

MID-CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2024-2040

PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION VERSION
DECEMBER 2023



This document, together with its accompanying Appendices, is the Regulation 14 (Pre-submission) version of the Reviewed Plan, for consultation.

The documents are also available to view online at:
www.mid-cherwell.org.uk/reg14

together with a response form for easy and quick submission of your views on-line.

Scan the QR code below to go there now.

If you are unable to use the on-line facility, hard copies are available to view in your local library or community centre
- or from your Parish Clerk (check your parish website for details)
- or from our Secretary at **info@mid-cherwell.org.uk**

The deadline for submission of comments is Friday 23rd February 2024.

All comments received will be carefully considered by the MCNP Forum and may influence the next version of the draft Plan, which will then be submitted to Cherwell District Council (CDC). There will be a final opportunity to comment on the Neighbourhood Plan when CDC undertakes its own formal consultation later in 2024, prior to Examination and Referendum.



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B	CONSTITUTION OF MID-CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
C	VILLAGE SETTLEMENT AREAS
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K	AECOM HERITAGE AND CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (separate document)
M	VILLAGE TRAFFIC MITIGATION REPORT

APPENDICES to this document

1	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - SCOPING DOCUMENT
2	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
3	HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
4	LANDSCAPE CONSULTANT'S REPORT
5	TREESCAPES BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES REPORT
6	HOUSING SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT

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and all other members of the MCNP Forum, its constituent Parish and Residents' representatives, the Clerks to the Parish Councils, the staff of the Dorchester Group, and the many local people who have assisted along the way.

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Cover photo: Catriona Renk

And finally, thanks to Locality for funding and technical support.



FOREWORD

The process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan is acknowledged to be a very labour-intensive one, involving many hours of voluntary effort from often a small group of people, over several years. The hope that keeps the group going is that it will all be worth it in the end, because we can help to shape development over time to the long-term benefit of the local community.

What is not so often acknowledged is that the process itself can bring enormous benefits to the community. In our case, where twelve local parishes have come together, some remarkable things have happened. Parish councils that had no previous reason to communicate with their opposite numbers in the same District have found common purpose with them. A new partnership has been forged: where councillors and their parishioners tended to think no further than the confines of their village or parish, now they consider the effects of increased traffic on the whole neighbourhood. Where once the importance of retaining the rurality of “our” village was the focus, now there is more awareness of the wider need for green infrastructure that links all the communities together in a common purpose, protected by the shared policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, yet ensuring that each locality retains its own unique character and identity.

If sharing in the problems, issues and hopes of all the participating parishes has been the principal outcome of producing this Plan, it will have been worthwhile for that alone. In a world where there are many bigger and more important issues affecting our future, it is a result somehow all the greater that a good proportion of the over 8,000 people in our Area now think more about their neighbours in other villages, and not just those in their street. That outcome is not one that can be claimed by every Neighbourhood Plan group, and we hope that the initial implementation, and now this Review, of the Plan will keep alive the glow of a wider sense of community that we have fostered. Of the 3,000 or so neighbourhood plan groups in England, we believe MCNP to be unique in having so many parishes working together.

Since the Plan was made in 2019, it has been effective in shaping development in the area in quite a number of ways. MCNP Forum has submitted written comments on numerous planning applications, and Cherwell DC officers have applied our policies alongside its own (and national policies). In many cases the MCNP has influenced the outcome. Applicants have in some cases withdrawn their applications or made beneficial changes. The “success rate” of outcomes that aligned with MCNP policies in those that we have analysed was 89%; we have worked with Council officers, but on occasions we have had to speak at Planning Committees, persuading elected members to go against officer’s recommendations (both to reject and to approve). We have been invited to give evidence on neighbourhood planning to Ministers and their Departmental staff. We are making a difference.

Martin Lipson, Forum Chair

THIS DOCUMENT

This is the Pre-Submission version of the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2040. It incorporates elements of the original Plan document (MCNP 2031) but also adds a number of new policies to reflect current issues and concerns affecting the neighbourhood plan area.

OUR VISION FOR MID-CHERWELL

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

“

In 2040 the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood's 12 parishes will still have vibrant individual villages connected by unspoiled countryside, and its communities' rural way of life will have been maintained. Affordable housing will have been sensitively added, heritage and conservation respected, and road traffic mitigated. Public transport will have been improved and will be well-used, and digital connectivity enhanced; local amenities will better provide for the needs of our communities. The natural environment will have been enhanced and cared for, biodiversity increased, and carbon reduction measures implemented.

”



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 This initial section provides the context in which the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan has been developed, explains its overarching purpose, and the membership and structure of its organization.
- 1.1.2 The Localism Act 2011 (the Act) introduced a range of new rights and powers to enable local communities to shape new development in their community. The Act, amongst other provisions, provides for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans which allow local communities to define both general and specific planning policies for the development and use of land in their neighbourhood areas. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Act.
- 1.1.3 Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The following paragraphs from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 are relevant:

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.

30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

- 1.1.4 It is a requirement of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that decisions on planning applications under the planning Acts must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Accordingly, once adopted, the policies contained within the Mid-Cherwell NP must be considered alongside the policies of other adopted development plan documents when making decisions on planning applications within our neighbourhood plan area.
- 1.1.5 At the present time, the development plan comprises:
- the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2042, adopted in December 2022
 - the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031, which was adopted on 20th July 2015 and subsequently subject to a Partial Review dealing with Oxford’s Unmet Housing Need.
 - saved policies from the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) - these are non-strategic
 - and five ‘made’ neighbourhood plans - MCNP, Bloxham, Hook Norton, Adderbury and Weston-on-the- Green.

- 1.1.6 The Council is now preparing its Local Plan 2040 which is at the Reg. 18 Consultation stage at the time of writing (October 2023), which has been taken into account in the preparation of this Review of the MCNP as a material consideration when considering planning applications. In addition, the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment published in December 2022 by Cherwell DC has been taken into account as part of the evidence base.
- 1.1.7 Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum (MCNPF) has liaised closely with Cherwell District Council (CDC) during preparation of its Review to ensure that it is both in general conformity with, and adequately reflects and accommodates the strategic policies, provisions and requirements of the current Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of key strategic Local Plan policies such as Policy Villages 1, 2 and 5 which have a direct impact on the MCNP area.

1.2 ORIGINS OF THE PLAN

- 1.2.1 This Neighbourhood Plan has unusual origins: the Plan arose from a meeting held in April 2014, initiated by the Dorchester Group. Dorchester are the owners of Heyford Park - the former RAF Upper Heyford air base - now being developed as a strategic site for housing and employment. Heyford Park sits at the heart of what has become the Mid-Cherwell neighbourhood, straddling several parishes, and affecting many others. 14 surrounding parish councils were invited to attend the meeting (12 of which attended).
- 1.2.2 Dorchester explained that they wished to act as facilitator for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan, engaging as many of the parishes surrounding its development as wished to join in. The proposal was presented as being mutually beneficial for both the developer and the local communities, as a way for the local communities to shape development within the Neighbourhood Plan area and for the developer to understand more about the needs and aspirations of the local communities. Eleven parishes agreed to take forward the idea.
- 1.2.3 A steering group was formed, and one of the parishes (Ardley with Fewcott) was nominated as “lead parish”. The Plan area was submitted in August 2014 and eventually approved by Cherwell District Council (CDC) as the Designated Area, in April 2015. The delay was caused largely by the fact that CDC was engaged in completing its own Local Plan at that time.
- 1.2.4 Progress was made towards a draft plan, with Dorchester providing support to working groups on specific topics, involving members of the parish councils and some other members of the local community. In July 2015, one of the parish councils initiated a review of the structure of the organization in order to remedy a lack of progress and leadership. The result was that the organization agreed to move from its somewhat informal status to being an unincorporated association, the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Forum. A Constitution was drafted, with significant support from CDC’s legal department, and formally adopted at the body’s first AGM in early 2016. This nominated the parish councils as Full members of the Forum, and Dorchester and the Heyford Park Residents Association as Associate members. The Forum is managed by an Executive group, with named officers.

- 1.2.5 Two things were quickly recognized: firstly, that the progress made up to that point needed to be supplemented by a comprehensive process of wide community engagement: the idea of a Plan had not yet been tested on the wider community, and this was of course essential to confirm broad-based support, not only to meet the criteria for successful examination of the Plan in due course, but also as the basis for a successful referendum. Secondly, the drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan was largely focused around issues arising from the development of Heyford Park, but it was going to be necessary to add to these a number of other issues identified by the local communities of the eleven parishes.
- 1.2.6 In February and March 2016 all the parishes held public meetings. Over 480 people attended and nearly 1600 written comments were received. Analysis of these and feedback from the meetings showed that there was very strong support for the process and the draft objectives, but that there were some additional issues of concern. Also, the weighting of issues from the community was different to those which the parish councils had assumed. Adjustments were made accordingly. By the time that a subsequent round of meetings and events were held in June 2016, it was clear that the direction of travel of the Plan now conformed much more closely with the wishes of the community.
- 1.2.7 Grants and technical support provided through Locality enabled the work to proceed through to Referendum in March 2019. The turnout was 25% and 90% of the votes cast were in favour of adopting the Plan.

1.3 SUBMITTING BODY AND PLAN REVIEW

- 1.3.1 This Neighbourhood Development Plan is submitted by Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) Forum, of which Ardley with Fewcott Parish Council is the lead parish and the qualifying body as defined by the legislation. It should be emphasised that the Forum is not the qualifying body, and is not a “neighbourhood forum” as defined by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, for use where no parish council is involved.
- 1.3.2 The Plan covers an area of North Oxfordshire, and is now represented by 12 Parish Councils and Parish Meetings, together with The Dorchester Group. The additional parish council derives from the creation in 2019 of a new parish for the growing settlement of Heyford Park, which was formed by changing the boundaries of three of the surrounding parishes. The designated area of the MCNP is unaffected.
- 1.3.3 Each parish is represented on the Forum by its parish councillors or by the parish council’s nominees, apart from Middle Aston and North Aston which have annual parish meetings and where the representatives are chosen by the parish meeting chairman.
- 1.3.4 The Constitution of the Forum is at [APPENDIX B](#).

1.3.5 Fig. 1 shows the Neighbourhood Area in its regional context (see also Fig.5 which highlights the location of Heyford Park). Fig.2 shows that the Area comprises the following Parishes (in alphabetical order).

- Ardley with Fewcott
- Duns Tew
- Fritwell
- Heyford Park
- Kirtlington (including Northbrook)
- Lower Heyford (including Caulcott)
- Middle Aston
- Middleton Stoney
- North Aston
- Somerton
- Steeple Aston
- Upper Heyford

1.3.6 The villages in Cherwell District are categorised in the adopted Local Plan. Category A villages (service centres) in the Neighbourhood Plan area are: Fritwell, Kirtlington and Steeple Aston. There are also two Category B (satellite) villages: Lower Heyford and Middle Aston. The remainder are Category C (other) villages.

1.3.7 The emerging Local Plan 2040 proposes changes to this categorisation. The Consultation document asks whether a new classification of “large villages” and “smaller villages” should be adopted. Kirtlington and Steeple Aston are amongst the eleven larger villages, but Fritwell is now to be a smaller village. Middle Aston and Lower Heyford become smaller villages, and are joined by Middleton Stoney and Upper Heyford which were previously not categorised. The policies in this Review of the MCNP have been influenced by this emerging Local Plan policy.

REVIEW OF THE PLAN

- 1.3.8 The policies of the MCNP were conceived in the period 2016-2018 and are therefore considered to be ready for review, as a result of changes in national planning policy and concerns about climate change that have become more urgent.
- 1.3.9 The Review was commenced in September 2022, with the help of a further grant from Locality, which enabled consultants to be appointed to assist with the work. Technical support has also been provided once again with the help of Locality’s framework programme.
- 1.3.10 The Forum established a Review Team, which in turn created two Task Teams - one looking at Development policies, and the other at Environment policies. The work of the Development Task Team was significantly enlarged by the decision, taken in January 2023, to allocate housing sites in the two potential “large villages” identified in the Local Plan 2040 consultation document published around that time (and which was subsequently withdrawn). The parish councils of Steeple Aston and Kirtlington supported the proposal, and identified representatives to take part in site assessment in each of the two villages. This work proceeded from May until November 2023, and involved public meetings in both parishes specifically to receive community feedback on the sites and on the proposed policy anticipating additional housing. Planning policy officers at Cherwell DC agreed at a meeting in July 2023 that MCNP Forum would be including allocation policies in the revised MCNP. The report detailing the site assessment process in both villages is at APPENDIX 6.



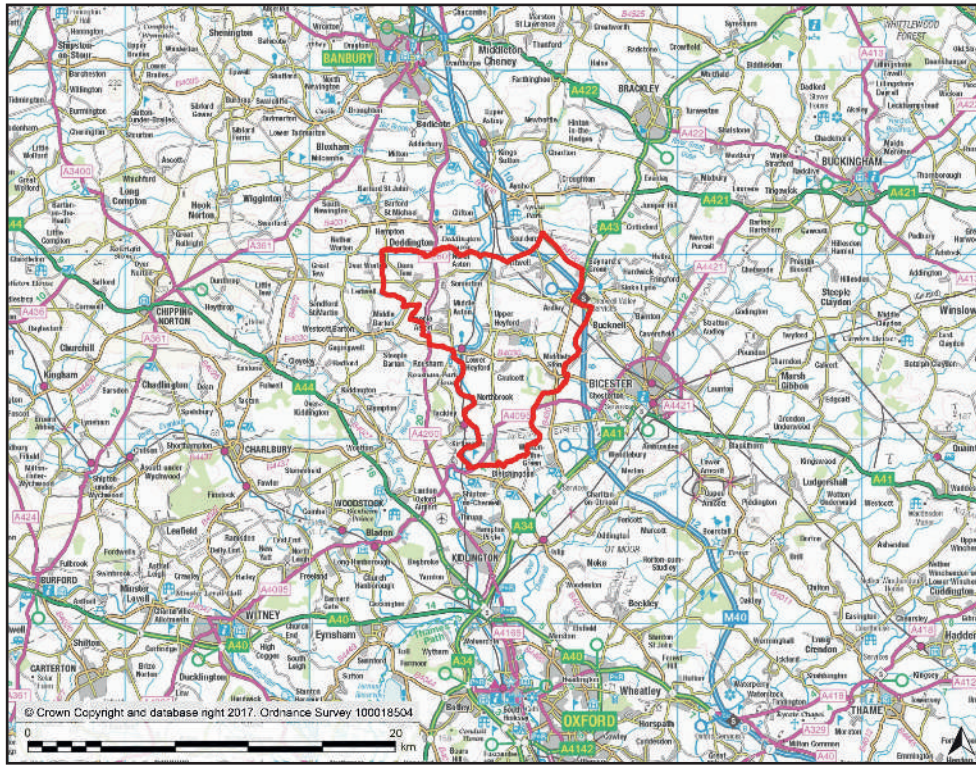


FIGURE 1: MAP SHOWING THE REGIONAL LOCATION OF MID-CHERWELL

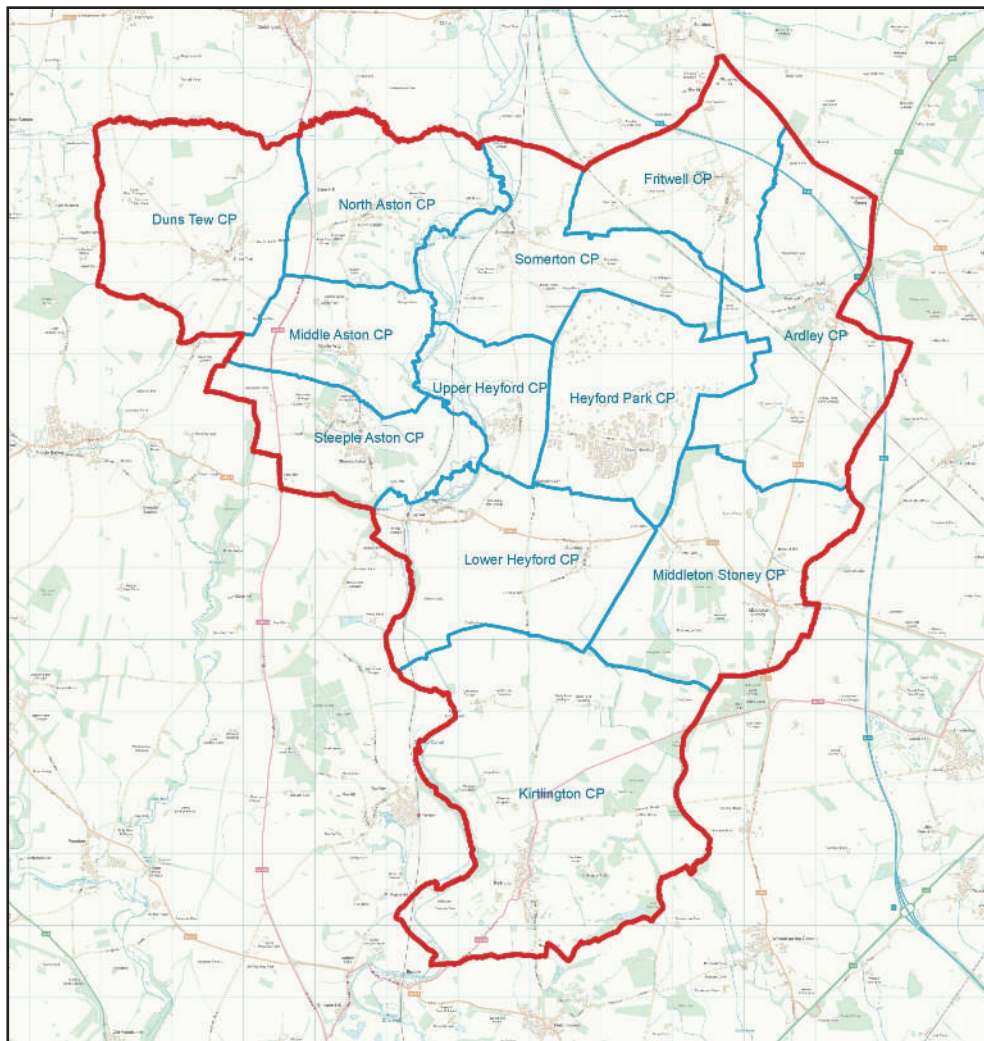


FIGURE 2: MID-CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA AND ITS PARISHES

1.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW - LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE

- 1.4.1 The designated area is an essentially rural part of Cherwell District in Oxfordshire, the closest town being Bicester, which is less than two miles away at its nearest point. Oxford is some ten miles away, and Banbury about six miles. The combined land area of the 12 parishes is approximately 7,800 hectares, roughly 13% of Cherwell District. The area is about seven miles across from east to west, and eight miles from north to south. The Neighbourhood Development Plan area is shown in Fig 2.
- 1.4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Area has as its most distinctive geographical feature the valley of the Cherwell River, which runs through the centre of the Area roughly on a north/south axis. Alongside it run the Oxford Canal and the Oxford – Birmingham railway, often in parallel for much of the river’s course. Other significant transport routes, which largely define the boundary of the Area, are the Oxford – Banbury Road (A4260), mostly to the west of the neighbourhood (apart from the parish of Duns Tew), the M40 motorway and the Bicester–Banbury railway line, which skirt the eastern boundary.
- 1.4.3 The River Cherwell, its flood plain and the higher ground on each side, where many of the twelve parishes lie, dominate the NP area. The landscape is very largely rural in nature, open rather than wooded; the only significant areas of woodland are associated with two of the three major country house estates in the neighbourhood area, namely Middleton Park and Kirtlington Park. The open land is predominantly arable with some pasture. There are over 30 active farms throughout the NP area together with their farmsteads and some isolated properties. Most of the villages are small and well-integrated into the landscape, although Kirtlington, Fritwell and Steeple Aston have small housing estates built in the C20th that have somewhat altered their historic character. The former RAF and USAF base at Upper Heyford, which sits in the centre of the NP area, is the only more “urban” site, although even here the majority of the land remains open and green (see further comments regarding the development at Heyford Park in 1.7 below)

1.5 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 1.5.1 The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan area is part of a wider smoothly rolling landscape that is bisected by the Cherwell Valley on a north-south axis. The land generally falls gently from north to south across the area, with a high point of 155m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the north-west of the area, and a low point of approximately 69m AOD at the base of the Cherwell Valley in the far south of the area. The Cherwell Valley is a reasonably narrow valley that creates a sense of enclosure from its base, and the narrow width of the valley creates a sense of intimacy between the two valley sides. The valley is a more prominent feature in the north of the area, where its sides are more pronounced, rising steeply by approximately 70m from the base to the west, and by approximately 50m from the base to the east. In the south of the area the sides of the valley rise more gently. The primary watercourse through the area is the River Cherwell, which flows from north to south through the Cherwell Valley. The Oxford Canal runs generally adjacent to the River Cherwell. At the western and southern ends of the Plan area, mineral extraction – principally sand and gravel – is an active industry, contributing significantly to heavy goods vehicle movements across the NP area.

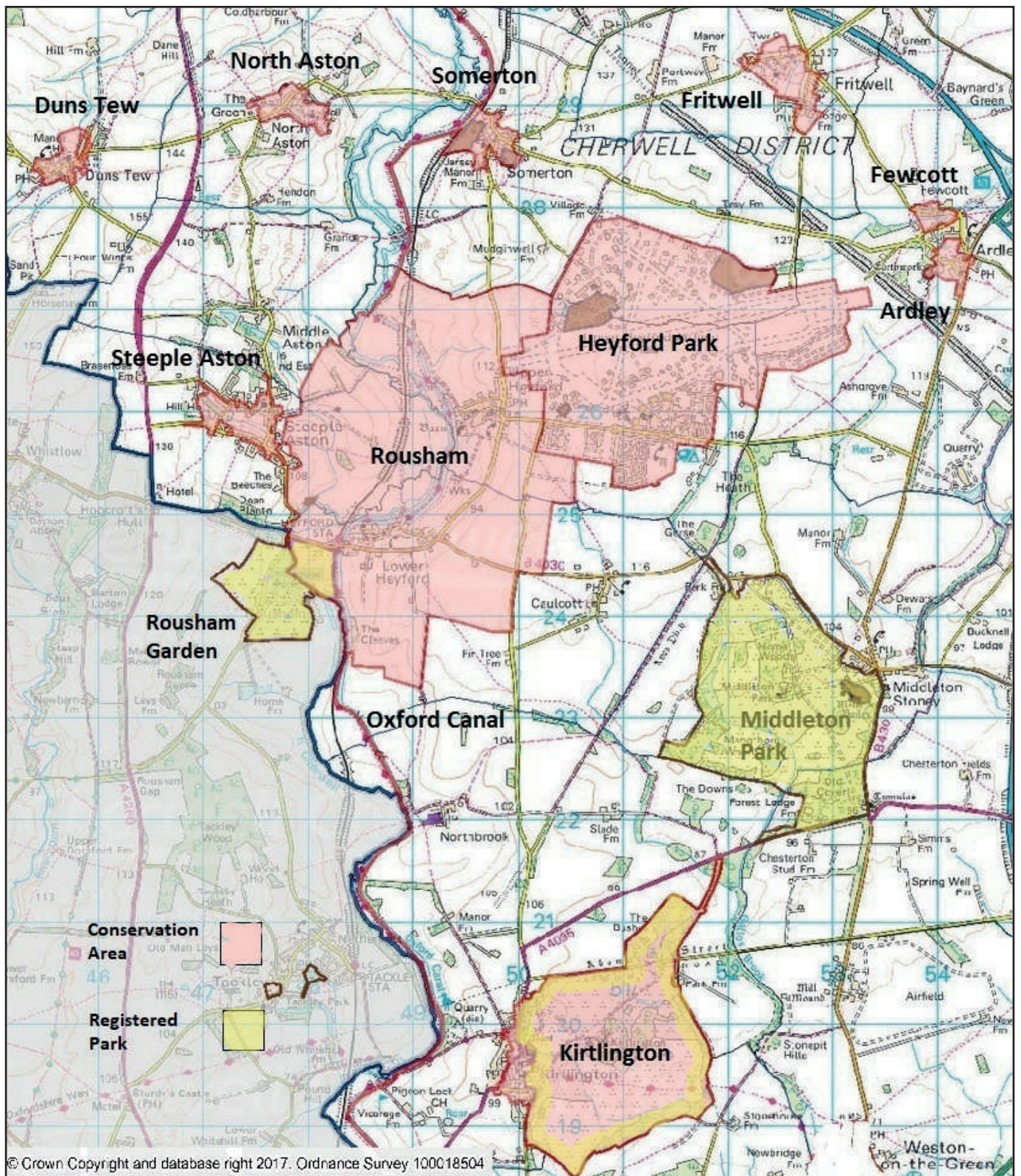


FIGURE 3: CONSERVATION AREAS AND REGISTERED PARKS IN THE MCNP AREA

- 1.5.2 The area is a rural landscape criss-crossed by public rights of way that promote access to the countryside and create usable natural green spaces out of landscape features such as the Cherwell Valley. There are limited areas of woodland, with the majority of the area comprising open farmed countryside. Large parts of the area are remnant historic parklands associated with manor houses; however these areas are either not entirely publicly accessible or have restricted access to paying visitors. Many of the villages within the area include small village greens at their centre, or other small-scale green spaces that whilst not for public use, still form a key part of the identity and character of the village. There are typically playing fields at each of the villages located close to a village hall to serve the communities for a wide variety of local activities and events. A number of the villages also have other community green spaces such as allotments.
- 1.5.3 The MCNP area does not contain any European sites for nature conservation, but there are two listed Gardens (Middleton Park and Kirtlington Park) and Rousham Garden is adjacent to the MCNP area. The NP area also contains five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - two at Ardley and one each near Duns Tew, Somerton and Kirtlington (see [www.http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx)). Also contained within or partly within the NP area are four Conservation Target Areas and a number of Local Wildlife Sites. The locations are shown on Wild Oxfordshire's website: www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/ and on TVERC's website: www.tverc.org/cms/LWSLivingLists

1.6 BUILT HERITAGE

- 1.6.1 The villages themselves reflect the mainly traditional character of their agricultural origins in medieval times, with later additions from subsequent periods. All the villages except for Middle Aston and Middleton Stoney have Conservation Areas, and across the twelve parishes there is a total of 239 listed buildings; in addition, the Oxford Canal Conservation Area runs through the heart of the Neighbourhood Area. The two country house estates – Middleton Park and Kirtlington Park also form part of Conservation Areas. Although outside the designated MCNP area, another important house and garden at Rousham exerts an influence on the area in terms of protected views. It is of national importance, having been landscaped by William Kent in the early C18th and surviving relatively untouched.
- 1.6.2 The former RAF Upper Heyford is also designated in its own right as a Conservation Area, and is regarded as an important survival of Cold War heritage, containing both Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments. There are no major archaeological sites within the neighbourhood, although a total of 173 items are registered in the Historic Environment Record. Amongst these are Portway and Aves Ditch which are important ancient routes that survive in some form.
- 1.6.3 A map showing all eleven Conservation Areas and the listed Parks is at Fig 3 below. Conservation Area appraisals are available on CDC's website: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/directory/34/conservation-and-heritage>

1.7 RAF UPPER HEYFORD, LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY AND MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

- 1.7.1 The former RAF Upper Heyford has had a major impact on the character and development of the neighbourhood. The base was in almost continuous use from 1918 through to 1994. Operated by the United States Air Force from 1950, it grew to be the largest NATO fighter base in Europe. At its peak the base hosted 14,000 people, of whom 4,000 lived on site - mainly airmen and their families, together with 1,000 MOD and contractor employees.
- 1.7.2 Many servicemen and women were housed in the nearby communities and their presence was a big factor in securing the viability of surrounding villages. Demand for housing ensured maintenance and some expansion of residential dwellings in the area, and local schools benefited from the inclusion of service children. Indeed, many people from the locality were employed at the base which became a significant contributor to the economy of the neighbourhood through salaries, house rentals, use of pubs and shops and schools. Local residents were made welcome as guests on the base as well, resulting in many lasting transatlantic friendships and marriages. Following the closure of RAF Upper Heyford in 1994 the villages largely returned to their quieter, agricultural tradition.
- 1.7.3 The Cherwell Local Plan 2031 designates Heyford Park as a strategic site for development and employment. It is the only such site so designated outside the essentially urban areas of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.
- 1.7.4 Two planning decisions which pre-date the Local Plan initiated the comprehensive redevelopment of the former military base:
- 1.7.5 An outline planning permission (08/00716/OUT) for the formation of a new settlement of 1,075 dwellings (314 of which already exist on the site) with associated works and facilities including employment uses, community uses, a school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure. The scheme was allowed at appeal (APP/C3105/A/08/2080594) dated 11 January 2010.
- 1.7.6 A subsequent outline planning consent (10/01642/OUT) concerned only with that part of the base referred to as the 'New Settlement Area'. This permission provided for an amended new settlement of 1,075 dwellings including facilities as above. Planning permission was granted by Cherwell District council on 22 December 2011.
- 1.7.7 In addition, Conservation Area Consents were applied for and approved for the demolition/partial demolition of specific buildings across the site.
- 1.7.8 Local Plan Policy Villages 5 now provides for a further 1,600 dwellings including primary and secondary schools, community, recreational facilities, and employment uses to provide for up to a further 1,500 jobs. The new housing, employment opportunities, facilities and services play a major role of provision within the NP area (for which a further planning application 18/00825/HYBRID was submitted in May 2018 and approved in 2020). In the last few years, a "village centre" with shops, hotel and other facilities has opened, and house-building has continued at a steady pace.

