



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

2020-2035

Baseline Report

Submission Version

December 2021



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Topic Paper 1

Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change

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1. Disclaimer

- 1.1. This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and to support the writing of corresponding Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is intended to provide an insight into how the plan has climate and environmental issues as a golden thread throughout the document.
- 1.2. This document is a non-exhaustive summary based on information, guidance and data reasonably available at the time of writing. As such, some or all of it may be superseded or become obsolete at a later date.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this topic paper is to demonstrate how the Plan has been developed and evidenced with a view to climate and environmental issues.
- 2.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) has published a series of background papers as part of this Baseline Report to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These cover a range of issues and provide more technical or detailed information than is contained in the Plan itself.
- 2.3. The background papers are:
 - Paper 1 – Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change
 - Paper 2 - Housing
 - Paper 3 - Retail, Town Centre and Economy
 - Paper 4 - Transport
 - Paper 5 - Infrastructure
- 2.4. The Baseline Report can be downloaded from the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are preparing a new Neighbourhood Plan. This will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Henley and Harpsden covering the period 2020 to 2035. Once 'made' it will replace the existing Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHNP) which came into force in April 2016.
- 3.2. The review is necessary due to the requirements set out in the new South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2020. This includes delivery of new homes and employment land, meeting affordable housing needs and addressing environmental issues such as air quality. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and able to continue strongly influencing planning decisions.
- 3.3. Planning policy and decision-making can make a significant contribution to reducing these levels of carbon emissions, through its influence over spatial planning, the energy performance and design of new development, transport and green infrastructure. However, many other interventions will be required beyond the remit of planning to achieve the national target in Henley and Harpsden. The Plan will also include wider strategies to help address key issues within the area which might not fall under planning. We have made sure to clearly differentiate between non-planning priorities and our planning policies.

- 3.4. In 2019, Henley Town Council declared a Climate Emergency. Henley Town Council's Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group (CE2030WG) has been formed to develop actions to reduce the Town's carbon emissions. The group are already undertaking initiatives with the objective of having project plans in place by 2030 to achieve net zero carbon emissions, many of which will already be operative before then.
- 3.5. The Plan must be in general conformity with the planning documents sitting above it in the planning hierarchy. For Henley and Harpsden, that is the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. Throughout the document, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy, the relevant policies from this plan are referenced.
- 3.6. The Baseline Report will mirror the sections of the NP to enable easy read-across between each policy and the evidence underpinning it. Hence, as with the NP, each theme has its own chapter, subdivided into the objectives, supporting text and finally the policies themselves.
- 3.7. Evidence has been compiled from a number of sources:
- Extensive engagement with the community and local stakeholders including through focus groups, leaflet drops, local surveys and online representations.
 - Compilation of statistics and facts from existing documents and reports relating to Henley and Harpsden.
- 3.8. The Neighbourhood Plan Group received support from consultants AECOM on the effectiveness of the draft environment policies. [The Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) provided a comprehensive review of 15 policies in total and the evidence upon which the policy is based. It sought to verify that:
- Evidence has been assembled from robust sources;
 - Stakeholder-derived evidence has been considered in an inclusive way;
 - Relevant third-party comments/issues have been addressed;
 - Reasonable conclusions have been drawn from that evidence;
 - All useful evidence available has been referenced (including new evidence, such as that which supports the new Local Plan and the Climate Emergency declaration);
 - There are no evidence gaps that need to be filled, including in light of any recent changes;
 - The draft policy is clearly written, distinct from and in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan; and that
 - The policy meets the Basic Conditions.
- 3.9. AECOM provided a number of recommendations on the strengthening or improvement of the draft policies and the evidence base. The policies were then redrafted in line with the recommendations within their report and additional evidence was produced.
- 3.10. Discussions also took place with OCC and SODC when drafting the policies to ensure conformity with Local Policy and ensure that the policies were not a repeat of the policies within the Local Plan.

4. Vision & Objectives

4.1. The vision statement for the revised Plan embeds a commitment to environmental sustainability (tackling climate change) and states that: **“In 20 years’ time, Henley on Thames and the surrounding village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area.”**

4.2. The revised Neighbourhood Plan includes the following environmental objectives:

- EO1 – To prioritise the protection and enhancement of the following features:
 - The physical townscape and the river including all National Trails and local footpaths, working with appropriate groups such as the Chiltern Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association and footpath working groups.
 - Key views
 - AONB and Harpsden Valley
 - Existing green spaces
- EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors. Public green spaces should also be supported by cycling and walking connectivity in line with transport objectives TO1 and TO2.
- EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.
- EO4 – To expect all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment.
- EO5 – To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials.
- EO6 – To support community energy projects.
- EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.
- EO8 – To seek to boost Air Quality.
- EO9 - Encourage the provision of Electric charging points in new development.

5. Planning Context

Legislative Background

- 5.1. The Government in 2018 launched a 25 year Environmental Plan¹ which sets out how it will improve the environment over a generation by creating richer habitats for wildlife, improving air and water quality and curbing the scourge of plastic in the world's oceans.
- 5.2. The Climate Change Act 2008² (amended in June 2019) commits the UK to reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. Progress against the 2050 target is measured by legally binding carbon budgets, which cap the amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted by the UK over a five-year period (measured by the Committee on Climate Change).
- 5.3. Once the Environmental Bill comes into place, this will go some way to ensure that the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and its Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2050 goal can be achieved. The bill includes numerous measures including: environmental governance; the clean air strategy; biodiversity net gain and trees.

Building Regulations

- 5.4. The Building Regulations Part L set the energy efficiency standards for residential buildings. They are divided into part L1A, which covers new build, and part L1B, which covers renovations to existing buildings.
- 5.5. The Future Homes Standard anticipated to replace Building Regulations L and F in 2025 will change building regulations so that from 2025 the Future Homes Standard will deliver homes that are zero-carbon ready. Homes built under the Future Homes Standard should produce 75-80% less carbon emissions compared with current levels and become net zero as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise. The intention is that homes built to the Future Homes Standard will not need to be retrofitted with any additional measures or technology to become net zero.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.6. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the key national planning priorities for England. The NPPF, revised in February 2021³, is accompanied by online Planning Practice Guidance.
- 5.7. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states that, at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (paragraph 7).

¹ GOV.UK. 2021. 25 Year Environment Plan. [online] Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>> [Accessed 12 May 2021].

² Legislation.gov.uk. 2021. Climate Change Act 2008. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>>

³ GOV.UK 2021. NPPF [online] Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

5.8. Paragraph 8 adds that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

5.9. Section 14 specifically addresses meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. It states that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (paragraph 152).

5.10. Paragraph 153 and footnote 53 further requires that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.

5.11. Paragraph 154 requires new development to be planned for in ways that:

- a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and
- b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government’s policy for national technical standards.

- 5.12. Paragraph 155 goes on to state that to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:
- i. provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
 - ii. consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
 - iii. identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for collocating potential heat customers and suppliers.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 5.13. The following parts of the ‘Climate change’ section of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) also highlights how important the issue is in planning, noting:

“Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. To be found sound, Local Plans will need to reflect this principle and enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. These include the requirements for local authorities to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change in line with the provisions and objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008, and co-operate to deliver strategic priorities which include climate change. In addition to the statutory requirement to take the Framework into account in the preparation of Local Plans, there is a statutory duty on local planning authorities to include policies in their Local Plan designed to tackle climate change and its impacts. This complements the sustainable development duty on plan-makers and the expectation that neighbourhood plans will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that responding to climate change is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.”⁴

- 5.14. The PPG provides clear guidance on the government’s national standards for a building’s sustainability and for zero carbon buildings. It states that:

“The National Planning Policy Framework expects local planning authorities when setting any local requirement for a building’s sustainability to do so in a way consistent with the government’s zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards. Local requirements should form part of a Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners, and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability. In this respect, planning authorities will need to take account of government decisions on the Housing Standards Review when considering a local requirement relating to new homes.

If considering policies on local requirements for the sustainability of other buildings, local planning authorities will wish to consider if there are nationally described standards and the impact on viability of development.”⁵

⁴ (NPPG Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 6-001-20140306

⁵ NPPG Paragraph 009 021. NeighReference ID: 6-009-20150327

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017⁶

- 5.15. Despite the over-arching legislation described in Chapter 2 there is in fact no explicit requirement or even encouragement from government for neighbourhood plans (as opposed to local plans made by the local authority) to address climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the exception of renewable energy.
- 5.16. The Government’s planning guidance (para 040) states that: “there is no ‘tick box’ list of evidence required for neighbourhood planning. Proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies in the draft neighbourhood plan.”
- 5.17. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the Local Plan and National Policy and meet the Basic Conditions:
- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan.
 - That the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - That the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
 - That the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- 5.18. The intention of our policies is not to simply duplicate planning policies that are already within the council’s local plan policy but will focus on what is missing, what could be strengthened and respond to local considerations.

Local Context

The South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Local Plan 2035⁷

- 5.19. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) was adopted in December 2020. It provides an overview of planning policy for South Oxfordshire, setting out how it should evolve and grow during the plan period (2011-2035). The Plan identifies locations for housing, retail and employment land as well as the infrastructure required to support this growth. Together with the adopted Neighbourhood Plans, the Local Plan forms the statutory development framework against which planning applications are determined.
- 5.20. The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan includes a number of relevant policies. ENV policies cover environmental topics and include a number of policies particularly relevant to climate change, including ENV1 (Landscape and Countryside), ENV2 (Biodiversity - Designated sites, priority habitats and species), ENV3 (Biodiversity), ENV4 (Watercourses), ENV5 (Green Infrastructure in New Developments), ENV11 (Pollution – Impact from existing

⁶ Legislation.gov.uk. Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted>>.

⁷ SouthOxon.gov.uk 2020 South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2020 [online] Available at: www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/02/SODC-LP2035-Publication-Feb-2021

and/ or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment- (Potential receptors of Pollution) and ENV12 (Pollution – Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity - Potential Sources of Pollution).

- 5.21. Environmental Protection policies are prefixed EP. Policy EP1 covers air quality, EP3 discusses waste collection and recycling, and EP4 covers Flood Risk.
- 5.22. DES policies cover design. DES1 (Delivering High Quality Development) promotes design that is sustainable and resilient to climate change and identifies key design characteristics which help to respond to climate change. The policy seeks to integrate requirements to minimise energy consumption and mitigate water run-off and flood risks as components of all development.
- 5.23. These requirements are further expanded upon by policies DES8, DES9 and EP4. DES4 (Masterplans for Allocated Sites and Major Development) requires masterplans to demonstrate how active travel and public transport opportunities have been maximised. DES7 (Efficient Use of Resources) guides the efficient use of resources including land (in accordance with Policy STRAT5), the minimisation of waste during construction and the life cycle of the building, maximising passive solar, lighting, natural ventilation water efficiency and the re-use of materials. It also covers air and water quality measures, avoidance of development of areas of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land and reuse of previously developed land and buildings.
- 5.24. DES8 (Promoting Sustainable Design) requires all new development to minimise carbon and energy impacts through its design and layout taking into consideration resilience to climate change and longevity of the proposal. The policy also supports elements of Policy DES1 and DES7. DES9 (Renewable Energy) encourages the incorporation of renewable and low carbon energy approaches within development.
- 5.25. Finally, DES10 (Carbon Reduction) requires development to incorporate carbon emission reductions either through on-site renewable energy, other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. It also requires an energy statement to be submitted.
- 5.26. There is no single policy in SOLP which is primarily dedicated to developer contributions. Planning obligations are, however, mentioned in policies INF1 (Infrastructure Provision) – in relation to infrastructure and services, required as a consequence of development, and provision for their maintenance; ENV3 (Biodiversity) in relation to compensation for unavoidable loss of biodiversity; EP1 (Air Quality) in relation to offsetting unavoidable air quality impacts remaining after mitigation; and finally H10 (Exception Sites and Entry Level Housing), which states that planning obligations will be used to ensure that certain conditions are met on small-scale affordable housing schemes outside of defined settlements.

Environmental Policies for The Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

5.27. The application of this collective suite of policies can contribute towards the achievement of the environmental objectives in the Neighbourhood Plan; EO1 – To prioritise the protection and enhancement of the following features : •the physical townscape and the river including all National Trails and local footpaths, working with appropriate groups such as the Chiltern Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association and footpath working groups. •Key views •AONB and Harpsden Valley •Existing green spaces. EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors. Public green spaces should also be supported by cycling and walking connectivity in line with transport objectives TO1 and TO2. EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity. EO4 – To expect all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment. EO5 –To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials. EO6 – To support community energy projects. EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency. EO8 – To seek to boost Air Quality. EO9 - Encourage the provision of Electric charging points in new development.

Policy ENV1: Air Quality

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

5.28. As recognised in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP), air quality is an issue within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, Policy HEN1 of the Local Plan expects the Neighbourhood Plan to address air quality issues. The purpose of this policy is to seek to minimise the impacts of development on air quality.

5.29. This policy has been drafted in line with recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) and has been edited to remove overlaps with the existing provisions of the Local Plan policies. The Air Quality Officer at SODC has reviewed this policy and the comments provided have been used to finalise the policy wording. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by evidence as listed below.

- 5.30. The public raised the issue of air quality in the town within the [Neighbourhood Plan Survey](#). 84% of the respondents to the Survey undertaken in 2020/21 were concerned with air pollution, with the main areas of concern Reading Road, Bell Street and Duke Street. When asked about issues in respect of roads in the area, 55% of respondents were concerned over air pollution and vibration from Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- 5.31. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side.
- 5.32. The draft Air Quality Action Plan for South Oxfordshire⁸ (published as final in 2014, as well as a Low Emission Strategy⁹ in 2015), set out specific measures for Henley, one of these included the introduction of an Intelligent Traffic System. This was an Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) initiative designed to smooth the traffic flow within Henley and reduce queuing times. OCC predicted this would have a positive effect on air quality; however the NO2 concentrations continued to rise.

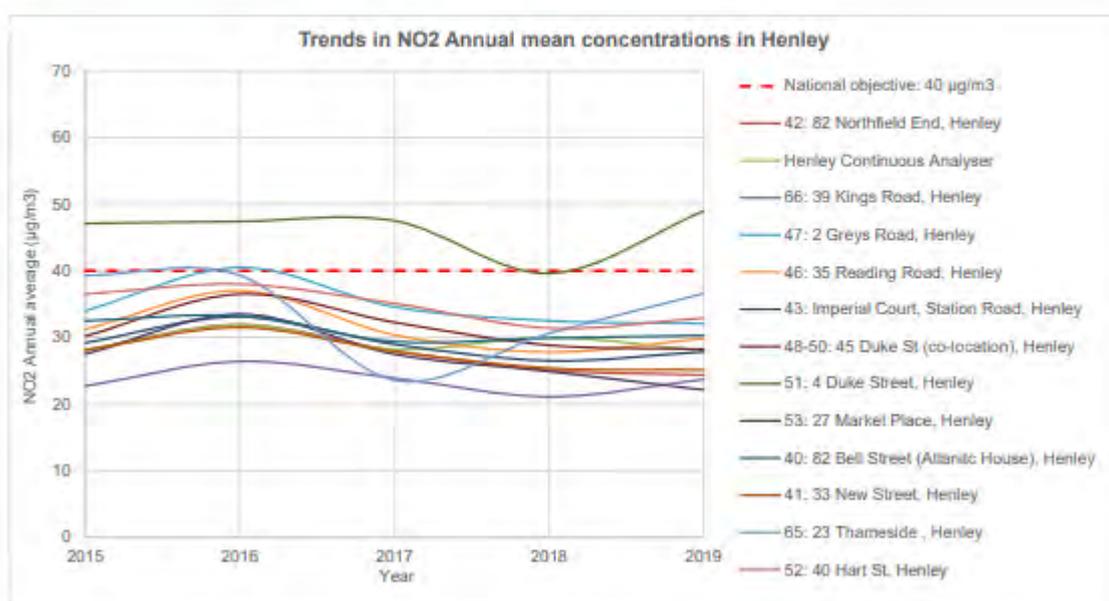


Figure 1: Trends in NO2 Annual mean concentrations in Henley as recorded in SODC 2020 Annual Status Report. https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/documents/SODC_2020_AS_R_PDF.pdf

⁸ South Oxfordshire District Council (2014) Air Quality Action Plan 2014 [online] available: https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/01/air_quality_action_plan.pdf

⁹ South Oxfordshire District Council (2015) A Low Emission Strategy for South Oxfordshire [online] available: http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/s7214/SODC%20LES_2015_V3_Final%20edited%20.pdf

- 5.33. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxides emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. The LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report¹⁰ states that there was an exceedance recorded in Henley AQMA located at 4 Duke Street, which recorded an annual average of 49 µg NO₂/m³ which exceeds the EU and UK threshold of 40 micrograms/cubic metres. The five-year trend of NO₂ levels in the district and within Henley AQMA continues to be a decreasing one, but some of the monitoring sites in Henley have registered higher concentrations than in 2018.
- 5.34. The Town Council are conducting additional air quality testing, including of particulates in Greys Road and nitrogen dioxide in the Bell Street area. The nitrogen dioxide monitoring follows the DEFRA calendar and Technical Guidance. The Council decided to extend the nitrogen dioxide measuring in June 2021 because it was concerned about some high results, and to enable longer term averages to be calculated.
- 5.35. NO and NO₂ measurements for Henley are shown for the past year during Covid-19 lockdown restrictions at <https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/location/henley/period/year/>
- 5.36. It is considered that the following locations are sensitive locations for air quality in Henley:
- AQMA
 - Crew Clothing, 3 Bell Street (highest levels in 3 December onwards diffusion tube measurements of nitrogen dioxide)
 - Schools and nurseries
 - Henley is a historic town with narrow pavements. It places pedestrians in closer proximity to vehicle exhausts than wider walkways allow.
- 5.37. One of the key issues with air quality is linked to the volumes of through traffic and particularly of HGVs. This is a particular problem within Henley, where the existing road network is already well used, and HGVs create and add to problems such as congestion, road safety, harm to the environment and quality of life in the area. Complaints made by the local community include, but are not limited to, vibration and impact on historic buildings, intrusion, noise and air pollution from HGVs travelling through the Town.
- 5.38. A proposal to include a 7.5 tonne weight limit on the bridge was made by the Transport Strategy Group (TSG) of Henley Town Council. This group was convened as a result of the Transport Study proposed in the first Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.39. A group of residents formed to lobby for a 7.5 Tonne Environmental Weight limit Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the town and surrounding parishes. The application for this TRO will focus on vibration damage to historic buildings, danger to pedestrians on narrow pavements, and Air pollution. The support is evidenced through a petition which has over 2000 signatures.
- 5.40. There was an OCC Cabinet ¹¹ motion approved on 7th April 2021 to undertake the necessary studies for an environmental weight restriction for Henley: “RESOLVED: (40 votes for, 3 votes against and 15 abstentions) The County Council will consider environmental weight restrictions ... and would not fall on the OCC.”

¹⁰ South Oxfordshire District Council (2020) Air Quality Annual Status Report [online] available: https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/documents/SODC_2020_ASR_PDF.pdf

¹¹ Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Agenda and Minutes for meeting held 7 April 2021 [online] available: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=116&MIId=6613>

- 5.41. The Town Council will support:
- work with the Local Highway Authority to put a Traffic Regulation Order in place within the Plan Period. This order will cover through traffic only and will permit HGV traffic to local businesses.
 - Work with local businesses to manage HGV traffic related to their operations.
 - Keep a watching brief on the proposal for an alternative bridge across the Thames, working with SODC and OCC to minimise the impact on the Neighbourhood Plan area.
 - Put in place monitoring to ensure that the objectives of this is policy are being met.
- 5.42. OCC are currently reviewing the Local Transport Connectivity Plan¹² (LTCP) as part of which they have produced a number of baseline papers and a report. A specific part of the consultation is about Freight Strategy. This discusses freight routes and associated issues.
- 5.43. A low emission zone feasibility study (undertaken in 2015) sets out key actions to reduce air pollution.¹³

Figure 3: The five core LES themes



¹² Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Local Transport Connectivity Plan [online] available: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/policy-and-overall-strategy>

¹³ Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Low Emission Zone Feasibility Study [online] available: http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/s7214/SODC%20LES_2015_V3_Final%20edited%202.pdf

5.44. The Henley Transport Study identifies issues and opportunities when it comes to air Quality (PG 101) which are still relevant to Henley today. The opportunities include;



5.45. The [Henley and Harpsden Transport Study Report Addendum](#) (September 2021) has been produced to provide an update on the transport conditions in Henley from the 2015 study to the present day in relation to:

1. Air Quality and Health
2. Public Transport Provision
3. Road Safety and Accident Data
4. Traffic Count Data

5.46. The Addendum states that there have been significant changes in transport policy since 2015, but the objectives of the Henley and Harpsden Transport Study (2015) remain aligned and will contribute to delivering a carbon neutral district by 2030.

5.47. The 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) South Oxfordshire District Council set out measures which have been put in place to improve the air quality within the district. Additional measures include:

- Providing personalised travel planning
- School and workplace travel planning
- Bus route improvements
- Promoting low emission public transport
- Car and lift sharing schemes
- Car clubs

5.48. A Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group was established by the Town Council in 2019 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency. A number of projects have been undertaken to improve air quality including:

- Planting – installed planters with vegetation that absorbs roadside pollution around the town centre
- Henley Car Club – in April 2021 the Council launched a car club with Co-wheels. The first two vehicles are low emitting cars (Toyota Yaris hybrid), and, if the car club expands, the Council has expressed the wish that future vehicles will be electric. The first vehicle is parked in Upper Market place and the second is on Reading Road between Perpetual Park Drive and Fairview Estate. As well as reducing air pollution the car club also aims to reduce parking congestion, lower embedded carbon dioxide by replacing several privately owned cars with a single shared vehicle and save residents money on the costs of owning and running a car.

- No-idling, closed door – the Council has supported ‘Clean Air for Henley’ campaigns on no-idling and closed doors (for roadside shops to protect their staff and customers from air pollution)
- Walking – the Council has supported and is continuing with several projects to encourage walking rather than driving.
 - Slow Ways – the Council has endorsed this project to connect town and villages with pedestrian routes
 - TSG has supported a project to put up walking signs giving the time it take to walk between popular locations in and around Henley, and this is being coordinated with Walkers are Welcome. Locations have been proposed and precise signage locations are being investigated
- Cycling
 - the Council offers its staff a cycle to work scheme
 - HTC identified locations for cycle racks which have been installed by OCC at locations around the town centre
 - TSG has agreed to investigate a web-based cycle map in and around Henley
- [SODC Turn it Off](#) campaign

5.49. As well as having direct effects on public health, habitats and biodiversity, these pollutants can combine in the atmosphere to form ozone, a harmful air pollutant (and potent greenhouse gas) which can be transported great distances by weather systems. Odour and dust can also be a planning concern, for example, because of the effect on local amenity.

Policy ENV1: Air Quality

All development proposals should include measures to minimise air pollution at the design stage and incorporate best practice in the design, construction and operation of the development. In particular:

- a) Such development must aim to demonstrate that it is ‘air quality neutral ’ (i.e. no worse than existing or the existing benchmark) and where possible should contribute to the reduction of concentrations of regulated air pollutants below WHO guidelines in the JHHNP Area by 2022 and thereafter.
- b) All replacement development should aim to be less polluting than existing development that it will replace.

Policy ENV2: Biodiversity

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors.

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

5.50. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#). The policy now includes more Neighbourhood level specific evidence as listed below and projects in the supporting text.

5.51. The green spaces and biodiversity assets in Henley and Harpsden are very important in making it such a high-quality place. This was a view reinforced by the local community in the [survey](#) where respondents wanted to maximize green space habitat/ biodiversity and provide connections between them.

5.52. This policy seeks to maintain and enhance the natural environment and its intrinsic ecological value. The application of policies ENV2, 3 and 4 can contribute to objective E03: To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

5.53. Although there are no European protected sites for biodiversity located within the Neighbourhood Plan area. There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that fall within the Neighbourhood Plan area, as detailed below:

- Harpsden Wood SSSI is located in the south of the Neighbourhood Plan area. It was notified in November 1990 and is approximately 25.83 ha in size. Based on the most recent condition assessment, 100% of the SSSI is classified as 'Favourable'¹⁴
- Highlands Farm Pit SSSI is located in the western part of the Neighbourhood Plan area. It was notified in 1986 and is approximately 0.6 ha in size. Based on the most recent condition assessment, 100% of the SSSI is classified as 'Favourable'¹⁵
- Lambridge Wood SSSI is located partially within the northernmost section of the Neighbourhood Plan area. It was notified in March 1984 and is approximately 73.8 hectares (ha) in size. Based on the most recent condition assessment, 57.03% of the SSSI is classified as 'Favourable' and 42.97% of the SSSI is classified as 'Unfavourable – Recovering'.¹⁶

¹⁴ Natural England (no date) Harpsden Wood SSSI [online] available:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1000307.pdf>

¹⁵ Natural England (no date) Highlands Farm Pit SSSI [online] available:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1002576.pdf>

¹⁶ Natural England (no date) Lambridge Wood SSSI [online] available:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1002730.pdf>

5.54. SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) are a GIS tool/ dataset which maps zones around each SSSI according to the sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location, including residential, rural-residential and rural non-residential. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. In this context, the northern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area overlaps with SSSI IRZs for development types which are likely to be taken forward through the Neighbourhood Plan (i.e. residential and rural residential development types). However, it is useful to note that the scale of the development proposals likely to come forward through the Neighbourhood Plan are less likely to meet or exceed the SSSI IRZ thresholds.

5.55. Whilst there are no formally designated local biodiversity sites, there are a number of areas which are recognised for their contribution to the local ecological network. Mill Meadows is former farmland which regularly floods in winter and the water bring with them silt and aquatic vegetation. The Henley Wildlife Group has a licence agreement with the Council to manage part of it as a wetland habitat. The wildlife area includes Cold Bath Stream which feeds into the River Thames, several specially created ponds, areas of grassland, including strips of long grass which are good for invertebrates and wooded sections including specimen trees.

5.56. Further (non-designated) areas recognised for their biodiversity values include:

- **Valley Road Chalk Bank-** a man-made woodland¹⁷ with tree-lined footpaths managed by the Greener Henley community group. Bird species such as the red kite have been spotted in the area.
- **Gillotts Field-** an open grassy area that provides sanctuary to a range of wildflowers including orange hawkweed (hound's tongue, musk mallow, and fox and cubs species), and bee and pyramidal orchids¹⁸.
- **Holy Trinity Churchyard-** an churchyard supporting over 200 species¹⁹ of plants, including grassland and wild flowers (in summer) which provide habitats for birds, frogs, grass snakes, butterflies and moths.
- **Tilebarn Wood-** a semi-natural woodland area managed by the members of Greener Henley community group and the Sue Ryder charity, home to native oak trees.

5.57. There are also a range of Biodiversity Action Plan Priority (BAP) Habitats within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan area, including, but not limited to:

- Lowland calcareous grassland;
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh;
- Lowland fens;
- Deciduous woodland; and
- Woodpasture and parkland.

¹⁷ The Henley Standard (2018) Hidden Henley [online] available:

<https://www.henleystandard.co.uk/news/hidden-henley/131855/hidden-henley.html>

¹⁸ The Henley Wildlife Group (2018) Report for the Annual Town Meeting 5th April 2018.

¹⁹ Holy Trinity Church (2020) What is happening in Trinity Churchyard? [online] available:

<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=2ahUKewj12oLktdboAhWGi1wKHcR6A10QFjABegQIARAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.holytrinityhenley.org.uk%2Fchurchyard-25.html&usg=AOvVaw1Ttpz8ukqN35WRE3Ryva6k>

Future baseline

- 5.58. The future baseline has been identified through the Henley and Harpsden 2020 [Strategic Environment Assessment](#).
- 5.59. The Assessment states that Habitats and species will potentially face increasing pressures from future development within the Neighbourhood Plan area, with the potential for negative impacts on the wider ecological network. This may include a loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks, which may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change, with the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition of habitats. This highlights the importance of introducing a locally specific policy to limit, where possible, the negative impacts on the ecological network.
- 5.60. Local Wildlife Sites act as wildlife corridors and have the potential to be impacted by new development which can remove the connection between habitats for species such as birds. Ecological sites can also be impacted by poor air quality and water quality, and factors such as noise and lighting can disturb vulnerable species.²⁰
- 5.61. The Neighbourhood Plan presents an opportunity to maximise benefits for biodiversity by including consideration of important habitats, species and designated sites at an early stage of planning for future growth. To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect and enhance important habitats but the connections between them. It will be crucial to effectively coordinate the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure to ensure that opportunities to improve green infrastructure and ecological corridors are maximised both within the Neighbourhood Plan area and in the surrounding areas.
- 5.62. The Town Council have introduced many initiatives to promote green conservation including on-going conservation work on Mill and Marsh Meadows, grassland management to encourage flora and fauna and reduced mowing to encourage wildlife. 18 bird boxes have been put up together with management and enhancement of the chalk bank and marsh meadow pond clearance. New projects include thinning of sycamores and native tree planting at Waterman's Spinney and preservation and enhancement of the peat marsh at Marsh Meadow.

²⁰ AECOM (2020) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Revised Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan [online] available: <https://jhnnp.org.uk/download/henley-and-harpsden-sea-scoping-report-consultation-version/>

Policy ENV2: Biodiversity

A. Development should maintain and enhance the natural environment and its intrinsic ecological value. As appropriate to their nature and scale, development proposals should:

- a. identifies the local biodiversity and seeks to protect or enhance it through the creation of new wildlife areas or corridors;
- b. incorporates features such as nesting boxes and beehives alongside soil and planting that is likely to attract wildlife;
- c. provides new, multi-functional green space locally including appropriately managed, unconventional green space such as green walls and green roofs, and greening of incidental existing spaces within the public realm; and/or
- d. incorporates planting which will be resilient to climate change.

B. Development should enhance the environment and biodiversity. As appropriate to their nature and scale, development proposals are encouraged to include tree and shrub planting, that:

- a. incorporates sustainable planting in keeping with the character of the local area.
- b. includes a clear planting plan demonstrating resilience to disease, pests and climate change that is consistent with the principles of Policy ENV3 (Trees);
- c. is designed to ensure low maintenance effort and cost and,
- d. where possible, is visible in whole or part from the public realm to capture associated well-being benefits.

Policy ENV3: Trees

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

- 5.63. This policy seeks to protect, maintain and enhance tree planting in order to meet objective E03: To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity. Furthermore, The Town and District level Climate Emergency declaration and targets for carbon neutrality by 2030. Trees will also help Henley and Harpsden adapt to the effects of Climate Change. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies.
- 5.64. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the [AECOM Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#). The policy now includes more Neighbourhood level specific evidence as listed below and includes projects in the supporting text.
- 5.65. The South and Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy²¹ and Landscape Character Appraisal²² state that Henley is on the interface between the Chilterns dip-slope and the Thames valley. The landscape is generally undulating, with locally steep valley sides, although the Thames valley is flat. Land cover is dominated by agriculture, comprising largely of medium sized, and regular to irregular arable and pastoral fields with a relatively strong hedgerow network. Blocks of woodland, including Ancient Woodland, and plantation are frequent. Varied riverside developments and landscaped grounds are frequent beside the Thames.
- 5.66. The Chilterns is one of the most densely wooded parts of the UK with nearly 22% woodland cover of which two thirds is ancient woodland - the highest proportion in the country²³. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also has a nationally-important concentration of high quality chalk grassland with over 700 ha. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Management Plan 2014-2019²⁴; contains a number of broad aims for the management of the Chilterns AONB.
- 5.67. On 19th August 2019, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) announced several amendments to the Environment Bill, kick-starting the government's 'build back greener' mission. A first draft of the 2019-21 Bill was released October 2019 with revisions published in February 2020²⁵. Among the Bill's major focus areas are tree planting and woodland management.

²¹ South Oxfordshire District Council (2017) South and Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy [online] available:https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1078639355&CODE=DC73108FAF0A8F9302E46D30C43430D7

²² South Oxfordshire District Council (2017) Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033 [online] available:https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038255686&CODE=DEBC6A309FBCBBF6CCE E61E1D20C9872

²³ Chilterns Conservation Board (2014) Management Plan 2014 - 2019 [online] available:https://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/ManagementPlan/Management%20Plan%202014-19/chilterns_management_plan_2014-19_final.pdf

²⁴ Chilterns Conservation Board (2014) Management Plan 2014 - 2019 [online] available:https://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/ManagementPlan/Management%20Plan%202014-19/chilterns_management_plan_2014-19_final.pdf

²⁵ Bills.parliament.uk. 2021. Environment Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament. [online] Available at: <<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593>>

- 5.68. As part of the 25-Year Environment Plan (published 2019)²⁶, the government is set to expand and manage the woodland areas to increase the delivery of ecosystem services. The Environment Bill pledges to increase tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares of trees per year by 2025. England Trees Action Plan 2021 to 2024 sets out the long term vision for trees, woodlands and forests in England in response to the England Trees Strategy consultation.
- 5.69. National Planning Policy recognises the importance of trees, paragraph (131) states that “planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible”. This paragraph continues to confirm that applicants and local planning authorities “should work with local highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places”.
- 5.70. The changing climate will present a number of different challenges for trees, and this will require careful management. Given the long life span of a tree, planting decisions taken today must take account of the tree's future resilience to the impact of the warmer climate.²⁷
- 5.71. The woodland trust identifies trees as critical for the future of the planet and for our own wellbeing, health and happiness.²⁸ They can reduce air pollution; absorb CO2 from the atmosphere; give us shade and shelter; guard us against flooding; make our minds happier and healthier; create vital homes for wildlife.
- 5.72. Land Use: Policies for a Net Zero UK 2020²⁹ sets out a detailed range of options to drive emissions reductions in England, which includes the importance of increase tree planting - increasing UK forestry cover from 13% to at least 17% by 2050 by planting around 30,000 hectares (90 – 120 million trees) of broadleaf and conifer woodland each year.
- 5.73. According the UK natural capital: urban accounts³⁰ In 2017, the removal of air pollution by urban green and blue space in Great Britain equated to a saving of £162.6 million in associated health costs. The amount of carbon removed by woodland in UK urban areas was estimated to be worth £89.0 million during 2017.
- 5.74. The Henley [Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan](#) Consultation Draft 2021 (CAAMP) states that maintaining existing trees and replacing lost or dying trees are an important part of the strategy to tackle climate change and trees also contribute considerably to the special interest of the conservation area. Street trees are a particularly important characteristic of the residential suburbs such the St Mark's Conservation Area. These combined with trees in private gardens contribute to the sense of place. The avenues of trees are also a key characteristic of Fair Mile.
- 5.75. Permission is needed for any works to trees above a certain size in the conservation area (see Section 7.0 of CAAMP) and justification is required for the loss of any street trees, which

²⁶ Bills.parliament.uk. 2021. *Environment Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament*. [online] Available at: <<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593>>

²⁷ Land use: Reducing emissions and preparing for climate change, CCC 2018

²⁸

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/campaign-with-us/campaign-in-your-community/neighborhood-planning/>

²⁹ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-policies-for-a-net-zero-uk/>

³⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapital/urbanaccounts>

should also be replaced with new trees. A succession planting strategy would be beneficial to ensure existing tree coverage is maintained into the future and opportunities for new trees should also be considered. There are limited opportunities for new green public spaces within the conservation area, with the greening of existing routes through trees likely to be the most appropriate means of improving green infrastructure. However, there may be opportunities to green some of the car parks such as Waitrose and Greys Road, using hedges and planting in a similar manner to Goodall Close.

