

# Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan



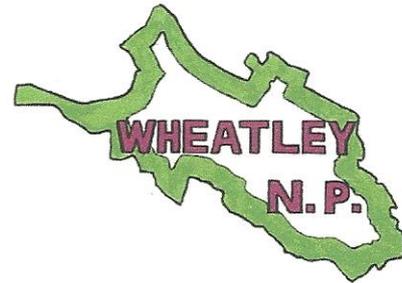
# **Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan**

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7 May, 2019.



Dear Residents,

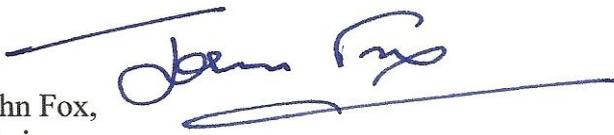
In January 2016, when Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee formed, we all entered new territory. The twenty-one members produced a large resource of local knowledge and skills – from architecture, IT, finance, report writing and scientific knowledge, to the experience and wisdom needed for discussion. Four members left the Committee in mid-2016 due to other commitments, but continued to support. Seven Committee members are in full time work and / or with growing families – an NP is not just a retirement hobby!

The Localism Act (2011) gave communities a statutory voice on Land Use. The WNP designated area includes all of Wheatley Civil Parish and the 'built form' of Oxford Brookes University's campus in Holton, (known as 'Wheatley Campus'). Five months into WNP work, the original housing allocation in Wheatley was withdrawn when OBU decided to sell its Campus whereupon the OBU site became one of several SODC Strategic Sites for housing. Discussion about its capacity, needs and local impact has lasted 3 years, and as yet its future use remains undecided.

In preparing the WNP we have listened extensively to community opinions with the result that we have sought to reach a balance between several factors. In the short term, there is a need for more housing in the village and with our Village Enhancement Proposal we have tried to provide this at minimal cost to the Green Belt. For the longer term, our policies have aimed to minimise and mitigate the impact of any future housing development on the OBU site.

SODC support and advice has been most welcome. Some 140 'Volunteers' signed up their support in 2016. They have helped staff public events, make doorstep deliveries to 1900 homes at a time, and are kept informed as a core group. Their most recent show of support has been in travelling to attend District Planning Meetings, and twice responding in 2018 to outline planning proposals regarding the Wheatley Campus.

Thank you all for your trust and encouragement.

  
John Fox,  
Chairman,

Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee. 2016-2019.

## **Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee**

Rebecca Beadman  
Mark Davies  
Roger Farrow  
John Fox (Chairman)  
Ellie Freeman  
Roy Gordon (Vice Chairman)  
Chris Hallsworth  
David Harverson  
Kevin Heritage  
Andrew Johnson  
David Mancey  
Rachel Newman  
Toby Newman  
Audrey Parsons  
Simon Shew  
Lucy Thomas  
Mike Vaughton

### **Associates**

Roger Bettess  
Tim Blightman  
Alan East  
Alan Hicks  
Doris Pridmore

Supported by Michelle Legg (Wheatley Parish Clerk)

**One of the first WNP projects undertaken was to sponsor a competition at Wheatley Park Academy for pupils to design a logo for the WNP Committee. The successful entry was designed by Milly Whittington and Alison Driver.**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This document is the **emerging** version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish of Wheatley and the part of the Oxford Brookes University (OBU) campus that is in the parish of Holton. The plan is known as the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) and it has been prepared by the communities of Wheatley and Holton. The WNP sets out the community vision for the future of the area during the plan period (2019 - 2034), together with providing a land use framework for development in the area, which will be achieved through a series of objectives and policies. The designated area of the Neighbourhood Plan is shown in Figure 1.1.

The right of communities to prepare and establish a neighbourhood plan was facilitated by the Localism Act 2011 [1]. Neighbourhood planning is part of the government's vision to provide local communities with the opportunity to engage with, and have a prominent say in, what goes on in the local area.

1.2 While the Localism Act enables the local community to make decisions in relation to planning, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) [2] sets out the guidelines for the process. As well as having regard to national policies and advice, the WNP needs to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) development plan for the area.

1.3 Any neighbourhood plan may provide more than the number of houses and amount of retail and leisure floor space set out in the strategic policies in the development plan, but there is no provision for neighbourhood plans to provide for less than the proposed amount of development.

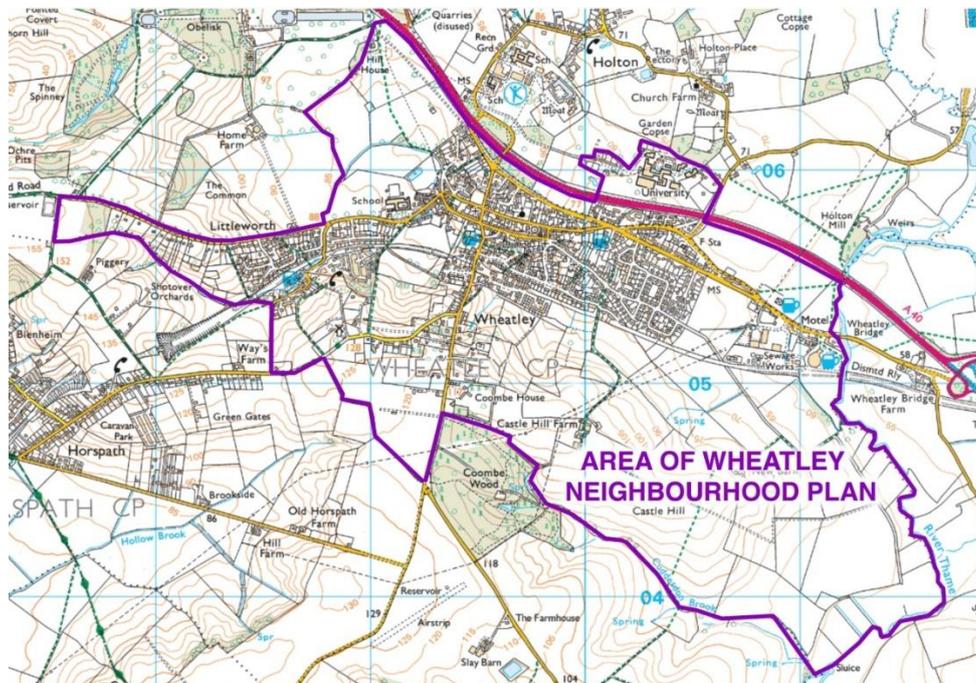


Figure 1.1 Designated Area of Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan

1.4 Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for local communities to have a say in where development is most appropriate by adding a level of local detail to the existing

local development plan policies and/or allocating sites for development. With input from the local community the WNP has developed a set of policies that guide development in Wheatley.

## 2 Developing the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 In addition to listening to the local community, the WNP Committee has drawn on national and local sources and compiled its own evidence base (EB) which is available at [www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk](http://www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk).

**The WNP Committee has endeavoured to seek the views of the local community in preparing the neighbourhood plan and where appropriate has responded and acted upon all correspondence. Copies of comments and responses can be found at [www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk](http://www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk) .**

2.2 The resident-based WNP Committee convened in January 2016 with 21 members, including members of Wheatley Parish Council, Holton Parish Council and the Business Manager of Wheatley Park Academy. The Committee met approximately once a month from January to July in 2016, and thereafter at approximately 6 - 8 weekly intervals as the work evolved and also devolved to smaller teams and workshops.

2.3 In April 2016, the WNP Committee outlined its purpose and intentions at the Annual Wheatley Parish Assembly. Community consultation began in May 2016 with a Straw Poll [3]. This was sent to 750 Wheatley homes (44%) in all parts of the village, and 458 responses (60% of those polled) were returned. The Straw Poll was launched on 7 May 2016 with an Open Day. On 1 June 2016 SODC published their emerging Local Plan 2032 Preferred Options [4] in which SODC announced that future housing for Wheatley would be solely based on the forthcoming development of the OBU site. This was confirmed subsequently in the Local Plan 2033 Second Preferred Options [5]. A joint SODC/WNP Public Open Day was held on 13 July 2016.

2.4 Wheatley Parish Council responded (4 August 2016) to the SODC Consultation on the Local Plan by advising that it would wait for the forthcoming WNP before providing any further response. Holton Parish Council responded (18 August 2016) separately to the SODC Consultation with their report. As part of this Consultation SODC received almost 8000 responses which were made available on the SODC website. In February 2017 the WNP Committee undertook an analysis of 234 of these responses relating to the OBU site. This WNP analysis [6] has been included in the evidence base.

2.5 In August 2016, a Community Survey [7] was sent to all 1860 homes in Wheatley and Holton, courtesy of local volunteers and Community First Oxfordshire Ltd (CFO). A 36% return was achieved. WNP and CFO published the survey report in mid-October 2016. The Community Survey [7] contained two parts: Housing Needs Survey prepared by CFO and Community Opinion Survey prepared by the WNP Committee. (The results of the Community Survey are discussed in Section 5).

2.6 The WNP Committee has not relied solely on questionnaires. Conversations have been held with individuals, organisations and groups as representatives of the community.

These range from shopkeepers and business owners, to schools' leaders, GPs and representatives from the local churches [8].

2.7 The WNP Committee prepared a process to deliver the plan as shown in Figure 2.1.

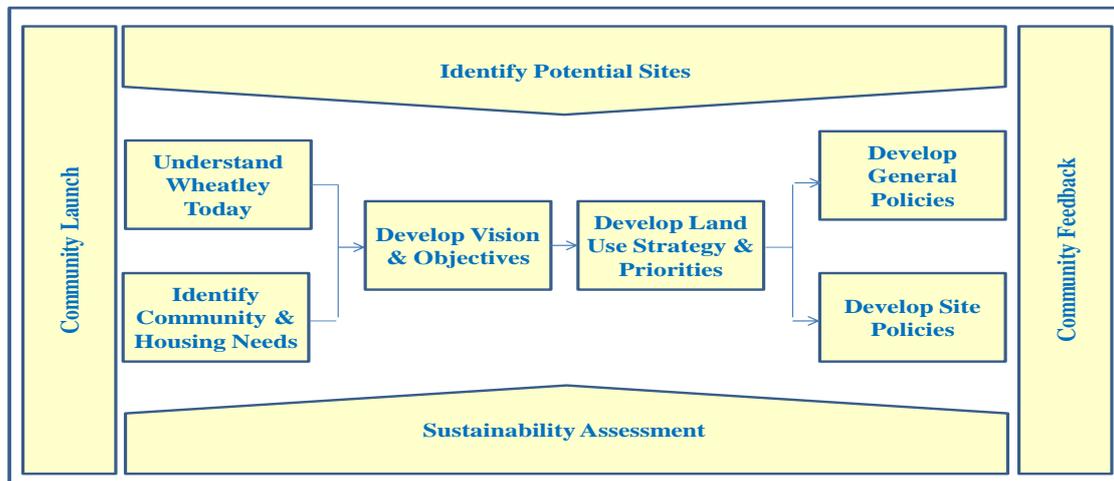


Figure 2.1 The process used to develop the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan

2.8 Following a series of eight working group sessions held from November 2016 to May 2017 to analyse the results of the Community Survey [7] and after various draft stages a first consultation, inviting comments on the draft plan from SODC, local people, other stake holders and statutory consultees, took place during May – June 2017.

2.9 The WNP Committee also commissioned two separate assessments to inform and analyse the content of the draft plan. The first commission was a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) that was directed at establishing the quantity and type of housing most suitable for Wheatley. The results are discussed in later chapters and the whole HNA is described in Appendix 3. The second commission was a Site Based Development Appraisal (see Appendix 4) or Viability Assessment (VA) that tested whether or not the proposals contained in the WNP were viable.

2.10 Further consultation and an independent examination will also take place together with a public referendum. It is hoped that the WNP will be adopted during 2019.

2.11 In October 2017 the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2033 Publication Version [9] became available wherein the SODC strategy (STRAT10) for the development of the Land at Wheatley Campus was described. The public consultation for this Local Plan was completed by November 2017. The emerging Local Plan (emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2034 [10]) was published in January 2019 (with STRAT10 now renamed STRAT14) and it is hoped that this emerging Local Plan will be adopted by late 2019.

### 3 Wheatley character

3.1 The WNP Committee recognises that there is a strong feeling of identity among the residents of Wheatley. A very important aspect of the village is its location, inset within the Green Belt, which confers a very rural nature and setting to the village making it attractive. Proximity to the open spaces that surround the built environment is particularly valued.

3.2 The local geography has both defined and constrained the development of the village to the extent that further development will involve some creative planning to provide the housing needs while at the same time retaining the essential character of the village which has been built up over many centuries. This character development is described in some detail in Appendix 1.

### 4 Wheatley today

4.1 The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (2012) [11] identifies Wheatley as one of the 12 settlements classed a “larger village” within the District. Wheatley is a linear village, extending for two miles, adjoining the A40 and leading directly to the M40. It is categorised also in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan as a “major hub” serving surrounding villages in retail, light industry, education, Post Office services and medical practice. It is described in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2034 Final Publication Version 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] as a Local Service Area. With the village of Holton, it hosts a complete school system for children aged 5 to 18 years, including secondary and special education schools serving Oxford City and the surrounding villages. Since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the adjacent small hamlet of Littleworth, located to the west, was included within the curtilage of Wheatley. As part of the Settlement Assessment in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2034 Final Publication Version 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] Littleworth was elevated to “smaller village” status.

4.2 The Straw Poll [3] conducted by the WNP Committee in May 2016 showed residents’ key concerns (Figure 4.1). From the 452 respondents (60% of those polled), some key issues were clearly identified, and these have been used by the WNP Committee in examining the needs of the village.

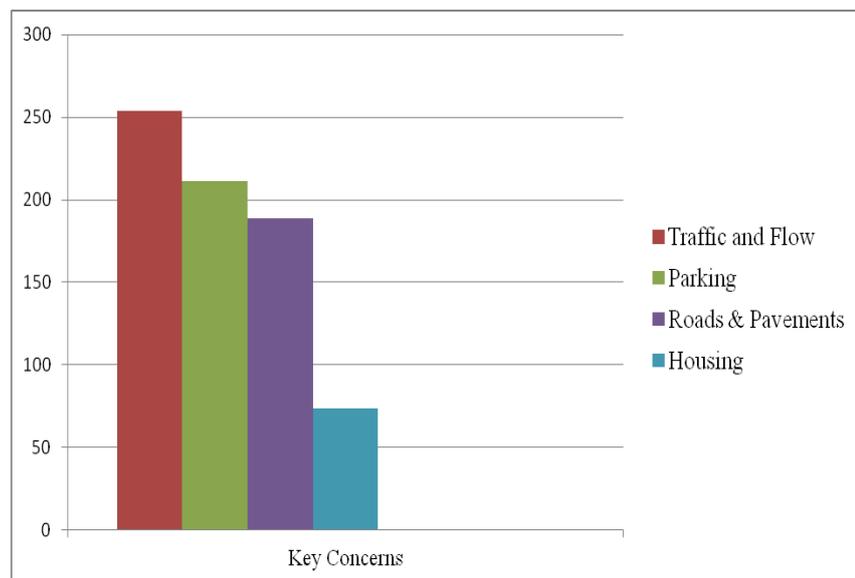


Figure 4.1 Key concerns of residents from the Straw Poll [3] held in May 2016

## **Population**

4.3 Census information shows that the population of Wheatley has not increased significantly since 2000. This is in part due to Green Belt constraint on housing development, although there has been exploitation of infill sites (notably former railway land). The National Census April 2011 [12] put Wheatley's population at 4092, an apparent increase of 11 on the 2001 census. A UK Office of National Statistics estimate [13] in June 2014 revised this to an estimated 4125. In addition, 108 homes in Holton were transferred to Wheatley by boundary change in 2015. The 2011 Census showed that more people in Wheatley were over 65 (769) than were in the age range 16-29 (600). This corresponds to one in every five residents of Wheatley being 65 or over in line with the national average [14].

## **Employment**

4.4 The 2011 Census provides data on the types of industry that residents within the plan area work in, with a total of 2077 working residents recorded overall. (See also the Annual Business Inquiry [15], Business Register and Employment Survey [16] and Oxfordshire Employment and Land Review [17].)

4.5 Analysis of the employment profile of Wheatley shows that the largest employment sector is Education (18%) closely followed by Health/Social work (14.2%) and Retail (12.3%). A wide range of professional services is also provided (e.g. communications, scientific and technical, linguistics, architectural and legal).

## **Housing**

4.6 WNP research [18] together with recent completions show that, despite the constraints of the Green Belt, at least 431 homes (24.3% of the current total of 1771) have been built in Wheatley since about 1980, the latest completed development being the upper London Road development of 51 homes on a rural exception site, permitted on 31 March 2016. This housing development has been achieved mainly through extensive in-fill and re-use of brownfield sites. Significantly, much of the recent development stands on former British Rail property in the post-Beeching era. It should be noted however that despite these increases there has not been the same commensurate improvement in infrastructure relating to traffic, parking, roads and pavements.