1.8 POPULATION (2021 CENSUS FIGURES)

- 1.8.1 The population of the designated Area in 2021 was 8,263, an increase from 2011 of 17%. The NP area density of 0.95 persons per hectare is about one third of the figure of 2.4 for Cherwell District and represents about 5% of the population of the District.
- 1.8.2 The eleven parishes around Heyford Park each have an average population of about 700. Only the new Heyford Park parish itself has over 1,000 residents (in fact 2,622 and growing). The second largest parish is Kirtlington with 986 residents, and the smallest is Middle Aston with 133 residents. Table 1 below shows 2021 census populations for each parish.

Parish	Population
Ardley with Fewcott	751
Duns Tew	474
Fritwell	712
Heyford Park	2,622
Kirtlington	986
Lower Heyford	453
Middle Aston	133
Middleton Stoney	306
North Aston	190
Somerton	304
Steeple Aston	978
Upper Heyford	354

FIGURE 4: POPULATION OF PARISHES IN THE MCNP AREA (2021 Census)

- 1.8.3 Mid Cherwell has a population with a high proportion of people of family age, with those aged between 25-64 accounting for 54% of the total population. When compared to Cherwell and National trends, Mid Cherwell has a higher proportion of its population aged between 65-84 and a smaller proportion aged between 15-24.
- 1.8.4 Household projections suggest that Mid Cherwell's population will change over the NP period, with a potential increase of 92% in the population aged 65 and over. This is in contrast to the potential decline in younger age groups.
- 1.8.5 Heyford Park has a distinct population profile when compared to the other parishes, with a much higher proportion of people aged between 24-44 and 0-14. This would suggest a migration of a younger family aged population who have moved to the area.

1.9 HOUSING

1.9.1 Data from the 2021 Census, from [AECOM's Housing Needs Assessment 2023](#), and from Cherwell District Council's published data, for the 12 parishes reveals the following:

- Dwellings: there are 3,283 households in Mid Cherwell (2021 Census). Completions data indicates that 79 dwellings were completed in the NP area between 2021 and 2022, taking the total to an estimated 3,641. *(Awaiting confirmation from Cherwell DC)*
- Dwelling type: 44% of homes are detached, 38% are semi-detached and 13% are terraced. Only 4% of homes are flats
- Household size: 22% are single-person households, 37% two-person households, and 32% three or four person households.
- Households: non-dependent children (adult children living at home, or students still calling home their primary residence despite living for most of the year near to university) shows a marked increase in numbers since 2021. This can be taken to indicate the relative unaffordability of entry-level homes, where young people are financially unable to move out and form their own households. This category grew by 34% between 2011 and 2021 in the MCNP area, a rate of growth which is much higher than Cherwell district (21%) and national (4%) averages.
- Tenure: 48% of homes are owned outright, and 20% are owned with a mortgage (total - 68% compared to 65% across Cherwell), 20% are privately-rented accommodation (similar to Cherwell), 9% social rented (13% across Cherwell) and 3% shared ownership (2% across Cherwell); ownership in Heyford Park drops to 56%, with 28% renting privately, 9% social rentals and 6% shared ownership.
- New homes: Between 2011 and 2022, there were 111 new dwellings constructed in the villages, with permission granted for a further 46 (of which at least 10 have been completed in 2023). In addition, 734 new dwellings were constructed at Heyford Park in the same period, with permission granted for a further 451. It is expected that Heyford Park will continue to grow at a rate of about 60 dwellings per annum, up to the projected total of around 3,000 in 2031.
- Rate of increase: the total number of dwellings completed in the MCNP area in the period 2011- 2022 was 845 dwellings - an increase over that period of 8% per annum in the number of dwellings in the neighbourhood.

1.9.2 In order to establish evidence of housing need in the Mid-Cherwell area, MCNP commissioned AECOM to undertake research and produce a report (at [Appendix E](#)). The report was completed in March 2023 and the main findings can be summarized as follows:

- there is a lack of diversity in the NP area housing stock: detached and semi-detached dwellings cumulatively account for 82% of the overall stock. In turn there is a lower proportion of terraced dwellings and flats.

Continued.....

- In terms of size, the NP area has a higher proportion of larger 4+ bedroom properties than can be typically found in Cherwell and nationally. There is a correspondingly smaller proportion of smaller 1-bedroom homes.
- To accommodate the future population of Mid Cherwell and to diversify its housing mix, AECOM's modelling suggests prioritising the provision of smaller 1 to 3 bed dwellings. This obviously does not reflect the preferences of individuals or their potential desire to live in larger dwellings than they 'need'. For this reason, it may not be advisable to restrict future housing delivery too strictly to smaller dwelling sizes. An additional factor is the existing historic character and density of the built environment, which may not be well-suited to flats – which is the form that 1-2 bedroom dwellings typically tend to take.
- Currently, the median house price in Mid Cherwell is £412,500, having grown by 20% since 2012. The average household income in Mid Cherwell is estimated to be £58,333 (in 2018). There is a clear issue regarding the affordability of housing in Mid Cherwell, with the median house price requiring an income of £106,071, which is 82% higher than the average income. Moreover, both entry level and new build homes are generally out of reach for the average earning household.
- Affordability is seemingly better in the rental market, with average rents accessible to households on average incomes. However, rental properties still present issues of affordability to households on lower incomes.
- The HNA would suggest a tenure mix in Mid Cherwell of 60% affordable rented and 40% affordable ownership accommodation. This is due to the particularly acute levels of unaffordability in the MCNP area; an increase in the supply of social/affordable rental homes would respond to the most acute affordability pressures.
- Affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments. However, if the community wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing, there are other, more proactive routes available for its provision. For example, using community development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts.
- The projected growth in the older population points to 329 new households inhabited by persons aged 75+ over the current Neighbourhood Plan period to 2031. Estimates of future need in Mid Cherwell produce a range of 104 to 133 specialist accommodation units that might be required during the Plan period. These estimates are based on the projected growth of the older population, assuming that today's older households are already well accommodated. If this is found not to be the case, it would justify aspiring to exceed the range identified here.

1.9.3. A new close care housing development of 60 one / two-bedroom apartments with communal facilities is planned for Heyford Park.

1.9.4 Heyford Park is expected to reach a resident population of 7,170 by the end of 2031 (an estimate provided by the Dorchester Group in November 2023 using average occupancy per dwelling type using OCC ratios). This takes into account all currently agreed development of the site by the Dorchester Group and Pye/David Wilson Homes.

1.10 THE COMMUNITY

- 1.10.1 Deprivation is slightly lower in Mid-Cherwell than across Cherwell, and slightly more people are economically active than across Cherwell.
- 1.10.2 Historically, the community has its roots in farming and there are still over 30 active farms in our neighbourhood area, but in 2021 just 3% of residents worked in the agricultural sector. The rest were categorized as follows: 14% work in the retail sector and 13% in education; 10% are in health or social work, 9% in professional, technical and scientific work, and another 9% in manufacturing; 8% each in construction and public administration; and finally, 5% in information and communication.
- 1.10.3 As the new community at Heyford Park grows, the demographics of the NP area are changing, although there is no definitive data at present. Integration of new residents into established villages is relatively easy, while for greater numbers of “incomers” to large-scale new developments there are more challenges. However, the early provision of a new school at Heyford Park has already had a beneficial impact on this, and other amenities such as shops, a pharmacy and restaurants also serving the wider area have had a similar beneficial effect on community well-being.
- 1.10.4 61% of households have two or more cars or vans; only 6% have no car. (15% across Cherwell). 71% of travel to work journeys are by private car or van; only 7% travel to work by public transport; 41% work mainly from home: this is a huge increase from the 17% recorded in 2011, in the immediate aftermath of the COVID pandemic of 2020/21.

1.11 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1.11.1 The neighbourhood currently has:

- 4 schools (one of which is the recent Heyford Park school) and a pre-school
- 14 meeting places – principally village halls and community centres.
- 4 village greens, a market square, a further 30 recreational spaces, and 4 allotments
- 2 community orchards (with a third opening in 2024)
- A variety of musical, cultural, social and sports groups in many of the villages
- Play facilities for younger children in all villages except North and Middle Aston
- A dearth of facilities for older children
- 8 pubs; 4 hotels; various B&Bs
- only 2 grocery shops (but in addition a small supermarket and a cycle shop at Heyford Park)
- A “yurt” restaurant located in a large plant centre, and a new coffee shop in Middle Aston
- A variety of small businesses offering services to the community, including canal boat hire
- 12 places of worship
- 10 cemeteries, many full
- 4 community magazines, and other web-based information sources
- No GP surgeries, but a new dentist and pharmacy with consulting rooms, both at Heyford Park
- A ground-source district heating system for many dwellings in North Aston, and another planned for Upper Heyford village

1.11.2 There are a number of annual festivities held in the neighbourhood, some of which regularly attract people from well outside the area. Among these are:

- The two Annual Shows of the Steeple Aston and Middle Aston Horticultural Society
- Annual church or village fetes of most of the villages in the MCNP Area
- Whit Races in Steeple Aston
- Annual “Lamb Ale” feast, fair and Morris Dancing weekend at Kirtlington
- Open Gardens in several villages during the summer

1.11.3 At the eastern end of the NP area is a regional facility for Waste management, the Ardley energy recovery facility and an associated landfill site.

1.12 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.12.1 A full record of all community engagement activities conducted during the preparation of the original Neighbourhood Plan (to 2031) can be found in the separate Consultation Statement. Community engagement was extensive and informed policy throughout. Details of how each stage was conducted and how the draft Plan was amended in response to points made are to be found in the Statement.

1.12.2 The 2022/23 Review of the MCNP also includes extensive community engagement, which is planned to occur alongside the Reg. 14 consultation phase. Details of this and other community engagement will be presented in the Reg. 16 stage documentation in 2024, in a further Consultation Statement.

1.12.3 It is worth noting that several of the participating parishes have in recent years produced their own Parish Plans - for example those produced for Fritwell in 2008, Steeple Aston and Duns Tew in 2010, in 2011 Kirtlington and Lower Heyford, and currently, Middleton Stoney. Parish Plans, however, have no statutory force and range across a wide spectrum of issues, many of them unrelated to land use and planning policy. Nevertheless, they have helped to inform and guide the thinking of parish councillors involved in the MCNP Forum: the local engagement process undertaken by the Forum in 2016/7 reflected long-standing issues in the community.



PHOTOS SHOWING CHARACTER OF NEIGHBOURHOOD, AND COMMUNITY



2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 THE PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 As stated earlier, engagement with the local community commenced in January 2016 with a series of meetings across the neighbourhood. The outcome was a set of prioritised objectives for the Plan, which have been revised and are to be tested again during this consultation. They are as follows:

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

- To work with OCC, Thames Valley Police and other bodies to develop strategies to protect against rising traffic volumes and the impact of increased development on the capacity of the rural road network serving the neighbourhood. This includes concerns about speeding, safety, and the impact of heavy goods vehicles.
- To secure the future of bus services linking the neighbourhood's villages with each other and with Bicester; to influence train operators to improve currently inadequate services.

DEVELOPMENT

- To strongly encourage the use of brownfield sites.
- To resist the loss over time of the all-important countryside between villages, and to avoid the Mid-Cherwell area eventually becoming a suburb of Bicester.
- To reinforce the sense of rurality that defines the neighbourhood, to protect against creeping urbanisation, and to maintain the character of the villages and the protection offered by their Conservation Areas.
- To identify how much, if any, new development might be successfully located in or around the villages; to specify where any such development should occur, what form it should take, and to ensure that any new development enhances our communities.

AMENITIES

- To identify and secure supporting facilities that can be improved or provided in the area, and in particular at Heyford Park, accessible to the wider Mid-Cherwell community. These should include additional leisure, recreation and sports facilities, as well as improved access to GP services and new cemetery provision.

HOUSING

- In the case of the two villages identified by CDC in the LP 2040 as "larger villages" (Steeple Aston, and Kirtlington), to identify potential sites and ensure that requirements identify the mix of the proposed homes, the density of development sites, the form of development and the quality of design.
- To ensure that affordable housing is provided within any local developments that meets the needs in particular of the local community, especially young people and older residents.

TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- To raise concerns about technical infrastructure with the various service providers.

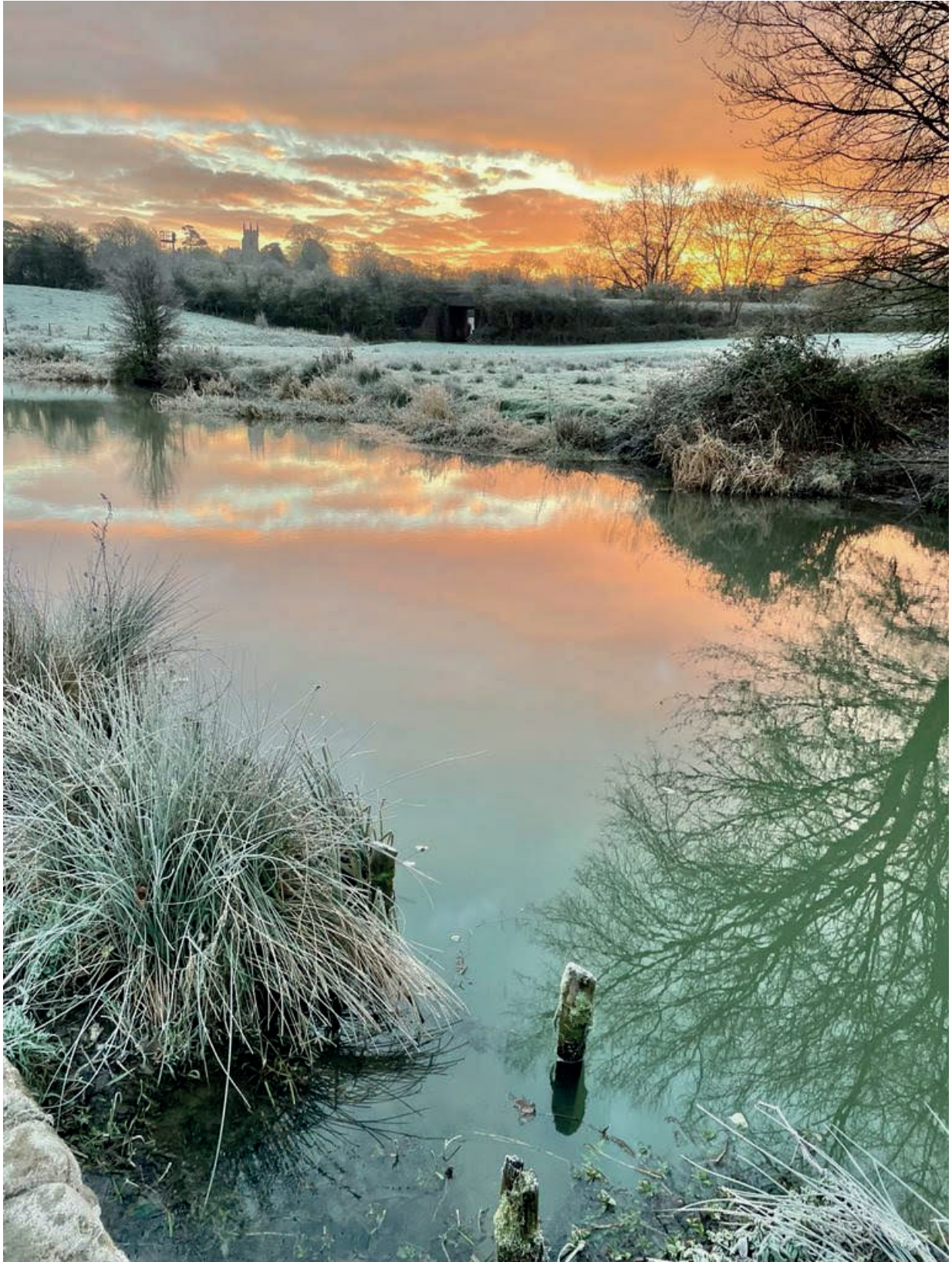
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ENVIRONMENT

- To enhance and care for the natural environment, increase biodiversity, and implement carbon reduction measures.
- We support the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the UK Government’s commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions, the 25-Year Environment Plan and the Environment Act of 2021, aimed at halting biodiversity decline and delivering biodiversity net gains.
- Our natural habitat and biodiversity have been eroded through human activity, agriculture, commercial development, pollution and climate change. We recognise the need to act on the causes and impact of climate change and biodiversity loss. Addressing the climate, ecological emergencies and protecting our natural environment, are considered strategic priorities for planning all development. As well as preventing biodiversity decline, our intention to protect wildlife and their habitats, will also enable residents to continue to appreciate the rural nature of our countryside.

2.2 HOW DOES THE PLAN DELIVER?

- 2.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan aims to deliver the objectives through two main routes. First, through implementation of our **PLANNING POLICIES** (which follow in Section 3). These are essentially development management policies which will be applied by Cherwell District Council to all applications for planning permission affecting our Neighbourhood area after the date on which this Plan is operative. The wording of these Planning policies will have been subject to considerable scrutiny before the Plan comes into force, because they have to be in general conformity with strategic national and local policies, and be both reasonable and workable. Clearly, the application of such policies will not deliver the desired outcomes overnight: there will be a cumulative effect, and we cannot control the rate at which this occurs as it is largely dependent on the number and scale of applications that are submitted by others.
- 2.2.2 However, there is a second and more pro-active way in which our Neighbourhood Plan can try to deliver the desired outcomes. Section 4 contains our **COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN (CAP)**, where the aspirations of the community can be addressed through proposals for action by our parish councils and other bodies. These proposals, while lacking statutory force, are not so dependent on market forces for delivery, and are therefore just as important as the planning policies as vehicles for providing solutions.
- 2.2.3 As an example, one of our objectives is “to ensure that affordable housing is provided within any local developments that meets the needs in particular of the local community, especially young people and older residents”. As well as including housing allocation policies in the main Plan, the Community Action Plan makes provision for affordable housing schemes on any rural exception sites that may come forward. In addition, the CAP contains a proposal that our parish councils should establish a Community Land Trust to initiate and deliver such schemes. This two-pronged approach - supporting schemes if and when they occur, while at the same time taking proactive steps to create such Schemes - is a characteristic of this Neighbourhood Plan.



3 POLICIES

3.0 APPROACH

- 3.0.1 This section details those policies which specifically relate to development and the use of land. These are the policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan which will be examined formally and referred to in the referendum. Plan policies are prefixed with the letters MC.
- 3.0.2 Each policy is followed by a rationale which explains the intent and provides references to evidence supporting the need for the policy.
- 3.0.3 Some detailed aspects of policies and supporting evidence for them are set out in a separate document of Appendices which are an integral part of the Plan.

3.1 LIST OF POLICIES

- MC1** Settlement Areas
- MC2(A)** Steeple Aston - Site Allocation: Land off South Side
- MC2(B)** Steeple Aston - Site Allocation: Land off Fenway
- MC2(C)** Steeple Aston - Reserve Site Allocation: Land off Grange Park
- MC3(A)** Kirtlington - Site Allocation: Land off Heyford Road (South)
- MC3(B)** Kirtlington - Site Allocation: Land off Heyford Road (North)
- MC4** Green Infrastructure Network
- MC5** Local Gaps
- MC6** Local Green Spaces
- MC7** Protection of Important Views, Vistas and Skylines
- MC8** Light Pollution
- MC9** Housing Development
- MC10** Sustainable Travel and Traffic Calming
- MC11** Local Employment
- MC12** Health Facility
- MC13** New Cemetery

POLICY MC1: SETTLEMENT AREAS

The Neighbourhood Plan defines Settlement Areas at Fritwell, Kirtlington, Lower Heyford, Middle Aston, Middleton Stoney, Steeple Aston and Upper Heyford, as shown respectively on Policy Maps 1 to 7.

Proposals for development within a Settlement Area will be supported in principle. Development proposals will not be supported outside a Settlement Area unless the use is essential to or suited to a countryside location, or is allocated in this Plan for housing development.

