



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

2020-2035

Made Version

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document is the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish areas of Henley on Thames and Harpsden. This Plan replaces the 2016 Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2. The Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) sets out the community vision for the future of the area during the plan period of 2020 – 2035 providing a land use framework for development which will be achieved through objectives and policies that follow.
- 1.3. The JHHNP has been developed by residents of Henley and Harpsden through public consultation, focus groups and events, and by members of working groups, populated by volunteers from the local community.
- 1.4. The ability of communities to prepare and establish Neighbourhood Plans was established through the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood planning is part of the government's vision to provide local communities with the opportunity to engage and have a prominent say in what goes on in the local area.

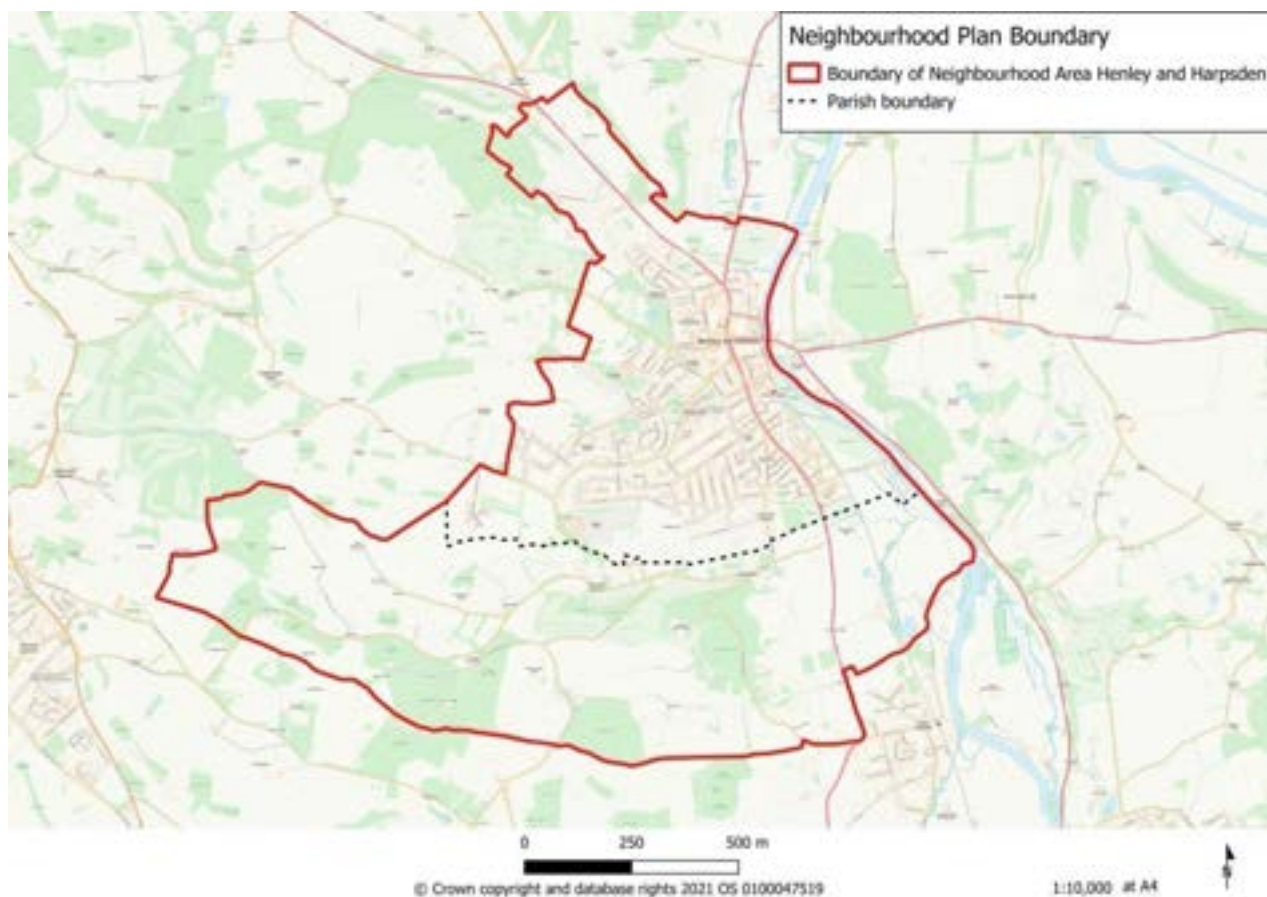
Localism

- 1.5. While the Localism Act (2011) enables the local community to make decisions in relation to planning, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) set out the guidelines for the process. As well as having regard to national policies and advice, there is a need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. For this reason the following policy taken from the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (2011-2035) (SOLP) is of direct relevance:

- 1.6. Policy HEN1: The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames

Neighbourhood Development Plans are expected to, and the Council will support development proposals that:

- deliver homes in accordance with Policy H3;
- strengthen the retail offer within Henley Town Centre;
- enhance the town's environment and conserve and enhance the town's heritage assets;
- strengthen and improve the attraction of Henley-on-Thames for visitors and provide leisure opportunities;
- improve accessibility, car and cycle parking in the Town Centre, and pedestrian and cycle links;
- improve employment opportunities at existing employment sites and identify new sites for employment;
- address air quality issues;
- support Henley College and Gillotts School to meet their accommodation needs; and
- provide new, or enhanced community facilities that meet an identified need.



- 1.7. Any Neighbourhood Plan has the opportunity to provide more than the proposed number of houses and amount of retail and leisure floorspace set out in the Development Plan, but National Policy states that the Neighbourhood Plan should not promote less growth than that required by strategic policies for the area, or undermine those policies.
- 1.8. This plan has provided the local community with the opportunity to decide the locations of key housing developments, as well as developing principles for how the town's environment can be enhanced.

2. Document Guide & Summary

Developing the JHHNP

- 2.1. A brief summary of the process of producing the JHHNP is provided below.
- Various informal consultation events have been held, including an [exhibition](#) at Henley Town Hall held over a two-day period and a number of online events facilitated by Community First Oxfordshire. In January 2021, we undertook a [questionnaire survey](#) which was publicised to every household in Henley and Harpsden. This was to identify the key issues in the neighbourhood area. We received over 770 responses.

Consultation

- 2.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee commenced consultation on the pre-submission (Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) version of the Neighbourhood Plan on Monday 20 September 2021. Initially planned for a period of six weeks, the consultation period was extended to eight weeks and ended on 16 November 2021.
- 2.3. A copy of the pre-submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan Development Plan was available to download, along with supporting documentation, on the JHHNP website: <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>. The Draft Plan was also available for inspection at the Town Hall. A leaflet advertising the consultation was delivered to all households within Henley and Harpsden.
- 2.4. ‘Drop-in’ sessions concerning the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan took place at Henley Town Hall on Friday 15 October 2021 and Saturday 16 October 2021. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee also had a stall at the Eco Fair taking place in Henley Town Hall on 22 September 2021.
- 2.5. 87 responses were received as part of this consultation. The comments received were reviewed and changes were then made to the Plan and the supporting documentation.
- 2.6. The Plan was then submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council for publication and a further eight-week public consultation took place before it was sent to an Independent Examiner.
- 2.7. An electronic copy of the (Regulation 16) submission draft Neighbourhood Plan documentation and associated evidence base can be found online at: <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>

2.8. South Oxfordshire District Council will continue to be responsible for determining planning applications, but the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will be used to make those decisions.

2.9. Neighbourhood plans must comply with the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). These state that the plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice, such as the National Planning Policy Framework
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area (our Core Strategy and our other development plan documents)
- Be compatible with European obligations and human rights requirements

Sustainable Development

2.10. The Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

2.11. The Plan, taken as a whole, constitutes our view of what sustainable development in Henley and Harpsden means in practice.

2.12. Since the adoption of the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan in 2016, South Oxfordshire District Council and Henley Town Council have both declared a climate emergency.



Monitoring and Review

- 2.13. The Plan will run concurrently with the current South Oxfordshire Local Plan and apply until March 2035. It is, however, recognised that the neighbourhood plan is a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community and will need monitoring and review to ensure continuing relevance and delivery. The Town Council, as the designated body, is responsible for maintaining and periodically reviewing the NDP in the event the needs and aspirations of the community require, or following significant changes to nation or local planning policy.
- 2.14. In addition, the Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council will monitor the delivery of the housing allocations in the Plan. If delivery is unlikely to proceed to meet the number of dwellings set out in Policy DS1 of the Plan, the two councils will consider a further review of the Plan to identify the extent to which delivery is not proceeding and/or to explore the allocation of alternative sites to meet any shortfall against the strategic requirements for Henley as identified in the Local Plan. Where necessary, it will consider the need for a full or partial review of the Plan.

3. Context – Henley and Harpsden Today

3.1. This section is intended to identify the key issues.

Population

3.2. The 2011 Census established that there are 11,619 residents in Henley on Thames and 560 in Harpsden, totalling 12,179.

3.3. According to the ONS mid-year estimates, the population of Henley-on-Thames increased from 11,318 in mid-2009 to 11,863 in mid-2019. This growth - over a ten-year period – was an apparent increase of 545 people or +5%. Over this time period, 2009 and 2019, the population of Henley-on-Thames aged 25-44 declined by 17% while the number of people aged 70+ increased by 30%.¹

Total Population	Aged 0-15	Working age population	Aged 65+	Dependency ratio
11,863	2,100	6,768	2,995	0.75
46.8% male; 53.2% female	17.7% (England average = 19.2%)	57.1% (England average = 62.4%)	25.2% (England average = 18.4%)	England average = 0.60

Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2019

Figure: Population estimates by 5-year age band

Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2019



¹ https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Henley_profile_Feb21.pdf

Employment

- 3.4. The 2011 Census provides data on the type of industry that residents within the Plan area work within, with a total of 5,864 working residents recorded overall.
- 3.5. The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) provides data on the type of industries located within the Plan area. Data from 2019 (based on the Henley-on-Thames Electoral Ward) illustrates that the businesses employ approximately 8,000 employees.²
- 3.6. The BRES indicates that between 2011 and 2019 the Henley economy, measured by the number of local employees, grew by 9.6% from around 7,300 to 8,000 workers. Business administration and support services was the largest industry sector with 13.1% of all people in employment, followed by retail industry 13% and Tourism (hotels and catering) 12.3%. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) (2019).
- 3.7. The largest business sector remained professional scientific & technical services at 26.3% of all local businesses, post and telecommunication was 10.2% and arts, entertainment, recreation and other services at 8.9%.
- 3.8. The South Oxfordshire Employment Land Review 2015 reports on office, business and industry land use and demand in Henley. The report indicates that Henley is seen as the most predominant office location in the District. It goes onto state that Henley will have the strongest demand for town centre office and that residual additional office demand could be met in the town centres of Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford (including Crowmarsh Gifford) and Thame. The distribution of demand for offices is likely to be spread equally across each of these towns.
- 3.9. It recognises that that has been a small net decrease in Henley-on-Thames of industrial floorspace.
- 3.10. What does the Local Plan say?

Policy EMP5: New Employment Land at Henley-on-Thames

1. In addition to allocations in the made Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan, at least a further 1 hectare of employment land will be delivered at Henley-on-Thames. This will be delivered through a review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
2. The review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites*³ to meet these requirements within 12 months of the adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for employment will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall plan distribution strategy as set out in STRAT1.

² Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)

³ * the Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient housing sites

Housing

- 3.11. The 2011 Census established that there are 5,457 households in the Henley and Harpsden area, of which 200 are in Harpsden. A relatively high 34% of all Henley and Harpsden dwellings have only a single occupier. A higher than average proportion of these are aged over 65 years.
- 3.12. Henley is the most expensive area in the district to purchase accommodation across nearly all housing types, and is also the most expensive place to rent. Despite this uneven growth, house prices are considerably higher than at the start of the 10-year period, with clear effects on affordability.
- 3.13. The current tenure profile of Henley and Harpsden is dominated by home ownership at 67% of all households, with the remaining households occupying private rented dwellings at a slightly higher rate than social rented housing.

Figure 4-1: Average house prices Henley and Harpsden between 2009 and 2018



Source: Land Registry PPD

- 3.14. The [Housing Needs Assessment](#) (HNA) 2020, indicates that by 2034, the size distribution of dwellings should be weighted slightly more towards medium sized dwellings. The proportions of dwellings with four or more bedrooms are currently in line with the results of the model. The requirement for one and two bedroom dwellings is expected to decline slightly, and the proportion of three bedroom homes should increase.
- 3.15. The [HNA 2020](#) estimates the housing sizes and likely distribution by 2034, being:

Number of Bedrooms	2011	2034
1 bedroom	11.1%	8.5%
2 bedroom	30.2%	24.8%
3 bedroom	32.0%	39.9%

4 bedroom	19.2%	19.5%
5 or more bedroom	7.4%	7.2%

- 3.16. The [HNA](#) suggests that when planning for new development in Harpsden and Henley, the focus should be on boosting the number of mid-size homes, with a lower amount of larger homes but very few small homes.
- 3.17. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) suggests that in the period between 2011 and 2031 around 63% of new homes should have one or two bedrooms, with around 37% of the requirement being for larger homes with three or more bedrooms. This contrasts with the findings of the [HNA](#) for Henley and Harpsden, which recommends a focus on three bedroom homes.
- 3.18. The Oxfordshire SHMA quantifies the need for Affordable Housing within South Oxfordshire district. It identified a need for 386 Affordable Housing units per annum in South Oxfordshire from 2013-2031. This figure can be pro-rated to Henley and Harpsden (at a rate of 9.1%, which is the percentage of the South Oxfordshire population who live in the NA) and equates to 35.1 affordable homes per annum.
- 3.19. An additional estimate undertaken in the [HNA](#) calculates that demand for affordable routes to home ownership from households who cannot afford to buy their own home, but cannot afford to rent, amounts to 53.3 households per annum over the Plan period. The total estimated Affordable Housing need over the Plan period 2020-2036 is therefore 527 (rounded) affordable rented homes and 800 affordable home ownership dwellings.
- 3.20. The Local Plan will be meeting the housing needs of Henley and Harpsden and this will be largely down to a percentage requirement of affordable homes in mixed market-led schemes as set out in Policy H9. For all major developments (10 or more homes), the policy requires housing sites to deliver 40% affordable housing on site. For sites in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, proposals for 5 or more homes will provide a financial contribution equivalent to 40% affordable housing provision, but for sites of 10 or more, this would be provided on site.
- 3.21. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, the government have released a ministerial statement on 24 May 2021 requiring First Homes; a specific kind of discounted market sale housing which should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:
- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
 - b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
 - c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
 - d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

- 3.22. First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.
- 3.23. The updated tenure mix in South Oxfordshire, taking into account the changes introduced by First Homes, is shown in the table below.

