

Wantage Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2031

Submission Draft



Basic Conditions Statement

Version no. 2.0 July 2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Basic Conditions Statement is one element of the document set needed for formal submission and examination. The following documents will make up the complete Wantage NDP submission.

- The Wantage Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2031 including Appendices;
- A map of the Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area;
- This Basic Conditions Statement;
- A Consultation Statement detailing the extensive consultation with residents and other local stakeholders and statutory bodies throughout the development process;
- A Screening Statement dated 13th January 2022 on the determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Screening Statement dated 11th May 2023 on the determination of the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which was carried out by Vale of White Horse District Council;
- An evidence base comprising the evidence base documents identified in the NP including:
 - Green Spaces Assessment
 - Neighbourhood Plan Local Character Assessment
 - Community Consultations and Survey Findings

For additional information please see <https://wantagecouncil.gov.uk/wantage-neighbourhood-plan/>

2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The legal requirements of Neighbourhood Plans, and the related procedural obligations, are set out in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

As part of the process of writing this Neighbourhood Plan the Steering Group has had regard to the various legal requirements contained in the key legislation. The following paragraphs of this statement describe those requirements and the compliance assessment.

Is Wantage Town Council a 'Qualifying Body' authorised to act in relation to the Neighbourhood Area?

This requirement is described in Sections 61E(1) / 61E(6) and 61F (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Wantage Town Council is a Qualifying Body and is therefore authorised to act in relation to the production of a Neighbourhood Plan covering the Neighbourhood Area.

Has the Neighbourhood Area been designated by Vale of White Horse District Council?

This requirement is described in Section 61G(1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The Wantage Neighbourhood Area application was submitted on 9th October 2013 and on 6th January 2014 the Vale of White Horse District Council Senior Policy Officer (Neighbourhood) designated the area, which covers the whole parish area.

Does the designation follow an application for designation by the 'Relevant Body' (ie Wantage Town Council)?

This requirement is described in Section 61G(1a) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The Wantage Neighbourhood Area application was submitted by the Wantage Town Council who are the 'Relevant Body' for the purposes of Section 61G(1a).

The designated Neighbourhood Area is indicated below in Figure 1:

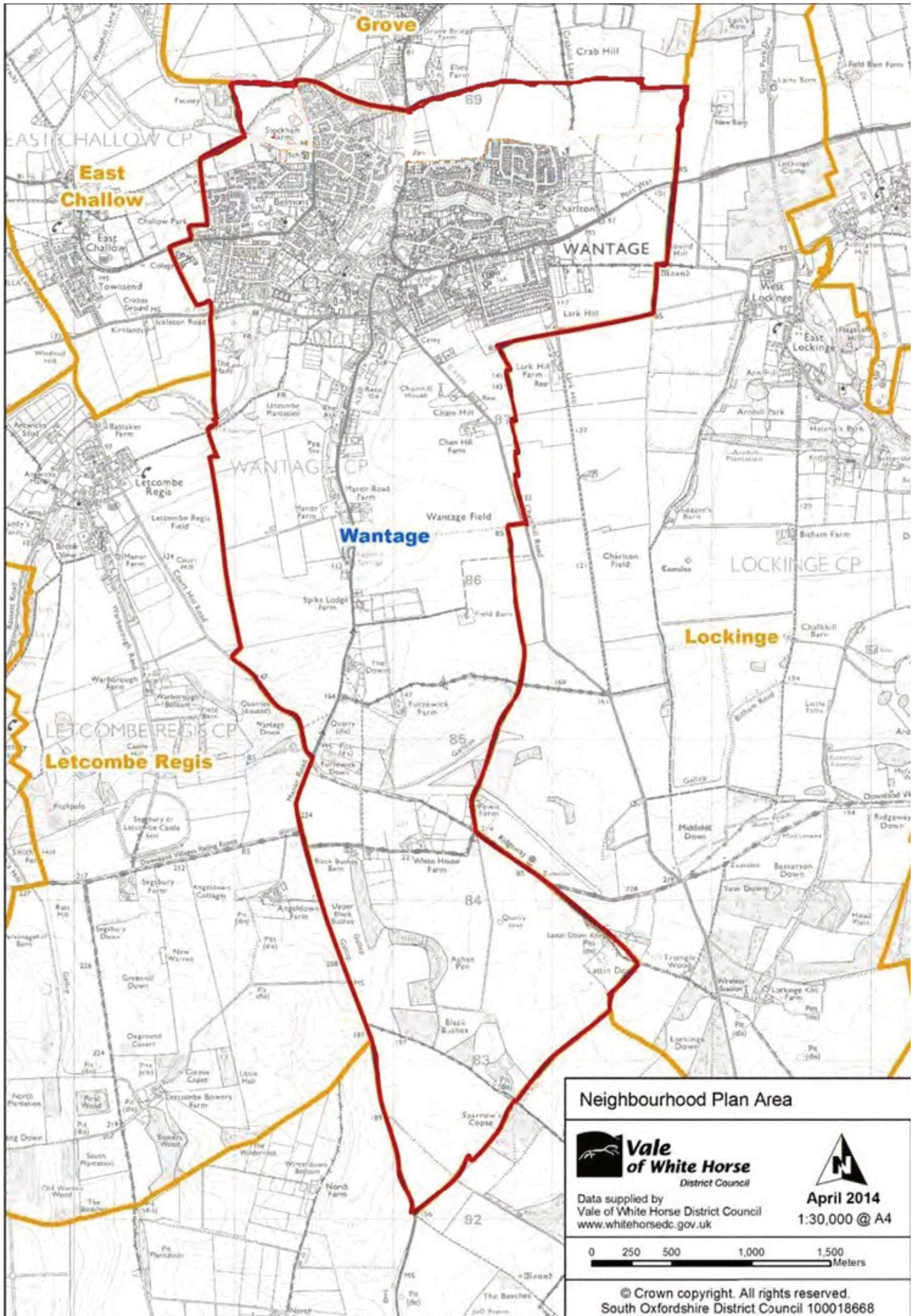


Figure 1. Designated Neighbourhood Area

Do the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan and Basic Conditions Statement specify the period for which the Plan is to have effect?

This requirement is described in Section 38B (1a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

Both the Neighbourhood Plan and the Basic Conditions Statement specify the period over which the Plan is to have effect, namely the period 2023 - 2031.

Does the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan include provisions about development that is 'Excluded Development'?

This requirement is described in Section 38B(1b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). 'Excluded Development' is defined in Section 61k of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as development that consists of a county matter (ie minerals and waste matters); or the carrying out of prescribed operations / development / development in prescribed area; development within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment; or nationally significant infrastructure projects.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not contain provisions about development that is 'Excluded Development'.

Does the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan relate to more than one neighbourhood area?

This requirement is described in Section 38B(1c) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

As noted above, the Neighbourhood Plan covers the entire area within the parish boundary.

Are there any other Neighbourhood Plans in place for the Wantage Neighbourhood area?

This requirement is described in Section 38B(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 (as amended).

There are no other 'made' Neighbourhood Plans that cover an area that is located within the Wantage parish boundary and the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Does the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan contain policies that relate to the development and use of land?

The Wantage Neighbourhood Plan contains policies which relate to the development or use of land and are therefore appropriate for inclusion within a Neighbourhood Plan.

Does the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan meet the 'Basic Conditions'?

The requirement to meet 'Basic Conditions' is set out in Schedule 4b(8(1a)) to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), with the basic conditions themselves being set out in Schedule 4b(8(2a-g)).

The rest of this Statement is devoted to assessing the degree to which the submission Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions set out in Schedule 4b.

For the sake of completeness, the basic conditions that are relevant to Neighbourhood Plans such as this are as follows:

(a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan

(b) the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development

(c) the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (in this case Vale of White Horse District Council)

(d) the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations as incorporated into UK law

(e) the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites (this is a 'Prescribed Condition')

Basic Conditions (d) and (e) are addressed together in Section 6 of this Statement.

Schedule 4b (8(6)) also indicates that it is necessary to consider whether the neighbourhood plan is “compatible with the Convention rights”. The interpretation section (s.17) in Schedule 4b confirms that “the Convention rights” have the same meaning as in the Human Rights Act 1998. This will be considered in Section 6 of this Statement.

3 CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL POLICY / ADVICE

The Wantage Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated December 2023. The Neighbourhood Plan has also had regard to the guidance set out on the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) website, published by the Government in 2014 and updated on a rolling basis.

The Town Council believes that the Neighbourhood Plan plans positively for future development in the parish area and that it is consistent with the provisions of the adopted Vale of White Horse District Council’s adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies and Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites.

Set out in Table 1 overleaf, is a brief summary of how each policy conforms to the NPPF and NPPG. The particular paragraphs referred to in the table are those considered the most relevant to each policy but are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all possible relevant paragraphs.