Rationale

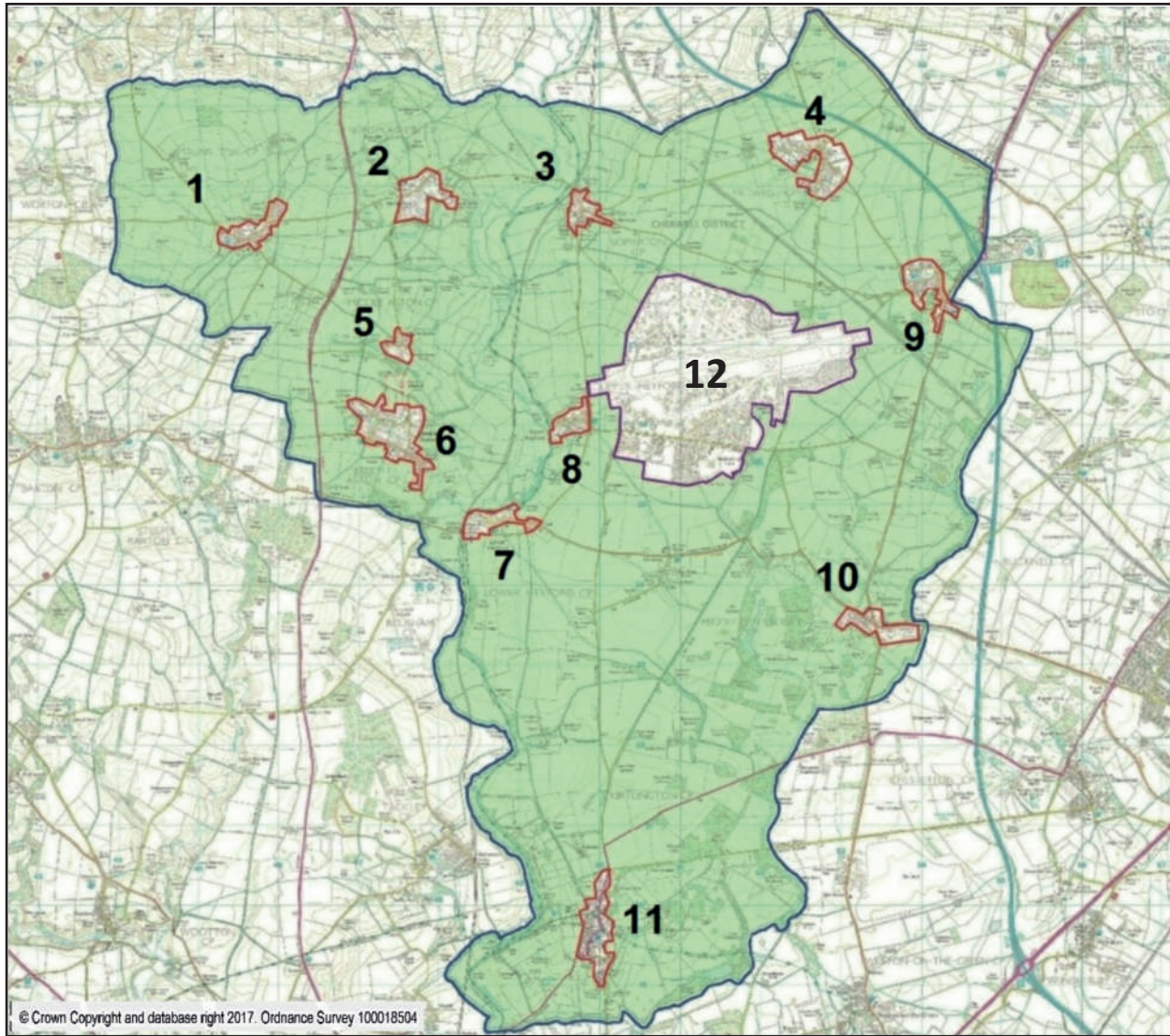
The purpose of defining settlement areas for these villages is to enable the provisions of Local Plan Policy Villages 1, which seeks to confine and manage 'residential development within the built-up limits of villages', to operate effectively. Policies PD1 and PD2 of the made MCNP defined Settlement Areas on its Policy Maps for Steeple Aston, Kirtlington and Fritwell (as 'Category A' villages) and for Middle Aston and Lower Heyford (as 'Category B' villages) respectively. In doing so, the policies removed any ambiguity on the precise extent of the 'built-up limits'. With Policies MC2 and MC3 now allocating land for development, the made policies have had to be modified.

In addition, taking account of the emerging Local Plan 2040 and its proposed re-categorisation of villages, settlement areas are now being proposed for two additional villages - Middleton Stoney and Upper Heyford. Fritwell's settlement area has been amended to include land with planning permission for new housing, and minor errors in other settlement areas have been corrected.

Fig. 5 is a map of the MCNP area showing all the settlements.

The policy provides an in-principle presumption in favour of development proposals within the defined settlement area, with other policies of the MCNP and Local Plan applying as relevant to judging their suitability in terms of land use, design, access etc. Outside the defined settlement area, the policy only allows for types of land use and development that are essential or suited to a countryside location. This rules out market housing schemes but allows for rural exception site schemes and isolated homes in the countryside, provided the relevant national and Local Plan policies are followed, as well as other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. It also allows for the appropriate diversification of farms.

Refer to [Appendix C](#) for Settlement Area definition.



- | | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------------|
|  Settlements (indicative) | 1 Duns Tew | 7 Lower Heyford |
|  Open countryside | 2 North Aston | 8 Upper Heyford |
|  Heyford Park strategic site | 3 Somerton | 9 Ardley with Fewcott |
|  MCNP designated area | 4 Fritwell | 10 Middleton Stoney |
| | 5 Middle Aston | 11 Kirtlington |
| | 6 Steeple Aston | 12 Heyford Park |

FIG.5: THE MCNP AREA AND ITS PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS

POLICY MC2(A): STEEPLE ASTON SITE ALLOCATION: LAND OFF SOUTH SIDE

Site reference: SA8

Area to be developed: 0.8ha

Number of dwellings: 10 - 15

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land off South Side, as shown on Policy Map 6 and Fig. 6, for residential development. Proposals will be supported, provided:

1. The scheme comprises between 10 and 15 dwellings of a mix of types that reflect the principles set out in Policy MC9(A) and (B);
2. The scheme shall include at least 4 single-storey dwellings;
3. The layout of the development reflects the following principles:
 - the site to be developed does not exceed the area shown in Fig.6
 - a single vehicular access from South Side;
 - a separate pedestrian and cycle access from South Side;
 - retention of the entirety of the woodland TPO adjacent to the site, and of healthy trees along the frontage which are also subject to TPOs;
 - retention of vehicular access across the site to Hill House
 - creation of a buffer zone on the east side of the site
 - creation of a woodland path linking the scheme northwards towards Fenway
 - minimising harm to the Conservation Area
 - compliance with other policies in this Plan and other Development Plan documents
4. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.
5. A Section 106 Agreement may be entered into with Cherwell DC which provides community benefits that have been pre-agreed with the parish council.

Rationale

The choice of this site for housing allocation is supported by a detailed site assessment report produced by a local MCNP team, at [Appendix 6](#).

Steeple Aston Parish Council approved the inclusion of this site allocation in the MCNP at a meeting of the parish council on 27th November 2023.

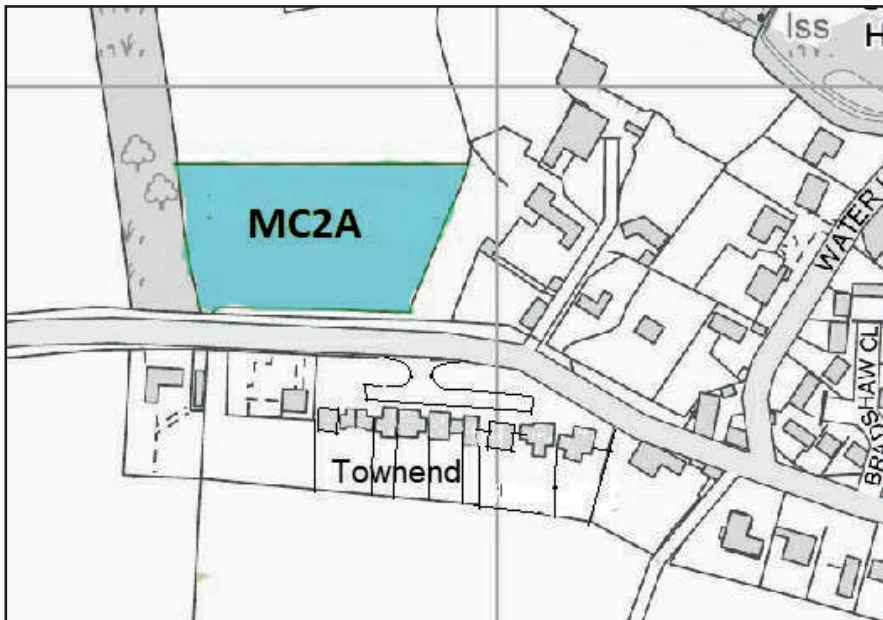


FIG. 6: SITE ALLOCATION MC2(A)

Steeple Aston, Land off South Side; site ref: SA8

POLICY MC2(B): STEEPLE ASTON SITE ALLOCATION: LAND OFF FENWAY

Site reference: SA6

Area to be developed: 1.55 ha

Number of dwellings: 10-15

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land off Fenway, as shown on Policy Map 6 and Fig.7, for residential development. Proposals will be supported, provided:

1. The scheme comprises between 10 and 15 dwellings of a mix of types that reflect the principles set out in Policy MC9(A) and (B);
2. The scheme shall include 6 single-storey dwellings;
3. The layout of the development reflects the following principles:
 - the site to be developed does not exceed the area shown in Fig.7
 - a single vehicular access from Fenway;
 - a separate pedestrian and cycle access from Coneygar Fields;
 - retention of the majority of the existing hedge fronting Fenway
 - creation of a public green space centrally on the site
 - minimising harm to the Conservation Area
 - compliance with other policies in this Plan and other Development Plan documents
4. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.
5. A Section 106 Agreement may be entered into with Cherwell DC which provides community benefits that have been pre-agreed with the parish council.

Rationale

The choice of this site for housing allocation is supported by a detailed site assessment report produced by a local MCNP team, at [Appendix 6](#). The report recognises that Cherwell District Council officers rejected a site, which includes this site, put forward in the 2017 HELAA. The proposed allocation is for a smaller site limited to the area shown.

Steeple Aston Parish Council approved the inclusion of this site allocation in the MCNP at a meeting of the parish council on 27th November 2023.

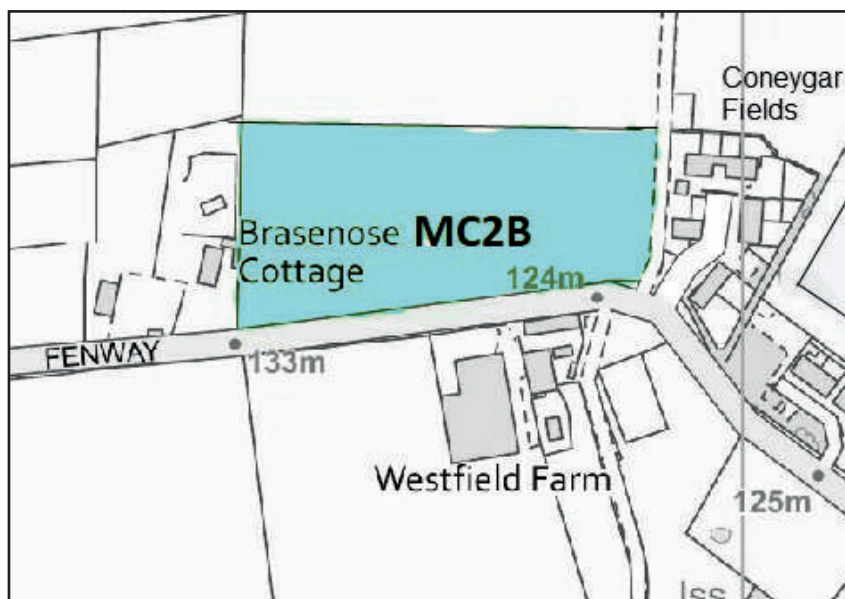


FIG. 7: SITE ALLOCATION MC2(B)

Steeple Aston, Land off Fenway; site ref: SA6

POLICY MC2(C): STEEPLE ASTON - RESERVE SITE ALLOCATION: LAND OFF GRANGE PARK

Site reference: SA3

Area to be developed: 1.5 ha

Number of dwellings: 10-15

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land off Grange Park as shown on Policy Map 6 and Fig. 8, as a reserve site for residential development. Proposals will be supported, provided:

1. The scheme comprises between 10 and 15 dwellings of a mix of types that reflect the principles set out in Policy MC9(A) and (B);
2. The scheme shall include at least 6 single-storey dwellings;
3. The layout of the development reflects the following:
 - the site to be developed does not exceed the area shown in Fig. 8
 - a single vehicular access from Grange Park as indicated on Fig. 8;
 - a separate pedestrian and cycle access from the Beeches footpath;
 - retention of all healthy trees on or adjacent to the site, and the entirety of the woodland area adjacent to the Beeches footpath;
 - compliance with other policies in this Plan and other Development Plan documents
4. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.
5. A Section 106 Agreement may be entered into with Cherwell DC which provides community benefits that have been pre-agreed with the parish council.
6. Construction should only commence in the second half of the Plan period, and then only if the allocated number of new homes (about 30) has not at that time already been met.

Rationale

The choice of this site for housing allocation is supported by a detailed site assessment report produced by a local MCNP team, at [Appendix 6](#).

Steeple Aston Parish Council approved the inclusion of this site allocation in the MCNP at a meeting of the parish council on 27th November 2023.

The report of the assessment team (Appendix 6) regards this site as *not suitable* but can be included if the sites which are the subject of policies MC2(A) and MC2(B) are unable to fulfil the aim of achieving up to 30 new dwellings. The allocation policy therefore includes a condition that the site should only be constructed in the second half of the Plan period (ie 2032 – 2040). This is in accordance with Cherwell District Council's definition of a "*developable site*" (see Appendix 6).

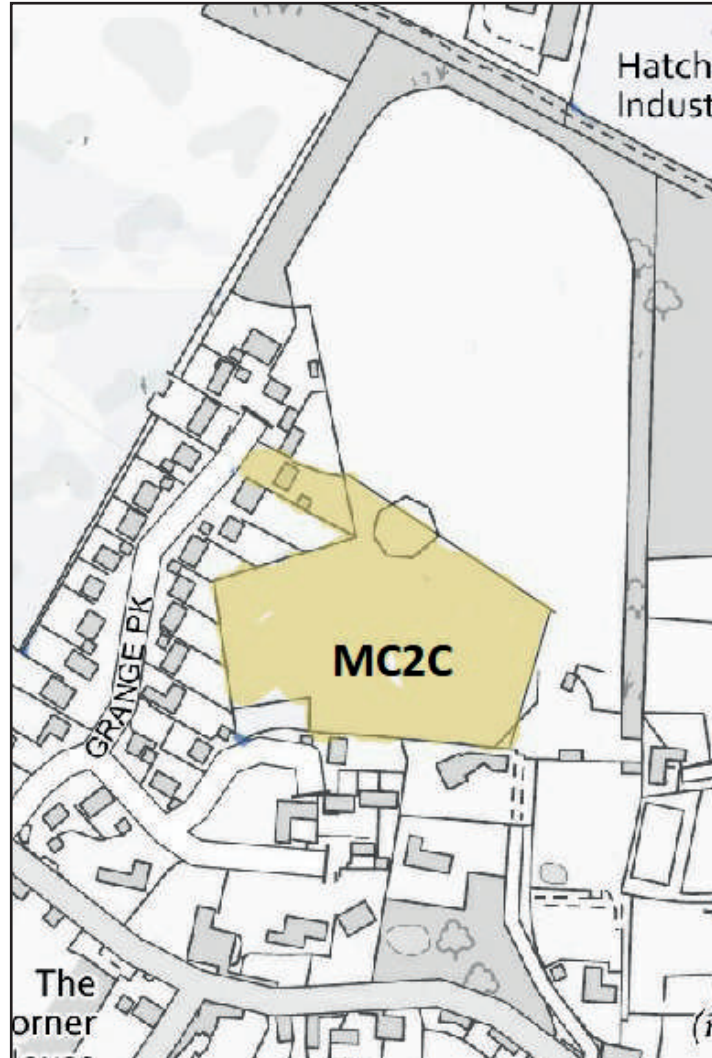


FIG. 8 SITE ALLOCATION MC2(C)

Steeple Aston, Land off Grange Park; Site ref: SA3

POLICY MC3(A): KIRTLINGTON SITE ALLOCATION: LAND OFF HEYFORD ROAD (SOUTH)

Site reference: KT7

Area to be developed: 1.06 ha

Number of dwellings: 10-14

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land off Heyford Road, as shown on Policy Map 2 and Fig. 9, for residential development. Proposals will be supported, provided:

1. The scheme comprises between 10 and 14 dwellings of a mix of types that reflect the principles set out in Policy MC9(A) and (B);
2. The scheme shall include at least 4 single-storey dwellings;
3. The layout of the development reflects the following principles:
 - the site to be developed does not exceed the area shown in Fig.9
 - a single vehicular and pedestrian access from Heyford Road;
 - minimising the impact on the heritage assets associated with the site
 - retention of all healthy frontage trees
 - compliance with other policies in this Plan and other Development Plan documents
4. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.
5. A Section 106 Agreement may be entered into with Cherwell DC which provides community benefits that have been pre-agreed with the parish council.

Rationale

The choice of this site for housing allocation is supported by a detailed site assessment report produced by a local MCNP team, at [Appendix 6](#).

Kirtlington Parish Council approved the inclusion of this site allocation in the MCNP at a meeting of the parish council on 27th November 2023.

This site is the subject of a planning application to Cherwell DC, ref 23/02471/F for 14 two-storey houses, which was determined at the Planning Committee meeting of 7/12/23. The proposed allocation remains as one of MCNP's choice of sites for new housing in Kirtlington.

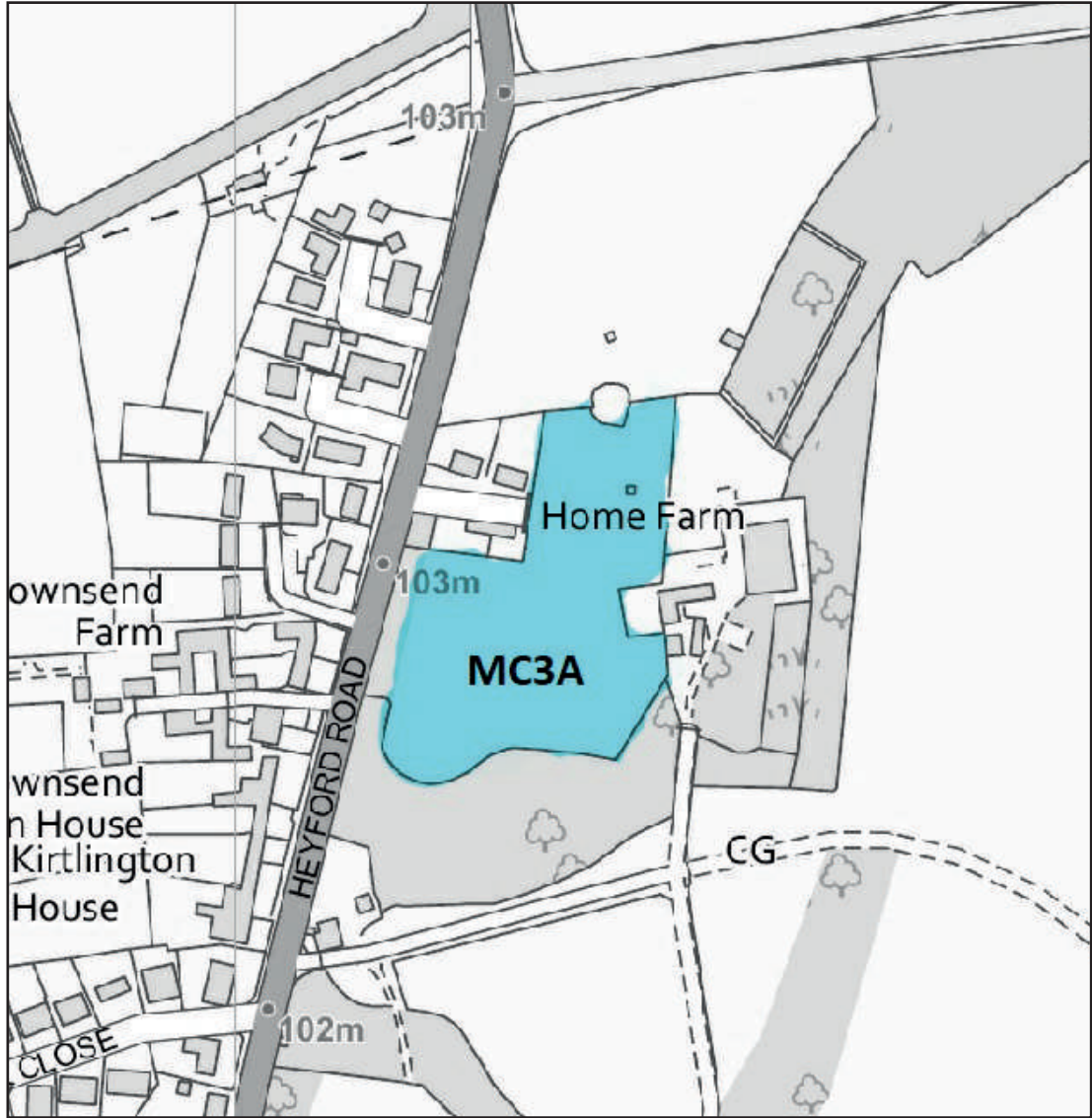


FIG. 9: SITE ALLOCATION MC3(A)

Kirtlington, Jersey Cottages (South), off Heyford Road; site ref: KT7

POLICY MC3(B): KIRTLINGTON SITE ALLOCATION: LAND OFF HEYFORD ROAD (NORTH)

Site reference: KT8

Area to be developed: 1.86 ha

Number of dwellings: up to a maximum of 21

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land off Heyford Road as shown on Policy Map 2 and Fig. 10, for residential development. Proposals will be supported, provided:

1. The scheme comprises between 15 and 21 dwellings of a mix of types that reflect the principles set out in Policy MC9(A) and (B);
2. The scheme shall include at least 8 single-storey dwellings;
3. The layout of the development reflects the following principles:
 - the site to be developed does not exceed the area shown in Fig.10
 - a single vehicular access from Heyford Road, with an emergency access only, if required, from Akeman Street;
 - a separate pedestrian and cycle access from Heyford Road, together with a pedestrian crossing;
 - retention of the majority of the stone wall separating the site from the roads;
 - retention of all healthy trees on site;
 - minimising the impact on the heritage assets associated with the site
 - creation of a green buffer zone between the development and Akeman Street
 - compliance with other policies in this Plan and other Development Plan documents
4. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.
5. A Section 106 Agreement may be entered into with Cherwell DC which provides community benefits that have been pre-agreed with the parish council.

Rationale

The choice of this site for housing allocation is supported by a detailed site assessment report produced by a local MCNP team, at [Appendix 6](#).

Kirtlington Parish Council approved the inclusion of this site allocation in the MCNP at a meeting of the parish council on 27th November 2023.

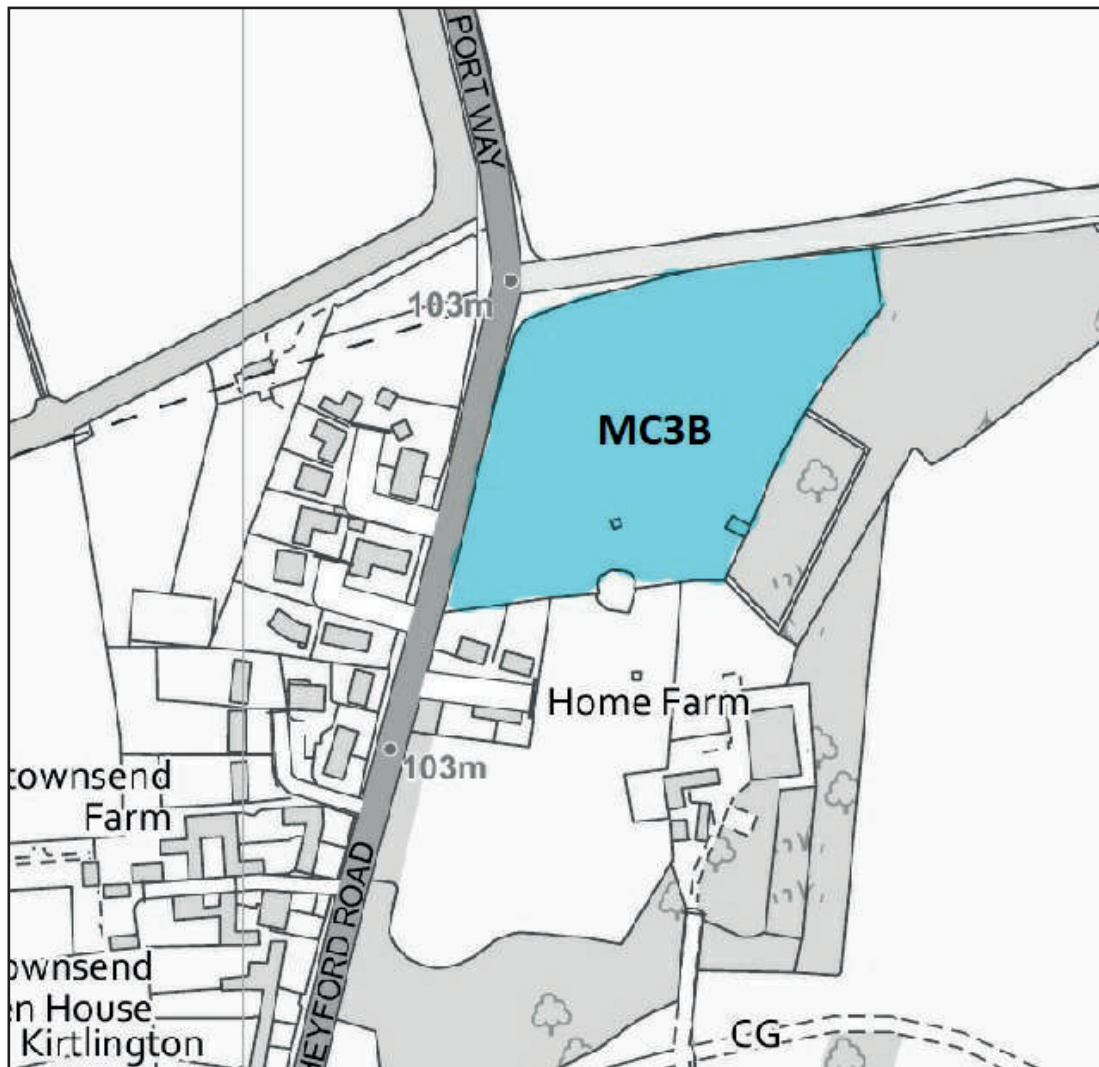


FIG. 10: SITE ALLOCATION MC3(B)

Kirtlington, Jersey Cottages (North), off Heyford Road; site ref: KT8

POLICY MC4: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

A. The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Mid-Cherwell Green Infrastructure Network in the designated Plan area, as shown on Policy Maps 8, and 8A-D, for the purposes of promoting:

- a net gain in biodiversity
- improved connectivity
- recognition and protection of wildlife corridors
- carbon capture
- natural flood management
- recreation and wellbeing
- reduced soil erosion, air pollution and noise.

The Network comprises a variety of green and blue infrastructure assets, including existing woodland, species rich grassland, hedgerows, and water bodies as well as public rights of way, amenity and recreation spaces.