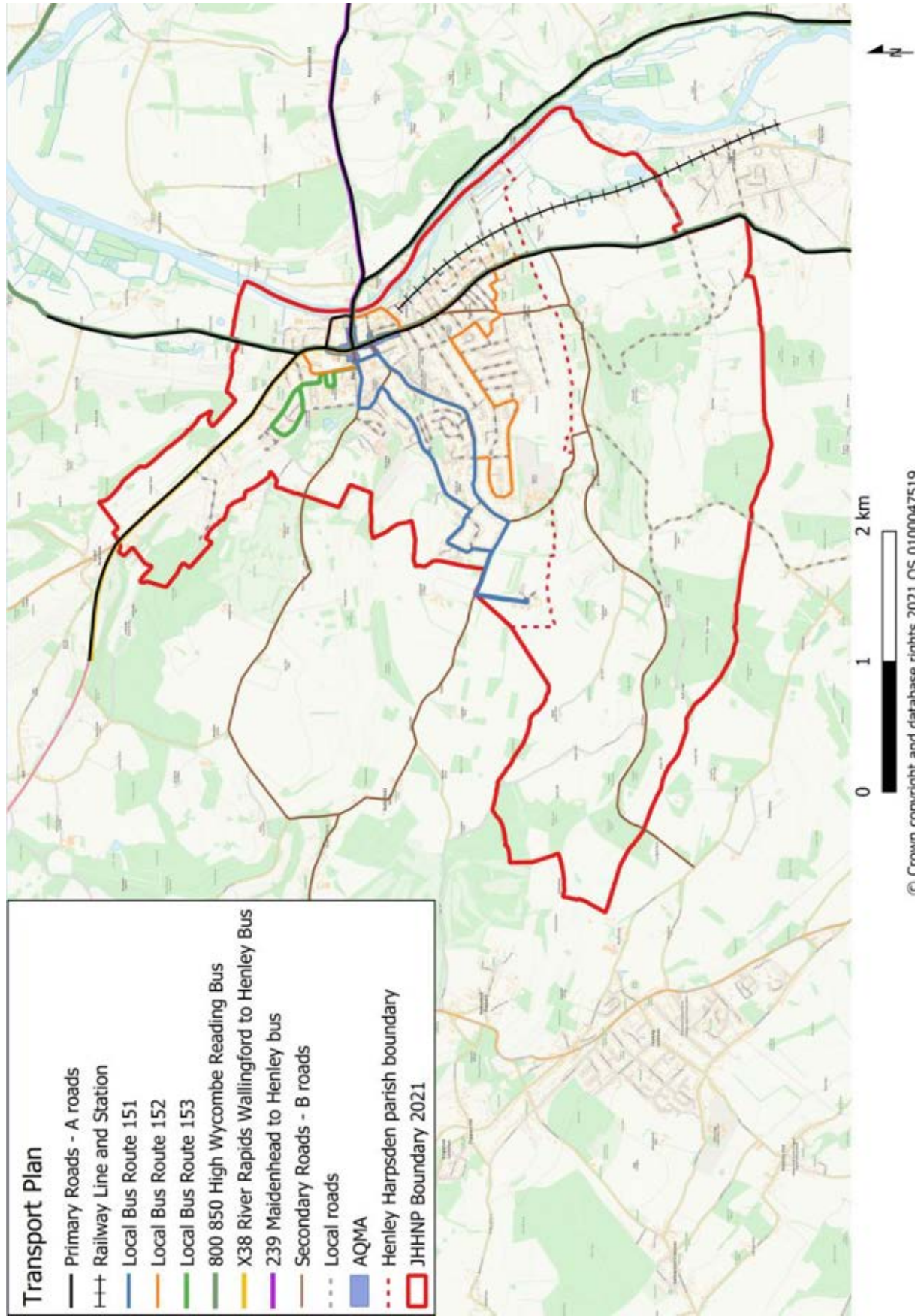
Tenure	South Oxfordshire
First Homes	25%
Social Rent	35%
Affordable Rent	25%
Other routes to affordable home ownership	15%

Retail and Town Centre

- 3.24. Henley-on-Thames has a strong-performing attractive and historic town centre. To a greater extent than the other centres in the District, it performs a dual function, both as a shopping and services centre for residents in the south-eastern part of the District, and also as a tourism destination, chiefly focused around events such as the annual Royal Regatta and the Henley Festival of Music and Arts. Almost half of the users of Henley town centre are from outside the South Oxfordshire area.
- 3.25. Projections undertaken in 2017 indicate that 1,500sqm additional floorspace for retail use will be required and this is set out in the Local Plan. The need is likely to be met by the Stuart Turner development and through a Town Centre policy. The Plan's priority is to ensure existing town centre units are filled to enhance the overall vibrancy of the town centre, rather than developing new retail areas which may detract from town centre spending.
- 3.26. Parking in the town centre is an issue with Greys Road and Kings Road car parks often full. Edge of centre car parks such as the station car park and rugby club car park tend to be underutilised.

Transport and Movement

- 3.27. Henley has good links with the surrounding area, with both bus and train services. A frequent (every 20 minutes) Monday to Friday bus service runs to High Wycombe, Marlow, Shiplake and Reading, running every 30 minutes on Saturday and hourly on Sundays. Within Henley, the Henley Hopper provides an hourly service three days a week between the outer areas of the town and the centre, hospital and Tesco supermarket.
- 3.28. The railway station is located at the south eastern boundary of the town centre and the Regatta Line provides a frequent service to join the mainline Great Western Railway services at Twyford.
- 3.29. A car club was set up in April 2021 to allow residents and visitors to hire a car by the hour from two locations – one in the town centre and the other on the Reading Road. This aims to reduce the need for resident owned vehicles and thereby to alleviate the pressure on parking space.
- 3.30. Pedestrian routes between the town centre and the rail station are pleasant - either walking via the river or Queen Street or Reading Road and Duke Street, although signage could improve the link.
- 3.31. From 2006 to 2009 the town centre transport network underwent some improvements, including signalisation of the Reading Road/ Station Road junction, linking the town centre signals to hold traffic on the edges of town, making Duke Street one-way northbound and footway widening on Duke Street and Bell Street to allow greater ease of movement for pedestrians. The work to improve the environment for pedestrians remains a consideration for the Transport Strategy Group.
- 3.32. Encouraging and promoting greater levels of Active Travel will become increasingly important, to shift away from private vehicles to active, public and shared forms of transport. For example, cycling and walking- either as a sole mode of transport for shorter journeys or for longer journeys in combination with public transport - has a significant role to play in terms of reducing congestion in Henley. Without doing this, vehicle emissions are likely to increase. They also provide benefits from improving health through exercise.



Air Quality

- 3.33. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side.
- 3.34. The previous Air Quality Management Plan for Henley in 2007 introduced an Intelligent Traffic System, designed to smooth the traffic flow within Henley and reduce queuing times. The draft Air Quality Action Plan for South Oxfordshire undertook public consultation in June 2014. Specific actions for Henley include:
- A low emission zone feasibility study with a particular focus on HGVs and buses. Part of this study will look at the potential for a low emission zone.
 - A park and stride campaign to encourage people to park out of town, where it is either free or considerably cheaper than town centre car parks.
 - A 'cut your engine' campaign to encourage drivers to switch their engines off when queuing at traffic lights

Character

- 3.35. Henley is an attractive and historic market town located on the banks of the River Thames, close to the Chiltern Hills. Its origins lie in the 12th century with the Market Place and St Mary's Church dating to this period.
- 3.36. The principal roads were all laid out by the 15th century and many buildings of the medieval period survive although many were refronted in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its special interest lies in its historic and continuing relationship with the River Thames, the surviving burgage plot pattern of the historic core, the Georgian and Victorian suburban expansion and refronting of many buildings during these periods and the varied style and materials of buildings.
- 3.37. The quality of Henley's historic buildings makes the town an important national destination which is also an important catalyst for its success as a tourist destination. The road layout and historic buildings do create a constraint on the town centre traffic flow, particularly given that the town provides the only river crossing from some distance, hence the through traffic. The [Henley Conservation Area Character Assessment](#) (consultation draft) 2021 provides an important statement of the historic built environment in Henley.
- 3.38. 'Harpsden is an older but now much smaller and more dispersed settlement, most of which lies in the Chilterns AONB to the south of Henley. The heart of the village is centred on the Village Hall with further residential clusters around Gillotts Lane, St. Margaret's Church and Harpsden Bottom.
- 3.39. The density of development across the urban area, in Henley, is important to acknowledge in determining potential capacity of future sites, in order to preserve the character of the town and not over load infrastructure. Development at the fringes of the town typically ranges from 20-25 dwellings per hectare, which can be found for example at the detached dwellings along Blandy Road and Valley Road. Areas such as Kings James Way have a range of detached, semi detached and terraced houses rising to

up to 40 dwellings per hectare. Older terraced properties in the town centre have the highest density, notably along Albert Road at around 70 dwellings per hectare.

Environment and Landscape

- 3.40. The quality of the landscape and environment is one of the key defining features of Henley and Harpsden. The Plan area covers a number of historic assets and designated areas including the River Thames itself, the surrounding Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Ancient Woodland and a scheduled ancient monument. The purpose of the Chilterns AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. SSSIs, of which there are three within the Plan area (Lambridge Wood, Highlands Farm Pit and Harpsden Wood), are designated for their particular national botanical and archaeological value and for their contribution to biodiversity.
- 3.41. There is also the Thames Path National Trail which is a nationally designated Long Distance Walking Route which runs along the river front.
- 3.42. There is an area of green belt located immediately east of the Neighbourhood Plan area, but no designated green belt within the Neighbourhood Plan area itself.

Flooding

- 3.43. The maps that result from the District's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment show flood zones 2 and 3. Flood zone 2 is the medium probability flood risk area that has between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 year annual probability of flooding (1% - 0.1%) in any year. Flood zone 3 is the high probability flood risk area that has a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of flooding (>1%) in any year. The proximity of the town to the River Thames means it is affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 and experienced flooding twice since 2000.





4. Vision and Objectives

- 4.1. This section sets out the community's vision for Henley and Harpsden, the themes and primary objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan and the strategy for bringing the vision and objectives forward. The planning policies that follow are the delivery tools for realising the vision, objectives and strategy.
- 4.2. The vision statement: **"In 20 years' time, Henley on Thames and the adjacent small village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area."**

Themes and main objectives

- 4.3. To achieve the Vision this Plan contains objectives and policies which are organised around a set of main themes:
 - Environment, sustainability and design quality
 - Housing
 - Traffic and transport
 - Retail, town centre and economy
 - Social infrastructure

Environment, sustainability and design quality

Primary Objectives

- EO1 – To prioritise the protection and enhancement of the following features:
 - The physical townscape and the river including *all National Trails and local footpaths, working with appropriate groups such as the Chiltern Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association and footpath working groups.*
 - Key views
 - AONB and Harpsden Valley
 - Existing green spaces
- EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors. Public green spaces should also be supported by cycling and walking connectivity in line with transport objectives TO1 and TO2.
- EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.
- EO4 – To expect all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment.
- EO5 – To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials.
- EO6 – To support community energy projects.
- EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the

economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.

- EO8 – To seek to boost Air Quality.
- EO9 - Encourage the provision of electric charging points in new development.

Housing

Primary Objectives

- HO1 - Identify land for new housing as required by the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policy H3.
- HO2 - Ensure that Henley and Harpsden remain distinct settlements, separated physically and visually from one other.
- HO3 - Prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield sites, and intensification of use of existing land where appropriate.
- HO4 - Deliver an appropriate range and mix of housing to achieve a balanced community and in particular help meet the needs of those age and income groups who have difficulty finding homes in Henley.
- HO5 - Explore opportunities to address local needs and maximise affordable housing delivery.
- HO6 – Ensure that developments are sensitively integrated into new and existing developments, promoting the amenity of all and sympathetic to existing housing.
- HO7 – Encourage new developments to sustain the significance of heritage assets and be sensitive to their settings.
- HO8 - Deliver an appropriate mix and tenure of housing including First Homes.

Traffic and transport

Primary Objectives

- TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.
- TO2 - To ensure that new development supports the Neighbourhood Plan vision by providing cycling, walking and public transport connectivity to the existing network and the town and where possible contributes to improving the existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.
- TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.
- TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.
- TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

Retail, town centre and economy

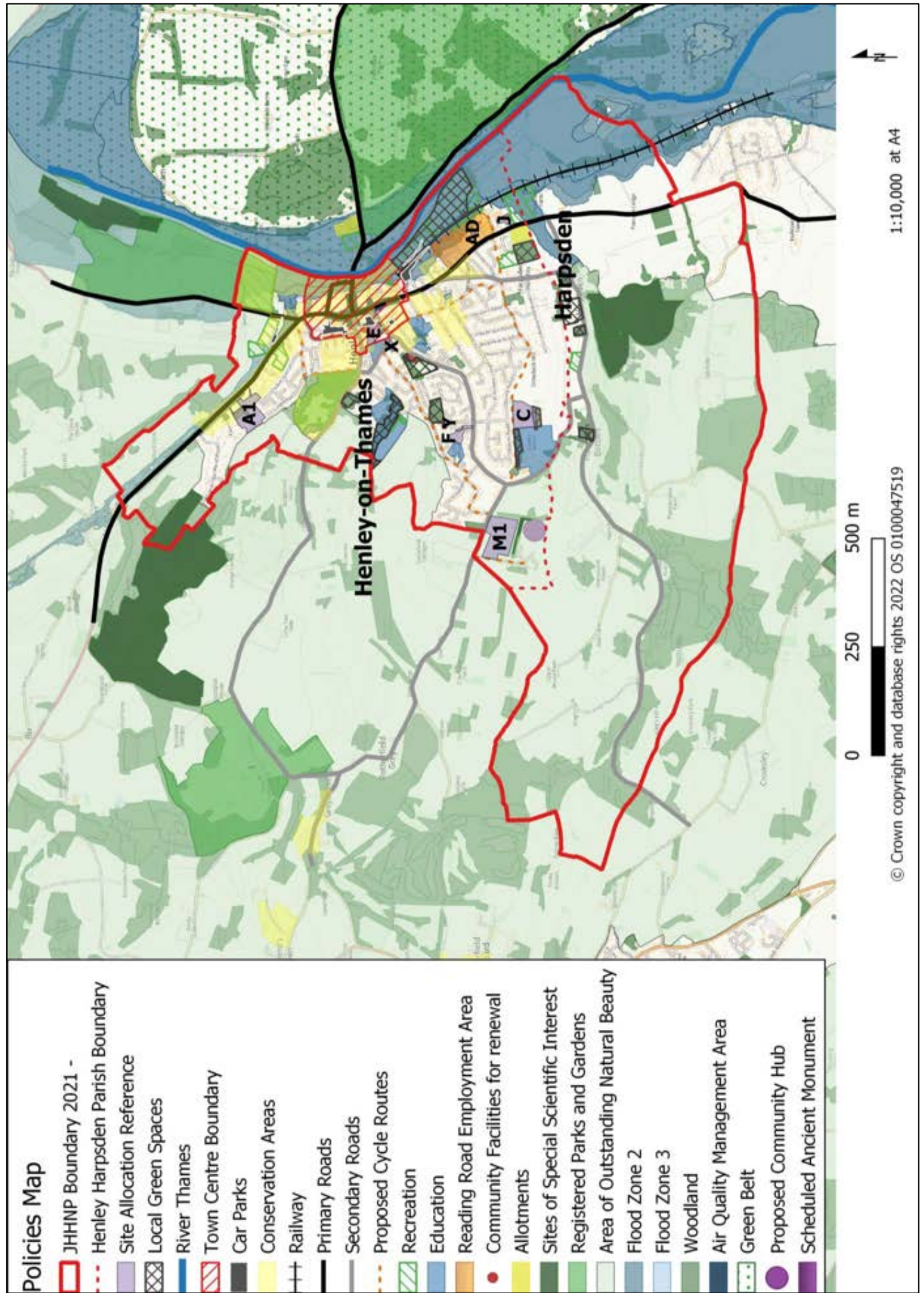
Primary Objectives

- RO1 - To improve the offering within the town centre to deliver additional retail floorspace which would be subject to the requirements of objectively assessed evidence of need.
- RO2 - To encourage mixed-use developments with employment, retail and housing uses.
- RO3 - To encourage a wider mix and variety of shops and services in the town to cater for all ages.
- RO4 - To enhance town centre vehicle flows and car park management (linked to objective T05).
- RO5 - To provide for the needs of start-ups and hightech companies including encouraging the provision of shared office space 'hubs' and service centres.

Infrastructure

Primary Objectives

- SO1 - To ensure that the required health, education, leisure and community infrastructure is in place to accommodate the needs of *all* residents and surrounding parishes.
- SO2 - To maximise leisure opportunities for all ages, identifying how new mechanisms for delivering new and improved facilities in appropriate locations can be delivered
- SO3 - To enhance and maintain Henley as a centre of excellence for sports (including rugby, football, rowing, swimming, hockey, tennis, golf, cricket, athletics and other sports).
- SO4 - To work with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that the health needs of the whole population are met and plan for future levels of provision and service.



The policies are organised by themes and relate to the Plan objectives (chapter 4). For clarity, the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives should not be confused with the Neighbourhood Plan Policies.

5. Environment Policies

Policy ENV1: Air Quality

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

The purpose of this policy is to seek to minimise the impacts of development on air quality.

- 5.1. The public raised the issue of air quality in the town within the [Neighbourhood Plan Survey](#). 84% of the respondents to the [Survey](#) undertaken in 2020/21 were concerned with air pollution, with the main areas of concern Reading Road, Bell Street and Duke Street. When asked about issues in respect of roads in the area, 55% of respondents were concerned over air pollution and vibration from Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 186 requires that Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan. More information on the AQMA and action plan can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1 : Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.
- 5.3. National guidance⁴ states that it is important to consider whether air quality is an issue when drawing up a neighbourhood plan.
- 5.4. The Local Plan Policy HEN1 expects the Neighbourhood Plan to address air quality issues. Policy EP1 already requires an Air Quality Assessment for development proposed in areas of existing poor air quality and/or where significant development is proposed and for all development to minimise air pollution at the design stage. Development will only be permitted where it does not exceed air pollution levels set by EU or UK regulations.

⁴ PPG Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 32-003-20191101

- 5.5. Development should not cause increases in harmful pollutants. Such pollutants include greenhouse gases those considered by the United Nations to cause adverse impacts to the natural environment⁵; and particles and gases considered by the World Health Organisation (WHO)⁶ to be harmful to human health.
- 5.6. The health, wellbeing and lifestyle of residents and visitors to the area are all of vital importance. Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. The 2008 Ambient Air Quality Directive⁷ sets legally binding limits for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that affect public health such as particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). There are also national emission reduction commitments for overall UK emissions of 5 damaging air pollutants:
- fine particulate matter (PM2.5);
 - ammonia (NH₃);
 - nitrogen oxides (NO_x);
 - sulphur dioxide (SO₂); and
 - non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs)
- 5.7. As well as having direct effects on public health, habitats and biodiversity, these pollutants can combine in the atmosphere to form ozone, a harmful air pollutant (and potent greenhouse gas) which can be transported great distances by weather systems.
- 5.8. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxide emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. The LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report⁸ states that there was an exceedance recorded in Henley AQMA located at 4 Duke Street, which recorded an annual average of 49 µg NO₂/m³ which exceeds the EU and UK threshold of 40 micrograms/cubic metres. The five-year trend of NO₂ levels in the district and within Henley AQMA continues to be a decreasing one, but some of the monitoring sites in Henley have registered higher concentrations than in 2018.
- 5.9. The Town Council are conducting additional air quality testing, including of particulates in Greys Road and nitrogen dioxide in the Bell Street area. The nitrogen dioxide monitoring follows the DEFRA calendar and Technical Guidance⁹. The Council decided to extend the nitrogen dioxide measuring in June 2021 because it was concerned about some high results, and to enable longer term averages to be calculated. More evidence can be found in the Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.

