



Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan



Made Version to 2031

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Prepared by Sutton Courtenay Parish Council
In conjunction with
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Please note that the Character Appraisal and Design Code and Evidence Base Documents can be found at <https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>

Foreword

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council has responded to the Government’s determination to give “communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area” (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2014) by preparing the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan.

Work began on the Neighbourhood Plan for Sutton Courtenay Parish in 2016 in response to a desire to preserve those aspects of the landscape, environment, heritage and public realm that were important to the residents of the Parish, and to seek to improve those aspects that have been affected by unsympathetic developments.

The Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan sets out a clear vision for the area over the years covered by the Plan period until 2031. The objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan focus on those aspects of life in the Parish that the community has made clear it values most highly.

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council looks forward to working with the community, the Vale of White Horse District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and other stakeholders to deliver the ambitions contained in this Neighbourhood Plan.

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1. Introduction & Background

1.1. Neighbourhood Plan Status

- 1.1.1. The Localism Act 2011, supplemented by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the spatial planning hierarchy of England, giving communities the right to influence future development at a local level.
- 1.1.2. Once approved at a referendum, a neighbourhood plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan, which will be incorporated into the district planning framework and be used by Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC) in the determination of planning applications. It supports the delivery of the strategic policies in the development plan and contains policies for the development and use of land. Wider community aspirations do not form part of the statutory development plan but are referred to separately in each relevant section.

1.2. Submitting Body

- 1.2.1. The Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore they are responsible for submitting the plan to the District Council for examination. The term 'qualifying body' is defined by the Localism Act 2011, meaning it is the body with responsibility for neighbourhood planning in the designated neighbourhood area.

1.3. Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.3.1. Sutton Courtenay Parish Council established a Steering Group to produce the Neighbourhood Plan in February 2016. In accordance with Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council submitted an application for the designation of a neighbourhood area on 5th July 2016. The specified area does not however follow the parish boundary. This was due to a Local Development Order being in place for land to the south at Milton Park. A further area to the south was also excluded from the Neighbourhood plan, which corresponds with the site of the former Didcot A power station and the current Didcot B Power Station. This area was excluded as a significant part of it is covered by enterprise zone and strategic employment site designations. An extension into Milton Parish to the west was included to help prevent coalescence between the villages of Sutton Courtenay and Milton. Figure 1.1 below outlines the Neighbourhood Plan area. Appendix 1 provides a copy of the Sutton Courtenay Parish Council Steering Group's *Assessment for extended Neighbourhood Plan Area*.
- 1.3.2. The Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the parish of Sutton Courtenay to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period to 2031. Every effort has been made to ensure that it reflects the views of residents. The Parish Council has consulted with and listened to the community and local organisations on a wide range of issues that will influence the well-being, sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural communities.

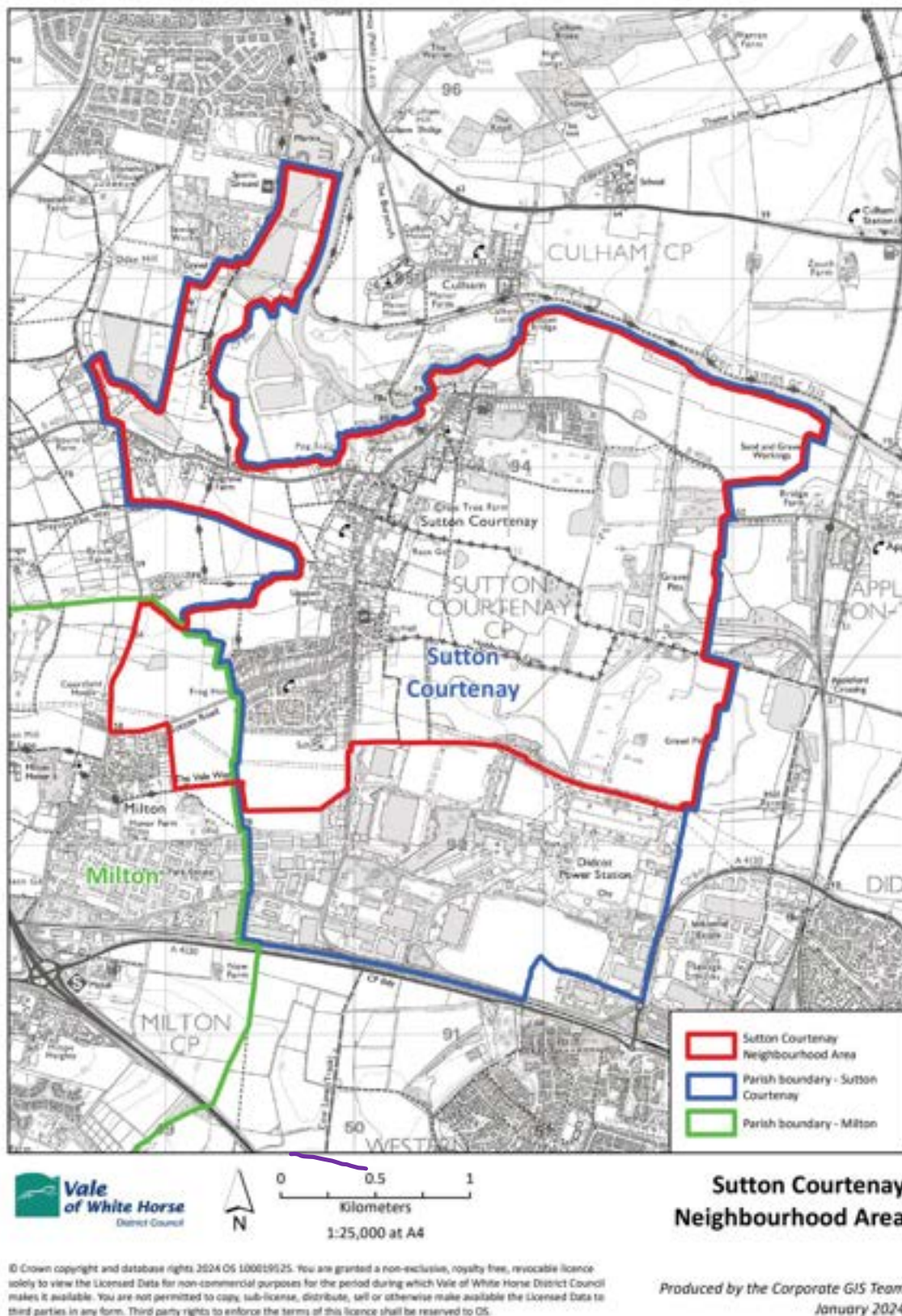


Figure 1.1 Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.4. Overview of Land Use Issues

- 1.4.1. Community surveys (see Consultation Statement for details) were undertaken to identify the broad issues affecting the residents of the Parish. These issues included:

- The design of any new development and compatibility with local character.
 - The importance of protecting the heritage assets.
 - The availability and quality of green spaces in the Parish.
 - The role that the setting of the settlement and the gaps between the settlements plays in defining the character of the village.
 - The appropriateness of previous developments and the scale of future development proposals.
 - The problems associated with accessibility within the Parish, including existing traffic congestion, proposed transport developments, public transport connectivity and the availability of off-road parking.
 - The maintenance and enhancement of the social and economic vitality of the Parish.
- 1.4.2. The Parish Council has reflected the concerns of residents in developing a vision for the future of Sutton Courtenay and a comprehensive set of objectives for future planning in the parish. These are set out in Section 4 below.

1.5. Overview of Non-Land Use Issues

- 1.5.1. Neighbourhood Plans must only contain land use planning policies to be used in determining the outcome of applications for development. This often means that important issues of particular interest to the local community that do not relate directly to planning, cannot be addressed by Neighbourhood Plans. Nevertheless, the Steering Group is aware of the importance local residents attach to certain issues that fall outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, and has sought to address these in this by including relevant 'Community Aspirations' with the aim of pursuing these by other means.

1.6. Basic Conditions

- 1.6.1. Neighbourhood Plans must comply with what are known as 'Basic Conditions'. These Basic Conditions are defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and comprise:
- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or Neighbourhood Plan).
 - The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
 - The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations as incorporated into UK law.
 - The making of the order (or 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.
- 1.6.2. 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" has the same meaning as in the Human Rights Act 1998.

1.7. Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.7.1. The Vale of White Horse District Council confirmed that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Appropriate Assessment was not required in a letter dated 22 November 2021.

1.8. Plan Period, Monitoring & Review

- 1.8.1. The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced to cover the period up to 2031, which corresponds with the plan period for The Vale of White Horse Local Plan.
- 1.8.2. The Neighbourhood Plan is intended to be dynamic plan that will change over time through the review process. In this respect, the Parish Council, in co-operation with the community, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revising the Neighbourhood Plan. The intention is to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan on a yearly basis, and to review the plan as necessary.
- 1.8.3. The Parish Council is also committed to monitor the effectiveness of Evidence Base Documents, such as the Design Code. At the end of each year it is recommended that a review takes place to ensure that they are up to date and decide what actions can be taken to improve them in the future.
- 1.8.4. Where changes (for example revised national or District planning policies) indicate that major alterations to the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be necessary, these are likely to require full public consultation and examination. Partial reviews will also need to go through the same process. However, where changes are updating matters of fact, that are minor in nature and relate only to the supporting text or community aspirations, there may be opportunities for a more limited review process to be undertaken in conjunction with the community and The Vale of White Horse District Council.

1.9. Neighbourhood Plan Stages

1.9.1. Figure 1.2 illustrates the steps involved in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan has been through public consultation and independent Examination. It has now been amended in accordance with the Examiner’s recommended modifications and reached the stage of Referendum.

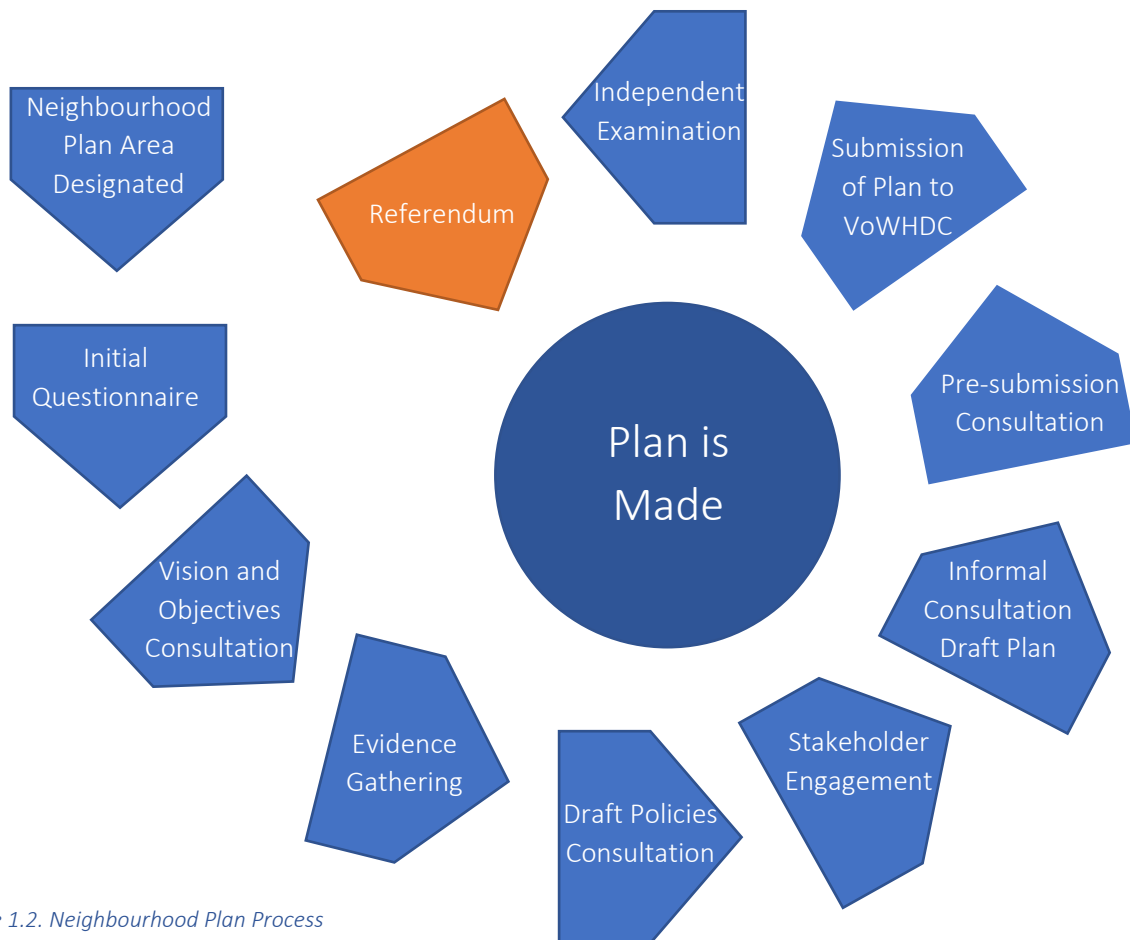


Figure 1.2. Neighbourhood Plan Process

1.10. Bibliography and Evidence Base

1.10.1. The bibliography of documents referred to in compiling this Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the location of evidence-based documents, is set out in detail in Appendix 2 to this Plan.

2. Planning Policy Context

2.1. National Planning Policy

2.1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in 2012 and was revised in February and June 2019, in July 2021 and more recently at the end of 2023. The document “*provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced*” (paragraph 1). The central focus of the NPPF is achieving sustainable development, which incorporates economic, social and environmental objectives. The NPPF requires that these objectives be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. In this respect, the NPPF is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans, and therein the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF.

2.2. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan

2.2.1. The development plan for the Parish currently comprises The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (Dec 2016) and The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (Oct 2019). The Local Plan identifies a number of key challenges and opportunities that are faced by the district and these are focused around four thematic areas:

- *Building healthy and sustainable communities.*
- *Supporting economic prosperity.*
- *Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility.*
- *Protecting the environment and responding to climate change.*

2.2.2. *Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Needs* identifies the housing target for the Vale of White Horse and prescribes how that target will be achieved. 220 houses are allocated in Sutton Courtenay at Land East of Sutton Courtenay. Core Policy 4 also includes a presumption in favour of “*sustainable development within the existing built area ofLarger Villages*”, of which Sutton Courtenay is one.

2.2.3. *Core Policy 5: Housing Supply Ring-Fence* identifies a ring-fenced area, known as the Science Vale, which has a separate housing requirement of 11,850 homes in the plan period (593 homes per annum).

2.2.4. *Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs* identifies land for future employment development. None of the strategic sites are within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary, however both Milton Park and Didcot A immediately adjoin it.

2.2.5. The Local Plan includes three Sub-Area Strategies and Sutton Courtenay falls within the South East Vale Sub-Area. Figure 2.1. highlights the relevant allocations, designations and constraints affecting this sub area. Further detail on the area specific policies is provided below:

2.2.6. *Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for the South East Vale Sub-Area* reinforces the settlement hierarchy and development allocations identified above.

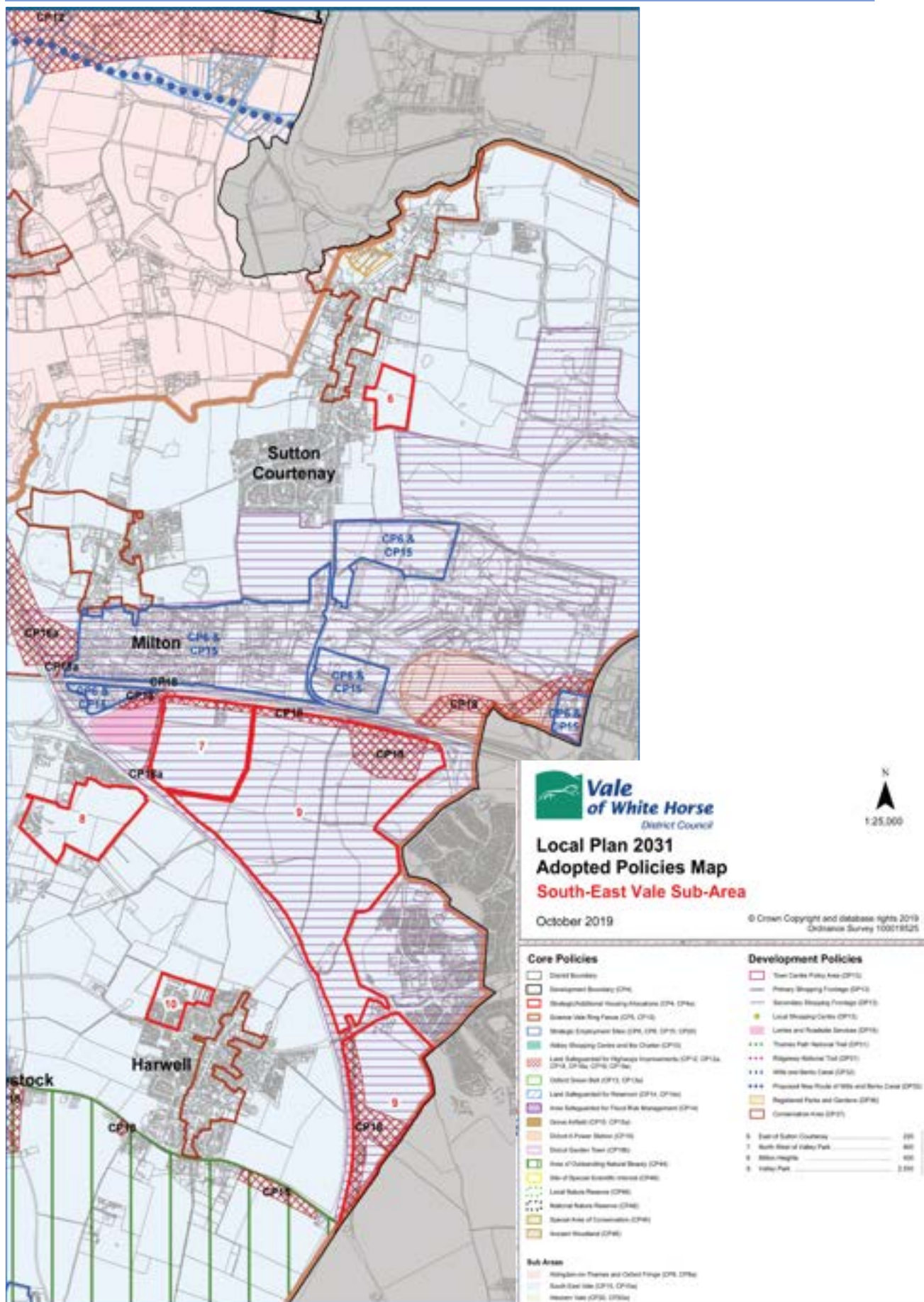


Figure 2.1: Inset Map: Sutton Courtenay, The Vale of White Horse Local Plan

2.2.7. Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station prescribes that the former power station would be considered suitable for a “high quality mixed-use development” particularly “employment (B1, B2

and B8) but also residential (C1, C2 and C3), ancillary retail, an element of bulky goods retail, leisure (D2) and community uses”.

- 2.2.8. *Core Policy 16b: Didcot Garden Town* requires proposals for development within the Didcot Garden Town to demonstrate how it can positively contribute to the achievement of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan principles.
- 2.2.9. *Core Policy 17: Transport Delivery for the South East Vale Sub-Area* recognises the need to “mitigate the impact of the planned growth across Science Vale”. As a consequence “all development within the South East Vale Sub-Area will be required to contribute towards the infrastructure identified within the Science Vale Area Strategy”.
- 2.2.10. *Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements* safeguards land to support the delivery of the prescribed transport infrastructure schemes. Of relevance to Sutton Courtenay are:
- Science Bridge and A4130 re-routing through the Didcot A site.
 - A4130 dualling between Milton Interchange and Science Bridge.
 - A new Harwell Link Road between the B4493 and A417 and Southern Didcot Spine Road.
 - A new strategic road connection between the A415 east of Abingdon-on-Thames and the A4130 north of Didcot, including a new crossing of the River Thames.
 - Improvement of the strategic cycle network.
- 2.2.11. The Local Plan includes a number of District wide policies, which are also relevant to the sustainable development of Sutton Courtenay. These include:
- Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
 - Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy.
 - Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services.
 - Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area.
 - Core Policy 22: Housing Mix.
 - Core Policy 23: Housing Density.
 - Core Policy 24: Affordable Housing.
 - Core Policy 25: Rural Exception Sites.
 - Core Policy 26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of an Ageing Population.
 - Core Policy 27: Meeting the Housing Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
 - Core Policy 28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites.
 - Core Policy 29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises.
 - Core Policy 30: Further and Higher Education.
 - Core Policy 31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy.
 - Core Policy 32: Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses.
 - Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking.
 - Core Policy 36: Electronic Communications.
 - Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness.
 - Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment.
 - Core Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction.
 - Core Policy 41: Renewable Energy.

- Core Policy 42: Flood Risk.
- Core Policy 43: Natural Resources.
- Core Policy 44: Landscape.
- Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure.
- Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity.

2.3. Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

2.3.1. The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2006 was adopted by Oxfordshire County Council in July 1996. It contained detailed policies for the supply of minerals, the provision of waste management facilities and for the control of minerals and waste developments.

2.3.2. In accordance with the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* a number of the policies of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2006 were 'saved' including Policy SC3, which states:

Planning permission will not be granted unless a routeing agreement has been secured to:

- (a) encourage heavy goods traffic to use the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road;*
- (b) prevent heavy goods traffic from entering the villages of Sutton Courtenay, Appleford and Long Wittenham except for local access; and*
- (c) limit the use of Culham Bridge to heavy goods vehicles serving local markets in the eastern parts of Abingdon and eastwards along the A415.*

2.3.3. Two additional area specific policies which relate to Sutton Courtenay were not saved, these comprised Policy SC1 and Policy SC2. Policy SC1 related to land to the east of Sutton Courtenay and land west of the Oxford-Didcot railway line, it stated that this land would be released for sharp sand and gravel working. Policy SC2 related to the after-use for that same area. The full text of Policies SC1 and SC2 are provided at Appendix 3 for reference.

2.3.4. Also of relevance is Inset Map 1 – Sutton Courtenay, which sets out those areas within the parish which were allocated for minerals workings and identifies their preferred after uses. Inset Map 1 (See Figure 2.2 below) prescribes that the land to the east of Sutton Courtenay and west of the Oxford-Didcot railway line should be restored for a mix of agriculture, woodland and nature conservation. The preferred location of each use is identified in Inset Map 1.

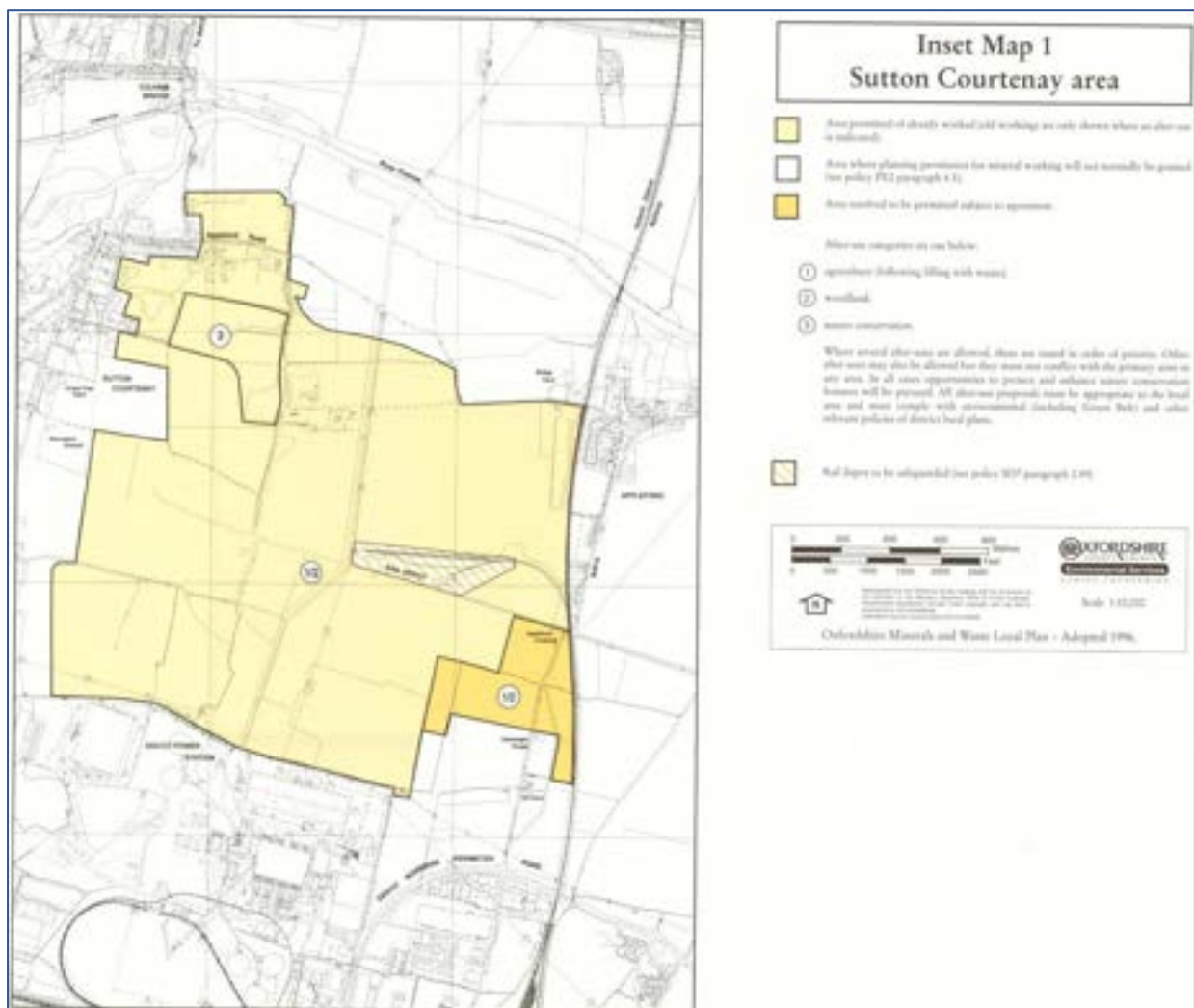


Figure 2.2: Inset Map: Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, 1996.

- 2.3.5. The replacement Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan comprises Part 1 – Core Strategy and Part 2 – Site Allocations documents. The Core Strategy was adopted on 12 September 2017 and includes a number of policies of relevance to Sutton Courtenay:
- 2.3.6. Policy M2 sets out the requirement for aggregate mineral working in Oxfordshire County for: - *“1.015 mtpa of sharp sand and gravel - giving a total provision requirement of 18.270 million tonnes.....”*. Policy M2 also prescribes that *“permission will be granted for aggregate mineral working under policy M5 to enable separate landbanks of reserves with planning permission to be maintained for the extraction of minerals of: at least 7 years for sharp sand and gravel.....”*.
- 2.3.7. Policy M3 sets out the *“principal locations for working aggregate minerals”*, with sharp sand and gravel identified in the *“Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey”*, the specific location of which is set out in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Map South and the Sutton Courtenay Inset Map, see figures 2.3 and 2.4 below respectively.

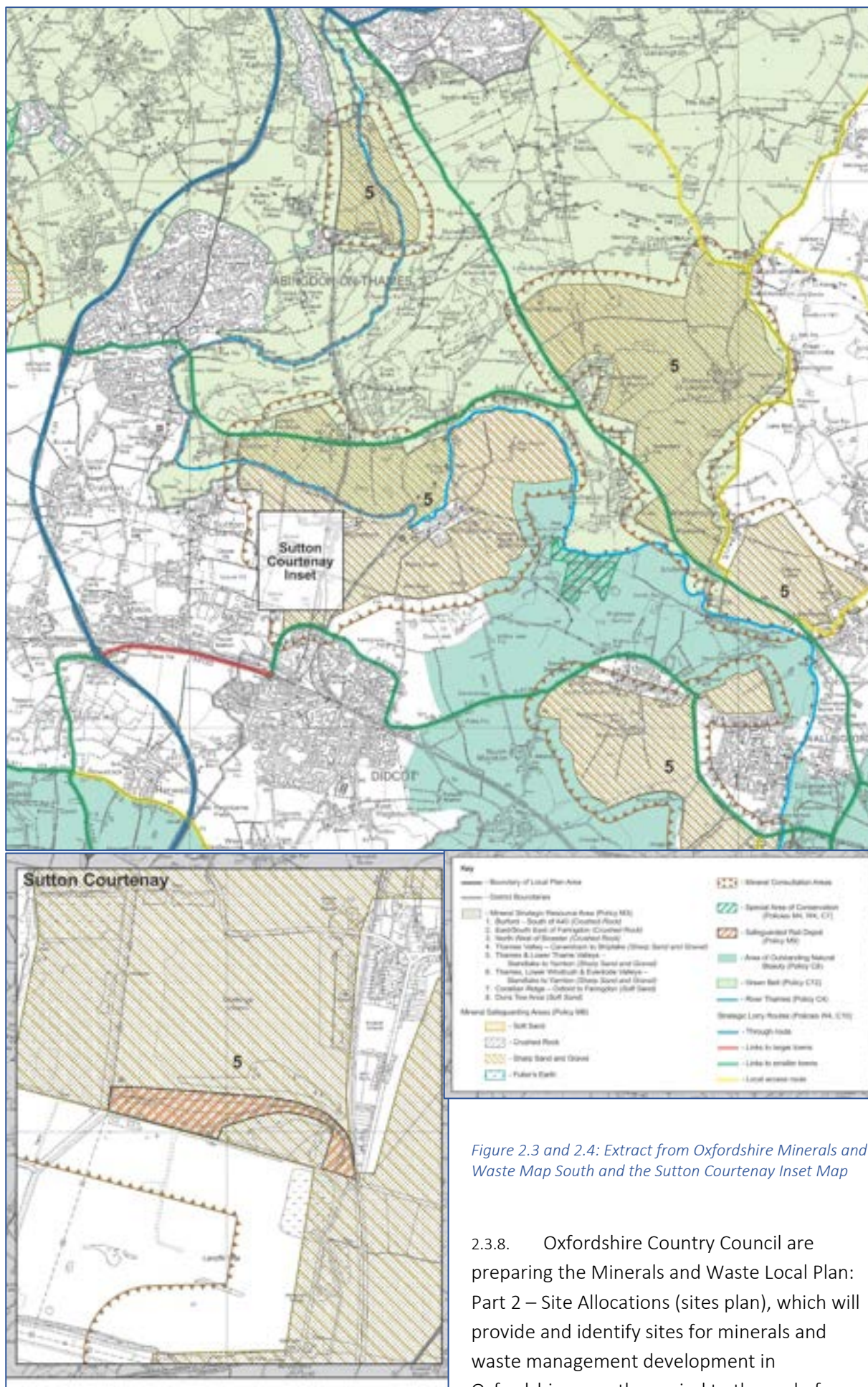


Figure 2.3 and 2.4: Extract from Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Map South and the Sutton Courtenay Inset Map

2.3.8. Oxfordshire County Council are preparing the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations (sites plan), which will provide and identify sites for minerals and waste management development in Oxfordshire over the period to the end of

2031. The January 2020 Preferred Options Consultation document did not identify any new or

extended minerals or waste sites as preferred options within Sutton Courtenay Parish or the Neighbourhood Plan area. At the time of writing there was a delay to the planned site Allocations Document, which was originally due in the Summer of 2022. The Minerals and Waste Development Scheme is currently being revised with the updated position.

2.3.9. Figures 2.3 and 2.4 above indicate the extent of the “minerals safeguarding area”. Policy M8 of the Core Strategy prescribes that *“mineral resources in the Mineral Safeguarding Areas shown on the Policies Map are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:*

- *The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or*
- *The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or*
- *The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place. Mineral Consultation Areas, based on the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, are shown on the Policies Map. Within these areas the District Councils will consult the County Council on planning applications for non-mineral development.*

2.3.10. Similarly, Policy M9 safeguards existing and permitted infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals in Oxfordshire against development that *“would unnecessarily prevent the operation of the infrastructure or would prejudice or jeopardise its continued use by creating incompatible land uses nearby”*.

2.3.11. Policy M10 relates to the restoration of minerals workings and sets out a number of factors which must be taken into account, with the overriding expectation that sites *“be restored to a high standard and in a timely and phased manner to an after-use that is appropriate to the location”*.

2.3.12. A number of waste sites are safeguarded under Policy W11 pending adoption of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document. These sites include:

- 010 - Sutton Courtenay Landfill - Recycle/Transfer, Transfer (residual waste).
- 114 - Appleford Sidings (Hanson) - CDE Recycling.
- 151 - Highway Depot (OCC) – Hazardous.

2.3.13. A number of additional Core Policies are of relevance to minerals and waste developments in the Neighbourhood Plan area, these include:

- Policy C1: Sustainable development.
- Policy C2: Climate change.
- Policy C3: Flooding.
- Policy C4: Water environment.
- Policy C5: Local environment, amenity and economy.
- Policy C6: Agricultural land and soils.
- Policy C7: Biodiversity and geodiversity.
- Policy C8: Landscape.