B. Development proposals on land that lies within or immediately adjoining any part of the defined Network are required to have full regard to maintaining and improving the effectiveness of the Network, in particular by retaining and integrating existing green and blue infrastructure assets as far as possible, in the overall design of their landscaping schemes, layouts, access and public open space provision.

C. Proposals that will harm the effectiveness or connectivity of the Network will not be supported. Proposals that will lead to an extension, or improved effectiveness of the Network (including the delivery of one or more of the identified Biodiversity Net Gain Opportunities) will be supported, provided that they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the Development Plan.

D. For the purpose of calculating Biodiversity Net Gain requirements using DEFRA's latest metric, development proposals on land that lies within or immediately adjoining any part of the defined Network should anticipate achieving at least a medium distinctiveness multiplier score (see the penultimate paragraph of the supporting text).

E. Any proposal that can demonstrate that off-site compensation to mitigate for biodiversity loss is necessary must follow a sequential approach to its delivery. In the first instance, the gain should be delivered within or adjoining the Green Infrastructure Network where the land is suited in principle for delivering the necessary gain with multiple-benefit areas, as defined in the Policy Map. If this is impractical, then the gain should be delivered on land elsewhere within the same Parish before considering a location within an adjoining MCNP Parish that is suited in principle for delivering the necessary gain. Only if it can be shown that this is impractical may the gain be delivered on other land.

Rationale

The content of this Policy is supported by the Treescapes Opportunities and Benefits Report published separately as Appendix 5. Policy Maps 8 and 8A-D use data that is still being developed at the time of writing (November 2023). The reference to “LIDAR extracted features” in the Map keys is the best available information regarding the location of hedges and woodland in the MCNP area. However, work is already in hand to update this information with more accurate data, enabling the Maps to be “refreshed” in due course.

Not only are many green and blue assets of special value in their own right, but they are also either well-connected or capable of being better connected to function as green/habitat corridors and as more sustainable means for people to travel around the Parishes by foot or cycle.

The policy complements the more general requirements of the adopted Local Plan Policy ESD17 on green infrastructure by encouraging specific opportunities for woodland and other planting and management as part of landscape schemes to contribute to the multiple benefits of such assets. The policy also complements the emerging Local Plan 2040, which includes a policy with similar overall aims. Policy MC4, however, provides locally-specific detail and, because the designated area is large enough to do so, and because it contains an important area for biodiversity enhancement (the Cherwell Valley), also proposes that Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) should occur within the neighbourhood plan area.

The policy requires that all promoters of development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least not undermine its existing integrity connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network’s effectiveness. The Treescapes Report identifies the locations that are best suited for specific intervention. It is acknowledged that there are already a number of Countryside Stewardship Agreements in the designated neighbourhood area. The Parish Councils will seek to work with landowners to realise the opportunities identified in the Treescapes Report where possible avoiding the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Clauses D and E respond to the BNG provisions of the Environment Act 2021, which will become a statutory part of plan making and development management in November 2023, or April 2024 for small sites. The BNG Metric (currently in its 4.0 version and includes a Small Sites Metric which is a simplified version of the 4.0 Metric) will provide the means for applicants to calculate the baseline biodiversity value of the application site in determining the net gain requirement of their proposals. The Treescapes Report demonstrates that the existing Network has a biodiversity value of more than 6 units in most cases, or between 3 and 6 units.

Clause D anticipates that the distinctiveness multiplier score of the BNG Metric (from very low to very high) will be at least medium for proposals located within or adjoining the existing Network.

The policy sets out how the loss of biodiversity value will be addressed through a sequential approach. The new biodiversity net gain requirement of at least 10% (as set out by the Environment Act of 2021) should be delivered either onsite or within or adjoining the Network so that the benefits of development are accrued as close as possible. Attention should be paid to areas where multiple benefits can be achieved. However, it is accepted that the Network in the Parish may not be suited to delivering every type of required off-site gain. In such cases, Clause E allows for the gain to be delivered in adjoining parishes or, as a final resort, on land elsewhere.

POLICY MC5: LOCAL GAPS

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Local Gaps for Upper Heyford (LG1), Caulcott (LG2), Middleton Stoney (LG3) and Ardley (LG4, 5 and 6), as shown on Policy Map 9. Local Gaps are intended to prevent coalescence of any development proposals with existing settlements, to reduce the impact of any such development on existing settlements, and also to provide the opportunity for visual and acoustic screening.

Within a Local Gap, the land should remain predominantly in agricultural use, but it may also accommodate:

1. Development associated with agricultural use that conforms to other policies in this Plan and in the Cherwell Local Plan
2. proposals for economic activities that bring about rural diversification, providing that:
 - the development is operated as part of a viable rural business (including farm holding) and contributes to the viability of the holding;
 - it is not detrimental to the character and appearance of existing buildings and their setting within the landscape;
 - existing buildings are used in preference to new buildings or extensions;
 - utilities and other infrastructure are available or can be provided
 - and there is access by means of an existing road; no highway hazards are created or increased; and road improvements incompatible with the character of the surrounding area are not required.
3. Ecological mitigation and appropriate visual and acoustic screening arising from development outside the Local Gaps
4. Footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways

Any development which is proposed adjacent to the designated strategic area of Heyford Park (as defined by Local Plan policy Villages 5) should not give rise to coalescence with the other surrounding settlements, or impact adversely on those settlements, to ensure that their rural amenity, separate identity and character are maintained.

Rationale

This policy takes forward the ‘zone of non-coalescence’ at Heyford Park in Policy PD3 of the made MCNP but renames it as ‘Local Gaps’ and adds new Local Gaps identified by the review of the plan. The review continues to acknowledge the planned strategic development at Heyford Park, as set out in Local Plan Policy Villages 5. There is however a natural concern from the communities of surrounding villages that they should keep their discrete character, separated from Heyford Park by a significant gap of open countryside. Saved policy C15 (CDC Local Plan 1996) also addresses this issue of potential coalescence,

Continued.....

and makes specific reference to Upper Heyford Village. Precedents exist in Local Plans and in “made” Neighbourhood Plans for “green gaps”, “buffer zones” and “zones of non-coalescence”. In many cases these zones are more extensive than those proposed here.

The policy provides more specific local detail in support of this saved policy, with particular reference to the impact of the Heyford Park development on the nearby village of Upper Heyford to the west. The designated Local Gap for Upper Heyford village is in conformity with CDC’s saved policy C15, and provides local detail and clarity on the extent of land between Heyford Park and Upper Heyford village where potential coalescence could occur. The land identified does not include any of the Heyford Park strategic site; it is however within the Rousham Conservation Area (as shown in Fig.3 on p.11). The Zone is intended to include a minimum 20 metre buffer zone where necessary to protect Upper Heyford village from the visual intrusion of any development. This green buffer zone (including the reinstatement of the historic Portway footpath) has been agreed between the owners of Heyford Park and Upper Heyford Parish Council. Protection from coalescence here is further supported by designation in policy MC7 of adjacent land in this area as Local Green Space (sites UH4 and UH5).

The other settlements in parishes adjacent to the strategic development site of Heyford Park include the hamlet of Caulcott, and the villages and farms of Somerton and Ardley. This policy aims to ensure that the separate identity of each of these settlements is maintained in the event that consideration is being given for any development application that would extend the strategic site of Heyford Park. Caulcott is identified specifically with a defined Local Gap in view of the increasing likelihood of Heyford Park developing to the south of the existing strategic site.

Ardley has three Local Gaps identified, aiming to provide protection from possible encroaching commercial development to its north and to expansion of Heyford Park and further possible encroaching commercial development to its south. It is also intended to ensure that any future development at a possible new railway station does not lead to harmful coalescence with the village. Middleton Stoney, likewise, has a Local Gap identified in relation to potential development to its north.

Adopted Local Plan policy ESD13 states that all development should respect and enhance local landscape character, and policy MC6 seeks to apply locally specific detail to that CDC policy.

Detailed evidence in support of each of the new Local Gaps in this policy is provided by the separate evidence report ‘Proposed Local Green Spaces, Special Landscape Area, and Local Gaps Review’ of 2023 by Briarwood Landscape Architecture Consultants ([Appendix 4](#)).

The Local Gaps may include within their designated area Local Green Spaces, which are shown at a larger scale in their respective Policy Maps.

POLICY MC6: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the Local Green Spaces listed in Fig. 11 and as shown on the Policies Maps for each of the settlements.

Development on the designated Local Green Spaces which does not relate to or complement their importance to the community will only be considered acceptable in very special circumstances.

Rationale

This policy designates Local Green Spaces to protect them from inappropriate development. They comprise those designated by Policy PD7 of the made MCNP and 15 additional spaces identified during the process of reviewing the plan. All of them are considered to meet the tests of NPPF §102 to show they are cherished by the local community. The effect of the designation is to give the spaces the equivalent protection as national Green Belt policy, meaning that only very special circumstances will justify what would be deemed ‘inappropriate development’.

Each participating Parish Council and Parish Meeting made an assessment of local green spaces in or close to their settlements and proposed nominations accordingly. A common system of assessment was used to ensure that each nomination met the NPPF requirements, and in particular had sufficient evidence of being “special to the local community”. Detailed evidence in support of each of the additional Local Green Spaces is provided by the separate evidence report ‘Proposed Local Green Spaces, Special Landscape Area, and Local Gaps Review’ of 2023 by Briarwood Landscape Architecture Consultants ([Appendix 4](#)).

A number of potential nominations have been excluded on the basis of expert advice received. These include Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Registered Village Greens, which have been deemed to have a high level of protection from development that would not be improved by designation as Local Green Spaces. Some other potential nominations were excluded as they were deemed not to meet the requirements of NPPF para 102.

FIGURE 11: LIST OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES

*Items in the list marked * are retained from MCNP1 policy PD5; Proposed additional LGSS are shown in **bold***

Designation	Parish	Site Address
AF1*	Ardley with Fewcott	Ardley with Fewcott Playing Field
AF2*	Ardley with Fewcott	Old Quarry Field
AF3*	Ardley with Fewcott	The Knob Green
AF4*	Ardley with Fewcott	Fewcott Green
MA1*	Middle Aston	Middle Aston House front lawn
DT1*	Duns Tew	Duns Tew play area
SA1*	Steeple Aston	Robinson's Close, Fir Lane
SA2*	Steeple Aston	Allotments, Fir Lane
SA3*	Steeple Aston	Field adjacent to Paines Hill
SA4	Steeple Aston	Water Lane Community Orchard
LH1*	Lower Heyford	Meadow abutting Oxford Canal
LH2*	Lower Heyford	Paddock adjacent to Ivy Close in The Lane
LH3*	Lower Heyford (Caulcott)	Paddock on South Street, Caulcott
LH4	Lower Heyford	Paine's Field
LH5	Lower Heyford	Station Road Allotments
LH6	Lower Heyford	Wildlife sanctuary behind Churchyard
MS1*	Middleton Stoney	Children's Playground
MS2	Middleton Stoney	Ardley Road Allotments
KT1*	Kirtlington	The Allotments
KT2*	Kirtlington	Square green in the centre of Dashwood Mews

Continued.....

Designation	Parish	Site Address
KT3*	Kirtlington	The Recreation field, etc.
KT4*	Kirtlington	Small green within Gossway Fields' housing
KT5	Kirtlington	Kirtlington Community Orchard
SO1	Somerton	Ardley Road Children's Play Area
HP1	Heyford Park	Heyford Park Free School Specialisms Campus, Izzard Road
HP2	Heyford Park	Heyford Village Green adjacent Howard Road and Wellington Road
HP3	Heyford Park	Soden Road
HP4	Heyford Park	Brice Road Community Garden
HP5	Heyford Park	Lime Kiln Meadow
HP6	Heyford Park	Heyford Leys 1
HP7	Heyford Park	Heyford Leys 2
FT1*	Fritwell	Church View
FT2*	Fritwell	Recreation ground and play area
FT3	Fritwell	Covert Field
UH1*	Upper Heyford	The Common
UH2*	Upper Heyford	High Street allotments
UH3*	Upper Heyford	Meadow abutting Allen's Lock
UH4*	Upper Heyford	Upper Heyford Recreation Ground
UH5*	Upper Heyford	Poors Allotments, Somerton Road

POLICY MC7: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS, VISTAS AND SKYLINES

A: The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Important Views, Vistas and Skylines listed in Fig. 12 and as shown on Policy Maps 14 and 15 . Development proposals in the vicinity of an Important View or Vista, or of a scale and location that may affect a Skyline, must not cause significant harm, unless the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh that harm. Where development proposals may affect Important Views, Vistas or Skylines, the planning application must include an assessment of the significance of the views and the effect of the proposed development on them.

B: Within the Mid-Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area (see Policy Map 16), development proposals must also demonstrate that they would cause no significant harm to the important landscape character of the area.

Rationale

The underlying landform, historic landscape elements, and notable landmarks within the landscape make views an important characteristic within the Mid-Cherwell area. The Cherwell Valley provides opportunities for far-reaching and panoramic views from along the valley sides, and more intimate views from within the base of the valley. Along the Cherwell Valley the strong rural characteristics of the landscape are apparent, including the small-scale isolated settlements dispersed along the valley, most notable in views as a result of their churches standing tall above surrounding woodland. Views within the Cherwell Valley are more open from the eastern side of the valley than the west, which is more wooded and has slightly greater enclosure. Policy Map 14 shows the contours and highlights the sensitive skylines of high ground on each side of the Cherwell Valley that are to be protected.

There are important views recognised in Cherwell District Council's Conservation Area Appraisals for many of the villages, which are referenced in Fig. 12. Some of the land nominated as Local Green Spaces (policy MC5) plays a significant role in important views that are listed. Across the area the most prominent recurring landmarks are the churches at the many small villages within Mid-Cherwell, and structures at the former RAF Upper Heyford. The churches are often framed within the landscape by surrounding vegetation, and are often the first indicator of the location of a settlement. The views between church towers along the Cherwell Valley, and the setting of these views, are a particularly characteristic feature. See the Heritage and Character Assessment ([Appendix K](#)).

Policy MC7A identifies a series of key views, which are defined on the Policies Map. The policy requires applicants to show that they have understood the potential for their proposals to cause harm to a view and that options have been properly considered to avoid such an outcome. This need not prevent development but should enable careful siting, design and layout decisions to be made.

Detailed evidence in support of each of the new Views and Vistas is provided by the separate report 'Proposed Local Green Spaces, Special Landscape Area, and Local Gaps Review' of 2023 by Briarwood Landscape Architecture Consultants ([Appendix 4](#))

continued.....

Rationale continued

As regards Policy MC7B, it is recognised that Special Landscape Areas are a non-statutory designation. The designation by this Neighbourhood Plan is nevertheless of importance as one of several ways of drawing applicants' attention to the special characteristics of the Mid-Cherwell Valley, which are set out in Section 5 of Briarwood Landscape Architecture Consultants' report ([Appendix 4](#)).

An example of the type of development that this policy aims to control is that of proposals for solar arrays on farmland, where important views and vistas could be compromised.

FIGURE 12: LIST OF IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

Parish	Ref	Location of viewpoint	Direction of view	Source
Ardley w Fewcott	AFV1	Footpath off Somerton Road	NW towards Fritwell	Fewcott CAA 2008
Duns Tew	DTV1A	Hill Farm Lane	NW	CAA 2022
Duns Tew	DTV1B	Hill Farm Lane	NE	Parish Council
Duns Tew	DTV2	Former quarry, Duns Tew Rd	N	Parish Council
Duns Tew	DTV3	From RoW 195/2/10	NW towards Over Worton	Parish Council
Duns Tew	DTV4	From Daisy Hill bridleway	S	CAA 2022
Duns Tew	DTV5	From RoW 195/1/10	NE towards Deddington	Parish Council
Fritwell	FRV1	Raghouse Lane railway bridge	N	Parish Council
Fritwell	FRV2	Footpath 219/9	SE	Parish Council
Fritwell	FRV3	Park Street	E	Parish Council
Fritwell	FRV4	Footpath 349/2	NW towards Clifton	Parish Council
Kirtlington	KTV1	Kirtlington Road	W towards Northbrook	HCA map
Kirtlington	KTV2	Top of Quarry, Mill Lane	N	HCA map
Kirtlington	KTV3	Bletchingdon Road	S	HCA map
Kirtlington	KTV4	Woodstock Way footpath	W	HCA photo p.43
Middle Aston	MAV1	near Hatch End, Fir Lane	E	HCA map
Middle Aston	MAV2	near Grange Farm	E	Parish meeting
North Aston	NAV1	Village Green	N	HCA map
Lower Heyford	LHV1	Footpath 422/2/10	S towards Caulcott	HCA map
Lower Heyford	LHV2	Canal towpath	S towards village	HCA photo p.51
Lower Heyford	LHV3	Station Road	W towards church	HCA photo p.22
Lower Heyford	LHV4	Fields south of village	N	HCA photo p.51
Somerton	SOV1	Canal towpath	N	Parish Council
Somerton	SOV2	Souldern Road	NW towards Somerton Lock	Parish Council
Somerton	SOV3	Footpath 349/9	W to Mudgingwell Farm	Parish Council
Steeple Aston	SAV1	Fenway/ A4260	S	HCA map
Steeple Aston	SAV2	Shop corner, Paines Hill	N across village	HCA photo p.65
Steeple Aston	SAV3	Cow Lane	E towards Eyecatcher	HCA map
Steeple Aston	SAV4	Cow Lane	S towards Rousham	Parish Council
Upper Heyford	UHV1	West end of runway	W over valley	HCA photo p.72
Upper Heyford	UHV2	Somerton Road	W towards Steeple Aston	HCA photo p.72

POLICY MC8: LIGHT POLLUTION

The design of external and street lighting in all new development should minimise the risk of light spillage beyond the development site boundary. Proposals should ensure that the installation of all external lighting satisfies the following criteria:

- a) elevations of buildings, particularly roofs, should be designed to limit light spill;
- b) proposals should not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of surrounding occupiers;
- c) proposals should not have a significant adverse impact on the character of a village and its setting or of the wider countryside;
- d) proposals should not be detrimental to an area of nature conservation interest.
- e) particular care should be taken to avoid light pollution where the development is in a remote rural location, or where it might adversely affect the setting of the Oxford Canal.

This policy replaces policy PD6 of the made MCNP without amendment.

Rationale

CDC's Local Plan policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built Environment states that new development proposals should "limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation". This policy addresses a concern expressed by a significant number of people at local engagement meetings and in responses to questionnaires during the formation of the made MCNP. Commercial users at Heyford Park already present a challenge to this policy because their night-time requirements for lighting are substantial. The night-time glow of light above the former Base is already significant, and is increasing, with a detrimental effect on the sense of rurality in the neighbourhood area. The Community Action Plan (Section 4 of this document) can also attempt to address this. In the meantime, this policy controlling light pollution from new development aims to stop the problem from getting worse.

The participating Parish Councils and their communities hold strong views about the proliferation of street lighting in traditional villages where there is either none or a very limited amount at present. Such proliferation is seen as damaging to the character of these villages. Any proposals to include new street lighting should therefore be discussed with the appropriate Parish Council or Parish Meeting, if possible prior to submission of planning applications. This issue is also addressed in the Community Action Plan.

POLICY MC9: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

A. Proposals for residential development schemes of 10 or more dwellings will be required to deliver, unless otherwise agreed, the following mix of dwelling types:

- 38% as 1 or 2 bedroom homes
- 61% as 3 bedroom homes
- 1% as homes with 4 or more bedrooms

Smaller schemes should aim for a similar mix where possible.

B. Proposals for residential development schemes of 10 or more dwellings will be required to deliver at least 35% (or 30% at Heyford Park) of affordable homes within the scheme and, unless otherwise agreed, comprising the following mix:

- 60% social and affordable rent
- 40% affordable home ownership, comprising 25% as First Homes (at a minimum discount of 40%), 10% as shared ownership (at an equity share of 25%) and 5% as rent to buy.

C. Housing development will be favoured that is designed with features that enable residents to live there throughout different phases of their lives, and be capable of internal and external adaptation to help achieve this aim. Such housing should be built amongst other homes to mitigate isolation and loneliness. Homes should be constructed to Building Regulations Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standard (as amended) unless it can be demonstrated that this requirement would render a development unviable, supported by an independent viability assessment that demonstrates that the application of the standard would make the development unviable. In addition, where possible, dwellings which are on one level should be included, to meet the need for such accommodation, in particular, for older people and those with disabilities.

D. Applications to alter or extend an existing dwelling that would reduce the existing level of off-street parking provision will be resisted unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the amount of overall parking provision retained on site is satisfactory and will not exacerbate existing difficulties with on-street parking in the locality.

E. Development affecting existing traditional stone walls should identify them on proposals drawings, and wherever possible retain and/or repair them using traditional forms and materials.

F. Proposals for minor development schemes will be required to provide new or improve existing footpaths and cycle ways to ensure that residents of all ages and mobility have safe access to village amenities. Where new routes are proposed to meet this requirement, the development proposals shall contain full details.

G. Proposals for community-led and self-build housing will be especially welcomed.

Rationale

This policy comprises five clauses that set out a framework for the types of mix of housing that will be required in Mid Cherwell over the plan period. Clauses A and B have been derived from the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) report of 2023 produced for the plan review by AECOM. Clauses C and D are retained (with some modification of clause D) from the made MCNP (formerly policies PH3 and PH4 respectively).

The current total number of dwellings in the area is estimated to be 3,641 (Census 2021) which equates to 2.3 people per dwelling. A considerable number of these dwellings have been delivered at Heyford Park. The area has a tenure profile which is dominated by people who own their own homes (68%), which is a slightly larger proportion than Cherwell (65%) and the national average (61%). The area has a private rental sector which is broadly similar in size to the District and national average, but has a smaller socially rented sector. Between 2011 and 2021, the private rental sector only grew by 2%. However, there was significant growth in the socially rented sector and shared ownership. Across the area, owner occupation remains the most popular tenure option. Heyford Park displays a more unique tenure profile, with a higher proportion of shared ownership and private rental homes. As such this development can be seen as helpfully diversifying the mix of existing tenures and widening options for local people.

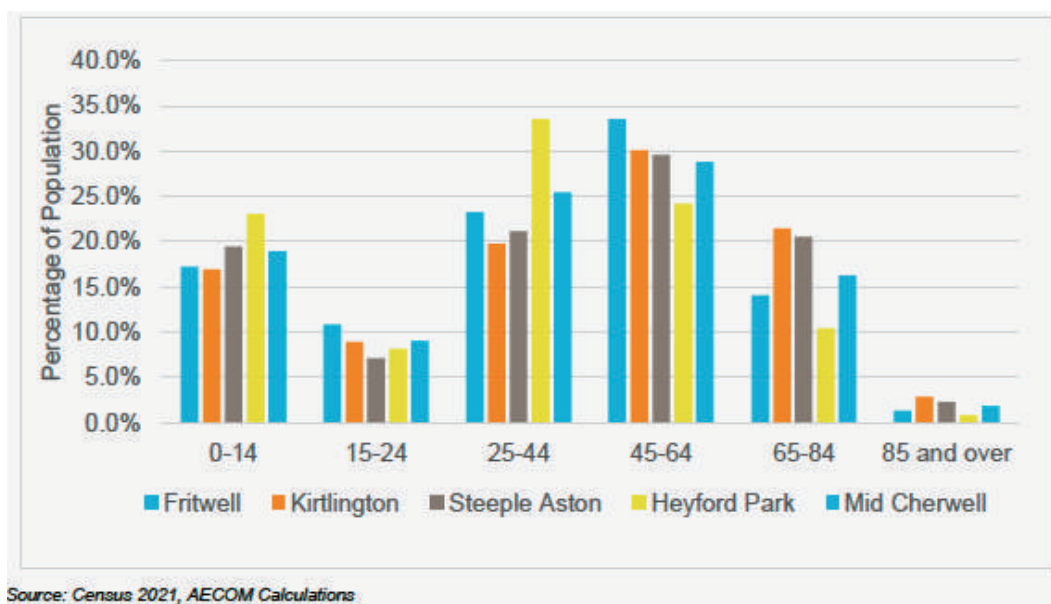


FIG 13: AGE STRUCTURE IN SUB AREAS, 2021 (HNA, AECOM, 2023)

Clause A sets out the required mix of new housing types to achieve a healthier range in the housing stock of the area. The HNA proposes that in order to diversify its housing mix, the MCNP Review should primarily focus on the delivery of 3-bedroom homes, and also promote the delivery of smaller 1/2 bedroom homes (see Fig X below). The result of this calculation is likely in response to the high proportion of families in the area, noting the importance of delivering housing of diverse types and sizes which is financially within reach of those in the population who are in more acute need. With the size mix of new homes at Heyford Park, there has been a considerable number of 4+ bedroom homes delivered generally following the pattern of development seen across the designated neighbourhood area.

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Number of bedrooms	Current mix (2011)	Suggested mix (2040)	Balance of new housing to reach suggested mix
1	3.5%	9.0%	24.8%
2	24.0%	21.9%	13.1%
3	37.8%	44.7%	61.1%
4+	24.0%	18.8%	1.0%

Source: AECOM Calculations

FIG 14: PROPOSED DWELLING SIZE MIX TO 2040 FOR MID CHERWELL (HNA, AECOM, 2023)

Clause B establishes the affordable housing requirements of the area over the plan period. The HNA notes that the median house price in Mid Cherwell is £412,500, having grown by 20% since 2012 (see Fig X below). The price of lowest quartile (25%) grew at a faster rate of 31% to a current average of £325,000. There is a clear issue regarding the affordability of housing in Mid Cherwell, with the median house price requiring an income of £106,071, which is 82% higher than the average income. Moreover, both entry level and new build homes are generally out of reach for the average earning household.

Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Growth
Detached	£385K	£440K	£434K	£450K	£472K	£478K	£471K	£460K	£523K	£523K	35.7%
Semi-detached	£310K	£265k	£300K	£300k	£288K	£326K	£336K	£318K	£320K	£358K	15.3%
Terraced	£230K	£250K	£277K	£325K	£270K	£306K	£294K	£192K	£387K	£325K	41.3%
Flats	£179K	£218K	£375K	£201K	£150K	£231K	£122K	-	£350K	£185K	3.5%
All Types	£345K	£315K	£368K	£377K	£330K	£375K	£410K	£360K	£472K	£412K	19.6%

Source: Land Registry PPD

FIG 15: MEDIAN HOUSE PRICES BY TYPE IN MID CHERWELL, 2012-2021 (HNA, AECOM, 2023)

Given the expectation of a further expansion of Heyford Park, compared with the progress on this site to date, it could be reasonably expected that Mid Cherwell will continue to see significant housing growth over the Local Plan period. Assuming the Local Plan target of 35% affordable housing is applied to any future development in this area, it would be expected that a large portion of the affordable housing need and demand identified in this study would be met. The HNA therefore proposes a tenure mix of 60% affordable rented and 40% affordable ownership accommodation, taking account of the required 25% First Homes. This reflects the particularly acute levels of unaffordability in the area, and an increase in the supply of social/affordable rental homes would respond to the most acute affordability pressures.

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Clause C retains Policy PH3 of the made MCNP. The supporting text to that policy noted that many residents are content to continue into retirement in their current homes; others seek nearby alternative housing for those who wish to downsize and for surviving partners. The stock of smaller houses has been much reduced over the last few years. Recognising the relatively older profile of the population, Hamptons note that one dwelling type that is significantly under-supplied is bungalows. Downsizing from the Mid-Cherwell villages and other rural areas drives demand for bungalows, particularly in nearby towns with good pedestrian access to services and facilities, such as Deddington and Bicester. Likewise, Heyford Park would likely be a settlement large enough to offer the range of services and facilities needed by older people within walking distance, and as such there would probably be a very strong demand for the existing bungalows, and for possible future ones here as well.

There remains a need for a two-bedroom, high specification dwelling, predominantly single storey and with a modest garden. The 'Lifetime Homes' standard (broadly equivalent to the Building Regulation M4(2) category homes) can offer benefits to everyone. Through design features that increase ease of access such as level thresholds and wider doorways, lit and covered entrance ways and good accessibility throughout the home, most people find it easier to enter, exit and move around in their properties without physical barriers such as steps and narrow areas. The Mid Cherwell HNA provides evidence which demonstrates that there is a need for Building Regulation M4(2) category homes in the designated neighbourhood area. The policy therefore makes this a requirement for all new homes, but provides flexibility where a financial appraisal proves there is a viability issue so that the requirement for all properties to meet Regulation M4(2) can be relaxed.

Clause D: many of the villages in the neighbourhood plan area suffer from parking congestion, because so few traditional dwellings have dedicated parking spaces or garages and so parking occurs at the roadside in locations which were never intended for such a use. This causes well-documented inconvenience to pedestrians and other drivers, including local bus services. This policy supports Local Plan 2031 policy ESD15. Reference should also be made to CDC's emerging Design Guide SPD 2017.

Clause E is an important contribution to maintaining the rural character of the MCNP area. Stone walls as boundaries to fields and properties are a characteristic and traditional feature of the neighbourhood. There is strong community support for their retention and protection. Some of these walls are in a poor state of repair, and others have virtually disappeared from view in undergrowth. This policy encourages their repair and re-emergence where the opportunity to do so arises.

Clause F is required in locations where village roads and lanes with grass verges, or those with none, at locations where small-scale development might occur, provide insufficient safe access for pedestrians.

Clause G applies in particular to the Site Allocation Policies in this Plan, as methods of delivering housing which can address the particular features of housing need that are articulated in the HNA and in this rationale. However, self-build is also encouraged on sites where infill or windfall schemes may become possible during the Plan period.

POLICY MC10: SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & TRAFFIC CALMING

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Active Travel Network, as shown on Policy Maps 8 and 8A-D, for the purpose of supporting healthy and safe active travel opportunities in the Parishes.

B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should sustain and, where practicable, enhance the functionality of the network by virtue of their layout, means of access and landscape treatment.

C. Proposals that will cause harm to the functioning or connectivity of the network will not be supported.

D. Traffic Calming: applications for development of 10 or more dwellings, and applications for other uses which are likely to generate significant traffic movement, are required to contribute financially to the creation of traffic calming schemes in the villages most affected by the proposals. This may be achieved either by planning conditions, or by inclusion within a S.106 agreement. The traffic calming schemes should take account of the principles set out in the Village Traffic Mitigation report produced by Hamilton-Baillee Associates ([Appendix M](#)).

Rationale

The policy maps identify the Active Travel Network, walking and cycling routes through and between the main village settlements connecting them with the countryside and neighbouring settlements. The aim is to raise awareness of the routes to encourage safe and convenient use, and to identify future opportunities to improve their connectivity. This allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. 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 and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that could undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

As regards Clause D, the aim is to ensure that mitigation of increased traffic through MCNP villages can be put in place, to supplement funds that have been set aside by Oxfordshire County Council from historic S.106 agreements relating to the development of Heyford Park and other local developments. MCNP Forum commissioned Hamilton-Baillee Associates in 2016 to produce ideas and proposals for traffic calming in the MCNP area, and the report was presented as part of the Evidence Base for the made plan. Traffic calming schemes now proposed should therefore take these ideas into account, together with other reports on best practice for traffic mitigation in villages. Place-making is amongst the key themes, putting emphasis on “re-claiming” village spaces that are currently dominated by traffic, for people to instead walk and cycle – now referred to as active travel.

A major community objective is to maintain the rural character of the neighbourhood. There are numbers of roads in the NP area that are either single-track or where passing is difficult. These rural lanes are an essential part of the character of the neighbourhood and are unsuited to increasing volumes of traffic that new development will generate. Their protection is a key part of this policy. Given the scale of growth in both residential and commercial traffic it is critical that effective plans are put in place to route traffic entering or leaving the neighbourhood along designated routes, minimizing disruption to the rural road network and communities. Traffic and transport issues are also addressed in the Community Action Plan in Section 4.

POLICY MC11: LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Continued commercial use of premises providing local employment within the neighbourhood area or otherwise benefiting the local economy will be encouraged. Proposals for the establishment of new small businesses will be considered favourably where they:

- a) provide diverse employment opportunities for people living in the neighbourhood area or otherwise benefit the local economy, or enhance agricultural production;
- b) do not have an adverse affect on the surrounding built, natural or historic environment that is not clearly outweighed by the economic benefits of the development;
- c) are unlikely to generate a volume of goods traffic that would have a significantly harmful effect on road safety or congestion or cause unacceptable noise and disturbance for local residents or to the rural environment and would not adversely affect on-street residential parking.

Rationale

This policy is retained from the made MCNP (formerly Policy PC1) without amendment, as employment opportunities within the Plan area continue to be very limited. The adopted Cherwell Local Plan states that less than a quarter of the rural population of Cherwell work within 5km of home. To help the neighbourhood become more sustainable and minimize traffic congestion it is proposed that all efforts be made to encourage the development of work opportunities and apprenticeships for local people in the neighbourhood area.

The encouragement of applications to establish new businesses that are unlikely to generate goods traffic includes support for working from home, so long as this does not in itself exacerbate parking or related problems for neighbours. The availability of fast broadband services is a factor in the success or otherwise of this policy.

POLICY MC12: HEALTH FACILITY

A health facility at Heyford Park serving the residents of Heyford Park and those residents within the NP area most suitably served by such a new service, will be supported. A new-build health facility at Heyford Park would also be supported if combined with other appropriate services or uses, such as community facilities or private dentistry, to increase viability.

Rationale

This policy is retained from the made MCNP (formerly Policy PC2) without amendment. The following rationale however has been updated.

The population of the NP area has grown from 7,221 in 2011 to 8,233 in 2021, an increase of 14%. The position on Primary Care for the residents of the NP area has significantly worsened since 2018 given the increased demand from the substantial number of new housing developments coming on stream, a shortage of NHS staff post pandemic, and the national shortage of newly qualified doctors choosing to work in primary care. Many GPs are also choosing to only work part time, preferring to apply for 3 days a week posts.

Many of the residents of the NP area are registered for Primary Care with Deddington Health Centre with most other residents registering at one of the three GP practices in Bicester. Residents do have the ability to register at any local practice. Although all 7 practices bordering the neighbourhood plan area say they are currently willing to accept new patients and are open for new registrations, spare capacity may be illusory as several villages responding to our survey complained of 7 day waits to make an appointment.

This may just reflect a temporary problem post pandemic or be an indicator that they are all overstretched and suffering from the current national shortage of doctors wishing to work in primary care. For example, Deddington Health Centre which is only a mile or so outside the MCNP boundary currently has a list size of 12,068 (October 2022) which is a significant increase of circa 25% in the last 4 years. This resulted in the practice having to close to any new registrations in June 2022 for a six-month period, re-opening for new patients in January 2023.

The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) is currently investigating the growth potential for existing clinics and is planning to report on this in December 2023. Their preference is for larger clinics serving c.10,000 / 20,000 patients. With the loss of one Surgery in Bicester and growth outside the neighbourhood plan area existing clinics are approaching capacity.

Local Plan policy Villages 5 includes the following reference to Health: A neighbourhood centre or hub should be established at the heart of the settlement to comprise a community hall, place of worship, shops, public house, restaurant, and social and health care facilities. Local Plan policy BSC8 also supports this policy.

Continued.....

There is ample scope for the creation of additional GP practices in the area covered by the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, particularly in respect of Heyford Park, which has the virtue of potentially offering space for a significant improvement in primary and community care facilities in the neighbourhood.

The proposed new Health facility would be expected to eventually serve 9-10,000 people living in Upper Heyford parish and Heyford Park by 2031. Oxford Health Foundation Trust which provides community health services may also be attracted to using the facility to base some local community health services.

This policy allows for the possibility of supplementing Heyford Park residents with a further 3,882 people from other parishes within three miles of the location of the new health facility, who might choose to register there rather than travelling outside the area. Public transport links in the area are not good, and increased use of private cars to reach existing health centres is unsustainable.

Re-registration would not necessarily create problems for other current centres serving the area as even with the already planned new developments, there are more than enough patients to go around. CDC's SPD on Community Infrastructure Levy (adopted February 2018) uses a threshold of 8,000 new residents to trigger a requirement for developer contributions towards an on-site GP service.

Some limited progress in achieving these aims has been achieved in the first 4 years of the neighbourhood plan. Firstly, the Masterplan for Heyford Park adopted and agreed by Cherwell DC in 2020 clearly indicates a designated site for the provision of a new healthcare centre close to the Village Centre. This has also been complemented by a site being chosen for 60-person Close Care dwellings close by.

Secondly, a new Private Dental Practice moved to the Village Centre and opened in 2022. Thirdly the Heyford Park Pharmacy operated by Minerva Clinical Services opened in January 2023 offering a dispensing service for HP residents, wherever they are registered for primary care, who can opt to pick up their prescriptions items and buy over the counter medicines and healthcare products closer to home.

Minerva Clinical Services has also linked up with the Alchester Medical Group in Bicester to provide local consulting rooms for the use of Heyford Park residents registered with the practice and wishing to see a doctor or nurse from the practice at a more convenient local facility. This move was supported by OCCG in the expectation that once numbers of Heyford Park/ MCNP residents using the consulting service at the new pharmacy increased to around 4,500 – 5,000 permission would be given for Alchester Medical Group to develop a new Branch Surgery on land set aside in the Heyford Park Masterplan for use as a health centre. The new centre would developed and managed by the Alchester Medical Group.

POLICY MC13: NEW CEMETERY

Subject to the suitability of the site having regard to Policy Villages 5 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2031 and other development plan policies, an application for the provision of a civil cemetery at Heyford Park, will be supported. The cemetery to be owned and managed, following best practice in the sector and guidance from the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management), by Heyford Park Parish Council.

Rationale

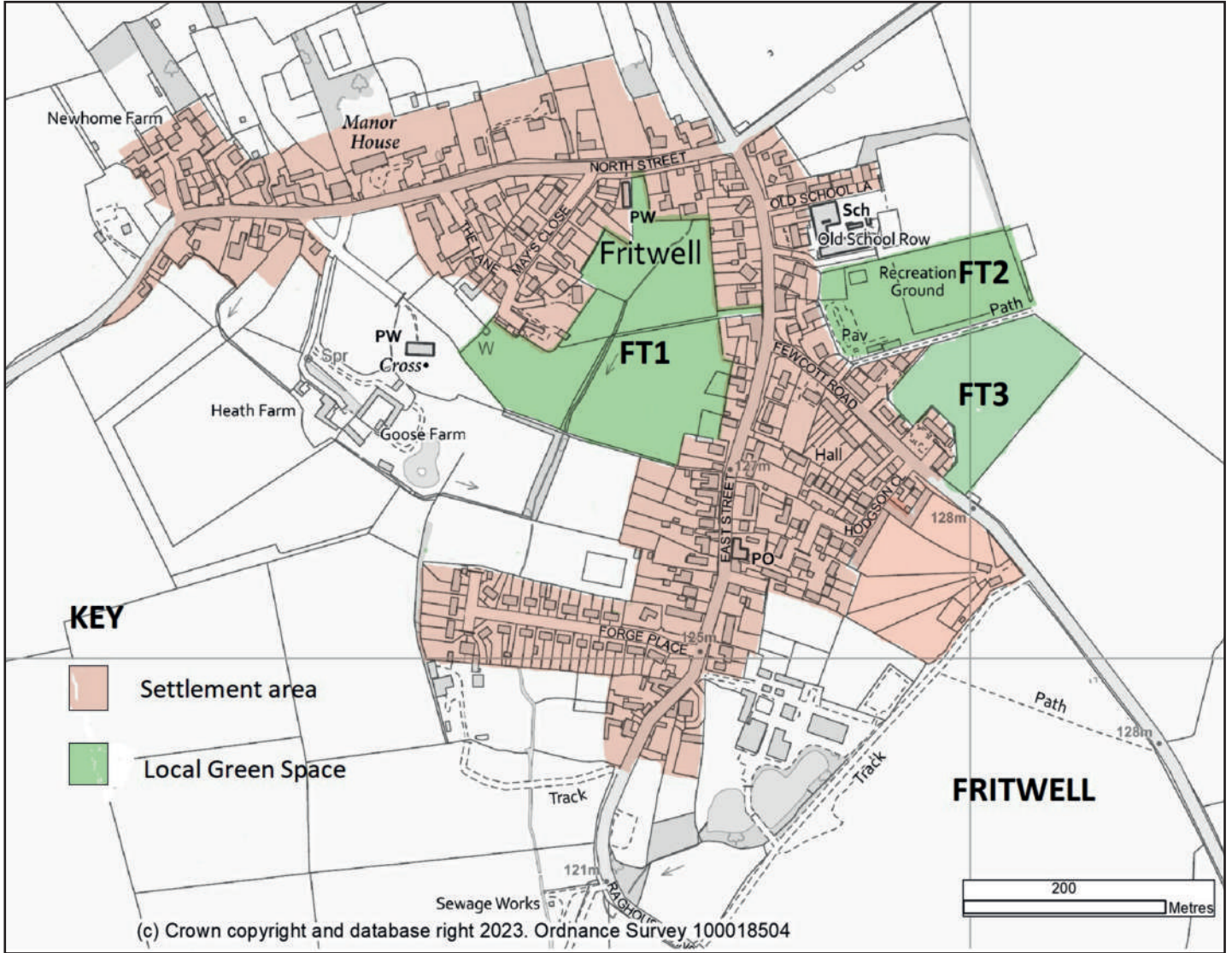
This policy is modified from the made MCNP Policy PC3. Cemetery space within the MCNP area remains in need of forward planning as a good proportion of cemeteries are nearing capacity. For example, Upper Heyford village cemetery will only be able to sustain its own small village community (158 homes) but not an emerging community of up to 8,000 residents at Heyford Park. Therefore, it is critical for Heyford Park to provide its own cemetery/green burial provision. A cemetery is as vital to a community as are shops, community halls and recreation spaces.

Heyford Park offers potential within the strategic site of Policy Villages 5 for a cemetery site to be found. Sites adjacent or close to the strategic site might also be considered suitable.

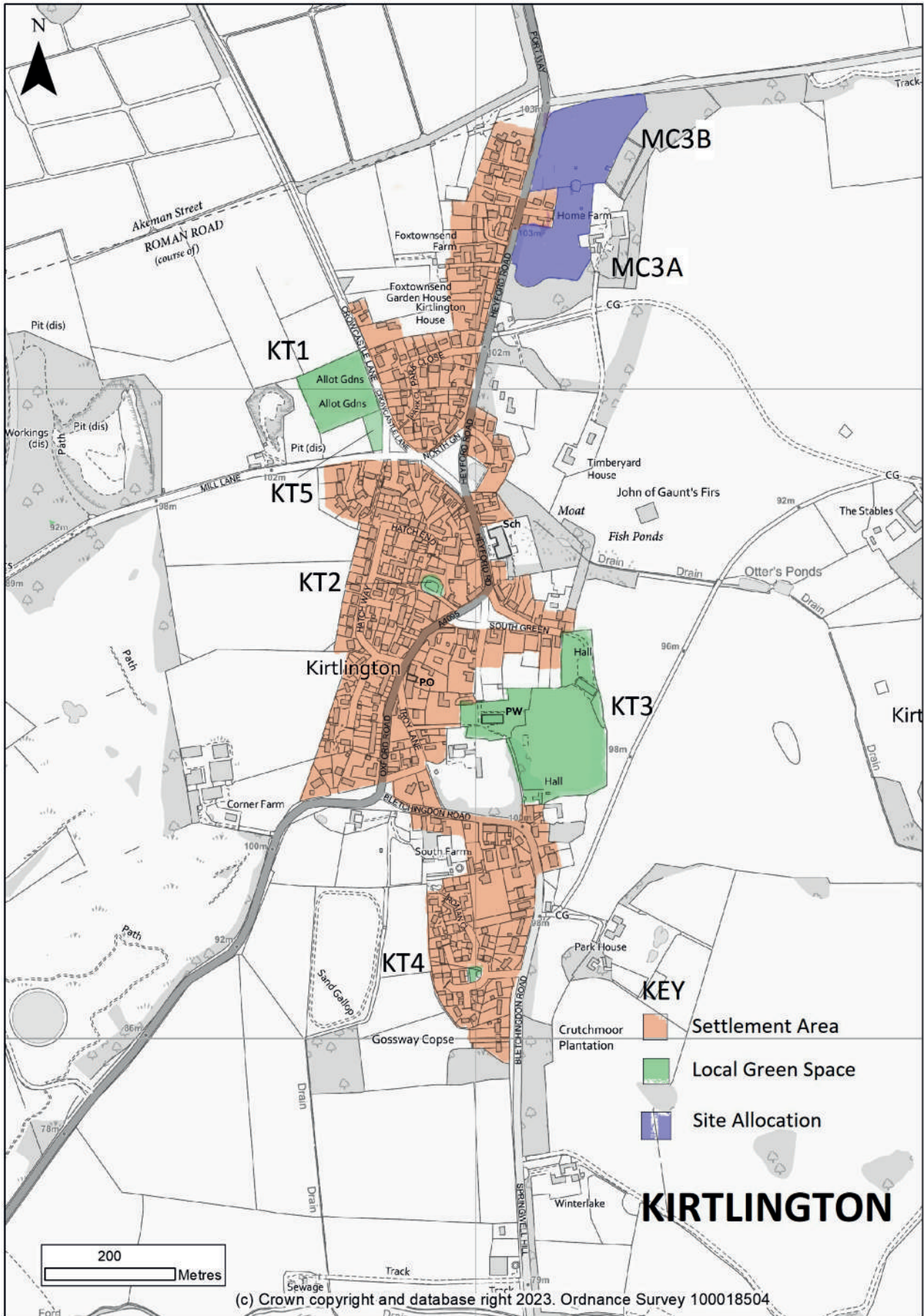
POLICY MAPS

LIST OF POLICY MAPS

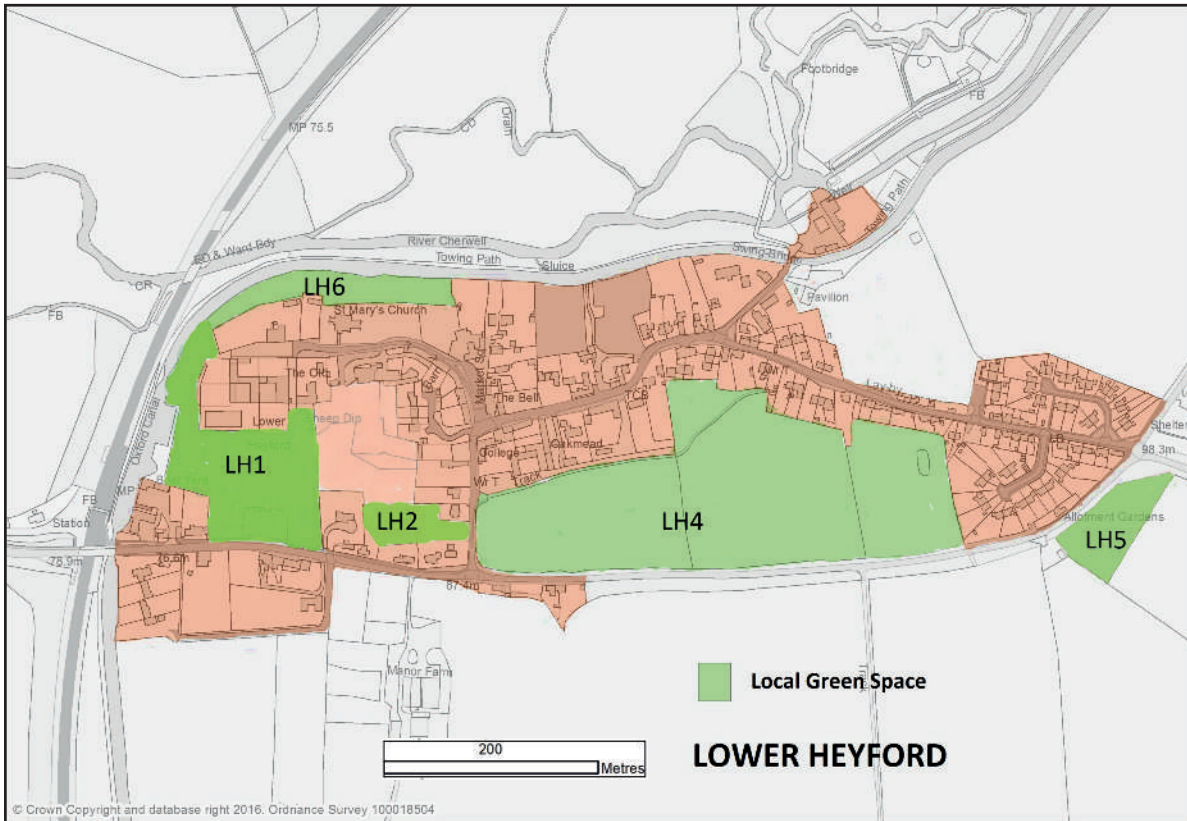
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POLICY MAP 1: FRITWELL

