



LONG WITTENHAM

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Appendix 1: Evidence base

Status: Submission

22/02/2017

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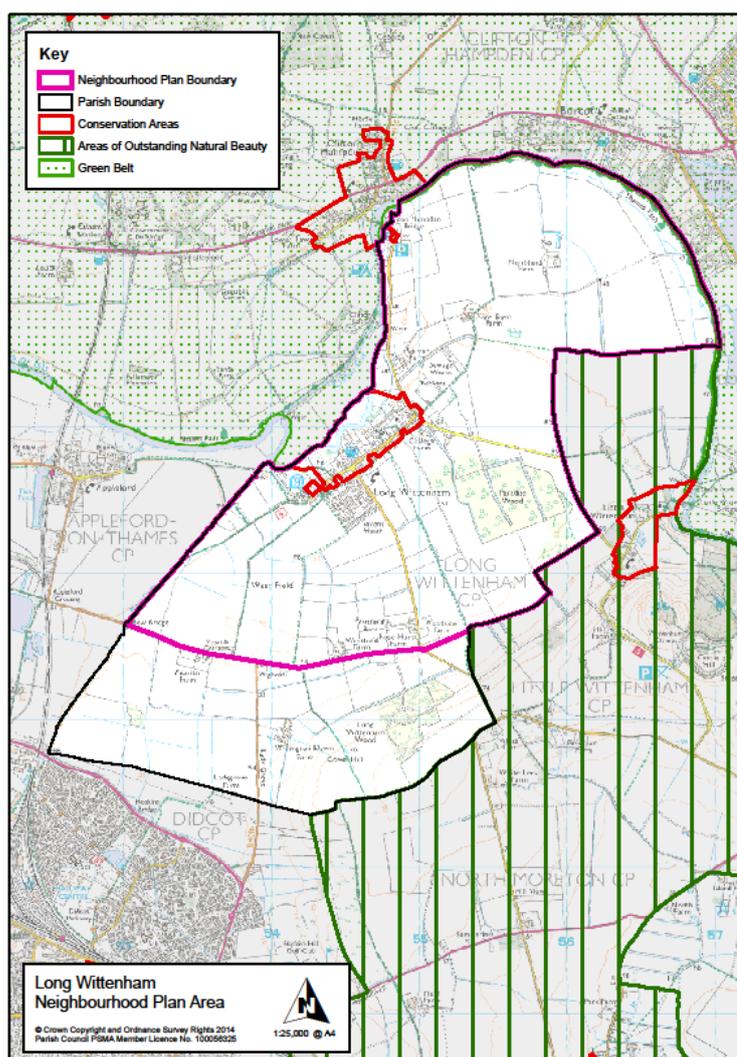
A1.1 Approach

On the advice of the planning department at SODC the LWNDP steering group undertook a Sustainability Appraisal in 2015 which incorporated the requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Late in our Plan process, the District Council issued a screening opinion that found the Plan did not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. However, the information gathered for the Sustainability Appraisal provides a robust baseline of evidence for the Long Wittenham Neighbourhood Plan and a summary of the information is presented here in support of the Plan policies. The full Sustainability Appraisal scoping report is available on Long Wittenham’s website. Further advice about evidence came from consultees in response to draft pre-submission consultation. The evidence that is relevant for the final Neighbourhood Plan is summarised in this appendix.

A1.2 Landscape

Map A1 shows the extent of the Parish and its relationship to our immediate neighbours of Little Wittenham to the east and Clifton Hampden across the River to the north and the environmental constraint surrounding the Parish.

MapA1: Landscape and Environmental Constraints



Some of the village is a designated Conservation Area. None of the parish is designated as Green Belt or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). However, across the river the whole of the other bank forms the boundary of Green Belt and the boundary with Little Wittenham coincides with the boundary of the AONB protection the area around Wittenham Clumps.

There are excellent views from the village towards The Clumps from properties in Fieldside and Didcot Road. The views from the village across to the Wittenham Clumps are some of the most iconic in Oxfordshire.

Figure A2: View cones to Wittenham Clumps

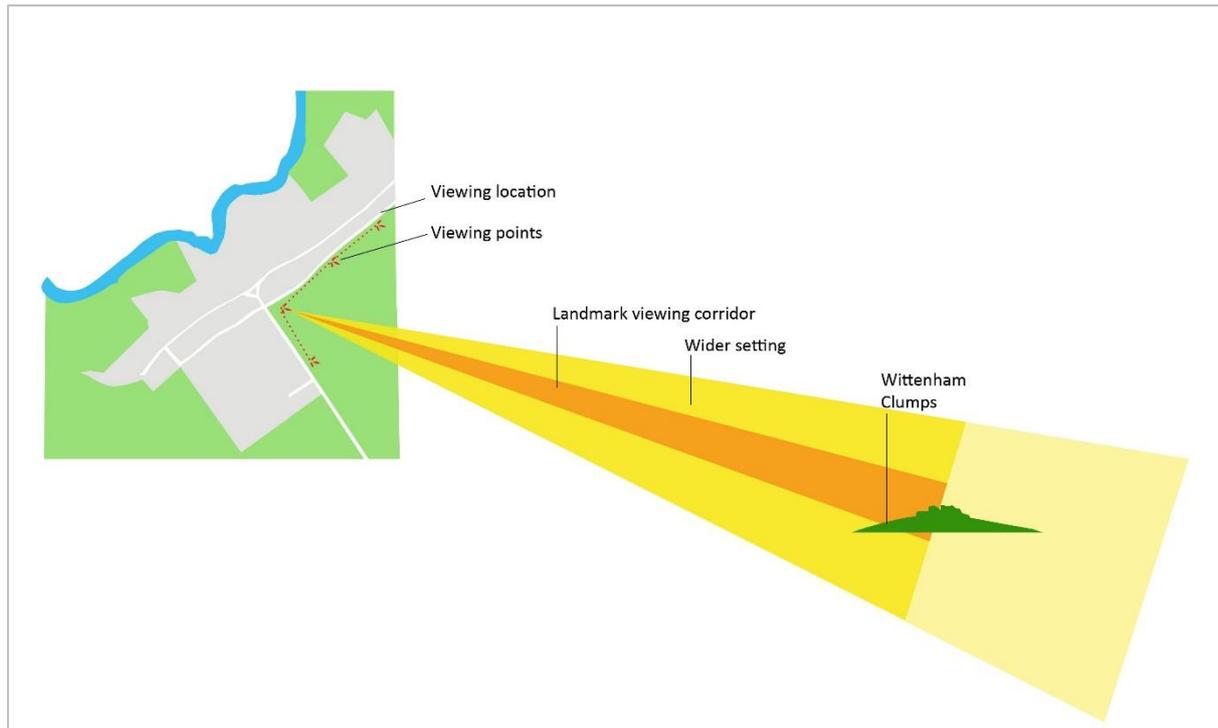


Figure A3 Views of the Clumps



There are still places between Long and Little Wittenham where it is quiet and no man-made structures can be seen and yet Didcot is only a few miles away. Views towards Appleford have been compromised by Didcot Power Station but these will become again essentially rural views once the remaining large buildings of the power station are demolished. The landscape of the area is still relatively unspoilt.

There is easy access to a good network of public rights of way from the village making it safe and convenient to walk off road to Little Wittenham, Appleford and towards Sires Hill areas. The Thames Path National Trail runs along the parish bank of the Thames from Clifton Hampden towards Days Lock in Little Wittenham. There is also a well-used cycle route from the village towards Didcot taking cyclists and pedestrians on a hard surfaced off-road route into Ladygrove.

