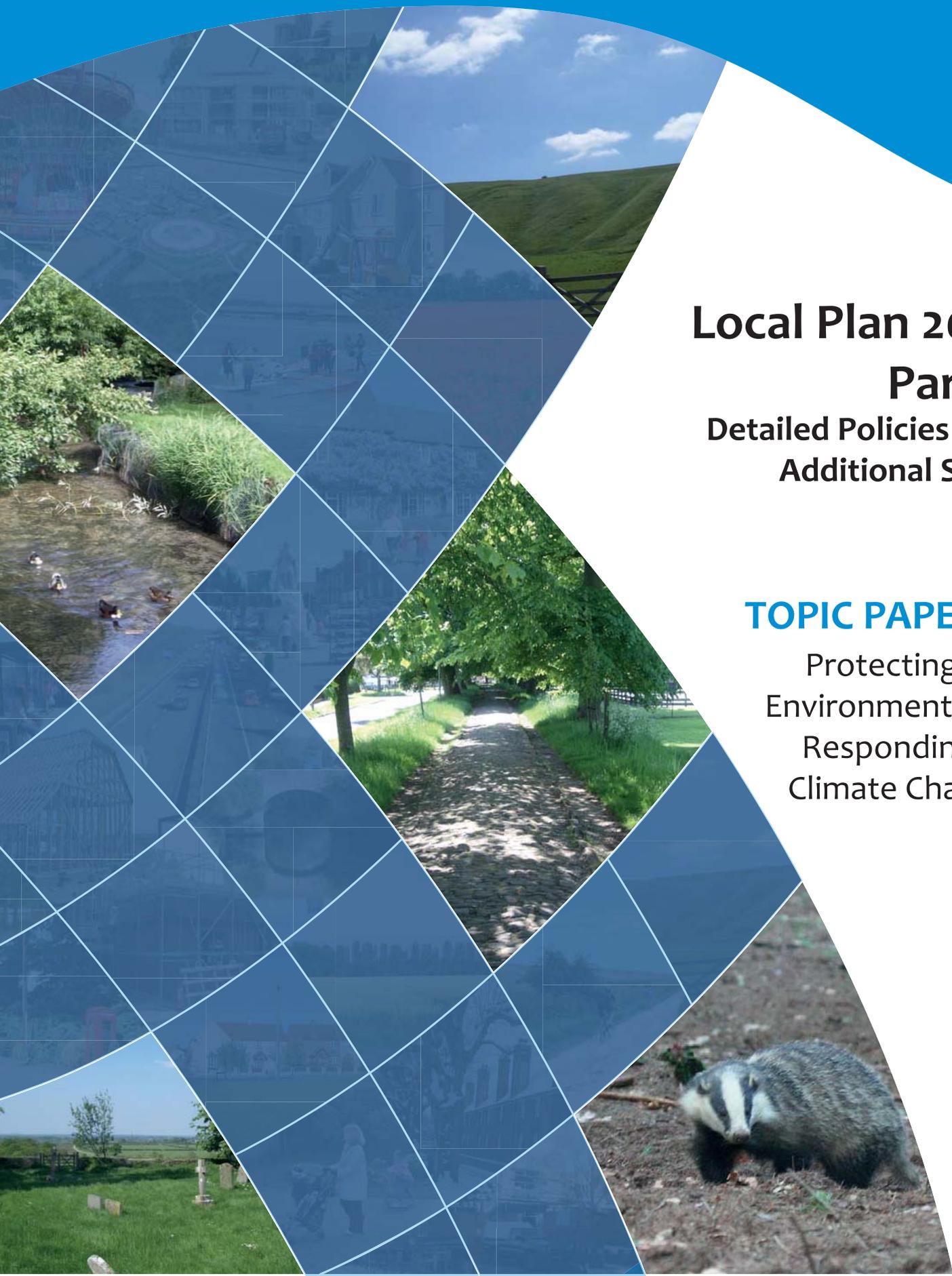




**Vale
of White Horse**
District Council

Publication Version
October 2017



Local Plan 2031

Part 2

Detailed Policies and Additional Sites

TOPIC PAPER 6

Protecting the
Environment and
Responding to
Climate Change

This paper is one of six topic papers, listed below, which form part of the evidence base in support of the draft Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

Topic Papers have been produced to present an overview of the evidence that has been considered in drafting the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. It is hoped that this will make it easier to understand how we have reached our conclusions.

The papers are all available to view and access from the Council website:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Topic Papers

1. Duty to Cooperate
2. Site Selection
3. Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities
4. Supporting Economic Prosperity
5. Supporting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
6. Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This topic paper sets out the process undertaken and evidence considered by the Council to inform the policies in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in relation to 'Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change'.
- 1.2 The Local Plan 2031 Part 2 will sit alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 which was adopted in December 2016¹. The Part 1 plan sets the strategic priorities for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the plan period up to 2031. It also identifies a number of district wide policies which provide strategic guidance on a number of topics.
- 1.3 The Part 2 plan complements the Part 1 plan by setting out:
- policies and locations for new housing to meet the Vale's proportion of Oxford's housing need, which cannot be met within the City boundaries, as agreed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board
 - policies for the part of Didcot Garden Town that lies within the Vale of White Horse District
 - detailed development management policies to complement the strategic policies set out in the Part 1 plan and replace the remaining saved policies of the Local Plan 2011, where appropriate, and
 - additional site allocations for housing.
- 1.4 This topic paper is one of a series of topic papers that reflect the four thematic areas central to the Local Plan. These themes are as follows:
- Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities
 - Supporting Economic Prosperity
 - Supporting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
 - Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change
- 1.5 This topic paper explains how the Council has formulated its policies in relation to the Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change theme. This includes design and amenity, historic environment, countryside and green infrastructure, open space, leisure and sports facilities and issues related to environmental health.

