

# WOODCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse  
Joint Local Plan 2041  
EXAMINATION LIBRARY DOCUMENT

## NDP54

## 2013-2035



REFERENDUM VERSION JULY 2022

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## Foreword

Neighbourhood Development Plans come out of the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions which affect them. The **Woodcote Neighbourhood Development Plan** has been developed to establish a vision for the village and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period 2013 – 2035. This current Neighbourhood Plan is an update of the first Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2014. Unlike the Woodcote Parish Plan 2008, upon which it builds, our Neighbourhood Development Plan is a statutory document that will be incorporated into the district planning frameworks and must be used by South Oxfordshire District Council to determine planning applications.

Our Plan has been produced by local residents, with the support of the Parish Council, using the views of the residents of Woodcote. The Advisory Group has consulted 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 community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in this document reflect those of the majority of Woodcote residents.

A Neighbourhood Plan has many benefits. The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by volunteers from the village to:

- protect the village from uncontrolled, large scale, or poorly placed development;
- Identify the development required, being mindful of the requirements of South Oxfordshire's Local Plan 2035 and the most suitable sites around the village;
- ensure that development is sympathetic to, and improves, the look and feel of the village;
- take steps to give residents preferred access to many of the new homes;
- limit the incursion into the AONB and minimise the loss of greenfield sites by, where possible, using previously developed sites;
- give the village the potential to access a higher proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to improve village facilities; and
- identify, in a **Woodcote Parish Action Plan 2021**, additional actions to improve Woodcote's facilities, services and local environment and to address issues beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

An electronic copy of this Plan, together with the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Report and other supporting documentation can be found online at [www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group).

The Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Advisory Group and pay tribute to their work since September 2011. The Parish Council is also grateful for the help and the engagement of many others in the village without which it would not have been possible to produce this Neighbourhood Plan.

Malcolm Smith  
Chair, Woodcote Parish Council

Geoffrey Botting  
Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

## Section 1: Introduction and Background

### 1.1. Purpose

In April 2012 the *Localism Act 2011* amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) which can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Act.

This plan, the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2035, updates and, when made, will replace the current made [Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013 -2027](#). For clarity and ease of reading:

- the current, made, Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2027 is referred to as [WNP1](#).
- this plan, the intended replacement to WNP1, is referred to as [WNP2](#).

### 1.2. Submitting Body

This Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) is submitted by Woodcote Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

### 1.3. Neighbourhood Area

The Plan applies to the Parish of Woodcote in South Oxfordshire which was designated by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) as a Neighbourhood Area on 12 April 2017<sup>1</sup>.

Woodcote Parish Council confirms that this Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- i. relates only to the Parish of Woodcote and to no other Neighbourhood Areas; and
- ii. will be the only NDP in the designated area.

### 1.4. Neighbourhood Development Plan Context

The Woodcote Neighbourhood Development Plan must:

- a. have appropriate regard to national planning policy;
- b. contribute to sustainable development;
- c. be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; and
- d. be compatible with EU obligations (as incorporated into UK law) and human rights requirements.

The Parish of Woodcote is part of the District of South Oxfordshire. The local development plan is, therefore, the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (the Local Plan) which was adopted in December 2020.

Woodcote is located entirely within and washed over by the Chilterns AONB. National Planning Policy and the Local Plan policy ENV1 require the greatest level of protection to be afforded to the AONB and that development must conserve and enhance the landscape of the AONB.

The Local Plan (policy H4) allocates an arithmetic level of growth (15% of the 2011 housing level in addition to the allocation in the previous Core Strategy) which results in a total of 225 houses (an increase of some 22% in total). When the allocations in the first Neighbourhood Plan and windfall development since 2011 are taken into account, that results in a requirement for 115 additional houses to be allocated in this revised Neighbourhood Plan.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix B: Neighbourhood Area Designation

It is, therefore, necessary to achieve a balance between the need to protect the AONB and the requirement to accommodate additional housing. This is acknowledged in the Local Plan (paragraph 4.28) which recognises that some villages are constrained by factors such as the AONB and may not be able to achieve the level of growth set out in policy H4. The Local Plan (paragraph 4.28) requires a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to be carried out to provide evidence for a lower allocation of houses. The Parish Council carried out an LVIA which was subsequently reviewed and endorsed by a chartered member of the landscape institute. The LVIA report, available at [www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan), shows that Woodcote is constrained by the AONB and identifies sites for 57 houses. One site was subsequently withdrawn by the new owners leaving allocations for 53 houses.

### 1.5 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

The Woodcote NDP will run concurrently with the current South Oxfordshire Local Plan and apply until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2035. It is, however, recognised that an NDP is a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community at the time of making and will need monitoring and review to ensure continuing relevance and delivery.

Woodcote Parish Council, as the designated body, is responsible for maintaining and periodically reviewing the NDP should the needs and aspirations of the community require, or following significant changes to the SOLP, or after five years if neither of the previous conditions occur.

In addition, the Parish Council will monitor the delivery of the housing allocations in the Plan. If delivery is unlikely to proceed to meet the number of dwellings set out in Policy HS1 of the Plan, the Parish Council will consider a review of the Plan to identify the extent to which delivery is not proceeding and/or to explore the allocation of alternative sites to meet any shortfall.

The Parish Council will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan against national policy. It will also assess the extent to which the Plan has regard to any changes which may arise to national policy. Where necessary, it will consider the need for a full or partial review of the Plan.'

## Section 2: Process Summary

### 2.1. Plan History

Woodcote Parish Council resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Woodcote on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011 was granted Front-runner status by the Department of Communities & Local Government. The Plan was developed, examined and, following a referendum in which 92% of the 59% of the community electorate who voted said Yes, the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2027 (WNP1) was made in May 2014.

Following the publication in 2014 of the Strategic Market Housing Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire, SODC began work in 2016 to quantify the new homes needed in South Oxfordshire as part of the production of their new Local Plan (completed and adopted in December 2020). The Parish Council, therefore, decided to prepare a second NDP to respond to a newly assessed local need for housing in the Parish and to ensure compliance with the relevant policies in the new Local Plan.

The formulation of WNP1 began by reviewing the views expressed by the community in three Village Appraisals (1984, 1991 and 2000) and the Woodcote Parish Plan (2008) to identify the issues that could be addressed by a Neighbourhood Plan. Six such issues were identified:

1. What is the housing need in Woodcote?
2. Where might new housing be located?
3. What is important to residents when considering new sites for housing?
4. What design requirements are there for new developments and homes?
5. What other aspects of living in the village should be considered?
6. How do we ensure that we meet the sustainability requirements?

These questions remained central to the formulation of the second Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.

### 2.2. Outline Plan Development Process

Figure 2.i outlines the Plan development process. This was managed by an Advisory Group established by the Parish Council to research and recommend changes to WNP1, the current Woodcote NDP.

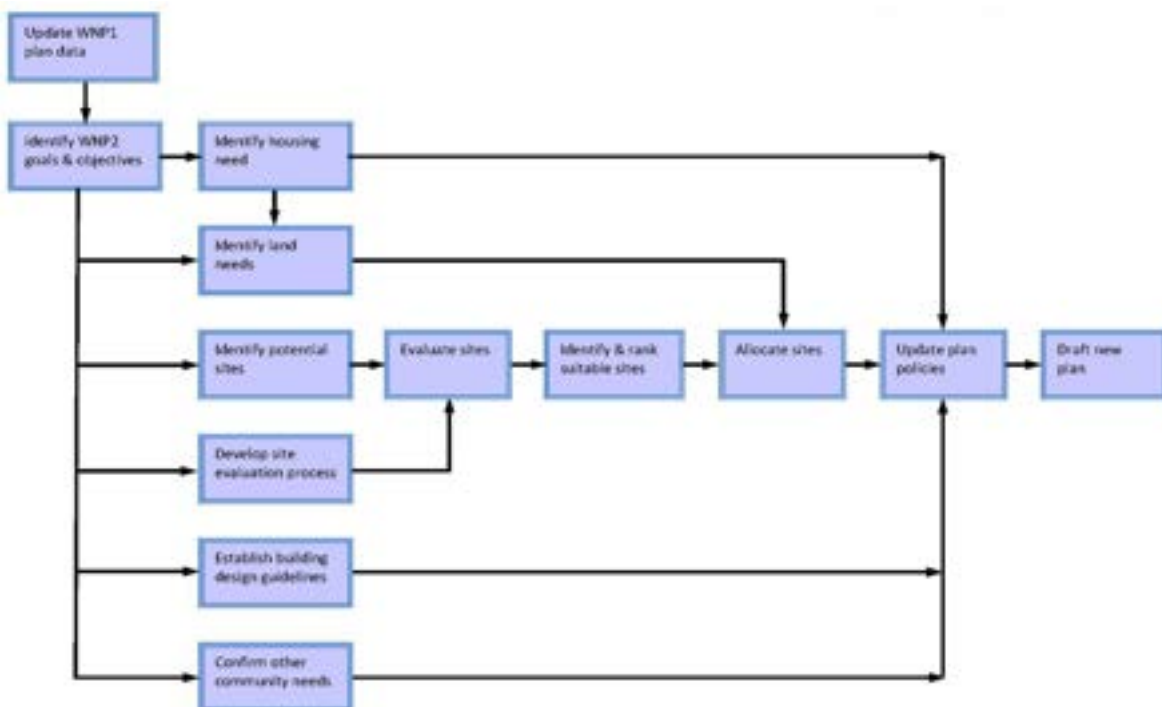


Figure 2.i. Outline Development Process

The **Goals and Objectives** were determined by adding, deleting or amending the goals and objectives of WNP1 to reflect changes resulting from:

- the views expressed by 70% of Woodcote households in an all-village survey in 2017;
- the views expressed in an open, all-village, consultation attended by 175 residents in 2017;
- the escalation in the climate and biodiversity crisis;
- a review of the NPPF, particularly in respect of guidance on development in AONBs.

The **Housing Need** was established by considering:

- the results of an independent housing needs survey across the whole village conducted by Community First Oxfordshire for WNP1;
- the views of residents who attended all-village, open, consultations in May 2017<sup>2</sup>, February 2018<sup>3</sup> and October 2019<sup>4</sup>;
- the views of owners and interested developers of potential sites; and
- the result of a detailed model using ONS and other official sources of data on population trends and forecasts in Woodcote<sup>5</sup>.

The greatest **need for land** arises from the demand for housing. This arises directly from the Housing Need Assessment. To assess other needs the all-village survey in 2017 also sought residents' views on the need for land for employment, medical services, education provision and recreation.

**Potential Sites** were identified by adding all sites in the South Oxfordshire District Council's current Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) to:

- all unallocated sites identified for the current Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP1);
- removing any SHELAA sites that were duplicates, already developed or otherwise unavailable for development;
- other sites notified to South Oxfordshire District Council; and
- all responses to an advertisement placed in the local press (the Henley Standard).

The **suitability of potential sites was evaluated** using a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and a set of some 20 criteria derived from:

- relevant policies in the NPPF and Local Plan 2035;
- the outcome of two open workshops in July 2012, which focused on the factors considered important by residents when selecting sites for new homes;
- sustainability objectives;
- the views expressed by the community as determined for WNP1 and updated by the all-village survey and open consultations in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Nearly 70% of those returning questionnaires from the February 2018 consultation agreed that the sites suggested did best match the factors they believed important when selecting development sites. This was supported by the majority support for the proposed sites at the consultation in October 2019.

**Design Guidelines** were determined by consideration of:

- the views expressed by the community at the public consultations;
- the SODC Design Guide;
- the Chilterns Conservation Board Buildings Design Guide (2010); and
- the growing demand in the community for measures to address the impact of new building on climate change.

**Other Community Needs** were determined by:

- using the results of previous community endeavours including the three Village Appraisals (1984, 1991, 2000), the 2008 Parish Plan and the WNP1 consultations and surveys;
- using information gathered by the 2017 all-village survey;
- using information gathered at the 2017, 2018 and 2019 consultations; and
- holding meetings with groups such as the village schools and the Goring & Woodcote medical practice.

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<sup>2</sup> Consultation Report May 17

<sup>3</sup> Consultation Report February 18

<sup>4</sup> Consultation Report October 2019

<sup>5</sup> Housing Needs Analysis: Objectively Assessed Need (2019)

The conclusions were presented at the February 2018 exhibition and were confirmed by 85% of those attending, with only 10% believing that the Advisory Group had not identified the key aspects of living in the village.

The **Plan Policies** were then developed by:

- adding new policies to those in WNP1 where needed;
- deleting WNP1 policies that were no longer required or relevant;
- retaining WNP1 policies that are still relevant; and
- Amending WNP1 policies, as necessary.

## 2.3. Community Engagement

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community plan and must derive its objectives, actions and authority from the community. From the outset the Advisory Group were determined that the residents should be kept informed and given every opportunity to tell the Advisory Group what they wanted. Communication and consultation, in various forms, played a major role in formulating the Plan.

A communication programme was established to:

- i. promote a high degree of awareness of the project;
- ii. invite residents to join the team advising the Parish Council;
- iii. encourage everyone to contribute to the development of the Plan;
- iv. promote consultation events;
- v. provide regular updates on the status of the Plan and its development.

Key to this programme was publicity, public events and the use of local print and electronic media to provide regular updates, together with the promotion of a Woodcote Neighbourhood Planning website, within the Parish Council website, ([www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group)) to provide easily accessible, extensive information to the whole village and to encourage the village to participate.

### Publicity

The Woodcote Correspondent is delivered to all homes in the village and read by 97% of adults and nearly three-quarters of young people in the village<sup>6</sup>. It is published monthly and carries articles on the Plan and its development.

### Surveys, Consultations and Workshops

Village opinion has been sought by:

- surveying every house in the Parish to support the formulation of the housing need (January 2017). This updated the results of surveys in June 2012 and January 2013;
- running public consultations in May 2017, February 2018 and October 2019 to solicit village views on the purpose, content and proposals in the Plan and to update the views expressed in similar consultations in March 2012 and February 2013;
- running two open workshops (July 2012) to identify the factors residents see as important when considering possible development sites; and
- the Regulation 14 Consultation (May 2021) led to some revision of the policies and supporting evidence in response to comments from the residents and statutory consultees, as set out in the Consultation Report.



<sup>6</sup> Source: The Woodcote Parish Plan 2008, page 14.



All events were publicised by leaflet drops, banners and local posters, and announcements in the Woodcote Correspondent, on the Parish Council website and the Woodcote Neighbourhood Planning website and on social media.



## Updates

Regular updates on the plan development process, opportunities to contribute and comment, and outcomes of surveys and events were provided:

- in the Woodcote Correspondent; and
- the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Planning website [www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group);
- the Parish Council's social media pages.

## 2.4. Evidence Base Overview

The analysis, objectives and proposals in this Neighbourhood Plan have drawn on a variety of sources. Data on:

- [population, employment, housing, deprivation, car ownership](#) was obtained largely from the Office of National Statistics;
- the [housing need](#) was obtained originally for WNP1 from an independent survey run by CFO<sup>7</sup>, the SODC housing register, local estate agents, and the views of residents at the public consultations and updated using local survey data (January 2017) and a detailed analysis of the population trends and impact of additional housing and house sales, based on ONS and other official sources;
- [life in the village](#) was obtained from three Village Appraisals (1984, 1991, 2000) and the 2008 Woodcote Parish Plan, the views of residents at the public consultations and workshops, meetings with key service providers including the schools in the village, the Goring & Woodcote Medical practice and the responses to the Living in the Village survey;
- [landscape](#) was obtained from the SOLA<sup>8</sup>;
- [flood risk](#) was obtained from the Department of the Environment.

More detailed information on this extensive evidence base, including reports on the village consultations and workshops, can be found in the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan supplementary documents on the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan website ([www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/NP-Group))

<sup>7</sup> Community First Oxfordshire

<sup>8</sup> South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (SODC)

## Section 3: Goals and Objectives

### 3.1. Vision for Woodcote

Woodcote is a village of some 2600 people located entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Following rapid development in the 1970s, it is now a well-established, vibrant, active community with, for example, some 40-plus clubs and societies. The village’s location within the AONB makes it an attractive place to live but house prices are very high. Poor public transport has led to car ownership being substantially higher than that nationally.

Any vision must balance what the community wants against the constraints of planning policy and what can be delivered.

#### The Community Need

Woodcote is fortunate in having the documented results of consultation and workshops conducted over more than 40 years. These consistently show a community that:

- values and wishes to conserve the landscape of the AONB;
- is concerned about road safety and traffic volumes;
- is concerned about high house prices preventing young people moving to the village and particularly those with a local connection not being able to afford accommodation in the village;
- is concerned about the impact of development on the local schools;
- is concerned about over development of the village.

Recent surveys have shown a substantial increase in concern for sustainability and the desire to reduce the community’s carbon footprint.

#### Planning Policies

The NPPF and the new Local Plan are strongly committed to conserving the nationally designated landscape of the AONB. In particular, the NPPF recognises the need for major development within the AONB to be refused other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.

#### Practicality

A vision must be aware that funding for major infrastructure projects or local services may not be available.

#### The Vision

**This, and future Neighbourhood Plans, will continue to support the development of Woodcote as a village that is a pleasant place to live and:**

- **that retains its vitality and vibrancy by providing a housing mix that is accessible to younger people and facilities, such as a well-supported and popular primary school, medical services and a social centre, that are attractive to younger families;**
- **in which the rural location, landscape and green spaces are conserved and enhanced for future generations to enjoy;**
- **in which cycling and walking are promoted, and roads are safe for pedestrians and motorists;**
- **for which the developed footprint is controlled to conserve the AONB;**
- **which sits lightly upon the planet continuously contributing to a reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions and increasing support for wildlife and biodiversity.**

**3.2. Goals**

The Vision is a summary of the wishes, needs and priorities of the local community as ascertained for the first Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP1) by survey in July 2012, workshops in July 2012 and consultations in March 2012 and February 2013.

These wishes, needs and priorities were then updated for WNP2 by:

- i. an all-village survey in January 2017 in which 74% of households and 68% of adults responded; and
- ii. all-village consultations in May 2017 (171 questionnaires returned), February 2018 (400 questionnaires returned), and Oct 2019 (135 questionnaires returned).

Table 3.i presents the goals of the second Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan which are derived directly from the Vision.

**Table 3.i**

**Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Goals**

- To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home.
- To seek opportunities for landscape, recreational and biodiversity gain while minimising the environmental impact of development.
- To reduce the contribution to climate change by seeking to minimise or reduce the impact of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- To reduce the need for travel by car and shorten the length and duration of local journeys.
- To reduce road traffic congestion.
- To enhance the prospects for local employment.
- To maintain the character and vitality of the village.

**3.3. Plan Objectives**

A set of objectives was derived for each of the agreed goals. These objectives:

- a. provide additional precision to the goals and hence the challenges facing the Advisory Group;
- b. directed the attention of the Advisory Group to the requirements of the community which has contributed significantly to both the content of the Plan and to the design of an appropriate plan development procedure;
- c. provided the context for the development of planning options and their evaluation;
- d. identified the key areas for policy development; and
- e. helped the Advisory Group communicate the benefits and limitations of a Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.

These objectives are listed in Tables 3.ii to 3.vi and have been used to help steer the updates to the Neighbourhood Plan. In many cases they result in a specific policy which will help to ensure that the identified goal can be achieved to the extent possible.

## REFERENDUM VERSION

**Table 3.ii  
Housing**

Goal	Aim/Objective
To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide new housing to meet local community needs, including a greater range of affordable housing for Woodcote residents and to contribute to the district wide need.</li> <li>• To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and new homes for families.</li> <li>• To limit new individual developments to no more than 30 homes.</li> <li>• To give preferential access to new homes for people with a strong local connection.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.iii  
Environment**

Goal	Aims/Objectives
To seek opportunities for landscape, recreational and biodiversity gain whilst minimising the environmental impact of new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect and enhance the village's open spaces.</li> <li>• To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB, landscape and views.</li> <li>• To protect and enhance the historic environment of the village and District.</li> <li>• To conserve and enhance biodiversity by protecting, enhancing and connecting wildlife habitat.</li> <li>• To use land efficiently and to preserve high quality agricultural land.</li> </ul>
To reduce the contribution to climate change by seeking to minimise or reduce the impact of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To position development in order to avoid increasing pollution from traffic congestion.</li> <li>• To ensure that new development is of high-quality design with a low carbon footprint.</li> <li>• To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.</li> <li>• To reduce the need for travel by car within the parish.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.iv  
Pedestrians,  
Traffic and  
Transport**

Goal	Aims/Objectives
To reduce the need for travel by car and shorten the length and duration of local journeys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To position development within easy walking distance of bus stops, the schools, the health centre, a shop and other village facilities.</li> <li>• To link all developments to the village centre with footpaths, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
To reduce road traffic congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To position new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.</li> <li>• To create new car parks to alleviate the worst areas of congestion within the built-up area.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.v  
Economy**

Goal	Aims/Objectives
To enhance the prospects for local employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage and support home working.</li> <li>• To provide local affordable housing for local employees.</li> <li>• To provide a net increase in sites for future employment within the Parish.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.vi  
Community**

Goal	Aims/Objectives
To maintain the character and vitality of the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To integrate new housing into Woodcote such that today's rural look and feel and open character of the developed area is maintained.</li> <li>• To provide homes for younger people and young families and so counter the growing demographic imbalance.</li> <li>• To preserve important village assets.</li> </ul>

# Section 4: Woodcote - Our Village

## 4.1. The Neighbourhood Area

Section 1.3 identifies the Neighbourhood Area as the Parish of Woodcote and the wishes of those who live and work in the Neighbourhood Area provide the essential context to the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.