5.76. The woodland trust sets out why native trees are the best for biodiversity³¹. A 2019 study³² led by Richard Ennos also concluded that the UK's native trees have the potential to adapt to future conditions, including those expected due to climate change.

5.77. The policy specifies that where removal of a tree due to development is unavoidable all trees so removed must be replaced by appropriate species according to the emerging Henley Town Council Tree Strategy at a ratio of 3:1.

5.78. 2000 saplings were planted by volunteers as the Millenium Wood project in the year 2000. The saplings were a mix of native broadleaf species that were appropriate for the soil and moisture conditions of the clay gravel cap of the Chiltern Dip Slope. The following photograph illustrate the planting density. The saplings were 60/90 Bare root and were planted at an approximate spacing of 1.6 meters (5 feet). This gives a density of approximately 3600 trees/ hectare , or 1500 trees per acre. We are asking developers to ensure that there is good management of the trees particularly in their early years, a ratio of 3:1 is a realistic one to achieve the appropriate tree density.



³¹ Woodland Trust (2020) Why are native woods important for biodiversity [online] available: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/07/biodiversity-and-native-woods/>

³² Forestry Commission (2019) Genetic Considerations for provenance choice of native trees under climate change in England [online] available: <https://www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/documents/7110/FCRP030.pdf>

Policy ENV3: Trees**A. Protection and Maintenance:**

Proposals that affect existing trees should contain plans for their protection including damage to roots. These can reach out radially to a distance greater than the height of the tree. Where removal of a tree due to development is unavoidable all trees so removed must be replaced by appropriate species according to the emerging Henley Town Council Tree Strategy at a ratio of 3:1.

B. Enhancement

Tree planting should be considered as a part of any new development either in individual gardens, or as a communal wooded area, or a combination of both. As a minimum three trees should be planted for each dwelling and plans put in place for the maintenance and upkeep of communal trees.

Policy ENV4: Local Green Spaces

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

EO1 – To prioritise the protection and enhancement of the following features:

- The physical townscape and the river including all National Trails and local footpaths, working with appropriate groups such as the Chiltern Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association and footpath working groups.
- Key views
- AONB and Harpsden Valley
- Existing green spaces

EO2 – To improve public access to green spaces (existing and new compensatory green space for any amenity lost to development), to the river and to the wider countryside. There is potential for green spaces to be linked through green chains and corridors. Public green spaces should also be supported by cycling and walking connectivity in line with transport objectives TO1 and TO2.

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

5.79. The policy seeks to designate twelve areas, identified by the local community as important, as Local Green Spaces. This conforms with paragraph 102 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

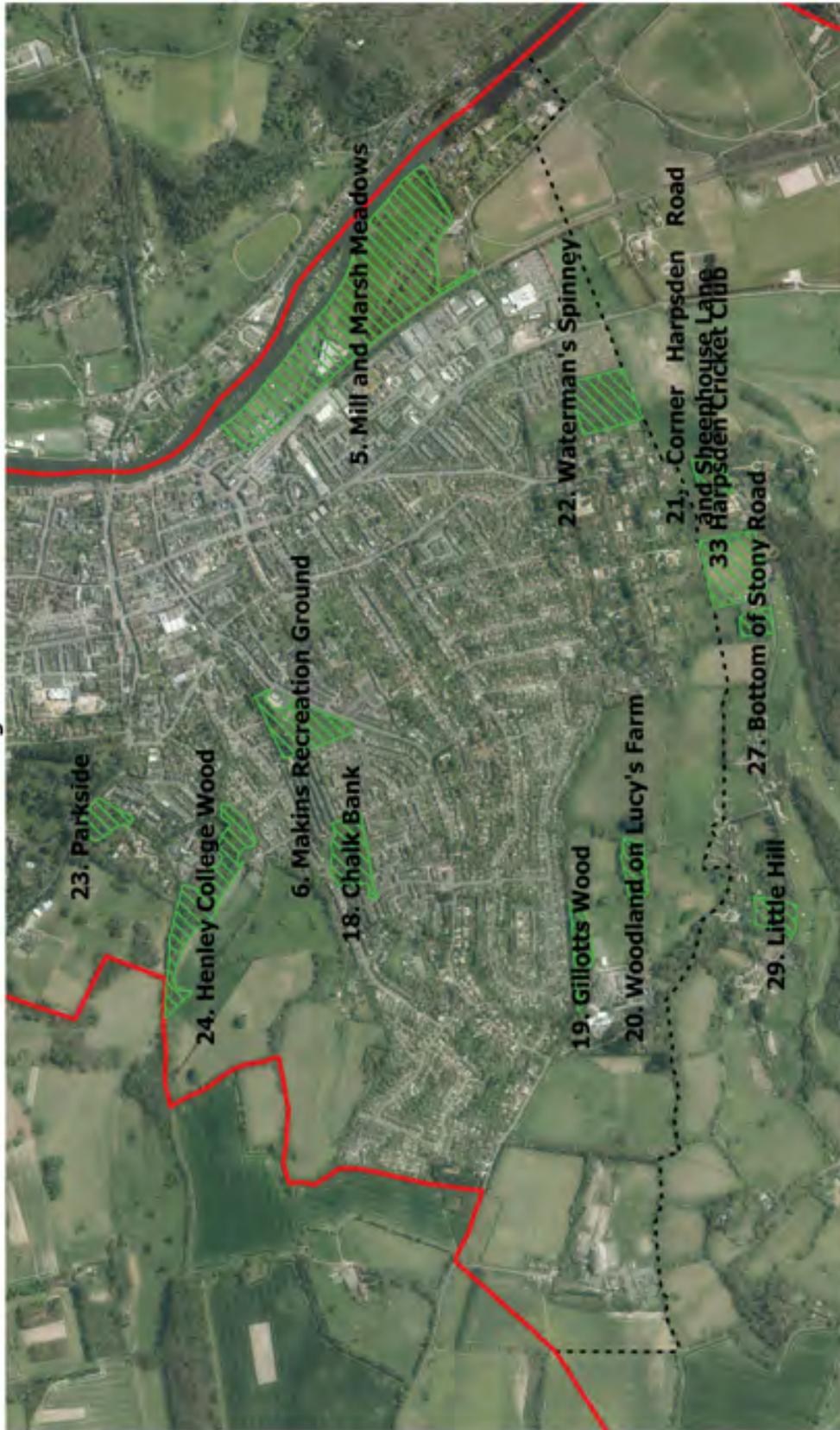
5.80. The application of this policy can contribute towards the achievement of Objectives E01 to prioritise the protection and enhancement of existing green spaces, E02 to improve public access to green spaces and E03 to protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value.

5.81. The twelve Local Green Spaces to be protected, as set out on the Policies Map in Part One are:

- 5) Mill and Marsh Meadows
- 6) Makins Recreation Ground
- 18) Chalk Bank
- 19) Gillotts Wood
- 20) Lucy's Farm – woodland
- 21) Sheephouse Lane
- 22) Watermans's Spinney
- 23) Parkside wood
- 24) Henley College Wood
- 27) Bottom of the Stony Road
- 29) Little Hill (previously Top of Little Hill)
- 33) Harpsden Cricket Club

5.82. All of the Local Green Spaces are demonstrably special to the community and also to visitors, and workers of Henley and Harpsden. Figure 2 shows all of the Local Green Spaces on a map and the [Local Green Space methodology](#) includes individual maps. A detailed description of each, including how they meet the NPPF Local Green Space criteria, is then provided in the table below.

Local Green Spaces Recommended for Designation



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Figure 2 - Local Green Spaces

Site Name	Demonstrably special to the community with regards to:				NPPF Criteria
	H i s t o r y	R e c r e a t i o n	T r a n q u i l l i t y	W i l d l i f e	
5) Mill and Marsh Meadows		✓	✓	✓	<p>Mill and Marsh Meadows have particular significance in Henley because of the long, iconic river frontage. A Keep Britain Tidy Green Flag Award has been achieved for the last 7 years, which recognises the upkeep of facilities including bandstand, bowling green, toddler playground, living wall and celebration beds</p> <p>Mill Meadows was purchased in 1921 as recreational space for the town. It includes separate play areas for both young children and older children, together with refreshments since 1931 and a bandstand for music at the weekends. A Portland Stone Obelisk believed to date from 1788 and originally installed in the Market Place to demonstrate Henley's civic pride and prosperity, was relocated to Mill Meadows in 1973. This is a listed monument (though has an incorrect location on the Listed Buildings Register).</p> <p>In 1966 Marsh Meadows was bought by the town. This is a tranquil space with an uninterrupted area of ground, rough grass and wildlife areas. Wildlife areas are maintained by volunteers from the wildlife branch of Greener Henley in association with the Parks Services. Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
6) Makins Recreation Ground		✓			<p>Makins Recreation Ground has particular local significance because of its recreational value and is a value to the community.</p> <p>The space provides recreation for a wide range of people and is easily accessible for all users. There is a children's play area, outdoor gym and skatepark and it is a popular recreational green space in the midst of housing. Surveys have shown that it is valued by residents for its excellent views over the valley of the River Thames. As well as open space for general recreational use, there is a beacon post which has been used for national celebrations such as the Queen's Jubilee, when a network of beacons were lit across the country. The outdoor gym and skatepark are the only such facilities in Henley.</p> <p>Makins Recreation Ground links to Makins Bank on its northern edge. Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>

18) Chalk Bank		✓	✓	✓	<p>Chalk Bank has particular local significance because of its tranquillity and richness of wildlife.</p> <p>This area provides an area of tranquillity within a busy built up area of housing. It provides an area for reflection and peaceful enjoyment providing wider views over Henley and the surrounding countryside. The 2004 Management Plan contains evidence of its local significance. The area is rich in wildlife and has been managed by the Henley Wildlife Group in association with the Council's Parks Services for over 20 years.</p> <p>The area is used by local schools for educational purposes. A new management plan is being written and this should be consulted for up to date information. The site provide good connections and accessibility to surrounding built up areas. The area warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
19) Gillotts Wood			✓	✓	<p>Gillotts Wood has particular local significance because of its tranquillity and richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland but is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space. It provides an important green corridor connecting adjacent green spaces.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
20) Lucys Farm – woodland			✓	✓	<p>Lucys Farm – woodland has particular local significance to Henley and Harpsden because of its tranquillity and richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland but is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It warrants designation of Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
21) Sheephous e Lane				✓	<p>Corner of Harpsden Road and Sheephous e Lane has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland but is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
22) Watermans 's Spinney				✓	<p>Watermans's Spinney has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland and is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>

23) Parkside wood			✓	<p>Parkside wood has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland but is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space. It provides a link between Friar Park and towards the woodland at Henley College creating nature corridors. Furthermore, in a recent appeal on this site (APP/Q3115/W/21/3268954) the inspector recognises that the site includes mature and semi mature indigenous trees and is likely to be a significant to the wider ecosystem.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
24) Henley College Wood			✓	<p>Henley Collegewood has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife and tranquillity.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland and is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space. It provides a link between Henley College and 40 acre fields creating nature corridors.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
26) Sarah's Wood				<p>This site has been removed following the Regulation 14 consultation as it consists of a private garden. This site does not warrant designation for Local Green Space.</p>
27) Bottom of the Stony Road			✓	<p>Bottom of the Stony Road has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland but is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
28) Bottom of Little Hill			✓	<p>This site has been removed following the Regulation 14 consultation as it consists of a private garden. This site does not warrant designation for Local Green Space.</p>
29) Little Hill (previously Top of Little Hill)			✓	<p>Little Hill has particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.</p> <p>The area is recognised as a Priority habitat – deciduous woodland and is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. It is not protected by other designations and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
33) Harpsden Cricket Field		✓		<p>Harpsden Cricket Field has particular local significance because of its recreational value and therefore warrants designation for Local Green Space.</p> <p>Recommendation : Local Green Space</p>
34) The Belt				<p>The Belt contains mature trees which are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The belt of trees are not a Priority habitat and therefore do not warrant designation for Local Green Space.</p>

35) Harpsden Court					This site has been removed following the Regulation 14 consultation as it consists of a private garden. This site does not warrant designation for Local Green Space.
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Policy ENV4: Local Green Space

The following areas shown on the Policies Map are proposed to be designated as a Local Green Space:

- 5) Mill and Marsh Meadows
- 6) Makins Recreation Ground
- 18) Chalk Bank
- 19) Gillotts Wood
- 20) Lucy's Farm – woodland
- 21) Sheephouse Lane
- 22) Watermans's Spinney
- 23) Parkside wood
- 24) Henley College Wood
- 27) Bottom of the Stony Road
- 29) Little Hill (previously Top of Little Hill)
- 33) Harpsden Cricket Club

Proposals for development on these Local Green Spaces will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

Policy ENV5: Watercourses

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

EO3 – To protect and enhance urban and rural habitats of value and seek to create new habitats to foster greater ecological diversity.

- 5.83. This policy seeks to raise awareness of the risks of flooding and the importance of early investigation of geology and drainage capacity of development sites.
- 5.84. In relation to greenhouse gas emissions, source data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change³³ suggests that South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire have had higher per capita emissions than the South East of England and England since 2005. South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire have both seen a 33.3% decrease in the percentage of total emissions per capita between 2005 and 2017, which is less than the reductions the South East of England (40.0%) and England (40.0%).
- 5.85. Per capita greenhouse gas emissions generated in the Neighbourhood Plan area are likely to continue to decrease with wider adoption of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies; however, increases in the built environment and carbon footprint of the Neighbourhood Plan would contribute to an increase in the total levels of greenhouse gas emissions.
- 5.86. Research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2018 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP18)³⁴. This predicts a likely central estimate of increase in annual mean temperatures of between 1°C and 2°C; and the central estimate of change in annual mean precipitation of 0 to +20% in winter and -10% to -30% in summer. Due to these changes a range of risks may exist for the Neighbourhood Plan area that include an adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain; an increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100-year floods; Soil erosion due to flash flooding and Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence and flooding of roads.
- 5.87. The Flood and Water Management Act (2010)³⁵ sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding, not just rivers and seas, are managed more effectively. This includes: incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

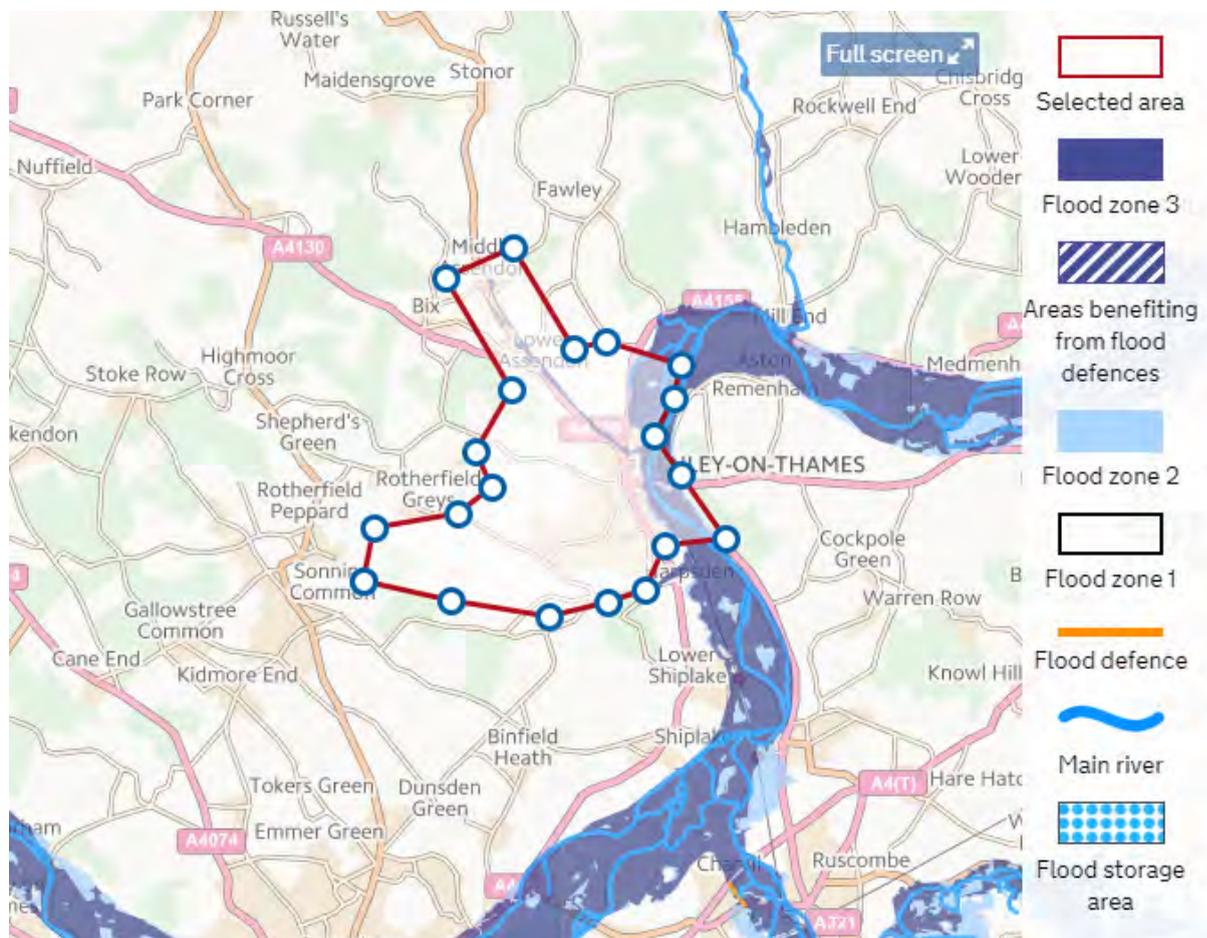
³³ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2019) '2005 to 2017 UK local and regional CO2 emissions – data tables' [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2017>

³⁴ <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/index>

³⁵ Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

5.88. The 2020 Henley and Harpsden [Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report](#) identifies that the areas at highest risk of flooding within the Neighbourhood Plan area are towards the eastern boundary, within proximity of the River Thames. The River Thames is a main river that flows through Southern England. Figure 4.1 (above) shows areas at risk from flooding from the River Thames are in Flood Zone 3, representing areas that have a 1% (1 in 100) or greater annual flood risk, and Flood Zone 2, representing areas that have between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%). Figure 3 shows the the Fluvial flood risk within the Neighbourhood Plan area.



³⁶Figure 3 - Fluvial flood risk within the Neighbourhood Plan area

5.89. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the district was published in 2013³⁷. The SFRA has allowed SODC to carry out the Sequential Test for site allocations and the findings of the SFRA have influenced the distribution strategy for development as set out in their Core Strategy regarding minimising the risk from flooding.

5.90. The SODC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment³⁸ (SFRA), published in 2013, notes that, whilst the floodplain is relatively narrow, some flooding to property was reported in 1947, 1990, 2000 and 2003, though not in 2007 or 2012.

³⁶ AECOM (2020) Henley and Harpsden Strategic Environmental Assessment [online] available at:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/district-flood-risk>

³⁷ JBA Consulting (2013) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report July 2013 [online] available at:

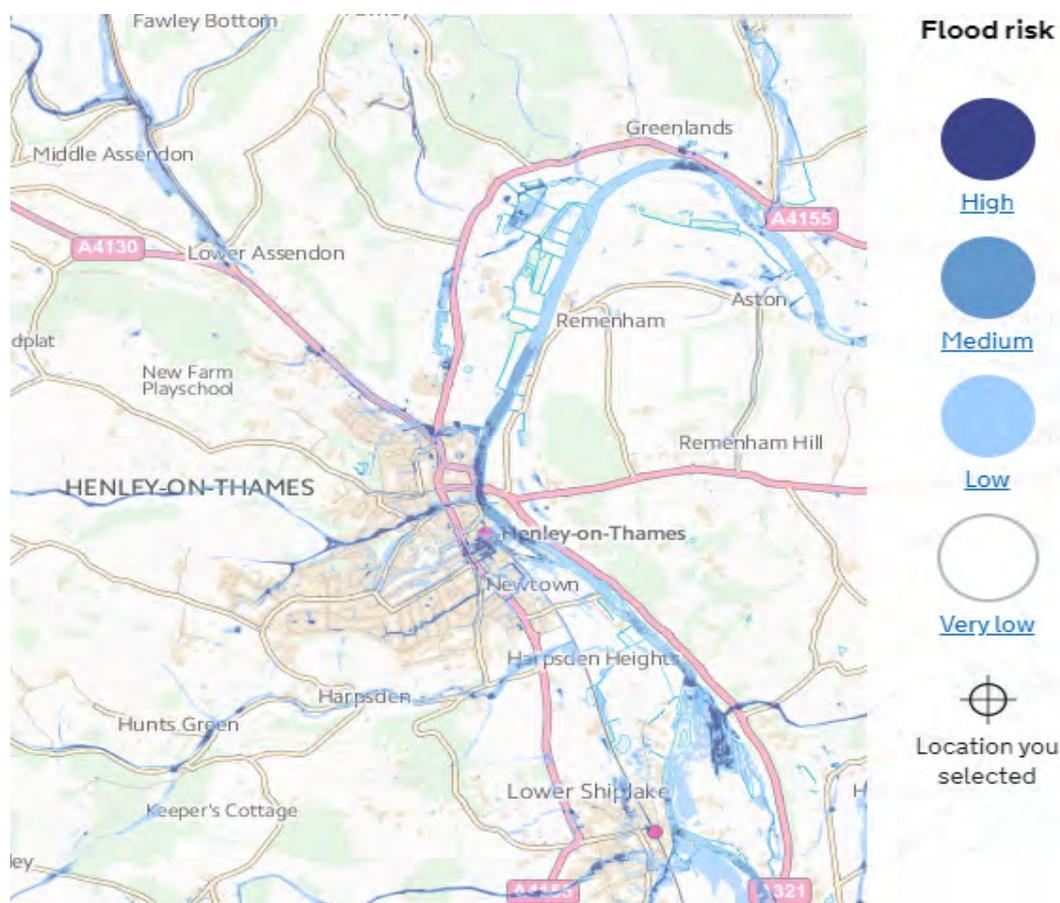
<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/district-flood-risk>

³⁸ JBA Consulting (2013) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report July 2013 [online] available at:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies/district-flood-risk>

5.91. The SFRA highlights Henley-on-Thames as a key settlement area and provides a summary of flood risk as follows: flood zones 2 and 3 present, low risk of surface water flooding, low risk of sewer flooding, high risk of groundwater flooding.

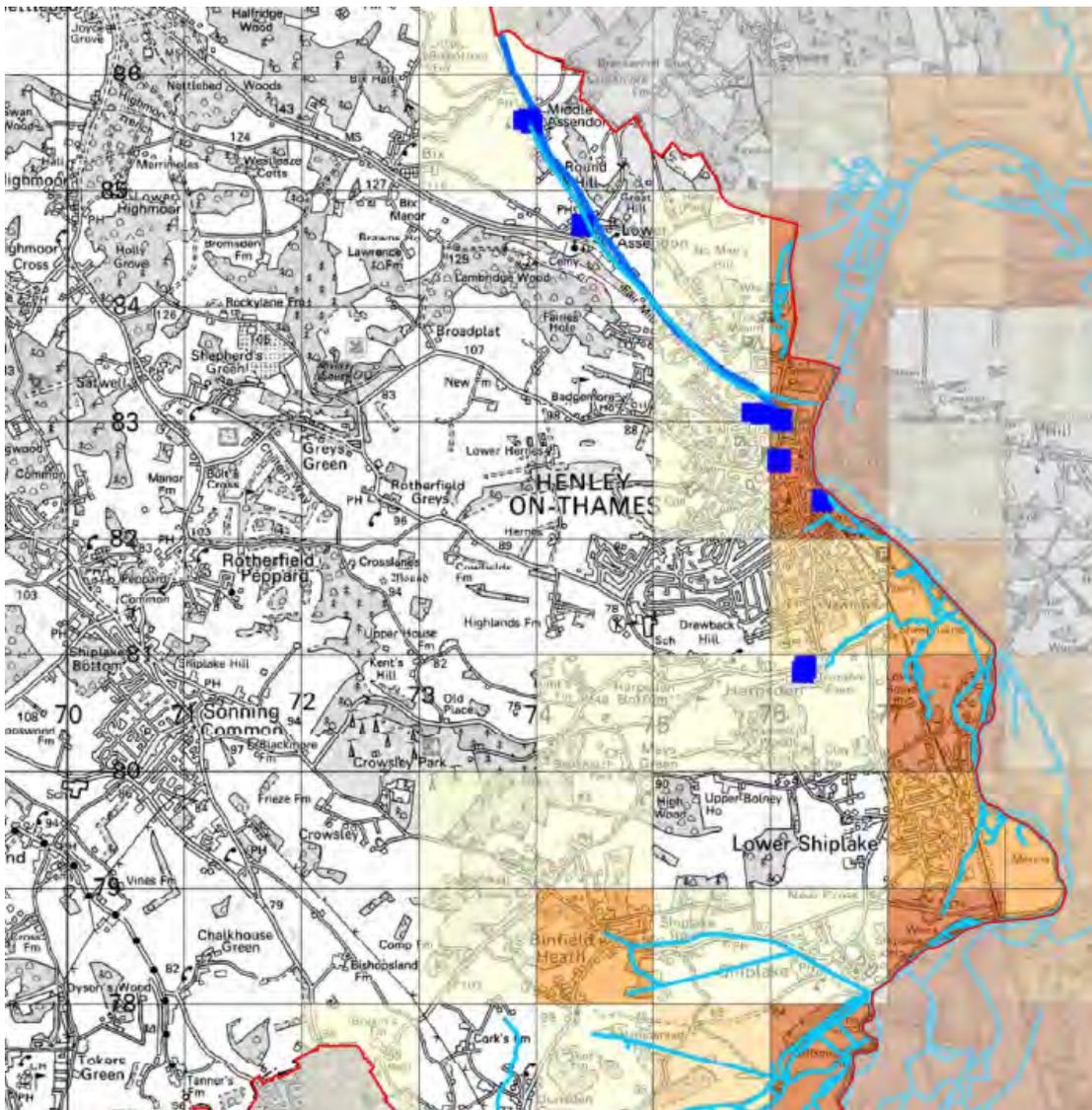
5.92. Figure 4 shows the risk of surface water flooding in the Neighbourhood Plan area, with the majority in low or very low risk areas, with localised areas of medium to high risk.



³⁹Figure 4 - Surface water flood risk within the Neighbourhood Plan area

5.93. **Figure 6** shows the risk of groundwater flooding in the Neighbourhood Plan area, with areas of highest risk located towards the east of the Neighbourhood Plan area towards the River Thames. The South Oxfordshire SFRA identifies Henley-on-Thames as being at high risk of groundwater flooding.

³⁹ GOV UK (2017): 'Long term flood risk assessment for locations in England' [online] available at: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/>



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Figure 5 - Groundwater flood risk. Source: JBA

LEGEND

South Oxfordshire

Vale of White Horse

Main Rivers

Watercourses reported as being affected by groundwater flooding in 2001

Reported Groundwater Flooding

Risk of Groundwater Emergence

>= 75%

>= 50% < 75%

>= 25% < 50%

< 25%

⁴⁰ JBA Consulting (2013) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report July 2013, Map 6.1 Areas Susceptible to Groundwater Flooding [online] available at: [http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Map%206.1%20Areas%20Susceptible%20to%20Groundwater%20Flooding%20\(SODC\)Reduced.pdf](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Map%206.1%20Areas%20Susceptible%20to%20Groundwater%20Flooding%20(SODC)Reduced.pdf)

Future baseline

- 5.94. The 2020 Henley and Harpsden [Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report](#) has considered the future baseline and identifies that Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the Neighbourhood Plan area, with increases in mean summer and winter temperatures, increases in mean precipitation in winter and decreases in mean precipitation in summer. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change, with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.
- 5.95. Per capita greenhouse gas emissions generated in the Neighbourhood Plan area are likely to continue to decrease with wider adoption of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies; however, increases in the built environment and carbon footprint of the Neighbourhood Plan would contribute to an increase in the total levels of greenhouse gas emissions.
- 5.96. The high-level review of the British Geological Survey (BGS) maps show the bedrock geology is the White Chalk subgroup⁴¹, described as: *“Chalk with flints. With discrete marl seams, nodular chalk, sponge-rich and flint seams throughout. Typology of flints and incidence of marl seams is important for correlation”*. The SEA identified this as a potential issue.
- 5.97. The main watercourse flowing through the Neighbourhood Plan area is the River Thames, which flows through the eastern part of the plan area, to the east of Henley. The River Thames is a main river that flows through Southern England, from Gloucestershire to London.
- 5.98. Henley and Harpsden are located within the Thames River Basin District and the Neighbourhood Plan area falls within the ‘Thames and Chilterns South’ Management Catchments and the ‘Chilterns South’ Operational Catchment. The Neighbourhood Plan area is covered by the Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan⁴² which aims to promote more sustainable approaches to managing flood risk.
- 5.99. Based on the most recently completed water quality assessments undertaken in 2016, the Environment Agency’s Catchment Data Explorer⁴³ classifies the 13 water bodies in the Chilterns South catchment as ranging from ‘Bad’ to ‘Good’ ecological status (with seven of the 13 water bodies classes as ‘Moderate’) and a ‘Good’ chemical status. The ‘reasons for not achieving good status’ (RNAGs) are primarily attributed to the following activities; water industry, agriculture and rural land management, and urban and transport factors.
- 5.100. The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwater have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwater are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination.

⁴¹ British Geological Society (2019) Geology of Britain Viewer [online] available at:

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

⁴² Environment Agency (2009) Policy paper: Thames: Catchment flood management plan [online] available at:

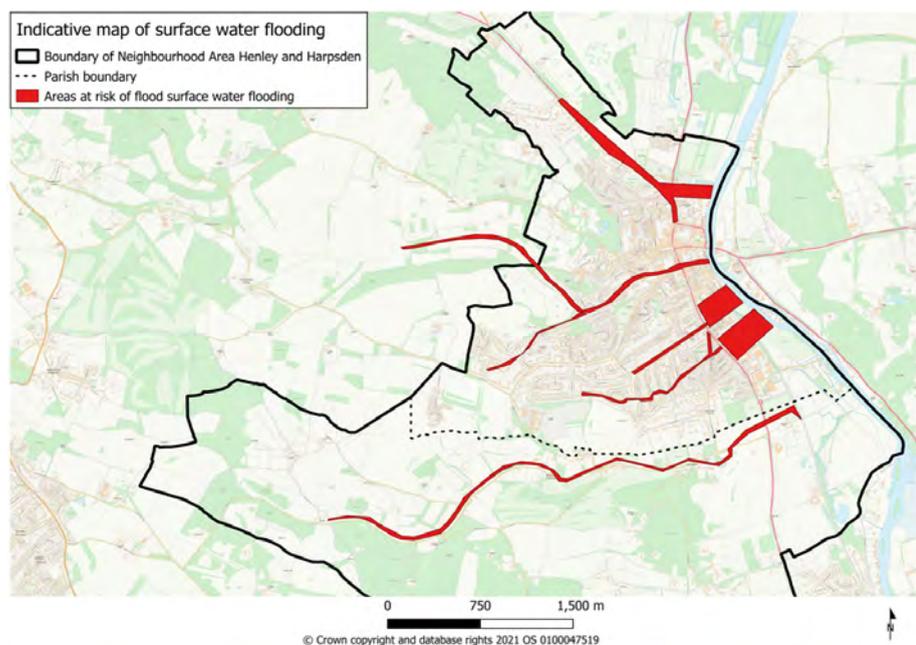
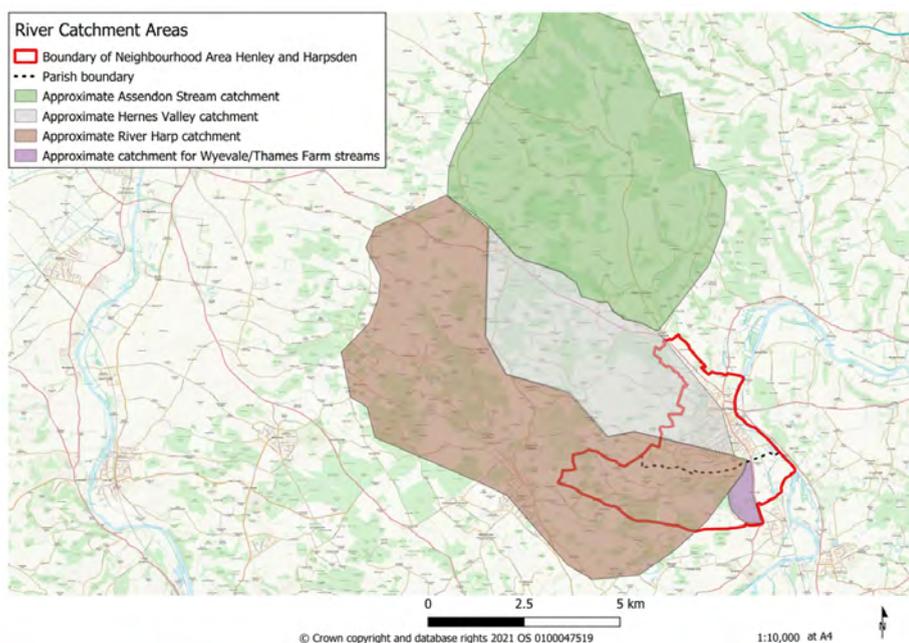
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/thames-catchment-flood-management-plan>

⁴³ Environment Agency (2019): ‘Catchment Data Explorer’ [online] available at:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/>

5.101. Future development has the potential to affect water quality through increased consumption, diffuse pollution, waste water discharges, water run-off, and modification. Water companies are likely to maintain adequate water supply and wastewater management over the plan period, and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality within the Neighbourhood Plan area and wider area. However, it will be important for new development to avoid impacts on water quality and support the objectives of the Water Resource Management Plan in reducing consumption and improving efficiency.