¹ Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-local-plan-2031-part-1-strategic-sites>

1.6 The structure of each section of the topic paper reflects the following:

- **National Policy Context:** a brief summary of relevant national policies e.g. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and relevant legislation.
- **Local Policy Context:** outlines relevant Core Policies in the Part 1 plan and provides a review and assessment of the relevant remaining saved policies in the Local Plan 2011.
- **Evidence:** summarises key evidence and its outcomes.
- **Sustainability Appraisal:** provides the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Part 2 plan policies.
- **Summary of Consultation:** summarises key issues identified through each stage of consultation, including informal engagement with specialist officers and key stakeholders and Regulation 18 public consultation in March 2017.
- **Key Issues:** summarises the key issues considered in formulating the Part 2 plan policies reflecting national and local policies, evidence and consultation outcomes.
- **Conclusions:** provides the conclusions that have been reached in informing the Preferred Options version and the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.

2.0 DESIGN AND AMENITY

2.1 This section summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to design and amenity.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies on 'Requiring good design'. Key aims of the NPPF are to seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings². Local Planning Authorities should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area³.

2.3 To ensure high quality design for new development and to provide a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants planning policies should:

- address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development in the natural, built and historic environment⁴
- ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account effects (including cumulative) of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity⁵, and
- limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation⁶.

2.4 The NPPF also provides guidance on advertisements, in particular advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts⁷.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.5 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional guidance on design and amenity. This includes the contribution public art and sculptures can make in creating interesting and exciting places⁸.

² CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

³ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 58

⁴ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 61

⁵ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 120

⁶ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 125

⁷ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 67

⁸ CLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 26-018-20140306

- 2.6 The PPG also includes guidance on health and well-being, such as the need for local planning authorities to consider potential pollution and other environmental hazards that might lead to an adverse impact on human health in new development proposals⁹.
- 2.7 In relation to external lighting, the PPG provides guidance on how to consider light, in particular the impacts of obtrusive light on wildlife, environment and humans.¹⁰
- 2.8 Guidance is also provided on the display of advertisements, particularly the need to consider the impacts on amenity and public safety¹¹.

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Part 1 plan), Adopted December 2016

- 2.9 Strategic Objective 11 in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 ensures all new development achieves high quality design standards and conserves and enhances the natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets of the Vale.
- 2.10 The Part 1 plan sets out a number of strategic policies related to design and amenity, including:
- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness** ensures that development proposals respond positively to the site and their surroundings and encourages the use of public art, and
 - **Core Policy 38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites** ensures development proposals respect local distinctiveness and achieve a positive sense of place and identity.

Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011

- 2.11 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continued to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.

⁹ CLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 53-002-20140306

¹⁰ CLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 31-002-20140306

¹¹ CLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306; Paragraph: 067 Reference ID: 18b-067-20140306

- 2.12 The remaining saved policies relating to design and amenity that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:
- DC3: Design against crime
 - DC4: Public Art
 - DC7: Waste and Recycling
 - DC9: The Impact of Development of Neighbouring Uses
 - DC10: The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development
 - DC16: Illuminated Advertisements
 - DC20: External Lighting
- 2.13 An assessment of these saved Local Plan 2011 policies has been undertaken to consider if these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan. **Appendix 1** shows the outcomes of this assessment. In summary, six of the seven saved policies have been updated or carried forward into the Part 2 plan, with one saved policy (DC3) not being replaced.
- 2.14 It is not considered necessary in taking forward the ‘Design against crime’ policy as sufficient detail is covered in Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness in the Part 1 plan and the Council’s Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Evidence

- 2.15 A range of evidence base studies have been used to support the preparation of the policies. Below is a short summary of each study that has helped to shape the policies.

Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2015)

- 2.16 The Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)¹² sets out a number of design principles for new development proposals and provides additional detail to complement Core Policies 37 and 38 in the Part 1 plan and development management policies in the Part 2 plan.
- 2.17 In relation to public art, the SPD ensures that public art is considered at the early stages of the design process, integrated into the public realm and is well maintained.

¹² Vale of White Horse Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2015), available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/supplementar-2>

- 2.18 The SPD also provides guidance on amenity, in particular the need for development proposals to consider issues such as noise, privacy and overshadowing in relation to potential impacts on neighbouring uses.
- 2.19 The Design Guide also provides additional guidance on lighting and advertisements to ensure that development proposals involving external lighting are appropriately designed and located.

Vale of White Horse emerging Public Art Policy

- 2.20 The Council's emerging Public Art Policy seeks to promote quality and vision by seeking contributions towards art provision in the Vale from new development proposals. The principles and content set out in this document has assisted the Council in producing a development management policy related to the provision of Public Art for new development proposals in the Part 2 plan.

Viability Update (February 2017) and Viability Statement (October 2017)

- 2.21 The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd to undertake a viability assessment of the Part 2 plan. Viability assessment tests the effectiveness of the cumulative impact of the policies in the Part 2 plan and whether they would put a development at risk.
- 2.22 The Viability Update¹³ and Statement¹⁴ have assessed the viability of the design and amenity policies and conclude that the design and amenity development management policies do not add additional burdens to developers.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 2.23 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 2.24 An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA report was published alongside the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the 'Publication Version' of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan.