This section of the Plan:

- i. provides a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Area; its location, surroundings, size, housing, heritage<sup>9</sup> and a summary of what residents think about life therein;
- ii. identifies the challenges facing the Neighbourhood Area; and
- iii. establishes policies to address, where possible, these challenges.



Figure 4.i Woodcote in South Oxfordshire

### Location

The parish is situated in a rural area of open farmland and beech woods. It is one of the larger villages in the district of South Oxfordshire at the south-western end of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), some eight miles to the northwest of Reading (see Figure 4.i) and four miles from the point where the River Thames flows through the Goring Gap.

### Neighbourhood Area Boundary

The Neighbourhood Area comprises the parish of Woodcote; thus the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area is the Parish boundary. This is shown by the blue line on the map opposite - Figure 4.ii



Figure 4.ii Parish Boundary

<sup>9</sup> A more detailed description is available in Section 1 of the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Background Document

4.2. Landscape

The Parish is located entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the escarpment above the Goring Gap. On the other side of the River Thames the eastern edge of North Wessex AONB rises steeply providing long views into Woodcote and the Chilterns AONB.

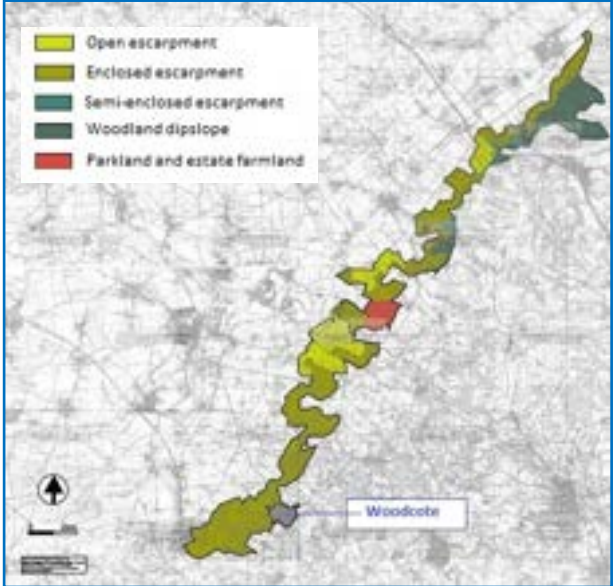


Figure 4.iii Woodcote in the Chilterns AONB

The South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (SOLA) for Character Area 8 describes Woodcote as the main settlement within the “Chilterns Escarpment” a feature described by the SOLA as forming:

*“the most visually significant and distinctive landform unit within the whole District. It comprises the steep face and top of the Chilterns escarpment, which forms a dramatic backdrop to the low-lying landscape of the vale to the northwest”.*

Figure 4.iv The Chilterns Escarpment



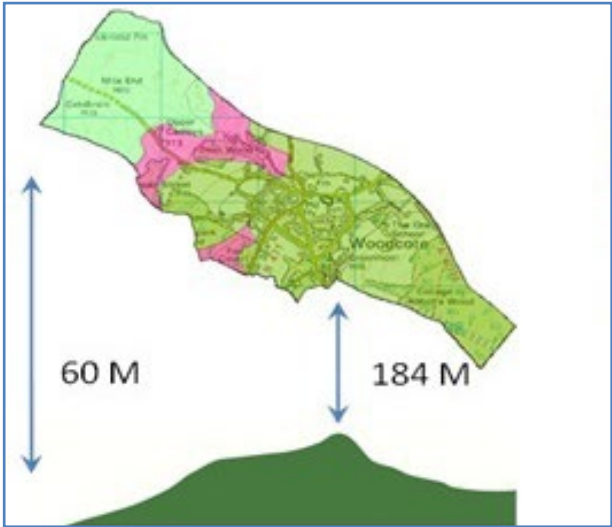
The Parish straddles the escarpment and dip slope. The north-west of the Parish is, generally, open farmland which slopes down towards the river Thames. This contrasts with the southeast of the Parish which is dense Chilterns beech woods, planted in the 18th Century to provide materials for the furniture-making industry.

Between the different north-western and south-eastern landscapes runs the Chilterns escarpment, a steep wooded escarpment as illustrated in Figure 4.v.

At its highest point the Neighbourhood Area is 184 metres above sea level; at its lowest some 60 metres (Figure 4.v).



Figure 4.v Parish Elevation



### 4.3. Natural Environment

Although there are no sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation or National Nature Reserves within the Parish there are two Conservation Target Areas. These are important areas for wildlife in the county where targeted conservation action can secure the maximum biodiversity benefits<sup>10</sup>. The two CTAs of particular significance to development in the parish of Woodcote are:

- the Chilterns Escarpment South CTA which abuts the south-western corner of the built-up area of the village; and
- the Chilterns Escarpment South Central CTA which abuts the northern edge of the built-up area of the village.

In addition:

(a) the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre<sup>11</sup> has designated four locations in the village area as ‘Local Wildlife Sites’:

- Elmorepark Woods
- Dean Wood
- Upper Covert
- Langtree House Bank

Local Wildlife Sites are a key component in the maintenance of the diversity of wildlife in the UK and although they are non-statutory sites the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect them.

(b) the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study<sup>12</sup> Biomap for South Oxfordshire identifies Woodcote as one of the most important locations for wildlife in the county with the habitat significance of some 60% of the parish being classed as **Very High** with another 25-30% being classed as **High**.

The landscape of the parish is typified by networks of tall dense hedges that support colonies of house sparrows and foraging hedgehogs. Swifts and bats still hunt over the allotments, the surrounding ancient woodland supports red kites, tawny owls and substantial carpets of bluebells, and the arable farmland running towards South Stoke is still home to rapidly declining farmland birds including corn bunting, yellow hammer and skylark.

The Neighbourhood Area has no water courses and contains no Zone 2 or 3 flood risk areas.

### 4.4. Physical Environment

#### Heritage

There are 12 listed buildings and 18 recorded archaeological monuments or findspots within the Neighbourhood Area.

#### Developed Area

Woodcote is a nucleated settlement with development concentrated, as shown by Figures 4.ii, 4.vi and 4.vii, in a single cluster in the centre of the Parish.



Figure 4.vi Developed Area



Figure 4.vii Developed Area

<sup>10</sup> Wild Oxfordshire [www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.tverc.org>

<sup>12</sup> <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

4.5. Housing

Population

The population of the Neighbourhood Area expanded rapidly from 600 in the 1950s to 2500 in 1981. Today the population is falling with the 2019 number estimated at about 2600<sup>13</sup> representing a decrease of some 3% since 2002 despite an increase in the number of dwellings. The population is also aging with the share of residents above 60 years of age moving from 13% in 2002 to 22% in 2017<sup>14</sup>. This poses a significant threat to the vitality of the community.

Housing

In March 2011 the Neighbourhood Area had 1012 dwellings<sup>15</sup>, an increase of 6.5% on the 950 in 2001. In 2019 the number of homes in the Parish had increased to 1108 homes as a result of windfalls (20) and the allocations in the first Neighbourhood Plan (76). As the population has fallen the average number of people resident in each dwelling has dropped by 10% from the 2001 figure of 2.8/household.

Housing in the Neighbourhood Area is expensive and less affordable than across England as a whole. In 2010 the Affordable Housing Ratio for South Oxfordshire was assessed to be 12.07. The national figure was 7.8<sup>16</sup>.

The Neighbourhood Area has more than twice as many detached houses as the national average and 70% more than Oxfordshire<sup>17</sup>. The share of terraced housing is less than one-third the national average. 5% of the homes (less than half the national average) have one bedroom; 38% (twice the national average) have 4 or more bedrooms<sup>18</sup>. The average number of bedrooms per home is 3.2. The Average number of bedrooms in use is 2.0<sup>19</sup>

Owner occupation rates are higher in the Neighbourhood Area (77%) than across England (63%) with social renting accounting for 12% of home tenure compared to 18% for the rest of the country<sup>20</sup>. The housing styles reflect the rapid development of Woodcote in the 1960s and 1970s



<sup>13</sup> Housing Need Assessment: Objectively Assessed Need: Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group: July 2019

<sup>14</sup> ONS 2011 Census

<sup>15</sup> ONS 2011 Census

<sup>16</sup> ONS 2020

<sup>17</sup> Source: Rural Community Profile for Woodcote 2012,

<sup>18</sup> ONS 2011 Census

<sup>19</sup> Woodcote All-village Survey: 2017

<sup>20</sup> ONS 2011 Census



#### 4.6. Living in the Neighbourhood Area

The 2008 Parish Plan observed that people liked living in Woodcote. Residents are relatively prosperous; enjoy good health, good housing, and an exceptional environment. Educational standards are high; unemployment and crime are low and deprivation is exceptionally low.

A strong sense of community is supported by over 40 clubs and societies<sup>21</sup>, the social facilities offered by the Village Hall, the Community Centre and coffee shop, the library, and the youth club, the Correspondent (the monthly village magazine) and major community events such as the annual Woodcote Rally which celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in July 2013 and the annual Village Fete.

All residents live within easy walking distance of the pre-schools, the primary and secondary schools, the health centre, churches, and retail outlets.

Despite these advantages no community is perfect and, as identified in the Parish Plan, Woodcote faces challenges. These challenges were evident in the consultations undertaken during the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and are explored in succeeding sections.



Community Centre



The Red Lion



Village Hall

#### Connections

Woodcote is 3.5 miles from the nearest railway station (Goring & Streatley) and eight miles from the centre of Reading, the nearest major town. To the north the nearest town is Wallingford some seven miles distant.

Woodcote is linked to Oxford, Wallingford and Reading by an hourly bus service.

<sup>21</sup> Woodcote Parish Plan, 2008, page 20

## Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The following sections contain policies derived from the goals and objectives set out in section 3. As explained in that section the goals were arrived at by looking at the views expressed by residents in three Village Appraisals, the Parish Plan, consultations and surveys held as part of the evidence gathering for the WNP1 and consultations and the survey carried out for WNP2. To aid identification, policies have been coded as indicated in Table 5.i

**Table 5.i**  
**Policy Coding**

Code	Policy Area	Plan Section
<b>C</b>	Community Well-Being Policies	6
<b>T</b>	Traffic and Transport Policies	7
<b>EM</b>	Employment and Skills Policies	8
<b>E</b>	Countryside, Environment and Climate Change Policies	9
<b>H</b>	Housing Policies	10
<b>D</b>	Design Policies	11
<b>HS</b>	Housing Site Policies	12
<b>ES</b>	Employment Site Policies	12

### Retained Policies

WNP1, the first Neighbourhood Plan, established policies in the areas listed in Table 5.i. Many of these policies are retained in this second Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan and identified as such in sections 6 to 12.

## Section 6: Community Well-Being Policies

### 6.1. Community and Recreational Facilities

- There is strong community support for the safeguarding of important village assets.

For a community of 2600 residents Woodcote is well endowed with community and recreational facilities. The village has:

- a substantial Village Hall with a kitchen, a large Main Hall, a smaller Pavilion Hall, a Committee Room, a Youth Centre, small Function Room, and showers and changing rooms;
- a community centre with two meeting rooms which hosts a Saturday coffee shop;
- a community Library, shared with Langtree Academy, which opens two mornings and three afternoons a week and provides internet access and e-mail; and
- nearly 60 centrally located allotments all within 10 - 15 minutes walking distance.

The Community Centre and Woodcote Community Library buildings, which enjoy a frontage onto Reading Road, are important facilities which contribute to the enjoyment of life in the village and the sustainability of the community.

The Community Centre is located in the old schoolhouse on Reading Road and is subject to a short-term lease to the village by Oxfordshire County Council. It is a long-term aim for the village to gain ownership of the property if ever the County Council should want to dispose of the building. The inclusion of the Community Centre on South Oxfordshire District Council's register of Assets of Community Value has provided the Parish Council, or another community organisation within Woodcote, with an opportunity to bid to acquire the asset on behalf of the local community, if it is placed for sale on the open market, under the Community Right to Buy Regulations.

#### Policy C1: Assets of Community Value (Retained Policy)

Proposals that will result in either the loss of an Asset of Community Value or in significant harm to an Asset of Community Value will not be supported unless it meets the requirements of relevant policies in the development plan.

Additional community facilities are provided by:

- a large village green which includes a cricket square and one football pitch;
- two LEAP<sup>22</sup> standard playgrounds; and
- badminton, yoga and other indoor activities in the Village Hall.

Local sports provision is enhanced for the local community by the generosity of the Oratory School (golf, swimming pool and squash courts) and Langtree Academy (particularly the sports hall, multi-use games area and tennis courts). Residents must travel for additional sports facilities such as athletics tracks, multi-purpose sports halls, outdoor bowling greens, golf courses, hockey, rugby and mini soccer pitches to Reading, Henley, Goring and Wallingford

#### Policy C2: Sports Facilities at the Schools (Retained Policy)

Proposals which provide for additional sports facilities, open in character and over and above those which already exist, on the Langtree Academy and Woodcote Primary School sites, and which meet the requirements of the school and the wider community, will be encouraged.

The rural surroundings are an important leisure asset and Woodcote's position within the Chilterns AONB provides many opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and other outdoor pursuits.

<sup>22</sup> LEAP = local equipped area for play. A minimum area of 400m<sup>2</sup> with at least five activities

## 6.2. Health and Health Care

- The dispensary attached to the Woodcote Surgery is highly valued.
- There is no local optician or NHS dentist.
- The ageing of the village will seriously strain the local medical practice.
- Road safety is a major concern.

Residents of South Oxfordshire enjoy better health than the average across the country. The only area where residents of the district are at significantly greater risk than others in England is that of being killed or seriously injured on the road.

The Goring and Woodcote Medical Practice has a surgery and dispensary in Woodcote which provides a valued service to patients from Woodcote and the surrounding rural area. The village is concerned that a separate chemist with a dispensary could prejudice the viability of the village surgery and dispensary and would, therefore, have the undesirable consequence of the loss of this essential service.

The nearest dental surgery is in Checkendon, some two miles away with the nearest dental practice taking NHS patients some seven miles distant in Wallingford. This has created a demand for an NHS dentist in Woodcote.

To see an optician requires that residents travel to Pangbourne, Wallingford or Reading which has led to a demand for an optician in the village.

## 6.3. Communications Infrastructure

- Residents consider a good broadband service to be essential.

The provision of good telecommunications is particularly important in rural areas and for the support of rural enterprise and homeworking. Currently fibre optic connections are the most robust and future-proof method of delivering high performance connectivity and this should be the aim for all new developments.

### Policy C3: Communications Infrastructure (Retained Policy)

Proposals which seek the expansion of electronics communication networks and high speed broadband along with improvements to connectivity will be supported where the applicant has fully explored the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures; where the numbers of radio and telecommunication masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and where the development has been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the character and appearance of the AONB.

New residential development should provide for suitable ducting to enable more than one service provider to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from connection chambers located on the public highway, or some alternative connection point available to different service providers.

A connectivity statement should demonstrate how the proposal takes communications connectivity into account.

## 6.4. Shopping

Woodcote currently has a Co-operative store, a smaller general store, a hairdresser, a fish and chip shop, a barber, a small garden centre and a small shop/cafe which provides take-away food and a variety of general supplies. In addition, there are two public houses. The village no longer has a Post Office and is dependent on a mobile Post Office van visiting the village three times per week.

Many residents also shop in Wallingford, Reading or, increasingly, on the internet.

## **Policy C4: Community Facilities and Services**

Proposals for additional services and facilities within the village will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:

- a. the individual proposal will not generate unacceptable noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to neighbouring residential properties;
- b. the particular proposal will not lead to unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network will not be severe; and
- c. access arrangements and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without having an unacceptable impact on adjoining residential and non-residential uses.

## **6.5. Education**

- **Woodcote Primary School would benefit from increased pupil numbers.**
- **Langtree School may not be able accommodate all pupils from the village and local feeder primary schools**
- **School buses and cars, taking and collecting pupils to and from school, add to the congestion on Reading Road.**

### **Woodcote Primary School**

The school is an Oxfordshire County Council coeducational school for children aged 4+ to 11 years mostly from the Parish. Woodcote Primary School has a current enrolment of around 180 and an overall capacity of 210 pupils. The school is currently housed on a cramped site, immediately adjacent to Langtree Academy. The limited provision for staff to park their cars leads to on-street parking which reduces the Reading Road to a single lane and adds to the congestion on the Reading Road.

### **Langtree Academy**

Langtree is a coeducational comprehensive school for 560 students aged from 11 to 16 years. The school became an Academy in 2012. Children come from Woodcote and neighbouring villages including Goring, Stoke Row, South Stoke and Nettlebed, with a few pupils admitted from the northern fringes of Reading and from West Berkshire. There is currently a serious shortfall in spaces for staff and visitor parking on the Langtree site which, leads to roadside parking and a further reduction of the Reading Road to a single lane. Langtree Academy buildings are used to capacity, but the school may be able to accommodate additional local pupils by reducing the numbers from beyond the catchment area.

The **Cabin Pre-school** is currently located on the boundary between Langtree Academy and the Primary School. A lack of parking spaces on the Langtree site means that staff working at the Cabin have to park on the Reading Road or in the Village Hall car park preventing users of the Village Hall, such as the **Village Hall Pre-school**, using the Village Hall car park, adding still further to the traffic problems on the Reading Road.

During the consultation process issues arose concerning:

- the ability of the schools to grow and provide for the additional children from the new family homes, both in Woodcote and the surrounding villages. As identified above these concerns may not be an issue for a moderate increase in housing;
- the ability of the schools to respond both to rising local demand and to the rising birth rate. The decline in, and ageing of, the population of Woodcote renders this concern invalid;
- the poor quality, piece-meal design and deterioration of some of the school buildings; and
- the serious impact of additional parking on the Reading Road between the War Memorial Crossroads and the junction with Greenmore and along Greenmore where it meets the Reading Road.

The Plan recognises the falling attendance at Woodcote Primary School and seeks to address this by providing more family homes. The Plan also recognises the severe congestion problems by the schools, which are exacerbated at school start and finish times by parents dropping off and collecting children by car, with the attendant air quality and road safety problems and seeks to address this by providing a substantial new car park opposite the schools.

There is no post-16 education provision in the Parish and most post-16 students travel to Henley College, the designated post-16 centre, by special bus or travel to schools or colleges some distance from the village by car or extra buses.

In addition to the primary and secondary schools, the Parish includes the **Oratory School**, an independent Catholic senior boarding and day school which admits 420 boys and girls from across the United Kingdom and beyond. One of the accesses to the Oratory site is from the Reading Road. Nearly all day-pupils at the Oratory School are brought and collected by car.

**Policy C5: Schools**

Proposals to relocate the Primary School to allow expansion of Langtree Academy without loss of playing fields, will be supported, provided the new location does not lead to an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.

## 6.6. Community Facilities

Additional residents in Woodcote will generate a need to enhance facilities at, for example, the library, health centre, schools, the village hall, community centre and village greens. These will be funded, where appropriate, by the Community Infrastructure Levy noting that communities with a Neighbourhood Plan receive 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

## Section 7: Traffic and Transport Policies

### 7.1. Traffic in the Village

- **Congestion in the Reading Road and at the War Memorial crossroads**
- **Pedestrian safety; speeding and parking**

The primary and secondary schools, two pre-schools, the businesses located at Church Farm, a shop, a car maintenance business, the Woodcote Garden Centre, the Village Library, Village Hall and Community Centre are all sited in a cluster, on the Reading Road. This is also a through road for the bus services and for traffic from the existing housing developments and from local villages west of Woodcote onto the A4074. With parents, users of the library and Community Centre, pre-school and some school staff parking on the Reading Road it is reduced to a single lane during the school day and with public service and school buses delivering children to Langtree Academy becomes very congested, particularly at the beginning and end of each school day.

Residents of the village including those dropping off/collecting children from the Langtree Academy, Woodcote Primary and Cabin Pre-School have identified three traffic hotspots within the village. The public consultation exercises concerning the WNP have highlighted concerns over traffic generation; access difficulties; speeding; unneighbourly parking and conflicts between private cars, buses and HGVs in three specific areas of the village, namely (i) in the vicinity of these educational establishments along Reading Road to, and along, Greenmore; (ii) at the War Memorial crossroads where Reading Road, Oxford Road, South Stoke Road and Goring Road meet; and (iii) the junction of Beech Lane/Bridle Path and Goring Road.

In addition to the schools, the village shops and services also attract traffic from the smaller villages surrounding Woodcote, leading to congestion and parking problems. Woodcote is also used as a short cut by drivers moving between the M4 and the A4074 to the Midlands. Many, as evidenced by Parish Council sponsored speed checks conducted by Oxfordshire County Council, exceed the speed limit particularly along the Goring Road and Greenmore. Traffic congestion, road safety, speeding and parking are all major concerns to residents.