4.7 Wheatley housing is expensive, but desirable. The WNP Straw Poll [3] in May 2016 showed that the principal reasons for the popularity of the neighbourhood were access to the M40 and A34, access to London and Oxford, access to three railway stations by bus, the village facilities including schools and surgery, its community spirit, a wide range of organisations and the setting and history of the village. All of these combine to make the area an attractive place to live and work. For this to be sustainable the community must retain its diversity in age, occupations, attitudes and ideology. Therefore, it is important that as many young people be retained and accommodated satisfactorily in the village to maintain and sustain community life without being priced out by the ballooning property market, inflated by metropolitan commuters.

4.8 The same Straw Poll [3] showed a 16% interest in more types of housing including affordable, starter, sheltered and, to a lesser extent, rented accommodation. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 [19] confirmed these findings and also showed that only 31.4% of owner-occupied homes in the district are 1-2 bedroom units. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 [19] recommends that future housing should be evenly split between 1-2 bedroom units and larger 3+ bedroom units. It also recommends that 35% of affordable homes in the SODC area should be 2-bedroom properties, 32% should have 1 bedroom, and 29% should have 3 bedrooms. The District council requires affordable housing contributions where there is a net gain of 11 or more dwellings, in line with national policy and guidance. More recently the emerging SODC Local Plan 2011 - 2034 Final Publication Version 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] has outlined in policy H9 clear criteria for the provision of affordable housing. The need for affordable housing is acute and has shaped the WNP ambition to provide this housing in as timely a fashion as possible in accordance with SODC guidelines.

### **Public Health and Medical Services**

4.9 Being surrounded by Green Belt with parks and public footpaths there are many recreational opportunities for the community. The local educational establishments also provide several sports amenities that can contribute to the general well-being of the community. However, the lack of “green spaces” within the village does limit the recreational opportunities for the elderly. The GP and district nursing services are based at Morland House. This well-established General Medical Services practice has a patient base of ca 11,000 and covers all socio-economic groupings within a radius of ca 5 miles from Wheatley. The practice is a teaching practice for Oxford University medical students. It has a reputation for being one of the best teaching practices in the county. At present the practice can support the proposed increase in housing at OBU although parking at Morland House is likely to come under further pressure.

### **Education**

4.10 Unusually for Oxfordshire villages, Wheatley and Holton between them have the full range of state schools: Wheatley Primary Academy and Wheatley Park Academy (run by different trusts) and a Local Authority Special School (John Watson) with junior and senior levels. These schools also serve other villages and the nearby suburbs of Oxford City, generating a school transport flotilla (a total of 12 buses serve Wheatley Park) and considerable private traffic at drop-off and pick-up times. Some 4-5 minibuses ferry pupils between the John Watson junior and senior sites each morning and afternoon. Wheatley Park and John Watson senior school share the school site adjacent to the OBU site, and both sites lie within the perimeter of medieval Holton Park. Wheatley also has two early learning centres/day nurseries.

4.11 Wheatley Primary Academy has accommodation for further pupils, but there are safety concerns about cross-village access, traffic and parking in the morning and afternoon. A questionnaire [20] about footpaths supported a green route through the village which would be a little over a mile long, and also asked for much-needed crossings at the High Street crossroads. Wheatley Park’s greatest concern is the problem of staff recruitment due to the cost of housing. It also has an aspiration for a Lord Baker-style technology foundation on the OBU site after the Brookes Formula Student workshop closes, but funding is lacking.

4.12 The villages of Wheatley and Holton have no youth service, a key factor and link between school and community for young people. To some extent ‘Fusion’, a faith-inspired Community Church, has played a voluntary youth work role. In addition, St. Mary’s CE Church and the United Reform Chapel are planning more community and youth activities. The Wheatley Scout Movement has over 90 members and owns its own building (former wartime fire station) which is however somewhat run down. A private language school (Oxford House) has thrived on Wheatley High Street since 1983.

### **Oxford Brookes University – The Land at Wheatley Campus**

4.13 Oxford Brookes University (OBU) is a university that can trace its origins to 1865 when the former Oxford School of Art was established. The university was renamed in 1992 to honour its former principal, John Henry Brookes. In 1976 the university acquired the Wheatley campus when it amalgamated with the Lady Spencer - Churchill teacher training college. One of the reasons for the inclusion of both Wheatley and Holton Parishes in the WNP is because this campus is located north of Wheatley, in Holton Parish.

SODC Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4.122 [10]

“The Local Plan proposes to inset Wheatley campus from the Green belt. The site is adjacent to the village of Wheatley which is already largely inset from the Green belt. The existing development within the site has compromised the site’s openness and countryside character, and the site is well contained and too close to Wheatley to play any significant role in the setting or special character of Oxford city. The exceptional circumstances justifying a review of the Green belt through the Local Plan in this area are:-

- there are opportunities for the site to be well connected to surrounding settlements, particularly the major urban area of Oxford city, by public transport and cycling;
- to inset the site from the Green belt will enable the most efficient use to be made of a partially previously developed site;
- there are limited alternatives for accommodating additional development at Wheatley other than through Green belt release; and
- the redevelopment of the site will provide new homes, helping to meet identified housing needs, including affordable housing needs.”

Figure 4.2 Extract from the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10]

4.14 OBU intends to vacate the site by 2021/22 and therefore is unlikely to be able to provide much needed housing for probably 5 years. At present the whole site has been the subject of an outline planning application, primarily for housing, pending its sale. Initially in 2015 as part of the Draft SODC Local Plan 2032 Refined Options Stage, 2015 [21], SODC proposed 180 + new homes to be built in Wheatley (corresponding to ~10% growth in the number of homes). However, following the OBU announcement in 2016 to vacate the site SODC ceased to require additional new housing in Wheatley and instead, via several subsequent versions [4], [5], [9], proposed “at least 300 homes” for the OBU site. In the most recent version, emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup>

[10], the proposal is to provide “at least 300 homes” in the OBU site, which is proposed to be released from the Green Belt.

4.15 A key challenge to be considered in the WNP is the impact of the proposed OBU development (and any other development) on the parishes of Wheatley and Holton, and how to mitigate any adverse effects, whilst seeking to maintain and improve the general living conditions for all the residents. For this reason, the extract (Figure 4.2) taken from the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] is of particular relevance in determining the content of the WNP.

### **Retail and village centre**

4.16 The retail activities in Wheatley centre are mainly food shops (the Co-op, Costcutter, a well-established baker and butcher) and catering (pub, restaurant, chip shop and take away). Among other High Street services there is the post office, hairdressers, pharmacy, dog grooming, estate agent, a laundrette and a tattooist. Above the High Street on Church Road services include another pub, an architect’s business, garage, dentist, the library, the parish church and a further estate agent. A car tyre supplier operates on Holloway Road and a veterinary practice can be found on Roman Road. On the village perimeter, there is a motel complex, an ASDA store and petrol station, a car sales outlet, a coach depot and two garden centres. The seven pubs of 1975 have now been reduced to two (and one private club). There are four worshipping congregations: Anglican, Catholic, United Reform and Community Church.

4.17 There is a light industry park at the east end of the village which has grown somewhat haphazardly since the 1950s. It includes four plant and building materials suppliers together with a garage business and also there is a business park (Wheatley Business Centre). Four car workshops are located at Littleworth on a site that is in disappointing condition at the centre of Littleworth.

4.18 Limited population growth might suggest that the retail outlets do not need to expand, but Wheatley retail outlets also serve the surrounding smaller villages (Cuddesdon, Holton, Little Milton etc) and the demand for retail would increase with additional residents in the areas served by Wheatley.

4.19 The village centre is based on the High Street, a mixture of 18<sup>th</sup> century town houses, refurbished cottages and a row of 1960s shops with flats above. In 1888, the Millers of Shotover Park constructed The Merry Bells to provide employment and then for use as a Temperance Hotel. In 1970 the Shotover Estate sold The Merry Bells to the village to be used as a village hall. Together with a mixture of listed buildings, this forms the centre of the Conservation Area. Today the building houses a public library together with the Wheatley Archive and is a significant community centre but for some events it is no longer able to accommodate the needs of the village. The main village crossroads is at the centre of the High Street. Traffic flows one way east of this crossroads, and two ways towards the west. Parking in the High Street and in the neighbourhood is a major concern, with parking in Church Road being highlighted by 16% of the respondents in the WNP Straw Poll [3]. Shops need access, but unrestricted garage conversions, households with multiple-car ownership and the growing use of Wheatley by non-residents for free parking (due to access to the buses into Oxford, Thornhill Park and Ride and onwards to London and airports) are growing

concerns. The latter is particularly significant on Church Road (and also Park Hill, Littleworth Road and London Road). The practice of parking cars ‘For Sale’ in laybys and on grass verges is also on the increase.

4.20 The condition of the village centre is a community concern. The WNP Straw Poll [3] highlighted the need for the centre to be modernised. The WNP Committee formally supported the successful bid by the local Post Office to take over the vacant Barclays Bank building.

4.21 The emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] is proposing to release the OBU site from the Green Belt. When the site is no longer used for educational purposes, the OBU campus in Holton parish *may* afford an opportunity for a housing development. Ultimately the outcome will depend on the intentions of the purchaser. New housing would increase the demand on High Street retail services, and on village facilities (including schools and GP services). It takes 25 minutes to walk from the centre of the OBU campus to the High Street in Wheatley. Unless the connection from the campus site is improved, net traffic congestion would grow in the centre of the village as residents would inevitably use their cars to travel from the campus site to the village centre and to Wheatley Primary School, thereby putting further pressure on the parking facilities (another big issue) not only in the centre but also in the wider village.

### Transport and movement

**The WNP Committee is well aware that the focus of the neighbourhood plan is housing and land use and not traffic, except where new roads, parking infrastructure and management are necessary. The wider community also understands these issues. However, the WNP Straw Poll [3] and the Community Survey [7] identified traffic, parking and footpaths/pavements as the dominant issues that concern the *community*. So, when new housing is proposed, the first question is, ‘What about the infrastructure?’**

4.22 Wheatley is reliant on bus services and key roads to maintain employment and other services. Its schools rely on bus and private transport. OBU brings 4000 students (40% with cars) to Wheatley Campus during term time. According to a UK Office of National Statistics Survey [13] conducted in 2014, the majority of Wheatley residents travel to work by car, van and bus. The bus services available are :-

Bus Service	Destinations	Status
275	Oxford - High Wycombe	Operational
280	Oxford – Aylesbury	Operational
103/104	Miltons - Wheatley - Horspath - Cowley	Cancelled in 2016
U1	Oxford - Wheatley Campus	Termination campus closure

Figure 4.2 Wheatley bus services

Loss of the 103/104 services has been keenly felt by the residents of the Miltons, Littleworth and Horspath and as a consequence some have lost jobs.

4.23 The M40 extension to Birmingham in 1990 reduced part of Wheatley into a virtual 2-mile slip road to the M40, but it also brought better access to routes afforded by the M40 from J8/J8A. In 1989-1990 motorway protesters warned that ‘capillary action’ would draw traffic through Wheatley to and from the M40. With ‘access’ comes ‘intrusion’ and perhaps unintended consequences as confirmed by Oxford County Council (OCC) (see Figure 4.3).

“Wheatley, near J8, M40, has some traffic management problems and is used by some drivers as a rat-run into Oxford to avoid congestion on main routes. Room for pedestrians and for access to the countryside could be improved. Noise from the A40 has been highlighted.”

OCC Local Transport Plan (3) 2011-2030, 26.4, (2012) [23]

“J.8 is not congested, however it does attract traffic through nearby villages for access to the M40”

OCC Local Transport Plan (3) 2011-2030, 27.9 (2012) [23]

“Wheatley is at one end of a Secondary Interurban Corridor [Oxford to M40] and at one end of a Primary Interurban Corridor [Aylesbury – M40 – Oxford]”

OCC Local Transport Plan (3) 2011-2030, 27.21 (2012) [23]

“Traffic problems in rural settlements ... excessive traffic on rural roads, particularly lorries, and lack of support for pedestrians and cyclists ...”

OCC Local Transport Plan (4) 2015-31, 26.27 (2012) [24]

#### 4.3 Extracts from Oxford County Council Local Transport Plans

4.24 The WNP Straw Poll [3] highlighted parking as a major issue. The village has become a commuter ‘rat-run’ [23], to and from the M40 to avoid the Green Road roundabout on the Oxford City ring road. There are entries and exits to the village via Littleworth Road, Ladder Hill, Park Hill and the London Road. At peak times this creates significant congestion in Wheatley, similar to that found in other villages and small towns as 21<sup>st</sup> century traffic intrudes on roads and pavements designed and furnished for the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The location of the road junctions that are subject to peak time congestion are shown in Figure 4.4. On-street parking is at a premium in Wheatley both for residents and also for those people who travel to Wheatley to provide services in the retail shops, educational and other professional establishments. Therefore, it is disappointing to find that increasingly Wheatley roads are used as a day long, free parking alternative to the Park and Ride facilities at Thornhill thereby adding to the parking and congestion issues. Littleworth Road, London Road, Church Road, Kiln Lane and Park Hill in particular suffer from the inappropriate use of roads and associated verges.

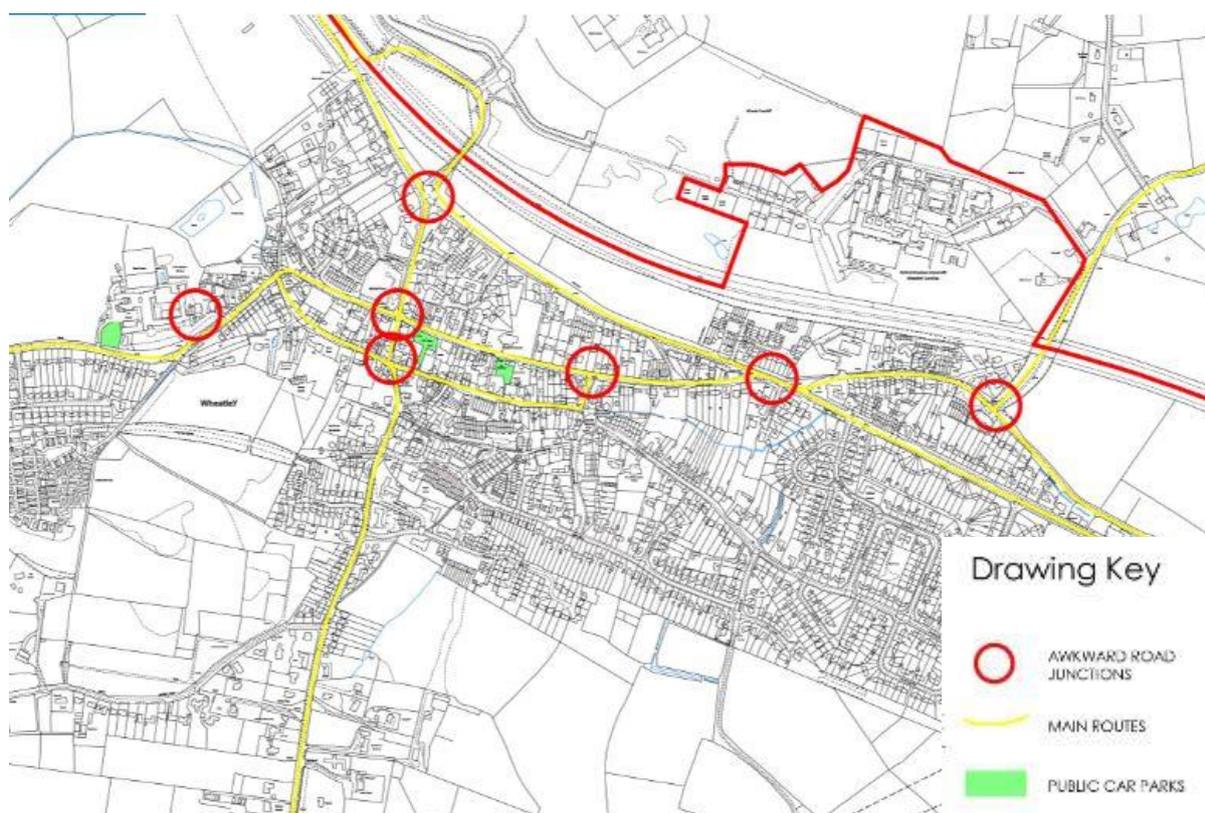


Figure 4.4 Locations of congestion at peak times [25]

4.25 Modern HGVs (no longer the ‘lorries’ of OCC’s 2015 Local Transport Plan [24]) are rated typically at 40 tonnes gross weight and can tow trailers that are equipped with hoists. Although they were designed to transport goods across such destinations as the Alps they were permitted in the UK since 2011. These HGVs now deliver to the light industrial units, building suppliers, garages, supermarkets and even village centre convenience stores (such as the Co-op). They increase the wear and tear on Wheatley streets, most notably London Road, now a *de facto* internal village bypass. Farm tractors at 5 tonnes gross weight with trailers are now part of mechanised, split-site farming and unfortunately add to the traffic issues. Inappropriate parking has destroyed grass verges on London Road and Park Hill. The London Road has begun to be used for ‘stack parking’, and the link road towards J8A has sometimes even been used as an HGV park for those awaiting ferries to the continent. OCC metal parking signs (2 hour limit) on the road from J8A to Wheatley in March 2016 were stolen within the month and not enforced. Wheatley has no such restriction on parking in the village, or in the long London Road layby created for residents’ access.

