



# CHARLBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2031

**The future for our thriving community**



Charlbury Street Fair by Maureen Sparling ©

Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031  
CONSULTATION DRAFT - Dated 15/09/2019



*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).

We also acknowledge the climate emergency declared by the UK parliament and more recently by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). Charlbury welcomes WODC's determination to be carbon neutral by 2030 and recognises the challenges this imposes on communities such as ours within the district.

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.

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 sustaining and enhancing the built and natural environment.***

***The needs of the local community will be paramount in determining the scale and nature of future development whilst ensuring that Charlbury becomes a more sustainable and low carbon community recognising the global challenges of climate change and biodiversity. 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 the range of services and facilities available.***

### **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.

### **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 climate change. 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 across the Evenlode Valley), green corridors for the protection of wildlife, biodiversity and trees.

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

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 unique character and identity is maintained for future generations.

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<sup>4</sup> See section 7.3.11, 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 G and acknowledgements are listed in Appendix H.

## 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 challenges of climate change are 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 local area 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 July 2018<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

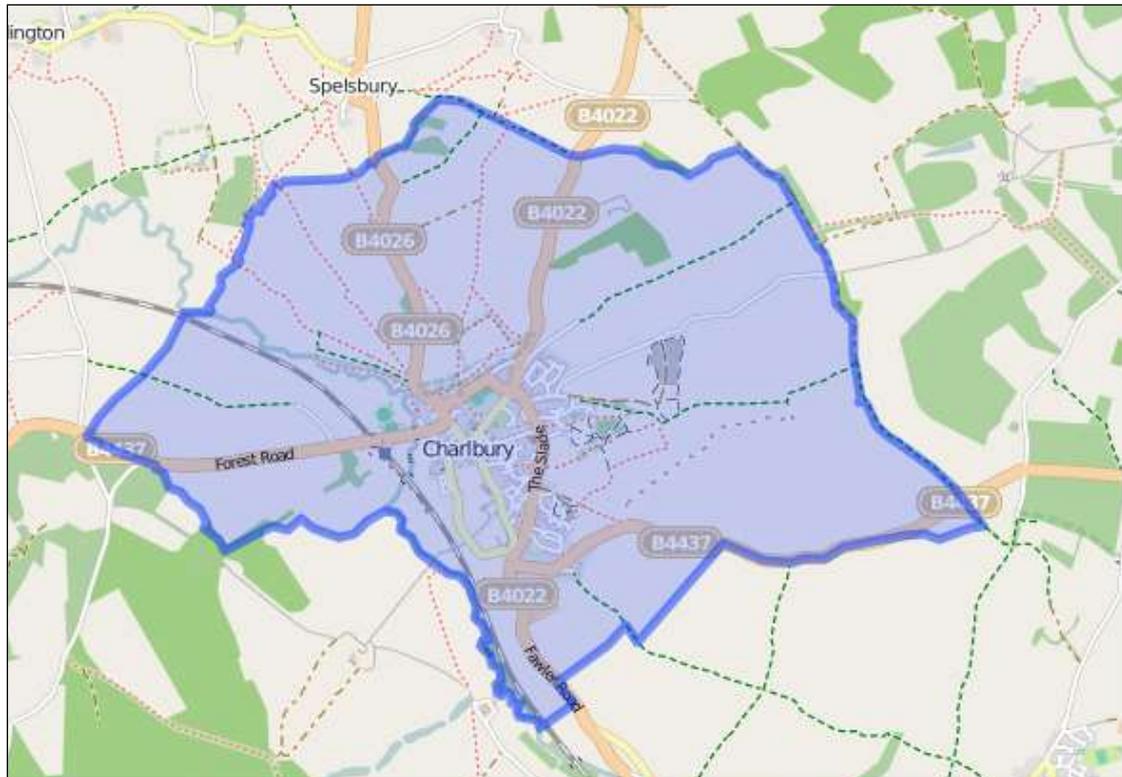
The Plan applies to the civil parish of Charlbury in West Oxfordshire. The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated by WODC on 17th September 2014. This followed a 6-week period of consultation to which there was one representation of support from Oxfordshire County Council. It covers all land within the Parish Boundary denoted in blue in the map 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 July 2018, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.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

## 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.

## Section 2: The Town of Charlbury

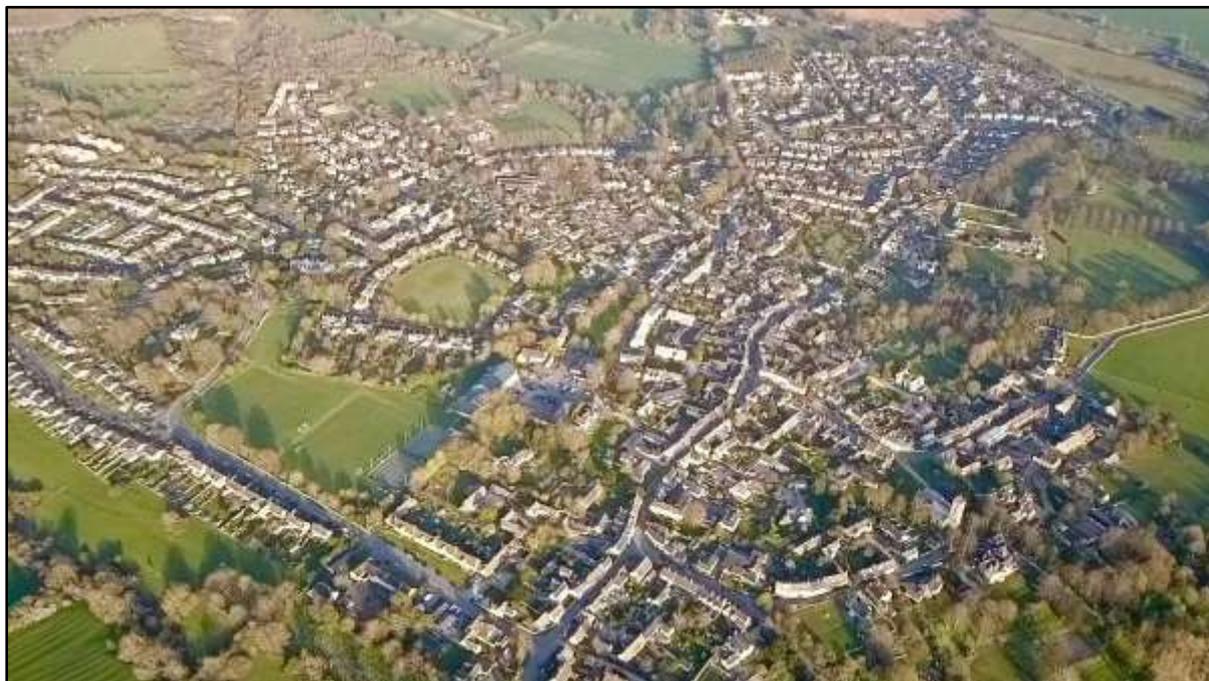


Photo by Alistair Ross

### 2.1 Charlbury Today

#### Location

Charlbury is a traditional Cotswold town located in West Oxfordshire. It lies 17 miles North East 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.

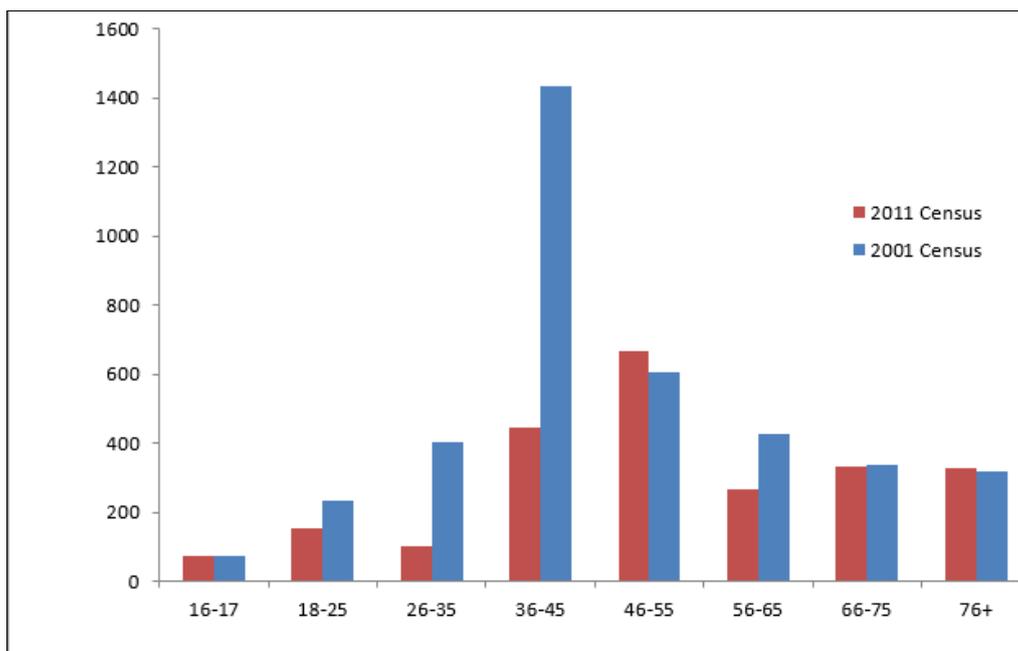
Charlbury also has a larger proportion of 5 bedroom, and larger, homes and 1 bedroom homes, but a relatively low proportion of 2 and 3 bedroomed homes and flats compared to the district and to England. A lack of suitable housing has limited the potential for down sizing by older residents. This in turn 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 7.

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.

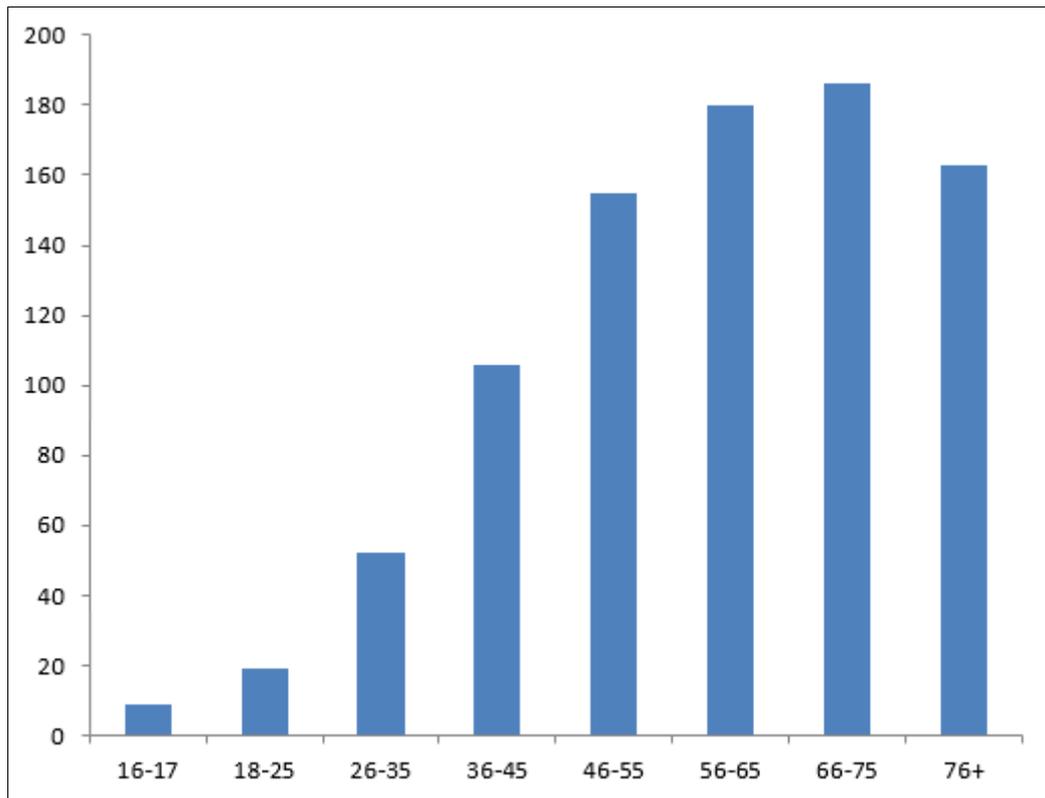
## Demography

The population of Charlbury in the 2011 census was 2830 with a significantly larger proportion of people aged over 45 (56.5%) compared to the district or to England. 8. 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 the reduction concentrated within the 18 to 45 age group. Despite this reduction, the number of households increased slightly.



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



**Charlbury Population Profile from 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 Solar), 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), 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, as trustees and volunteers 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 within two other organisations, Sustainable Charlbury and Charlbury Green Hub, also work hard to raise awareness of environmental issues and to implement local initiatives to help Charlbury to reduce carbon emissions and become more sustainable.

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 possible without significant work from very many volunteers operating as, or on behalf of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum (see section 4).

This above list of organisations is not comprehensive but serves to illustrate the important role played by volunteers in the functioning and enrichment of community life. There are many other organisations which rely on volunteers, but there are too many to mention individually.

### **A "Rural Service Centre"**

The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 identifies Charlbury as a rural service centre reflecting the good transport links and level of services available in the town. People from the surrounding area travel to Charlbury to use the rail station, doctors' surgery, veterinary practice, sports facilities, library, shops, cafes, pubs and other facilities. In common with other towns of its size, the town centre has lost a significant number of shops since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Charlbury still has 4 pubs, a Co-op with a Post Office, a Londis shop, three



transport. This was supplemented by consideration of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023.

It is recognised that climate change is a major world-wide issue but one which also needs to be tackled at the local level.

Under the NPPF 2019 there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is summarised as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.<sup>9</sup> 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 Cross Roads 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 low carbon economy in mitigation of climate change<sup>10</sup>

- Require new housing and extensions to be built to the highest environmental standards possible.
- 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.

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<sup>10</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.