- Policy C9: Historic environment and archaeology.
- Policy C10: Transport.
- Policy C11: Rights of way.

3. The Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1. Overview

- 3.1.1. A significant body of information about the Parish can be found in the various surveys and reports that have been undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These documents, which include the Character Appraisal and Design Code, Business Survey and the Local Green Space Assessment, provide detailed information on the Neighbourhood Plan area and set out evidence to underpin the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan (please see <https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/> for more information). A schedule of these documents is set out in detail in Appendix 2 to this Plan.

3.2. Location and Geography of Sutton Courtenay

- 3.2.1. The neighbourhood plan area extends to approximately 670 hectares (1657.4 acres) in area. The neighbourhood plan area adjoins Abingdon, however the village of Sutton Courtenay is situated approximately 2.5 km to the south east of Abingdon, separated by the meander of the River Thames. The southern boundary of the parish aligns the Great Western main railway line and the parallel A4130, beyond which lies the town of Didcot. Immediately to the north of those routes and partially within the parish boundary (though not the neighbourhood plan area) are Milton Park and the site of the former Didcot A Power Station.
- 3.2.2. The eastern boundary of the parish runs broadly parallel with the Didcot to Oxford railway line. The land in this area has historically been used for both landfill and gravel extraction, which continues to this day, though with some tracts being restored in recent years. The western boundary of the parish extends to Milton Road, while further north, it abuts Sutton Wick Nature Reserve, Abingdon Sewage Treatment Works and Abingdon Rugby Club. The land to the west of Sutton Courtenay is largely agricultural with floodplain further north, adjoining the River Thames.
- 3.2.3. The parish comprises a broadly flat tract of land between 50 and 60 metres above the ordnance datum. Typically, the southern boundary of the parish is significantly higher than the northern boundary, with the lowest points associated with the route of the River Thames. Similarly, land towards the western boundary is higher than that associated with the eastern boundary of the parish, though contours in this location may alter due to the ongoing landfill, gravel extraction and future restoration developments.

3.3. Development History of Sutton Courtenay

- 3.3.1. There has been continuous settlement in the Sutton Courtenay area for over 8000 years evidenced by locally discovered Bronze Age and Iron Age artefacts. Similarly, archaeological evidence of Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlers exists, most notably a Roman villa to the west of the village, with an Anglo-Saxon 'Great Hall' approximately 1.7km to the west of the village.
- 3.3.2. The first written record of the village was in AD688 when the king of Wessex, King Ine, endowed the new monastery of Abingdon with the Manor of Sutton, as the village was then known. "Sutton" is a corruption of Sudtone or South Town, a town to the south of Abingdon. Sutton

became known as Sutton Courtenay after the Courtenay family took residence at the Manor in the 1170s.



Figure 3.1. 1872 OS Map of Church Street (Bodleian Library)

- 3.3.3. River trade grew during the 1600s and correspondingly so did the village. Sutton Paper Mill, which is denoted on a number of the historic maps, including John Rocque's map of 1761, produced special paper for printing banknotes for the Bank of England. The surrounding agricultural land, initially worked as open fields and latterly as enclosed landscape, supported employment and food production in the village. Gravel extraction, which was first documented at the end of the eighteenth century, expanded massively in the twentieth century, particularly to the east of the village, still continues today.
- 3.3.4. The arrival of the railways and the consequential easy transport of bulky materials enabled the development of the now demolished Didcot A power station, which was situated to the south of Sutton Courtenay. In the latter part of the twentieth Century, the railway started being used to transport refuse to the gravel pits to be land-filled.
- 3.3.5. John Rocque's map of 1761 and subsequent historic maps illustrate how the layout of the village has altered little through time, with development broadly limited to the infilling of gaps during the 19th and 20th centuries. Notable examples include the almshouses, built in 1820 and the National School and Baptist Chapel built during the second half of the nineteenth century. The

early twentieth century development included new terraced and semi-detached houses along Drayton Road, a number of detached buildings between Drop Short (Hulgrove Farm) and Gilbourn's Farm and limited ribbon development along Milton Road and Sutton Courtenay Lane (Harwell Road).

- 3.3.6. The most significant change to the built form occurs during the 1950s and 60s with new housing estates constructed along Milton Road and Harwell Road in response to post-war housing shortages. The twenty first Century sees additional housing constructed to the north of Milton Road and south of Appleford Road. Other development includes infilling of the back plots between High St and Ginge Brook.

3.4. Socio-Economic Characteristics

- 3.4.1. The 2011 census, recorded 2421 residents in the parish of Sutton Courtenay. The mean age of residents is 42.7, with 22.2% of the population under the age of 19 (England average is 24%) and 19.5% of the population over the age of 65 (England average is 16.4%).
- 3.4.2. The 2011 census also recorded 1,036 dwellings within the parish, of which 68.8 % are owner occupied, with social rented accommodation making up 18% of households and private rented making up 11.9% of households. One-person households make up 27% of all households in the parish, slightly below the English average of 30.2%. Properties in Sutton Courtenay had an overall average price of £601,364 in 2021, significantly above the average property value in England of £274,615.
- 3.4.3. Sutton Courtenay Parish recorded very low levels of unemployed individuals in the 2011 census, with only 2.7% of the population being unemployed in comparison to 4.4% in England. The percentage of retired individuals is slightly higher than the English average however, with 13.7% in England and 14.2% in Sutton Courtenay. The sectors in which individuals work are broadly similar to the rest of England, however *professional, scientific and technical activities* represent 13.7% of employed individuals compared to 6.7% across England, reflecting the location of the parish in the Science Vale. There is a significantly higher proportion of "*managers, directors and senior officials*" living in Sutton Courtenay parish representing 16.6% of employed individuals compared to 10.9% for England.
- 3.4.4. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are datasets that are used in the UK to classify the relative deprivation of geographical areas known as Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA). The Neighbourhood Plan area includes parts of three LSOA. The least deprived area corresponds with the southwestern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which falls within the parish of Milton. This LSOA is ranked within the 10% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The most deprived area corresponds with the southern part of Sutton Courtenay village and parish. This LSOA is however still ranked within the 40% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The main part of Sutton Courtenay village and the northern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area are within the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country, ranked 27,563 out of 32,844.
- 3.4.5. Car ownership levels are higher than the English average with only 10.8% of households having no car in comparison to the English level of 25.8%. The percentage of households with one car is broadly similar between Sutton Courtenay and England (40.1% compared to 42.2%). A significant difference emerges however in the percentage of households having two cars, with 32.8% of

Sutton Courtenay households having a second car in comparison to 24.7% of English households. The higher than average levels of car ownership reflect both the affluence of the area and the fact that the average road distances to some key services and workplaces are greater than the England average.

- 3.4.6. The Neighbourhood Plan Area contains one school – Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School. The school provides education for pupils aged 4 to 11, with 165 pupils currently enrolled in the school. The school became an academy and joined the Ridgeway Education Trust family of schools on 1st April 2019.
- 3.4.7. Sutton Courtenay benefits from a range of local services and facilities including the primary school, local shop, place of worship, public houses, petrol station, post office and village hall. In terms of public transport, the no. 33 Thames Travel Connector provides an hourly service (5:30am to 7:30 pm) between Abingdon and Wallingford, via Milton and Didcot. The nearest railway station is located in Appleford which is located approximately 2.5km driving distance from The Green, Sutton Courtenay. In addition, Didcot Parkway station is situated 6.3km from The Green.
- 3.4.8. Crime rates in the Vale of White Horse are generally lower than in the wider Thames Valley police force area.

4. Vision Statement & Core Objectives

Vision

To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.

Aims

1. To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.
2. To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.
3. To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.

Objectives

Environment

1. To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements.
2. To maintain living green spaces.
3. To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish.
4. To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.
5. To use land efficiently and to preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Economy

6. To promote and support local business.
7. To encourage and support home working.

Community

8. To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village.
9. To seek to ensure the provision of social amenities meets the demands of a growing village.
10. To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village.
11. To preserve and enhance historic village assets

Housing

12. To give priority for new housing to meet local needs including a greater availability of range of affordable housing.
13. To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness.
14. To ensure all new developments are appropriate and integrated within the built up area.
15. To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.

5. Land Use Policies

5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. Sutton Courtenay is an ancient village with earliest buildings dating from the twelfth century and with a historic complex network of tracks and lanes. Sutton Courtenay includes the picturesque historic core of the village, the centre of which is designated as a conservation area.
- 5.1.2. The village was historically dominated by the agricultural landscape, however the twentieth Century saw significant and largely detrimental changes within the Parish. Gravel extraction vastly increased in scale and this was followed with use of many of those sites for landfill. Restoration is ongoing in places, however this is a lengthy process which, to date, in places has been poorly executed. It is acknowledged that mineral extraction is within the remit of Oxfordshire County Council and cannot be covered by Neighbourhood Plan policies, however once the land has been restored and been through aftercare it can be subject to policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.1.3. The development of Didcot A Power Station, changed and visually dominated the landscape for decades until its recent demolition. The Didcot B Power Station and neighbouring industrial and commercial uses continue to exert an influence over the landscape. Although much of this land falls within the parish boundary, it was removed from the designated area and is not covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. This area does however fall within the scope of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan boundary.
- 5.1.4. The village is also affected by significant developmental pressures associated with its location within the Science Vale. The village itself has recently had a number of modern estate-style residential developments, particularly to the south west of the conservation area and along Appleford Road. There is pressure from development at Milton Park to the south as well as housing development as part of Didcot Garden Town. The proximity of Abingdon to the north exerts further pressure and so do schemes within neighbouring parishes of Milton, Drayton, Culham, Appleford-on-Thames and Harwell.
- 5.1.5. Whilst there has been an attempt to maintain the semi-rural appearance to the edge of many new developments, the gap between Sutton Courtenay and neighbouring settlements is rapidly diminishing. The Parish, therefore risks being subsumed into encroaching development. The Residents' Survey highlighted a strong desire by residents to maintain an appropriate separation between the built-up area of the village and the expansion of neighbouring settlements, employment sites and further mineral extraction. Whilst a key issue is the prevention of coalescence, it is also acknowledged that Sutton Courtenay has a unique identity which must evolve over time in such a way that maintains its distinct and historic identity.
- 5.1.6. As described in Section 2.2 above, the adopted Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) contains a variety of policies that establish the strategic framework for protecting designated heritage assets and controlling new development in the settlements in the vale. Policy CP3 describes the settlement hierarchy in the Local Plan area, ranging from market towns at one end (e.g. Faringdon and Wantage), then local service centres and larger villages, and finally smaller villages at the other end. According to Policy CP4 - in 'larger villages' such as Sutton

Courtenay, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area, in accordance with CP1. It is noted in CP4 that:

“Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. This development must be adjacent, or well related, to the existing built area of the settlement or meet exceptional circumstances set out in the other policies of the Development Plan and deliver necessary supporting infrastructure”.

- 5.1.7. Everything beyond the built-up area of the village is deemed to be ‘open countryside’ where development *“will not be appropriate unless specifically supported by other relevant policies as set out in the Development Plan or national policy”.*

5.2. Development Approach Principles

- 5.2.1. The desire to see most development take place within the built-up area of the village is a broad concern and a number of principles have been identified to address this matter:
- The need to encourage the relocation of non-conforming land uses in residential areas within the villages to suitable relocation sites in close proximity thereby ensuring retention of jobs and services and enabling the relocated businesses to flourish with their existing sites being redeveloped.
 - General support for infill development subject to meeting planning policy requirements.
 - The need to manage housing development that does take place in rural locations outside the villages, including managing the conversion of buildings in the countryside.
 - Support for employment development and protection of existing employment facilities.

5.3. List of Policies

Policy SC1: Green Gaps	Environment
Policy SC2: Landscape Character and Value	
Policy SC3: Key Views and Vistas	
Policy SC4: Green and Blue infrastructure	
Policy SC5: Local Green Spaces	
Policy SC6: Biodiversity	
Policy SC7: Flooding and drainage	Flooding and Drainage
Policy SC8: Residential development Within the Built-up Area	Housing
Policy SC9: Housing Needs	
Policy SC10: Design, Heritage and Setting	Built Environment
Policy SC11: Mineral and Waste Restoration	
Policy SC12: Riverside Related Development	
Policy SC13: Community facilities	Community
Policy SC14: Village Hall	
Policy SC15: Sustainable construction and infrastructure	Infrastructure
Policy SC16: Economy and Employment	Local Business & Employment
Policy SC17: Traffic management	Transport & Highways

6. Environment

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aim	To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.
Objectives to implement the Vision and Aims	<p>To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements.</p> <p>To maintain living green spaces.</p> <p>To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.</p> <p>To use land efficiently and to preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p>
Environment Policies	<p>Policy SC1: Green Gaps</p> <p>Policy SC2: Landscape Character and Value</p> <p>Policy SC3: Key Views and Vistas</p> <p>Policy SC4: Green and Blue infrastructure</p> <p>Policy SC5: Local Green Spaces</p> <p>Policy SC6: Biodiversity</p>

6.1. Green Gaps

- 6.1.1. Many terms are used to refer to land between neighbouring settlements that are vulnerable to physical or visual coalescence, including ‘green gap’, ‘local gap’, ‘green buffer’, ‘strategic gap’ or ‘meaningful gap’. For the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan, the term green gap is used as it corresponds with the term that has been used in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan, which was published in October 2017 having been approved by Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. This document established the principle of green gaps to prevent Didcot Garden Town coalescing with the necklace of villages surrounding the new garden town.
- 6.1.2. Policy D29 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) also supports the principle of a green gap between settlements and provides guidance for development proposals in that respect:

Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlement’s character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements.

The key criteria state that development will be permitted where:

- Physical and visual separation between two separate settlements is not unacceptably diminished.
- Cumulatively, with other existing or proposed development, it does not compromise the physical and visual separation between settlements.
- It does not lead to a loss of environmental or historical assets that individually or collectively contribute towards their local identity.

Proposed Green Gap Locations

- 6.1.3. This Neighbourhood Plan is underpinned by a detailed assessment of green gap locations, which is set out in the *Countryside and Green Gap Assessment, April 2022* (see <https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>). This document describes the key features and assets of the parish, in addition to identifying those areas which are deemed to be critical to ensuring that sufficient physical and visual separation is maintained between the village and neighbouring settlements.
- 6.1.4. In accordance with the approach in the above document, the land encompassing the village of Sutton Courtenay was divided into individual land parcels and each parcel was analysed to determine its visual connection to Sutton Courtenay and surrounding villages. The parcels were further assessed to identify their heritage, recreation, nature conservation and landscape value, as although a green gap is primarily a landscape function, related to physical and visual separation, gaps also provide green infrastructure and wildlife benefits close to settlements. Many also contain Public Rights of Way which are highly valued by residents. Finally, the analysis examined the developmental pressures which each land parcel is affected by, including existing and potential future developments and proposals.
- 6.1.5. Based on the work undertaken, the Plan proposes the identification of two Green Gaps. In both cases they are intended to maintain the physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Milton Park (to the south) and Milton (to the west). Green Gap 4a is a rectangular field to the immediate west of Sutton Courtenay Lane. Its southern boundary has been drawn to take

account of the Milton Park Local Development Order. Green Gap 3j is located to the north and west of Green Gap 4a. It will safeguard the separation between Sutton Courtenay and Milton.

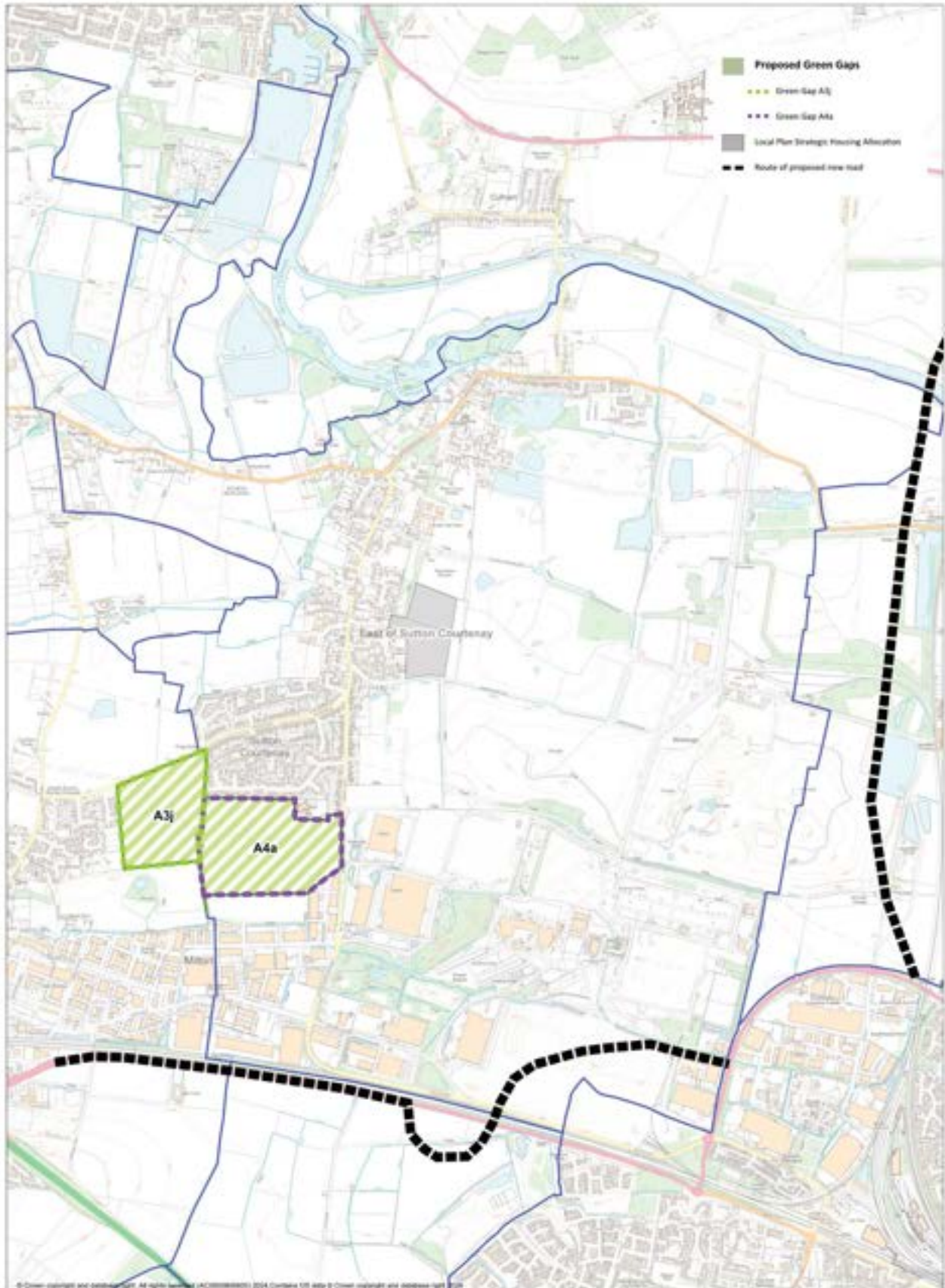


Figure 6.3: Extract from *Countryside and Green Gap Assessment*, April 2022

Please see Evidence Base Document Countryside and Green Gaps for detailed plans

Policy title	Policy SC1: Green Gaps
Policy text	<p>The Plan identifies two Greens Gaps between Sutton Courtenay and Didcot/Milton as shown in Figure 6.3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Gap 3j; and • Green Gap 4a. <p>Development proposals within the identified Green Gaps which would either individually or cumulatively, affect the integrity of the gap and the physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Didcot/Milton will not be supported.</p>
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' Survey. • Landscape Study and Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Countryside and Green Gap Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways. • Use land efficiently and preserve agricultural land.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 17, 28-37, 71, 79, 103, 106, 123, 181. • LPP1&2 CP4 and DP29.

6.2. Landscape Character and Value

6.2.1. 159 National Character Areas (NCAs) have been developed for the varying landscapes in England. Sutton Courtenay is sited within NCA 108, the Upper Thames Clay Vales, which is a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland. It is a predominantly agricultural landscape, with arable fields, dairy herds, hedges and hedgerow trees and field trees. Industrial activities at Abingdon and Didcot, including the Didcot B power station, visually intrude upon much of the open character of the Vale landscape.

6.2.2. The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) provides an investigation of landscape character and biodiversity across the Oxfordshire county. The landscape character areas surrounding Sutton Courtenay are identified as:

- River Meadowlands

- Lowland Village Farmlands

6.2.3. The Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment, 2017 identified the different Landscape Character Types found within Sutton Courtenay parish. It identified the following two main types of landscape:

- Landscape Type RF- River Floodplain
- Landscape Type VL- Lower Vale Farmland

6.2.4. The Sutton Courtenay Landscape Study, Steven Warnock, 2019 provides a more in depth analysis of the two distinct types of landscape that occur within Sutton Courtenay Parish.

- *River Meadowlands: This is a low-lying, linear landscape associated with alluvial soils along the River Thames that are prone to seasonal flooding. Where there is regular flooding patches of wet grassland and marsh occur. Such features evoke a strong sense of naturalness and give these meadowland landscapes a special quality that is now rare in Oxfordshire. Woodland is largely restricted to secondary tree cover and scrub around flooded gravel pits, or associated with dense corridors of willow and ash bordering ditches and watercourses.*
- *Lowland Village Farmland: To the north of Didcot this landscape is associated with recent fluvio-glacial drift which gives rise to the relatively flat, low lying terrain around Sutton Courtenay. Intensive arable production is a dominant feature in this landscape, resulting in a variable field pattern with many gappy/low cut hedgerows. Tree cover is limited, but many of the streamlines crossing the river terrace are well treed, often creating a strong sense of enclosure and scale in this flat landscape.*

6.2.5. Sutton Courtenay and its surrounds has been subdivided into 7 separate local character areas as illustrated in Figure 6.4 below.

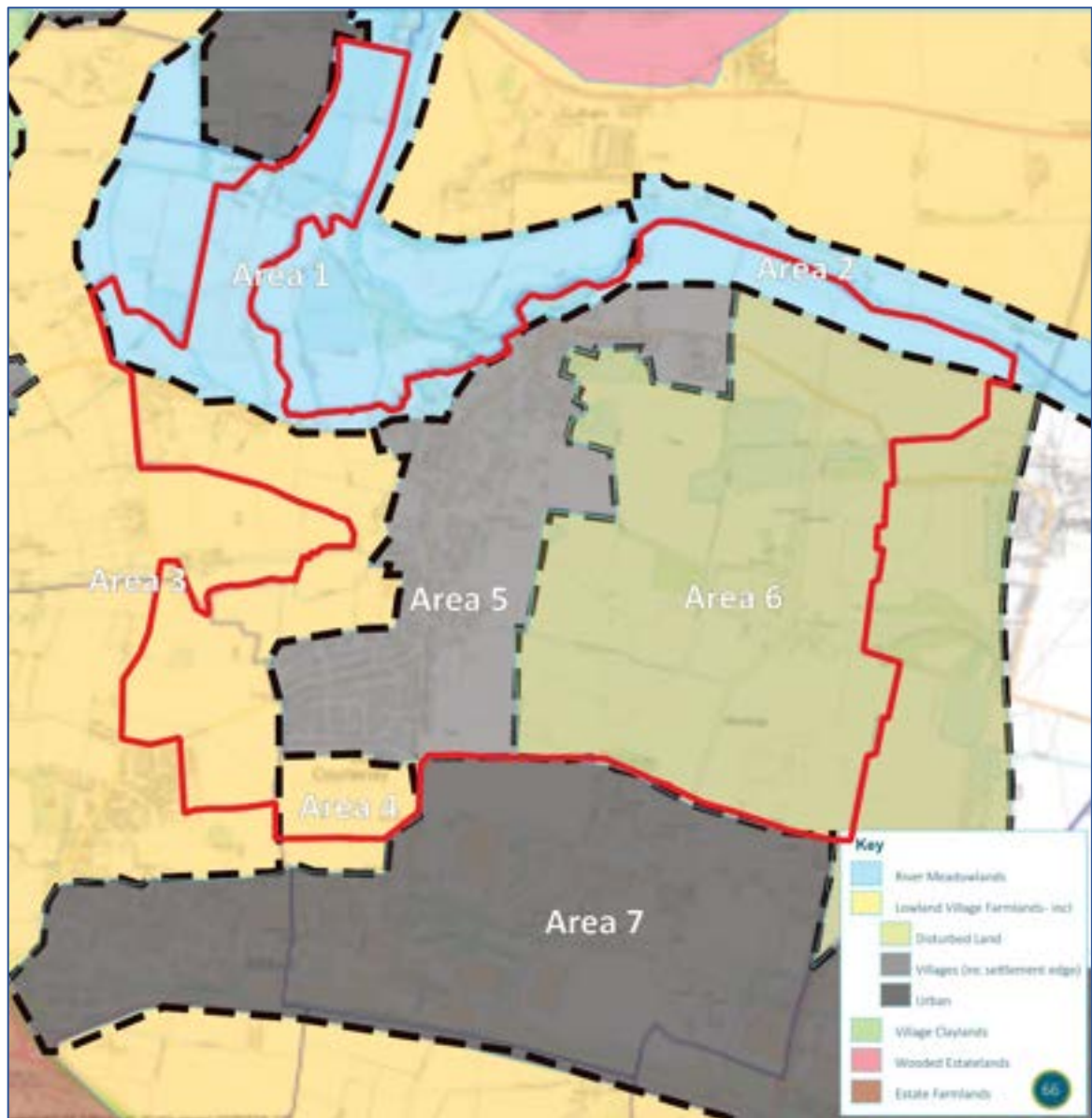


Figure 6.4: Landscape Character Areas

Landscape Character Area 1: River Meadowlands /gravel pits to the north of Drayton Road

- 6.2.6. A mixed area of land use, including a series of flooded and restored gravel pits within a matrix of fields used for livestock grazing. Although part of a landscape that has locally been very disturbed by sand and gravel extraction, this area provides many opportunities to conserve and restore wet grassland habitats along the River Thames floodplain and for encouraging the regeneration of trees and wetland habitats along watercourses.

Landscape Character Area 2: River Meadowlands to the east of Sutton Bridge

- 6.2.7. A strip of fields along the alluvial floodplain, bounded by the river to the north and by land affected by sand and gravel extraction to the south. Although this land is intensively managed as arable farmland, the river floodplain is still intact in this area. As with Area 1 above, there is an opportunity for re-creating wet grassland along the river floodplain and for encouraging the regeneration of trees and wetland habitats along the river.

Landscape Character Area 3: Village Terrace Farmlands to the south of Drayton Road

- 6.2.8. This is the main area of Village Terrace Farmlands within the parish and it links well with the adjoining areas of this landscape within the parishes of Drayton and Milton. This area retains a distinctive rural character within a partially urbanised setting.

Landscape Character Area 4: Village Terrace Farmlands to the south of the village

- 6.2.9. This area comprises a small area of Village Terrace Farmlands surrounded in part by residential development within the villages of Sutton Courtenay and Milton and a major area of commercial development to the south and east. Only to the west beyond Sutton Road and the village of Milton, is there any link to the main area of this landscape type. A large part of the land is designated as a heritage asset site.

Landscape Character Area 5: Sutton Courtenay village and adjoining eastern plots

- 6.2.10. Sutton Courtenay, like many villages in this area, displays evidence of having been planned around a main street, with lanes enabling access to the river meadows and arable land in former medieval open fields.

Landscape Character Area 6: Disturbed land to the east of the village

- 6.2.11. A former area of Village Terrace Farmlands extending into the neighbouring parish of Appleford. This has been completely changed in character by extensive sand and gravel extraction and subsequent re-use as a large-scale waste disposal site. Gravel extraction expanded throughout the twentieth century, initially to the west of the village and then major works developed to the east of the village. In the latter part of the twentieth century the gravel pits commenced use as landfill brought in by rail via Didcot. There are opportunities, however, for the creation of a new, more ecologically/visually interesting and accessible landscape in this area.



Figure 6.5 Landscape Typologies by Novell Tullett

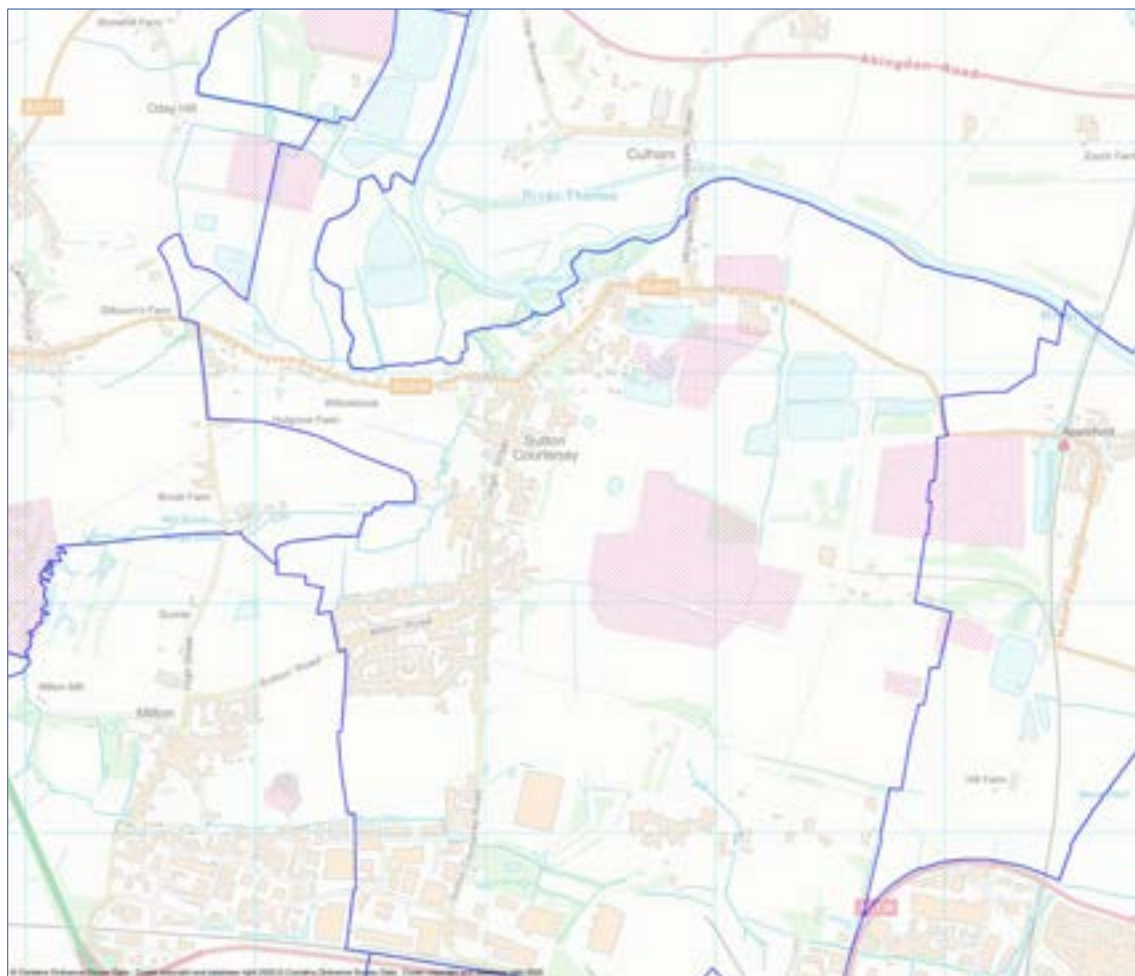


Figure 6.6 Plan of Historic Landfill Sites

Historic Landfill Sites



Landscape Character Area 7: Urban area bordering Didcot to the south

6.2.12. A former area of Village Terrace Farmlands, extending to the parish boundary along the railway line and beyond, that has been completely changed to an urban landscape - including Didcot B power station and associated more recent commercial/industrial development.

6.2.13. A more comprehensive description of these areas is set out in the *Sutton Courtenay Countryside and Green Gap Assessment*, April 2022 and the *Sutton Courtenay Landscape Study*, June 2019.

Policy title	Policy SC2: Landscape Character and Value
Policy text	Development proposals should demonstrate how they preserve or enhance the features which positively define the character of the designated neighbourhood area, taking into consideration the landscape character areas and typologies (shown in figures 6.4 and 6.5) and the recommendations of the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal and Design Code.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' Survey. • Landscape Study and Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Countryside and Green Gap Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain living green spaces • To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements. • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways • To use land efficiently and to preserve best and most versatile agricultural land.
Relevant policies	NPPF paragraphs 124, 135, 180

6.3. Conserving and Enhancing Views

6.3.1. The village is characterised by a wide variety of views, which are described in the Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code and highlighted in figure 6.7. The views reflect both the character of the Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area and the strong connection of the village to the surrounding landscape. In addition, the Lowland Vale makes an important contribution to distant views from higher ground within the North Wessex Downs AONB to the north. Furthermore, 91% of residents responding in the Residents' Survey rate the views entering and leaving Sutton Courtenay as very or quite important.