### **Green routes, pavements and pathways**

4.26 A green route footpath east-west across Wheatley for safer access to Wheatley Primary Academy has been mooted (and supported by the Head teacher) in a minor WNP survey [20]. Parts of the village lack pavements and in some places the pavements are too narrow for use by a pushchair safely and pose problems for wheelchair users. Pavements are

modern urban street furniture, but villages now face urban-scale traffic. The increased traffic flow through the village poses traffic management problems and parking issues that highlight the need for extensive improvement in the quality and number of pavements in the village. The WNP Committee has produced a pavement map of the village [22]. There are no pavements [22] by The Sun, along Old Road or throughout Littleworth. Heavy parking outside the primary school, on Littleworth Park Lane and a combination of traffic and parking the full length of Church Road are further safety concerns. No footpaths or pavements connect the nearby villages of Forest Hill, Cuddesdon and Great Milton with Wheatley.

4.27 Three pedestrian crossings were requested in July 2016 through the Primary School and Footpath Committee Survey [20]: –

- a) across Station Road/Ladder Hill
- b) between the primary school and the nursery/Littleworth Park
- c) across the bottom of Holloway Road.

Currently, only request (a) has been satisfied as part of the completion of a residential development on site WHE18a for homes built for those residents aged over 50 years.

Although there are significant concerns in the community regarding these transport issues the WNP Committee can only address housing needs together with issues relating to employment, leisure and the environment. However, the Committee will aim to mitigate and not exacerbate any of the existing issues associated with transport.

### **Air Quality**

4.28 Today, the air quality of modern Wheatley is largely determined by a series of east-west roads following a “valley contour” bringing traffic into the centre of the village thereby raising concerns about pollution.

4.29 National policy on air quality is set out in the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland 2007 [26]. This provides a framework for reducing air pollution in the UK and sets standards (objectives) for nine air pollutants to protect health, vegetation and ecosystems. The best-known of these since the international diesel engine emissions scandal are nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>).

4.30 Modern traffic using Wheatley’s roads creates concern about air quality to add to those about congestion, parking and HGVs. Noise pollution has been partially offset with new road surfaces on the A40 north of Wheatley and on lower London Road (the ‘cut’). Since 2011, the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has generated maps [27] showing national estimate background concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) for the whole of the UK on a grid of 1 km x 1 km. For Wheatley and the surrounding area, the background estimate for NO<sub>2</sub> ranges between 13.5 µgm/m<sup>3</sup> and 14.9 µgm/m<sup>3</sup> and for PM<sub>10</sub> the estimate ranges between 16.9 µgm/m<sup>3</sup> and 17.9 µgm/m<sup>3</sup>.

4.31 SODC has monitored annual average NO<sub>2</sub> levels in Wheatley since 2006 as part of a general concern about the M40/A40 corridor. Monitoring began on Beech Road and at 50 High Street (Figure 4.5) in 2006 as the ‘least’ and the ‘worst’ locations respectively. It was

discontinued on Beech Road after 2011 but will continue on High Street until 2032. There are also concerns now about pollution levels around the Old London Road and these have been brought to the attention of the WNP Committee and SODC. The annual average concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> in Wheatley is described as being high (but without exceeding the maximum allowed). The average over the decade 2006-2016 was 28.7 µgm/m<sup>3</sup> per annum, with the dip in 2015 being explained by “unusually stable weather conditions”. It is understood that the NO<sub>2</sub> levels are mainly from HGV emissions.

Further evidence of the issues experienced in Wheatley is shown in Figure 4.6 not only from an air quality standpoint but also as an example of the use of inappropriately programmed SatNavs that take no account of 18<sup>th</sup> century streets having to deal with 21<sup>st</sup> century trucks and lorries.

Location	50 High Street (SODC site 27)
Year	Annual Mean NO <sub>2</sub> Conc. (µgm/m <sup>3</sup> )
2006	27.3
2007	28.0
2008	30.4
2009	30.9
2010	31.7
2011	29.7
2012	29.8
2013	29.6
2014	28.0
2015	24.0
2016	26.8
2017	25.8



Figure 4.5 Summary of diffusion tube results in Wheatley [28]. Permissible limit is 40 µgm/m<sup>3</sup> [29]

Figure 4.6 Use of inappropriately programmed SatNavs bring HGVs into the centre of the village

4.32 It is recommended by SODC in the Air Quality Action Plan [29] and endorsed by WNP that no housing development should be considered as acceptable if as a consequence the Air Quality Action Plan objectives are exceeded.



Figure 4.7 War Memorial donated by Magdalen College to replace worn original



Figure 4.8 The spire of St. Mary's CE Church seen from the High Street

### Heritage Assets

4.33 Wheatley has numerous listed buildings, scheduled Ancient Monuments and an interesting history. The Wheatley Conservation Area was established in December 1989. The special character of buildings in the Area arises from the harmoniously balanced mixture of local limestone and locally produced warm red brick and tile. There are small cottages, terraces and individual dwellings in brick and stone reflecting the structure of society in the past. Roofs are generally traditionally pitched. Welsh slates were introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Wheatley has one of the few windmills with an octagonal shaped tower. It dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century being in continuous use up until 1914 whereupon it suffered a period of considerable decline. A restoration project started in the 1970s has now been completed (see front cover) and the windmill now enjoys a prominent role as a local tourist attraction. The present Manor House building was completed by the Archdale family in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.



Figure 4.9 Manor House East Wing datestone



Figure 4.10 The Manor House East Wing, older buildings lie to the west

The parish church and adjacent schoolhouse (Figure 4.11) are Victorian designs by the architect G.E Street. Numerous buildings, including a restored windmill, date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Wheatley Lock Up (Figure 4.12) built in 1834, an evocative pyramidal shape, has become the village’s unofficial logo.



Figure 4.11 The Old School (G.E. Street).  
Formerly the Wheatley National School  
1858 – 1987.



Figure 4.12 The Roundhouse, now known as  
the Lock Up, built during rural unrest, 1834

### Environment and landscape

4.34 The village of Wheatley is tightly surrounded by the Green Belt and lies next to Shotover Country Park (Figure 4.13). In addition to the Conservation Area the Parish owns Wheatley Common Allotment, managed by the Howe Trust, (Figure 4.14) and other common (community) land which is used for grazing horses. A number of public footpaths and rights of way cross parts of the village to lead to the countryside beyond.



Figure 4.13 Westfield from  
Shotover Park in winter

The OBU site has been extensively landscaped to the extent that there are Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in place for many of the trees that flourish on the site. This arboriculture has been the subject of one survey [30] by SODC in 2005 and a further survey [31] carried out by the WNP in 2017. Wheatley is inset in the Green Belt and is surrounded by parkland and woodland all of which provide the delightful setting that is typical of the Chiltern countryside. However, Figure 4.15 illustrates that within the confines of the village there are very few “green spaces” for recreational activities especially for young families and the elderly. It would be desirable if there were more opportunities for the elderly to be able to enjoy recreation and walking in green spaces reasonably close to their homes without having to face the steep hills that lie in all directions except towards the east of the village.



Figure 4.14 The Howe Trust Land looking W towards Shotover Park

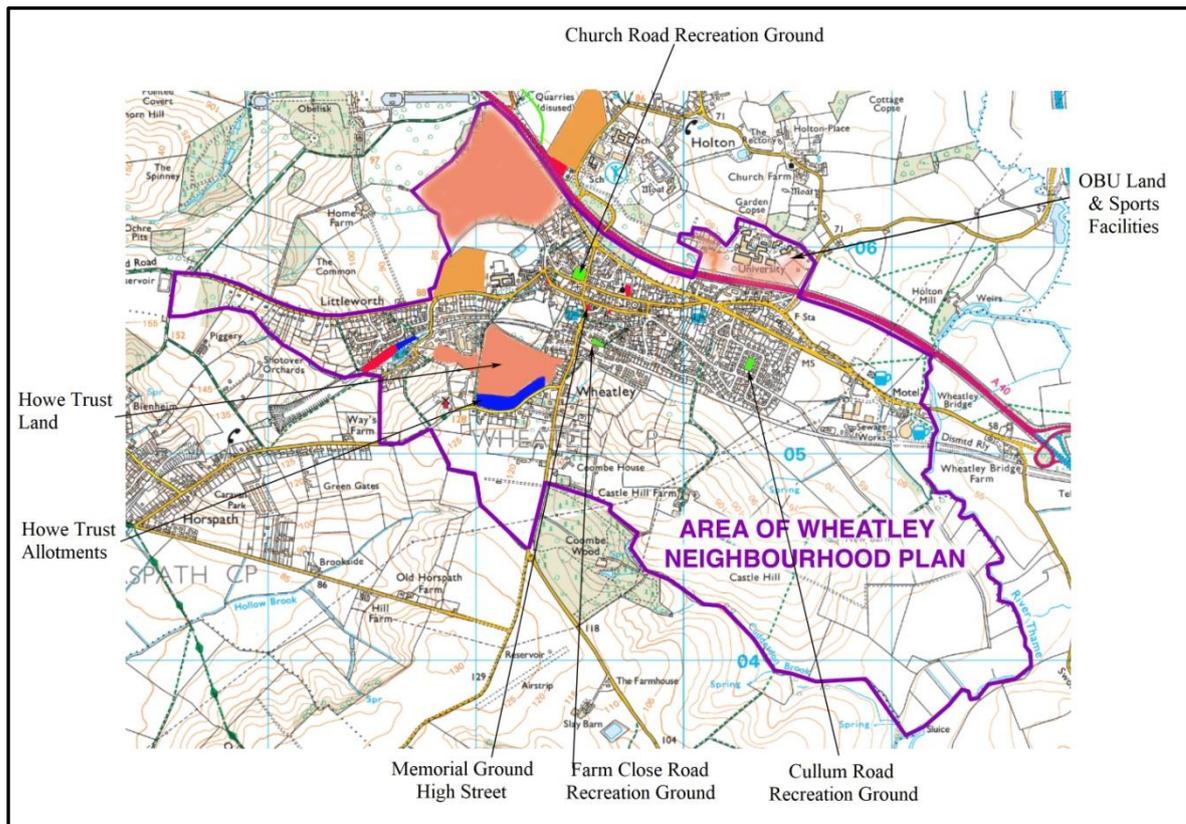


Figure 4.15 Recreation areas in Wheatley [25]

## Provision of Burial Space

4.35 St. Mary's CE Church is surrounded by an extensive cemetery which has served the community since 1857. However, the need for further burial capacity is now at a critical level and it is imperative that a new site (approx. 0.3 Ha) is found. WNP, WPC and the Vicar of Wheatley have discussed the issue. The cemetery has been closed to new burials since the first quarter of 2019. WNP has agreed to support an application once WPC and Wheatley Parish Council of Churches propose a suitable site

## Water Supply and Sewerage

4.36 Thames Water have a responsibility to provide mains water and sewerage for new housing in Wheatley [32] but this can only be provided if there is collaboration with SODC and any potential developers. Any proposed development in Wheatley should take account of the impact of increased demand for water and sewerage services. There is a risk that any new development may impact the wider water or sewerage system and cause problems elsewhere in the system. Any developer in Wheatley is encouraged to engage with Thames Water at the earliest opportunity to consider the potential impacts on water supply, sewerage and surface water drainage. Thames Water also needs to be consulted if proposals include building over or close to an existing public sewer. The emerging SODC Local Plan must set out strategic policies for the delivery of this infrastructure in compliance with paragraphs 20 – 23 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [33] and the National Planning Practice Guidance [34] This emerging Plan is the focus for ensuring that the investment plans of Thames Water match any proposed developments in Wheatley. The surface water runoff from most new developments is now usually controlled so that the peak flow is no greater than the peak flow before development. With this condition, then the risk of surface water flooding should not be significantly increased by the development.



Figure 4.16 River Thames in spate at Wheatley Bridge

## 5 The Community Survey

5.1 A Community Survey [7] was sent to every home in Wheatley and Holton. Parts 1–4 (Housing Needs Survey) of this survey were compiled by Community First Oxford (CFO) and this provided a Housing Needs Survey. Part 5 (Community Opinion Survey) comprised a series of questions compiled by the WNP to ask the residents about their views, concerns and aspirations for the future of the villages. There was a 36% response from a total of 1860 homes in Wheatley and Holton. A copy of the whole survey is available at [www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk](http://www.wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk). With respect to the housing needs, the key messages provided by the CFO Survey are summarised in Figure 5.1.

<b>Housing</b>
<b>Status (% figures are given with respect to the number of respondents)</b>
Most houses are owner occupied (91%)
Most houses have 3 bedrooms or more (77%)
Distribution of age (N) (64% , N ≥ 45)
Proportion of retirees (38%, N ≥ 65)
42% of individuals in some form of employment
Strong village association (58% have lived in the area for 20+ years)
<b>Aspiration</b>
Appetite for downsizing (26% of respondents might be interested)
Lack of affordable housing is a major reason given for leaving the village (36% of leavers)
Strong support for affordable housing (63%), starter homes (53%) and supported housing (47%, with preference towards independent accommodation with care)
Strong support for owner occupied/shared ownership properties; home ownership is preferred among families/individuals wishing to move within the next 5 years (80%)
Most families/individuals wishing to move require 2+ bedrooms (90% of respondents)
Need for supported housing among families/individuals wishing to move is low (only 9 expressed a need)
There is demand for housing from households living outside Wheatley; the greatest demand is for 2 and 3 bedroom properties

Figure 5.1 Key results of the Housing Needs Survey [7] (Parts 1-4)

5.2 Like most semi-rural village locations, the community is generally car owning. The survey showed that 50% of the respondents lived in households having two or more vehicles. There is a relatively large retirement population in the villages of Wheatley and Holton so when taken in conjunction with the lack of local employment opportunities for younger people this means that the population is inevitably ageing.

5.3 Further analysis of the Community Survey [7] reveals specific issues related to the housing needs for Wheatley and Holton. Some of the key issues related to the type of housing needed for the elderly can be summarised:-

- a. Approximately one third of the respondents is of retirement age
- b. Nearly 60% of the respondents are unlikely to leave within 20 years
- c. A significant number of retirees would like to downsize and stay in the village but availability of suitable property is an issue
- d. There is an expressed need for some form of supported housing

The conclusion of the survey is that it is necessary to make provision for the housing needs of retired and elderly residents together with their associated well-being.

5.4 There is strong support for the Green Belt (56% of respondents), with priority being given to the development of brownfield sites (86% of respondents).

5.5 Although areas were identified where the standard of living could be improved, the conclusions from Part 5 of the survey showed that in general the residents were satisfied with the quality of life in Wheatley and Holton. The local amenities provided are sufficient to ensure that day-to-day needs are catered for without having to leave the villages. The

residents enjoy a pleasant rural location and have good access to neighbouring conurbations. Two particular issues gives rise to considerable dissatisfaction viz:- traffic and transport together with parking problems especially around the centre of Wheatley. This confirms the findings of the WNP Straw Poll [3] (Figure 4.1). Residents’ concerns are further illustrated in Figure 5.2. In particular, the traffic flow on a single carriageway (London Road) corresponds to a rate of one car every 10 seconds in each direction for a period of one hour at peak times.

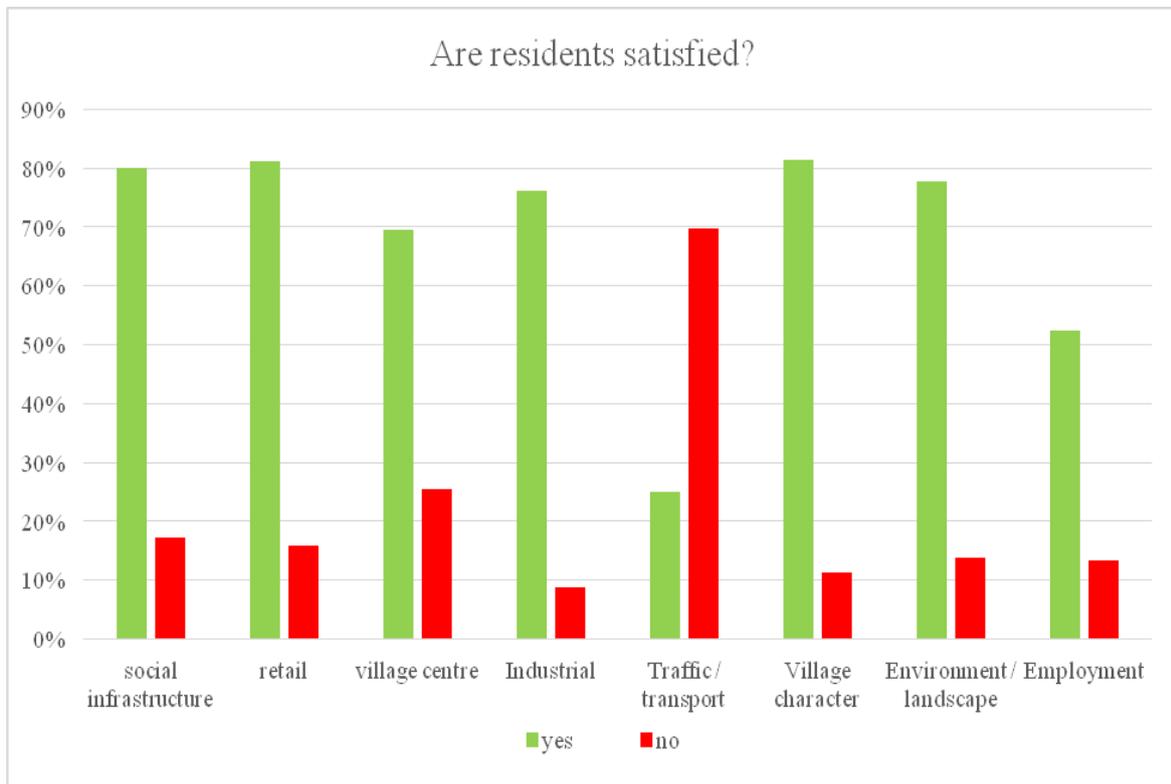


Figure 5.2 Key resident concerns [7] (Part 5, Community Opinion Survey)

It therefore must be a priority for the WNP that, in seeking to satisfy the housing needs, any potential impacts arising in terms of traffic, transport and parking are satisfactorily mitigated.