5.102. The maps below identify the river catchment areas and an indicative map of surface water.



Policy ENV5: Watercourses

Development should have regard to the geology and drainage capacity of the site and the consideration of the catchment map.

Sustainable Policies for Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Policy SD1: Minimising Carbon Emissions.

The following policies SD1a (Fabric First Approach) and SD1b (Other Methods) should be read in conjunction with policy DES10 of the Local Plan.

Policy DES10 of the Local Plan includes the requirement for new build residential dwellings,developments including 1,000sqm or more of C2 use or Houses in Multiple Occupation to achieve at least 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. The requirement will increase from 31 March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions and again from 31 March 2030 to a 100% reduction in carbon emissions (zero carbon). These targets will be reviewed in the light of any future legislation and national guidance.

In delivering the standards set out in Policy DES10 of the Local Plan, Policy SD1a would apply, where this is not possible Policy SD1b should be applied.

Policy SD1a: Fabric First Approach.

Policy SD1b: Other Methods

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:
EO4 – To expect all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment.
EO6 – To support community energy projects in line with the government’s Community Energy Strategy 2014.

5.103. This policy seeks to encourage new development to minimise both the embodied carbon during construction and minimise the operational carbon emissions by design using the Fabric First Approach. To meet objective EO4 which expects all new development to contribute to lowering carbon emissions through good building design and enhancement of the natural environment.

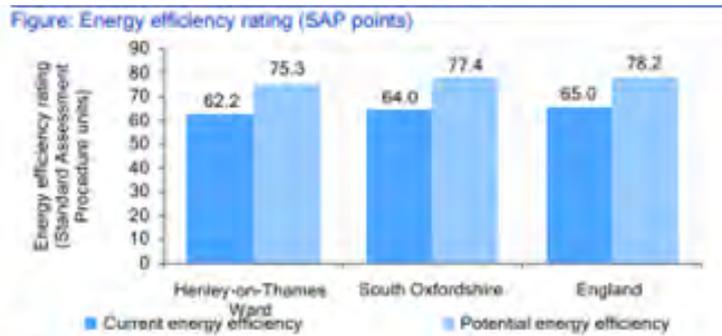
5.104. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) and has been reviewed by SODC. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies. The evidence underpinning this policy is neighbourhood level specific and justifies why these methods and measures are particularly appropriate in the NA. The Centre for Sustainable Energy Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency Report⁴⁴ has also been used to aid the development of this policy.

5.105. Henley faces a number of challenges such as fuel poverty and high energy bills. Data taken from the Energy Performance of Buildings Data in England and Wales⁴⁵ shows that Henley and Harpsden energy performance of buildings lag behind other stock in London and

⁴⁴ Centre for Sustainable Energy (2020) Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency [online] available at: <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/planning/renewables/neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government [online] available at: <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/login>

the South East. The energy efficiency rating of domestic buildings for Henley is lower than South Oxfordshire and England as shown in Figure 6 below.



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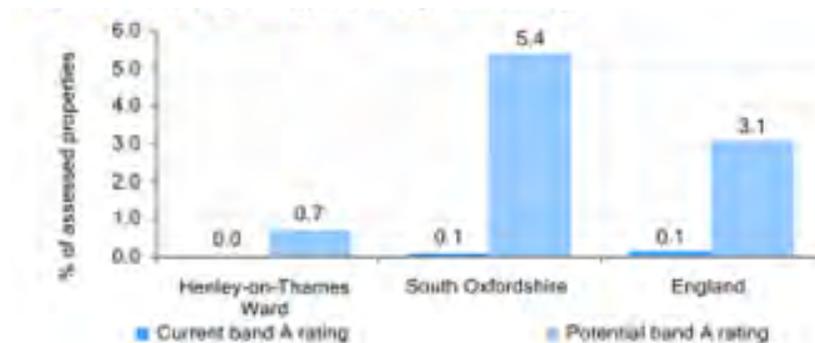
Figure 6- Energy Efficiency rating (SAP points) Data source: DCLG data collected between 2009 – 2016.

5.106. The table below, taken from SODC Towns Emissions Modelling, provides an overview of the CO₂ emissions per capita for all sources and for residential buildings. It shows that Henley has a high level of CO₂ emissions compared with other towns in South Oxfordshire.

District	Town	CO ₂ e emissions per capita (tonnes) for all sources	CO ₂ e emissions per capita (tonnes) for residential buildings
South Oxfordshire	Didcot	8.93	2.14
South Oxfordshire	Henley	9.88	3.05
South Oxfordshire	Thame	9.22	2.44
South Oxfordshire	Wallingford	9.25	2.45

Figure 7- Per Capita Emissions –Overview⁴⁷

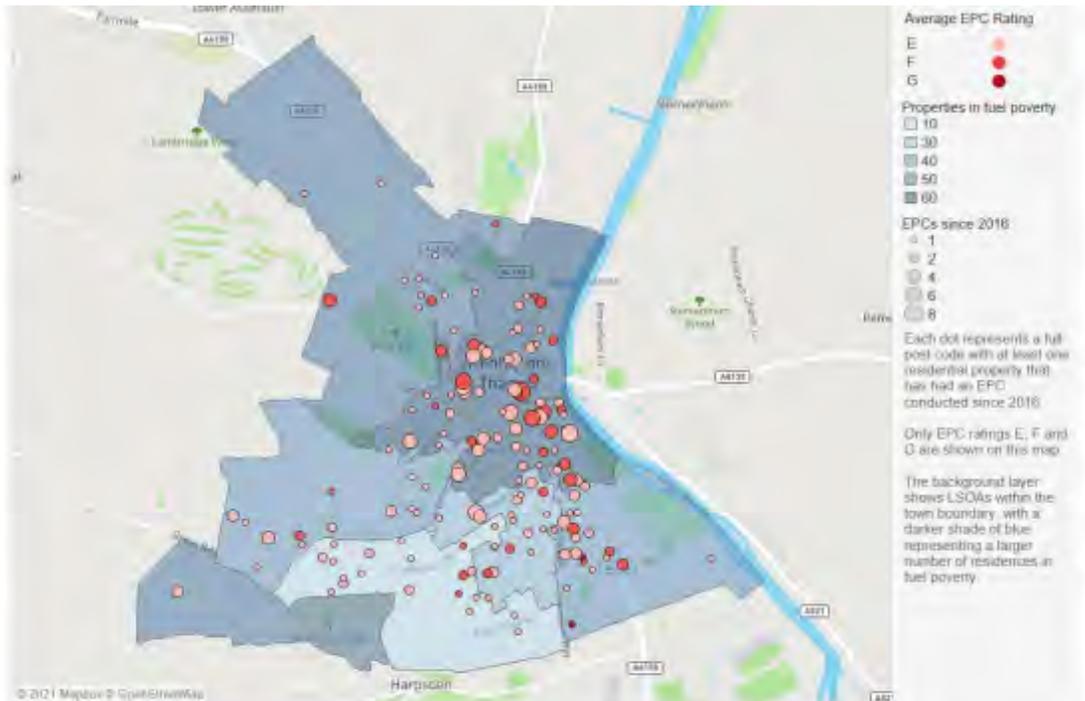
5.107. Buildings are awarded A EPC rating if their energy efficiency rating is equal or above 92. Only homes that have been built, bought, sold or retrofitted since 2008 have an EPC, which present about 50 to 60 per cent of homes within a local authority area. Henley has 0 Band A rated buildings according to data collected by DCLG between 2009 – 2016 shown in figure 8. A map showing both EPC and Fuel Poverty data is shown in Figure 9.



⁴⁶ The energy efficiency rating, expressed in Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) points, is a score between 1 – 100 with 1 being poor energy efficiency and 100 being excellent energy efficiency. The energy efficiency gap is currently 13.1 (the difference between the current average rating of building alongside the potential rating).

⁴⁷ SODC Towns Emissions Modelling, June 2021

Figure 8 - Band A (high energy efficiency) rated buildings⁴⁸

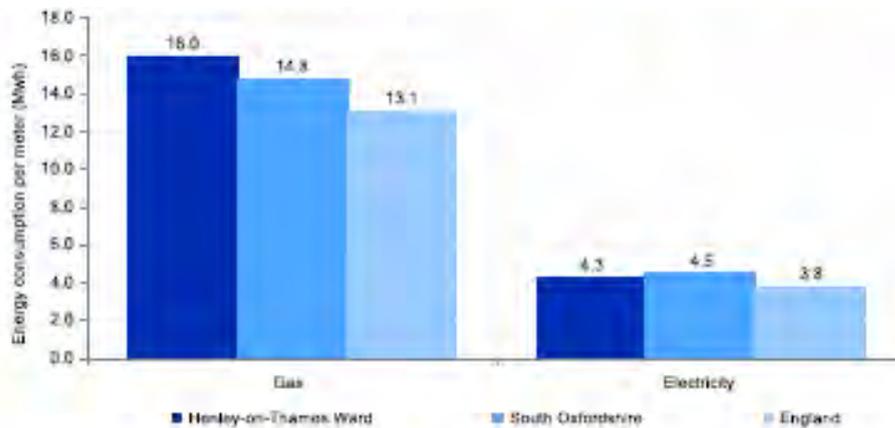


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Figure 9 - EPC Ratings per postcode, and Fuel Poverty rates per LSOA

Dots are used to indicate EPC data. Each dot represents a full post code where at least one EPC has been performed since 2016. The colour of the dot indicates the number of EPCs. Only EPC scores of E, F or G are included.

5.108. The following diagram (Figure 10) shows that Henley energy consumption of gas is above South Oxfordshire and England in 2015.



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Figure 10 - Domestic and electricity consumption, 2015

5.109. The maps below shows details of the absolute emissions (figure 11) and residential buildings emissions (figure 12) per capita, in tCO₂e, per LSOA. Each shaded area indicates the boundary of a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) within the town. A lighter shade indicates lower absolute emissions, a darker shade indicates higher emissions.

⁴⁸ Data source: DCLG data collected between 2009 – 2016.

⁴⁹ South Oxfordshire (2021) Towns Emissions Modelling

⁵⁰ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2015 (consumption). Not connected to gas network, 2019

5.110. The maps show that the town centre has high rates of emissions both absolute and residential and this is also that area that contains the oldest buildings.

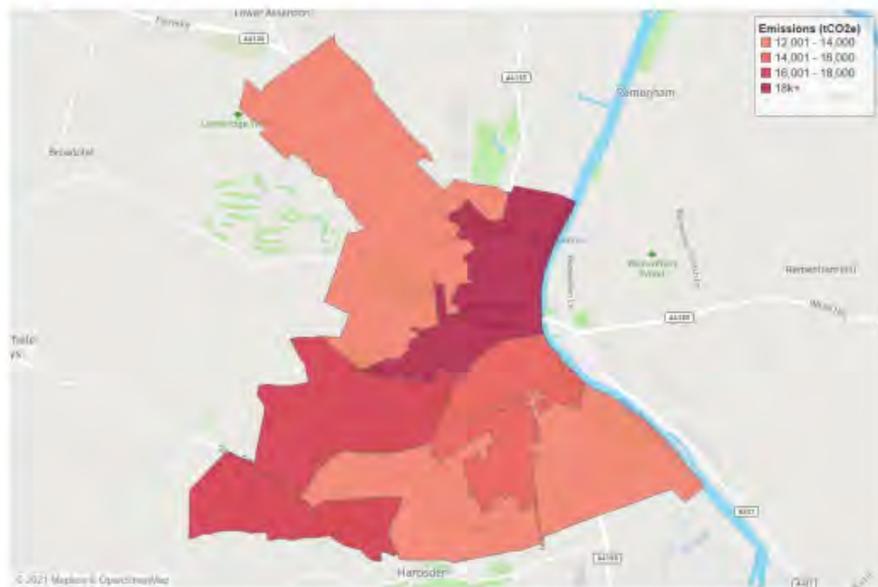


Figure 11 - Absolute emissions per LSOA, for Henley-on-Thames



Figure 12 - Residential buildings emissions per capita, per LSOA for Henley-on-Thames⁵¹

5.111. There are many opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of historic buildings in Henley and Harpsden. The 2021 [Henley and Harpsden Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan](#) (consultation draft) includes opportunities for new developments' means of responding to climate change. The following diagram shows that this is a particular issue for this NPA, Henley has a higher number of dwellings built before 1945 when compared with South Oxfordshire and England.

⁵¹ South Oxfordshire (2021) Towns Emissions Modelling

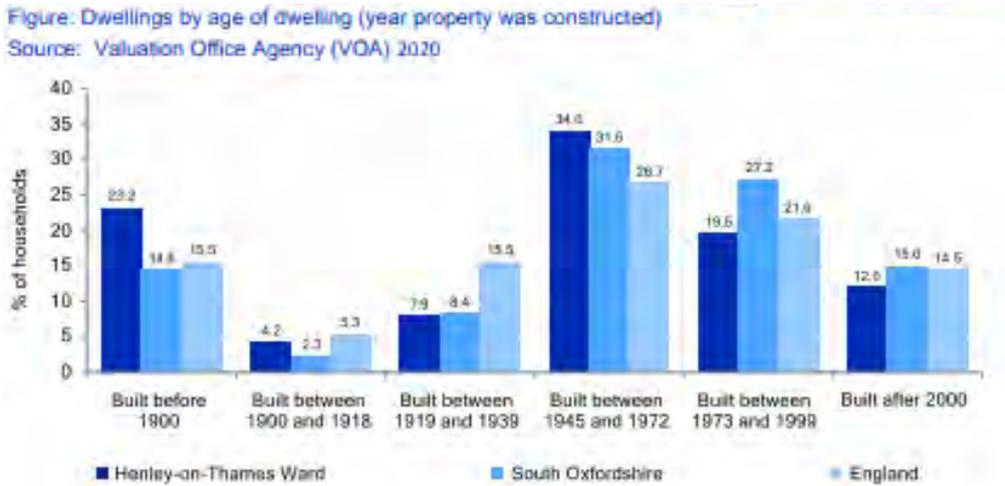


Figure 13 - Dwellings by age of dwelling (year property constructed)

- 5.112. The Building Regulations Part L set the energy efficiency standards for residential buildings. They are divided into part L1A, which covers new build, and part L1B, which covers renovations to existing buildings.
- 5.113. The Future Homes Standard anticipated to replace Building Regulations L and F in 2025 will change building regulations so that from 2025 the Future Homes Standard will deliver homes that are zero-carbon ready⁵². Homes built under the Future Homes Standard should produce 75-80% less carbon emissions compared with current levels and become net zero as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise. The intention is that homes built to the Future Homes Standard will not need to be retrofitted with any additional measures or technology to become net zero.
- 5.114. EnerPHit⁵³ as a best practice standard to achieve good air-tightness and insulation in retrofit and Passivhaus for new development.
- 5.115. A Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group was established by the Town Council in 2019 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency. The Town Council have been involved with projects to reduce carbon emissions, see Appendix A.

⁵² [The Future Homes Standard: changes to Part L and Part F of the Building Regulations for new dwellings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-future-homes-standard)

⁵³ [EnerPHit – the Passive House Certificate for retrofits \[\] \(passipedia.org\)](https://passipedia.org/en/enerphit)

Policy SD1: Minimising Carbon Emissions.**Policy SD1a: Fabric First Approach**

Commensurate to their size and scale, development proposals should consider a Fabric First approach to their design to minimise their carbon emissions and as a minimum meet the energy efficiency requirements set out in the Development Plan.

A) A 'fabric first' approach to building design would be recommended to maximise the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. Developers should consider:

- a) Minimising the use of high carbon cost building materials such as Concrete, Cement and Steel.
- b) Maximising use of materials which score highly on Building for Life criteria⁵⁴ such as wood, wood and/or hemp fibre.
- a) Using modern design techniques such as EnerPHit as a best practice standard to achieve good air-tightness and insulation in retrofit and Passivhaus for new development.

Minimising Carbon Emissions.**Policy SD1b: Other Methods**

Where electrical and mechanical means are required to meet energy efficiency targets set out in the Development Plan, or any higher standards introduced by National Policy, development proposals are encouraged to incorporate some, or all, of the following:

- A. maximising the use of renewable energy by using electrical heating and avoiding the use of fossil fuels.
- B. Introducing measures to reduce heat loss. This could include, where appropriate, double glazing in Conservation Areas or secondary glazing in listed buildings with wooden windows that meet the latest relevant British standard.
- C. Draught proofing and improved ventilation strategies with suitable forms of insulation and insulating materials that are compatible with building type, construction and traditional fabric that do not detract from historic characteristics.
- D. using heat pumps to extract heat from the air, ground, or nearby water.
- E. incorporating Solar photovoltaic panels on South or East/West facing roofs, where these do not detract from the historic character of the building and are not visible from public domain where they are allowed, if the building lies within the conservation area.
- F. Installing a battery to allow load shifting to take advantage of local and grid renewable generation.

Policy SD2: Community Energy Projects

Community energy projects will be supported.

⁵⁴ https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Building%20for%20Life%2012_0.pdf

Policy DQS1: Local Character

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

EO5 –To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials.

EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.

5.116. This policy aims to protect the character of Henley and Harpsden when planning for new development or redevelopment and reinforce the importance of the Conservation Areas. To meet the following objectives: EO5 –To require new development to respond to local character, materials and colour palette corresponding to the SODC Design Guide and the Supplementary Technical Notes on local building materials. EO7 – To conserve and enhance the unique historic and natural environment assets of the area which make an important contribution to the quality of new development, the economy and social infrastructure of the town and village whilst increasing their energy efficiency.

5.117. The [Henley and Harpsden Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan \(CAAMP\)](#) (Consultation Draft) identifies and provides analysis of the different character areas within the Conservation Areas.

5.118. The Character of the Area is articulated in the [Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan](#) (CAAMP) and summarised in Figure 14.

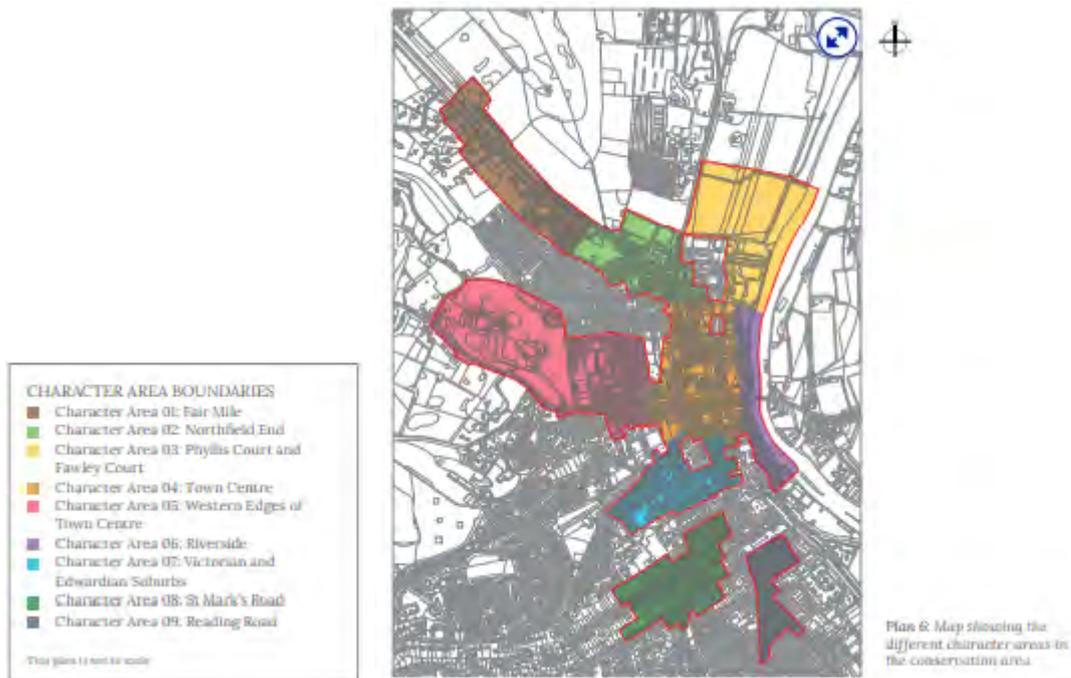


Figure 14 -Henley Character Area Boundaries)



Detached villas in spacious plots along Fair Mile



Tall mansion blocks close to the town centre



Two-storey semi-detached houses towards the north-west end of the character area

5.119. Fair Mile (Character Area 1) features medium-sized plots comprising semi-detached or detached houses to the south-west and more dispersed development with buildings occupying larger and more irregular plots to the north-west.

5.120. The character area developed piecemeal as a residential area beyond the town centre and retains this function and suburban, edge of town character today. Due to the piecemeal development of this road, the buildings adopt a range of building materials and architectural features.

5.121. Most houses, particularly those on the south west side of the road, are well-screened behind high masonry walls or mature hedges. The double tree-lined avenues either side of Fair Mile give the character area a verdant, leafy character. Fair Mile follows a valley down from the Chiltern Hills and its setting is therefore characterised by inclining slopes on both sides. Most houses are set within spacious gardens with trees, shrubs and grass lawns.



Dwellings and retail units at the south-west end of Northfield End



Quaker Meeting House



Two-storey terraced houses on Northfield End

5.122. Northfield End (Character Area 2) is the principal street in the character area, which is a continuation of Bell Street and curves to the north-west to become Fair Mile. It is therefore part of the key approach to the town from the north west. Bell Lane, the northern half of which is in this character area, is an ancient street, part of the medieval gridded street layout and originally leading all the way to the River Thames.

5.123. The buildings in this character area are almost entirely residential with the exception of the Quaker Meeting House and a few retail units on the stretch of Northfield Road immediately to the north of King's Walk. The buildings in this character area typically range from two to three-storeys. The Victorian terraces are fine-grained and particularly diminutive in height, whilst the three-storey buildings of more substantial massing are generally modern, for example Fairmile Court.

5.124. The predominant cladding material for historic buildings in the character area is red brick, although the brickwork to some buildings is rendered or painted white. Roofs are typically clay tiled although there are more recent buildings with slates; terraced roofs are pitched, whilst villas often employ hipped or half-hipped forms.

5.125. Detached or semi-detached villas are characterised by regency-style classical lintels with reeded pilasters or porticos and features such as bracketed eaves. Terraced houses typically have simple flat or segmental door lintels supported on brackets. Timber-framed sash windows are typical. Characteristic of the closer to town centre location, the terraced rows are positioned hard against the pavement, whilst larger detached or semi-detached buildings are set behind small front gardens bounded by brick walls, hedges or railings or a combination of boundary treatments. Northfield End is characterised by mature street trees and grass verges, giving the character area a leafy, verdant character.



The view of the river and Henley from the publicly accessible riverside



The Grandstand

5.126. Phyllis Court and Fawley Court (Character Area 3) is characterised by the large open spaces of the sports fields, historically part of the Fawley Court estate, and the grounds of the Phyllis Court Club.

5.127. The principal buildings are the Phyllis Court Clubhouse and the Grandstand (Grade II) with the only other buildings being ancillary structures associated with the club. The Clubhouse is rendered and painted pale pink with cornice, window surrounds and string course picked out in white. The building is fronted by a range of glazed conservatories.

5.128. Whilst the character area is largely green and features a number of trees, the playing fields and adjoining riverbanks form the only publicly accessible part of the character area. These open spaces are accessed via a footpath off Marlow Road.



Ornamental terracotta and stained glass



Decorative polychrome brick



View looking east along Hart Street showing commercial buildings at ground level

5.129. Town Centre (Character Area 4). There is also good survival of the medieval, burgage plot pattern comprising deep, narrow fronted plots, this is particularly distinct along Hart Street and the north side of Friday Street.

5.130. There has been relatively little plot amalgamation, meaning the frontage widths are not hugely varied. Various narrow yards, courtyards, lanes alleyways and carriage arch passages run along the alignment of the burgage plots to meet the main streets, particularly along Hart Street and New Street. These spaces enable views of the more varied rear elevations of buildings whose fronts have been refronted in the Georgian period.

5.131. Market Place and Hart Street, which lie at the heart of the conservation area, are characterised by a largely commercial character with building uses including banks, retail and hospitality (hotels, pubs and restaurants). Most upper storeys are in residential or commercial use.

5.132. The character area has a mix of two and three storey buildings. Buildings are generally fronted in red or grey brick, a combination of the two, or are rendered or painted white. There are several timber-framed, jettied buildings, others survive but concealed 18th or 19th centuries re-fronted. Roofs are pitched or hipped, and the roofline is further enlivened by a number of gable ends. The most historic buildings use clay tiles, although some later buildings make use of slate. Some roofs are concealed behind parapets, particularly those built or refronted in the Georgian period. Many ground floors are occupied by shopfronts, which are a mix of historic, traditional-style and modern. In some cases, where shopfronts have been replaced, certain historic features including pilasters and consoles or corbels still survive.



Commercial buildings at the lower (east) end of Gravel Hill



Terraced residential development along King's Road

5.133. Western edges of Town Centre (Character Area 5). The street and plot pattern are varied across the character area owing to its piecemeal development along Gravel Hill, Victorian residential infill and the large site of the former Henley Union Workhouse (Townlands Memorial Hospital).

5.134. A large part of the character area is also taken up by the Friar Park estate, to the west. Gravel Hill has long served as an important approach to the town centre from the west and joins the Market Place at the Town Hall. This character area contains a mix of building uses although the predominant use is residential.

5.135. Hop Gardens, West Street, King's Road, Clarence Road and York Road are largely residential in character with the land between Hop Gardens and the other streets occupied by Townlands Memorial Hospital and doctors' surgeries.

5.136. The buildings along Gravel Hill and West Street are generally clad in red brick, sometimes combined with grey brick. Certain buildings have been rendered or painted pale colours. There are a few examples of timber-framed buildings or knapped flint. Architectural or decorative features include sash-windows, bay windows, door lintels and contrasting coloured brickwork to pick out window surrounds and banding.



View of the north end of Thameside from Henley Bridge

5.137. Riverside (Character Area 6) this character area is defined by the River Thames, with Thameside the main route in the area running parallel in a north-south arrangement with the riverside. Development in this character area is relatively fine-grained but less dense than that in the town centre, demonstrative of its post medieval development. The buildings generally form part of terraced rows broken up with small gaps between or converging roads.

5.138. There are a range of building functions in the riverside character area. The mansion blocks at the south end of Thameside are tall four-storey buildings and some of the tallest buildings in the conservation area, whilst those to the north of the bridge, are smaller, typically two-storey buildings, some with attic accommodation. Those around the bridgehead are slightly taller at three-storeys. Red brick is the predominant cladding material in this character area, sometimes used in conjunction with grey brick. The brickwork to some buildings is painted. Stucco or render is also popular, particularly for the regency row of River Terrace (Grade II), at the south end of Thameside.



Small residential buildings on Reading Road and taller commercial buildings closer to the town centre in the background



Eclectic style of houses on Norman Avenue



The large-scale Imperial Hotel and associated buildings



Detail of terrace with decorative brick banding and name plaque

- 5.139. Edwardian Suburbs (Character Area 7) has a transitional character connecting the historic medieval core of the town with the Edwardian suburbs to the south.
- 5.140. The principal routes are Reading Road, the principal approach from the south and Greys Road and important south-west approach to the town. Both these routes are historic and were built up prior to the Victorian period. The street pattern between these two roads is irregular and piecemeal in its evolution, mainly developed in the Victorian and Edwardian periods.
- 5.141. The character area primarily consists of residential uses, although Reading Road contains a mix of residential and, to the north towards the town centre, commercial uses. The scale of the residential buildings in this character area is typically two-storeys, reflecting their domestic function, although the detached dwellings on Norman Avenue are larger, three-storey buildings with wide frontages and deep proportions.
- 5.142. Red brick is the predominant building material in the character area, sometimes used alongside grey brick. Yellow brick is also used to articulate red brick elevations in some residential streets particularly Albert Road and Queen Street, where it has been used for banding and other detailing around windows. The brickwork to some buildings is painted or rendered, although where this occurs in a terrace disrupts the uniform appearance of the row. Roofs are generally pitched or gabled and are typically slate-tiled, except a number of older buildings which feature clay tile.



St Mark's Road looking east showing street trees, well-planted front gardens and a wooded landscape beyond Henley



Art Deco style carved relief

Turret feature at St Mary's School



Villa with a crenelated parapet

- 5.143. St Mark's Road (Character Area 8) is formed by parallel streets laid out in the late 19th/early 20th century to form a middle-class suburb.
- 5.144. The detached and semi-detached houses were designed to occupy spacious plots, which became more generous to the south-west, away from the town centre. Whilst there has been some infilling, the suburb is clearly distinct from the more urban environment of the town centre, retaining a unique, spacious, leafy and airy character.

- 5.145. The area is characterised by wide roads lined by deep, wide-fronted plots with semi-detached or detached dwellings.
- 5.146. The area is almost entirely residential with the exception of St Mary's School on St Andrew's Road. The buildings are typically two-storeys, although some have additional attic accommodation, and a small proportion are three full storeys.
- 5.147. The buildings in the character area are generally finished in red brick, although some have stone fronts or rendered detailing. Roofs, which are pitched and sometimes gabled, generally feature slate tiles although some are clay.
- 5.148. The streets in this character area, particularly St Mark's Road and St Andrew's Road, are lined with mature plane trees. The avenues contribute to the leafy suburban character of the area, although some sections of avenue have been lost over time. Most dwellings feature treed and well-planted front gardens, bringing leafy verdant and suburban character.



Historic stained-glass highlights and moulded surrounds on Reading Road



New York Terrace at the southern end of the character area characterised by additional detail to windows and doors

- 5.149. Reading Road (Character Area 9) is the principal and historic approach route to Henley from Reading to the south and bisects this character area.
- 5.150. Terraced houses were developed along Reading Road at the turn of the 20th century. Although the plots along Reading Road are slightly more generous, plot sizes within this character area are largely uniform and of a fine grain with narrow-fronts and small gardens to the rear. This area was developed as a working-class residential area and remains almost entirely residential in function.
- 5.151. The buildings within this character area are domestic in scale and of a consistent two-storey height. Stylistically, the buildings within this character area are very similar. Buildings are all finished in red brick and feature pale-yellow brick detailing for banding and door and window surrounds. A few buildings have been rendered or painted white or off-white, but this is out of character historically and disrupts the uniform appearance of the area. The residential terraces feature mixed boundaries but generally comprise low brick walls, with some metal railings, enclosing small front gardens

Policy SD3: Local Character

Development should have regard to the importance of responding creatively to, and enhancing, the setting of the surrounding area, having regard to the character of adjacent buildings and spaces, including scale, orientation, height and massing. They should demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture that respects the relevant Character Area, as demonstrated in the CAAMP.

- a. The importance of responding creatively to, and enhancing, the setting of the surrounding area, having regard to the character of adjacent buildings and spaces, including scale, orientation, height and massing.
- b. For each of the respective Character Areas identified on the Policies Map, proposals should respect the design, use of materials and views identified in the Character Area. The Character Areas, as shown in the Conservation Area Appraisal, are: Area 1 ('Fairmile'); Area 2 ('Northfield End'); Area 3 ('Phyllis Court and Fawley Court'); Area 4 ('Town Centre'); Area 5 ('Western Edges of Town Centre'); Areas 6 ('Riverside'); Area 7 (Edwardian Suburbs'); Area 8('St Mark's Road'); Area 9 ('Reading Road').
- c. High quality materials should be used that respect the local setting and contribute positively to the particular Character Area or Conservation Area or the general surrounding area if outside of these designations.



**Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan:
Report on 12 November 2020 Climate Emergency
Focus Group**

Introduction

Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are updating their Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) has been commissioned by the NP Steering Committee to assist with the community consultation strategy, engaging with residents about current and future issues facing the town. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, it has not been possible to hold the usual public-facing engagement activities.

In summer 2020, CFO held two Zoom Focus Groups (a separate report is available). One of the main follow-up actions from these sessions was to arrange a Focus Group focusing on the Climate Emergency.

To this end, all community groups were contacted by e-mail in October 2020 inviting them to sign-up for a Climate Emergency Focus Group. These invitations were followed up with telephone conversations and further emails. There was also use of social media and community websites, inviting the general public to participate.

17 individuals signed-up to take part in a Focus Group, with 15 subsequently attending the event from 7 – 8.30 pm on 12 November 2020.

Focus Group Aims

The key aims of the Focus Group were to:

1. - Explore why participants think the Climate Emergency is an issue with which the Neighbourhood Plan refresh should engage; and
2. - Investigate specific climate and low carbon measures which Neighbourhood Plan policies could seek to include.

Focus Group Process

The session was facilitated by Tom McCulloch (discussion lead) and Hilary Lombard (notetaker and summariser) from Community First Oxfordshire.

Discussion themes were not prescribed in advance. CFO did not want to dictate what people talked about but rather to encourage a free-flowing conversation, introducing discursive prompts now and then to follow-up certain points in more detail or invite comment about wider/ connected considerations.

DISCUSSION THEME 1

Why is the climate emergency important to you?

Summary

Most people expressed concern about the negative legacy that would be left for future generations if the climate crisis is not adequately addressed. Several attendees described how they were changing/ had changed their own behaviours to minimise their personal climate impact and make a difference now.

The impact of a 3 degree rise in temperature was discussed. The current older generation's grandchildren are likely to be alive at the end of this century and would be impacted by this. This was a general concern.

There was general discussion and agreement about the need to protect the environment and encourage biodiversity.

It was explored how local children benefit from volunteers going into schools giving presentations on the issue. The students are very engaged and have a good understanding of the issues, however, this needs to be extended to more students and schools.

QUOTE

'I speak to one person a day about the issues. Teenagers are good to talk to as they will inherit this world.'

DISCUSSION THEME 2

How would you describe wider community interest and engagement regarding the Climate Emergency?

Summary

There was general agreement that there needs to be more education and wider communication about the climate emergency, as well as other environmental issues (the use of herbicides and pesticides was noted for example). It was discussed how people see things from different perspectives and this needs to be considered.

In addition, it was felt that while most people are aware of these issues, often they feel overwhelmed and do not know what to do on a personal level. Furthermore, there is a limit on what individuals can do without an overarching strategy/ policy from government. It was also pointed out that it needs to be made clear that we are facing not only a climate emergency but an ecological one as well.

On the other hand, it was suggested that people didn't really know what they should do to address climate etc. issues and the NP should be used to set out just what they could, with real-life examples.