<b>Aim 1</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
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**

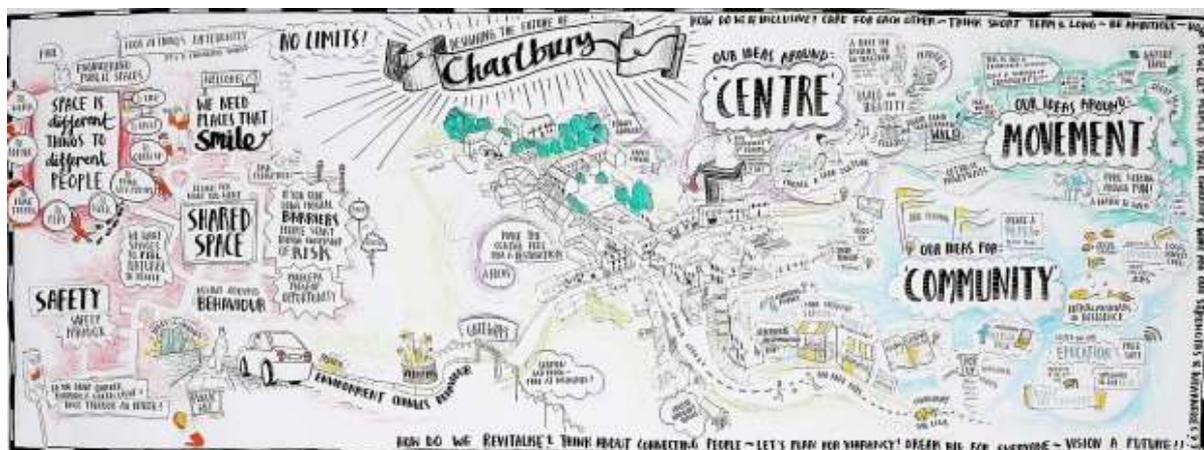
- To provide housing that supports a balanced demographic and a mix of household types.
- To enable more people of working age and especially key workers (e.g education and health workers) to live in Charlbury.
- To provide housing that is affordable to households on or below median income level.
- To 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> To support Charlbury's role as a Rural Service Centre. <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>
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<p><b>Aim 5</b> To conserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting and protect the environment. <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>
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<p><b>Aim 6</b> To secure a sustainable future for Charlbury's historic environment. <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>
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# 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 ORCC11, the decision was taken at that time to use the Community Led Plan (CLP) model for the plan but the option was left open to produce a separate Neighbourhood Development Plan should that be considered appropriate at a later stage.

<sup>11</sup> Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, now known as Community First Oxfordshire (CFO)

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>12</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:

- A Housing Needs Assessment for the parish<sup>13</sup> – commissioned from consultants arc4;

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<sup>12</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).

<sup>13</sup> Parish of Charlbury – Housing Needs Assessment – Final Report – January 2018 by arc4

- A Local Area Character assessment<sup>14</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>15</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 will be documented, any revisions made to the draft plan which will then be submitted to WODC.

WODC will then carry out further consultation and submit the plan for independent examination. If approved, a referendum of registered voters in the parish will be held. If a simple majority of votes cast support the Plan it will be adopted and become a legal part of the planning system for applications within the parish of Charlbury.

## 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.

## 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 website [charlburyneighbourhoodforum.org.uk](http://charlburyneighbourhoodforum.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.

<sup>14</sup> Charlbury Parish Character Assessment – Summer 2018 by Dr Kathryn Davies and the residents of Charlbury

<sup>15</sup> Charlbury Local Green Space Assessments – 2018 by residents of Charlbury

# Section 5: Housing



## 5.1 Background

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 2018 (NPPF) and the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, as well as the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) commissioned by the Town Council (Jan 2018). The issues affecting Charlbury are explored in the Housing Need & Policy Analysis (Appendix A) with the housing challenges and conclusions summarised below.

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>16</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>16</sup> As now defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF – July 2018

The principal conclusions of the analysis 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:** 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 (though this may reduce by 10 if the Rushy Bank scheme proceeds as anticipated) but that the need for 'social' housing 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.

## 5.2 Housing Objectives & Approach

In light of the above conclusions (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.

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 social 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 fail to meet identified local needs.

## 5.3 Housing Policies

### Meeting Charlbury's Needs

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**

Because of the town's location in the AONB and other constraints described in the supporting Housing Need & Policy Analysis, including a lack of obviously suitable land for development and the need for affordable housing in Charlbury the following apply:

1. Proposals which only involve housing at open market value on land within the built-up area will not be supported unless a genuine need for them related to the goals and objectives of this Plan can be demonstrated. 'Mixed' proposals will only be supported where it is convincingly demonstrated that the market housing proposed is necessary for the scheme to be viable.

An exception to this may be made where only a single dwelling is proposed and the site is not capable of accommodating a larger number of dwellings.

2. Housing proposals on undeveloped land adjoining the built-up area will only be supported where there is convincing evidence that the scheme will meet specific local needs (such as those identified by this Plan), in particular as described in Policies CH2 and CH3 below.

All proposals must also accord with other relevant policies in this and the Local Plan 2031, in particular in relation to conserving and enhancing the AONB and the Conservation Area.

#### **Justification:**

- 5.3.1 Policy CH1 provides certainty for landowners and developers that schemes which do not meet the identified needs of the Parish will not be permitted.
- 5.3.2 The policy allows however for 'one off' developments within the recognised built-up area, e.g. where a large property is divided but such proposals will always be subject to other policies in this Plan (e.g. policy CH9) and in the Local Plan 2031. Further, in the spirit of para 5.63 of the Local Plan 2031, schemes which appear to take advantage of this provision by proposing a single dwelling where more could be satisfactorily accommodated will be resisted.
- 5.3.3 For the sake of certainty, 'land adjoining the built-up area' means precisely that. It does not mean 'undeveloped land on the other side of the road' nor does it mean 'land next or close to' previously developed land that is itself beyond the main built-up area and/or separated from it by undeveloped land. Though within the parish, the site known as Rushy Bank, if developed as anticipated, will not therefore be regarded as part of the built-up area of the town for future planning purposes.

## Policy CH2: Affordable Homes

To meet the needs identified in this Plan, new housing development should consist predominantly if not exclusively of affordable homes in one or more of the categories defined in the NPPF (2018) and which will remain affordable for future eligible households and/or of “lower cost housing” as defined in Policy CH3 below.

## Policy CH3: Lower-cost Housing

“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<sup>[1]</sup>. (In 2017 this was calculated as a maximum sale price of £223,000).<sup>[2]</sup>

“Lower cost housing” may include self-build properties, custom build properties, smaller-sized properties, flats or any other property.

Proposals for development which include “lower-cost housing” homes may be supported provided that they are in accord with all other policies in this plan and that the applicant can demonstrate both of the following:

- that an alternative development limited to social rented and shared ownership housing only cannot be delivered; AND
- that resale of the homes will be constrained (e.g. by a section 106 agreement) to ensure that the homes remain “lower-cost” in perpetuity.

## Justification:

5.3.4 The £223,000 price cap has been calculated based on median household income within the town.<sup>17</sup> This will be revised during the lifetime of this plan to recognise any significant change as recorded by the Office of National Statistics.

## Policy CH4: Rural Exception Sites

Any proposals for Rural Exception Sites must meet the criteria in Policy H3 of the Local Plan 2031, be acceptable in their impact on the AONB and Conservation Area and must seek to address the needs of the parish by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Housing on such sites must remain affordable in perpetuity. In particular, social rented housing must be exempt from “Right to Buy”.

Development proposals for Rural Exception Sites which meet these criteria will be supported.

<sup>17</sup> Arc4 Parish of Charlbury Housing Needs Assessment paras 4.9 to 4.12

## Justification:

- 5.3.5 Rural Exception Sites are defined in the NPPF as: “Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites 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”.

### **Policy CH5: Maintaining affordable housing in the parish**

In order to maintain the town’s stock of social rented and shared ownership housing, all new social rented and shared ownership property should be exempt from “right to buy”. Other forms of affordable housing should retain their affordable status in perpetuity, for example through a Section 106 agreement where appropriate.

## Justification:

- 5.3.6 This policy seeks to ensure that any new shared ownership or social rented housing will provide a long-term benefit for the community, rather than a one-off benefit to an occupant who is able to purchase it at a discounted price.
- 5.3.7 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 extended the Right to Buy to cover properties owned by Housing Associations on a voluntary basis. The Government has said that under the voluntary agreement, Housing Associations will have the discretion not to sell properties that would impact on communities in rural areas, but instead offer residents an alternative property from their own or another Housing Association’s stock. It is not yet clear what this will mean for Charlbury.
- 5.3.8 If the Right to Buy is applied within Charlbury, the result could be the gradual loss of our social rented housing stock. The very limited land suitable for development means that it would probably not be possible to replace properties purchased under Right to Buy without building on green field sites that would impact on the AONB and Conservation Area.

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

All new development (except social rented housing, for which see CH7) should provide the following mix of dwelling sizes: at least 40% 1-2 bedrooms; no more than 20% 4 bedroom homes; 0% 5 bedroom or larger homes<sup>18</sup>.

New development in the town centre should be mainly in the form of terraced houses or flats, in order to make efficient use of space and to fit in with existing housing. Development outside the town centre should be mainly terraced or semi-detached houses.

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<sup>18</sup> This is in general agreement with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 paras 5.71 to 5.76 on housing mix

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

For development of new social rented housing the precise housing mix should be determined with regard to the local authority's housing database and other relevant evidence, with particular emphasis placed on providing properties suitable for older residents and those with disabilities.

#### **Justification:**

- 5.3.9 At the time of writing, the Housing Needs Assessment indicated a shortage of one and two bedroom social rented properties in Charlbury. However it is recognised that the situation may change over the lifetime of the Plan and therefore these policies seek to allow flexibility should needs change in the future. Given Charlbury's aging population it is particularly important that some new social rented housing should be suitable for elderly and/or disabled people.

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

Proposals to convert existing dwellings into smaller units are supported, provided that sufficient provision is made for additional parking requirements; and provided that any proposed alterations are consistent with conserving and enhancing the character and heritage of the town. Proposals should also demonstrate that additional refuse and recycling bins can be accommodated in a non-intrusive way.

#### **Justification:**

- 5.3.10 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.
- 5.3.11 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**

New housing or other built development within existing residential gardens will not be supported where the garden makes an important contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

## Justification:

- 5.3.12 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."
- 5.3.13 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 within the parish, is 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 (so-called "granny flats") are supported in principle provided that 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 is consistent with other relevant policies. In particular, proposals to modernise or redevelop former assisted living accommodation to bring it back into such use will be strongly supported. Redevelopment that results in the long-term loss of current or potential assisted living accommodation will be resisted.

## Justification:

- 5.3.14 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.
- 5.3.15 Charlbury currently has no sheltered housing or assisted living accommodation for the elderly so their provision is supported in principle.

## Section 6: Economy, Community, Transport and Movement



### 6.1 Overview

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.

The 2016 Town Survey showed that traffic, transport and parking were the top concerns of Charlbury residents.<sup>19</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.

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>20</sup>

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

<sup>19</sup> 2016 Town Survey, responses to questions 3 and 76

<sup>20</sup> 2016 Town Survey, responses to questions 40 and 3 respectively

important that we protect and retain the town's remaining businesses as well as helping new businesses to set up.

This section sets out policies to promote employment, protect the town centre, manage traffic and parking problems and encourage increased walking and cycling.

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 environment and historic environment.

## 6.2 Economy

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.

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:

6.2.1 The Local Plan 2031 recognizes 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, co-op and other shops, community centre and sports clubs.

- 6.2.2 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). Therefore it is 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.
- 6.2.3 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>21</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.

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

Premises used for retail, employment and provision of local services will be retained and proposals for changes of use to such premises will be resisted in line with Local Plan 2031 Policy E5.

However on streets where there are a number of former retail premises no longer in retail use, it is recognised that conversion to another use may be in the best interests of the community. Any change of use of such premises must provide employment (e.g. office space) unless there is evidence that every effort has been made to retain an employment usage and this has not proved viable.

Where an employment use is not viable and a residential use is proposed, this must provide lower-cost accommodation likely to be affordable to households on the average local wage. In particular, existing accommodation above and behind retail premises must be retained and changes of use that convert flats into large residential properties will not be supported.

### **Justification:**

- 6.2.4 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.

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<sup>21</sup> 2016 Town Survey, questions 40 and 41

- 6.2.5 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 is therefore supported. This policy seeks to maintain the ability to revert buildings back to retail or other employment uses in the future, should the situation change.
- 6.2.6 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. Given the shortage of rental accommodation in Charlbury and the need for lower-cost dwellings (both evidenced in the Housing Needs Assessment), it is important to protect dwellings associated with retail premises.

### **Policy ECT3: Home working**

Development that supports or complements homeworking is supported, such as provision of office hubs and meeting spaces for home workers.

### **Community Aspiration 1: High speed Broadband**

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

### **Justification:**

- 6.2.7 The 2016 Town Survey revealed that 30% of Charlbury's working population work from home some of the time.<sup>22</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>23</sup>
- 6.2.8 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>24</sup> Therefore development of this sort of facility is supported in this Plan.

<sup>22</sup> 2016 Town Survey, question 7

<sup>23</sup> ONS Labour Force Survey, quoted in *Rural Home Working Statistics*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rural-home-working>

<sup>24</sup> 2016 Town Survey, question 8

## **Policy ECT4: Sustainable Tourism**

Development related to tourism and leisure which supports the responsible enjoyment of the local environment, utilises town facilities and supports local business and events will be welcomed provided that it is of a modest scale and is consistent with policy E4 of the Local Plan 2031 plus other policies in this Plan.

In particular, we will welcome such development which:

- Supports and promotes Charlbury's designations as a Walkers are Welcome Town and a Cotswold Gateway Town;
- Promotes safe walking and/or cycling;
- Promotes and enables the use of public transport;
- Limits the generation of additional traffic in the town.

### **Justification:**

- 6.2.9 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.
- 6.2.10 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.
- 6.2.11 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.
- 6.2.12 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.
- 6.2.13 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.
- 6.2.14 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

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.

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).

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, by relocation or other means, alternative facilities providing an equal or improved level of service and access for users has first been made available.

### 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 in order to safeguard the facility.

### Justification:

- 6.3.1 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.
- 6.3.2 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. 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.

### Policy ECT6: Children's Play Areas

Provision of new children's play facilities in areas of need is supported. Developer contributions will be sought to provide new play facilities and to maintain and upgrade existing facilities. New residential development in areas currently underserved will be expected to demonstrate how they will improve provision of playspace.

## Justification:

- 6.3.3 While Charlbury has an excellent children’s playground at Nine Acres Recreation ground, provision in some parts of the town is not adequate. The play area at Ticknell Piece Road is currently in a poor state of repair, although funding including developer contributions is being sought for improvements.
- 6.3.4 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). This equates to about a 5 minute walk.
- 6.3.5 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].
- 6.3.6 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

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.

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.

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.

### **Policy ECT7: Parking**

All development, wherever it may be within the town, must make adequate provision for on site parking by residents and visitors. Where development results in the loss of any on-street parking space, it must make provision for at least the same number of new unallocated parking spaces (or where the lost parking space was designated for residents, disabled people or any other particular group, a replacement parking place with the same restrictions should be provided).

Where planning permission is being sought for extensions and alterations, these must not result in a net reduction in parking spaces.

Creation of appropriate additional parking in or near the town centre is supported should opportunities arise, in accordance with Local Plan 2031 policy T4.

