

BURCOT & CLIFTON HAMPDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2011 – 2035



REFERENDUM PLAN

Published by Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council for Submission under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

June 2024

Acknowledgement. *The Parish Council wish to acknowledge the advice and support of Neil Homer in preparing this Neighbourhood Plan ,*

Guide to Reading this Plan

This Neighbourhood Plan is a detailed planning policy document. The purpose of this page is to explain the structure and help you find your way around the plan.

Forward

The forward provides an overview of the Neighbourhood Plan and sets the scene for submission to South Oxfordshire District Council.

1. Introduction & Background

This section explains the background to this Neighbourhood Plan.

2. The Neighbourhood Area

This section details many of the features of the designated area.

3. Planning Policy Context

This technical section relates this Plan to the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning policies of South Oxfordshire District Council.

4. Community Views on Planning Issues

This section explains the community involvement that has taken place.

5. Amenities

This section describes the amenities within the village and how this Neighbourhood Plan will help to sustain them well into the future.

6. GP Surgery

This section sets out the case for a new site for the GP surgery. (It should be noted though that this need will be met via an NDO, not a policy within this NP).

7. Vision, Objectives & Land Use Policies

This is the key section. Firstly, it provides a statement on the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives. It then details Policies which are proposed to address the issues outlined in the Foreword and in Sections 4 and 5. These Policies are listed on page 5. There is a Policy Map at the back of the plan.

8. Implementation

This section explains how the Plan will be implemented and future development guided and managed. It suggests projects which might be supported by the Community Infrastructure Levy which the Parish Council will have some influence over. Finally, it deals with a number of issues which although relevant are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.

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FOREWORD

The Parish of Burcot and Clifton Hampden is a small community of about 660 residents, 220 houses, with facilities and amenities that are truly remarkable for parish of its size: a primary school, shop and post office, GP's surgery and pharmacy, a village hall, River Thames wharf, recreation ground with a cricket pitch, pavilion, and scout hut, church, cemetery, and three pubs.

In 2013, the Parish Council of Burcot and Clifton Hampden decided to write a Village Plan. A survey was conducted in 2014, and the Village Plan was published in 2015. Through the Village Plan, residents expressed a desire for the village to grow, provide opportunities for residents to downsize without having to move away, sustain its amenities, and carry out a range of improvements to the built infrastructure of the village and for other community led activities.

By the end of 2016, many of the desired benefits had already been progressed, e.g. faster broadband, a new children's playground, community activities, and traffic calming in Burcot.

However, many of the desired improvements require planning permission: a new surgery building, a 10-15% increase in housing, cycle paths, and additional parking.

In 2017 the Parish Council launched the Neighbourhood Plan, which will be used to inform and determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2035.

It was our original intention that the Neighbourhood Plan would also set the policy framework to deliver the improvements to the built infrastructure set out in the Village Plan. However following extensive consultation with the Local Planning Authority, South Oxfordshire District Council, it became clear that, given the status of the parish as 'washed over Green Belt', there was no provision under National Planning Policy for this Neighbourhood Plan to include specific policies, such as housing targets or site allocations, that would deliver the required improvements to the built infrastructure.

In 2019 the Parish Council, in consultation with SODC, decided on a twin track approach. The Neighbourhood Plan would set out general planning policies, whilst development of a new surgery, homes and additional parking would be brought forward through a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). An NDO is a planning application submitted by the Parish Council and is subjected to the same consultation process as the Neighbourhood Plan before being put to referendum.

Between November 2020 and March 2021 the Parish Council held an Initial Parish Consultation on the first draft of the NP, alongside proposals for development via the NDO.

The draft NP was updated to reflect comments received in the Initial Parish Consultation. Between August 2022 and September 2022, the Parish Council held a

statutory consultation (Regulation 14 Pre-submission) on the pre-submission version of the NP.

The NP was updated following the Regulation 14 consultation and submitted in December 2022. SODC appointed an Independent Examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft, and conducted a further statutory consultation (Regulation 16) between April and May 2023. Following the public examination and Examiner's report, the NP was further updated in accordance with the recommendations of the Examiner, and is now presented for Referendum.

The NP and NDO together provide a comprehensive picture of how the vision for the parish to 2035 and beyond will be realised.

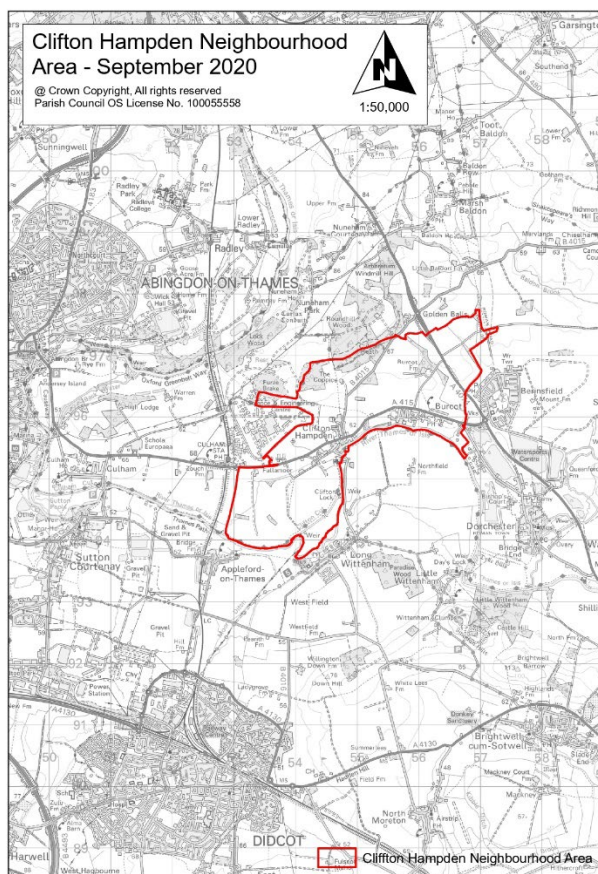
Suzanne Neave
Chair
Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council

LIST OF POLICIES

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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, South Oxfordshire District Council, on 26 September 2014 and amended on 18 September 2020. The area coincides with the parish boundary (see Plan A overleaf). The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations of 2012 (as amended).



Plan A: Designated Neighbourhood Area

1.2 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2035. The Plan will form part of the development plan for the South Oxfordshire District, alongside the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2035.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities, like Burcot and Clifton Hampden, with the chance to manage the quality of development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning.

1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet all of the 'basic conditions'. In essence, the conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan.
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations as incorporated into UK law.
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

1.5 In addition, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to an independent examiner that it has successfully engaged with the local community in preparing the Plan. If the examiner is satisfied that it has, and considers the Plan meets the above conditions, then the Plan will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout (50% + 1 vote) votes in favour of the Plan, then it becomes adopted as part of the development plan for the South Oxfordshire District.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (2022)

1.6 In February 2022 the Government published for consultation its White Paper, 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom', which proposes to make changes to planning system. It indicates that there is still a future for neighbourhood planning in that system. It remains unknown when any proposed changes will be implemented.

The Pre-Submission Plan

1.7 A draft Pre-Submission Plan was published for consultation (Regulation 14) between 17 August – 29 September 2022 in line with the Regulations. The Parish Council has reviewed the comments received from the local community and other interested parties and has made changes to this final version.

Sustainability Appraisal & the Habitats Regulations

1.8 In 2019 South Oxfordshire District Council stated in its screening opinion in September 2019 that "based on the assessment ... the Burcot and Clifton Hampden NDP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment ... and does not require a Strategic Environment Assessment, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004. This screening opinion was reconfirmed in December 2022. Instead, an analysis of the ways in which the Plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development is included in the Basic Conditions Statement.

1.9 The 2019 screening opinion, confirmed in December 2022, also confirmed that the Plan "is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or programmes; therefore, an Appropriate Assessment for the Burcot and Clifton Hampden Neighbourhood Development Plan is not required", in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The Next Steps

1.10 This draft plan will now be submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council for consultation under Regulation 16, independent examination and referendum.

Further Information

1.11 Further information on the Plan and its evidence base can be found on the project website at:

<https://cliftonhampden.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

(Acknowledgements to www.oxfordshirevillages.co.uk and www.british-history.ac.uk)

2.1 Burcot and Clifton Hampden is a friendly rural Parish community established in 1932 and comprising two villages. Clifton Hampden sits on the north bank of the River Thames, around 4 miles (6.5 km) east of Abingdon in Oxfordshire, and Burcot continues along the north bank east of Clifton Hampden. The 2011 Census recorded the parish population as 662. The villages face particular challenges, including traffic, transport, flooding, maintaining excellent amenities, securing support for village activities and the threat of a gravel extraction works.

The Village of Clifton Hampden

2.2 Clifton Hampden is an attractive Thames-side village with several beautiful old thatched cottages. 'Clifton' must be derived from the buff or cliff overlooking the Thames with the Church of St. Michael & All Angels perched on top and 'Hampden' may be from the name of an owner of the Manor in the sixteenth century. In 1885 Dickens's Dictionary of the Thames said of Clifton Hampden, '*Clifton Hampden, this picturesque little village, is situated at the foot of a bold bluff, which rises abruptly from the somewhat flat country around. The cliff is surmounted by the church and vicarage and is clothed with luxuriant trees down to the water's edge. The village, a pretty collection of old-fashioned cottages, all of which are bright with flowers ...*' This description could have been written today. The old-fashioned cottages are still there, many of them listed, and the whole makes for a very attractive scene well worth a visit. The village welcomes many visitors, who enjoy picnicking in the meadows, swimming in the river, fishing and visiting the church.