NP Policy Number and Title	NPPF / NPPG paragraph	Comment on Conformity
ALL POLICIES	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 12-14, 18, 21, 29-30, 37, 50, 52, 67-68, 71, 105, 132, 145 and 161 (neighbourhood planning).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 41-001-20190509-41-107-20200925 (neighbourhood planning)</i></p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan has been drafted having regard to the extensive policy and guidance contained in the Government's NPPF and NPPG resources. The policy and guidance has fundamentally informed and shaped the policies in this neighbourhood plan as a result.</p>
Policy 1: Town Centre Policy Area	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 85-89 (economy), 90-95 (ensuring the vitality of town centres), 127 (effective use of land), 114-117 (transport) and 135, 191, 193 (amenity / pollution).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 2b-001-20190722 to 2b-018-20190722 (town centres and retail), 66-001-20190722 to 66-003-20190722 (effective use of land), 66-006-20190722 to 66-007-20190722 (amenity) and 42-001-20140306 to 42-015-20140306 (transport).</i></p>	<p>This policy reflects national policy on supporting town centre uses that seeks to preserve the unique identity of Town Centres and maintain the vitality of local communities.</p>
Policy 2: Protection of Employment Sites	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 85-89 (economy), 114-117 (transport), 135, 191, 193 (amenity / pollution) and 180 (landscape).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 41-045-20190509 to 41-046-20190509 (infrastructure needs), 66-006-20190722 to 66-007-20190722 (amenity) and 42-001-20140306 to 42-015-20140306 (transport).</i></p>	<p>The NPPF strongly supports employment development, which helps to build a strong, competitive economy (Section 6) and this policy also supports a specific form of employment development.</p> <p>This policy sets out a number of criteria, which reflect the points raised in paragraphs 85-89 of the NPPF and seeks to support new employment opportunities and ensure that development will not unacceptably harm the countryside.</p>
Policy 3: Design - General Principles	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 55, 57-58 (planning obligations), 114-117 (transport), 123-125 (making effective use of land), 131-140 (design), 180 (landscape), 135, 193 (amenity), 191(c) (dark landscapes) and 195-199 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 26-001-20191001 to 26-023-20191001 (design), 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape), 66-006-20190722 to 66-007-20190722 (amenity / daylight), 18a-001-20190723 to 18a-063-20190723 and 18a-039-2019-0723 to 18a-041-20190723 (heritage), 42-001-20140306 to 42-015-20140306 (transport) and 23b-001-20190315 to 23b-038-20190901 (planning obligations).</i></p>	<p>This policy draws on comprehensive landscape evidence and local design guidance and seeks to manage the impact of development on the important views that make a significant contribution to the character of the Plan area, in a way that is consistent with the requirements at NPPF paragraphs 131-140 (design) by ensuring that the design of development reflects the special qualities of the Plan area.</p> <p>In addition, it also seeks to build upon the policies of the development plan in maintaining the special character of the town and its associated spatial arrangement.</p> <p>Lastly, it seeks to secure appropriate contributions from developers in order to ensure that development will not have an unacceptable impact to the existing cycling facilities and to the local road network.</p>
Policy 4: Design - Character Areas	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 123-125 (making effective use of land), 128-129 (achieving appropriate densities), 131-140 (design), 157-162 (climate change), 180 (landscape), 135, 193 (amenity), 195-199 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and 185-188 (biodiversity / Net Gain / green</i></p>	<p>This policy sets out the main requirements that developers need to meet in order to demonstrate a development relates to the character of the specific local area.</p> <p>It also reflects national policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment, including its heritage assets in the NPPF.</p>

	<p><i>infrastructure).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 26-001-20191001 to 26-023-20191001 (design), 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape), 6-001-20140306 to 66-004-20190722 to 66-005-20190722 (density), 66-006-20190722 to 66-007-20190722 (amenity / daylight), 18a-001-20190723 to 18a-063-20190723 and 18a-039-2019-0723 to 18a-041-20190723 (heritage) and 8-004-20190721 to 8-035-20190721 (biodiversity / Net Gain and green infrastructure).</i></p>	<p>Many of the policies in the NPPF are relevant to the quality and form of developments. However section 12 in particular supports a Neighbourhood Planned approach, indicating that “Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.”</p> <p>This policy will ensure that developments directly draw upon the guidance on local distinctiveness in the Plan’s appendices. Therefore, it will accord with the NPPF and paragraphs 131-135 in particular.</p>
<p>Policy 5: Design - Housing Types</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 60-72 (housing mix and affordability), 78-80 (rural housing), 119-121 (making effective use of land), 124-125 (density), 126-135 (design), 130 and footnote 49 (space standards).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 67-001-20190722 to 67-015-20210524 (housing need and affordability), 2a-017-20190220 to 2a-024-20190220 (affordable housing need), 63-001-20190626 to 63-019-20190626 (housing for older and disabled people), 56-001-20150327 to 56-023-20160519 (technical standards), 26-001-20191001 to 26-023-20191001 (design) and 66-004-20190722 to 66-005-20190722 (density).</i></p>	<p>This policy draws upon housing policies in the NPPF and seeks to develop a policy approach that is consistent with national planning policy and guidance on housing developments.</p> <p>In addition, it seeks to support affordable housing development that reflects the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the associated guidance in the NPPG.</p> <p>The NPPF contains detailed guidance on meeting the accommodation needs of communities through the provision of certain forms of housing development where the need is supported by good evidence. Section 5 of the NPPF and the associated NPPG provide a great deal of detail in this regard and policy 5 seeks to capture this approach by asking developers to demonstrate how their proposals meet specific needs of the local community in the Plan area.</p>
<p>Policy 6: Green Infrastructure Network and Biodiversity</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 180 (landscape) and 20, 96, 159, 180-188, 192 (biodiversity / Net Gain / green infrastructure).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape) and 8-004-20190721 to 8-035-20190721 (biodiversity / Net Gain / green infrastructure).</i></p>	<p>Policy 6 builds upon recently made environmental legislation, which makes mandatory the requirement for a minimum percentage of biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments will be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity and therefore the policy is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.</p> <p>This policy also identifies a Green Infrastructure Network and seeks to protect those parts of the Plan area that are especially significant because they contain green and blue infrastructure due to the significant contribution they make in the Plan area.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that this policy is consistent with the principles in the NPPF at Sections 2, 9, 12 and 15 in particular, and also reflect the associated guidance in the NPPG.</p>