As noted, three areas are of particular note:

- a) **The Reading Road, particularly near the schools and on Greenmore at its junction with the Reading Road.** There is concern, verging on anger, about the impact of day-long parking along one side of the Reading Road, the serious congestion that results and the hazard to school children from the associated chaos. As noted previously Langtree Academy serves a wide area and many children arrive by school bus or in private cars. In addition, post-16 children have to travel out of the village by bus or car adding further to the congestion.
- b) **The junction of Goring, Oxford and South Stoke Roads at the War Memorial** crossroads where visibility is poor and pedestrians are at risk from cars exceeding the speed limit despite the introduction in 2019 of a zebra crossing.
- c) The **junction of Beech Lane, Bridle Path and the Goring Road** where buses, customers' cars, delivery vehicles using the Co-operative store all meet speeding traffic and cause serious congestion on a corner where poor visibility creates a danger to motorist and pedestrian alike.

The consultations also showed growing concern about the road safety hazard arising from parked cars reducing Greenmore to a single lane on the bend in Greenmore opposite the Wards farm industrial site.

**Policy T1: Traffic Congestion (Retained Policy)**

Proposals which generate significant amounts of movement should provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment. Proposals which have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe will not be supported, particularly in the following areas:

- a. that section of Reading Road between the War Memorial crossroads and its junction with Greenmore;
- b. the War Memorial crossroads where Reading Road meets Oxford Road, South Stoke Road and Goring Road; and
- c. within a circumference of 200 metres of the crossroads where Beech Lane and Bridle Path meet Goring Road.

**Policy T2: Parking for the Library and Community Centre**

Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals to provide a number of disabled parking spaces in front of the Library will be supported.

New car parks opposite the schools on the Reading Road and at the industrial units at Wards Farm remove the need for those working in the schools and clients and those employed on the Wards Farm site to park in the street with the consequent increase in congestion and reduction in road safety. We recommend that contingent upon the construction of new off-road parking on the Reading Road and opposite Wards Farm parking controls and traffic calming measures be pursued.

**Policy T3: Safe Travel to School (Retained Policy)**

Proposals to improve the safe delivery of pupils to the Langtree Academy and Woodcote Primary School sites on foot, by bicycle, school buses or by car which would involve changes to the existing site entrances will be supported.

**Policy T4: Parking at the Co-operative Store (Retained Policy)**

Proposals to provide a limited increase in parking spaces at the Co-operative store will be strongly supported.

The Co-operative store attracts many customers from the surrounding villages and is located on Bridle Path at a point where it meets the Goring Road and Beech Lane. Traffic on the Goring Road frequently exceeds the speed limit at this point which, together with poor visibility, the nearby bus stop and a lack of off-street parking outside the store which forces cars to park on Bridle Path and Beech Lane, creates a substantial hazard to the safety of road users and pedestrians.

**Policy T5: Traffic Calming along Goring Road (Retained Policy)**

Where appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for development which will directly access onto the Goring Road will be required to make provision for, and contribute to, appropriate traffic calming measures at either end of the Goring Road or in the near vicinity of the development.

Residents have continuously expressed a strong view in all consultations since 1984 that measures are needed to control the speed of traffic travelling through the village along the Goring Road. The improvement to road safety provided on the Goring Road near the War memorial crossroads has proved to be effective and the Parish Council will continue to work to address the issue of speeding traffic along the Goring Road.

**Policy T6: Pedestrian Footways (Retained Policy)**

All new housing developments must when appropriate and practical provide safe pedestrian access to link up with existing or proposed footpaths, ensuring that residents can walk safely to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.

Woodcote is a rural location with limited local facilities and a poor and unreliable public transport service. 44% of the population work outside Woodcote and 75% of those travelling to work use a car. This has led to high levels of car ownership (see Table 7.i below for a comparison with the figures for South Oxfordshire).



	% of households with a car or van	% of households with:				
		No cars	1 car	2 cars	3 cars	4+ cars
Woodcote	92%	8%	33%	41%	12%	6%
South Oxfordshire	82%	18%	42%	30%	7%	3%
England	74%	26%	42%	25%	5%	2%

Table 7.i Car ownership in Woodcote compared with South Oxfordshire and England

Woodcote figures derived from the 2017 all village survey, South Oxfordshire and England figures from 2011 census.

Inadequate provision for residential parking spaces has led to high levels of on-street parking on narrow estate roads and consequent issues for road safety. The photos below show examples of on-street parking in Wayside Green. In the 2017 all village survey, 11% of households reported that they did not have sufficient off-road parking spaces for the vehicles they owned. Future development in Woodcote must, therefore, provide adequate off-street parking for both residents and employees.

Policy T7 seeks to address this matter. It applies the minimum County Council car parking standards to new residential development in the parish. Plainly there may be circumstances where a development has the space and flexibility to provide a standard of car parking beyond the minimum standards. Car parking spaces and parking areas should also be sensitively integrated into new developments in accordance with the various criteria in Policy DES1 of the adopted Local Plan. The Parish Council acknowledge that proposals for modifications and extensions to existing properties will continue to come forward within the Plan period. Where it is practicable to do so, such proposals should be designed to ensure that existing parking spaces are retained or rearranged as part of the proposed development.



**Policy T7: Residential Car Parking Spaces**

Proposals for all new homes should provide off-street parking spaces having regard to site-specific circumstances and Oxfordshire County Council parking standards.

**7.2. Local Travel**

- **Additional traffic from new homes will add to existing congestion and road safety problems.**
- **Promotion of bus travel for all.**

The bus services are regular but only 3% of those employed currently use the bus to travel to work<sup>23</sup>. 10% walk and 70% use a car or van. The Parish Council is actively working to improve the hourly bus service to both Reading and Wallingford by requesting that the X39 buses, in both directions, stop once in the village at the bus stops on Reading Road outside Langtree and the Woodcote Garden Centre entrance.

WNP1 included a policy requirement that bus laybys be provided for the bus stops on Reading Road near to the junction with the A4074. Feasibility assessments have shown that there is insufficient space to provide the laybys without affecting the root protection areas of adjacent trees. This policy has, therefore, been removed.

The limited bus service only provides inconvenient and time-consuming access to the railway stations at Reading, Pangbourne and Goring.

<sup>23</sup> ONS 2011 Census

REFERENDUM VERSION



Traffic on the Reading Road showing roadside and Langtree Academy parking

## Section 8: Employment and Skills Policies

### 8.1. Employment and Skills

- **Development must not cause a net loss of employment space unless the loss can be justified by exceptional circumstances.**
- **Income and deprivation.**

Woodcote residents proportionately have more qualifications than those in England as a whole and the proportion with no qualifications is less than half the national average. Most (80%) work outside the Parish and local unemployment is about 25% of the national figure. Within the Parish the largest employment is in education with an increasingly significant number now working from home, Employment is also provided in local shops and on sites at Church Farm, Hatt's Yard, Ward's Farm and at premises in Long Toll.

Income levels are relatively high, and deprivation is very low. Net household incomes exceed those of Southeast England by 20% and the Office of National Statistics' index of multiple deprivation puts Woodcote among the top 5% of least deprived communities in the country.

The future economic wellbeing of Woodcote requires consideration of non-housing development. Consultations and the all-village survey in 2017 have produced some requests to improve the prospects for local employment, but these do not appear to be a priority. The number of home workers continues to increase helped by the recent upgrades to broadband speeds in the village.

Feedback from the consultations<sup>24</sup> reveals that there is no appetite for additional business or industrial development, but the community gives support to maintaining existing commercial enterprises and some support to adding to these, especially small independent businesses.

The proposed employment site allocations will create an additional 0.55 hectares of employment space which will accommodate a number of small industrial units. The proposed conversion of under-utilised office space into residential accommodation will result in the loss of 0.25 hectares of employment space giving a net gain of 0.3 hectares.

#### **Policy EM1: Heavy Goods Traffic (Retained Policy)**

Any proposal requiring planning permission to change the use of land in the Parish to general industrial use (B2) or distribution and storage uses (B8), or other uses which would generate heavy goods traffic, will be supported where they do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or would not result in a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network. All development proposals generating significant amounts of movement will require Travel Plans and should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment.

<sup>24</sup> The Woodcote Parish Plan 2008 and the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Consultation March 2011.

## Section 9: Countryside & Environment Policies

### 9.1. Rural Look and Feel

- The openness of the village and its location in the Chilterns AONB are greatly valued by all who live in Woodcote and residents wish to preserve the rural look and feel of the village.

#### Policy E1: Green space and Landscaping

For the allocations in this Plan and for any application for major development, a landscape strategy and visual analysis should be submitted which will incorporate the following details, where relevant:

- existing and proposed hard and soft landscaping;
- an outline of the measures to be taken to protect wildlife habitats, including trees and hedgerows, during construction;
- an analysis of both near and distant views from principal public vantage points and the effect of the proposed development and any planting mitigation on these views; and
- details, where appropriate, of how those areas to be retained for open space and/or woodland will be managed in the future.

### 9.2. The Historic Environment

#### Policy E2: Historic Environment (Retained Policy)

Any designated historic heritage assets in the Parish and their settings, both above and below ground and including listed buildings, and any monuments that may be scheduled or conservation areas that may be created will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage assets.

### 9.3. Countryside and Environment

- Development might damage Greenmoor Ponds or the aquifer feeding them.
- Development might damage the AONB and landscape and could lead to a loss of valued views across open countryside from within, and into the village.
- Development could lead to a loss of greenfield sites and open the AONB to further development.
- Development might damage the local ecology.

Conservation and enhancement of the landscape and wildlife habitats is a high priority of the NPPF, the Local Plan and the residents of Woodcote and protection of the countryside and the environment are major considerations when assessing potential sites. Wherever possible developments should seek to have a net gain for wildlife in the parish.

The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study<sup>25</sup> uses 'biobands' to illustrate the extent to which areas in the county of Oxfordshire support wildlife. Six biobands, ranging from **Low** to **Very High** are used. A bioband which is classified as very high tends to support a wider range of wildlife habitats including some which may be of national or international importance. Lower biobands generally have fewer habitats and these are usually of more local importance.

Woodcote is one of the more important locations in the county with the habitat significance of some 60% of the Parish being classified as **Very High** and another 25-30% being classified as **High**.

The parish still supports a rich variety of wildlife including species or groups, such as frogs, toads, newts, hedgehogs, wild pollinators, farmland birds and swifts but these are increasingly under pressure. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks

<sup>25</sup> <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

to foster a neighbourhood that supports Woodcote’s wildlife and enable it to thrive and support solutions to climate change.

There are no local-level designations, but Woodcote residents place a high value on the environment at Greenmoor Ponds and on the continued protection of the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The 2008 Parish Plan notes that *‘99% of villagers want to protect the countryside around Woodcote and the natural features in the village’* and we expect the Local Plan policies ENV1 (Landscape and Countryside), ENV2 (Biodiversity), ENV3 (Biodiversity – Non Designated Sites, Habitats and Species) and ENV5 (Green Infrastructure in New Developments) to apply.

### **Policy E3: Biodiversity and Wildlife Support**

All development should result in a net biodiversity gain of at least 10%, measured by a recognised biodiversity accounting metric against a baseline ecological survey detailing wildlife habitats, including existing trees and hedgerows, and their condition.

Development proposals which take appropriate opportunities to incorporate wildlife improvements in and around the site will be supported, especially where this can secure measurable overall gains for wildlife by implementing measures such as:

- a. retaining and ensuring the ongoing sympathetic management of existing wildlife features, such as mature trees, hedgerows and other forms of wildlife corridor;
- b. retaining existing nesting and roosting opportunities where possible and providing nesting features and boxes for bats and birds, suited to, but not exclusively for, swifts, swallows and house martins on each new dwelling or building as an integral part of their design;
- c. ensuring hedgehogs can move between gardens through provision and ensured retention of “hedgehog highways”;
- d. creating wildlife corridors or other features that support wildlife;
- e. encouraging features that support green infrastructure;
- f. providing new green spaces, enhanced for pollinators including butterflies and moths, with native trees and/or hedgerows within the development; and
- g. retaining wildlife strips of scrubland where development results in the loss of scrubland.

Where onsite measures are not possible, offsite measures will be considered.

## **9.4. Settlement Boundary**

Woodcote is located entirely within the Chilterns AONB, so, development that extends the built area of the village beyond the settlement boundary has the potential to cause significant harm to the landscape of the AONB, contrary to policies in the SODC Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The benefits of defining a settlement boundary and the methodology used to determine the settlement boundary for Woodcote are set out in a separate paper “Establishing a Settlement Boundary for Woodcote” which can be found on the Neighbourhood Plan page on the Parish Council website<sup>26</sup>. The paper considers the planning context, the reasons for establishing a settlement boundary, the guidance available and defines the criteria used for inclusion or exclusion of land within the Parish.

The settlement boundary is a line that is drawn on a plan around a village which reflects its built form and guides development to sustainable locations. In general, there is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary although it should be noted that inclusion of land within a settlement boundary does not mean that all land within the boundary is automatically suitable for new development. There may be areas of land within the settlement boundaries that are not suitable for development due to other constraints, for example, tree preservation orders, land protected as Local Green Space or listed buildings. A settlement boundary does not preclude all development outside of the boundary line but would be regulated by the stricter planning policies governing new development (particularly housing) in the open countryside of the AONB. It must be noted that the settlement boundary is a planning designation only and has no other administrative relevance. Settlement boundaries do not necessarily reflect land ownership boundaries, parish boundaries or the exact curtilage of dwellings.

<sup>26</sup> [www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan)

The benefits of establishing a settlement boundary for Woodcote are as follows:

- i. ensure development is directed to more sustainable locations, both in terms of accessibility to, and support of, existing services and transport, and in terms of landscape and habitat;
- ii. protect the special character of the AONB from encroachment of land uses more characteristic of built-up areas;
- iii. reduce the risk of loss of landscape quality from ribbon development;
- iv. ensure a more plan-led and controlled approach to potential development in the parish;
- v. provide greater certainty to communities, landowners and developers over where certain types of development could be acceptable in principle; and
- vi. assist with a consistent approach to the determination of planning applications

There are disadvantages. A settlement boundary can:

- i. lead to an increase of land value within the settlement boundary;
- ii. impact the character of properties and the village by encouraging development within the gardens of homes within the settlement boundary although this is one of the reasons that a number of larger gardens have been split by the settlement boundary;
- iii. result in development being crammed into every available parcel of land within the boundary and reducing the landscape quality and character of that village, although this is why the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces within the settlement boundary; and
- iv. increase the ‘hope’ value of countryside adjoining, but outside, the boundary.

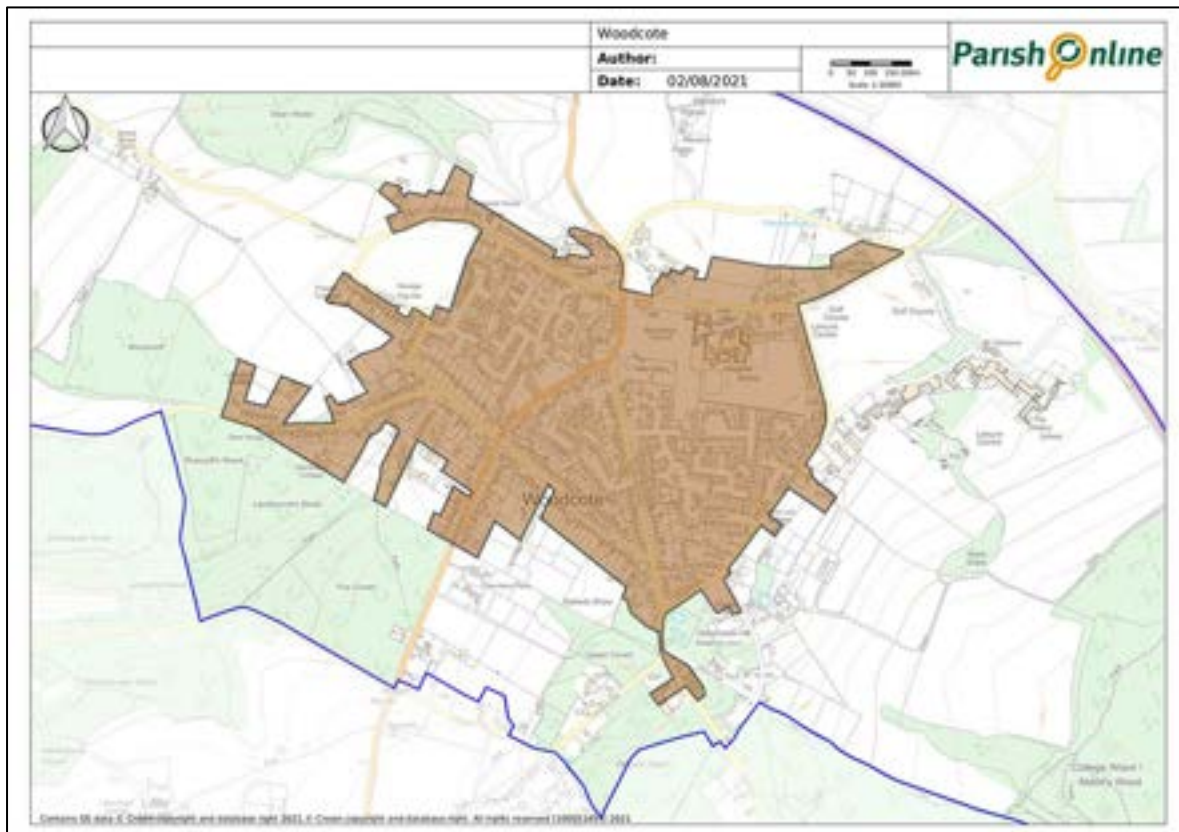
**Policy E4: Settlement Boundary**

The Settlement Boundary is shown in Fig 9.i.

Proposals for residential development within the boundary will be supported, provided that they accord with the design and development management policies of the Local Plan and other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposals for development outside the boundary will only be supported if they are appropriate to a countryside location and therefore conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB.

Fig 9.i Map showing the settlement boundary



The policy requires that development proposals outside the defined boundary are appropriate to a countryside location and are consistent with relevant policies of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan in respect of protecting the landscape and character of the Chilterns AONB. This recognises the valued function of the countryside and working farmland in shaping rural character. In some places there are paddocks, farms, agricultural units, education establishments, recreational facilities and dwellings in open countryside or on the edge of the village extending into the countryside beyond. The policy does not seek to prevent the improvement or extension of such uses. In addition, the third paragraph of the policy provides the flexibility for new commercial and recreational development to be supported where that development would be in accordance with development plan policies.

The boundary has been drawn to reflect the present, observable, developed edge of the village and makes provision for the proposed development schemes set out in policies HS2-HS10, whilst protecting the village from unwanted development on the edge of the village that would cause harm to the AONB.

### 9.5. Green Spaces

Green spaces within the built-up area provide both recreational, wildlife amenity and potential sites for tree planting, an essential element of the community's action to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The process followed and the criteria for the selection of local green spaces is set out in a separate paper "Local Green Space Assessment" which can be found on the Neighbourhood Plan page of the Parish Council website<sup>27</sup>. The paper considers the reasons for identifying and protecting green spaces within the village, defines the criteria used in assessing the green spaces and includes the detailed assessment of each space.

One of the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans is the achievement of sustainable development. The social, community, economic and environmental benefits of green spaces make local places sustainable<sup>28</sup>. Thus, the provision of local green space can contribute to development being sustainable and planning for green spaces should be an integral part of a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Local Green Space (LGS) designation was introduced into national planning policy, as part of the Government's commitment to promoting healthy communities<sup>29</sup>. Communities can identify green areas of particular importance to them, designate them, and protect them with appropriate policies in Neighbourhood Development Plans noting that good planning requires that green infrastructure be considered in terms of value to the local community, local environment and local economy.

Once a site is designated as a Local Green Space, it is protected against new development except in 'very special circumstances'. The designation:

- i. should live beyond the lifetime of the plan;
- ii. must be complementary to the objectives of sustainable development, and to sufficient investment in homes, jobs and other essential services; and
- iii. must be consistent with national policy.

Policy E5 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the local green spaces within the Plan period, they can be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the District Council. In particular, it will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the 'very special circumstances' required by this policy.

National Planning Practice Guidance states that 'Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities'.

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<sup>27</sup> [www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan)

<sup>28</sup> Neighbourhood Planning, Local Green Spaces. Locality Toolkit

<sup>29</sup> Open Spaces and Recreation, NPPF paragraphs 98-102

Demonstrating the particular importance requires satisfying criteria contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Specifically for a Local Green Space to be eligible for designation, it must:

- i. be in reasonable proximity to the community which it serves;
- ii. be demonstrably special to a local community and hold 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/or
- iii. not be an extensive tract of land; and
- iv. be local in character.

National policy further states that blanket designation of all green space is not appropriate.

**Policy E5: Local Green Spaces**

The areas identified in Table 9.i and Map 9.ii are designated as Local Green Spaces.

New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Spaces except in very special circumstances.