⁵ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/independent-assessment-of-uk-climate-risk/>

⁶ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/345329/9789240034228-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁷ UK and EU Air Quality Policy Context - Defra, UK

⁸ South Oxfordshire District Council (2014) Air Quality Action Plan 2014 [online] available: https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/01/air_quality_action_plan.pdf

⁹ Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Support Website | DEFRA

- 5.10. A Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group was established by the Town Council in 2019 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency. A number of projects have been undertaken to improve air quality including:
- 5.11. No-idling, close the door – the Council has supported ‘Clean Air for Henley’ campaigns on no-idling and closed doors (for roadside shops to protect their staff and customers from air pollution).
- 5.12. The Council has supported and is continuing with several projects to encourage walking rather than driving. TSG has supported a project to put up walking signs giving the time it takes to walk between popular locations in and around Henley, and this is being coordinated with Walkers are Welcome. Locations have been proposed and precise signage locations are being investigated.
- 5.13. A car club was set up in April 2021 to allow residents and visitors to hire a car by the hour from two locations – one in the town centre and the other on the Reading Road. This aims to reduce the need for resident owned vehicles and therefore help to improve air quality. The project was 50% funded from the SODC air quality improvement fund. The first two vehicles are low emitting cars (Toyota Yaris hybrid), and, if the car club expands, the Council has expressed the wish that future vehicles will be electric.
- 5.14. A full list of projects undertaken by the Town Council can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.15. New housing and employment provision in the parishes and the surrounding area has the potential to negatively impact air quality through increasing traffic flows and associated pollutants, including NO₂, particularly along the main routes through the Neighbourhood Plan area. More specifically, the designated AQMA in Henley is an area of high sensitivity to increased traffic flows and consequent pollution. It is considered necessary for the policy to go beyond what is required through the Local Plan.

Policy ENV1: Air Quality

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should include measures to minimise air pollution at the design stage and incorporate best practice in the design, construction and operation of the development. In particular:

- a) Such development must aim to demonstrate that it is ‘air quality neutral’ (i.e. no worse than existing or the existing benchmark) and where possible should contribute to the reduction of concentrations of regulated air pollutants below WHO guidelines in the JHHNP Area by 2022 and thereafter.
- b) All replacement development should aim to be less polluting than existing development that it will replace.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors.

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure development maintains and enhances the natural environment and its intrinsic ecological value.

- 5.16. The green spaces and biodiversity assets in Henley and Harpsden are very important in making it such a high-quality place. This was a view reinforced by the local community in the [survey](#) where respondents wanted to maximize green space habitat/ biodiversity and provide connections between them. More evidence of the existing assets can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.
- 5.17. The National Planning Policy Framework (section 15) promotes conserving and enhancing the natural environment, it states that “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment”, “minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity”, promoting “establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”. “Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions” (paragraph 174). “plans should “Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks “and promote their “habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation” (paragraph 179).
- 5.18. SOLP Policy STRAT4. Clause 5.i,v & vi) already requires a landscape and visual impact assessment, an Arboricultural Survey and an Ecological Impact Assessment and STRAT4. Clause 6.vi) requires a vi) a Landscape Management Plan to provide appropriate landscaping and an integrated network of green infrastructure for strategic developments.
- 5.19. SOLP ENV5.3. on appropriate planting “which takes account of changing weather patterns” and DES8 which requires that “...proposals must demonstrate that they are seeking to limit greenhouse emissions through location, building orientation, design, landscape and planting.
- 5.20. In order to maximize biodiversity, it is necessary to make the most of opportunities with new development. Local species will be encouraged, which contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the landscape character of the site and the local area, the ecological value of the site and any wildlife corridors.

- 5.21. During the Covid-19 crisis there has been an increased awareness of the need for local green spaces which has driven demand for new space and human encroachment on existing spaces needed for biodiversity.
- 5.22. The Town Council have introduced many initiatives to promote green conservation including on-going conservation work on Mill and Marsh Meadows, grassland management to encourage flora and fauna and reduced mowing to encourage wildlife.

Policy ENV2: Biodiversity

A. Development should maintain and enhance the natural environment and its intrinsic ecological value. As appropriate to their nature and scale, development proposals should:

- a) identifies the local biodiversity and seeks to protect or enhance it through the creation of new wildlife areas or corridors;
- b) incorporates features such as nesting boxes and beehives alongside soil and planting that is likely to attract wildlife;
- c) provides new, multi-functional green space locally including appropriately managed, unconventional green space; and/or
- d) incorporates planting which will be resilient to climate change.

B. Development should enhance the environment and biodiversity. As appropriate to their nature and scale, development proposals are encouraged to include tree and shrub planting, that:

- a) incorporates sustainable planting in keeping with the character of the local area.
- b) includes a clear planting plan demonstrating resilience to disease, pests and climate change that is consistent with the principles of Policy ENV3 (Trees);
- c) is designed to ensure low maintenance effort and cost and,
- d) where possible, is visible in whole or part from the public realm to capture associated well-being benefits.

Policy ENV3: Trees

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

- 5.23. All woodland in Henley and Harpsden should be given some form of protection. (See policy ENV4 Local Green Spaces). Where Green space (See policy ENV4 Local Green Spaces) protection is deemed to be insufficient, further protection should be sought.
- 5.24. Ancient and Priority Habitat woodland should be allowed to regenerate naturally. Removal of undergrowth and small trees should be avoided.
- 5.25. The tree population should be maintained in accordance with good arboricultural practice. It should be regenerated with healthy and diverse species with a balanced age structure that respects character and heritage to maximise its landscape and amenity benefits to the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan Area over the long term. More evidence can be found in the Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.
- 5.26. Careful management of street trees is essential to preserve the character of many streets in Henley, to help to control air pollution and to provide visual amenity. Their maintenance should be covered in the emerging Town Council Tree Strategy.

Policy ENV3: Trees

A. Protection and Maintenance:

Development proposals that affect existing trees should contain measures for their protection in general, and to avoid damage to roots in particular. Where the removal of trees is unavoidable, they should be replaced by appropriate species and in locations which would allow their longer-term stability and growth. Wherever practicable, three new trees should replace every tree lost.

B. Enhancement

As appropriate to its scale, nature and location tree planting should form part of new development proposals. This should include large scale trees planted along streets and in public open spaces where their future can be guaranteed. In addition, trees should be planted in gardens or as communal woodlands, or a combination of both. Unless site circumstances dictate otherwise, a minimum of three trees should be planted for each dwelling and measures put in place for the maintenance and upkeep of communal trees.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

EO1 – To prioritise the protection and enhancement of the following features:

- The physical townscape and the river including all National Trails and local footpaths, working with appropriate groups such as the Chiltern Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association and footpath working groups.
- Key views
- AONB and Harpsden Valley
- Existing green spaces

EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors. Public green spaces should also be supported by cycling and walking connectivity in line with transport objectives TO1 and TO2.

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

5.27. In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection. Once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances.

5.28. Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.
- Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

5.29. The sites listed in the policy have been assessed against the criteria for Local Green Space as set out in the NPPF paragraph 102. They are considered to be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve; local in character and not an extensive tract of land; and demonstrably special to the local community and holding a particular local significance.

5.30. The detailed justification for each of the Local Green Spaces are provided in the “Local Green Space Assessments” in the Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change and the [Local Green Space Methodology](#), and their location is shown on Figure 1.

5.31. Policy ENV4 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the local green spaces within the Plan period, they can be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the District Council. In particular, it will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the 'very special circumstances' required by the policy.



Figure 1 - Local Green Space Designations

Policy ENV4: Local Green Space

The following areas shown on the Policies Map are designated as a Local Green Space:

- 1) Mill and Marsh Meadows
- 2) Makins Recreation Ground
- 3) Chalk Bank
- 4) Gillotts Wood
- 5) Lucy's Farm – woodland
- 6) Sheephouse Lane
- 7) Watermans's Spinney
- 8) Parkside wood
- 9) Henley College Wood
- 10) Bottom of the Stony Road
- 11) Little Hill (previously Top of Little Hill)
- 12) Harpsden Cricket Club

Proposals for development on these Local Green Spaces will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

The purpose of this policy is to raise awareness of the risks of flooding and the importance of early investigation of geology and drainage capacity of development sites.

- 5.32. Flooding is a natural process influenced by natural elements such as rainfall, geology, topography and man-made interventions, such as farming methods, flood defences, roads, buildings, and other infrastructure. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to avoid the risk of flooding, where possible. Where it is not possible, development should be directed to areas with the lowest level of flood risk using the sequential test. Having exhausted all opportunities to direct development away from areas of flood risk, the vulnerability of the proposed use must be considered along with possible mitigation measures using the exception test. This approach is known as the risk based sequential approach.
- 5.33. Research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2018 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP18)¹⁰. This predicts a likely central estimate of increase in annual mean temperatures of between 1°C and 2°C; and the central estimate of change in annual mean precipitation of 0 to +20% in winter and -10% to -30% in summer. Due to these changes a range of risks may exist for the Neighbourhood Plan area that include an adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain; an increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100-year floods; Soil erosion due to flash flooding and Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence and flooding of roads.
- 5.34. With regard to flooding from rivers, the NPPF categorises zones of flood risk (1,2,3a and 3b) and states that the overall aim should be to steer new development to Flood Zone 1 (low risk). The Environment Agency defines flood zones on the basis of their annual probability of flooding without the presence of any defences. The advice within the NPPF explains in detail how these zones are classified.
- 5.35. The risk of flooding from rivers, surface water, sewers, groundwater within the district including Henley and Harpsden has been explored within the South Oxfordshire District Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)¹¹. The SFRA provides more detailed flood risk information, including identifying which parts of Flood Zone 3 are within the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b), as well as information on the effects of climate change and data on depth and hazard of flooding.

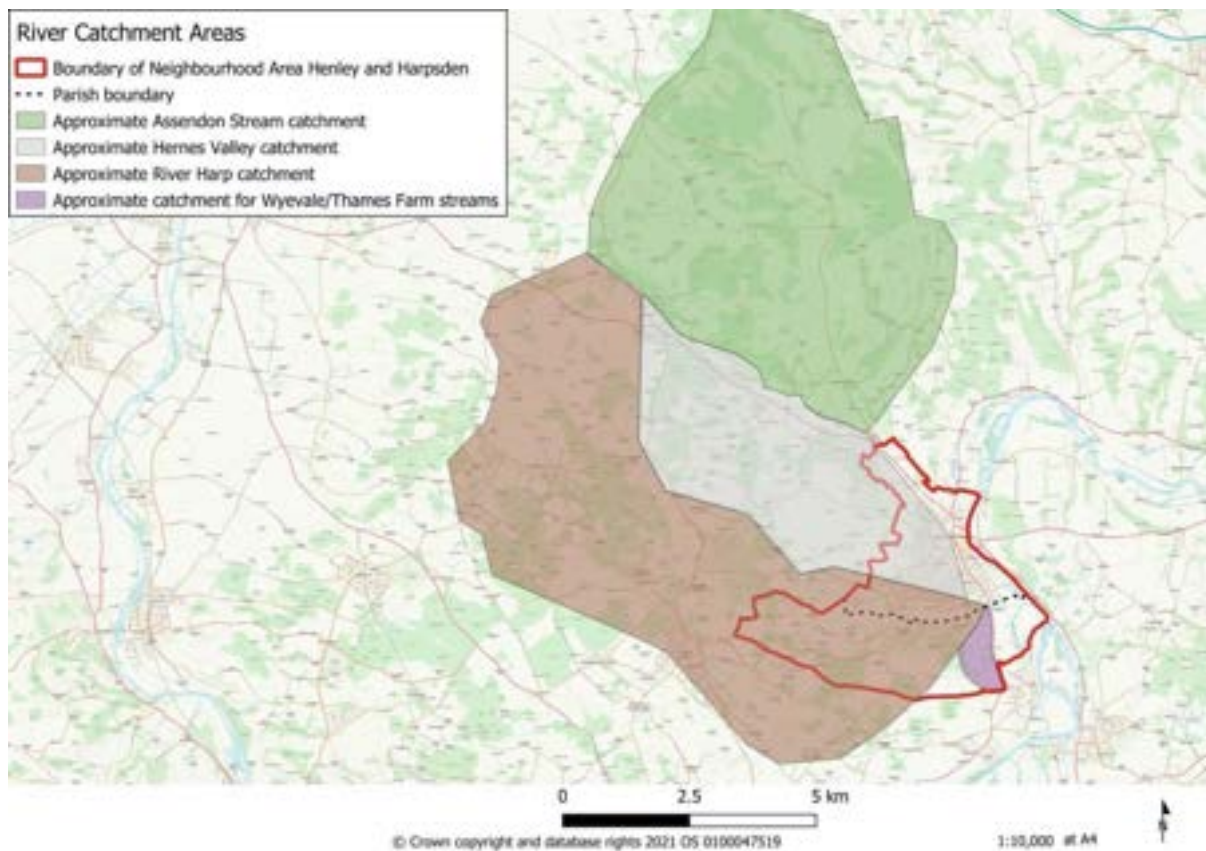
¹⁰ UK Climate Projections (UKCP) - Met Office

¹¹ JBA Consulting (southoxon.gov.uk)

- 5.36. The Local Plan Policy EP4: Flood Risk requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and sets out in what circumstances an FRA would be required in Flood Zone 1.
- 5.37. Local Plan Policy INF4: Water Resources states that all development proposals must demonstrate that there is or will be adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve the whole development. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users. When there is a capacity constraint and improvements to off-site infrastructure are not programmed, the developer should set out how the infrastructure improvements will be completed prior to occupation of the development. For phased development proposals, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and water treatment capacity.
- 5.38. The promotion of sustainable water management practises is vital. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage water flow can be important in minimising flood risk, but they also help to create high quality environments that encourage biodiversity through enhancements to wildlife, and benefit water resources. The effective use of permeable surfaces, soakaways and water storage areas should be incorporated in all new development, where possible. These are supported through the Neighbourhood Plan and would also deliver wider benefits to biodiversity, water quality and public amenity.
- 5.39. Lead local flood authorities (LLFAs) are responsible for advising on the management of surface water from new development and for producing local flood risk management strategies. These show the extent of flood risk from ordinary watercourses and other sources of flooding such as surface water and set out how this risk will be managed in partnership.
- 5.40. Up-to-date fluvial and surface water flooding maps produced by the Environment Agency are available here: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>.
- 5.41. Local Plan Policy EP4: Flood Risk requires all development to provide a Drainage Strategy and expected to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and ensure that run-off rates are attenuated to greenfield run-off rates. Higher rates would need to be justified and the risks quantified. Development should strive to reduce run-off rates for existing developed sites. It also states that Sustainable Drainage Systems should seek to enhance water quality and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive.
- 5.42. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has produced a set of non-statutory technical standards for the design, maintenance and operation of sustainable drainage systems¹². There is an expectation that robust and sustainable arrangements for the maintenance of sustainable drainage systems will be put in place. Please see Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change for more information.

¹² Sustainable drainage systems: non-statutory technical standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- 5.43. Henley and Harpsden has unique geology and the location of Harpsden which lies on the dip slope of the Chiltern Hills, a chalk outcrop which stretches 50 miles. Rainfall in this catchment area is normally drained through the underlying chalk, however when the ground is either saturated, or is too dry to absorb water, the rainfall runs off following the dry watercourses as shown in the Map in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change where there is more information.
- 5.44. New development must have regard to the presence of unstable ground and the effect this can have on planning and development of an area. The Neighbourhood Plan would support the investigation of sites at the early stages of the planning process.



Policy ENV5: Watercourses

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should have regard to the geology and drainage capacity of the site and the way in which rainfall is affected by the underlying chalk in the area.

6. Sustainable Policies

Policy SD1: Minimising Carbon Emissions.

- 6.1. The following policies SD1a (Fabric First Approach) and SD1b (Other Methods) should be read in conjunction with policy DES10 of the Local Plan.
- 6.2. Policy DES10 of the Local Plan includes the requirement for new build residential dwellings, developments including 1,000sqm or more of C2 use or Houses in Multiple Occupation to achieve at least 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. The requirement will increase from 31 March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions and again from 31 March 2030 to a 100% reduction in carbon emissions (zero carbon). These targets will be reviewed in the light of any future legislation and national guidance.
- 6.3. In delivering the standards set out in Policy DES10 of the Local Plan, Policy SD1a would apply, where this is not possible Policy SD1b should be applied.

Policy SD1a: Fabric First Approach.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO4 – To expect all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment.