QUOTE

"People get worked up about hedgehogs and not insulating their homes as that costs money"

It was also felt by two attendees that that Henley Town Council should take more of a lead in positively responding to the climate issue, for example, by making the point about the need to encourage biodiversity when faced with complaints about overgrown paths.

Attendees also discussed the complexity of the planning system and how many people find the system difficult to understand and navigate. In particular, people need to be clear which Local Authority (County, District, Town or Parish) deals with which issue and how much local people can influence.

It was also considered how Henley TC and Harpsden PC have limited control over certain issues, such as the cutting down of trees. Nevertheless, despite this, the councils can play a role in highlighting the importance of issues like these with residents and working to address them. In addition, Henley TC owns land in the town and therefore can control how it is used. The council's 'general power of competence' is additionally useful.

The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was mentioned, particularly in relation to how it restricts the ability to undertake certain renewable energy projects. Opinion was expressed that the AONB plan should be adapted in order to better respond to the climate emergency, perhaps by allowing appropriate alternative energy development projects.

DISCUSSION THEME 3

Do you think there's a perception that some ideas and opinions about the Climate Emergency are too radical and some people are scared off?

Summary

There was a discussion about short-termism and how policies, strategies, behavioural change need to look to the long-term to adequately address the climate emergency.

It was felt by some attendees that most people consider the Climate Emergency to be an inconvenience and live only in the 'here and now'. It was discussed that the effects of climate change have not affected us in northern Europe as much as other parts of the world (although the increasingly frequency of flooding and extreme weather events in the UK was noted). Therefore, when people do realise the urgency it may well be too late.

There was then discussion about how best to communicate the issues and suggested actions relating to the Climate Emergency and what to do about it. It was explored how it is important that instead of just 'preaching at people and telling them what to do' that people are advised about what's doable and showing 'what's in it for them', by showing how taking certain actions can save them money and making clear what financial support might be available to support certain innovations and changes.

The need to make better use of the following communication and advocacy channels was also explored: social media on all platforms; polls; going into schools; and making the case within businesses and organisations.

QUOTE

"The challenge is a long-term issue and most people do not think that way. We need to make people aware of the fact their behaviour now is important"

DISCUSSION THEME 4

Do you think the climate issue is championed enough by South Oxfordshire District Council?

Summary

There was discussion about the current situation with SODC's emerging local plan, and it was noted that the Planning Examiner had added policies about the Climate Emergency and that these should be exploited to the Neighbourhood Plan's advantage.

However, concern was also expressed that both SODC and the County Council were not doing enough in relation to the Climate Emergency and that 'we need to take more local action.'

DISCUSSION THEME 5

How should the NP refresh respond to the Climate Emergency in terms of vision, objectives, and specific policy themes?

Summary

Vision and objectives

There was consensus that the Climate Emergency needs to be at least the golden thread throughout the NP, if not be the starting point for the whole of the plan. Every policy should be checked against its influence on the climate.

In terms of the golden thread, this would mean that the Plan specifically set out the things that need to be done to address the Climate Emergency: 'from transport and having an infrastructure of charging points through to retrofit, through to renewable energy and tree planting.'

However, opinion was expressed that some people could be turned off if the plan was seen purely as 'the Climate Emergency plan'.

There was also an argument put forward that all the work and thinking taking place on sustainable transport, biodiversity, retrofit etc. in the community currently 'wasn't joined up', which was somewhat dissipating the impact of an overall local strategy to respond to the Climate Emergency – the NP could help in this regard.

QUOTE

"Every policy of the Neighbourhood Plan should take the climate crisis into account."

Other suggestions for how the NP could be used to meet a zero carbon agenda included the provision and encouragement of the following themes as a priority: encouragement for walking and cycling; alternative energies; green infrastructure and biodiversity; and the transition to a low carbon economy.

It was felt that NP policies should be written to encourage new development (whether on allocated sites, through windfall development or infill development) to proactively mitigate climate change, and encourage biodiversity, environmental protection etc. 5

Housing

Attendees felt strongly that the new developments, including social housing, should provide zero carbon homes. Houses should use less concrete and offer electric vehicle charging points. It was felt that itemising the cost of renewables would be helpful as new energy sources can be cheaper than traditional ones.

An attendee noted that a builder in Kingston Bagpuize built new carbon neutral homes at a cheaper price than a standard home and this was something that could be usefully explored. There followed discussion about how resources are limited and these need to be used wisely when looking at both new and existing housing.

It was also very important that tenants and homeowners need to be able to retrofit, with one attendee setting out some indicative costs of £30-40k per house, which 'will not be easy'.

Design and character

There was also discussion about how a NP design and character policy could ensure development in keeping with the local area. This could be particularly useful in terms of preventing the removal of traditional hedges, for example. Concern was also expressed about the loss of trees as a result of development and sometimes during house sales. Therefore, a policy NP could be investigated regarding tree conservation.

Home-working hubs

It was felt, particularly given recent changes with working patterns and arrangements with the pandemic, that a forward-thinking policy would be to provide 'hubs' in public spaces for home working.

Sustainable food and biodiversity

Other projects that could be investigated via the NP included the provision of allotments and a community orchard.

Next steps and recommendations

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The Climate Emergency and ecological etc. ambitions of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan refresh may well go beyond those set out in the emerging South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan. However, a 'limiting' factor in the NP is that it must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for South Oxfordshire. Therefore:

Recommendation 1 – discussions should be sought as early as possible with SODC Planning Officers to explore the ambition and extent of emerging NP policies and measures relating to the Climate Emergency etc.

Wider community engagement

Some of the opinions expressed in the Climate Emergency Focus Group are strongly held. Many are powerfully argued. However, the Neighbourhood Plan needs also to take into account wider community opinion on this issue (and others) and can do so via additional consultation methods:

Recommendation 2 – questions on the Climate Emergency and related issues should be asked in the community-wide NP survey currently being drafted (November 2020)

Recommendation 3 – ‘collective’ responses on the range of NP themes, including the Climate Emergency and related issues, should be sought from the range of community organisations and institutions in Henley and Harpsden as part of overall NP opinion and evidence gathering strategy.

Tom McCulloch and Hilary Lombard

November 2020

R and institutions in Henley and Harpsden as part of overall NP opinion and evidence gathering strategy.

Tom McCulloch and Hilary Lombard



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Topic Paper 2

Housing

Submission
December 2021



Topic Paper 2: Housing Topic Paper

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6. Disclaimer

- 6.1. This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and to support the writing of corresponding Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 6.2. This document is a non-exhaustive summary based on information, guidance and data reasonably available at the time of writing. As such, some or all of it may be superseded or become obsolete at a later date.

7. Purpose

- 7.1. The purpose of this topic paper is to look at available evidence in terms of housing needs of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and explain the site assessment and site selection process.
- 7.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) has published a series of background papers as part of this Baseline Report to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These cover a range of issues and provide more technical or detailed information than is contained in the Plan itself.
- 7.3. The background papers are:
- Paper 1 - Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change
 - Paper 2 - Housing
 - Paper 3 - Retail, Town Centre and Economy
 - Paper 4 - Transport
 - Paper 5 - Infrastructure
- 7.4. These Baseline Report can be downloaded from the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website.

8. Introduction

- 8.1. Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are preparing a new Neighbourhood Plan. This will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Henley and Harpsden covering the period 2020 to 2035. Once 'made' it will replace the existing Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHNP) which came into force in April 2016.
- 8.2. The review is necessary due to the requirements set out in the new South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2020. This includes delivery of new homes and employment land, meeting affordable housing needs and addressing environmental issues such as air quality. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and able to continue strongly influencing planning decisions.
- 8.3. The Plan must be in general conformity with the planning documents sitting above it in the planning hierarchy. For Henley and Harpsden, that is the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Throughout the document, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy, the relevant policies from this plan are referenced.

8.4. The Baseline Report will mirror the sections of the NP to enable easy read-across between each policy and the evidence underpinning it. Hence, as with the NP, each theme has its own chapter, subdivided into the objectives, supporting text and finally the policies themselves.

8.5. Evidence has been compiled from a number of sources:

- Extensive engagement with the community and local stakeholders including through focus groups, leaflet drops, local surveys and online representations.
- Compilation of statistics and facts from existing documents and reports relating to Henley and Harpsden.

9. Vision & Objectives

9.1. The vision statement for the revised Plan states that: **“In 20 years’ time, Henley on Thames and the surrounding village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area.”**

9.2. The revised Neighbourhood Plan includes the following housing objectives:

- HO1 - Identify land for new housing as required by the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policy H3 Local Plan.
- HO2 - Ensure that Henley and Harpsden remain distinct settlements, separated physically and visually from one other.
- HO3 - Prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield sites, and intensification of use of existing land where appropriate.
- HO4 - Deliver an appropriate range and mix of housing to achieve a balanced community and in particular help meet the needs of those age and income groups who have difficulty finding homes in Henley.
- HO5 - Explore opportunities to address local needs and maximise affordable housing delivery.
- HO6 – Ensure that developments are sensitively integrated into new and existing developments, promoting the amenity of all and sympathetic to existing housing.
- HO7 – Encourage new developments to sustain the significance of heritage assets and be sensitive to their settings.
- HO8 - Deliver an appropriate mix and tenure of housing including First Homes.

10. Planning Context

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011- 2035

10.1. The current development plan for the Neighbourhood Plan Area is the South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011 - 2035. This Plan sets out the requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy H3: Housing in the Towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford

10.2. A minimum housing requirement of 3,873 homes will be collectively delivered in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford as follows:

- i) Henley-on-Thames: at least 1,285 homes
- ii) Thame: at least 1,518 homes
- iii) Wallingford: at least 1,070 homes

10.3. Neighbourhood Development Plans for the market towns should seek to meet demonstrable local needs, for example for specialist or affordable housing, even where this would result in housing provision in excess of the outstanding requirement shown in Table 4d.

10.4. If a Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating sites* to meet these requirements within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for housing in that market town will be supported provided that proposals comply with the remainder of the policies in this Development Plan.

* the Plan has reached submission stage and has allocated sufficient housing sites.

National Planning Practice Guidance

10.5. The Planning Practice Guidance states that ‘housing need is an unconstrained assessment of the number of homes needed in an area. Assessing housing need is the first step in the process of deciding how many homes need to be planned for. It should be undertaken separately from assessing land availability.... and preparing policies to address this such as site allocations’

11. Latest Housing Figures

11.1. The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2035 sets out the housing supply required made up from several sources including; Strategic allocations, retained Core Strategy and Local Plan 2011 allocations, existing planning commitments, small scale (non-strategic sites) to be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans or identified in the emerging Plan where Neighbourhood Development Plans are not being progressed and sites not yet identified (windfalls) that will come forward through the development management process.

11.2. The Local Plan proposes an additional 15% housing stock to 2011 in the market towns including Henley-on-Thames. An additional 1,285 dwellings are proposed for Henley-on-Thames to 2035 (completed and committed total).

11.3. On the date that the Plan is likely to be examined, housing will already have been built (Completions), a further quantity will have planning permission but will not have been built (Commitments) and over the remainder of the plan period it would be expected that a proportion of growth would be delivered via windfall developments. The table below demonstrates how the minimum housing target requirement will be met.

11.4. Table 1b: Total Projected Housing Growth (2011 - 2035)

Core Strategy + 15% growth	1285
Completions and commitments*	1216
New housing allocations proposed in the JHHNP	145
Total Growth (2011 - 2035)	1361

* Completions and commitments as of 1 April 2021

12. Housing Needs Assessment

12.1. A [Housing Needs Assessment](#) was completed by AECOM in 2020. This suggests that Henley and Harpsden will require an additional 527 affordable rented homes and 800 affordable home ownership dwellings over the Plan period.

12.2. AECOM's review of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) suggests that the Affordable Housing need identified is focused on households living in unsuitable housing and unable to afford to rent in the market. The SHMA does not quantify the need (or rather, potential demand) for Affordable Housing from households who can afford to rent but cannot afford to buy and would prefer to do so. This is because such households who can afford to rent in the open market but cannot afford to buy were added to the NPPF definition of those in need of Affordable Housing since this SHMA was published in 2014.

12.3. In order to provide an estimate for those who cannot afford to buy in the market in Henley and Harpsden, to complement the SHMA's calculation for those who require affordable rented products, AECOM has produced an additional estimate as shown in the table below.

Table 4-5 : Estimate of the need for affordable home ownership housing, Henley and Harpsden

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current number of renters in NA	1,024.36	Census 2011 number of renters x national % increase to 2018
1.2 Percentage renters on housing benefit in LA	13.40%	% of renters in 2018 on housing benefit (based on LA proportion)
1.3 Number of renters on housing benefits in NA	161.40	1.1 x 1.2
1.4 Current need (households)	782.22	Current renters minus those on HB and minus 25% assumed to rent by choice
1.5 Per annum	52.15	1.4/ plan period
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	665.79	LA household projections for plan period (2014 based) pro rated to NA
2.2 % of households unable to buy but able to rent	15.05%	Current % of households in PRS
2.3 Total newly arising need	100.20	2.1 x 2.2
2.4 Total newly arising need per annum	5.57	2.3/ plan period
STAGE 3: SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Supply of affordable housing	88.53	Number of shared ownership homes in NA (Census 2011 + new build to 2018/19)
3.2 Supply - intermediate resales	4.43	3.1 x 5% (assume rate of re-sale)
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) PER ANNUM		
Shortfall (per annum)	53.29	Shortfall = (Step 1.5 + Step 2.4) – 3.2

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, CLG 2014 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

- 12.4. South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) have adopted a new local plan 2011-2035. The housing requirement set out in the Local Plan equates to 775 homes per year over the plan period, which constitutes an uplift on the housing requirement generated by the standard method, particularly taking into account the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA)⁵⁵, the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and the approach taken by the other Oxfordshire Local Authorities in their adopted Local Plans. It is proposed that the plan could enable delivery of up to 12,048 affordable homes (justified by viability evidence) largely through the provision of seven strategic sites within South Oxfordshire.
- 12.5. The Housing Delivery Strategy recommends that South Oxfordshire District Council could consider increasing the requirement of affordable rental properties on new development sites in areas of high demand such as Henley.
- 12.6. The Local Plan will be meeting the housing needs of Henley and Harpsden and this will be largely down to a percentage requirement of affordable homes in mixed market-led schemes as set out in Policy H9. For all major developments (10 or more homes), the policy requires housing sites to deliver 40% affordable housing on site. For sites in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, proposals for 5 or more homes will provide a financial contribution equivalent to 40% affordable housing provision, but for sites of 10 or more, this would be provided on site.
- 12.7. The Housing Needs Assessment recognises this and also suggest that there may be some overlap at the margins.
- 12.8. The strategy of the Local Plan was found sound including the strategy for identified growth for Henley.
- 12.9. The recommended tenure split for Henley and Harpsden, based on the HNA is to maintain that set out in district level policy: 40% affordable rented, 35% social rented and 25% other affordable routes to home ownership as set out Policy H9 of the Local Plan.
- 12.10. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, the government have released a ministerial statement on 24 May 2021 requiring First Homes; a specific kind of discounted market sale housing which should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:
- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
 - b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
 - c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
 - d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

55

https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038255624&CODE=DEBC6A309FBCBBF6F16E378EF9002410

12.11. First Homes are the government’s preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.

12.12. The updated tenure mix in South Oxfordshire, taking into account the changes introduced by First Homes, is shown in the table below.

Tenure	South Oxfordshire
First Homes	25%
Social Rent	35%
Affordable Rent	25%
Other routes to affordable home ownership	15%

12.13. The NPC will seek opportunities to maximise meeting these needs. The Committee will consider the most suitable sites for Henley and Harpsden, applying additional site assessment criteria, considering feedback from residents and looking at the wider impact of sites, taking into account constraints to growth such as infrastructure capacity and provision.

13. Past Performance on Affordable Housing Delivery

13.1. The AECOM estimates of the potential supply of Affordable Housing stand in contrast to the reality experienced in Henley and Harpsden in recent years. SODC state that the number of Affordable Housing units delivered in Henley and Harpsden between April 2011 and March 2019 was just 14, all of which were shared ownership. The number of Affordable Housing units committed for future delivery as of April 2019 is only 16 – 12 of which will be for affordable rent and 4 for shared ownership are expected to complete in the 2019/20 period.⁵⁶

13.2. That equates to a past effective delivery rate of 4% and an expected delivery rate of 2%, compared with the 40% requirement set out in SODC’s planning policies. This may be due to a high proportion of small infill sites that do not meet the size threshold needed for that policy requirement to apply. It may also be due to developments of residential institutions (Use Class C2) coming forward without requiring contribution to affordable housing.

13.3. It should be noted that proposed the Local Plan sets out a requirement for 40% affordable housing in respect of all developments within Use Class C2 where the site is delivering a net gain of 10 or more self-contained units which should help to deliver more affordable housing. There is affordable housing expected at the Thames Farm and Highlands Farm sites which should be delivering 103 affordable units, of which 77 will be for affordable rent.

⁵⁶ Should note that these are records from Henley and doesn’t include Harpsden.

13.4. The following table provides an updated delivery of affordable housing and the potential forecast. Data provided by SODC on 28 July 2021.

Site	Affordable Rented	Shared Ownership
Completed		
Highlands Farm (1), Rotherfield Greys	41	8
116-118 Greys Road, Henley	-	5
Wilkins Yard, Henley	-	9
Townlands Hospital, Henley	12	-
Forecast/potential upcoming		
Land West of Fairmile, Henley	22	7
Anderson House, Henley	0	8
Wyevale Garden Centre, Harpsden	12	4
Highlands Farm (1), Rotherfield Greys	8	8
Highlands Farm (2), Rotherfield Greys	8	3
Thames Farm, Reading Road, Lower Shiplake	28	10
Land to East of Reading Road, Lower Shiplake	20	6

13.5. According to our records, there have been a total of **75** affordable homes delivered in the last five years, with **53** of these being for affordable rent and **22** being shared ownership.

13.6. Including applications that are currently pending or have some form of permission, possible forecasted units stand at **144**. **98** of these units for affordable rent and **46** for shared ownership.

14. Housing Needs Survey

- 14.1. In order to carry out the [Community Survey](#), a publicity flyer was delivered to all residents in Henley and Harpsden in December 2020 - January 2021. Residents were invited to respond to the [Community Survey](#) via a Survey Monkey internet link. A number of hard copy responses were also received (and inputted) from those residents who did not have access to the internet. The survey deadline was 8 February 2021 and 771 survey responses were received.
- 14.2. The survey included questions about housing for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. A copy of the questionnaire is available on the neighbourhood plan website.
- 14.3. The Survey results are shown in Appendix A. Key points are:
- **A total of 244 people stated that they would require a house in the next 10 years.**
 - **Those in detached houses were in the most need to move house.**
 - **The majority of those who have a housing need do not require specialist housing.**
 - **The preferred tenure to meet housing need 'Housing for sale at a lower price' with 73% of respondents selecting this option.**
 - **Most respondents require a 2 or 3 bed property.**
 - **The majority of respondents (42%) want a detached home.**
 - **39 people currently renting wanted to buy a new home but couldn't afford to.**
- 14.4. The evidence from consultation suggests it would be appropriate to support Community Led Housing in the NPA and/or to have policy to support delivery of affordable housing.

Housing Policies for The Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Policy H1: Design Brief

For all of the allocated sites listed within Policy DS1, a Design Brief must be produced for the whole site, setting out the principles for development on the submission of a planning application.

Applicants should seek to discuss the content of the Design Brief with Henley Town Council and where appropriate Harpsden Parish Council. Where appropriate the Design Brief should demonstrate consideration of:

- I. Location, type and management of open space and recreation facilities.
- II. Location, type and management of landscaping.
- III. Management, impact and mitigation of views, vistas and adjacencies.
- IV. Building use, scale, height, density and massing.
- V. Materials palette.
- VI. How the development responds to local character.
- VII. Connecting walking and cycling routes.
- VIII. Promotion of sustainable development and energy efficiency

Policy H2: Affordable Housing

Taking into account the requirements for affordable housing set out in the Local Plan Policy H9, as well as the requirement that at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered should be First Homes, the affordable housing tenure sought should be in accordance with the table below:

Tenure	South Oxfordshire
First Homes	25%
Social Rent	35%
Affordable Rent	25%
Other routes to affordable home ownership	15%

Policy H3: Housing Type and Mix

Proposals for residential development should deliver a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households. Proposals should have regard to local housing need, as evidenced by the Henley and Harpsden Housing Needs Assessment and any future updates.

Policy H4: Infill and Self-Build Dwellings

Infill housing developments and proposals for the construction of self-build dwellings within the built-up areas of Henley and Harpsden will be supported where it is demonstrated that the proposed development is in accordance with other relevant policies of the development plan.

15. Site Selection Process

15.1. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee have considered all potential sites put forward and made choices about which sites to allocate and for what purpose. Not all the sites put forward to the NPC through the Call for Sites have been considered suitable or are required to meet development's needs. The site assessment process is explained in the next section.

Site Assessment Process

- Stage 1: Review of existing JHHNP allocated sites
- Stage 2: Identification of new sites
- Stage 3: Site Assessment by AECOM
- Stage 4: Sites rated green or amber by AECOM shortlisted
- Stage 5: Public engagement to consider 15 sites
- Stage 6: Considering further site suitability criteria
- Stage 7: Sites selected for allocation

15.2. The Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2016, which included 11 site allocations. The following table shows the existing sites allocated in the JHHNP and their current status:

Site Name	Allocation	Status
Land West of Fair Mile (Site A)	Around 60 dwellings	Planning application currently being decided for 72 units
Mill Lane former Jet Garage (Site H)	Around 55 dwellings	53 Assisted Living Extra Care apartments delivered
Wilkins (Site U)	Around 20 dwellings	23 dwellings delivered
Highlands Farm (Site M)	Around 170 dwellings as part of the mixed use development of the site	Planning permission granted and currently under construction
357 Reading Road (Site J)	Around 30 dwellings	Assessed by AECOM for 50 dwellings
Gillotts School (Site C)	Around 50 dwellings	Assessed by AECOM for 80 dwellings
TA Centre (Site V)	Around 10 dwellings	Allocated but not considered to be deliverable and therefore removed from Plan.
Chiltern's End (Site F)	Around 27 dwellings	Assessed by AECOM for C2 use
Stuart Turner and Empstead Works (Site E)	Around 42 dwellings as part of the mixed use development of the site	Proposal remains the same and therefore principal of development established
118 Greys Road (Site Z)	Around 13 dwellings	16 dwellings delivered
Henley Youth Club (Site C)	Around 23 dwellings	Assessed by AECOM for C2 use

16. Identification of Suitable Sites

Call for Sites

16.1. As part of the early engagement stage of the revised Neighbourhood Plan, a 'call for sites' was undertaken between 18 April 2019 - 18 July 2019 to establish which sites land developers and other interested parties wished to be considered for development through the revised Plan. This was publicised on the JHHNP website and parties were asked to fill in a form to ascertain their intentions for the land. A total of 18 new sites were put forward for consideration for various proposed uses at this stage. The NPC continued to receive site suggestions (NEW1 and NEW2) after the official call for sites, and these were accounted for.

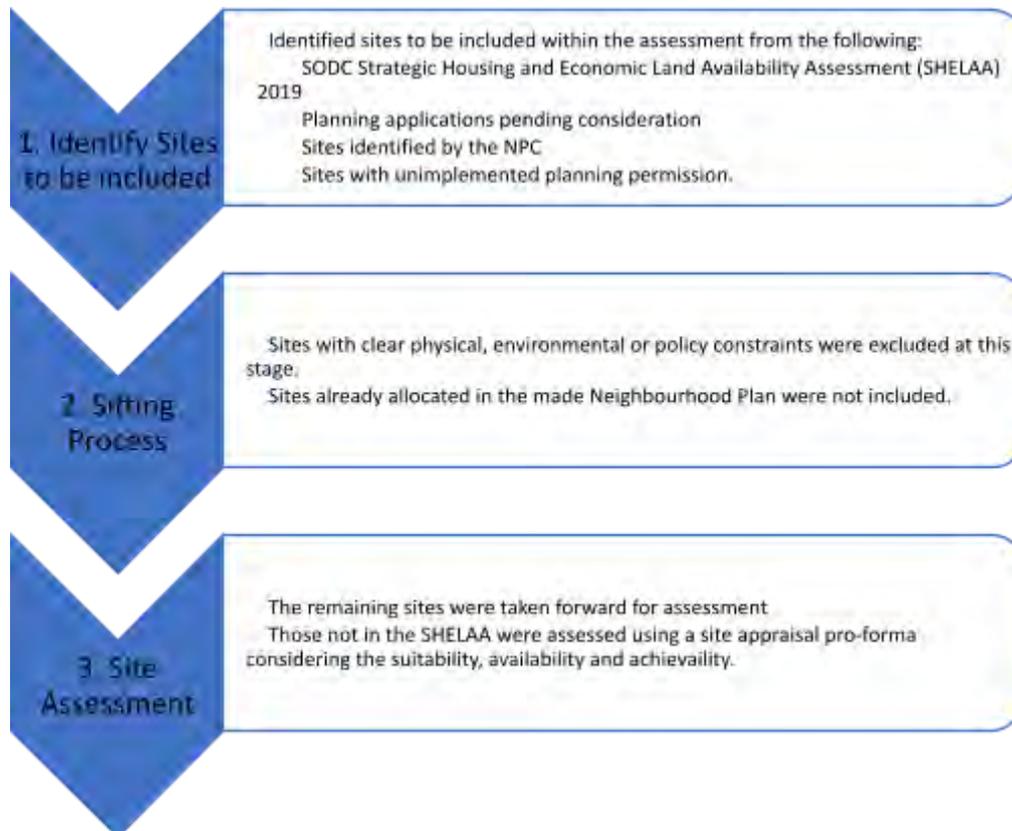
AECOM Site Assessment

16.2. AECOM conducted an independent site assessment for the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) as part of the Locality and MHCLG Neighbourhood Planning programme.

16.3. The approach undertaken by AECOM in the site appraisal was based on the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and associated National Planning Practice Guidance.

16.4. AECOM produced a [Site Assessment report](#) which included the site assessment for 35 sites identified through the original 2019 Call for Sites and other sources. Following this, an [addendum](#) was completed in 2020 which included the site assessment of 2 new sites and 3 sites already assessed in the original Site Assessment but for different proposals. AECOM produced a [second addendum](#) in 2021 with a further 3 additional sites.

16.5. The AECOM methodology for choosing sites to assess can be summarised as follows:



16.6. The Site Assessment by AECOM included the assessment of 41 sites identified through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites and the 2019 SHELAA. The site assessment found that 9 sites were free from constraints or have constraints that could be resolved:

Site 2 - Chiltern Centre: The site is previously developed land within the built-up area of Henley, access to services and facilities in less than a five-minute walk. This site is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is within the extent of the built-up area. The site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. The site would remain suitable should the emerging plan become adopted policy, as it is in conformity with Policy H1 as the site is appropriate infilling within the existing built-up area.

Site 5 – Land west of Fairmile: the site is greenfield within the general built-up area of Henley, the surrounding land is an adopted allocation in the existing Neighbourhood Plan therefore would act as an extension of this allocation.

Site 853a – Land at Highlands Farm: 853a is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site (once the wider side construction is complete) is within the built- up area. The area put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites (853a) is suitable for allocation as there are no major constraints and once the other part of the site is completed, it will be within the built-up area. The site's suitability would remain the same should the emerging plan become adopted policy, as it is in conformity with Policy H1 as the site is appropriate infilling within the existing built-up area.

Site 1117 – Land East of A4155, Wyevale: this site already has planning permission for 40 dwellings and is suitable to allocate for a further 20 dwellings as the principle of development is already established on the site.

Site X – Former Youth Centre: this site is included in the made Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood and has been reassessed to change the allocation from housing to C2 residential institution which would not change its suitability for allocation. The conclusions in the evidence base for the made Neighbourhood Plan remain relevant. The site is assessed against emerging Local Plan Policy H1, which refers to housing including C2. In addition, this site meets Core Strategy Policy CSH4, emerging Local Plan Policy H13 and meets the requirements set out in the PPG on housing for older people. If there is evidence a care home is needed in this location this would be sufficient evidence to support an allocation. If the evidence of need does not exist, the site cannot be allocated in the Plan for the C2 use, but could be included in the NDP as an aspiration which aims to bring forward the site as a care home, should the evidence of need come forward.⁵⁷ If the site was allocated it would count towards the housing requirement, but the exact calculation should be discussed with SODC.

Site NEW1 – Land North of Crossways: This site partially meets objectives in the NP as it does not contribute to coalescence between Henley and Harpsden however, it is a greenfield therefore does not meet the objective of prioritising brownfield. This site is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is within the built- up area. In addition, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, the site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.

Site C – Playing Fields at Gillotts School: The site is owned by Gillotts School and in use as a playing field. The school is proposing to sell the site to allow improvement and renovation of the school. This site is included as an allocation in the made Neighbourhood Plan for 50 dwellings. The site area avoiding removal of existing trees is approx. 2.3 hectares. The proposed increase to 80 dwellings on the site would be a net density of approx. 46 dwellings per hectare, assuming 25% of the gross site is set aside for non-residential use required to support the development. This density is broadly in line with the made Neighbourhood Plan policy guidelines as set out in paragraph 5.8 and therefore would be an appropriate level of development, subject to detailed design and agreement with the Highways Authority (OCC) over access arrangements.

⁵⁷ See the Infrastructure Topic Paper for evidence on the need for a C2 care home.

Site F – Chiltern’s End: The site is located within the built up area of Henley and contains former care home buildings. It is understood the site closed in 2016 and has remained unused since. It is currently allocated in the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan for residential use. With regards to C2 on this site, AECOM stated that if evidence of need or availability does not exist, the site cannot be allocated in the plan for the C2 use, but could be included in the NDP as an aspiration which aims to bring forward the site as a care home, should the evidence of availability and need come forward.⁵⁸

Site J – 353-357 Reading Road: Clearance of the site of existing buildings and diversion of a large number of utilities would mean high development costs therefore the viability of the scheme should be established before the site is allocated to ensure the housing delivery is achievable. If a development brief could demonstrate that the level of development was achievable with respect to parking, open space and other requirements and the access arrangements designed to allow continued access for the retail delivery to the adjacent superstore, the site could be allocated for 50 dwellings in the revised Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, the site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.

16.7. A further 6 sites were considered potentially suitable and available (i.e. have not been ruled out entirely) but have constraints – some very significant – which mean they are less likely to be suitable for development. If these constraints could not be resolved or mitigated, they would not be appropriate for allocation. These were:

Site 13 – Thames Poultry Farmhouse, Bolney Lane: The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built-up area however, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5- year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC would be required to determine whether development of the site would meet policy. In addition, the site has a current planning application on it for 3 dwellings which should be monitored. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.

Site 14 – The Bungalow, Green Acres, Harpsden Woods : This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is adjacent rather than within the built- up area. The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built-up area however, a site to the south (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5- year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC on whether the site would meet policy would be required. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation subject to consultation with SODC.

⁵⁸ See the Infrastructure Topic Paper for evidence on the need for a C2 care home.

Site 949 – Henley College: the site is split into two parts (not continuous). Both sites are currently occupied by Henley College and grounds. If the sites were available for redevelopment the parts that are most suitable are the previously developed areas that meet local policy and are well situated in relation to the town.

Site 878 – Thames Farm (NE Corner): This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is outside the built-up area. However, it will be in conformity once the two adjacent sites have been built out. The site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. There are no major constraints, however conformity with policy relies on site 1117 being built out. The site's suitability would remain the same should the emerging plan become adopted policy.

Site E – Stuart Turner/Empstead Works: the site is a town centre previously developed site. However, it would have to demonstrate the existing employment use is no longer viable.

NEW2 – Hallemead House, Woodlands Road, Harpsden: This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is adjacent to rather than within the built-up area. The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built up area however, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC on if the site would meet policy would be required. In addition, given the narrow access road and potential landscape impact, the capacity of the site should be lower than Site 1036 and would be more appropriate at the lower density of around 10 dwellings per hectare. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.

16.8. The remaining 26 sites (Site 1, 6,11, 18,19, 956, 939, 161, 988, 1262, 1261, 1260, 1259, 853, 1257, 827, 1255, 1126, 961, 197, 378, 163, 876, 1158, 1036 and 950) were not suitable for residential development and therefore not appropriate for allocation in the plan.

16.9. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee considered that two sites (6 and 1158) should be considered further due to the sites being promoted to provide affordable housing. It was later confirmed that site 1158 was not proposing more affordable housing than required through Local Plan policy H9.

16.10. Following the AECOM site assessment, it was confirmed by the landowner that site 949 was no longer available and therefore this site was not taken forward for further consideration.

Stage 4: Sites rated green or amber by AECOM shortlisted

16.11. This left 15 sites, those assessed as green and amber within the AECOM site assessment to be considered further. The site promoters for these sites were invited to attend public exhibitions within the Town Hall in order to provide the opportunity for the public to consider these sites.

Stage 5: Public engagement to consider 15 sites

16.12. A Site Assessment consultation event was held in Henley Town Hall on 2-3 July 2021. Attendees were invited to view the AECOM site assessments and complete the Site Assessment Feedback Form.

16.13. For those unable to attend the physical event, links to an online Site Assessment Consultation were widely publicised locally via local newspapers, social media, and direct emailing to community contact lists (residents, businesses, and community groups). People were invited to consider the site assessments on a dedicated Henley and Harpsden NP webpage and complete an online version of the Site Assessment Feedback Form by 12 July 2021.

Public Engagement Response

- 219 Site Assessment feedback forms were received in hard copy and via the online survey.
- A number of representations which did not use the site assessment feedback form (online or hard copy) were also received. These have been collated separately to the Site Assessment Feedback form
 - 9 representations from residents received by email before public consultation event.
 - 27 representations from residents received by email/ letter after public consultation event.
 - 1 representation received on behalf of a group of residents

The full [Site Assessment Feedback report](https://jhhnp.org.uk/) is available on the Neighbourhood Plan website: <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>

Overview of findings

Narrative summary – ALL SITES

16.14. The main thrust of comments regarding potential development in general was that brownfield development was preferable to greenfield, and that where development happens it should be to maximise affordable housing and minimise large, expensive housing. There were also concerns about development contributing to the coalescence of Henley, Harpsden, and Shiplake, and that development should consolidate the development of existing settlements and not materially change their character.

16.15. Longer-term sustainability of housing sites should also be a key consideration. There was also concern expressed about local infrastructure (such as parking and traffic) being inadequate to cope with new development, particularly in the locations which are most distant from Henley.

