members of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum, past and present.

David Court, Tim Crisp, Cllr Richard Fairhurst, Simon Fenn, Mark Gregory, Liz Gupta, John Hole (Former Joint Chair), Liz Jones, Eileen Kenrick, Anne Miller, Chris Morton, Ron Prew, Cllr Liz Reason (previous Chair), Sarah Routley, Clare Shakya, Meryl Smith (Chair of Community Action Plan Group), James Styring, Sue Tokumine, Lucy Crane-Lupton (former Project Manager/Administrator), Claire Wilding (former Project Manager/Co-ordinator), Ben Wright (former Project Manager/Administrator – sadly deceased).

## Compilers of Character Assessment and/or Local Green Space Assessments

Barbara Allison, Vic Allison, Malcolm Blackmore, Helen Chapman, Dawn Colvin, Judy Dod, Christine Elliott, Nigel King, Nicolette Lethbridge, Linda Monckton, Linda Mowat, Richard Nicolay, Jody O'Reilly, Helene Provstgaard, Nikki Rycroft, Janet Sly, Selina Thomas, David Thomas, Rhona Walker, Jeff West

## Providers or Photographs and Artwork

Ali Ross, Catherine Goyder, David R Murphy, Hugh Goyder, Maureen Sparling, Peter Kenrick, Richard Fairhurst, Susan Woolley, Tanya Stevenson and Tony Merry.

## Others

Jim Holah & original Town Council Advisory Group who kicked off this project and other members of the community who have engaged with the Plan and provided input

## External Organisations

Dr Kathryn Davies for compiling the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment and supporting the local volunteers

Pip Wilton for independent analysis of the Town Survey results

Locality for grant Support and Guidance

Charlbury Leaflet for assistance with distribution of information

Charlbury Chronicle for publishing articles

Midcounties Co-op for hosting display boards

Chris Broughton and staff at arc4 for production of the Housing Needs Assessment

TVERC (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre) for provision of a biodiversity report

Astrid Harvey and other staff at WODC for help and advice on production of the Plan

## Current Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Peter Kenrick – Chairman

Cllr Janet Burroughs

Cllr Tony Merry

Juliet West – Vice Chair

Graham Terry – Joint chair of the Neighbourhood Forum

Rod Evans

Catherine Goyder

Reg James

Chris Sharpe