EO6 – To support community energy projects in line with the government's Community Energy Strategy 2014.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage new development to minimise both the embodied carbon during construction and minimise the operational carbon emissions by design using the Fabric First Approach.

- 6.4. A typical conventional new build house will embody between 50 and 60 tonnes of Carbon in its construction.¹³ The ongoing operational emissions are typically 5 tonnes per annum. This means that over the Local Plan period to 2035, embodied carbon represents between 40% and 44% of the total carbon for a house built today. In order to mitigate this, developers and builders should use fabric first methods, using tried and tested methods of construction that can match existing construction costs when used at scale.
- 6.5. Data taken from the Energy Performance of Buildings Data in England and Wales¹⁴ shows that Henley and Harpsden energy performance of buildings lag behind other stock in

¹³ About - Hemspan®

¹⁴ <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/login>

London and the South East. Data included in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.

- 6.6. A 'fabric first' approach to building design involves maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. This can help to reduce capital and operational costs, improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions whilst reducing ongoing maintenance costs.
- 6.7. The Local Plan encourages developers to take account of the energy hierarchy when identifying the measures taken to reduce carbon emissions and to adopt a fabric first approach by maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems.
- 6.8. Policy INF4 Water Resources in the Local Plan already requires new developments to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres/head/day (l/h/d) for new homes. Policy DES7 includes the incorporation of measures to maximise opportunities for solar gain through building orientation, to maximise natural ventilation, use of green roofs and natural shading.
- 6.9. PassivHaus refers to new build and EnerPHit is a standard which sets performance requirements for retrofits, on space heating and cooling demand and on airtightness performance and is a recognised benchmark for whole house energy efficiency. Other standards on energy efficiency and insulation include Lifetime Homes and Building Regulations standards. It is acknowledged that retrofitting to EnerPHit standard will be challenging and could have viability implications.
- 6.10. Henley faces a number of challenges such as fuel poverty, high energy bills.¹⁵ Saving energy and generating clean energy can simultaneously help reduce our community's contribution to climate change, address energy challenges and generate practical benefits for the community such as reduced fuel poverty, lower fuel bills, warmer homes, improved health and local jobs.
- 6.11. The Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to bring forward affordable housing, which provides a good opportunity to seek high energy efficiency standards. There is a deficit of Social Housing in the NDP area as demonstrated by the [2020 Henley and Harpsden Housing Needs Assessment](#)¹⁶. Any development of affordable and particularly social rental housing should be to the highest energy efficiency standards, in order to minimise fuel poverty.
- 6.12. The Town Council have been involved with projects to reduce carbon emissions, see Appendix A.

¹⁵ See Baseline Report: Topic Paper 1: Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change.

¹⁶ See Baseline Report: Topic Paper 2: Housing

Policy SD1: Minimising Carbon Emissions.**Policy SD1a: Fabric First Approach**

Commensurate to their size and scale, development proposals should consider a Fabric First approach to their design to minimise their carbon emissions and as a minimum meet the energy efficiency requirements set out in the Development Plan.

A) A 'fabric first' approach to building design should be taken to maximise the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. As such developers should consider the following development principles:

- a) Minimising the use of high carbon cost building materials such as Concrete, Cement and Steel.
- b) Maximising use of materials which score highly on Building for Life criteria¹⁷ such as wood, wood and/or hemp fibre.
- c) Using modern design techniques such as EnerPHit as a best practice standard to achieve good air-tightness and insulation in retrofit and Passivhaus for new development.

¹⁷ https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Building%20for%20Life%2012_0.pdf

Policy SD1b: Other Methods

- 6.13. Development plays an important role in minimising the environmental impact of living, working, studying and visiting Henley and Harpsden. It is vital that new development creates the smallest carbon footprint possible, ideally zero.
- 6.14. NPPF section 14 considers meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. Paragraph 152 specifically states that the planning system should help to “shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”. Paragraph 155 requires that “to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should: provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts)”; and “identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers”. Paragraph 158 goes even further and says that local authorities should approve planning applications for renewable and low carbon development “if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable”.
- 6.15. Local plan policy DES 8 sets out the scope of the building policies to include modification and extension and policy DES 10 sets out that all new development, including building conversions, refurbishments and extensions, seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction and policies ENV6-8, which cover works on historic buildings.
- 6.16. The Local Plan (Paragraph 8.36) seeks for all energy efficiency measures used to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions, including renewable energy and low carbon technologies, should be delivered on-site, where possible. Where off-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies need to be used, the renewable or low carbon energy produced should directly service the proposed development scheme. This policy seeks to add value to the Local Plan policy providing specific encouragement of improving energy efficiency in existing buildings and new buildings.
- 6.17. As a designated conservation area, much of Henley is a heritage asset in its own right. It also contains a high density of listed and unlisted buildings and structures, which contribute to the overall character and special interest of the area. There are 393 listed buildings within Henley-on-Thames and 15 listed buildings within Harpsden according to the latest Historic England Data.
- 6.18. NPPF Section 16 discusses conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraphs 199 – 208 discuss the weighing of different factors when considering the impacts of proposed development, including the asset’s conservation, the level of harm to the asset’s significance involved in the proposal, public benefits from the proposal.

- 6.19. SOLP policy HEN1 expects the NP to enhance the town's environment and strengthen and improve its attractiveness. SOLP ENV6, similarly to the NPPF, talks about weighing considerations: "Proposals for new development that may affect designated and non-designated heritage assets should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation." ENV6 part 2 clarifies that "Proposals that have an impact on heritage assets will be supported particularly where they" (amongst other potential benefits listed) "make a positive contribution towards wider public benefits".
- 6.20. The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures in historic buildings will be encouraged, including the retrofitting of listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas, providing that it respects the integrity of the historic environment and the character and significance of the building.
- 6.21. There are many opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of historic buildings which will have no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and examples of these are listed in the updated [Conservation Area Appraisal 2020](#) (draft). Proposed windows in a Conservation Area should be 'similar in appearance' or indeed accurately replicate historic proportions, material treatment, sight lines, opening mechanisms and detailing. Reference to Local Plan Policies ENV8 and Design Guide. However, it is noted that most retrofit would be allowed under Permitted Development Rights and therefore this policy would not be applicable. It should be noted that Listed Buildings do not benefit from Permitted Development and as such listed building consent will be required for most retrofit work. A number of non-listed buildings are covered by Article 4 Directions and some energy improvement measures may also require planning permission as a result. Where permission is required then this policy should be applied.
- 6.22. The following Community Scale and large commercial Projects should be investigated by Henley Town Council as part of their Carbon reduction strategy for the town.
- a. Installation of solar on the roofs of public buildings, schools, businesses Retrofit of Ground Source Heat Pump, Air Source Heat Pump, Water Source Heat Pump;
 - b. Installation of solar canopies on public and private car parks;
 - c. Water source heat pumps for supplying energy to buildings close to the river Thames including but not limited to the River and Rowing Museum, Phyllis Court Club;
 - d. Ground and air source heat pumps for public, buildings schools and businesses; e.g. the reinstatement and upgrade of Hydropower generation at Marsh Lock.

Minimising Carbon Emissions.
Policy SD1b: Other Methods

Where electrical and mechanical means are required to meet energy efficiency targets set out in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, or any higher standards which may be introduced in the Plan period, development proposals should incorporate some, or all, of the following measures:

- A. maximising the use of renewable energy by using electrical heating and avoiding the use of fossil fuels.
- B. Introducing measures to reduce heat loss. This could include, where appropriate, double glazing in Conservation Areas or secondary glazing in listed buildings with wooden windows that meet the latest relevant British standard.
- C. Draught proofing and improved ventilation strategies with suitable forms of insulation and insulating materials that are compatible with building type, construction and traditional fabric that do not detract from historic characteristics.
- D. using heat pumps to extract heat from the air, ground, or nearby water.
- E. incorporating Solar photovoltaic panels on South or East/West facing roofs, where these do not detract from the historic character of the building and are not visible from public domain where they are allowed, if the building lies within the conservation area.
- F. Installing a battery to allow load shifting to take advantage of local and grid renewable generation.

Policy SD2: Community Energy Projects

Community energy projects will be supported.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO5 –To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials.

EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.

- 6.23. The NPPF (paragraph 126) highlights that the importance of the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.
- 6.24. One of the notable features that defines Henley and Harpsden’s distinctive character is the high quality of built environment. Most of the Area is covered by three Conservation Areas, Henley, St Marks Road and Reading Road Conservation Areas. Henley Conservation Area was designated in 1979 and the St Mark’s Road and Reading Road Conservation Areas were both designated in 2005. For the purposes of description, the [Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan](#) (CAAMP) subdivides the Conservation Areas into Character Areas which help to describe the rich design and heritage of Henley. The Character Areas, as shown in the Conservation Area Appraisal, are: Area 1 (‘Fairmile’); Area 2 (‘Northfield End’); Area 3 (‘Phyllis Court and Fawley Court’); Area 4 (‘Town Centre’); Area 5 (‘Western Edges of Town Centre’); Areas 6 (‘Riverside’); Area 7 (Edwardian Suburbs’); Area 8(‘St Mark’s Road’); Area 9 (‘Reading Road’).
- 6.25. The historic environment of Henley, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit. The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality and respect their local context.
- 6.26. Development within the setting of the conservation area should be sympathetic to its special interest in terms of its scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing; development which harms its special interest will be resisted.
- 6.27. It is also important that development relates well to the design of existing local buildings, both within the individual character areas of the respective Conservation Areas, but also in the parts of the Area that are not in a Conservation Area. Development pressure could otherwise result in the compromise of design quality in new proposals.

- 6.28. Attention should be paid to good quality existing design guidance which includes the South Oxfordshire Design Guide¹⁸, National Design Guide¹⁹, South Oxfordshire Shopfront Design Guide²⁰ and Chilterns Building Design Guide²¹.
- 6.29. Historic shopfront signage should be retained and new signage should be appropriately designed for its historic context.
- 6.30. Where Design Briefs are required, they should demonstrate how the proposed development will respond to local character in terms of design and materials.
- 6.31. Awareness of the benefits of regular maintenance and sensitive repair, and advice regarding good practice should be sought, considering the latest [Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan](#) in the first instance.

Policy SD3: Local Character

Development proposals should respond positively to the setting of the surrounding area, having regard to the character of adjacent buildings and spaces, including scale, orientation, height and massing. In particular, they should demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture that respects the relevant Character Area, as shown in the Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan.

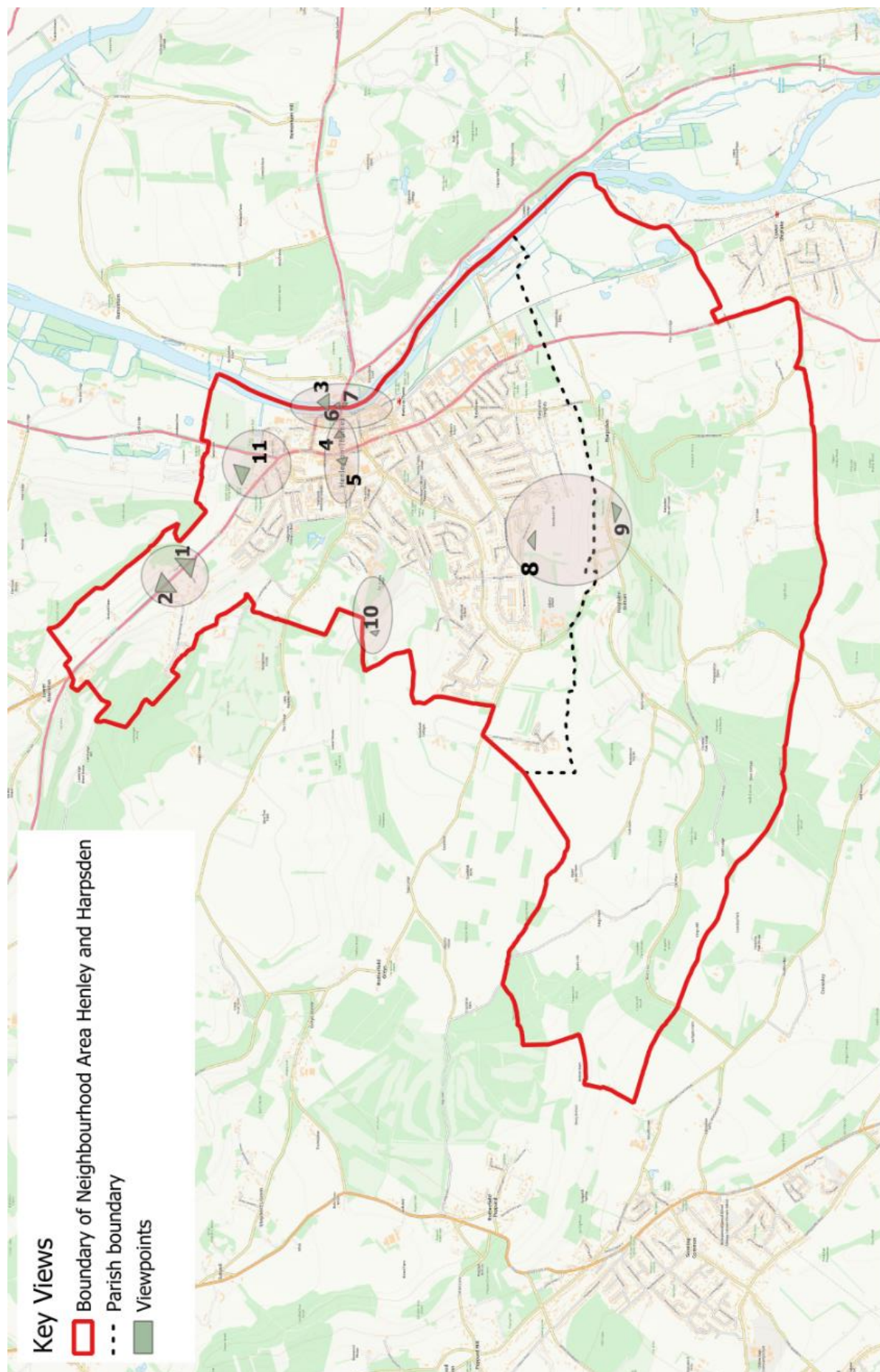
- a) Development proposals should have regard to the importance of responding creatively to, and where practicable enhancing, the setting of the surrounding area, having regard to the character of adjacent buildings and spaces, including scale, orientation, height and massing.
- b) For each of the respective Character Areas identified on the Policies Map, proposals should respect the design, use of materials and views identified in the Character Area.
- c) High quality materials should be used that respect the local setting and contribute positively to the particular Character Area or Conservation Area or the general surrounding area if outside of these designations.

¹⁸ South Oxfordshire Design Guide

¹⁹ National Design Guide

²⁰ South Oxfordshire Shopfront Design Guide

²¹ Chilterns Design Guide



Key View 1 – Fairmile looking North West



Key View 2 – Fairmile looking South East



Key View 3 – Looking south towards Henley Bridge



Key View 4 – from Market Place to the West



Key View 5 – Market Place to the East



Key View 6 – North of Henley Bridge to the Red Lion



Key View 7 – South of Henley Bridge to the Angel on the Bridge



Key View 8 – Drawback Hill to Henley Golf Club



Key View 9 – Henley Golf Club to Drawback Hill



Key View 10 – Sue Ryder Woodland to Henley College



Key View 11 – From near Henley Rugby Club towards the Mount



7. Housing Policies

Policy H1: Design Brief

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO5 –To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials.

EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.

H06 – Ensure that developments are sensitively integrated into new and existing developments, promoting the amenity of all and sympathetic to existing housing.

- 7.1. In addition to enabling communities to decide where new development should go, one of the key purposes of Neighbourhood Planning is to also enable local communities to say what new development should look like. To ensure Henley and Harpsden residents and businesses are able to pro-actively influence and shape new development coming forward at an early stage in the design process, allocated sites within the Neighbourhood Plan are expected to prepare a Design Brief. In preparing the Design Brief the following three stage process is encouraged.

Stage One: Early Engagement

- a) Offer to meet with Henley Town Council, Harpsden Parish Council and South Oxfordshire District Council to discuss initial design proposals for the site;
- b) Undertake a minimum of a one day public consultation event that is appropriately attended by a technical team;
- c) Provide Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council with an opportunity of an accompanied site visit.

Stage Two: Design Refinement

- d) Provide Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council with a short summary statement of the public consultation feedback and offer to meet with the Town and Parish Councils to discuss and review the feedback and any resulting proposal modifications

Stage Three: Agree the Design Brief

- e) Offer to present the final proposals and planning application submission to Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council;
- f) Within an agreed reasonable time prior to the submission of any planning application Henley Town Council, Harpsden Parish Council and South Oxfordshire District Council will provide a Design Brief Position Statement to the applicant confirming the satisfactory completion of the Policy H2 Design Brief process. This Position Statement would form the basis of any subsequent statutory public consultation comments made by Henley Town Council and/or Harpsden Parish Council to South Oxfordshire District Council as part of any formal planning application decision making process.