¹³ HDH Planning and Development Ltd (2017) Viability Update: Local Plan Part 2, available at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

¹⁴ HDH Planning and Development Ltd (2017) Viability Statement: Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

- 2.25 In relation to Development Policy 20: External Lighting, the Interim SA Report stated that this policy provides additional detail to assess nuisance from sources such as floodlit sports pitches.
- 2.26 In relation to Development Policies 22 and 23, the Interim SA Report stated that Development Policy 22 sets out measures to minimise the impact of development on neighbouring amenity, supplementing the high design standards set out in Core Policies 37 and 38 of the Part 1 plan and the Council's Design Guide SPD.
- 2.27 In the updated SA Report¹⁵, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies focussed on environmental quality and amenity in the Part 2 plan perform well and should appropriately complement the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular the development policies provide additional detail to support Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), Core Policy 43 (Natural Resources) Core Policy 44 (Landscape) and the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 2.28 In conclusion, the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is predicted to result in significant positive effects in relation to the design and amenity objectives.

Summary of consultation and engagement

- 2.29 The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal engagement

- 2.30 The Council undertook informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in November 2016 to inform preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that helped to inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:
- the Development Management Team commented that the public art policy should be considered in light of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
 - the Development Management Team were supportive of a policy on advertisements, but commented that it would need to reflect national guidance with respect to public safety and amenity

¹⁵ AECOM (2017) Sustainability Appraisal of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

- the Arts Development Officer was supportive of a policy on public art but commented that it will need to be in line with the Council's emerging Public Art Policy
- the Waste Team were supportive of a waste collection and recycling policy, however commented that it should reflect the Council's Waste Planning Guidance and apply to commercial and residential proposals
- the Environmental Health Team were supportive of a policy on amenity and commented that the policy should cover other environmental issues
- the Environmental Health Team were supportive of a policy on external lighting, particularly when assessing nuisance from sources such as floodlit sports pitches
- the Specialist Officer was supportive of a policy on external lighting and commented that the policy needs to consider impacts on landscape and environmental zones. The policy should also refer to current best practice, and
- the Environment Agency commented that the policy on external lighting should consider impacts on local biodiversity, particularly light spill into river and green corridors.

2.31 The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement in July 2017 with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council following Preferred Options consultation. The responses received have identified no further issues relating to the development management policies on design.

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

2.32 The Council published the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were received in relation to the design and amenity policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 1** below. All comments received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.¹⁶

¹⁶ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 1: Summary of consultation responses related to design and amenity

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 19: Public Art	A few comments suggested that the policy should be flexible and be closely aligned to the principles contained with the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).	<p>This policy will replace the saved policy from Local Plan 2011, which also states that public art should be required on sites larger than 0.5 hectares. The Council consider that this policy has been regularly used when implementing schemes associated with public art for development proposals.</p> <p>The Council notes that there are other ways to contribute positively to the making of a place, but public art encourages public enjoyment and engagement, promotes the renewal of social skills and supports the local economy. The Design Guide SPD also provides further detail on public art.</p>
Development Policy 20: External Lighting	<p>North Wessex Downs AONB Board would like to see reference made in the policy to maintaining and enhancing dark night skies within the AONB and its setting.</p> <p>A few comments suggested the need to include additional criteria in the policy.</p>	<p>Noted. The Council has considered the comments in refining the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan and has included further detail in the accompanying text to ensure that development proposals located within the North Wessex Downs AONB or its setting seek to avoid and reduce light pollution, including the control of lighting schemes, taking into account the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	Environment Agency supported the policy and supporting text.	The Council welcome and acknowledge Environment Agency's support for this policy.
Development Policy 21: Advertisements	<p>The Council's Equalities Officer suggested adding further detail in the policy criteria to take into account visual impairments.</p> <p>Historic England supports this policy in particular criteria iv.</p> <p>One comment related to the application of this policy for instances where there is a visual impact from advertisements on lorries, with a particular reference to Botley.</p>	<p>The Council consider the policy provides sufficient flexibility and has been informed by Equalities Impact Assessment. The accompanying text to this policy in the Part 2 plan ensures that development proposals consider the effect of poorly-positioned or intrusively illuminated signs for all users, including people with visual impairments.</p> <p>The Council welcome and acknowledge Historic England's support for this policy.</p> <p>Advertisements on vehicles do not require planning permission provided that the primary purpose of the vehicle is as a vehicle.</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 22: Impact of Development on Amenity	<p>A few comments suggested that the policy is considered unnecessary as there are a number of policies in the plan that cover this level of detail.</p> <p>One comment suggested that the policy should consider issues such as outlook and loss of views.</p> <p>There were a number of comments received that support the principle of this policy including Environment Agency and North Wessex Downs AONB Board.</p>	<p>The Part 1 plan contains no specific policies on amenity and neighbouring uses and following engagement with specialist officers within the Council, this policy has been regularly implemented when assessing development proposals. The Council considers Development Policy 22: Impact of Development on Amenity is consistent with national policy and is important to ensure any future applications will not cause un-due harm to the amenities of neighbouring and/or nearby properties.</p> <p>Support noted and welcomed.</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 23: The effect of neighbouring or previous uses on new developments	<p>One specific comment raised an issue that the policy is considered unnecessary as there are a number of policies in the plan that cover this level of detail.</p> <p>There were a number of comments received that support the principle of this policy including the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>The Part 1 plan contains no specific policies on amenity and neighbouring uses and following engagement with specialist officers within the Council, this policy has been regularly implemented when assessing development proposals. The Council considers Development Policy 23: The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments, is important to ensure any future applications will not cause undue harm to the amenities of neighbouring and/or nearby properties.</p> <p>Support noted and welcomed.</p>
Development Policy 27: Waste Collection and Recycling	<p>Oxfordshire County Council supported Development Policy 27, but would like the policy to consider encouraging higher recycling and home composting and associated environmental and financial benefits.</p>	<p>Noted. The Council consider that Oxfordshire County Council's suggestions help to improve the effectiveness of the policy and to recognise the financial and environmental benefits associated with recycling and home composting. The Publication Version of the Part 2 plan includes an additional requirement in the policy to encourage development proposals to use sustainable waste management initiatives where they are likely to provide environmental and financial benefits.</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	<p>Paragraph 3.203 should list examples of other sustainable waste management initiatives.</p> <p>On-site refuse container storage facilities should be located away from the front of properties to reduce impact on the visual amenity. Road widths to accommodate refuse vehicles should also consider the on-road parking of residents' vehicles.</p>	<p>Noted. The Council has updated the accompanying text in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan to include other sustainable waste management initiatives.</p> <p>The Council acknowledge these points made by Watchfield Parish Council. Criteria iii in Development Policy 27 ensures that recycling and refuse provision appropriately designed and located, whilst considering the impacts of the provision on visual amenity. This policy also ensures that all development proposals are consistent with the Council's Waste Planning Guidance. This guidance sets considerations to be taken into account when making a planning application, including access for waste collection vehicles. The Council consider that this detail is sufficiently covered in this policy and the Waste Planning Guidance.</p>
N/A	Sport England suggested that the Part 2 plan should refer to Sports England's design guidance document 'Active Design'.	Noted. The Publication Version of the Part 2 plan includes accompanying text in the design section that sets out the importance of design in making people more active within the community, with particular reference to Sport England's Active Design guidance.
N/A	Oxfordshire County Council recommend the chapter and design policies	Noted. The Council agree with the importance of improving health and wellbeing. The Council has consider Oxfordshire County Council's comments and has updated the accompanying text in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.