- 6.3.2. Within the conservation area, views are characterised by the historic and notable buildings in a variety of styles, dates and materials. Notable views within the village include those featuring the church, pubs and village green. These views are often channelled by the strong landscape features within the village. Similarly, the landscaping along the lanes that lead out from the conservation area provide a suggestion of the countryside beyond and reinforce that strong link to the landscape. Views from these lanes also offer glimpses into private gardens and reveal the rear elevations of the village properties.
- 6.3.3. The close proximity of the village to the countryside is exemplified in particular with the River Thames. At its closest point, the River Thames is within 25m of Church Street, however the river is not visible within the streetscene. Rather, a discrete PRoW at the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road (the site of the former wharf) provides access to the river. The footpath tracks the north side of the river from where there are attractive views over the river and into the mature gardens of the houses along Church Street. Numerous boathouses and pleasure craft highlight the value of the river as recreational resource. Further along the footpath views across Sutton Pools are of a heavily treed riverine landscape.
- 6.3.4. Beyond the conservation area, to the south, the successful feeling of enclosure is lost, with a general reduction in the level of street-side landscaping and a slight broadening in the street width or building lines. There are fewer notable buildings and an increase in single storey dwellings, which reinforces the openness of the view, with glimpses from within the streetscene to less attractive features such as the pylons in the land immediately to the east. As the topography of the area is generally flat, views of the open fields beyond the street-scene are limited to glimpses through undeveloped plots, though some views of distant hedgerows can be seen from between houses.
- 6.3.5. The footpaths and tracks leading out of the village have open views of the countryside. To the west, views are of the flat open fields mostly in agricultural use. To the east views are of the degraded landscape of gravel working and landfill crossed by electricity pylons leading from Didcot Power Station. From the west of Sutton Courtenay, particularly on Milton Road, the flat topography and lack of vegetation provides clear views of both Milton and Sutton Courtenay, with a clear though small distinction between built-up area and open countryside. Further north on Drayton Road, views of the countryside are more glimpsed due to the presence of hedgerows. From the east, the topography has the effect of visually concentrating the development with the result that views of the village are limited to glimpses of rooftops set within trees.

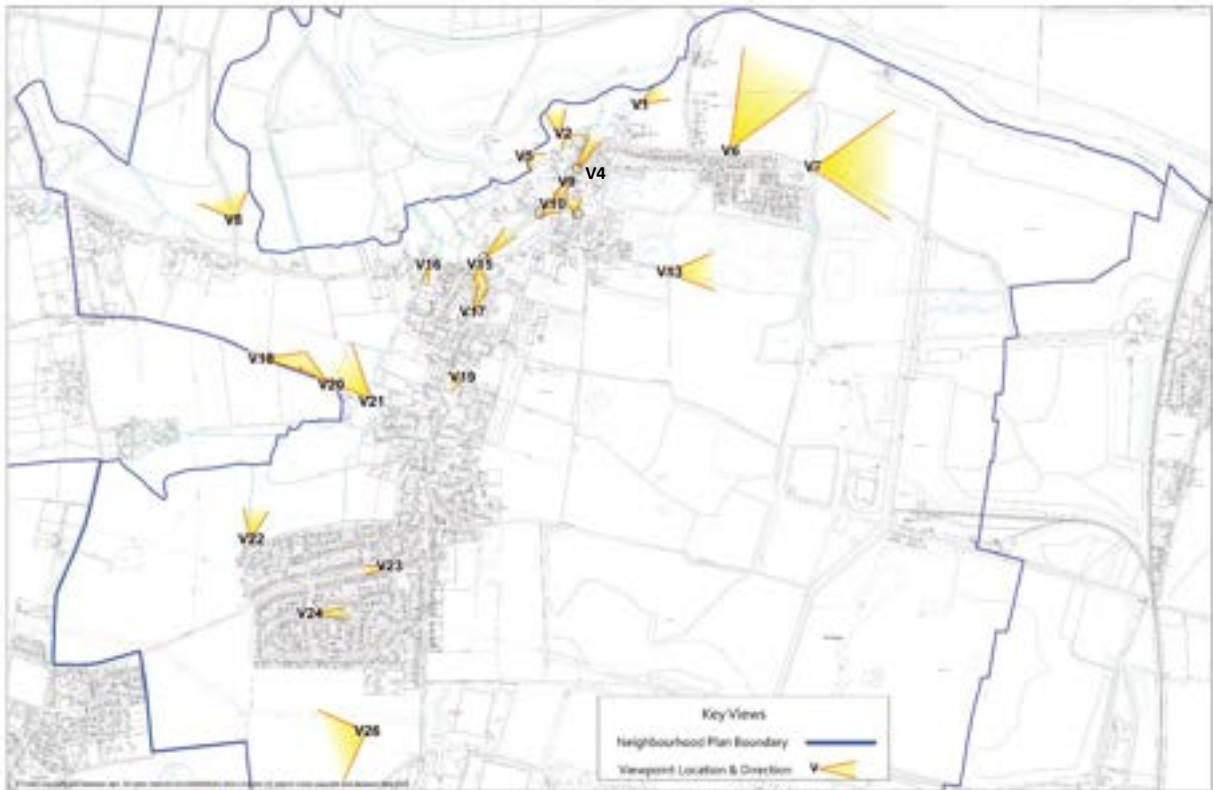




Figure 6.7 Key View location maps REV B

For a more detailed plan please see Evidence Base Document Character Appraisal and Design Code

6.3.6. Figure 6.7 above identifies the location of the individual views and vistas that are listed in policy SC3. Policy SC3 seeks to protect, and where possible enhance, those views and vistas that are important to the community ('key views and vistas') and which help to define the character and

setting of the village and the rural area surrounding it. Reference should also be made to the *Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal and Design Code* and associated maps/ plans in determining applications that affect the identified key views and vistas (an extract of the description of the views is found in Appendix 6).

Policy title	Policy SC3: Key Views and Vistas
Policy text	<p>Development proposals should maintain and where practicable enhance the following key views and vistas (and as shown in figure 6.7):</p> <p>Key Views:</p> <p>View 1: River Thames and Sutton Bridge from the flood meadow to north of Appleford Road and east of Abingdon Road.</p> <p>View 2 River Thames backwater and Church Street houses and gardens from footpath over weirs.</p> <p>View 3 North over River Thames and flood meadows from weirs at Sutton Pools.</p> <p>View 4 Church St western side looking north from Courtenay Cottage.</p> <p>View 5 The Manor and Manor Grounds from meadow upstream from weirs on River Thames.</p> <p>View 6 North over meadow towards Sloven Copse and Culham Brake, part of the Oxford Green Belt from Appleford Road.</p> <p>View 7 East towards Wittenham Clumps over agricultural land from Appleford Road as road exits Sutton Courtenay.</p> <p>View 8 Views of water meadows to east and west from Peep-O-Day lane.</p> <p>View 9 The Green and The Abbey grounds from the War Memorial.</p> <p>View 10 North west towards the long (south) elevation of The Norman Hall across the adjacent paddock from the footpath on the western side of Church Street.</p> <p>View 11 All Saints' Church and churchyard from northern end of All Saints Lane.</p> <p>View 12 North over The Green looking towards The Swan public house and All Saints' Church.</p> <p>View 13 East along bridle path adjacent to the Millennium Common.</p> <p>View 14 North along Church Street showing stone wall to the west and lime trees to the east.</p> <p>View 15 South towards The Triangle from Church St.</p> <p>View 16 Ginge Brook looking south from junction with Brook Street.</p> <p>View 17 North High Street from High Street.</p> <p>View 18 East along Drayton East Way towards wooded boundary of village behind High Street.</p> <p>View 19 Southfield Farm on West side of High Street from entrance to Lady Place.</p> <p>View 20 West from Mill Lane/Drayton East Way over farmland.</p> <p>View 21 Ginge Brook at site of former ford.</p> <p>View 22 Views of old willows, ditches and brook on land north of Springfield Way.</p>

	<p>View 23 View along Milton Road.</p> <p>View 24 Barretts Way looking east showing communal front gardens to the north and tree lined grass verge to the south.</p> <p>View 26 West towards Milton over Kelaart’s Field.</p> <p><i>View 25 – please note that this view has been deleted</i></p>
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents’ Survey. • Landscape Study and Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Countryside and Green Gap Assessment. • Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.
Relevant policies	<p>NPPF paragraph 135, 160, 180.</p> <p>LPP1 Policy CP6.</p>

6.4. Green and Blue Infrastructure

Public Rights of Way

- 6.4.1. Sutton Courtenay is well served by Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and permissive paths, and these are an important part of life in the village, as well as being important in maintaining the strong historical connection between the village and the wider landscape. These paths and lanes give the village a highly connected structure and provide a layer of pedestrian permeability outside the main vehicular routes.
- 6.4.2. Historically, perhaps the most significant routes are Drayton East Way and Old Wallingford Way, which in the medieval period were used as connections between Sutton Courtenay and adjacent villages. These paths may have been established much earlier and may relate to pre-historic development in the area.
- 6.4.3. More contemporary routes include the Thames Path National Trail, which runs along the north bank of the River Thames and provides excellent recreational opportunities. The National Cycle Network Route (NCN5) runs from Oxford to Didcot via Abingdon and Sutton Courtenay. This route, also known as Hanson Way runs through the centre of the village, but is off-road at Peep-O-Day Lane, where it uses a raised causeway leading north from Sutton Courtenay to Abingdon. A further cycle path; Route 3D (Abingdon to Milton Park) is one of 8 strategic routes/corridors of Oxfordshire County Council's Science Vale Cycle Strategy. Routes 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 are also easily accessible from Sutton Courtenay.
- 6.4.4. The condition of the Public Rights of Way crossing the Neighbourhood Plan area has been reviewed and the evidence contained in the Sutton Courtenay All Paths Report. Figure 6.8 illustrates the location of the ProW network in the village and surrounding countryside.

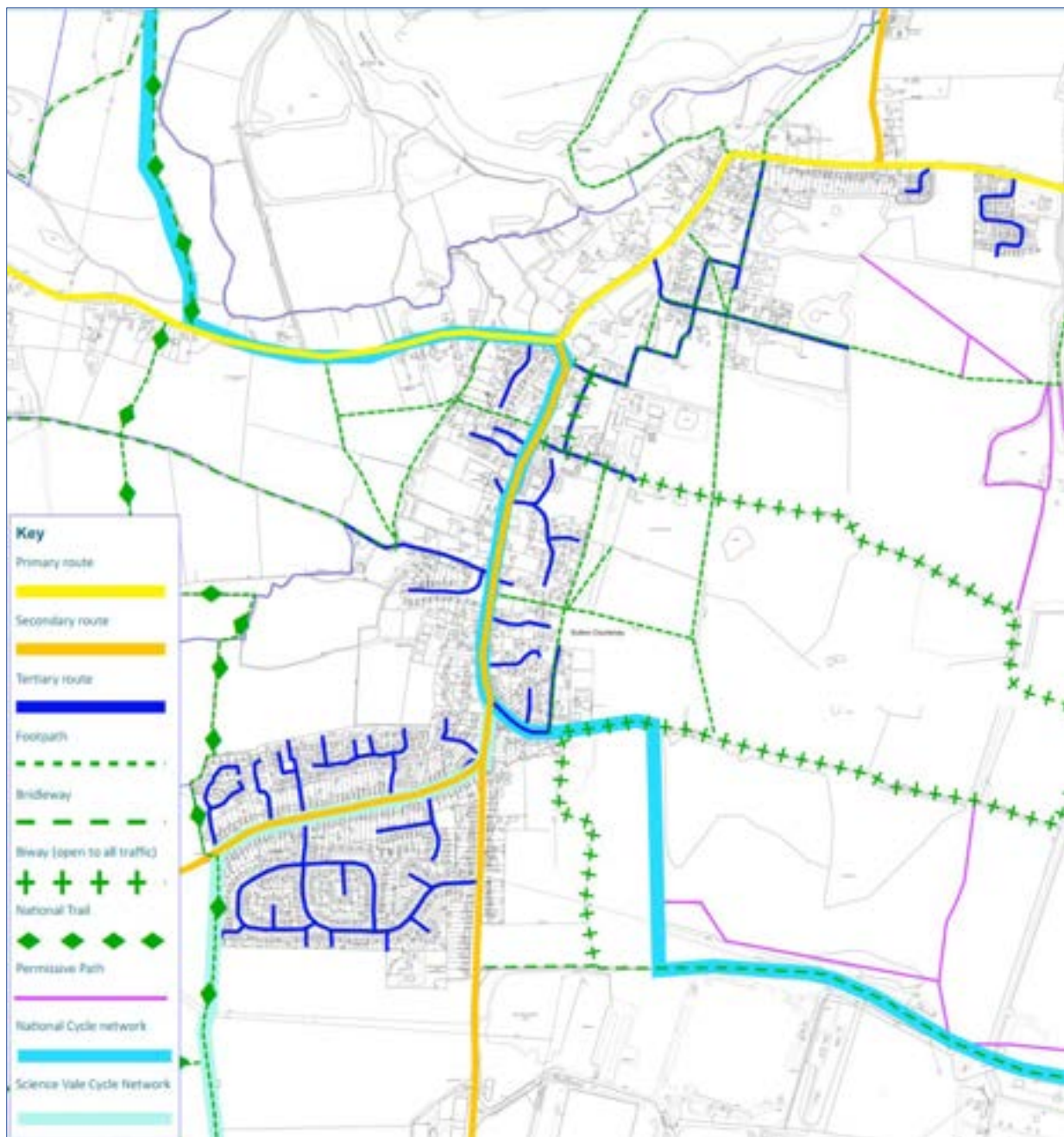


Figure 6.8 ProW Network

Rivers and Watercourses

6.4.5. Sutton Courtenay has a very close physical relationship to a number of waterbodies, including:

- River Thames, including Sutton Pools.
- Ginge Brook.
- Mill Brook.
- Wetlands and floodplains.
- Artificial lakes formed in former gravel extraction quarries.

6.4.6. The Residents' Survey highlighted a strong local connection between residents and these waterbodies, particularly the River Thames. Two-thirds of respondents (68%) wanted to see the maintenance of the riverbank and streams as the top priority in any measures to enhance the natural environment of Sutton Courtenay.

- 6.4.7. The River Thames and its fertile flood plain attracted early settlers and were important in the historical prosperity of the village. Historical maps indicate mills, maltings and a wharf, with a history of paper making in the village in the C17th. The wider river area has long been associated with gravel extraction, being first documented at the end of the eighteenth century and continuing to today. The River Thames was thus historically important in supporting the livelihoods of the villagers.
- 6.4.8. The river landscape has largely been reclaimed from its industrial past, though quarrying continues, particularly to the east of the village. The presence of the River Thames is not obvious from the heart of the village, but it makes an enormous contribution to life in the village, with huge recreational opportunities for walking, fishing and boating. Although not visible from the heart of the village, the wooded islands within the Thames provide a strong character to the northern fringes of the village and in recognition of the quality of this environment, the boundary of the conservation area extends to encompass large swathes of this landscape. Many of the listed buildings along Church Street have gardens that run down to the southern bank of the River.
- 6.4.9. The Mill and Ginge Brooks have a less formal character than the wide, open landscape of the Thames. Ginge Brook forms a strong boundary along the western village fringe, which largely screens the village from views from the west. The watercourse exhibits typical, lowland stream characteristics with broader shallows and more deeply incised banks as the water cuts a course through the landscape. Ginge Brook is also well used for recreation including the meadows adjoining the brook. A footpath follows the route of Ginge Brook linked by stiles over ditches along field boundaries. A former ford is still visible within the field accessed from Mill Lane, and is a popular place for locals with a rope swing over the brook.
- 6.4.10. To the east of the village and adjoining Millennium Common are three tree-lined water-bodies, which represent historic gravel extraction sites. Two of the water-bodies are visible from Churchmere Road – Footpath 373/12, while the northernmost lake is accessed via a fisherman’s path at the northwest of Millennium Common as well as directly off All Saints Lane, from where it is highly visible. Two of the waterbodies (northernmost and southernmost ponds) act as a leisure resource predominately for fishing (club members only). All three water bodies make an important contribution to the setting of the village, with the western most waterbody falling partly within the conservation area. Figure 6.9 illustrates the location of the waterbodies in the neighbourhood plan area and surrounding countryside.

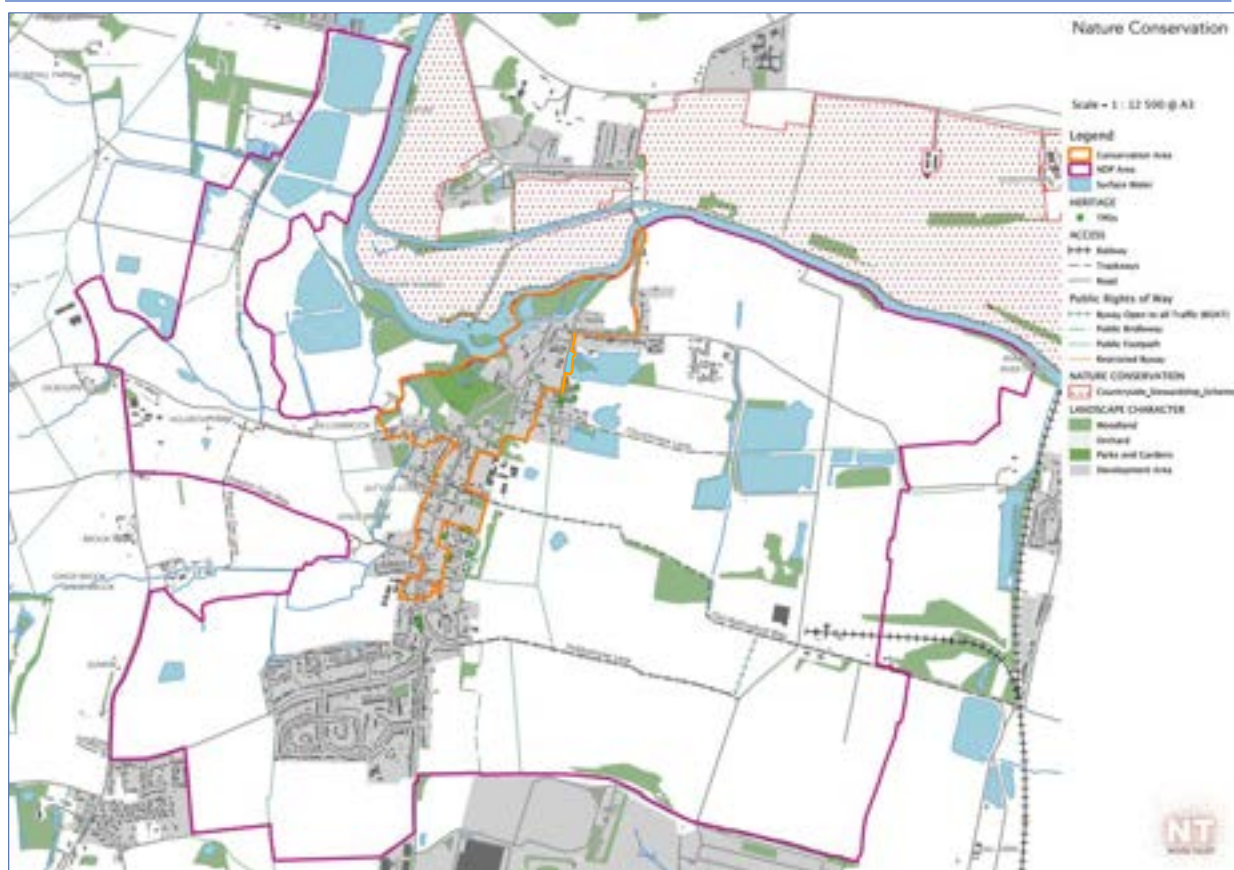


Figure 6.9 Plan of Blue Infrastructure by Novell Tullett

Local Green Spaces

6.4.11. The 2018 Residents’ Survey highlighted the importance of local green spaces to respondents. When asked to select four green spaces and/or views that are most important to them in Sutton Courtenay, 55% of respondents indicated that The Green and the paths and meadows along the Thames were equally rated as most important. 52% felt the Green Belt (Local Green Gaps) was their most important and 37% said all public footpaths were the most important.

Green spaces and/or views that are the most important to you	Nos.	%
The Green	339	55
Paths & meadows along the Thames	343	55
Green Belt between Sutton Courtenay & neighbouring villages & towns	323	52
All public footpaths	229	37
Churchyard & Cemetary	207	33
Recreation Ground	176	28
Views over farmland	121	20
Land adjacent to Ginge Brook	108	17
Millennium Common	105	17
Meadow south of the village school	99	16
Distant views to Wittenham Clumps & The Ridgeway	72	12
The Triangle	43	7
Other	11	2
Base: (All Respondents) (619)		

6.4.12. The NPPF states in paragraph 105 that *“The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.”*

- 6.4.13. The NPPF goes on to state at paragraph 106 that *“The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*
- a. in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - b. 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*
 - c. local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*
- 6.4.14. These criteria form the basis of the assessment that has been undertaken for each potential Local Green Space and which is detailed in the Local Green Spaces Assessment, April 2022 evidence document. This document evaluated the following for potential designation as Local Green Spaces, which fell into one (or more) of four distinct categories:
- Those (generally small) areas of Sutton Courtenay’s “built environment” which are considered most vital.
 - Those sites used for sports and other recreational activities.
 - Those on the immediate periphery of the settlement with public access and in regular use by those on foot.
 - Those which (without necessarily offering public access) fulfil a specific function (from the NPPF list) to the local community, that is reflected in the aspirations and policy objectives of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.4.15. The following sites were considered for assessment:
1. The Millennium Common, off Church Mill Road
 2. Site of former Catholic church, Hobbyhorse Lane
 3. The Green, Church Street
 4. Old Wallingford Way Recreation Ground
 5. Green space, Lady Place and High Street
 6. Communal garden for residents of Lady Place
 7. All Saints’ Churchyard, The Green
 8. The Cemetery, Old Wallingford Way
 9. Sutton Courtenay Village Hall tennis court
 10. Allotments
 11. Mill Lane
 12. Land to the south of Cemetery
 13. Land off Hobbyhorse Lane/ Harwell Road
 14. Sutton Pools
 15. Riverside Meadow
 16. Land adjacent to Cross Trees Farm off High Street
 17. Kelaart’s Field
 18. Asquith Park LEAP
 19. Land west of the Millennium Common
 20. Land south west of the Millennium Common
 21. Tyrell’s Way Green space.
 22. Green space between High Street, Mill Lane and Tullis Close
 23. Green space triangle Church Street, Brook Street and High Street
 24. Triangle at junction of Frilsham St and High St
 25. Land at The Norman Hall
 26. Land at The Abbey
 27. Land at Priors Court

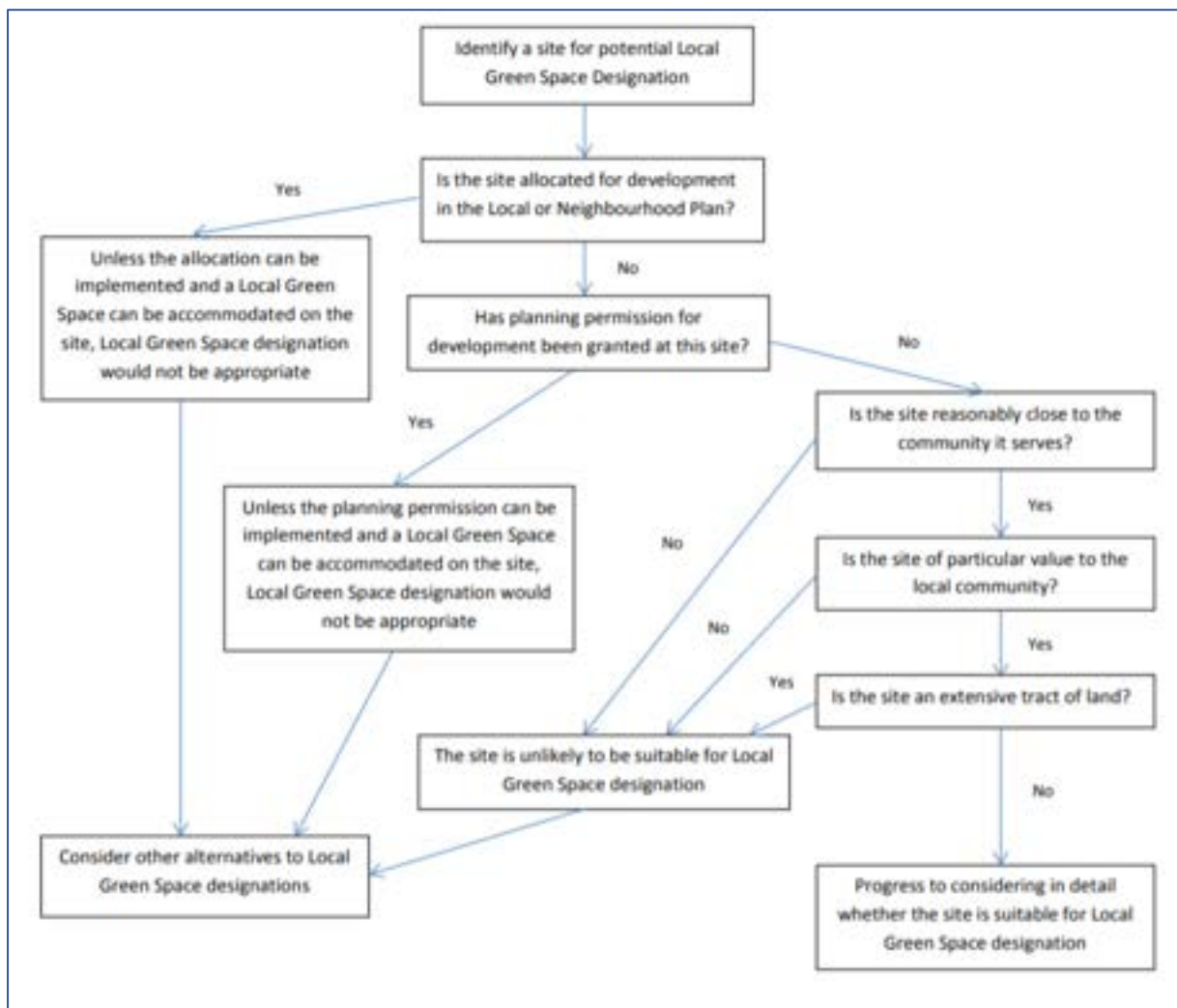


Figure 6.10 Designation Tree for Green Space

6.4.16. From this assessment, a conclusion was reached as to whether spaces should be designated. It should be noted that whilst many open spaces are considered important to residents, not all qualify for Local Green Space status. Some spaces were considered for different reasons, but failed the NPPF tests. The detailed evidence for the identification and assessment of potential Local Green Space sites is set out in the 2020 Local Green Spaces Assessment (updated April 2022). Figure 6.11 identifies all the open spaces in the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan area proposed for designation. Policy SC5 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. If 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. 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’

6.4.17. It should also be noted that some areas were deemed to be sufficiently protected by other designations, such as certain recreation facilities. In this instance it was considered that designation as a Local Green Space was not the most appropriate approach to take.



Figure 6.11 Plan of Local Green Spaces proposed for designation

For a more detailed plan and the full extent of individual sites, please see Evidence Base Document Local Green Space Assessment <https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>

Policy title	Policy SC4: Green and Blue infrastructure
Policy text	<p>Development proposals on land that lies within or adjoining the Green and Blue Infrastructure Network defined in figures 6.8, 6.9 and 6.11 should have regard to the degree to which the landscaping schemes, layouts, public open space provision and other amenity requirements (such as pedestrian and cycle connections) will maintain or enhance the visual characteristics and biodiversity of the Network.</p> <p>Wherever practicable, development proposals should provide access for wildlife to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Network, improve pedestrian access and contribute to or improve the connectivity and maintenance of the Network.</p> <p>Proposals which maintain or enhance the existing Green and Blue Infrastructure Network will be supported, particularly where they encourage the planting of native trees or encourage biodiversity and enhance habitats of protected species.</p> <p>Proposals to create new Green and Blue Infrastructure and associated new pedestrian and cycle routes will also be supported.</p> <p>The creation of new permissive and Public Rights of Way will be supported, particularly those set out in the supporting text to this policy. Development proposals are to be supported where they do not result in unacceptable harm to a public right of way or enjoyment of it.</p> <p>Where development affects a Public Right of Way, the proposal will be expected to show how the development will impact the right of way and describe any mitigation measures needed to address any adverse impacts on users of that right of way or provide public benefit to outweigh the harm.</p> <p>Where public footpaths or bridleways are routed or realigned through new developments, they should, where possible, be designed as part of landscape wildlife corridors rather than being routed along road pavements as part of the highway network.</p>
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' Survey. • Landscape Study. • Countryside and Green Gap Assessment. • Local Green Space Assessment. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain living green spaces. • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.
Relevant policies	<p>NPPF paragraph 104.</p> <p>LPP1 Policy CP37.</p>

Policy title	Policy SC5: Local Green Spaces
Policy text	<p>These areas are designated as Local Green Spaces, in line with the NPPF:</p> <p>LG1: The Millennium Common, off Church Mill Road. LG3: The Green, Church Street. LG4: Old Wallingford Way Recreation Ground. LG5: Green Space at Lady Place and High Street. LG7: All Saints’ Churchyard, The Green. LG10: Allotments. LG11: Green Space off Mill Lane. LG12: Green Space South of Cemetery. LG14: Sutton Pools. LG15: Riverside Meadow. LG18: Asquith Park LEAP. LG19: Land to the west of the Millennium Common. LG20: Land to the south-west of the Millennium Common. LG22: Green space bordered by High Street, Mill Lane and Tullis Close. LG23: Triangle at junction of Brook Street, Church Street and High Street. LG24: Triangle at junction of Frilsham St and High St</p> <p><i>LGS2 – please note that this potential LGS has been deleted</i> <i>LGS17 - please note that this potential LGS has been deleted</i></p> <p>Development proposals on the identified Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.</p>
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Green Space Assessment. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain living green spaces. To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.
Relevant policies	NPPF paragraphs 105 – 107.

Community Aspirations

Where possible, the Parish Council will:

- *Explore opportunities to work with local landowners to enhance the character of Sutton Courtenay’s Village Terrace Farmlands, for example via the restoration of hedgerows.*
- *Work with interested parties to protect the agricultural productivity of land in the Parish*

6.5. Biodiversity & Nature Conservation

- 6.5.1. As part of the 2018 Residents' Survey, residents were asked to select the four top factors which they consider could enhance the natural environment of Sutton Courtenay. As figure 6.12 illustrates, the highest priority for the majority of respondents was maintaining riverbanks and streams with the encouraging wildlife habitats their second priority.