2.3 Many of the buildings in the village were erected in the nineteenth century by the Gibbs family, who inherited the manor from their Hucks relations. Robert Hucks, brewer and MP for Abingdon, had bought the Manor in 1726. They identified a young architect, George Gilbert Scott, who went on to build the Albert Memorial and St Pancras station. The family gave many of the assets to, or for the use of, the village, including the school, bridge, village hall, recreation ground, wharf, church, vicarage; and this tradition continued until the death of Christopher Gibbs in 2018.

2.4 The original settlement would have occurred here because the river was fordable in summer. Now Clifton Hampden Bridge spans the Thames. This is an attractive brick bridge with six elegant arches and is said to resemble the medieval bridge at Albi south of Nantes in France. The bridge was built in 1864 by George Gilbert Scott for Henry Hucks Gibbs, who at that time was Lord of the Manor, and replaced the ford and a ferry. Triangular recesses over the piers provide safety for pedestrians as they cross the bridge. The bridge width is only adequate for one way traffic, so vehicle movement is controlled by traffic lights at each end. The bridge used to be a toll bridge and the tollhouse still stands on the former Berkshire side of the river. George Gilbert Scott is also responsible for the Church of St. Michael & All Angels and Clifton Hampden Manor, both of which were also built for the Gibbs family. The Church of St. Michael & All Angels has C12 origins but was rebuilt and restored by Scott in two phases, 1843-4 and 1864-67.

2.5 The Plough Inn in the centre of the village is C17 with late C18 additions to the rear. On the other side of the river by the bridge is the village's other public house, The Barley Mow. This is a cruck framed building dating back to 1352. In 1975 the building was gutted by fire, but it was totally restored in 1977. Later, in 1997, The Barley Mow was rebuilt and rethatched. The village and The Barley Mow were featured in Jerome K. Jerome's book *Three Men in a Boat*, and in the book *Jerome K. Jerome describes Clifton Hampden as 'a wonderfully pretty village, old-fashioned, peaceful, and dainty with flowers'. He describes The Barley Mow as 'without exception the quaintest, most old-world inn up the river (standing) on the right of the bridge, quite away from the village. Its low-pitched gables and thatched roof and latticed windows give it quite a story-book appearance, while inside it is even still more once-upon-a-timey-fied...'. He adds that the river scenery is 'rich and beautiful'.*

The Village of Burcot

2.6 Burcot lies on the north bank of the Thames, 1¼ miles north-west of Dorchester. Its historical relationship with Dorchester cannot be precisely defined. In the 18th century it was described as a separate parish, and in the 19th century was placed in a different registration district and rural district from Dorchester. In 1932 Burcot civil parish was transferred to Clifton Hampden. The only natural boundary is the River Thames, which has naturally played an important part in the economy.

2.7 The highway from Abingdon to Dorchester runs through the village from west to east. Since the 15th century when Abingdon and Culham bridges were built this road ceased to be of merely local importance and became an important highway carrying traffic from London to Gloucester.

2.8 Burcot's position near the River Thames at one time gave it an importance out of all proportion to its size. During the first 30 years of the 17th century the Thames between Burcot and Oxford was virtually innavigable, and consequently goods destined for Oxford had to be unloaded at Burcot and then carried by road into the city.

2.9 The village of Burcot lies on both sides of the Dorchester-Abingdon highway. Nearly all the houses are relatively modern, having been built since 1888. The timberframed

and thatched cottages, for instance, once in Occupation Row, were pulled down between 1888 and 1892 by Jabez Balfour and rebuilt on a new site. About 1880 the area began to attract attention as a desirable Thames-side residential district, and it still retains this character. The compactness which the village no doubt possessed in earlier days has therefore tended to be replaced by a more spreadeagled appearance. Yet the core of the village is still the area between the church and the Chequers Inn where the original hamlet seems to have been concentrated.

2.10 South of the Dorchester-Abingdon road and near to the river in the west of the parish is a large recently modernised late Victorian building formerly known as the Croft and now as Riverside House. Nearby to the east until demolished in 1956 was Burcot House. The coach house and the study-bedrooms have been converted into houses, but the chapel remains.

2.11 Two other old buildings, lying close together, are situated just south of the Abingdon-Dorchester highway. The Old Cottage, formerly Burcot Cottage, is a timberframed structure, perhaps dating from Tudor times. The house was perhaps originally a farm. The Chequers Inn nearby is a timber-framed structure. It seems to be of 16th century origin and is traditionally held to have been an inn for more than 400 years. In 1950 it was damaged by fire; the roof and ceiling were destroyed, but the fabric escaped destruction. The building has now been completely restored.

2.12 No trace of a church or chapel at Burcot has been found either in the medieval or modern period before 1869, when a chapel-of-ease was built to serve the dual purpose of a chapel and school. Since the closure of Burcot school in 1922 the building was devoted solely to spiritual uses until it passed into private ownership. The chapel is a small brick building, consisting of nave, chancel, and bell turret. It is in the Gothic style of the Victorian era. The architect was George Gilbert Scott.

2.13. The Close Home, adjacent to the Chequers Pub, and the John Masefield House Home are significant buildings within Burcot's eastern boundary.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The parish lies within the South Oxfordshire District Council area in the county of Oxfordshire.

National Planning Policy

3.2 The latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2023, is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The following paragraphs of the NPPF 2023 are considered especially relevant:

- Neighbourhood planning (paragraphs 28 - 30)
- Promoting healthy and safe communities (paragraph 92)
- Community facilities (paragraph 96)
- High quality design (paragraph 131)
- Protecting Green Belt land (paragraphs 142-156)

- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraph 180)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraphs 195-196)

Strategic Planning Policy

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan must also be able to show that its policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan, which currently comprises the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. There are also minerals and waste policies adopted by Oxfordshire County Council, but none are considered relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.4 In the Local Plan, both Burcot and Clifton Hampden continue to be defined as 'smaller villages' in the settlement hierarchy and they remain 'washed over' by the Oxford Green Belt. The settlement infill development policy is H16 and allows for infill on sites meeting certain criteria. It also supports redevelopment of previously developed land and sets no site area limit for such proposals.

3.5 Policy STRAT6 restates the national planning policy approach to development management in the Green Belt. In which case, unless 'very special circumstances' can be demonstrated, proposals will only be supported by this policy if they are deemed appropriate in the Green Belt as set out in NPPF paragraphs 152-154. For housing schemes, exceptions include proposals for 'limited infilling in villages (para 149e), which is defined by Policy H16 and for affordable housing for local community needs as exception sites in line with Policy H10. Policy H8 guides housing development in the Smaller Villages – allowing for growth of up to 10% in the housing stock - but for Burcot and Clifton Hampden this policy is curtailed by their location in the Green Belt and the lack of available land within their existing built up areas.

3.6 There are other policies in the Local Plan that may be relevant, including:

- H1 – Delivering New Homes
- H11 – Housing Mix
- INF1 – Infrastructure Provision
- TRANS5 – Consideration of Development Proposals (Transport)
- ENV1 – Landscape and Countryside
- ENV2 – Biodiversity
- ENV4 – Watercourses
- ENV5 – Green Infrastructure
- ENV6 – Historic Environment
- ENV7 – Listed Buildings
- ENV8 - Conservation Areas
- DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development
- DES2 - Enhancing Local Character
- CF1 - Safeguarding Community Facilities
- CF4 - Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities

3.7 Although the Local Plan makes few proposals within the Parish, there are major proposals on its edges (see Fig A below). Policy STRAT8 proposes significant

employment growth at Culham Science Centre to the immediate west of Clifton Hampden and Policy STRAT9 proposes a total of 3,500 new homes adjacent to the Centre (with approximately 2,100 to be built in the plan period). Policy STRAT10i proposes the development of 1,700 new homes at Berinsfield to the immediate east of Burcot. To help serve both proposals, Policy TRANS3 makes provision for a Clifton Hampden Bypass within the Parish to the north of the village to relieve it from additional traffic on the A415 Abingdon Road and B4015 Oxford Road that will be generated by the two schemes (see Fig B overleaf).