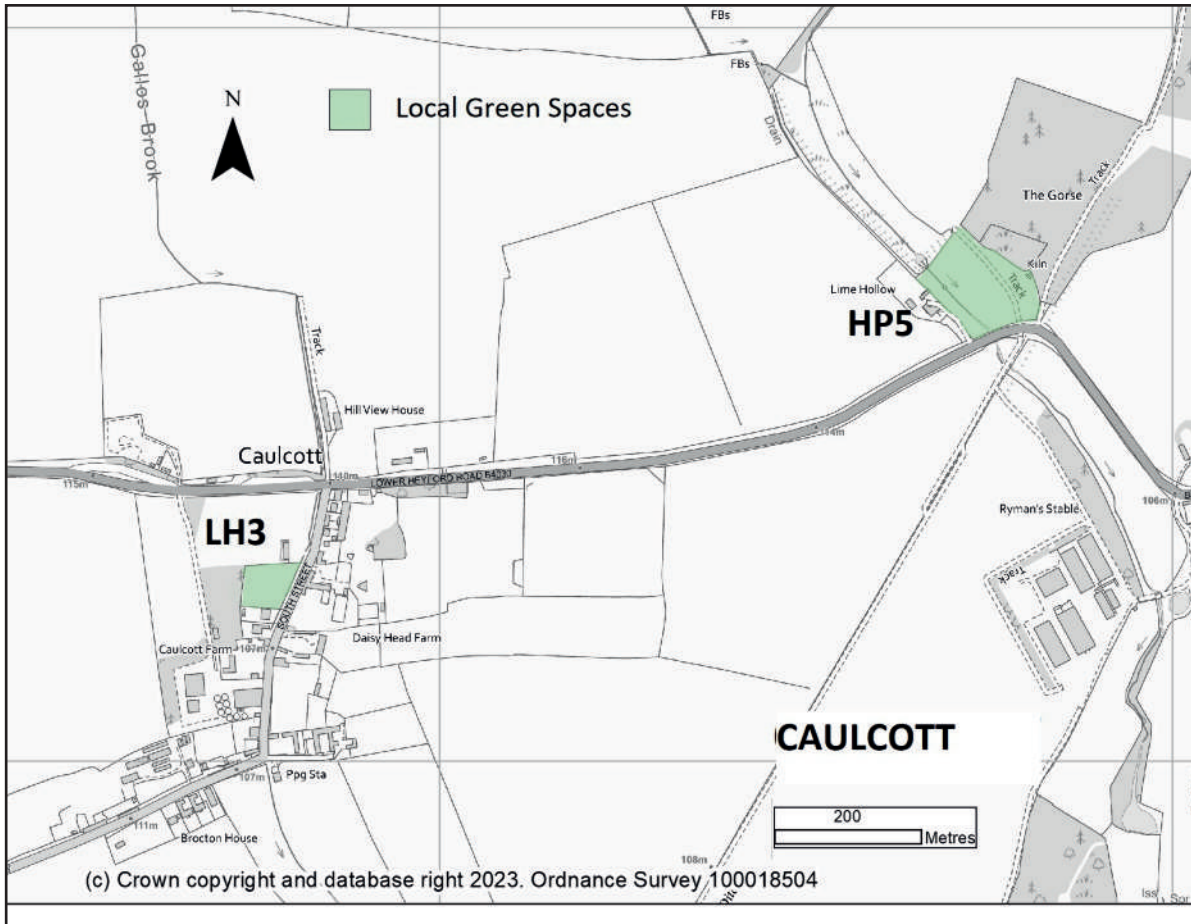


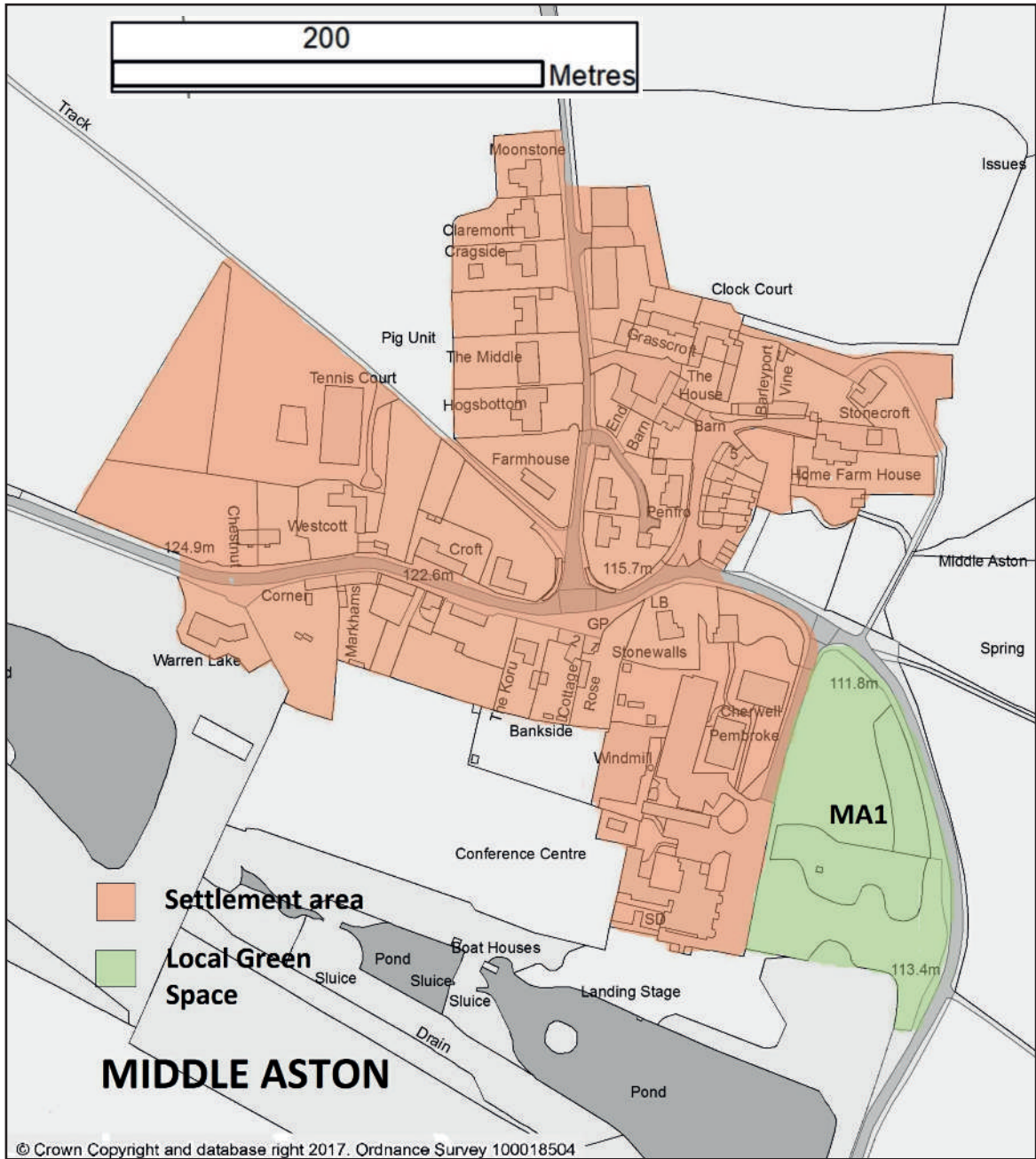
POLICY MAP 2: KIRTLINGTON



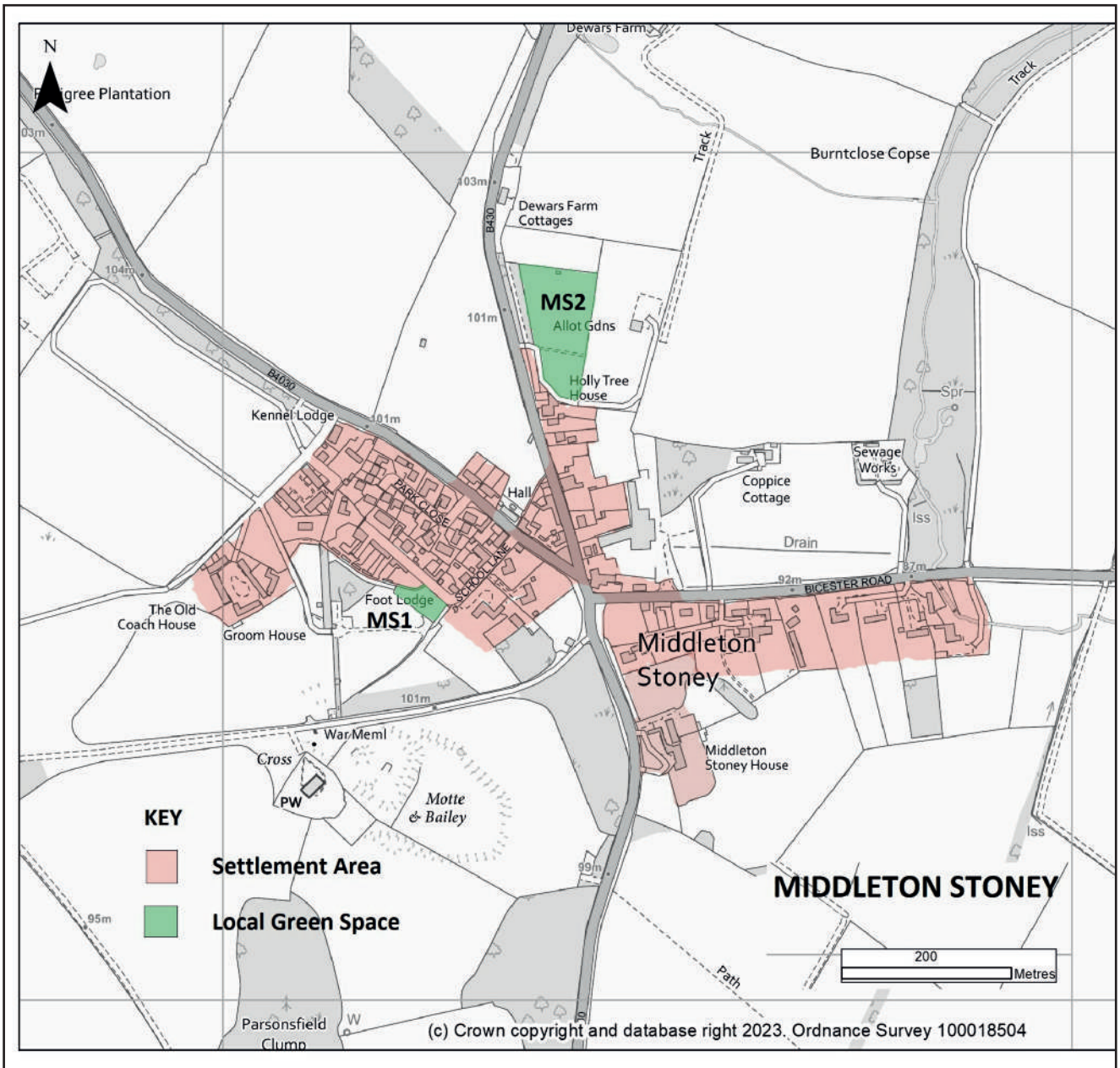
POLICY MAPS 3A: LOWER HEYFORD (ABOVE) AND 3B: CAULCOTT (BELOW)

See also Policy Map 9



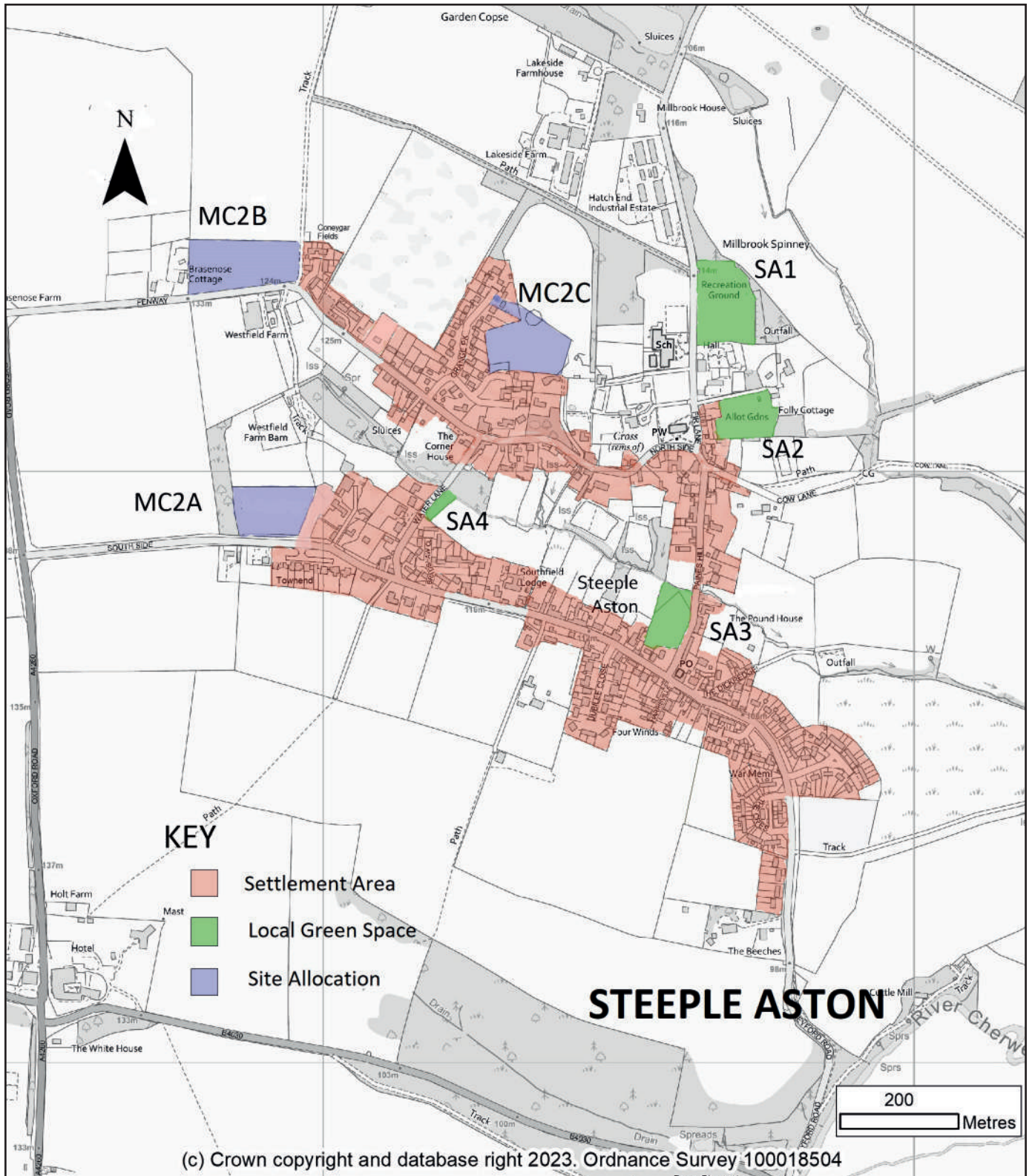


POLICY MAP 4: MIDDLE ASTON

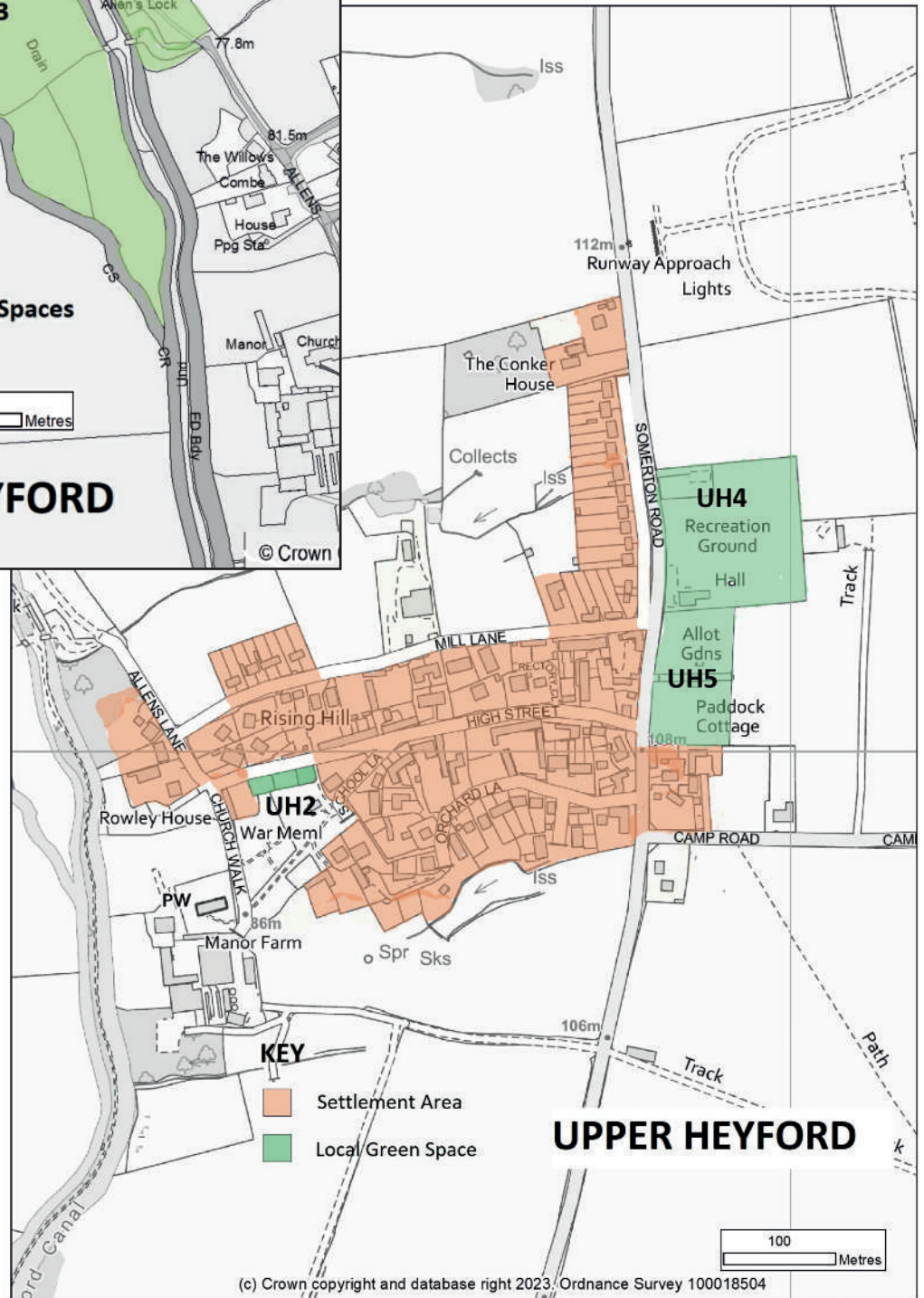
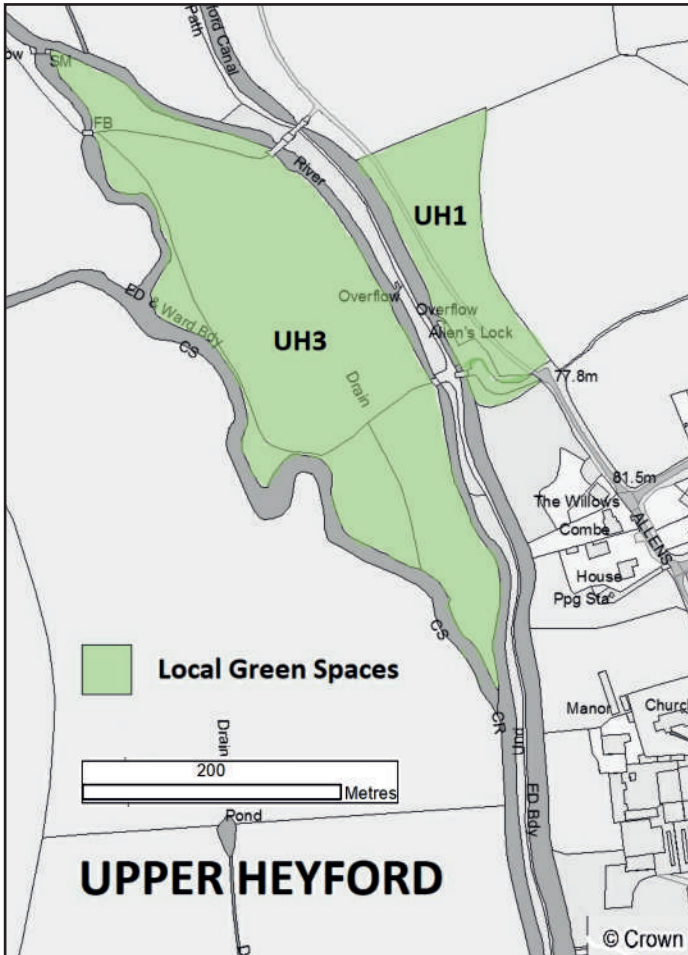


POLICY MAP 5: MIDDLETON STONEY

See also Policy Map 9

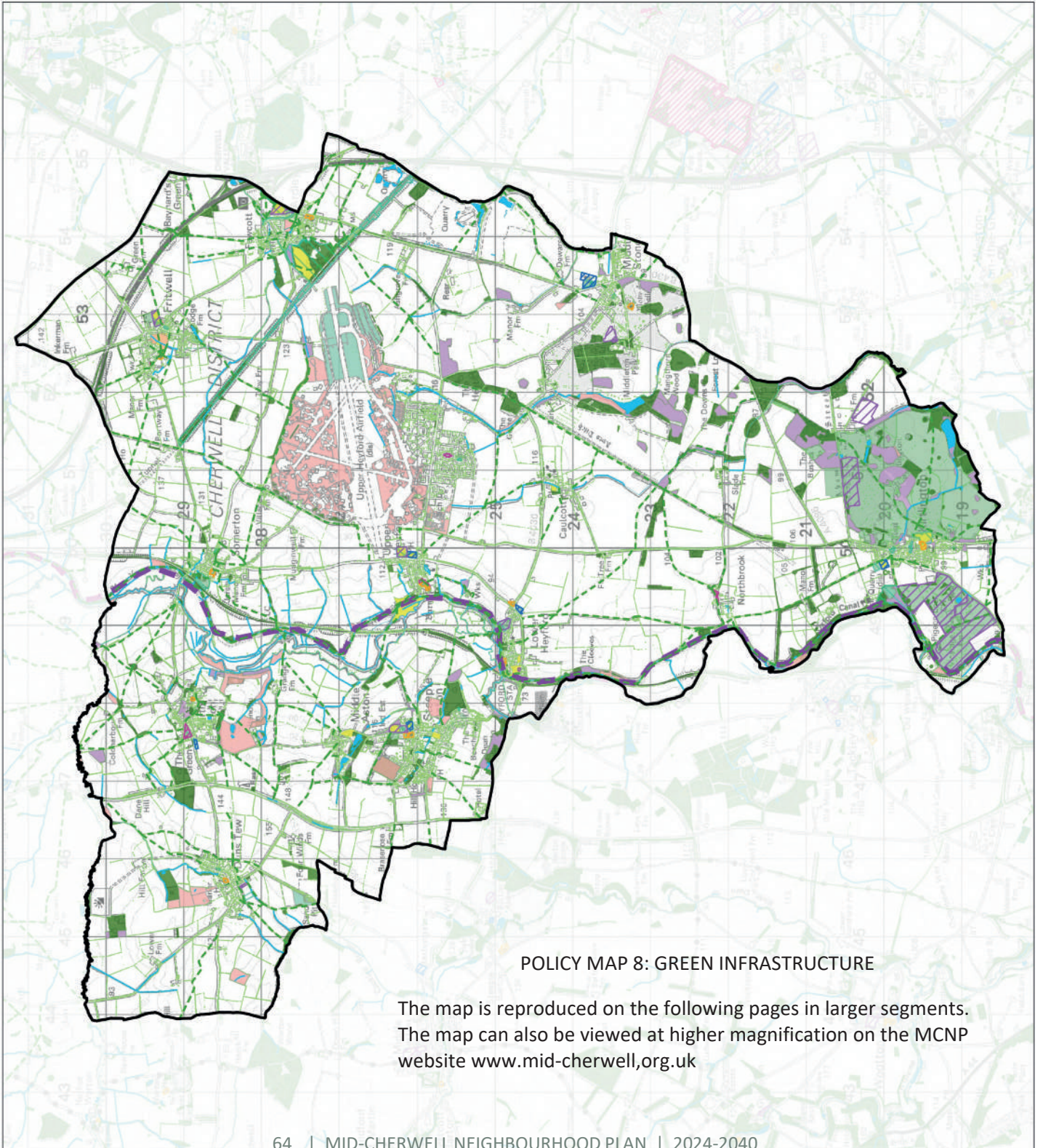


POLICY MAP 6: STEEPLE ASTON



POLICY MAP 7: UPPER HEYFORD (TWO PARTS)

See also Policy Map 9



KEY

- Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
- Public Right of Way
- Oxford Canal Trail
- Lakes, Ponds, Streams and Rivers
- OS OpenMap Local Water – Surface Line
- OS OpenMap Local Water – Surface Line
- OS Open GreenSpace
- Allotments or Community Growing Spaces
- Cemetery & Religious Grounds
- Public Park or Garden
- Golf Course, Bowling Green, Playing Field, Tennis Court & Other Sports Facility
- Cherwell District Council Designations
- Cherwell Local Policies Open Space (Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy)
- Existing Green Space (as per the Adopted Local Plan Policies Map July 2016)
- Neighbourhood Development Plans
- Local Green Spaces
- Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) S41 Habitats
- Lowland Calcareous Grassland
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
- Possible Priority Grassland Habitat
- Wet Woodland
- Woodland and Surface Features
- OS OpenMap Local Woodland
- Lider Extracted Features

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2 kilometres

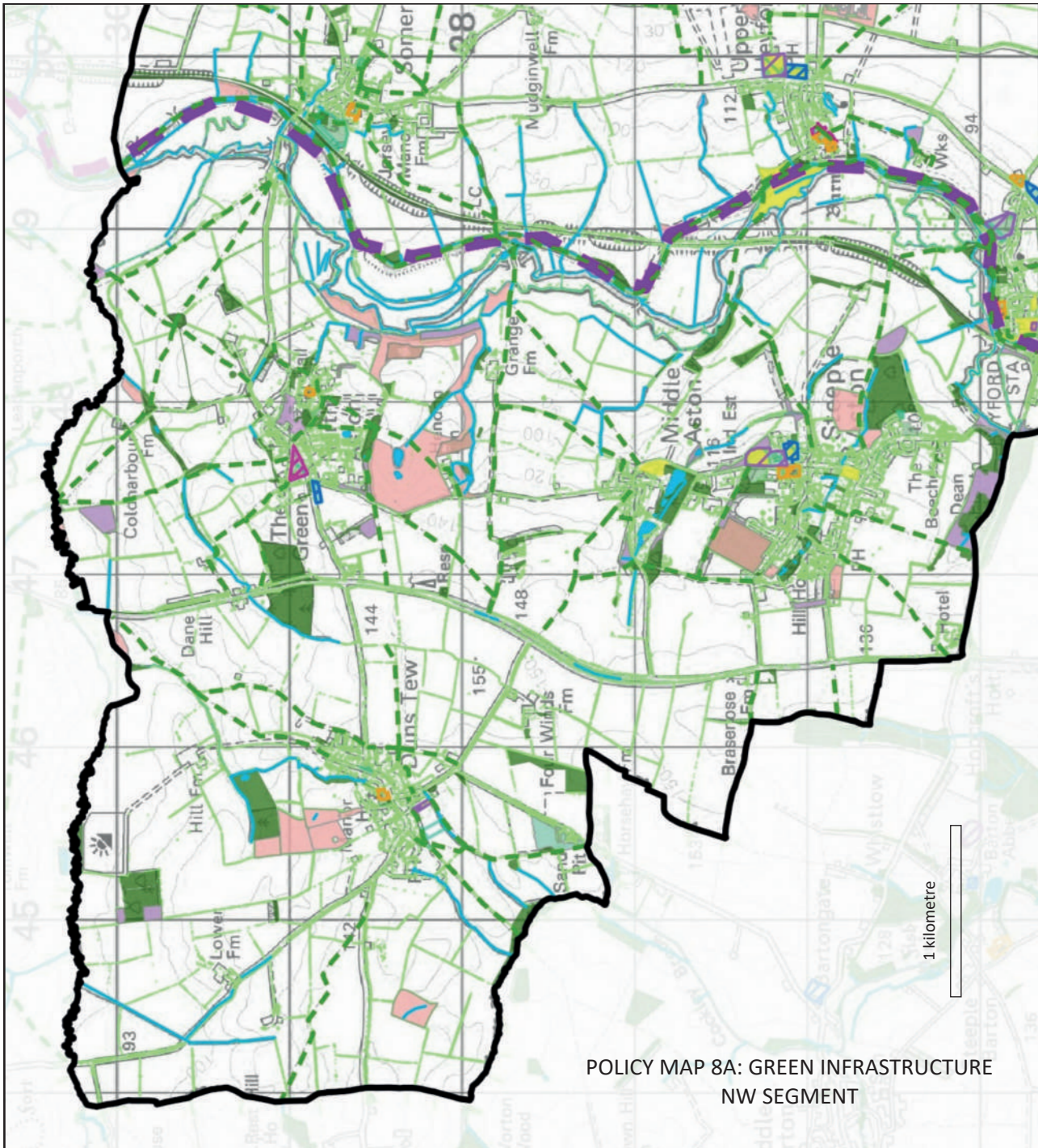
POLICY MAP 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The map is reproduced on the following pages in larger segments. The map can also be viewed at higher magnification on the MCNP website www.mid-cherwell.org.uk