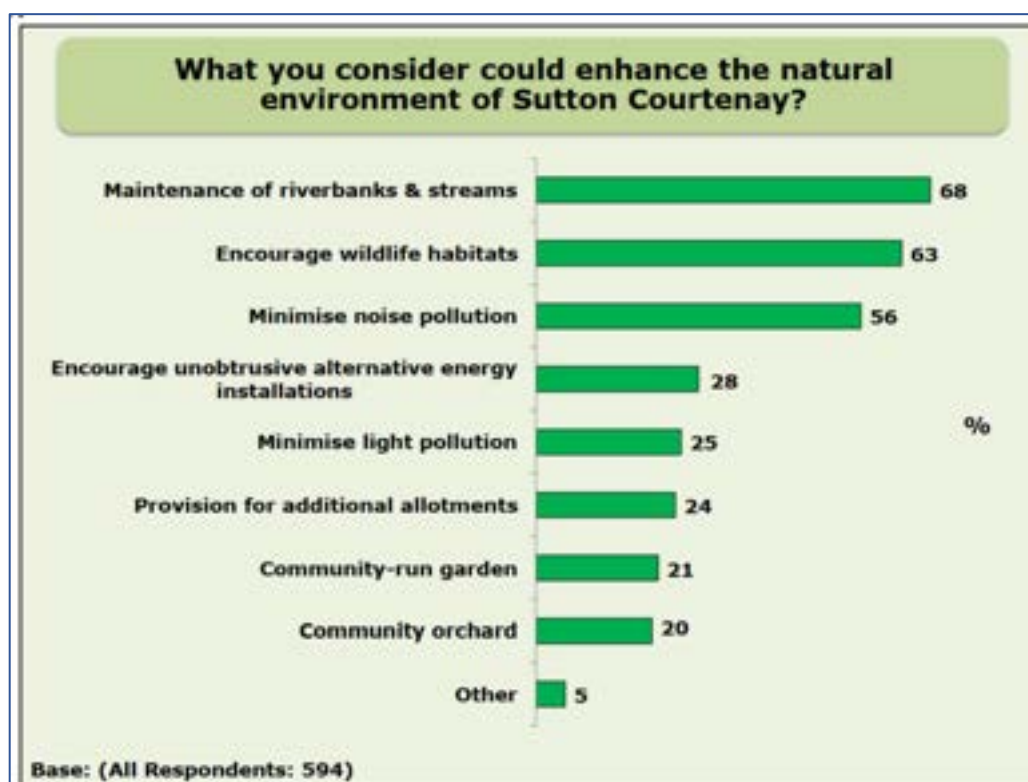


Figure 6.12 Survey Results

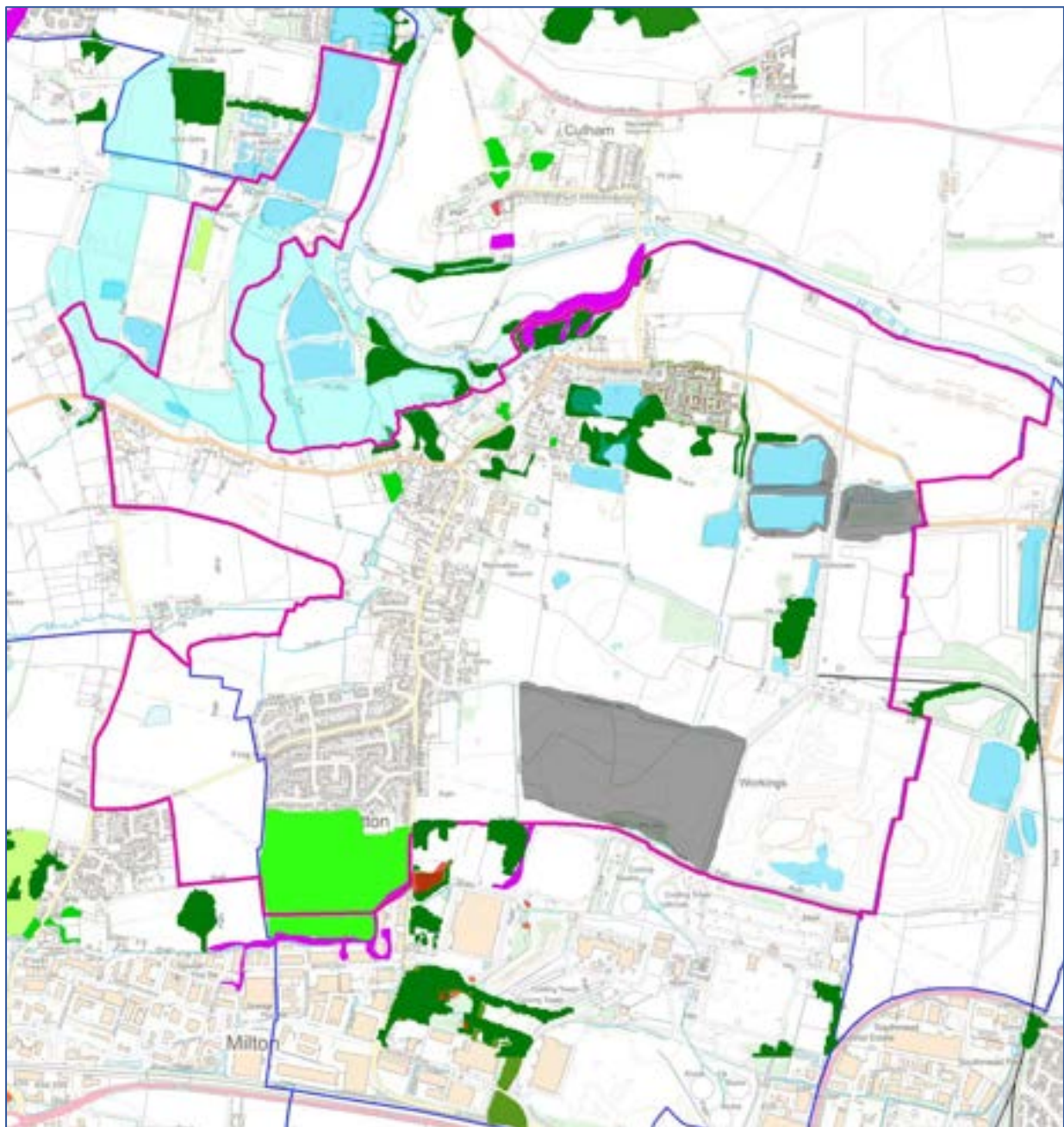
- 6.5.2. NPPF paragraphs 123 and 185 – 188 deal with the effects of development on the landscape and biodiversity, establishing a wide range of criteria against which development will be assessed and also defining the means by which policies in development plan documents can protect these important assets. The adopted Local Plan policies largely focus on European¹ and National² designations, but also highlight that Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Priority Habitats, Ancient Woodland and veteran trees and species listed in the national and local Biodiversity Action Plan should be afforded the *“level of protection and mitigation proportionate to the status of the habitat or species and its importance individually and as part of a wider network.”* Core Policy 46 (Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity) of the Local Plan seeks to *“conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district”*.
- 6.5.3. A Biodiversity Report has been produced for the Parish (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, February 2020). Although the Plan area borders the River Thames corridor, which is significant and is an ecologically highly important natural feature, there are no national, European or internationally designated sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The nearest SSSI is the Culham Brake SSSI which is located approximately 2km to the north of the Plan area and the entire Neighbourhood Plan area therefore falls within the associated SSSI Impact Risk

¹ Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are sites designated under the EU Birds Directive. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are sites designated to help conserve the habitat and species identified in Annex I and II of the European Union's Habitats Directive. European Designations including SACs and SPAs in the UK no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 network. Instead, they contribute to a UK national site network.

² A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a formal conservation designation denoting a nationally protected area for its flora, fauna, physiological and/or geological features.

Zone. The nearest SACs are Little Wittenham SAC, approximately 4.5km to the east and Cothill Fen SAC 5.4km to the northwest.

- 6.5.4. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) have no statutory designation but provide recognition for areas of high wildlife value in terms of species, habitats or both. A Local Wildlife Site, Kelaart's Field, is proposed in the agricultural field directly south of Sutton Courtenay's built up area, and north of Milton Park because it includes species-rich grassland with elements of lowland meadow. A landscape buffer will be created on the part of field nearest to Milton Park. A Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust Education Centre, comprising a 19-acre nature reserve of woodland, meadow and ponds is situated on Sutton Courtenay Road, approximately 250m south of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 6.5.5. Figure 6.13 below shows the location of the priority habitat sites within and adjacent to the Plan area. There are a number of priority habitats within the Neighbourhood Plan area. An area of Lowland Meadow is situated at Kelaart's Field. A large pond is situated to the west of Kelaart's Field, with further ponds situated further south, particularly at the Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre, which also includes an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland. There are a series of Eutrophic Standing Waters both within the neighbourhood plan area and on surrounding land, the majority of which are associated with former sites of gravel extraction. A large tract of Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh is located to the south and west of the River Thames, while to the north-east of the village is a possible Priority Grassland Habitat at Millennium Common. In addition, an area of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland is located approximately 1.5km to the north, at Culham Brake. There is a further small copse of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland approximately 1.5km to the east on the north bank of the River Thames, adjoining the railway crossing. The restored land immediately to the east of the village is identified as Open Mosaic Habitats.
- 6.5.6. In addition to the priority habitats, there are a number of green spaces and large gardens, as well as a significant number of trees of landscape and ecological value and small areas of non-designated vegetation and hedgerows, throughout the Plan area. Together, these form important local wildlife oases and corridors connecting larger areas of biodiversity importance, for example the River Thames corridor. This riverine landscape, with its seasonal flooding creates diverse habitats, which although fragile, greatly add to the biodiversity of the area. Other water features including Ginge Brook, Mill Brook and a number of artificial lakes also provide good opportunities for biodiversity within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan area also benefits from trees that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). An extract from the District Council's GIS database below (Figure 6.14) depicts the location of the TPO-protected trees and woodlands within the Neighbourhood Plan area.



-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary.
-  Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh.
-  Eutrophic Standing Waters
-  Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows.
-  Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland.
-  Priority Habitat Inventory - Traditional Orchards.
-  Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat.
-  Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land
-  Priority Habitat Inventory - No main habitat but additional habitat exists
-  Ponds

Figure 6.13 Plan of Priority Habitats



Figure 6.14 Plan of Tree Preservation Orders

6.5.7. A number of legally protected and notable species are present within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Of particular significance, are species that are protected under European Directives as incorporated into UK law. These include:

- Amphibians: Great Crested Newt and Common Frog.
- Birds: Ruddy Shelduck, Little Egret, Red Kite, Peregrine, Golden Plover, Ruff, Wood Sandpiper, Little Gull, Common Tern, Short-eared Owl, and Kingfisher.
- Fish (Bony): Barbel and Bullhead.
- Higher Plants (Flowering): Butcher's Broom.
- Mammals (terrestrial - bats): Serotine, Natterer's Bat, Lesser Noctule, Noctule Bat, Pipistrelle Bat species, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, and Brown Long-eared Bat.
- Mammals (terrestrial – excluding bats): European Otter and Polecat.

6.5.8. Other important species, protected under UK legislation, include:

- Amphibians: Palmate Newt, Smooth Newt, Common Toad.
- Birds: Goldeneye, Pintail, Garganey, Hobby, Little Ringed Plover, Temminck's Stint, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Barn Owl, Cetti's Warbler, Black Redstart, Fieldfare, Redwing, Brambling.
- High Plants (Flowering): Lizard Orchid.
- Mammals: Water Vole.

6.5.9. In addition, there are a number of species '*of principal importance for the purpose of preserving biodiversity*', covered under Section 41 (England) of the NERC Act (2006), as well as others protected under other designations.

6.5.10. The evidence presented above highlights the value of the Neighbourhood Plan area in terms of biodiversity. It should however be noted that the extraction of gravel from a number of sites

throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area has potentially changed the structure of the floodplains and water table in the local area and correspondingly the biodiversity. Furthermore, biodiversity may be significantly affected by ongoing operations associated with the minerals and waste development in the plan area. Plant communities can be significantly affected by dust deposition, while animal species can react to anthropogenic noise in various ways, such as by moving away from the source of the noise. The 1996 Minerals and Waste Plan prescribes that the land be restored for agriculture, woodland and nature conservation, which if achieved should add to the biodiversity value of the overall neighbourhood plan area.

Policy title	Policy SC6: Biodiversity
Policy text	<p>Development proposals should deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10% for the designated neighbourhood plan area. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate public and private green amenity spaces using high quality landscaping to balance gardens and community spaces. • Conserve existing natural and green and blue corridors (including bodies of water) and create new ones, using landscape features and habitats. • Introduce new or improve existing trees, wetlands, grassland, parks, woods, orchards and allotments, where appropriate. • Avoid any unacceptable impacts on priority habitats or result in the loss of woodlands, amenity trees or hedgerows including those as highlighted in figures 6.13 and 6.14 in accordance with Local Plan Core Policy 46. • Avoid any unacceptable impacts on priority species in accordance with Local Plan Core Policy 46.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Report (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre). https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain living green spaces. • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways. • To use land efficiently and to preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 124, 185 – 188. • LPP1&2 Policy CP46.

Community Aspirations

Where possible the Parish Council will support and encourage:

- *Work to improve landscaping for the village e.g. planting of (wild)flowers, shrubs and trees.*
- *Possibilities for re-wilding and creating nature pathways, orchards and allotments.*
- *Retention of grass field margins by landowners, for the benefit of wildlife.*

7. Flooding and Drainage

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To maintain living green spaces.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.</p> <p>To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.</p>
Flooding Policies	Policy SC7: Flooding and Drainage

7.1. Flooding and Drainage Issues

- 7.1.1. The NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. It is the aim, in future, to minimise the likelihood of flooding and drainage overflow problems by all practical means; particularly to prevent new developments from exacerbating the situation. Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change.
- 7.1.2. The Residents' Survey provided a clear indication that flooding is a key issue with 88% of respondents stating that all future developments should include flood-prevention measures to reduce the impact of a flood. The local concern with flooding stems from the fact that Sutton Courtenay sits in a low-lying area beside the River Thames, with several of other water bodies,

including Ginge Brook, Mill Brook and a number of artificial lakes. Parts of the village are therefore vulnerable to river flooding, surface water flooding and groundwater flooding. Historical incidences of flooding in the village and surrounding countryside have resulted from one or a combination of these factors.

7.1.3. The Environment Agency (EA) flood risk maps (Figure 7.1) show the predicted 1 in 100 year (Flood Zone 3) and 1 in 1000 year (Flood Zone 2) flood outlines, which cover a significant part of Sutton Courtenay. Figure 7.2 illustrates the flood warning areas while figure 7.3 illustrates historically recorded areas of flooding.

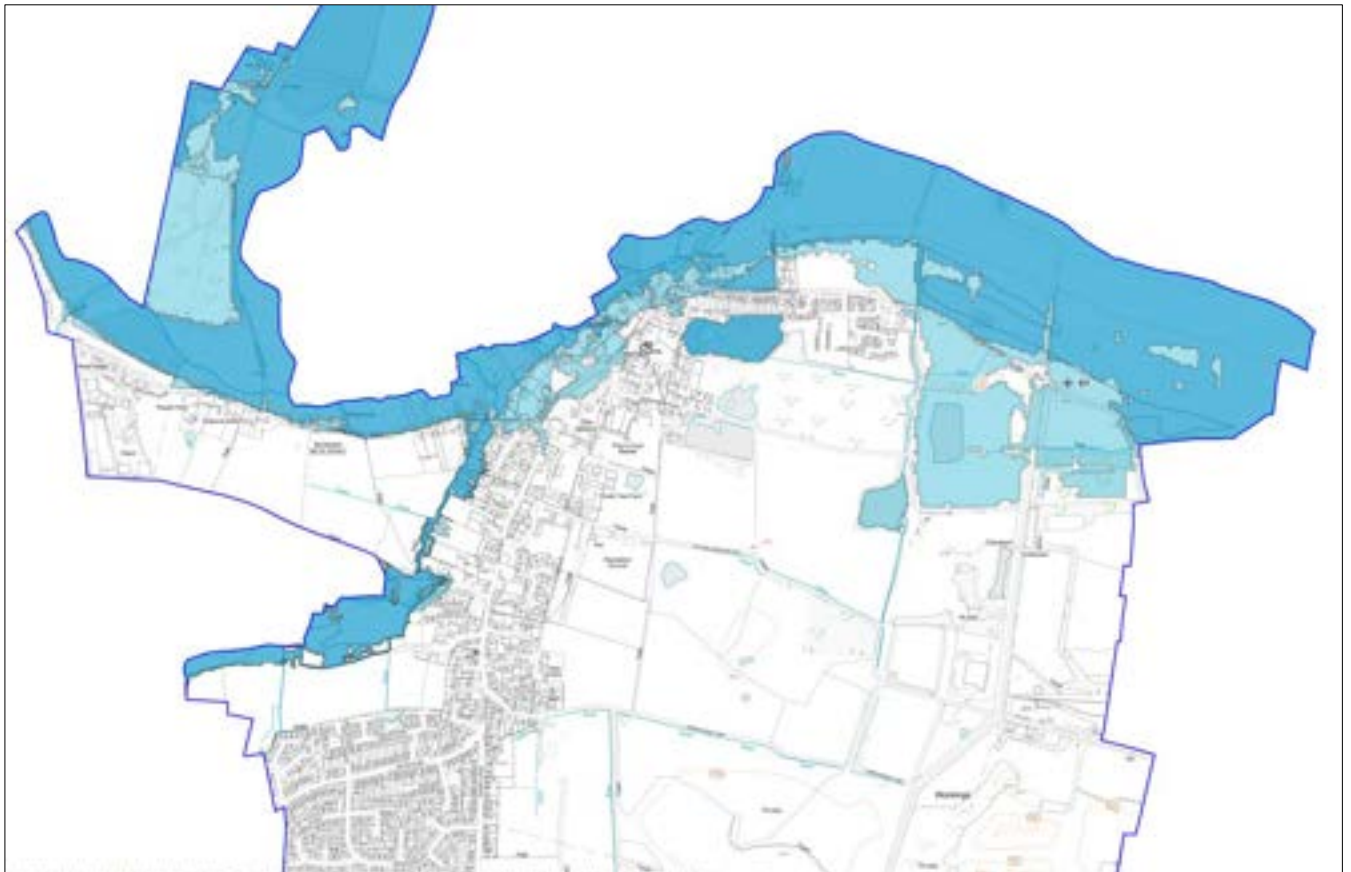



Figure 7.1 Plan of Flood Zones 2 and 3

 Flood Zone 3

 Flood Zone 2

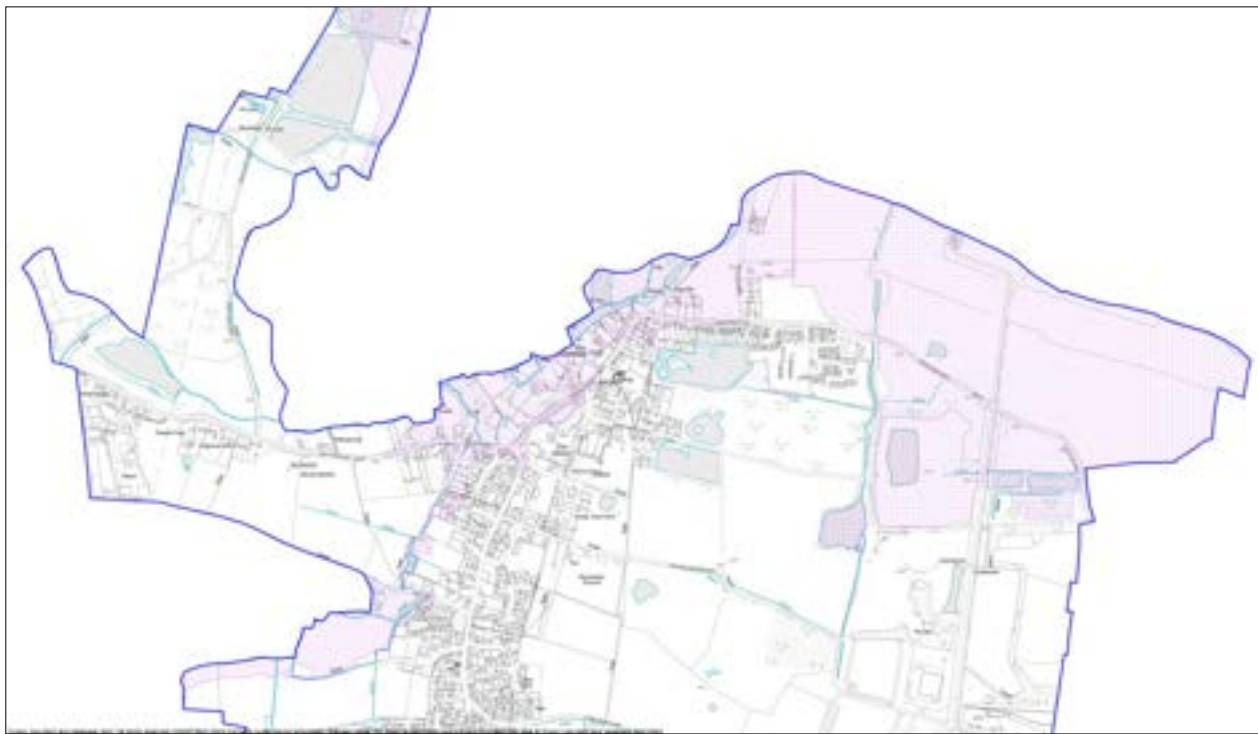


Figure 7.2 Plan of Flood Warning Areas



Flood Warning Areas

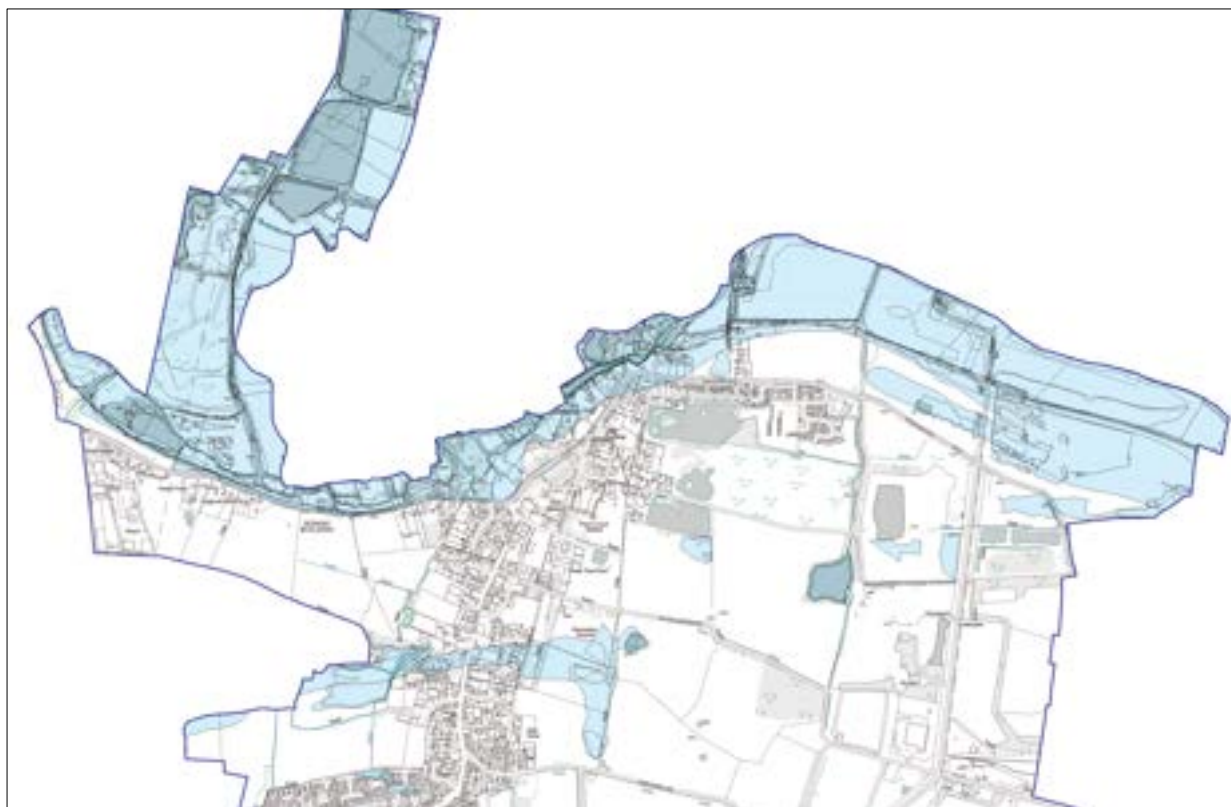


Figure 7.3 Historic Recorded Flood Areas



Historic Recorded Flood Areas

7.1.4. Additional anecdotal evidence of local flooding has been provided from residents' observations and recordings. This information is not recorded on the Environmental Agency flood maps, but has been gathered by the Parish Council and passed to the County Council as the Lead Flood Authority. A summary of the local flooding based on both anecdotal and EA flood risk map evidence is provided below.

River Flooding

- 7.1.5. The area affected by the potential River Thames flooding is situated generally to the north of Drayton Road and Appleford Road and the gardens of the houses on the western side of Church St are also potentially vulnerable. Abingdon Road regularly floods when water volumes are high in the River Thames and flooding regularly extends over the fields east and west of Abingdon Road, with those to the west particularly affected. The fields to the east of Abingdon Road are shown on the EA Flood Risk map as being in Flood Zone 3 at the northern end towards the Sutton bridges, but in Flood Zone 2 further south towards Appleford Road. However, very extensive flooding was observed, most recently during the winter of 2019/20.
- 7.1.6. The weirs on the River Thames allow much of the water in the river to be diverted onto the flood plain when it is in flood. As a consequence, river flooding is a frequent event in a large area to the north of Drayton Road in Sutton Courtenay. This area lies predominantly in flood zones 2 and 3 (medium and high risk) and most recently in March 2021, the area suffered extensive flooding.
- 7.1.7. A further area of potential river flooding to the south of Drayton Road is associated with Ginge Brook. Ginge Brook is a chalk stream which rises on the Berkshire Downs and passes through fields to the west of the village before it turns northwards and runs behind houses at the north end of High Street, after which it passes under Brook Street before it ultimately joins the River Thames. In periods of heavy rain Ginge Brook has flooded Brook Street and Drayton Road as well as properties on Lower Mill and The Nursery (July 2007).

Surface Water Flooding

- 7.1.8. As stated above, the village is in parts affected by surface water flooding which is due partly to the low level of the surrounding land and also to the ground conditions in the area. The increasing frequency of heavy rainfall associated with climate change may also be a factor. The area has experienced a high level of additional built development in recent years, with a corresponding increase in impermeable surfaces, including three separate residential developments to the north of Milton Road on greenfield sites.
- 7.1.9. The EA surface water flood map for Sutton Courtenay (figure 7.6) illustrates that issues with surface water flooding occur in a variety of locations dispersed throughout the village. Some areas that are particularly vulnerable include the southern and eastern parts of the village as well as parts of High Street and Brook Street. Local evidence supports this as flooding regularly occurs on Brook Street after heavy rain as illustrated in Figure 7.4 where the floodwater can be seen extending into Chapel Lane. Oxfordshire County Council recorded a further flood event at the same location on 16th September 2016 where it was noted that the problem was likely to reoccur and regular maintenance of drains was essential. Figure 7.5 illustrates flooding of the upper part of High Street following a thunderstorm on 12th August 2020.



Figure 7.4 Brook Street/Chapel Lane Flooding



Figure 7.5 High Street Flooding 2020

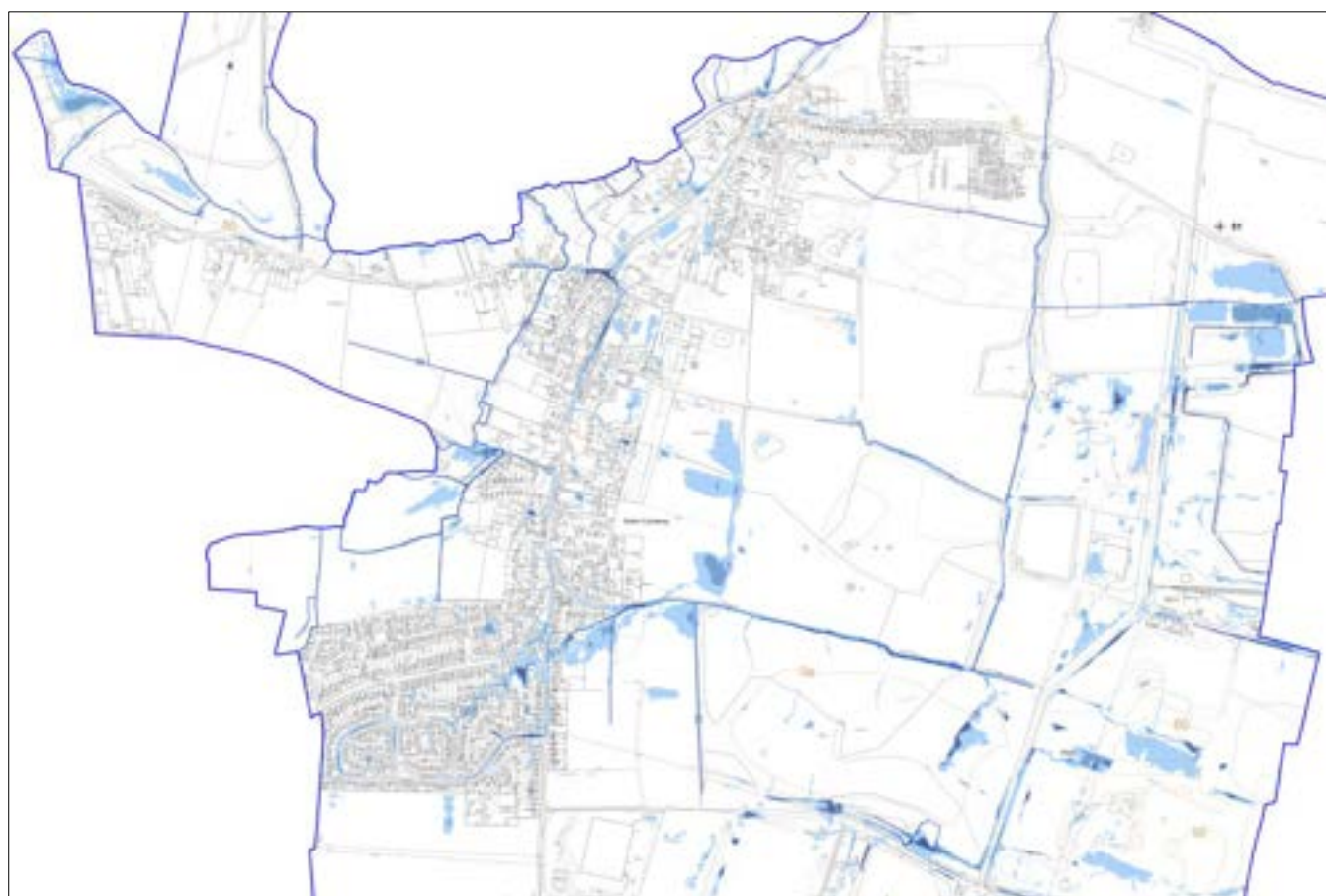


Figure 7.6 Surface Water Flooding Risk Areas



7.1.10. The flood risk map also shows that large areas to the south of Frilsham Street/Hobbyhorse Lane and to the east of the High Street, are highly vulnerable to surface water flooding. The latter is identified as a strategic development site for housing (200 houses) in the VoWH Local Plan 2031. Planning Application P17/V1963/O which sought permission to build 200 houses on this site was refused and an appeal was lodged but was subsequently withdrawn. Photographic evidence was submitted by village residents in the course of the planning application process which showed

flooding on this site, in 2014 and in 2020. Figure 7.7 and 7.8 illustrate flooding incidents on the site. A new application P21/V2682/O was lodged in September 2021 for 175 dwellings on the same site.



Figure 7.7 and 7.8 Flooding on Strategic Housing Allocation East of Sutton Courtenay, February 2014 and January 2021

7.1.11. Flooding has also been observed in land to the north of the allocated site, including at the recreation ground and at the field to the east of Cross Trees Farm, the latter of which flooded most recently during the winter of 2019/20. This area is not shown on the EA flood map to be at risk of flooding, however the more extreme weather experienced as a result of climate change may have contributed to this extensive flooding.



Figure 7.9 and 7.10 Flooding to east of Cross Trees Farm February 2020 and on Recreation Ground, February 2014

Groundwater Flooding

7.1.12. *'Flooding from groundwater can happen when the level of water within the rock or soil underground - known as the water table – rises. When the water table rises and reaches ground level, water starts to seep through to the surface and flooding can happen. This means that water may rise up through floors or underground rooms such as cellars or basements. Groundwater flooding is much slower to occur than river flooding – it will usually happen days, weeks or even months after heavy or prolonged rainfall. And it may last weeks or even months. Flooding from groundwater is most common in areas where the underlying bed rock is chalk, but it can also happen in locations with sand and gravel such as in river valleys³. According to the Vale and South Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report of 2013, groundwater flooding can occur in combination with main rivers and that some areas in the VoWH have suffered*

³ (<https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/2019/12/23/what-is-groundwater-flooding/>)

basement flooding when groundwater in alluvial gravels has risen, driven by river flooding in the River Thames.

- 7.1.13. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (figure 7.11) illustrates that vast majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area is 'predominantly within the very high-risk category (greater than 75%) of groundwater flooding.' According to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, there have been 62 reports of groundwater flooding in the area between 2000 and the production of the report.