Policy	Summary	Council response
	include reference to improving health and wellbeing.	

Key Issues

2.33 Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.

2.34 The following key issues were identified and considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version for the Part 2 plan:

- general support for a number of policies related to design and amenity from specialist officers within the Council and key stakeholders following informal engagement
- a policy on public art should reflect the principles set out within the Council's emerging Public Art Policy and the Design Guide SPD
- implications of Community Infrastructure Levy should be considered when developing a policy on public art
- national policy regarding external lighting sets out the need to consider the most suitable locations for development proposals involving uses that generate or alter existing levels of artificial light
- Environment Agency has commented that a policy related to external lighting should address the impact lighting can have on biodiversity, particularly light spill into rivers and green corridors, and
- the PPG sets out the need for advertisements to be appropriately designed to ensure they contribute to a safe and attractive environment, including the need to consider pedestrian safety, heritage assets, visual amenity and external lighting.

2.35 The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed design and amenity policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:

- the public art policy should be more closely aligned to the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- the supporting text on design should refer to Sport England's design guidance document 'Active Design'
- the external lighting policy should seek to maintain and enhance dark skies within the North Wessex Downs AONB and its setting
- the policy on external lighting should reflect the wording of Saved Policy DC20 in the Local Plan 2011, and
- the policy related to advertisements should include a requirement in the policy to consider people with visual impairments
- the waste collection and recycling policy should consider encouraging recycling and home composting for development proposals, and

- Oxfordshire County Council commented that the accompanying text to the design section of the Part 2 plan should make reference to the importance of improving health and wellbeing.

Conclusions

- 2.36 Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.
- 2.37 The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the design and amenity policies for consideration in the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan:
- it was not considered necessary to replace Saved Policy DC3: Design against crime of the Local Plan 2011 in the Part 2 plan as the detail in this policy related to safety and crime is sufficiently covered by Core Policies 37 and 38 in the Part 1 plan and principles set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD
 - a policy was included to seek support or encourage the promotion of public art as part of development proposals reflecting comments made by the Council's Arts Development Officer that the policy should align with the council's emerging public art policy
 - a policy was included on waste collection and recycling that sets out measures to ensure adequate and appropriate facilities for the sorting, storage and collection of waste for new development proposals, reflecting the Council's Waste Planning Guidance. This reflected comments made by the Council's Waste Team, to ensure the policy is applied to both commercial and residential proposals
 - a policy was included that sets out measures to minimise the impact of development on neighbouring amenity. The saved policy of the Local Plan 2011 has been successfully implemented by the development management team when assessing development proposals and was particularly supported by specialist officers within the Council
 - a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure new occupiers are not unacceptably affected by existing or neighbouring uses. Similar to the amenity policy, the saved policy of the Local Plan 2011 has been successfully implemented by the development management team when assessing development proposals, and was particularly supported by specialist officers within the Council
 - a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure that development involving external lighting is appropriately design and located. This reflected comments made by the Council's specialist officers to ensure that development proposals located within different Environmental Zones

take into account national guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Professionals. The Environment Agency commented that a policy on external lighting should consider impacts on local biodiversity. The Council has reflected this in paragraph 3.135 of the Preferred Options version of the Part 2 plan, and

- a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure development involving advertisements is appropriately designed and located. This reflected guidance set out in the PPG to ensure that advertisements are appropriately designed and contribute to a safe and attractive environment.