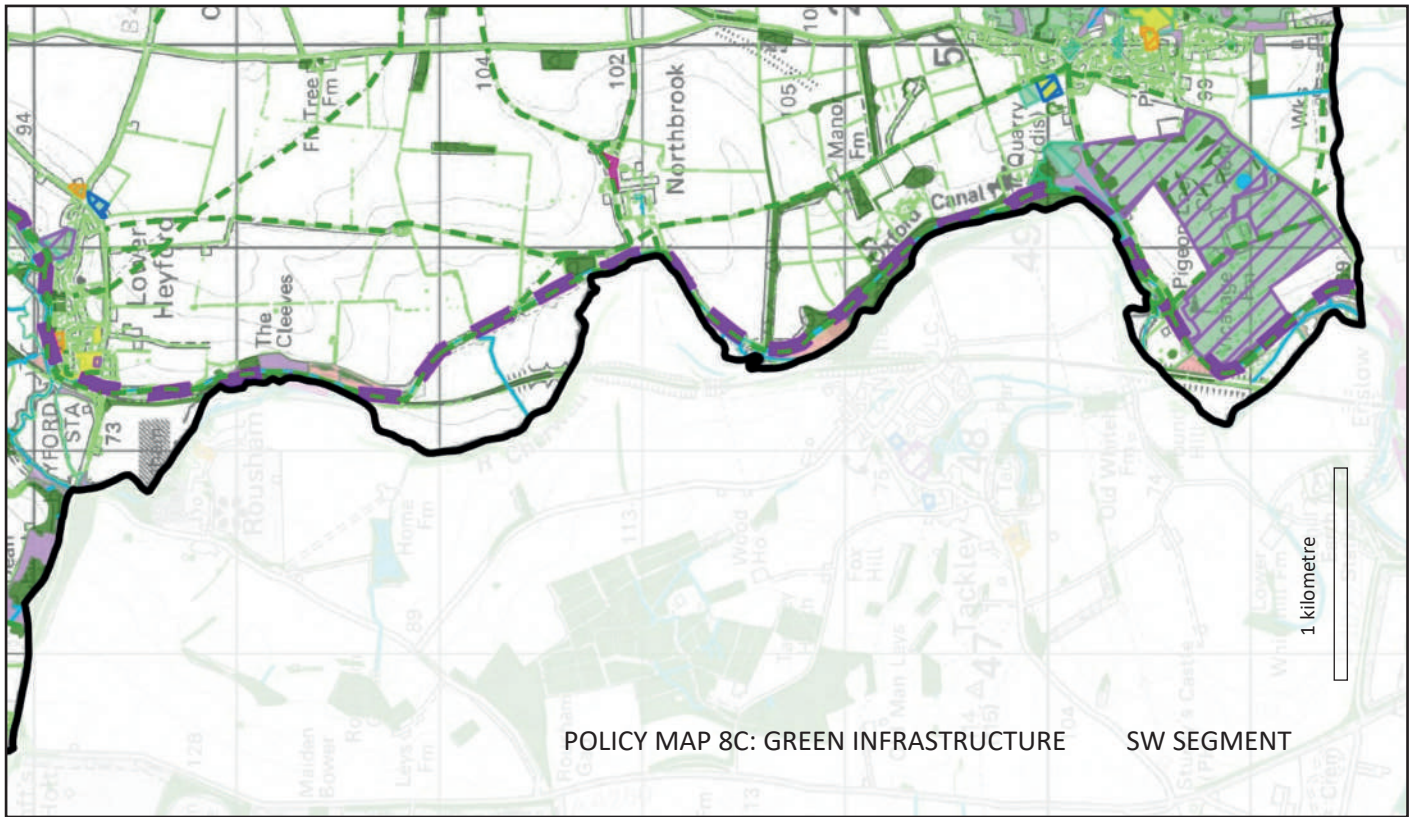
KEY

- Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
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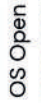













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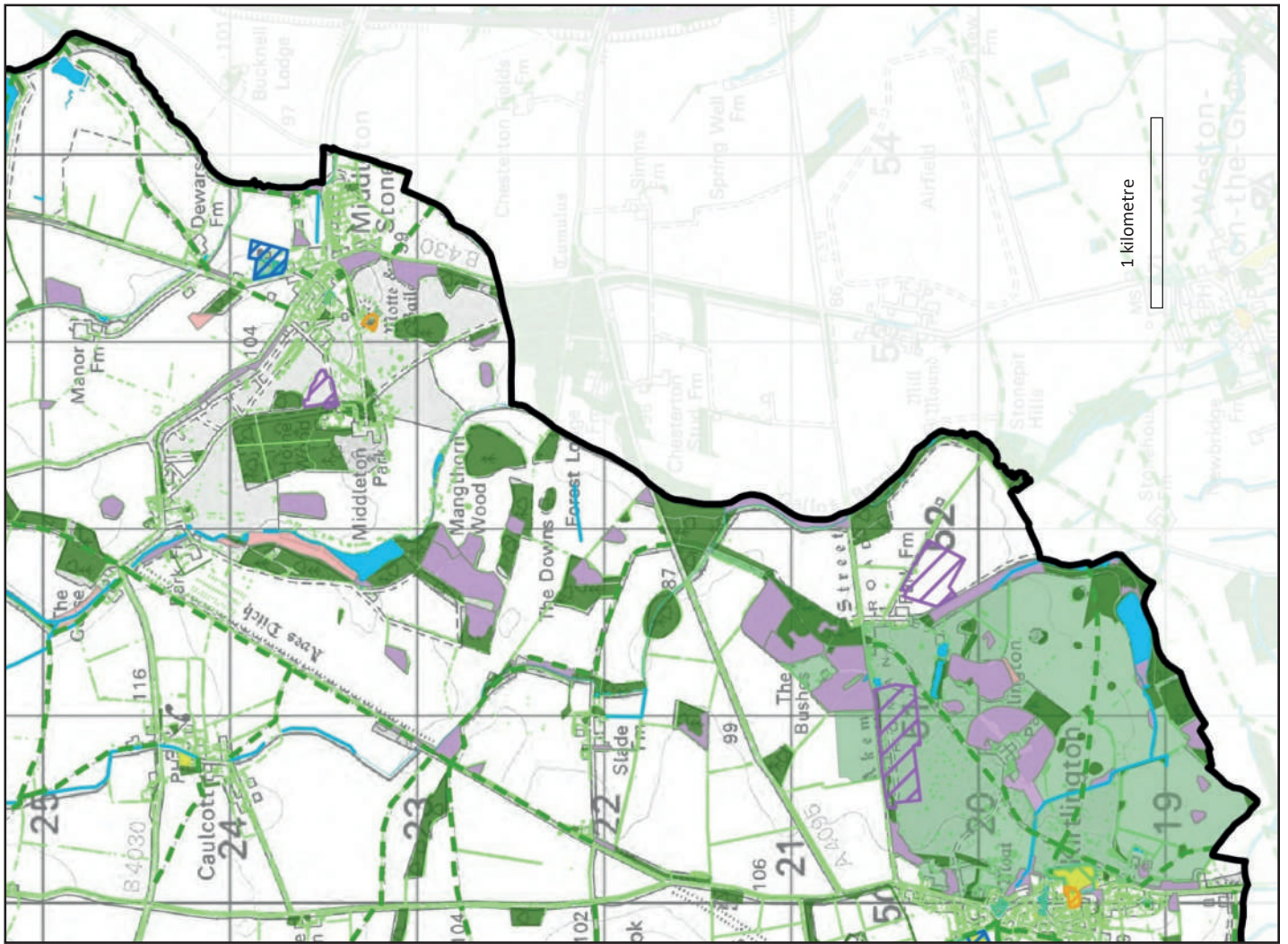
**POLICY MAP 8A: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
 NW SEGMENT**



KEY

-  Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
-  Public Right of Way
-  Oxford Canal Trail
- Lakes, Ponds, Streams and Rivers
-  OS OpenMap Local Water – Surface Line
-  OS OpenMap Local Water – Surface Line
-  OS Open GreenSpace
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- Woodland and Surface Features
-  OS OpenMap Local Woodland
-  Lidar Extracted Features

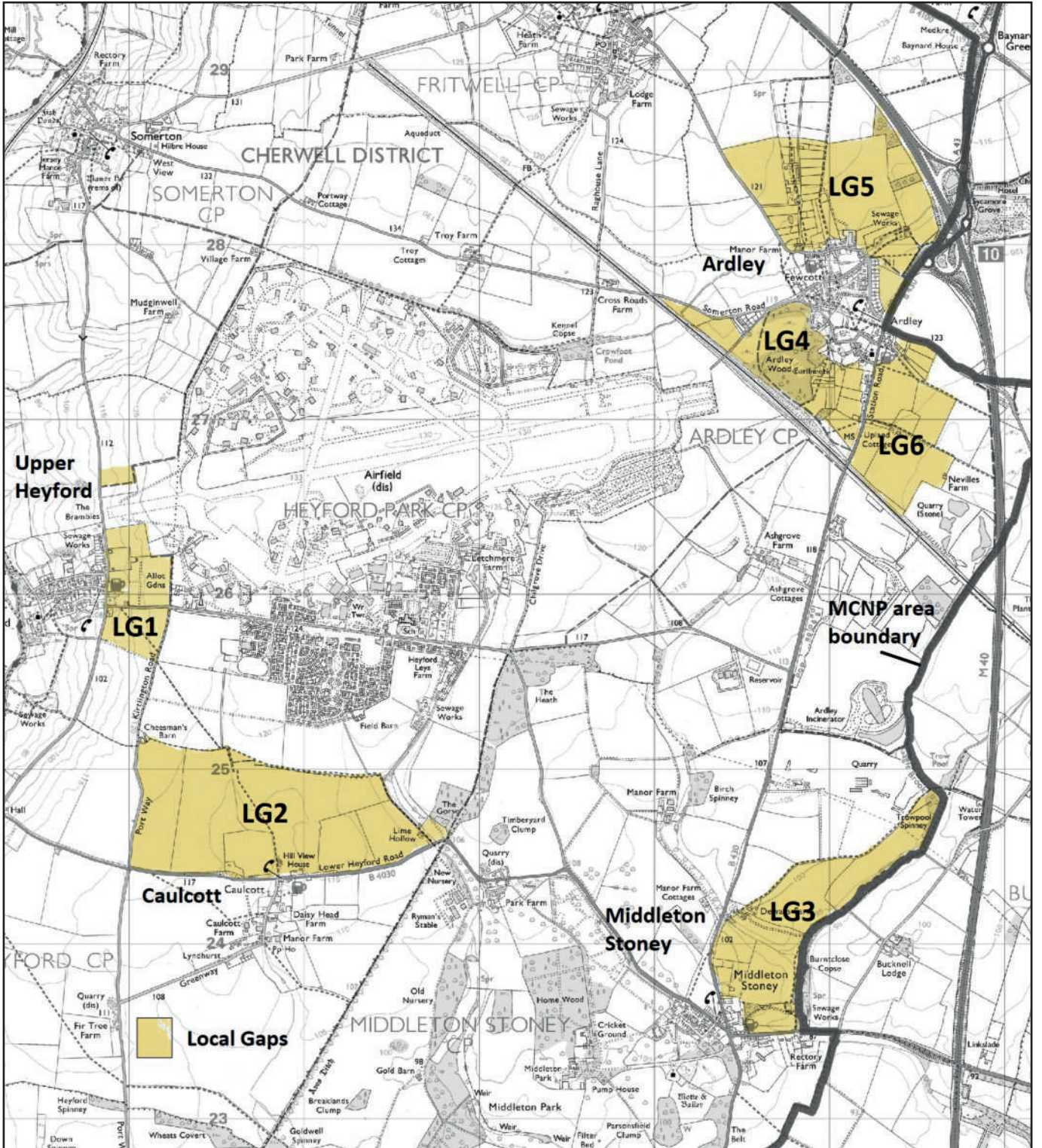
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- KEY**
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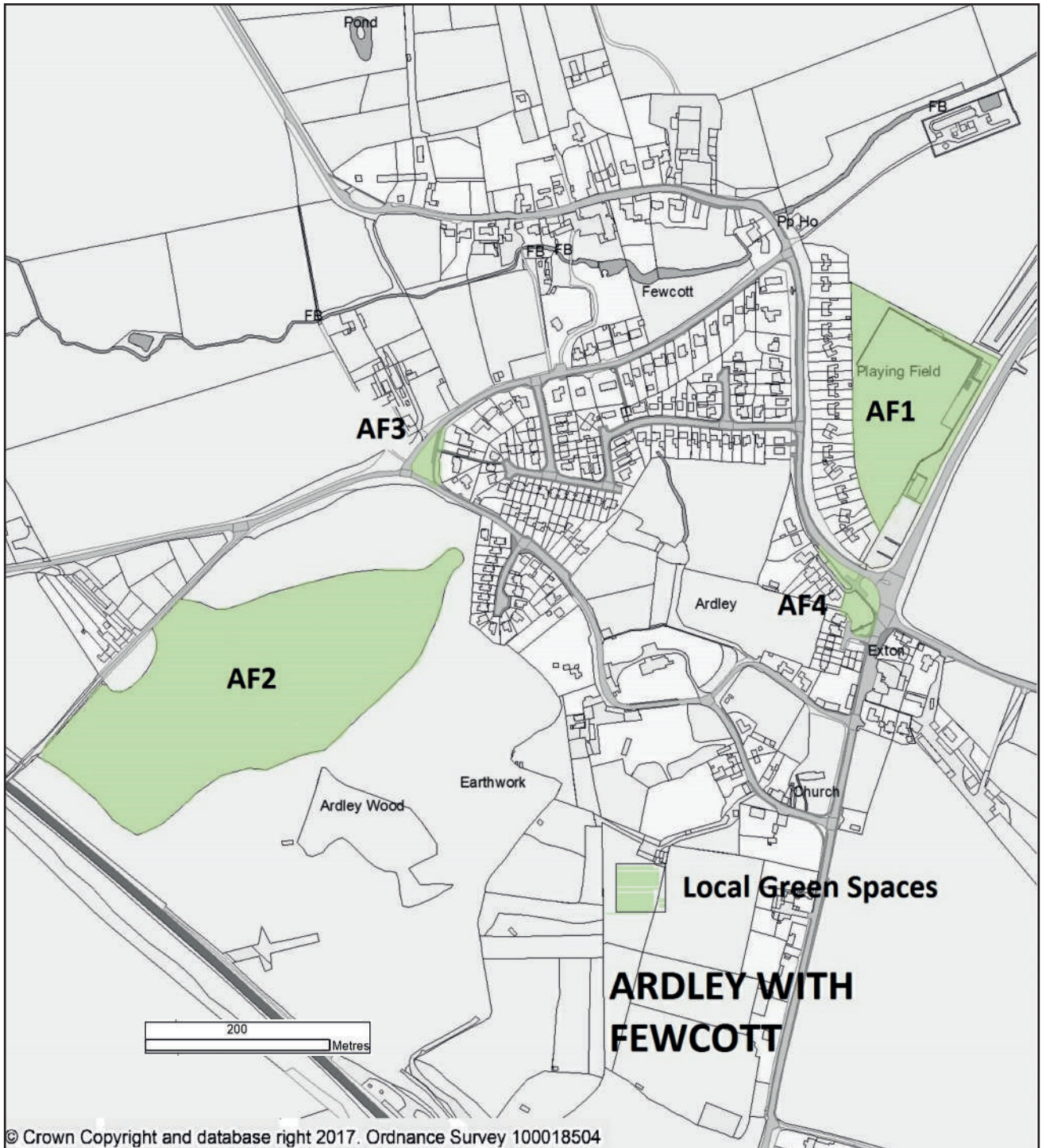
POLICY MAP 8D: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SE SEGMENT