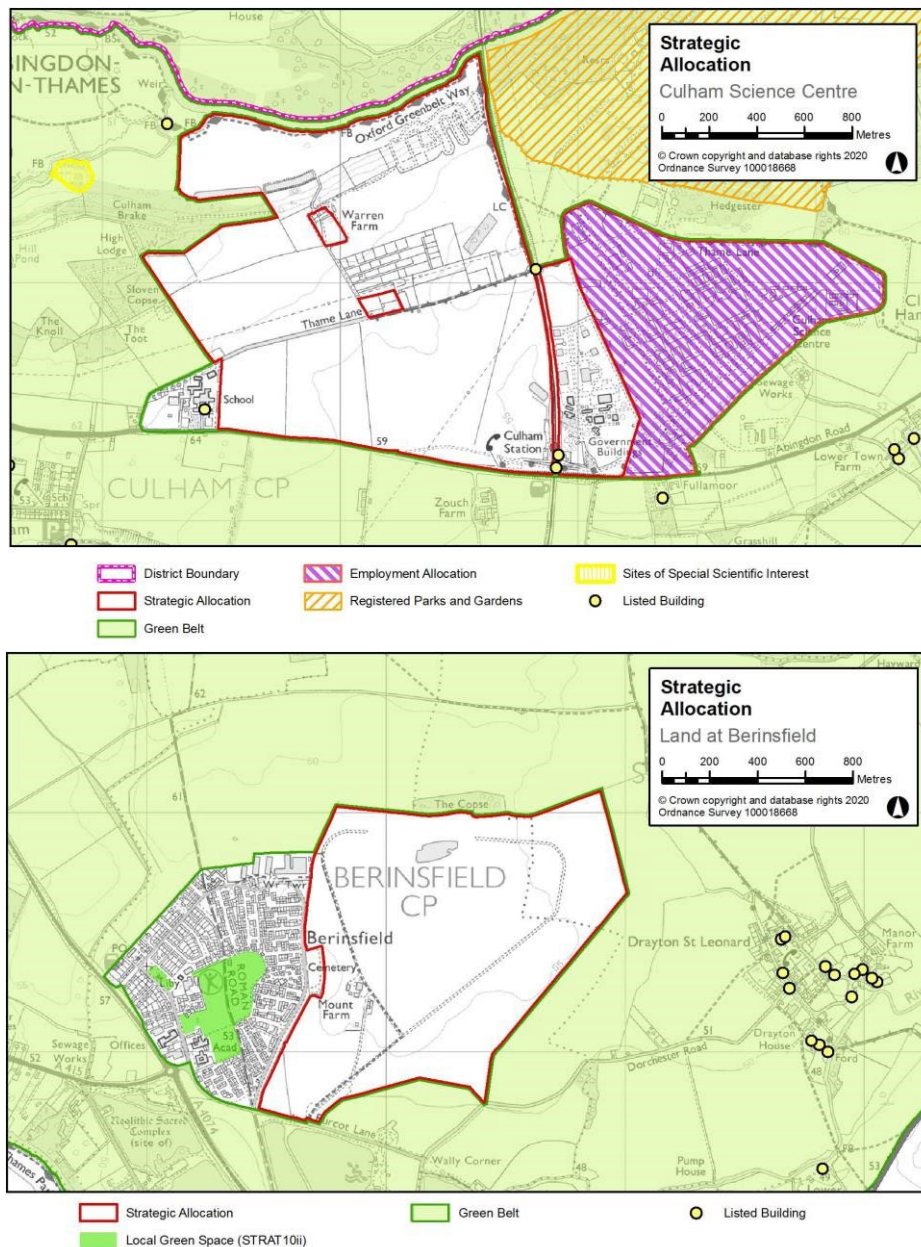


Fig A: South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 – Strategic Allocation Maps for Culham Science centre and Berinsfield

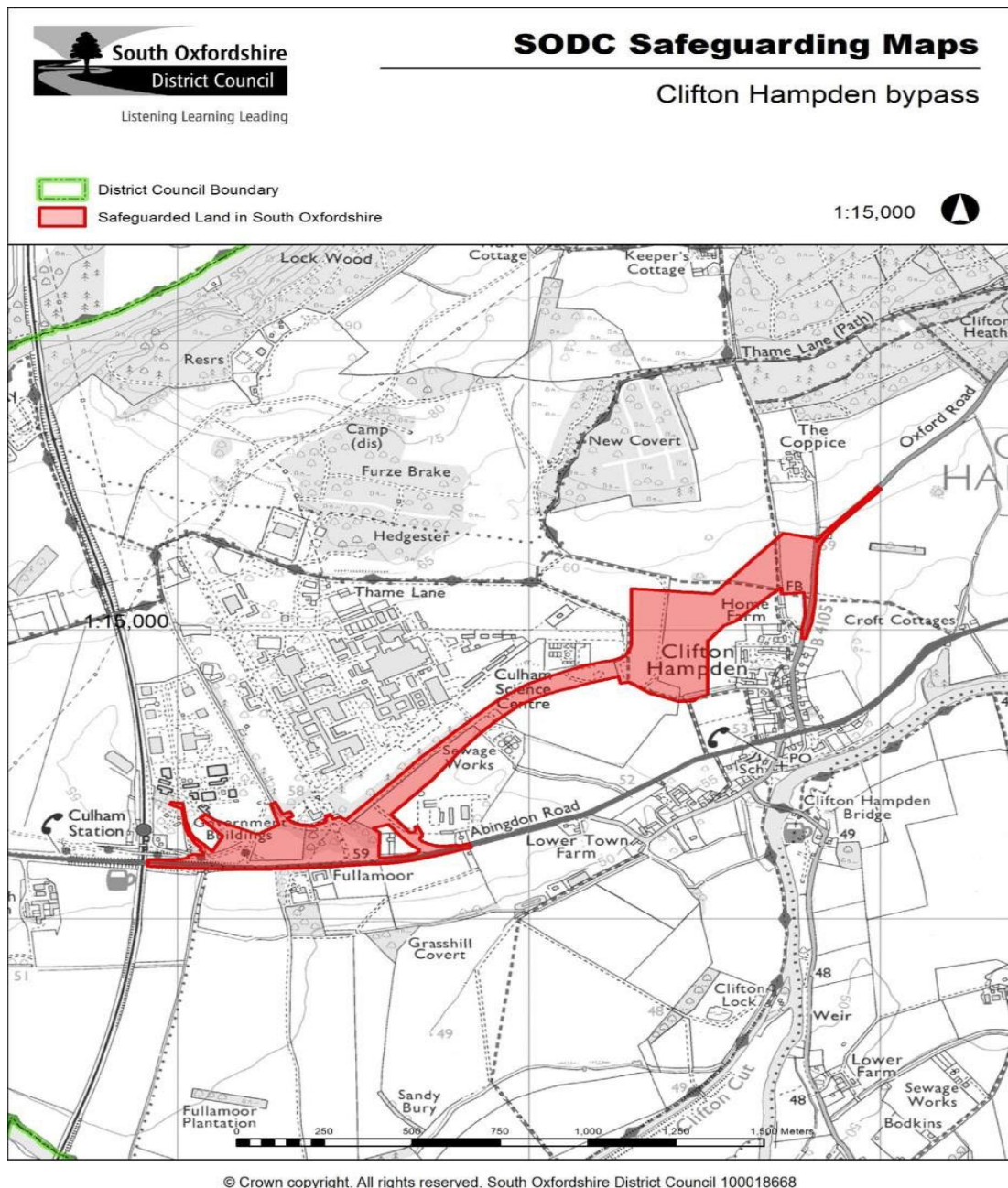


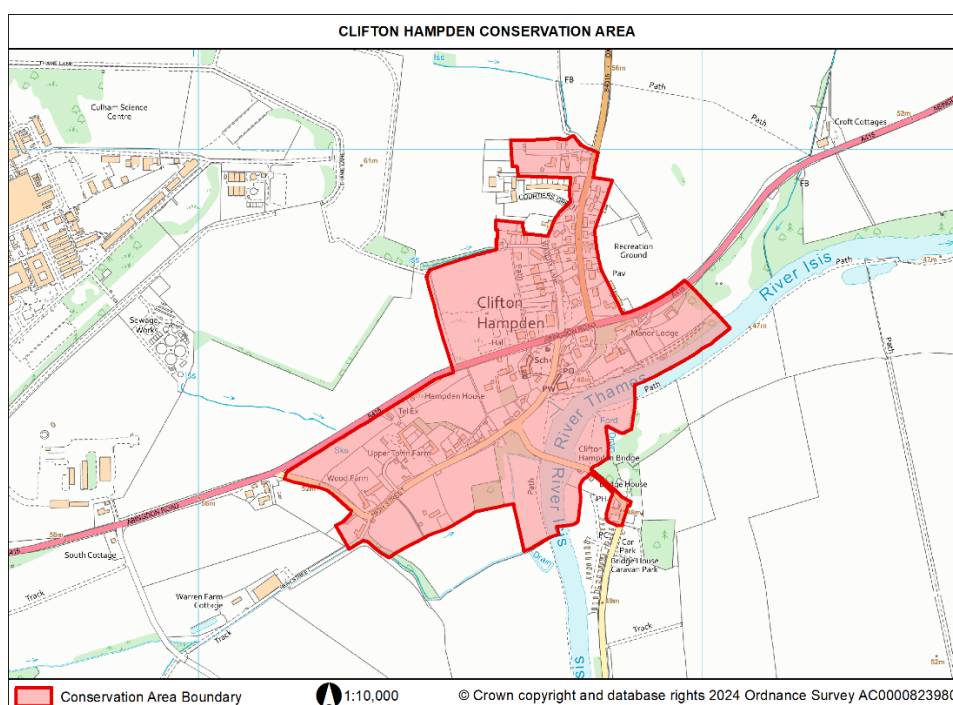
Fig B: South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 – Safeguarding Map for Clifton Hampden Bypass

Adjacent Neighbourhood Plans

3.8 Neighbourhood planning is popular in South Oxfordshire and a number of plans have been made, or are in preparation, in the vicinity of the Parish, including the made plans in the neighbouring parishes of The Baldons and Dorchester and a review of the made Neighbourhood Plans at Berinsfield and Long Wittenham. None are considered to comprise proposals that directly affect this Neighbourhood Plan.

Clifton Hampden Conservation Area

3.9 The Conservation Area was designated by South Oxfordshire District Council in the 1970s (see Plan B below). Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, to protect areas of special interest as opposed to individual buildings. Since 1967 some 8,000 conservation areas have been designated in England, including 72 in South Oxfordshire District. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.