## 6 Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan: Vision and objectives

**The WNP Committee welcomed the opportunity to deliver a neighbourhood plan that would revitalise the villages of Wheatley and Holton and thereby act as a catalyst for fulfilling housing needs, enabling village enhancement, expanding employment possibilities and rationalising the layout of light industry in Wheatley.**

6.1 This section sets out the community’s vision for Wheatley, the themes and primary objectives for the WNP, and the strategy for bringing the vision and objectives forward. The planning policies which follow in Section 9 are the delivery tools for realising the vision, objectives and strategy.

6.2 The WNP objectives and policies are organised around a set of main themes that have been the subject of planning policy, planning applications, Parish Council stewardship and community needs for many years. Continuing to address and review these themes is an important part of the WNP and in so doing they have undergone extensive community consultation. The main themes are:-

- Housing and land use
- Social infrastructure
- Retail services
- Village centre
- Industrial and commercial environment and infrastructure
- Traffic and transport
- Village character
- Quality of the environment and natural landscape
- Employment opportunities

6.3 Each of these themes has an individual vision, with primary objectives:-.

<b>Housing and Land Use</b>		
<b>Vision</b>		<b>Objectives</b>
HL1V	Wheatley will comprise a balanced range and quantity of housing that meets the needs of both current and future residents of all ages. The housing should be mixed, including affordable homes. It should be thoughtfully located and designed, and integrated into the village of Wheatley to minimise any negative impact on the natural environment.	HL1O1 Provide a range of different types of new houses across all tenures to meet the needs of all income and age ranges, including key workers, within Wheatley and its catchment area using design guidance based on the South Oxfordshire Design Guide [35] and the Chilterns Building Design Guide [36] HL1O2 Promote the provision of 40% affordable homes, in line with the policy of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan HL1O3 Build new homes within walking distance of the village centre, especially those designed for the elderly HL1O4 Ensure that affordable dwellings are mixed with, and indistinguishable from, the market housing HL1O5 Prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield sites, and intensify the use of existing land where this will not have unmitigated significant environmental effects HL1O6 Set aside land for housing for the elderly

HL2V	The Green Belt will be retained where it contributes to the purposes of the Green belt. Areas of historic heritage will be preserved.	HL2O Support land released from the Green Belt within the framework of the Local Plan only where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified.
HL3V	The built-up area of the OBU site as shown on the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be transformed to provide additional housing and business amenities in accordance with the community vision for Wheatley. The OBU tower should be demolished, it is a blight on the landscape (see Figure 9.2)	HL3O1 Encourage redevelopment proposals to consider that serviceable OBU buildings can be retained for re-use as business/residential units HL3O2 Support the demolition of the OBU tower. HL3O3 Ensure that the profile of any and all new housing and buildings does not harm either the views from the listed building of Holton House or the views from the OBU site towards Brill.
HL4V	Commercial businesses and non-retail businesses will be relocated where practical to the eastern perimeter of the village, encouraging growth, improving services and the environment for residents together with enhancing the village.	HL4O1 Promote the relocation of businesses in central village locations in order to facilitate the relief of traffic congestion and parking issues HL4O2 Promote the relocation of businesses in designated area WHE22 to create a site for housing commensurate with the surrounding environment HL4O3 Set aside land to attract new businesses and to accommodate relocated businesses to the east of Wheatley which could include sites released from the Green Belt within the framework of a Local Plan
HL5V	There will be sufficient burial capacity.	HL5O Set aside land for burial since the present cemetery will be closed for new burials at the end of the first quarter 2019
HL6V	Create a more sustainable and low carbon community	HL6O Pay attention to good quality existing design guidance which includes the South Oxfordshire Design Guide [35] and the Chilterns Building Design Guide [36]

## Social infrastructure (including a range of sport, education, healthcare and leisure services)

Vision		Objectives
S11V	There will be a range of high-quality sports, leisure, education, healthcare, recreational open space and social facilities to meet the community needs commensurate with an expanding population of all ages especially the elderly.	<p>SI1O1 Ensure social infrastructure in place to meet the increased needs of new and existing residents</p> <p>SI1O2 Maximise the leisure opportunities for all ages, including the allocation of land and identification of ways of delivering new and improved facilities at appropriate locations to meet increased demand</p> <p>SI1O3 Preserve leisure facilities used by residents of Holton and Wheatley that are located on the OBU site.</p> <p>SI1O4 Consider identifying land to build new village hall to meet the increased demand created by new housing</p> <p>SI1O5 Consider identifying land to re-locate the current accommodation used by the Scout Movement to improve safety and encourage increased participation in the organisation.</p>
SI2V	Wheatley will continue to operate as a hub village and Local Service Area	SI2O Expand the amenities to satisfy the increasing demand

## Retail Services

Vision		Objectives
RS1V	Wheatley will be served by a thriving hub village economy that provides a diverse range of accessible day-to-day services for its residents and those of the surrounding villages.	<p>RS1O1 Retain and support a mix and variety of shops in the village centre</p> <p>RS1O2 Improve traffic flow to ease congestion in the village centre</p> <p>RS1O3 Provide adequate parking close to the village centre</p>

## Village Centre

Vision		Objectives
VC1V	The village centre will provide a pleasant, attractive, safe and convenient place for residents of all ages to shop,	<p>VC1O1 Support the provision of a public toilet for the village centre</p> <p>VC1O2 Set aside land for public parking</p>

	socialise and generally enjoy life.	
VC2V	The village centre will be a vibrant place for use by the community that is reviewed to provide improvement and regeneration.	VC2O New homes should be built within walking distance of village centre, to maximise use of the shops, reduce parking needs and provide ease of access for the elderly

### Industrial and commercial environment and infrastructure

Vision		Objectives
IC1V	Wheatley will remain home to the growing number of small enterprises covering all ownership sectors (private, voluntary and public) across the tertiary sector and light manufacturing sectors.	IC1O To provide more business units capable of flexible use and expansion
	New businesses will be located around the eastern end of the village, close to existing ones, with some flexibility for expansion.	IC2O Relocate existing commercial units to provide opportunities to develop Littleworth industrial area (WHE22) brownfield site for residential use (see Figure 6.1)

### Traffic (motorists, pedestrians and cyclists) and transport

Vision		Objectives
TT1V	Wheatley will be supported by a safe and efficiently functioning road network with sufficient village parking.	TT1O1 Ensure that new developments minimise congestion TT1O2 Enhance parking management and provision TT1O3 Ensure that new developments do not exacerbate the issues with existing traffic black spots, rat runs and movement of HGVs
TT2V	The village centre, all schools and leisure facilities will be safely accessible by walkers, cyclists and the elderly and infirm.	TT2O1 Provide new and improved pavements throughout Wheatley TT2O2 Promote safe cycling and walking routes east to west for access to schools TT2O3 Promote safe walking routes in the High Street TT2O4 Provide a new pedestrian link to OBU which could include a new pedestrian and cycling bridge for safe and practical access to the village centre

		TT2O5 Ensure that parking provision for the health and education services are met for future population levels
TT3V	Wheatley will continue to have good public transport.	TT3O Promote public transport as the first-choice mode of transport for residents
TT4V	Under all circumstances air quality standards [26] will be met.	TT4O To identify opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts, especially at critical locations, by using through traffic and travel management together with green infrastructure provision and enhancement.

### Village character

Vision		Objectives
VCh1V	Wheatley will enhance its reputation as a welcoming village, respectful of its heritage, where residents experience a strong community spirit.	VCh1O Preserve and enhance the village character by providing, within walking distance, safe access from all new housing to a vibrant village centre.

### Quality of the environment and natural landscape

Vision		Objectives
EL1V	Residents will continue to enjoy the natural landscape that offers a range of green spaces and outstanding local vistas.	EL1O1 Preserve the Green Belt in line with national and local strategic planning policies. EL1O2 Ensure that the key visual landscapes are preserved
EL2V	The rural habitat and ecological diversity will be protected and enhanced.	EL2O1 Promote enhancement of wildlife sites through the creation of features such as ponds, spinneys, wetlands and grassland

### Employment opportunities

Vision		Objectives
EO1V	There will be increased employment opportunities for the communities served by the Wheatley hub (see para 4.1) especially for our young people.	EO1O1 Encourage business expansion in Wheatley through improved and new business infrastructure

## 7 Land Availability

7.1 A list of all potential development sites was created from the OCC SHLAA [37] and SHELAA [38] reports (including updates published during the NP process), local knowledge of the village, maps and Google Earth. Brownfield sites were reviewed and considered with respect to possible relocation of existing inappropriate development. All the sites were assessed against locally developed criteria aimed at identifying the suitability, availability and the deliverability of potential sites. The site assessment of suitability has been carefully considered with respect to SODC planning policies and constraints. The vision and objectives of the plan have been important considerations in the identification of suitable sites. All the sites were screened and evaluated according to a series of criteria designed to find the sites that would fulfil the aspirations of the Vision and Objectives and also to address the need for a sustainable community to retain its diversity in age, occupations, attitudes and ideology as discussed in sections 4.6 and 4.7

7.2 The site assessment identified seven sites to be considered in more detail. The detailed assessment identified WHE2, WHE15, WHE16, WHE17, WHE22, WHE25 and WHE28 for further consideration. The entire site assessment process is described in Appendix 2.



Figure 7.1 Public Consultation 17 June 2019

## 8 Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan: Policies

### Introduction

8.1 The policies are organised by themes and relate to the WNP objectives described in Section 6. For clarity, the WNP objectives should not be confused with the WNP policies. Figure 8.1 shows how the policies of the WNP will meet the objectives set out in Section 6.

<b>WNP Objectives</b>	<b>WNP Policies</b>
<b>Housing &amp; land use</b>	
HL1O1 – 6	H1, H2, H3, H4
HL2O	H2
HL3O1 – 4	H1
HL4O1 – 3	H4
HL5O	B1
HL6O	DQS1
<b>Social infrastructure (sport, education, healthcare and leisure)</b>	
SI1O1 – 5	SCI1, SCI2
SI2O	SCI1, SCI2
<b>Retail services</b>	
RS1O1 – 3	T1
<b>Village centre</b>	
VC1O1 – 3	VCE1
VC2O	VCE1, H3
<b>Industrial/commercial environment &amp; infrastructure</b>	
IC1O	H4
IC2O	H4
<b>Traffic (motorists, pedestrians, cyclists) &amp; transport</b>	
TT1O1 – 3	T1, P1
TT2O1 – 5	T1, P1
TT3O	T1
TT4O	T1
<b>Village character</b>	
VCh1O	T1, VCE1
<b>Quality of the environment &amp; natural landscape</b>	
EL1O1	EN1
EL2O	EN1
<b>Employment opportunities</b>	
EO1O1 – 2	E1

Figure 8.1 Relationship between the WNP objectives and the WNP policies

### Character and Design

8.2 The emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] indicates that the aim of STRAT14 (previously designated as STRAT10 in [9]) is to allocate “at least 300 homes” as part of a housing development when the OBU campus in Holton is vacated.

8.3 In addition to enabling communities to decide where new development should go, one of the key purposes of neighbourhood planning is to enable local communities to say what new development should look like. To ensure Wheatley and Holton residents and businesses

are able to influence and shape new developments at an early stage in the design process it would be welcomed that developers engage with Wheatley and Holton Parish Councils for local guidance in this process.

#### **POLICY H1: DESIGN AND CHARACTER PRINCIPLES**

Development proposals will be supported, provided they complement, enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness of the village and where appropriate are designed to enhance the setting of the conservation areas and their settings. Proposals must show clearly how the scale, mass, density, layout and design of the site, building or extension fits in with the character of the immediate area and wider context within the village.

The proposals will be supported if they appropriately address the following principles:-

- a. Provides a high-quality of internal and external living space
- b. Has regard to historic plot boundaries, hedgerows and enclosure walls
- c. Proposals for new garages, outbuildings or tall garden walls must be subservient in scale and, whether of a traditional or modern design, should draw from the local palette of vernacular building materials
- d. The impacts on residential amenity of the construction arrangements are minimized by way of lorry movement, deliveries, work times, lighting and loss of vegetation
- e. The layout, orientation and massing of new houses on larger residential schemes must avoid an estate-style appearance by dividing the developable area into distinct parcels and by responding to the historic grain of the development in the village, including its road and footpath network and historic property boundaries
- f. They use permeable surfaces on driveways and use sustainable drainage systems that can connect directly to an existing or new wet environment wherever possible
- g. They will not require culverts for the existing ditches, unless there is a demonstrable benefit to walking, cycling, highway safety or access.
- h. The layout maximises the opportunities for open space and recreation facilities
- i. The layout provides a high-quality landscape scheme
- j. The proposals complement, enhance and reinforce the local character
- k. The proposals should incorporate where possible walking and cycling routes, and where possible, enhance and connect existing walking and cycling routes

8.4 Attention should be paid to good-quality existing design guidance which includes the South Oxfordshire Design Guide [35] and the Chilterns Building Design Guide [36] with particular reference to low carbon sustainable development.

8.5 On windfall sites of 10 or more net additional dwellings, or comprising 500 sqm or more of additional new employment, retail, hotel, community service, or leisure floor space, the preparation of a Design and Access Statement is encouraged in the spirit of good planning and positive frontloading of the decision-making process. The use of development proposal websites and other social media to provide residents with information and an opportunity to comment on emerging proposals is encouraged.

8.6 It is important to ensure that the local community, through Wheatley Parish Council and Holton Parish Council, maintains an active and positive role throughout any decision-making process undertaken by SODC and OCC on a planning application. Where appropriate, a Planning Performance Agreement between the applicant, SODC, OCC, Wheatley Parish Council and Holton Parish Council would be welcomed, particularly for the sites allocated for development within the WNP.

8.7 Wheatley's character is its landscape, its history and its community. From medieval times the village focused on agriculture and quarrying which survived well into the beginning of the 20th century. Most of the houses were built from local stone giving the village a characteristic “feel” in its rural setting. The setting is fairly tightly constrained by a geological fault that eventually levels out towards the east. Looking out from Wheatley there are several views unique to the village. To the south there is Castle Hill (see Figure 8.4) and the poplar ridge of “Cuddesdon on the hill” (Figure 2.4, Appendix 1), to the east is the Chiltern ridge (see Figure 9.3) and to the north the village of Brill (see Figure 8.5) is easily recognised. In former times Holton House would have been visible on a ridge to the north of Wheatley. Holton House is now part of Wheatley Park Academy (WPA) and really can only be seen from inside the WPA grounds and the neighbouring OBU campus (see Figure 8.5). A detailed description of the character of Wheatley (and Holton) is provided in Appendix 1.

## **POLICY H2: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

All new development should be sensitive and make a positive contribution to the local character of the area (see Policy H3 and Appendix 1) with the aim of preserving the views and landscapes that characterise Wheatley. Any new developments will demonstrate how they will respond to the local character together with mitigation on any impact on local heritage assets.

### **The nature of Housing Needs in Wheatley**

8.8 It is also important to ensure that new housing meets the housing needs of Wheatley and Holton at present, over the lifetime of the WNP and into the future. As housing needs in terms of size, type and tenure will vary over the lifetime of the WNP, a flexible policy approach is required to ensure that future development proposals are able to respond to the housing needs at that time. Wheatley is a Larger Village in South Oxfordshire that is inset from the Green Belt. In the NPPF [33] it states the five purposes of the Green Belt, viz:-

- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

So, in meeting housing needs, proposals should take advantage of any opportunities afforded if or when there are boundary changes made to the Green Belt **within the framework of a Local Plan** and these facilitate residential or commercial development in conjunction with urban regeneration and improved well-being of residents. As evidenced by the Community

Survey [7] the main housing needs are for affordable housing, starter homes and supported housing for the elderly (see Figure 5.1) and the quantity of affordable housing is identified by the HNA (see Appendix 3). The aim of policy H3 is to create new good quality living accommodation over and above that allocated in the Local Plan [10] in order to accommodate the young families of existing residents and maintain the diversity of people living in the village. Offering new and attractive options for households will encourage an increase in owner occupation, strengthen local demand for shops and support local employment.