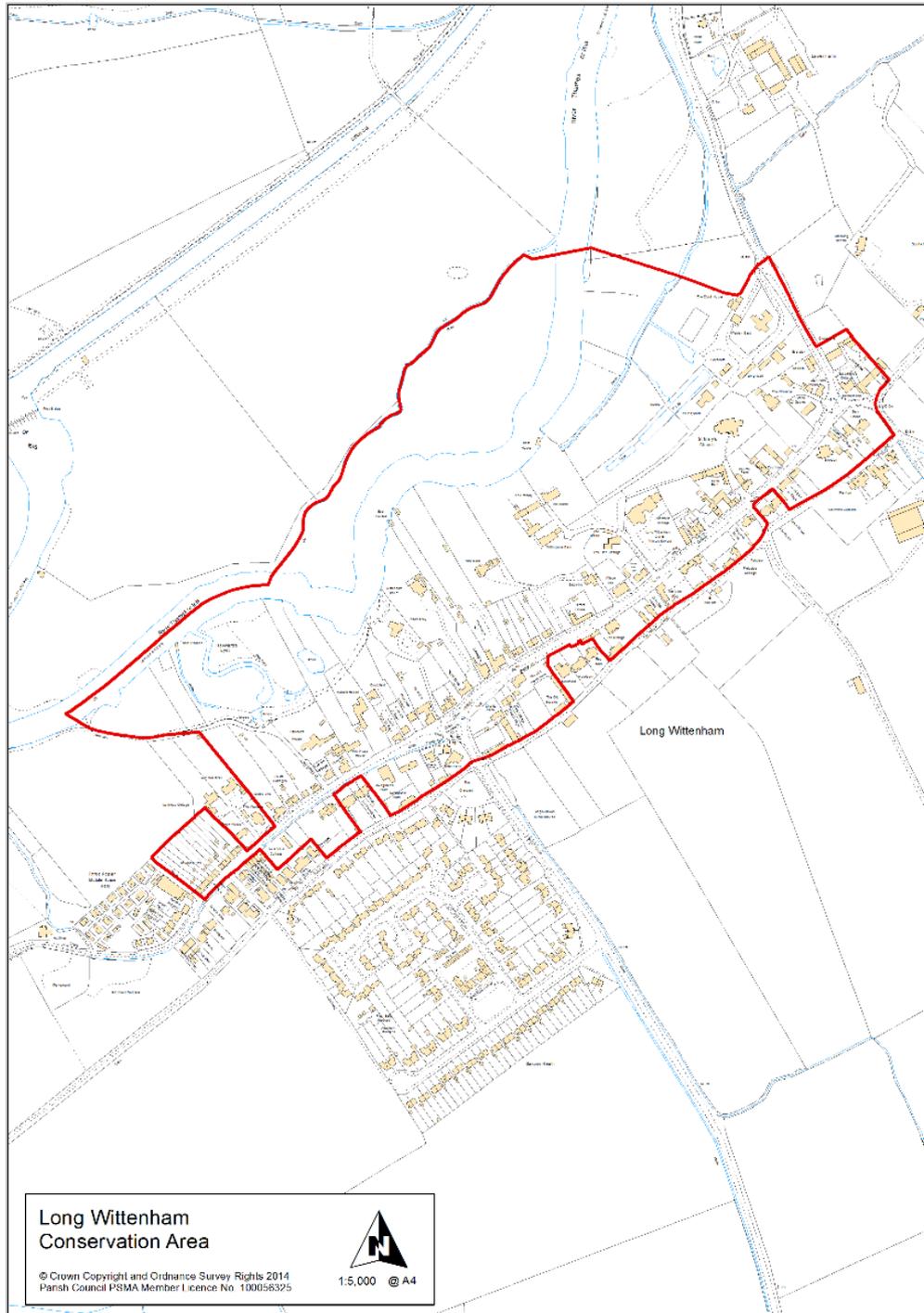
There are two additional routes which villagers would like to see implemented, as demonstrated by responses to the Neighbourhood Plan survey (see section A1.19): an off road route to Clifton Hampden; and a circular route starting near the Pendon Museum and taking in Clifton Hampden Lock area using the weir at the upstream end of the lock cut. The Wittenham Vision survey in 2010

showed that 80% of respondents would use the path between several times per week to several times per year for recreation, dog walking or to access services in Clifton Hampden.

A1.3 Townscape

Long Wittenham is a village of with a population of 875 people living in approximately 325 dwellings. It is situated centrally in the triangle formed by the towns of Abingdon, Wallingford and Didcot. The main part of the village is shown in Map A4 with the conservation area marked in red.

Map A4: Long Wittenham village and conservation area



The northern boundary of the parish is the River Thames and its southern borders Didcot. However as a significant part of the southern area, which is only sparsely populated, is now included in the Northern Development Area of Didcot's planned expansion. This area of the parish is excluded from the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan.

The village has four main housing elements of differing character which are examined in detail in the Village Character Assessment (Appendix 2 to the Neighbourhood Plan) which sets out what villagers value and wish to retain about our townscape. The High Street and immediate environs includes many historic and listed buildings in the conservation area shown Map A2 and also includes the historic St Mary's Church, village school (which is not listed) and two pub/restaurants.

- Westfield Road is a 1970s private housing development
- Saxons Heath is a development partly in 1950s and partly in 1970's of formerly social housing some of which is now owner occupied.
- Poplars Park is a pitch park home development.

A1.4 Village activity

Long Wittenham is a thriving village with a strong community. There are a number of facilities including 2 central pubs, primary school, village hall, pre-school and some sports and play facilities and also two plots of allotments. There are however some notable limitations in community infrastructure including limitations of the school and hall, lack of a village shop or post office (the nearest facilities being at Clifton Hampden, 2.6km away). There are active communities for football and yoga, as well as a playing field and two playgrounds. Other active clubs and societies include History, Women's Institute, bell ringing, a monthly lunch club and a monthly Good Neighbours Group. There are also a number of community events including the May Fair, annual Witt Fest music festival, an annual fun run, bonfire night event and concerts in the church. Although the village hall provides a useful base for many activities it could not be developed to function as a multi-purpose community hub.

Residents use facilities outside of Long Wittenham such as gyms, swimming, tennis clubs, badminton courts and golf. For day centres, residents would need to travel to Didcot, Abingdon or Wallingford. The rural surroundings are an important leisure asset and Long Wittenham's rural position by the River Thames provides many opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and other outdoor pursuits. Additionally, there are a number of allotments located within Long Wittenham, providing recreational activities and also provide locally grown food.

A1.5 Soil, air, water and climate

Long Wittenham is located on the former floodplain of the River Thames, and broadly the whole village shares a similar soil type.

The local soils are freely-draining base-rich in nature but slightly acid. They contain low levels of carbon. They have a loam texture and have high natural fertility; making them highly valuable for arable and grass farming systems. Their free-draining nature also makes them liable to upwards percolation, meaning that low-lying areas can be prone to standing water when the water table is high. To the south of the village, as the altitude increases, soils change to loam-clays which are slowly-permeable with impeded drainage, and only moderate fertility.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report concluded that “warming of the climate system is unequivocal” and “it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century”. Carbon dioxide emissions from South Oxfordshire decreased between 2005 and 2012, from 8.2 to 7.0 tonnes CO₂ per capita. (source DEFRA CO₂ emissions data). This is below the Oxfordshire average of 7.3 tonnes per capita. Just over 36% of South Oxfordshire’s CO₂ emissions come from industrial and commercial sources, 37% from domestic sources, 27% from road traffic. (DEFRA “Local and Regional CO₂ Emissions Estimates for 2005-2012” June 2014)

There are no samples for air quality taken within the immediate boundary of the village recorded on the Environment Agency website¹. The village was included in an Air Quality Action Plan consultation led by South Oxfordshire District Council in 2014, in fulfilment of the 1995 Environment Act². Long Wittenham is not been categorised as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), unlike nearby Wallingford whose centre suffers from queuing road traffic which leads to high levels of NO₂. Nonetheless, as traffic levels are anticipated to increase in the village, with no planned improvements to traffic flow, levels of NO₂, sulphur dioxide and particulates may need to be monitored closely in future.

A number of sources for pollution are noted in the local area. These include:

- Jet Laboratory, Culham Science Centre - radioactive materials
- Waste recycling centre, Culham – mixed materials
- Gravel extraction, Sutton Courtenay- mining waste
- Didcot Power Station, Didcot - Didcot A, coal-fired, now closed. Didcot B, gas-powered.
- Adjacent landfills, both old and live

There is a 7.5 tonne weight restriction at Clifton Hampden bridge so lorry traffic to or from any of these sites will not go through Long Wittenham, unless making a local delivery.

Long Wittenham is situated at 50 metres above sea level in a flat landscape, its climate largely unaffected by local topography. The nearest Met Office weather station to Long Wittenham is located at Benson. Thirty year averages (1981-2010) from this station indicate the following averages for the local area:³

- Average annual max temperature 14.4°C (warmest month July 22.6°C)
- Average annual min temperature 5.9°C (coldest month February 0.8°C)
- Average annual rainfall 112.3mm (highest rainfall month November 11.1mm)

In summary, it is likely that the changes with the greatest effect will arise from significantly higher winter rainfall – which would exacerbate seasonal flooding – while summer drought is likely to impact on farming and other businesses that require water.