POLICY MAP 9: LOCAL GAPS

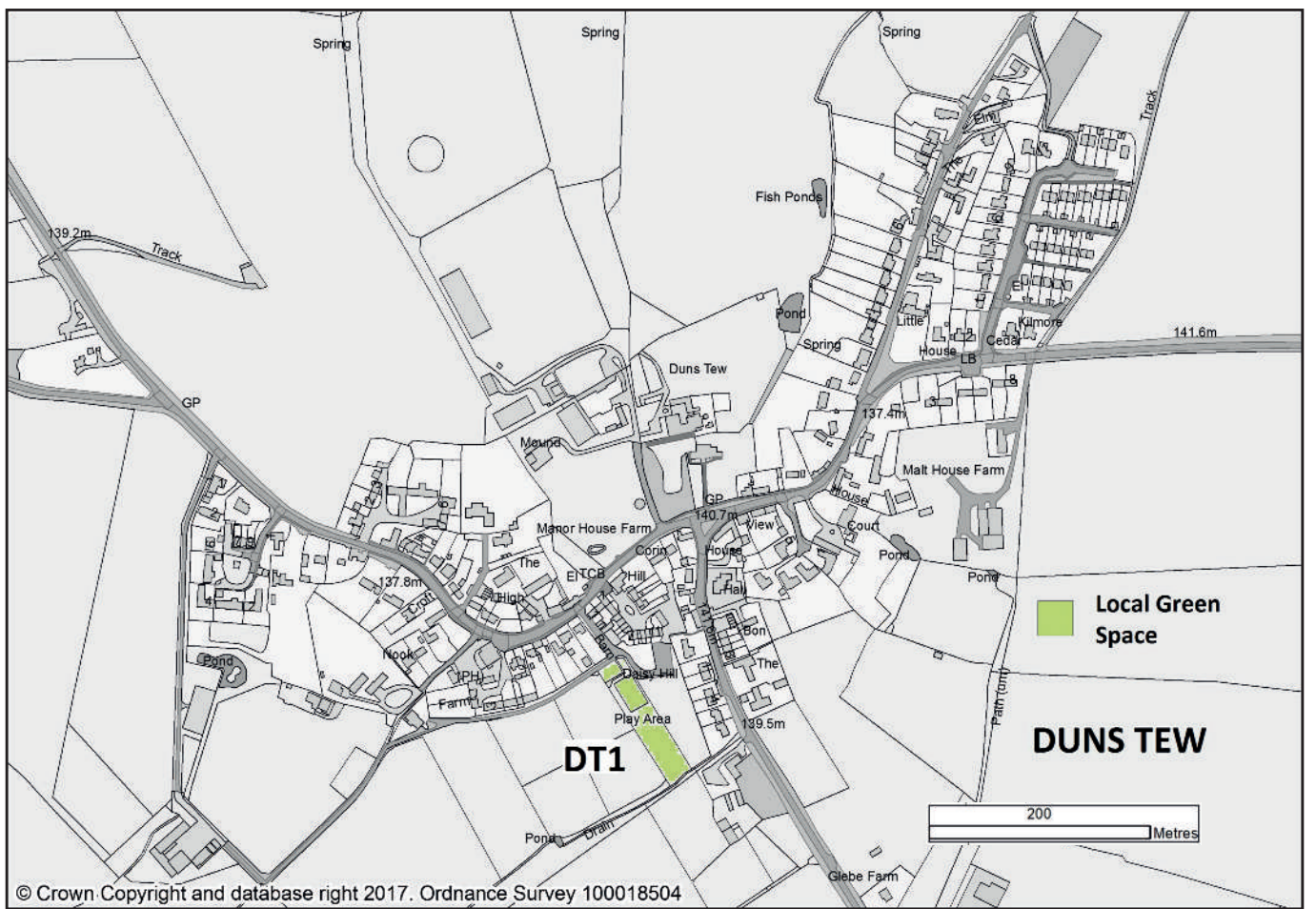
1 kilometre



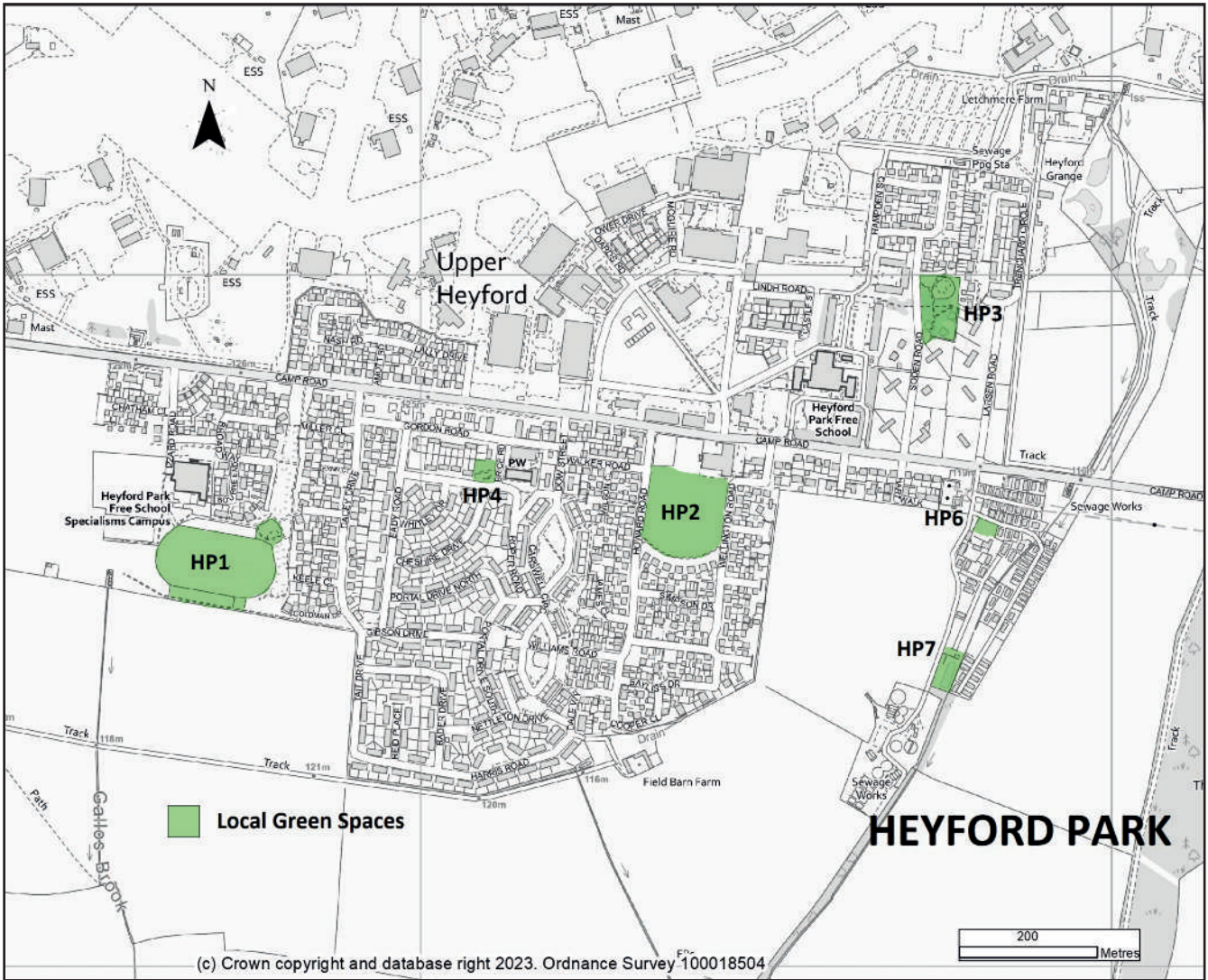


POLICY MAP 10: ARDLEY WITH FEWCOTT

See also Policy Map 9

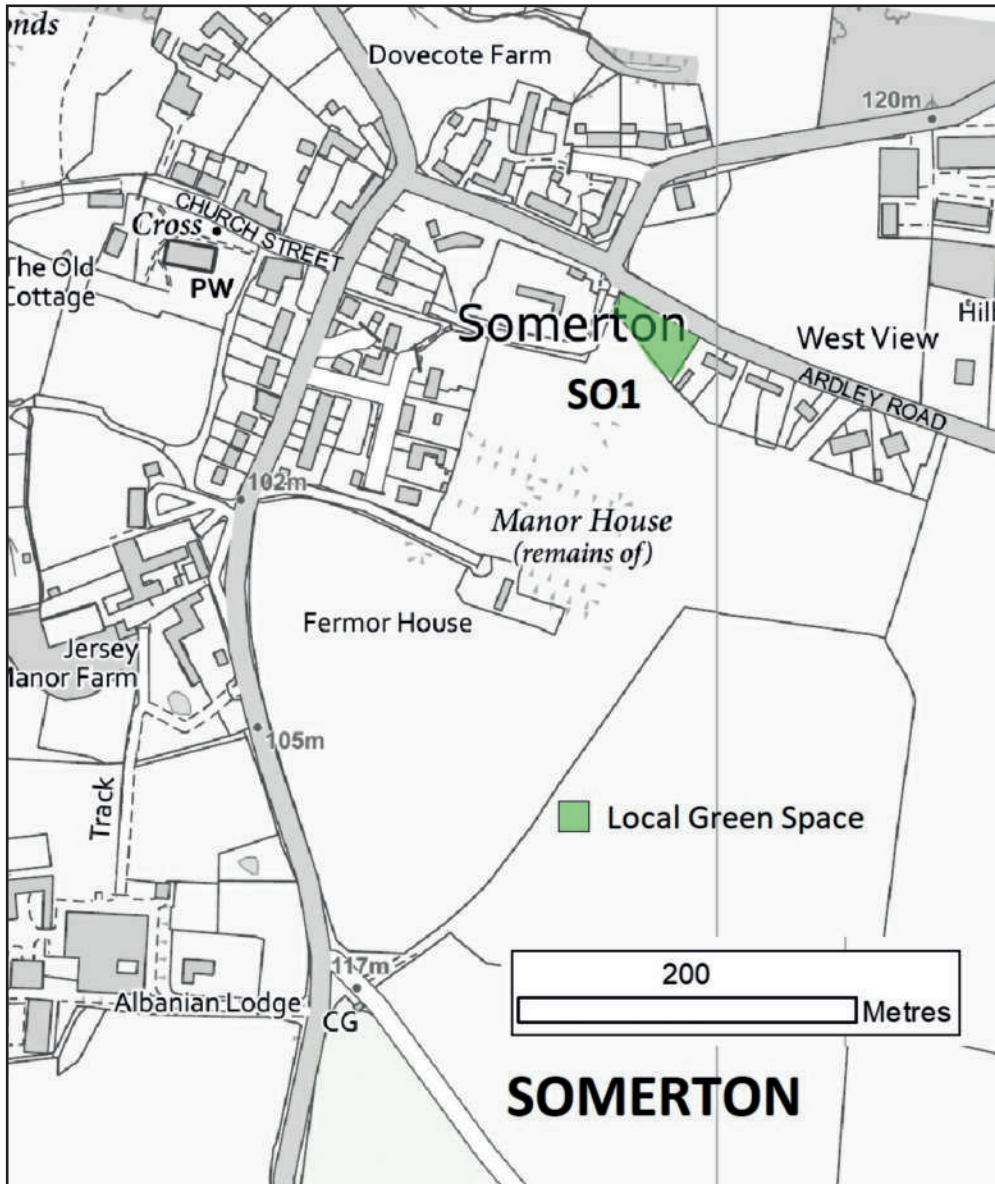


POLICY MAP 11: DUNS TEW

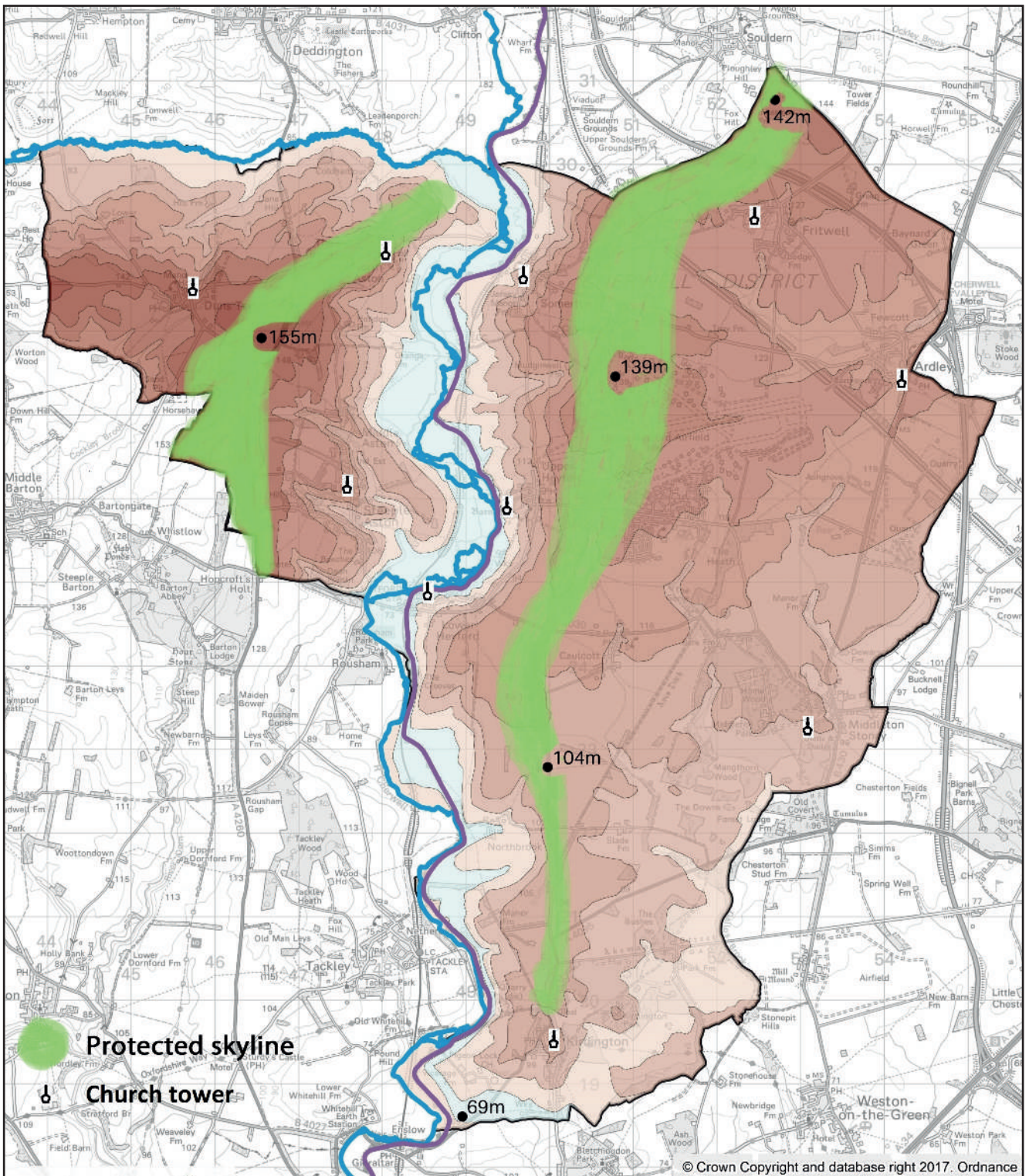


POLICY MAP 12: HEYFORD PARK

See also Policy Map 9



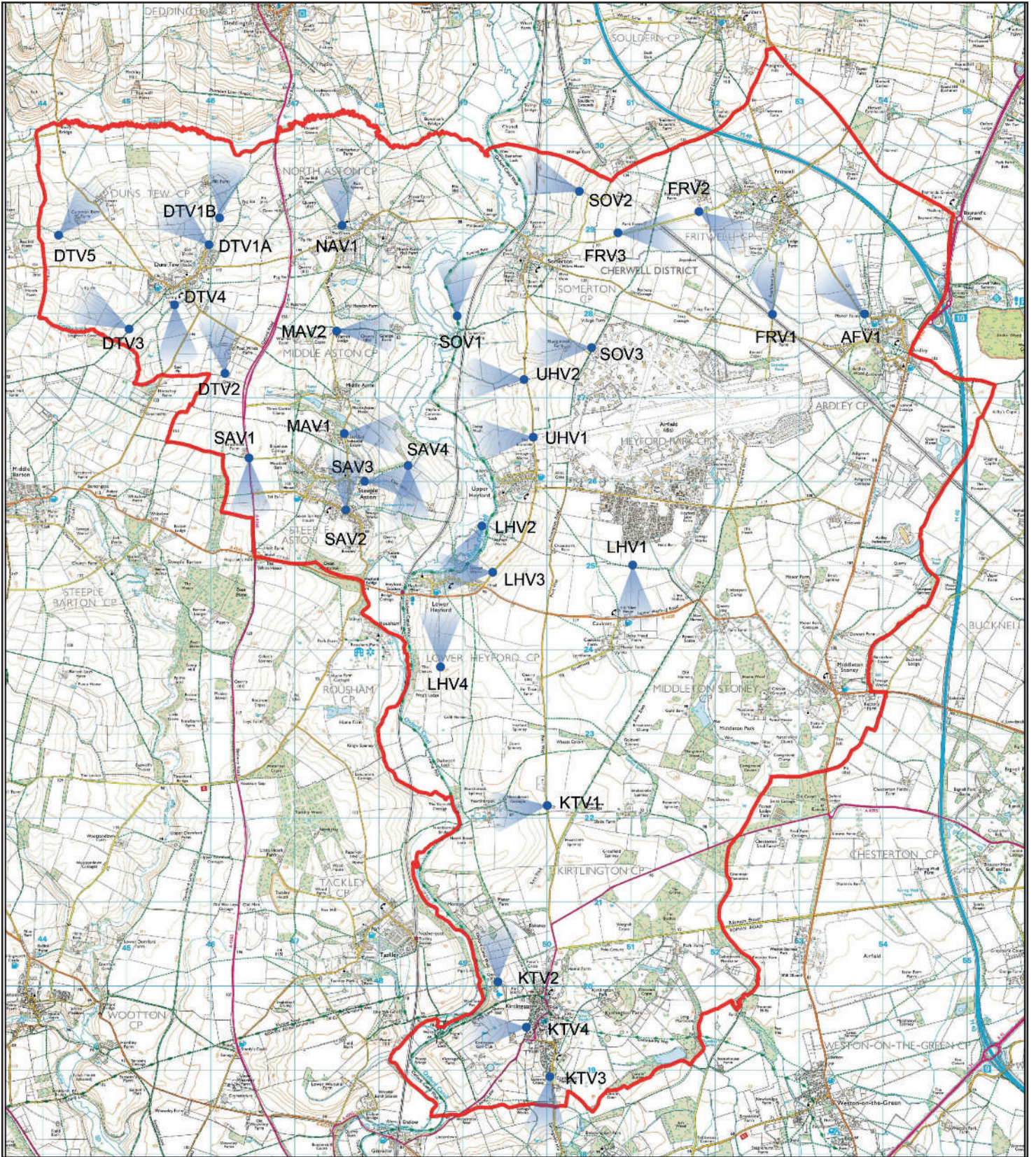
POLICY MAP 13: SOMERTON



POLICY MAP 14: SHOWING CONTOURS, PROTECTED SKYLINES AND CHURCH TOWERS.

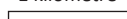
1 kilometre

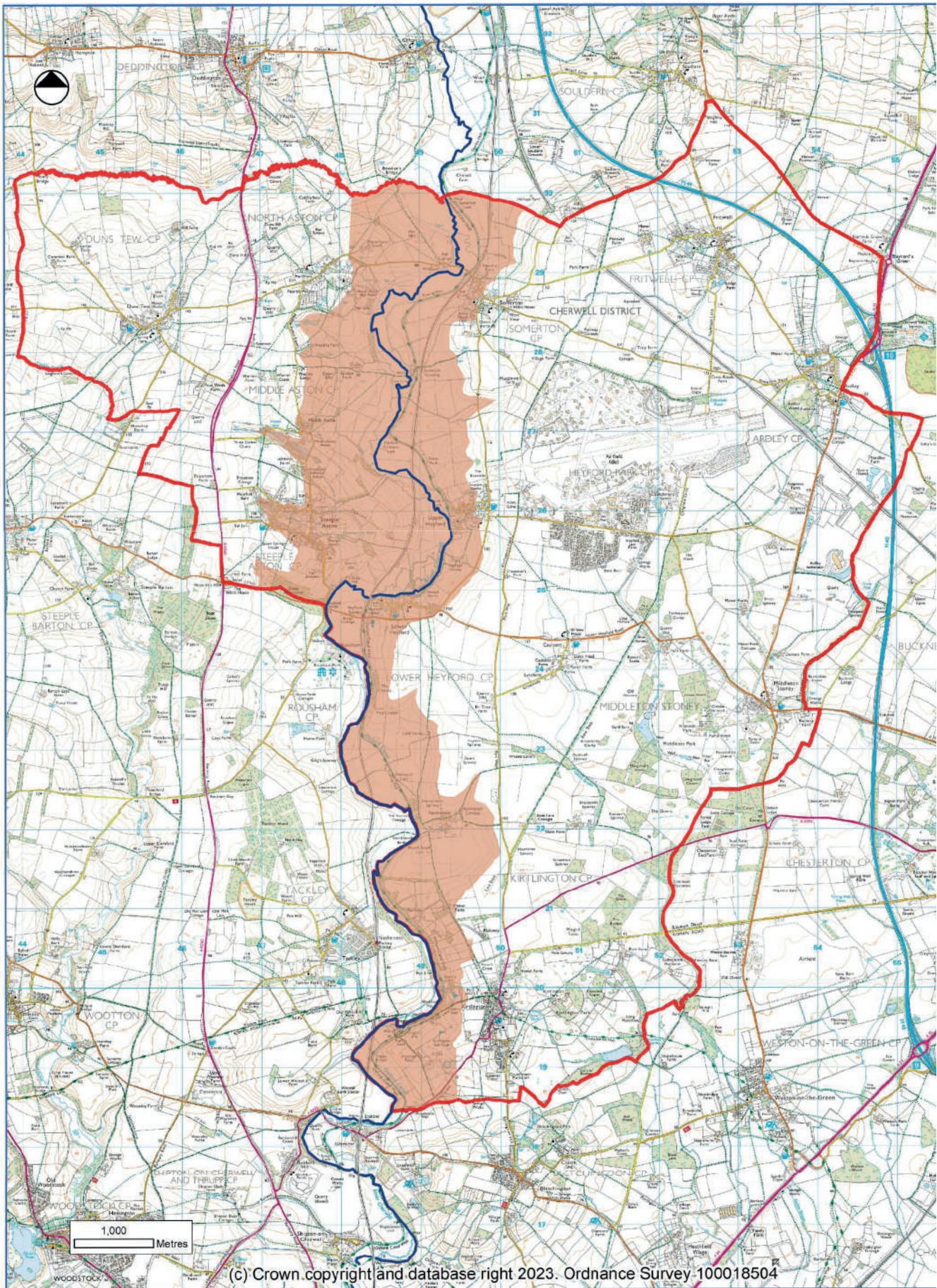




POLICY MAP 15: IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

1 kilometre





POLICY MAP 16: MID-CHERWELL VALLEY SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA



4 COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Some of the aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan cannot be achieved through planning law. Instead, we aim to deliver them over time through our Community Action Plan, which will be the responsibility of the parish councils and the Neighbourhood Plan Forum. **None of the actions identified in the Community Action Plan have the status of development plan policies.**

During the course of the initial Neighbourhood Plan period, Parish Councils have become increasingly aware of the need for better communication and engagement from Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. This is particularly relevant in the area of transport and traffic. The MCNP Forum and its Parish Councils need to have a voice in the planning process because they are best placed to know the issues that are important to their communities. We hope that the CAP will provide a better understanding of their aspirations and concerns and look forward to a closer working relationship with our Local Authorities so that they can be followed up with action.

The Community Action Plan will continue to evolve, but at this stage it includes the following:

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT	
<p>Ensure a commitment from CDC to involve Parish Councils in the drawing up of S106 agreements.</p> <p>Urge CDC/OCC to communicate the terms of Section 106 contracts to Parishes when they are agreed, including sums and trigger points.</p> <p>Urge OCC and CDC to enforce S106 agreements. OCC to liaise with Parishes to develop traffic mitigation schemes in a timely fashion so that S106 monies can be spent as trigger points are reached. Encourage OCC to negotiate early 'trigger points'.</p> <p>Support alterations to the existing highway network and infrastructure which is designed to conserve, and be sympathetic to, the rurality of the area.</p> <p>Campaign for OCC to introduce weight limits in the neighbourhood area to protect our rural villages that are affected by HGV traffic Urge OCC to include HGV routing agreements (construction and operational) as part of planning approvals at Bicester and Heyford Park to avoid inappropriate 'rat running' through neighbourhood villages.</p> <p>Negotiate with local businesses that make extensive use of HGVs to try and reduce flows on certain roads.</p> <p>Urge OCC to provide resources for enforcement of routing agreements and to explore the use of cameras and HGV tracking technology.</p> <p>Urge OCC to provide an annual update of companies at Heyford Park to neighbouring Parishes affected by HGV traffic.</p>	<p>In order for CDC and OCC to negotiate effectively on behalf of Parishes, it is important that they know what Parishes need.</p> <p>To enable Parishes to plan ahead and prioritise how S106 monies are spent.</p> <p>Traffic in our neighbourhood has grown considerably as new development has been built out. Many of our roads are not capable of sustaining the increase in volume without the infrastructure to mitigate it.</p> <p>The neighbourhood area around Heyford Park is valued for its rural character and historic heritage and contains a number of Conservation Areas.</p> <p>HGVs from growing Bicester and Heyford Park have a disproportionate impact on minor roads through rural villages because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speeds are higher causing greater noise and vibration - narrow or no pavement make them intimidating and unsafe for walkers - traditional houses have no set back - HGVs discourage walking, community life and the peace associated with the countryside <p>Routing agreements need enforcing to work effectively. OCC currently has no officer responsible for enforcement.</p> <p>To enable Parishes to work with Dorchester Group for more effective enforcement of Heyford Park's routing agreement.</p>

<p>Explore sustainable public transport provision for villages such as ‘call-on-the mile’ buses and ‘dial-a-ride’ schemes.</p> <p>Campaign for the 250 bus service between Heyford Park and Bicester to include a limited service for Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford during non-peak hours.</p> <p>Urge OCC to restore historic bridges using contractors with the required skills and expertise to carry out conservation work.</p> <p>Ensure OCC Highways includes developer contributions for cycle paths and footpaths to Heyford Park.</p> <p>Ensure CDC provides full and transparent consultation on planning applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Documents on their planning portal should have titles to reflect their contents <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Assessments for major applications should include traffic flow maps and current observed counts in line with national guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic model validation reports should be included as part of the evidence base. 	<p>There is a need for transport in the villages, particularly for the young and old and for those who do not drive. This will enable residents to use the amenities at Heyford Park and Bicester. It enables independence and prevents social isolation.</p> <p>To prevent harm to heritage assets by conforming to conservation principles and to ensure acceptable workmanship.</p> <p>To encourage healthy alternatives to driving and to minimise traffic growth. To enable students to travel independently and safely to Heyford Park Free School.</p> <p>To enable easier and more effective consultation and to provide confidence in the planning process.</p>
DEVELOPMENT	
<p>Campaign to stop unwanted development on greenfield sites when appropriate brownfield options are available.</p> <p>Identify local amenities such as shops and pubs that may need protecting from conversion to dwellings by designating them as Assets of Community Value.</p> <p>Seek to reduce light pollution from established users of excessive lighting.</p>	<p>Greenfield development will degrade the rural nature of our villages and lead to coalescence. Valuable farmland is lost and natural habitats are destroyed.</p> <p>To ensure that essential amenities are not lost to the villages. Designation would enable the Parish to purchase the building and run it as a community business.</p> <p>To complement policy MC8</p>

HOUSING	
<p>Actively encourage developers to build to the Lifetime Homes Standard</p> <p>Persuade CDC to adopt a housing allocations policy that gives priority to families already living in a village when homes become available.</p> <p>Support Open Market Housing Schemes with one and two bedroom dwellings, designed to be genuinely affordable for first time buyers, based on average salaries for the Cherwell District.</p> <p>Establish a Community Land Trust to develop our own affordable housing schemes on Rural Exception Sites.</p> <p>Approach local landowners with a view to purchasing such sites.</p> <p>Encourage CDC to use Local Letting Plans so that affordable homes can go to people from the MCNP area followed by those with a local connection. The MCNP Forum or Parish Councils would like involvement in the drafting of Plans.</p> <p>Identify the demand for self-build homes. If demand is established, identify sites and direct people to appropriate resources and information.</p>	<p>To allow purchasers of new houses to remain there throughout their lives and to make new housing available for those with disabilities. The absence of affordable housing in rural villages forces local families to leave their community and relatives. People with local family connections should have priority for available affordable housing. This issue has been highlighted by Parish Councils and through MCNP community engagement.</p> <p>To address the need for starter homes in the area, pitched at affordable prices for young people.</p> <p>To provide an effective way of delivering affordable housing for local people.</p> <p>To facilitate the establishment of Land Trusts and designation of Rural Exception Sites.</p> <p>To provide an effective way of delivering affordable housing for local people.</p> <p>To provide choice in design and layout to meet occupiers' needs, with lower running costs and better energy performance.</p>
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE	
<p>Prioritise the provision of secondary school places at Heyford Park Free School for children within the neighbourhood plan area.</p> <p>Respond to consultations on changes to local health services led by the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG).</p>	<p>To prevent students from having to travel to outlying towns for school. Local provision will help to maintain the viability of at least one primary school in our neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Changes to local health services and the centralisation of services in Bicester and Oxford could result in transport problems for local people in accessing services.</p>

<p>Support opportunities for improved outdoor recreation and leisure facilities, particularly for young people.</p> <p>Seek to create new permissive or definitive rights of way to improve connectivity between villages within and beyond the NP boundary.</p>	<p>These facilities are poorly provided for in the MCNP area and have social, recreation and health benefits.</p> <p>This has social, recreation and health benefits.</p>
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THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

<p>Campaign for a community allotment at Heyford Park.</p> <p>Install artificial nest sites for birds and habitat for animal and insect species in and around the villages.</p> <p>Promote native wild flower growth in and around villages (eg village greens, roadside and pathway verges).</p> <p>Identify sites for nature reserves, wildlife ponds, tree planting and small-scale native woodlands.</p> <p>Consider other local measures that could impact on climate change</p>	<p>There is a growing need for allotments at Heyford Park as its population grows. Allotments in neighbouring villages are unable to satisfy this demand.</p> <p>To encourage local fauna and flora</p> <p>To enhance the natural environment and aid biodiversity</p> <p>To enhance the natural environment and aid biodiversity</p>
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TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

<p>Developers to provide evidence from utility providers – water, drainage, electricity, gas – that their existing networks have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development without negative impact on existing users. If providers are unable to confirm this, the applicants should provide impact studies of the extent, cost and timescale for any required upgrading works.</p> <p>Support planning applications for high quality broadband infrastructure to improve mobile phone coverage on condition that this does not adversely affect the surrounding built and natural environment, including the setting of heritage assets and important views.</p>	<p>There is concern about the impact of the growing population on electricity supply, sewage and drainage capacity, mobile phone coverage and other related services.</p> <p>This is essential for sustainable economic growth.</p>
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5 GLOSSARY

Adaptable Housing	Housing designed to be capable of internal and external adaptation to suit residents as they age.
Adoption	The final confirmation of a development plan or local development document status by a local planning authority (LPA).
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing (including shared ownership and low-cost purchase), provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.
Brownfield Land	Land which has been previously used for any type of permanent building and can be reused.
Community Action Plan	A set of objectives identified by the community as being important but not subject to planning law. Parish Councils/ Meetings and the Forum implement the plan.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.
Community Land Trust	Community Land Trusts are a form of community-led housing, in which local organisations - set up and run by ordinary people - develop and manage homes as well as other assets. The CLT's main task is to make sure these homes are genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, for now and for future occupiers.
Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA)	CAAs help define the special architectural and historic interest of an area to clarify why it merits 'designation'. An appraisal also identifies the character of the area, and features which should be enhanced or conserved
Conservation Area	Areas designated by the Local Council as special for its architectural or historic interest, where the character or appearance is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Extra-Care Housing	Self-contained accommodation to suit people who want to live as independently as possible but who need extra care provided.
Green Infrastructure	A network of green spaces and other environmental features designed and managed as multi-functional resources providing a range of environmental quality of life benefits for the local community. This can include parks, open spaces, woodlands, nature reserves, playing fields, allotments and other natural assets.
Heritage and Character Assessment	A report which identifies the key characteristics of an area in terms of landscape, setting, and heritage.
Heritage Impact Assessment	A study to evaluate what impact the proposed development will have on the heritage resource(s) and to recommend a conservation strategy.
Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Infill Development	Small scale development filling a gap within an otherwise built up frontage.
Lifetime Homes	Homes carefully designed to incorporate 16 design criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each of the criteria adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, from raising children through to coping with reduced mobility or illness in later life.

Local Green Space	An area which is reasonably close to the community and where it is demonstrably special due to its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity, or richness of wildlife.
Local Plan (LP)	Cherwell District Council's statutory planning document which will guide and determine development through to 2031.
'Made' Plan	When a neighbourhood plan is adopted by the District Council and becomes their formal responsibility.
Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP)	This Neighbourhood Plan, covering 12 Parishes around the Cherwell Valley.
Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum	The body responsible for the MCNP, consisting of representatives from the member Parishes, and the Dorchester Group.
Most Versatile Agricultural Land	Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The Government's policy on all matters affecting the planning system and to which the Neighbourhood Development Plan must conform.
OCCG	Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
OHFT	Oxford Health Foundation Trust
Policies	Those parts of the Plan which must be taken account of by anyone proposing development in the parish and which will be used by the District Council to help them decide planning applications in the parish.
Rural Exception Site	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
Section 106 Agreement	Section 106 (1990 Town & Country Planning Act) agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
Settlement Area	The line that distinguishes between those parts of a settlement where development is acceptable in principle and those parts outside the settlement where more restrictive policies towards development apply.
Sustainable Development	Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Traffic Impact Assessment	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