Table 9.i Local Green Spaces	Identification	Map Location	Description
	The Village Green	1	Used by dog walkers and others for general recreation and incorporates a cricket pitch, football pitch and football practice area
	The Allotments.	2	Used for recreation and production of flowers and vegetables
	Folly Field.	3	Used for recreational purposes and incorporating play equipment
	The green space bounded by Wittenham Close, Croft Way, Grimmer Way and Hagbourne Close.	4	Used for recreational purposes – dedicated as green space when the estate was developed
	The green space bounded by Wood Green and the Goring Road.	5	Used for recreational purposes – designated as green space when the estate was developed
	The green space bounded by Folly Green and Goring Road.	6	Used for recreational purposes – designated as green space when the estate was developed
	The green space in Wayside Green	7	Used for recreational purposes – designated as green space when the estate was developed
	Greenmoor Ponds	8	Wildlife area incorporating historically significant ponds
	Snowdrop Wood, south of the Long Toll development	9	Woodland used as recreational space and supporting wildlife
	Woodland surrounding the Greenmoor Ponds	10	Woodland used as a recreational space and supporting wildlife



Figure 9.ii

Map showing Designated Green Spaces



Maps of the individual green spaces are included in appendix F.

## 9.6. Important Views

There are a number of views from public vantage points that are particularly distinctive of the rural landscape setting, the village lying within it, and the context of the two AONBs. The Plan requires that development proposals recognise and take account of these. These views are identified in Table 9.ii and map in Figure 9.iv. Photographs showing these views are included in appendix E.

The process used to define the important views is set out in a separate paper “Protected View Assessment” which can be found on the Neighbourhood Plan page of the Parish Council website<sup>30</sup>. This paper describes the context in which the village sits, including the landscape character assessment for the surrounding landscape. Each view is then described and the reasons for protecting the view are given.

<sup>30</sup>[www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan](http://www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan)

The Parish is located entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the escarpment above the Goring Gap. On the other side of the River Thames the eastern edge of North Wessex AONB rises steeply providing long views into Woodcote and the Chilterns AONB.

There is a dense network of public rights of way in and around Woodcote (shown on map 9.iii). A nationally important route - the Chiltern Way extension (highlighted in yellow on the map) - passes through the Parish. Public Rights of Way are important in the context of assessment of the views into and out of the village because of issues of visual amenity for walkers and, in the case of bridleways, for horse riders and cyclists. The relatively extensive network of public rights of way shows the value of the landscape surrounding the settlement as a recreational resource.



Map 9.iii Public rights of way around Woodcote

All the views can be seen from public footpaths, bridleways or public roads. The views have been assessed against the landscape character seen in the view:

- i. Views of the open escarpment to the northwest, including views into the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- ii. Views of the open dip slope to the southeast.
- iii. Views of the typical paddocks and fields enclosed by hedges and/or woodland.
- iv. Views into the village along the rural roads.

**Policy E6: Important Views**

Development proposals should preserve, conserve and, where practicable, enhance the local character of the landscape in general and should take account of the important views as identified on figure 9.iv and as listed in table 9.ii.

Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on the local character of the landscape and/or on an identified important view will not be supported.

No	Vantage Point		
	From footpath/road	Towards	Comments
1	411/9/10	Bridle Path	Characteristic AONB landscape
2	411/9/10	Upper Covert Woods	Characteristic AONB landscape
3	411/9/10	Goring Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
4	411/9/10	Shirvells Hill	Characteristic AONB landscape
5	Goring Road	Pot Kiln Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape
6	411/2/10	Fox Covert Woods	Characteristic AONB landscape
7	411/2/10	Wood Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape
8	411/8/10	Behoes Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape
9	411/8/10	South Stoke Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
10	411/8/10	South Stoke Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
11	South Stoke Road	Oxford Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
12	Oxford Road	Reading Road	Valued rural approach to village
13	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape
14	411/1/10	Oxford Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
15	411/1/10	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape
16	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape
17	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	Reading Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
18	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	Reading Road	Characteristic AONB landscape
19	Reading Road	Greenmore	Valued rural approach to village
20	411/19/30	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape
21	411/19/30	College Wood	Characteristic AONB landscape

**Table 9.ii Valued Local Views**

Figure 9.iv Map showing Valued Local Views



**9.7. Renewable Energy Generation**

Climate change presents a major threat to environmental and social sustainability. New development will add to the community’s greenhouse gas emissions from, for example, electricity generation and transport thus proposals for renewable energy will be supported provided they do not conflict with the NPPF requirement to protect and enhance valued landscapes such as AONBs or sites of biodiversity

**Policy E7: Solar Energy Arrays**

Proposals for a solar energy array will be supported having regard to the policies of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan and provided:

- a. it is located and designed to suit the character of the local landscape;
- b. it is effectively screened;
- c. it will not cause significant harmful noise or light pollution; and
- d. it will not cause substantial harm to a designated heritage asset.

## Section 10: Housing Policies

### 10.1. Background

- There is a need to provide a more balanced housing stock with more smaller houses.
- More affordable housing should be provided.
- Housing suitable for older people should be provided.
- Housing should be provided at a scale which is appropriate to the character of the village and will enable new residents to integrate easily into village life.
- There should be provision for those with a strong local connection to have preferential access to housing.
- New development must be integrated into the community rather than creating communities within the community.

The population is ageing. The number aged over 60 increased by more than 60% between 2002 and 2017 making this sector of the community 22% of the local population in 2017 against 13% in 2002. At the same time the number under 40 has decreased by 19% since 2002 – falling to 42% of the local population in 2017 compared with 52% in 2002. This threatens the vitality of the community and places extra, and different, demands on local health, transport and housing.

House prices continue to rise in Woodcote. In 2013 the average price of a home in Woodcote was £365,000<sup>31</sup>. In October 2019 the average house price was £509,000<sup>32</sup> with, for example, terraced houses selling for an average price of £300,000. The housing stock has twice the national proportion of detached houses and less than one third of the national proportion of terraced houses when compared to England as a whole. When asked, in 2013, what type of housing was needed in Woodcote one third of respondents wanted semi-detached houses<sup>33</sup> while one in eight wanted a flat, maisonette, or bed-sit. This was confirmed by the response to:

- the all-village survey in 2017 which showed that 70% of respondents wanted semi-detached or terraced rather than detached homes; and
- an all-village consultation in February 2018<sup>34</sup> which showed that over three-quarters of respondents supported a mix in which 50% of new homes were 3-bed properties and 25% were 2-bed properties.

Woodcote needs more young people and families for the community to retain its age balance, but the current shortage of affordable housing denies young people and families the opportunity to live in the village where they grew up. The village needs smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and remain in Woodcote and for young singles or couples<sup>35, 36</sup>.

If there is going to be limited housing development, then most residents want priority to be given to using redundant brown field sites rather than building on green field sites.

### 10.2. Housing Strategy

This housing strategy is directed towards improving the sustainability of Woodcote as a demographically mixed and balanced community and is based on the results of the Housing Need Assessment. It therefore places:

- (i) high priority on family-sized dwellings to address the imbalances identified. This includes:
  - three bed family homes for private purchase;
  - affordable housing for rent or shared ownership; and
  - smaller one and two bed dwellings for residents to downsize.
- (ii) low priority for larger four or five bed dwellings. It is accepted that a small number of larger homes may be necessary in order to secure viability of allocated sites and deliver a minimum of 40% affordable housing.

<sup>31</sup> Zoopla: February 2013.

<sup>32</sup> Zoopla: October 2019

<sup>33</sup> Source: Woodcote CFO Neighbourhood Plan Housing Survey Report, 2013

<sup>34</sup> Source: Woodcote Consultation Report: February 2018

<sup>35</sup> Source: Village consultation March 2012

<sup>36</sup> Woodcote All-Village Survey: 2017

### 10.3. Housing Number, Mix and Tenancy

The goals and objectives of the Plan are realised by a set of policies that:

- i. conform to and develop the relevant policies in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan;
- ii. address those issues of life in the village that are related to land use; and
- iii. address the particular sustainability or any other requirements that arise from a specific site proposal.

This section provides policies that fall into (i) and (ii) above. Site specific policies are addressed in Section 12.

#### The Number of New Homes

A large majority of residents do not wish to see major new housing developments in Woodcote which would inevitably lead to a significant change in the character of the village and intrusion into the AONB. A 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Oxfordshire recommended the housing need in Oxfordshire to 2032. Derived from this, the South Oxfordshire Local Plan allocated 15% growth to the larger villages in the District (based on the number of houses in 2011) in addition to the allocation in the earlier Core Strategy, making a total requirement for 225 new dwellings for Woodcote. WNP1 allocated sites for 76 houses (the requirement from the SODC Core Strategy) and there have been 34 windfall developments, leaving a balance of 115 homes.

Woodcote is located wholly within the Chilterns AONB and the NPPF requires that the AONB must be protected and enhanced by new development. Policies in the Local Plan also support this requirement.

Woodcote Parish Council compiled a list of potential development sites derived from the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), local advertising for sites and sites identified when preparing WNP1 that were not allocated. Following removal of duplicates, sites already included in WNP1 or developed, and sites withdrawn by landowners, 18 sites were assessed for suitability for development based on landscape, sustainability, heritage and infrastructure issues. Four sites were assessed as suitable for residential development with a capacity for 53 houses and two sites for employment use, in addition to one site that is already designated as an employment site.

The NPPF also requires that major development, such as 225 new homes, must be justified and that an assessment of the need for the development in the AONB and the opportunity to meet the requirement outside the area must be assessed<sup>37</sup>.

Woodcote Parish Council therefore reviewed the requirement for new housing in Woodcote between 2011 and 2035 to ensure that the housing sites identified would meet the local requirements. The assessment followed Locality guidance, based on ONS and MHCLG forecasts for population and housing growth of 5% and 9% respectively. The allocations in WNP1 together with windfall development will produce housing growth of 8% supporting a population growth of 6%. This suggests that only about 1% additional housing growth (around 10 more houses) needs to be allocated in WNP2 to meet the ONS/MHCLG forecasts.

However, Woodcote Parish Council were not satisfied that this would maintain the vitality of the village and address issues of recent falls in population and the age profile. Therefore, the initial assessment was supplemented by a detailed model to assess the impact of the allocations, windfall development and house sales and concluded that<sup>38</sup> an additional 50 to 60 new homes will be needed to address the issues. Further details of the housing requirement and landscape assessment are in Appendix D and the separate Housing Need Assessment paper.

In accordance with paragraph 4.28 of the Local Plan 2035, the Parish Council carried out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to provide proportionate evidence to justify the lower allocation of 53 houses compared with the allocation of 115 in the Local Plan. The LVIA identified the same four sites for housing as the original site assessment and the same sites for employment use. One additional site (Goats Gambol) was identified by the LVIA as potentially suitable for development with four houses, despite an earlier planning application and subsequent appeal having rejected the site because of the impact on the AONB. Subsequently Goats Gambol was sold, and the new owners have now withdrawn the site.

<sup>37</sup> NPPF paragraph 177

<sup>38</sup> Housing Needs Analysis: Objectively Assessed Need: 2019

Because of ecological issues raised during the assessment of the planning application for the Chiltern Rise site, Woodcote Parish Council commissioned an Ecological Appraisal of the allocated sites which shows that there are no significant issues that would make the sites unsuitable for development.

The outcome of this process is that the Plan proposes the development of 129 homes in the Plan period. Fourteen of these homes have now been completed. The overall total of 129 homes consists of 76 homes which were allocated in the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2011—2027 (of which 14 are complete, 33 are under construction and 29 remain to be developed) and 53 additional homes which are allocated in this review of the Plan. Collectively, they are shown in the allocated sites in Policy HS1 of this Plan. Policies HS2-HS9 provide specific details for their development on a site-by-site basis.

#### **Policy H1: Number of New Homes**

The Plan provides for the development of a minimum of 129 new homes within the plan period and as set out in Policy HS1 of this Plan.

#### **Policy H2: Tenancy Mix (Retained policy)**

Proposals for development will need to consider local housing need and should normally provide a tenure mix of 25% of the Affordable homes being for low-cost ownership (intermediate housing) unless viability or other local factors show a robust justification for a different mix.

The Plan supports the development of affordable housing in Woodcote for rent, low-cost ownership and for sale to **local** people. Residents have consistently expressed an overwhelming desire that affordable housing should meet the needs of local people with strong **local** connection to Woodcote. The sustainability and balance of the community is threatened because young people brought up in Woodcote are forced to move away because the village is unable to meet their housing needs in the open market. Starter homes and family homes with adequate gardens or shared green space are priorities for a community whose sustainability requires that it attracts young families.

The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan delivers the requirement for affordable housing while maintaining the flexibility necessary to meet the specific **local** requirements needed within our proposed housing developments.

The full integration of affordable and open market housing is a requirement of the SODC Local Plan policy H9.

When those attending the public consultation in March 2012 were asked *what was most important to them when thinking about development in Woodcote* nearly one-third of respondents placed *preferential access to new housing for villager families* in their top three considerations. Policies H3 and H4 are a response to this. This strong preference for housing for local people was confirmed in 2017 by 80% of the community<sup>39</sup>.

Woodcote Parish Council would welcome proposals for housing on the allocated sites that make provision for open market housing to be made available for sale to local residents for a period of three months prior to release onto the open market.

This will not be a condition of granting planning permission but could give some initial priority to young people who have grown up and want to set up home in Woodcote and older residents in under-occupied properties who wish to downsize whilst remaining in their community. Discussions with landowners and potential developers have shown support for this aim.

## **10.4. Affordable Homes for Local People**

Affordable homes comprise social rented, affordable rented and low-cost home ownership for eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market.

<sup>39</sup> Woodcote All-Village Survey 2017

Policy H3 sets out the Plan's approach to affordable housing. The ambition of the second part of the policy is to ensure that the affordable housing element is seamlessly incorporated into the wider development. Plainly this may require imaginative design solutions, especially on smaller sites. It is on this basis that the policy has been designed to be applied on a proportionate basis. The application of this policy may result in some mathematical inconsistencies. In cases where the development is less than 10 homes, the contribution to affordable housing may be provided as a financial contribution. In cases where the 40% calculation provides a part unit, either the number of affordable units should be rounded up to the next whole unit or a financial contribution will be sought equivalent to that part unit.

### **Policy H3: Affordable Housing**

Proposals for developments that result in a net gain of five or more dwellings or where the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more should provide a minimum of 40% of affordable housing on the site unless a financial viability assessment identifies a justification for a lower percentage.

As appropriate to the scale of the site, the delivered affordable homes should be fully incorporated into the wider development.

All new affordable housing in Woodcote provided by the Plan should initially be subject to a local connection, meaning that people with a strong local connection to the Parish and whose needs are not met by the open market will be first to be offered the tenancy or shared ownership of the home. In this context a strong local connection means an applicant(s):

- a. who has lived in the Parish for 5 of the last 8 years and is currently resident there, or
- b. who has lived in the Parish for at least 5 years and whose parents or children are currently living in the Parish and have at least 10 years continuous residency there, or
- c. who has an essential need to live close to another person, for proven age or medical reasons, who has had a minimum of 5 years permanent and continuous residence in the Parish, or
- d. who needs to live in the Parish to be close to their place of work.

## **10.5. Exception Site Affordable Housing**

The Local Plan 2035 policy H10 provides for rural exception sites for affordable housing where the development meets an identified local need. Subject to proven local need, a limited amount of affordable housing could be provided within the Parish on small rural exception sites, beyond the boundary of the village, where proposals for housing would not normally be permitted.

### **Policy H5: Affordable Housing on Exception Sites (Retained Policy)**

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites on the very edge of the village where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies and submitted in accordance with policy H10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, will be supported, particularly where they can demonstrate the redevelopment of brownfield land.

## **10.6. New Home Type and Size**

Woodcote has 2.5 times the share of detached homes compared to the national average and less than one-third the share of terraced homes. This reduces the supply of less expensive homes in a village where housing is very expensive.



## Policy H7: Size of Homes

Development proposals that deliver smaller dwellings will be supported. The following mix should be delivered on developments of nine or more new homes, unless viability or other material considerations show a robust justification for a different mix:

- Up to 10% should have one bedroom;
- Up to 25% should have two bedrooms;
- At least 50% should have three bedrooms; and
- No more than 15% should have four or more bedrooms.

Proposals which include terraced or semi-detached homes to achieve this mix of housing will be particularly supported.

This requirement:

- provides more smaller and, therefore, relatively affordable open market family homes;
- reflects the wish of over 80% of residents<sup>40</sup> for flats, terraced and semi-detached housing and for two- and three-bedroom houses;
- reflects the response to Question 31 of the Woodcote Housing Survey which showed 42% requiring a two-bedroom home and one, two- and three-bedroom homes meeting the need of 79% of the village<sup>41</sup>.
- reduces the loss, and makes efficient use, of greenfield land in the AONB; and
- complies with SODC's requirement for a mix of dwelling types and sizes (Policy H11);
- reflects the results of the Housing Need Assessment;
- redresses a housing imbalance in the village in which 45% of homes have 4 or more bedrooms;
- provides 3-bedroom homes suited to young families; and
- provides homes for elderly residents wishing to downsize.

Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan delivers the requirement for affordable housing while maintaining the flexibility needed to meet the specific requirements within our housing developments.

## 10.7. Retirement Housing Provision

Demographics indicate that there will be an increasing need for housing provision for the elderly in Woodcote. Many residents are content to continue into retirement in their current homes; others seek alternative housing in the village with needs falling into three general categories:

- i. homes for those who wish to downsize and for surviving partners. The stock of smaller houses has been much reduced over the last thirty years as many have been extended. There is a need for two-bedroom, high specification dwellings, mainly single storey and with modest gardens;
- ii. sheltered housing, for those capable of independent living with limited support. The existing provision in Woodcote is at the newly built Mowforth House and the Folly Orchard bungalows;
- iii. care home provision for those no longer capable of independent living. Woodcote does not have a Care Home and residents must move to Goring, Henley, Sonning Common or Wallingford for specialist care.

For older residents to be able to downsize then, in addition to the encouragement of smaller homes in Policy H7, there is a need to limit the extension of new smaller homes to keep them available to both older residents and younger people.

Consideration will be given to requesting the removal of permitted development rights when a Planning Application is considered in order to protect the stock of smaller and therefore relatively more affordable homes in Woodcote.

## 10.8. Infill

SODC's Policy on housing in villages (H16) allows applications for infill development within the settlement boundary of Woodcote, as a larger village, to be considered. The current Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP1), through the allocated sites, provides adequate provision for new housing to meet identified **local** need up to 2027. This

<sup>40</sup> Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan All-village Survey 2017

<sup>41</sup> CFO, Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Housing Survey Report, July 2012 Question 31

Neighbourhood Plan (WNP2) allocates sites which, with a limited number of 'windfall' new homes will provide sufficient new housing for the local need until 2035.

Woodcote is one of only two larger villages in South Oxfordshire to be situated wholly within the Chilterns AONB. Residents have indicated strongly that they expect this national designation to be a material consideration with regard to both the amount and scale of any new housing development in Woodcote. The Local Plan indicates that the scale of infill should be appropriate to its location. The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan draws attention to this part of the policy in order to reflect the strong views of local residents. Woodcote has an open, rural character with many wooded areas and open spaces that make an important contribution to this loose-knit character. It is important that infill development does not destroy this essentially open character and does not adversely affect the natural beauty and landscape of the AONB.

A small infill site could provide an opportunity for a small number of self-build homes to be constructed in Woodcote. Policy H9 supports appropriate windfall development in Woodcote noting the requirement of paragraph 71 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021).

### **Policy H9: Infill Housing in the AONB**

Applications for residential developments on small infill or redevelopment sites within Woodcote will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and meeting all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan and the Local Plan, and where such development:

- a. fills a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within the settlement boundary<sup>42</sup> where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.
- b. will not involve the outward extension of the settlement boundary of the village, as defined in section 9.4;
- c. has regard to the SODC Design Guide, in particular the requirements for separation between habitable rooms in adjacent properties and the provision of amenity space;
- d. does not have a significant adverse impact on the privacy of adjacent properties;
- e. is consistent with the character of the locality;
- f. is compliant with policy H10 of this Plan if considered to be backland development; and

### **Backland Development**

Backland development is defined as the residential development of land behind an existing frontage or placing of further dwelling/s behind existing dwelling/s within the existing site.

Residents have expressed concern about the impact of excessive backland development on the open look and feel of the village, which is characterised by relatively large, well-developed gardens, many of which provide habitat for a range of wildlife.

The Parish Council also note<sup>43</sup> the NPPF requirement that 'Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area'.

### **Policy H10: Backland Infill development in the AONB**

Backland development (the residential development of land behind an existing frontage or placing of further dwelling/s behind existing dwelling/s within the existing site) will be supported where the development meets all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan and the Local Plan, and where such development:

- a. provides suitable access to the rear properties that is wide enough and far enough from the boundary and any front property to accommodate delivery, service and emergency vehicles without unnecessary disturbance to neighbours or the front property;
- b. provides safe pedestrian access to the rear properties;
- c. does not result in unacceptable loss of wildlife habitat in a residential garden.

<sup>42</sup> See section 9.4

<sup>43</sup> NPPF paragraph 71

## Section 11: Design Policies

### 11.1. Design

- **Much of the newer housing in Woodcote is architecturally undistinguished and not in keeping with the south Chilterns locality and does not reflect the character of many villages within the Chilterns AONB.**

The construction of several large, dense, housing estates in the 30 years since 1960 was in sharp contrast to the open nature of the village. There is an opportunity to enhance the built environment and improve the quality of the design aesthetic within the village

#### **Policy D1: Good Design (Retained Policy)**

Proposals for all forms of new development must plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design, at the same time demonstrating they have sought to conserve local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Chilterns AONB. Applications proposing unsympathetic designs which fail to respect the connections between people and places, or are inappropriate to its location, or pay inadequate regard to issues of renewable energy technologies, landscape and biodiversity considerations will not be supported.