Figure 8.2 Cottages in Bell Lane



Figure 8.3 Wheatley High Street



Figure 8.4 The Chiltern Ridge from Castle Hill..... and some Wheatley residents

### **POLICY H3: MIX AND SIZE OF NEW HOUSING**

Development proposals for schemes of more than ten (10) dwellings, will be required to:-

- a. Meets the needs of different groups in the community, such as but not limited to, young people, local workers, small families, the elderly and older residents (55+), and people with disabilities. These needs are described in the Community Survey [7].
- b. Deliver the affordable housing requirements set out in the Development Plan, and;
- c. Deliver an appropriate mix of housing types and sizes, having regard to the local community's needs as identified in the housing needs survey, and other local evidence.

8.9 The Green Belt boundary at Wheatley is drawn tightly around the built edge of the village. Almost all of the opportunities for in-fill development have been exploited. Many of them have indeed provided suitable accommodation but sometimes without really adequate provision for parking especially where the in-fill has taken place within the conservation area. When the in-fill development is used as rental accommodation with multiple occupancy the parking issue becomes more significant. As a result, several roads in Wheatley (e.g. Farm Close Road, High Street, Mulberry Drive) together with their associated pavements are regularly overwhelmed by parked cars and vans, this unintended consequence of some of the in-fill development detracts from the character of the village. Policy H4 is designed not to necessarily present a barrier to in-fill development but rather to ensure that its inappropriate implementation is curtailed especially when the WNP has provided more appropriate means of providing housing through the enhancement proposals.

### **POLICY H4: IN-FILL AND SELF-BUILD DWELLINGS**

In-fill and self-build development, which reflects the scale and character of the village, will be supported within the built-up area of Wheatley where it accords with the policies of this Plan and the Development Plan for the district.

Proposals for residential development outside of the built-up area of Wheatley or outside of the sites identified in Policies SPOBU, SPES1, SPES2, SPES3 and SPES4, which are subject to the provisions of policy GBBA1, will only be supported if they are appropriate for a countryside location and Green Belt location and consistent with local development plan policies.

### **Transport and movement**

8.10 In Section 4 of the WNP the issue and the causes of parking problems in Wheatley were described (see paras 4.19, 4.22 & 4.25). Parking standards [39] for new residential developments recognise the use of 'tandem' parking but fail to recognise the reality that both spaces are rarely used to the extent that adjacent street parking becomes the norm. Given this,

and in order to guard against overspill onto the existing busy and constrained road infrastructure WNP will support only the limited use of tandem car parking in calculating the level of parking provision for residential development.

#### **POLICY P1: PARKING PROVISION**

Parking needs to be delivered in accordance with the adopted standards as set out by OCC [39]. Arrangements should be adequate or seek innovative solutions that avoids:-

- 1) the extensive use of tandem parking;
- 2) the need for large expanses of driveway;
- 3) the loss of vegetation along the highway; and
- 4) parking on village roads or lanes

8.11 Traffic congestion within Wheatley causes major inconvenience to road users, cyclists and pedestrians, and creates an unpleasant environment, particularly within the village centre. Exhaust fumes also contribute to air pollution. Presently, Air Quality is measured only at the High Street in Wheatley.

8.12 The WNP seeks to minimise the impact of existing and additional congestion on the road network, particularly the village centre. Any increase in traffic volumes is a very strong concern and has influenced the housing site selections. Proposals should consider carefully and as a high priority the traffic and air quality impacts of their proposals and show that they will not lead to significant impacts in air quality (i.e. greater than levels shown in Figure 4.5) and unacceptable traffic.

#### **POLICY T1: IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE ROAD NETWORK**

Proposals for residential and any other developments which may generate significant traffic movement will be required to provide a Travel Plan, setting out how opportunities for encouraging, facilitating and supporting the use of, and improvements to, sustainable transport modes have been maximised. The Travel Plan will address the specific issues of minimising congestion, parking management and impact on general air quality. This Travel Plan will be submitted in accordance with the guidance set out by OCC [40] and delivered as part of the proposed development. The provision of new or improved walking or cycling routes, improvements to public transport and the incorporation of electric car charging points, will be supported.

8.13 To help to improve Wheatley's transport issues over the longer term the WNP Committee has listened to the views of many residents in Wheatley. These views have been collated and listed below to aid the Wheatley Parish Council develop schemes to manage and mitigate traffic flow through the village of Wheatley:-

- a) To improve cycling routes (access, quality and safety) across and beyond the WNP area
- b) To promote information on existing cycle routes and facilities, and to explore the potential for new sustainable transport initiatives
- c) To promote information on existing walking routes, especially those used for ‘health walks’ and to improve alternative walking routes along parallel secondary routes
- d) To increase the accessibility of the village to pedestrians, including reviewing opportunities to increase the one-way system and through short-term initiatives (e.g. temporary street closures for weekly and/or seasonal markets)
- e) To support the introduction of electric cars and buses and low-emission vehicles (e.g. through the provision of charging points for electric cars)
- f) To explore the feasibility of a low-emission zone in the village centre
- g) To ensure that schools and educational establishments work with SODC to seek ways to improve the safety and well-being of their students in terms of walking and cycling
- h) To introduce 20mph zones on roads adjacent to the village centre
- i) To ensure that all major village businesses, employers and institutions, including schools and educational establishments, complete a travel plan that identifies how they are minimising congestion on the roads
- j) To deliver public transport improvements in Wheatley, including the running of buses with enhanced energy efficiency and electrification, reviewing the location of existing bus stops, and to provide real-time information
- k) To engage with the highway authorities to re-direct strategic traffic, where appropriate, away from Wheatley village centre
- l) To install sufficient signage to control and reduce the passage of HGVs through the village by restricting weights over the flyover and Wheatley Bridge. Restrictions to be implemented in the village centre, Ladder Hill and Littleworth Road, with access hour restrictions and SatNav and strategic route advisory management
- m) To remain open to new forms of traffic infrastructure, such as roundabouts, that may aid the safe flow of traffic
- n) To address road safety along a number of routes perceived as particularly dangerous
- o) To encourage a review of car parking throughout the village and to remain open to implementing Controlled Traffic Zones as appropriate
- p) To encourage the development of additional car parking spaces, including the provision of ‘load and go’ bays (where possible) in the village centre for short-term car parking
- q) To continue to fund the bus services through S106 funding [41]

The WNP has made a formal request to WPC to set up an appropriate committee to liaise and seek to work with OCC (subject to appropriate funding) to resolve as many of these issues as possible.

### **Social and Community Infrastructure**

8.14 Redevelopment of the access, pavements and parking at Wheatley Primary School (WHE27) would alleviate the current traffic congestion and parking issues associated with collection and transport of pupils which need to be addressed if pupil numbers increase.

8.15 Constraints on land availability in Wheatley reduce opportunities to deliver new community facilities. Existing facilities, notably the Merry Bells and the Wheatley Scout Movement provide important community services in relatively outdated buildings.

Opportunities to provide these services within larger facilities that retain the existing services and provide space for additional community functions should be explored and supported, including consideration of a ‘sustainability hub’ which brings together ideas and organisations related to low-carbon living. These facilities are important Community Assets and are listed as follows:-

- a. Merry Bells
- b. Wheatley Churches
- c. Wheatley Scout Movement building
- d. Public Library
- e. Wheatley Archive
- f. Educational Establishments
- g. Pubs and restaurants
- h. Howe Trust Land
- i. Recreation Land
- j. Sports Fields

8.16 Community facilities wishing to apply for renewal utilising S106 [41] or CIL [42] funds should register with Wheatley Parish Council.

#### **POLICY SCI1: COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Proposals that result in the loss of an essential community facility or service described in paragraph 8.15, or of any other established community use, through change of use or redevelopment, will not be permitted unless:

- a. it would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility or the replacement of an existing facility equally convenient to the local community it serves and with equivalent or improved facilities;
- b. it has been determined that the community facility is no longer needed;
- c. in the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.

Appropriate, detailed and robust evidence will be required to satisfy the above criteria. SODC will require the independent assessment of this evidence.’

#### **POLICY SCI2: IMPROVEMENT TO COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Proposals to improve any of the community facilities described in paragraph 8.15, or of any other established community use by way of an extension or partial redevelopment of buildings and land will be supported. Proposals that would result in the provision of additional community facilities or services within settlements will be permitted, provided that there are no overriding amenity, environmental or traffic objections to the proposals and that there is no conflict with the other policies in this Plan.

### **Burial provision**

8.17 St. Mary's CE Church has the only serviceable burial ground in Wheatley. The vicar has advised the Wheatley Parish Council that the burial ground will close sometime in the first half of 2019. It is therefore urgent that an alternative location is found preferably within the curtilage of the villages of Wheatley and Holton. New burial space will improve overall

neighbourhood satisfaction, principally for those who have been residing in the village for many years and feel an emotional attachment to the area.

#### **POLICY B1: BURIAL PROVISION**

Proposals for the development of a natural burial ground, including any necessary, permanent ancillary structures for the management of the burial arrangements, will be supported, provided they are located and designed to suit the character of the local landscape.

### **Retail and village centre**

8.18 Wheatley has a strong mix of independent traders serving the local rural district. In keeping with national trends in recent years, the village has lost a number of its pubs and at present has only two restaurants. It is important that the village's vitality and viability is maintained and where possible improved. It is also important that

Wheatley village centre remains at the heart of the community as a destination not just for shopping, but also as a place where current and future residents want to work, socialise and live.

#### **POLICY VCE1: WHEATLEY VILLAGE CENTRE**

Proposals for any new housing, retail, leisure and office development should be in locations which are accessible or can be made accessible to the village centre by walking, cycling and public transport with parking provisions consistent with policy P1.

### **Employment**

8.19 Wheatley provides some important opportunities for local employment which need to be retained and enhanced. In particular, the needs of small and medium-sized businesses in the business, professional, creative industries and information technology sectors must be supported, as well as more traditional industries and arts and crafts.

8.20 Pressures on land due to additional housing requirements focus the strategy employed to be on intensification (including higher density) and partial redistribution and/or change of use of land.

8.21 Industrial and office activity will be supported towards the eastern end of the village at the industrial estate. Where possible, opportunities for new office-based employment within the village can also be considered.

#### **POLICY E1: SUPPORTING WHEATLEY'S ECONOMY**

Where appropriate the development of existing businesses and forging of commercial initiatives within the built-up area will be encouraged and supported. Relocation within the village of existing businesses to permit expansion or operational efficiency will be supported together with those proposals that contribute to the village enhancement plan and mitigates its own traffic issues.

## Environment

### Preservation of the landscape



Shotover .....



..... and its residents



Wheatley.....



..... and its residents



Brill from OBU



Holton House from OBU

Figure 8.5 Scenes from around Wheatley

8.22 The Parish Councils of Wheatley and Holton will seek to encourage development proposals to take full account of the important views and landscapes (see Figure 8.5) that are in the district. The following development considerations will be supported:-

- a. Redevelopment of a site that affords the opportunity to improve the visual aspect of the site and its surroundings
- b. Enhancement of the approaches to any site under development
- c. Enhancement of the views to, from and within the site and its surroundings
- d. Preservation of tree avenues (especially those of significant age and historic nature)

- e. Creation within the site of a built form that has a scale and massing that reflects the local context
- f. Creation of a network of secondary spaces that responds to the built form around them and respects the location of mature trees, ecological features and ancient monuments
- g. Enhancement of the biodiversity and landscape setting of any site under development
- h. Improvement of the quality of the built environment/public realm especially with respect to the needs of young families and the elderly

### Preservation of the Environment

8.23 The parish councils of Wheatley and Holton will seek to preserve and enhance the environment, habitat and biodiversity of the area. In addition, Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be protected (e.g. Littleworth Brick pit).

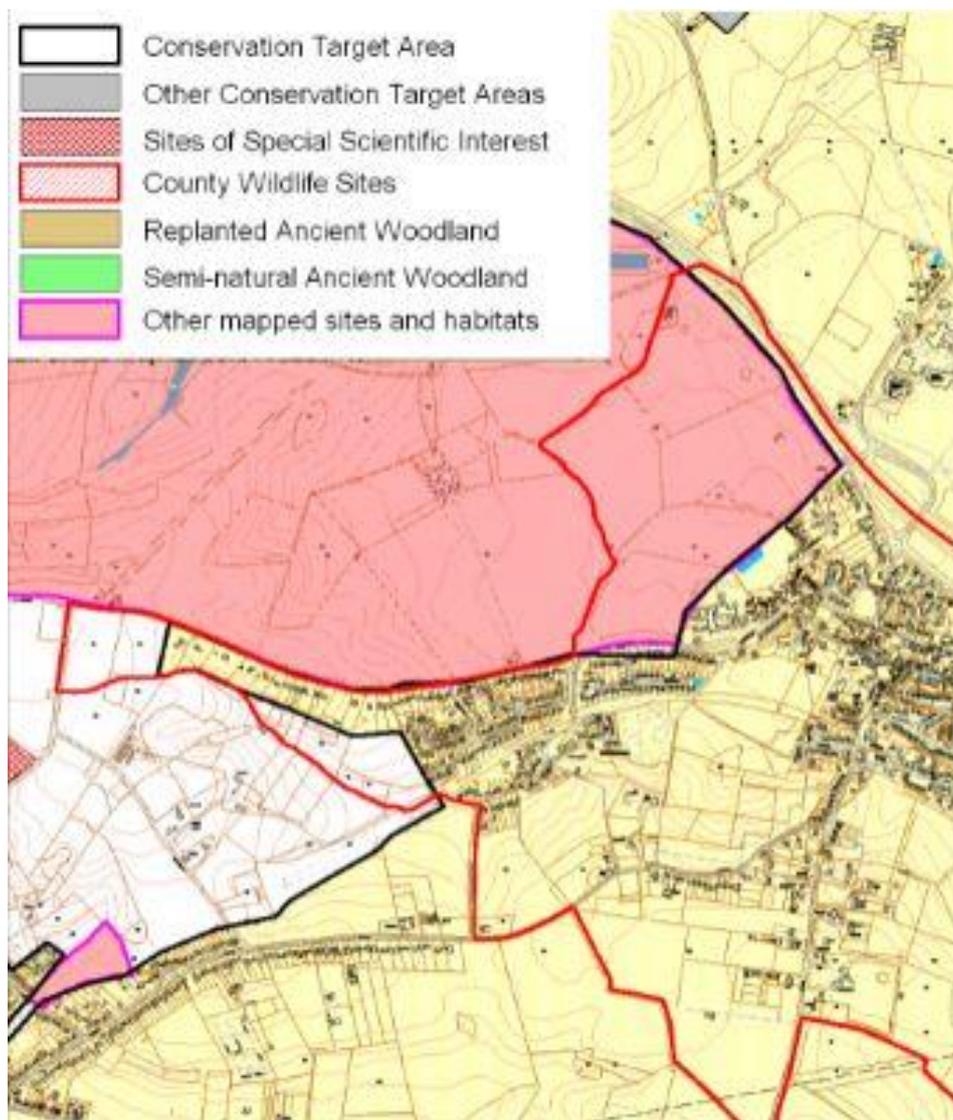


Figure 8.6 Shotover Target Conservation Area [43].  
The boundary line of the WNP designated area is shown in red

## **POLICY EN1: BIODIVERSITY**

The protection and enhancement of urban and rural biodiversity will be supported. Net gains in biodiversity, through the creation of new habitats, the enhancement of existing sites, and the development and implementation of ecological management plans will be supported, together with the aims of the Shotover Target Conservation Area [43] as an eastern section of this Area lies within the WNP Designated Area (see Figure 8.6).

8.24 The geology of the Wheatley area is varied; the strata in the Littleworth geological SSSI include iron sands, other sands, fossilised limestone and clay. In turn, this has resulted in a great diversity of local habitats and consequent biodiversity.

8.25 The Howe Trust Land (WHE10) was surveyed by an ecological consultant in 2009 [44] and by the WNP Committee in 2017 [31]. This report indicated a range of wooded and grassland areas, supporting a good biodiversity. It found 22 bird species, 8 butterfly species, 2 reptile species and 180 species of plant, including the common spotted orchid. Since then, a management programme has been implemented to encourage a greater biodiversity, through extensive tree planting and better grassland management.

8.26 The whole Oxford Brookes University Site (WHE25 and the adjacent area not in the WNP designated area) was surveyed for tree diversity in 2017 [31]. In the brownfield section of the site alone, there were about 84 trees with tree preservation orders, including ancient oaks. Over the whole site 155 trees were noted, many with tree preservation orders. The most common were Oak and Ash. There were rare species in the brownfield part of the site, including Ginko biloba (the maidenhair tree) and Davidia involucrate (the ghost tree). Many invertebrates have been recorded over many years in the grassland areas. Great Crested Newts have been recorded in the pond area by a survey team from Pond Action [45].