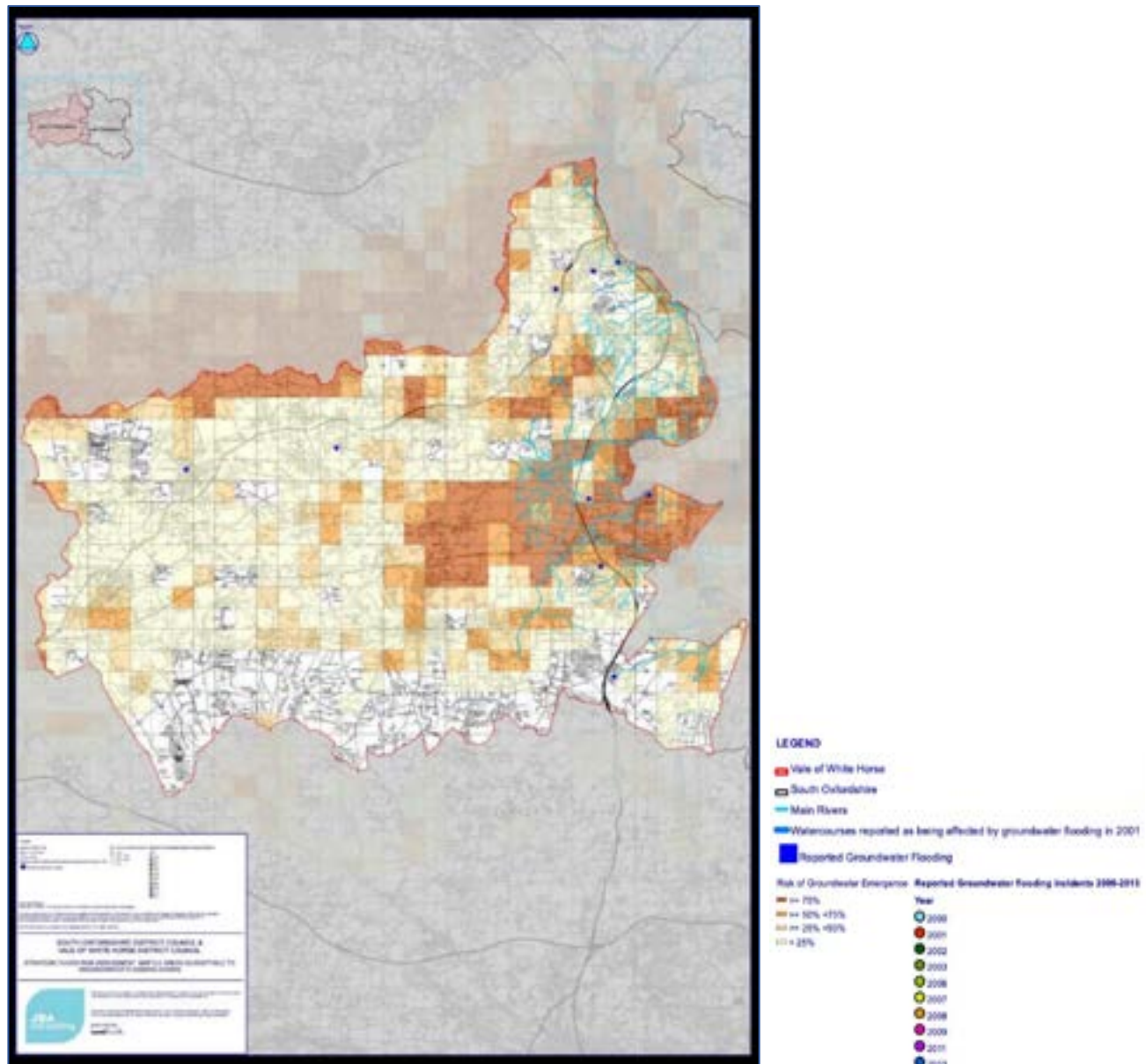


Figure 7.11 Extract from Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report 2013

- 7.1.14. Planning application P17/V1963/O for 200 houses on the strategic housing allocation at Hobbyhorse Lane was refused in August 2019 in part due to groundwater flooding issues and the absence of an adequate drainage strategy. Another further application (P21/V2682/O) to build 175 homes on the same site was refused in October 2022 on a number of grounds including vulnerability to surface and groundwater flooding and failure to demonstrate that the development would not increase flooding elsewhere. Section 6.1 above proposes, as a minimum, the inclusion of the eastern section of this site (identified as Parcel A5d) as part of the green gap to the east of Sutton Courtenay as this area broadly correlates with the area identified on the Environment Agency Flood Risk maps.

Flooding from Sewers

7.1.15. Sewer flooding occurs when intense rainfall overloads the sewer system capacity (surface water, foul or combined), and/or when sewers cannot discharge properly to watercourses due to high water levels. Sewer flooding can also be caused when problems such as blockages, collapses or equipment failure occur in the sewerage system. There have been a number of incidences of sewer flooding in Sutton Courtenay, including on Frilsham Street in the early 2000s, on High Street and Frilsham Street in the winter of 2002/2003, on the upper part of the High Street in July 2007 and in 2016 when sewage spilled into the road near the Triangle for several hours. Although the latter was caused by a blockage, the flooding was likely to have been exacerbated by the lack of capacity of the sewers to cope with the load, partly as a result of the extent of new developments in the village.

7.1.16. Policy SC7 addresses these various matters. For the purposes of the policy, the following areas have been identified as particularly vulnerable to flooding:

Fluvial Flooding

- Land north of Drayton Road and Appleford Road and north of Church Street (Fluvial River Thames Flooding).
- Land south of Drayton Road and west of the village, including Brook Street, Chapel Lane and High Street (Fluvial Ginge Brook Flooding).

Surface Water Flooding

- Land East of Sutton Courtenay and west of current landfill site.
- High Street.
- Brook Street.

Groundwater Flooding

- Entire village is at risk.

Policy title	Policy SC7: Flooding and drainage
Policy text	<p>Development proposals should demonstrate that surface water drainage will not add to the existing site runoff or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties or their setting. This should be achieved through a detailed flood risk assessment in respect of sites that fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and sites that have historical evidence of flooding as shown in figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.6 and 7.11 (in addition to the Evidence Base Document: Flood Report)</p> <p>As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) principles. Such systems should be detailed within a site-specific flood risk assessment and designed to current policy and best practice, including taking account of climate change, to manage rainfall run-off rates and volumes to existing pre-development rates and mimic the natural drainage regime of the site.</p>

	Wherever practicable, SuDS should be designed in a way which contributes towards the landscaping and biodiversity of the site concerned and make provision for their future maintenance.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency flood maps. • SCNP Report on Flooding https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF Paragraphs 166 – 175. • LPP1&2 Policies CP42.

Community Aspirations

Where possible the Parish Council will support and encourage:

- *Work to ensure soak-aways to roadside ditches are cleaned regularly and clogged-up ditches emptied.*
- *The use of permeable drainage for driveways etc. on existing properties throughout the village.*

8. Housing

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To give priority for new housing to meet local needs including a greater availability range of affordable housing for residents.</p> <p>To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness.</p> <p>To ensure all new developments are appropriate and integrated within the built up area.</p> <p>To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.</p>
Housing Policies	<p>Policy SC8: Residential development Within the Built-up area</p> <p>Policy SC9: - Housing Needs</p>

8.1. Housing Development & Approach

- 8.1.1. Section 5 of the NPPF promotes the delivery of a sufficient supply of homes whilst recognising the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment (sections 15 and 16). Paragraph 29 of the NPPF sets out that:
- “Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.”*
- 8.1.2. Policy CP2 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan (LPT1) states that the Council will *‘continue to work jointly and proactively with all other Oxfordshire local authorities and through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to address any unmet housing need’*.

8.1.3. As stated in paragraph 2.2.2 above, the Adopted Local Plan spatial strategy is to direct the majority of housing to Market towns and Local service centres. This echoes the policy contained in the NPPF at paragraphs 82-84. Sutton Courtenay is a ‘Larger Village’ where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area. It states that *‘Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. This development must be adjacent, or well related, to the existing built area of the settlement or meet exceptional circumstances set out in the other policies of the Development Plan and deliver necessary supporting infrastructure.’*

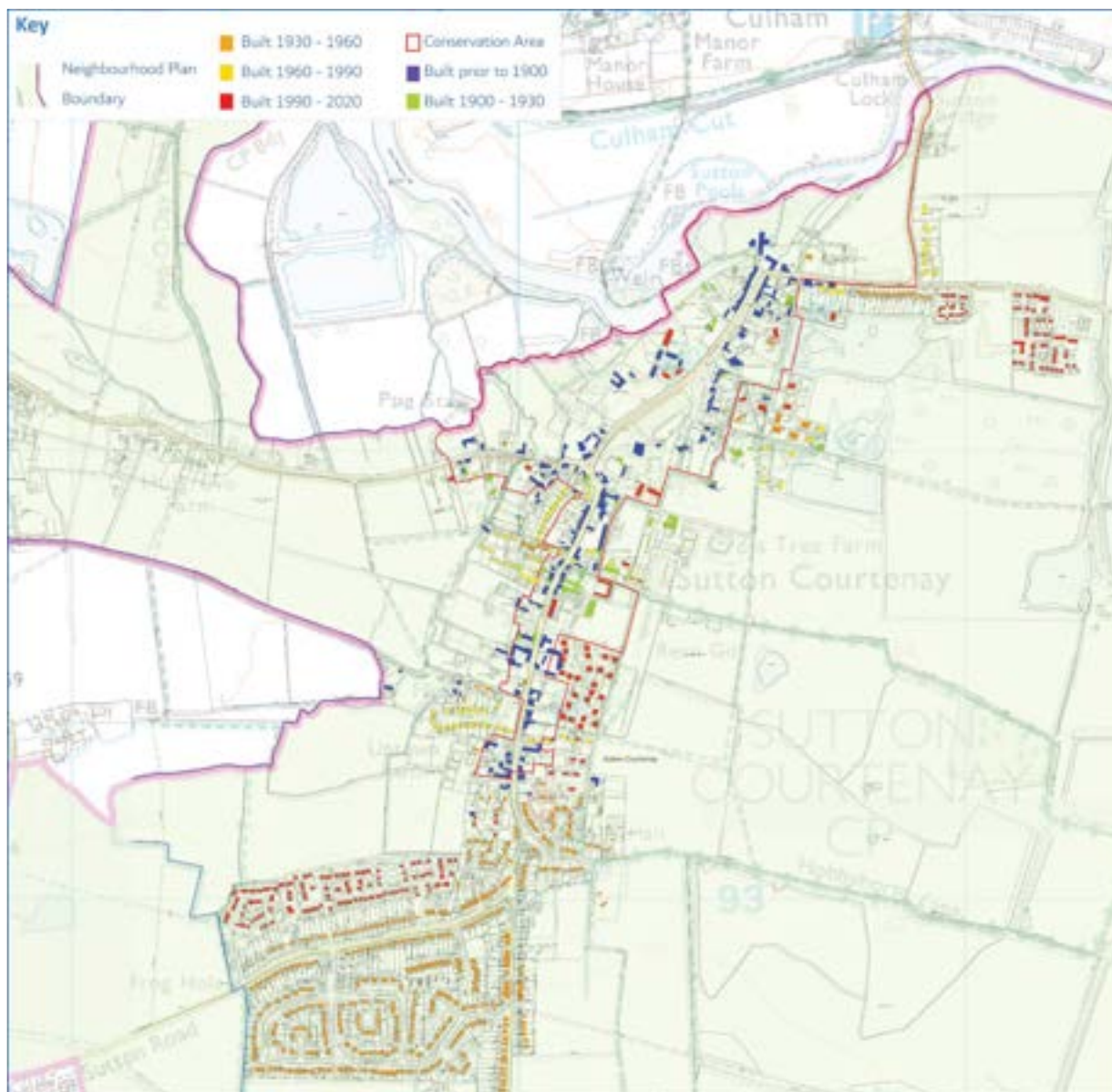


Figure 8.1 Urban development of Sutton Courtenay

8.1.4. This however does not reflect the increased level of housing growth that the Parish has experienced over the last ten years on greenfield sites outside the built-up area, partly as a result of the redevelopment of former commercial sites and partly as a result of development on greenfield sites, during a time when the District had a lack of a five-year supply of housing sites.

8.1.5. Figure 8.1 highlights the evolution of the urban form of the settlement from the early twentieth century to the present with a gradual infilling of plots in the streetscene. Towards the south of the village there are examples of infill and in-depth housing developments, which are of a generic style with little influence being derived from the local vernacular. Major development over the Local Plan period (2011-2031), has led to nearly 300 dwellings constructed (or under construction) in estate form, in designs which lack the variety and character of the historic core, including:

- 4 dwellings at Red Kite Close (2017).
- 7 dwellings at High Street (1 in 2017; and 6 in 2016 over 2 different applications).
- 3 dwellings at Drayton Road (2016).
- 28 dwellings at Rye Gardens, Milton Road (2015).
- 34 dwellings at Springfield Way, Milton Road (2014).
- 171 dwellings at Amey Roadstone Ltd, Appleford Road (2013).
- 65 dwellings at Asquith Park, Milton Road (2013).

8.1.6. Clearly this is a significant number given that the parish census record a population of only 2,414 in 2001 and 2,421 in 2011. However, between 2011 and 2019, the population had increased by 29.5% to 3,259. Although not within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the village is also closely affected by residential development in the surrounding areas, including in Milton, Milton Park, Abingdon, Drayton, Culham and most notably at Didcot Garden Town which has a current and future potential of 15,050 new homes. There is also added pressure associated with the future development of the minerals and waste sites to the east and northeast of the village. Part of this area is currently being promoted as a potential housing allocation for between 2000 and 2500 new homes.

8.1.7. The level and location of housing growth was considered in the 2018 Residents’ Survey. In response to the question *should applications for future development come forward in the future, where would you like to see that development built*, over two-thirds of respondents (69%) agreed that development should be directed to infill sites, within the built-up area of the village. It should be noted that in the survey infill sites were defined as 1-2 houses. 56% of respondents agreed that development should be built on existing brownfield sites within the built up area. The large majority of respondents (79%) disagreed that development should be on sites which will extend the built up area of the village and 77% disagreed that they should be on larger sites within the built up area of the village (not brownfield) (Figure 8.2).

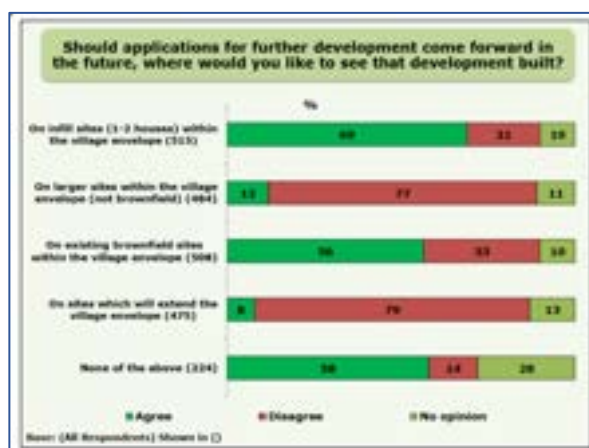


Figure 8.2 Residents’ Survey Results

Policy SC8 below therefore distinguishes between the built-up area of the Sutton Courtenay village and the surrounding countryside in order to manage development proposals accordingly. Therein Policy SC8 sets out the spatial strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan area with a strong focus on brownfield development within the built up area. As a consequence, Policy SC8 complements Policy SC1 which identifies and protects the green gaps which are considered important in terms of their value relating to the setting of the conservation area and providing a

sufficient buffer to prevent coalescence. Policy SC8 should also be read in conjunction with policy SC11 which relates to the restoration of mineral and waste sites.

- 8.1.8. Policy SC8 addresses these matters. It seeks to ensure that proposals for residential development within the built-up area of Sutton Courtenay respond positively to the special character of the village and the relevant details in the Character Appraisal and Design Code. The policy has been designed so that it operates in a complementary way with the Joint Design Guide (2022) produced by the Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. The Design Guidance is supplementary planning guidance. It sets out a series of development principles.

Policy title	Policy SC8: Residential development Within the Built-up Area
Policy text	Proposals for residential development within the built-up area of Sutton Courtenay will be supported where they respond positively to the special character of the village and the relevant details in the Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' Survey. • Landscape Appraisal. • Character Appraisal and Design Code. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village. • To preserve and enhance historic village assets. • To use land efficiently and to preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land. • To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness. • To ensure all new developments are appropriate and integrated within the built up area.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 123 – 125. • LPP1&2 Policies CP1, CP3, CP4. • Joint Design Guide.

Community Aspirations

Where possible, the Parish Council will:

- *Aim to maintain, and when possible improve, the condition of the pavements within the Parish to ensure that people who are less physically able to move can walk confidently and safely.*

- 8.1.9. Part 1 of the Adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan includes a number of policies which also address housing issues. Most notably, Policy CP26 aims to accommodate the current and future needs of the ageing population, which supports the Government's objective to address the needs of groups with specific housing requirements (NPPF paragraph 60).

8.1.10. Many other aspects of housing accommodation are addressed in Part 2 of existing Adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan, and are set out below for ease of reference:

- *Development Policy 1: Self and Custom Build – which promotes Self Build and Custom Build to meet the need highlighted within the Self Build Register.* Self build opportunities may be supported either in individual plots or in small clusters within major development proposals.
- *Development Policy 2: Space Standards – which seeks to ensure internal space of housing is delivered to an appropriate standard to reflect the needs of the community. This includes the optional building regulations and the nationally described space standards.* The Nationally Described Space Standards identify standards for the space within new dwellings and are suitable for application across all tenures. The standards set out requirements for the minimum gross internal (floor) area and for storage areas associated with new dwellings.
- *Development Policy 3: Sub-Division of Dwellings – which sets out measures to ensure subdivision of housing is appropriately designed and executed.* The Sub-Division of dwellings are considered to be separate units which require their own facilities and living spaces. Good design must be incorporated into proposals to minimise their impact on the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area, and to maintain or enhance its character.
- *Development Policy 4: Residential Annexes – which seeks to ensure that residential annexes are designed appropriately.* The size, scale, location and design of the annex needs to be appropriate and subordinate to the existing dwelling ensuring that the annex is successfully integrated into the original dwelling.
- *Development Policy 5: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside – which sets out criteria to guide development in the open countryside.* The policy states that replacement dwellings in the open countryside will be permitted, provided it is a replacement; it is either situated on the same site or on a better alternative; and the impact of the dwelling respects the rural character, locality and landscape setting.
- *Development Policy 6: Rural Workers’ Dwellings – which sets out the Council’s approach to enabling rural workers’ dwellings to support rural businesses.* The proposal will need to demonstrate that there is no suitable available existing accommodation in the vicinity of the rural business (such as the nearest settlement) or buildings suitable for re-use and conversion to residential use.
- *Development Policy 7: Re-use, Conversion and Extension of Buildings for Dwellings in the Open Countryside – which sets out the measures where the reuse or conversion of buildings for housing will be appropriate in the open countryside.* Policy DP7 supports re-use, conversion and extension of buildings for housing provided it’s structurally sound; respects the character appearance and setting of the original building; respects the rural landscape, character and locality; and retains features of architectural or historic merit, where appropriate; this is echoed in the NPPF at paragraph 84.

It should also be noted that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) establishes circumstances where permitted development rights exist to convert buildings into dwellings. Parts M and N allow the conversion of retail and sui generis uses to dwellings; Part O allows the conversion of offices to dwellings; Part PA allows the conversion of light industrial buildings to dwellings; and Part Q allows the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings. These aspects are not covered in Neighbourhood Plan policies.

8.2. Housing Need

Age Profile

- 8.2.1. The population of Sutton Courtenay has increased by 29.5% between 2011 and 2019 from 2,421 residents to 3,259. This increase of 838 residents is not spread evenly through the age groups with the biggest changes in the 0-15 age bracket and 85+ age bracket at over a 40% increase, then followed by the 16-24 and 25-44 age brackets at just over 30% with the smallest change being just over 15% for the 45-64 age bracket. Although it should be noted that the given the small overall number of 85 + residents, the swing in population within this bracket could be considered disproportionate. When viewed as a percentage change in population, the dominant age group is the 45-64 bracket, though there is also a marked increase in 0-15 bracket.

Health Profile

- 8.2.2. The overall health of Sutton Courtenay is good with the majority (82.5%) reporting Very Good or Good health, with around the same (82.9%) reporting no limitation in day-to-day activities. Of those aged 16-64 with a limiting long-term illness (164), this makes up 10.9% of the population, compared to England's average of 12.7%.

Household composition

- 8.2.3. The household composition for Sutton Courtenay, based on the 2011 Census identifies one family households as the dominant group. When related to the England wide figures it clear that the household composition within Sutton Courtenay is similar to the England wider averages. The points of variation are that Sutton Courtenay has a lower than average number of One Person Households, and greater than average percentage of Married Households and Pensioner Households.

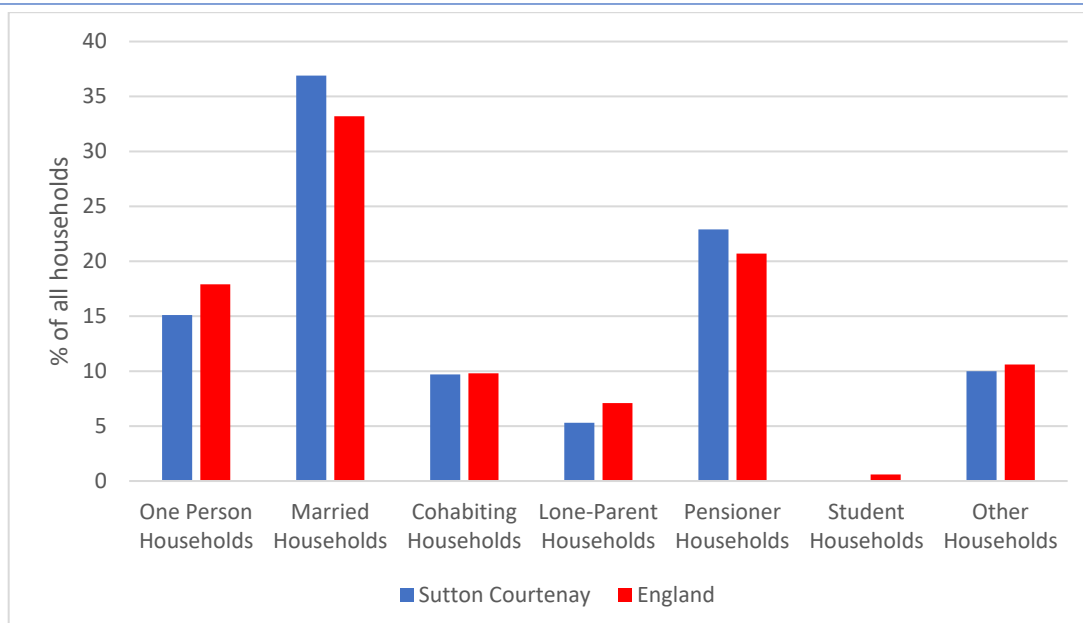


Figure 8.3 Households Sutton Courtenay v England

Housing Tenure

- 8.2.4. Based on the 2011 Census information, the majority of homes within Sutton Courtenay are owner occupied (697 properties), with a roughly equal proportion of the remainder of properties either rented on the open market (129 properties), or rented through housing associations / the local authority (181 properties).
- 8.2.5. When the tenure of properties across Sutton Courtenay are compared with those in Southern Oxfordshire and across England, it shows that Sutton Courtenay has a greater than average number of owner-occupied dwellings than across England, although falls below the average for Southern Oxfordshire. It also displays a greater number of Housing Association Rented tenures than the average for both Southern Oxfordshire and nationally. However, there are significantly fewer than average rentals from both the local authority and privately rented tenures.
- 8.2.6. Residents were asked in the 2018 Residents' Survey what sort of property they currently occupy. 47% live in a house or bungalow containing four or more bedrooms, 32% live in a house or bungalow with three bedrooms and 11% live in a house or bungalow that contains two bedrooms. The survey also indicated that 79% of residents live in 3+ bedroom properties that are privately owned. From the responses to the survey there is no sheltered housing provision, and rental provision in all sectors is approximately 6%. Of the 654 respondents 172 did not feel their current property suited their needs. They were asked what sort of property they would require. 36% of respondents indicated that they would like to live in a house or bungalow containing four or more bedrooms, 22% would like to live in a house or bungalow with three bedrooms and 11% would like to live in a property that contains two bedrooms. The Residents' Survey also indicated a need for more affordable homes and for housing for older generations.

Housing Prices

- 8.2.7. Sutton Courtenay has a higher than national average house price across all types of housing with available data (there is no data available for the average price of flats, indicating a stark lack of their provision). In particular there is a stark increase in the average price for detached homes in

the parish compared to the national average. The percentage increase of the average combined house prices from that of the national average is 34.4%.

- 8.2.8. Based on Land Registry information between 2018 and 2019, a decrease in the average house price by 6.5% was recorded, however during 2020 this bounced back showing an overall price rise of 7.4%.
- 8.2.9. Rental values within the parish are in line with the overall rental market in Southern Oxfordshire for individual dwellings however for single rooms, prices are above that rental market. It should be noted that the private rental property market in Sutton Courtenay is very small.

Affordable Housing

- 8.2.10. The Affordable Housing Officer at Vale of White Horse confirmed that as of 30.03.2021 there were 111 people on the Housing Register waiting list who had specified Sutton Courtenay as an area of preference. The Vale housing register waiting list at that date stood at over 2,400 applicants, not all who will specify an area and some who may specify more than one area. It is also not known whether those on the waiting list who expressed a preference for Sutton Courtenay actually have a need to be in the parish or just a desire.

Policy title	Policy SC9: - Housing Needs
Policy text	<p>As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for new housing should respond positively to the most up-to-date assessment of local housing needs. The following types of residential development will be supported:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Proposals which meet the specific local needs including affordability of different groups in the community as set out in Housing Summary: Sutton Courtenay Parish (and any future amendments) as well as the Sutton Courtenay Residents' Survey. b) Proposals which meet the general demand for first-time buyers and those looking to downsize for smaller (2-3 bedroom) dwellings. c) Proposals which meet the needs of older people including new homes that are suitable or capable of adaptation to facilitate lifetime independent living. d) Proposals which meet the need for the appropriate provision of affordable housing in line with the NPPF as well as a tenure mix in accordance with the latest requirements as set out by the LPA. e) Proposals which comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards or their successor.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing Needs Survey. ● Residents' Survey. ● Housing Summary: Sutton Courtenay Parish. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/

Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To give priority for new housing to meet local needs including a greater availability range of affordable housing for residents.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NPPF Section 5.• LPP1&2 Policies CP22-26.

Community Aspirations:

Where possible the Parish Council will:

- *Explore opportunities to accommodate local residents with an identified housing need where new housing is constructed.*

9. Built Environment

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements.</p> <p>To maintain living green spaces.</p> <p>To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.</p> <p>To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village.</p> <p>To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness.</p> <p>To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.</p> <p>To ensure all new developments are appropriate and integrated within the built up area.</p> <p>To preserve and enhance historic village assets.</p>
Built Environment Policies	<p>Policy SC10: Design, Heritage and Setting.</p> <p>Policy SC11: Mineral and Waste Restoration.</p> <p>Policy SC12: Riverside Related Development.</p>

9.1. Introduction

- 9.1.1. The analysis of the urban areas undertaken in the Sutton Courtenay Character Assessment and Design Code provided a detailed understanding of its evolution and the historical character and significance of the built form. The character of this ancient village is expressed on the ground in its layout, buildings, spaces and through its relationship with its surrounding fields.
- 9.1.2. Residents were asked how important it was to them that development does not have a harmful impact on historic buildings and the conservation area in Sutton Courtenay. 80% felt it was very important, 17% quite important and 3% not important at all. When asked whether the current conservation area should be extended, 40% felt it should, 20% felt it should not be extended, with 41% having no opinion. Whilst the latter needs to be formally considered, this has not been assessed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is a community aspiration that this be considered in more detail in the future.
- 9.1.3. In their feedback on the vision and objectives and subsequent informal consultation exercises the local community has also identified the following features to be important to the design of housing in the Plan area:
- Adequate off-street parking (74%).
 - In keeping with the housing character of Sutton Courtenay (68%).
 - In keeping with existing design and street scenes (55%).
- 9.1.4. In order to support appropriate forms of development in the future, Policy SC10 seeks to reinforce the locally distinctive built form and to enhance or better reveal those aspects of the heritage assets that are significant.

9.2. Sutton Courtenay Village - Character, Design and Appearance

- 9.2.1. An overview of the heritage and setting of Sutton Courtenay is provided below, however more detailed information is set out in the Design Code and Character Appraisal (<https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>), which identifies the essential character of different parts of Sutton Courtenay, which forms the identity of the village. The historical development of the village and how it is inextricably linked to the countryside are also described.
- 9.2.2. Sutton Courtenay is an ancient village, situated on the River Thames. The river and its fertile flood plain attracted early settlers and there is evidence of settlement from the Neolithic period onwards. History on the ground dates from the medieval period when a combination of the links to Abingdon Abbey; a royal connection and rich agricultural land gave rise to a high-status village. The earliest buildings date from the twelfth century and the complex network of tracks and lanes throughout the village was established around this time, if not earlier.
- 9.2.3. The historic importance and character of the village are reflected in the fact that its 42.96 ha conservation area was designated by the Vale of White Horse District Council in 1969. The conservation area encompasses the oldest part of the village and contains all except two of the parish's listed buildings and two of its locally important assets.
- 9.2.4. The parish contains three Grade I listed buildings, six Grade II* listed buildings and 54 Grade II listed buildings. The most notable Grade I listed buildings comprise:

- Norman Hall, Church Street - A twelfth century manor house, now house, with later alterations.
- Church of All Saints, Church Street - Romanesque west tower and nave; thirteenth century chancel; fourteenth century north and south aisles, and clerestory and fifteenth Century south porch.
- Sutton Courtenay Manor House, which is a Grade II Listed Park and Garden comprising of thirteenth, fifteenth, and seventeenth century buildings and circa 2 ha of modern formal and wild gardens, developed in the 1920s by Norah Lindsay.
- The Abbey, Church Street - Rectory house, now a religious education centre. Hall and solar range of c.1320; rear range probably sixteenth Century; south range probably early seventeenth century with later alterations. Grade II Listed structure gives a highly landscaped feel to the village.



Figure 9.1 Listed buildings and other designated heritage Assets

9.2.5. A number of non-designated but nevertheless historically and/or aesthetically valuable buildings, structures and remains also make a very important contribution to the character of the village (as shown overleaf on figure 9.2). Figure 9.1 above sets out the location of all the

designated heritage assets in the village. It also identifies the location of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry Number: 1004853, SM OX250) to the south of the village, immediately north of Milton Park Business Park. The monument *“comprises an area of extensive cropmarks”* which *“are at their most concentrated on the eastern side of the scheduled area, with outlying linear cropmarks to the west, described as being typical of later prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon period features”*. The buried remains of the scheduled monument do not themselves make a visible contribution to the character of Sutton Courtenay village, however the open grassland use of the site and Kelaart’s Field, which is a proposed local wildlife site and a priority grassland habitat, make an enormous contribution to the individual characters of both Sutton Courtenay and Milton villages.

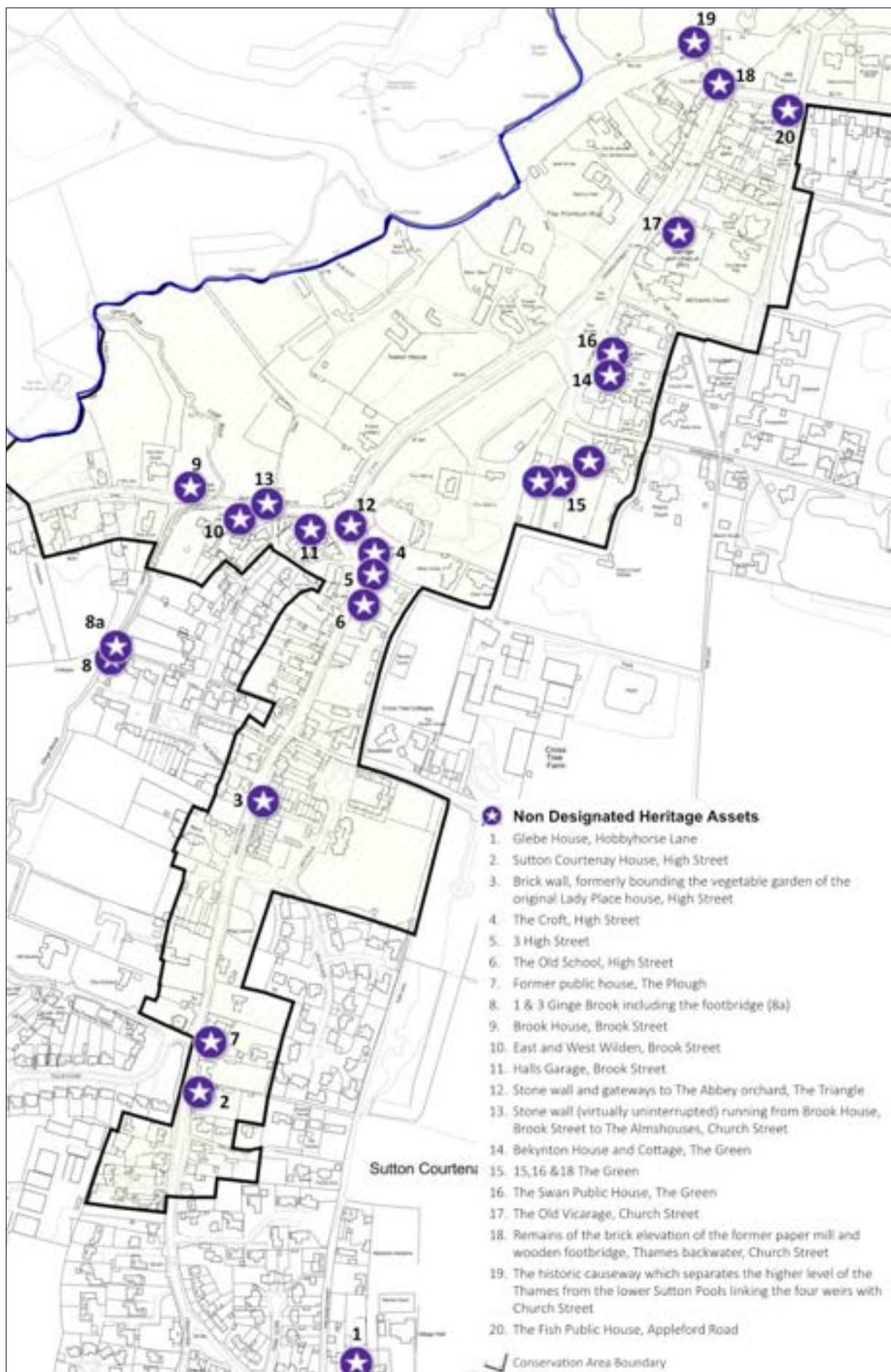


Figure 9.2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Joint Design Guide and National Design Guide

- 9.2.6. The National Design Guide was published in 2019⁴. The latter sets out the characteristics which when combined create the physical character of an area and create a sense of place and community. The ten characteristics are:
- Context – enhances the surroundings.
 - Identity – attractive and distinctive.
 - Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
 - Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
 - Nature – enhanced and optimised.
 - Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
 - Uses – mixed and integrated.
 - Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
 - Resources – efficient and resilient.
 - Lifespan – made to last.
- 9.2.7. The National Model Design Code was published in July 2021⁵, it provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design.
- 9.2.8. The newly published Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Council’s Joint Design Guide⁶ replaces previous local design guides and aligns with the National Design Guide above. The aim of the Joint Design Guide is:
- “To improve the standard of design in all developments in South Oxfordshire and the Vale and ensure that only developments of the highest quality and sustainability are delivered.”*
- 9.2.9. It sets out how to analyse a site and its wider context as well as setting out Design Principles for each of the themes and objectives.