#### **Design and Access Statements**

Where required, development proposals for new development should be accompanied by a design and access statement to show how they have responded to the policies in the Local Plan and other guidance and include a clear vision for the type of place that could be created by building on the character and needs of Woodcote.

In addition, proposals for development of allocated sites will be expected to show that they:

- i. have adopted, to the fullest extent practicable, the guidance produced by the **SODC Design Guide** and the **Chilterns Buildings Design Guide** and the **Supplementary Technical Notes** on local building material and use locally sourced building materials;
- ii. promote wastewater management both in respect of sustainable drainage and water capture (for use in activities such as gardening, car washing);
- iii. maximise the use of renewable energy opportunities offered by a particular site;
- iv. adopt the guidance produced by the Building for Life Partnership, the Oxfordshire County Council's Street Design Guide and, in particular, that proposals for development:
  - integrate the new homes into the existing neighbourhood and support a more pedestrian and cycle friendly neighbourhood;
  - provide access to local facilities and public transport links via convenient, direct paths suitable for those pushing a pushchair, in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter;
  - have designed streets in a way that encourages low vehicle speeds and allows them to function as social spaces;
  - have designed streets to accommodate on-street parking, to prevent anti-social parking and to allow for plenty of trees and planting to balance the visual impact of parked cars;
  - have not met the parking need only with large rear parking courts; and
  - have provided adequate storage space for bins and recycling, as well as vehicles and cycles.

### 11.2. Light Pollution and Urbanisation

In November 2009 the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution published a report on the impact of Artificial Light in the Environment<sup>44</sup> which focussed on the loss of the view of the stars, the nuisance caused by badly designed lighting, and the effects of artificial light on nature and ecosystems. The Commission:

<sup>44</sup> The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, Artificial Light in the Environment, The Stationery Office, 2009.

- i. concluded that ‘access to the natural beauty of the night sky is every bit as important as the preservation of other aspects of natural beauty which society routinely seeks to protect for the enjoyment of its citizens and for posterity’.
- ii. expressed a concern that ‘we simply do not know enough about the biological impacts of light pollution on plants and wildlife, particularly at the population and ecosystem levels’; and
- iii. recommended that ‘to rapidly redress the lack of access to the night sky for the population of the UK, we recommend that those responsible for the management of existing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the equivalent National Scenic Areas in Scotland seek to eliminate unnecessary outdoor light and to better design and manage that which cannot be eliminated, and also that efforts are made to retain or create dark skies over urban areas so that people in major centres of population may have access to the night sky’.

Woodcote is located within the Chilterns AONB. Policy D2 aims to ensure that new development does not add to local light pollution and responds to the wish of the many residents who want to maintain the rural nature of the village and prevent light pollution and increasing urbanisation.

### **Policy D2: Light Pollution (Retained Policy)**

Proposals for any necessary street and external lighting should comply with the current guidelines established for the Chilterns AONB and for rural areas by the Institution of Lighting Engineers<sup>45</sup>

### **11.3. Crime Prevention and Reduction**

The Local Plan states that ‘New development should be designed to ensure that buildings and their surrounding spaces can be accessed and used by everyone and promote safe environments that reduce the opportunity for crime as well as the fear of crime itself.’

### **Policy D3: Secure by Design (Retained Policy)**

Development proposals which incorporate the principles of ‘Secured by Design’ (SBD<sup>46</sup>) and ensure that a safe and sustainable community is maintained will be supported.

### **11.4. Sustainability**

Both the National Government and the South Oxfordshire District Council have declared a Climate Emergency. Therefore, reducing the contribution of all development to climate change is a key goal of this plan and new development must be designed and constructed to minimise its impact on the environment; high levels of energy generation on site with solar panels, ground source and/or air source heat pumps will be sought. In an all-village consultation held in October 2019 residents were asked to rate the importance of reducing the carbon footprint of new developments. On a scale of 1 (not important) to 10 (essential) the average across all respondents was 9.1 underlining the importance the community attached to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Resource efficiency in both construction and operation should be a priority, and minimum standards required by legislation should be exceeded where possible.

All new development is expected to meet the carbon reduction requirements set out in the Local Plan Policy DES10.

### **Policy D4: Renewable Energy**

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate the carbon reduction requirements set out in Local Plan Policy DES10. The use of a range of techniques and technologies, from energy use reduction to renewable energy generation will be supported.

<sup>45</sup> Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light, the Institution of Lighting Engineers, 2005.

<sup>46</sup> [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

## 11.5. Sustainable Homes and Buildings

### Policy D5: Sustainable Homes

Proposals for residential development should:

- a. Align dwellings to take maximum advantage of passive solar heating;
- b. Be insulated to a high level; and
- c. Incorporate sustainable water and drainage systems and storage.

The rural location of Woodcote and the poor public transport provision mean that car ownership is essential for most residents, so it is unlikely that the use of cars will diminish significantly in the foreseeable future. Petrol and diesel cars make a significant contribution to both air pollution and climate change. Therefore, sustainable forms of transport, such as electric vehicles and bicycles, should be encouraged. The Government have recently announced that sales of petrol and diesel vehicles must cease in 2030. The high level of car ownership in Woodcote (as set out in section 7.1 and Table 7.i) indicates that more than one EV charging point should be provided for the larger houses.

### Policy D6: Sustainable Transport

New residential development should:

- be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles (including both cars and cycles) in safe, accessible and convenient locations; and
- provide bicycle storage facilities in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council cycle parking standards.

## Section 12: Development Site Policies

### 12.1. Site Allocation

#### Policy HS1: Site Allocations

Residential allocations are provided in Table 12.i. The development of up to and including the number of houses set out in the Table for each development will be supported.

Employment allocations are provided in Table 12.ii. The development of new employment opportunities on these sites will be supported.

This policy adds to the land available for employment in the Parish and to meet an updated, locally identified, housing need while (i) protecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (ii) meeting the strongly held wishes of Woodcote residents that open spaces and surrounding countryside be protected and that the developments are small, and spread around the village, and (iii) the need for viability.

Table 12.i lists the sites allocated in the current Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP1), with their planning status at February 2021, and the additional housing sites allocated in this updated Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP2).

**Table 12.i**  
Sites allocated for new homes

WNP Ref	Site Name Address	Maximum Number of Homes	Allocation Status
WNP1-01	Chiltern Rise Cottage and surrounding land, Reading Road	24	Planning Permission granted and development started
WNP1-02	Woodcote Garden Centre, Reading Road	9	Planning Permission granted and development started
WNP1-16	Former Reservoir site, Greenmore	20	Planning Application submitted
WNP1-18	Former Bus Depot, Long Toll	14	Development complete
WNP1-19	The Smallholding, Land at the end of Wood Lane	9	
WNP2-02	Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 1	5	
WNP2-03	Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 2	4	
WNP2-09	Beechwood Court	14	
WNP2-30	Church Farm	30	

**Table 12.ii**  
Sites allocated for employment purposes

WNP Ref	Site Name Address	Area
WNP2-43a	Old Coal Yard Greenmore	0.37 Ha
WNP2-25	Land west of Church Farmhouse	0.29 Ha
WNP2-98	Wards Farm	0.14 Ha

The position of each site can be located on the map in Figure 12.i.

### 12.2. Delivery

The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy required that 73 new homes be built in Woodcote between 2011 and 2027. To date (September 2021) 110 new homes have been built or have received planning permission:

- 14 new homes (10 affordable) have been built on WNP1-18 (the former bus depot on Long Toll);
- planning permission has been granted for 31 new homes and construction is underway on:
  - WNP1-01 (Chiltern Rise); and
  - WNP1-02 (Woodcote Garden Centre);

- Planning permission was granted for WNP1-16 (the former Reservoir site) which has now expired, and a new updated planning application has been submitted for 20 new homes; and
- windfalls (either built or with planning permission) have provided another 45 (net) new homes.

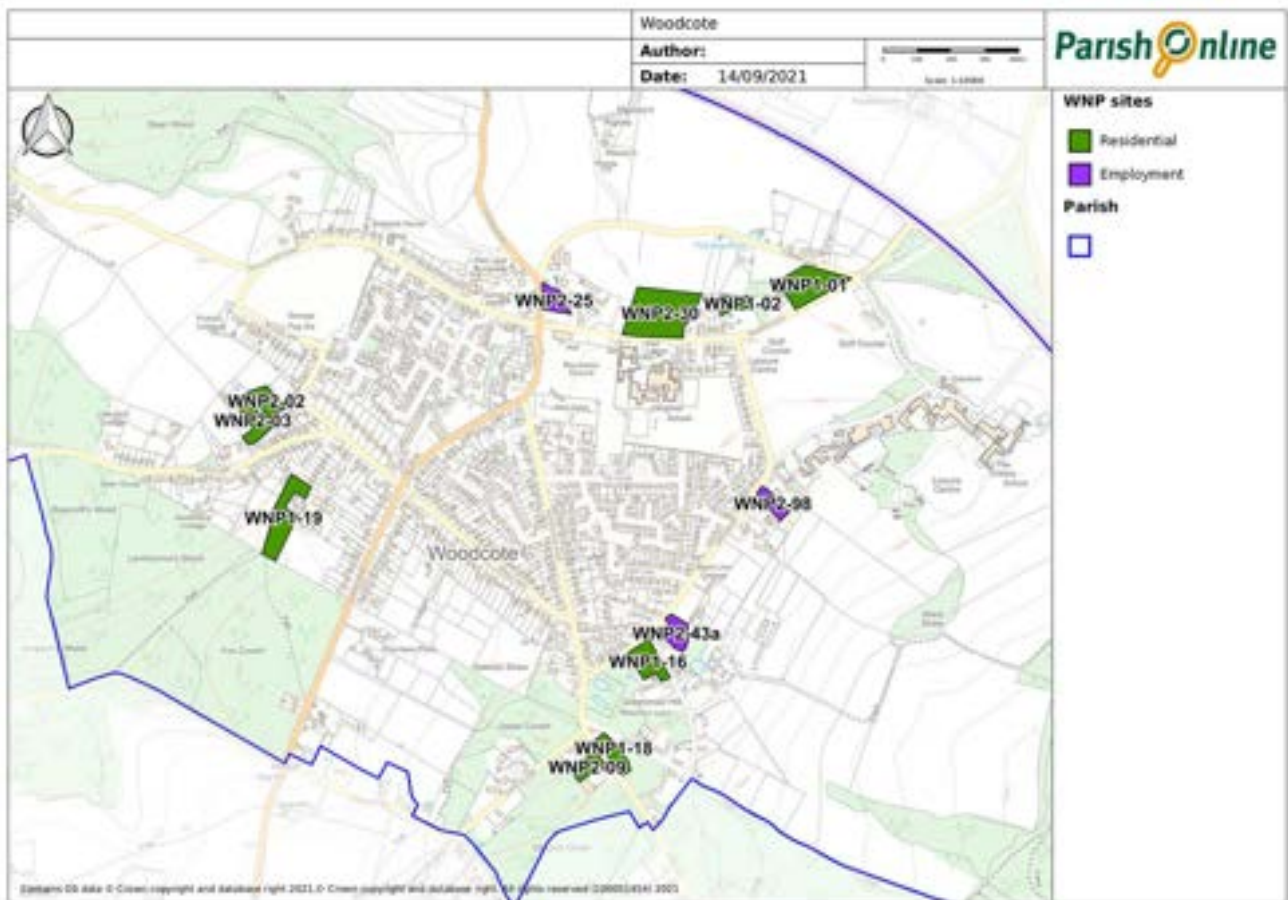
**Site Numbering**

The map in Figure 12.i identifies sites allocated in in WNP1, the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2027, and those newly allocated in this Plan (WNP2).

Sites:

- allocated in WNP1 are identified as WNP1-*nn*, where *nn* is a unique number between 1 and 99; and
- allocated in this plan (WNP2) are identified by the prefix WNP2- followed by a unique two-digit identifier.

**Figure 12.i**  
**Location of Allocated Housing and Employment Sites**



**12.3. Site-Specific Requirements**

In addition to the policies in the preceding sections there are policies that apply to each of the allocated sites. These policies, which are the subject of detailed Memoranda of Understanding signed by the landowners and Parish Council, respond to the particular characteristics or sensitivities of a development site and are listed below.

For the purposes of determining housing density, the Local Plan 2035 defines the area for housing as that occupied by the houses, gardens, parking, access roads, incidental open space, landscaping and play areas. Some of the site policies specify green space (shown in yellow) that is set aside for screening of the development or to create buffer space between developments and existing properties. For clarity, the area designated for housing and the total area including the green space have been specified separately for these sites. In each case the development of the housing allocations in the Plan should comply with Policy E1 of this Plan.

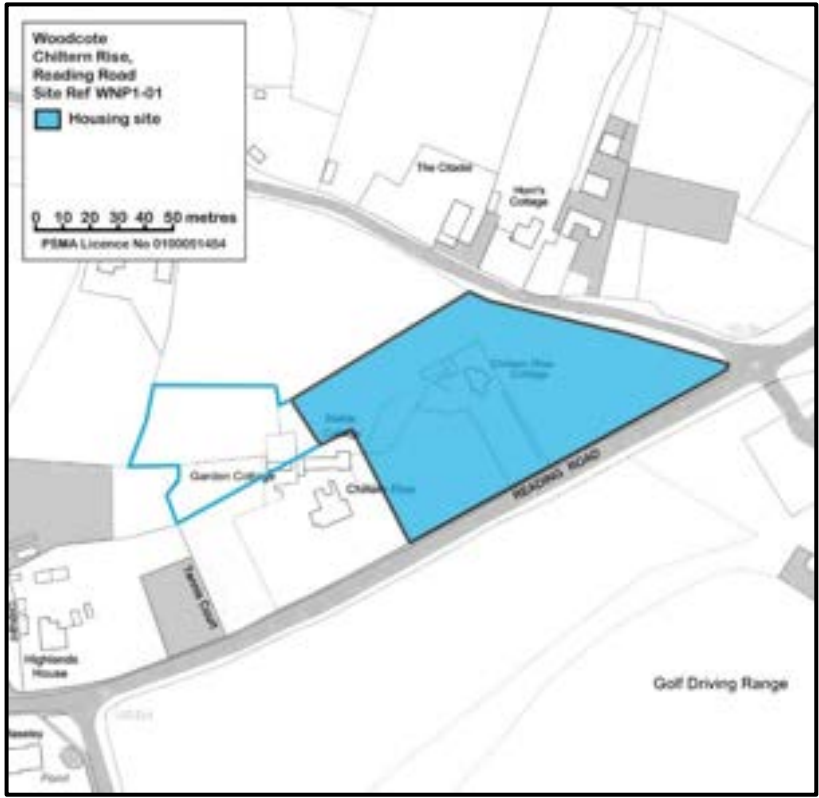
<b>Policy HS2:</b>	<b>Chiltern Rise Cottage and surrounding Land</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP1-01</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	1 hectare
		<b>Number of Homes</b>	24
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	9

Site WNP1-01 is allocated for 24 dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- The development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.i and exclude Chiltern Rise and the adjacent woodland;
- the development should be set back from the north-eastern boundary of the site bordering Tidmore Lane;
- no vehicular access for the development should be secured through Chiltern Rise;
- access to the site should be taken from Reading Road near to the junction with Tidmore Lane;
- access to the site for nine homes at Woodcote Garden Centre (Policy HS3) should be provided through this site;
- where practicable, Chiltern Rise Cottage should be retained and with future access to be taken from the new development;
- the existing hedges and trees to the north of the site should be retained;
- the existing hedge along the full length of the site adjacent to Reading Road should be retained except where the new vehicle access is provided from Reading Road;
- a pedestrian footpath should be provided through the site behind the existing hedge from Tidmore Lane to meet the boundary of the site with Woodcote Garden Centre; and
- significant trees and habitats on the site should be retained or replaced as part of the development;

Planning permission has been granted for this development - reference P20/S2110/FUL and development commenced.

Although this site is in a reasonably prominent location on the main road into Woodcote, the surrounding trees and native hedge screen the site from long distance views and allow only glimpses into the site from Reading Road & Tidmore Lane. The existing buildings are set well back and also screened from the road. The trees and scrub that form the perimeter of the site and the woodland within the site make an important contribution to the rural landscape character. The option remains to replace Garden Cottage, Stable Cottage and Chiltern Rise Cottage making the total 27 houses (nett 24). The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.



**Map 12.i**

The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. Criterion j will be supported by the results of a tree and ecological survey to be submitted by the developer as part of the planning application process. The District Council and the Parish Council will negotiate for the developer to make a contribution to the cost of providing hard standing and bus shelters for the two bus stops on Reading Road adjacent to the site.



<b>Policy HS3:</b>	<b>Woodcote Garden Centre, Reading Road</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP1-02</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.3 hectares
		<b>Number of Homes</b>	9
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	4

Site WNP-02 is allocated for nine dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.ii;
- vehicular access to the site should only be from the Chiltern Rise site (WNP1-01);
- vehicular access to the site from the Reading Road shall be restricted to that for existing housing on the site;
- the provision of pedestrian access to the Reading Road at, or near, the current entrance to Woodcote Garden Centre for the new homes on the site and the adjoining Chiltern Rise site;
- new development should respect the safeguarding area for the gas pipeline; and
- the existing vegetation to the north of the site should be retained.

Planning permission has been granted for this development - reference P20/S2110/FUL and development commenced.

The site comprises a collection of low-key buildings and greenhouses associated with the current garden centre use. This brownfield site is available for redevelopment as the existing business use as a garden centre is not viable. A small part of the garden centre site will be retained as a retail outlet and base for a landscaping business. The site is very well screened by houses fronting the Reading Road and by trees and hedges to the north. This existing vegetation should be retained to provide some screening from adjacent open fields.

The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.

The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. The site will be developed in close association with the adjacent site (Policy HS2). Criterion e safeguards the gas pipeline as it runs through the site. Other criteria address access matters.



Map 12.ii

<b>Policy HS4:</b>	<b>Former Reservoir Site, Greenmore</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP1-16</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.5 hectares
		<b>Number of Homes</b>	20
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	8

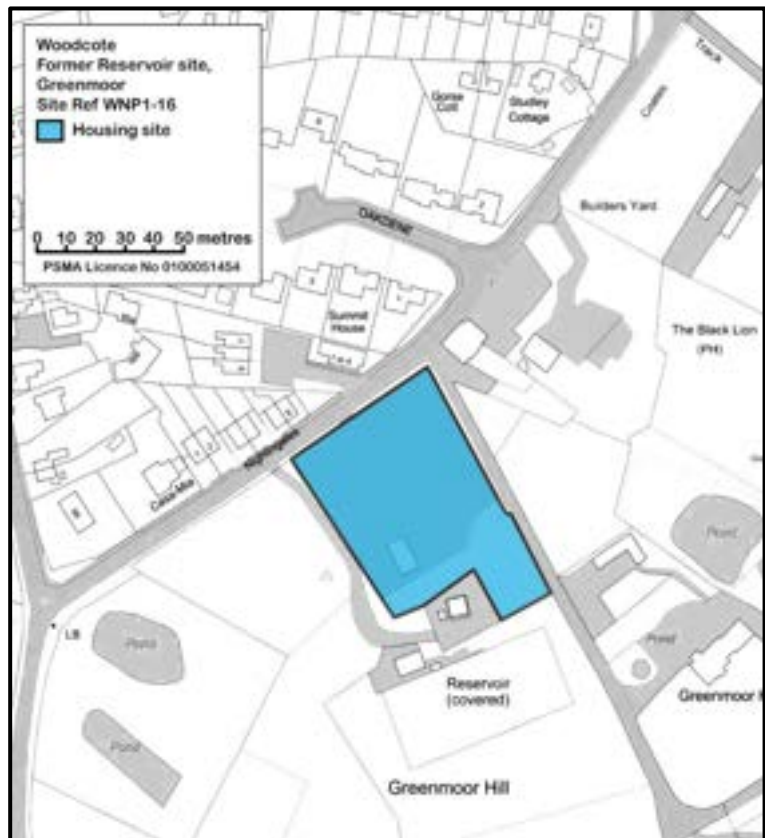
Site WNP1-16 is allocated for 20 dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.iii;
- the conversion of the Pump House building on this site to housing use as part of the provision for 20 homes;
- the construction of a footpath along the full length of the site adjacent to Greenmore; and
- a landscaping scheme showing native trees and hedging to screen the site.

Planning permission was granted against application P15/S2685/FUL, which has now expired. An updated Planning application P20/S1984/FUL has been submitted. This is a brownfield site that has been cleared of all vegetation, covered with hardcore and fenced off with unsightly hoardings which are visible from nearby houses, the highway and passing traffic. The geology of this site is extremely critical to the local environment and, in particular, the environmentally sensitive and ancient Woodcote ponds which rely on water from a confined aquifer beneath the site. For this reason, a planning application will require a survey to establish the depth of the aquifer and the clay capping layer and details to demonstrate that the proposed development will not damage the aquifer or its capping layer. The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.