### **Justification:**

- 6.4.1 Policy ETM5 has been developed to be consistent with Local Plan 2031 Policy T4 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.
- 6.4.2 It is important that any new development makes adequate provision for the additional parking needs it may generate, and does not place extra pressure upon the existing on-street parking.
- 6.4.3 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.

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

Expansion of the station car park is supported only if it does not detract from or damage the sensitive and high value landscape setting of the Evenlode Valley around the rail station and minimises light pollution after dark, including by avoiding negative impacts on nearby proposed Local Green Space sites.

### **Community Aspiration 3: Station Car Park**

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:

- 6.4.4 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.
- 6.4.5 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 or losing valued green space around the town.
- 6.4.6 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. This plan proposes to designate certain areas close to the rail station as Local Green Space (see section 7.3.11, policy NE7) and it is important that any expansion of the station car park is not to the detriment of these green spaces or the wider AONB.

## 6.5 Walking and Cycling

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).

### Policy ECT9: Walking and Cycling

All residential development should seek to offer safe and attractive walking and cycling routes to the town's main facilities (i.e. the town centre, school and railway station) and proposals must demonstrate how this will be achieved.

Development which provides new or improved links between different parts of the town for pedestrians and cyclists is encouraged. 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, are supported. In particular, proposals to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists along the B4022 or to provide alternative cycle routes avoiding the B4022 are encouraged.

Proposals which harm the following characteristics of footways, footpaths and bridleways will be resisted: safety, directness, access, attractiveness and convenience.

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

Applications for development must show how they will address the movement needs of people of all abilities on pavements, pathways and road crossing points, having due regard to the need to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Development which makes the town more accessible for wheelchairs, mobility scooters, buggies and people with disabilities is supported. Where existing roads and pavements are not suitably safe, developer contributions towards improvements will be expected.

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

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

### **Justification:**

- 6.5.1 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 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.
- 6.5.2 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**

All development should take into account the need to maintain and enhance public transport links, by ensuring that future residents of new developments can walk to bus stops safely and easily as well as by maintaining and enhancing access to bus stops for existing residents.

### **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 and providing additional seating at bus stops

## Justification:

- 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. 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 also welcomed.

## 6.7 Electric Vehicles

### Policy ECT12: Electric Vehicle Charging Points

All developments of new homes should include provision for charging electric vehicles parked within the property boundary.

### 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:

- 6.7.1 The government has announced its intention to end the sale of diesel and petrol vehicles entirely by 2040. 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.

## 6.8 Sturt Road, The Slade & Charlbury Primary School

### Policy ECT13: Sturt Road & The Slade

Proposals which contribute to improvements in road safety on Sturt Road and The Slade will be supported. Proposals which require planning permission and which will access directly on to Sturt Road or the Slade or increase traffic volumes on these roads will need to demonstrate that they do not exacerbate conditions of parking stress, increase congestion or increase danger to drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, in particular at school pick up and drop off times.

## Justification:

- 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>25</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.

### Policy ECT14: Safe Travel to Charlbury Primary School

Proposals for new developments should demonstrate that there is a safe walking route to Charlbury Primary School which is practical for young children and pushchairs, so as not to increase traffic and parking pressure around the school.

### 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.

## Justification:

- 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.

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<sup>25</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.

## 6.9 Enstone Road Crossroads

### Policy ECT15: Enstone Road Crossroads

Proposals for development which increase traffic and pedestrian volumes at the Enstone crossroads will be required to make developer contributions towards projects to improve safety at the Enstone crossroads. These could include junction redesign, improved road marking, improved signage and improvements to the footway.

#### Justification:

- 6.9.1 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.
- 6.9.2 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.
- 6.9.3 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.

# Section 7: Natural Environment and Green Space

## 7.1 Overview

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).

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.

Charlbury Parish lies within the Cotswolds Valley Nature Improvement Area, 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.

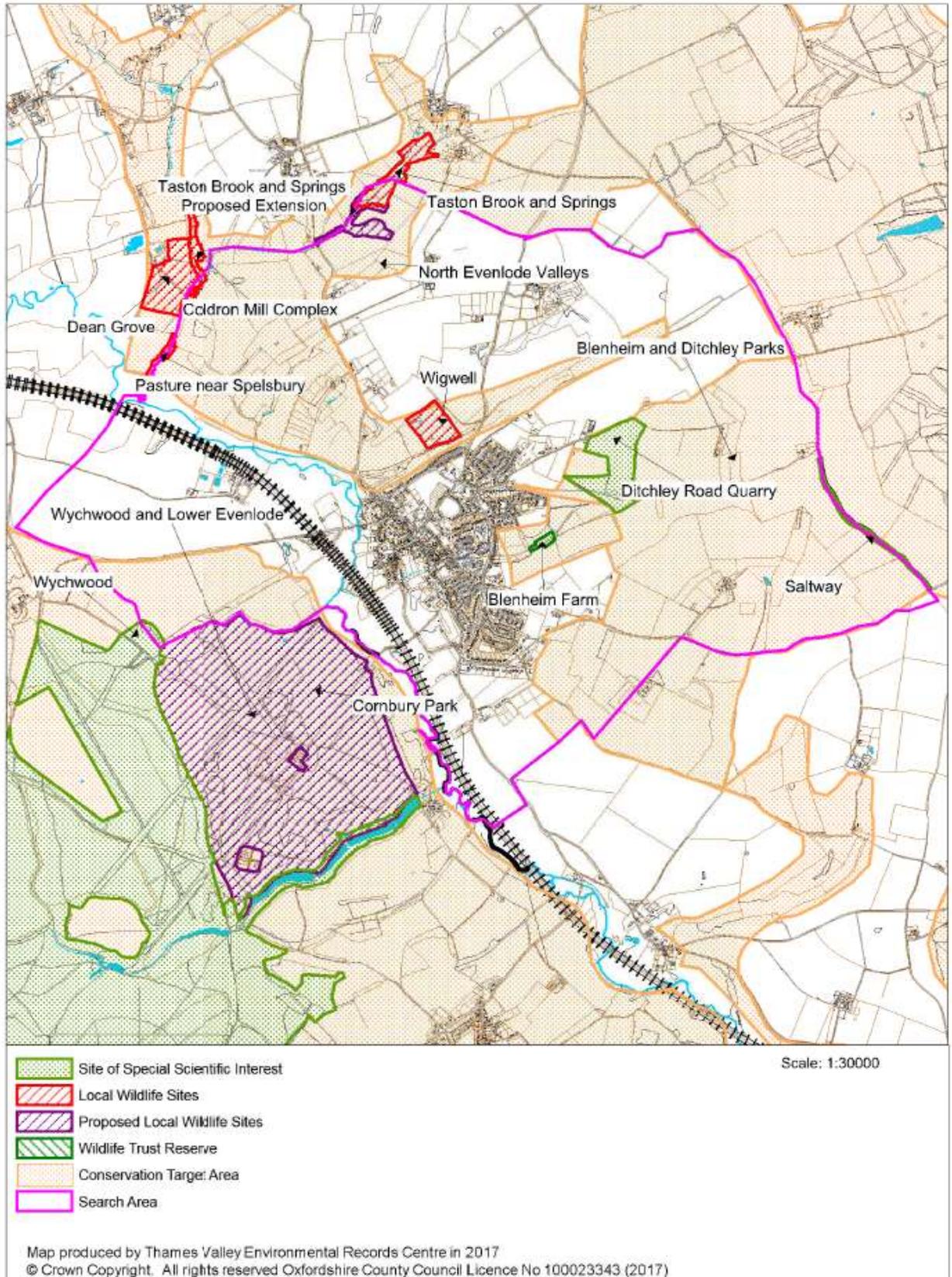
In addition, there are three Conservation Target Areas within the parish.<sup>26</sup> These are areas that have been identified as of highest priority for conservation and habitat creation. Between them, they cover a large part of the undeveloped land outside the built up area of the town.

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/>. The map shown overleaf is taken from this report.

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<sup>26</sup> These are the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks CTA, the North Evenlode Valleys CTA and the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Valley CTA.

# Charlbury Parish Designated Wildlife Sites



Map 2 - designated Wildlife Sites

## 7.2 Landscape Character

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

In line with Local Plan 2031 policy EH1, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, landscape and countryside of the Cotswolds AONB, including its wildlife and heritage.

Development must demonstrate how it conserves and enhances landscape and scenic beauty and must take account of policies in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, Position Statements and any relevant associated guidance.

Development of affordable housing that meets identified needs of the town will be supported provided it is consistent with the great weight that must be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and natural scenic beauty of the area.

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

New development should be sympathetic to important views of, from and within the town. Great weight should be given to the protection of these views which should not be obstructed or impaired.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- views of the town from Banbury Hill;
- views down Church Street, Park Street and Sheep Street towards Hixet Wood;
- view of the Evenlode Valley and the registered landscape of Cornbury Park from the “promenade” along Grammar School Hill;
- distant views from the North and East of the town across the Evenlode Valley;
- natural skyline to the East of the town when viewed looking up or across from Cornbury Park;
- views out from designated Local Green Spaces

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

New development should not be permitted anywhere 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, except where it can be robustly demonstrated that the consequent public benefit outweighs any detriment 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

All development should avoid causing noise and light pollution and, consistent with Local Plan 2031 policy EH2 and Cotswolds Management Plan policies CE4 and CE5, should maintain or improve the tranquillity and dark skies in and around Charlbury. In particular, artificial lighting should only be used where it is necessary and should avoid casting light to areas where it is not needed, including upwards and into any neighbouring homes. Existing light pollution should be reduced or removed where possible.

### Justification:

- 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 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) 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).
- 7.2.3 The Evenlode Valley is Charlbury's most distinctive landscape feature and of critical importance to its setting. 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.
- 7.2.4 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>27</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>28</sup>.

<sup>27</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>28</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>

## 7.3 Biodiversity and Green Space

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>29</sup>

### Policy NE5: Biodiversity and Trees

Charlbury's natural environment shall be protected and enhanced to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity, as set out in Local Plan 2031 policy EH2 and Cotswolds Management Plan policy CE7. Charlbury's SSSI and designated wildlife sites will be protected. Development in Conservation Target Areas will only be permitted where it helps to achieve the aims of the Conservation Target Area.

All new developments shall provide an enhanced wildlife friendly environment by installing such things as swift boxes, bat roosts and hedgehog gates where these are appropriate. Developments with boundaries to green space shall augment and enrich wildlife corridors and seek to incorporate habitat-rich wildlife areas which deliver net gains in biodiversity.

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.

In accordance with Local Plan 2031 policy EH2, all developments must show a net positive impact upon biodiversity. 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. Where non-native or ornamental trees are lost, they should be replaced where their visual or historic context makes this appropriate.

Strong support will be given to the retention of natural boundary treatments and the provision of new areas of natural planting and habitat 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.

### Justification:

7.3.1 It is important that new development does not damage local wildlife, and that opportunities are taken to enhance and create habitats.

<sup>29</sup> Cotswolds Management Plan 2018 – 2023, policy CE7 (Biodiversity)

7.3.2 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. The 1993 Charlbury Nature Appraisal<sup>30</sup> identifies appropriate species found to be present at that time within the parish and is provides a useful guide for the selection of species for planting. This policy is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework policy on biodiversity which encourages opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments.

### **Policy NE6: Green Infrastructure**

In line with Local Plan 2031 policy EH3, green infrastructure must be protected and enhanced. This includes nature reserves, Conservation Target Areas, designated sites, recreation grounds, parks and open spaces, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and green verges.

The following three “green corridors” are to be conserved and enhanced as interlinked green space:

- **The Sandford Slade Green Corridor** (defined in paragraph 7.3.8 below) must be conserved for the benefits it provides in terms of biodiversity, landscape character, tranquility and flood risk mitigation. Development that improves conditions for wildlife along this corridor is welcomed. Development must not restrict or prevent the movement of wildlife through the corridor. Development that provides greater public access to this Green Corridor, without compromising its tranquility and biodiversity value, will be supported.

- **The Wigwell Green Corridor** (defined in paragraph 7.3.7 below) must be conserved for its very important contribution to biodiversity as well as its contributions to landscape character, tranquility, flood risk mitigation and recreation. Development is unlikely to be appropriate within this corridor due to its environmentally sensitive nature. Development bordering the corridor is encouraged to enhance the surrounding area by providing hedges, green strips and other green features that link the urban area with the green corridor.

- **The Evenlode Green Corridor** (defined in paragraph 7.3.9 below), must be conserved for its very important contribution to biodiversity as well as its contributions to landscape character, tranquility, flood risk mitigation and recreation. Development is unlikely to be appropriate within this corridor due to its environmentally sensitive nature.

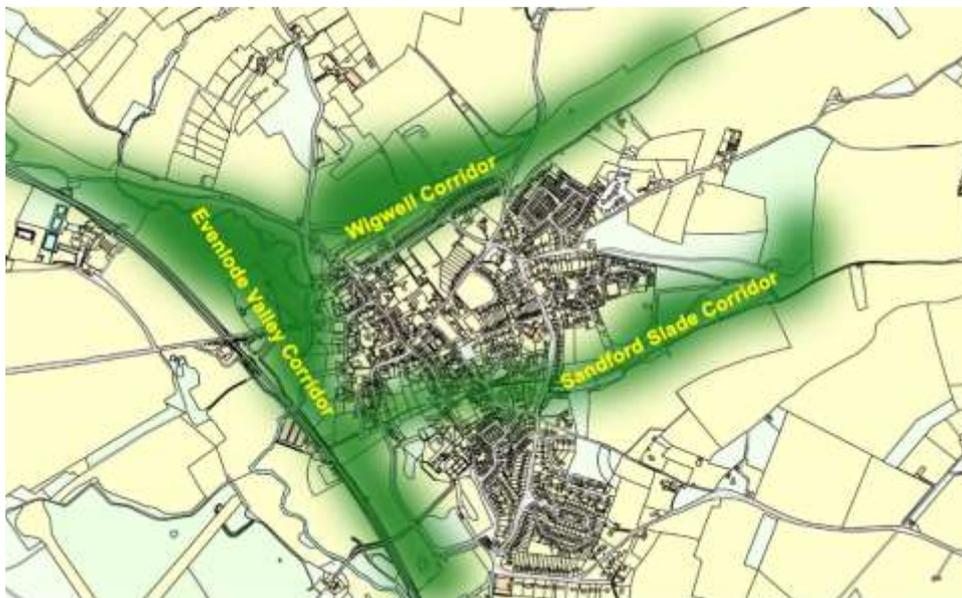
Every opportunity should also be taken to protect and enhance the character, accessibility and visibility of these Green Corridors, which frame the primary settlement of the town.

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<sup>30</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

## Justification:

- 7.3.3 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>31</sup>
- 7.3.4 The importance of 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.
- 7.3.5 Green spaces that are interlinked to form “green corridors” (see map 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.