Plan B: Clifton Hampden Conservation Area

3.10 The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character.

4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

4.1 Community consultation has been a central feature from the outset. Consultation Events have been publicised on the parish council website, notice boards, flyers, annual village meetings, village email (set up after the community launch event in 2012), and the parish magazine (The Bridge). The main events and how the results have been taken forward into this plan are set out below.

Community Launch Event 2012

4.2 This professionally facilitated event was attended by about 100 residents and included a 'post it' exercise to identify village issues. The outcome was village support for the development of a Community Led Plan (CLP) and the formation of a committee to take it forward.

Village Plan Survey 2014/Village Plan 2015

4.3 The village plan survey was a comprehensive survey, to which 266 (56%) of residents responded. The results and analysis, published in the Village Plan in 2015, covered a wide range of issues: Clifton Hampden as a visitor destination, housing, amenities, parking, transport, traffic, footpaths and cycle paths, flooding, the environment, parish events and the community, younger people, the church, caring and support, funding and an action plan. Of these, housing, amenities, parking, cemetery space and the environment emerged as the key issues that needed to be addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Confirmatory Survey 2018

4.4 Because of the elapsed time since the original survey, a short follow up survey was conducted in 2018 to establish whether residents' views expressed in the 2015 results were still valid. 233 (49%) residents responded. The survey confirmed strong ongoing support for addressing the key issues: new housing, retention of amenities, parking, footpaths and cyclepaths.

Drop-in Consultation 2018

4.5 Two drop-in consultation events were held in late 2018. Residents were asked to comment on the main policy proposals for the NP, all of which attracted strong support, and which have been carried forward into this draft NP.

4.6 Drawing the highlights of these consultations together:

Housing: 31% of houses currently have 3 bedrooms; 58% have 4 bedrooms or more. Respondents agreed that there was a need for a limited increase in housing stock, mostly 2-3 bedroom with a few 4 bedrooms:

- To enable the village to grow in size and sustain its amenities, e.g. the shop/post office, the school, the GP's surgery and pharmacy, church, pubs, clubs and organisations (77% of respondents)
- To enable older residents to downsize within the parish (48%)
- To enable residents to upsize (27%)
- To enable older residents to step into sheltered accommodation (61%)
- To enable our children to live in the parish (50%)
- To provide an opportunity for new people to move into the village (43%)
- To provide Affordable Housing to buy/rent (37%)

Amenities (% of respondents who felt it was very important or important to retain):

- Shop/Post Office: 99%
- Surgery: 92%
- The School: 92%
- The Village Hall: 92%
- Other (church, pavilion/sports ground, sports bar, scout hut, tennis court, pubs): ranging from 73% to 90%.

Parking (% of respondents who when using experienced parking difficulties very often or often):

- Shop/Post Office: 75%
- School: 60%
- Surgery: 67%
- Village Hall: 34%

Initial Parish Consultation November 2020 to March 2021

4.7 Support for the first draft of the NP and its policies was very strong amongst those who responded. Some comments about specific policies were received and where appropriate reflected in this draft. Those expressing concerns generally did so on the basis that they did not support development proposals being consulted upon in parallel, or that there was insufficient information upon which to express an opinion. SODC have also commented on the draft NP. In their opinion, policies for the new surgery and new housing should not be included in a Neighbourhood Plan for a parish in the Green Belt, and that the cases for these need to be made through an CRTBO/NDO. These policies have therefore been deleted.

Regulation 14 Consultation (Pre-Submission)

4.8 A detailed account of the Pre-Submission consultation and actions taken as a result is contained within the Consultation Statement. An overview is provided here within the main body of the NP.

4.9 The pre-submission consultation (Regulation 14) was carried out between 17 August 2022 and 29 September 2022. Comments were received from 5 statutory consultees and 16 members of the public. In their responses, 2 members of the public supported the draft NP, and 14 expressed concerns.

4.10 **Statutory Consultees** Responses were received from South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Historic England, National Highways and Thames Water. There were no objections. The main comments from statutory consultees were:

a. Textual amendments to draft policies to improve conformity with NPPF and Local Plan Policies, which have been incorporated.

- b. A recommendation to replace the policy entitled Assets of Community Value with a policy entitled Protecting Community Facilities, which is agreed.
- c. A recommendation to include a policy to improve energy performance of new developments and existing buildings, in response to the climate crisis, which is agreed.
- d. Additionally, Thames Water offered some generic comments regarding water usage and flood risk of new developments, but these were not felt to warrant a specific local policy in this NP.

4.11 **Members of the Public** Comments on the scheme from members of the public fell into 12 themes. Of note is that many if not most comments made by residents were not relevant to the pre-submission draft of Neighbourhood Plan, but relevant to the Neighbourhood Development Order which was put out for consultation under Regulation 21 in parallel. Comments that were not relevant to the NP have not been considered further in the consultation statement, but context explaining why they are not relevant has been provided. Relevant comments covered 4 areas:

- **BCH 4 Design Principles in Clifton Hampden** One resident argued that the NP should ensure that the policy address the landscape setting of listed buildings. This is covered in NPPF Paragraphs 200-214 and SODC Local Plan Policy ENV 7. The Steering Group felt that no further amendments to the NP are required.
- **BCH 5 Assets of Community Value** 3 residents commented that the list of Assets of Community Value was not sufficiently comprehensive. Following advice from SODC, we now understand that the process for designating ACVs sits outside the NP process. This policy has therefore been removed in the Submission version, and a new policy 'BCH 5 Protecting Community Facilities' included.
- **Reducing Carbon Footprint** 3 residents commented that the NP should contain policies designed to minimise the carbon footprint of new development. This chimes with the recommendation from SODC. A new policy BCH8 'Provision of well-designed energy efficient buildings and places' has been added.
- **Footpaths and Cyclepaths** 2 residents raised concerns that the NP does not promote much needed improvement of existing footpaths and cycle paths. A new policy, BCH7 'Footpaths and Cyclepaths', has been added supporting improvements to the existing footpath on the A415 between Clifton Hampden and Burcot and the footpath on the Oxford Road improvements.

Members of the public commented on a range of other issues not relating to proposed policies, e.g. Membership of the Parish Council; the consultation process; the NDO; the Surgery; traffic and road safety; parking; the needs of Burcot. These are summarised in the Consultation Statement, together with an explanation of why they are not relevant.

5. AMENITIES

5.1 Despite its small population and in contrast with many other small rural communities, the parish of Burcot and Clifton Hampden has developed and retained an excellent range of amenities, the origins of many of which are tied in with the history of Clifton Hampden as an estate village and have been gifted to the village by the Gibbs family:

- The School
- The Surgery
- The Shop/Post Office
- The church and cemetery
- The Village Hall and car park
- 3 pubs
- The Thames Wharf
- The Recreation Ground with its cricket pitch, sports pavilion, scout hut and boat store, children's playground, and tennis court
- The Allotments



Figure 1 - The School

5.2 With the exception of the Chequers pub in Burcot, these amenities are centred around the cross roads at the centre of Clifton Hampden within 2 minutes' walk of each other and 5 minutes' walk from almost all of the houses within Clifton Hampden. They act collectively as a hub, and are mutually supporting, e.g. users of the surgery and the school, many of whom are not resident in the parish, visit the shop and post office.



Figure 2 - The Village Shop and Post Office

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the school, surgery and shop all played pivotal roles in sustaining the community who could shop for essential groceries, use mail services, and access healthcare services without having to leave the parish. The community's wish to retain and sustain these amenities, shared by both villages within a single parish, and to be enjoyed for the community's benefit and that of their successors emerged from the 2014 survey as the cornerstone of the vision for this Neighbourhood Plan, and one of the key drivers to grow the village and develop new housing.

6. GP SURGERY

6.1 Clifton Hampden Surgery is located between Abingdon and Berinsfield and looks after 3300 patients from a cluster of villages. There has been a surgery in Watery Lane, Clifton Hampden for over 100 years, and the current surgery site was developed from two period semi-detached cottages in 1978 and has twice been extended since then. The surgery building, whilst charming and atmospheric, is increasingly problematic and unfit for the purpose of providing medical care in the 21st century. In the latest CQC report, it was noted that “Due to the design of the practice premises access for patients with a physical disability was limited.” The age and period features of the building make infection control a challenge. Physical building space and lack of rooms is another difficulty.



Figure 3 -The GP Surgery

6.2 The political landscape of primary care is changing. There is a move towards Network working and working at scale. In 2019 all GP surgeries in Britain were required to form “Primary Care Networks (PCNs)” with their neighbouring surgeries, in order to facilitate closer working, improve longer term sustainability, and sharing of new staff and risk. This has worked well for the Clifton Hampden practice now joined in a PCN with Berinsfield Surgery, Long Furlong Surgery and Marcham Road Surgery. It is a thriving and active PCN and has been “ahead of the curve” on various innovations. One of the main reasons for the formation of the PCNs was so that surgeries could employ shared staff to help in delivering improved medical care – the PCN currently employs two Social Prescribers and a Clinical Pharmacist to help deliver NHS England targets, and these staff divide their time between the four surgeries of the PCN. However, the surgery already struggles to find room space for these staff, who need a regular consulting space each week. Furthermore, over the next 5 years it is planned as a result of government policy that the PCN will expand the number of staff and additional working space will be required at Clifton Hampden. It is also noted that SOLP Policy STRAT9: Land Adjacent to Culham Science Centre requires provision of sufficient health care capacity, likely to be a total of one new GP Surgery on site to service existing and future demand in this area accordance with the council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

6.3 A new, purpose built surgery in Clifton Hampden is urgently required to allow the practice to continue to offer high quality medical care to its patients, as well as providing scope and space for the enhanced activities proposed in the government’s “Primary Care Network Direct Enhanced Service” which will be rolled out over the next 5 years. Both the PCN and Oxfordshire CCG have confirmed their support for a new, purpose built surgery in Clifton Hampden.