The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. There are specific ground condition issues to be addressed as part of the development of the site. The developer should prepare a hydro-geological survey to identify the profile of the underlying aquifer that feeds Greenmoor ponds and to demonstrate how the planned development will protect the underlying aquifer and any infiltration points into the aquifer that are highlighted by the hydro-geological survey of the site. In particular the results of the surveys identified above will be required to determine:

- The depth and thickness of the clay cap beneath the site;
- The location of any infiltration points within the site boundaries; and
- The type of development required to reduce to an absolute minimum any risk to the water supply to the ponds including recommendations for any covenants or restrictions that should be placed on properties built on the site to prevent a post-development threat to the aquifer.



Map 12.iii

<b>The former Bus Depot, Long Toll</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP1-18</b>
	<b>Area developed</b>	0.5 hectares
	<b>Number of Homes</b>	14
	<b>Affordable homes</b>	10

This site received planning permission – reference P14/S2440/FUL – in March 2015. Construction is complete and all houses are occupied. The adjacent woodland, known as Snowdrop Wood, was transferred to the ownership of the Parish Council to provide recreational space for the residents of Woodcote.



<b>Policy HS5:</b>	<b>The Smallholding, Land at the end of Wood Lane</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP1-19</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.65 hectares
		<b>Number of Homes</b>	9
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	4

Site WNP-19 is allocated for nine dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.iv;
- the developer should provide a footpath to link the new homes to the existing footpath in Wood Lane;
- where practicable, the existing dwelling (The Smallholding) should be retained;
- the developer should provide a landscaping scheme showing native trees and hedging to screen the site.

The site is at the end of a short lane with no through traffic. It is enclosed on two sides by buildings and on the third, by dense woodland. A footpath runs southwest alongside the fourth side. Views into the site from the footpath are limited to less than 50 metres as the land slopes up to the southeast from the path. Approximately one-third of the site is occupied by a house and outbuildings.

We expect development to progress from the access with Wood Lane and move southwards along the site. Thus, development will not occupy the entire site and the density will not be as low as a simple calculation suggests. Part of the site slopes steeply upwards away from the footpath and flexibility will be required when planning applications are being discussed to ensure that a satisfactory solution to the density requirement will be obtained. The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.

The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. The District Council and the Parish Council will negotiate for the developer to make a contribution to the improvement of safety, road markings and visibility at the junction of Wood Lane and Beech Lane.



Map 12.iv

<b>Policy HS6:</b>	<b>Behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 1</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-02</b>
		<b>Total area</b>	0.38 hectares
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.20 hectares
		<b>Number of homes</b>	5
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	0

Site WNP2-02 is allocated for five dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- a. the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.v;
- b. vehicular access to the housing should be from Behoes Lane;
- c. the existing access (outlined in blue) should be widened, as necessary, to meet OCC Highways requirements, to accommodate traffic to this site and the adjacent site WNP2-03;
- d. vehicular access should be provided to the east of the site (outlined in blue) to provide access to the paddock at the rear of the site; and
- e. The yellow shaded area to the rear of the housing should be retained as green space and planted with native trees to screen the site from views across the open fields.

This development is located on the extreme edge of the settlement and is visible from the AONB to the northwest. Screening is, therefore, required to minimise the impact of the development on the AONB.

The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months. The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. The principal focus is ensuring that the site is developed in a complementary way to that of the adjacent site (WNP2-03).



Map 12.v

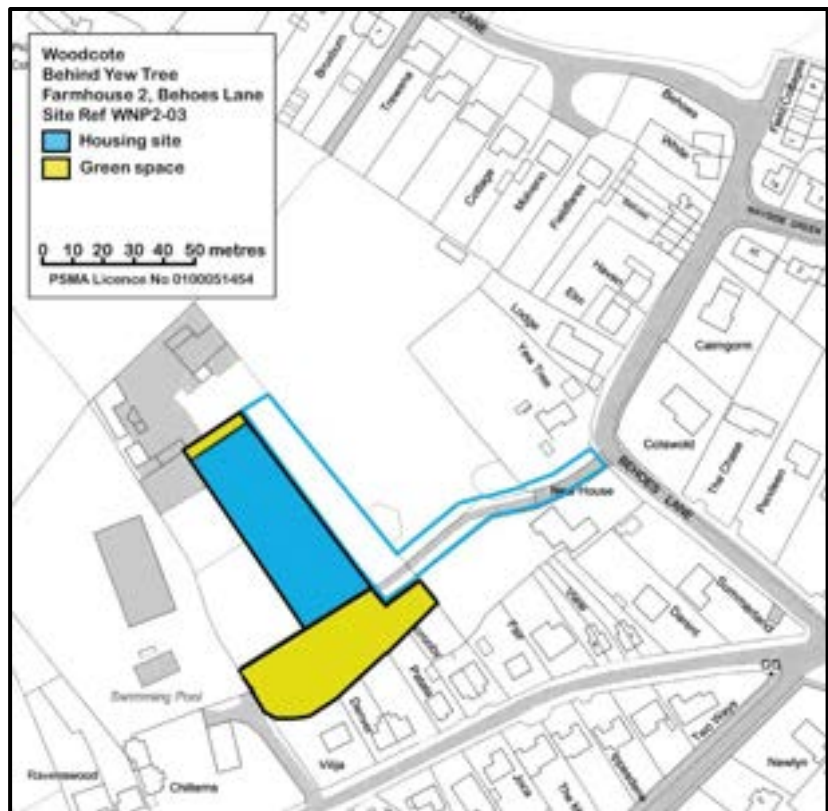
<b>Policy HS7:</b>	<b>Behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 2</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-03</b>
		<b>Total area</b>	0.44 hectares
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.19 hectares
		<b>Number of homes</b>	4
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	0

Site WNP2-03 is allocated for four dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.vi;
- vehicular access to the housing should be from Behoes Lane;
- the existing access (outlined in blue) should be widened, as necessary, to meet OCC Highways requirements, to accommodate traffic to this site and the adjacent site WNP2-02;
- vehicular access (outlined in blue) should be provided to the houses and smallholding at the rear of the site;
- native trees should be planted to the northwest of the housing (in the area shaded yellow and outlined in black) to screen the site from views across the open fields;
- a green space (shaded yellow and edged in black) planted with native trees should be created to the south of the site behind the houses in Beech Lane; and
- the existing smallholding and paddock are excluded from the development area.

This development is located on the extreme edge of the settlement and is visible from the AONB to the northwest. Screening is, therefore, required to minimise the impact of the development on the AONB.

The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months. The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. The principal focus is ensuring that the site is developed in a complementary way to that of the adjacent site (WNP2-02).



Map 12.vi

<b>Policy HS8:</b>	<b>Beechwood Court</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-09</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.25 hectares
		<b>Number of homes</b>	14
		<b>Affordable homes</b>	6

Site WNP2-09 is allocated for 14 dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

- a. the development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.vii;
- b. the existing offices should be converted into 1 or 2 bed flats; and
- c. vehicular access to the site should be from Long Toll.

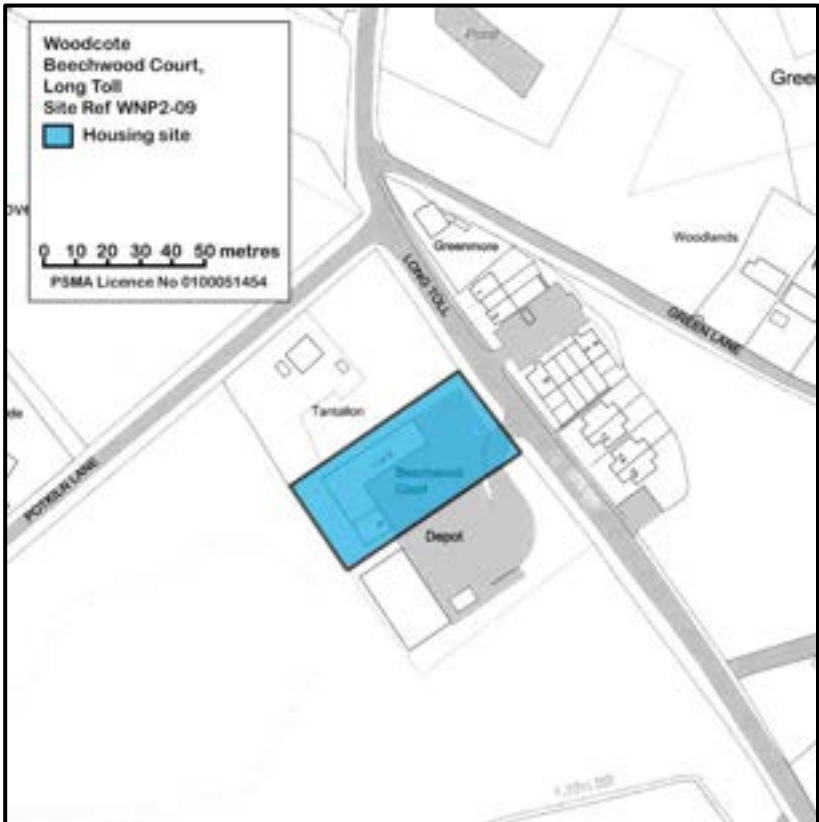
The offices are identified for conversion into flats rather than demolition and rebuilding as new flats, because this will minimise the carbon footprint of the construction.

The configuration of the offices lends itself to conversion into 14 one or two bed flats.

Although this appears to be a loss of employment space, many of the offices are currently empty and the owners are finding it difficult to let or sell the vacant offices and the additional employment space allocated elsewhere in this plan more than compensates for the loss.

The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.

The criteria associated with the policy provide clear guidance for its development. Their principal focus is in securing small residential units and securing safe and convenient vehicular access.



Map 12.vii

## REFERENDUM VERSION

Policy HS9:	Land to the east of Church Farmhouse	Site Reference	WNP2-30
		Total area	1.46 hectares
		Area to be developed	1.3 hectares
		Area for car park	0.16 hectares
		Number of homes	30
		Affordable homes	12

Site WNP2-30 is allocated for 30 dwellings. Proposals for residential development will be supported on the site subject to the following criteria:

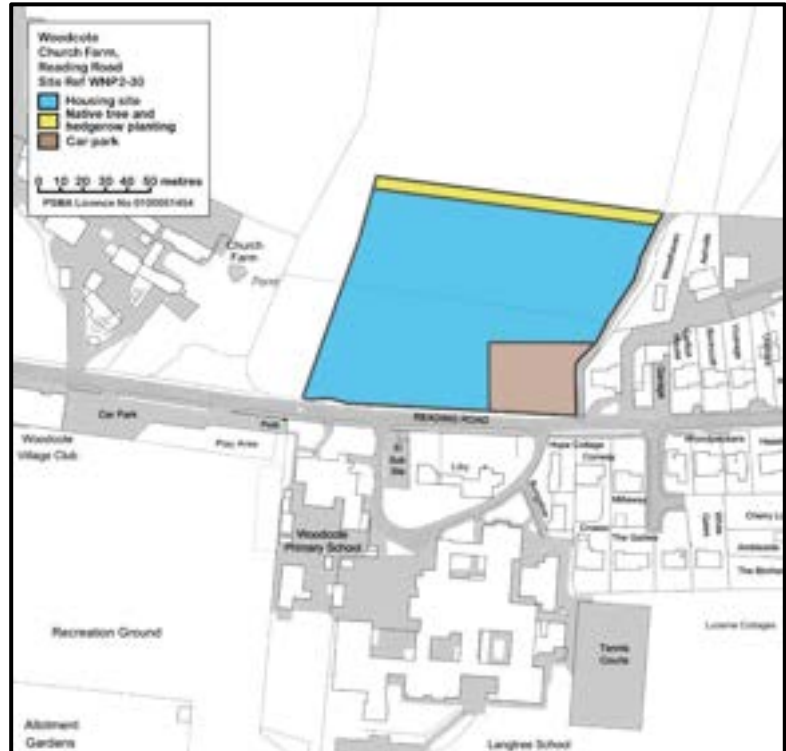
- the housing development should occupy the blue shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.viii;
- the area shaded in brown should be surfaced and made available as a public car park;
- vehicular access to the housing and car park should be provided in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council standards;
- a footpath should be provided along the frontage of the site from the entrance to link with the footpath in front of Sunset House. This will require the hedge at this point to be moved back or replaced with new planting behind the footpath;
- The existing hedge along the front of the site should be retained except where the footpath and entrance are created;
- the existing hedge across the middle of the site should be relocated to the rear of the site into the area shaded yellow and edged in black. Additional native trees should be planted in the hedge to screen the site from views across the open fields; and
- The development should incorporate suitable landscaping to soften the appearance and increase biodiversity.

The site is located on the Reading Road near to the identified traffic hot spot caused by parking for the schools. The new public car park will provide sufficient capacity to accommodate all the cars regularly parked on the Reading Road during school time and relieve the congestion problems.

The creation of a car park and additional housing on this site and on the Chiltern Rise and Garden Centre sites on the opposite side of the road from the schools, library and village hall makes the provision of a zebra crossing in the vicinity of the car park a high priority for the Parish Council to pursue.

The car park will be managed by the Parish Council to provide a public car park and parking for school staff.

The Parish Council would wish to see that proposals for housing make provision for local residents to be given the sole opportunity to purchase the open market housing for a period of three months.



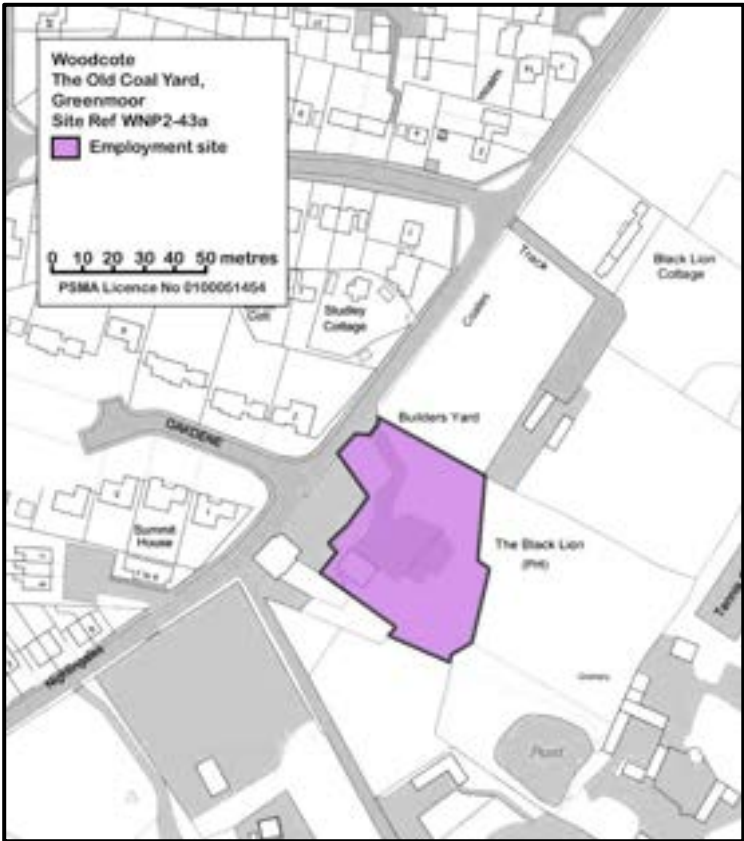
Map 12.viii



<b>Policy ES1:</b>	<b>The Old Coal Yard</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-43a</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.37 hectares

Site WNP22-43a is allocated for employment use, subject to the following site-specific requirements:

- a. the development should occupy the purple shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.x;
- b. vehicular access to the site should be via the existing entrance from Greenmore;
- c. the existing hedges and trees screening the site from Greenmore should be retained; and
- d. parking spaces should be created on site to accommodate staff and customers of the businesses occupying the site, having regard to the Oxfordshire County Council Parking Standards.

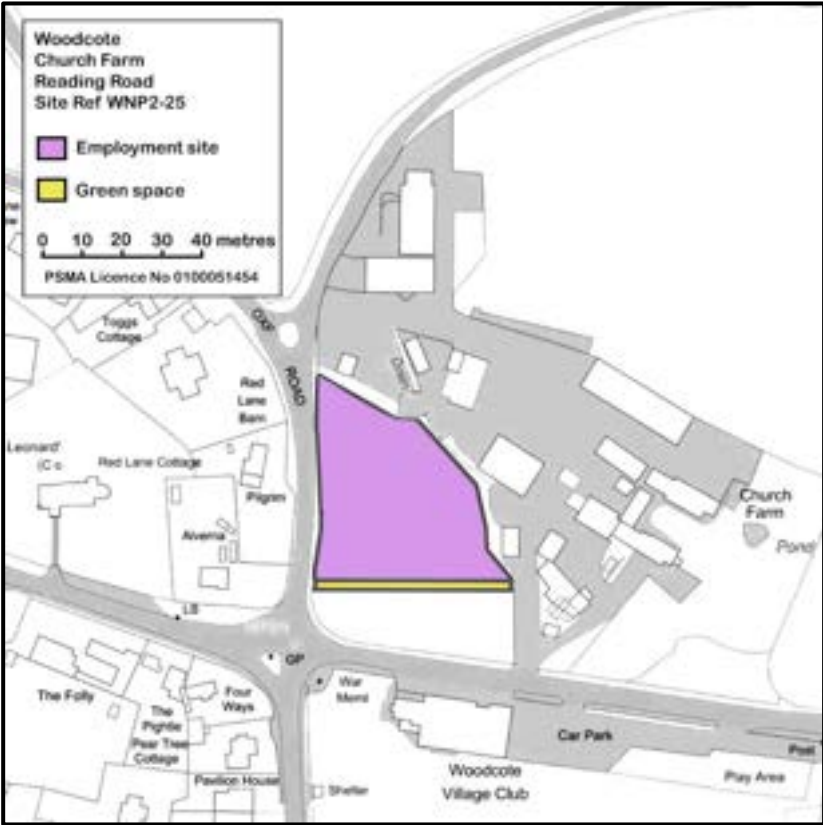


Map 12.x

<b>Policy ES2:</b>	<b>Church Farm</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-25</b>
		<b>Total area</b>	0.29 hectares
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.27 hectares

Site WNP2-25 is allocated for employment use, subject to the following site-specific requirements:

- a. the development should occupy the purple shaded area edged in black shown on Map 12.xi;
- b. vehicular access to the site should be via the existing entrance to the industrial units from Reading Road;
- c. the existing hedges along the Reading Road and Oxford Road should be retained;
- d. A native hedge and trees should be planted to the front of the employment units in the area shown in yellow, edged black, to screen the site from views from Reading Road; and
- e. parking spaces should be created on site to accommodate staff and customers of the businesses occupying the site, having regard to the Oxfordshire County Council Parking Standards.



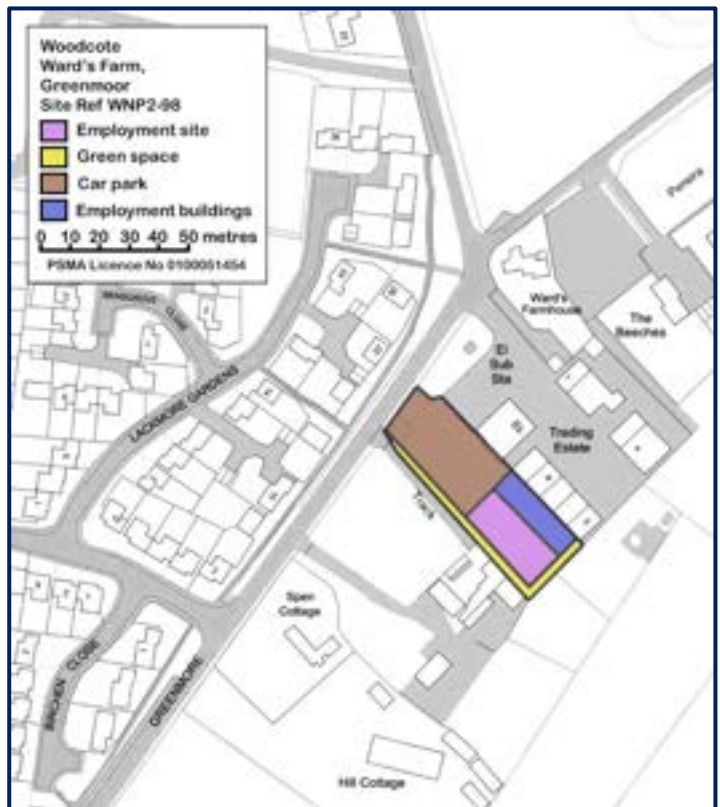
Map 12.xi

<b>Policy ES3:</b>	<b>Wards Farm</b>	<b>Site Reference</b>	<b>WNP2-98</b>
		<b>Area to be developed</b>	0.14 hectares

Site WNP2-98 is allocated for employment use, subject to the following site-specific requirements:

- a. the development should occupy the area edged in black shown on Map 12.xii;
- b. vehicular access to the site should be via the existing entrance to the paddock from Greenmore;
- c. the existing hedge along Greenmore should be retained;
- d. native trees should be planted to the southwest and southeast of the employment units in the areas shaded yellow, edged in black, to screen the site;
- e. approximately five industrial units should be located to the rear of the site next to the existing units on the adjacent site, within the blue shaded area edged in black;
- f. parking spaces should be created adjacent to the new employment units to accommodate staff and customers of the businesses occupying those units, within the area shaded purple having regard to the Oxfordshire County Council Parking Standards;
- g. additional parking spaces should be created in the front part of the site to accommodate staff and customers of the existing businesses on the Wards Farm site, within the area shaded brown having regard to the Oxfordshire County Council Parking Standards;
- h. all parking spaces should be retained for parking and should not be used for storage of materials, spare parts or unusable vehicles; and
- i. pedestrian access should be provided from the new car park into the existing Wards Farm site.