¹ Environmental Agency – interactive maps for air quality and pollution. Accessed January 2015
<http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

² South Oxfordshire Air Quality Action Plan (2014)
https://consult.southoxfordshire.gov.uk/portal/south/health_and_housing/ep/

³ Met Office: thirty year data for Benson. Accessed January 2015
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/climate/gcpjw35jy>

A1.6 Flooding

The village is frequently governed by flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency, although any flooding typically affects the road network rather than homes or business premises.⁴ For instance the road to Clifton Hampden is often flooded by the River Thames, which spills onto the road to the north of the village, sometimes at a depth making passing impossible except by 4x4 vehicles. The road flooded during winter 2013/4 and again in 2014/5 when it was closed for 6 weeks. This has implications for residents who typically commute north to Oxford or to Abingdon. The nearest alternative crossing points over the River Thames are at Sutton Courtenay (which is also liable to flooding) or Wallingford.

Figure A5 Areas around Long Wittenham issued with Flood Warnings⁴.

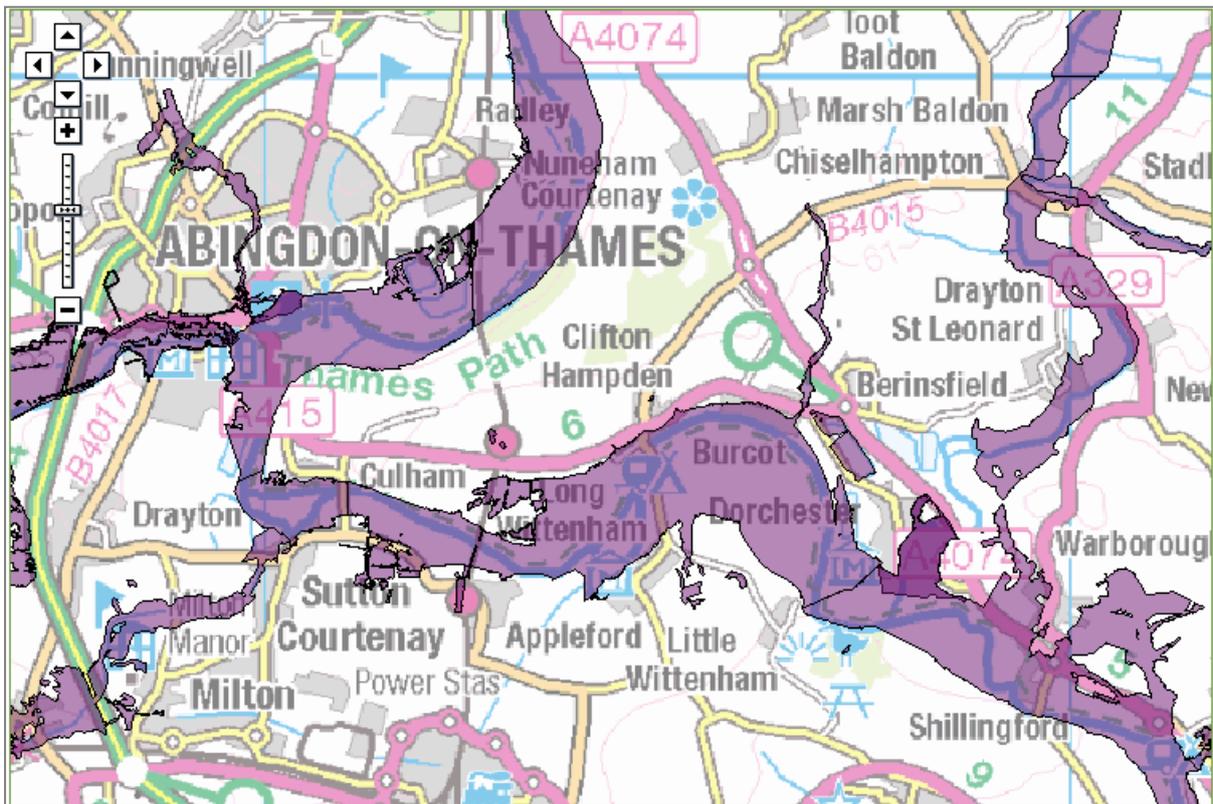


Figure A5 shows areas issued with flood warnings. However, for the purposes of housing development Figure A6, is more relevant, showing in light blue the risk of extreme flooding (0.1% chance per year).

⁴ Environmental Agency – interactive maps for flooding and water quality. <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

Figure A6 Flood map for planning⁵

The section of the River Thames near the village is covered by a River Basin Management Plan. It is deemed to be of low ecological value, predicted to rise to 'moderate' in 2015. The whole village area is categorised as a 'Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone' – meaning that surface waters contain at least 50mg per litre nitrate. This has implications for farms in the area; farms must comply with NVZ rules. Water samples from Clifton Hampden Ditch (near the road bridge) and Moor Ditch (west of the village) taken in 2009, were graded good for chemistry but poor for biology. Very high levels of nitrates and phosphates were found in the samples.

A1.7 Biodiversity

South Oxfordshire contains a rich variety of natural habitats of local, national and international importance. There are a total of 203 designated nature conservation areas in South Oxfordshire including 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), 38 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 157 proposed or confirmed County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and 4 Local Nature Reserves. None of these falls within the Long Wittenham neighbourhood plan area.

Most of Long Wittenham parish landscape is lowland village farmlands which do not support habitats that are deemed to be of national or international importance. However there are areas of river meadowlands which include reedbed habitat and wet willow woodland which are both national nature conservation priority habitats, and the Loddon lily which is a rare plant is found mainly in wet areas along the Thames in Oxfordshire and Berkshire and the River Loddon in Berkshire. Kingfishers nest in a bank on one site. Some wet meadow that has escaped agricultural improvement and is

⁵ Environment Agency – Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and seas. Accessed January 2016
<http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

managed as pasture or is cut for hay is a type of habitat that is a national priority for nature conservation. Wildflowers on this site include great burnet, ragged robin, sneezewort and abundance of the yellow flowered marsh marigold. Marsh orchids have been seen here. There is also a seasonal pond in the meadow. Skylarks, which are a national priority for nature conservation due to the rapid decline in its UK population, can be seen here.

There is a colony of Roman snails along Fieldside, which have protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This has been confirmed in a letter from the Conchological Society in their response to Planning Application: P16/S1124/O (proposed housing development at Long Wittenham) on 18th February 2017.

Natural England commented in response to a draft of the Neighbourhood Plan that the Little Wittenham Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is in relatively close proximity to Long Wittenham and supports an important population of Great Crested Newts. Natural England suggest that the Plan should recognise this and promote the creation and linkage of habitats (both ponds and terrestrial habitats) for this species within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Like other amphibians, great crested newts need suitable ponds surrounded by good quality terrestrial habitat if they are to prosper. Changes in farming practices have had seriously adverse effects on both of these essential requirements.⁶