Character Appraisal and Design Code

- 9.2.10. The Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code (<https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>) provides a detailed analysis of streetscape, landscape, history, views and topography to establish three distinct Character Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area. It is based on the guidance set out in the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit⁷ and that set out in the National Design Guide (2019) in the National Model Design Code (2021).
- 9.2.11. The boundary of each character area is defined partly by the geographical features, but also taking into account the functional and historic links between the different areas. Table 9.1 below provides a summary of each of the three character areas. For full illustrated details, please see the Character Appraisal and Design Code document.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

⁶ <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/planning-and-development/urban-design/joint-design-guide/>

⁷ https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character_assessment_toolkit/878/character_assessment_toolkit

9.2.12. Figures 9.3 and 9.4 depict Character Area 1: The Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area. Figures 9.5 and 9.6 depict Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from the Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area and figures 9.7 and 9.8 depict Character Area 3: South of the Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area.



Figure 9.3. All Saints' Church



Figure 9.4. Norman Hall



Figure 9.5. Hobbyhorse Lane



Figure 9.6. Ginge Brook



Figure 9.7. Bradstocks Way



Figure 9.8. Asquith Park




TABLE 9.1	Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from Cons. Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
Siting & Layout	<p>Properties on Church Street and High Street have a strongly defined building line, in places forming clusters of continuous built form. The properties surrounding The Green are set well back in large gardens with expansive gaps between. A number of farm buildings on High Street have their primary frontage perpendicular to the road resulting in gaps permitting views of the countryside beyond.</p>	<p>Siting and layout dominated by detached properties set in own plots with front and rear gardens and boundaries defined with walls, fencing and domestic hedges. Developments including Lady Place and Tullis Close present more suburban layouts with dedicated parking bays and standard road widths.</p>	<p>Developed initially as ribbon development along Harwell Road and Milton (Sutton) Road, with detached properties with both front and rear gardens. To the rear of this development are backfill developments including Bradstocks Way, Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way, which present more suburban layouts with dedicated parking and standard road widths. To the north of Milton Road are more recent developments, which provide a mix of housing, closely spaced with formal layouts.</p>
Density	<p>Densities range from less than 5 to nearly 35 dph. The lowest density areas correspond with the large detached properties at The Green, which also benefit from a very low plot ratio, with buildings occupying less than 10% of the plot. The highest density occurs at the top of High Street at 33dph, where plot ratio is nearly 50%.</p> 	<p>The lowest density area is Churchmere Road, which also benefits from a low plot ratio, with buildings on average occupying less than 25% of the plot. The highest density occurs on Amey Close at 28dph, where plot ratio is nearly 50%.</p> 	<p>Densities range from 7dph to 25dph. The lowest density areas adjoin Character Area 1, with significantly higher densities occurring along Bradstocks Way and on the recent developments at Asquith Park and Rye Gardens, where plot ratios are nearly 50%.</p> 

Table 9.1	Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from Cons. Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
Green Spaces	<p>The Green is the most visible and is a highly valued green space. Trees and landscaping associated with the Manor House and The Abbey link The Green to the triangular space at the top of High St. Equally valuable is the River Thames. A PRoW at the north end of Church St leads on to the river at the site of the former wharf. The footpath provides riverside views of private gardens on the opposite bank. On the east side of the conservation area, the water-filled former gravel pits adjoin the edge of the built up area. Similarly, Ginge Brook has a strong historical and physical link to the village.</p>	<p>The lanes that make up this character area are heavily landscaped and lead to the countryside and the network of PRoW beyond. This character area also includes a number of formal open spaces including Sutton Courtenay Recreation Ground and Lady Place communal gardens. The lanes also provide access to Ginge Brook, which has a strong historical and physical link to the village. The Brook is well used by the community, with a PRoW running along the stream side and into adjoining fields.</p>	<p>Fewer green spaces in comparison to the others. A tennis court and some allotments are situated to the rear of Village Hall. Milton Road includes a green corridor with mature trees. Asquith Park includes a LEAP, while Rye Gardens provides a small central green space. Bradstocks Way/Tyrrells Way/Barretts Way include green verges, undeveloped corners and the Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School includes an area of playing fields. Immediately to the south of this is Kelaart’s field, which is included in the Didcot Delivery Plan as a proposed open space. The area is well connected to the surrounding countryside by the PRoW network.</p>
Building Typology	<p>There is a mix of terraced properties of a variety of styles and large detached properties set in large gardens. There are very few examples of other building typologies, occasional semi-detached properties do occur while apartments are limited to sub-division of larger properties and occur rarely. The majority of traditional buildings in this character area adopt a very simple form, with rectangular floorplans. Projections to the simple floorplan can occur as porches or bay windows.</p>	<p>Detached properties with both front and rear gardens are the dominant typology. Lady Place includes both terraced and apartment dwellings. The most recent developments off Appleford Rd at Amey Close and Heritage Park also include a broad mix of typologies. Each of these examples is characterised by cul-de-sacs, which is incongruous with the historic core.</p>	<p>A mixed housing typology including terraced, semi-detached, detached, bungalows and maisonettes. This mix is not evenly distributed, with a number of streets, notably Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way being dominated by semi-detached houses, while Katchside is entirely dominated by detached bungalows. Terraced houses occur on Frilsham Street, Bradstocks Way, Town Close, and Spring Field Way, but are otherwise absent from this character area. Although rare, some apartments can be found in this area, including maisonettes on Bradstocks Way.</p>
Scale, Height & Massing	<p>Most buildings are two stories (6-8m). There are examples of three storey buildings (8 - 11 m), at the top of High Street, the junction of Brook Street and Church Street and the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road. Further three storey properties occur set back from the road frontage set within large gardens. Single storey buildings (less than 5m) occur at the Almshouses on Church Street and outbuildings elsewhere in the conservation area.</p>	<p>Most buildings are two stories (6-8m). There are very few examples of three storey buildings though examples occur at Lady Place (10- 13m). There are few examples of single storey buildings, but examples occur at Chapel Lane, where dormer bungalows also occur (5 - 7m). Elsewhere single storey buildings occur as outbuildings, with heights of less than 5m.</p>	<p>Most buildings are two stories (6-8m). Examples of occupation of a third floor occur only as loft conversions. Examples of single storey buildings with a height of less than 5m occur throughout this Character Area, similarly there are examples of dormer bungalows with heights of approximately 7m.</p>

Table 9.1	Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from Cons. Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
Enclosure	<p>The area has a strong sense of enclosure defined in part by the height of the buildings and in other locations by the strong boundary planting, which frame parts of Church Street. Trees, hedges and walls also contribute towards creating a sense of enclosure elsewhere throughout the character area. The majority of the spaces within this character area fall within the 1:1.5 to 1:3 (building height/street width) range and therein have a strong sense of enclosure. The space toward the bottom of Church Street has a ratio of 1: 0.54, which continues to be comfortable as it is defined by vegetation rather than by buildings. The overriding factor is that the space between buildings is a safe and pleasant place and does not feel oppressive.</p>	<p>The area has a sense of enclosure that is strongly defined by landscaping. The majority of the spaces within this character area fall below the ideal 1:1.5 to 1:3 (building height/street width ratio) which could appear oppressive, however in the majority of instances the space is dominated by vegetation and therefore feels pleasant. The narrowness and enclosure also creates dynamic rather than static spaces, aiding the user to transit along them towards either the countryside or the main village streets. Some more recent developments to the south of this character area have higher ratios, such as at Courtenay Close.</p>	<p>The area has a much more open character, being defined by lower rise buildings and standard road widths. The space is typical of suburban cul-de-sacs, resulting in a scale that is more appropriate to cars rather than people. The majority of the spaces fall above the ideal 1:1.5 to 1:3 (building height/street width ratio) range, which could result in a poorly defined space that becomes dominated by the car. In places, the quality of the space has been improved with landscaping. These trees and hedges help define spaces. More recent developments have adopted ratios that fall within the 1:1.5 to 1:3 range and therefore have a more successful degree of enclosure, however the higher ratio coupled with the high density and high plot ratio has resulted in a building dominated space.</p>
Appearance & Details	<p>There is a wide variety of architectural styles and details throughout this character area reflecting the organic development of the village over centuries. Notable styles include Elizabethan, Jacobean, Queen Anne, Georgian, Regency and Victorian. Architectural details include brick chimneys, arched doorways, timber porches and painted dormers. The overall visual impression is highly varied and detailed.</p>	<p>There is a narrower range of architectural styles in this character area, and there is only one listed building - Sutton Mill. The majority of buildings are of twentieth and twenty first Century construction and where details occur, they are often designed to reflect those features found in the conservation area. A small number of examples of contemporary style occur.</p>	<p>With a narrow range of architectural styles evident, there are few notable architectural details, though some decorative brickwork and tile-hanging on dormers can be found. Chimneys, where they do occur are typically of brick construction and not elaborated. There are examples of poor architectural detailing and features within this character area.</p>
Roof Form	<p>There is a variety of roof forms, including hipped, half hipped, gables perpendicular to the street and gable fronting dwellings. The latter are frequently steeply pitched with decorative barge-boards. Earlier properties often have more simple brick detailing under the gable. The majority have plain clay tiles. Prominent and decorative chimneys are a feature of the area. Dormer windows are commonplace and can be set on the eaves line or wholly within the roof .</p>	<p>There is a variety of roof forms, including hipped roofs, half hipped, gables perpendicular to the street and gable fronting dwellings. The latter are frequently steeply pitched with simple barge-boards or brick detailing under the gable. The majority have plain clay tiles. Chimneys are built without decoration or detail. Dormer windows are commonplace and usually set on the eave line or wholly within the roof.</p>	<p>Gable roofs are the dominant roof form, particularly along Bradstocks Way, Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way. Hipped roofs and half hipped roofs are also common, notably on Katchside, Milton Road and Harwell Road. The latter offers the greatest variety of roof forms within this character area, reflecting the fact that it has developed more organically than other streets. Dormer windows are an occasional feature of the roofscape, often of flat roof design and sometimes dominating the roof.</p>

Table 9.1	Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from Conservation Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
Materials	<p>Across the conservation area there is a diverse mix of materials including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red/ orange bricks. • Red/ orange hanging tiles. • Timber framing with brick or render infill. • Rubblestone. • Timber clad barns on brick or stone plinths. • Plain clay roof tiles. • Slate. • Thatch. • Contrasting door and window surrounds. • Painted render. • Timber painted windows and doors. 	<p>This area has a narrower pallet of materials though still includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red/ orange bricks. • Red/ orange hanging tiles. • Painted render. • Rubblestone. • Plain clay roof tiles. • Door and window surrounds with brick quoins. • Timber painted windows and doors. • Contemporary materials, including metal and large areas of glazing. 	<p>This area has a narrower palette of materials compared to the other character areas, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of brick colours including red/ orange bricks. • Painted render in white or neutral colours. • Plain clay roof tiles. • Interlocking roof tiles. • White uPVC windows and doors. • Occasional instances of decorative brick banding. • Occasional instances of tile hanging.
Windows & Doors	<p>The predominant window type is timber casement, though timber sash and leaded casement also occur. Painted timber windows are typically white, though other neutral colours are also noted. Doors are typically timber, often solid, though sometimes with simple glazed panels or small square fanlights above. Dark paint colours predominate over lighter colours.</p>	<p>The predominant window types are timber casement and timber sash. Some examples of contemporary window designs occur. Some less appropriate windows designs occur, such as top hung casements. Doors are typically timber, often solid, though sometimes with simple glazed panels. Dark paint colours predominate over light colours.</p>	<p>The predominant window types are white uPVC casements, though darker framed uPVC are also noted. Inappropriate window designs occur, such as top hung casement and leaded uPVC. Doors are also typically uPVC in white or wood colour to coordinate with windows. There are occasional examples of infills or refurbishments where a more contemporary approach has been adopted successfully.</p>
Gardens	<p>Properties surrounding The Green are set in large plots, with dense landscaping aligning boundaries. Elsewhere, on Church Street, properties often benefit from small front gardens or green spaces, with large rear gardens. On High Street where buildings align the road, buildings benefit from generous rear gardens.</p>	<p>Properties often benefit from generous front and rear gardens, particularly towards the north of the area. Further south, more formal layouts have reduced garden sizes as density has increased, particularly at Tullis Close and Lady Place.</p>	<p>Properties frequently benefit from back gardens. Ribbon development along Harwell Road and Milton (Sutton) Road often include front gardens, though these are either absent or significantly reduced in the residential development behind these properties such as at Amey Close.</p>

Table 9.1	Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading from Conservation Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
Boundary Treatments	In the north of this area, landscaping is a defining feature of boundary treatments, with stone or brick walls often visible beneath. Further south, landscaping is less prominent and walls are more visible.	Boundary treatments vary between lanes, with brick and stone walls evident as well as fencing. The most prominent boundary treatment is hedging and tree planting, which may be used in addition to other treatments, though often it is used on its own. Lady Place and Tullis Close are exceptions to this with open boundaries.	Properties frequently include fencing or low boundary walls, which are typically in brick, though examples of less appropriate materials also occur. Hedging is also used as a boundary feature either in association with other boundary treatments or on its own.
Parking	Parking is a visually discordant feature throughout this area with the loss of some front gardens to parking towards the north of High Street. In some instances this has been more successfully integrated with landscape screening. On-street parking has also caused the erosion of green verges at intervals throughout the character area, but in places this has been addressed successfully with posts or stone markers.	Parking is more successfully addressed in this area, though there are examples of inappropriate parking arrangements. In communal layouts, parking is provided in designated bays or within courtyard garages. In detached properties, parking is accommodated in integrated garages or behind boundary treatments, the latter resulting in parking being less perceptible.	Parking is a visually discordant feature throughout with the loss of many front gardens to parking. On-street parking has also caused the erosion of green verges at intervals throughout the character area.
Garages	There are few garages or outbuildings within this character area. Those that occur are typically modest in scale and associated with larger properties or farm buildings. The latter structures are typically timber clad barns in natural colours with brick plinths.	Garages and outbuildings have in places been designed to reflect the design of traditional barns throughout Sutton Courtenay. These structure work best where they are modest in scale.	There are few garages or outbuildings within this character area, though examples of garages blocks do occur in Tyrells Way and Barrets Way. Elsewhere garages are typically modest in scale or integrated within the building. Garages occur more frequently in the recent Asquith Park development and are typically integrated on the larger detached properties.
Heritage Assets	Rich with heritage assets including all but two of the parish's listed buildings and all but three of the parish's locally important assets.	Fewer heritage assets, with one listed building and two locally important assets. Lanes do however lead out to historically important sites.	One listed buildings and one locally important asset. Adjoins a Scheduled Ancient Monument at Kelaart's Field.

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area – Character Assessment Conclusion

- 9.2.13. Character Area 1 can be divided into two separate areas, north and south of The Triangle at the junctions of Brook Street, High Street and Church Street.
- 9.2.14. With respect to Church Street, the value of this part of the village is derived from the fortuitous composition of houses of all dates, sizes, styles and materials sited along Church Street and around The Green. The war memorial is prominently positioned as the focus of The Green, which is enclosed by the church, two public houses and houses with attractive generous mature gardens fronting the west and south of The Green, contributing enormously to the rural character of the village. Houses fronting the east side of The Green are more modest in scale, though several are nevertheless substantial. Attractive front gardens make a positive contribution to the picturesque quality of the village scene here. Though not visible from the street, the river helps define both the shape and character of the village and does offer beautiful views from private houses and Public Rights of Way.



Figure 9.12. The Green & adjoining houses

- 9.2.15. The junction of Church Street, Brook Street and High Street marks a shift in character in the historic core. Most of the houses on Brook Street are detached and in generous plots, set back from the road. By contrast, on High Street the houses are generally built up to the highway edge or bounded by rubble stone walls which enclose the street. The street is of generous width and has a similar mix of house types, size, styles and dates as Church Street. The north end of High Street has earlier buildings fronting directly onto the highway, where there are a mix of dates from the seventeenth century through to the twentieth century. Here, the houses run almost continuously with no gaps. As the road widens towards the south, a grass verge and trees line the road in places. There are views out to open countryside to the west where some of the village's agricultural origins are seen in several farm buildings which survive, such as Uptown Farm and Southfield Farm. Traditional farm buildings continuing down the plot reinforce the agricultural character of the site. Well-planted gardens contribute to the attractive character of the street

and reinforce its semi-rural character. There is a picturesque jumble of roofs interspersed with vegetation which gives a visual richness enhanced by the winding character of the High Street. As with the north of the conservation area the value is derived from the successful mix of houses of varying ages with the landscaping that softens the spaces.



Figure 9.13. High Street Looking North

9.2.16. Where more recent developments do occur the retention of hedges and trees has aided the integration of old and new. An exception is the Lady Place development which is slightly dominating because it is higher than other development and of different scale and form.

Summary of Key Issues

1. Traffic - As the principal route through the village, Church Street carries a significant amount of traffic. At peak times this frequently leads to long queues of slow moving or stationary vehicles in Church Street and Appleford Road.
2. Accretion of signage and clutter within the street.
3. Lack of designated off-street and unregulated on-street parking which is visually discordant and results in erosion of grass verges and degradation of edges.
4. Potential for inappropriate infill - there are numerous spaces and gaps between buildings which offer an important setting to designated and non-designated heritage assets in this area, such spaces if filled with inappropriate development lead to significant adverse impacts. Similarly, development of larger garden spaces would cause loss of openness and erosion of the character of the village. Conversion or redevelopment of barns and former agricultural buildings, forming part of original farmyards, would also result in these open spaces being eroded by access and parking.
5. Erosion of informality of the layout by imposition of standard highway layouts – see for example Lady Place.
6. Loss of mature trees, there are no replacement trees for the mature limes for example.
7. Management of pollards – allowing trees to develop full canopy would detrimentally affect the character of the trees in this location and the pollards have a strong local characteristic.

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes Leading From Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area – Character Assessment Conclusion

9.2.17. Leading off the main village streets, the narrow, secondary routes form another layer of permeability and access, providing a network largely outside the vehicular zone. This secondary connection is an important part of the character as it punctuates and subdivides the built environment. The value of this part of the village lies in the inviting lanes and footpaths, leading out to hidden corners of the village. The paths and lanes are extremely well used by local people, for dog walking, local recreation and by children playing safely, away from the traffic on the village street.

- All Saints Lane.
- Churchmere Road.
- Old Wallingford Way.
- Courtenay Close.
- Hobbyhorse Lane.
- Tullis Close.
- Mill Lane.
- The Nursery.
- Hilliers Close.
- Chapel Lane.
- Ginge Brook.

9.2.18. These paths and lanes form the principal tracks of the footpath network in this part of the village and therefore give the village a highly connected structure, providing a layer of pedestrian permeability outside the main vehicular routes. The historic structure of the village includes these routes and many of them are shown on the 1804 enclosure map. The routes are without through traffic and are mostly informally surfaced, often edged with wild vegetation, reinforcing the rural character of the village. Many of the paths and pedestrian routes open out into wider paths that run through the open paddock spaces, such as that between Old Wallingford Way and Frilsham Street. They retain an informality without conventional highway format, and usually below standard width, without kerbs and generally they are not adopted highway. Most are single track, uneven and their character is clearly that of a local, secondary route.



Figure 9.14. All Saints Lane, Looking North

- 9.2.19. Views from these spaces offer glimpses into private gardens and reveal the rear elevations of the listed and other village buildings. The open space mosaic is linked by these lanes and paths, as well as Ginge Brook on the western village boundary, which together form a strong part of the complex pattern of the settlement. The water-filled former gravel pits butt up to the edge of the built-up area and now have established vegetation and wildlife.
- 9.2.20. Lanes have accommodated a reasonable amount of infill development which has generally been sensitively sited in an informal layout, and of varying design, allowing the village to grow without impacting on its essential character. Houses do not dominate views within the lanes but are mixed in with natural greenery, open plots and mature gardens, which all contribute to their rural character. Some of the houses are bounded by rubblestone walls which helps modern development fit into the surrounding area. In contrast other developments have been less successfully integrated, particularly where standard road widths and footways/footpaths have been adopted and where houses draw little reference to the character of the conservation area. Tullis Close is a distinct example of how this approach contrasts with the organic development of the conservation area. Similarly, development that has occurred along Appleford Road, as ribbon development in estate form at Amey Close and Heritage Park fits less comfortably within the village having a distinct urban or suburban feel in contrast to rural and verdant character of the village. The latter developments off Appleford Road also retain a drainage ditch and chain link fence separation to the Millennium Common, which is a restored former gravel extraction site, immediately beyond Churchmere Pool which was designed to afford additional amenity to the village. The barrier is an unusual feature within a settlement characterised by a multiplicity of lanes and local connections.



Figure 9.15. Out of character high-density, sub-urban style development at Hawthornes, Appleford Road with limited vegetation and poor relationship to the historic village core.

- 9.2.21. Hobbyhorse Lane provides access to the southern boundary of the Local Plan Strategic Housing Allocation for 220 dwellings. The site presents a number of challenges in order to achieve successful integration without adversely affecting the character of the village. Hobbyhorse Lane, similar to other lanes in this Character Area is narrow, strongly vegetated and has a very rural character, which could be significantly altered if designs dictated by standard highways layouts are proposed. As stated above, the eastern part of the site is constrained by surface water

flooding and it is therefore recommended that as a minimum, this part of the site be identified as part of the green gap to the east of Sutton Courtenay. The proximity of the site to existing minerals and landfill operations, presents significant challenges for the site. Furthermore the visual sensitivity of the location is also very significant due to the relatively open nature of the landscape. Each of these issues should be comprehensively assessed as part of any development proposals for the site.



Figure 9.16. Local Plan Strategic Allocation, Looking North Towards Recreation Ground

Summary of Key Issues

1. Changing or broadening the width of the narrow lateral routes, tidying up or surfacing in conventional materials, introducing other highway vernacular, signs, kerbs – all would have an unacceptable suburbanisation effect.
2. Increase of traffic effect on the narrow streets of the village.
3. Pressure for increased space for parking can erode the laneways and introduce more vehicles into the spaces.
4. Loss of pedestrian only paths and erosion of the network of non-trafficked routes.
5. Increased infill behind the main street will put pressure on these small lanes with over use by vehicles effecting a change to their character.
6. Development of larger garden spaces would cause loss of openness and erosion of the street character and quality, depleting the variety and form of vegetation and eroding the sense of rurality of the village and affecting the setting to the listed buildings and the conservation area.
7. Infill and conversion or redevelopment of barns and former agricultural buildings, forming part of original farmyards, means that these open spaces may be eroded by access and parking.
8. Urban extension could have an urbanising effect if poorly designed, eroding the sense of rurality of the village and its characteristic laneways.
9. Loss of the historic relationship with the immediate open space around the village.

10. View of gravel workings – Laneways leading out to the east of the village are marred by gravel workings, though some tracts have been restored in recent years. The 1996 Minerals and Waste Plan prescribes that the land be restored for agriculture, woodland and nature conservation, which if achieved should add to the biodiversity value of the overall neighbourhood plan area. Restoration to date has been poorly executed.

Character Area 3: South of Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area – Character Assessment Conclusion

- 9.2.22. The area to the south of the conservation area incorporates the southern part of High Street, Frilsham Street, Harwell Road, Milton Road and the numerous tertiary roads leading off those roads. Development along the southern part of High Street and leading into Frilsham Street includes houses dating from the eighteenth century, nineteenth century, early twentieth century terraces, 1930s semi-detached houses and some later 20th century houses. Glebe House on Frilsham Street/Hobbyhorse Lane is identified as a locally important asset. Sutton Courtenay Tyres is prominently positioned at the bottom of High Street and is visible on approach to the village from both Sutton (Milton) Rd and particularly Harwell Road.



Figure 9.17. Glebe House, Hobbyhorse Lane

- 9.2.23. Electricity pylons and supply lines are prominent features in some places within the streetscene. Parking particularly undermines the quality of the streetscene in this location, with evidence of parking on footpaths and green verges in addition to the loss of private front gardens to hardstanding. The end of Frilsham Street leads into Hobbyhorse Lane from where views and pedestrians are channelled towards the countryside to the east. The countryside here is marred by gravel workings and landfill, though some tracts have been restored in recent years. The 1996 Minerals and Waste Plan prescribes that the land be restored for agriculture, woodland and nature conservation, which if achieved should add to the biodiversity value of the overall neighbourhood plan area. The development of Didcot A Power Station, changed and visually dominated the landscape for decades until its recent demolition. The Didcot B Power Station and neighbouring industrial and commercial uses continue to exert an influence over this landscape.



Figure 9.18. Kelaart's Field with Electricity Pylons and Supply Lines

- 9.2.24. Further south and west is a densely-developed area of predominately residential properties. This development of both Milton Road and Harwell Road started as ribbon development in the 1930s and was almost continuously built up by 1959. Predating the housing is Richard Matthews Florist at no. 7 Harwell Road, which was established in 1906. A mix of house types and styles characterise this early development of the area, including a number of bungalows. Most dwellings have reasonable plots with mature vegetation.
- 9.2.25. The post war housing shortage in the wider area was resolved by the construction of Tyrells Way/ Bradstock Way/ Barretts Way, which from the 1950s onwards introduced in-depth development including, a housing estate, GP surgery, shops and a school. The layout of this was typical of that period, with standard road widths and footpaths as well as standard building lines for the housing, resulting in a homogeneous character within the estate. Almost all are two-storey with pitched roofs and constructed of brick, though Katchside is entirely comprised of bungalows. On-street parking is prominent and in places front gardens have been entirely lost to parking. The generous road width, grass verges and relatively low building height combined with the open setting of the surrounding countryside, give most of this area a spacious feel. Mature vegetation both within the verges and in private gardens contributes to its semi-rural character. The layout allows for some opening out of the verge to create small greens, which now have mature trees.
- 9.2.26. To the north of Milton Road, more recent residential development has occurred to the rear of the original ribbon development. Asquith Park provides a mix of detached and semi-detached houses, mostly 2 storeys high, with some 2.5 storeys, set in relatively small plots. The houses are arranged in a cul-de-sac and include a LEAP. Two other developments, Rye Gardens and Springfield Way have adopted a similar approach resulting in a significant increase in the number of houses in the area as the estates have been developed with high densities and high plot ratios, with relatively little planting to soften the effect. Asquith Park does however include a reed-bed area, which provides an attractive biodiversity resource for the area.

Summary of Key Issues

1. View of gravel workings and landfill– Laneways leading out to the east of the village are marred by gravel workings, though some tracts have been restored in recent years and the 1996 Minerals and Waste Plan prescribes that the land be restored for agriculture, woodland and nature conservation, which if achieved should add to the biodiversity value of the overall neighbourhood plan area. Restoration to date has been poorly executed.

2. Failure or delay of restoration plans for gravel workings and landfill.
3. Visual detractors including those associated with Didcot B power station, pylons, cables and towers and large scale warehouse developments.
4. Lack of designated off-street and unregulated on-street parking which is visually discordant and results in erosion of grass verges and degradation of edges.
5. Potential for inappropriate infill or urban extensions, which would undermine the close relationship between the settlement and the surrounding countryside, increase pressure on existing village resources and introduce further high density, high-plot ratio developments that are incongruous with the open rural feel of the village.
6. Loss of mature trees – the existing mature trees on Milton (Sutton) Road are very significant features that soften the effect of development in this part of the village.

Policy title	SC10: - Design, Heritage and Setting
Policy text	<p>Development proposals should be of a high standard of design, in keeping with the character of the area as identified within the Sutton Courtenay Character Appraisal and Design Code and the setting of the Conservation Area (as relevant). As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, it should be demonstrated that development proposals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are in-keeping with the scale, form, layout (including plot size), appearance and density of adjacent development. 2. Make a positive contribution to local character. 3. Respond positively to the applicable key issues of the relevant character area. 4. Do not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses or give rise to the potential for harm to the amenity of proposed dwellings. 5. Are built to a high standard, using appropriate materials and construction methods that reflect the requirements set out in the policies of the Development Plan and guidance contained in the Joint Design Guide or their successor documents. 6. Are designed to conserve and enhance the special interest or significance of any designated heritage asset and its setting (see appendix 4). 7. Avoid the loss of important features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and water bodies; 8. Include appropriate landscape mitigation measures to reduce the impact of newly introduced built form and ensure that development is in keeping with the existing landscape features of the village. 9. Proposals for development that will result in the loss of, or harm to a non-designated heritage asset (as shown in figure 9.2) will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the

	development outweigh the loss of significance of the asset and cannot otherwise be provided in a less harmful manner.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character Appraisal & Design Code. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/ • Joint Design Guide. https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/SAV/JDG.html#qsc.tab=0
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness. • To preserve and enhance historic village assets.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 133-141. • LPP1 Policy CP37 and CP38.

Community Aspirations

Where possible, the Parish Council will:

- Explore opportunities to extend the Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area.

History, Archaeology & Landscape

9.2.27. The large expanse of land to the east of the village was formerly open fields, it was mostly enclosed during the nineteenth century, but there was some ancient enclosure. This tract of land stretching from Didcot, in the south to the River Thames, in the north, would historically have been identified as Lowland Village Farmland. As with land to the west of the village, it is likely that the land has been continuously settled since pre-historic times. Although there are no scheduled sites within the area, there are scheduled sites just to the north of the river and to the east of Appleford. In 1962-63, excavations on the Bridge Farm Quarry site, north of Appleford Road found remnants of a Romano-British settlement, possibly a villa. Further archaeological work identified a site at Appleford Sidings which was occupied by a rectilinear enclosure that possibly contained a protovilla of early Roman date.

9.2.28. This land to the east of the village has long been highly connected to the village. It is possible that the existing B4016 Appleford Road is of early medieval (or earlier) date. Old Wallingford Way and Hobbyhorse Lane are ancient tracks that lead across these former open fields that continue the route through to Appleford, Long Wittenham and on to Dorchester. Further tracks leading out from the village include the 373/08 off High Street and Churchmere Lane/Church Mill Road which run through woodland to Millennium Common and east to the countryside which is dominated by the degraded landscape of gravel working and landfill.

9.2.29. The Land had its character significantly altered through extensive sand and gravel extraction and landfill. The landscape here is expressed in water-filled pits, landfill, plant and machinery, exposed spoil and man-made bunds. Additional visual detractors within Area 6 include overhead electricity cables and pylons which stretch across the landscape from south to north. Aesthetically, the main value lies in the openness of this land as the topography remains broadly flat and visually open affording views of Wittenham Clumps.

Waste Operations

9.2.30. There are currently three waste developments within the parish of Sutton Courtenay. These are situated primarily to the south of Appleford Road and comprise:

- Sutton Courtenay Composting Facility (Permit Ref: EPR/BP3295ET).
- Sutton Courtenay Landfill Site (Permit Ref: BV7001 | K).
- Sutton Courtenay Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and Waste Transfer Station (WTS) (Permit Ref: EPR/NP3890VV).

9.2.31. Figure 9.22 identifies the location of each of the above operations, it illustrates that a large tract of land to the south east continues to be used as landfill, with a licence to operate until 2031. All three permitted sites have the potential to contribute to odour in the local area and there is a history of odour complaints in the Sutton Courtenay area, associated with waste activities. Landfill activities also have the potential to produce both fine and coarse particulates, the make-up of which will depend on the activities undertaken on-site and the types of waste being handled.



Figure 9.19, 20 & 21. Views of Operational Landfill & Composting Facility

- 9.2.32. There is potential for ground gasses including methane, carbon dioxide and numerous trace gases associated the decomposition of organic material at both the operational and former landfill sites neighbouring Sutton Courtenay. The presence of such landfill gasses can be highly hazardous to human health and it is therefore vital that sources of such gasses are identified prior to any development and that measures are put in place to prevent a dangerous build-up of gas within buildings.
- 9.2.33. Detailed restoration proposals for this area include its return to agricultural use. Some parcels to the west of the operational landfill have been progressively restored to agriculture, creating areas of grassland bounded by hedgerows and woodland shelterbelts. Approximately 50% of the site is now restored including Hobby Horse Lane North, Hobbyhorse Lane South and a large area immediately west of Appleford. There are a number of other smaller fields which are also fully restored. The quality of the restoration has however been poor so now the landscape generally has a degraded appearance.