8.27 Westfield, an area of ancient grassland within the WNP area and the Shotover Target Conservation Area [42] has classic ridge and furrow, with biodiversity changing between ridge and furrow. It also has a stream from the springs that come out of Shotover Hill. Shotover is a significant wildlife area adjacent to the eastern boundary of the WNP area, and has been monitored over many years by Shotover Wildlife; it contains woodland SSSI, with ancient woodland species of anemone and English bluebell. Together with extensive areas of grassland and heathland, there is a great diversity of wildlife, including all three woodpecker species and three species of lizard. The mammals living on Shotover are often seen in Wheatley.

8.28 The River Thames borders the eastern side of WNP; it is a well-known fishing site, and the banks support wetland plants, such as bulrush. It frequently floods adjacent fields. There are many other wildlife habitats surrounding Wheatley village that have not been surveyed to date, such as the areas south of the village envelope. Within the village, there have been many reports of slowworms and of a range of bird species in gardens. The red kite is common in the skies above Wheatley.

8.29 Wheatley is a Larger Village inset within the Green Belt. It is important that new developments make and maintain provision for green space within the site. Contributions and arrangements will be sought for management of spaces, expected to be carried out by SODC or Wheatley Parish Council. Green infrastructure should be considered in conjunction with playing pitches and the facilities to support them.

### **Preservation of Historic Environment**

8.30 The Parish Councils of Wheatley and Holton will seek to preserve the designated historic heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the conservation area.

#### **POLICY HE1: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

The parish's designated historic assets and their settings, both above and below ground including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation area will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking into account the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF [33].

### **Design quality and sustainability**

8.31 The community welcomes the development of innovative high-quality sustainable homes that can act as exemplars for other villages and towns, and for the country as a whole.

8.32 In 2014 the UK government launched a Community Energy Strategy making it easier for the owners of buildings to install renewable energy. Proposals in Wheatley and Holton that promote community energy projects taking advantage of initiatives within the government's Community Energy Strategy including the Rural and Urban Community Energy Funds will be supported.

8.33 The Wheatley and Holton communities will also take advantage of Oxfordshire's pioneering role in the community energy field. The expertise of the organization Low Carbon Hub, a promoter of community energy initiatives working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council, will be utilised, exploring the possibility of carrying out a Wheatley schools' photovoltaic project financed through the issue of community shares.

#### **POLICY DQS1: INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY ENERGY PROJECTS**

Any individual and community renewable energy projects will be supported, provided they conform to good quality existing design guidance provided by the South Oxfordshire Design Guide [35] and the Chilterns Building Design Guide [36] and are appropriately located.

## **9 Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan: Policy for Oxford Brookes Campus**

### **WHE25, the OBU site**

9.1 The policy contained in this chapter is not an allocation for development, rather it aims to communicate the aspirations of the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee in consultation with the local people in the villages of Wheatley and Holton. The policy complements the vision, objectives and policies of the Plan.

9.2 The OBU site is a brownfield site, approximately 12.1HA (as shown in Figure 9.1), located within the Green Belt. The site falls within the Holton Parish boundary, but is considered to be primarily related to Wheatley given its proximity to the village. Although there is some uncertainty as to the eventual use of this site in the future it is probable that its current established use is unlikely to be continued when the site is sold. Policy CSEM5 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy “Oxford Brookes University” [11] states that:-

“Proposals for the redevelopment of Oxford Brookes University Campus at Holton will be supported. We will work proactively with the University to develop an agreed masterplan that meets its business objectives”

Since OBU was established it has had a considerable impact on Wheatley and its residents. There have been opportunities for employment, its students use some of the facilities in the village and residents use the site’s sports facilities. Many residents enjoy the use of the U1 bus service although some will be pleased that traffic associated with OBU will eventually stop.

9.3 OBU has announced that it intends to vacate the current Wheatley Campus by 2021/22 and is in the process of selling the site with planning permission. As a result, the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] has designated the OBU site as a strategic site (STRAT14) and accordingly has allocated the site for residential development. The Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan supports the allocation of the OBU site as a strategic housing allocation on the built form in the Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan [10]

9.4 Currently the OBU site provides sports facilities for Wheatley residents which represent valuable amenities for the residents of Wheatley and Holton. The retention of these facilities would mitigate against a solely residential development on this site experiencing difficulties from not integrating into the villages of Wheatley and Holton. The A40 hampers easy movement from the site to Wheatley centre and the primary school. It takes at least 25 minutes to walk from the current bus terminus at OBU into the centre of Wheatley and experience shows that this is a potential barrier to integration. It will also encourage any future residents to drive into Wheatley thereby adding to the pressure on parking. So, to be sustainable, redevelopment of the OBU site will require good pedestrian and cycling routes to the centre of the village and the primary school.

9.5 A high quality well integrated development of the OBU site has the potential to enhance the overall quality of the neighbourhood area by removing some of the worst architectural features on the site (e.g. the Tower Block, see Figure 9.2). New or improved access arrangements may permit access for buses from the site through the Wheatley Park Academy (WPA) site to the Holton flyover and thereby create opportunities to implement a

new routing for the bus service in Wheatley that could alleviate some of the traffic issues in Wheatley and perhaps, more importantly, also provide an easier and safer location for WPA pupils to access the buses rather than having to negotiate the Holton flyover to reach the bus stops at Park Hill.

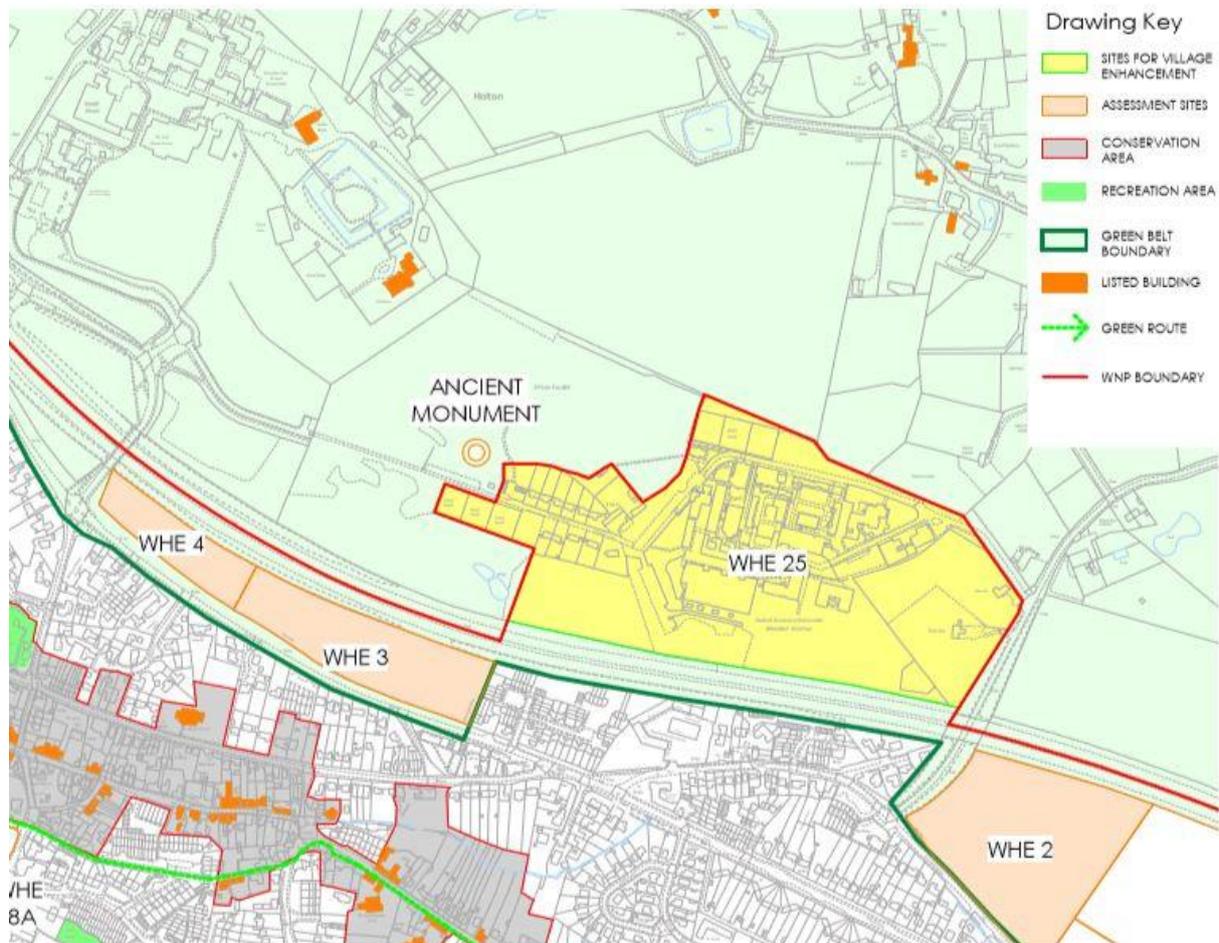


Figure 9.1 Location of the OBU site. WHE25 [25]

9.6 The area proposed to be allocated in the SODC emerging Local Plan 2034 [10] under policy STRAT14 includes existing areas of green space, sports fields, outstanding views, a scheduled monument and protected trees of which 54 have been identified [31] as Grade “A”. As can be seen in Figure 9.1 only part (referred to as WHE25) of the OBU site lies within the designated area of the WNP and therefore the policies and recommendations contained within the WNP will focus solely on that part. WHE25 comprises the built form of the OBU campus, car parks, tennis courts and sports fields together with two vacant residential properties (“Kortenay” and “Long White Cloud”). These two properties are owned by OBU but have not been used for educational purposes.



Figure 9.2 The OBU tower



Figure 9.3 Looking east from Wheatley  
towards the Chiltern Ridge

## **POLICY SPOBU – WHE25**

Proposals for redevelopment of the brownfield site WHE25 will be supported provided they accord with development plan policies.

Alterations or replacement of existing buildings should be focused on the previously developed part of the site and should avoid an adverse impact on the Scheduled Monument to the West of the built-up area of the site. In general, development on undeveloped parts of the site will not be considered appropriate with the exception of access routes and functional green spaces.

Proposals to redevelop the site for housing will be expected to deliver:

- 1) Affordable housing provision and mix in accordance with the development plan;
- 2) Appropriate development densities in accordance with the development plan. The density of development should avoid an adverse impact on heritage assets
- 3) Any necessary contributions to enhance local school capacity arising from the proposal;
- 4) All necessary transport infrastructure as set out in the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which is likely to include:
  - Cycling and walking links to the centres of Holton and Wheatley and to the primary school
  - Cycle link improvements to Oxford, to ensure the route is a safe and attractive travel option;
  - Pedestrian, vehicular, emergency, cycle and bus access;
  - Support for accessible and well-connected bus services through the site;
  - Accessible green infrastructure and open space provision as set out in the current IDP.

Any proposal to redevelop the site should be accompanied by a comprehensive masterplan.

Proposals will be expected to deliver a masterplan that demonstrates:

- a. Visual impacts on surrounding countryside has been minimised;
- b. Valuable individual specimen trees, avenue and groups of trees and native vegetation are retained and respected; and
- c. Surrounding listed buildings and structures and their setting are conserved and enhanced.
- d. Development to be informed by a programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation, undertaken ahead of any development; and
- e. Appropriate landscaping, including buffers along the A40 and an appropriate countryside edge.

Existing sports facilities should be retained or replaced within the development or, where this is not achievable because of site constraints, replacement facilities should be provided close to Wheatley or Holton to ensure that there is no local deficit of quantity or quality created by the redevelopment of the site.

Proposals should also maximises opportunities to deliver:

- a. High quality public realm and open space through high quality design and landscaping.
- b. Enhanced integration and access between Wheatley and the site particularly through;
  - i. Improved and, where necessary, additional, pedestrian and cycle access.
  - ii. Improved public transport.
  - iii. Pavement upgrading.
  - iv. The movement network internal to the site, and any off-site improvements directly related to the site, should be in accordance with appropriate OCC standards [46,47]
- c. Highway and junction improvements to ensure that the development is serviced by adequate access roads and;
  - i. has no severe impacts on traffic congestion or provides adequate mitigation
  - ii. provides improved vehicle management for London Road and Old London Road
- d. The removal of the tower block.
- e. Where possible, the retention of the positive features of the site including; landscaping, playing pitches, tennis courts, green infrastructure and biodiversity.
- f. Preservation of important views of listed buildings and views to neighbouring villages.

## 10 Wheatley Village Enhancement

### Village needs and the opportunities for enhancement

10.1 The emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2nd [10] discusses in detail the growth expected in the larger villages across SODC. Figure 10.1 summarises some of the key considerations relevant to Wheatley.

- a. Provision of 15% growth in the larger villages
- b. Development should be proportional, appropriate and dependent on existing infrastructure
- c. Wheatley is restricted by the Green Belt
- d. 15% growth in Wheatley corresponds to 305 dwellings
- e. There have been 131 completions and commitments (completions as of March 31 2019, and commitments as of 1 April 2019) in Wheatley (see Table 5.1 in Appendix 5)
- f. In view of the strategic allocation at OBU there is no outstanding requirement for the WNP

Figure 10.1 Key Planning Considerations for Wheatley as a larger village

10.2 However, the conclusion that there is no outstanding requirement for Wheatley has to be qualified. When it is eventually sold, the OBU campus in Holton parish *may* afford an opportunity for a housing development. This will depend on the intentions of the purchaser and obviously on any forthcoming successful planning application. What is certain however is that the results of the Community survey [7] identified a current need for affordable housing and also discussions with senior staff at Wheatley Park Academy have advised that the biggest barrier, “right now”, to teacher recruitment is the lack of affordable housing in the area [48].

10.3 The 15% growth target is calculated on an average basis for the whole of SODC. The WNP Committee commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) [Appendix 3] with the brief to examine the housing needs specific to the Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area. The questions to be addressed are shown in Figure 10.2.

1. What quantity of housing is appropriate over the Period of the Plan.
2. What quantum of Affordable Housing is needed over the Plan Period and what tenure of dwellings (both affordable and market) should be included in the housing mix.

Figure 10.2 Questions for Housing Needs Assessment [Appendix 3]

10.4 The conclusion of the HNA is that there is a need for 120 affordable homes during the Plan Period (see Table 5.3 in Appendix 3) which, based on the 40% requirement for affordable homes in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> (2019) [10], means that a total of 520 homes would have to be built to deliver this affordable target. So, although the strategic allocation (STRAT14) at OBU certainly goes some way to meeting the housing needs there would still be an unmet need.

10.5 In addressing this issue there are two important policy statements made in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2nd [10] viz :-

“4.119: Wheatley is the only Larger Village which is inset from the Green Belt where a Neighbourhood Development Plan is being prepared. According to current national planning guidance, the NDP can make detailed amendments to the Green Belt boundary where the Local Planning Authority sets the need.

4.120: The inset boundary at Wheatley is drawn tightly around the built edge of development. There are limited opportunities to redevelop existing land within the inset boundary and the removal of Green Belt would enable new development to take place at this village. The Green Belt Study found that the land immediately adjacent to the eastern built up edge of Wheatley has few essential characteristics of the Green Belt.”

10.6 As Wheatley is highly constrained by the Green Belt with almost all of the in-fill sites occupied already the only opportunities to provide housing to help meet bespoke local needs will be afforded by “change of use” of brownfield sites. From the Site Selection Process (see Appendix 2) the WHE22 site at Littleworth emerged as a good candidate site. The advantages of redeveloping this site are discussed in more detail in 11.1 and 11.2 below not only in respect of providing much needed housing but also in terms of rationalising and improving the whole neighbourhood at the centre of Littleworth. Change of use on this site however would mean closure of some small businesses and associated loss of employment (approximately 30 jobs). Such a consequence would be harmful and make Wheatley less sustainable but, working collaboratively with the district council, we have devised an enhancement plan that provides the housing to meet bespoke local needs, preserves employment and improves the overall layout of Wheatley. In preparing this enhancement plan the WNP Committee has been mindful of:-

- a. The findings in the Housing Needs Survey [7, figures 21 and 22] and therefore the WNP has aimed to achieve a balance between resisting pressure on greenfield sites yet still providing appropriate development.
- b. The comments contained in the OCC response [49] on the Pre-Submission Local Plan in February 2019 indicated that a total level of development corresponding to 500 houses would lead to capacity concerns regarding Primary School Education since expansion of the Primary School is not considered viable.
- c. A total development of 500 houses would have a significant impact on the provision of local health care and associated infrastructure. It would not be sufficient to justify a new health centre (or its equivalent) so again a balance has to be achieved between providing appropriate development and the constraints of health care provision.

### **Amending the Green Belt Boundary**

10.7 Neighbourhood plans are now able to make detailed amendments to the Green Belt boundaries where a need for changes has been established through strategic policies the NPPF [33] states that:-

“Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans”.