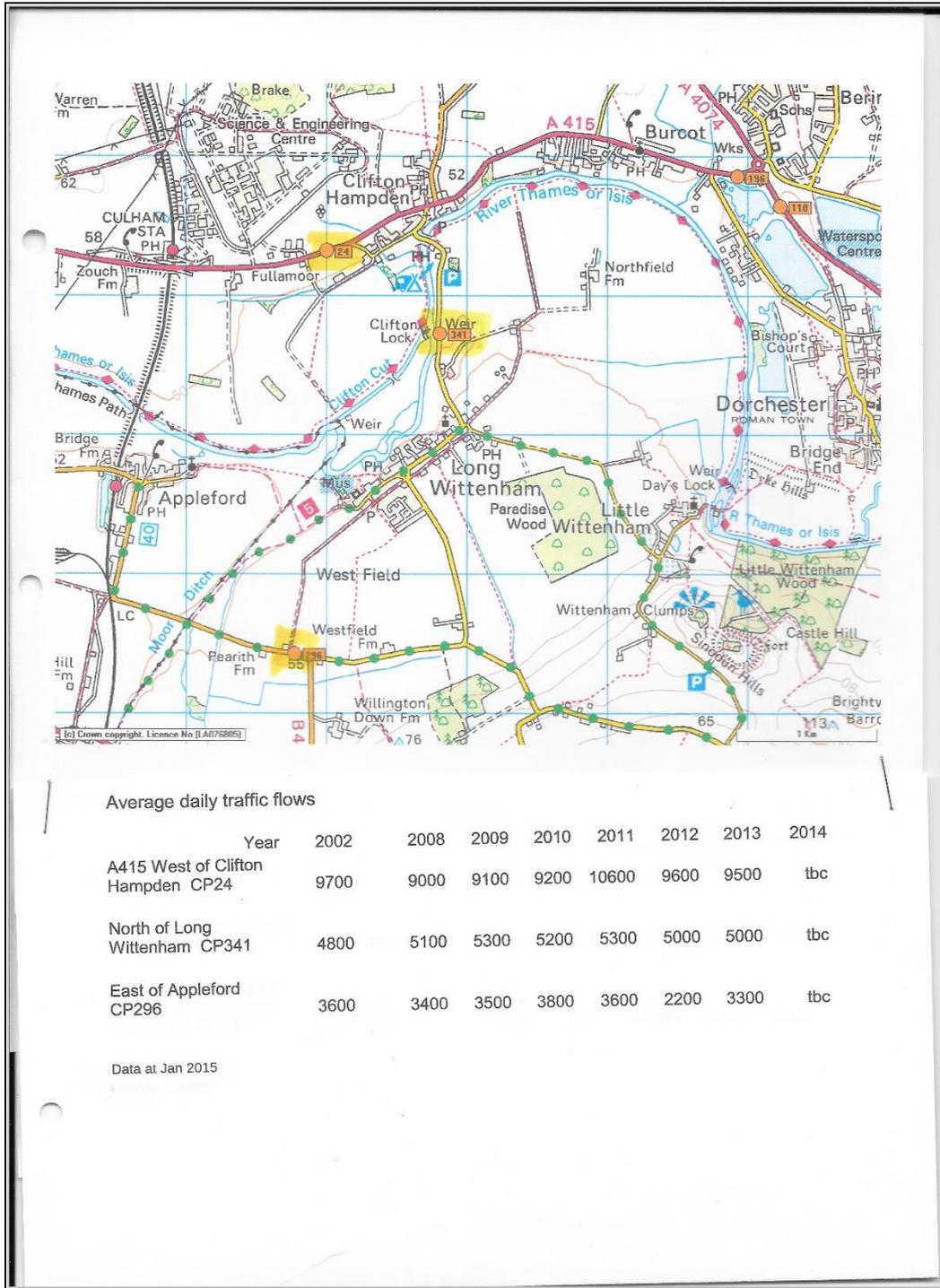
A1.8 Traffic and Transport

As set out above, the Village is served by road access to Didcot and Wallingford via minor roads. However access north towards Oxford and Abingdon is constrained by the one way working at Clifton Hampden Bridge. The centre of the village is protected by a 30 mph speed limit and there is a system of traffic calming with one-way priority shuttle working at 3 locations through the High Street. There is also a 30 mph limit on the approach to the Barley Mow. All of the built up areas of the village benefit from a system of street lighting although this provides only low level lighting.

Approximately 2,500 vehicles per day used the main road through the village and attached as appendices are historic traffic volumes over the last 7 years taken from the 3 permanent traffic counters surrounding the village.

⁶ Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook http://www.froglife.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/GCN-Conservation-Handbook_compressed.pdf

Figure A7: Average daily traffic flows



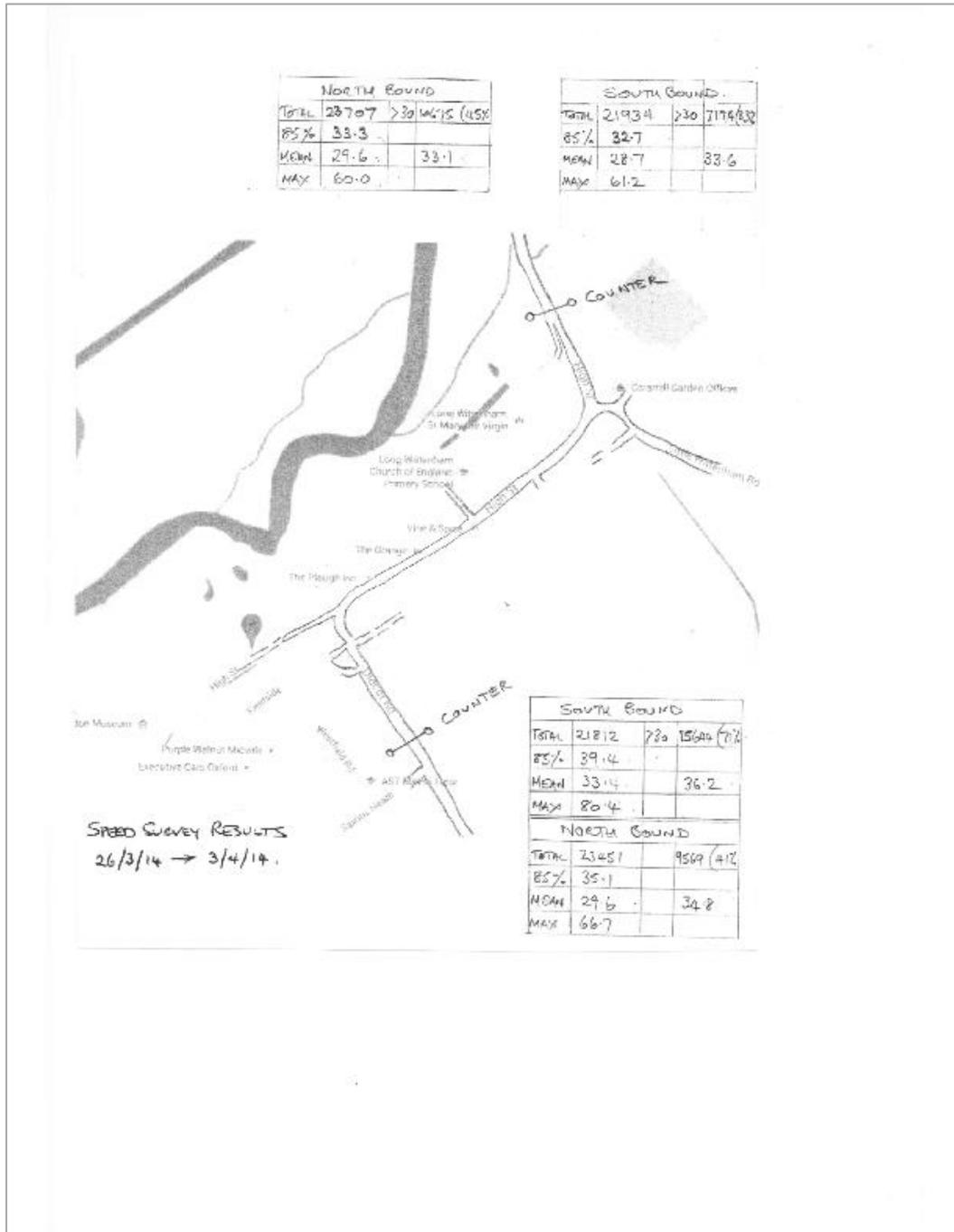
Traffic volumes and speeds were one of the top priorities discussed at recent village meetings in preparation for drafting the Neighbourhood Plan. Data from the traffic count and speed survey over the years 2002 to 2013 is in Figure A7 below and results from an additional survey in 2014 are summarised in Figure A8.

The Village lies on a “classified un-numbered” road between the quickly expanding commuter and dormitory town of Didcot to the south and one of the few river crossings (Clifton Hampden) towards

the employment and retail opportunities at Oxford and beyond via the M40. There is no bus service in the village.

Traffic volume and speed has long been a concern for residents of the High Street and so in 2014 the parish council commissioned an automatic traffic survey from Simone Surveys Ltd. They placed automatic counters at either end of the village centre for a period of 9 days to record both volume and speed of traffic entering and leaving the residential area. The survey showed a total of approximately 23,500 north bound and 22,000 south bound vehicles or an average of 5,000 vehicles per day. The figures summarised in Figure A8 show that in and out volume is very similar and therefore the village is not the final destination for most of this traffic: the vast majority is through traffic.