<p>Policy 7: Green Infrastructure - Letcombe Brook</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 126-135 (design), 180 (landscape), 20, 96, 159, 180-188, 192 (biodiversity / Net Gain / green infrastructure) and 193 (amenity).</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 26-001-20191001 to 26-023-20191001 (design), 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape), 6-001-20140306 to 6-012-20190315 (climate change), 66-004-20190722 to 66-005-20190722 (density), 31-001-20191101 to 31-007-20191101 (light pollution), 66-006-20190722 to 66-007-20190722 (amenity / daylight) and 8-004-20190721 to 8-035-2010721 (biodiversity / Net Gain and green infrastructure).</i></p>	<p>Policy 7 reflects and builds upon a range of issues that are addressed in the NPPF, including design (section 12) and landscape and biodiversity (section 15).</p> <p>The approach in this policy reflects the unique role that the Letcombe Brook plays in the Plan area and the value it represents to the local community and visitors. The approach that will be taken to managing development alongside the Letcombe Brook, including the mitigation measures for the effects of development that impacts on the river corridor that will be sought from developers, is set out in detail in Policy 7.</p>
<p>Policy 8: Green Infrastructure - Local Green Spaces</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 20, 96, 159, 181, 192 (green infrastructure) and 102-107 (open space and recreation)</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape) and 8-004-20190721 to 8-035-20190721 (biodiversity / Net Gain and green infrastructure).</i></p>	<p>This policy draws on the evidence provided in Appendix 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan and seeks to conserve existing green infrastructure that define the unique character of the Plan area.</p> <p>This policy complies with the requirements set out in the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the associated guidance in the NPPG.</p>
<p>Policy 9: Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 20, 96, 159, 181, 192 (green infrastructure) and 102-107 (open space and recreation)</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 8-036-20190721 to 8-042-20190721 (landscape) and 8-004-20190721 to 8-035-20190721 (biodiversity / Net Gain and green infrastructure).</i></p>	<p>Policy 9 addresses one of the primary concerns of the local community, which is the desire to ensure protection of the Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground due to its significant recreational value.</p> <p>This policy supports development proposals, which will secure the long-term future of the existing leisure and recreational facilities and as a consequence, it accords with the Government's theme of encouraging healthy communities (NPPF paragraphs 96-97) and preserving open space and recreational buildings (NPPF paragraphs 102-103).</p>
<p>Policy 10: Infrastructure Investment</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 20, 96, 159, 181, 192 (green infrastructure) and 102-107 (open space and recreation)</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 37-003-20140306 (open space / recreation), 41-045-20190509 to 41-046-20190509 (infrastructure needs), 53-007-20190722 (delivering sufficient school places), 10-007-20190509 to 10-028-20180724 (viability) and 23b-001-20190315 to 23b-038-20190901 (planning obligations).</i></p>	<p>This policy seeks to secure appropriate contributions from developers in order to ensure that development will not have an unacceptable impact to the existing community facilities.</p> <p>This is central to the Government's theme for supporting a prosperous rural economy and encouraging healthy communities (sections 6 and 8 of the NPPF) and it follows the policy approach for planning obligations set out in paragraphs 55, 57-58 of the NPPF.</p>
<p>Policy 11: Community Assets</p>	<p><i>NPPF Paragraphs 8 (sustainable development), 58, 127 (viability), 85-89 (economy), 96-97, 99 (healthy / safe communities), 102-103 (open space / recreation), 193 (pollution)</i></p> <p><i>NPPG Paragraphs 37-003-20140306 (open space / recreation), 41-045-20190509 to 41-046-20190509 (infrastructure needs); 10-007-20190509 to 10-028-20180724 (viability).</i></p>	<p>This policy seeks to protect the specified existing Assets of Community Value and support their reuse in the Plan area.</p> <p>This is central to the Government's theme for supporting a prosperous rural economy and encouraging healthy communities (sections 6 and 8 of the NPPF).</p>

4 CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

There are three over-arching objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental (see NPPF paragraph 8). The three objectives are mutually dependent.