6.4. As this Neighbourhood plan does not make site allocations or safeguard land for development, a proposal for a new surgery building is included in the Neighbourhood Development Order being brought forward in parallel.

7. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

Vision

7.1 The vision of the neighbourhood area in 2035 is:

“A single, thriving, sustainable parish formed of two distinct villages, each with its own particular identity and character, with shared facilities and amenities.”

Objectives

7.2 The key objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are:

- To build a long-term sustainable community
- To sustain and improve local services, business and amenities
- To protect and enhance the natural environment and green spaces
- To honour the historic character of the parish, its villages, and its setting
- To improve the network of footpaths and cycle paths within the parish and to neighbouring villages

Land Use Policies

7.3 The purpose of these policies is to encourage planning applications to be made for potential development that reflect the Vision and Objectives, as outlined at the beginning of this section. The policies have been clearly written so that they can be easily interpreted and applied in the consideration and determination of planning applications.

7.4 The Neighbourhood Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents, the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies of the South Oxfordshire Development Plan will continue to be used.

7.5 Set out below are the proposed land use policies. Each policy is numbered and titled, and it is shown in bold italics for ease of reference. Where necessary, the area to which it will apply is shown on the Policies Map attached to the document. After each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy, how it will be applied and, where helpful, how it relates to other development plan policies.

BCH1 School Improvements

Proposals to improve or extend the Clifton Hampden Primary School (as shown on the Policies Map) will be supported, provided the new buildings or structures are designed and sited in such a way that their impact on the rural character and visual amenity of the Green Belt is minimised, not having a greater impact on the Green Belt's openness, and not resulting in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In addition, they should conserve and enhance the significance of the Clifton Hampden Conservation Area and the significance and setting of other designated heritage assets.

7.6 The policy is intended to encourage proposals to improve and extend the primary school, which plays a vital part in the social fabric of the community and occupies a very prominent location in the village. NPPF paragraph 154 allows for the extension of buildings in the Green Belt, provided the proposals are not disproportionate to the size of the original building.

7.7 In doing so, the policy refines the intent and purpose of Local Plan policies CF1 – CF2 relating to community and recreational facilities. It also acknowledges the Green Belt status of the Parish and so conforms with Local Plan Policy STRAT6.

BCH2 Enhancing Community Facilities

- 1. Proposals to improve or extend or replace or increase accessibility of the pavilion and ancillary buildings at the Clifton Hampden Recreation Ground (as shown on the Policies Map) will be supported, provided the improved/updated/new buildings or structures are designed and sited in such a way that their impact on the rural character and visual amenity of the Green Belt is minimised, preserving the openness of it, and not resulting in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. They will also conserve or enhance the significance of the Clifton Hampden Conservation Area and the significance and setting of other designated heritage assets.**
- 2. Proposals to improve or extend or increase accessibility of the Village Hall (as shown on the Policies Map) will be supported, provided the improved/updated/building is designed and sited in such a way that its impact on the open nature, rural character and visual amenity of the Green Belt is minimised, preserving the openness of it, and not resulting in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In addition, they should conserve and enhance the significance of the Clifton Hampden Conservation Area and the significance and setting of other designated heritage assets.**
- 3. Proposals to deliver new cemetery space or additional off-street car parking spaces to serve the village amenities will be supported provided they are consistent with other relevant policies of the development plan, preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.**
- 4. Proposals to reorganise or to relocate existing allotment plots or increase accessibility such as the raising of beds will be supported provided there are sufficient plots remaining to serve the needs of the local community for the plan period.**

7.8 This policy identifies a number of existing community facilities that may benefit from improvement or extension and supports such proposals to ensure they remain fit for modern purposes and demands. It also makes provision for proposals to reorganise the existing supply and distribution of allotment plots in the Parish. These facilities together form an essential and integral part of the healthy and vibrant life of the village. NPPF paragraph 154 allows exceptions for the extension or alterations of buildings in the Green Belt, provided the proposals are not disproportionate additions to the size of the original building.

7.9 In doing so, the policy refines the intent and purpose of Local Plan policies CF1 – CF4 relating to community and recreational facilities. It also acknowledges the Green Belt status of the Parish and so conforms with Local Plan Policy STRAT6.

BCH3 Design Principles in Burcot

Proposals for development will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the village and positively reflect and respond to the following design features and important views where relevant to their location in the Parish:

- 1. Plots are generally long and of a regular width and orientation in specific local areas**
- 2. Within only a small number of exceptions, buildings are regularly orientated within a street and are set well within the plot with gaps to separate them from neighbouring buildings**
- 3. Plot frontages are generally formed by tall hedges and mature trees with grass verges to the highway edge**
- 4. Buildings are rarely of more than two storeys in height and of irregular, detached forms**
- 5. Buildings are generally constructed in red brick with plain clay tiles and are articulated with architectural detailing, window placements and roof forms to reduce their massing in the street scene**
- 6. The Chequers P.H. is prominent in the streetscene with a distinct rural character by way of its thatched roof and traditional pub sign**
- 7. The low, two storey building with a decorated and jettied gable and two full dormers at the entrance to The Close is prominent in the streetscene in views from the east**
- 8. The narrow-pointed spire of the Old School House is prominent in views along Abingdon Road from the west**
- 9. There are occasional glimpse views from Abingdon Road through to the countryside to the north and south of the village**

7.10 The policy establishes the importance of the design of new development to maintain the essential character of Burcot. In doing so, it refines the design quality principles of Local Plan Policy DES2 by comprising a series of design principles drawn from a community character assessment of the village. It requires that development proposals demonstrate, where relevant to the nature and location of the proposal, that regard has been paid to these principles. It does not require a slavish adherence to responding to each feature and therefore allows designers flexibility to propose innovative design solutions where appropriate. The approach in the Plan has been prepared to supplement the Joint Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

(June 2022) produced by the District Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council. All the relevant information will be considered in determining planning applications including the guidance contained in the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code, and (when available) the Burcot and Clifton Hampden Design Code.

7.11 The majority of housing stock in the village of Burcot has been constructed since about the end of the 19th century and is largely grouped along or off the A415 Abingdon Road. To the north of and fronting the A415 are 18 properties known as Balfour cottages. The majority of these were built as matching Victorian three bedroomed cottages with generous gardens; many have now been extended to form spacious family homes and more cottages were added at either end at some later date. These properties are surrounded by farmland.

7.12 Sited to the south side of the road are various pairs and terraces of old cottages, namely: Clock Cottages, Rosemary Cottages and Chapel Cottages. The former have generous rear gardens whilst to the rear of Chapel Cottages is Burcot Chapel, a listed chapel now converted into a single dwelling. Also, on the south side of the road are a number of detached properties in generous and heavily wooded grounds. Some of these have lawns running down to the River Thames. The properties are mostly individual and detached and constructed in the 20th century. They are a mixture of bungalows and houses. The properties either have direct access to the main road or are accessed via a series of narrow no through access roads.

7.13 Some large riverside mansions were built in Victorian times, notably Burcot Grange, still a single residential property, and Burcot House now subdivided into 3 smaller units. Also, to the south of the A415 is Burcot Park, a close of 16 detached properties built in the 1960(s). To the west of Burcot Park is Riverside house (formerly Croft House). This property was built in 1899 as a mansion by the Croft Family, in substantial riverside gardens. The property was converted by Berkeley Homes into luxury flats in 1998 and at the same time its boathouse was converted into a dwelling and a terrace of 2 and 3 storey riverside cottages constructed in its grounds.

BCH4 Design Principles in Clifton Hampden

1. Proposals for development will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the village and, where appropriate, the character and appearance of the Clifton Hampden Conservation Area and its setting.

2. Development proposals should also positively reflect and respond to the following design features and important views where relevant to their location in the Parish:

a. There is a wide variety of plot shapes and sizes in the High Street with buildings generally no more than two storeys and set close to the front of

the plot behind a low hedge or railings and a narrow grass verge to the highway edge

- b. Thatch and old plain tiles are common roofing materials**
- c. Red brick is the common building material with occasional use of flared headers**
- d. Timber weatherboarding is used for some barns and most ancillary buildings**
- e. The Church of St Michael & All Angels is prominent in views along High Street from the west and north**
- f. The group of cottages and the Post Office form an essential complementary role in framing the setting of the Church in views from the north**
- g. Buildings along Watery Lane are located tight to the street with large garden plots generally running on an East-West axis, and plots on the western side backing onto a public footpath**
- h. The plots in Oxford Road are of a regular width and depth with buildings generally no more than two storeys and set close to the front of the plot behind a low hedge or timber fence and a narrow grass verge to the highway edge**
- i. Almost every building in Oxford Road has a full or half gabled dormer**
- j. The weather-boarded barn at the front of the Ashbourne House plot on Oxford Road is prominent in the streetscene in views from the north and south**
- k. Rosebank on Courtiers Green is prominent in the streetscene in views from the south**
- l. There are regular glimpse views from Oxford Road through to the countryside to the east and west**

7.14 The policy establishes the importance of the design of new development to maintain the essential character of Clifton Hampden. In doing so, it refines the design quality principles of Local Plan Policy DES2 and policies ENV6 and ENV8 by comprising a series of design and heritage principles drawn from a community character assessment of the village.