Figure A8: Traffic survey



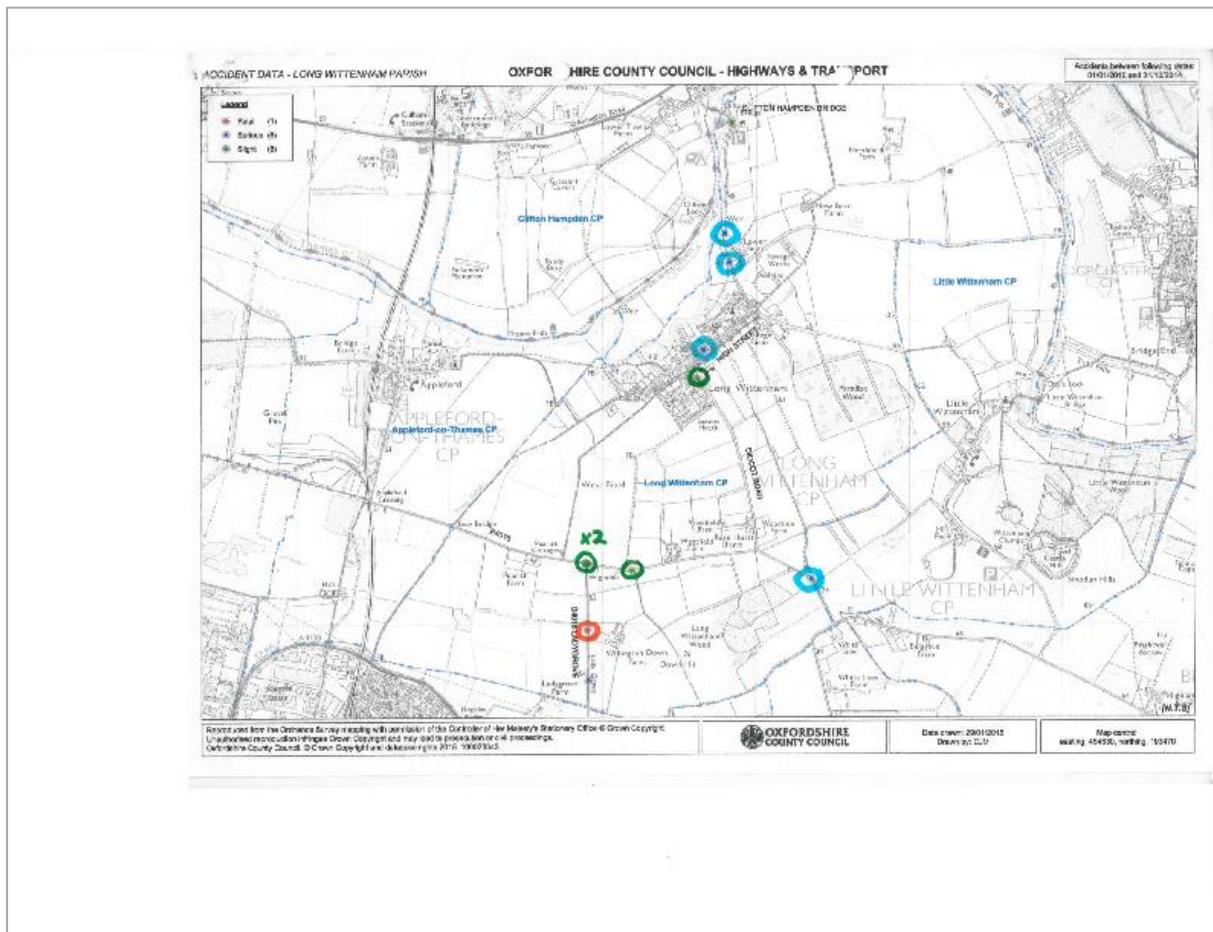
The results also show the daily distribution with over 50% of movements occurring in the morning and evening peak times and only 5% per hour through the daytime hours. This high peak volume coincides with the dropping off and collection times for both the School and Pre-school which are both located in the High Street. This can lead to very significant congestion due to the concentration of traffic coinciding with parking by parents. The survey quantified concerns that had been expressed by residents and numerous village meetings.

Speed in the centre of the village is controlled by a series of traffic calming measures and by the two tight bends at either end of the High Street. Away from the traffic calming vehicle speeds increase

significantly above the 30mph speed limit. The 85th percentile speed (a standard measure) is 35.1 entering the village from Didcot and 32.7 entering from the Oxford direction. Average speeds within a 30mph limit would usually be in the high 20s rather than exceeding 30mph. The raw data shows over half the vehicles entering and leaving the village exceed the speed limit. The variable speed indicator signs at both ends of the village seem to have limited effect on vehicle speeds.

Five year injury accident records were obtained from OCC. Fortunately these record very few traffic accidents in the Parish and these are not generally in the village centre. The junction of Ladygrove (sometimes called the Long Mile) with Sires Hill road accounts for some of the accidents. However this junction is due to be modified in the near future due to the north east Didcot planned development. (Accident locations are shown in Figure A9)

Figure A9 Accident locations



This development, an expansion of nearly 2,000 homes and associated schools and community facilities is a serious concern to residents as it will add to the already congested peak time travel through the village. Longer term the recently published “LTP4” includes plans for a new link road and bridge over the River Thames to link Didcot to the Science Vale area at Culham/Jet and the A415 and beyond. However this is likely to be 10 years in the planning and construction before it will relieve traffic congestion for the village.

In summary the major issue for the village is the concentration of peak time through traffic coinciding with school times which cause congestion, noise and fumes in the centre of the village.

Relocation of the School and Pre-school in a new “Hub” away from the High Street would be of significant benefit as it would remove the parking in the High Street at peak times.

A1.9 Material assets

Village Hall

Long Wittenham has a village hall, built around 1916/1917 which has had many extensions and upgrades over the past century. It is owned by the Parish Council on behalf of the parishioners and managed by a Village Hall Committee which includes representatives of the main groups that use the hall regularly. The Committee works hard to provide a low-cost but good standard venue for the village.

Figure A10 Village Hall Land Registry extract

REGISTER EXTRACT

Title Number	: ON51625
Address of Property	: The Parish Hall, High Street, Long Wittenham
Price Stated	: Not Available
Registered Owner(s)	: THE LONG WITTENHAM PARISH COUNCIL care of Mrs S J Humphreys, Clerk to the Parish Council, 18 Saxons Heath, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4PX.
Lender(s)	: None

The main user of the village hall is Long Wittenham pre-school. The pre-school is currently fully subscribed. The building poses some limitations in terms of size of indoor and outdoor space and also having to share the space with all the other requirements of the village. The pre-school and primary school work as closely together as possible given that they are at separate locations. Not all primary school pupils have attended the pre-school and likewise, not all the pre-school children go to the primary school.

The village hall is also widely used by community groups: Brownies, Pilates, WI, Lunch Club, Good Neighbours Group, Twinning Group, History Group exhibitions. It is available for hire for parties, dances, quizzes, fund raising fetes, fairs, sales and similar events.

The hall is centrally located in the village but has serious limitations. The need for a new village hall was identified in the community led plan Wittenham Vision 2011 and endorsed at public meetings and by the village survey in 2015. The village hall has limited parking (4 spaces) and the car park doubles as the only outside space. There is only one main hall with no separate meeting rooms. When it is in use by pre-school no other groups can meet there which limits the opportunities for other groups to form and use it as a base.

Church

The Grade 1 listed Church and cemetery are central to the village. St Mary's is a fine grade I listed church built by the Normans in 1120. It retains many of its early features such as the Norman chancel arch, lead font and small sculpted memorial to one of the early Lords of the Manor, Gilbert de Clare, which dates from 1295.

Public Houses

We have three pubs in the Parish, The Plough Inn which hosts several village events such as the annual Fun Run and the church fete, The Vine and Spice which is now an Indian Restaurant as well as a traditional pub, and The Barley Mow which dates from the 14th century and is mentioned in J K Jerome's 'Three Men in a Boat'. However, the Barley Mow is 1.8km outside the village adjacent to Clifton Hampden bridge.