16.16. An increase in carbon emissions from new development was also expressed as a concern, plus a lack of emphasis on alternative, low carbon (non-car) methods of travel to access and connect sites. The opinion that new development should be premised on being carbon-neutral and increasing biodiversity was also expressed.

16.17. The need to avoid ribbon development, which may lead to further infill development behind such developments, was also stated, as was the importance of maintaining green gaps and local green spaces. Drainage, and the impact on local aquifers were also concerns, as were other potentially problematic ground conditions.

16.18. There was also strong opinion regarding the potential impacts of developing several sites, which, while in Harpsden parish, are in close proximity to the parish of Shiplake. Such development would impact or strain the infrastructure, amenities and services in Shiplake (especially with regard to traffic and parking). It was felt that formal site assessment consultation should have been extended to Shiplake residents.

Stage 6: Considering further site suitability criteria

16.19. The Site Selection Working Group met on the 26 August to identify the provisional development sites to be included as preferred options within the Pre-Submission Plan (Regulation 14) which took place for a 8-week period from 20 September 2021 and 16 November 2021.

16.20. The group considered the evidence, public feedback, objectives and strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan the Local Plan.

16.21. The shortlisted sites were subject to the following additional site assessment criteria:

- Benefit to town: How the proposed site will bring wider benefits for the community and the town.
- Loss of other beneficial use: Whether the proposed site would result in the loss of an existing beneficial use which is either not surplus to requirements or could not be replaced locally.
- Climate emergency: How the proposed site will reduce carbon emissions and be resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Landscape Impact: Consider the impact of the proposed site on the landscape and key views.
- Impact on roads: Evaluate the impact of the proposed site on the local roads - traffic etc.

16.22. Although it was originally proposed to assess the sites impact on air quality. It was considered, by the group, that this was not a specific site assessment criteria that could be undertaken at this stage. It was therefore agreed to remove this from the list of criteria.

16.23. Comments received from OCC Education, Minerals and Waste, Transport and Archaeology teams also informed site selection.

16.24. The additional site assessment can be found in Appendix B.

Stage 7: Sites selected for allocation

16.25. The following sites were considered to be the most suitable options for development.

Site	Dwellings allocated in existing JHHNP	Dwellings allocated in this JHHNP
Site A1: Land West of Fair Mile	Around 60	72
Site C: Gillott's School Playing Field	Around 50	50
Site E: Empstead Works / Stuart Turner	Mixed use including 42	Mixed use including 42
Site F: Chiltern's End	Around 27	27
Site J: 357 Reading Road	Around 30	50
NEW Site M1: Northern Field at Highlands Farm	0	110
Site X: Henley Youth Club	Around 23	23
NEW Site Y: Chilterns Centre	0	3

Appendix A: Results of the Housing Needs Survey

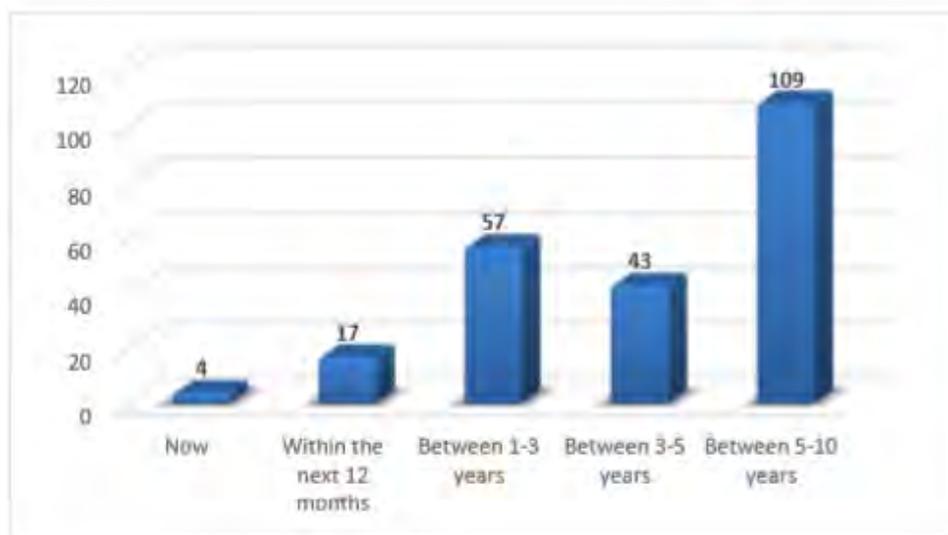
Housing Need

This section considers responses to a part of the questionnaire only completed by those respondents who expressed they had a future or imminent housing need. The base for response is lower than the overall survey and therefore should be used with caution.

Housing need for current residents

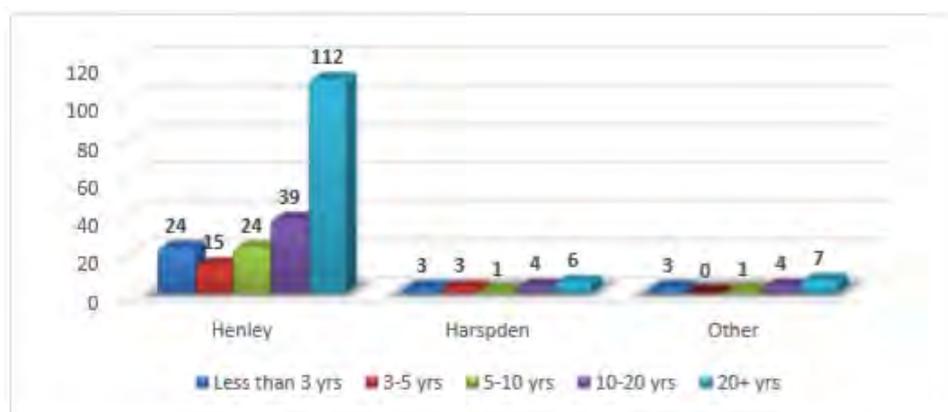
A total of 244 people stated that they would require a house in the next 10 years and 52% of respondents (121) would require a home within the next five years.

Figure 14 -When would you need to move into this new home?



There is a significant difference based on length of time in living in the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA). Those who have lived in Henley-on-Thames longest (over 10 years) are more likely to need to move, 46% advised they did need another home.

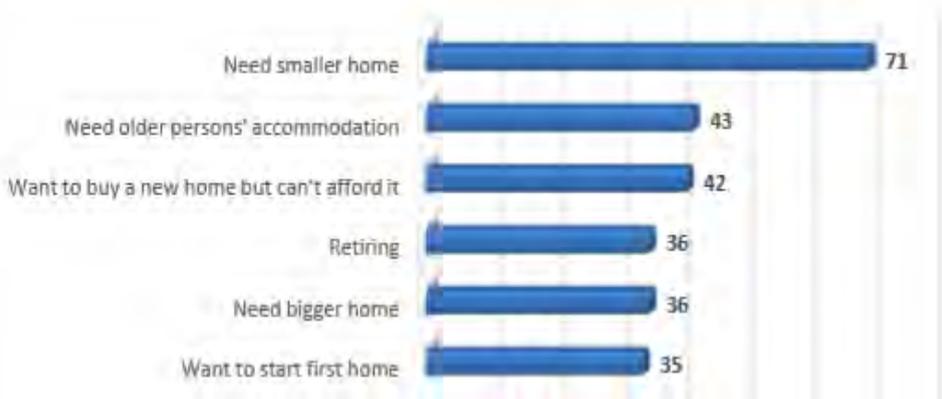
Figure 15 - How many years have you lived there?



Reason for Housing Need

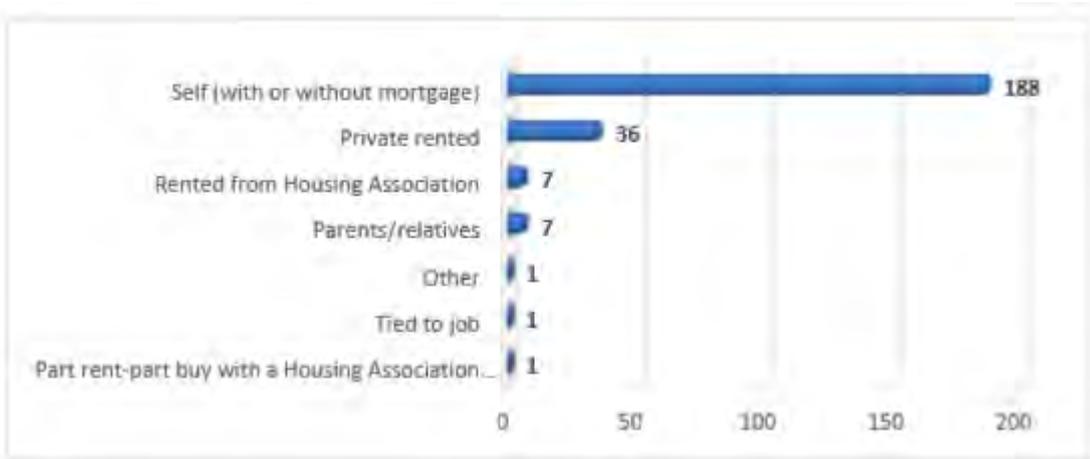
The main reason for requiring a new home was due to people needing a smaller home with 71 stating this as the reason (30%), 43 people need older persons' accommodation (18%) and 42 people want to buy a new home but can't afford it (18%).

Figure 16 - Why does your household need a new home?



Those in detached houses were in the most need to move house, 112 of respondents (47%), with people in terrace and semi-detached accounting for a fifth each. 114 of respondents had more than 4 bedrooms in their existing house and the majority of people (78%) owned their existing property (with or without a mortgage).

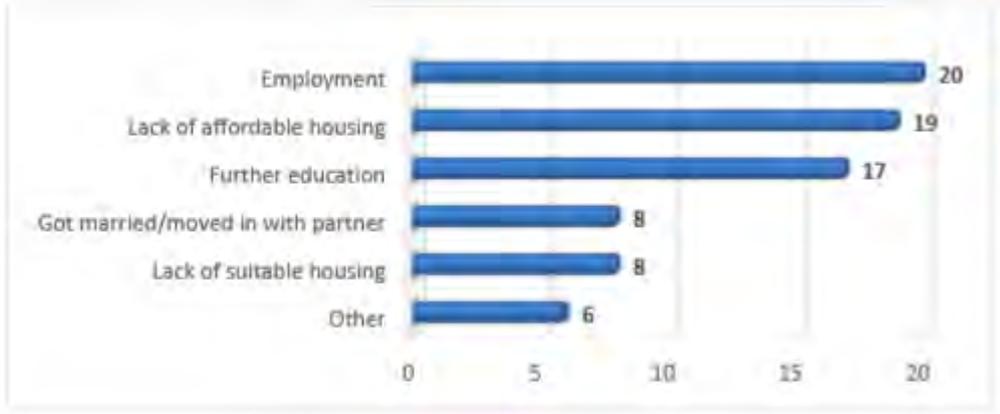
Figure 17 - Who owns the home you live in now?



When asked why people in the household had left Henley or Harpsden, the most popular reason (20 persons) was due to employment. 29 people out of 45 stated it was due to the lack of affordable housing.

It should be noted that respondents were invited to select all options that met their reasons.

Figure 18 - Why did they leave?

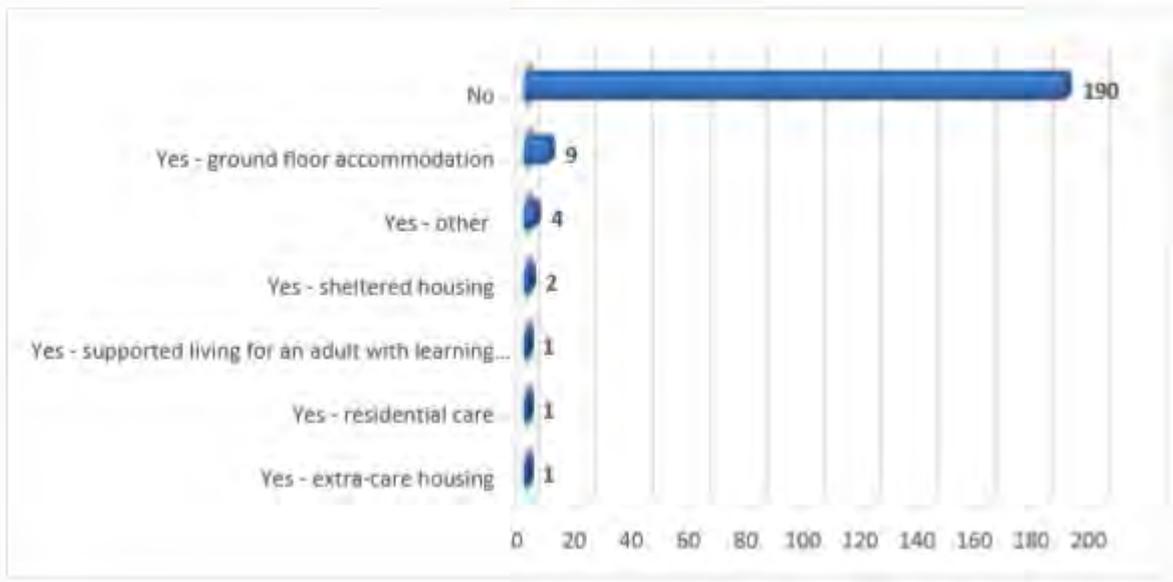


Tenure and size of housing needed

The majority (92%) of those who have a housing need do not require specialist housing.

A few stated that limited mobility 11% (22 persons) would impact upon the house they needed and 5% (10 persons) have other care/support need.

Figure 19 - Does anyone in your household have a specialist housing need?



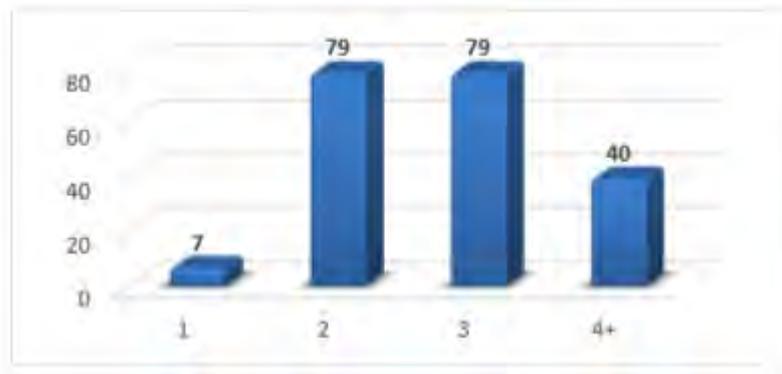
The preferred tenure to meet housing need ‘Housing for sale at a lower price’ with 73% of respondents selecting this option. 19% of respondents would prefer a self build, and 11% would prefer to rent from a housing association (with affordable rents). Shared ownership would suit 5% of respondents. Private renting is low at 2% of respondents with a housing need.

Figure 20 - Which of the following would be best for you?



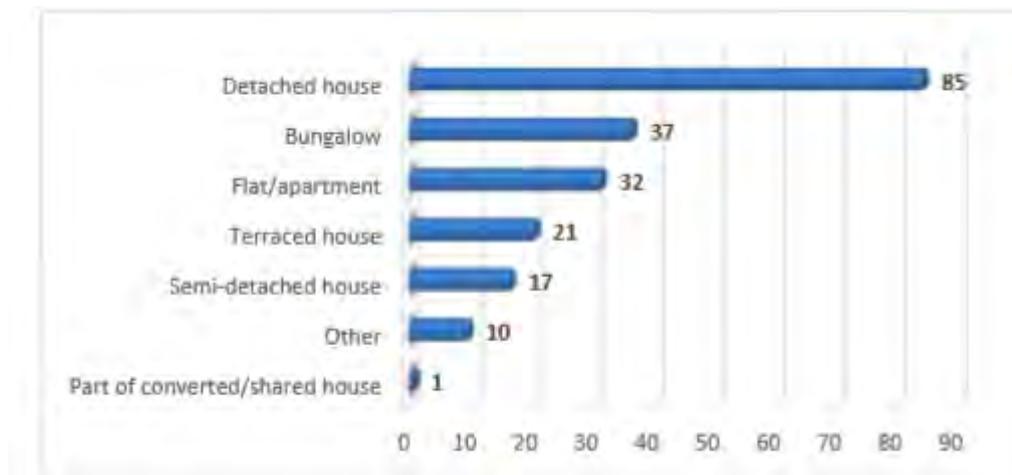
When asked to consider which size housing would best suit their need, most respondents (39% respectively) require a 2 or 3 bed property.

Figure 21 - How many bedrooms would your new home need?



The majority of respondents (42%) want a detached home, followed by 18% wanting a bungalow and a 16% wanting a flat/apartment.

Figure 22 - What type of home would best meet your needs?



Out of the people currently renting, 76% (39 persons) considered that they would want to buy a new home but couldn't afford to, in comparison to just 12 persons that were currently renting down to choose.

Figure 23 - If you are currently renting, do you do this out of choice or is it because you can't afford to buy a new home?



Of the respondents who expressed a need for new housing, the majority (14%) are not on the South Oxfordshire Council Housing Register.



Appendix B: Additional Site Assessment

Pro-forma for sites considered further by the NPC.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 853a (M1)
Site Address / Location	Land at Highlands Farm
Proposed Use (and numbers)	Mixed Use Site including 110 dwellings
AECOM Assessment	<p>853a is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site (once the wider site construction is complete) is within the built-up area.</p> <p>The area put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites (853a) is suitable for allocation as there are no major constraints and once the other part of the site is completed, it will be within the built-up area.</p> <p>The site's suitability would remain the same should the emerging plan become adopted policy, as it is in conformity with Policy H1 as the site is appropriate infilling within the existing built-up area.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Allocate for mixed use development.</p> <p>Considered suitable to be allocated for mixed use development including residential development for approximately 110 dwellings, employment/ community facilities, the relocation of the Chiltern Centre and the provision of community-led housing.</p> <p>This site can provide housing and affordable housing required for Henley , open space, employment land, community led housing and community land. The site is well connected to Henley. This is considered to be one of the most sustainable and suitable sites of the alternatives.</p>
Relevant NP Objectives	The site would accord with objectives: H01, H02, H04, H05, H06, H07.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	<p>The site is for a mixed use scheme which could deliver employment/ community facilities, the relocation of the Chiltern Centre and the provision of community-led housing which would provide a number of public benefits to the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p> <p>The latest Housing Needs Assessment demonstrates that there is a need for affordable housing for Henley and Harpsden. Policy H3 of the Local Plan states that Neighbourhood Development Plans for the market towns should seek to meet demonstrable local needs, for example for specialist or affordable housing, even where this would result in housing provision in excess of the outstanding requirement.</p>

	<p>The advantage of this site coming forward rather than a number of smaller sites would be that it could deliver the quantum of development required and deliver a greater number of affordable housing required for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This development could bring forward approximately 44 additional affordable houses.</p> <p>The disadvantage of allocating a number of smaller sites (especially those under 10 dwellings) would that they would yield few, if any affordable housing and other benefits for the area.</p> <p>Site 853a would adequately achieve the quantum of development required for Henley and deliver other improvements through additional CIL and S106.</p>
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	The site is well located to the town on an existing bus route with pedestrian and cycle links available. It would comply with the Local Plan strategy to direct growth towards Henley.
Landscape Impact	It is considered that the public benefit provided through this scheme would outweigh harm to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The landscape sensitivity is influenced by the new housing being built on the existing allocation Site M: Highlands Farm. Any impact could be mitigated by existing and new hedges and tree planting within the site and other requirements set out in the policy wording.
Impact on roads	Considered to be a good access onto Greys Road.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 2 (Y)
Site Address / Location	Chiltern Centre, Greys Road
Proposed Use (and numbers)	3 dwellings
AECOM Assessment	<p>The site is previously developed land within the built-up area of Henley, access to services and facilities in less than a five-minute walk.</p> <p>This site is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is within the extent of the built-up area. The site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The site would remain suitable should the emerging plan become adopted policy, as it is in conformity with Policy H1 as the site is appropriate infilling within the existing built-up area.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Allocate for 3 dwellings.</p> <p>Considered suitable to be allocated for residential development for approximately 3 dwellings.</p> <p>The site is within the built up area of Henley with good access to services and facilities. This is considered to be one of the most sustainable and suitable sites of the alternatives.</p>
Relevant NP Objectives	The site would accord with objectives: H01, H02, H03, H06.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	Development would replace the existing Chiltern Centre and would contribute towards improved facilities bringing wider benefits to the town.
Loss of other beneficial use	Development would replace the existing Chiltern Centre which is proposed to be relocated so no loss of beneficial use.
Climate emergency	The site is previously developed land within the built-up area of Henley, access to services and facilities in less than a five-minute walk.
Landscape Impact	Considered acceptable.
Impact on roads	Considered acceptable.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site C
Site Address / Location	Playing Fields at Gillotts School
Proposed Use (and numbers)	50 or 80
AECOM Assessment	The site is owned by Gillotts School and in use as a playing field. The school is proposing to sell the site to allow improvement and renovation of the school. This site is included as an allocation in the made Neighbourhood Plan for 50 dwellings. The site area avoiding removal of existing trees is approx. 2.3 hectares. The proposed increase to 80 dwellings on the site would be a net density of approx. 46 dwellings per hectare, assuming 25% of the gross site is set aside for non-residential use required to support the development. This density is broadly in line with the made Neighbourhood Plan policy guidelines as set out in paragraph 5.8 and therefore would be an appropriate level of development, subject to detailed design and agreement with the Highways Authority (OCC) over access arrangements.
Site Selection Group Recommendation	Allocate for 50 dwellings Considered suitable to be allocated for residential development for approximately 50 dwellings.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	Bring investment to the school.
Loss of other beneficial use	Loss of playing fields.
Climate emergency	n/a
Landscape Impact	Not considered to be suitable for 80 dwellings, an increase of 30 dwellings would reduce the area available for tree coverage to screen the site as required through the existing JHHNP. A higher density scheme would have a greater impact on the landscape and wider views particularly to the south from across Harpsden Valley and the AONB. 50 dwellings on this site would be more appropriate to respond to the site's environmental and landscape context and allow for landscaping.
Impact on roads	80 dwellings on this site would increase the traffic and impact on Blandy Road.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site J
Site Address / Location	353-357 Reading Road
Proposed Use (and numbers)	Currently allocated for 30, now being considered for 50 dwellings
AECOM Assessment	Clearance of the site of existing buildings and diversion of a large number of utilities would mean high development costs therefore the viability of the scheme should be established before the site is allocated to ensure the housing delivery is achievable. If a development brief could demonstrate that the level of development was achievable with respect to parking, open space and other requirements and the access arrangements designed to allow continued access for the retail delivery to the adjacent superstore, the site could be allocated for 50 dwellings in the revised Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, the site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.
Site Selection Group Recommendation	Allocate for 50 dwellings Considered suitable to be allocated for residential development for approximately 50 dwellings.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	The site would bring forward a mixed-use site including 200sqm of retail/commercial land.
Loss of other beneficial use	No loss of other beneficial use.
Climate emergency	Previously developed land which has limited ecology. Sustainable location within the centre with good access to facilities.
Landscape Impact	Already located within the built-up area, it sits behind an apartment scheme which is 3-4 storey; generally apartment/flatted development along this end of the Reading Road, including a McCarthy & Stone scheme. Tesco car park and superstore on adjacent site., Therefore impact on landscape would be limited.
Impact on roads	Considered to be suitable.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 5 (A1)
Site Address / Location	Land west of Fairmile
Proposed Use (and numbers)	72
AECOM Assessment	<p>Considered Suitable:</p> <p>The site is greenfield within the general built-up area of Henley, the surrounding land is an adopted allocation in the existing Neighbourhood Plan therefore would act as an extension of this allocation.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Allocate for 72 dwellings</p> <p>Considered suitable to be allocated for residential development for approximately 72 dwellings.</p>
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	Balances out the town with development to North.
Loss of other beneficial use	No loss of other beneficial use.
Climate emergency	Closer to facilities and services within the Town.
Landscape Impact	Limited increase in impact on landscape than 60 dwellings already allocated in existing JHHNP.
Impact on roads	Considered to be suitable.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 1117
Site Address / Location	Land east of A4155, Wyevale
Proposed Use (and numbers)	60 dwellings
AECOM Assessment	This site already has planning permission for 40 dwellings and is suitable to allocate for a further 20 dwellings as the principle of development is already established on the site.
Site Selection Group Recommendation	Not to Allocate The site already has planning permission for 40 dwellings under planning application P18/S0951/O. It is considered that this site should be brought forward as a mixed use site in line with the planning permission. Employment land being provided on the site would provide greater benefits to the Neighbourhood Plan Area than 20 additional dwellings.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	The employment use on this site would benefit the Neighbourhood Plan Area and wider benefits to the community.
Loss of other beneficial use	The loss of B1 and/or B2 and/or D1 floorspace as permitted through planning application P18/S0951/O for 20 additional houses would be a loss of beneficial use.
Climate emergency	Providing a mix of uses on this site would be more appropriate and sustainable.
Landscape Impact:	n/a
Impact on roads:	Considered acceptable - already obtained outline planning permission and detailed consent for the access.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 1158
Site Address / Location	Swiss Farm International, Marlow Road
Proposed Use (and numbers)	73
AECOM Assessment	Not Suitable: This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is outside the built-up area. The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it does not meet local policy and availability has not been established. The site may be suitable on policy grounds should the emerging plan become adopted policy, see paragraph 1.16 of the main report.
Site Selection Group Recommendation	Not to Allocate The site is considered to be unsuitable by AECOM, the site is outside the built-up area. It would have no wider benefits to the town and is therefore considered to be unsuitable.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	Development of this site would not have wider benefits to the town. The site is not proposing additional affordable housing than what is required through Policy H9 Local Plan. It is therefore considered to be unsuitable for development as demonstrated by the AECOM assessment. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable.
Loss of other beneficial use	Development of this site would result in the loss of other beneficial uses. The site currently provides a number of community benefits including events, parking and useful open space.
Climate emergency	It is considered that this site is outside of the built-up area and therefore is not suitable.
Landscape Impact	n/a
Impact on roads	n/a

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 6
Site Address / Location	Land at Reading Road, Harpsden Meadows
Proposed Use (and numbers)	39
AECOM Assessment	Not Suitable: The site is greenfield located between Henley and Harpsden. It is approximately a 15-minute walk to services and facilities. The site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is adjacent rather than within the built-up area. The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it does not meet local policy. The site may be suitable should the emerging plan become adopted policy, see paragraph 1.16 of the main report.
Site Selection Group Recommendation	Not to Allocate Although affordable housing is being proposed, it is considered that the preferred site for development would provide the quantum of development required including land for community led housing. This site is located outside of the built-up area and development in this location would fail to meet objective HO2 of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that Henley and Harpsden remain distinct settlements, separated physically and visually from one other.
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	Although affordable housing is being proposed, it is considered that the preferred site for development would provide the quantum of development required including land for community led housing.
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	It is considered that this site is outside of the built-up area and therefore is not suitable. Part of the site is within Flood Risk Zone 3.
Landscape Impact	The site would fail to meet objective HO2 - Ensure that Henley and Harpsden remain distinct settlements, separated physically and visually from one other.
Impact on road	Considered that development of this site could have an adverse impact on Reading Road.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	NEW1
Site Address / Location	Land north of Crossways, Woodlands Road, Harpsden
Proposed Use (and numbers)	11
AECOM Assessment	<p>This is a greenfield site within the built up area. It is approximately a 15 minute walk to services and facilities.</p> <p>The landscape is a combination of Chiltern Plateau and Thames Valley with a gently undulating and semi enclosed landscape type. The site falls within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and nitrate vulnerable zone however, this does not impact residential development. While there is no specialist landscape study available for this site it is likely that the site has medium landscape sensitivity and low visual sensitivity. The site is in close proximity to the Lower Shiplake war memorial however, mitigation is likely to be possible to reduce the harm on this asset. There is existing access however, it would require upgrading.</p> <p>The site is subject to a current planning application for 20 dwellings, the supporting documents for which demonstrate that the proposal would not impact upon landscape or heritage assets.</p> <p>This site partially meets objectives in the NP as it does not contribute to coalescence between Henley and Harpsden however, it is a greenfield therefore does not meet the objective of prioritising brownfield.</p> <p>This site is in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is within the built- up area. In addition, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site.</p> <p>Therefore, the site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC.</p> <p>The site would remain suitable should the emerging plan become adopted policy, as it is in conformity with Policy H1 as the site is appropriate infilling within the existing built up area.</p>

<p>Site Selection Group Recommendation</p>	<p>Not to Allocate</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to the settlement of Shiplake which is not a location for growth as set out in the Local Plan Strategy (STRAT1) and the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As there are preferable sites available that are better related to Henley that can deliver the quantum of development required, it is not considered to be suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>A planning application on this site for housing was refused planning permission (P20/S2103/FUL) by SODC, the SODC planning officer stated: "SODLP Policy H16 defines infill development as "the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings..." The site is currently open to the north. Even if Thames Farm is built out, it could not be said that the site is a small gap in a continuous built-up frontage. The Thames Farm development itself would be set back from the road by between 55 and 65m. The dwelling to the south (Corner House) fronts onto Woodlands Road, with around 85m of its garden along the A4155. The site is not closely surrounded by buildings as the large gardens to the south and paddocks to the west of the site mean there is an open aspect along these boundaries".</p> <p>It is considered that these reasons would still apply when considering the site for 11 homes.</p> <p>It is considered that the site is situated beyond the edge of the currently built-up area, in a transitional location that is more rural in character. As such, it is more akin to the countryside than a built-up area, such as a settlement.</p> <p>The site would not fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, and as the site is not located within a settlement, the proposal would conflict with the relevant provisions of the Local Plan (including Policy H16) and the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Local Plan strategy and Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver sustainable development by directing growth to the main town of Henley-on-Thames (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. Shiplake does not have a housing requirement through the Local Plan.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the site would not be within the built-up area as stated by AECOM and would not accord with the overall strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan and not constitute sustainable development.</p>
<p>Additional Criteria</p>	
<p>Benefit to town</p>	<p>No additional benefits to the town. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable and better related to Henley.</p>

Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	<p>The location of the site would not result in sustainable development, the site is situated closer to Shiplake and not the services and facilities within Henley.</p> <p>The Local Plan strategy directs growth to the main towns including Henley (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. It is therefore in conflict with the strategy/policies within the Local Plan.</p>
Landscape Impact	The site would as a result of not being in the built-up area have an adverse impact on the landscape.
Impact on roads	Considered that development of this site could have an adverse impact on Reading Road.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 13
Site Address / Location	Thames Poultry Farm House, Harpsden
Proposed Use (and numbers)	3
AECOM Assessment	<p>The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built-up area however, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5- year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC would be required to determine whether development of the site would meet policy. In addition, the site has a current planning application on it for 3 dwellings which should be monitored.</p> <p>Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC. The site may be suitable on policy grounds should the emerging plan become adopted policy, see paragraph 1.16 of the main report.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Not to Allocate</p> <p>The site is closer related to the settlement of Shiplake which is not a location for growth as set out in the Local Plan Strategy (STRAT1) and the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As there are preferable sites available that are better related to Henley, that can deliver the quantum of development required, it is not considered to be suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>A planning application on this site for housing was refused planning permission (P19/S1858/O) by SODC and dismissed at appeal, this is taken from the inspectors decision: “ Policy H16 of the Local Plan provides that (amongst other things) within Smaller Villages (such as Lower Shiplake) development should be limited to infill. Infill development is defined in paragraph 2 of Policy H16 as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. It is common ground that the proposal does not meet the first limb of the definition of infill development given in paragraph 2 of Policy H16. The site is situated beyond the edge of the currently built-up area, in a transitional location that is more rural in character. As such, it is more akin to the countryside than a built-up area, such as a settlement. In my view, due to the distance of the site from the centre of Lower Shiplake and the noticeable change in character from the built-up village setting of Lower Shiplake to the</p>

	<p>developed countryside beyond the A4155, it is currently not reasonable to consider the site as being within Lower Shiplake. Therefore, as the proposal, for an outline application for the erection of 3 detached dwellings, would not fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, and as the site is not located within a settlement, the proposal would conflict with the relevant provisions of Policy H16”.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Local Plan strategy and Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver sustainable development by directing growth to the main town of Henley-on-Thames (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. Shiplake does not have a housing requirement through the Local Plan.</p> <p>It is considered that these reasons set out in the appeal decision would still apply and it is therefore considered that the site would not be within the built-up area as stated by AECOM and would not accord with the overall strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan and not constitute sustainable development.</p>
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	No additional benefits to the town. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable and better related to Henley.
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	<p>The location of the site would not result in sustainable development, the site is situated closer to Shiplake and not the services and facilitates within Henley.</p> <p>The Local Plan strategy directs growth to the main towns including Henley (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. It is therefore in conflict with the strategy/ policies within the Local Plan.</p>
Landscape Impact	The site would as a result of not being in the built-up area have an adverse impact on the landscape. It would result in urbanisation of this area.
Impact on roads	Considered that development of this site could have an adverse impact on Bolney Lane.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 14
Site Address / Location	The Bungalow, Green Acres, Harpsden Woods
Proposed Use (and numbers)	8
AECOM Assessment	<p>The site is previously developed land located outside the built-up area. It is approximately a ten-minute walk to services and facilities. This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is adjacent rather than within the built-up area. The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built-up area however, a site to the south (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC on whether the site would meet policy would be required. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation subject to consultation with SODC. The site may be suitable on policy grounds should the emerging plan become adopted policy, see paragraph 1.16 of the main report.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Not to Allocate</p> <p>The site is closer related to the settlement of Shiplake which is not a location for growth as set out in the Local Plan Strategy (STRAT1) and the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As there are preferable sites available that are better related to Henley that can deliver the quantum of development required, it is not considered to be suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>This is in a similar location to Site 13 and therefore the reasons set out in dismissed appeal would apply (P19/S1858/O) “ Policy H16 of the Local Plan provides that (amongst other things) within Smaller Villages (such as Lower Shiplake) development should be limited to infill. Infill development is defined in paragraph 2 of Policy H16 as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.”</p> <p>It is considered that the site is situated beyond the edge of the currently built-up area, in a transitional location that is more rural in character. As such, it is more akin to the countryside than a built-up area, such as a settlement.</p> <p>The site would not fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, and as the site is not located within a settlement, the proposal</p>

	<p>would conflict with the relevant provisions of the Local Plan (including Policy H16) and the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Local Plan strategy and Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver sustainable development by directing growth to the main town of Henley-on-Thames (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. Shiplake does not have a housing requirement through the Local Plan.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the site would not be within the built-up area as stated by AECOM and would not accord with the overall strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan and not constitute sustainable development.</p>
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	No additional benefits to the town. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable and better related to Henley.
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	<p>The location of the site would not result in sustainable development, the site is situated closer to Shiplake and not the services and facilities within Henley.</p> <p>The Local Plan strategy directs growth to the main towns including Henley (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. It is therefore in conflict with the strategy/policies within the Local Plan.</p>
Landscape Impact	The site would as a result of not being in the built-up area have an adverse impact on the landscape. It would result in urbanisation of this area.
Impact on roads	Considered that development of this site could have an adverse impact on Bolney Lane.