7.15 It requires that development proposals demonstrate, where relevant to the nature and location of the proposal, that regard has been paid to these principles. It does not require a slavish adherence to responding to each feature and therefore allows designers flexibility to propose innovative design solutions where appropriate.

7.16 Although only small, a recent character assessment of the village identified seven distinct character areas: Upper High Street, Lower High Street, A415 East, A415 West, Courtiers Green, Oxford Road and Watery Lane. The areas reflect the different periods of growth of the village since mediaeval times. Acknowledging this history and its consequences for how the village appears is important in successfully managing and, where possible, enhancing the design of development proposals.

7.17 The Upper and Lower High Street areas form the historic and functional core of the village. Upper High Street is a gently curving road going down the hill from the traffic lights to the bridge leading across the river Thames. Its character is interesting with a number of features that are typical of a quaint village, including cottages, village shop/post office, primary school, river bank/wharf, roadside parking, boardwalk, all presided over by the local church looking down from the hilltop. There are attractive typical village cottages with lots of traditional features including wooden window frames (mostly partitioned) and thatched or tiled roofs with attractive brick-built chimneys. Behind the cottages lie the Old Vicarage and the Manor House, neither of which are easily in view but both of which are iconic characteristics of the village of Clifton Hampden.

7.18 The Lower High Street winds its way westwards from a junction with Upper High Street just north of the bridge. It feels especially rural as a country lane with fields, horses, little traffic and is safe but dark. There are traditional, rural, farm buildings, cottages, thatch, old brick varying from one/two-bedroom cottages to 5 bedroom (or more) ex-farmhouses. Some are 300+ years old; some are barn conversions. The gaps between buildings are varied and based on conversion from historic use to cater for today's requirements. Some cottages are close together with limited space, especially in front, with little space for cars.

7.19 From the traffic lights at the centre of Clifton Hampden, proceeding east along the very busy A415, the character of the village changes into open spaces comprising mostly farmland with a few buildings dotted about. There are three sets of buildings, one within the Recreation Ground on the north side of the A415, one comprising outlying buildings attached to the Manor and, further up the road, lies Croft Cottages. These cottages are more recently built but adhere to the traditional architecture, with panelled windows, wooden doors with glass panels, tiled roofs and brick chimneys.

7.20 From the traffic lights proceeding west along the A415, there is a mixture of buildings, mostly large, and open spaces including the allotments. Past the developments there are open spaces on either side of the busy road up to the complex of petrol station, garage, forge and accommodation backing onto fields.

7.21 Opposite the High St is the village pub (currently used as a B&B), which is an attractive white building with a thatched roof, originally built in the 17th century, still retaining low beam ceilings. Next door is a red brick thatched detached cottage and then the Village Hall, which has served the village for a number of years, and its car park. Opposite, across the busy A415, is the primary school, housed partly in a traditional building. Proceeding west there are three detached houses in substantial

plots built in keeping with the village, with panelled windows, tiled roofs, and brick chimneys. They are all reasonably set back from the A415.

7.22 Courtiers Green is a T-shaped cul-de-sac of uniform 1950s semi-detached, 3- or 4-bedroom houses that are separated by garages. Some have been extended above so no gap remains on the first storey. There is normally no access to the rear garden, except through the garage. There are small front garden grassed areas and concrete or paved driveways to each property. Windows are generally large PVC, including a very large front room window to a low window seat. All houses (except one), have original chimneys. A newer detached house stands at the entrance to Courtiers Green in sympathy with both Courtiers Green and the Oxford Road. This has a chimney and gravelled driveway. A grassed bridleway joins Courtiers Green to the driveways at the rear of some Oxford Road properties.

7.23 There is a mix of style of houses along Oxford Road. The majority are Victorian semi-detached cottages set back from the road with a small front garden area, which have retained their character and contribute to the picturesque village. The fencing surrounding properties and along the edge of the footpath is split chestnut fencing. There is good spacing between the pairs of semi-detached properties, enough for parking adjacent to the property and in some cases garages. There is greenery and foliage in gardens and boundary hedges of beech, box and mixed hedgerow. There are a number of old and large trees, including Plane/Lime. In summer, hollyhocks line the pavements. Set much further back from the road on the West side of the Oxford Road travelling out of the village are larger, detached houses and converted barns. On the east side of the road closest to the traffic lights are newer detached houses with paved driveways, fencing and walls of different character to the other dwellings on the Oxford Road. All have dormer windows, and some have hipped roofs. Extensions have been added in keeping with the style and character and have retained key features. All dwellings have chimneys.

7.24 Watery Lane is an eclectic and characterful mix of properties. It includes the early 18th century Courtiers House and adjoining cottages; 17th century thatched houses, having been converted from multiple dwelling into one; an original Coach House; and a 19th century house converted to a doctor's surgery. There are also a number of 20th century houses and bungalows on the west side of the lane. The properties have large gardens on varying aspects. Properties on the east side are closer to the road and have larger front garden areas. There is also a series of small cottages attached to the back of Courtiers House at right angles. The buildings on the west side of the lane have large front garden areas and split chestnut fencing boundaries. Each property has its own style and is maintained in keeping with its era.

BCH5 Protecting Community Facilities**1. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following Community Facilities:**

- a. The Chequers P.H., Abingdon Road, Burcot**
- b. Clifton Hampden Primary School***
- c. The Barley Mow PH, Clifton Hampden***
- d. The Plough PH, Clifton Hampden***
- e. The Shop and Post Office, High Street, Clifton Hampden**
- f. The Surgery, Watery Lane, Clifton Hampden**
- g. The Village Hall, Clifton Hampden**
- h. The Recreation Ground, Clifton Hampden**
- i. The Sports Pavilion and Scout Hut, Clifton Hampden**
- j. The Wharf, Clifton Hampden**
- k. The Allotments, Clifton Hampden**
- l. St Michaels and All Angels Church, Clifton Hampden***

***Please note these buildings are also Grade II Listed Buildings.**

2. Development proposals which would affect the use of the identified Community Facilities of the policy will be determined against the provisions of Policies CF1 (Safeguarding Community Facilities) and CF4 (Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities) of the SODCLP.**3. Proposals that would result in the loss of community facilities, or which would harm their effectiveness or amenities will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that:**

- i. It would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility or the replacement of an existing facility equally convenient to the local community it serves with equivalent or improved facilities**
- ii. It has been determined that the community facility is no longer needed, or**
- iii. In the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.**

7.25 The policy supplements and refines existing development plan policies on community, open space, sport or recreation facilities to which the policies should apply and by seeking to ensure that the long-term potential value of land in community use is not lost without good reason. Given the small nature of the village, the loss of any of these facilities would be significantly detrimental, so even though a specific type of community use may no longer be viable, the opportunity to retain the premises or land in this use cannot be lost.

BCH6 Local Heritage Assets

Proposals that enhance the historic environment by preserving or enhancing the unique and special character, architectural style, historic settlement pattern and spaces of designated heritage assets and their settings, including the conservation area, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and archaeology will be supported.

7.26 The policy is intended to give a parish dimension to national and local planning policies.

7.27 Currently no list of non-designated Local Heritage Assets has been prepared. The Parish Council intend to develop a list in due course, following the advice set out by Historic England [Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage \(historicengland.org.uk\)](https://www.historicengland.org.uk). Once such properties have been identified the policy will apply Policy ENV6 of the Local Plan. Policy ENV6 requires a balanced judgement to take place where proposals directly or indirectly affect the significance of a local heritage asset considering the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset, in line with paragraph 209 of the NPPF.'

BCH7 Footpaths and Cycle Paths

Proposals that result in an improvement to existing footpaths or cyclepaths both generally and at the following locations will be supported:

- a. Between Burcot and Clifton Hampden adjacent to the A415**
- b. On the Oxford Road**

7.28 Over the duration of the project, residents have expressed a desire to:

- grow the network of footpaths and cycle paths, including a new footpath/cyclepath between Clifton Hampden and Long Wittenham.

- improve safety of the footpath on the Oxford Road which is so narrow that users risk being hit by passing vehicles.
- improve the experience of pedestrians and cyclists on the footpath adjoining the A415 between Burcot and Clifton Hampden.

7.29 Of note also is that whilst the NP does not make site allocations or safeguard land for new cycle paths or footpaths, the NDO being consulted in parallel makes provision for an extensive increase in the amount of publicly accessible space and footpaths on either side of the A415 within the conservation area, on land that will pass into community ownership.

7.30 Of note also is that the made Long Wittenham Neighbourhood Plan includes policy provision for the new footpath between Clifton Hampden and Long Wittenham. This falls outside the NP area. However, the settlement with the Landowner to enable the NDO to be brought forward in parallel includes an agreement to grant land for the new footpath as one of the public benefits to the NDO.

BCH8 Provision of well-designed energy efficient buildings and places

As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, the design and standard of development proposals should incorporate a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions.