Map 3 - Green Corridors

- 7.3.6 Where 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.
- 7.3.7 The Wigwell 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).

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<sup>31</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12

- 7.3.8 The Sandford Slade 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.
- 7.3.9 The Evenlode 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.
- 7.3.10 The three proposed green corridors are important because they provide inter-connected green space 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 two small-scale valleys that define the limits of the historic town. The importance of these minor valleys to the local landscape is noted in the 1998 West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, as well as in the recent Character Assessment which emphasised the particular importance of the strong urban edge to the town along the Evenlode Valley.
- 7.3.11 The two secondary valleys which for the Wigwell and Sandford Slade green corridors, 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.

## 7.4 Local Green Spaces

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.

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.

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.

This Plan identifies 21 sites within the parish of Charlbury for designation as Local Green Space. The locations of these sites are shown in the map on page 53. 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 adopted by WODC.

### Policy NE7: Local Green Space

The 21 sites listed below and identified on the following map are all designated as Local Green Space. Development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space or its significance and value to the local community will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances in which it can be clearly demonstrated that the benefits to the community of Charlbury will outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space.

LGS1 – Playing Close	LGS2 – Nine Acres Recreation Ground
LGS3 – Mill Field	LGS4 – Allotments adj. Wellington Cottages
LGS5 – Wigwell	LGS6 – Pound Hill Triangle
LGS7 – Cricket Club Grounds	LGS8 – Field east of Railway Station
LGS9 – Centenary Wood	LGS10 – Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve
LGS11 – Land south of The Bell	LGS12 – Oxpens Allotments (Enstone Road)
LGS13 – Clarke’s Bottom	LGS14 – Grammar School Green
LGS15 – West of Grammar School Hill	LGS16 – Glebelands
LGS17 – Field north of Forest Road	LGS18 – Land east of Hixet Wood
LGS19 – Land adj. Narrow Lane	LGS20 – Stream west of Hixet Wood
LGS21 – Land east of Blenheim Farm House and Slade Cottage	

### Justification:

- 7.4.1 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 Appendix F and the full assessments can be viewed in the separate document “Local Green Space Assessments” at <https://charlburynp.org.uk/other-documents/>.
- 7.4.2 A number of the sites make up part of the three “green corridors” described in section 7.3 above. The interlinked nature of these green spaces gives additional value for biodiversity, beauty and recreation.
- 7.4.3 A number of the Local Green Space sites need to be considered together because they form important approaches to the town, providing views of Charlbury in its rural setting that are important to the AONB and to the town’s character.
- 7.4.4 **Approach from Fawler Road:** Sites 9 (land between Grammar School hill & railway line), 18 (allotments near Wellington Cottages), and 21 (Grammar School green) together form this important approach to Charlbury. The approach is an open one, with extensive views over farmland towards Cornbury Park from Fawler Road. It is also important coming the other way, that is down Park Street, where you move from a narrow confined space as the houses front the street, and suddenly the whole landscape opens out, with some of the houses set back along the green (line of the former road) on the left, and wide open views on the right. This feeling of a natural edge to the town continues on the right as Five Ways is approached and then down the Fawler Road
- 7.4.5 **Approach from Burford Road and railway line:** When approaching the town from Burford Road or by rail, sites 9 (land between Grammar School Hill and railway line), 24 (field north of Forest Road) and 20 (field next to the railway station) provide very valuable views of the town in its rural setting, and in particular, of the church standing prominently above you on a bluff.



Map 4 - Local Green Spaces

## 7.5 Flood Risk

### Policy NE8: Flood Risk Management

Development must not increase flood risk in Charlbury or elsewhere along the Evenlode valley, and where possibly must reduce flood risk. Measures to reduce flood risk might include use of permeable surfaces; planting of trees and shrubs; and use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems where appropriate.

Development must not result in increased surface water run off without appropriate mitigation measures, and arrangements must be in place for the long term maintenance of any proposed SUDS or drainage systems.

#### Justification:

- 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>32</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 EH5.
- 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. This will help manage flood risk within the town and beyond.
- 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.
- 7.5.4 Note that the former town quarry has not been proposed as a Local Green Space but this important site deserves special mention as follows:
- Part of the site, incorporating the quarry face is protected as a geological SSSI;
  - The site is currently not accessible to the public for safety reasons but is an important site for biodiversity and wildlife and has a rich flora and fauna;
  - Potential access to the site, whilst limited, may be able to support a small development in the future without undue harm to the ecological importance of the site or to the landscape setting;
  - It is therefore judged that seeking LGS protection for the entire site would be disproportionate and may inhibit modest and appropriate development at some future date.

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<sup>32</sup> WODC Parish Flood Report for Charlbury, July 2008 see <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/134616/Charlbury-flood-report.pdf>

## 7.6 Environmental Design Standards

### Policy NE9: Environmental Design Standards

Applications for new buildings should demonstrate how the development will seek to achieve excellent environmental performance. Developers are encouraged to use the Home Quality Mark to rate proposals on the dimensions of living costs for occupants, health and wellbeing, and environmental footprint.

Developments should seek to incorporate energy and water efficiency measures and applications should demonstrate how this will be done.

#### Justification:

- 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 and by WODC and seeks to address the WODC target to become carbon neutral by 2030.

# Section 8: Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design

## 8.1 Introduction

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

Charlbury has its origins in an Anglo-Saxon monastery (a 'minster') founded by the Irish missionary St Diuna 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. And 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 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 quarrymen or glove-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.

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 Hundley Way (1926) and Sturt Road and Woodstock Road (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**

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.

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.

Cornbury Park, a 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.

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**

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 Walcote 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

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.

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**

Significant weight should be given to the value of the non-designated heritage assets identified in the Local List attached as Appendix D both as heritage assets in themselves and in view of the contribution they make to the character of the conservation area.

#### **Justification:**

- 8.6.1 Conserving buildings 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 of particular local importance to be identified on a 'local list'. Such buildings are known as 'non-designated heritage assets'. Inclusion on the local list helps to inform the application of Local Plan 2031 Policy EH9, which requires significant weight to be given to the value of these assets, and says that balanced judgements should be made when considering proposals affecting them regarding the scale of any harm or loss, the significance of the asset and the public benefits of the development".
- 8.6.2 The advice provided by Historic England (*Local Heritage Listing* Historic England Advice Note 7 2016) has been taken into account in proposing Charlbury buildings 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.

8.6.3 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.

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

Development should sustain or enhance the character and quality of Charlbury's built environment by following the Design Guidance attached as Appendix C.

#### **Justification:**

- 8.6.4 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).
- 8.6.5 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.
- 8.6.6 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.

- 8.6.7 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.
- 8.6.8 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].
- 8.6.9 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 (LTP) 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 LTP 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**

Appropriate field evaluation should be carried out and impact assessments prepared before applications are determined that 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 buildings on the Local List attached as Appendix D.

## Justification:

- 8.6.10 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).
- 8.6.11 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 any application for development within the area defined above that would involve significant ground disturbance is therefore necessary to determine whether Anglo-Saxon or later medieval evidence is likely to survive, to be followed if necessary by full excavation and reporting.
- 8.6.12 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 those on the Local List annexed to this Plan.

## 8.7 Exploring the Scope for an Article 4 Direction

An article 4 direction is a direction under article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) that enables a local planning authority to withdraw specified permitted development rights across a defined area. Permitted development rights allow property owners to make certain alterations to properties without seeking planning permission. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance specifies that article 4 directions should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area, and that the potential harm that the direction is intended to address should be clearly identified.

The Character Assessment identified the distinctive character of the town's historic environment and the contribution made by its traditional vernacular buildings and by others that are associated with the town's heritage or which make a significant positive contribution to the townscape. Of particular significance to the character of the town are roofing materials, the use of local stone and self-coloured render, and the survival of historic windows, doors and door canopies. Although Charlbury is a conservation area, alterations to many of these features are permitted development and do not require planning permission.

Individual buildings not statutorily listed but of local heritage interest have been identified in the local list in Appendix D (see Policy HE1 above). While this should ensure that they are

given consideration in planning decisions, it gives them no additional statutory protection. Other unlisted buildings in the historic town centre not suitable for local listing but which nevertheless make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area are also vulnerable to damaging alteration.

Adoption of an appropriate Article 4 Direction could help to address the above vulnerabilities. It would not prevent appropriate developments or alterations but could ensure that proposed works were properly scrutinised through the planning system. To address these vulnerabilities, an Article 4 Direction should apply to:

- a) the locally listed buildings within the Charlbury Conservation Area identified in Appendix D of this Plan; and
- b) the unlisted buildings in the historic town centre that make a positive contribution to the character of the Charlbury Conservation Area identified in Appendix E of this Plan.

For these buildings, permitted development rights should be withdrawn for proposed works, as listed below, to/on the principal or side elevation, or at the front or side, fronting the highway or visible from a publicly accessible space. Work to be covered to include:

- alterations to elevations, including windows and doors;
- alterations to roofs, including changes to roofing materials or their colour;
- erections, alteration or demolition of chimneys or flues;
- the erection of porches;
- the painting of previously unpainted exterior walls;
- erection or demolition of gates, fences, walls or railings;
- erection of solar panels.

This list covers work that would materially affect the external appearance of the building, and which therefore counts as development under planning legislation, but which would otherwise be permitted under Part 1 Classes A, C or D or Part 2 Class C of the GPDO.

As already explained, withdrawing permitted development rights would not prevent changes being made to the external appearance of buildings; it would simply mean that planning permission would be required prior to any works. In considering any planning application, the local authority would be required to make a balanced judgement taking into account the scale of any harm or loss to the character of the conservation area and the extent of the public benefit that would accrue from the proposed work.

# 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 August 2018. 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>33</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 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

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<sup>33</sup>Local Plan 2031 Paragraphs 5.20 & 9.6.29

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).

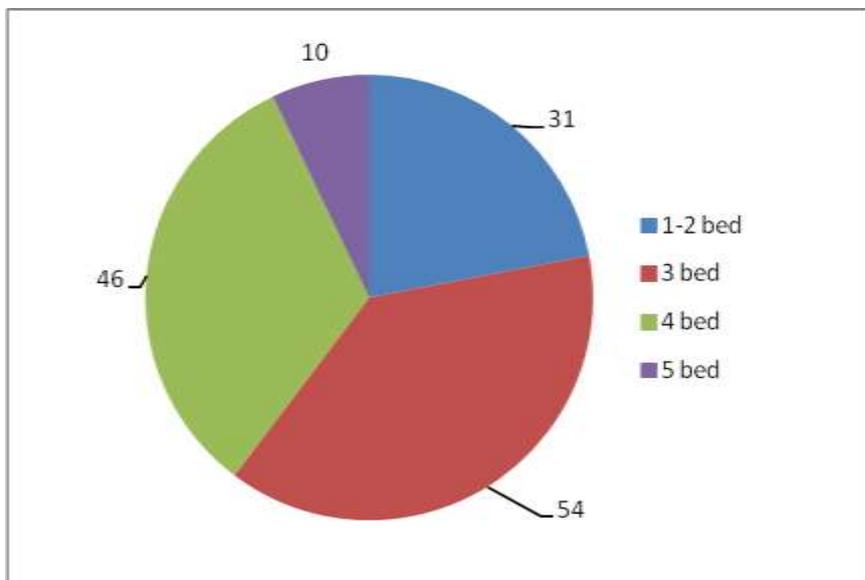
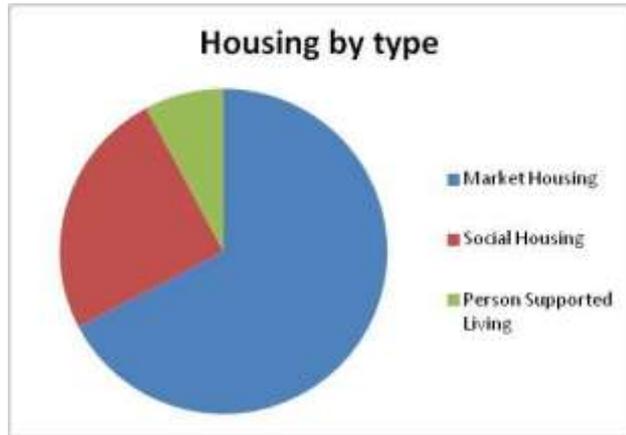
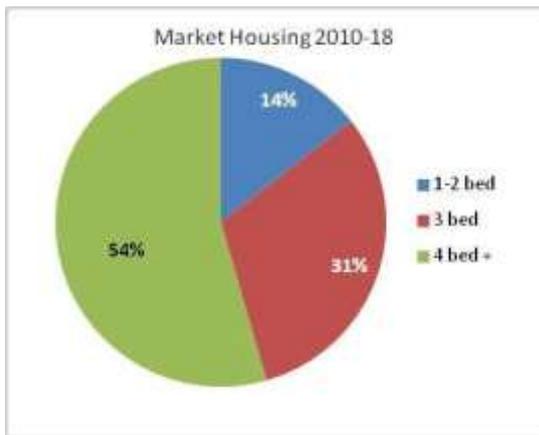
The Brett Report reached matching conclusions. It was commissioned by WODC as part of the Local Plan 2031 examination process (at the Inspector’s request). The consultants reported on the level of housing need in the sub-area and the demographic implications of different levels of housing provision. 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>34</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>34</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>35</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.

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<sup>35</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).**

Paper compiled & written by:  
Claire Wilding  
Cllr Dr Tony Merry FRSC, Charlbury Town Councillor  
Rod Evans BA(Hons) Solicitor MRTPI (rtd)  
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>36</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>37</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>36</sup> APP/D3125/W/18/3209551 dated 21/06/19

<sup>37</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.