The additional dedicated parking (the area shaded brown) is required to provide an alternative to the current on-street parking in the vicinity of the site which makes travel along this section of Greenmore hazardous with the likelihood of meeting oncoming traffic on the wrong side of the road at the corner.



Map 12.xii

## Section 13: Our Village – Our Future

### 13.1. The Woodcote Parish Action Plan 2021

Important investigations into life in Woodcote were carried out as part of the preparation of the Woodcote Parish Plan which, in 2008, made recommendations on eight aspects of Woodcote life and facilities: the Natural Environment, the Built Environment, Business and Employment, Communications, Health, Services and Utilities, Social Activities and Sports, Youth and Education.

Many of these issues re-emerged during the consultations for the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2027 and it was evident that work remained to be done to address the community’s concerns in these areas. Some, such as housing, were taken forward and specifically addressed in the first Neighbourhood Plan. Others, such as road safety and congestion on the village roads, could only be partially addressed by a Neighbourhood Plan that focused on land use.

Consultations in May 2017 and February 2018 and the all-village survey in 2017 again showed concern for road safety and traffic congestion in the village and also showed

- a growing concern about Climate Change;
- a reducing concern about the impact of new housing on the schools; and
- great concern about the dilapidated state of the primary school buildings and services.

We recommend that the Parish Council should:

- i. continue its support and sponsorship of the Woodcote Traffic Working Group;
- ii. establish a new working group to identify measures to reduce Woodcote’s greenhouse gas emissions;
- iii. establish a working group to carry out a baseline wildlife survey and identify measures to protect/enhance wildlife and green infrastructure in the village;
- iv. establish a working group to identify candidates for non-designated heritage status in the Parish;
- v. continue to work to support Woodcote Primary School; and
- vi. continue its investigation into Community Land Trusts for future adoption.

### 13.2. Road Safety and Traffic Congestion

This Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (2013 – 2035) contains two measures to reduce congestion from parked motor vehicles; a public car park off the Reading Road and increased off-road parking for the businesses at Wards Farm, Greenmore.

The Parish Council has funded a zebra crossing at the War Memorial crossroads that greatly improves the safety at that busy crossing point.

There remain general concerns about speeding cars in the village and particular concerns about congestion and speeding vehicles on the Reading Road, Goring Road, Oxford Road and Greenmore and the Traffic Working Group could usefully focus on:

- i. traffic calming measures on the Reading Road, Goring Road and Greenmore;
- ii. a zebra crossing linking the new Reading Road car park to the schools; and
- iii. a zebra crossing at the junction of Beech Lane, Bridle Path and the Goring Road by the Co-op store.
- iv. parking restrictions on Reading Road and Greenmore.



### 13.3. Climate Change

South Oxfordshire District Council has declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and the new Local Plan contains measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to relevant policies in this plan it is recommended that Woodcote Parish Council establish a Climate Change Working Group to:

- i. identify opportunities for the Parish Council to reduce the emissions of its property and otherwise use its property to absorb the emissions of others; and
- ii. identify opportunities for residents of Woodcote to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and implement greenhouse gas absorption measures.

It is also recommended that Woodcote Parish Council establish an Ecological Working Group to:

- i. review wildlife habitats and corridors in the village;
- ii. identify opportunities to enhance and protect wildlife in the village; and
- iii. identify opportunities to improve biodiversity in the village.

### 13.4. Woodcote Primary School

The consultations for this Neighbourhood Plan revealed great concern about the poor state of the buildings of Woodcote Primary School. It is recommended that the Parish Council lend its weight to that of the governors of the school to effect urgent improvements or build a new school.

### 13.5. Stronger Local Access to Affordable Housing

#### Woodcote Community Land Trust

Consultation has consistently shown a desire for local people to be given priority in the allocation of affordable housing in the village. The absence of a local connection requirement for existing affordable housing is both divisive and instrumental in reinforcing opposition to new affordable housing in the village.

One approach to ensuring that new affordable housing provided on the allocated sites in the Plan is subject to a local connection requirement would be a Community Land Trust (CLT). A CLT is a non-profit entity that develops and manages affordable housing on behalf of the community. Partnerships between CLTs and housing associations can attract funding to improve the viability of affordable housing projects and Woodcote Parish Council will be consulting with interested affordable housing providers regarding the feasibility of establishing a Woodcote Community Land Trust.

It is recommended that the Parish Council create a CLT Working Group to produce a scheme for possible future adoption.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: Glossary

Acronym	Subject	Explanation
ACRE		Action with Communities in Rural England
	Affordable Housing	Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It does not include low-cost market housing.
	Affordable Rented Housing	Rented housing let by registered providers of affordable housing to householders whose needs are not met by the open market, at a rent which is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social or Affordable Rent or is at least 20% below local market rents.
	Advisory Group	The community team established by Woodcote Parish Council to advise them on the format and contents of a new Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan.
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area	Areas where the objectives set out in Air Quality Regulations 2000 will not be met by the relevant deadlines.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Nationally designated areas accorded the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. In this Plan the AONB will be the Chilterns AONB unless specifically stated otherwise.
	Biodiversity	The variety of life in the world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem.
BREEAM		Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method. A nationally recognised standard for sustainable design and construction.
CABE		Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council).
CHP	Combined Heat and Power	Using the heat generated from electricity production for heating purposes
CLT	Community Land Trust	A non-profit organisation that develops and manages affordable housing on behalf of the community.
	Conservation Area	An area designated by the District Council under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
	Code for Sustainable Homes	The code sets out levels (1 to 6) specifying the sustainability performance of a house to reduce the environmental impact of homes
CS	Core Strategy	The previous Development Plan Document setting out long-term spatial vision and objectives and containing both strategic policies and generic policies which applied to all development proposals in the district. Now replaced by the Local Plan 2035.
	Ecohomes	Quality standard applied to new homes by BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) and now replaced by the Code for Sustainable Homes.
	Floodplain/Flood Risk Zones	Flood risk areas identified by the Environment Agency, as high (zone 3), low to medium (zone 2), or little or no risk (zone 1).
	Green Belt	Designated land around a town or city to be kept permanently open and where there is a strong presumption against inappropriate development.
	Infilling	The filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.

## REFERENDUM VERSION

	Infrastructure	All the ancillary works and services which are necessary to support human activities, including roads, sewers, schools, hospitals, etc.
	Lifetime Homes	Guidance incorporating 16 design criteria that can be applied to new homes at minimal cost to add to the comfort and convenience of the home and support the different needs of occupants as they age.
	Listed Buildings	Buildings and structures which are listed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as being of special architectural and historic interest and whose protection and maintenance is the subject of special legislation.
LEA	Local Education Authority	The term Local Education Authority is no longer in official use, but it is still sometimes used informally to refer to the department of a local authority that deals with education.
LP SOLP	South Oxfordshire Local Plan	The latest Development Document setting out the long-term spatial vision and objectives and containing both strategic policies and generic policies which will apply to all development proposals in the district.
LVIA	Landscape	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. A process for identifying the impact of development on the landscape.
	(Open) Market Housing	Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan	A plan forming part of the development plan prepared by Town or Parish Councils.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	A document setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
OCC		Oxfordshire County Council
CFO		Community First Oxfordshire
	Parish Plan	The Woodcote Parish Plan (2008)
	(the) Plan	The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan
	Renewable Energy	Energy generated from the sun, wind, oceans, plants, the fall of water, biomass and deep geothermal heat
	Social Rented (Affordable) Housing	Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	A process of appraising policies for their social, economic and environmental effects, which must be applied to all Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. See also SEA Directive
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Assessments made compulsory by a European Directive (the SEA Directive). To be implemented in planning through Sustainability Appraisal of Development Plan Documents.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	A study to identify sites with potential for housing, assess their housing potential and assess when they are likely to be developed.
SODC		South Oxfordshire District Council
SOLA		South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998)
SUDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems	(Previously Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) Management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a sustainable manner.
	Woodcote Village Appraisals	Reports summarising life in Woodcote in 1984, 1991 and 2000
WNP1	Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2027	The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan made in April 2014
WNP2	Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2035	The second Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan updated in 2021 to reflect changes to community planning requirements and replace WNP1.

Appendix B: Neighbourhood Area Designation

**Planning**  
 HEAD OF SERVICE: ADRIAN DUFFIELD



Parish Clerk  
 Parish Council Office  
 Village Hall  
 Reading Road  
 Woodcote  
 RG8 0QX

Contact officer: Gary Palmer  
 gary.palmer@southoxon.gov.uk  
 Tel: 01235 422600

Textphone users add 18001 before you dial

Your reference:  
 Our reference: NDP/Wood

21 February 2017

Dear Ms Welham

**Decision regarding Woodcote Parish Council's request for the designation of Woodcote Neighbourhood Area.**

I am pleased to inform you that on 20 February 2017 the Head of Planning at South Oxfordshire District Council designated the area shown on Map 1 below as the 'Woodcote Neighbourhood Area'.

In accordance with Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the area shown on map one will be designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 12 April 2017. The current designation will be terminated at the end of 11 April 2017.

The following area designation information is published on the council's website:

- a redacted copy of the neighbourhood area application, including the name of the organisation that applied for area designation and the proposed neighbourhood area
- the map of the designated neighbourhood area (map one below)
- a redacted copy of this letter

Yours sincerely



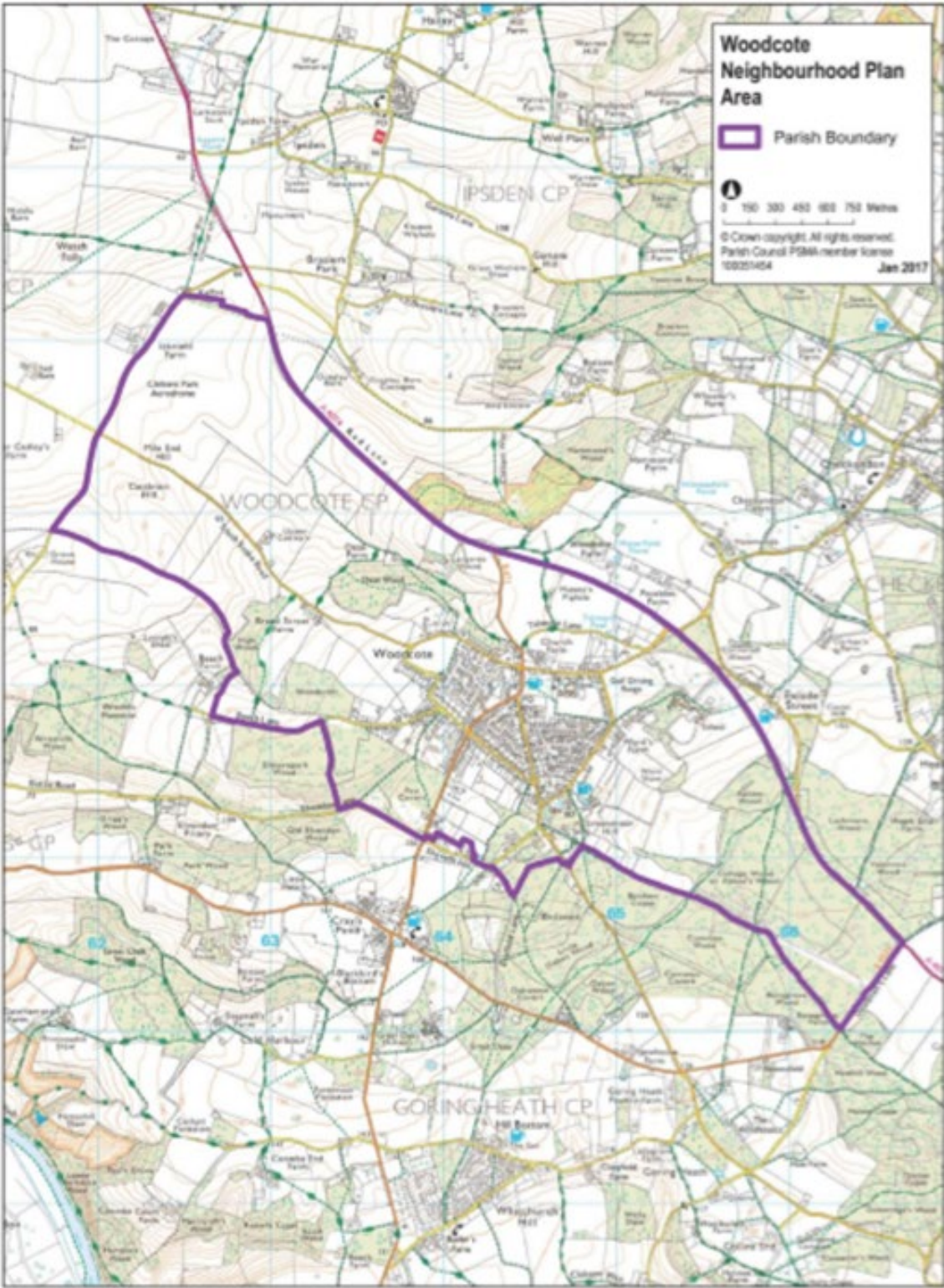
Adrian Duffield  
 Head of Planning

South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire  
 OX14 4SB [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)






Neighbourhood Plan Area – Map 1



**Appendix C: Summary of Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

The Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. This Appendix contains a summary of the local policies in the Plan.

<b>Code</b>	Policy Area
<b>C</b>	Community Well-Being Policies
<b>T</b>	Traffic and Transport Policies
<b>EM</b>	Employment and Skills Policies
<b>E</b>	Countryside and Environment Policies
<b>H</b>	Housing Policies
<b>D</b>	Design Policies
<b>HS</b>	Housing Site Policies
<b>ES</b>	Employment Site Policies

<b>C1</b>	<p><b>Assets of Community Value (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals that will result in either the loss of an Asset of Community Value or in significant harm to an Asset of community value will not be supported unless it meets the requirements of relevant policies in the development plan.</p>
<b>C2</b>	<p><b>Sports facilities at the Schools (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals which provide for additional sports facilities, open in character and over and above those which already exist, on the Langtree Academy and Woodcote Primary School sites, and which meet the requirements of the school as well as the wider community, will be encouraged.</p>
<b>C3</b>	<p><b>Communications Infrastructure (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals which seek the expansion of electronics communication networks and high speed broadband along with improvements to connectivity will be supported where the applicant has fully explored the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures; where the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and where the development has been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the character and appearance of the AONB.</p> <p>New residential development should provide for suitable ducting to enable more than one service provider to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from connection chambers located on the public highway, or some alternative connection point available to different service providers.</p>
<b>C4</b>	<p><b>Community Facilities and Services</b></p> <p>Proposals for additional services and facilities within the village will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the individual proposal will not generate unacceptable noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to adjoining residential properties;</li> <li>the particular proposal will not lead to unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network will not be severe; and</li> <li>access arrangements and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without having an unacceptable impact on adjoining residential and non-residential uses.</li> </ol>
<b>C5</b>	<p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>Proposals to relocate the Primary School to allow expansion of Langtree Academy without loss of playing fields, will be supported, provided that the new location does not lead to an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.</p>

## REFERENDUM VERSION

<b>T1</b>	<p><b>Traffic Congestion (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals which generate significant amounts of movement should provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment. Proposals which have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe will not be supported, particularly in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. that section of Reading Road between the War Memorial crossroads and its junction with Greenmore;</li> <li>b. the War Memorial crossroads where Reading Road meets Oxford Road, South Stoke Road and Goring Road; and</li> <li>c. within a circumference of 200 metres of the crossroads where Beech Lane and Bridle Path meet Goring Road.</li> </ol>
<b>T2</b>	<p><b>Parking for the Library and Community Centre</b></p> <p>Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals to provide a number of disabled parking spaces in front of the Library will be supported.</p>
<b>T3</b>	<p><b>Safe Travel to School (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals to improve the safe delivery of pupils to the Langtree Academy and Woodcote Primary School sites on foot, by bicycle, school buses or by car which would involve changes to the existing site entrances will be supported</p>
<b>T4</b>	<p><b>Parking at the Co-operative store (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals to provide a limited increase in parking spaces at the Co-operative store will be strongly supported.</p>
<b>T5</b>	<p><b>Traffic Calming along Goring Road (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Where appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for development which will directly access onto the Goring Road will be required to make provision for, and contribute to, appropriate traffic calming measures at either end of the Goring Road or in the near vicinity of the development.</p>
<b>T6</b>	<p><b>Pedestrian footways (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>All new housing developments must where appropriate and practical provide safe pedestrian access to link up with existing or proposed footpaths, ensuring that residents can walk safely to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.</p>
<b>T7</b>	<p><b>Residential car parking spaces</b></p> <p>Proposals for all new homes should provide off-street parking spaces having regard to site specific circumstances and Oxfordshire County Council parking standards.</p>
<b>EM1</b>	<p><b>Heavy Goods Traffic (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Any proposal requiring planning permission to change the use of land in the Parish to general industrial use (B2) or distribution and storage uses (B8), or other uses which would generate heavy goods traffic, will be supported where they do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or would not result in a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network. All development proposals generating significant amounts of movement will require Travel Plans and should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment.</p>
<b>E1</b>	<p><b>Green space and Landscaping</b></p> <p>For the allocations in this Plan, and for any application for major development, a landscape strategy and visual analysis should be submitted which will incorporate the following details, where relevant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. existing and proposed hard and soft landscaping;</li> <li>b. an outline of the measures to be taken to protect wildlife habitats, including trees and hedgerows during construction;</li> <li>c. an analysis of both near and distant views from principal public vantage points and the effect of the proposed development and any planting mitigation on these views; and</li> <li>d. details, where appropriate, of how those areas to be retained for open space and/or woodland will be managed in the future.</li> </ol>
<b>E2</b>	<p><b>Historic Environment (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Any designated historic heritage assets in the Parish and their settings, both above and below ground and including listed buildings, and any monuments that may be scheduled or conservation areas that may be created will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.</p> <p>Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage assets.</p>