- 7.2. On windfall sites of 10 or more net additional dwellings or comprising 500sqm or more of new additional new employment, retail, hotel, community service, or leisure floorspace the preparation of a Design Brief is encouraged in the spirit of good planning and positive front loading of the decision-making process. The use of development proposal websites and other social media to provide residents with information and an opportunity to comment on emerging proposals is encouraged.
- 7.3. To ensure the local community, through Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council, maintain an active and positive role through any planning application decision-making process undertaken by South Oxfordshire District Council, where appropriate, a Planning Performance Agreement between the applicant, South Oxfordshire District Council and Henley Town Council would be welcomed, particularly for the sites allocated for development within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy H1: Design Brief

For all of the allocated sites listed within Policy DS1, a Design Brief must be produced for the whole site, setting out the principles for development on the submission of a planning application.

Applicants should seek to discuss the content of the Design Brief with Henley Town Council and where appropriate Harpsden Parish Council. Where appropriate the Design Brief should demonstrate consideration of:

- I. Location, type and management of open space and recreation facilities.
- II. Location, type and management of landscaping.
- III. Management, impact and mitigation of views, vistas and adjacencies.
- IV. Building use, scale, height, density and massing.
- V. Materials palette.
- VI. How the development responds to local character.
- VII. Connecting walking and cycling routes.
- VIII. Promotion of sustainable development and energy efficiency

Policy H2: Affordable Housing

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

HO4 - Deliver an appropriate range and mix of housing to achieve a balanced community and in particular help meet the needs of those age and income groups who have difficulty finding homes in Henley.

HO5 - Explore opportunities to address local needs and maximise affordable housing delivery.

HO8 - Deliver an appropriate mix and tenure of housing including First Homes.

7.4. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, the government have realised a ministerial statement on 24 May 2021²² requiring First Homes; a specific kind of discounted market sale housing which should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

7.5. First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.

Policy H2: Affordable Housing

Taking into account the requirements for affordable housing set out in the Local Plan Policy H9 or in any update position as set out by South Oxfordshire District Council on this matter, as well as the requirement that at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered should be First Homes, the affordable housing tenure sought should be in accordance with the table below:

Tenure	South Oxfordshire
First Homes	25%
Social Rent	35%
Affordable Rent	25%
Other routes to affordable home ownership	15%

²² <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hlws48>

Policy H3: Housing Type and Mix

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

HO4 - Deliver an appropriate range and mix of housing to achieve a balanced community and in particular help meet the needs of those age and income groups who have difficulty finding homes in Henley.

HO5 - Explore opportunities to address local needs and maximise affordable housing delivery.

HO8 - Deliver an appropriate mix and tenure of housing including First Homes.

- 7.6. It is important to ensure that new housing meets the housing needs of both South Oxfordshire and Henley and Harpsden both now and over the lifetime of the Plan. As housing needs in terms of size, type, tenure will vary over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan a flexible policy approach is required to ensure that future development proposals, particularly allocated sites phased to the latter part of the Neighbourhood Plan period, are able to respond to the housing needs at that point in time.
- 7.7. The recommended tenure split for Henley and Harpsden, based on the [HNA](#) and South Oxfordshire evidence, is to maintain that set out in district level policy: 40% affordable rented, 35% social rented and 25% other affordable routes to home ownership as set out Policy H9 of the Local Plan. However, due to changes resulting from the introduction of First Homes the district policy has effectively been amended, and a tenure split of 25% First Homes, 35% Social Rent, 25% Affordable Rent and 15% other routes to affordable home ownership will now be sought in the district.

Policy H3: Housing Type and Mix

Proposals for residential development should deliver a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households. Proposals should have regard to local housing need, as evidenced by the [Henley and Harpsden Housing Needs Assessment](#) and any future updates.

Policy H4: Infill and Self-Build Dwellings

- 7.8. The adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policy H16 defines Infill development as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.
- 7.9. The scale of infill should be appropriate to its location. The provision of new housing through infill and redevelopment opportunities are classed as ‘windfalls’. Windfalls are sites that have not been specifically allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan and have unexpectedly become available.
- 7.10. Self-build is an important element of the Government’s housing strategy as they not only provide new homes but can help get empty and redundant buildings back into productive use and supports action to help new house building firms.

Policy H4: Infill and Self-Build Dwellings

Infill housing developments and proposals for the construction of self-build dwellings within the built-up areas of Henley and Harpsden will be supported where it is demonstrated that the proposed development is in accordance with other relevant policies of the development plan.

8. Economy Policies

Policy E1: Supporting Henley's Economy

- 8.1. Henley provides a significant and important employment offer which needs to be retained and enhanced. In particular, the needs of small and medium sized businesses in the business, professional, creative industries and information technology sectors must be supported, as well as more traditional industries and arts and crafts. Analysis has shown that the business sector is the driving force behind the Henley economy, more so than retail, tourism and education, although these are also key employment sectors. As across the county as a whole, manufacturing has continued to decline.
- 8.2. Pressures on land due to additional housing requirements focus the employment strategy on intensification (including higher density) and partial redistribution of employment land.
- 8.3. Industrial and office activity will be concentrated at the Reading Road industrial estate which will be protected for employment. Opportunities for office based employment and smaller businesses hubs will be distributed at a range of town centre and out of town sites including allocated sites of Empstead Works / Stuart Turner and Highlands Farm.

Policy E1: Supporting Henley's Economy

Development at Reading Road Industrial Estate that supports its role as the Neighbourhood Area's main employment area will be supported.

Policy E2: Henley Town Centre

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

RO1 - To improve the offering within the town centre to deliver additional retail floorspace which would be subject to the requirements of objectively assessed evidence of need.

- 8.4. Section 9 of the Local Plan focuses on 'ensuring the vitality of town centres'. Policy TC2 identifies Henley-on-Thames as a major town centre, and states that the Council will promote the continued role and functions of the town centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and structure. The policy states that to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply a 'town centre first' approach to retail, services and other main town centre uses in accordance with the established hierarchy of centres.
- 8.5. Paragraph 9.11 of the Local Plan states that the Council considers that the national threshold for a Retail Impact Assessment of 2,500sqm is not appropriate for the district. The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (2016) identifies that while Didcot is performing well, the other centres are relatively small and could potentially be adversely impacted upon by out-of-centre development.

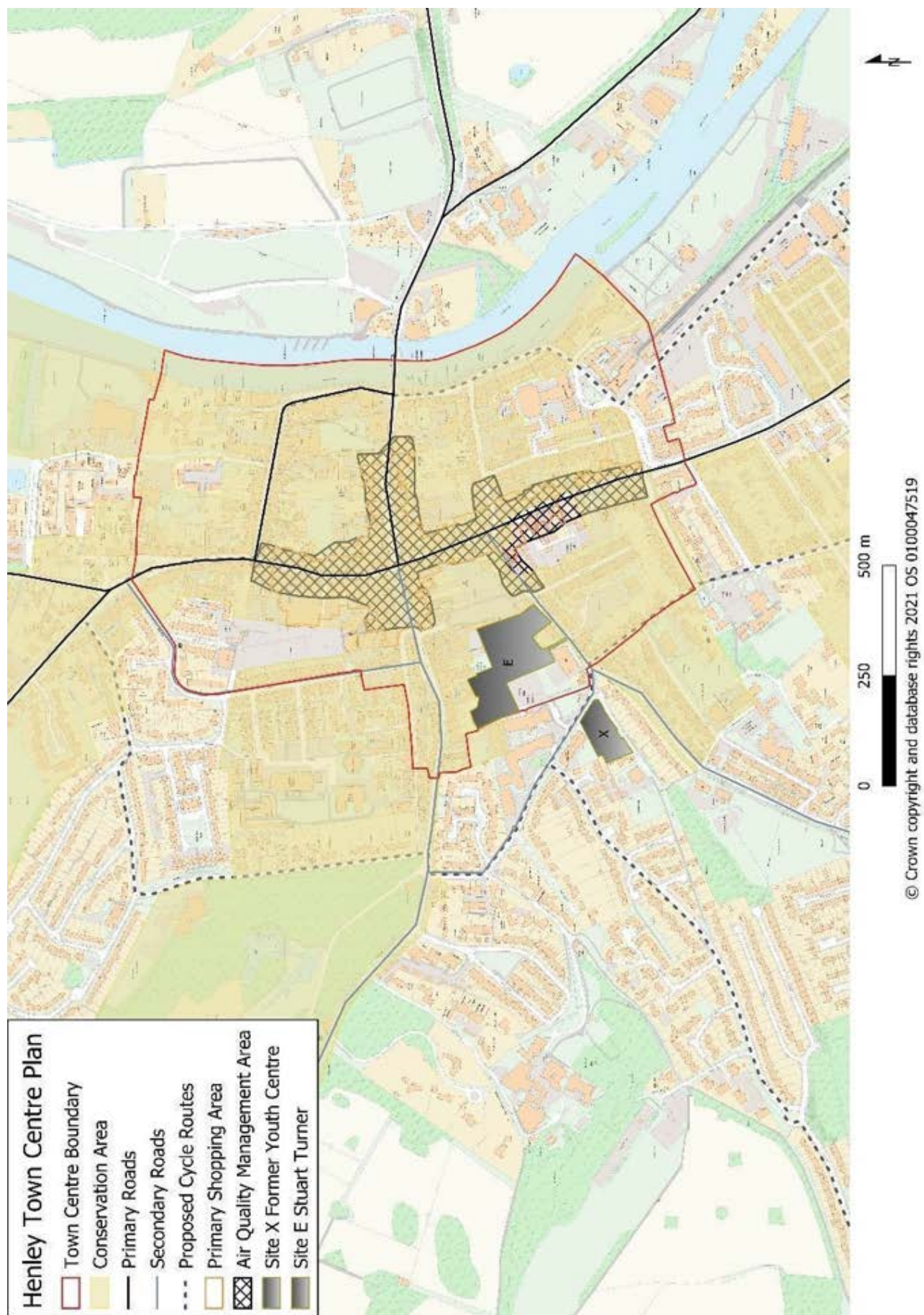
- 8.6. This section goes on to state that modern retailers selling a range of comparison goods generally have a requirement for a larger format unit. A threshold of 500sqm is deemed appropriate for protecting the vitality and viability of the district's centres when considering the size of the smallest 'main' foodstore in the district is 569sqm. The retail impact analysis threshold will be kept under review
- 8.7. Henley is a strong and healthy town centre, with a diverse mix of independent boutique shops and national multiples. The town has a good selection of both retail and restaurants with Bell Street offering the retail prime pitch and the northern side of Market Place offering the focal point for restaurants. However, competition from competing centres is only set to grow, so it is important that the town's vitality and viability is maintained and where possible improved. It is important that Henley town centre remains at the heart of the community as a destination not just for shopping, but also as a place where current and future residents want to work, socialise and live.
- 8.8. Greater flexibility was provided to town centre uses by the Use Classes Order 2020. In particular that version of the Order introduced a new Class E use (commercial, business and service uses) within which changes from one use to another do not need planning permission.

Policy E2: Henley Town Centre

The Henley Town Centre boundary is shown on the Henley Town Centre Plan.

Proposals for new retail, leisure, hotel and office development should be located within the defined town centre boundary. Development proposals for retail, leisure and office uses on unallocated sites outside the defined town centre must be in accessible locations to the town centre by walking, cycling and public transport, and have appropriate on and/ or off-street car parking provision. Such proposals will be subject to a sequential test and, for proposals comprising 500sqm or more net additional floorspace, an impact assessment.

Proposals which fail to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact will not be supported.



Policy E3: Market Place Hub

- 8.9. Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states that planning policies should retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones.
- 8.10. The very popular Charter Markets are held in the Market Place every Thursday as well as monthly farmers markets and Henley holds several weekend Continental style Markets each year. The 'Changing face of the High Streets South Oxfordshire's town centres', February 2014, report prepared by South Oxfordshire District Council highlights the importance of Market Place as a focal hub and recommends enhancing the restaurant offer within the Market Place area, particularly to the north.

Policy E3: Market Place Hub

The following development will be supported within Market Place:

- a) Food and drink (Class E);
- b) market stalls;
- c) secure cycle storage, particularly a covered facility.

Policy E4 : Employment and Residential above shops

- 8.11. The NPPG states that a wide range of complementary uses can, if suitably located, help to support the vitality of town centres, including residential, employment, office, commercial, leisure/entertainment, healthcare and educational development. Residential and in particular employment uses above shops will be encouraged.
- 8.12. Local Plan Policy H21 states that the loss of existing residential accommodation in the town centres will not be permitted other than in accordance with the relevant policies of this Plan, except in cases of upper floor accommodation where an independent access does not exist and cannot be provided, or in cases where there are insurmountable environmental factors which militate against continued residential use. The loss of private gardens, which could affect the residential amenity of the occupants of existing dwellings will also be resisted.

Policy E4: Employment and Residential above shops

Residential and in particular employment uses above shops will be encouraged, to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre and local economy.

9. Transport Policies

Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

- 9.1. The purpose of this policy is to address specific issues in Henley and Harpsden which are not currently addressed by the Local Plan, specifically in relation to air quality and improving health outcomes and quality of life. It is considered that the OCC and SODC requirements are not stringent enough to address the issues in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 9.2. The evidence²³ illustrates that action at the most local level that delivers practical support for improved transport infrastructure and activity should be sought. There is already a requirement in the Local Plan Policy TRANS4 for Transport Assessment, Statements and Travel Plans which should include the following; i) illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes of transport; ii) show the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site; iii) detail the proposed measures to improve access by public transport, cycling and walking to reduce the need for car travel and reduce transport impacts; iv) illustrate the impact on the highway network and the impact of proposed mitigation measures where necessary; v) include a Travel Plan (that considers all relevant forms of transport including accessible transport for disabled people) where appropriate; and vi) outline the approach to parking provision.
- 9.3. Transport Assessments (TAs) should identify what measures should be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme and improve accessibility and safety for all modes of transport, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport. Development proposals that are likely to have significant transport impacts must be accompanied by an appropriate Transport Assessment. This consolidates the approach taken in Policy TRANS4 of the Local Plan. In addition, the Assessment should demonstrate the development's impacts on traffic during both the construction and operational phases and the expected effect of mitigation measures.
- 9.4. The National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 105 specifically acknowledges that "significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health."
- 9.5. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are keen to avert a return to pre-lockdown levels of car use and the high pollution and congestion. A new transport modelling platform MIMAS is currently being developed by the County Council who have confirmed that a new Oxfordshire mobility model (OMM) will be implemented. More information on OCC and SODC evidence can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport.

²³ See Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport

- 9.6. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxides emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. The LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report²⁴ states that there was an exceedance recorded in Henley AQMA located at 4 Duke Street, which recorded an annual average of 49 µg NO₂/m³ which exceeds the EU and UK threshold of 35 40 micrograms/cubic metres. The five-year trend of NO₂ levels in the district and within Henley AQMA continues to be a decreasing one, but some of the monitoring sites in Henley have registered higher concentrations than in 2018.
- 9.7. Individual air pollutants can cause a variety of health impacts. A review by the World Health Organization²⁵ concluded that long-term exposure to air pollution reduces life expectancy by increasing the incidence of lung, heart and circulatory conditions. Public Health England (PHE), the independent body responsible for protecting the nation from public health hazards, has identified air pollution as a top priority for action.²⁶
- 9.8. South Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and Henley Town Council in 2020. The Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group was established by the Town Council, they have been working with local residents to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and the town. They have many existing projects planned for the future, including ways to improve air quality and quality of life.
- 9.9. The traffic survey shows that the congestion in Henley is worse than the average across South Oxfordshire. The impacts of transport will have a greater impact than the rest of the District and County in general. Henley-on-Thames is environmentally sensitive but still is a location for past and projected growth.
- 9.10. The public raised the issue of air and light pollution within a [Community Survey](#) carried out in early 2021. 84% of respondents to the [survey](#) were concerned about air and light pollution, with Reading Road (81%), Bell Street (76%) and Duke Street (72%) causing the greatest concern.
- 9.11. A further [Transport Survey](#) was sent to local businesses and schools, community groups and organisations and site owners and promoters in May 2021. Responses from this [survey](#) indicate that the majority of respondents did not have a travel plan. Traffic and congestion in Henley was also thought to be currently unreasonable or unmanageable by 60% of respondents and air quality considered to be neutral or bad by 84%. Development was considered by 78% of respondents to result in negative impacts on 8 different areas, including noise pollution, air quality and traffic and congestion.