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site 878
Site Address / Location	Thames Farm (NE corner)
Proposed Use (and numbers)	8
AECOM Assessment	<p>This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is outside the built-up area. However, it will be in conformity once the two adjacent sites have been built out. The site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. There are no major constraints, however conformity with policy relies on site 1117 being built out. The site's suitability would remain the same should the emerging plan become adopted policy.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Not to Allocate</p> <p>The site is closely related to the settlement of Shiplake which is not a location for growth as set out in the Local Plan Strategy (STRAT1) and the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As there are preferable sites available that are better related to Henley that can deliver the quantum of development required, it is not considered to be suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>This is in a similar location to Site 13 and therefore the reasons set out in dismissed appeal for Site 13 (P19/S1858/O) would apply. Policy H16 of the Local Plan provides that (amongst other things) within Smaller Villages (such as Lower Shiplake) development should be limited to infill. Infill development is defined in paragraph 2 of Policy H16 as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings."</p> <p>The SODC Officer report for refused planning permission (P20/S2103/FUL) for NEW1 would also apply to this site, which states: "Even if Thames Farm is built out, it could not be said that the site is a small gap in a continuous built-up frontage. The Thames Farm development itself would be set back from the road by between 55 and 65m."</p> <p>It is considered that the site is situated beyond the edge of the currently built-up area, in a transitional location that is more rural in character. As such, it is more akin to the countryside than a built-up area, such as a settlement. The site would not fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, and as the site is not located within a settlement, the proposal would conflict with the relevant provisions of the Local Plan (including Policy H16) and the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Local Plan strategy and Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver sustainable development by directing growth to the main town of Henley-on-Thames (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct</p>

	<p>growth to Shiplake. Shiplake does not have a housing requirement through the Local Plan.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the site would not be within the built-up area as stated by AECOM and would not accord with the overall strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan and not constitute sustainable development.</p>
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	No additional benefits to the town. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable and better related to Henley.
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	<p>The location of the site would not result in sustainable development, the site is situated closer to Shiplake and not the services and facilities within Henley.</p> <p>The Local Plan strategy directs growth to the main towns including Henley (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. It is therefore in conflict with the strategy/ policies within the Local Plan.</p>
Landscape Impact	The site would, as a result of not being in the built-up area, have an adverse impact on the landscape. It would result in urbanisation of this area.
Impact on roads	n/a

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name	Site NEW2
Site Address / Location	Hallemead House, Woodlands Road, Harpsden
Proposed Use (and numbers)	20 – 30
AECOM Assessment	<p>This is a greenfield site outside the built up area. It is approximately a 15 minute walk to services and facilities. The landscape is a combination of Chiltern Plateau and Thames Valley with a gently undulating and semi enclosed landscape type. The site falls within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and nitrate vulnerable zone. While there is no specialist landscape study available for this site it is likely that the site has medium landscape sensitivity and low visual sensitivity. There is existing access however, it would require upgrading and there are no pedestrian links to the village/ services and facilities. This site partially meets objectives in the NP as it does not contribute to coalescence between Henley and Harpsden however, it is a greenfield therefore does not meet the objective of prioritising brownfield. This site is not in conformity with South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) Policy H4 as the site is adjacent to rather than within the built-up area. The site does not currently meet local policy as it is not within or adjacent to the built up area however, the adjoining site (site 1036) has planning permission and is under construction which would change this. Site 1036 was allowed at appeal as the inspector reasoned that SODC could not demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, the effect on character of the immediate area would be moderately adverse, highways safety issues could be overcome, and the scheme satisfied the three roles of sustainable development. These could be applied to this site. Therefore, consultation with SODC on if the site would meet policy would be required. In addition, given the narrow access road and potential landscape impact, the capacity of the site should be lower than Site 1036 and would be more appropriate at the lower density of around 10 dwellings per hectare. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with SODC. The site may be suitable on policy grounds should the emerging plan become adopted policy, see paragraph 1.16 of the main report.</p>
Site Selection Group Recommendation	<p>Not to Allocate</p> <p>The site is closer related to the settlement of Shiplake which is not a location for growth as set out in the Local Plan Strategy (STRAT1) and the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As there are preferable sites available that are better related to Henley that can deliver the quantum of development required, it is not considered to be suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>This is in a similar location to Site 13 and therefore the reasons set out in dismissed appeal would apply (P19/S1858/O) “ Policy H16 of the Local Plan</p>

	<p>provides that (amongst other things) within Smaller Villages (such as Lower Shiplake) development should be limited to infill. Infill development is defined in paragraph 2 of Policy H16 as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.”</p> <p>It is considered that the site is situated beyond the edge of the currently built-up area, in a transitional location that is more rural in character. As such, it is more akin to the countryside than a built-up area, such as a settlement.</p> <p>Whilst the Group acknowledges that part of the site is previously developed land. This would not outweigh that the site would not fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, and as the site is not located within a settlement, the proposal would conflict with the relevant provisions of the Local Plan (including Policy H16) and the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.</p> <p>Furthermore, The Local Plan strategy and Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver sustainable development by directing growth to the main town of Henley-on-Thames (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. Shiplake does not have a housing requirement through the Local Plan.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the site would not be within the built-up area as stated by AECOM and would not accord with the overall strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan and not constitute sustainable development.</p>
Additional Criteria	
Benefit to town	No additional benefits to the town. Furthermore, the preferred sites would deliver the quantum of development required and are considered to be more suitable and better related to Henley.
Loss of other beneficial use	n/a
Climate emergency	<p>The location of the site would not result in sustainable development, the site is situated closer to Shiplake and not the services and facilities within Henley.</p> <p>The Local Plan strategy directs growth to the main towns including Henley (a requirement of 115 dwellings), it does not direct growth to Shiplake. It is therefore in conflict with the strategy /policies within the Local Plan.</p>
Landscape Impact	Whilst the group acknowledge that part of the site is previously developed land. The site would as a result of not being in the built-up area have an adverse impact on the landscape. It would result in urbanisation of this area.
Impact on roads	n/a



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Topic Paper 3

Retail, Town Centre and Economy

Submission
December 2021



Topic Paper 3: Retail, Town Centre and Economy

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17. Disclaimer

- 17.1. This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and to support the writing of corresponding Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 17.2. This document is a non-exhaustive summary based on information, guidance and data reasonably available at the time of writing. As such, some or all of it may be superseded or become obsolete at a later date.

18. Purpose

- 18.1. The purpose of this topic paper is to demonstrate how the Plan has been developed and evidenced in terms of retail, town centre and the economy.
- 18.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) has published a series of background papers as part of this Baseline Report to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These cover a range of issues and provide more technical or detailed information than is contained in the Plan itself.
- 18.3. The background papers are:
- Paper 1 - Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change
 - Paper 2 - Housing
 - Paper 3 - Retail, Town Centre and Economy
 - Paper 4 - Transport
 - Paper 5 - Infrastructure
- 18.4. These Baseline Report can be downloaded from the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website - <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>.

19. Introduction

- 19.1. Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are preparing a new Neighbourhood Plan. This will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Henley and Harpsden covering the period 2020 to 2035. Once 'made' it will replace the existing Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) which came into force in April 2016.
- 19.2. The review is necessary due to the requirements set out in the new South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2020. This includes delivery of new homes and employment land, meeting affordable housing needs and addressing environmental issues such as air quality. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and able to continue strongly influencing planning decisions.
- 19.3. The Plan must be in general conformity with the planning documents sitting above it in the planning hierarchy. For Henley and Harpsden, that is the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Throughout the document, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy, the relevant policies from this plan are referenced.

20. Vision & Objectives

20.1. The vision statement for the revised Plan embeds a commitment to environmental sustainability (tackling climate change) and states that: **“In 20 years’ time, Henley on Thames and the surrounding village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area.”**

20.2. The revised Neighbourhood Plan includes the following retail, town centre and economy objectives:

- RO1 - To improve the offering within the town centre to deliver additional retail floorspace which would be subject to the requirements of objectively assessed evidence of need.
- RO2 - To encourage mixed-use developments with employment, retail and housing uses.
- RO3 - To encourage a wider mix and variety of shops and services in the town to cater for all ages.
- RO4 - To enhance town centre vehicle flows and car park management (linked to objective T05).
- RO5- To provide for the needs of start-ups and hightech companies including encouraging the provision of shared office space ‘hubs’ and service centres.

21. Planning Context

National Context

21.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the key national planning priorities for England. The NPPF, revised in 2021, is accompanied by online Planning Practice Guidance.

21.2. The NPPF (paragraph 81) states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

21.3. Paragraph 82 adds that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

21.4. Section 7 focuses on ensuring the vitality of town centres. Paragraph 85 states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

Local Context

The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2035⁵⁹

- 21.5. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) was adopted in December 2020. It provides an overview of planning policy for South Oxfordshire, setting out how it should evolve and grow during the plan period (2011-2035). The Plan identifies locations for housing, retail and employment land as well as the infrastructure required to support this growth. Together with the adopted Neighbourhood Plans, the Local Plan forms the statutory development framework against which planning applications are determined.
- 21.6. The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan includes a number of relevant policies. HEN1 requires the Neighbourhood Plan to strengthen the retail offer within Henley Town Centre; improve employment opportunities at existing employment sites and identify new sites for employment.
- 21.7. Policies EMP1 and EMP5 require the Neighbourhood Plan to make allocations of at least a further 1 hectare of employment land. It goes on to state the review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan must be submitted to the Council within 12 months of adoption of this Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan has not adequately progressed with allocating employment sites to meet these requirements within 12 months of the adoption of this Local Plan, planning applications for employment will be supported provided that proposals comply with the overall employment distribution strategy as set out in Policy EMP1 and the overall plan distribution strategy as set out in STRAT1. In this time the planning authority will allocate site(s) through a review of the plan.
- 21.8. Policy EMP2 states that proposals for employment use will provide a range of sizes and types of premises, including flexible business space to meet current and future requirements. The Council will support proposals for premises suitable for small and medium sized businesses, including start-up/ incubator businesses (up to 150sqm) and grow-on space (up to 500sqm). Proposals for employment uses will be considered against these criteria and the overall employment distribution strategy at EMP1.
- 21.9. Section 9 of the Local Plan focuses on 'ensuring the vitality of town centres'. Policy TC2 identifies Henley-on-Thames as a major town centre, and states that the Council will promote the continued role and functions of the town centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and structure. The policy states that to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply a 'town centre first' approach to retail, services and other main town centre uses in accordance with the established hierarchy of centres.
- 21.10. Policy H21 states that the loss of existing residential accommodation in the town centres will not be permitted other than in accordance with the relevant policies of this Plan, except in cases of upper floor accommodation where an independent access does not exist and cannot be provided, or in cases where there are insurmountable environmental factors which militate against continued residential use. The loss of private gardens, which could affect the residential amenity of the occupants of existing dwellings will also be resisted.

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https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=1173354792&CODE=341BA7B67420EFFE92E2F22C258C640E&NAME=South%20Oxfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202034&REF=SOLP_2034&REFERER_URL_IN=&SOVA_IN=SOUTH

Retail, Town Centre and Economy policies for Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Policy E1: Supporting Henley’s Economy.

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

- RO5- To provide for the needs of start-ups and hightech companies including encouraging the provision of shared office space ‘hubs’ and service centres.

21.11. Henley provides a significant and important employment offer which needs 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. Analysis has shown that the business sector is the driving force behind the Henley economy, more so than retail, tourism and education, although these are also key employment sectors. As across the county as a whole, manufacturing has continued to decline.

21.12. Pressures on land due to additional housing requirements focus the employment strategy on intensification (including higher density) and partial redistribution of employment land.

21.13. Industrial and office activity will be concentrated at the Reading Road industrial estate which will be protected for employment. Opportunities for office based employment and smaller businesses hubs will be distributed at a range of town centre and out of town sites including allocated sites of Empstead Works / Stuart Turner and Highlands Farm.

Policy E1: Supporting Henley’s Economy
Development at Reading Road Industrial Estate that supports its role as the Neighbourhood Area’s main employment area will be supported.

Policy E2: Henley Town Centre

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

- RO1 - To improve the offering within the town centre to deliver additional retail floorspace which would be subject to the requirements of objectively assessed evidence of need.

- 21.14. The South Oxfordshire District Retail Needs update 2017 states that Henley-on-Thames is a strong-performing attractive and historic town centre. To a greater extent than the other centres in the District, it performs a dual function, both as a shopping and services centre for residents in the south-eastern part of the District, and also as a tourism destination, chiefly focused around events such as the annual Royal Regatta and the Henley Festival of Music and Arts. Almost half of the users of Henley town centre are from outside the South Oxfordshire area.
- 21.15. Section 9 of the Local Plan focuses on 'ensuring the vitality of town centres'. Policy TC2 identifies Henley-on-Thames as a major town centre, and states that the Council will promote the continued role and functions of the town centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character and structure. The policy states that to ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply a 'town centre first' approach to retail, services and other main town centre uses in accordance with the established hierarchy of centres.
- 21.16. Paragraph 9.11 of the Local Plan states that the Council considers that the national threshold for a Retail Impact Assessment of 2,500sqm is not appropriate for the district. The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (2016) identifies that while Didcot is performing well, the other centres are relatively small and could potentially be adversely impacted upon by out-of-centre development.
- 21.17. This section goes onto to state that modern retailers selling a range of comparison goods generally have a requirement for a larger format unit. A threshold of 500sqm is deemed appropriate for protecting the vitality and viability of the district's centres when considering the size of the smallest 'main' foodstore in the district is 569sqm. The retail impact analysis threshold will be kept under review

Comparison goods

- 21.18. The 2017 Retail Assessment Update states that the proportion of comparison goods expenditure which is retained by Henley from its local catchment was found to have increased from 29% to 42%, suggesting the centre's offer has improved in recent years. The centre also has a particularly strong range of restaurants and coffee shops in the centre, reflective of both its affluent catchment and its tourism role.
- 21.19. Policy TC3: Comparison Goods Floorspace Requirements includes the following:
3. In Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford there is no qualitative need for additional comparison goods floorspace during the plan period. Applications for new comparison goods floorspace in these town centres should be treated on their individual merits.

4. Applications for comparison retail located outside of town centres will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential test and the locally set retail impact threshold (500sqm or as modified by the Council in response to the latest evidence).

Convenience goods

21.20. Projections undertaken in 2017 indicate that additional floorspace (1,500sqm) for convenience goods will be required for Henley.

21.21. Local Plan Policy TC4: Convenience Floorspace Provision in the Market Towns includes the following:

1. Each of the three Market Towns should make provision for a single format food store with at least 1,500sqm net sales floorspace. As per Policy TC2, 'a town centre first' approach will be expected to be undertaken and then, if this is not appropriate, edge of centre and then a criteria based selection assessment. This will be provided at the following locations:

Location	Site	Net amount of retail floorspace required
Henley-on-Thames	Sites to be identified through the review of the Henley – Harspden Neighbourhood Development Plan.	1,500sqm

21.22. The Joint Henley-Harspden Neighbourhood Development Plan has identified a key opportunity site to accommodate retail floorspace requirements in Henley-on-Thames. The Local Plan is supportive of this opportunity.

21.23. It is proposed that the allocation of Empstead Works/ Stuart Turner (Policy SP3) will meet this requirement. The site will be allocated for a mixed use scheme including at least 3,000sqm of town centre mixed uses including 1,500sqm for retail floorspace.

21.24. Furthermore, Policy E2: Henley Town Centre will allow for proposals for new retail within the defined town centre boundary.

Policy E2: Henley Town Centre

The Henley Town Centre boundary is shown on the Henley Town Centre Plan.

Proposals for new retail, leisure, hotel and office development should be located within the defined town centre boundary. Development proposals for retail, leisure and office uses on unallocated sites outside the defined town centre must be in accessible locations to the town centre by walking, cycling and public transport, and have appropriate on and/ or off-street car parking provision. Such proposals will be subject to a sequential test and, for proposals comprising 500sqm or more net additional floorspace, an impact assessment.

Proposals which fail to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact will not be supported.

Policy EM3: Market Place Hub

21.25. The very popular Charter Markets are held in the Market Place every Thursday as well as monthly farmers markets and Henley holds several weekend Continental style Markets each year. The 'Changing face of the High Streets South Oxfordshire's town centres', February 2014, report prepared by South Oxfordshire District Council highlights the importance of Market Square as focal hub and recommends enhancing the restaurant offer within the Market Place area, particularly to the north.

Policy EM2: Market Place Hub

The following development will be supported within Market Place:

- a) Use Class A3 Food and Drink uses, particularly within the northern part of the square;
- b) market stalls;
- c) secure cycle storage, particularly a covered facility.

Policy EM4 : Employment and Residential above shops

21.26. A wide range of complementary uses can, if suitably located, help to support the vitality of town centres, including residential, employment, office, commercial, leisure/entertainment, healthcare and educational development. Residential and in particular employment uses above shops will be encouraged.

21.27. Local Plan Policy H21 states that the loss of existing residential accommodation in the town centres will not be permitted other than in accordance with the relevant policies of this Plan, except in cases of upper floor accommodation where an independent access does not exist and cannot be provided, or in cases where there are insurmountable environmental factors which militate against continued residential use. The loss of private gardens, which could affect the residential amenity of the occupants of existing dwellings will also be resisted.

Policy EM4: Employment and Residential above shops

Residential and in particular employment uses above shops will be encouraged, to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre and local economy.

Existing Policy TCE3: Hotel and Bed Space

21.28. It is proposed to remove the existing policy from the JHHNP for the reasons set out below.

21.29. The 2014 District Council study indicated that there was a need for additional hotel bed space in Henley. A number of hotel and bedspaces have been provided that have not been taken into account in the 2014 study and additional bedspaces have been provided since 2014.

21.30. The table shown in figure 1 sets out the level of need provided in Henley and the surrounding villages. In addition to this the Red Lion (Relais Henley) now has 43 bedrooms, Badgemore Park Golf Club have increased their number of bedrooms, Greenlands now has 100, and RiosHouse Hotel have more rooms shown on their website. On top this there are at least 20 privately run units of accommodation in Henley listed by Airbnb which cater for between 2 and 10 people.

HOTEL, PUBS & B&B OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION SUPPLY 2020								
NAME	LOCATION	HOTEL	CLUB	PUB WITH ROOMS	B&B	ROOM NUMBERS	DRIVING DISTANCE FROM HENLEY TOWN HALL	DRIVING TIME FROM HENLEY TOWN HALL
0-15 minutes drive time from Henley								
HENLEY: CENTRAL								
The Catherine Wheel		Y				30		
Hotel Du Vin		Y				43		
The Imperial						Closed		
Leander			Y			11		
The Paddock					Y	6		
Phyllis Court			Y			17		
The Red Lion		Y				35		
Rioshouse					Y	8		
Row Barge				Y		4		
						154		
HENLEY: SURROUNDING VILLAGES								
Badgemore Park	Rotherfield Greys		Y			8	1.3 miles	3 minutes
The Bull	Wargrave			Y		5	3.9 miles	10 minutes
The Baskerville	Shiplake			Y		4	3.1 miles	10 minutes
Black Boys Inn	Hurley			Y		8	3.8 miles	9 minutes
Cherry Tree Inn	Stoke Row			Y		4	6.0 miles	13 minutes
Chiltern Valley Winery & Brewery	Old Luxtor				Y	5	6.2 miles	14 minutes
Crazy Fox	Hurley				Y	4	5.4 miles	12 minutes
The Crown	Playhatch			Y		10	5.9 miles	15 minutes
Danesfield House	Medmenham	Y				70	5.4 miles	12 minutes
Dog & Badger Inn	Medmenham			Y		6	4.5 miles	9 minutes
The Flower Pot	Aston			Y		3	2.9 miles	9 minutes
Frog Inn	Skirmett			Y		3	6.6 miles	14 minutes
Handywater Cottage	Lower Assendon				Y	4	1.0 miles	5 minutes
Henley Business School	Greenlands		Y			80	2.8 miles	8 minutes
Hurley House	Hurley			Y		10	5.8 miles	12 minutes
The New Inn	Kidmore End			Y		6	6.3 miles	15 minutes
The Olde Bell	Hurley	Y				48	5.2 miles	12 minutes
The Stag & Huntsman	Hambleden			Y		9	4.3 miles	10 minutes
The White Hart	Nettlebed			Y		18	4.9 miles	8 minutes
						305		

Figure 24 - Hotel and Bed Space Provision 2020

21.31. Furthermore, the newly adopted Local Plan EMP11: Tourism sets out a supportive approach to hotels and there is no requirement for the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan for such a policy, meaning that the policy is no longer required.



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Topic Paper 4

Transport

Submission
December 2021



Topic Paper 4: Transport

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22. Disclaimer

- 22.1. This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and to support the writing of corresponding Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 22.2. This document is a non-exhaustive summary based on information, guidance and data reasonably available at the time of writing. As such, some or all of it may be superseded or become obsolete at a later date.

23. Purpose

- 23.1. The purpose of this topic paper is to demonstrate how the Plan has been developed and evidenced in relation to transport issues.
- 23.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) has published a series of background papers as part of the Baseline Report to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These cover a range of issues and provide more technical or detailed information than is contained in the Plan itself.
- 23.3. The background papers are:
- Paper 1 - Environmental
 - Paper 2 - Housing
 - Paper 3 - Employment
 - Paper 4 - Transport
 - Paper 5 - Infrastructure Statement
- 23.4. The Baseline Report can be downloaded from the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website - <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>.

24. Introduction

- 24.1. Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are preparing a new Neighbourhood Plan. This will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Henley and Harpsden covering the period 2020 to 2035. Once 'made' will replace the existing Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) which came into force in April 2016.
- 24.2. The review is necessary due to the requirements set out in the new South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2020. This includes delivery of new homes and employment land, meeting affordable housing needs and addressing environmental issues such as air quality. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and able to continue strongly influencing planning decisions.
- 24.3. Planning policy and decision-making can make a significant contribution to reducing these levels of carbon emissions, through its influence over transport. However, many other interventions will be required beyond the remit of planning to achieve the national target in Henley and Harpsden. The Plan will also include wider strategies to help address key issues within the area which might not fall under planning. We have made sure to clearly differentiate between non-planning priorities and our planning policies.

- 24.4. In 2019, Henley Town Council declared a Climate Emergency and set up a Working Group. Henley Town Council's Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group (CE2030WG) has been formed to develop actions to reduce the Town's carbon emissions. The group are already undertaking initiatives with the objective of having project plans in place by 2030 to achieve net zero carbon emissions, many of which will already be operative before then.
- 24.5. The Plan must be in general conformity with the planning documents sitting above it in the planning hierarchy. For Henley and Harpsden, that is the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Throughout the document, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy, the relevant policies from this plan is referenced.
- 24.6. The Baseline Report will mirror the sections of the NP to enable easy read-across between each policy and the evidence underpinning it. Hence, as with the NP, each theme has its own chapter, subdivided into the objectives, supporting text and finally the policies themselves.
- 24.7. Evidence has been compiled from a number of sources:
- Extensive engagement with the community and local stakeholders including through focus groups, leaflet drops, local surveys and online representations.
 - Compilation of statistics and facts from existing documents and reports relating to Henley and Harpsden.
- 24.8. The Neighbourhood Plan Group received support from consultants AECOM on the effectiveness of the draft transport policies. AECOM provided a comprehensive review of 15 policies in total and the evidence upon which the policy is based. It sought to verify that:
- Evidence has been assembled from robust sources;
 - Stakeholder-derived evidence has been considered in an inclusive way;
 - Relevant third-party comments/issues have been addressed;
 - Reasonable conclusions have been drawn from that evidence;
 - All useful evidence available has been referenced (including new evidence, such as that which supports the new Local Plan and the Climate Emergency declaration);
 - There are no evidence gaps that need to be filled, including in light of any recent changes;
 - The draft policy is clearly written, distinct from and in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan; and that
 - The policy meets the Basic Conditions.
- 24.9. AECOM provided a number of recommendations on the strengthening or improvement of the draft policies and the evidence base. The policies were then redrafted in line with the recommendations within their report and additional evidence was produced.
- 24.10. Discussions also took place with OCC and SODC when drafting the policies to ensure conformity with Local Policy and ensure that the policies were not a repeat of the policies within the Local Plan.

25. Vision & Objectives

25.1. The vision statement for the revised plan states that: **“In 20 years’ time, Henley on Thames and the surrounding village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area.”**

25.2. The revised Neighbourhood Plan includes the following transport objectives:

- TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.
- TO2 - To ensure that new development supports the Neighbourhood Plan vision by providing cycling, walking and public transport connectivity to the existing network and the town and where possible contributes to improving the existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.
- TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.
- TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.
- TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

26. Planning Context

Legislative Background

26.1. The Climate Change Act 2008⁶⁰ (amended in June 2019) commits the UK to reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to zero by 2050 (view the Climate Change Act). Progress against the 2050 target is measured by legally binding carbon budgets, which cap the amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted by the UK over a five-year period (measured by the Committee on Climate Change).

26.2. The Government has confirmed the ban of sales of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in 2030, and of hybrid cars and vans in 2035. Energy Savings Trust estimates c40% of cars will be electric powered by 2030 – suggesting a significant transition to electric vehicles pre-2030.⁶¹

The National Planning Policy Framework

26.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the key national planning priorities for England. The NPPF, revised in 2021, is accompanied by online Planning Practice Guidance.

⁶⁰ Legislation.gov.uk. 2021. *Climate Change Act 2008*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>>

⁶¹

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-historic-step-towards-net-zero-with-end-of-sale-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-by-2030>

26.4. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states that, at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (paragraph 7).

26.5. Paragraph 8 adds that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

26.6. The NPPF 2021 retains an emphasis on Air Quality Management Areas (para 186) including a requirement to improve air quality and mitigate the impacts of individual sites and by stating that a strategic approach is required. Importantly the NPPF further acknowledges the linkage between sustainable patterns of development, reduced need for travel, good air quality and health (Paragraph 105) and states in para 174 that;

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality...”

26.7. Paragraph 104. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
- b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
- c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
- d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

- 26.8. If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:
- a) the accessibility of the development;
 - b) the type, mix and use of development;
 - c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - d) local car ownership levels; and
 - e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 26.9. Sitting below NPPF is a series of Planning Practice Guidance Notes (PPG) issued by Government to inform the conduct of planning. One of the topic-based notes considers Air Quality.

Oxfordshire County Council

- 26.10. Oxfordshire County Council is the local transport authority and has a statutory duty to produce a Local Transport Plan which is available to view at:
https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s33704/Background%20CA_JUN2816R07%20Connecting%20Oxfordshire%20vol%201%20-%20Policy%20and%20Overall%20Strategy.pdf
and covers the period from 2015 – 2031. Amongst other things it sets the programme for enhancing road capacity, reducing emissions, improving health and wellbeing and mitigation / developer contributions.
- 26.11. Their Active & Healthy Travel Strategy (A&HTS) sets out in detail how they intend to encourage and enable more people to travel actively and healthily. The Strategy has been put together in collaboration with Public Health and brings together three active travel options - cycling, walking and Door to Door sustainable integrated travel.
- 26.12. Their EV Charging Strategy sets out the Oxfordshire County Councils' ambitions to stretch beyond the Governments proposed changes to the English Buildings Regulations, align planning policy requirements for EV charging infrastructure in local plans, and support the local planning system through development of clear guidelines on EV charging for both developers and planning officers.
- 26.13. Transport for New Developments – Parking Standards for new residential developments sets out the parking space provision for new residential areas including Henley in Appendix C.
- 26.14. Oxfordshire Freight Strategy sets out the strategy for freight network between 2015 and 2031. The strategy acknowledges that the bridge to Henley is an environmentally sensitive area. It states that the county council will consider environmental weight restrictions across the County, particularly areas which are subject to significant levels of HGV traffic, prioritising the towns including Henley-on-Thames. However, the county council is very unlikely to have any funding available for this in the coming years so any schemes would need to be funded through development and/or by local communities, businesses and town/parish councils.
- 26.15. Connecting Oxfordshire sets out Oxfordshire County Council's policy and strategy for developing the transport system in Oxfordshire to 2031.

The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2035

26.16. The South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan includes a number of relevant policies –

- Policy HEN1 - The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames
- ENV12 Pollution - Impact from Existing and/ or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)
- TRANS1b Supporting Strategic Transport Investment
- TRANS2 Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes:
- TRANS4 Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans
- TRANS5 Consideration of Development Proposals
- TRANS6 Rail

Henley and Harpsden Transport Study Report

26.17. This Study was produced in 2015 by Peter Brett to underpin the development of the existing Henley-on-Thames and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan. The study considered the potential impact of the new housing proposals identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and a range of mitigation measures to meet the following objectives of the Study. The issues considered in the report still remain relevant and it is considered that a full review of the study will not be required.

26.18. The [Henley and Harpsden Transport Study Report Addendum](#) (September 2021) has been produced to provide an update on the transport conditions in Henley from the 2015 study to the present day in relation to:

1. Air Quality and Health
2. Public Transport Provision
3. Road Safety and Accident Data
4. Traffic Count Data

26.19. For clarification, Stantec used traffic count information from counts carried out for Henley Town Council in May 2015, December 2018 and June 2019, together with Oxfordshire County Council traffic count data for limited locations from autumn 2020 and spring 2021. Only where it was relevant to compare data, was the traffic count information used. Details of the data used are detailed in the [Henley and Harpsden Transport Study Addendum](#) from September 2021, pp21,22. NO_x readings were taken from SODC's Air Quality Annual Status Report 2020, which uses data from 2019.

26.20. The [Addendum](#) states that there have been significant changes in transport policy since 2015, but the objectives of the Henley and Harpsden Transport Study (2015) remain aligned and will contribute to deliver be a carbon neutral district by 2030.

27. Survey Results –updated to include Transport Survey

- 27.1. Two surveys have been undertaken to inform the revision of the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan. The first of these was a [community survey](#) carried out in late 2020, early 2021. 771 responses were received, giving confirmation that policies in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan aligned with views amongst the general public. The second survey was covering transport issues in particular and was targeted at community groups, organisations and businesses. Responses were requested from one representative of an organisation, with hundreds, if not thousands of people, covered by the respondents. The two biggest educational providers in the town responded, as well as one of the biggest sports clubs. Responses were also received from Thames Valley Police and one of the big supermarkets. Most respondents were located in Henley, whereas others were based in Reading or outlying villages.
- 27.2. The results of both surveys show that most people use their car to travel. According to the [community survey](#), people would like to walk more (49%) and would like to use the bus or cycle more (41% each). The frequency of service was the top reason why people didn't use the bus more and the cost prevented people using the train more. The main reason for not walking and cycling more was due to the poor state of repair of pavements (56% gave this as the reason).
- 27.3. The majority of people completing the [community survey](#) felt that the main issues to address in relation to roads were potholes (82%) and poor state of repair in general (70%). The reasons given for how accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians could be improved were pedestrianised areas (52%), cycle lanes (51%) and more off-road footpaths (48%). 73% of people wanted to see more cycle parking at car parks.
- 27.4. The 2021 [Transport Survey](#) confirmed the opinion that levels of traffic and congestion were unreasonable or unmanageable (60%) as well as supporting more frequent bus services and better/more routes as the preferred means to improve public transport. Cycle lanes, better quality road surfaces and more cycle parking were identified as the most popular improvements to cycling. For walking, better quality and wider pavements were selected. 62% of respondents felt that there was insufficient parking provision in Henley and Harpsden, with 82% saying that more parking was needed. 80% suggested that HGV traffic should be restricted in Henley town centre and 88% agreeing a ban or restriction on HGVs would improve air quality. There were no positive impacts of the proposed housing developments in Henley on transport matters.

Transport Policies for Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

- 27.5. The evidence illustrates that action at the most local level that delivers practical support for improved transport infrastructure and activity should be sought. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) and has been edited to remove overlaps with the existing provisions of the Local Plan policies.
- 27.6. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by evidence as listed below including an up-to-date [residents survey](#) and [transport data](#).
- 27.7. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxides emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. The LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report⁶² states that there was an exceedance recorded in Henley AQMA located at 4 Duke Street, which recorded an annual average of 49 µg NO₂/m³ which exceeds the EU and UK threshold of 35 40 micrograms/cubic metres. The five-year trend of NO₂ levels in the district and within Henley AQMA continues to be a decreasing one, but some of the monitoring sites in Henley have registered higher concentrations than in 2018.
- 27.8. Individual air pollutants can cause a variety of health impacts. A review by the World Health Organization⁶³ concluded that long-term exposure to air pollution reduces life expectancy by increasing the incidence of lung, heart and circulatory conditions. Public Health England (PHE), the independent body responsible for protecting the nation from public health hazards, has identified air pollution as a top priority for action.
- 27.9. Henley has an above average level of older people who are more likely to contract health issues, in addition to experience more severe affects of Covid-19. This is significant because poor air quality typically affects the more vulnerable members of society disproportionately to others⁶⁴.