10.8 South Oxfordshire District Council is in the process of updating the Local Plan, and as a result have recently reviewed the Green Belt boundaries. The inset boundary at Wheatley is drawn tight around the built edge of development, and as such there are limited opportunities to redevelop existing land within the inset boundary. The removal of land from the Green Belt would enable new development to take place in Wheatley.

10.9 The Green Belt Study, which forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, found that the land immediately adjacent to the eastern built up edge of Wheatley has few essential characteristics of the Green Belt.

10.10 The mechanism to allow Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan to make detailed amendments to the Green Belt is provided in Policy STRAT6: Green Belt in the emerging Local Plan, which identifies that:-

“4. Detailed amendments to the Green Belt made by the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in compliance with requirements of the NPPF and the need identified within the Local Plan.”

10.11 Through working with the Local Planning Authority, the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Group have established that exceptional circumstances exist that permit the release of land from the Green Belt in Wheatley.

10.12 The exceptional circumstances for the release of land from the Green Belt at Wheatley are:-

- a. Wheatley is a Larger Village, which is an appropriate location for accommodating additional development
- b. There are limited alternatives for accommodating additional development at Wheatley other than through Green Belt release
- c. To meet bespoke housing needs of Wheatley
- d. To contribute towards offsetting the loss of employment at the OBU site
- e. To enable the relocation of existing employment uses to more suitable locations in Wheatley, thus creating better facilities and improving the interaction between different land uses. This will also enable vacated employment sites to be developed for housing.
- f. To enable development to take place to provide for a mix of uses to the benefit of existing and future residents
- g. To make efficient use of land that has few essential characteristics of the Green Belt

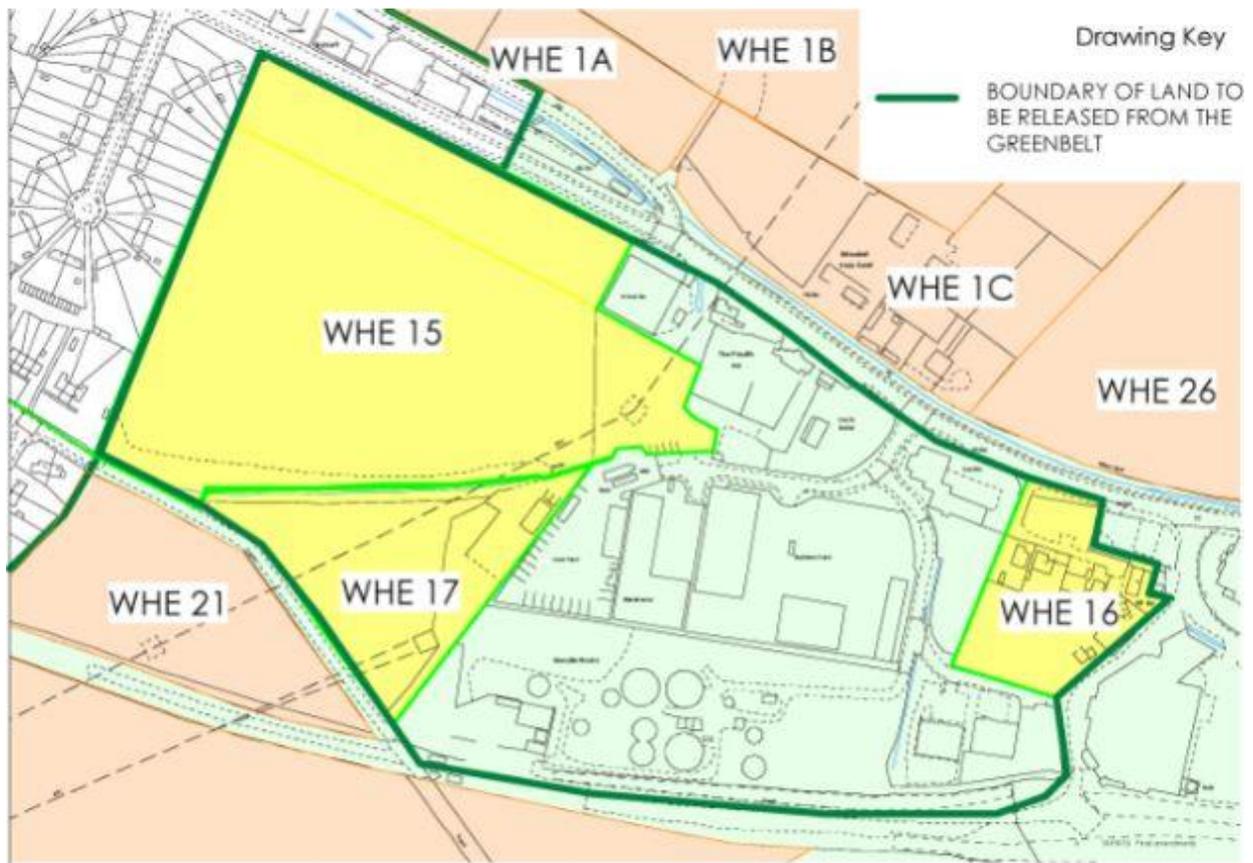


Figure 10.3 Amendment to Green Belt Boundary

### **POLICY GBBA1: Green Belt Boundary Amendments**

Detailed amendments to the Green Belt boundary are made to accommodate allocations at WHE15, WHE16 and WHE17. The boundary of the amended Green Belt is identified on Figure 10.3.

This policy only comes into effect once the need for changes to Green Belt boundaries in Wheatley has been established through strategic planning policies. This is expected to be achieved through the adoption of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] or any subsequent updates.

## **11. Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan: Policy for Village Enhancement Sites**

11.1 The Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] establishes the need for the release of Green Belt land in Wheatley and on its adoption will allow the WNP to support the coordinated development of WHE15, WHE16, WHE17 and WHE22 subject to the provisions set out in policy GBBA1. Such a Village Enhancement Plan will provide housing to meet bespoke local needs and at the same time improve connectivity through the village, rationalise light industry and provide opportunities for employment at the expense of only a small loss of Green Belt.

11.2 In considering potential land use in Wheatley and Holton the initial selection process was based on suitability, availability and achievability for development followed by a more rigorous process based on key strategy issues. The site selection process is described in detail in Appendix 2 and summarised in the spreadsheets contained therein. WHE15, WHE16, WHE17 and WHE22 emerged as the clear preferred candidates to provide the housing, employment and improved connectivity throughout the village.

11.3 Each of the four preferred candidate sites was given a development appraisal to establish the viability of developing these sites as proposed. The appraisal is described in Appendix 4. The findings from the appraisals indicated that the four sites were viable.

11.4 Each of these sites is identified in Figures 11.1 and 11.2 showing their locations with respect to each other and the green route. They will now be described further together with a specific site policy. The number of houses that would eventually be built on the sites has been shaped by a housing needs assessment (see Appendix 3).

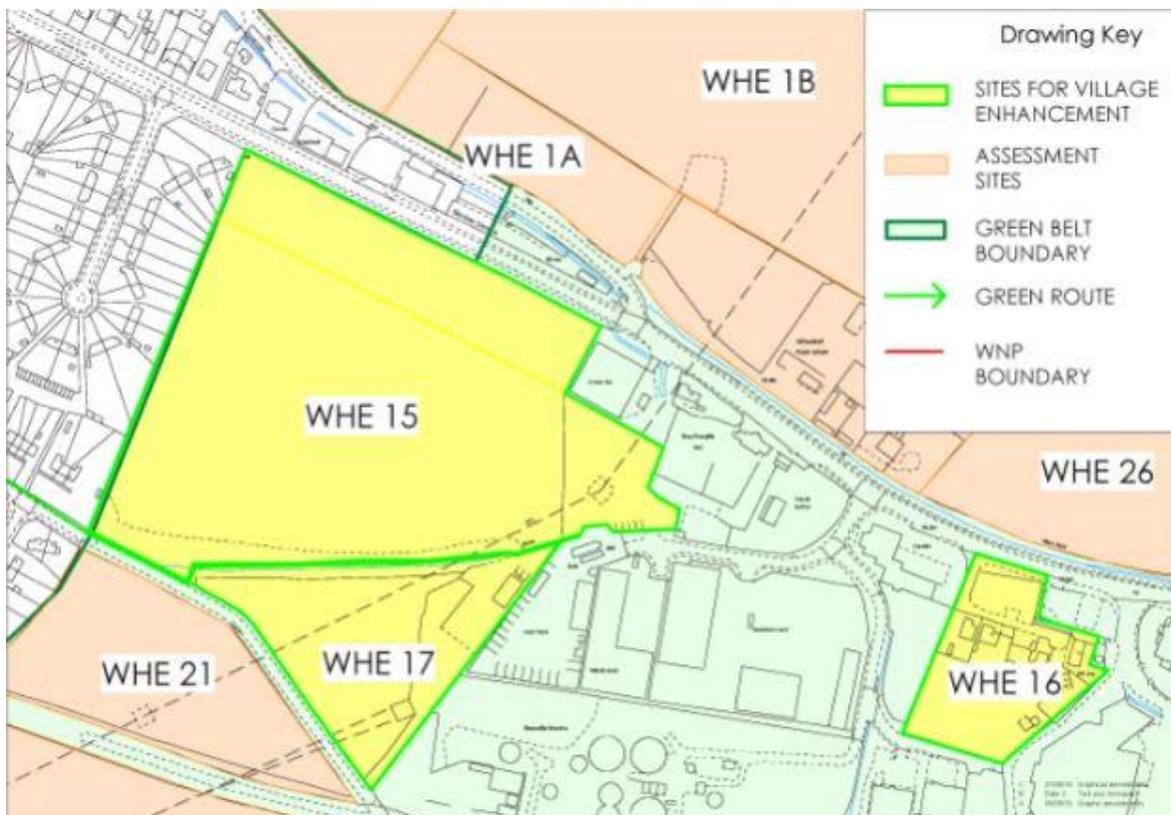


Figure 11.1 Location of WHE15, 16 and 17 and eastern part of the green route [25]



Figure 11.2 Location of WHE22 and western part of green route [25]

### WHE16, The Bungalows' Site

11.5 Wheatley has experienced substantial expansion since the early 1960's which has resulted in the creation of a site for light industry towards the eastern parish boundary. The idea for this site was to accommodate the relocation of badly sited industry in other parts of the village. Development of this light industrial area has had benefits in terms of employment and also in providing a location for the village sewage works. Planning however has not been well coordinated to the extent that a small development of 6 bungalows (#'s 148 – 158 London Road (even numbers)) has become isolated, not only within this area but also

disconnected from the main settlement, serviced only by an unadopted road and located next to the sewage works. The bungalows lie within WHE16 (Figure 11.3), a parcel of land that is 0.88HA and located almost completely within the light industrial area. At the front and rear of the bungalows lie two portions of land within the Green Belt (in total 0.35HA) but which would be suitable for release from the Green Belt thereby permitting a small development. The land to the rear of the bungalows is used daily for ad hoc parking for 30+ cars by the local businesses and any change of use for

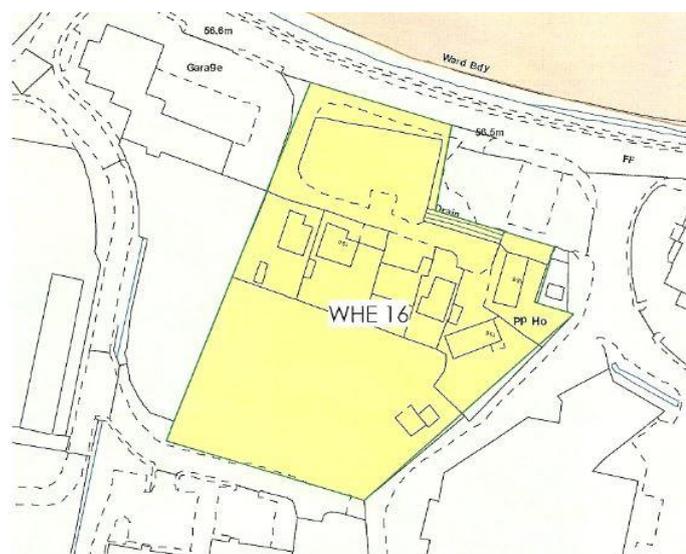


Figure 11.3 WHE16 [25]

this land would have to make provision for this car parking. All the car parking spaces on the access road to the industrial estate are used regularly and this road and connecting roads cannot accommodate any more parking. It would be desirable to reconcile the effects of historical planning decisions that would now appear to be inappropriate and improve the character of WHE16 together with providing connectivity to the rest of the village.

11.6 The portion of land lying at the front of the bungalows comprises an unadopted access road in poor condition, unmaintained scrubland and a drainage ditch. As such it would prove ideal to develop for improved access to the existing site with suitable visibility splays to the London Road, accommodate a bus stop lying to the east of the site and an improved green space in front of the bungalows.

11.7 The land lying to the rear of the bungalows can provide two types of land use residential and car parking. Access to the land lying adjacent to the rear of the bungalows can be provided via the space between two of the existing bungalows (#s150 and 152) thereby permitting development, to the south, for up to 10 two-storey dwellings (corresponding to approximately 45 houses/HA). The whole Bungalows' site is tightly constrained on three sides light industry and employment activities. The development would need careful design and planning to include appropriate separation from the bungalows together with green space and tree planting. The land that lies further south and adjacent to the industrial estate access road can be used to provide a two-storey car parking facility to satisfy the local need.

#### **POLICY SPES1: WHE16**

Subject to the provisions outlined in policy GBBA1, a development proposal for up to 10 dwellings, occupying approximately 0.28HA, would be supported provided:-

- a. Housing would be delivered in accordance with Policy H3
- b. Enhancement of the public realm within the site through design and landscape measures, public open space and/or financial contributions, subject to viability.
- c. Ensures that the development has no greater impact on the surrounding environment and where possible enhances the landscape and scenic beauty.
- d. Incorporates appropriate access from the London Road to ensure that the development is serviced adequately
- e. Ensures that the development does not have adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight
- f. Incorporates sufficient parking for the development in accordance with the adopted standards
- g. Delivery of public parking for adjacent businesses that currently use the site for ad hoc parking (30+ cars) occupying approximately 0.07HA.

#### **WHE22, The Littleworth Industrial Area**

11.8 The Littleworth Industrial Area is a brownfield site (Figure 11.4) located in the village of Littleworth which lies to the west of Wheatley linked by a narrow band of housing along the Littleworth Road. The road itself is winding and has a sharp bend on a bridge across the

disused railway line prior to entering the village from Wheatley. The road continues through the village and is awkward with tight bends. Wheatley Primary School is located along the road between Wheatley and Littleworth. The site comprises a small industrial/commercial area based on several buildings standing on plots with multiple ownerships. Many of the buildings are over 50 years old and are in need of major refurbishment and regeneration. The front of the site is used for parking, in a rather uncontrolled manner, by the business employees and also by the neighbouring residents most of whom have no access to a garage or alternative off-street parking. The rear of the site rises fairly steeply through well vegetated land up to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The location and condition of this brownfield site make it ideal for redevelopment for housing but not however at the expense of the loss of employment that such redevelopment would entail. The businesses are willing to relocate within Wheatley, subject to satisfactory commercial terms, thereby maintaining jobs and even offering the scope of growth and expansion on a more suitable location.

11.9 In any redevelopment of this site the proposal must comply with both the existing and emerging Local Plans which have policies that protect existing employment land, Policy E6 in the Local Plan 2011 [50], and Policy EMP6: Retention of Employment Land in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 2<sup>nd</sup> [10]. Accordingly the WNP has been developed such that:-

- a. The redevelopment of the site will be supported provided that suitable provision for the relocation of the businesses on site is made available in Wheatley; **or**
- b. The redevelopment of the site is supported provided the existing use is no longer economically viable, it is evidenced that there is no market interest in the site following a year of active and efficient marketing, and the change of use from employment use will not lower the employment capacity within the South Oxfordshire District.



Figure 11.4 Development of WHE22 restricted to be respect Green Belt and SSSI [25]

11.10 A change of land use from industrial to residential would end the need for many commercial vehicles to negotiate the narrow roads in Littleworth although more residents' cars would have to be accommodated. With good access to the Primary School, smaller, low cost dwellings appear appropriate, some of which could be terraced to reflect those on the adjoining main road and also target first time buyers particularly those with young families.

11.11 As part of a change of land use there would have to be recognition that at present the frontage of the site is regularly used, on an ad hoc basis, by residents of the adjacent terraced houses for parking. The constrained nature of the roads in Littleworth makes it imperative that provision is made to regularise and accommodate this need for parking to avoid on-street parking. The indicative layout shown in Figure 11.4 is solely for illustrative purposes and not intended to prejudice any future planning applications.

### **POLICY SPES2: WHE22**

The redevelopment of the site will be supported provided that:

1. Suitable provision for the relocation of the businesses on site is made available in Wheatley; or
2. It is agreed by the Council that the existing businesses on site are no longer viable, it is evidenced that there is no market interest in the site following one year of active and efficient marketing, and the change of use will not lower the employment capacity of the District.