²⁴ LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report

²⁵ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565196>

²⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf

- 9.12. The South Oxfordshire Infrastructure Funding Statement²⁷ sets out how funding received from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be allocated. In accordance with this CIL funds may be allocated to transport infrastructure, including strategic highways or transport infrastructure projects (including public rights of way). This includes infrastructure/measures to improve air quality and monitoring.
- 9.13. Interventions and improvements that would be encouraged and are particularly suitable for Henley and Harpsden are interconnecting the town and surrounding countryside, reducing traffic, allowing cars to flow and limiting traffic jams.
- 9.14. Projects have been identified through the [existing Neighbourhood Plan](#), the [Transport Study](#) and the Transport Strategy Group with the intention to make local transport more sustainable. These initiatives include introducing a car club, improving existing public transport, introducing new bus stops at new development, improving walking and cycling, providing cycle racks through the town centre, improving signage, traffic modelling work to identify possibility of shared space, wider pavements, removal of street furniture and possible one way system.
- 9.15. The current South Oxfordshire viability assessment considers policy costs around S106 financial contributions and fees including County Council requirements around Travel Plan, assessments and monitoring. This policy consists of some additional topics for transport assessments to consider but shouldn't impact viability.
- 9.16. Section 106 will continue to fund:
Site specific transport infrastructure including any works necessary for vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access and/or public transport on or adjacent to the site as a result of the development; mitigation works remote from the development site where the need for such works is identified in a Transport Assessment; works associated with a S278 agreement, or planning conditions; and Travel Plan monitoring.
- 9.17. There is a clear intention and willingness to bring forward local transport that is more sustainable. This policy should be read alongside other policies in the Plan including Policy T2: Active Travel, Policy T3: Easing Congestion, Policy T4: EV Charging Points and Policy T6: Parking and Standards.

Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network

Development proposals should identify the way in which they would be satisfactorily accommodated within the local highways network. In particular, development proposals should identify the way in which they would respond positively to air quality issues in Henley and to improving health outcomes and quality of life.

²⁷ Community Infrastructure Levy or CIL - spending - South Oxfordshire District Council (southoxon.gov.uk)

Policy T2: Active Travel

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.

TO2 - To ensure that new development supports the Neighbourhood Plan vision by providing cycling, walking and public transport connectivity to the existing network and the town and where possible contributes to improving the existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage active travel to improve health, quality of life and the environment. Henley-on-Thames is one of the built-up areas in South Oxfordshire where there is significant further potential for sustainable transport.

- 9.18. We recognise that encouraging and promoting greater levels of Active Travel will become increasingly important, to shift away from private vehicles to active, public and shared forms of transport. For example, cycling and walking- either as a sole mode of transport for shorter journeys or for longer journeys in combination with public transport - has a significant role to play in terms of reducing congestion in Henley. Without doing this, vehicle emissions are likely to increase. They also provide benefits from improving health through exercise.
- 9.19. Increased opportunity to walk or cycle to work, school or to access town centre and other facilities can lead to decreased car use, reduced congestion, reduction of pollution, and improving public and individual health. Without taking the needs and advantages of active travel into consideration, development and road network improvements can lead to the fragmentation and diminishing of provision for walking and cycling.
- 9.20. Paragraph 92c of the NPPF highlights the importance of the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure and layouts that encourage walking and cycling to enable and support healthy lifestyles. It goes on to state in paragraph 106 d) that planning policies should “provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans); “and paragraph 104c states that “opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued”. Part E states that: “patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places” and paragraph 100 states that “Planning Policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”.
- 9.21. South Oxfordshire Local Plan promotes active travel through policy TRANS2 iii which states that the council will “ensure new development is designed to encourage walking and cycling, not only within the development, but also to nearby facilities, employment and public transport hubs”. Policy TRANS4 part 3 clause v), which requires consideration in

travel plans of “all relevant forms of transport including accessible transport for disabled people” and clause i) of the same policy which requires assessments to “illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes of transport”.

- 9.22. Local Plan Policy HEN1 requires the Neighbourhood Plan to support development proposals that improve accessibility, car and cycle parking in the Town Centre, and pedestrian and cycle links and address air quality issues. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. More information can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport.
- 9.23. The existing Henley transport study shows that Henley has a comprehensive network of pedestrian footways and public rights of way, however the footway width in Henley is constrained due to limited highway space.
- 9.24. The [community survey](#) undertaken in early 2021 demonstrates the desire for active travel provision across the Neighbourhood Plan Area. 49% of respondents would like to walk more often, and 41% would like to cycle more. However, 36% of respondents were nervous about cycling on the busy roads in Henley and Harpsden and the poor state of pavements and foot/cycle paths prevented 56% of people walking and cycling more often.
- 9.25. These results are supported by the [Transport Survey](#) circulated to local businesses and organisations in May 2021. The [Transport Survey](#) showed that respondents were positively disposed towards both walking and cycling in terms of providing access to businesses, shops and leisure pursuits, but that better quality road surfaces and pavements together with more and better cycle lanes are required, as well as cycle parking, wider pavements and better connected pavements and paths.
- 9.26. The existing Public Rights of Way network allows people access to enjoy Henley and Harpsden and surrounding Countryside and in the process can make a contribution towards improving their health and well-being. The Public Rights of Way network can also provide an alternative to car use for some journeys by forming an important component of the overall sustainable transport network, providing access on foot or by cycle to the services and facilities and wider countryside.
- 9.27. Where the location and scale of new development requires connections and / or could lead to increased use by new and existing residents, there may be a need for improvements to the Rights of Way network in order to encourage more walking and cycling through improved accessibility, surfacing and / or connectivity. Where this is the case, the Council will seek to secure appropriate contributions. Particular consideration should be given to connecting development sites with open spaces, leisure / community facilities and strategic access routes, making links within the wider Rights of Way network or to creating circular or extended routes.
- 9.28. The Town Council has implemented a Sustainability Action Plan which lists a number of projects that the Town Council and the Community wish to take forward. It is intended to serve as a road-map to support climate change actions in Henley-on-Thames, with the aim of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Projects in the pipeline include posts for

walking, showing distances and times and support from development for these projects will be encouraged.

- 9.29. There is a clear intention and willingness to bring forward local transport that is more sustainable. This policy should be read alongside other policies in the Plan including Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network, Policy T3: Easing Congestion, Policy T4: EV Charging Points and Policy T6: Parking and Standards

Policy T2: Active Travel

Development proposals which would join up footpaths/ways and cycle paths/ways into comprehensive networks will be supported. Particular support will be given to proposals which would:

- encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and/or
- supporting projects as shown in Appendix A; and/or
- maintain and enhance connectivity with the network of public rights of way (bridleways), and the designated local green spaces as shown in Policy ENV4.

Development proposals that would result in a reduction in the capacity of existing active travel infrastructure or of the safety of active travel infrastructure will not be supported.

Policy T3: Easing Congestion

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage appropriate measures to ease congestion, while still providing access for public transport, to enhance town centre pedestrian and cycle routes.

- 9.30. Growing road traffic levels risk a deterioration in quality of life for residents, for example due to noise, a less safe walking and cycling environment, and associated impact on community life.
- 9.31. Since 1997, Henley has had an issue with air quality and has had an Air Quality Management Area in place. More information can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport.
- 9.32. The [Transport Study](#) (2015) recognises that Henley suffers from traffic congestion at peak times, with issues at Henley Bridge along the A4130 back to Remenham Church Lane and traffic through the Town Centre.
- 9.33. The [Transport Survey](#) undertaken in May 2021 highlights the impact of congestion, with 60% of respondents finding traffic levels unreasonable or unmanageable. Both the [Transport Survey](#) and [Community Survey](#) request better provision for cycling and walking, as well as 29% of respondents to the [Community Survey](#) saying that they don't walk and cycle more because they feel unsafe. 49% of respondents to the [Community Survey](#) say they would like to walk more and 41% would like to cycle more.
- 9.34. The [Transport Study](#) (2015) recognises that some congestion in the town centre is down to HGVs loading, servicing or delivering in peak periods.
- 9.35. Oxfordshire Freight Strategy²⁸ sets out the strategy for freight network between 2015 and 2031. The strategy acknowledges that the bridge to Henley is an environmentally sensitive area. It states that the County Council will consider environmental weight restrictions across the County, particularly areas which are subject to significant levels of HGV traffic, prioritising the towns including Henley-on-Thames. However, the County Council is very unlikely to have any funding available for this in the coming years so any schemes would need to be funded through development and/or by local communities, businesses and town/parish councils.
- 9.36. The [Community Survey](#) from early 2021 shows that 55% of people think that air pollution and vibrations from heavy goods vehicles are an issue that needs addressing.

²⁸ Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031

- 9.37. The Neighbourhood Plan will support bringing forward an environmental weight limit on Henley Bridge.
- 9.38. Oxfordshire County Council will be producing a local transport and connectivity plan with the long term transport strategy for Henley and more information can be found in the Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport .
- 9.39. The Town Council will work with OCC and SODC to improve the public realm to provide an environment to help ease congestion. CIL contributions should be directed to funding modelling for, and possible implementation of, key projects that have been considered by the Transport Strategy Group, such as:
- a) Removal of some of the traffic controls at the following locations:
 - Greys Road/Duke Street junction
 - Hart Street/ Bell Street/ Duke Street junction
 - b) Reducing to one lane the traffic approaching the junction from the bridge on Hart Street.
- 9.40. There is a clear intention and willingness to bring forward local transport that is more sustainable. This policy should be read alongside other policies in the Plan including Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network, Policy T2: Active Travel, Policy T4: EV Charging Points and Policy T6: Parking and Standards.

Policy T3: Easing Congestion

- A. Subject to compliance with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and elsewhere in the Development Plan, development proposals which have significant transport implications will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
- a) they will not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or have severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network, in Henley Town Centre or at key junctions within the town or wider plan area, achieved through appropriate mitigation as necessary; and
 - b) additional opportunities to alleviate traffic congestion on the highway network and through improvements to pedestrian and cycling routes and improvements to public transport have been identified, considered and where appropriate incorporated into the scheme.

Policy T4: EV Charging Points

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage electric vehicle charging.

- 9.41. The UK Government has announced their intention for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2030 and of hybrid cars and vans in 2035. Government 2020 announcement towards net-zero with end of sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030²⁹;
- 9.42. This steers a shift from diesel and petrol fuelled cars and vans towards electric powered vehicles. As part of this strategy, the Government considers that all new homes, where appropriate, should be electric vehicle ready by having a chargepoint available. As such, new development proposals should not only be mindful of this, but should support and enable this transition.
- 9.43. South Oxfordshire District Council's recently adopted Local Plan 2035 (Policy Trans 5) requires proposals for all types of development to be designed to enable the charging of plug-in and low emission vehicles and to provide facilities to support the take up of electric and/or low emission vehicles. Further guidance will be provided in the District's forthcoming Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document).
- 9.44. Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2020-2025)³⁰ provides the overall strategy for the County and sets out how the planning system can encourage and require EV Charging in new developments and historic areas. They also consider the feasibility of EV charging options for residents without off-road parking, including complexity and costs.
- 9.45. Henley Town Council and South Oxfordshire District Council have both declared a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group (CE2030WG) were established and have been working with local residents to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and the town. They have many existing projects planned for the future, including ways to improve air quality and quality of life.
- 9.46. CE2030WG estimates Henley's residents have approximately 6,500 cars in Henley (including those company owned and/or leased but excluding residents' vans.) If all of

²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-historic-step-towards-net-zero-with-end-of-sale-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-by-2030>

³⁰ Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 20210225.pdf

them were substituted in 2030 by pure battery vehicles, emission savings would be c15% of the town's total footprint, excluding emission sources like air travel.

- 9.47. Homes without off street parking represent nearly 30% of total homes in Henley–1,366 homes. There are nearly 300 apartments (excluding houses with flats), as well as 23 streets that are described as “private”, with nearly 300 homes located in them – all will require EVCPs. We would also like to explore further how we could support the retrofit of infrastructure and the requirement to fit charging points for existing properties and/or provide parking permit system and designated areas for charging.
- 9.48. More evidence provided by CE2030WG and the reasoning behind the declaration of the Climate Emergency can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport. The paper sets out the current provision for chargepoints and the areas of greatest deficiencies.
- 9.49. The [Transport Survey](#) carried out in May 2021 showed that 78% of respondents thought that the current EV Charging provision in Henley was not adequate and a substantial majority (weighted average of 4.31 on a scale of 1-5) of those completing the [Community Survey](#) wanted new developments to have the charging infrastructure for electric cars.
- 9.50. A Plan Policy requiring the installation of EV charging point infrastructure in new developments will provide an important delivery mechanism to support the Government's objectives by minimising one of the barriers to EV uptake, and will assist in mitigating the impacts of climate change through reducing transport associated carbon emissions. This will also have positive benefits for local air quality.
- 9.51. The level of provision of electric vehicle charging points should be appropriate to the development size and type, its level of parking provision and its context and location. In the case of car parks, upstanding or inset charging points can be integrated into the design, whereas more innovation may be required for on-street charging points which should be integrated into street lighting columns or other smart street furniture items so as to reduce street clutter.
- 9.52. Access to overnight charging at home and charging at the workplace will be crucial in promoting the shift towards the use of plug-in hybrids and battery electric vehicles (EV). It is important therefore that new development seeks to encourage continued growth and responds to this essential change. The Government is also keen to ensure that people are not disadvantaged on the basis of having communal parking or by not owning their own home. New charging points will be encouraged in new and existing car parks to meet the needs of residents and tourists visiting the NPA.
- 9.53. Electric vehicle parking spaces should be counted as part of the total parking provision and bays should be clearly marked. Charging points should also be included in parking spaces for the disabled and the provision of charging points cannot be used as a reason for why disabled parking spaces cannot be delivered.

- 9.54. Development proposals should specify the type or types of chargepoints to be installed and consideration should be given to the OCC Standards in Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2020-2025)³¹.
- 9.55. The government has consulted on proposed changes to the English Building Regulations regarding EV charging provision in new developments, which it is believed will serve as the national minimum acceptable standard³².
- 9.56. The Town Council will work with OCC and SODC to improve the provision of EV charging points and CIL contributions where these should be directed to key projects. Further information can be found in Appendix A and Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport.

Policy T4: EV Charging Points

- A. Proposals for development should include, where practicable, appropriate provision for electric vehicle charging points taking account of best practice.
- B. Proposals should specify the type of charge points to be installed. This should be in line with the OCC Standards in Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2020-2025) or any updates of the Strategy within the Plan period.
- C. Details of how the electric vehicle charging facilities within development proposals will be allocated, located and managed should be included within the relevant Transport Assessment or Transport Statement.
- D. In cases where charging points, including infrastructure to enable retrofitting, cannot be provided within the development site, developer contributions may be sought to enable those facilities to be suitably provided in other locations including public car parks or on-street parking spaces (with overnight parking restrictions in place) or designated areas.
- E. All building conversions, refurbishments and extensions, should be designed to improve resilience to the anticipated effects of climate change. New charging points including infrastructure to enable retrofitting will be supported as part of these proposals.

³¹ Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.pdf

³² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/electric-vehicle-chargepoints-in-residential-and-non-residential-buildings>

Policy T5: Public Transport

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

- 9.57. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policy TRANS6 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that; i) improve rail services in South Oxfordshire; ii) improve access to rail services including for disabled people; and/ or iii) improve facilities at railway stations such as car and cycle parking and upgrades to interchanges provided that there are no significant adverse effects on the environment or amenities of residents.
- 9.58. Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision states that Infrastructure and services, required as a consequence of development, and provision for their maintenance, will be sought from developers, and secured through planning obligations, conditions attached to a planning permission, other agreements, and funding through the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or other mechanisms. This applies equally where external funding for infrastructure necessary for development has been secured (including where the infrastructure is delivered ahead of development), on the expectation that funding shall be recovered from development.
- 9.59. The Regulation 123 list contains generic types of infrastructure that may be funded using CIL receipts, with the exception of specific on-site infrastructure or direct mitigation measures and specifically of the strategic development sites.
- 9.60. Exclusions (to be secured through S106 and other statutory provision) include; site specific transport infrastructure including any works necessary for vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access and/or public transport on or adjacent to the site as a result of the development. Mitigation works remote from the development site where the need for such works is identified in a Transport Assessment.
- 9.61. The Plan aims to maintain the frequency and capacity of the railway service.
- 9.62. Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments – part of the Evidence Base for SODC's Local Plan 2035 by Steer Davies Gleave - cites 776,282 entries and exits for Henley station in 2015-16, with 9% of the resident working population using rail to travel to work. The report states 'The challenge is to ensure that the station's sustainable transport facilities (i.e. cycle parking) keep pace with demand, so that new residents can use the railway for their journeys to work and other leisure journeys.'