Pendon Museum

One other historic pub, The Three Poplars, is now the Pendon Museum. Pendon Museum has been in the village for more than 60 years, and is widely heralded as one of, if not the best dioramas portraying life and transport of the Inter-war years in the UK. The museum is an independent, self-funding charitable trust, and an attraction with a worldwide audience. The museum opens at weekends, bank holidays and some additional days during school holidays. The Museum Car Park is normally sufficient for parking but on two occasions in 2015 made use of Wards field for overflow parking. The Pendon Museum contributes to the village economy. There are 7,000 visitors to the museum annually from worldwide destinations. Most visitors are railway modellers but an increasing number are from architectural, rural history, transport and other backgrounds. The museum encourages visitors to use the local pubs and bed and breakfast accommodation and taxi companies. It also employs two local part time staff and a caretaker who lives in the house attached to the site.

Village Cross

Centrally sited at the heart of the village tradition has it that St Birinus preached Christianity to the villagers in the seventh century. The cross was restored in the late nineteenth century but the base is much older, possible original. It has always been a focal point in the village.

School

The village benefits from a thriving primary school with 82 pupils on the roll. There has been a school in Long Wittenham since the 1830s. It moved to its current site in 1854 when it was designated a National School. It has been added to and improved but the old school building is still an integral part of the school. The school is owned by the Diocese of Oxford.

Figure A11 Primary School Land Registry extract

REGISTER EXTRACT

Title Number	: ON300963
Address of Property	: Long Wittenham Church of England School, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon (OX14 4QJ)
Price Stated	: Not Available
Registered Owner(s)	: THE BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD, THE ARCHDEACON OF BERKSHIRE AND THE VICAR OF THE PARISH OF LONG WITTENHAM AND THEIR SUCCESSORS care of Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey Lane, Botley, Oxford OX2 0NB.
Lender(s)	: None

Long Wittenham Primary School takes pupils from 5-11 from Long Wittenham, Little Wittenham, Appleford, Sutton Courtenay and Didcot. The most recent OFSTED inspection report (2014) rates the school as 'Good' and the pupils attain above average SATs. It is a small school which provides a friendly and supportive learning environment to its approximately 90 pupils.

The school is currently the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), the Local Education Authority (LEA). The school has capacity of 115. The age range is from 4 - 11 years (reception to Year 6) and the catchment area is Long and Little Wittenham. However the school would not be sustainable with pupils from this area only as there are too few young children living in the village. About one third of pupils come from other areas which have included Appleford, Abingdon, Berinsfield, North Moreton, Sutton Courtenay, Didcot, Dorchester and Drayton. This leads to the challenge of parking and transportation as these parents obviously need to drive to school. The intake numbers vary from year to year and the school losing some pupils every year at the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) when they move to private education.

To ensure that the school, a key village asset, is not lost the village has for years been aware that it must be re-located to a new site that meets current standards for external and internal space and indoor facilities. The evidence supporting a new school on a different site rather than renovating the old school is:

- A recent assessment by Mouchels, commissioned by the school governors, rejected redevelopment as financially non-viable.
- The site is small and re-development would provide no opportunity to add a playing field to the school. There is no space for a playing field on or near the current site. Teaching staff spend time every week taking pupils off site for sports.
- Redevelopment on the same site would not address the issue of parking and congestion in the High Street
- A substantial re-build would be difficult in an active school.

- The school hall cannot accommodate the whole school at one time and would be difficult to upgrade to meet current requirements of disabled pupils.
- The school does not provide facilities for one to one mentoring.
- The main centre of population is no longer the High Street, with the developments at Saxons Heath and Westfield Road. Over the last 50 years the village has 'moved away' from the school.
- Current maintenance costs are high and supervising maintenance is time consuming for the head teacher.

Other facilities

Other village/parish facilities and amenities include:

- Bodkins Field sports pitches and play-area
- Caravan and camping site adjacent to The Barley Mow where there is also a large surfaced carpark.
- A well used fishing area at the Maddy
- Access to Neptune wood on Little Wittenham Road
- Two village allotments at either end of Fieldside
- Acklings Village play and sports area opposite Poplars Park
- Pendon Museum

The War memorial

Designed by Guy Dawber, the memorial bears the names of fourteen men from the village who died as a result of the First World War. They are remembered each Armistice Day at a short service attended not only by villagers but the children from our village school who keep alive those names from the past.

Cultural heritage

There have been people living in this area since the Stone Age with Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements nearby. The Wittenham sword and the Wittenham shield, both from the Iron Age are on display in the Ashmolean Museum and the Iron Age hill fort on the Clumps at Little Wittenham is part of our close landscape. When the Romans came they built a small town at Dorchester; one of them walked this way and dropped a brooch which was later found in Church Cottage. Local metal detectorists have found many Roman artefacts at various locations.

The village was founded by Witta and his family, in the fifth century AD. An important Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been partially excavated on what is now Saxons Heath, site of the council estate built in the 1950s. It is expected that further investigations will be needed to establish the extent of the cemetery and any other Anglo-Saxon remains. There are extensive crop marks within the parish boundary including those of a Romano-British farmstead at Northfield Farm.

The village is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. At the time of the Conquest, the manor had been owned by Queen Edith wife of Edward the Confessor. When she died in 1075, William the Conqueror gave it to Walter Gifford, his cousin, who had come with him in 1066. From then on there

were a succession of Lords of the Manor until it was bought by Sir Thomas White in the mid 1550s and given to his foundation of St John's College in Oxford to provide the College with an income of money and crops. Only fairly recently has the College sold most of the houses and much of the land.

A1.10 Heritage

Much of the village is in the Long Wittenham Conservation area but currently there is no adopted conservation area appraisal.

The main features of the conservation area are a significant number of cruck frame houses, some later timber-framed houses, a number of thatched cottages and the overall aesthetic nature of the High Street as a coherent whole. The timber framed houses are spread out along the length of the village interspersed with some large and some more modest houses of brick construction many with the vitrified headers which are so characteristic of the Wallingford area. The overall number and variety of ages and styles of the buildings which contribute to the heritage of the village High Street give the conservation area a unique historical and architectural interest which the Council has a statutory duty to preserve or enhance.

The buildings in the conservation area, together with surrounding archaeology, tell the story of the village. Its roots go back as far back as the Stone Age, there are nearby Bronze Age settlements, there is an Iron Age hill fort at nearby Castle Hill and the Roman town of Dorchester. Then from the fifth century when the Saxons came we know there has been a settlement at Long Wittenham. The cross, marking the conversion to Christianity, the church, built on the same site as the Saxon one, the Manor House where the manorial court was held each year, the early cruck frame buildings followed by the box frames and later styles, the number of well-built barns and farmhouses telling of the farming wealth in the 17th century, the more modest brick built houses of the 18th century and the comparatively fewer 19th century houses when farming was changing and struggling and then to the very few more modern houses of note. The conservation area is thus important as it provides a framework to preserve the story, character and visually attractive appearance of the main part of the historic High Street.

There are nine houses with cruck frames, although some of the crucks are no longer visible. This indicates houses built from around the 14th -16th century from materials available locally. The crucks would have come from Long Wittenham woods managed to grow to give a good cruck shape and local reeds cut from the river bank. Cruck Cottage has thatch with original smoke blackening from a central hearth; it is one of the oldest domestic houses in South Oxfordshire. The crucks at The Barley Mow, Terret Close and Church Cottage are also particularly striking. Remains of other crucks can be seen at The Clock House, Church Farm, No 33 High Street, Yew Tree Cottage, May Tree Cottage.

There is a unity of style and colour in the older brick-built houses in the village possibly as bricks from local brick works on Clifton Heath and Culham were used. The latter used mud from the river backwater behind the village, near Dawber's House at 'Mouldey's Hole (Isaac Mouldey being the brickmaker). Many have the grey or blue headers which give the brickwork a distinctive character.

Long Wittenham has always been a farming community, mainly arable with sheep kept on the higher ground to the south of the village and cattle on the water meadows by the River Thames. It is this

good arable land and grazing which brought Witta and his people here to settle in the fifth century. The importance of farming is reflected in the number of barns and houses converted from barns that have listed status.

There is evidence from crop marks that the village may have had a different focus in the past perhaps with some or all at right angles to the existing main road with the church and old village green (by The Manor, behind the school) as a central feature rather than, as now, set back from the High Street. Perhaps after the Black Death in 1348 or following floods or a change in the course of the river, the main route through the village was realigned. Certainly it looks more planned than some villages.