⁶² South Oxfordshire District Council (2020) Air Quality Annual Status Report [online] available: https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/documents/SODC_2020_ASR_PDF.pdf

⁶³ World Health Organization (2018) Preventing disease through healthy environments: a global assessment of the burden of disease from environmental risks [online] available: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565196>

⁶⁴ Henley_profile_Feb21.pdf (oxfordshire.gov.uk)

- 27.10. The public raised the issue of air and light pollution within a [Community Survey](#) carried out in early 2021. 84% of respondents to the survey were concerned about air and light pollution, with Reading Road (81%), Bell Street (76%) and Duke Street (72%) causing the greatest concern. When asked about issues in respect of roads in the area, 55% of respondents were concerned over air pollution and vibration from Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- 27.11. The traffic survey shows that the congestion in Henley is worse than the average across South Oxfordshire. The impacts of transport will have a greater impact than the rest of the District and County in general. Henley-on-Thames is environmentally sensitive but still is a location for past and projected growth.
- 27.12. A further [Transport Survey](#) was sent to local businesses and schools, community groups and organisations and site owners and promoters in May 2021. Responses from this survey indicate that the majority of respondents did not have a travel plan. Traffic and congestion in Henley was also thought to be currently unreasonable or unmanageable by 60% of respondents and air quality considered to be neutral or bad by 84%. Development was considered by 78% of respondents to result in negative impacts on 8 different areas, including noise pollution, air quality and traffic and congestion.
- 27.13. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan Transport Topic Paper 2019⁶⁵ sets out the process and evidence the District Council has undertaken to produce and inform the Transport Policies included in the SODC Local Plan 2035. The paper sets out some of the key issues in the District including challenges and opportunities. This includes:
- The need for policies to ensure that development takes full account of its impact on the transport network and opportunities are taken to promote the use of sustainable modes.
 - The impact of growth in other districts and how that affects the transport network in South Oxfordshire.
- 27.14. Oxfordshire County Council are currently reviewing the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP) for the long term strategy for Henley-on-Thames and has published several consultation papers and as part of which it has produced baseline papers on a range of transport subjects and a baseline report.⁶⁶
- 27.15. The South Oxfordshire Infrastructure Funding Statement sets out how funding received from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be allocated. In accordance with this CIL funds may be allocated to transport infrastructure, including strategic highways or transport infrastructure projects (including public rights of way). This includes infrastructure/ measures to improve air quality and monitoring.

⁶⁵

https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038265824&CODE=E3B28F03DACE4F819CEC8BECC6A84FA

⁶⁶ <https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/ltcp.engagement/consultationHome>

27.16. Henley Town Council and South Oxfordshire District Council both declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. The Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group was established by the Town Council, they have been working with local residents to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and the town. They have many existing projects planned for the future, including ways to improve air quality and quality of life. There is local appetite as shown in the past and current projects to improve air quality and these demonstrate realistic application and effectiveness of sustainable transport solutions.

Policy T1: Impact of Development on the Transport Network

A. Development proposals that are likely to have significant transport impacts must be accompanied by an appropriate Transport Assessment, as required by SOLP Policy TRANS4. In addition to this the Assessment should demonstrate the development's impacts on traffic during both the construction and operational phases and the expected effect of mitigation measures. To comply with this policy the Transport Assessment must address how the development will impact upon:

- a. air quality (see policy ENV1);
- b. improving health outcomes and quality of life.

Policy T2: Active Travel

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.

TO2 - To ensure that new development supports the Neighbourhood Plan vision by providing cycling, walking and public transport connectivity to the existing network and the town and where possible contributes to improving the existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.

27.17. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) and has been edited to remove overlaps with the existing provisions of the Local Plan policies.

27.18. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by neighbourhood level evidence as listed below.

27.19. Henley is one of the built-up areas in South Oxfordshire where sustainable transport has significant further potential. The [residents survey](#) shows an appetite for active travel interventions and discussions with OCC highlight the need to promote active travel.

27.20. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The source of the problem is road traffic. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxide emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. SODC publish their air quality monitoring data for Henley in the Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)⁶⁷. Encouraging active travel can help with air quality issues in the NPA.

27.21. The 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)⁶⁸ South Oxfordshire District Council set out measures which have been put in place to improve the air quality within the district.

Additional measures include:

- Providing personalised travel planning
- Promoting walking and cycling
- School and workplace travel planning
- Promoting the cycle network via OCC website

27.22. 84% of the respondents to the [Survey](#) undertaken in 2020/21 were concerned with air pollution, with the main areas of concern Reading Road, Bell Street and Duke Street. When asked about issues in respect of roads in the area, 55% of respondents were concerned over air pollution and vibration from Heavy Goods Vehicles.

27.23. One challenge associated with encouraging sustainable travel at Henley-on-Thames will be in ensuring that new residents are immediately apprised of the sustainable travel options available to them, so that residents are informed of the travel choices they have rather than automatically using the car.

⁶⁷ South Oxfordshire District Council (2020) Air Quality Annual Status Report [online] available:

https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/documents/SODC_2020_ASR_PDF.pdf

⁶⁸ [Create Graph, South Oxfordshire District Council - Air Quality monitoring service \(airqualityengland.co.uk\)](#)

- 27.24. Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments⁶⁹ – part of the Evidence Base for SODC’s Local Plan 2035 by Steer Davies Gleave states that the levels of non-car ownership is higher than the South Oxfordshire average; 18% of households in Henley North and 14% of households in Henley South do not have a car or a van, compared with 12% of all households in South Oxfordshire. This is likely to reflect the choice of viable alternatives for everyday travel in these areas specifically and across Henley-on-Thames as a whole. This is undoubtedly an opportunity for encouraging and increasing levels of sustainable travel for everyday journeys.
- 27.25. 40%⁷⁰ of all travel to work trips by Henley-on-Thames residents are 0-5km in length. Though the majority of these shorter trips are currently made sustainably (on foot, by bicycle or by public transport), there is potential to increase the proportion of shorter, intra-urban trips which are made on foot or by bicycle and realise the potential for trips to be made by sustainable means.
- 27.26. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan Transport Topic Paper 2019⁷¹ sets out the process and evidence the District Council has undertaken to produce and inform the Transport Policies. It states that it will be important that sustainable transport improvements are realised within South Oxfordshire District as new development comes forward. The transport policies of the plan recognise this, highlighting the importance of promoting walking, cycling and public transport improvements to ensure that existing and new residents have opportunities to travel by means other than car.
- 27.27. It goes on to state that in other areas (outside the built up areas such as Didcot and Oxford) it is recognised that the car will remain an important way for residents to access facilities and services. New development can help minimise the impacts of this car travel by, for example, providing infrastructure to enable charging of plug-in and other low-emission vehicles from the outset.
- 27.28. In 2016, the county council and its partners updated, adopted and began delivering Connecting Oxfordshire 2011-2031: Local Transport Plan (LTP4)⁷², a transformation of how people travel to and within Oxfordshire, as part of a plan to create a less congested, less polluted city and county. The plan has three key components:
- A better, faster and more comprehensive public transport network.
 - A complete, high-quality, spacious walking and cycling network.
 - Reclaiming some of the road space currently used for vehicles to provide more space for buses, pedestrians and cyclists.
- 27.29. The 2016 Connecting Oxfordshire; the Active & Healthy Travel Strategy⁷³ sets out why there is a need for an active and healthy travel strategy and why cycling and walking are important and links to the health benefits. The UK Chief Medical Officers Physical Activity

⁶⁹ Steer Davies Gleave (2017) South Oxfordshire Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments [online] available: https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038255719&CODE=4457502990788E202AD61BD67F0E4C76

⁷⁰ Steer Davies Gleave (2017) Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments [online] available: https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1283190528&CODE=753BC786212096D4962D97C168C98D67

⁷¹ https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038265824&CODE=E3B28F03DACE4F819CEC8BECC6AA84FA

⁷² Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan (2015- 2031) [online] available: <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/localtransportplan/ConnectingOxfordshirevol1policyandoverallstrategy.pdf>

⁷³ Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Active & Healthy Travel Strategy [online] available: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s33761/Annex%203%20-%20Connecting%20Oxfordshire%20vol%204%20-%20Active%20Healthy%20Travel%20Strategy.pdf>

Guidelines⁷⁴ states that Regular physical activity provides a range of physical and mental health benefits. These include reducing the risk of disease, managing existing conditions, and developing and maintaining physical and mental function.

27.30. Oxfordshire County Council are currently reviewing the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP)⁷⁵ for the long term strategy for Henley-on-Thames and has published several consultation papers which relate to active travel including on cycle streets, greenways, walking and cycling infrastructure plans, low traffic neighbourhoods.

27.31. Oxfordshire Walking Design Standards 2017⁷⁶ and the Cycling Design Standards 2017⁷⁷ sets out additional information on how an attractive and functional environment for walking and cycling can be achieved that is available to all users. The research commissioned by British Cycling (2014) about the benefits of investing in cycling⁷⁸ states that investing in cycling will generate benefits for the whole country, not just those using a bike to get around. Eleven benefits are summarised in the document which can help solve a series of health, social and economic problems. The report shows how investing in cycling is good for our transport systems as a whole, for local economies, for social inclusion, and for public health, and the Manual for Streets⁷⁹ Furthermore, Guidance is available for local authorities on designing high-quality safe cycle infrastructure in the local transport note LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design.⁸⁰ It is likely that a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP) will be developed in the future for Henley.

27.32. The SODC Green infrastructure strategy⁸¹ sets out the opportunity for enhanced contribution to GI Objectives which include to improve the quality of the Thames Path at Henley-on-Thames to improve access along the River and to the wider countryside.

27.33. It also states that the Oxfordshire Way Link is a north-south Strategic Green Access Link which connects communities and facilities in the eastern side of South Oxfordshire with the wider countryside and destinations around Henley in the south and Cherwell District in the north. New access and connections along some sections of the Link would need to be established and existing access upgraded where appropriate to accommodate cycle use.

⁷⁴ (2019) UK Chief Medical Officers Physical Activity Guidelines [online] available:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf

⁷⁵<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation-ltcp/>

⁷⁶ Oxfordshire County Council (2017) Connecting Oxfordshire: A Guide for Developers, Planners and Engineers Walking Design Standards[online] available:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-policies-and-plans/walkingstandards.pdf>

⁷⁷ Oxfordshire County Council (2017) Connecting Oxfordshire: A Guide for Developers, Planners and Engineers Cycling Design Standards[online] available:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-policies-and-plans/cyclingstandards.pdf>

⁷⁸ British Cycling (2014) Benefits of Investing in Cycling [online] available:

(https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/campaigning/BENEFITS_OF_INVESTING_IN_CYCLING_DIGI_FINAL.pdf)

⁷⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>

⁸⁰ Department for Transport (2020) LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design Available [Online] [Cycle infrastructure design \(LTN 1/20\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design)

⁸¹ South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Councils (2017) South & Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy Available [Online]

https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1078639355&CODE=DC73108FAF0A8F9302E46D30C43430D7

27.34. The SODC Regulation 123⁸² list states that infrastructure projects (to be funded through CIL) on transport will be strategic highways or transport infrastructure projects (including public rights of way) and that section 106 will continue to fund site specific transport infrastructure including any works necessary for vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access and/or public transport on or adjacent to the site as a result of the development; mitigation works remote from the development site will be funded where the need for such works is identified in a Transport Assessment; and so will works associated with a S278 agreement, or planning conditions.

Policy T2: Active Travel

A. Measures to join up footpaths/ways and cycle paths/ways into comprehensive networks will be supported with priority being given to:

- A. Encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- B. Supporting projects as shown in Appendix A.
- C. Maintain and enhance connectivity with;
 - a. the network of public rights of way (bridleways),
 - b. local green spaces.
- D. Encourage public access across previously inaccessible private land;
 - a. Designed so they are adequately lit,
 - b. signage is [only used where] necessary,
 - c. it is clear to the public that access is permitted.

B. Development proposals that lead to any of the following will not be supported:

- a. A reduction in the capacity of existing active travel infrastructure;
- b. A reduction in the safety of active travel infrastructure; or
- c. A Reduction in the capacity, quality or accessibility of local facilities which support active travel reduces the capacity, quality or accessibility of local facilities which support active travel.

⁸² South Oxfordshire (2017) Community Infrastructure Levy [Online] Available: <http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/s12409/2017-09-26-Revised%20R123%20List%20August%202017.pdf>

Policy T3: Easing Congestion

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

- 27.35. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#). This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by evidence as listed below which includes an update to the [transport study](#), [residents survey](#) and additional air quality monitoring.
- 27.36. The evidence demonstrates that there is a need to ease congestion as traffic is a particular issue in this Neighbourhood Area which requires greater intervention than already provided by the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies and AQMA.
- 27.37. Since 1997, Henley has had an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and results have shown it exceeds air quality standards in terms of nitrogen dioxide. The AQMA is one of only three AQMAs in South Oxfordshire.
- 27.38. The source of the air quality problem is road traffic, primarily congestion building up along Duke Street, exacerbated by the canyon effect of a narrow road with tall buildings either side. As part of the AQMA, SODC continues to monitor NO₂ (nitrogen dioxide emissions) at their various monitoring points around the NA, including the town centre. The LAQM 2020 Annual Status Report states that there was an exceedance recorded in Henley AQMA located at 4 Duke Street, which recorded an annual average of 49 µg NO₂/m³ which exceeds the EU and UK threshold of 35 40 micrograms/cubic metres. The five-year trend of NO₂ levels in the district and within Henley AQMA continues to be a decreasing one, but some of the monitoring sites in Henley have registered higher concentrations than in 2018
- 27.39. Easing Congestion will help with air quality issues in the NPA.
- 27.40. The [Transport Study](#) (2015) recognises that Henley suffers from traffic congestion at peak times, with issues at Henley Bridge along the A4130 back to Remenham Church Lane and traffic through the Town Centre. The Study (2015) also recognises that some congestion in the town centre is down to HGVs loading, servicing or delivering in peak periods. Although the Addendum (2021) recognises that there has been a reduction in road traffic volume between 2015 and 2019. There are some exceptions, notably on Fair Mile A3130 (AM and PM) and Marlow Road (PM) which indicate an increase in traffic levels between the given dates. 2021 data was used to show that Covid-19 has significantly impacted the use of roads in the area, highlighting the unprecedented nature of transport at present due to the pandemic. Traffic conditions will need to be monitored to determine any permanent changes to travel pattern.

27.41. The [Transport Survey](#) undertaken in May 2021 highlights the impact of congestion, with 60% of respondents finding traffic levels unreasonable or unmanageable. Both the [Transport Survey](#) and [Community Survey](#) request better provision for cycling and walking, as well as 29% of respondents to the Community Survey saying that they don't walk and cycle more because they feel unsafe. 49% of respondents to the Community Survey say they would like to walk more and 41% would like to cycle more. The survey shows that 55% of people think that air pollution and vibrations from heavy goods vehicles are an issue that needs addressing.

27.42. Oxfordshire Freight Strategy⁸³ sets out the strategy for freight network between 2015 and 2031. The strategy acknowledges that the bridge to Henley is an environmentally sensitive area. It states that the County Council will consider environmental weight restrictions across the County, particularly areas which are subject to significant levels of HGV traffic, prioritising the towns including Henley-on-Thames. However, the County Council is very unlikely to have any funding available for this in the coming years so any schemes would need to be funded through development and/or by local communities, businesses and town/parish councils.

27.43. Oxfordshire County Council are currently reviewing the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP)⁸⁴ for the long term strategy for Henley-on-Thames and has published several consultation papers which relate to active travel including on cycle streets, greenways, walking and cycling infrastructure plans, low traffic neighbourhoods etc. The vision sets the direction for transport in Oxfordshire and outlines a clear long-term ambition for transport to 2050.

27.44. The SODC CIL has now been in place since 2016, which includes a Charging schedule and Regulation 123 list. The Regulation 123 list states that infrastructure projects to be funded through CIL on transport will be strategic highways or transport infrastructure and that section 106 will continue to fund site specific transport infrastructure including any works necessary for vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access and/or public transport on or adjacent to the site as a result of the development. Mitigation works remote from the development site will be required where the need for such works is identified in a Transport Assessment; as well as works associated with a S278 agreement, or planning conditions. Mitigation works necessitated due to the traffic generation of a development is therefore likely to be delivered through s106 rather than CIL.

Policy T3: Easing Congestion

A. Subject to compliance with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and elsewhere in the Development Plan, development proposals which have significant transport implications will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

a. they will not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or have severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network, in Henley Town Centre or at key junctions within the town or wider plan area, achieved through appropriate mitigation as necessary; and

b. additional opportunities to alleviate traffic congestion on the highway network and through improvements to pedestrian and cycling routes and improvements to public transport have been identified, considered and assessed.

⁸³ Oxfordshire County Council (2015) Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 Oxfordshire Freight Strategy Available [online]
https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s33708/Background%20CA_JUN2816R10%20Connecting%20Oxfordshire%20vol%205%20-%20Freight%20Strategy.pdf

⁸⁴ <https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/connect.ti/localtransportconnectivity/consultationHome>

Policy T4: EV Charging Points

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.

27.45. The evidence illustrates that a policy is required, to go further than what is required in the Local Plan, as additional evidence has been published since the adoption of the Plan. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the [AECOM Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#).

27.46. The UK Government has announced their intention for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2030 and of hybrid cars and vans in 2035.⁸⁵ Government 2020 announcement towards net-zero with end of sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030⁸⁶;

27.47. The Clean Growth Strategy 2017⁸⁷ and Clean Air Strategy 2019⁸⁸ sets out the government intention for growing the national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The Principles of the National Infrastructure Commission – National Infrastructure Assessment 2018⁸⁹ sets out the aim of revolutionising road transport stating that the government needs to provide the right environment to support and encourage the switch to electric vehicles. To catalyse this, consumers need to feel confident that they can charge their electric vehicles en route across the country. A core network of fast or rapid chargers should be installed in visible locations across the UK.

27.48. A Government Consultation 2019 on Electric vehicle charge points in residential and non-residential buildings⁹⁰ is proposing to:

1. alter building regulations for new:
 1. residential buildings to include requirements for electric vehicle chargepoints
 2. non-residential buildings to include requirements for electric vehicle chargepoint infrastructure
 3. introduce requirement for existing non-residential buildings to have electric vehicle chargepoint

⁸⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sets-ambitious-new-climate-target-ahead-of-un-summit>

⁸⁶

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-historic-step-towards-net-zero-with-end-of-sale-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-by-2030>

⁸⁷ HM Government (2017) The Clean Growth Strategy Available [Online]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>

⁸⁸ Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (2019) Available [Online]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>

⁸⁹ National Infrastructure Commission (2018) National Infrastructure Assessment Available [Online]

https://nic.org.uk/app/uploads/CCS001_CCS0618917350-001_NIC-NIA_Accessible-1.pdf

⁹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/electric-vehicle-chargepoints-in-residential-and-non-residential-buildings>

- 27.49. Other national level evidence is available on the health effects of air pollution, such as: Air Quality a Briefing for Directors of Public Health⁹¹ and Royal College of Physicians ‘Every breath we take the lifelong impact of air pollution’ (2016)⁹².
- 27.50. The South Oxfordshire District Council Transport Topic Paper⁹³ states that new development can help minimise the impacts of this car travel by, for example, providing infrastructure to enable charging of plug-in and other low-emission vehicles from the outset.
- 27.51. Henley Town Council and South Oxfordshire District Council have both declared a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group were established, they have been working with local residents to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and the town. They have many existing projects planned for the future, including ways to improve air quality and quality of life.
- 27.52. Before declaring a climate emergency the Climate Emergency 2030 Working Group did the following:
- established Henley Town’s carbon footprint (on a pro rata basis to that of SODC);
 - identified three strategic pillars on which to progress towards a zero-carbon target for Henley Town - **moving to clean energy** by developing sources of renewable energy; **reducing demand** by reducing existing demand and emission levels; and **absorbing carbon** by developing land use programmes to absorb emissions;
 - identified potential initiatives under each of these three pillars, and established both the likely cost of these initiatives and their impact on the Town’s carbon footprint;
 - developed a timing plan for these initiatives and a source of funds plan to deliver these initiatives – the timing plan has a target of 2030 by when the full project plans would be in place, with implementation of these projects taking place before and after 2030, depending on aspects such as planning;
 - identified four initiatives (described as “low hanging fruit”) that could be implemented quickly at no cost to deliver reductions in emissions and to demonstrate to residents and businesses that the Town Council is committed to reducing emissions; and defined the need to establish a Community Energy Society to deliver more large scale emissions reduction initiatives; all four initiatives being ready to proceed in the early months of 2020.
- 27.53. Current chargepoint provision (excluding any private provision) is shown on <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>
- King’s Road Car Park
 - Tesco Superstore
 - Henley Business School
 - Badgemore Park
 - David Bray Motor Engineers Ltd
 - HiQ &Castrol Henley

⁹¹ Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (2017) Air Quality A Briefing for Directors of Public Health Available [Online] https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/6.3091_DEFRA_AirQualityGuide_9web_0.pdf

⁹² Royal College of Physicians Available [Online]

<https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/every-breath-we-take-lifelong-impact-air-pollution>

⁹³ South Oxfordshire District Council (2019) Transport Topic Paper Available [Online]

https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038265824&CODE=E3B28F03DACE4F819CEC8BECC6A A84FA

27.54. As private home-owners with off street parking take up EV, peer-to-peer charging may become publicly available through booking services such as Zap-Home and bookmycharge.

27.55. The Town Council has joined the Central Southern Regional Framework for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. This Framework has been procured through OJEU (Office for the Journal of the European Union) by Hampshire County Council and means that local authorities across Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Sussex and Wiltshire do not need to undertake a further supplier procurement process, as it has already been completed.

Areas with the greatest deficiencies

27.56. Reference 1 identifies substantial shortfall in provision of EV chargepoints particularly in light of the fact that the Oxfordshire electric vehicle infrastructure strategy (OEVIS)⁹⁴ (reference 2) identifies Henley as an EV hotspot.

OEVIS

27.57. The strategy describes local authority plans including an aspiration to convert 7.5% of local authority managed public car park spaces, to fast or rapid EV charging by 2025, which will mainly contribute toward the need for destination charging, although there is an expectation of access for resident overnight charging (OEVIS EVI 4)

27.58. 'At the end of August 2020, there were 4,381 ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEVs) in Oxfordshire, 2,200 of which were BEVs. Socio-economic factors mean Oxfordshire is likely to have faster growth in EV sales than the national average; research from the University of Oxford indicates that EV sales are likely to reach approximately 70% of new vehicle sales by 2025 (Figure 2). In absolute numbers, the university's predictions mean that by 2025 there could be over 25,000 EVs on Oxfordshire's roads, and over 44,000 by 2027.'

27.59. The CE2030WG on-street parking survey lists streets with greatest future need for on street charging and the work is summarised in reference 1.

Locations most suitable for new provision

27.60. Discussions are ongoing between the TSG Electric Vehicle sub group and our areas' District Network Operator, Scottish and Southern Energy Networks, about upgrades to the local network that will be required to ensure the grid has the capacity to meet the anticipated need for chargepoints.

Private homes, workplaces, other hubs and on-street

27.61. The implication of OEVIS policies (OEVIS p4-5) is that private homes will retrofit to provide a substantial proportion of domestic charging need, and explicitly that new homes will be able to provide chargepoints (EVI 7-9). Workplaces, public car parks, other hubs and on-street charging also have policies to enable provision of chargepoints. As described in reference 1 there are about 1400 homes in Henley that will need on-street charging in order for those households to have access to electric vehicle ownership.

⁹⁴ Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy Available [Online] [https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/\(S\(0qslfpunjtwzla330vllt55\)\)/documents/s55283/CA_MAR1621R11%20Annex%203%20-%20DRAFT%20Oxfordshire%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Infrastructure%20Strategy%2020210225.pdf](https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/(S(0qslfpunjtwzla330vllt55))/documents/s55283/CA_MAR1621R11%20Annex%203%20-%20DRAFT%20Oxfordshire%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Infrastructure%20Strategy%2020210225.pdf)

Pilot of gully solution

27.62. OCC is due to invite residents to join a pilot study of a particular solution to on street charging – cable gullies. A resident in Niagara Road has expressed an interest and we await the outcome. CE2030WG is concerned (reference 1) that gullies have practical limitations that mean they are not suitable for many Henley homes eg terraced housing.

On Council owned land

27.63. OEVIS Policy EVI 3 calls for 7.5% of LA car parks to have chargepoints by 2025, but some of the Town Council car parks eg Mill Lane do not have an electricity supply.

27.64. Based on the recommendation of CE2030WG, R&A resolved (30 June p33-67) to request a 100% supplier-funded proposal for EVCP from Joju at three of ten potential sites. The Town Council are in final contract negotiations for four chargepoints at Mill Meadows Car Park.

Henley Car Club

27.65. Currently has two non-plugin hybrid cars, and it is likely that any additional future cars would be battery electric vehicles (R&A minutes 1 Dec 2020). It is hoped that this pay-as-you go car sharing model will reduce the number of chargepoints required because a smaller number of shared cars will be required.

Hydrogen fuel cells

27.66. A note about the hydrogen fuel cell alternative. On 17 August 2021 the government published its hydrogen strategy.

27.67. It looks like in the medium term, to 2030, that for hydrogen, the government is focussing on energy-intensive industries like chemicals, oil refineries, power and heavy transport like shipping, HGV lorries and trains. Oxfordshire Fire Service are trialling hydrogen fuel cell fire engines. The press release talks about the government analysis suggesting that 20-35% of the UK's energy consumption by 2050 could be hydrogen-based.

27.68. Whilst it's not possible to predict exactly what new technology might achieve, at the moment the government does not seem to be thinking of hydrogen as the future of personal powered transport.

Policy T4: EV Charging Points

A. Proposals for development should include, where practicable, appropriate provision for electric vehicle charging points taking account of best practice.

B. Proposals should specify the type of charge points to be installed. This should be in line with the OCC Standards in Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2020-2025).

C. For developments, details of how the required electric vehicle charging points will be allocated, located and managed should be included within the relevant Transport Assessment or Transport Statement. The management of the charging points, including the mechanism/procedure for taking payments, will be the responsibility of the developer/occupier.

D. In cases where charging points, including infrastructure to enable retrofitting, cannot be provided within the development site, developer contributions may be sought to enable those facilities to be suitably provided in other locations including public car parks or on-street parking spaces (with overnight parking restrictions in place) or designated areas.

E. All building conversions, refurbishments and extensions, should be designed to improve resilience to the anticipated effects of climate change. New charging points including infrastructure to enable retrofitting will be supported as part of these applications.

Policy T5: Public Transport

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

TO1 - To promote active travel; walking, cycling and also public transport as first choice modes for all residents, ensure that children can choose to walk safely to school and to ensure that the services supporting these modes are in place, from high quality safe routes to reliable and sustainable transport services.

TO3 - To ensure that new development minimises congestion and air quality impacts of vehicle traffic.

TO4 – To implement a range of innovative transport solutions in the JHNP and surrounding areas using the Henley Transport Study.

27.69. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#). This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by evidence as listed below including an updated [transport study](#), [residents' survey](#), and [stakeholder engagement](#).

27.70. The [Community Survey](#) showed that public transport links were highly rated as a consideration for new housing. 41% of respondents would like to use the bus more and 31% would like to use the train more. Frequency of services was cited by 56% of respondents as a barrier to increased bus usage.

27.71. Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments – part of the Evidence Base for SODC's Local Plan 2035 by Steer Davies Gleave - cites 776,282 entries and exits for Henley station in 2015-16, with 9% of the resident working population using rail to travel to work. The report states 'The challenge is to ensure that the station's sustainable transport facilities (i.e. cycle parking) keep pace with demand, so that new residents can use the railway for their journeys to work and other leisure journeys.'

27.72. This results in recommendation TDM2: Development of station travel plans to support increased awareness of sustainable travel options for journeys to the station, and monitoring of the need for additional station facilities. Each station travel plan developed will include an action plan identifying the capital and revenue schemes required to support increased levels of sustainable travel to and from the station, e.g. more cycle parking / improved cycle parking facilities.

27.73. Network Rail have confirmed that further to the Network Rail Western Route Study from 2015, rail usage is anticipated to grow by 55.5% between 2019 and 2043.⁹⁵ Although over 2020-21 usage will be reduced due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it is anticipated that coupled with the increasing pressure on the climate and policy encouragement to use public transport rather than private cars, together with the move to prohibit the sale of petrol and diesel cars from 2030, more residents will be turning to the train for travel.

27.74. The Government's Future of Mobility Report from 2017⁹⁶ states 'External modelling suggests further growth in passenger rail demand of 45-66% up to 2040, allowing for constraints' (Blainey and Preston, 2016, Transport systems assessment. In: Hall J.W., Nicholls R., Tran M. and Hickford A.J. (eds) The Future of National Infrastructure: A System-of-Systems

⁹⁵ <https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Western-Route-Study-Final-1.pdf>

⁹⁶

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/780868/future_of_mobility_final.pdf

Approach (pp. 88-113). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.). Similarly, the Department for Transport estimates a 48% growth in passenger journeys, and growth of around 60% in passenger-km. (The first Department for Transport figure was estimated using the Exogenous Demand Growth Estimator (EDGE) model, the second using the National Transport Model (NTM).) The expected social and technological changes taking place over the next 20-30 years could also significantly change rail demand. The report goes on to cite environmental considerations as a driver for young people's attitude to transport, as well as increased interest in 'usership' rather than 'ownership', hence an inclination to a sharing economy. Linked with moves elsewhere in Europe (France) to ban short haul flights (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-56716708>) and encourage the use of rail transport, this can be taken as an indicator of the direction that transport use will move in. OCC's LTP4 states 'If we continue to see the same proportion of sole-occupancy car journeys in the future, we will simply not be able to accommodate the trips that people want to make.' LTP4 Overall Strategy p9.

- 27.75. It is essential that the public transport network is integrated to create connected networks between places where goods and people need to go. Transport infrastructure in Henley and Harpsden will comprise a range of public transport; bus routes and stops, walking routes, cycling networks, roads, potential park and ride, and railway station that all need to work and connect together. Work with Network Rail on their 'First Mile Last Mile Principles and Approach' can help review the options available.
- 27.76. Bus travel uses less road space per person than car use. We would like to promote the use of the bus service within Henley and the continued use of the train services to provide sustainable transport options.
- 27.77. The Henley Town Bus Service was reinstated by the Town Council following the removal of funding by Oxfordshire County Council from local bus services in 2016. It provides a much appreciated route around the town, where the geography of Henley can make it possible to walk downhill into the Town Centre, but less easy to walk up the hill again. The current service links the outer edges of the town with the town centre and provides stops close to the railway station and at the hospital, as well as in the heart of the town. In the six months from October 2020 to March 2021, 2500 passengers were carried, despite the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 27.78. Both the [Community Survey](#) carried out in early 2021 and the [Transport Survey](#) carried out in May 2021 affirm the support and necessity of improved public transport provision. With 60% of respondents to the Transport Survey considering traffic and congestion in Henley and Harpsden to be unreasonable and/or unmanageable, it is not surprising that bus timetables and access to business, shops and leisure pursuits is viewed as neither suitable nor good. Respondents identified the need for more frequent services and improved routes.
- 27.79. The Regulation 123 list contains generic types of infrastructure that may be funded using CIL receipts, with the exception of specific on-site infrastructure or direct mitigation measures and specifically of the strategic development sites.
- 27.80. Exclusions (to be secured through S106 and other statutory provision) include; site specific transport infrastructure including any works necessary for vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access and/or public transport on or adjacent to the site as a result of the

development. Mitigation works remote from the development site where the need for such works is identified in a Transport Assessment.

27.81. The 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)⁹⁷ South Oxfordshire District Council set out measures which have been put in place to improve the air quality within the district.

Additional measures include:

- Providing personalised travel planning
- School and workplace travel planning
- Bus route improvements (such as providing RTPI)
- Promoting low emission public transport
- Car and lift sharing schemes
- Car clubs

27.82. Projects to support improvements to the quality of public transport:

- New Bus Stops, shelters etc to serve new developments
- Buses – access to bus stops, cycle racks near bus stops, integrated ticketing
- Review road crossing facilities near main bus stops eg Reading Road
- Improvement of bus waiting facilities eg Town Hall and Townlands Hospital (ie centre for shopping and access to health care. Townlands covers both the hospital and the doctors' surgeries)– information screens, shelter, seating
- Extension of car club
- Electric bike charging points
- Traffic modelling work to identify possibility of shared space, wider pavements, removal of street furniture, possible one way system
- Extension of AQMA across town centre. Only covers Duke Street currently, but measurement via diffusion tubes is ongoing. More funds for diffusion tubes.
- Improve signage for Long Stay car parks – safeguard availability of long stay car parks
- Walking Signage to identify routes and times into Town Centre. In association with Walkers are Welcome and SODC
- Identification and appropriate signage for cycling routes across the town
- Environmental Weight Limit to restrict HGVs coming through the town and thereby making it a more comfortable environment for walking and cycling
- School Streets – consult and consider the possibility of introducing this for the streets around schools in Henley

Policy T5: Public Transport

A. Proposals on the Henley Railway Station Site should seek to enhance the services, transport links and amenity provided.

B. Development proposals are required to meet the infrastructure and service needs it creates. Where developments are likely to lead to an increased need for bus services, they should make contributions towards these.

C. Where appropriate, development proposals should be designed to facilitate access to high quality public transport routes, including safe walking routes to nearby bus stops or new bus stops.

⁹⁷ [Create Graph, South Oxfordshire District Council - Air Quality monitoring service \(airqualityengland.co.uk\)](https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/)

Policy T6: Parking and Standards

Relevant Neighbourhood Plan Objective:

TO5 – to enhance vehicle and car park management, exploring opportunities for additional town centre parking, encouraging use of the station car park, potentially use of a digital car park management system and support schemes which encourage electric vehicles. **To reduce vehicle movements both on the edge of town and in the town centre.**

27.83. This policy has been drafted in line with the recommendations set out in the AECOM [Evidence Base and Policy Development Report](#) and has been edited to remove overlaps with the existing provisions of the Local Plan policies and national policy. This policy seeks locally specific requirements over and above what is required in the SOLP policies and is supported by evidence as listed below.

27.84. **The evidence demonstrates the need for a policy to seek** adequate vehicle and cycle parking as part of new development. To ensure that car parking facilities are not lost within the town. This policy may need to be reviewed over time to provide for new initiatives in line with climate change and low carbon objectives.

27.85. Henley has a higher level of car and van ownership against England, 78% of households had a car/van in 2018 according to ONS. The combined impact from infill development and change of use have all contributed to the inadequate provision of off-street parking. The problem is exacerbated by the number of terraced houses in Henley-on-Thames where owners have more than one car. At present we have Residents Parking areas in and around the centre of the town with some 350 spaces, yet we have over 500 parking permits allocated to residents.

27.86. For many years planning permission has been granted in Henley-on-Thames for residential properties when insufficient off-street parking has been allowed for, this has caused the roads in and around the centre to be at capacity throughout the day and evening. One of the biggest problems is where permitted development and change of use applications have been granted to turn space above shops in to flats and with no spaces available for parking.

27.87. Whilst it is recognised that Henley is a sustainable location with access to public transport, many residents still rely on cars for many journeys and many people from surrounding villages need to travel to Henley for access to services and facilities.

27.88. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan Transport Topic Paper 2019⁹⁸ sets out the process and evidence the District Council has undertaken to produce and inform the Transport Policies. It acknowledges that in areas (outside the built up areas such as Didcot and Oxford) that the car will remain an important way for residents to access facilities and services.