2.38 The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the design and amenity policies following stages of informal consultation with key stakeholders and specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan in March 2017:

- the wording of the public art policy is refined to closely align with the principles as set out in the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to ensure the design and location of public art is appropriate for development proposals, reflecting consultation comments
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.142 to the public art policy includes the need for development proposals to contribute towards the provision of public art in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions SPD, reflecting comments made at public consultation on the Preferred Options version of the Part 2 plan and comments made by the Council's specialist officers during informal engagement
- Sport England commented that the Part 2 plan should refer to their 'Active Design' guidance. The Publication Version of the Part 2 plan includes a footnote to the Active Design principles at paragraph 3.136, in the design section
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.149 to the external lighting policy includes the need to ensure that development proposals located within the North Wessex Downs AONB or its setting take into account the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan, reflecting consultation comments
- the policy related to external lighting includes an additional criteria that reflects the wording in Saved Policy DC20 of the Local Plan 2011 to ensure that the lighting proposed is the minimum necessary to undertake the task for which it is required. This reflects a comment made at the Preferred Options consultation
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.156 of the policy on advertisements is amended to ensure that development proposals take into account people with visual impairments, reflecting comments made by the Council's Equalities Officer, and
- the waste collection and recycling policy includes an additional requirement to encourage development proposals to use sustainable

waste management initiatives where they provide environmental and financial benefits, reflecting comments made by Oxfordshire County Council at the Preferred Options consultation.

- 2.39 A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

3.0 LANDSCAPE

- 3.1 This section summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to the landscape topic.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.2 Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies on 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. Key aims of the NPPF are the need to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, to take account of the different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside¹⁷.

- 3.3 To ensure development recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, the NPPF suggests planning policies should:

- protect and enhance valued landscapes¹⁸
- set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting landscape areas will be judged¹⁹, and
- give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty²⁰.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) requires councils to include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape and the wider countryside.²¹

¹⁷ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

¹⁸ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 109

¹⁹ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 113

²⁰ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 115

²¹ Planning Practice Guidance, Reference ID: 8-001-20140306

- 3.5 The PPG also requires councils, through plan-making, to prepare Landscape Character Assessments (LCA) to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape²², and to identify the features that give it a sense of place.

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Part 1 plan), Adopted December 2016

- 3.6 The landscape is central to the rural character of the Vale, from the Corallian Ridge, to the Lowland Vale, to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Oxford Green Belt.
- 3.7 Strategic Objectives 10 and 11 of the Part 1 plan ensure that the natural environment including landscape, is maintained and improved as well as ensuring that all new development conserves and enhances the natural and landscape assets of the Vale.
- 3.8 The Part 1 plan sets out a number of strategic policies relating to landscape, including:
- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness** ensures that all development achieves high quality design standards
 - **Core Policy 38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites** which sets out the requirement for Masterplans and Design and Access Statements to accompany strategic and major development proposals, and
 - **Core Policy 44: Landscape** ensures the Vale's distinctive and intrinsic landscape and key features are protected from harmful development.

Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011

- 3.9 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continue to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.
- 3.10 The remaining saved policies relating to landscape that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:
- DC6: Landscaping
 - NE6: The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

²² Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 8-001-20140306

- NE7: The North Vale Corallian Ridge
- NE8: The Landscape Setting of Oxford
- NE9: The Lowland Vale
- NE10: Urban Fringes and Countryside Gaps
- NE11: Areas for Landscape Enhancement
- NE12: Great Western Community Forest

- 3.11 An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to consider if these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan. **Appendix 2** shows the outcomes of this assessment. In summary, only one of the eight saved policies (NE10) is carried forward or updated into the Part 2 plan in its current form.
- 3.12 Following a review of national policy and guidance (NPPF and NPPG), the Council considers it important to ensure the Vale’s distinctive and intrinsic landscape and key features are protected from harmful development, including the wider countryside. It is not considered necessary to take forward the specific landscape character policies in their current form, as this level of detail is covered in the Landscape Character Assessment which will be used to determine proposals as set out in Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan. This policy and evidence ensures the specific character of the landscape and wider countryside is taken into consideration, while providing sufficient flexibility to assess development proposals.

Evidence

- 3.14 A range of evidence base studies have been used to support the preparation of the policies. Below is a short summary of each study that has helped to shape the policies.

Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment (2017)

- 3.15 The Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment²³ supports the development of planning policies in the Local Plan 2031 and has been prepared alongside the Part 2 plan. The assessment identifies the key landscape features, including Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas, to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the Vale’s landscape.
- 3.16 The LCA will be used to assist the Development Management team when assessing development proposals that may impact upon the landscape. This ensures the specific character of the landscape is fully taken into consideration in accordance with Core Policy 44 of the Part 1 plan.

²³ Hankinson Duckett Associates (2017) Vale of White Horse draft Landscape Character Assessment, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017)

- 3.17 The Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy²⁴ has been prepared alongside the Part 2 plan and supports the policies in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 by setting out a strategic approach for the Vale, for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network.
- 3.18 Green Infrastructure (GI) is an integral part of the landscape that strongly influences landscape character and makes places distinctive.

Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)

- 3.19 The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) provides a landscape character assessment and biodiversity appraisal for Oxfordshire. This document is currently being used to help determine planning applications in the Vale.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 3.20 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 3.21 An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA Report was published alongside the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the 'Publication Version' of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan.
- 3.22 In considering the Landscape theme, the Interim SA Report recognises that Development Policy 28: Settlement Character and Gaps ensures that proposals do not compromise important gaps between settlements and to secure the separate identity and characteristics of individual settlements to contribute to local character and distinctiveness. The Report states that this policy will complement Core Policy 44 (Landscape) in the Part 1 plan which sets out to protect, and where possible enhance, the important landscape settings of settlements.
- 3.23 The Report also recognises that Development Policy 28 will also contribute towards the achievement of heritage objectives.

²⁴ Chris Blandford Associates (2017) South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse draft Green Infrastructure Strategy, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

3.24 In the updated SA Report, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies related to landscape perform well and should appropriately compliment the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular, the development policies provide additional detail to support Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), Core Policy 39 (Historic Environment) and Core Policy 44 (Landscape).