<p><b>E3</b></p>	<p><b>Biodiversity and Wildlife Support</b></p> <p>All development proposals should result in a net biodiversity gain of at least 10%, measured by a recognised biodiversity accounting metric against a baseline ecological survey detailing wildlife habitats, including trees and hedgerows, and their condition.</p> <p>Development proposals which take appropriate opportunities to incorporate wildlife improvements in and around the site will be supported, especially where this can secure measurable overall gains for wildlife by implementing measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. retaining and ensuring the ongoing sympathetic management of existing wildlife features, such as mature trees, hedgerows and other forms of wildlife corridor;</li> <li>b. retaining existing nesting and roosting opportunities where possible and providing nesting features and boxes for bats and birds, suited to, but not exclusively for, swifts, swallows and house martins on each new dwelling or building as an integral part of their design;</li> <li>c. ensuring hedgehogs can move between gardens through provision and ensured retention of “hedgehog highways”;</li> <li>d. creating wildlife corridors or other features that support wildlife;</li> <li>e. encouraging features that support green infrastructure;</li> <li>f. providing new green spaces, enhanced for pollinators including butterflies and moths, with native trees and/or hedgerows within the development; and</li> <li>g. retaining wildlife strips of scrubland where development results in the loss of scrubland.</li> </ul> <p>Where onsite measures are not possible, offsite measures will be considered.</p>																																	
<p><b>E4</b></p>	<p><b>Settlement Boundary</b></p> <p>The Settlement Boundary is shown in Fig 9.i.</p> <p>Proposals for residential development within the boundary will be supported, provided that they accord with the design and development management policies of the Local Plan and other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Proposals for development outside the boundary will only be supported if they are appropriate to a countryside location and therefore conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB.</p>																																	
<p><b>E5</b></p>	<p><b>Local Green Spaces</b></p> <p>The areas identified in Table 9.i and Map 9.ii are designated as Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Spaces except in very special circumstances.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="260 1267 1426 1709"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="260 1267 496 1346"><b>Table 9.i Local Green Spaces</b></th> <th data-bbox="496 1267 1256 1335"><b>Description</b></th> <th data-bbox="1256 1267 1426 1335"><b>Map Location</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1335 1256 1368">The Village Green</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1335 1426 1368">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1368 1256 1402">The Allotments.</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1368 1426 1402">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1402 1256 1435">Folly Field.</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1402 1426 1435">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1435 1256 1503">The green space bounded by Wittenham Close, Croft Way, Gimmer Way and Hagbourne Close.</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1435 1426 1503">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1503 1256 1536">The green space bounded by Wood Green and the Goring Road.</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1503 1426 1536">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1536 1256 1570">The green space bounded by Folly Green and Goring Road.</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1536 1426 1570">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1570 1256 1603">The green space in Wayside Green</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1570 1426 1603">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1603 1256 1637">Greenmoor Ponds</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1603 1426 1637">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1637 1256 1671">Snowdrop Wood, south of the Long Toll development</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1637 1426 1671">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td data-bbox="496 1671 1256 1709">Woodland surrounding the Greenmoor ponds</td> <td data-bbox="1256 1671 1426 1709">10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Table 9.i Local Green Spaces</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Map Location</b>		The Village Green	1		The Allotments.	2		Folly Field.	3		The green space bounded by Wittenham Close, Croft Way, Gimmer Way and Hagbourne Close.	4		The green space bounded by Wood Green and the Goring Road.	5		The green space bounded by Folly Green and Goring Road.	6		The green space in Wayside Green	7		Greenmoor Ponds	8		Snowdrop Wood, south of the Long Toll development	9		Woodland surrounding the Greenmoor ponds	10
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<p><b>E6</b></p>	<p><b>Important Views</b></p> <p>Development proposals should preserve, conserve and, where practicable, enhance the local character of the landscape in general and should take account of the important views as identified on figure 9.iv and as listed in table 9.ii.</p> <p>Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on the local character of the landscape and/or on an identified view will not be supported.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="256 394 1426 1205"> <thead> <tr> <th>No</th> <th>Vantage Point</th> <th>Towards</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>411/9/10</td><td>Bridle Path</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>411/9/10</td><td>Upper Covert Woods</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>411/9/10</td><td>Goring Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>411/9/10</td><td>Shirvells Hill</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>Goring Road</td><td>Pot Kiln Lane</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>411/2/10</td><td>Fox Covert Woods</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>411/2/10</td><td>Wood Lane</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>411/8/10</td><td>Behoes Lane</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>411/8/10</td><td>South Stoke Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>411/8/10</td><td>South Stoke Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>South Stoke Road</td><td>Oxford Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>Oxford Road</td><td>Reading Road</td><td>Valued rural approach to village</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)</td><td>A4074</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>411/1/10</td><td>Oxford Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>411/1/10</td><td>A4074</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)</td><td>A4074</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)</td><td>Reading Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)</td><td>Reading Road</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>Reading Road</td><td>Greenmore</td><td>Valued rural approach to village</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>411/19/30</td><td>A4074</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>411/19/30</td><td>College Wood</td><td>Characteristic AONB landscape</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Table 9.ii Valued Views</b></p>	No	Vantage Point	Towards	Comments	1	411/9/10	Bridle Path	Characteristic AONB landscape	2	411/9/10	Upper Covert Woods	Characteristic AONB landscape	3	411/9/10	Goring Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	4	411/9/10	Shirvells Hill	Characteristic AONB landscape	5	Goring Road	Pot Kiln Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape	6	411/2/10	Fox Covert Woods	Characteristic AONB landscape	7	411/2/10	Wood Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape	8	411/8/10	Behoes Lane	Characteristic AONB landscape	9	411/8/10	South Stoke Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	10	411/8/10	South Stoke Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	11	South Stoke Road	Oxford Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	12	Oxford Road	Reading Road	Valued rural approach to village	13	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape	14	411/1/10	Oxford Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	15	411/1/10	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape	16	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape	17	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	Reading Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	18	Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10)	Reading Road	Characteristic AONB landscape	19	Reading Road	Greenmore	Valued rural approach to village	20	411/19/30	A4074	Characteristic AONB landscape	21	411/19/30	College Wood	Characteristic AONB landscape
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<p><b>E7</b></p>	<p><b>Solar Energy Arrays</b></p> <p>Proposals for a solar energy array will be supported having regard to the policies of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan and provided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is located and designed to suit the character of the local landscape;</li> <li>It is effectively screened;</li> <li>It will not cause significant harmful noise or light pollution; and</li> <li>It will not cause significant harm to a designated heritage asset.</li> </ol>																																																																																								
<p><b>H1</b></p>	<p><b>Number of New Homes</b></p> <p>The Plan provides for the development of a minimum of 129 new homes within the plan period and as set out in policy HS1 of this plan.</p>																																																																																								
<p><b>H2</b></p>	<p><b>Tenancy Mix (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals for development will need to consider local housing need and should normally provide a tenure mix of 25% of the Affordable homes being for low-cost ownership (intermediate housing) unless viability or other local factors show a robust justification for a different mix.</p>																																																																																								
<p><b>H3</b></p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing</b></p> <p>Proposals for developments that result in a net gain of five or more dwellings or where the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more should provide a minimum of 40% of affordable housing on the site unless a financial viability assessment identifies a justification for a lower percentage.</p> <p>As appropriate to the scale of the site, the delivered affordable houses should be fully incorporated into the wider development.</p>																																																																																								

<p><b>H5</b></p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing on Exception Sites (Retained Policy)</b>  Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes for rural exception sites on the very edge of the village where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies and submitted in accordance with policy H10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, will be supported, particularly where they can demonstrate the redevelopment of brownfield land.</p>
<p><b>H7</b></p>	<p><b>Size of Homes</b></p> <p>Development proposals that deliver smaller dwellings will be supported. The following mix should be delivered on developments of nine or more new homes, unless viability or other material considerations show a robust justification for a different mix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 10% should have one bedroom;</li> <li>• Up to 25% should have two bedrooms;</li> <li>• At least 50% should have three bedrooms; and</li> <li>• No more than 15% should have four or more bedrooms.</li> </ul> <p>Proposals which include terraced or semi-detached homes to achieve this mix of housing will be particularly supported.</p>
<p><b>H9</b></p>	<p><b>Infill Housing in the AONB</b></p> <p>Applications for residential developments on small infill or redevelopment sites within Woodcote will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and meeting all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan and the Local Plan, and where such development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. fills a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within the settlement boundary<sup>47</sup> where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.</li> <li>b. will not involve the outward extension of the settlement boundary of the village, as defined in section 9.4</li> <li>c. has regard to the SODC Design Guide, in particular the requirements for separation between habitable rooms in adjacent properties and the provision of amenity space;</li> <li>d. does not have a significant impact on the privacy of adjacent properties;</li> <li>e. is consistent with the character of the locality;</li> <li>f. is compliant with policy H10 of this Plan, if considered to be backland development.</li> <li>g.</li> </ol>
<p><b>H10</b></p>	<p><b>Backland Infill Development in the AONB</b></p> <p>Backland development (the residential development of land behind an existing frontage or placing further dwelling/s behind existing dwelling/s within the existing site) will be supported where the development meets all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan and the Local Plan, and where such development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provides suitable access to the rear properties that is wide enough and far enough from the boundary and any front property to accommodate delivery, service and emergency vehicles without unnecessary disturbance to neighbours or the front property;</li> <li>b. provides safe pedestrian access to the rear properties;</li> <li>c. does not result in unacceptable loss of wildlife habitat in a residential garden.</li> </ol>
<p><b>D1</b></p>	<p><b>Good Design (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals for all forms of new development must plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design, at the same time demonstrating they have sought to conserve local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Chilterns AONB. Applications proposing unsympathetic designs which fail to respect the connections between people and places, or are inappropriate to its location, or pay inadequate regard to issues of renewable energy technologies, landscape and biodiversity considerations will not be supported.</p>
<p><b>D2</b></p>	<p><b>Light Pollution (Retained Policy)</b></p> <p>Proposals for any necessary street and external lighting should comply with the current guidelines established for the Chilterns AONB and for rural areas by the Institution of Lighting Engineers<sup>48</sup></p>

<sup>47</sup> See section 9.4

<sup>48</sup> Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light, the Institution of Lighting Engineers, 2005.

<b>D3</b>	<b>Secure by Design (Retained Policy)</b> Development proposals which incorporate the principles of ‘Secured by Design’ (SBD <sup>49</sup> ) and ensure that a safe and sustainable community is maintained will be supported.																																																																		
<b>D4</b>	<b>Renewable Energy</b> As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate the carbon reduction requirements set out in Local Plan Policy DES10. The use of a range of techniques and technologies, from energy use reduction to renewable energy generation will be supported.																																																																		
<b>D5</b>	<b>Sustainable Homes</b> Proposals for residential development should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>align dwellings to take maximum advantage of passive solar heating;</li> <li>be insulated to a high level; and</li> <li>incorporate sustainable water and drainage systems and storage.</li> </ol>																																																																		
<b>D6</b>	<b>Sustainable Transport</b> New residential development should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles (including both cars and cycles) in safe, accessible and convenient locations; and</li> <li>provide secure bicycle storage facilities in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council cycle parking standards.</li> </ul>																																																																		
<b>HS1</b>	<p><b>Site Allocations</b></p> <p>Residential allocations are provided in Table 12.i. The development of up to and including the number of houses set out in the Table for each development will be supported.</p> <p>Employment allocations are provided in Table 12.ii. The development of new employment opportunities on these sites will be supported.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="256 1010 1434 1375"> <thead> <tr> <th>Table 12.i</th> <th>WNP Ref</th> <th>Type</th> <th>Site Name Address</th> <th>Maximum Number of Homes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP1-01</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Chiltern Rise Cottage and surrounding land, Reading Road</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP1-02</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Woodcote Garden Centre, Reading Road</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP1-16</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Former Reservoir site, Greenmore</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP1-18</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Former Bus Depot, Long Toll (development complete)</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP1-19</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>The Smallholding, Land at the end of Wood Lane</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-02</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 1</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-03</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 2</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-09</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Beechwood Court, Long Toll</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-30</td> <td>Residential</td> <td>Land to the west of Church Farmhouse</td> <td>30</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="269 1406 1422 1536"> <thead> <tr> <th>Table 12.ii</th> <th>WNP Ref</th> <th>Site Name Address</th> <th>Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-43a</td> <td>Old Coal Yard, Greenmore</td> <td>0.37 Ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-25</td> <td>Land west of Church Farmhouse</td> <td>0.29 Ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WNP2-98</td> <td>Wards Farm</td> <td>0.14 Ha</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Table 12.i	WNP Ref	Type	Site Name Address	Maximum Number of Homes		WNP1-01	Residential	Chiltern Rise Cottage and surrounding land, Reading Road	24		WNP1-02	Residential	Woodcote Garden Centre, Reading Road	9		WNP1-16	Residential	Former Reservoir site, Greenmore	20		WNP1-18	Residential	Former Bus Depot, Long Toll (development complete)	14		WNP1-19	Residential	The Smallholding, Land at the end of Wood Lane	9		WNP2-02	Residential	Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 1	5		WNP2-03	Residential	Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 2	4		WNP2-09	Residential	Beechwood Court, Long Toll	14		WNP2-30	Residential	Land to the west of Church Farmhouse	30	Table 12.ii	WNP Ref	Site Name Address	Area		WNP2-43a	Old Coal Yard, Greenmore	0.37 Ha		WNP2-25	Land west of Church Farmhouse	0.29 Ha		WNP2-98	Wards Farm	0.14 Ha
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<sup>49</sup> [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

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<b>HS7</b>	<b>Land behind Yew Tree Farmhouse 2</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.
<b>HS8</b>	<b>Beechwood Court, Long Toll</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.
<b>HS9</b>	<b>Land to the west of Church Farm, Reading Road</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.
<b>ES1</b>	<b>Bishops Yard</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.
<b>ES2</b>	<b>Church Farm</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.
<b>ES3</b>	<b>Wards Farm</b> The full text of this policy may be found in Section 12.3 of this document.



## Appendix D: The Number and Mix of New Homes

### D.1 Local Plan Requirement

The previous South Oxfordshire Local Plan (the Core Strategy) and the Local Plan 2035 both use a settlement hierarchy that has 13 'larger' villages. Woodcote is one of these larger villages and was allocated 73 new homes in the Core Strategy.

The new Local Plan 2013-2035 proposes that each of the larger villages grow proportionally by around 15% from the 2011 base data, plus any housing allocated to that village through the Core Strategy. For Woodcote:

- the Core Strategy + 15% growth requires 225 new homes;
- completions and commitments totalled 110 new homes; thus
- the outstanding requirement for NDP becomes 115 new homes

### D.2 NPPF Considerations

Woodcote is located on the escarpment at the south-western end of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB). The AONB flows through and encloses the parish.

The NPPF requires plan makers to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development so that strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing, except where a protected area such as an AONB provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area. The NPPF further requires (paragraphs 174, 175, 176 and 177) that:

- planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes such as those in AONBs;
- that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value;
- that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty'
- that planning permission in designated areas such as AONBs should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.

### D.3 AONB Constraints

There are no available sites within the settlement boundary to accommodate the additional housing requirement. Therefore, any new development must be located on the perimeter of the village, intruding into the AONB with consequential adverse effects on the AONB. To accommodate additional housing it is, therefore, necessary to identify locations that have the minimum impact on the landscape where mitigation is possible to limit that impact.

A total of 18 possible sites for housing or employment development were identified. These were identified from:

- the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA);
- all unallocated sites identified for the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2012 – 2027 (WNP1);
- other sites notified to South Oxfordshire District Council;
- all responses to an advertisement placed in the Henley Standard; and
- the paddock by Wards Farm in response to local concerns about parking on the road.

One of these sites is a brownfield site – offices at Beechwood Court with the potential for conversion to flats, the remaining sites are all greenfield sites.

A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was carried out to determine which sites might be suitable for development. Five sites for housing (accommodating 57 houses) and two sites for employment use were identified as having minimal impact on the AONB with appropriate mitigation. All other sites were found to have a major impact on the AONB and were rejected. Subsequently one of the sites was withdrawn by the new owners leaving four sites with the capacity for 53 houses.

## D.4 Local Housing Need

An allocation of 225 new homes to a village of some 1000 homes in the AONB represents major development<sup>50</sup> and, as such, the NPPF requires that exceptional circumstances must be proven. To date the Local Planning Authority have not provided any evidence to support this allocation nor any evidence of:

- a national need for this development;
- any negative impact of refusing it; nor
- that the development cannot be delivered outside the designated area.

In the absence of an evidence based local housing allocation or reasons for ignoring the requirements for development in the AONB from the Local Planning Authority and recognising that there will be an additional local need, Woodcote Parish Council have produced their own local objectively assessed housing need to ensure that the sites identified by the LVIA provide the capacity for enough houses to meet or exceed the local need.

In so doing the Parish Council:

- noted that the NPPF (paragraph 174) gives great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- considered that the Parish's location entirely within the Chilterns AONB constituted an exceptional circumstance (NPPF paragraph 61) that justified an alternative approach which uses current and future demographic trends;
- decided that the use of a simple proportional allocation to quantify the local need was both inappropriate and unlikely to be accurate;
- recognised that the village has an ageing population with a reduction in young families that affects the social balance of the village; and

produced an assessment that:

- Used the community need for housing, noting that there was substantial opportunity for any need beyond the Parish to be met, at no additional cost, outside the AONB;
- used local demographic data from the Office of National Statistics, the South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council;

## D.5 Projected Windfall Provision

Paragraph 71 of the NPPF permits an allowance for windfall development to be made provided there is compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

## D.6 History

Between 01-Apr-11 and 31-Mar-18 an additional 34 new homes were built in the Parish as a result of windfall development – an average of 4.8/year. A conservative projection, therefore, would be 4/year giving some 56 additional homes between 2021 and 2035.

## D.7 House Sales

An assessment of recent house sales showed that sales of houses with 3 or more bedrooms frequently resulted in families replacing older people, thus affecting the age distribution of the population, so this was also taken into account in assessing the impact of housing development in the village.

## D.8 New Homes Mix

The village is predominantly made up of large, detached houses, often under-occupied. The requirement is, therefore, mainly for smaller, three bed family homes.

## D.9 Woodcote Housing need: Summary

The locally assessed additional housing requirement for the Parish of Woodcote is 50-60 new homes in addition to the anticipated 56 windfalls.

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<sup>50</sup> Ref paper "What constitutes major development in an AONB"

Appendix E: Photographs of important views



View 1: From footpath 411/9/10 toward Bridle Path



View 2: From footpath 411/9/10 toward Upper Covert Woods



View 3: From footpath 411/9/10 toward Goring Rd



View 4: From footpath 411/9/10 toward Shirvells Hill

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View 5: From Goring Rd toward Pot Kiln Lane



View 6: From footpath 411/2/10 toward Fox Covert woods



View 7: From footpath 411/2/10 toward Wood Lane



View 8: From footpath 411/8/10 toward Behoes Lane



View 9: From footpath 411/8/10 toward South Stoke Rd



View 10: From footpath 411/8/10 toward South Stoke Rd



View 11: From South Stoke Rd toward Oxford Rd



View 12: From Oxford Rd toward Reading Rd

REFERENDUM VERSION



View 13: From Tidmore Lane (FP 411/27/10) toward A4074



View 14: From footpath 411/1/10 toward Oxford Rd



View 15: From footpath 411/1/10 toward A4074



View 16: From Tidmore Lane toward A4074



View 17: From Tidmore Lane toward Reading Road



View 18: From Tidmore Lane toward Reading Rd



View 19: From Reading Rd toward Greenmore

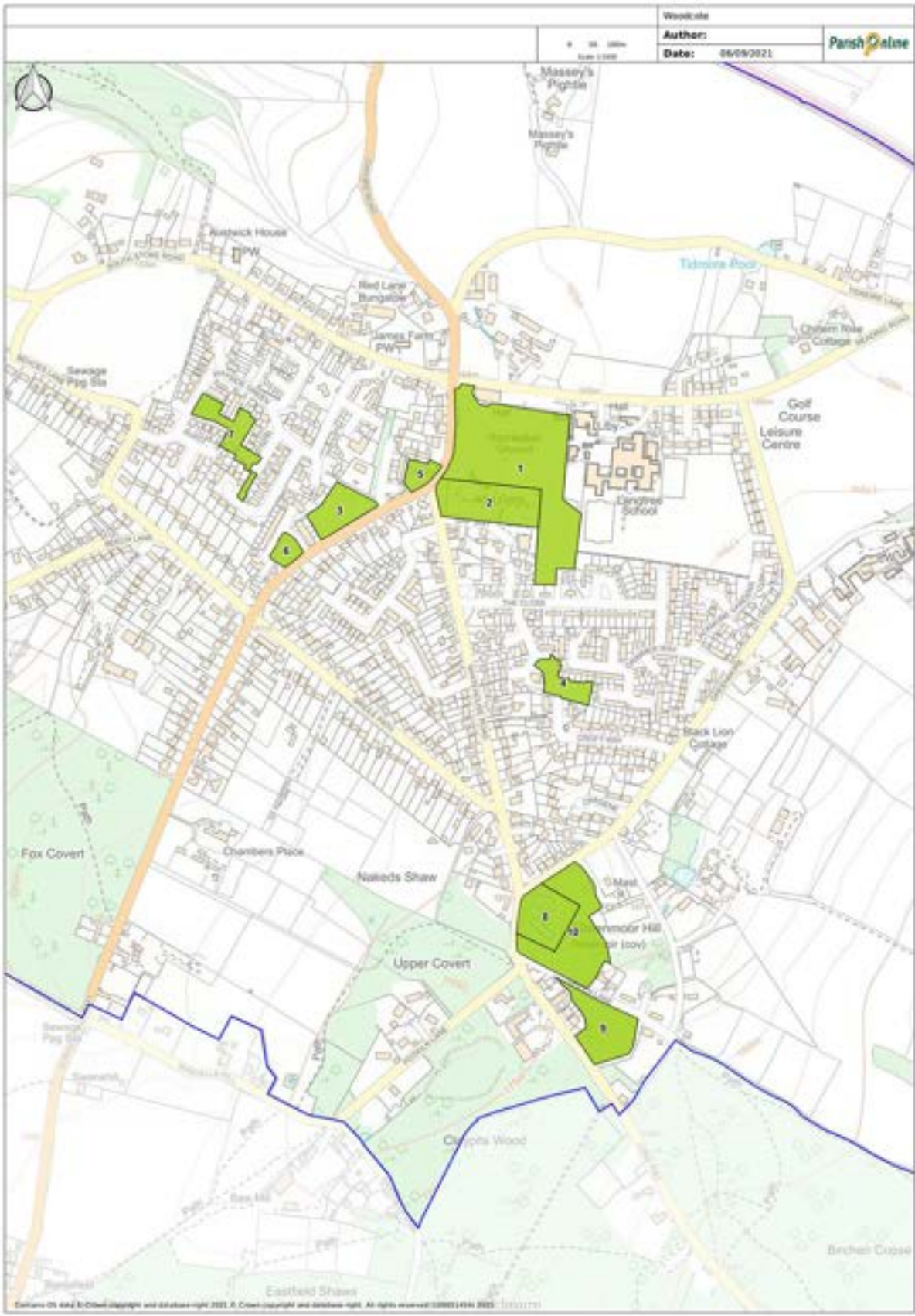


View 20. From bridle path 411/19/30 toward the A4074



View 21. From bridle path 411/19/30 toward College Wood

Appendix F: Maps of local green spaces





LGS1. Village Green



LGS2: The Allotments



LGS3. Folly Field



LGS4. Green space bounded by Wittenham Close, Croft way, Grimmer Way and Hagbourne Close



LGS5. Green space bounded by Wood Green and Goring Road



LGS6. Green space bounded by Folly Green and Goring Road





LGS7. Wayside Green



LGS8. Greenmoor Ponds



LGS9. Snowdrop Wood, Long Toll



LGS10. Woodland surrounding the Greenmoor Ponds

## Acknowledgements

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