Subject to satisfying either of the above, a development proposal for approximately 25 dwellings, occupying approximately 0.075HA, would be supported provided:-

- a. Enhancement of the public realm within the site through design and landscape measures, public open space and/or financial contributions, subject to viability.
- b. Ensures that the development has no greater impact on the surrounding environment than the existing built form, and that the development conserves and enhances the landscape and scenic beauty.
- c. Maximum height of the dwellings to be 2 storeys (terraced with possibility of rooms in the roof) in keeping with the surrounding developments (e.g. in Cooper's Close). The development should follow the natural contours of the site with feeder roads to each group of dwellings as progress is made into the site.
- d. Existing access retained and used as the main feeder road to the proposed dwellings.
- e. Incorporates appropriate access from Littleworth Roads to ensure that the development is serviced adequately.
- f. Retain an area adjoining the road as an open green space/village green and provide a footpath that links with the main footpath to Coopers Close.
- g. Retain an area of approximately 0.05HA adjoining the road as provision for resident parking for use by designated terrace houses and flats neighbouring the development on north side of Littleworth Road.
- h. There will be no adverse effects on the neighbouring SSSI.
- i. Any development in the eastern part of the site within the Green Belt must comply with national and local Green Belt policy'.

## WHE15 Miss Tomb's Field

11.12 This site (Figure 11.5) lies in the Green Belt at the eastern end of the village between the settlement boundary and the large-scale industrial buildings. It consists of a single agricultural field of irregular shape and is crossed by two power lines. The land is visually important, particularly when approaching the village from the east and is a desirable and much needed, albeit informal, green space within the parish boundary. As part of Parcel 09 in the South Oxfordshire Green Belt Study [51] it was considered for boundary changes. Care would have to be taken that any development did not have an adverse impact either on the houses at the settlement boundary or on the adjacent Green Belt.

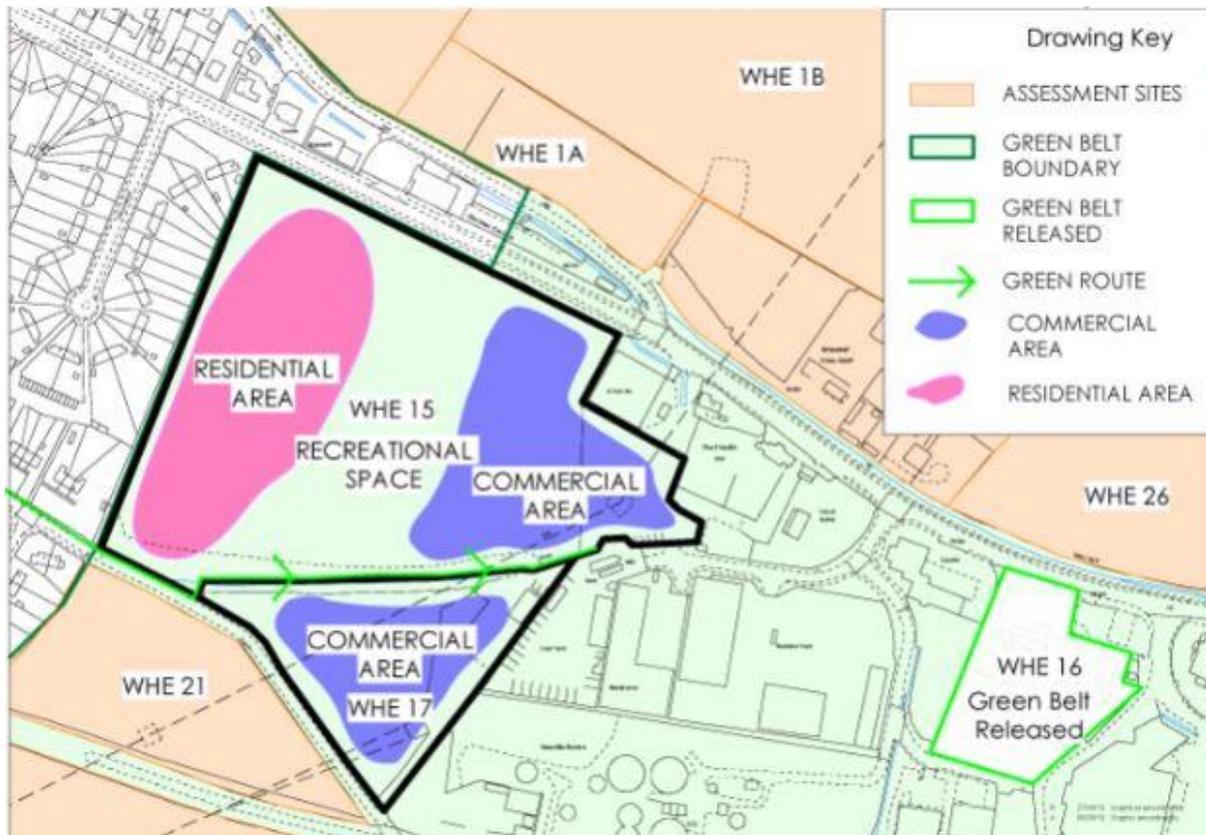


Figure 11.5 WHE15 and WHE17 are shown within the black boundary [25]

11.13 In view of the presence of the power lines and proximity to the Green Belt the site lends itself to mixed development viz:- commercial, residential, and recreational. The indicative layout shown in Figure 11.5 is solely for illustrative purposes and not intended to prejudice any future planning applications.

- a. Adjacent to the power lines a commercial space can be created to accommodate all the businesses that would need to be relocated from the Littleworth Industrial Estate (WHE22). In addition, this space could accommodate other local businesses (e.g. Cornfield Bakery, Wheatley Tyres) or new ventures. Road access to this part of the site would be through the feeder road that already services the existing industrial area.

- b. An appropriate residential development can be accommodated between the settlement boundary and the newly created commercial space. Vehicular access would be from the London Road to the north with no through vehicular access to Roman Road in the south. The development would be contoured to provide a “soft transition” from the urban development to the recreational space and Green Belt to the south.
- c. A formal recreational space can be provided in the southern portion of this site, between the development and the Green Belt. Figure 4.15 already shows the lack of recreational space within the settlement. This recreational space would also form part of a Green Route for cyclists and pedestrians through the village.

### **POLICY SPES3: WHE15**

Subject to the provisions outlined in policy GBBA1, a mixed development proposal would be supported provided:-

- a. An area of approximately 1.7HA available for appropriate commercial buildings to accommodate the businesses relocated from Littleworth Industrial Estate and for any other businesses or new ventures
- b. An area of approximately 1.7HA available for appropriate residential accommodation for 55 houses. Maximum height of the dwellings to be two- storey in keeping with style of the adjacent dwellings (eg in The Avenue).
- c. Housing development to conform to standards for locations close to pylons/power cables.
- d. Wildlife corridor (at least 20m wide) with winding path and planting to eastern and western boundaries of the housing development to ensure gap between the rear gardens of The Avenue, proposed new housing and commercial development
- e. With good Green Route access to the primary school
- f. Recreational space of approximately 1.7HA is allocated to merge with the adjacent Green Belt together with a games area adjacent to Elton Crescent
- g. Enhancement of the public realm within the site through design and landscape measures, public open space and/or financial contributions, subject to viability.
- h. Incorporates appropriate access only from London Road to ensure that the site is serviced adequately
- i. The Green Route should be surfaced appropriately for use by pedestrians and cyclists in all weathers, be designed to a suitable path width for both user groups and incorporate appropriate lighting

## **WHE17, Mobbs' Land**

11.14 This site (Figure 11.5) lies in the Green Belt at the eastern end of the village between the boundary of WHE15 and the large-scale industrial buildings. It consists of a single agricultural field of irregular shape and is crossed by two power lines. The land is owned by A.W. Mobbs (Building Supplies) whose buildings share a common boundary with WHE17. The site is land locked but access can be achieved via the eastern boundary shared with A.W. Mobbs. The owner of the land has made it clear that it will only be made available for commercial development. As part of Parcel 09 in the South Oxfordshire Green Belt Study [50] it was considered for boundary changes. Care would have to be taken that any development did not have an adverse impact on the Green Belt south of WHE17 and on the adjacent sewage works.

### **POLICY SPES4: WHE17**

Subject to the provisions outlined in policy GBBA1A development proposal for commercial use will be supported provided that:-

- a. It supports the delivery of the village enhancement plan by enabling the relocation of businesses moving from the Littleworth site.
- b. Appropriate commercial buildings can be available for any other businesses, subject to site constraints .
- c. Ensures that the development has no impact on the surrounding environment and, where appropriate, enhances the landscape and scenic beauty.
- d. Incorporates appropriate access from adjacent commercial site to ensure that the development is serviced adequately and well-integrated.
- e. Development proposals should be located in sustainable locations and should be designed to ensure that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on human health, the natural environment and/or the amenity of the neighbouring uses.

## **WHE15/16/17, Boundary Issues**

11.15 As can be seen on Figure 11.5, WHE15 and WHE17 each consist of a single agricultural field of irregular shape and crossed by two power lines. In order to facilitate appropriate development the land owners may wish to negotiate a rearrangement of the boundaries to achieve regularly shaped plots that are more easily developed. WHE15/16/17 are located near to a sewage works so care must be taken to liaise with Thames Water to consider whether an odour assessment is required.

## **Green Route**

11.16 The WNP would like to promote safe and easily accessible recreation for the residents of Wheatley and Holton, in particular the young and the elderly. Emphasis has already been placed on retaining sports facilities as part of the OBU redevelopment.

In paragraph 98 of the NPPF [33] it states:-

“Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”

The opportunity for a Green Route currently exists in Wheatley (see Figures 11.1 and 11.2) for pedestrians and cyclists stretching from Littleworth in the west to the ASDA supermarket in the east that would connect the whole village to retail, Primary school and recreational facilities. The path of travel would need to be upgraded with suitable all-weather surfacing, adequate provisions for width and lighting. As a result, this will support the health and well-being of residents by enhancing access to open space, facilitating improvements in levels of physical activity and enhancing social interaction between new and existing residents.

#### **POLICY SPGR: GREEN ROUTE**

Proposals for the creation of Green Route through Wheatley, as identified in Figures 11.1 and 11.2 will be supported. Any development which will have an adverse impact on, or will benefit from the proposed Green Route will be expected to contribute towards its provision, subject to need and viability.

#### **Realisation**

11.17 The Village Enhancement Plan has been developed by engagement with the community, businesses and SODC. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan has afforded the opportunity to rectify some of the consequences of planning decisions that historically were not as well formulated or regulated as those of today. The opportunity to rationalise the layout of industry in the village and also revitalise the Littleworth (WHE22) and the Bungalows’ (WHE15) sites is one that should not be missed. Release of WHE15 and WHE17 from the Green Belt has not to be considered as a stand-alone project but one that only can be undertaken in conjunction with redevelopment of the Littleworth (WHE22) site.

11.18 Fulfilment of the Village Enhancement Plan is dependent on a number of factors. The adoption of the policies relating to Wheatley and Holton in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] is crucial as is ensuring that subsequent overall development in Wheatley and Holton does not prejudice the ability to deliver Primary School Education. It is essential that the Village Enhancement Plan is seen as a mutually cooperative development between all of the selected sites complementing the nature and scope of the development proposed in policy STRAT14 of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10]

11.19 The benefit of the WNP including the Village Enhancement Plan is summarised in Figure 11.6 which shows the estimate of the number of homes that could be built in Wheatley and Holton as a result of the adoption of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034 Final Publication 2<sup>nd</sup> [10] and the WNP. The actual number of homes that can be built

will be limited by the capacity of Primary School Education available in Wheatley and Holton.

Site	Type of Development	Homes
Completions (31 March, 2019) and Commitments (1 April 2019)	Housing	131
SODC LP STRAT14	Housing	300 <sup>§</sup>
The Railway (WHE18a)	Housing (50+)	16
The Bungalows (WHE16)	Housing	10*
Littleworth (WHE22)	Housing	25*
Miss Tomb's Field (WHE15)	Housing and employment	55*
Mobbs' Land (WHE17)	Employment	0
<b>Total Homes</b>		<b>537</b>

\*These are estimates, final numbers can only be established following planning application

§ Subject to planning permission

Figure 11.6 Estimate of increase in number of homes

## 12 Delivery and Monitoring

12.1 When completed, the WNP policies will form part of the development plan for the area and will thus help to determine planning applications. The Wheatley and Holton Parish Councils will monitor the impact of the policies of the WNP

12.2 The following items have been identified from the Community Opinion Survey [7] to help guide any spending by Wheatley and Holton Parish Councils of funds resulting from Section 106 Agreement [41] and/or Community Infrastructure Levy [42] payments.

- Transport management
- Parking and appropriate parking management
- Community hall/multi-service centres (including a youth centre component), including the renewal and enhancement of existing community facilities
- Provision of public toilets
- Indoor and outdoor sports facilities, including football fields and tennis courts
- Junior, mini and adult playing pitches
- Children's play areas
- Wheatley village centre action plan priorities
- New and replacement or enhanced green infrastructure including parks and gardens, accessible natural and semi-natural green space, allotments and amenity green space
- Improved green spaces with public access

Twelve (12) month review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WNP will be reviewed by the Wheatley Parish Council and representatives of the WNP Committee one (1) year after its adoption following the community referendum</li> <li>• The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the WNP objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions</li> </ul>
Five (5) year review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WNP will be reviewed every five (5) years thereafter and led by Wheatley Parish Council</li> <li>• The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the WNP objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions</li> </ul>
End of Plan review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two (2) years prior to the expiry of the WNP, a full review will be taken to gauge the success of the Plan in meeting its objectives and to put in place a succession Plan.</li> </ul>

Figure 12.1 Monitoring the WNP

12.3 A monitoring plan described in Figure 12.1 will be adopted by Wheatley Parish Council.

12.4 Evidence and suggestions gathered by WNP Committee related to traffic and infrastructure will be collated and presented to WPC for further consideration.

### 13 Glossary

**Affordable housing:** Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions:
  - i. the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable);
  - ii. the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and
  - iii. it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home

should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):** Statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, AONB represents the nation's finest landscapes. AONBs are designated by Natural England.

**Brownfield site:** Previously developed land, which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

**Built form:** A term used in urban planning to describe a site in terms of the man-made building aspects including the man-made spaces between the buildings

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** CIL regulations introduce a levy whereby developer payments contribute to the provision of infrastructure or refurbishment of existing provision to support the additional burden that new development makes on both local and strategic infrastructure.

[Developer Payments - Community Infrastructure Levy, s106 agreements and Viability, \(April 2014\).](#)

**Conservation Area:** An area designated by the District Council under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990 [52]) as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are additional controls over demolition, minor developments and the felling of trees. The emphasis will be on careful control, positive management of change and positive enhancement, to enable the area to remain alive and prosperous, but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with the area's special architectural or

historic interest. Designation as a Conservation Area puts an onus on prospective developers to produce a very high standard of design which respects or enhances the particular qualities of the area in question.

**Flood zones:**

- Zone 1 (low probability) comprises land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<1%).
- Zone 2 (medium probability) comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% - 0.1%).
- Zone 3a (high probability) comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%).
- Zone 3b (the functional floodplain) comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

**Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green spaces, urban and rural, that is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental benefits for the local communities.

**Greenfield site:** Land which is farmland, which has not previously been developed.

**Infill site:** 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.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**OFSTED:** A non-ministerial department, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills has the responsibility for inspection and regulation of services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages.

**OCC:** Oxfordshire County Council

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

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/106>

**Sequential Test (Flooding):** The Sequential Test ensures that a sequential approach is followed to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. The aim is to steer new development to Flood Zone 1 (areas with a low probability of river or sea flooding). Where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 1, local planning authorities may consider available sites within Flood Zone 2 (areas with a medium probability of river or sea flooding).

**Sequential Test (Retail):** The Sequential Test ensures that a sequential approach is followed to steer new development to areas in the most sustainable location. This requires that applications for main village centre uses (e.g. shops) should be located in village centres. If that is not possible, then they should be located in edge-of-centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available should out-of-centre sites be considered.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** A Site of Special Scientific Interest in Great Britain or an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) in the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland is a conservation designation denoting a protected area in the United Kingdom and Isle of Man.

**SODC:** South Oxfordshire District Council

**SHLAA:** The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a technical study to inform future planning policy development. It also assists in monitoring whether there is an adequate supply of deliverable housing land.

**SHELAA:** The Strategic Housing and Economic Land availability Assessment is a technical document which provides information on sites; submitted by Landowners and Agents, for potential housing, economic development, Gypsy and Travelling Show-people, Self-Build housing etc. in relation to their suitability, availability and achievability.

**Sustainable development:** Sustainable development balances social, economic and environmental needs.

**Tree Preservation Order (TPO):** A mechanism for securing the preservation of single or groups of trees of acknowledged amenity value. A tree subject to a tree preservation order may not normally be topped, lopped or felled without the consent of the local planning authority.

**Windfall Site:** Any site that has not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process.

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