In addressing the above basic conditions, the Neighbourhood Development Plan pays particular regard to NPPF, Paragraph 9, which requires that

“Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but on doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”.

When testing the policies set out in the NDP the following three categories have been assessed and the conclusions are summarised below.

Sustainable Development Category	Responsibility
Economic (Econ)	The Plan encourages and supports rural businesses, employment of local people and development which have a tangible benefit to community infrastructure and services.
Social (So)	The Plan’s policies recognise the social dimension seeking to preserve and enhance community facilities and promoting active and sustainable travel. Emphasis has been placed on the need to manage traffic and pedestrian safety and improve cycling facilities in the Plan area. The Plan also identifies proposed Local Green Spaces and a green infrastructure network, which are valued for their social benefits.
Environmental (En)	The Plan encourages development to respect the local character, landscape, biodiversity, heritage and a range of other environmental attributes of the parish area, as well as protecting the identity of Wantage by using appropriate landscape and design policies.

The following table shows how the NDP objectives relate to the more detailed sustainability themes.

Sustainability Theme	Categ.	General sustainability Appraisal Objective	Town Objective
1. Biodiversity	En	Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses.	2a), 2b), 2c)
2. Water resources and flood risk	En	Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	2a)
	En	Protect people and property from risk of flooding	2a)
3. Climatic Factors	En	Minimise our impacts on climate change and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects.	1a), 3a), 3b)
4. Landscape and Townscape	En	Conserve and enhance the character and quality of Wantage NP's rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	1a), 2c), 3a), 3b)
5. Healthy Communities	So	Provide a safe and healthy environment in which to live.	3b), 4a)
6. Education and Skills	So	Raise educational attainment and provide opportunities for people to improve their workplace skills	1a), 4a), 5a)
7. Economy and Enterprise	Econ	Encourage a vibrant and diversified local economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth.	1a)
	Econ	Ensure adequate provision of employment land and diverse employment opportunities to meet the needs of local businesses and a changing workforce.	1a), 4a)
8. Land and soil resources	En	Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings.	1a), 3b), 4a), 5a)

The degree to which policies meet key sustainable development objectives is scored using the scoring scheme shown in the following table.

Score	Commentary
++	The policy will result in a very positive effect on the sustainability objective in question
+	The policy will result in a positive effect on the sustainability objective in question
0	The policy will result in a neutral effect on the sustainability objective in question
-	The policy will result in a negative effect on the sustainability objective in question
--	The policy will result in a very negative effect on the sustainability objective in question

The following table shows how these conclusions have been reached. The Plan's policies have been assessed in terms of how they will deliver sustainable development in the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability and the assessment shows that the Plan's policies address all three objectives in clear and logical ways.

Policy Number, Category and Description		Achievement of Sustainable Development		
		Economic	Social	Environmental
Policy 1	Town Centre Policy Area	++	++	0
Policy 2	Protection of Employment Sites	++	++	0
Policy 3	Design - General Principles	+	++	++
Policy 4	Design - Character Areas	+	++	++
Policy 5	Design - Housing Types	+	++	0
Policy 6	Green Infrastructure Network and Biodiversity	0	++	++
Policy 7	Green Infrastructure - Letcombe Brook	0	++	++
Policy 8	Green Infrastructure - Local Green Spaces	0	++	++
Policy 9	Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground	++	++	0
Policy 10	Infrastructure Investment	++	++	0
Policy 11	Community Assets	++	++	0

5 CONFORMITY WITH STRATEGIC POLICIES

The Development Plan in the Vale of White Horse District Council consists of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies, which was adopted in December 2016 and the Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites, which was adopted in October 2019.

The policies of the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan can be seen in the table below. Each Neighbourhood Plan policy is accompanied by a statement describing the ‘general conformity’ with strategic policies of the Development Plan.

The Development Plan strategic policies that have not been included in the table below are not considered to be directly relevant to the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan.