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https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1038265824&CODE=E3B28F03DACE4F819CEC8BECC6AA84FA

27.89. The Local Plan paragraph 6.6. states the policies contribute towards our vision and objectives which seek to build on opportunities for sustainable travel. They have been informed by relevant evidence, including our Evaluation of Transport Impacts work. However, they recognise that the rural nature of the district means that many residents will still be dependent on car travel for some or all of their journeys, and this is reflected in the policies.

27.90. The Town Council's Transport Strategy Group are looking to promote use of the long stay car parks on the north and south of the town, including the Rugby club and station car parks.

Policy T8: Parking and Standards

A. Development will be permitted where adequate vehicle parking facilities and cycling parking are provided by the developer to serve the needs of the proposed development. Development proposals should provide sufficient parking spaces to avoid inappropriate on-street parking, highway safety problems and to protect living and working conditions locally.

B. Development proposals should meet Oxfordshire County Council's parking standards.

C. Parking needs to be carefully considered as part of the wider scheme and designed appropriate for the site. Vehicle and cycle parking should be integrated as a key element of design in development layouts to ensure good quality, safe, secure and attractive environments. Proposals will be expected to comply with the requirements of the South Oxfordshire District Council Design Guide.

D. Any proposals to develop on existing public car parks within the Plan area will need to demonstrate that the overall number of car parking spaces available to the public and their ease of use is adequate to meet the needs of the town centre and railway station.



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

Topic Paper 5

Infrastructure

Submission
December 2021



Topic Paper 5 : Infrastructure

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33. Disclaimer

- 33.1. This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and to support the writing of corresponding Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 33.2. This document is a non-exhaustive summary based on information, guidance and data reasonably available at the time of writing. As such, some or all of it may be superseded or become obsolete at a later date.

34. Purpose

- 34.1. The purpose of this topic paper forms part of the evidence base to inform the new Neighbourhood Plan in relation to the current infrastructure position and capacity. Infrastructure, in planning terms, can be defined as ‘any facility, service or physical structure that supports or enables proposed development, whether privately or publically funded’. This stage of the report will outline the state of infrastructure provision in Henley and Harpsden.
- 34.2. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) has published a series of background papers to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. These cover a range of issues and provide more technical or detailed information than is contained in the Plan itself.
- 34.3. The background papers are:
 - 1. Paper 1 - Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change
 - 2. Paper 2 - Housing
 - 3. Paper 3 - Retail, Town Centre and Economy
 - 4. Paper 4 - Transport
 - 5. Paper 5 - Infrastructure
- 34.4. These background papers can be downloaded from the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website <https://jhhnp.org.uk/>.

35. Introduction

- 35.1. Henley Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council are preparing a new Neighbourhood Plan. This will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Henley and Harpsden covering the period 2020 to 2035. Once ‘made’ it will replace the existing Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) which came into force in April 2016.
- 35.2. The review is necessary due to the requirements set out in the new South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2020. This includes delivery of new homes and employment land, meeting affordable housing needs and addressing environmental issues such as air quality. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and able to continue strongly influencing planning decisions.

- 35.3. The Plan must be in general conformity with the planning documents sitting above it in the planning hierarchy. For Henley and Harpsden, that is the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Throughout the document, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy, the relevant policies from this plan are referenced.

36. Vision & Objectives

- 36.1. The vision statement for the revised Plan embeds a commitment to environmental sustainability (tackling climate change) and states that: **“In 20 years’ time, Henley on Thames and the surrounding village of Harpsden will have a sustainable community, meeting the needs of current and future generations who live and work here and for visitors where possible. The community will be resilient in its capacity to address the likely impact of climate change whilst still protecting the special qualities of the area.”**
- 36.2. The revised Neighbourhood Plan includes the following social infrastructure objectives:
- SO1 - To ensure that the required health, education, leisure and community infrastructure is in place to accommodate the needs of *all* residents and surrounding parishes.
 - SO2 - To maximise leisure opportunities for all ages, identifying how new mechanisms for delivering new and improved facilities in appropriate locations can be delivered
 - SO3 - To enhance and maintain Henley as a centre of excellence for sports (including rugby, football, rowing, swimming, hockey, tennis, golf, cricket, athletics and other sports).
 - SO4 - To work with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that the health needs of the whole population are met and plan for future levels of provision and service.

37. Schools, Care for the Elderly, Health facilities, Utilities: Water and Sewage

Research carried out

- 37.1. In April 2018 the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHNP) Committee set up a number of working groups to research a range of issues and to gather evidence to inform the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan of April 2016. Four members of the committee were tasked with researching schools, provision for the elderly, health facilities and utilities. The group met to agree responsibilities for different aspects of the research. A questionnaire and covering letter were drawn up and sent to local schools, care homes, doctors’ surgeries, dentists and utility companies requesting information about current capacity and expectation of being able to accommodate increased demand resulting from additional housing units. Some follow-up visits to schools were made. Private schools were not included in the survey as it was thought that they are likely to respond to market forces.
- 37.2. Enquiries were made with the Oxfordshire CC regarding school places and projections of future demand. LEA planning documents were consulted to collect information relevant to Henley and Harpsden. Relevant documents such as the infrastructure section of SODC Local Plan and SODC Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017 were included in the group’s research. Utility companies were approached for information on current capacity and potential future constraints.

- 37.3. The working group reported its progress to the full JHHNP Committee in May and July and September 2018. Following a workshop with SODC Planning officers at the end of August it was agreed that the working group should produce a topic paper to support the revision of the JHHNP.

Schools

Early years and Childcare

- 37.4. While the government plans to introduce 30 hours of free childcare for working families with children ages 3 and 4 from September 2017, local authorities are not expected to deliver provision themselves, but to work with providers (private and voluntary providers) to ensure there is sufficient provision available. No major sufficiency gaps in South Oxfordshire have been identified. *SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017*. However, in Henley there are now only three places that provide 30 hours funded child care and two of these are full and have waiting lists.

Primary Schools

- 37.5. There are 5 primary schools in, or close to, Henley – Trinity, Valley Road, Badgemore, Shiplake Primary and Sacred Heart. The town also has 2 private preparatory schools – St Marys and Rupert House. Oxfordshire County Council produces a ‘Pupil Place Plan’ forecasting pupil numbers and school capacity for every school area within Oxfordshire. OCC estimates extra demand for primary school place arising from housing sites identified in the current JHHNP current plan to be 484 places. This does not take account demand arising from the 95 homes in Shiplake permitted since the calculation of the forecasts in the Plan. Nor does it include potential demand from additional homes built as infill or permitted development.
- 37.6. *SODC Infrastructure Plan 2017* plan indicates spare capacity at primary level in Henley of 202 places (17%) across all years. The projected numbers in the *SODC Infrastructure Plan 2017* for newly arising demand from new houses to 2033, using the formula of 25 places per 100 houses, estimates a need for 259 places up to 2033. The delivery mechanism for dealing with this increase has yet to be defined. Approximately 700 – 800 new homes should warrant a new primary school. The current spare capacity situation may therefore change as new developments are built.
- 37.7. We confirmed the situation directly with local schools via a questionnaire, which confirmed that whilst Sacred Heart and Badgemore had spare places, Valley Road and Trinity did not. Trinity would be able to expand by building an extra classroom on site if necessary and if funding was available.

Secondary Schools

- 37.8. There is one secondary school in Henley – Gillotts, which caters for pupils from 11-16. Gillotts (current enrolment 920, capacity 900) however before this the school had not been full since 2012 and had brought in students from north Reading and the private sector to fill spare places. There are insufficient pupils at Henley primary and preparatory schools to fill the places available at secondary level. A visit to Gillotts School and discussion with the head teacher, confirmed the figures. *SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017* estimates that 251 additional places will be needed by 2033. The new provision could potentially be met by expansion of Gillotts School. OCC have confirmed that there is sufficient school capacity for the proposed growth in the Plan.

Post 16 Education

- 37.9. Post 16 education is provided by The Henley College. The Henley College, awarded Beacon status in 2010, the highest accolade in the post 16 sector, by the Department of Education, was formed in 1987 by the amalgamation of King James' College and the South Oxfordshire Technical College. Its history dates back much further however, to 1604 when King James 1 founded a free Grammar School and 1609 when Dame Elizabeth Periam founded a vocational Charity School.
- 37.10. The College provides a wide range of academic and vocational courses for post-16 learners. It attracts students from a wide geographic area with students traveling in by bus and by train. Students come from Berkshire. and Buckinghamshire and the catchment area in South Oxfordshire extends to Wallingford. The college operates from two sites and a recently completed sports hall has been built at a cost of £2 million. However, as noted in the Baseline Report for the JHHNP made in 2016, there are still many buildings that need improving or replacing.

Special Education needs and Disability

- 37.11. The SODC Infrastructure Plan 2017 describes provision in the area: units in local primary and secondary schools together with a specialist school, Bishopswood, at nearby Sonning Common.

Care for the elderly

- 37.12. At the moment Henley is well provided with a range of residential options for older people: independent living, assisted living, managed care and those that deal with specialised care categories. There are age restricted properties and a number of alms houses. In most cases the age restricted homes offer non-residential management staff and Careline alarm services. There are additional places in the surrounding area. A survey done by the Henley NP Oversight group in March 2017 shows a total of 483 units of accommodation for the elderly (care home places, sheltered housing, nursing care, retirement living) in Henley or just across the Henley Bridge.
- 37.13. Since the JHHNP was accepted, new facilities have been built or are planned. One of the sites designated for regular housing with 40% affordable housing units was allowed change of use to privately owned flats for the elderly with facilities for residents and an optional range of care at extra cost (Albert Court). Another site designated in the JHHNP for housing was refused permission to change to elderly care, and lost an appeal against the decision (former Youth Centre on Deanfield Avenue).
- 37.14. Oxfordshire County Council have confirmed that they are not seeking more care beds in Henley and Harpsden as demand is decreasing, particularly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They have confirmed there is a need for extra care housing in Henley but that would be C3 use class with people living in their own self-contained flats, with communal facilities provided.

Health and Social care GP Surgeries

- 37.15. There are two NHS doctors' surgeries in Henley - The Bell and the Hart surgery. Both were visited and sent a questionnaire and both reported that they welcome new patients. The Bell Surgery's current list is 8,633 and their maximum list is 10,500. They have already responded to a capacity survey by the CCG in 2017 that they would be happy to recruit another GP if the additional patient numbers allowed for the funding of a full or part time GP.
- 37.16. **The Bell Surgery** believes it could deal with finding clinical room for extra staff by room sharing by part time GPs. They would be happy to consider extending the premises if NHS funding were available.
- 37.17. **The Hart Surgery's** current NHS list is 10,400 and maximum capacity is 11,000. If numbers were to be greater than 11,000 the surgery would need to employ 1-2 more GPs and 1 nurse/health care assistant. Every additional 1000 patients requires 0.5 GP and some nursing time. Premises are almost at capacity so an extension to the building would be needed. This could be done if funding were to be made available.

Community Nursing

- 37.18. The SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2017 has identifies a growing demand for the services of community nursing teams causing pressure on the service. Oxfordshire CCG have reported that there is a high number of district nurse vacancies in the area round Henley-on-Thames. Clearly additional development in Henley and Harpsden will add to the pressure on these services.

Dentists

- 37.19. There are several private and NHS dental surgeries in Henley. The NHS surgeries were sent a questionnaire and were visited. All said that they could take on extra patients now or by employing extra staff. Private surgeries were not visited on the assumption that market forces would allow them to expand if demand increased.

Pharmacists

- 37.20. The SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017 quoting the pharmaceutical needs assessment found that pharmaceutical provision meets the needs of the current population and no requirement for additional pharmacy premises was found.

Hospitals

- 37.21. A range of hospital services are provided by Townlands Memorial Hospital. The Hospital is approximately a 15-20 minute walk from Henley Railway station. Completed in March 2017 the new hospital is well liked by staff and patients. Services provided include:
- c) Rehabilitation and palliative care for people who no longer require the services of an acute hospital but require greater support than currently provided in their home environment.
 - d) A dedicated team of nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists and support from medical teams. Staff work closely with social services to source care placements and liaise with other care agencies.
 - e) In addition to its inpatient beds, the hospital has a [Minor Injuries Unit](#) (MIU), a range of outpatient clinics (provided by Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust),

X-ray facilities (provided by Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust), and a [rapid access care unit](#) (RACU)

- f) The RACU unit will provide a next-day service led by a consultant and a team of health and social care professionals including community nurses, physiotherapy and occupational therapy practitioners, social care staff, mental health staff and hospital clinicians.
- g) This Hospital has Neurology and Dermatology Departments which are managed by [Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- h) It offers Care Home beds and outpatient services

Utilities: water and sewage

- 37.22. Thames Water is the statutory water supply and sewage undertaker for SODC. The way water and wastewater infrastructure will be delivered has changed since the 2016 JHHNP was published. From 1 April 2018 all off site water and wastewater network reinforcement works necessary as a result of new developments will be delivered by the relevant statutory undertaker. Local reinforcement works will be funded by the Infrastructure Charge which is a fixed charge for water and wastewater for each new property connected. Strategic water and wastewater requirements will be funded through water companies' investment programmes which are based on a 5 year cycle, the Asset Management Plan process.

Sewage treatment Works capacity in Henley-on-Thames / Harpsden

- 37.23. The area is served by the Henley Treatment Works. Thames Water anticipate that this sewage works has adequate capacity to manage current and forecast growth until 2025. Should further growth come forward, the company wish to be informed at the earliest opportunity so they can update their projections to upgrade infrastructure as and when required.

Electricity

- 37.24. An assessment done for SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017 shows that the majority of new housing developments will be able to be served by the existing electrical network at a 33/11kV level and that no upgrades are required in the Henley area.

Gas

- 37.25. Southern Gas were consulted by SODC in 2017 on the estimated gas demand from new developments. Southern Gas are currently assessing their networks ability to support updated proposed developments. They cannot give firm proposals until they get confirmed developer requests. As with water, should alterations be required, needs must be established early to allow time for the necessary works.

Area of Concern

- A. At the current time it appears that local primary schools can absorb more pupils, but this may change rapidly when the numbers are recalculated to take into account all of the new housing provision including infill and permitted development.
- B. Prospective pupils are lost each year to the grammar schools in the neighbouring counties and to the independent sector, with some pupils transferring from state primary schools at the age of 11 to independent schools joining pupils from Henley's two preparatory schools.
- C. Some of the buildings on the Gillotts site are old and need replacing to provide a good quality teaching and learning environment.

- D. The college needs to continue to attract students from the wider area and across county boundaries in order to be able to continue to offer the wide range of courses and a high quality experience for all students. Budget cuts are hitting the sector as a whole.
- E. An increase in population could lead to an increase in demand for special education services. New and expanded facilities which could include specialist resources in expanded mainstream schools might well be needed.
- F. Fear that the age profile in the town will become even more unbalanced as more accommodation for the elderly is built at the expense of mainstream housing. High prices for houses and very high rents mean that fewer young people can afford to live in the town. The vision of Henley as a vibrant prosperous mixed community could become impossible to achieve.
- G. There is extensive competition to get staff for existing care home and assisted living homes which is likely to lead to an increase in wages and therefore cost to residents. Most staff come from outside Henley as they cannot afford to live in Henley so have to travel to work increasing existing problems with traffic congestion, parking and poor air quality.
- H. There is some concern about the cost of the privately owned properties and the service charges. There is also concern about the high maintenance costs, particularly with the new buildings, which may reduce the uptake of such properties and make them financially unviable.
- I. Although capacity is sufficient to meet current needs, additional development could lead to a need for expansion of services which could only be met by extending the present premises. Where the funding for such an expansion would come from is not clear.
- J. Thames Water have concerns regarding wastewater network services in the area. Upgrades to the existing drainage structure are likely to be required to ensure sufficient capacity is in place to serve development.
- K. Thames Water have particular concerns for the area west and southwest of Henley where there is cluster of developments predominately on sites with foul water assets only, an area in which wastewater infrastructure is operating very close to capacity.
- L. In response to the current planning application (P19/S2350/FUL) at the Fairmile, Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal.

Library

- 37.26. Henley has a well-used public library run by Oxfordshire County Council situated in a convenient central location. It offers the following services and facilities:
- A. Books in a variety of format
 - B. (Newspapers and magazine)
 - C. Books in other languages
 - D. Audio books
 - E. eBooks and eAudio
 - F. DVDs
 - G. Free Wi-Fi
 - H. (Music CDs) Music library
 - I. Computers and Internet
 - J. Local studies collection
 - K. Bus pass, Blue Badge, (resident parking validation services) and EU settled status assisted service.
 - L. A3/A4 printing and copying
 - M. (Bookable Digital helper sessions)

It also offers regular *Rhymetime* sessions for parents, carers and children and *Knit and natter* sessions for all.

- 37.27. Staff plan and schedule activity sessions based on community interest. (Bookings are recommended for some sessions e.g. digital helpers.) Feedback from Henley Library customers indicates that the Library serves its customers well.
- 37.28. The Library Service uses a range of demographic data and projections to map the impact of the growth plan across the service. As part of the strategic and business planning the Library service will review its service provision in the coming months to ensure that they are prepared and will provide a relevant community service in response to the extra houses being built in the current and revised JHHNP and the wider Oxfordshire growth Plan over the next 10-15 years. Library staff regard their role as ensuring they remain relevant to the communities they serve.
- 37.29. The SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan, part A 2017 states that there are currently no shortfalls in provision.

Community Halls

- a) There are a number of community halls in the 2 parishes. There are also sports clubs and churches that hire out rooms for private or group functions when they are not required by the club or church.
- b) Community facilities for meetings include Town Hall rooms, King's Arms Barn meetings room, Old Fire Station Gallery, The Pavilion (owned by Henley Town Council), Harpsden Village Hall, TA Centre and Over Sixties Social Club.
- c) The Town Hall has a large hall with space for 200 people, a Council Chamber for up to 60 people and a committee room for smaller meetings.
- d) Harpsden Hall, overseen by the *John Hodges Trust*, has a main hall, a small meetings room and a kitchen. The playing fields next to the hall have a football pitch and a cricket ground.

- e) The Over 60's club is a social club for people over 60. They run a range of activities and services and provide meals 3 days a week.
- f) Several local churches have halls that can be used by the wider community including St. Mary's grade 1 listed Chantry House, the Christchurch Centre, with a range of different sized rooms, Henley Baptist Church and Sacred Heart Parish Hall.
- g) The Chantry House is used as a church hall with a variety of activities and is also available for hire.
- h) The Christ Church Centre has a range of rooms for activities or hire. A number of groups meet there providing support for older people, families, carers and people with health issues. The Centre also runs a range of sports and cultural activities and classes.
- i) Henley Baptist Church runs d:Two, a community centre which has a family centre, a community café and bookshop, (a youth and community project) the Nomad community project and Food Bank. Rooms are available for hire
- j) Rooms can also be hired from Sports Clubs, the YMCA and other private organisations and clubs such as Badgemore Golf Club, the Salisbury Club and Phyllis Court.

Several Community halls were either fully or partially closed during the periods of Covid 19 restrictions but they have now (August 2021) reopened and bookings are increasing as local groups resume face to face meetings.

Indoor and outdoor Sports Facilities

- 37.30. The two parishes have a number of sports clubs with indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

The Henley Leisure Centre

- 37.31. **The Henley Leisure Centre:** Henley Leisure Centre offers the local community a large range of facilities including a 50 station gym, 25m swimming pool, separate cycling and fitness class studio (with over 20 classes per week,) 4 court badminton hall, 2 squash courts, children's swimming lessons, martial arts and 5 a side football. The gym at Henley Leisure Centre has recently received new gym equipment, which includes: treadmills; Excite Bikes; Concept 2 Rowers; Synchro X-trainers; dumbbells up to 38kg; Multipower Smith Machine. The fully equipped, air-conditioned gym offers a range of fitness equipment for everyone with cardiovascular machines, resistance equipment, dedicated stretching areas and fitness aids. A fitness programme tailored to individual needs can be put together by a *Better Fitness* instructor. A range of fitness classes is offered including Total Body Conditioning, Core Stability, Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi, BoxFit, Group Cycle Circuits, Water Workout, Dance Aerobics, Strength & Conditioning.

Swimming

- 37.32. The swimming pool is 25 metres long, with 4 lanes and a changing village located next to the pool side. Swim fit sessions are laned pool sessions with options of slow, medium and fast pace. Fun sessions are float mat sessions aimed at children under the age of 16. A changing facility for disabled users, including adjustable height changing bed and hoist is available. The Centre provides: fully qualified teachers. Lesson plans are designed in accordance with the ASA Learn to Swim Framework. There are free-swimming sessions. The swimming pool normally operates at close to 70% capacity (classed as busy).

The Studios

- 37.33. The studio hosts -8 classes a week. A range of classes including cardio, circuits, dance, cycling and yoga are offered. Personal trainers are available providing exercise programmes for all areas of general fitness.

Racquet sports

- 37.34. The Centre has 4 Badminton and 2 Squash courts. Racketball can also be played on the squash courts. The Leisure Centre is host to the Henley Squash and Racketball Club, with internal leagues & ladders and matches against other clubs in Oxfordshire & Berkshire. The SODC draft report states that there is a surplus supply of squash courts in the local area. The SODC draft report states that there is sufficient provision of badminton courts in the area and that the priority is improvement of existing facilities to improve attractiveness and accessibility.

Jubilee Park

- 37.35. Following public consultation in the summer of 2019, Henley Town Council is considering plans for the construction of a new clubhouse, a 3G pitch and rearranged grass pitches on Jubilee Park, financed by the sale of land at 353-357 Reading Road for residential and retail development. The site is managed by Henley Town Council.
- 37.36. Facilities include an all-weather pitch laid in 2011 with artificial rhinoturf, a 4 lane running track, changing rooms with showers and car parking. The pitch is suitable for hockey, football, athletics, rugby and fitness training. It is home to Henley Hockey Club and is also used by AFC Henley, local schools and organisations.

Football

- 37.37. *Henley AFC*: offer football for boys and girls from 4 to 18, and, in partnership with Henley Town Football Club and Henley YMCA, onward progression to adult teams.

Facilities include:

- Five pitches at Jubilee Park.
- A full-sized pitch in the village of Harpsden
- Access to Henley YMCA's pitch in Lawson Road
- Access to the Rhinoturf at Jubilee Park Henley for training
- Access to Henley Town's men's pitch in Mill Lane

Activities include:

- Saturday morning Mini-Soccer Centre for under 5 to under 8
- Midweek Mini/Junior Soccer Centres
- Midweek Player Development centres (by invitation)
- Competitive league football for under 9 to under 18
- Football for adults at Henley Town Football Club
- Football for adults with learning disabilities at Henley YMCA
- After School Clubs
- Holiday soccer camps
- Football parties

AFC Henley is affiliated to Oxfordshire Football Association (OFA)

- 37.38. **Henley Town Football Club** was founded in 1871 and is the oldest club recognised by the Oxfordshire Football Association. They currently have teams in the Thames Valley League and Reading and District Sunday League and are working with AFC Henley to promote local boys' progression into adult football.

Rugby

- 37.39. **Henley Hawks** is a rugby union club. The first team play in the fourth tier of the English league system. The ground has a capacity of 4000, a range of pitches, a wonderful new 4G training facility and a large refurbished clubhouse at Dry Leas. The ground is leased from the Town Council with the unexpired portion being nearly fifty years. Henley RFC have developed a close working relationship with Ealing RFC and Henley College for player development with loan players and a pathway from the college into adult community rugby. As well as the first team the club has 4 other men's squads, a strong women's section with two sides and a girls' development squad and three community sides. There is a large *Kids First* and *Juniors* section with teams ranging from under 6 to under 16.

Hockey

- 37.40. **Henley Hockey Club** was founded in 1952.
- They use the Rhino Turf pitch at Jubilee Park.
 - They have 6 men's teams and 3 women's teams who play matches throughout the season
 - There is an Academy for children with teams for boys and girls from under 6 to under 16. This equates to about 250 children
 - All training uses qualified coaches.
 - Qualified 'First Aiders' are present at all games
 - HHC is affiliated to *England Hockey*
 - HHC has sponsors and regularly uses its facilities for non-hockey events – cultural events, slimming club, etc.
 - HHC has fully trained and tested umpires
 - HHC arranges many social events throughout the year
 - HHC offer a *Return to Hockey* facility
 - HHC is an amateur club with all members paying for hockey and/or social functions
 - HHC is a PLC. It has 3 plc Directors and a committee. Activities are reviewed and advised upon by non-executive directors.

Cricket

- 37.41. **Henley Cricket Club** play on Brakspear's ground on the south side of the river, which they have bought. They have built a new pavilion. The Club runs three Saturday League sides competing in the Home Counties Premier League and Thames Valley Cricket League, a Sunday XI, a thriving and successful junior section for both boys and girls and a Ladies team. The main ground is regularly used for Berkshire Minor Counties matches.
- 37.42. **Harpsden Cricket Club**, founded in 1807, play on their grounds in the Harpsden Valley. They have 2 Saturday league sides and an active junior section.

Tennis

- 37.43. **Henley Tennis Club** has courts next to The Henley College sports field. The courts were originally built by *The Henley College* but fell into disrepair and became unusable. Now the courts have been leased to the club and have been refurbished. Players of all ages and abilities are welcomed and the club runs coaching programmes for adults or juniors. Courts operate at close to capacity but the club feel that they are not meeting the demand for the area as their facilities are not of the quality of tennis clubs outside of Henley so players have to go elsewhere to get the good facilities they need. The club does not have floodlighting, any covered courts or a good clubhouse. In certain weather conditions the surface of the courts is not good enough for them to be used. Planning permission to install flood lighting on two of their courts has now been granted.

- 37.44. The club would like to have stronger links with local schools, to raise its profile in the community and boost membership so that they can provide more free access and discounts for local people. To meet the increased demands from new households the club would need to provide more courts, covered or indoor facilities and a bigger clubhouse.

Rowing and river activities

- 37.45. Although most of the facilities for rowing are on the Berkshire bank of the river, so outside the parishes of Henley and Harpsden, their activities are closely associated with Henley.
- 37.46. **The Eyot centre:** The Eyot Centre is a community centre situated on the Berkshire bank of the River Thames just 300m from Henley Bridge. It is also the home of *The Henley Canoe Club* and *The Henley Dragon Boat Club* and is directly licensed centre for the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. The Eyot Centre is a registered charity which seeks to provide access to social and river based leisure activities primarily to the young people of Henley and surrounding areas.
- 37.47. It offers: leadership and facilities for the local community to engage in regular paddle sport activities; adventure weeks/weekends combining camping, hiking and paddle sports for local schools, colleges, youth groups and Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants; coaching and training to individuals wishing to gain recognised qualifications in paddle sports activities; fun and sporting challenges to disadvantaged groups to aid their self-development and team-building skills.
- 37.48. **Leander Club:** Founded in 1818, Leander Club boasts an unsurpassed record in rowing achievements. It is home to heroes such as Sir Steve Redgrave CBE, and Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE, triple gold medallist Peter Reed OBE, and double gold medallists James Cracknell OBE, Steve Williams OBE, and Alex Gregory MBE, as well as the champions of tomorrow. Leander is a private Members' club. The Leander Academy aims to attract and develop young oarsmen and women with high-potential. The High Performance Programme is recognised and supported by the GB Rowing Team and funded through the National Lottery.
- 37.49. **The Henley Rowing Club:** founded in 1839, provides rowing and sculling for adults and juniors. Both *Learn to Row* courses and private tuition aimed at adults and juniors who have never rowed before are offered. The club has Junior, Senior and Masters' squads for men and for women. Courses are run by experienced rowers/coaches and cover many different aspects of rowing including gym work, rowing on the water, using rowing machines and learning how to handle boats and rowing equipment carefully. The club also runs Junior Summer Camps. (All facilities are have been closed due to the coronavirus restrictions.)
- 37.50. **Upper Thames Rowing Club:** Upper Thames Rowing Club was established in 1963 to provide competitive rowing on the iconic Henley reach. The club has a gym, changing facilities and an extensive fleet of top-of-the-range boats. The club updates its Coronavirus guidance in consultation with British Rowing. Established in 1963 the club has senior, veterans and junior squads and runs training courses. The clubhouse includes a gymnasium. In accordance with the latest Government's Coronavirus restrictions and following the advice from British Rowing, UTRC have issued new arrangements to members to allow sculling in private and club boats.

Golf

- 37.51. Badgemore Golf Club: founded in 1972 the club has an 18 hole course and a large clubhouse which can be booked for private functions. FOCUS, a gym and fitness club was opened in 2018.
- 37.52. **Henley Golf Club:** situated in the Harpsden valley the club, which was founded in 1907, has an 18 hole course and a clubhouse which is being extended.
- 37.53. Future golf provision is likely to be provided by the commercial sector and therefore will respond to demand.

Bowling

- 37.54. **Henley-on-Thames Bowling Club:** the club caters for both competitive and social bowlers and offers coaching sessions. Members play in league games, friendlies and internal competitions. They are based at The Pavilion in Mill Meadows Riverside Park.

Phyllis Court private club

- 37.55. The Club has facilities for bowls, croquet, tennis, a rowing club and a new indoor sports centre for members plus several meeting rooms and restaurants.

Private gyms and fitness studios

- 37.56. Although LA Fitness and Urban Space have closed, new fitness centres opened recently: *Love Fitness* at the Henley Rugby Club, **FOCUS** at Badgemore Park, a Fitness Centre at Phyllis Court, *Fitness Space* on the Centenary Business Park, plus others under discussion.
- 37.57. There are a number of other smaller private fitness centres and others in sports clubs.

Parks and recreation area

- 37.58. Henley has an extensive park/ recreational area alongside the River Thames. At the town end (**Mill Meadows**) there are 2 recently refurbished children's playgrounds, one for younger and one for older children. There is a bowling green and a space that has been used as a putting green and is being considered for conversion to as mini golf course. Public toilets are available in the Leichlingen Pavilion. There is a bandstand in an open meadow area alongside the river. A walk along the tow path leads to **Marsh Meadows**, another open area for walks and picnics.
- 37.59. **The River and Rowing Museum** has a range of attractions, a café, wild life walks and meetings rooms that can be hired out.
- 37.60. **Freeman's Meadow** is an open recreational area off the Fair Mile. It has a recently refurbished children's play area.
- 37.61. **Makins Recreational Ground** is an open recreational area off Greys Road. There is a recently refurbished children's playground, an adult outdoor gym and a new skateboard area.

Changes since the publication of the JHHNP in 2016

- 37.62. Since the 2016 JHHNP a number of changes to facilities in the town have occurred.
- The Youth Centre in Deanfield Avenue has been demolished and the land designated for housing, as set out in the 2016 JHHNP.
 - The skate park in Makins Recreational Area alongside Greys Road has been substantially redesigned and upgraded.
 - Children's Play areas have been refurbished and new equipment installed.
 - Some new adult outdoor exercise equipment has been installed at Makins Recreation Ground recreational area.
 - A new community / sports hall is scheduled to be built by the developer, Crest Nicholson, as part of the housing development at Highlands Farm

Areas of concern

- a) Covid restrictions in 2020 led to closures of most of the leisure and recreational facilities in Henley and Harpsden. The resulting longer term effects of the Coronavirus pandemic are as yet unknown.
- b) The SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan part A, 2017 notes that facilities in Henley are under some pressure and there is relatively limited scope for further increase. There is a shortage of land for new facilities within the parishes which can only be exacerbated with the growth in population.
- a) Assuming that all of the gyms and fitness centres reopen once Covid restrictions are lifted There appears to be sufficient provision of gyms and fitness centres to meet current needs. Much of it is in the private sector or associated with sports clubs so it could probably be expanded to meet future needs. The problem is that the price of membership puts the facilities out of the reach of many local people.
- b) New legal requirements for clubs such as safeguarding, finance, insurance, training, coaching, data protection have placed a burden on volunteers and fewer people are willing to come forward to take on responsibilities for running clubs. People are keen to join in and help but reluctant to take on more onerous legally required duties and responsibilities.
- c) The SODC Infrastructure Delivery Plan part A, 2017 notes that football is short of pitches and a 3G pitch is needed somewhere in the parish. Henley Hockey Club needs a second astroturf pitch. Henley Cricket Club have needed to go outside the parishes for suitable grounds to meet the demands of their members. Several clubs are improving or looking to improve their clubhouses and facilities.
- d) The SODC Draft Sports, Leisure and Playing Pitch Study identifies a need to review the use and demand for athletics training facilities at Jubilee Park. This demand is likely to increase with the additional number of households planned.
- e) A need is identified in the SODC draft study to ensure the Jubilee Park's proposed replacement changing provisions for football and hockey meets the needs of the clubs, is appropriate for the site and does not impact on pitch provision.
- f) Improvement to the changing facilities on the main Henley rugby site and basic wash facilities for the Regatta site are recommended in the draft SODC study.
- g) A need to explore opportunities to develop additional rugby pitches particularly for mini and junior use is also identified.

- h) An urgent need for 1 full size hockey surface pitch in the Henley area is recognised in the SODC draft study but a potential sited has not been identified.
- i) Need to improve capacity at existing tennis courts by providing floodlighting, more courts, some of which should be covered and a bigger clubhouse. The Tennis Club has been losing members (down from 430 two years ago to 250 in 2019) because of the inadequate and deteriorating facilities.
- j) Existing lease on tennis courts (from the Henley College) has only 12 years to run and contains a buy-back clause that the College could exercise in 2 years' time. The threat of a possible buy-back means that money spent improving facilities could be lost if the buy-back is exercised. Should the buy-back be exercised the Club would have no home.
- k) A Priority identified in SODC Draft report is the improvement of existing swimming facilities at the Leisure Centre.
- l) Highlands Park sports / community centre: as yet it has not been possible to find an organisation willing to take responsibility for the management of the Highlands Farm sports and community centre. It is hoped that eventually the management and associated costs will be taken over by residents of the estate. However, until the estate is fully occupied and a residents' association organisation is set up, interim arrangements for maintenance and management are needed.

Infrastructure policies for Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Policy SCI1: Comprehensive Renewal of Gillotts School

The renewal of Gillotts School will be supported subject to it resulting in the provision of alternative sports facilities to those that currently exist.

Policy SCI2: Renewal and Enhancement of Community Facilities

The renewal and enhancement of the community facilities used by the following community groups, will be supported: Henley on Thames Social Club for the Over 60s; Henley on Thames Scouts; and Headway Thames Valley.

Policy SCI3: Community Right to Build

Proposals based on the Community Right to Build will be supported.

Policy SCI4: Henley College

The redevelopment of Henley College, to meet educational accommodation needs, will be supported.



Joint Henley and
Harpsden
Neighbourhood Plan

For further information, see www.jhhnp.org.uk