- 9.63. This results in recommendation TDM2: Development of station travel plans to support increased awareness of sustainable travel options for journeys to the station, and monitoring of the need for additional station facilities. Each station travel plan developed will include an action plan identifying the capital and revenue schemes required to support increased levels of sustainable travel to and from the station, e.g. more cycle parking / improved cycle parking facilities.
- 9.64. Network Rail have confirmed that further to the Network Rail Western Route Study from 2015, rail usage is anticipated to grow by 55.5% between 2019 and 2043.³³ Although over 2020-21 usage will be reduced due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it is anticipated that coupled with the increasing pressure on the climate and policy encouragement to use public transport rather than private cars, together with the move to prohibit the sale of petrol and diesel cars from 2030, more residents will be turning to the train for travel.
- 9.65. The Government's Future of Mobility Report from 2017³⁴ states 'External modelling suggests further growth in passenger rail demand of 45-66% up to 2040, allowing for constraints' (Blainey and Preston, 2016, Transport systems assessment. In: Hall J.W., Nicholls R., Tran M. and Hickford A.J. (eds) *The Future of National Infrastructure: A System-of-Systems Approach* (pp. 88-113). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.). Similarly, the Department for Transport estimates a 48% growth in passenger journeys, and growth of around 60% in passenger-km. (The first Department for Transport figure was estimated using the Exogenous Demand Growth Estimator (EDGE) model, the second using the National Transport Model (NTM).) The expected social and technological changes taking place over the next 20-30 years could also significantly change rail demand. The report goes on to cite environmental considerations as a driver for young people's attitude to transport, as well as increased interest in 'usership' rather than 'ownership', hence an inclination to a sharing economy. Linked with moves elsewhere in Europe (France) to ban short haul flights (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-56716708>) and encourage the use of rail transport, this can be taken as an indicator of the direction that transport use will move in. OCC's LTP4 states 'If we continue to see the same proportion of sole-occupancy car journeys in the future, we will simply not be able to accommodate the trips that people want to make.' LTP4 Overall Strategy p9.
- 9.66. It is essential that the public transport network is integrated to create connected networks between places where goods and people need to go. Transport infrastructure in Henley and Harpsden will comprise a range of public transport; bus routes and stops, walking routes, cycling networks, roads, potential park and ride, and railway station that all need to work and connect together.
- 9.67. Bus travel uses less road space per person than car use. We would like to promote the use of the bus service within Henley and the continued use of the train services to provide sustainable transport options.

³³ <https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Western-Route-Study-Final-1.pdf>

³⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/780868/future_of_mobility_final.pdf

- 9.68. The Henley Town Bus Service was reinstated by the Town Council following the removal of funding by Oxfordshire County Council from local bus services in 2016. It provides a much appreciated route around the town, where the geography of Henley can make it possible to walk downhill into the Town Centre, but less easy to walk up the hill again. The current service links the outer edges of the town with the town centre and provides stops close to the railway station and at the hospital, as well as in the heart of the town. In the six months from October 2020 to March 2021, 2500 passengers were carried, despite the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 9.69. Both the [Community Survey](#) carried out in early 2021 and the [Transport Survey](#) carried out in May 2021 affirm the support and necessity of improved public transport provision. With 60% of respondents to the [Transport Survey](#) considering traffic and congestion in Henley and Harpsden to be unreasonable and/or unmanageable, it is not surprising that bus timetables and access to business, shops and leisure pursuits is viewed as neither suitable nor good. Respondents identified the need for more frequent services and improved routes.
- 9.70. The [Community Survey](#) showed that public transport links were highly rated as a consideration for new housing. 41% of respondents would like to use the bus more and 31% would like to use the train more. Frequency of services was cited by 56% of respondents as a barrier to increased bus usage.
- 9.71. Projects to support improvements to the quality of public transport are listed in the Baseline Report: Topic Paper 4: Transport.

Policy T5: Public Transport

- A. Proposals on the Henley Railway Station Site should seek to enhance the services, transport links and amenity provided.
- B. Development proposals should meet the public transport infrastructure and service requirements which directly arise from their implementation.
- C. Where appropriate, development proposals should be designed to facilitate access to high quality public transport routes, including safe walking routes to nearby bus stops or new bus stops.

Policy T6: Parking and Standards

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development comes forward with adequate vehicle and cycle parking. To ensure that car parking facilities are not lost within the town. This policy may need to be reviewed over time to provide for new initiatives in line with climate change and low carbon objectives.

- 9.72. OCC set the parking standards for the County including Henley and Harpsden. These are referred to by South Oxfordshire Local Plan policy TRANS5 clause xiii) provide for the parking of vehicles in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards, unless specific evidence is provided to justify otherwise.
- 9.73. The NPPF Paragraph 108 discusses the justifications needed for setting maximum parking standards. It states that ‘Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of the Framework).’
- 9.74. Henley has a higher level of car and van ownership against England, 78% of households had a car/van in 2018 according to ONS. The combined impact from infill development and change of use have all contributed to the inadequate provision of off-street parking. The problem is exacerbated by the number of terraced houses in Henley-on-Thames where owners have more than one car. At present we have Residents Parking areas in and around the centre of the town with some 350 spaces, yet we have over 500 parking permits allocated to residents.
- 9.75. For many years planning permission has been granted in Henley-on-Thames for residential properties when insufficient off-street parking has been allowed for, this has caused the roads in and around the centre to be at capacity throughout the day and evening. One of the biggest problems is where permitted development and change of use applications have been granted to turn space above shops in to flats and with no spaces available for parking.
- 9.76. Whilst it is recognised that Henley is a sustainable location with access to public transport, many residents still rely on cars for many journeys and many people from surrounding villages need to travel to Henley for access to services and facilities.
- 9.77. As demonstrated through the [community survey](#), residents are concerned with the safety of the roads and the impact this has on the walking and cycling. Residents would like additional cycle parking and they have a preference for more facilities in existing car parks.

- 9.78. The [Transport Survey](#) sent out in May 2021 showed that 62% of respondents felt that parking provision was bad or very bad. 82% further identified that more parking was required to improve the situation.
- 9.79. The Town Council's Transport Strategy Group are looking to promote use of the long stay car parks on the north and south of the town, including the Rugby club and station car parks.

Policy T6: Parking and Standards

- A. Development proposals should provide vehicle and cycle parking to meet the most up to date Oxfordshire County Council standards.
- B. Parking provision and layout should be carefully considered as part of the wider scheme and designed as appropriate for the site. Vehicle and cycle parking should be integrated in layouts as a key element of design and ensure high quality, safe, secure and attractive environments. In particular, development proposals should comply with the requirements of the South Oxfordshire District Council Design Guide.
- C. Development proposals to redevelop existing public car parks will only be supported where they can demonstrate that the overall number of residual car parking spaces available to the public and their ease of use remains appropriate to meet the needs of the town centre and the railway station.

10. Social Infrastructure

Policy SCI1: Comprehensive Renewal of Gillotts School

- 10.1. In the case of Gillotts School, any loss of playing fields must result in an enhanced alternative sports provision which overall better meets the needs of the children at the school and the community as a whole.
- 10.2. Proposals for the renewal for the school itself should, in addition to the principles set out within Local Plan Policy DES4, demonstrate how the proposed development has appropriately: a) Screened the visual impact of any development from the adjacent AONB and prepared a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as appropriate; and b) Made provision for community use of school facilities.
- 10.3. The establishment of a community working group to work with Gillotts School on taking the comprehensive renewal and enabling development of the land forward will be supported.

Policy SCI1: Comprehensive Renewal of Gillotts School

The renewal of Gillotts School will be supported subject to it resulting in the provision of alternative sports facilities to those that currently exist.

Policy SCI2: Renewal and Enhancement of Community Facilities

- 10.4. Constraints on land availability in Henley reduce opportunities to deliver new community facilities. Existing facilities, notably Henley on Thames Social Club for the over 60's, Henley on Thames Scouts and Headway Thames Valley, provide important community services in relatively outdated buildings. Opportunities to reprovide these services within larger facilities that retain the existing services and provide space for additional community functions should be explored and supported, including consideration for a 'sustainability hub' which brings together ideas and organisations related to low carbon living. More information on community facilities can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 5: Infrastructure.
- 10.5. Community facilities wishing to apply for renewal utilising S106 or CIL monies should register with Henley Town Council who will engage with the District Council on their behalf.

Policy SCI2: Renewal and Enhancement of Community Facilities

The renewal and enhancement of the community facilities used by the following community groups, will be supported: Henley on Thames Social Club for the Over 60s; Henley on Thames Scouts; and Headway Thames Valley.

Policy SCI3: Community Right to Build

10.6. Community Right to Build is an enabling right supporting local people to undertake development so that communities collectively own, develop and/or manage their own land and developments. As an alternative to the traditional application for planning permission, it gives communities the power to decide for themselves what happens in their neighbourhood. Under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations made following the Localism Act 2011, communities will be able to build:

- New community facilities such as a new community centres.
- Family homes to sell on the open market.
- Affordable housing for rent or to convert disused farm buildings into affordable homes.
- Sheltered housing for elderly local residents. Community Right to Build development proposals would be welcomed, provided they are in agreement with other aspects and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, South Oxfordshire District Local Plan and NPPF.

10.7. The formation of a Community Land Trust for Henley will be supported.

Policy SCI3: Community Right to Build

Proposals based on the Community Right to Build will be supported.

Policy SCI4: Henley College

This Policy recognises Henley College as an important asset to the town.

Policy SCI4: Henley College

The redevelopment of Henley College, to meet educational accommodation needs, will be supported.

11. Site Policies

Policy DS1: Proposed Allocations

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

HO1 - Identify land for new housing as required by the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policy H3 Local Plan.

HO5 - Explore opportunities to address local needs and maximise affordable housing delivery.

- 11.1. This part of the Plan includes development proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. They have been prepared to accord with the Vision, Objectives and Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.
- 11.2. New proposed development sites are shown in red on the Policies Map and would, if selected for development, be subject to both the general topic based policies of this Plan, site specific policies attached to each of the suggested Allocations and the policies set out in the Local Plan.
- 11.3. The site options have been subject to a comprehensive site assessment process and full details of the methodology used can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 2 – Housing.
- 11.4. The following sites are proposed as preferred allocations for residential or mixed use development. A summary of each assessment and all of the alternatives considered can be found in Baseline Report: Topic Paper 2 – Housing.

Policy DS1: Proposed Allocations

The following sites are allocated for residential development subject to compliance with the site specific and general policies of the Plan.

Site	Dwellings allocated in existing JHHNP	Dwellings allocated in this JHHNP
Site A1: Land West of Fair Mile	Around 60	72
Site C: Gillott's School Playing Field	Around 50	50
Site E: Empstead Works / Stuart Turner	Mixed use including 42	Mixed use including 42
Site F: Chiltern's End	Around 27	27
Site J: 357 Reading Road	Around 30	50
NEW Site M1: Northern Field at Highlands Farm	0	110
Site X: Henley Youth Club	Around 23	23
NEW Site Y: Chilterns Centre	0	3

Residential : Site A1 Land West of Fair Mile



- 11.5. This site is already allocated for residential development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period. The site is located between existing development along the Fairmile.
- 11.6. The eastern edge of the site is highly sensitive, being an integral part of the Henley Conservation Area and adjacent to two Listed Buildings. As identified within the 2004 Henley Conservation Area Character Appraisal, the Fair Mile is characterised by its avenues of turkey oaks and limes, planted in the 1950s and 1970s respectively to replace an earlier avenue of elm trees. The Grade II listed flint and brick wall of Henley Park, to the north of the Fair Mile, is a particularly positive and notable feature, providing a foreground to longer views to open hillside and woodland beyond. The south of the Fair Mile is more enclosed, with wide grass verges, large gardens, neat hedges and mainly paired or detached houses, set back along a common building line, and interspersed with mature planting and hedgerows. Accesses from the Fair Mile to properties on either side are present along its length, and are largely minor in scale and broadly vernacular in character.
- 11.7. It will be necessary for the site to respond to this context, in terms of the appearance of the access road from the Fair Mile, the treatment of its narrow frontage, the appearance of the site internally, and from nearby listed buildings, in order to ensure that proposals conform with heritage guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. The site's frontage is currently planted, with a hedgerow, some mature trees and scrubland being visible from the Fair Mile itself. A high quality solution to the site's access and frontage will be required, wherein the access road responds to the character and scale of other side roads in the vicinity, and avoids creating an overly intrusive or dominant

presence into long and short range views within the Fair Mile. Opportunities should also be taken to reinforce the planting along the site's frontage, in order to retain the sense of a 'green buffer' between 27 Fair Mile and Mile Edge, the properties which flank the site's entrance.

- 11.8. A low density response is anticipated for the lower portion of the site which also needs to preserve and manage the existing green infrastructure as far as possible. Based on the provision of 72 dwellings on Site A across 3.8 ha, the density is 19 dwellings per ha. Whilst the site is essentially bounded on two sides by existing development, a sensitive transition needs to be made between the lower density properties to the north and existing urban edge to the south. Densities to the south of the site are more urban (around 35 dwellings per hectare at Luker Avenue), to the north along Lambridge Road they are considerably lower, below 10 dwellings per hectare. The environment, townscape and heritage constraints have informed the density of this site which is in accordance with Local Plan policy STRAT5.
- 11.9. The partial inclusion of the Henley Conservation Area in the site boundary gives rise to circumstances where low density development below the District Council's density of 45 dwellings per hectare (Policy STRAT5) is appropriate to ensure the character of the area is not harmed.
- 11.10. Achieving the allocated number of residential units (around 72) is subject to the Local Authority's responsibility to have special regard for the desirability of preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area at the planning application determination stage.

Policy DS2: Land West of Fair Mile (Site A1)

The land west of Fairmile site (as shown on site A location diagram) is allocated for 72 residential units. The Design Brief prepared for this site should demonstrate how the proposed development:

- a) Appropriately responds to the site's environmental and landscape context, including proximity to the AONB and visibility from the opposite side of the valley;
- b) Responds to the heritage context. This includes the location of part of the site within the Henley Conservation Area and its proximity to listed buildings. This should include a sensitive and contextual approach to its density, design and use of materials. A low density development may be appropriate for this part of the site. A sensitive solution to the site's access from the Fair Mile will be required, taking into account its location within the Henley Conservation Area, and should include high quality landscaping;
- c) Delivers new and improved cycle and walking links through the site and to adjacent residential areas;
- d) Provides a high quality green link and biodiversity environment, including any existing on site biodiversity features;
- e) Undertakes a predetermination archaeological assessment to inform the Design Brief, which will also be required with any planning application before the potential impact on below ground heritage assets can be assessed.

Residential: Site C Gillotts School Playing Field



- 11.11. This site is already allocated for residential development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period.
- 11.12. The allocation is made to enable the school to dispose of land for enabling development to renew its facilities throughout. Exemplary replacement sports facilities are expected, both to meet the NPPF criteria and to ensure the best learning and play environment for pupils and the community as a whole.
- 11.13. The site is located on the same gravel deposits as Highlands Farm and therefore has the potential to contain further significant Palaeolithic deposits. The full archaeological assessment will need to include an archaeological field evaluation to identify the full extent of the Palaeolithic deposits within the site prior to the determination of any planning application.
- 11.14. The allocation of around 50 dwellings over 3.4 ha results in a density of around 15 dwellings per hectare. This relatively low density takes into account the existing trees on the site, particularly on the southern edge, which are anticipated to play an important part in screening the site from the south. It also reflects the existing relatively low density development pattern found in this part of the town, being around 20 dwellings per hectare along Blandy Road. The environment and landscape constraints have informed the density of this site which is in accordance with Local Plan policy STRAT5.

11.15. The policy for the site should be read in conjunction with Policy SCI1 Comprehensive Renewal of Gillotts School.

Policy DS3: Gillotts school field (Site C)

The Gillotts School Field site (as shown on site C location diagram) is allocated for around 50 residential units. The Design Brief prepared for site C should demonstrate how the proposed development:

- a) Responds to the site's environmental and landscape context, including proximity to the AONB;
- b) Utilises the existing tree coverage to screen the site from views, particularly to the south from across Harpsden Valley and the AONB, and supplemented this screening where necessary;
- c) Minimises impact on the copse area required to access the development to the north east of the site;
- d) Provides high quality sustainable connecting links across the site to encourage sustainable movement;
- e) Assesses the impact of the proposed development on the landscape by undertaking a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; and
- f) Avoids harm to any heritage assets through a predetermination archaeological assessment, this will also be required with any planning application before the potential impact on below ground heritage assets can be assessed.

Mixed Use: Site E Empstead Works / Stuart Turner



- 11.16. This site is already allocated for mixed use development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period.
- 11.17. Although the site is outside of the Conservation Area, development on this site will have an impact on its setting and an assessment should be made of the impact to both it and the numerous statutorily listed buildings and locally listed buildings surrounding the site. As a result of an impact assessment, a design brief for mixed development should respond to the types of use and the character of the surrounding buildings.
- 11.18. This site also falls within the area of archaeological restraint covering the Medieval Village at Henley-on-Thames, which should also be considered as part of planning applications for the site.
- 11.19. This site is suitable and available for development which should be achievable in the plan period. The site has significant potential to enhance the town centre and employment offer, as well as contributing to town centre living. the site may be developed in phases over the plan period.

Policy DS4: Empstead Works/ Stuart Turner (Site E)

The Empstead Works/ Stuart Turner site (as shown on site E location diagram) is allocated for around 42 dwellings and at least 3,000sqm of town centre mixed uses including employment and 1,500sqm for a single format food store.

- a) Responds to the surrounding Conservation Area;
- b) Contributes to the town centre vitality;
- c) Contributes to town centre car parking requirements; and
- d) Contributes to new and improved cycle and pedestrian links.
- e) Supports continued high-quality employment use.

Residential: Site F Chiltern's End



11.20. This site is already allocated for residential development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period.

11.21. It is considered that housing including affordable housing is of greater need for the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Policy DS5: Chiltern's End (Site F)

The Chiltern's End site (as shown on site F location diagram) is allocated for around 27 residential units.