NP Policy Number and Title	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Local Plan 2031 Part 2	Comment on Conformity
Policy 1: Town Centre Policy Area	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP3: Settlement Hierarchy; CP6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites; CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises; CP32: Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses and CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP13: Change of Use of Retail Units to Other Uses; DP14: Village and Local Shops and DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity</i></p>	<p>This policy identifies the Wantage Town Centre Area, as defined in the VWHLPP1 and seeks to encourage uses falling within Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).</p> <p>This policy also seeks to restrict the loss of Class E Uses within the identified Wantage Town Centre Area, unless development proposals can meet a certain list of criteria which will demonstrate that there will be no harm to the vitality and cultural value of the town centre.</p> <p>This approach is considered to be in general conformity with the approach that is set out in VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP3, CP6, CP15, CP28, CP29, CP32 and CP37 and VWHLPP2 policies DP13, DP14 and DP23.</p>
Policy 2: Protection of Employment Sites	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites; CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises and CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP10: Ancillary Uses on Employment Land and DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity</i></p>	<p>There are no specific employment areas designated in the Plan area, however there are a number of small business that are scattered throughout Wantage. This policy seeks to encourage the creation of new business opportunities in the whole of the Plan area, provided that development proposals meet a certain list of criteria that will ensure that there will be no unacceptable harm to the local environment, amenity and highway network.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that Policy 2 is in general conformity with VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP6, CP15, CP28, CP29 and CP37 and VWHLPP2 policies DP10 and DP23.</p>
Policy 3: Design - General Principles	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking; CP37: Design and</i></p>	<p>This policy seeks to manage the effect of development on the character of the local townscape and valued landscape by preserving important views on the town's edge.</p>

	<p><i>Local Distinctiveness; CP40: Sustainable Design and Construction and CP44: Landscape</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity and DP24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments</i></p>	<p>Policy 3 also sets out a number of criteria that are required to be met by developers in order to promote sustainable travel and specifically to enhance existing cycling facilities and create opportunities for the creation of improved cycling links between parts of the town.</p> <p>This reflects the policy approach in VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP15, CP35, CP37, CP40 and CP44 and VWHLPP2 policies DP16, DP23 and DP24. Therefore, this policy is considered to be in general conformity with the above policies.</p>
<p>Policy 4: Design - Character Areas</p>	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP22: Housing Mix; CP23: Housing Density; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness; CP39: The Historic Environment; CP40: Sustainable Design and Construction; CP44: Landscape; CP45: Green Infrastructure and CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP1: Self and Custom-Build; DP4: Residential Annexes; DP13: Change of Use of Retail Units to Other Uses; DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity; DP24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments; DP33: Open Space; DP36: Heritage Assets; DP37: Conservation Areas and DP38: Listed Buildings</i></p>	<p>Policy 4 identifies 6 Character Areas based on the distinctive features, characteristics or elements which have been found in Wantage. This policy will help to maintain the separate identifies of each of the Character Areas in the Plan area as described in the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>This policy also seeks to create a framework, which will preserve the locally specific features which positively enhance each individual identified Character Area of the settlement and sets out what will be required from development proposals to be considered compatible with their unique features, characteristics or elements.</p> <p>It is considered that this approach reflects the objectives that are set out in VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP15, CP22, CP23, CP33, CP37, CP39, CP40, CP44, CP45 and CP46 and VWHLPP2 policies DP1, DP4, DP13, DP16, DP23, DP24, DP33, DP36, DP37 and DP38.</p>
<p>Policy 5: Design - Housing Types</p>	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP4: Meeting Our Housing Needs; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP22: Housing Mix; CP23: Housing Density; CP24: Affordable Housing; CP26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness and CP40: Sustainable Design and Construction</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP1: Self and Custom-Build; DP2: Space Standards; DP3: Sub-Division of Dwellings; DP4: Residential Annexes; DP5: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside; DP6: Rural Workers' Dwellings; DP7: Re-use, Conversion and Extension of Buildings for Dwellings in the Open Countryside; DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity and DP24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments</i></p>	<p>This policy provides a number of criteria for appropriate development and encourages developers to use them in order to justify their proposals and maintain the special character of the Plan area. This approach is considered to be consistent with both national and development plan policies, which seek to promote high quality design and healthy and safe communities.</p> <p>This policy also supports the creation of accommodation for rural workers, self-build and custom house builders, provided that an identified housing need can be met. This approach is in accordance with both national and local plan policies, which seek to restrict housing development in the countryside and help local businesses to meet their business need.</p> <p>This approach is considered to be in general conformity with development plan policies that are listed in the column to the left.</p>
<p>Policy 6: Green Infrastructure Network and Biodiversity</p>	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility; CP35: Promoting Public Transport Cycling and Walking; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness; CP40: Sustainable Design</i></p>	<p>This policy suggests that development delivers a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, which accords with NPPF Paragraphs 180(d), 185(b) and 186(d).</p> <p>It also identifies a Green Infrastructure Network within the Plan area, which consists of green and blue features of amenity value and sets out a certain list of criteria which</p>