A1.11 Archaeology

It is clear from crop mark evidence and archaeological finds that the Wittenhams once spread themselves over a larger area than they do now; people have liked living here since the Stone Age. Which means that there are archaeological implications over much of the village although the sites 1 and 2 may be 'hotspots'. (see figure A19)

There are known sites close by and artefacts found in the area, many of which are now in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Perhaps the main site is the Anglo-Saxon burial site excavated by John Yonge Akerman in 1859 and 1860. One hundred and eighty eight graves were found many with grave goods. The findings were laid before the Society of Antiquarians.

A1.12 Population

The total population of Long Wittenham according to the 2011 Census is 875 people living in 325 houses. There are 190 children under 16, 550 working age adults, 135 adults over 65 years and 55 people from Black and ethnic minorities (BME). There are less BME people than the national average (6.4 v 20.2%) and slightly more children (21.9 v 18.9%) but otherwise these population profile is similar to that of the UK.

The total population is stable but of note since 2001 there has been a net migration out of 37 people aged 15-24.

Figure A12: Population

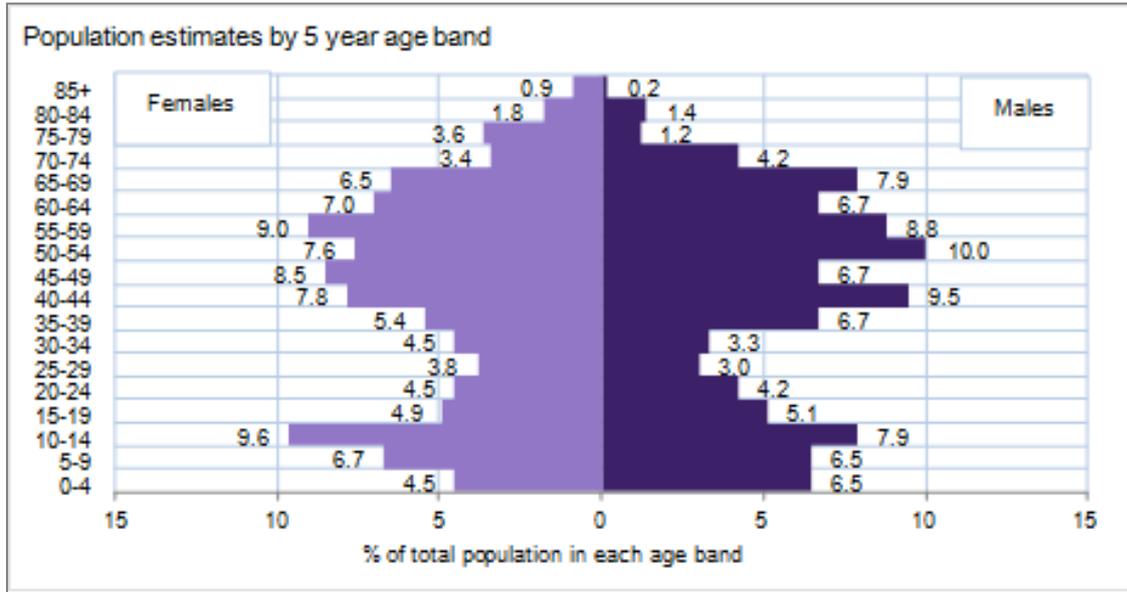
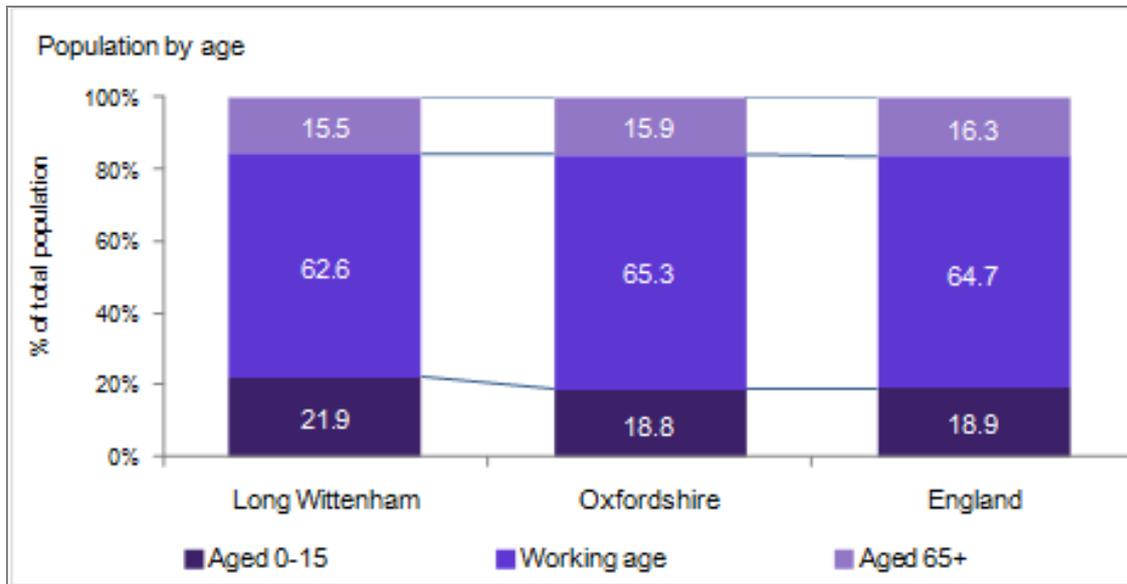


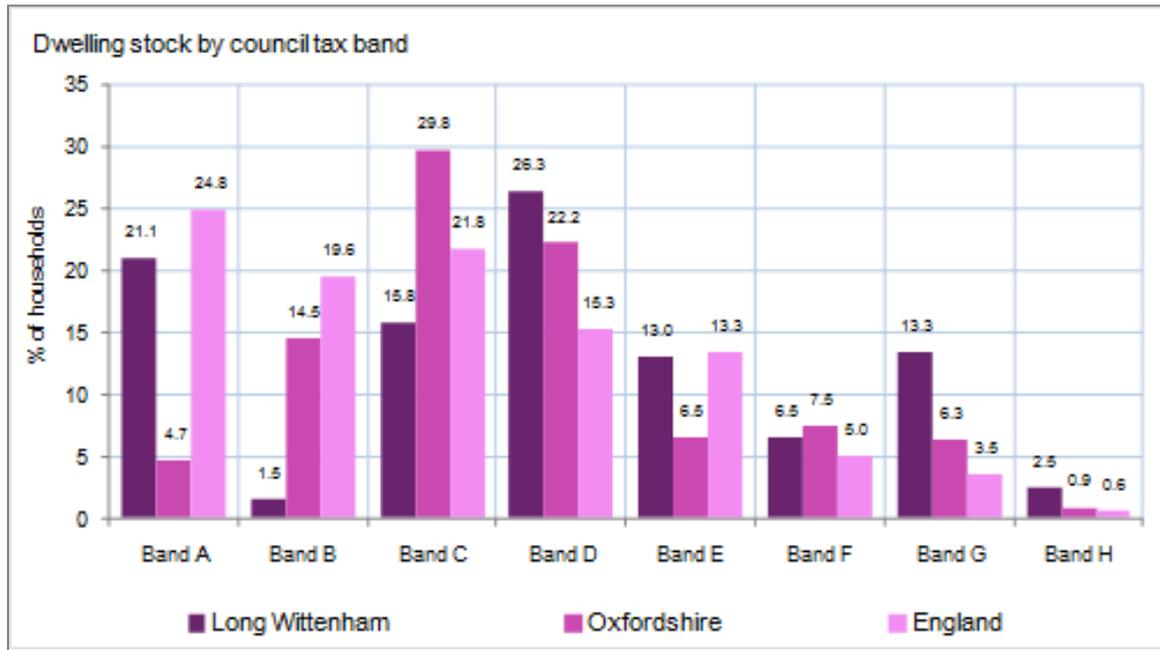
Figure A13: Population by age



A1.13 Housing

2011 Census shows that there are 291 detached/semi-detached /terraced houses in Long Wittenham (87.1 compared with 77.5% England). There were also 17 flats and 26 caravans. 264 houses are owner occupied (81.5% compared with 64.1% England) and 36 socially rented, either through the local authority or housing association (11.1% compared with 17.7% England). In addition 24 other residences are rented.