Project and location	Source	Delivery partners (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				
<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

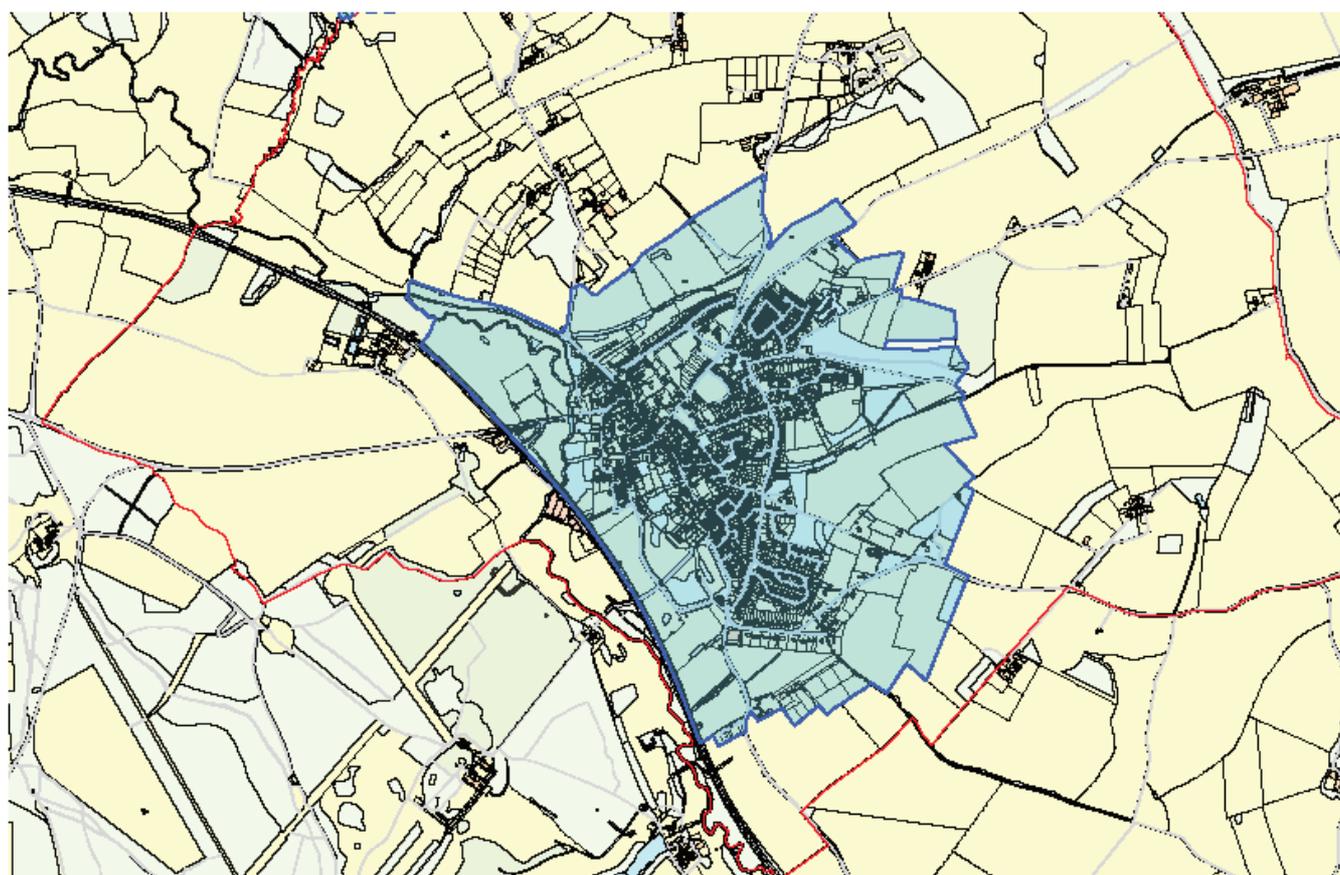
OCC = Oxfordshire County Council

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. 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.

No particular style is recommended 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 pavioir 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 Rose 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 window
- Use materials which either match or are distinct from the existing fabric as appropriate

### ***Extensions***

C.1.4 **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 form as 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.1.5 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 cottage 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.

### **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.

# 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. Selection guided by 1849 Charlbury Tithe Map ( <i>candidates for national listing</i> ) B. Other traditional buildings earlier than 1850 retaining original fabric. Selection guided by 1849 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 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
south side	Chantry Cottage OX7 3RS	1B
<b>Brown's Lane</b>		

Street	Building or feature	Criteria
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 (terrace S of garage) OX7 3SA	1B
	Lee Place wall	1B, 4
<b>Hixet Wood (cont.)</b>		
east side	The Rise Cottage OX7 3SB	1B

Street	Building or feature	Criteria
	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	
	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
	Building to rear of Crinan House 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 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
	Sessions Cottage OX7 3PT	1A,3A,5,9
<b>Priory Lane (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	The Old Bakehouse OX7 3QR (poss. part of listed Sycamore House)	1B
	Merry's OX7 3QP	1B

Street	Building or feature	Criteria
	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	
<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>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, ?4
	Ivy Cottage OX7 3SJ )	9
	Yew Cottage OX7 3SJ ) <i>old glove factory</i>	9
	Mulberry Cottage OX7 3SJ )	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

Street	Building or feature	Criteria
	1-4 Thames Gardens OX7 3QQ	1B

# Appendix E Additional Buildings for Article 4 Direction Consideration

Section 8.7 of this Plan explores the potential for further protection of the historical environment of Charlbury through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction. If Charlbury Town Council were to make a request to WODC for such an order, then the following buildings in the historic town centre, which make a positive contribution to the character of the Charlbury Conservation Area, should be considered for inclusion in addition to the buildings proposed for the Local List (see Appendix D).

Street		Building
<b>Brown's Lane</b>	North	The Old Fire Station OX7 3QW
<b>Church Lane</b>	East	Cricket Cottage OX7 3PX The Cottages OX7 3PX Forest Cottage OX7 3PX
	West	The Vicarage OX7 3PX - including wall to street
<b>Church Street</b>	North	Floriston OX7 3PR Harebell Cottage OX7 3PR Wychwood Cottage OX7 3PR Cuckoo Cottage OX7 3PR <b>House W of Cuckoo Cottage OX7 3PR</b>
	South	The Old Drapery OX7 3PR
<b>Dyer's Hill</b>	North	7 Dyers Hill OX7 3QD 1-3 Victoria Terrace OX7 3QF Wall to Dyers Hill House Mill House and Millbank OX7 3QG
	South	Lawn Cottage OX7 3QD 1-4 Forest Court OX7 3QD Bridge House OX7 3QG
<b>Fishers Lane</b>	South	1-2 Valley Cottages OX7 3RX Windsor Cottage OX7 3RX The Old Candle Factory (incl. Snuff Cottage) OX7 3RX Candle, Wick and Tallow Cottages OX7 3RX
<b>Hixet Wood</b>	West	Lee Place Cottage OX7 3SB

<b>Market Street</b>	West	Noah's Ark OX7 3PL
		Apple tree Cottage OX7 3PJ
		Thames House OX7 3PJ
		Seymour House OX7 3PJ
		Upton House OX7 3PJ
		Halfpenny House OX7 3PJ
		Farthings OX7 3PJ
<b>Park Street</b>	East	4,5,6,7 Park St OX7 3PS
		10-11 Park St OX7 3PS
	West	Wesley Cottage OX7 3PT
		1-3 Marlborough Cottages OX7 3PU
<b>Playing Close</b>	South	Wormwood Cottage OX7 3QP
	West	10-26 The Playing Close OX7 3RJ
<b>Pooles Lane</b>	West	The Croft OX7 3RT
		Carennac OX7 3T
		Homend Cottage OX7 3RT
		1-4 Hone Court OX7 3TE; 5 Hone Court 3TF
		Anvil Cottage OX7 3RT
		Limestone Cottage OX7 3RT
<b>Pound Hill</b>	West	Evenlode House OX7 3QN
<b>Sheep St</b>	East	Providence House OX7 3RR
		Bourton Cottage OX7 3RR
		Goodgames OX7 3RR
		9 Sheep St OX7 3RR
		Greater Hone OX7 3RR
	West	Zelyan OX7 3RR
		1-2 Vine Cottages OX7 3RU
		Spring Cottage OX7 3RR
<b>Thames Street</b>	East	Brice House OX7 3QQ
	West	Well Cottage OX7 3QQ
		Appletree Cottage OX7 3QQ

# Appendix F Local Green Space

## F.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.

## F.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 – Cricket Club Grounds
- LGS8 – Field east of Railway Station
- LGS9 – Centenary Wood
- LGS10 – Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve
- LGS11 – Land south of The Bell
- LGS12 – Oxpens Allotments (Enstone Road)
- LGS13 – Clarke’s Bottom
- LGS14 – Grammar School Green
- LGS15 – Land West of Grammar School Hill
- LGS16 – Glebelands
- LGS17 – Field north of Forest Road
- LGS18 – Land east of Hixet Wood
- LGS19 – Land adj. Narrow Lane
- LGS20 – Stream west of Hixet Wood
- LGS21 – Land east of Blenheim Farm and Slade Cottage

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

## LGS1 – The Playing Close



**Rationale :** An historic and iconic site in the heart of Charlbury. It is equivalent to a “village green” visually as well as being the main location for holding events such as Farmer’s Market. The Playing Close is opposite the entrance to the Spendlove car park and is the vista seen by everyone using the local neighbouring facilities (Co-op supermarket, doctors, vets, dentists, offices, community centre and sports pavilion). It is at the junction of several walking routes into the town centre from the outlying housing areas. There are many historic references including that it was where all the able bodied men of Charlbury had to practise archery in the days of the longbow, to be ready for military service.

**Setting :** Set centrally amongst attractive stone housing with Victorian water fountain

**Ownership :** Thomas Gifford trust who are aware and approve designation.

**Access and Usage :** Freely accessible with seating and constantly crossed by walkers.



**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.

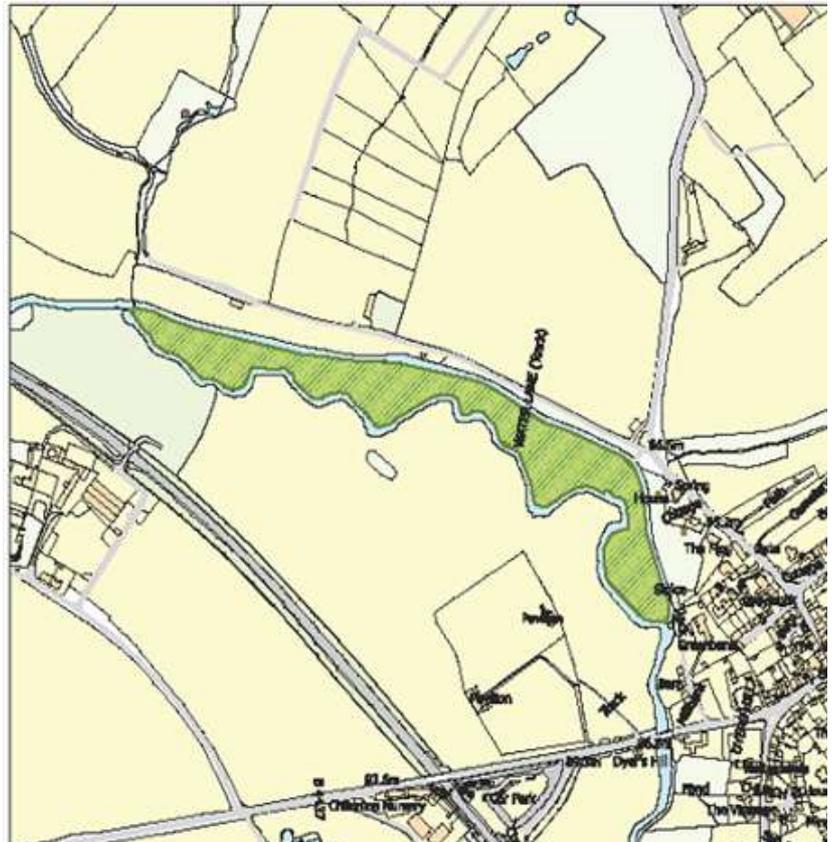
## LGS3 – Mill Field

**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. 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 :** Plot 18: Allotments near Wellington Cottages, Fiveways Junction, Charlbury

NB: Sites 9, 18 and 21 form the continuous Southern approach to Charlbury. They should be considered together.

**Ownership :** Blenheim Estate. Owner notified but has not responded. 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.

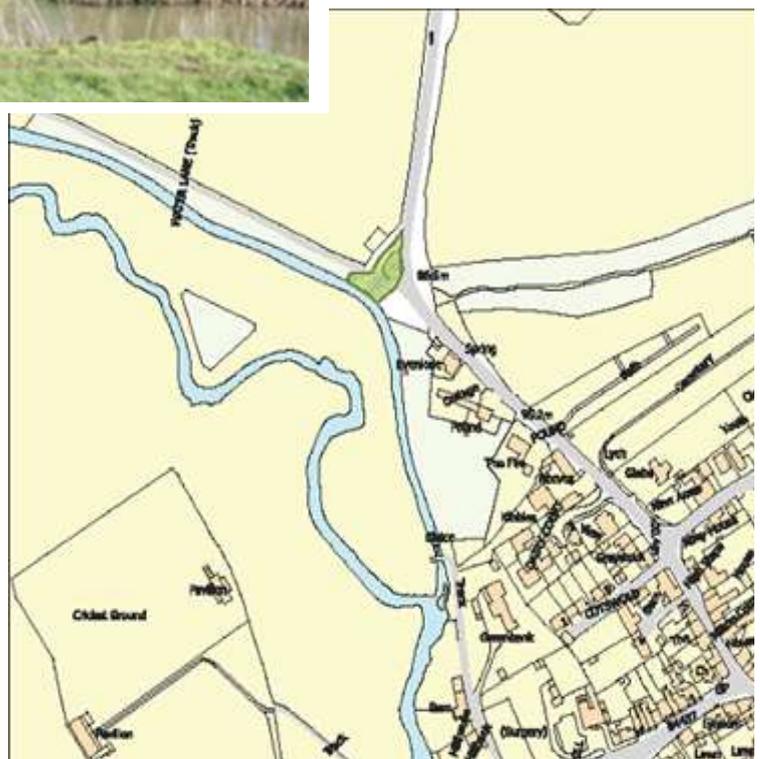


**Rationale :** Part of the site has been designated as a Local Wildlife Site. This status was re-confirmed by BBOWT in May 2016. The grassland with wooded valley and stream offer an attractive natural setting to the northern edge of the settlement of Charlbury. This is accentuated during the summer months with the appearance of the meadow flora through the eastern sections of the site on the north and south slopes. The rich flora and fauna include some that are designated as “Near Threatened” and is subject to protection under a 1992 amendment to Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The field pattern visible today dates from before 1761 and has many springs. The site provided water supply to the town between 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the 1960s initially under the management of Charlbury Water Works Co. and later by Thames Water..

**Setting :** Within the Charlbury Conservation Area and adjacent to the built up area of the town and cemetery it provides wide ranging views of countryside and Evenlode valley beyond.

**Ownership :** Thames Water Utilities Ltd. The owner is aware but has made no comments regarding designation. A conservation lease for the land dated 31 March 1995 was granted to Charlbury Town Council. By legal agreement with Thames Water this lease was assigned to the Wychwood Project in July 2015 and the town council continues to support the Wychwood Project by the provision of grants to assist the management of the land.