	<p><i>and Construction; CP44: Landscape; CP45: Green Infrastructure and CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP16: Access; DP30: Watercourses; DP31: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas; DP32: Wilts and Berks Canal and DP33: Open Space</i></p>	<p>aim to protect these elements from development that could have an unacceptable harm to them.</p> <p>It is accordingly considered that this policy is in conformity with VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP15, CP31, CP33, CP35, CP37, CP40, CP44, CP45 and CP46 and VWHLPP2 policies DP16, DP30, DP31, DP32 and DP33.</p>
Policy 7: Green Infrastructure - Letcombe Brook	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness; CP44: Landscape; CP45: Green Infrastructure and CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity; DP30: Watercourses and DP31: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas</i></p>	<p>The Letcombe Brook and its tributaries is a distinctive feature of the Plan area and this policy seeks to protect the watercourse from unacceptable harm that would be caused from any type of development.</p> <p>This approach reflects the objectives that are set out in VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP15, CP33, CP37, CP44, CP45 and CP46 and VWHLPP2 policies DP16, DP23, DP30 and DP31.</p>
Policy 8: Green Infrastructure - Local Green Spaces	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness; CP44: Landscape; CP45: Green Infrastructure and CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity; DP33: Open Space and DP34: Leisure and Sports Facilities</i></p>	<p>The policy reflects national policies and lists a number of green spaces that are proposed for designation, due to their compliance with the criteria set out in the NPPF and the benefits they provide to the local community.</p> <p>Consequently, it is considered that this policy is in conformity with the strategic policies of the VWHLPP1 and VWHLPP2 that are set out in the column to the left.</p>
Policy 9: Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness; CP44: Landscape; CP45: Green Infrastructure and CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP8: Community Services and Facilities; DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity; DP33: Open Space; DP34: Leisure and Sports Facilities and DP35: New Countryside Recreation Facilities.</i></p>	<p>The Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground and its associated sports and recreational buildings are a significant community facility in the Plan area. Policy 9 expresses support for proposals, which will help to secure the long term future of the recreational park through enabling development.</p> <p>It is accordingly considered that this policy is in conformity with VWHLPP1 policies CP1, CP15, CP37, CP44, CP45 and CP46 and VWHLPP2 policies DP8, DP16, DP23, DP33, DP34 and DP35.</p>
Policy 10: Infrastructure Investment	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility and CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness</i></p> <p><i>VWHLPP2 Policies: DP8: Community Services and Facilities; DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity and DP24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments</i></p>	<p>This policy provides clear guidance about supporting the provision and/or enhancement of town facilities where a need arises due to additional pressure / use due to new development taking place.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that this policy is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the VWHLPP1 and VWHLPP2 that are set out in the column to the left.</p>
Policy 10: Community Assets	<p><i>VWHLPP1 Policies: CP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area; CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility; CP37: Design and Local</i></p>	<p>This policy seeks to protect the existing Assets of Community Value in the Plan area and support their improvement and/or reuse, provided it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable harm to the amenity</p>

Distinctiveness and CP40: Sustainable Design and Construction

VWHLPP2 Policies: DP8: Community Services and Facilities; DP9: Public Houses; DP16: Access; DP23: Impact of Development on Amenity and DP24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments

of the local community.

Therefore, it is considered that this policy is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the VWHLPP1 and VWHLPP2 that are set out in the column to the left.

6 COMPATIBILITY WITH EU OBLIGATIONS (AS INCORPORATED INTO UK LAW) / PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS

The EU Directives (as incorporated into UK law) that are of most relevance to the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC
- The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC
- The Wild Birds Directive 2009/147/EC

The above have been transposed into UK law in the following ways:

- The SEA Directive is transposed into UK legislation by way of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004
- The Habitats and Wild Birds Directives have been transposed into UK legislation by way of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

Other Directives that are not directly relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU
- The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)
- The Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
- The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

The above have been transposed through the following main legislative tools (which may be subject to further amendments):

- Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (Waste Regulations 2011), SI 2011/988; Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, SI 2020/904

- Air Quality Standards Regulation 2010 (as amended)
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016

The fifth Basic Condition requirement that 'Prescribed Conditions' are met, means - for the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan - that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan must not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which sets out the habitat regulations assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.

This requirement was introduced by Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Furthermore, it is necessary to consider whether the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations which are the same as those set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Human Rights Act 1998

Dealing with this last matter first, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, being cognisant of the obligations in relation to Human Rights, have sought to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR and that it complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.