Figure A14: Dwelling stock



The diagram (Source: Valuation Office Agency 2011) shows that Long Wittenham has less housing in lower Council Tax bands (the smaller houses) with the exception of Band A due to the caravan site.

Houses in Long Wittenham are generally more expensive than average England prices (median detached house price £495,000 compared with £320,000). For low income households, lower quartile house prices in Long Wittenham are 14.4 times the lowest quartile household income which is slightly more affordable than the average across England (affordability ratio 15.4).

According to census data (2011) 8 households in the parish were overcrowded (2.5% compared with 8.7% England average) and there were 10 vacant household spaces.

The Neighbourhood Plan Survey in 2015 found that the main local need for new housing is for smaller or starter homes (70% of respondents) for existing residents and those living outside with strong demand for family homes (50%) and affordable housing (48%). High cost of housing and lack of suitable housing were the main reasons given for wanting to move but not being able to move within the village or from outside the village.

The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (final report April 2014 section 7.21) found that ‘...the data suggests a slight shift [across the county] towards a requirement for smaller dwellings relative to the distribution of existing housing’. This is understandable given the fact that household sizes are projected to fall slightly in the future (which itself is partly due to the ageing of the population).’

A1.14 Crime

Overall crime rates (19.9 compared with 37.6/1000) and specific types of crime are lower in South Oxfordshire compared with England.

A1.15 Prosperity

The prosperity of Long Wittenham is above average with low deprivation score (3rd decile for multiple deprivation), low levels of benefit claims (9.9 compared with 20.6% England, income support 0.5 compared with 3.2% England). Weekly household income estimate after housing costs is lower than Oxfordshire (£470 compared with £498) but significantly higher than England (£423).

A1.16 Health

There is no GP or nurse in the village, the nearest facilities being at Clifton Hampden, 2.6km away. GP provision is adequate although increasingly stressed by the needs of the village's aging population. Access to health and social care services is difficult for some residents without the use of a private car, as public transport services are absent. There is a pool of volunteers to take residents without a car to the surgery and collect prescriptions.

- The John Radcliffe in Oxford is the nearest Accident & Emergency (22km away)
- The local District General Hospital is the John Radcliffe and Churchill in Headington, Oxford. The average travelling time by public transport to Oxford hospitals is 113 minutes, including a taxi to the nearest bus stop (Oxon average 58 minutes).
- The Abingdon Community Hospital provides important out of hours doctor care and a minor injury service (10km away)
- The nearest chemists are in Didcot (6.5km away)
- The dispensary attached to the Clifton Hampden Surgery is highly valued
- The nearest dental surgery is in the Ladygrove Estate in Didcot, 5.8km away with the nearest dental practice taking NHS 7.7km away in Didcot or in Berinsfield.
- The nearest optician is in Didcot 6.3km away

Table A15 Health of Long Wittenham residents

	Long Wittenham	South Oxon	England
Population	875	13,4257	53,012,456
Health status:	%	%	%
Very good	54	53	47
Good	34	33	34
Fair	9	11	13
Bad	3	3	4
Very bad	1	1	1

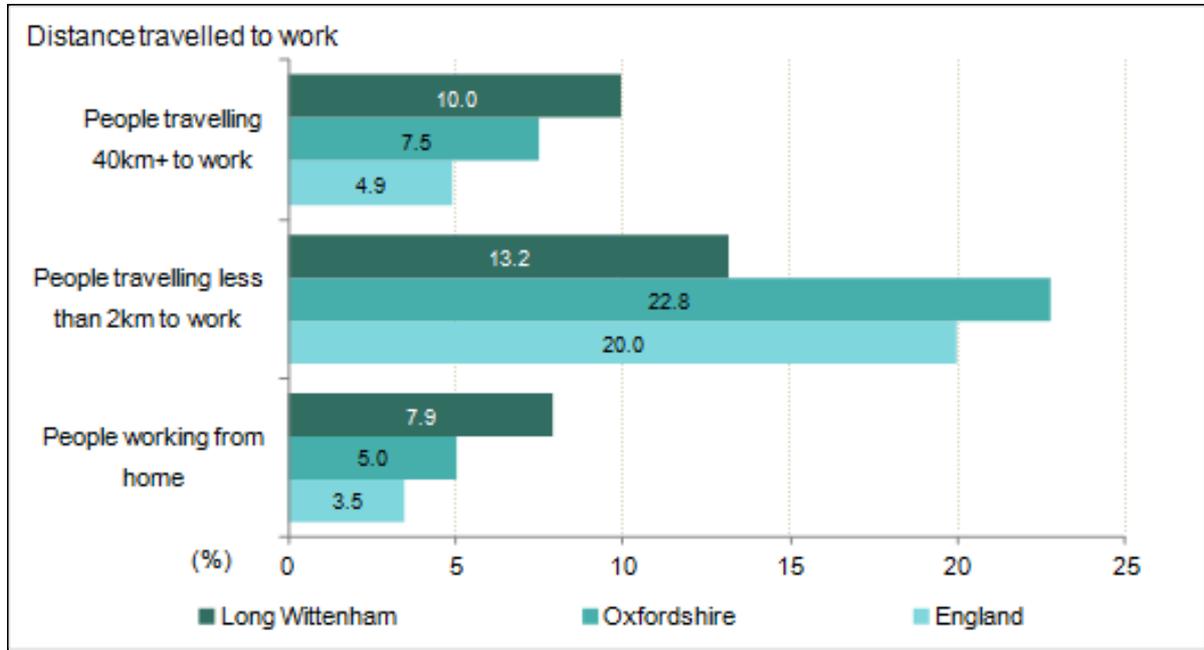
A1.17 Employment

The 2011 census showed that there are 490 adults age 16-74 who are economically active (76.0% compared with 69.9% England). Of those economically active, 285 are full time, 95 are part time, 83 are self-employed (12.9% compared with 9.8% England) and 50 work from

home (7.9% compared with 3.5% England). There are 26 unemployed people (4.7% working age adults compared with 9.8% England – DWP figures 2012 and 2013).

Significant numbers of people travel significant distances to work (see Figure 3.10).

Figure A16 Travel to work distances⁷



There are a small number of employers in the village offering employment in addition to those people who are self-employed / working from home: Long Wittenham Primary School; Vine and Spice; Plough; Barley Mow; Leather works and several farms. More recently the Sylva Wood centre has opened for start-up wood related craft businesses.

Long Wittenham is within the Science Vale UK area of economic growth which includes Harwell, Milton Park and the Culham Science Centre.

⁷ Source: Working from home (Census 2011 QS701 EW), Distance travelled to work (Census 2011 UV 35)

Figure A17: Proximity of Science Vale UK employment areas



A1.18 Communication

Gigaclear, a private company, installed high speed fibre broadband cable into the village in 2016.

Table A18 3G Mobile phone coverage as quoted by the main companies

Company	Indoor	Outdoor
EE	Variable	Should work most areas
O2	Good	Good
Vodafone	No	Yes

A1.19 Neighbourhood Plan survey

The steering group commissioned a survey of all residents which forms part of the baseline evidence for the LWNP. The full results are available in a separate document⁸. The survey identified that what people like about living in Long Wittenham are its friendliness, community spirit and that it is quiet and peaceful. What people most dislike is the volume of traffic, poor transport connections and lack of a shop.

⁸ Long Wittenham Neighbourhood Plan Survey report, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, July 2015

Respondents were asked about 3 possible community hub sites that had been identified in earlier feasibility work before the LWNDP began and were encouraged to make comments. Landowners were also invited to put forward any further sites. Sites 1 (72% support) and 2 (74%) received more support than site 3 (47%).

Figure A19: Locations considered for community hub



53% of respondents agreed with the development of 30 to 40 new houses to fund the hub, and about 20% would accept some smaller amount of housing.

Parking is a problem for 20% of respondents, and 73% supported the concept of a village car park. 43% found parking associated with school runs to be a problem. 96% of respondents supported lobbying for the new bridge to address traffic issues, and most supported retaining traffic calming or alternatives to the existing traffic calming measures. 92% of respondents support opening a new footpath (a circular walk popular with walkers) over the weir and 88% support a cycle path to Clifton Hampden. See map below of potential routes.

Figure A20: Possible circular walk route