**Access and Usage :** Accessible to all and frequently used with a marked footpath along its length. Frequently used for walking



**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 - Cricket Club Grounds

**Rationale :** The Charlbury Cricket Club is extremely active providing youth and senior cricket, youth football and multi-sport training. Regular courses are run for school children which while not free of charge are open to all and do not require any prior experience or particular level of ability. It is also the location of an annual beer festival, firework display plus weddings/celebrations, There is no alternative site for cricket in or around the town and as such it is a major sporting centre not only for Charlbury but also for the wider surrounding area.

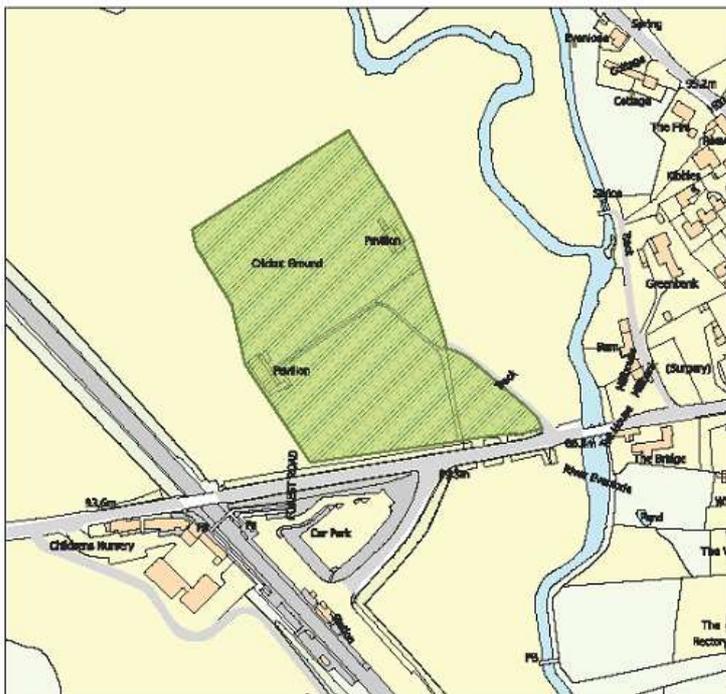
The character of Charlbury rising as it does on one bank of the Evenlode River makes the location of the Cricket Pitch very significant to maintain the Town's character and

significant views to and from the town across the landscape of the Evenlode valley. As a venue for cricket it blends in to this landscape but needs the recognition and protection as a LGS to maintain that character.

**Setting :** The Cricket pitch is situated on the North West of the built up area of the town, beyond the Mill Field. It is within the designated flood plain of the River Evenlode with its access road frequently flooded. It is close to and visible from, the built up area of the town. People pass the cricket ground when travelling between the town and the rail station and approaching the town from the west.

**Ownership :** Charlbury Cricket Club occupies the land on lease from Cornbury Estate, Cornbury Estate is aware but has not indicated whether or not they support designation.

**Access and Usage :** Whilst club membership is required for cricket, others frequently visit to spectate, accompany or attend the frequent public events. The cricket pitch is well known and loved by local residents many of whom are involved in the sporting activities or attend the annual beer festival and fireworks held at the site



## LGS8 - Field east of Railway Station

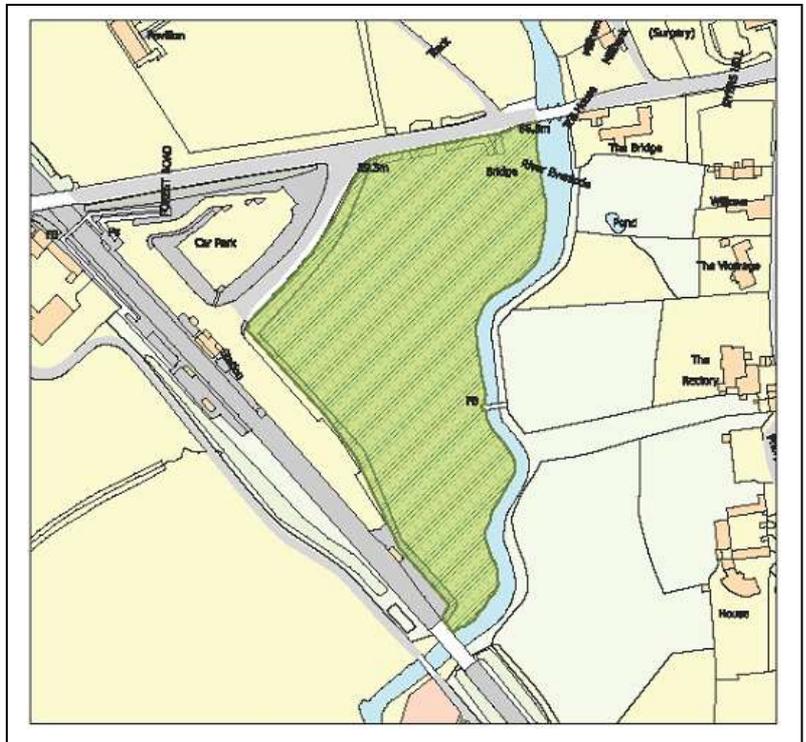
**Rationale :** This field is essential to maintaining the distinctive setting and character of Charlbury. Visible from the railway, road and river bridge it is one of the first things people see when entering the town from the west. The field is wholly in the flood plain and floods frequently but in doing so affords some protection from areas downstream.

**Setting :** This field occupies a picturesque site between the Evenlode River and the high embankment of the railway station which is largely obscured by trees and bushes. At this location the Evenlode River creates a natural boundary to the built up area of the town which rises on the opposite side of the river. To the north, the field is bounded by Forest Road which as well as being the main entrance to the town from the west is also the pedestrian access to and from the station. The site falls within the Charlbury Conservation area.

**Ownership : The Cornbury Estate :** The owner has responded but has not indicated whether they support or oppose.

**Access and Usage :** The site is not accessible to the public but is a prominent view for train passengers and users of the station and road. For many of the large numbers of commuters using the train this field is a real 'welcome home'. This field was not originally cited by the Neighbourhood Plan team as an LGS candidate but was subsequently added following popular demand. The Cotswold Line Promotion Group and the Great Western Railway society agree on the special significance of this area in front of the Listed station

**Additional Comments :** Whilst there are no current applications known it is understood that First Great Western railways are preparing plans for a car park which would cover a substantial area of the site

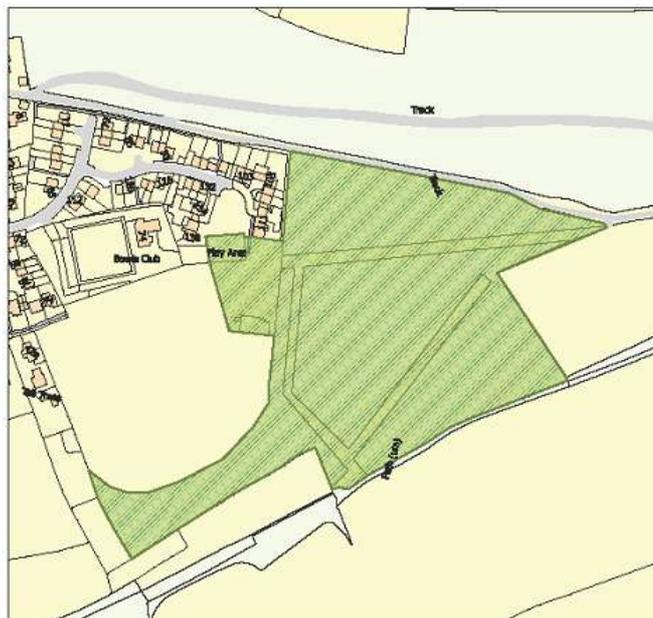


## LGS9 - Centenary Wood

**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.



## LGS10 - Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve

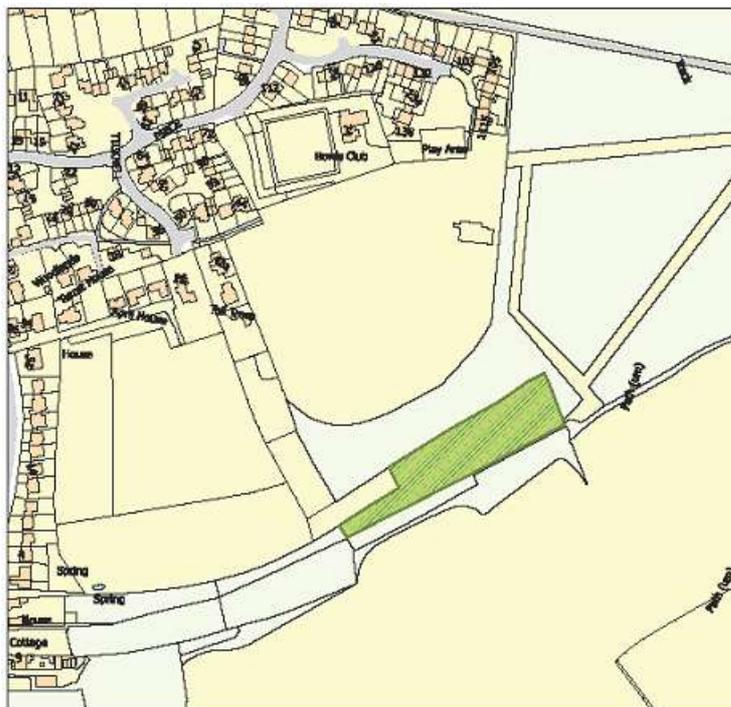
**Rationale :** This area is managed as a wildlife reserve accessible to all. The site has been monitored for the past 30 years and is used as a resource for educating the local community about nature and conservation. Beaver scouts and children from the local school have visited for specific events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



## LGS11 - Land south of The Bell

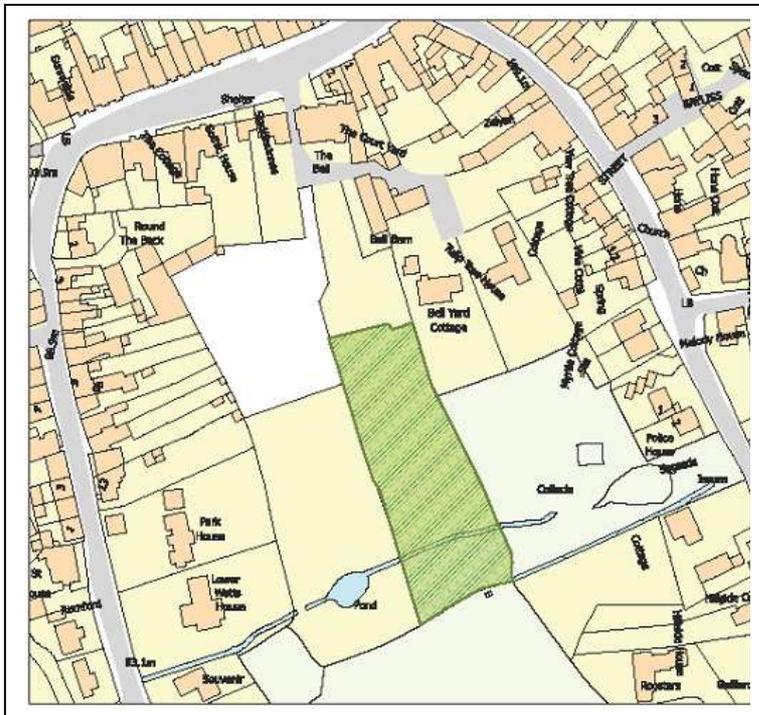
**Rationale :** There are a number of historical references to this site which remains a great favourite for many in the town. A number of local events take place here ranging from children’s drama / singing to Morris dancing.. It is felt particularly important to protect the wildlife corridor along 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.

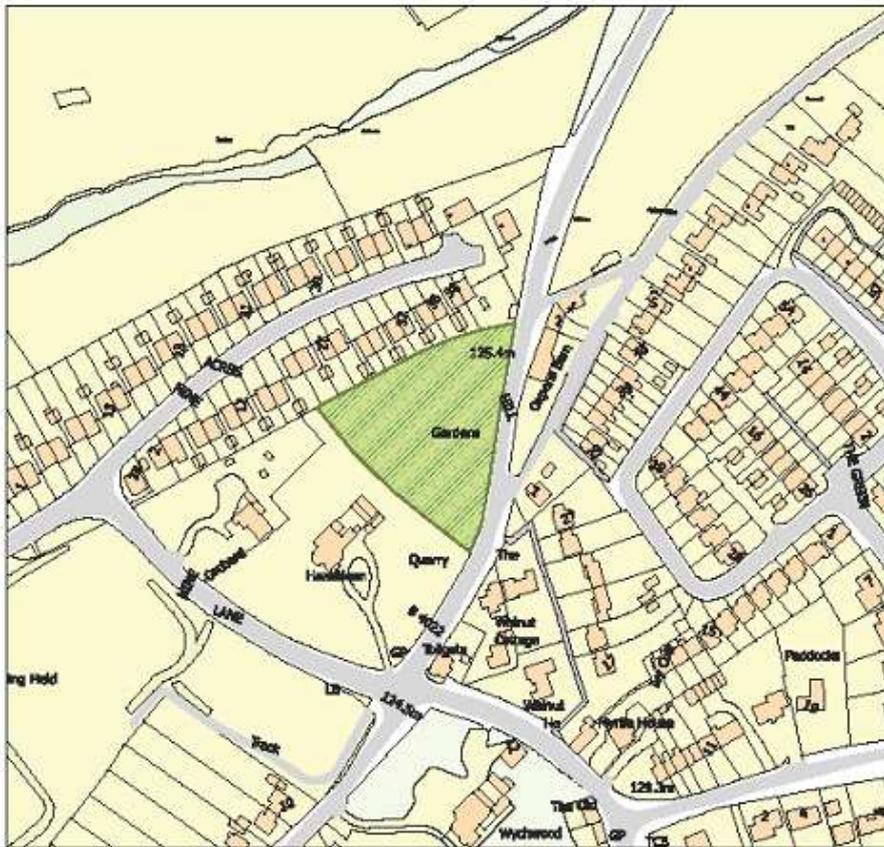
**Ownership : Greene King.** The owner has been informed but has not responded.

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



The stream, bridge and wild area beyond

## LGS12 – Oxpens Allotments (Enstone Road)



**Rationale** : This site was historically a wild flower meadow and appears as such on historic maps. Its current use is extremely valuable to the many residents as allotments but also for others who respect it as an open space central to the town.

**Setting** : located centrally to the town adjacent to one of the main roads entering the town.

**Ownership** : Charlbury Town Council who propose its designation.

**Access and Usage** : Access to the site is not restricted and regular users include allotment holders, people living in neighbouring Nine Acres Close who walk through the site to get access to through their back gardens, and anyone driving or walking past on the Enstone Road



## LGS13 - Clarke's Bottom



**Rationale:** Clarke's Bottom is a particularly picturesque and locally valued valley overlooked from a regularly used public footpath and eminently worthy of protection.