The Design Brief for this site should demonstrate how the proposed development appropriately responds to the site's environmental and landscape context, including proximity to the AONB.

Mixed Use: Site J 357 Reading Road



11.22. This site is already allocated for residential development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period.

11.23. The site is located within the built up area, the adjacent developments are between 3-4 storeys. It is considered suitable for an increased density on this site.

Policy DS6: 357 Reading Road (Site J)

The 357 Reading Road site (as shown on site J location diagram) is allocated for:

- a) around 50 residential units; and
- b) Up to 200sqm of retail/commercial development.

The Design Brief prepared for this site should demonstrate how the proposed development mitigates the impact of any delivery vehicles on residential amenity and integrates with the surrounding area and provides walking and cycling connections.

Mixed Use: New Site - M1 Northern Field at Highlands Farm:



11.24. This site is to the north of the existing allocated site M which is currently being built out. This site is suitable and available for development and would be in compliance with the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies. The site is well located to the town, on an existing bus route with pedestrian and cycle links available. It is considered that the landscape sensitivity of the site has been influenced by the new housing being built on the existing allocation Site M: Highlands Farm to the South of the site.

11.25. The site is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) will be required to inform the Masterplanning of the site from the outset, ensuring any impact from the development on the AONB is minimised. The LVA should be completed in accordance with the latest guidelines available from the Landscape Institute. As part of the LVA, wireframe visualisations should be used to explore the appropriate built height of development while responding to the build character of the adjacent areas. Whilst development would be visible from Greys Road, the impact could be mitigated by retaining existing hedges and trees around the site, incorporating internal open space and tree planting within the site, and introducing a landscape buffer to the northern, eastern and western boundaries. Such landscaping should aim to break up views of the new development. The site is large enough to accommodate the proposed number of dwellings, other uses and to achieve landscaping and open space. It is important that proposed developments are landscape-led. The approach taken should be set out in the associated Design and Access Statement or a wider Planning Statement.

11.26. It is important that careful attention is given to the site layout, building heights and materials in order to minimise the visual impact of development. Development should conserve and enhance the individual character of this area. It is important that new

development on this site is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge. The sensitivity of the site is such that Policy DS7 takes a very detailed approach to its development. Developers should demonstrate the way in which they have complied with the policy by way of a detailed Planning Statement with planning application. Criterion b and c of the policy will best be achieved through the preparation of a bespoke geological survey. This will ensure that the Scheduled Ancient Monument and SSSI are protected and to help to inform the design of the site in a sensitive fashion.

- 11.27. It is considered that development would accord with NPPF paragraph 176 for the reasons set out below.
- 11.28. The site is for a mixed use scheme and would deliver the quantum of development required, it would also deliver economic and social benefits through new employment/ community facilities, the relocation of the Chiltern Centre and the provision of community-led housing.
- 11.29. The latest [Housing Needs Assessment](#) demonstrates that there is a need for affordable housing for Henley and Harpsden. Policy H3 of the Local Plan states that Neighbourhood Development Plans for the market towns should seek to meet demonstrable local needs, for example for specialist or affordable housing, even where this would result in housing provision in excess of the outstanding requirement.
- 11.30. The advantage of this site coming forward rather than a number of smaller sites would be that it could deliver the quantum of development required and deliver a greater number of affordable housing required for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This development could bring forward approximately 44 additional affordable houses.
- 11.31. There is a SSSI located adjacent to the site. The SSSI is designated for its geological interest due to the exposure of gravel flooring of an abandoned channel of the Thames. A geological survey should be undertaken by a contractor with specific palaeolithic expertise. The extent of the geological and archaeological interest may influence the pattern and quantum of development that is suitable for the site.
- 11.32. The site is known to be an area of Palaeolithic archaeology. A programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non – invasive is required to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended. Any such mitigation may require the physical preservation of any significant archaeological deposits identified within the site. The setting of the designated scheduled monument could be impacted by this proposal.
- 11.33. The site area allows for development at a density which protects the local environment, AONB and SSSI in accordance with policy STRAT5 of the Local Plan. As well as provision of mixed uses and open space, any scheme should provide adequate landscaped buffers.

Policy DS7: Northern Field at Highlands Farm (Site M1)

POLICY SP1: HIGHLANDS FARM (SITE M1(853a))

The Northern Field, Highlands Farm site as shown on site location diagram is allocated for the following uses:

- around 110 new homes including community-led housing;
- 1 ha of flexible commercial and community employment land including the relocation of the Chilterns Centre; the relocation and redesign of the community centre and the employment facilities from existing Highlands Farm residential development; and
- publicly accessible open space.

Development proposals should be landscape-led and respond positively to the location of the site within the Chilterns AONB. All proposals should demonstrate that their site layout, design, orientation, height, bulk and scale of the proposed structures and buildings have properly responded to the sensitive location of the site. Detailed consideration should also be given to the use of colours, materials and the reflectiveness of surfaces. In addition, the use of street lights and other forms of external illumination should be designed to safeguard the dark night skies of the AONB.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they would:

- a) incorporate and reinforce or re-provide the existing landscaping, green Infrastructure and biodiversity features, particularly along the northern, southern and western edges of the site;
- b) protect and where practicable enhance the Scheduled Ancient Monument and its setting within the site;
- c) protect and where practicable enhance the SSSI including a buffer strip on the north side of Highlands Farm Pit SSSI; and
- d) respond positively to the site's environmental and landscape context, including its visibility from the opposite side of the valley.

Residential: Site X Henley Youth Club



11.34. This site is already allocated for residential development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period. It is considered that housing including affordable housing is of greater need for the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Policy DS8: Henley Youth Club (Site X)

The Henley Youth Club site (as shown on site X location diagram) is allocated for around 23 new homes. The Design Brief prepared for this site should demonstrate how the proposed development:

- a) Appropriately responds to the local urban context along Deanfield Avenue and in particular the Victorian terracing of Greys Road; and
- b) Enhances the public route running adjacent to the south of the site, including the green and biodiversity functions it provides. Residential proposals coming forward result in the loss of the facility should demonstrate that:
 - (i) suitable alternative provision is made for the facility (or similar facilities of equivalent community value) on a site elsewhere in the locality, or
 - (ii) in the case of recreational facilities, it is not needed, or
 - (iii) in the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.

Residential: NEW Site Y Chiltern Centre



11.35. The site is previously developed land within the built-up area of Henley with good access to services and facilities. The site is to be made available following the relocation of the Chilterns Centre.

Policy DS9: Chiltern Centre (Site Y)

The Chiltern Centre (as shown on site Y location diagram) is allocated for around three new homes.

The Design Brief for this site should demonstrate how the proposed development appropriately responds to the site's environmental and landscape context, including proximity to the AONB.

Employment: Site AD Land at Newtown Road



11.36. This site is already allocated for B1 development in the current adopted Plan but has not been developed. It is proposed to roll it forward into the new Plan period.

Policy DS10: Land at Newtown Road (Site AD)

Land at Newtown Road site (as shown on site AD location diagram) is allocated for Class E (c/d/e/f/g) purposes. Development proposals should demonstrate how they would appropriately mitigate any impact on nearby residential properties.

Appendix A

The following priority projects are identified in the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan.

- a) Henley Car Club – in April 2021 the Council launched a car club with Co-wheels. The project was 50% funded from the SODC air quality improvement fund. The first two vehicles are low emitting cars (Toyota Yaris hybrid), and, if the car club expands, the Council has expressed the wish that future vehicles will be electric. The first vehicle is parked in Upper Market place and the second is, temporarily on Market Place road, but we hope to relocate it to Reading Road between Perpetual Park Drive and Fairview Estate if a TRO application is granted. As well as reducing air pollution the car club also aims to reduce parking congestion, lower embedded carbon dioxide by replacing several privately owned cars with a single shared vehicle and save residents money on the costs of owning and running a car.
- b) There was an OCC Cabinet motion approved on 7th April 2021 to undertake the necessary studies for an environmental weight restriction for Henley: “RESOLVED: (40 votes for, 3 votes against and 15 abstentions) The County Council will consider environmental weight restrictions ... and would not fall on the OCC.”
- c) No-idling, closed door – the Council has supported ‘Clean Air for Henley’ campaigns on no-idling and closed doors (for roadside shops to protect their staff and customers from air pollution)
- d) Modal shift – in line with its climate emergency and Henley Environmental Action Plan, the Council is seeking ways to facilitate the uptake of travel by walking and cycling through signage, mobile information and other facilities including safer travel to school
- e) Walking – the Council has supported and is continuing with several projects to encourage walking rather than driving.
 - a. Slow Ways – the Council has endorsed this project to connect town and villages with pedestrian routes
 - b. TSG has supported a project to put up walking signs giving the time it take to walk between popular locations in and around Henley, and this is being coordinated with Walkers are Welcome. Locations have been proposed and precise signage locations are being investigated
 - c. TSG is supporting a further project to promote recreational walking routes in and around Henley
- f) Cycling
 - a. the Council offers its staff financial support for cycling equipment <https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/employers>
 - b. HTC identified locations for cycle racks which have been installed by OCC at locations around the town centre
 - c. TSG has agreed to investigate a web-based cycle map in and around Henley
 - d. The Council supports its partners in a maintaining a bike repair workshop for Henley
- g) [SODC Turn it Off](#) campaign
- h) Council Bus Service – the Council runs the Henley Hopper bus service and will consider increased frequency and additional routes if demand and funding allows

- i) Clean river travel – the Council wishes to facilitate the use of low-carbon, low-pollution fuel on the river to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to improve air quality.
- j) Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy
 - a. the Council is developing a strategy for Henley, mindful of the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS), to ensure access to electric vehicle chargepoints for residents and visitors. The electricity network capacity is being monitored to ensure chargepoints can be installed on-street, off-street and in community hubs.
 - o The Council prefers that the second phase of vehicles for the Henley Car Club be electric, and chargepoint locations need to be found and established.
 - o The Council has decided to install four electric vehicle chargepoints at its Mill Meadows Car Park. This first installation falls short of longer term anticipated need and indeed the OEVIS target of 7.5%. Further installations at this and other Council-owned sites are expected.

Glossary

Active travel – refers to travel that is not by vehicle, rather by foot or bicycle for example, which affords benefits of improving health through exercise and reducing harmful vehicle emissions.

Affordable housing – Affordable housing: 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.
- e) First Homes - First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:
 - a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
 - b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below);
 - c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
 - d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)- Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines

Ancient Monument - Any scheduled monument, or any other monument, which in the opinion of the Secretary of State, is of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, artistic or archaeological interest attributed to it

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - A national designation to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. The AONBs in South Oxfordshire are the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns

Asset of Community Value – land or buildings of local importance, nominated by local community groups or parish councils. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Localism Act gives local community groups the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market.

Biodiversity - Biodiversity is seen as the total complexity of all life, including not only the great variety of organisms, but also their varying behaviour and interactions.

Burgage Plots - Long, narrow plots, laid out at right angles to the street frontage, with the rear often accessed by a back lane. Burgage plots were generally laid out in blocks, as acts of medieval town planning, comprising plots of often uniform width (sometimes 6 metres). A main building, generally shops or houses, occupied the frontage, with the rear containing ancillary buildings, and open space which was often used for digging cess pits and rubbish pits. The boundaries between plots may now be marked by high stone or brick walls, and in some cases, much or even all of the open space may now have been built on. Their regular width sets the rhythm of the street, within which buildings of various dates and styles provide variety. Remaining open land at the rear provides an important haven for wildlife and acts as a 'green lung' in otherwise densely developed and populated areas.

Character area – refers to any of nine areas, Area 1 ('Fairmile'); Area 2 ('Northfield End'); Area 3 ('Phyllis Court and Fawley Court'); Area 4 ('Town Centre'); Area 5 ('Western Edges of Town Centre'); Areas 6 ('Riverside'); Area 7 (Edwardian Suburbs'); Area 8 ('St Mark's Road'); Area 9 ('Reading Road'). – each displaying their own unique set of built characteristics and each located in one of the four local Conservation Areas.

Class – the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

Code for Sustainable Homes (The Code) - Provides a comprehensive measure of sustainability of a new home by rating and certifying new homes against nine categories of sustainable design: energy/CO₂, pollution, water, health and well-being, materials, management, surface water run-off, ecology and waste. The Government has withdrawn the code with many of its requirements being consolidated into Building Regulations which will be changed to be the equivalent to code level 4

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – a levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by South Oxfordshire District Council.

Community Land Trust or CLTs – are democratic, non-profit organisations that own and develop land for the benefit of the community. They typically provide affordable homes, community gardens, civic buildings, pubs, shops, shared workspace, energy schemes and conservation landscapes. They are community organisations run by ordinary people who want to make a difference to their local community, putting control of assets into the hands of local people. They can be set up by the

community or a landowner, developer or council. They ensure that their homes are permanently and genuinely affordable. CLTs act as long-term stewards of land and the assets on it. They ensure the land is used to the benefit of the local community, not just for now but for every future occupier.

Comparison Retail - Retail items not bought on a frequent basis, for example televisions and white goods (fridges, dishwashers etc).

Conservation Area – An area designated by the District Council under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are additional controls over demolition, minor developments and the felling of trees. In the Plan area there are three four Conservation Areas: Henley, St Marks Road and Reading Road.

Convenience goods – basic goods or services that people may need on a weekly, if not daily basis. Convenience goods retail uses include grocers and newsagents, and fall within A1 Retail in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000) - Provides for public access on foot to certain types of land, amends the law relating to public rights of way. It also places a duty on local authorities to produce management plans for each AONB and to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONBs when performing their functions. For more information on the Act please visit: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/content

Designated Heritage Asset - A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development Plan - This includes adopted Local Plans, Neighbourhood Development Plans and the Waste and Minerals Local Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Planning applications have to be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Employment Land - A designation that has defined boundaries and is used to safeguard areas in the district for employment uses, both existing and proposed, as designated by the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Plan

Electric car charging – dedicated charging points for electric vehicles.

Green infrastructure – (as defined in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan) - Green Infrastructure includes sites protected for their importance to wildlife or the environment, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. Together they provide a network of green space both urban and rural, providing a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits

Housing Need - The quantity of housing required for households who are unable to access suitable housing without financial assistance.

Housing Need Assessment (HNA) - An assessment of housing need and affordable housing need.

JHHNP Baseline Report: Topic Papers – documents with evidence and technical information about the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and its policies. Whilst not part of the development plan, it provides helpful information about the context of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and should be read alongside it to understand fully the rationale and purpose of each policy.

Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan Area (the Area, NPA or Neighbourhood Plan Area) – the area of land covered by the Neighbourhood Plan that was designated formally by the Local Planning Authority.

Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan Committee (the Committee or JHHNPC) – the body that leads on the production of the Neighbourhood Plan for the Neighbourhood Area. The Area cannot be covered (either in part or in whole) by a town or parish council. A neighbourhood forum must meet certain legal requirements and can only be designated by the Local Planning Authority.

Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (the JHHNP, Neighbourhood Plan or Plan) – the document that sets out planning and land-use policies in the Area at a very local scale, prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011, the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) – a method used for understanding what the landscape is like, how it formed and how it may change in the future. It helps to define what makes an area unique as well as what should be done to protect and improve its character. Last mile service – the last leg of a product's trip before it arrives at its destination address.

Local Green Space – a green area of particular importance to a community that, if meeting criteria set out in the NPPF, can be afforded special protection through local and neighbourhood plans.

Major Development – developments for 10 or more new residential units or for the creation/ change of use of more than 1,000m² floorspace. This includes residential development of less than 10 units that creates more than 1,000m² floorspace.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

New development – the construction of new dwellings or other buildings or the refurbishment of existing buildings requiring planning permission.

Paris Agreement – an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020.

Primary Shopping Frontage – the main shopping frontages along the stretch of Brompton Road that is in the Area and which are designated by WCC as an International Shopping Centre and Primary Shopping Frontage.

Renewable energy – any naturally occurring, theoretically inexhaustible source of energy, such as solar, wind, tidal, wave or hydroelectric power, which is not derived from fossil or nuclear fuel. It excludes biomass burning, combined heat and power plants, diesel generators and gas boilers.

Section 106 agreement (s106 agreement) – a mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highway contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Sequential Test - A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types of location of land before others. For example, brownfield housing sites before greenfield sites, or town

centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. With regard to flood risk, it seeks to locate development in areas of lower flood risk (Flood Zone 1) before considering Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Social rented housing – housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

Smaller Village – Defined by SODC, Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

Sustainable Development - At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Utilities – within the context of the Plan this includes the following and their successors in technology: electricity for public or private use; gas; internet; telecommunications; television; and clean, dirty and storm water networks.

Watercourse - Main rivers, (larger rivers, brooks and streams) and ordinary watercourses (headwaters and smaller brooks and streams). Watercourses as defined in s72(1) Land Drainage Act 1991, available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/59/section/24; Ordinary watercourses as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents

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<https://historicengland.org.uk/terms/website-terms-conditions/data-downloads/>

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Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

For further information, see www.jhhnp.org.uk