Minerals Operations

- 9.2.34. Bridge Farm Quarry lies to the north of the B4016 Appleford Road between the villages of Appleford and Sutton Courtenay. The quarry and the access from the plant site to the highway network contain land in both parishes. A mineral processing plant for the quarry material is located 650 metres south of the quarry, south of the B4016 Appleford Road. This was historically

connected to the extraction area by conveyor, which ran beneath the road, however this has now failed and the remaining stockpiled sand and gravel is transported by road, which has the potential to produce dust emissions, particularly when combined with over activities such as wind erosion of exposed areas, topsoil removal and cover activities.

9.2.35. Part of the land in the Bridge Farm workings is being restored as waterbodies with the remainder planned to be restored similarly, with a mix of habitat including wet woodland, reedbeds, fens and flower rich meadow/pasture. This restoration plan, if successfully executed provides a long-term potential for a net gain for biodiversity, with restoration to water-bodies with associated reed bed, grassland margins and supplemental tree and shrub planting. These habitats would offer potential for breeding birds, bats, otter and water vole.

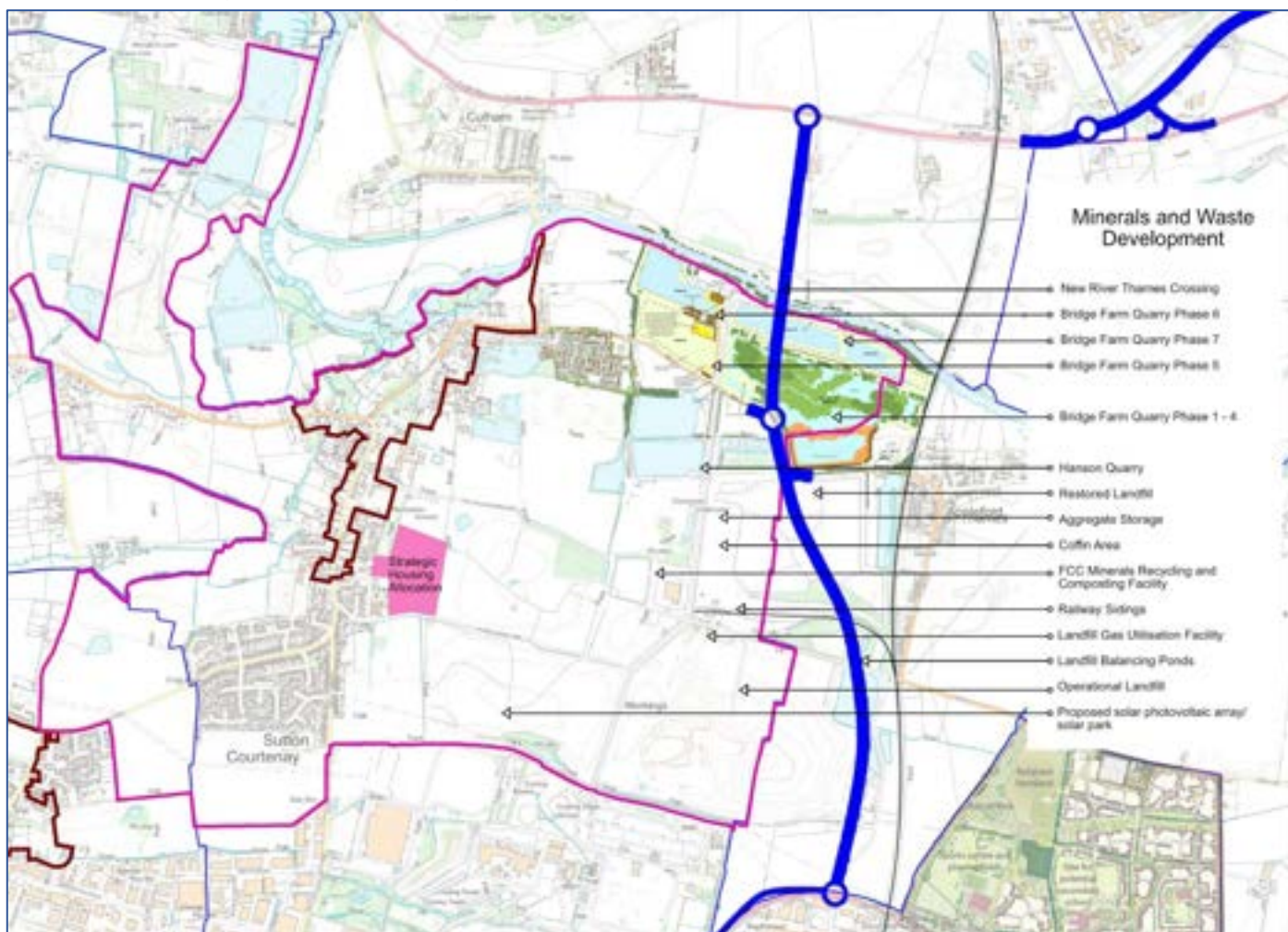


Figure 9.22. Minerals and Waste Developments East of Sutton Courtenay – also see Figure 2.2: Inset Map: Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, 1996 for full extent of the area covered

Planned and Potential Development Proposals

9.2.36. This area has been earmarked for the location of the proposed route of the new road linking the proposed new River Thames Crossing and the Science Bridge. In addition, the future use of part of this land is uncertain as it is being promoted as a potential future strategic housing allocation.

9.2.37. A current application is being considered by the Vale of White Horse for the installation of a 24 megawatts (MW) export capacity solar photovoltaic array/solar park with associated infrastructure on approximately 37.4 ha of land within the partially restored landfill site, to the south of Hobbyhorse Lane. The proposal indicated that panels would be mounted at approximately 0.8 m from the ground at the lowest point (the southern edge) rising to approximately 2.6-3 m at the highest point (the northern edge) which adjoins Hobbyhorse Lane. The core construction activity period would be 6 months and planning permission is sought for a temporary operational period of 35 years. This application if approved would therefore significantly delay the restoration programme approved under planning application MW.0039.15, which prescribes at condition no. 31 that *“the first restoration operation, as described in condition 30 (capping), of the whole site shall take place by 30th September 2031 and the second restoration operation, as described in condition 30 (top-soiling), of the whole site shall take place by 30th September 2036”*.

Policy title	Policy SC11: - Former Mineral Workings
Policy text	<p>Following the restoration of the site concerned, development proposals for nature conservation and/or recreation of land previously used for the extraction of minerals will be supported where they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Avoid unacceptable harm to the wider landscape within which the site sits, and be accompanied by natural screen planting appropriate to the area. b) Ensure appropriate development in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and for appropriate mitigation and management measures to be implemented and monitored as appropriate. c) Avoid any unacceptable harm to biodiversity by incorporating suitable measures in development proposals in line with Policy SC6. Where appropriate these will include avoidance measures, mitigation measures and compensation measures. d) Undertake necessary measures to address potential issues associated with ground gasses and other potential contamination as a result of the historic use as a landfill. e) Avoid unacceptable harm to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets (as shown in figure 9.2). f) Include transport mitigation measures that are suitable to the area in which they are located. g) It is served by a suitable and safe access route that avoids conflicts between vehicles accessing the site and pedestrians and cyclists accessing the wider area.

	h) The recreation uses can be sensitively incorporated within the immediate locality without creating an unacceptable harm to the amenity of residential properties.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countryside and Green Gap Assessment. • Character Appraisal and Design Code. • Residents' Survey. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village. • To maintain living green spaces. • To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements. • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways. • To use land efficiently and to preserve best and most versatile agricultural land.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 180, 185, 187, 188.

Community Aspirations

The Parish council will work with other interested parties (e.g. Didcot Garden Town, FCC and local landowners) to identify opportunities to enhance the landscape character of the disturbed land on the Eastern side of the village.

9.4. The River Thames

- 9.4.1. The gravel terrace beside the River Thames would have been a first choice for early settlers, the gravels producing light, fertile and well drained soils, with close access to the River Thames for food and transport. Later, the River was harnessed for industrial uses in the area, including mills, maltings and a wharf. The wider river area has long been associated with gravel extraction, being first documented at the end of the eighteenth century and continuing to today. The River Thames was thus historically important in supporting the livelihoods of the villagers.
- 9.4.2. The river landscape has largely been reclaimed from its industrial past, though quarrying continues, particularly to the east of the village. The presence of the River Thames is not obvious from the heart of the village. The houses on the west side of Church Street have gardens which

run down to the river but these are not publicly accessible. Only the footpath at the north end of Church Street leads on to the river at the site of the former wharf. Here there are good views of the river. The footpath leads alongside the riverbank on the north side of the river with views of private gardens on the opposite bank. Boathouses and pleasure craft indicate the importance of leisure use of the river. Spectacular views across this stretch of water towards Culham Cut offer completely different views from those in the rest of the village. The value of views of the River to the parish is highlighted in the fact that four of the 27 *Key Views and Vistas* identified in Policy SC3 include the River Thames. Furthermore, the boundary of the conservation area extends to encompass large swathes of the riverside landscape reiterating the historical importance and contribution the river makes to the character of the village. Major development within the defined riverside corridor (highlighted in blue in Figure 9.23) should be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment which demonstrates the landscape and visual effects of the proposal.

9.4.3. Section 7 above identifies the flood risk presented to the village as a result of its proximity to the River. The Environment Agency (EA) flood risk maps (Figure 7.1) show the predicted 1 in 100 year (Flood Zone 3) and 1 in 1000 year (Flood Zone 2) flood outlines, which cover a significant part of Sutton Courtenay, particularly the west side of Church Street and north side of Brook Street and Appleford Road. Policy SC7: Flooding and drainage sets out criteria for the sustainable management of flood risk.

Policy title	Policy SC12: - Riverside Related Development
Policy text	<p>Development proposals adjacent to the River Thames and its tributaries as shown on figure 9.23 should protect and enhance the waterside character, heritage value and setting. Development proposals will promote and enhance the use of the river and the riverside by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the low key and informal nature of infrastructure and facilities for boat users including jetties, private and public moorings, slipways, steps and stairs. • Supporting opportunities to improve the quality of and links to the riverside rights of way. • Carefully managing the proliferation of river-based and riverside recreation and leisure activities. • Protecting and enhancing the Thames River Corridor as a valuable resource for biodiversity and wildlife (wildlife corridor). • Demonstrating that proposals will not lead to harm to the setting or landscape character of the riverside.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Assessment & Study. • Character Appraisal & Design Code. • Countryside & Green Gap Assessment. • Residents’ Survey. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>

Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain appropriate separation between the village and neighbouring settlements. • To maintain living green spaces. • To use land efficiently and to preserve best and most versatile agricultural land. • To maintain and regenerate parcels of green space in addition to trees and vegetation of amenity value within the Parish. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraphs 180, 185, 187, 188.

Community Aspirations

Where possible the Parish Council will support opportunities to improve access to the river for users of self-propelled crafts such as canoes and paddle boards.

The Parish would prioritise financial contributions from new developments in this area towards improving the quality of the riverside environment including river infrastructure, open spaces, biodiversity, rights of way, and links to the riverside from the surrounding area.

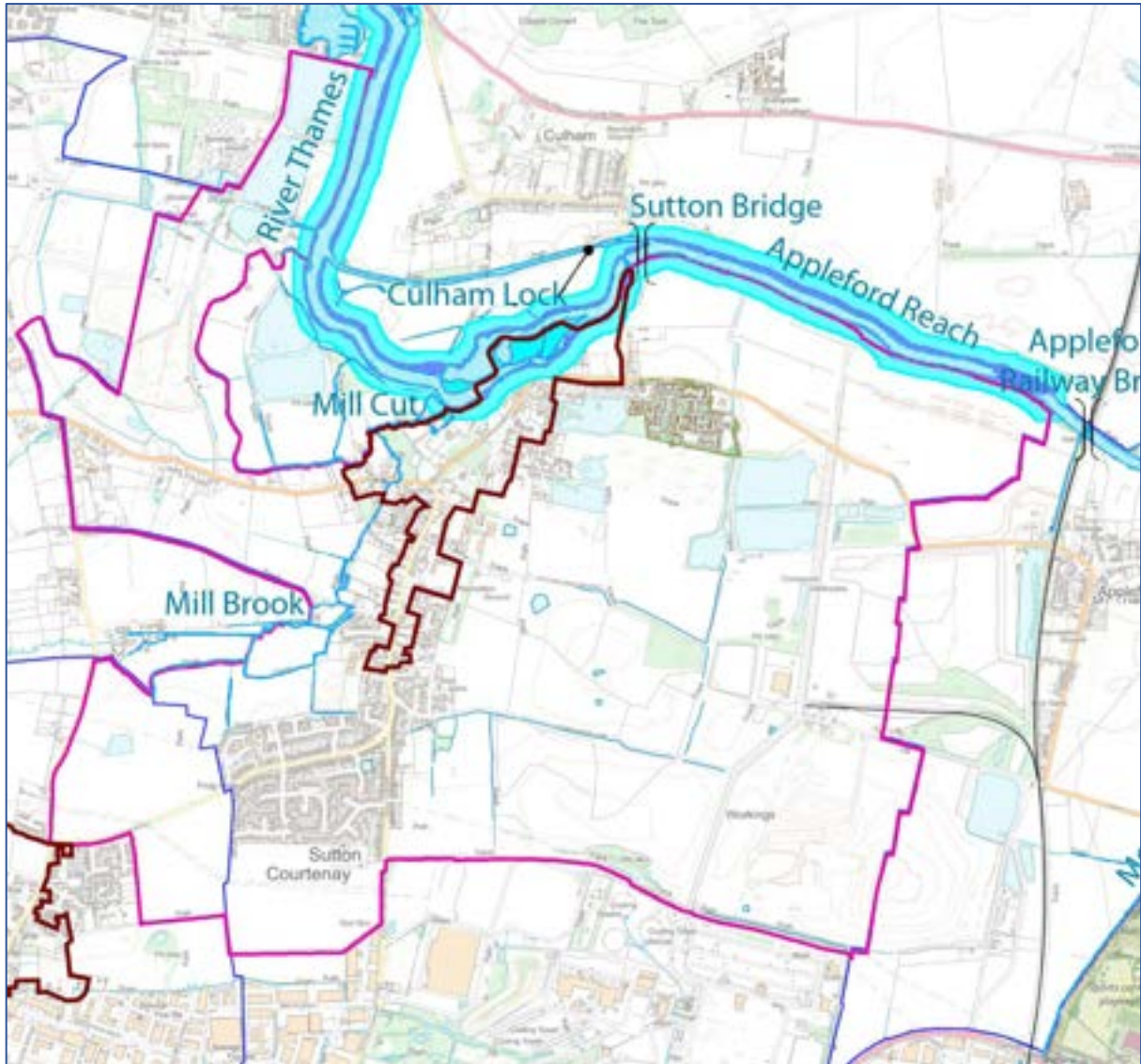


Figure 9.23. River Thames, Riverside Corridor and Features



10. Community

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
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<p>Aims</p>	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
<p>Key objectives</p>	<p>To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village.</p> <p>To seek to ensure the provision of social amenities meets the demands of a growing village.</p> <p>To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village.</p>
<p>Community Policies</p>	<p>Policy SC13: - Community facilities</p> <p>Policy SC14: - Village Hall</p>

10.1. Key facilities in the Plan area include:

- Church.
- The Village Hall and Tennis Court.
- Recreation Ground including play area, sports field and skate park.
- LEAP at Lady’s Place and Asquith Park.
- Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School.
- Allotment gardens.
- Sutton Courtenay Post Office.

10.2. These facilities lie at the heart of the community with many day-to-day needs being met within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Other facilities and services that also make a very important contribution to the sustainability of the village and its appeal to residents include:

- Larkmead Vets.
- Halls Garage.
- Matrix Arts Centre.
- Sutton Courtenay Tyres.
- Costcutter.
- Richard Mathews Florist.
- Mathews & Son Greengrocer.

- Public House/Bar/Restaurant – The Fish, George & Dragon, The Swan.
- Changes Hairdresser.
- Hari & Esha News.

10.3. A fourth public house, The Plough achieved planning permission under P16/V1457/FUL for conversion of the public house to residential. A subsequent planning application P17/V2202/FUL was approved for a new 4 bed dwelling to the rear of the former public house on land that was used for car parking. The loss of the public house was regrettable within the community as it had provided a venue for a number of social and recreational groups.

10.4. Local residents were asked how satisfied they were with the availability and suitability of various services and facilities in Sutton Courtenay. Excluding those people who had no opinion or don't know, the highest rated was schools with a 90% satisfaction score. This was followed by preschool and childcare with 75% satisfaction and with 68% each, outdoor facilities for sport, leisure, exercise and recreation, plus the facilities for hire for functions.

10.5. The top three with the highest dissatisfaction ratings were for health and welfare (74% dissatisfied), facilities for the young (69% dissatisfied), and indoor facilities for sport leisure, exercise and recreation (65% dissatisfied).

Policy title	Policy SC13: - Community facilities
Policy text	<p>The Plan identified the following community facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church. • Sutton Courtenay Post Office. • Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School. • Allotment gardens. • Recreation Ground including play area, sports field and skate park (see Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities in the Local Plan Part Two) • LEAP at Lady's Place and Asquith Park (see Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities in the Local Plan Part Two) <p>Proposals for the redevelopment of a building or land that would result in the loss of a community existing facility will not be supported unless it can be shown that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facility is no longer viable; or • the facility is no longer needed; or • it would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility; or • it can successfully be relocated elsewhere within the parish where it is well related and accessible to the whole of the village by means of cycling and walking routes. • where a site comprises existing leisure and sports facilities, the development of the site will only be permitted in accordance with the

	requirements set out in Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities in the Local Plan Part Two.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' Survey. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village. To seek to ensure the provision of social amenities meets the demands of a growing village. To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPPF paragraphs 23, 87, 96. LPP1 Policy CP30.

Community Aspirations

Where possible, the Parish Council will:

- Seek financial contributions either from private developers and via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) scheme or other interested third parties for the maintenance of the LEAP at Lady's Place and Asquith Park.

Policy title	Policy SC14: - Village Hall
Policy text	<p>Proposals for a new or replacement community/ village hall on the existing site will be supported where it would result in an improvement of the facilities currently available.</p> <p>If a replacement village hall is proposed elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the proposals must comply with Policy SC13; the current site (which includes the allotments) must be retained for community use.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' Survey. https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To seek to ensure the provision of social amenities meets the demands of a growing village.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPPF Paragraphs 158-160. LPP1 Policy CP7.

Community Aspirations

Where possible delivery of the following will be particularly supported by the Parish Council:

- Upgrading, refurbishment and modernisation of the Village Hall.
- Health care facilities.
- Indoor sports facilities.
- Improved and modernized facilities for local user groups.
- Improved facilities for young adults.
- Children’s play areas (particularly at the southern end of the village).
- A café.
- Additional street-furniture (benches, bins etc.)

11. Infrastructure

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.

	<p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To seek to ensure new developments are of high-quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and reinforce local distinctiveness.</p> <p>To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village.</p>
Community Policies	<p>Policy SC15: Sustainable construction and infrastructure.</p>

11.1. Utilities and Services

11.1.1. The need for development to mitigate its impact on existing facilities and infrastructure is a well-recognised principle of the planning system. The ability exists for local planning authorities to secure mitigation through what are known as Section 106 agreements, whereby funding, or the provision, of community facilities or social and physical infrastructure can be secured in response to the proposal to develop land.

11.1.2. The evidence to support such requirements is generally provided on a site by site basis following assessment by the relevant bodies (school capacity – Oxfordshire County Council; sustainable transport measures – Oxfordshire County Council; healthcare provision – Oxfordshire and Swindon Clinical Commissioning Groups; sewerage treatment capacity – Thames Water; water supply – Thames Water; public open space – Vale of White Horse District Council; and utility connections – utility companies).

11.1.3. In addition to Section 106 agreements, the District Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in September 2017 which imposes a charge on new development for certain locations and categories of development. The Neighbourhood Plan area lies entirely within CIL charging zone 1. With an adopted Neighbourhood Plan in place Sutton Courtenay Parish Council would receive 25% of CIL receipts in relation to development permitted after the Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’, regardless of the number of dwellings within the Parish. This compares to a figure of 15% without a Neighbourhood Plan.

11.1.4. The CIL Regulations state that a Parish Council can spend CIL funds on the following:

- The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- Anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

11.1.5. The Vale encourages communities to publish priorities for spending, highlighting those that align with the District Council. These priorities are described in Appendix 5 to the Neighbourhood Plan.

11.1.6. Residents were asked to rate various pieces of infrastructure. The highest rated was water supply with 26% rating it good and 53% acceptable. 14% rated broadband as good and 45% acceptable, with sewage/drainage 13% good/54% acceptable. The infrastructure indicated as in greatest need of improvement for residents was roads, with almost three-quarters (74%) of respondents confirming this. The majority of these issues are not land use planning related and therefore cannot be covered by Neighbourhood Plan policies.

11.2. Mitigation of Effects of Development on Climate Change

11.2.1. Sustainability is a cornerstone of both national and local planning policy. A climate emergency was declared by the Vale of White Horse District Council administration at Full Council on 13 February 2019. As part of this declaration, the Council has resolved to reduce carbon emissions by 75% by 2030 and aspire to become a carbon neutral district by 2045, at the latest. As a consequence of this and in recognition of the importance of climate change as an issue, sustainable development is a key focus of the Neighbourhood Plan.

11.2.2. Natural gas and electricity are the main sources of energy for consumers in The Vale of White Horse. Long term trends in energy consumption for residential and non-domestic buildings show that demand for heat is reducing due to greater efficiencies in home heating equipment and increased education, passive solar heating and cooling, in addition to improved heating equipment, standards of insulation, air-tightness and lower u-value windows and doors.

11.2.3. As well as seeking to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases through energy upgrades to the housing stock, a further issue to be addressed is ensuring houses are resilient to the effects of climate change, such as water shortages due to hotter drier summers and flooding due to wetter winters. Opportunities should therefore be taken in existing and new housing stock for rainwater harvesting, tree planting, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and potential flood resilient measures.

11.2.4. A sensitive approach will need to be taken to safeguard the special character the Conservation Area and of the Listed Buildings and Locally Important Assets.

11.2.5. In order for the community of the Parish to continue to flourish in the future, it is necessary to ensure that an appropriate level of infrastructure is maintained commensurate with the needs of the community. Active support will be given to development which is consistent with the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan where it secures the provision or funding of infrastructure that mitigates the effects of the development, with particular regard to school capacity,

sustainable transport measures, healthcare provision, sewerage treatment capacity, water supply, public open space and utility connections. A list of the priorities is set out at Appendix 5 to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy title	Policy SC15: - Sustainable construction and infrastructure
Policy text	<p>Where practicable, and as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals (including retrofitting of existing buildings) should incorporate measures to combat the effects of climate change into their designs and layouts including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Careful site layout and orientation to maximise solar gain and take advantage of natural shelter. b) Adopt passive solar heating and cooling measures. including building orientation, glazing positioning, thermal mass, roof overhang and natural ventilation. c) Select materials to maximise heat retention in winter and minimise overheating in summer. d) Incorporate rainwater harvesting measures and SUDS measures. e) Carefully integrate renewable energy technologies, including solar PV, solar thermal, micro wind generation and heat pumps.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents’ Survey. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek to ensure the infrastructure meets the demands of a growing village.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF Paragraphs 158 – 160. • LPP1 Policy CP7.

Community Aspirations

All new development will be expected to make sustainable and appropriate provision for utilities and services to support the development concerned. New utilities and services should:

- *Be carefully sited and appropriately designed with boxes for technology, services and utilities masked wherever possible.*
- *Provide for new cables to be buried where possible.*
- *Not overload or damage existing infrastructure capacity.*

- *Include state-of-art high-speed broadband and/or other communication networks (e.g. mobile phones).*

Where possible the Parish Council will support:

- *Work to maximise improvements to broadband and other communication networks throughout the village when opportunities arise in connection with infrastructure improvements in the surrounding area.*
- *Improvements to air quality and reduction of carbon emissions throughout the village by encouraging:*
 - *The adoption of a 20mph speed limit.*
 - *Provision of Zero Carbon housing.*
 - *Retrofitting of renewable energy sources such as solar photovoltaic and heat pumps.*
 - *Use of Ultra Low Electric Vehicles by provision of public electric car charging points in the village.*
 - *Retaining links with FCC and the Environment Agency in order to reduce emissions from historic landfill sites and the current composting site.*

12. Local Business and Employment

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To promote and support local business.</p> <p>To encourage and support home working.</p>
Community Policies	Policy SC16: - Economy and Employment.

12.1. Commercial Development – Policy Context

12.1.1. Planning for employment is addressed in section 6 of the NPPF. Paragraph 88 supports the expansion of all types of businesses in the rural areas, through conversion of buildings and well-designed new buildings, agricultural diversification and sustainable rural tourism and leisure. Paragraph 84 explains that planning policies should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It explains that the use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

12.1.2. The Adopted Local Plan states that proposals for new employment development (formerly uses within classes B1 (now within the revised Use Class E), B2 or B8) will be supported by the Council on unallocated sites in or on the edge of the built-up area of Larger Villages provided that the benefits are not outweighed by any harmful impacts (LPP1 Policy CP28). The reuse, conversion or

adaptation of suitable existing buildings for employment will also be supported, subject to criteria.

12.1.3. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) establishes circumstances where permitted development rights exist to convert buildings into commercial uses. For example, Part R allows conversion of agricultural buildings to flexible commercial uses; Part S allows conversion of agricultural buildings to a state-funded school or nursery; and a whole range of other commercial uses may be permitted as a result of a change of use by other parts of this Order.

12.2. Need for Business Development

12.2.1. The Residents' Survey investigated whether there is a need for small-scale business development in Sutton Courtenay. Almost half of respondents (47%) indicated a need for extra shops, while three out of ten (30%) were in favour of creative workshop spaces and 17% considered that there was a need for small starter office units. Exactly a third of respondents took an opposing view, indicating that there was no need at all for small-scale business development in the village.

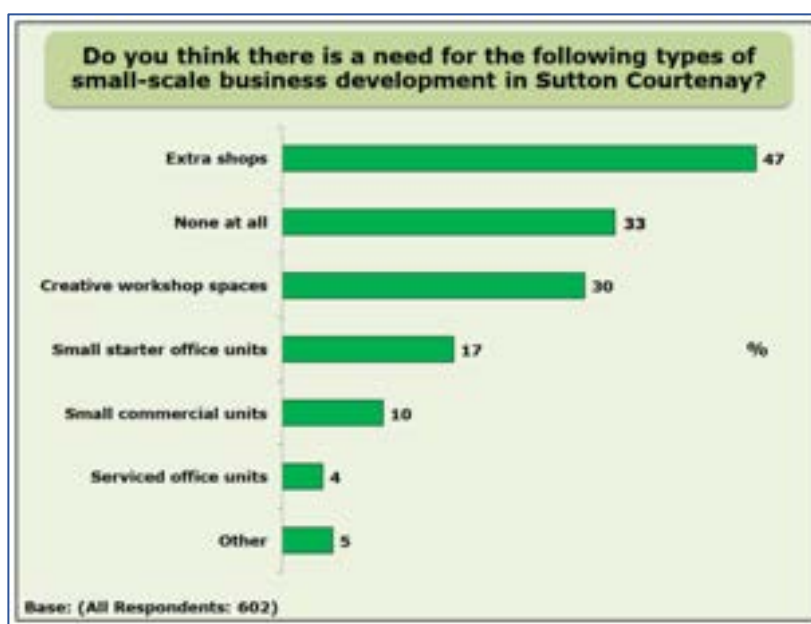


Figure 12.1. Residents' Survey Results

12.2.2. The survey also considered whether encouragement should be given to having more local businesses. Almost half of respondents (47%) feel encouragement should be given to increase the range of local businesses. Just under a quarter (23%) were against and 29% had no opinion. Over half of respondents (53%) felt that encouragement should be given to having more local jobs. Exactly one in five were against and 27% had no opinion.

12.2.3. A further parish business survey was undertaken online in March 2021 with the following findings:

- When asked why businesses were operating from Sutton Courtenay, the highest rate of respondents stated it was because there was/is a local demand for products, followed by home based working and availability of suitable sites.

- The businesses are generally small scale with 1-2 staff (33%), 3-5 staff (22%), 6-10 staff (11%) 11-20 staff (22%) and 21-49 staff (11%). There were no companies with over 50 staff members.
- In terms of travel to work, the majority of staff (55%) travel by car, followed by 33% walking, 22% cycling and the remainder by van or not needing to travel (home based). The largest proportion of staff live in or within 3 miles of the parish (82%).
- Of those responding, 89% had sufficient space to park vehicles with the exception of The Nursery business units, where parking was insufficient for a number of businesses.
- When asked how businesses could employ more local people, responses largely focused upon improving skills and facilities.
- In terms of improvements to facilities, the majority required an improvement to broadband speeds and mobile phone reception, with the affordability and location of premises also highlighted.
- All respondents stated that they envisaged staying in the parish for at least the next ten years, although some specified that they will be needing larger premises. Of these most stated that they could expand on their current site. Those stating that where this was not possible, would be looking to leave the parish.
- There was a general satisfaction with the amount of land available for commercial use. Where there was a demand, this related to smaller start up units for office and light industrial uses. Although it was also stated by some that the proximity to Milton Park negated a need for any more employment.
- In relation to the impact of COVID-19, it had a mixed effect on businesses with most not being too adversely impacted. Where businesses did not already operate from home, the majority did not envisage a permanent switch to home working as a result.

12.2.4. Sutton Courtenay Parish recorded very low levels of unemployed individuals in the 2011 census, with only 2.7% of the population being unemployed in comparison to 4.4% in England. The percentage of retired individuals is slightly higher than the English average however, with 13.7% in England and 14.2% in Sutton Courtenay. The sectors in which individuals work are broadly similar to the rest of England, however *professional, scientific and technical activities* represent 13.7% of employed individuals compared to 6.7% across England, reflecting the location of the parish in the Science Vale. There is a significantly higher proportion of “*managers, directors and senior officials*” living in Sutton Courtenay parish representing 16.6% of employed individuals compared to 10.9% for England. Census figures also indicate a higher proportion of self-employed individuals in the area at 14.3%, compared to 11.4% for the Vale of White Horse and 10.4% for England and Wales.

12.2.5. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are datasets that are used in the UK to classify the relative deprivation of geographical areas known as Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA). According to the 2011 Census Data, the Neighbourhood Plan area includes parts of three LSOA. The least deprived area corresponds with the southwestern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which falls within the parish of Milton. This LSOA is ranked within the 10% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The most deprived area corresponds with the southern part of Sutton Courtenay village and parish. This LSOA is however still ranked within the 40% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The main part of Sutton Courtenay village and the northern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area are within the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country, ranked 27,563 out of 32,844.

Policy title	Policy SC16: - Economy and Employment
Policy text	<p>Development proposals for workspace for existing or new small-scale businesses will be supported where they otherwise comply with the development plan and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be satisfactorily accommodated in the local highway; and • can be satisfactorily accommodated into the immediate locality in relation to light and noise pollution and the overall amenity of the area.
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' Survey. • Census Data. • Business Survey. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and support local business. • To encourage and support home working.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraph 85 – 89. • LPP1 Policy CP6.

Community Aspirations

Where possible the Parish Council will support work to provide a hub to support working from home.

13. Transport and Highways

Vision	To safeguard the individual character and vitality of our historic Thames-side village whilst meeting the needs of villagers now and in the future.
Aims	<p>To protect and enhance the distinct rural character of the Village whilst promoting sustainable connections beyond.</p> <p>To maintain and improve a positive and welcoming community spirit across the whole village which includes everybody.</p> <p>To provide a built environment that promotes the wellbeing for all social and age groups through amenities.</p>
Key objectives	<p>To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village.</p> <p>To encourage and support home working.</p> <p>To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways.</p>
Community Policies	Policy SC17: Traffic management.

13.1. Travel Preferences

13.1.1. The Residents' Survey revealed a strong preference among respondents for the private car as a method of travel, with 95% of health visits made using a car, 94% of family and friends visits and 91% of journeys for grocery shopping.

13.1.2. Looking at alternative modes of transport, 11% of respondents indicated that they use the bus for other shopping trips and 9% indicate that they use a bus to commute to and from the train station. 14% of respondents use the train to travel on business and 9% to commute to and from school or work. Those that use a train for commuting were asked from what station they started their journey, the results indicated that 96% used Didcot, 6% used Culham and 6% used Oxford station.

13.1.3. 18% of respondents indicated that they use a bicycle to take part in leisure activities, with 12% using one to commute. Exactly a quarter of residents walk to take part in leisure activities and 14% walk to visit family and friends. One in ten residents uses a taxi as part of their commute to and from the train station.