It forms part of the Wigwell Green Corridor (see 7.3.7 and policy NE6) and comprises grazing land with old hedgerows, ancient trees and a spring and old pond (water from which flows through the Wigwell Nature Reserve and on into the River Evenlode). It creates a natural and compact boundary to this area of the town beyond which is more extensive farmland. The Charlbury Nature Conservation Appraisal 1993 identifies the western part of the site as one of the few sites of unimproved grassland in Charlbury, together with a pond and associated damp habitat in the valley bottom. This western half of the site has been permanent pasture for very many years and the old trees which appear randomly scattered through the valley are in fact remnants of old field boundaries shown on the 1761 map. The whole site is surrounded by very old hedgerows.

**Setting :** The 1761 map shows this site to be 12 small linear fields all following the contours of the valley, it also shows that nine of them were "inclosed". The houses in Hundley Way overlook the site and Hundley Way is a very popular public footpath. In effect it brings the countryside into the town. There is a bench overlooking the valley at the town end of the site. This site is within the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks Conservation Target Area.

**Ownership :** HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust who strongly object to the designation. They argue that the site does not meet NPPF criteria for designation and that the site is already adequately protected by virtue of its location within the Cotswolds AONB.

**Access and Usage :** There is no public access but it is overlooked from a regularly used footpath. In the town survey a number of respondents remarked how valuable the site is. –  
"The view down the valley from there is also extremely beautiful and should be protected."  
Other : The site is important for small mammals and consequently, together with Wigwell, it provides good hunting ground for barn owls. The linear nature of the site, the dampness, and the old hedgerows also makes it an important site for insects and hunting bats.

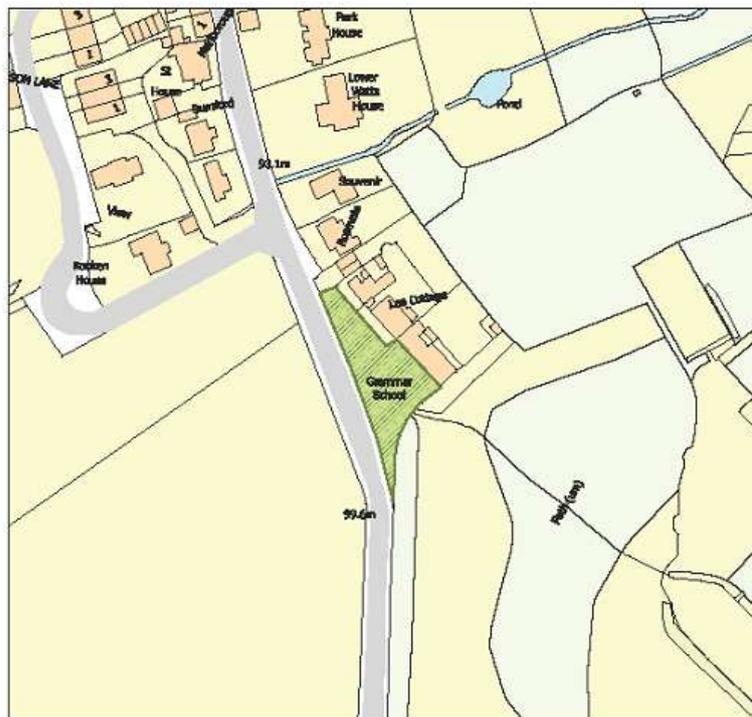
## LGS14 – Grammar School Green

**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.

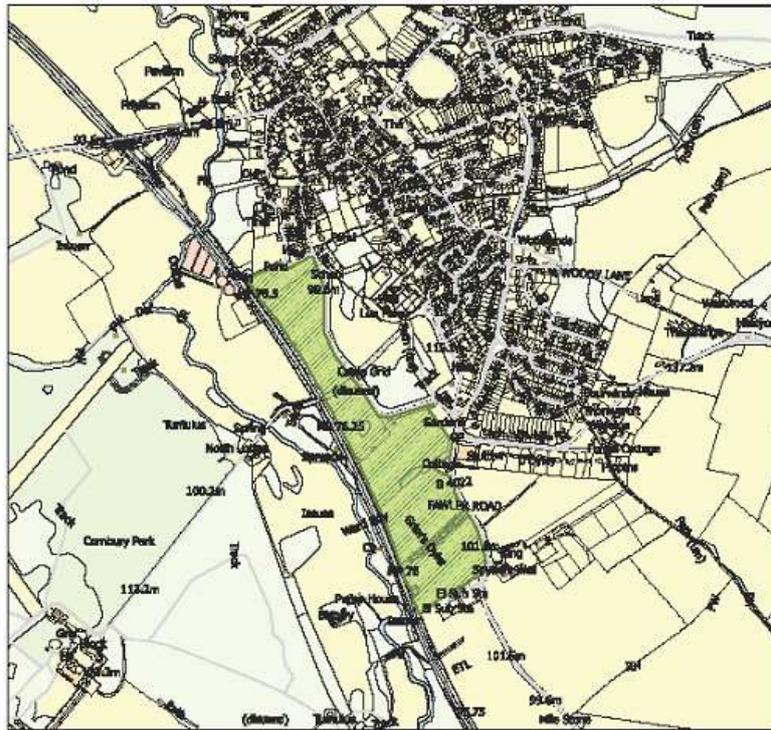
**Access and Usage** : there are no barriers to access and It serves the whole town, and especially the children who attend the Pre-school. It has the feel of a village green.



**LGS15 – Land west of Grammar School Hill**

**Rationale :** Local Green Space designation is needed in this area to protect the setting of the town and the iconic Evenlode Valley. A recent refusal on part of this site does not mean that there will not be further pressure for its development in the future so that the added protection as LGS is seen as vital.

**Setting :** The site directly adjoins and forms a natural boundary to the built up area of the town and provides one of the most important views across the River Evenlode and Cornbury Estate in this area. As such it is a very important part of the local area which is highly valued by the community.



**Ownership :** Blenheim Trustee Co No 1. Notified by letter 22/09/17. No response received.

**Access and Usage :** Apart from the public footpath along the drive to Cornbury Park this land is not accessible to the public, but is widely visible both from that public footpath and from Park Street / Grammar School Hill, as well as from passing trains.

**Other:** . Recent planning appeal on part of this site was withdrawn

**Comment :** The area was described in the Charlbury character assessment as follows: “the views from Grammar School Hill over the Evenlode Valley, Cornbury Park and Wychwood Forest are of great significance, and must rank as some of the most important in the Cotswolds AONB. Charlbury is sited at the point where the Evenlode passes from the wide valley upstream to the west, and turns south through the narrow Charlbury gorge or defile. The church (presumably at the centre of the primary settlement) is on a prominent bluff overlooking the river, facing an answering defensive earthwork on the rising ground on the other side of the river within Cornbury Park. This topography is probably significant historically as well as in landscape terms (as the reason why Charlbury is where it is), and Grammar School Hill is one of the few places from which this can be appreciated.”

The well near the entrance to Cornbury Park, looking south



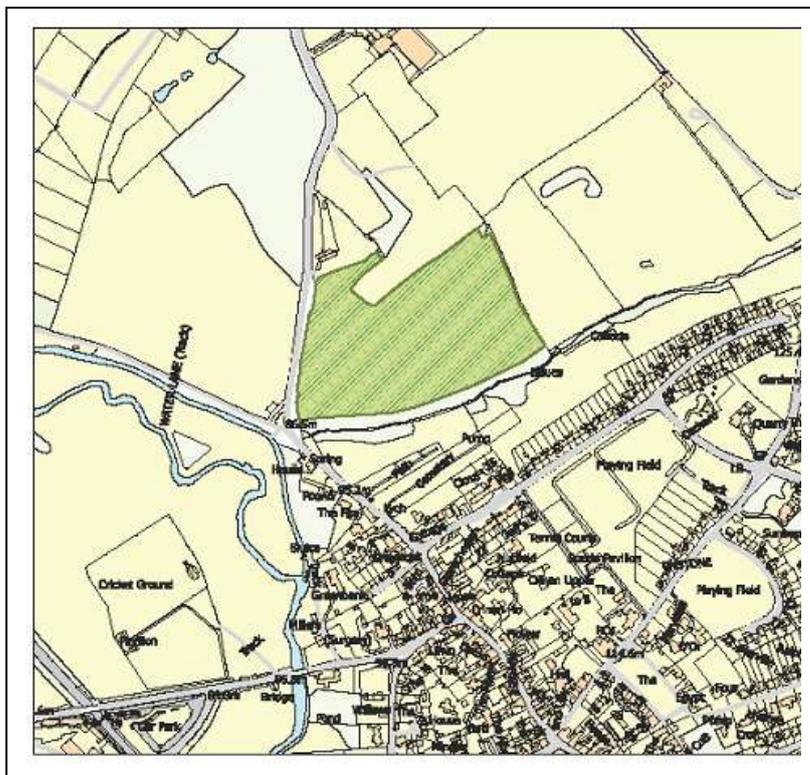
General view looking west across the Five Ways allotments



## LGS16 - Glebelands

**Rationale :** Designation is sought on the basis that whilst the objection by the ODBF is clear and accepted to be in good faith and that our aims are aligned they do not constitute a guarantee to the community that they will remain so in perpetuity.

**Setting :** The site provides particular local significance for its beauty because it provides the setting for the cemetery and therefore has a meditative quality that is both visually beautiful and tranquil. When entering Glebelands from the footpath over the stream in the Wigwell Nature Reserve there is a steep uphill climb. Once in the field there is a magnificently beautiful view across to Wychwood and the fields leading up to it that is very special to the local community. The ridge and furrow landscape features give the site particular local historical significance to the community.



**Ownership :** Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF) who let it on an Agricultural Holdings Act lease for agricultural purposes. The ODBF object on the basis that they as “a charitable organisation cannot permit its assets to be fettered in perpetuity in this way” and that designation does not provide “clear additional benefit” and that “existing policies and protection would achieve the same ends”

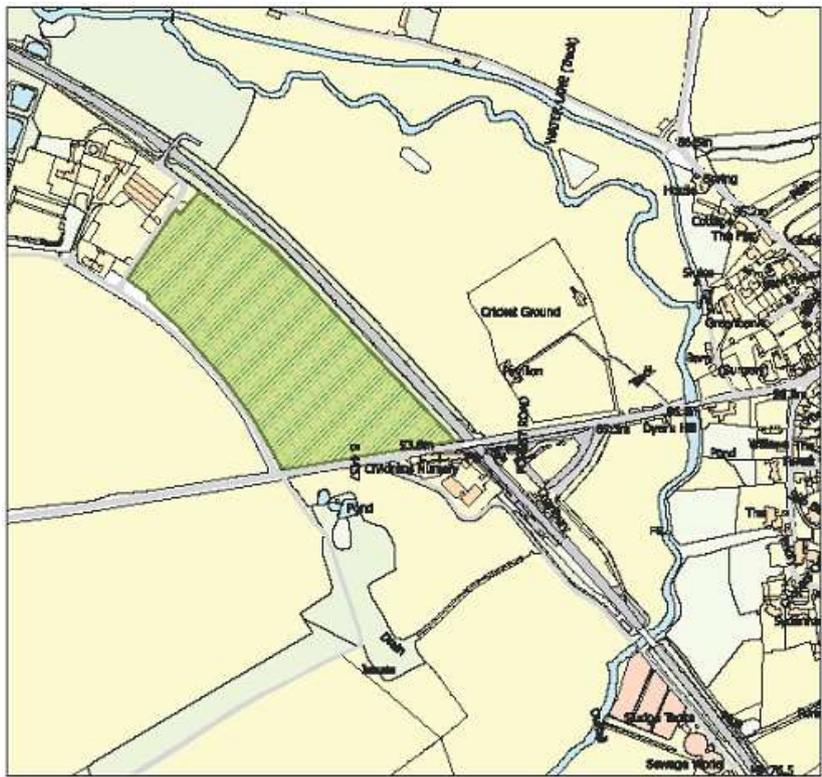
**Access and Usage :** There is a public right of way crosses the top right hand corner of the site and continues to the next field where the public footpath continues to Taston in one direction and towards Banbury Hill in the other. A permissive path from Pound Hill provides access to the bottom of the adjoining land where the lowest part of Glebelands can be seen from the path but the rest of the land does not have public access. This is rough walking country and is therefore not suitable for disabled access

**Other :** The local vicar (Sally Welch) supported designation as an individual.

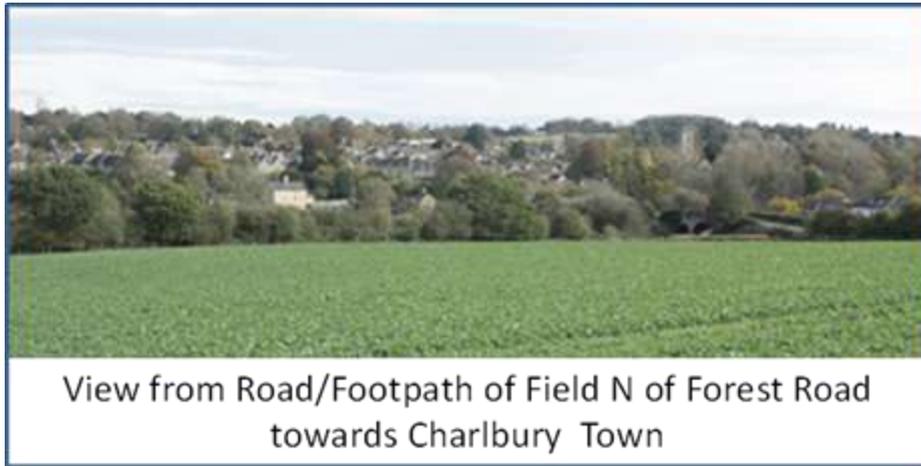


**LGS17 - Field north of Forest Road**

**Rationale :** This field is central to the view across the Evenlode Valley which ranked highest amongst the places nominated by respondents for protection in a Neighbourhood Survey. Development of this field would radically change the wide-ranging views of and from Charlbury and the hamlet of Walcot and footpaths between and around these. As such it would seriously undermine the setting and character of the Town. A landscape appraisal conducted in response to an earlier aborted approach for development commented on this field as follows: “The scenic quality of the site and study area is described as highly attractive and unspoilt. Value rating: “**very high**”.



**Setting :** Rising on the opposite side of the Evenlode Valley to that of the built up area of the town, this field is visually an integral part of the town’s setting. Physically, it is close to the built up area. Its social importance comes from the fact that the track to the hamlet of Walcot, which forms the western boundary of this green space, is part of a popular local walk, and important views over this site back to the town can be enjoyed from this track.