These rights can be summarised as follows:

- The right to life
- The prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment
- Protection against slavery and forced labour
- The right to liberty and freedom
- The right to a fair trial and no punishment without law
- Respect for privacy and family life and the right to marry
- Freedom of thought, religion and belief
- Free speech and peaceful protest
- No discrimination
- Protection of property
- The right to an education
- The right to free elections

The process of developing this Neighbourhood Plan has involved a significant amount of public consultation, seeking to engage with as full a range of consultees as possible to ensure the greatest opportunity for discussion about the Neighbourhood Plan (see Consultation Statement for details).

This engagement with the local community (through consultation with a wide array of individuals, businesses, landowners and community organisations) has provided many opportunities for the community to feedback and be involved in the process. This has meant that in having the opportunity to consider the draft Neighbourhood Plan and to seek to influence it where appropriate, respondents have been able to ensure, through discussion and feedback, that those rights identified above have been protected throughout the process.

In addition, as Appendix A to this Statement demonstrates, an Equalities Impact Asssment of the Neighbourhood Plan has been carried out to ensure that no groups or individuals are disadvantaged as a result of decisions being made which fail to take account of their requirements.

Other EU Obligations as Transposed into UK Legislation

Furthermore, the Plan does not contain policies which would have implications for air quality, water or waste and it is therefore compatible with the EU Directives dealing with those matters, as transposed into UK legislation.

Finally, the Plan does not propose individual projects or projects of a scale which would trigger the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and therefore the Plan is also compatible with EIA Directive as transposed into UK legislation.

Equality

Neighbourhood Plans fall within the remit of the Equality Act 2010. This legislation seeks to ensure that no groups or individuals are disadvantaged as a result of decisions being made which fail to take account of their requirements; and that policies and decision making do not discriminate either accidentally or deliberately.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the policies of the Neighborhood Plan is provided at in Appendix A to this document. The assessment concludes that the policies in the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan submission will in some cases result in positive impacts for all road users and those with disability and for the community facilities of the area. In other cases the policies will have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Having undertaken an analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan in the preceding sections of this Statement, it is concluded that the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

APPENDIX A EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The explanatory notes to the Equality Act 2010 explain that the Act “... has two main purposes - to harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality.”

It goes on to note that the Act combines a number of Acts of Parliament and sets of Regulations dating back to 1970. It places various duties on public bodies and identifies a series of ‘protected characteristics’ that could either accidentally or deliberately be discriminated against during the course of decision making or policy processes. These protected characteristics are:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion and belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation; and
- Gender reassignment.

The purpose of this section is to assess the submission draft of the Wantage Town Neighbourhood Development Plan against the above protected characteristics. Where the policies are found to have a negative effect on a protected characteristic then this can be used to identify necessary amendments to policies or to inform the consideration of potential amendments during the examination into the submission Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The degree to which policies meet equality characteristics is scored using the scoring scheme shown in the following table.

Score	Commentary
+	The policy will result in a positive effect on the equality characteristic in question
0	The policy will result in a neutral effect on the equality characteristic in question
-	The policy will result in a negative effect on the equality characteristic in question

This assessment is intended as a final check in the process of preparation of the Plan for submission. Earlier consultation exercises with the local community have engaged with a range of individuals and groups, providing an opportunity for them to comment on all aspects of the draft Plan, including whether the draft Plan supports equality.

The table over page identified each policy and assess the policy against each of the protected characteristics. The final row of each table is for comments including any actions arising from the assessment of each specific policy.

Finally, conclusions are drawn from the exercise and the conclusions fed into the Basic Condition Statement findings.

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Policy reference	Policy Description	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnership	Race	Religion and belief	Sex	Sexual orientation	Pregnancy and maternity	Comments
Policy 1	Town Centre Policy Area	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy supports the provision of improved access and accessibility to new development, including conversions and car parking
Policy 2	Protection of Employment Sites	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	New businesses are designed to meet the needs of those with disabilities
Policy 3	Design - General Principles	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy supports the provision of improved access and accessibility
Policy 4	Design - Character Areas	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy has potential to improve road safety and accessibility for all road users of all ages and those with disability
Policy 5	Design - Housing Types	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy will provide housing that meets local needs, including where there is a need for homes for retirement purposes or those with additional needs / supported living as required
Policy 6	Green Infrastructure Network and Biodiversity	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	Policy has potential to improve road safety and improve linkage between valued spaces for all road users of all ages and those with disability
Policy 7	Green Infrastructure - Letcombe Brook	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy supports improved quality of and links to the defined riverside buffer area
Policy 8	Green Infrastructure - Local Green Spaces	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	Policy protects valued spaces / recreation facilities which are available to various age groups and those with disabilities
Policy 9	Manor Road Memorial Recreation Ground	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy supports improved access to recreational and leisure facilities
Policy 10	Infrastructure Investment	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Policy supports improved access to facilities
Policy 11	Community Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	