13.2. Existing Road & Transport Network

13.2.1. The street pattern within Sutton Courtenay appears broadly unchanged for centuries, with a strong linear form defined by Church Street to the north leading into High Street and then Harwell Road to the south. In addition, there are a number of east-west streets which intersect the north-south streets, including Brook Street, Appleford Road and Milton Road. The village is also well served by tertiary roads which link the historic core to the newer residential developments. Within the conservation area, these tertiary routes are open represented by narrow historic lanes, while further south they are more open engineered cul-de-sacs.

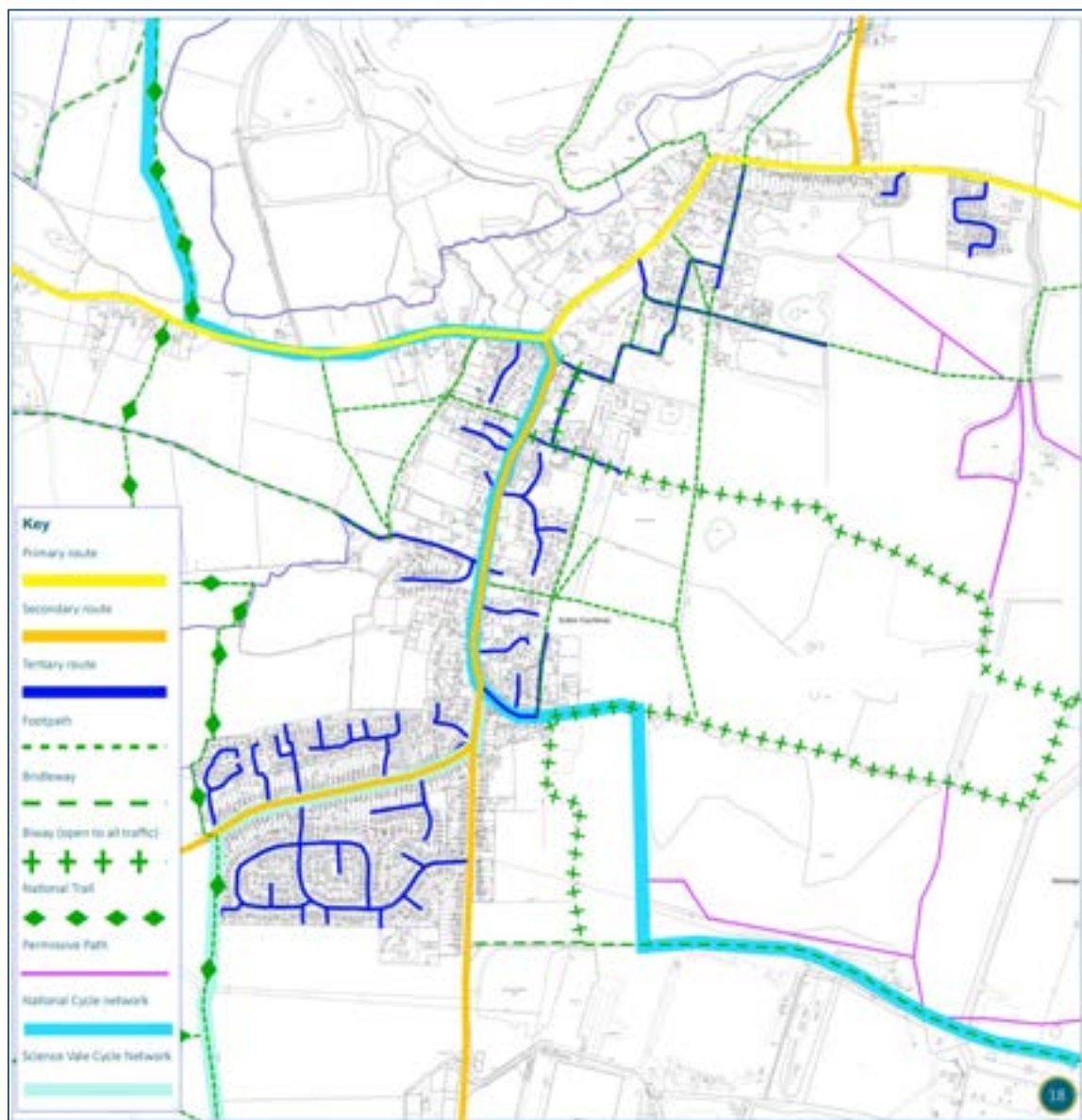


Figure 13.1. Transport Network in Sutton Courtenay

- 13.2.2. In terms of public transport, the village is serviced by the no. 33 Thames Travel Connector which provides an hourly service (5:30am to 7:30 pm) between Abingdon and Wallingford, via Milton and Didcot. The nearest railway station is located in Appleford which is located approximately 2.5km driving distance from The Green. In addition, Didcot Parkway station is situated 6.3km from The Green.
- 13.2.3. Sutton Courtenay is well served by Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and permissive paths, and these are an important part of life in the village, as well as being important in maintaining the strong historical connection between the village and the wider landscape. These paths and lanes give the village a highly connected structure and provide a layer of pedestrian permeability outside the main vehicular routes. The Thames Path National Trail, runs along the north bank of the River Thames. The National Cycle Network Route (NCN5) runs from Oxford to Didcot via Abingdon and Sutton Courtenay. This route, also known as Hanson Way runs through the centre of the village, but is off-road at Peep-O-Day Lane, where it uses a raised causeway leading north to Abingdon. A further cyclepath, Route 3D (Abingdon to Milton Park) is one of 8 strategic routes/corridors of Oxfordshire County Council's Science Vale Cycle Strategy. Routes 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 are also easily accessible from Sutton Courtenay.

13.3. Highways Capacity

- 13.3.2. A number of roads within the village are considered to be operating above capacity. The Local Highway Authority has surveyed and modelled this part of the network and investigated potential improvements, including optimising and biasing signal times and introducing signals at the junction of Appleford Road and Abingdon Road. The conclusions of this work found that such alteration would not yield any benefit, rather they would simply transfer the blocking back from one junction to another. As a consequence, a number of development proposals, including small scale residential developments, have been refused planning permission by both the local planning authority and the Planning Inspectorate.
- 13.3.3. The Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan adopted in July 2022 has identified that a number of capacity improvements and new road links are necessary to accommodate the large-scale employment and residential development associated with the Didcot Garden Town, a status that was granted in December 2015. A masterplan to guide the development of Didcot up to 2031 includes proposals for 15,050 new homes and 20,000 new jobs created in the Science Vale area.
- 13.3.4. In order to relieve pressure on this part of the network and to enable sustainable growth in the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district areas a new road is proposed between north Didcot and Culham Science Centre. This road will require the implementation of an additional Thames river crossing. It will provide improved access to Culham Science Centre and a direct link to the B4015 (north of Clifton Hampden). This scheme will also better connect Science Vale and the major employment areas of Oxford in the Eastern Arc. This route will also provide some relief to the A34 for local movements as well as network resilience. Preferred alignments for the scheme that constitute the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (known as HIF1)

programme were informed by a detailed and multi-stage option exercise to identify the appropriate interventions.

- 13.3.5. A public consultation exercise was undertaken in March/April 2020 on the preferred options that were identified during the feasibility design process and the preferred route alignment of the project was approved in July 2020. Oxfordshire County Council (at the time of writing) state: *“The planning application was submitted in November 2021. A decision on the application is expected early in 2023 with the construction phase scheduled to start in the spring/summer of 2024. Construction is expected to be complete by mid-2026”*. Figure 13.2 illustrates the preferred location for this crossing and other highway improvements. Clearly this route will have a fundamental impact upon the eastern part of the parish and could potentially further increase traffic flows through the village particularly from western villages and Milton Park as an alternative. Whilst many applications for residential development have been refused on traffic grounds, it is not clear what impact the river crossing will have until it is implemented.



Figure 13.2. Proposed River Crossing

13.4. Parking

- 13.4.2. There is a lack of well-designed parking in parts of the village, in particular along High Street and Church Street, where parking on the pavement and on grass verges can be observed. In these locations, the problem is a function of the way in which they have developed, with dwellings often being located close to the road having been built at a time when cars were not a factor in the design or layout of the plots. This can be a visually discordant feature in the conservation

area, particularly where grass verges are undermined as a result. Grass verges have also been removed from some of the residential properties around The Green and The Swan public house to provide parking which similarly undermines the visual quality of the space. Effort has been made at The Green to address parking on the grass using timber posts along the edge.

- 13.4.3. Parking problems also occur in the newer southern streets of the village, including Frilsham Street and in parts of the Bradstocks Way development where on-street parking is prominent and in places front gardens have been entirely lost to parking.

Policy title	Policy SC17: - Traffic management
Policy text	<p>All new development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide off-street parking in accordance with the County Council’s adopted standards so as to avoid increasing demand for on-street parking. • Be designed to avoid adverse impacts on road safety within the Neighbourhood Plan area and, where justified, to secure road safety improvements particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. • Maximise opportunities for sustainable transport, pedestrian and cycle movements both within and between the settlement and the surrounding area, including securing improvements and greater accessibility for all to the Public Rights of Way that connect the settlements in the area. • Be accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate how an increase in traffic (including HGV movements) which may be generated by a proposal has been taken into consideration, in line with the findings of the 2017 traffic survey (and any successor document). <p>Where traffic calming measures are proposed, these should be designed so as not to increase noise or have an adverse impact on residents or users of the route.</p>
Justification from Evidence Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents’ Survey. <p>https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/</p>
Key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek an enhanced inter connectivity across the village. • To maintain and enhance access to Public Rights of Way, Local Green Spaces, views and waterways. • To encourage and support home working.
Relevant policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPPF paragraph 108 -117. • LPP1 Policy CP6.

Community Aspirations

Where possible, unregulated on-street parking (such as on green verges and kerbs) should be designed out by the arrangements of paving, planting and carriageway.

The loss of front gardens to parking should be discouraged. Where it has already been lost, opportunities should be taken to establish or reinforce planting to act as a screen to parked cars, whilst ensuring that highway safety is not undermined.

Where possible the Parish Council will support:

- *Opportunities to provide additional off-street parking in the village.*
- *Work with other councils and transport providers to facilitate provision of efficient, regular and well-connected public transport and or Community Transport Services to surrounding towns and villages (including Abingdon, Didcot and Oxford).*
- *Work to ban HGVs from all roads in the village (except for access).*
- *The introduction of 20mph speed limit in Sutton Courtenay in line with Oxfordshire County Council's policy.*
- *The introduction of a low traffic area in the vicinity of the school and provision of walking routes from car parking beyond the immediate vicinity of the school to encourage children to walk part of the journey.*
- *Work to improve well-connected cycle paths and footpaths both within the village (particularly linking the north and south ends of the village) and connecting with surrounding towns and villages.*
- *Improved safety measures for cyclists and pedestrians e.g. by giving them priority over Sutton Bridge (and roads linking to it) and providing a safe crossing for cyclists at the Triangle.*

Appendix 1 – Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Assessment for Extended Neighbourhood Plan Area

Introduction

1. At the time of the original Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area designation in January 2017, the VWHDC had considered that the combination of the Enterprise Zone, Strategic Employment Sites, Didcot A Power Station, Didcot B Power Station and electricity generation warranted the exclusion of these areas from the designated Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area.
2. In March 2020, the VWHDC offered that it may be possible to revise the boundary of the Neighbourhood area subject to Sutton Courtenay Parish Council submitting a formal application.
3. This note sets out the deliberations of the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SCNPSG) on the pros and cons of submitting an application for re-designation, to inform its recommendation to the Parish Council

History

4. The original area designation application to the VWHDC, submitted in July 2016, included the whole parish as well as the two fields (in Milton Parish) separating the southwestern end of the Village from Milton. The District Council, however, through its NP Officer was strongly of the view that we could not do that. We were advised that the area of Didcot A Power Station could not be included in the NP area – a large part of the site is covered by Enterprise Zone (EZ) legislation and a smaller part constitutes a Strategic Employment Site (SES). Other land lying within the Parish Boundary but outside the NP area is a mixture of EZ and SES – a large proportion of which falls under the control of Milton Park.
5. After much discussion and a fairly lengthy period of no agreement it was made clear that we would not be permitted to include any of the land south of the Village within the NP area. The only extra land that could be included were the two fields lying within Milton Parish referred to above and then only with the full agreement of Milton PC. This was secured.
6. Accordingly, the application to make a NP was submitted to the Vale that included the two Milton fields and excluded the areas referred to in paragraph 4 above. After some delay by the Vale to advertise the NP application we were finally able to set out on the road towards the production of the Plan. Unfortunately, there was one very strong objection made at the time of advertisement of the application, from Abingdon Town Council who wished to include nearly half of the northern projection of the Parish alongside the Thames within its own NP.

Current position

7. The Vale has now offered that we may submit a new application to extend the NP area to include the omitted southern part of the Parish. Sadly, however, this will involve amending the NP and making a fresh application to the Vale. It means that we would have to go through the whole process of advertising and dealing with likely fresh comments and objections (Abingdon TC for example). In addition, we would have to reconsult widely – further village surveys etc and revert to the numerous consultants

and advisors that we have used to make amendments to the work that we have already paid for. We would, in effect, be recommending a new NP nearly 4 years after we started out.

Questions

8. We need to consider, therefore, the following: -
 - i) What would be achieved by including this extra land within the Plan – would there be any tangible benefit to the Village and its NP?
 - ii) Can a further lengthy period be justified before we finally get to the Parish referendum?

Recommendation

9. In our view, at this extremely late stage, there can be little or no benefit either to the Village or to its NP. The draft NP and policies we have so far will not put forward any strategic sites for residential development allocation and this issue alone is potentially controversial and likely to lead to challenges at the hearing stage. Having taken so long to get to our current position, we believe the SG should press on now and not go back to the beginning of the process. To do so would put us in a poor light with residents and many might be tempted to question the credibility of both the SG and the NP. It seems to us that, currently, we may be able to carry much support with us over our intention not to include any new allocated sites. By prolonging the process for possibly another 2 years, we could run into difficulties in having to fend off pressure for building land.
10. Furthermore, there are no obvious sites/land within the, currently omitted, southern part of the Parish that might lend themselves to housing allocation. It is more than probable that any new development in this extended area is likely to be commercial, industrial or warehousing based and would not yield any CIL money that might benefit the Parish and its infrastructure. Besides which, it is important to remember that a lot of the land/sites in question are covered by EZ and SES designations and, as such, are not subject to full planning control by the District Council.
11. Another point worth considering: the longer the NP is delayed whilst the Didcot Garden Town proposals advance, the further behind that Plan we will be. We should be seeking to get the NP determined as quickly as possible in order to enable the Parish Council to keep the pressure on Didcot GT.
12. We are of the opinion that we should not seek to include this extra land within the NP. It is too late in the process and would put us at a disadvantage for the reasons specified above. It would have been fine if the Vale had let us include the land as part of our original application.

SCNPSG – May 2020

Appendix 2 – Evidence Base Documents

The Neighbourhood Plan is based on a number of evidence base documents including:

- Residents' Survey 2018.
- Sutton Courtenay Landscape Study (Steven Warnock, Landscape Matters, June 2019).
- Sutton Courtenay Character Assessment (Dr K Davies, August 2019).
- Green Space Assessment (Patrick O'Callaghan, August 2019).
- SCNP Report on Flooding (Sarah Eccles, February 2022 as amended).
- TVERC_19_494 Sutton Courtenay Biodiversity Report (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, February 2020).
- Landscape Assessment – Novell Tullitt 2019 / 2020.
- Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal and Design Code (Bluestone Planning, April 2022).
- Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Highways & Transport Context (Bluestone Planning, April 2022).
- Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Space Assessment Bluestone Planning April 2022).
- Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Countryside & Green Gap Assessment Bluestone Planning April 2022).
- Footpath Report v03 (Simon Lazare, June 2021).
- Business Survey 2021.

Please see <https://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk/> for more details of each document

Appendix 3 – Superseded Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policies

SCI - The area between the Oxford-Didcot railway line, the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road, Didcot Power Station and the existing gravel pit at Sutton Courtenay will be released for sharp sand and gravel working in accordance with the other policies in this Plan. Applications for clay extraction will be considered under policy SD5.

SC2 - After-uses for mineral workings should normally conform with those shown on the Proposals Map (the categories of uses are explained in paragraph 7.2), Planning permission will not normally be granted until these after-uses and means of funding them have been secured.

paragraph 7.2 Policies SC2, SW5, SH5, CY3 and CV1 require after-uses to conform with the Proposals Map. The following general categories are used in the after-use proposals for the specific areas. Some of the categories include a range of activities as described below: 1 agriculture (following filling with waste); 2 woodland; 3 nature conservation (normally water-based); 4 angling; 5 lakeside water-related activities - general public access for walking, picnicking, bird watching and some fishing; 6 low key water-based activities - windsurfing, sailing; 7 intensive water-based activities - water-skiing, jet skiing, windsurfing, sailing.

paragraph 7.3 Where several categories of uses are allowed, these are stated on the Proposals Map in order of priority. Other uses may also be allowed but they must not conflict with the primary aims in any area. In all cases opportunities to protect and enhance nature conservation features will be pursued. All after-use proposals must be appropriate to the local area and must comply with environmental (including Green Belt) and other relevant policies of district local plans

paragraph 7.7. Most of the land which has been worked so far has already been restored to agriculture. Over the years pulverised fuel ash (PFA) from Didcot Power Station has been one of the main fill materials, but the Sutton Courtenay area has also accepted a substantial amount of household waste from both the local area and London.

Appendix 4 – Listed buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

See Figure 9.1 for location of Listed buildings, heritage Assets and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Listed Buildings (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/> for more info)

I Church of All Saints

I The Norman Hall

I The Abbey

II* West Gatepier Approximately 20 Metres South East of the Manor House

II* The Manor House

II* Outbuilding Approximately 15 Metres North East of the Manor House

II* East Gatepier Approximately 20 Metres South East of the Manor House

II* Buckeridges

II* Chest Tomb Approximately 10 Metres South of Chancel of Church of All Saints

II 1, Church Street

II 18, High Street

II 2, the Green

II 20 and 22, Church Street

II 20, High Street

II 33 and 35, High Street

II 37 and 39, High Street

II 4 and 5, the Green

II 4, Brook Street

II 44, High Street

II 49, High Street

II 5, High Street

II 76, High Street

II 8, 9 and 10, the Green

II Barn Approximately 25 Metres South South West of Number 13 (Buckeridges)

II Barn Approximately 45 Metres West North West of Number 96 (Uptown Farmhouse)

II Barn Approximately 50 Metres East North East of the Manor House

II Barn Approximately 70 Metres North East of the Manor House

II Chest Tomb to Thomas Dalby Approximately 15 Metres East of Chancel of Church of All Saints

II Courtenay Lodge

II Cross Trees Cottage

II Dovecote Approximately 100 Metres North East of the Manor House

II East Boundary Walls to No 72

II Ramseys

II Garden Cottage at No 72

II Howes Cottage

II Little Chemscode

II Long Barn

II Manor Cottage

II Mill House

II No. 1 Abbey Cottages

II Number 3 Goslings

II Number 53 (Pull Croft) and Railings to Front
II Old House
II River Cottage
II Shelter Shed Approximately 40 Metres West North West of Number 96 (Uptown Farmhouse)
II Southfield Farmhouse
II Stable at No 72
II Sundial Approximately 10 Metres North East of the Manor House
II Sutton Bridge and Causeways
II Sutton Courtenay War Memorial
II Sutton Mill
II Thatched Cottage
II The Almshouses and Attached Walls and Gate
II The George and Dragon Public House
II The Old School House
II The Retreat
II The Wharf
II Tudor Cottage
II Uptown Farmhouse
II Walton House
II Wharf Barn
II Wharf Cottage

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

1. Glebe House, Hobbyhorse Lane
2. Sutton Courtenay House, High Street
3. Brick wall, formerly bounding the vegetable garden of the original Lady Place house, High Street
4. The Croft, High Street
5. 3 High Street
6. The Old School, High Street
7. Former public house, The Plough
8. 1 & 3 Ginge Brook including the footbridge (8a)
9. Brook House, Brook Street
10. East and West Wilden, Brook Street
11. Halls Garage, Brook Street
12. Stone wall and gateways to The Abbey orchard, The Triangle
13. Stone wall (virtually uninterrupted) running from Brook House, Brook Street to The Almshouses, Church Street
14. Bekynton House and Cottage, The Green
15. 15,16 &18 The Green
16. The Swan Public House, The Green
17. The Old Vicarage, Church Street
18. Remains of the brick elevation of the former paper mill and wooden footbridge, Thames backwater, Church Street
19. The historic causeway which separates the higher level of the Thames from the lower Sutton Pools linking the four weirs with Church Street
20. The Fish Public House, Appleford Road

Appendix 5 - Priorities for CIL Spending

Extract from Resident's Survey

When in place, the Neighbourhood Plan will ensure that Sutton Courtenay gets 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy. These funds can be used to carry out works to ensure that the local amenities can continue to operate or be improved to meet the needs of the increase in population.

Residents were asked if such funds were available, for what projects would they like them used.

Given a maximum of four choices, the top project wanted by exactly half of residents was to see the improvement of footpaths and cycle ways across the parish. 44% would like to see the modernisation and increase of the Village Hall facilities for local group users. 39% would like to see play areas created at the southern end of the village (Primary School End) and 38% would like to see more facilities developed for children and young adults.

If such funds were available, how would you like them to be used?	Number	%
Improve footpaths/cycle ways across the parish	307	50
Modernise and increase the Village Hall facilities for local group users	272	44
Create play areas at the southern end of the village (Primary School end)	244	39
Develop more facilities for children and young adults	236	38
Maintain and improve the Recreation Ground and play equipment	236	38
Improve access to the internet	193	31
Provide landscaping for the village (flowers, shrubs, trees)	166	27
Provide a Community Transport Service	154	25
Provide more street furniture in the village (benches/bins etc.)	105	17
Improve provisions for and expand the area of the allotments	66	11
Provide a hub to support working from home	53	9
Commission and install an art sculpture	9	1
Other	32	5
Base: (All Respondents) (620)		

There were 32 other comments which are listed in the Appendix to the Residents' Survey

Appendix 6 – Details of Important Views Extract

3.5. Views and Landmarks

The village is characterised by a wide variety of views which reflect both the character of its conservation area and its strong connection to the surrounding landscape. In addition, the lowland vale makes an important contribution to distant views from higher ground within the North Wessex Downs AONB to the south.

Within the conservation area, views are characterised by the historic and notable buildings. These views are often channelled by the strong landscape features and open spaces within the village. Similarly, the landscaping along the lanes that lead out from the conservation area provide a suggestion of the countryside beyond and reinforce that strong link to the landscape. Views from these lanes also offer glimpses into private gardens and reveal the rear elevations of the village properties.

At its closest point, the River Thames is within 25m of Church Street, however the river is not visible within the streetscene. Rather, a discrete PRow at the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road (the site of the former wharf) provides access to the river. The footpath tracks the north side of the river from where there are attractive views over the river and into the mature gardens of the houses along Church Street. Numerous bathhouses and pleasure craft highlight the value of the river as recreational resource. Further along the footpath views across Sutton Pools are of a heavily treed riverine landscape.

Beyond the conservation area, to the south, the successful feeling of enclosure is lost, with a general reduction in the level of street-side landscaping and a slight broadening in the street width or building lines. There are fewer notable buildings and an increase in single storey dwellings, which reinforces the openness of the view, with glimpses from within the streetscene to less attractive features such as the pylons in the land immediately to the east. As the topography of the area is generally flat, views of the open fields beyond the streetscene are limited to glimpses through undeveloped plots, though some views of distant hedgerows can be seen from between houses.

Key Views:

- View 1:** River Thames and Sutton Bridge from the flood meadow to north of Appleford Road and west of Abingdon Road - The riverine landscape is a strong characteristic of Sutton Courtenay and flooded land, wetlands and watercourses on the village periphery are key to its identity.
- View 2:** River Thames backwater and Church Street houses and gardens from footpath over weir - The riverine landscape forms a dynamic part of the village setting and character. The enclosure formed by wooded islands within the Thames, as well as the river itself, provide a strong character of the northern fringes of the village. The conservation area extends out to encompass large swathes of the wetland landscape. The river is close coupled to the northern village fringe with many listed buildings having gardens that run down to its southern banks.
- View 3:** North over River Thames and flood meadows from weirs at Sutton Pools - Another element of the riverine landscape rich in natural beauty and affording good opportunities for walking and informal recreation.
- View 4:** Church St western side looking north from Courtenay Cottage - PRow runs close to the cottages and are an important feature of this part of the street. These semi-private/public spaces contribute much to the informality and intimate character of this rural scene.
- View 5:** The Manor and Manor Grounds from meadow upstream from weir on River Thames - The grade 2* listed Manor is set back on the western side of Church Street with extensive river frontage to the rear of its designated gardens.
- View 6:** North over meadow towards Sreen Copse and Culham Brake, part of the Oxford Green Belt from Appleford Road - A tranquil rural image with distant rural views and the well treed course of the River Thames notable in the middle ground. This is interrupted by ribbon development along Abingdon Road visible in the left of the image, which significantly reduces the gap between Sutton Courtenay and Culham.
- View 7:** East towards Wittenham Clumps over agricultural land from Appleford Road as road exits Sutton Courtenay - Wittenham Clumps are an important local site of recreation; long views have been lost at the southern end of the village by the height of the landfill.
- View 8:** Views of water meadows to east and west from Peep-O-Day Lane - This route is well used by commuters and recreational users and forms an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Abingdon.
- View 9:** The Green and The Abbey grounds from the War Memorial - The status of the Abbey is apparent by the stone pillars and gates directly facing The Green. Trees are a defining feature of the estate and their presence contributes significantly to the rural character of the village.
- View 10:** North west towards the long (south) elevation of The Norman Hall across the adjacent paddock from the footpath on the western side of Church Street - The paddock contributes to the sense of space, an important characteristic of the conservation area and to the setting of the listed building.
- View 11:** All Saints' Church and churchyard from northern end of All Saints Lane - This view reflects the importance of the Church in the village.
- View 12:** North over The Green looking towards The Swan public house and All Saints' Church - The Green is the physical and historic heart of the village. It is a key local open green space providing a setting for several important listed buildings, allowing them to be seen and appreciated from a distance.
- View 13:** East along bridle path adjacent to the Millennium Common - Enticing view along tree lined footpath/track to the south of the Millennium Common. This land is strongly integrated within the network of paths through the village.
- View 14:** North along Church Street showing stone wall to the west and lime trees to the east - The southern end of Church Street is marked by long stone walls on either side of the street associated with The Abbey and The Manor House estates. With wide verges, mature trees, and a simple footway, the street has a verdant, green character that looks as if it has changed very little over centuries.
- View 15:** South towards The Triangle from Church St - The Triangle is a focal point with a loose feel with buildings set back with informal parking at the road edge.
- View 16:** Ginge Brook looking south from junction with Brook Street - A lattice of secondary routes bisect the structures of Sutton Courtenay. These paths and lanes are minimally well used by local people for dog walking, local recreation and by children playing safely, away from the traffic on the village street.

Analysis of Local Context



Views and Landmarks (cont)

The footpaths and tracks leading out of the village have open views of the countryside. To the west, are the flat open fields mostly in agricultural use. The visual impact of development cannot however be overlooked with ribbon development associated with Drayton and Milton Roads including Drayton Highways Depot, edge of settlement development associated with Milton village and development at Drayton Mill, all having an urbanising effect on the otherwise rural setting of the village.

To the east views are of the degraded landscape expressed in water-filled pits, plant and machinery, exposed spoil and man-made bunds, which represent significant visual detractors to the landscape. Additional visual detractors include overhead electricity cables and pylons which stretch across the landscape from south to north as well as east to west along the southern boundary. Aesthetically, the main value lies in the openness of this land as the topography remains broadly flat and visually open, though some contour changes have occurred as a result of the operations on the land and the subsequent restoration works. These contour changes have resulted in the loss of long distance views towards Wittenham Clumps from the southern end of the village.

From the west of Sutton Courtenay, particularly on Milton Road, the flat topography and lack of landscaping provides clear views of both Milton and Sutton Courtenay, with a clear though small distinction between built-up area and open countryside. Further north on Drayton Road, views of the countryside are more glimpsed due to the presence of hedgerows.

From the east, the topography has the effect of visually concentrating the development with the result that views of the village are limited to glimpses of rooftops set within trees.

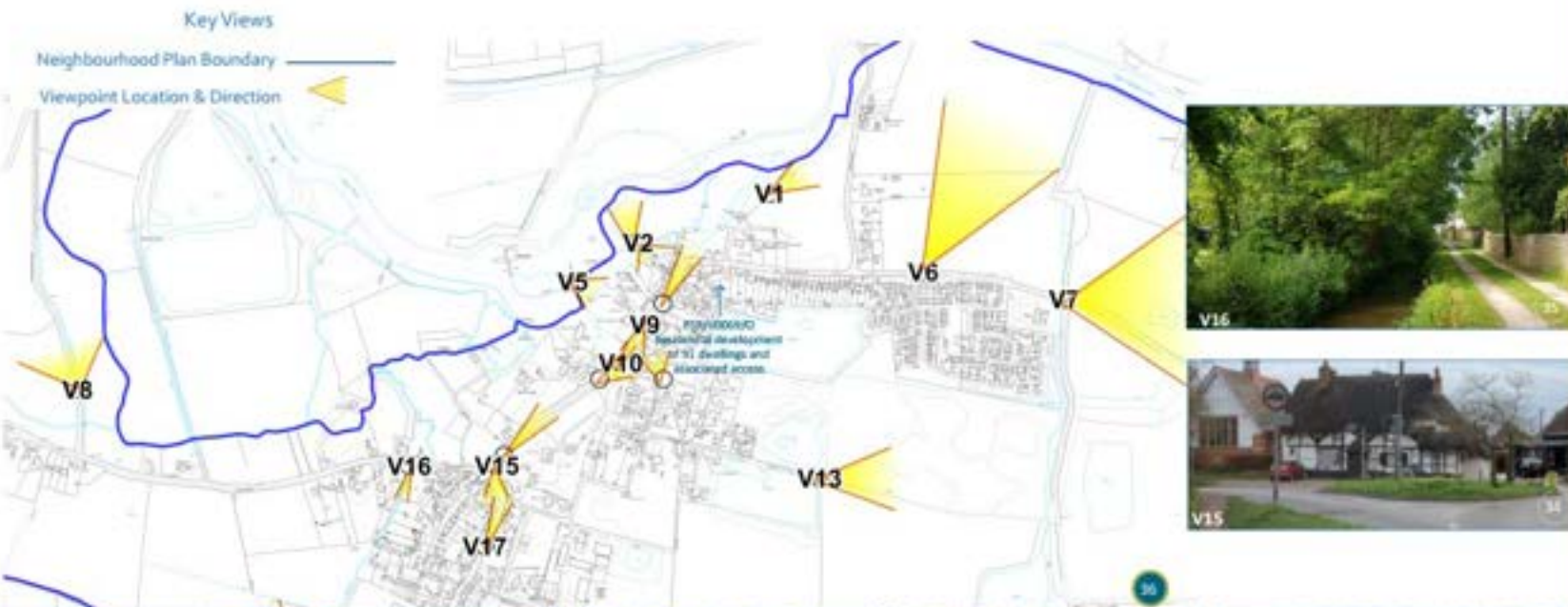
Key Views:

- View 17 North High Street from High Street - Typical picturesque view obtained along the winding High Street with historic buildings in a variety of styles, dates and materials lining the street.
- View 18 East along Drayton East Way towards wooded boundary of village behind High Street - Flat open, agricultural land with wide skies. The tops of some trees of the Abbey and Church Street are visible. This route crosses an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Drayton, especially the development at Drayton Road and Milton Road. The towers associated with the Didcot B power station are a visual detractor.
- View 19 Southfield Farm on West side of High Street from entrance to Lady Place - Remnant farmhouses such as Southfield Farm reinforce the rurality of the scene and provides glimpse to the paddocks and small open fields that characterise the back land behind High Street.
- View 20 West from Mill Lane/Drayton East Way over farmland - This route is well used by recreational users and crosses an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Drayton, especially the development at Drayton Road and Milton Road.
- View 21 Ginge Brook - Ginge Brook has a smaller, softer character than the Thames. Ginge Brook forms a strong boundary along the western village fringe.
- View 22 Views of old willows, ditches and brook on land north of Springfield Way - This view introduces a softness to the high density development, though the contrast between the two areas is very apparent.
- View 23 View along Milton Road - Milton Road looking west showing low density development, generous plots and mature trees lining the road.
- View 24 Barretts Way looking east showing communal front gardens to the north and tree lined grass verge to the south - The green around the houses in the southern end of the village are locally very important.
- View 26 West towards Milton over Kelaart's Field - Kelaart's Field is a flat open pasture with permanent grasses with a wide expanse of sky.

Please note that view 25 has been deleted following Independent Examination



Views and Landmarks (cont)



Analysis of Local Context

Views and Landmarks (cont)



Analysis of Local Context

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