The provision of the following sustainable features will be supported:

- **Siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain, where this does not come into conflict with the existing settlement patterns within the conservation area**
- **The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials**
- **Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing**
- **Detailed design and construction to meet or exceed continually improving Building Regulations requirements**
- **'Fabric first' approach to lowering energy usage through improved levels of insulation and air-tightness**
- **The use of Air source heat pumps**
- **Non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard 'excellent'**
- **The incorporation of on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels, to at least the extent required by Policy STRAT 4 of the adopted local plan**
- **The retrofitting of heritage properties and assets where it safeguards the character and appearance of the building concerned**
- **The alterations of existing buildings where such works comply with the sustainable design and construction standards in Policies DES8-10 of the adopted Local Plan**

7.31 Every new build or redevelopment project in the Neighbourhood Plan Area provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting climate change targets for 2050. This policy is intended to deliver a step change in the energy performance of all new developments in the Parish, and to encourage the retrofitting of energy efficient features in existing homes.

7.32 The policy requires developers and individual home owners to ensure they address the Government's climate change targets and energy performance at the very initial stages of design. 'Zero Carbon Ready' by design means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits ('free heat') of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost.

7.33 The policy defines the presence of Green Infrastructure assets in the Parish. By doing so it refines SOLP Policies ENV3 and 5. Its purpose is linked with the vision and principles of green infrastructure in the District by defining a network of green infrastructure assets in the neighbourhood plan area as a means of providing environmental support for the community and wildlife.

BCH9 Green Infrastructure

1. The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Green Infrastructure Network (as shown on Policies Map 3: BCH9) for the purpose of providing an environmental support system for communities and wildlife. The Network comprises the River Thames corridor, the recreation ground, the wharf, allotment land, ancient woodland, hedgerows, veteran trees, and public rights of way.

2. Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the Network should have full regard to the need to protect the value and resilience of the Network, in a manner commensurate with the land's statutory status or identifying quality in the development plan. Proposals should deliver an appropriate level of new green infrastructure measures, having regard to requirements set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, AONB Management Plan and seek to deliver a net biodiversity gain of 10%, having regard to the requirements of Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Proposals that will lead to the extension of the Network will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.

7.34 The policy explains that all development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an

opportunity to relate the land better to the Network, for example in complementing existing biodiversity value through the design of the landscape scheme.

7.35 The Network may become more valuable over time, and although the majority of these features are physically attached to enable habitat connectivity, some features of the Network are not. This does not devalue their integral biodiversity or recreational value and at some point in the future an opportunity may arise to achieve similar connectivity.

BCH10 Local Landscape Character

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the culturally and historically important local landscape character of the parish, and in particular the waterscape of the River Thames corridor and its setting.

Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on the features of the river corridor and the area's landscape will not be supported.

7.36 The landscape character around the villages of Burcot and Clifton Hampden has a strong degree of coherence, with the River Thames providing a unifying influence. Floodplain pasture is characteristic of the immediate river corridor, extending into semi-enclosed farmland beyond. The River Thames corridor is noted for its unspoilt peace and tranquillity, and is enjoyed both by local residents and visitors to the area using the long distance Thames Path which runs along its banks as well as the river itself for water based leisure activities.

7.37 Landscape character can be defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape, and in addition to the influence of the physical structure can include inherited historical and cultural features, as is the case with the landscape context of the parish.

7.38 There is a wealth of archaeological interest, including the scheduled monument of an Early Bronze Age round barrow cemetery site within the riverside area to the west of Clifton Hampden. It is likely that the presence of this site, together with other settlement monuments close by to the west, east and south of the river, is linked to early human activity taking advantage of the highly fertile soils and use of the river for transportation, communication and trade.

7.39 In addition there is historical map evidence to demonstrate that the existing hedgerows and woodland groups defining the field patterns in the area are of great age, many of them predating the Inclosure Acts (1896), and therefore are highly valued landscape elements, with those predating the Inclosure Acts identified as Important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

7.40 Further testament to the heritage value of the riverside landscape is that the listing information for the grade II Fullamoor Farmhouse shows it provides an important

historical setting for the farmhouse, because construction of the property was specifically designed to provide vistas from and to the farmland within the river valley floor, with woodland planting planned to frame the view. The special character of the Conservation Area at the western end of Clifton Hampden also derives some significance from transition into and intervisibility with this riverside farmland.

7.41 The parish borders the North Wessex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which has the highest status of protection. The setting to the AONB sets the frame for this protected landscape and provides long distance views, in particular of Wittenham Clumps, an iconic landmark within the AONB. The land adjacent to the Thames also features the very popular Thames path, which provides recreational access to the AONB and the opportunity to experience it both close up and from a distance. The rich and beautiful scenery of the local area has long been the subject of artists and mentioned in important cultural and literary references¹.

7.42 Overall the local landscape has a strong rural character with areas of high scenic quality, and is prized for its historical and amenity value. Living within such an aesthetically pleasing and culturally meaningful landscape makes an important contribution to the well-being of residents and strengthens the sense of community and attractiveness of the area, including for tourism.

7.43 The unspoilt floodplain pastures and landscapes around the villages, particularly where an important component of the setting to Clifton Hampden conservation area and other designated heritage assets, are especially vulnerable to change. Development proposals that would result in a general weakening of landscape structure, through measures such as removal of the existing pattern of hedgerow, trees and woodland planting, or that would lead to major change in and erosion of the existing intrinsic character and/or value of the landscape as a recreational resource and as part of the setting to the AONB would not be acceptable.

8. IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parish.

Development Management

8.2 The Parish Council will use a combination of the Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Plan policies to inform and determine its planning application decisions. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications made in the parish and it will be made aware of any future planning applications or alterations to those applications by the planning authority. It will seek to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies

¹ Eg *Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)* (Pub 1889) by Jerome K Jerome describes a journey along the River Thames from London to Oxford, overnighing by the bridge in Clifton Hampden

have been identified and applied correctly by applicants and by officers in their decision reports.

8.3 Where necessary, the Parish Council may seek to persuade the Secretary of State to call-in a planning application that it considers is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan but which the planning authority has deemed to consent. Similarly, it may also seek to persuade the Secretary of State to recover an appeal of a refused application, where the conflict with one or more Neighbourhood Plan policies has been important in the reasons for refusal. In both cases, the Parish Council will do so if it considers matters of national policy significance (for neighbourhood planning) are raised.

Local Infrastructure Improvements

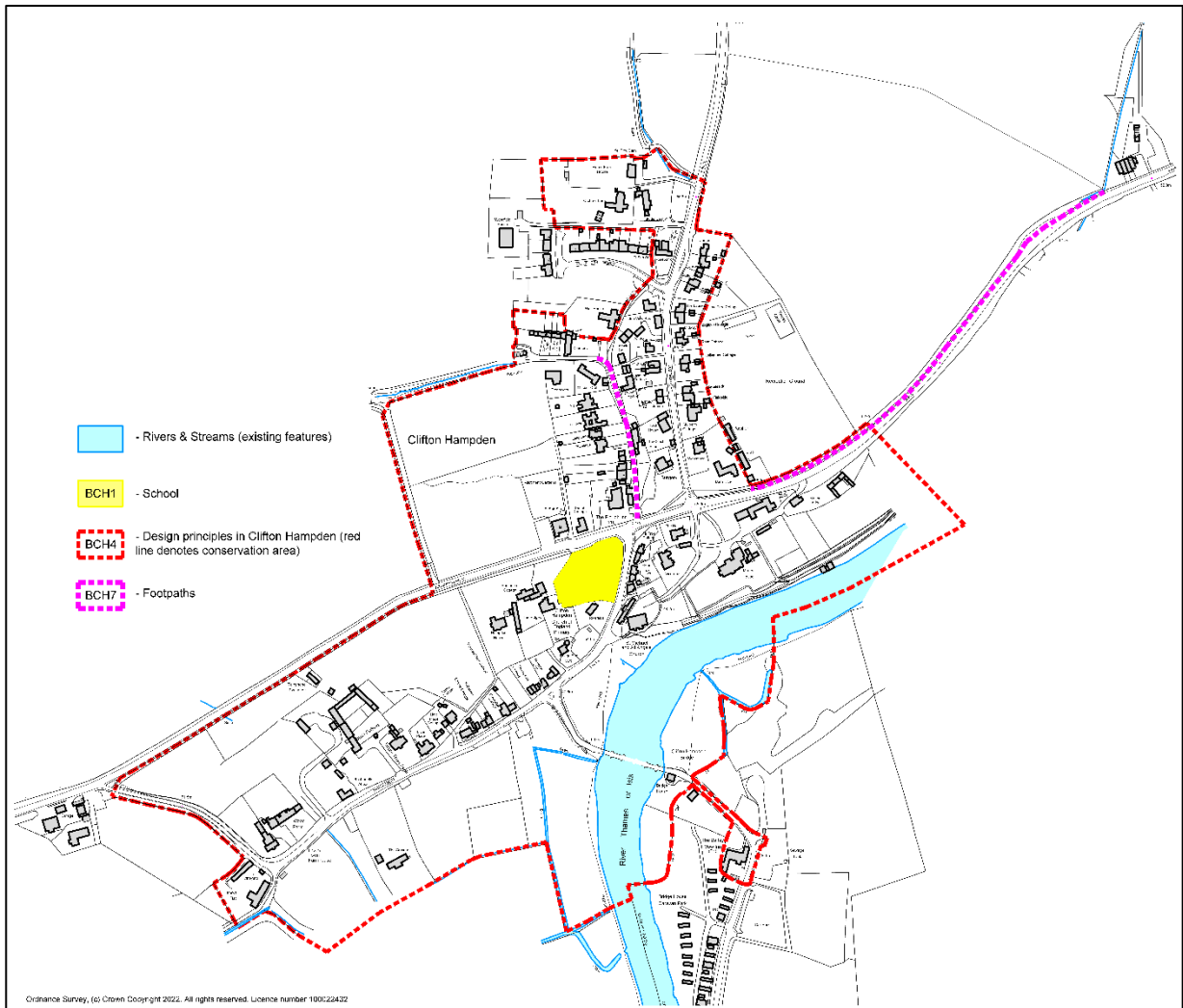
8.4 Where opportunities arise through Section 106 agreements (or through the Community Infrastructure Levy) to secure financial contributions to invest in improving local infrastructure, the Parish Council will review the evidence base and community consultations for the Neighbourhood Plan to inform its view in liaising with the local planning authorities. The following projects have been identified to date:

- Provision of a new surgery building, 17 new homes, improved parking, new burial ground, a new allotments site and an extension to and improvements to the Village Hall, to be brought forward through a Neighbourhood Development Order in parallel with this Neighbourhood Plan.
- School Buildings required to accommodate anticipated growth: provision of a preschool; provision of an additional main classroom.
- Replacement or major renovation of the scout hut on the recreation ground, as the current building is in a poor state of repair.
- Renovation or replacement of cricket pavilion and sports bar on the recreation ground, as the current building is in a poor state of repair.
- Acquisition by the community of the Post Office and Shop building.
- Provision of a public footpath and cycle path from Clifton Hampden to Long Wittenham.
- Retention of rights for residents and visitors to use the Barley Mow carpark whether or not they are not patrons, i.e. to be used as an extension of village car park.
- Moving the traffic lights on the south side of the bridge beyond the Barley Mow public house, improving safety for pedestrians using the bridge to access the Barley Mow.

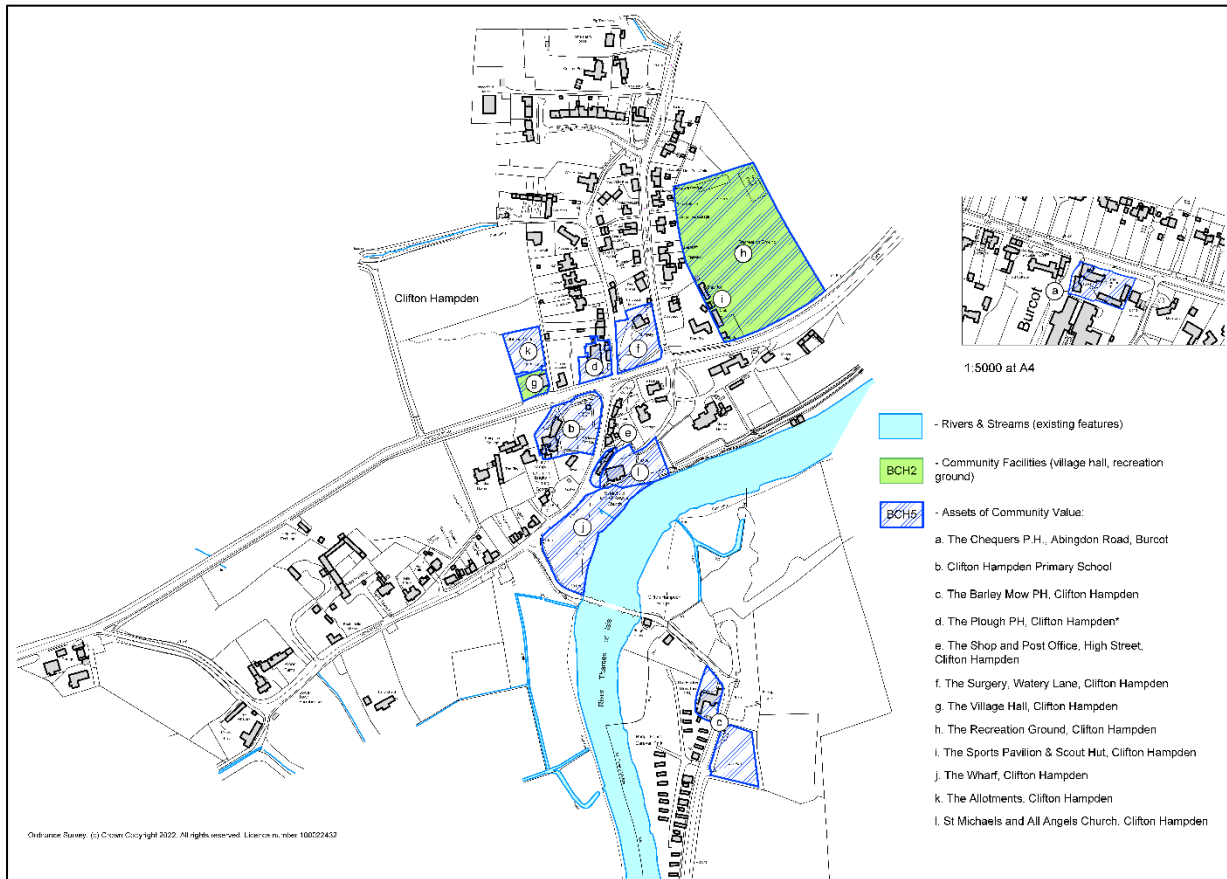
Other Non-Planning Matters

8.5 During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there have been many ideas for improving or addressing current problems in the parish that lie outside the scope of the land use planning system to control. The Parish Council has noted these issues and will take them forward through its day-to-day business and in partnership with the local community and relevant parties.

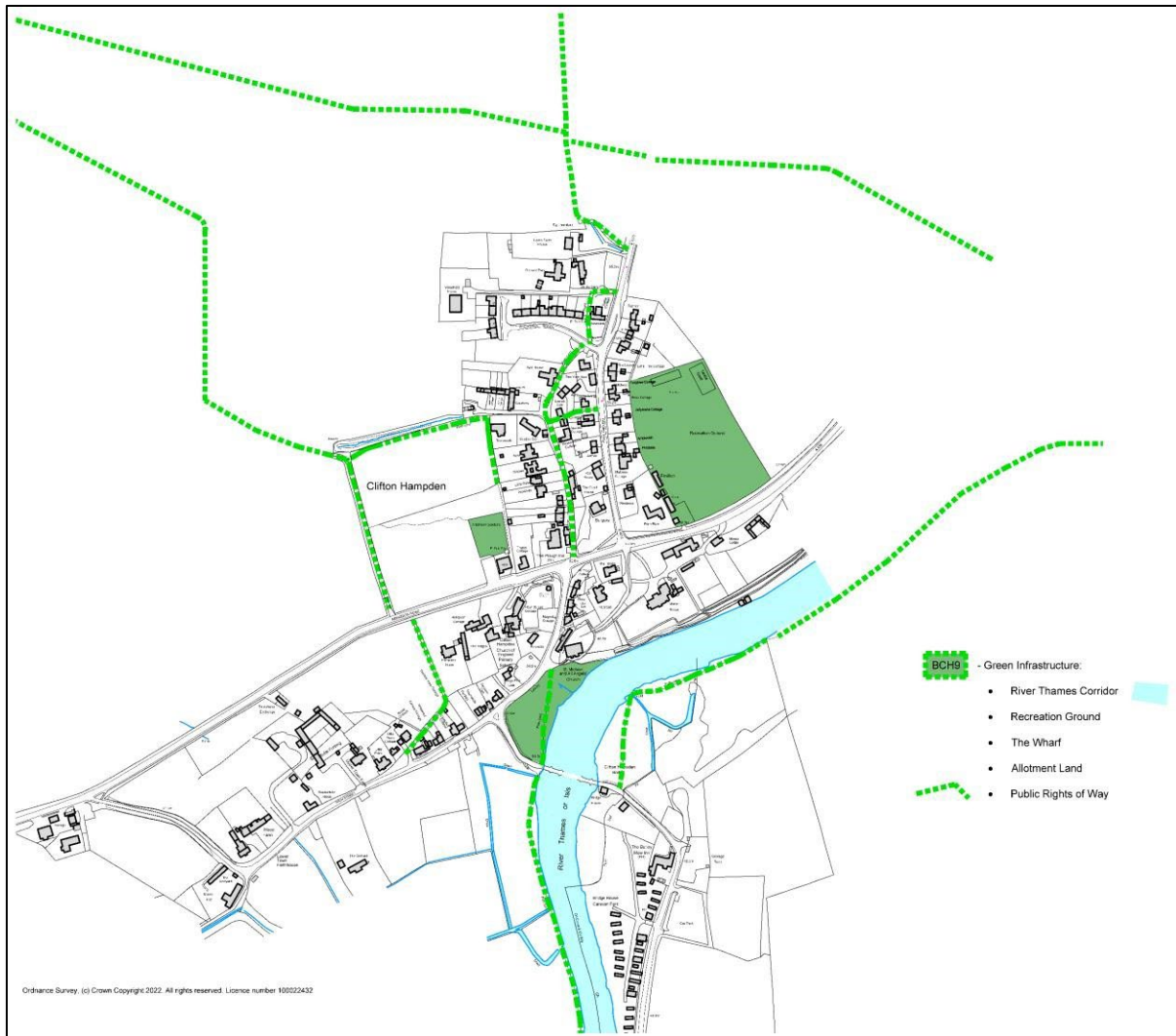
POLICIES MAPS



Policies Map 1: BCH1, BCH4 and BCH7



Policies Map 2: BCH 2 and BCH 5



Policies Map 3: BCH 9