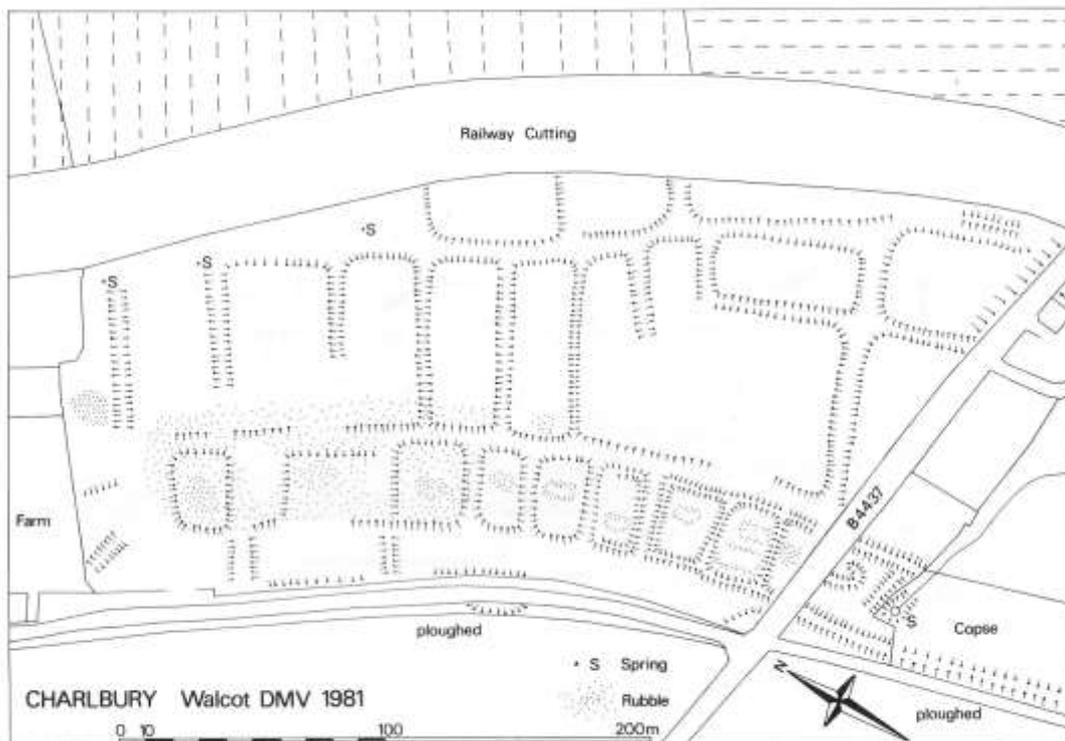
**Ownership** : Cornbury Estate who have not indicated whether they support the designation.

**Access and Usage** : Access on to the site is limited by the fact that it is farmed arable land. The footpath running on the road along one side of the field is open to all.

**Other** :

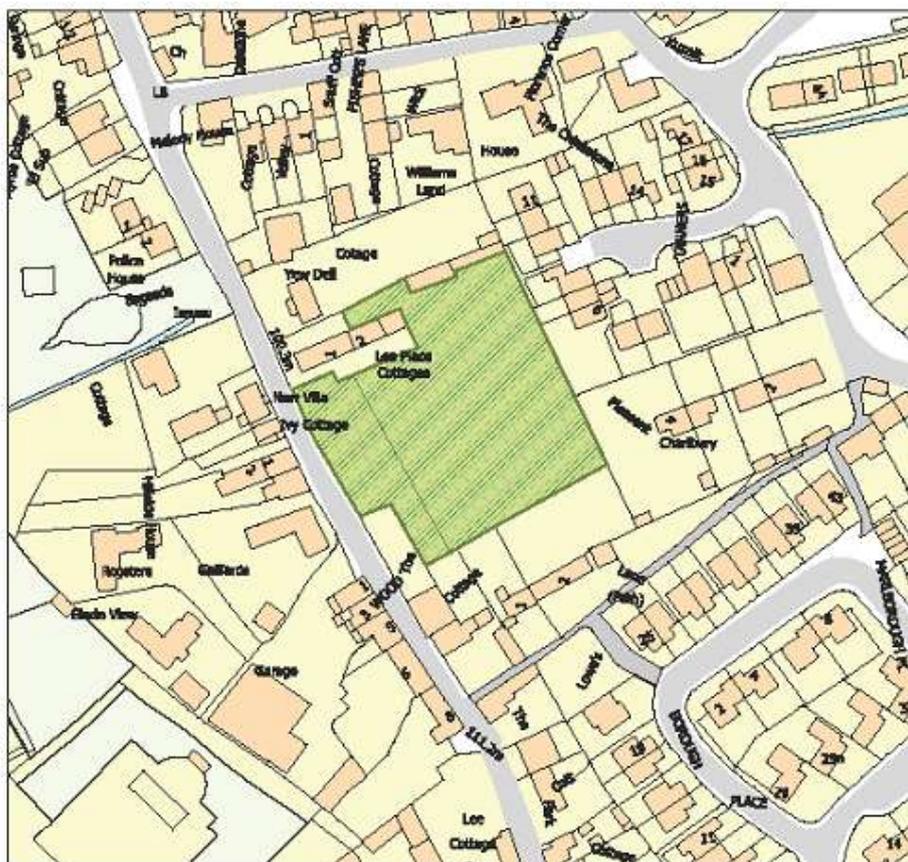
This site adjoins but is outside the area designated as the Charlbury Conservation Area.

The West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment described the Evenlode valley as forming ‘a strong landscape edge to Charlbury’ and referred to the ‘attractive valley side and valley floor with strong landscape structure’ with ‘very few detracting influences’ and ‘important views across and along the valley in both directions’. It found there was a ‘need to maintain strong landscape structure and attractive pastoral character on valley sides and to maintain quality of the approach on the B4437 (Forest Road) from the west’. Historically it was the site of a medieval settlement as demonstrated by the geological map below( Archaeological findings Tim Copeland CBA South Midlands Group, South Midlands Archaeology, 1981).



## LGS18 - Land east of Hixet Wood

**Rationale :** This site forms a green setting for the houses on both sides of the Slade stream valley. The north-east corner of the site is the last remnant of the old orchards that used to exist throughout the town. Also visible from Hixet Wood, this site contributes to the rural character of the area.



**Setting :** The site is surrounded by houses and is the southern slope of the valley of the private open space between the town and Hixet Wood at the top of the hill. The site is the southern (north-facing) slope of the Sandford Slade valley which crosses Charlbury from east to west towards the river. It provides a natural break between the main town and Hixet Wood on the south side of the town which was probably established to service Lee Place

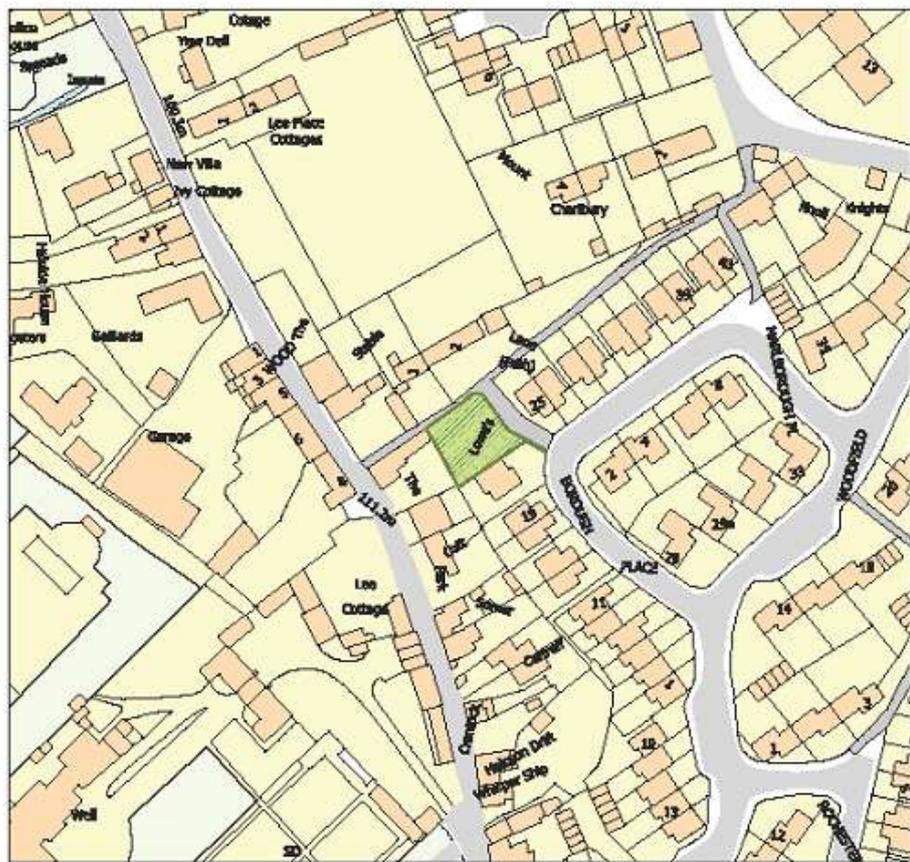
**Ownership :** Blenheim Estate who have not responded to our letter.

**Access and Usage :** There is no public access but is visible from a large number of properties. This site provides part of a green corridor through the town, from the old Quarry, through Centenary Woodland, Blenheim Farm Nature Reserve, along Willow Walk adjacent to Sandford Park and then into the green land behind the Bell and down to the River Evenlode. The aim in protecting it is to preserve a safe passage for mammals including hedgehogs and bats, insects, birds, amphibians and reptiles to move through the built up area safely.



**LGS19 - Land adj. Narrow Lane**

**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.

**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 play space.as this area of the town is quite distant from alternative play areas.

Alleyway leading from/to area



## LGS20 - Stream west of Hixet Wood



**Rationale** : The primary reason for proposing this location as a LGS is to protect existing wildlife, but also to provide a safe passage for wildlife through the built up area, as part of several connected green spaces.

**Setting** : The proposed site is a small overgrown patch of wild ground in the heart of the town. It sits up close to existing and planned housing but provides an important pocket of space for wildlife within the built up area. While not traditionally beautiful, this area plays a role in the change of character in the town that you experience as you leave the more densely built up area in the centre, and enter Hixet Wood with the workers cottages associated with Lee Place.

**Ownership** : Blenheim Estate who have been made aware but not responded to our letter.

**Access and Usage** : The site is not currently accessible to the public. Apart from it being a welcome natural break visually, its designation relates mainly to wildlife. This extract from the Charlbury Nature Conservation Appraisal relates to the site: "Area of spring-fed marsh behind houses. This and the far west section are now the only semi-natural sections of the Brook which once ran from the pond in site 11 along Willow Walk to the railway. The central section has been piped and Willow Walk and the gardens behind the Bell altered. This is a valuable habitat and an important green space in the town. Marsh is rare in Charlbury, and, although not rich, this has kingcup, sedges and rushes. In late summer nettles and great hairy willowherb are good for butterflies and dragonflies. Scrub and willows provide nesting areas for birds."

**LGS21 - Land east of  
Blenheim Farm House and  
Slade Cottage**



**Rationale** : This piece of land forms part of the Sandford Slade green corridor crossing the town from East to West (see section 7.3.8 and policy NE6). This provides a route for wildlife and people, linking the built up area to open space and farmland. It also forms part of a number of circular walks starting in the town

**Setting** : The site connects the residential area of Charlbury directly to the Blenheim Nature Reserve and then to the Centenary Woodland and farmland beyond. The site is significant because the path through it provides easy, level, access to Blenheim Nature Reserve and open space. From the footpath, views of the fields to the North can be enjoyed. This provides a pleasant rural backdrop to a walk very close to the town centre

**Ownership** : Julie Penny, Blenheim Farm House. The owner is strongly opposed to designation arguing that the site does not meet the NPPF criteria for designation.

**Access and Usage** : There is an important public footpath running the length of the site which provides access to the Nature Reserve and land beyond and subsequent paths towards Ditchley. There is vehicular access to the edge of the site and some parking nearby on The Slade. Although the site can be crossed using the path signage and fencing prevents public access to the land. The path is used extensively by dog walkers, ramblers, children and others going to the Nature Reserve and beyond

## F.3 Sites Assessed but not chosen for LGS Designation

A number of sites have been considered but not pursued. Two of these (Wychwood Paddocks and Evenlode Close Allotments) are of note following representations from members of the public and therefore the rationale for their non-inclusion is summarised here.

### Wychwood Paddocks



### Evenlode Close Allotments



These sites are not proposed for designation for the following reasons.

#### **Wychwood Paddocks:**

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 97 provides strong protection for playing fields such as this. In order for the land to be built on it would have to be demonstrated either that the facility was surplus to requirements, the facility would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable location, OR that any proposed development of the site would itself provide sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which could be shown to clearly outweigh the loss of the current facility. Our understanding is that this situation is not affected by future academisation of Charlbury Primary School.
- In the event that the above conditions were to be met at some future time (e.g. an alternative equal or better facility was provided in a suitable location), it may be in the best interests of the community as a whole to consider alternative uses of the land.
- The site is not accessible to the public and views across the site are limited for all except the existing residents of Wychwood Paddocks.
- The current owners of the land (OCC) are not supportive of the designation.

#### **Evenlode Close Allotments:**

- There is a clearly defined need for assisted living accommodation in Charlbury especially as some former facilities no longer meet national requirements for such accommodation. The Evenlode Close facility adjacent to this site is a case in point. We are therefore keen to ensure that any plans to redevelop this site in order to bring the accommodation back into use for assisted living can be supported. Use of the allotment site may become significant for such a development and we therefore judge it appropriate to leave such an option open at this time. The relative benefits and harms of such a change of use of the allotment site would, of course, be considered in conjunction with any such planning application.

# Appendix G 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** (July 2018). 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 surrounding spaces considered to be of special architectural or historic interest, which have a particular character or appearance worthy of preservation or enhancement. The Charlbury Conservation Area was established by West Oxfordshire District Council in 1974 and a map of the area is included on page 77 of this Plan. Consideration of planning applications within the Conservation Area must have

special regard to potential harms to the character of the area as laid down in the **NPPF** and the **Local Plan 2031**.

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

A committee set up by West Oxfordshire District Council to advise on planning applications within Charlbury Conservation Area. Members include Town, District and County Councillors as well as representatives from the Community with knowledge 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 for the essential character of the Town to support the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. Production of the report involved a comprehensive review of the built area and surrounding open space 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 review.

### **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>

## **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)**

A statutory publication which 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 adopted in July 2018 and is available for download at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.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.

## **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.

### **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 H 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 Elliot, 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

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## 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

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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

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Charlbury Leaflet for assistance with distribution of information

Charlbury Chronicle for publishing articles

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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