Summary of consultation and engagement

3.25 The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal Engagement

3.26 The Council undertook informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council to inform preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that helped to inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:

- Specialist Officer commented that up-to-date evidence, in the form of a Landscape Character Assessment, is necessary to support the implementation of Core Policy 44 (Landscape) in the Part 1 plan and to support a policy related to settlement character and gaps in the Part 2 plan
- Specialist Officers commented that an updated landscape character policy in the Part 2 plan should reflect the emerging Landscape Character Assessment, however it is considered Core Policy 44 in the Part 1 plan provides a sufficient policy framework for assessing development proposals
- Specialist Officers commented that a policy on settlement character and gaps should be supported by the Landscape Character Assessment to provide further detail
- Specialist Officers commented that a policy on settlement character and gaps should focus on the identity of places drawn from the Landscape Character Assessment, and
- Equalities Officer commented that a policy on settlement character and gaps should recognise the need to improve access to the countryside for all users, including people with disabilities and mobility impairments.

3.27 The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council. The responses received

have identified no further issues relating to the development management policies on landscape.

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

- 3.28 The Council published the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were received in relation to the landscape policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 2** below. All representations received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.²⁵

²⁵ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 2: Summary of consultation responses related to landscape

Policy	Summary	Council response
<p>Development Policy 28: Settlement Character and Gaps</p>	<p>A number of comments were received on the cumulative impact of development on the narrowing of settlement gaps over time. Comments were supportive of this policy but would like some provision to be made in the policy to prohibit the sequential narrowing of the gap through incremental development.</p> <p>A number of comments were received on the relationship between the evidence base and providing a blanket policy for the whole of the district. Justification for the policy was requested and justification for landscape areas to be judged.</p> <p>A number of comments were received suggesting that the policy should be strengthened. Comments suggested using the Local Plan 2011 saved policies as a basis for</p>	<p>In applying Development Policy 28, the Council will take into account Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan and the Landscape Character Assessment. The Council will take into account the individual effects of the proposal and the cumulative effects of existing and other proposed development when assessing development proposals.</p> <p>The Landscape Character Assessment provides detail to support Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan and Development Policy 28 in the Part 2 plan. The policy in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan has been refined to take into account recommendations from the Landscape Character Assessment. The Council considers this policy provides sufficient flexibility to assess development proposals in detail and sets out a positive strategy for conserving and enhancing the natural environment in line with national policy and guidance.</p> <p>The Council consider that Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan, Development Policy 28: Settlement Character and Gaps in the Part 2 plan and</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	<p>the proposed policy. Comments were received in support of Development Policy 28.</p> <p>Comments were received that stated the policy is too restrictive and could prevent sustainable and suitable sites coming forward and is therefore inconsistent with the NPPF and NPPG.</p>	<p>the Landscape Character Assessment provide sufficient level of detail when deciding on planning applications. The Council considers it important to ensure that the Vale's distinctive and intrinsic landscape and key features are protected from harmful development, including the wider countryside. This policy provides sufficient flexibility to assess development proposals in detail and sets out a positive strategy for conserving and enhancing the natural environment in line with national policy and guidance.</p> <p>The Council considers that the policy is in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. The Council recognises the need to promote thriving villages and rural communities, whilst also recognising the importance of safeguarding the separate identity and characteristics of individual settlements. Local Plan Part 1 supports the need to promote thriving villages and rural communities, whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character. The Council has produced a Landscape Character Assessment that supports Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan and Development Policy 28 in the Part 2 plan and provides sufficient flexibility to assess development proposals.</p>

Key Issues

- 3.29 Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.
- 3.30 The following key issues that were considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version for the Part 2 plan were:
- an up-to-date Landscape Character Assessment should be prepared to provide additional detail to support the implementation of policies in the Part 1 plan and Part 2 plan. The Part 2 plan should include accompanying text to ensure development proposals are compatible with the Landscape Character Types and Character Areas in the Landscape Character Assessment
 - the need for a policy on settlement character and gaps to be applied to the wider countryside, as well as distinctive and intrinsic landscape features
 - any update to the existing Saved Policy NE10 should be kept generic, reflect national policy and guidance and focus on detail drawn from the Landscape Character Assessment, and
 - the need to update or replace Saved Policy NE11 of the Local Plan 2011 related to areas of landscape enhancement.
- 3.31 The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed landscape policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:
- consider providing additional detail to the settlement character and gaps policy to assist in assessing development proposals of this nature. The detail should reflect the key findings set out within the Landscape Character Assessment and provide further consistency with national policy and guidance, and
 - consider including additional criteria in the settlement character and gaps policy to provide sufficient flexibility for assessing development proposals that are located between settlements.

Conclusions

- 3.32 Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.

3.33 The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the proposed landscape policies for consideration in the Preferred Options for the Part 2 plan were as follows:

- a policy was not considered necessary to include in the Part 2 plan related to landscape character as Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan, provides sufficient detail in protecting the Vale's key landscape features from harmful development by taking into account landscape character. However, supporting text is included in the Part 2 plan to ensure development proposals are compatible with the Council's Landscape Character Assessment
- a policy was included in the Part 2 plan that carried forward Saved Policy NE10 of the Local Plan 2011 in the Part 2 plan, in relation to settlement character and gaps. The policy is updated to set out measures to ensure that development proposals do not compromise important gaps between settlements. This is particularly relevant as the Vale comprises of many urban and rural settlements that each provide a locally distinctive character and identity. The policy is applied across the Vale of White Horse District, including the wider countryside, in accordance with national policy and guidance. The policy is also informed by a district-wide Landscape Character Assessment
- it was not considered necessary to replace Saved Policy NE6 of the Local Plan 2011 as Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan sufficiently covers this level of detail for assessing development proposals located within the North Wessex Downs AONB and its setting. The Part 1 plan also ensures that Core Policy 44 is applied using up-to-date legislation and landscape studies, including the AONB Landscape Character Assessment produced by the North Wessex Downs AONB Board and the Council's Landscape Character Assessment
- it was not considered necessary to replace Saved Policies NE7, NE8, NE9 and NE12 of the Local Plan 2011 in their current form as Core Policy 44: Landscape of the Part 1 plan ensures that the Vale's distinctive and intrinsic landscape and key features are protected from harmful development. The Council will apply this policy when assessing development proposals, taking into account the district-wide Landscape Character Assessment and any up-to-date legislation and guidance, and
- it was not considered necessary to replace Saved Policy NE11 of the Local Plan 2011 in its current form as Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan ensures that development proposals enhance damaged landscape areas. The implementation of this policy is supported by a Landscape Character Assessment that sets out principles for each landscape type to encourage positive change in weak or degraded

landscapes and to protect the highest quality and most sensitive landscapes.

3.34 The Council has reached the following conclusions in respect of policies related to landscape, following stages of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan in March 2017:

- the settlement character and gaps policy includes additional criteria to assess development proposals that are located between settlements, taking into account the individual effects of the proposal, cumulative effects of existing and other proposed development and the loss of environmental or historical assets that contribute towards a settlement's distinct and local identity. This reflects comments made at the Preferred Options consultation that suggested the policy was too restrictive and inconsistent with national policy. The Council considers the additional criteria provides sufficient flexibility to assess development proposals, supports recommendations set out in the Landscape Character Assessment and sets out a positive strategy for conserving and enhancing the natural environment in line with national policy and guidance, and
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.288 to the settlement character and gaps policy is updated to provide clarity that the Council will apply this policy, taking into account Core Policy 4 of the Part 1 plan and the district-wide Landscape Character Assessment, when assessing development proposals that are located between settlements.

3.35 A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

4.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.1. This section summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to the green infrastructure topic.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.2. Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies on 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. Key aims of the NPPF is the need to "*recognise that open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk, mitigation.....*"²⁶.
- 4.3. To ensure development conserves and enhances the natural environment, in relation to green infrastructure, Local Planning Authorities should:
- support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit business in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside²⁷
 - protect and enhance public rights of way and access and seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks, including National Trails²⁸
 - set out a strategic approach in their local plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure²⁹, and
 - minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity by identifying and mapping components of local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors³⁰.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Other Legislation

- 4.4. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) includes additional guidance on green infrastructure (GI), including the function that watercourses and other water bodies can play in supporting the GI network.³¹

²⁶ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

²⁷ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 28

²⁸ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 75

²⁹ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 114

³⁰ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 117

³¹ Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 8-027-2160211

- 4.5. The PPG also requires councils, through plan-making, to produce a green infrastructure framework or strategy, making an assessment of current GI provision to identify gaps in the network, and opportunities for improvement. National guidance also encourages neighbouring councils to work collaboratively with other stakeholders under the Duty to Cooperate to consider how wider strategies can help to address cross-boundary issues³².
- 4.6. In relation to Public Rights of Way and National Trails, the PPG states that ‘public rights of way form an important component of sustainable transport links and should be protected or enhanced’³³. The PPG also states the role of the Defra Rights of Way circular (1/09) that provides advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing public rights of way. It also contains guidance on the consideration of rights of way in association with development.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act)

- 4.7. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act) places a duty on authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in exercising their functions³⁴. Through plan-making and policy-making, the Act requires that aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats are protected and enhanced, with a particular relevance to green infrastructure such as watercourses.

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Part 1 plan), Adopted December 2016

- 4.8. Some of the key challenges and opportunities identified in the Part 1 plan include the need to improve access to waterways that add biodiversity and interest to the locality, providing corridors for recreation, tourism and wildlife and the need to support informal recreation and provide GI.
- 4.9. There are over a hundred watercourses within the Vale, varying from small springs and drainage channels, to the River Thames, and include several globally rare chalk streams. The geology of these chalk streams produce characteristic features that support special wildlife habitats and species, including protected species such as White Clawed Crayfish, Otters, Water Voles, Water Shrews and Kingfishers.
- 4.10. However, it is estimated that only around a quarter of Britain’s chalk streams are achieving ‘good’ ecological status under the Water Framework Directive.

³² Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 8-029-20160211

³³ CLG (2014) Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 37-004-20140306

³⁴ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, available at:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/pdfs/ukpga_20060016_en.pdf

- 4.11. Public Rights of Way and National Trails are also recognised as an element of GI that provides an important resource in the Vale for exercise, recreational and tourism activities and for their tranquillity, landscape, ecological and historical significance.
- 4.12. Strategic Objective 10 in the Part 1 plan aims to ensure that the natural environment including biodiversity, landscape, Green Infrastructure and waterways, is maintained and improved.
- 4.13. The Part 1 plan sets out a number of strategic policies related to green infrastructure, including:
- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness** ensures that all development achieves high quality design standards
 - **Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure** ensures a net gain to Green Infrastructure through on or off site provision or the improvement of existing assets, and
 - **Core Policy 46: Biodiversity** seeks to avoid a net loss of biodiversity and to permit development which would restore and enhance biodiversity.

Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011

- 4.14. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continued to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.
- 4.15. The remaining saved policies relating to green infrastructure that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:
- L3: Urban Open Space and Green Corridors
 - L10: Safeguarding and Improving Public Rights of way
 - L11: The Ridgeway
 - L12: The Thames Path
 - L14: Wilts & Berks Canal
 - L15: Wilts & Berks Canal
- 4.16. An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to consider whether these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan. **Appendix 3** shows the outcome of this assessment. In summary, all of the saved policies have been updated or carried forward into the Part 2 plan, but it is considered there is no need for separate policies.

Evidence

- 4.17 A range of evidence base studies have been used to support the preparation of the policies. Below is a short summary of each study that has helped to shape the policies.

Watercourses

Vale of White Horse Water Cycle Study (2015)

- 4.18. The Vale of White Horse Water Cycle Study³⁵ assessed the impacts of new housing developments on safe water, refuse water needs, and the impact of climate change on potential flood risk of allocated housing sites. The study also assessed the potential impact on the biodiversity of watercourses adjacent to potential housing sites and recommended that riparian buffer strips should be provided adjacent to watercourses within a development site or along its periphery.
- 4.19. It also recommended that the removal or modification of existing river culverts should be considered where practicable in line with Environment Agency guidance.

Viability Update (March 2017) and Viability Statement (October 2017)

- 4.20. The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd to undertake a viability assessment of the Part 2 plan. Viability assessment tests the effectiveness of the cumulative impact of the policies in the Part 2 plan and whether they would put a development at risk.
- 4.21. The Viability Update and Statement have assessed the viability of the green infrastructure policies and conclude that the green infrastructure development management policies are enabling policies rather than policies restricting development or imposing additional requirements, and therefore do not add additional burdens to developers.
- 4.22. The Viability Statement assessed Development Policy 30: Watercourses in relation to the provision of a 10m buffer adjacent to watercourses. The Statement concluded that this policy would not have an adverse impact on viability.

³⁵ JBA Consulting (2015) Vale of White Horse District Council – Water Cycle Study: Updated Phase 1 Study, available at:
<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=627990642&CODE=5B5E037FB8EDDB17AA1EFFC78D0AE00A&NAME=WWF01.1+Vale+of+White+Horse+District+Council+Water+Cycle+Study+%28September+2015%29&REF=LOCAL%20PLAN%202031%20PART%201%20EXAMINATION%20LIBRARY>

Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017)

- 4.23. The Green Infrastructure Strategy³⁶ presents the Councils' vision for the future provision and management of Green Infrastructure (GI) in the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Districts up to 2031. The Green Infrastructure Strategy also sets out principles and guidance to assist in the planning, design and delivery of Green Infrastructure in the Vale.
- 4.24. The Strategy has also identified deficits in Accessible Natural Green Space, following an analysis of current provision in the Vale of White Horse District. Deficits in ANG have been identified for each of the Market Towns, Local Service and Larger Villages located within the Vale.
- 4.25. The Strategy recommends that new development proposals should seek to enhance links to existing and new green infrastructure assets. A Strategic Green Infrastructure Network is identified that sets out the priorities for investment in Green Infrastructure at three inter-related scales: Strategic Corridors and Links; Strategic Areas within which landscape-scale GI opportunities are identified, and detailed areas around settlements where growth is planned in the Council's Local Plans, which identify local opportunities for GI enhancement based on an analysis of needs and opportunities for GI provision.
- 4.26. The Strategy also sets out a number of recommendations to minimise the impact of development on watercourses.
- 4.27. The Part 1 plan includes Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure that ensures development proposals provide a net gain in Green Infrastructure in line with the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (2017)

- 4.28. The HRA³⁷ to support the Part 2 plan concluded that increasing access to existing public rights of way and creating new connectors may lead to increases in recreational activity that could have the potential to increase pressure on European sites.
- 4.29. The Report recommended that the policy should consider increased pressure on sensitive receptors, such as ecologically valuable sites.

³⁶ Chris Blandford Associates (2017) South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse draft Green Infrastructure Strategy, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

³⁷ AECOM (2017) Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Habitats Regulations Assessment, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015 – 2025

- 4.30. Oxfordshire County Council has published a Rights of Way Management Plan 2015 – 2025³⁸ that sets out the vision for managing and improving the access to the public rights of way network, whilst continuing to identify and seek opportunities for improvements.

Oxfordshire County Council Definitive Map and Statement

- 4.31. The Definitive Map and Statement³⁹ shows the status and location of public rights of way routes in Oxfordshire.

Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration Strategy 2015

- 4.32. The Trust is preparing a number of technical studies to support the inclusion of a policy in the Part 2 plan and to demonstrate the long-term delivery of the project. The Trust has published a Restoration Strategy⁴⁰ that sets out their approach to the future restoration of the canal. This is underpinned by a number of supporting and emerging studies including feasibility studies, masterplanning, ecology assessment and a landowner engagement policy and programme.
- 4.33. The Council continues to work positively and constructively with the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership to explore their long-term vision for the future restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 4.34 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 4.35 An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA report was published alongside the ‘Preferred Options’ version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the ‘Publication Version’ of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the ‘Preferred Options’ version of the Part 2 plan.

³⁸ Oxfordshire County Council (2014) Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-2025; available at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-rights-way-management-plan>

³⁹ Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Definitive Map and Statement, available at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/definitive-map-and-statement-online>

⁴⁰ The Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership (2015) A Restoration Strategy for the Completion and Future Development of the Wilts & Berks Canal, available at: <http://www.canalpartnership.org.uk/files/studies/Abridged.pdf>

- 4.36 In the updated SA Report, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies relating to green infrastructure perform well and should appropriately compliment the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular, the development policies provide additional detail to support Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), Core Policy 45 (Green Infrastructure) and the sustainable transport policies.
- 4.37 The Report also states that there are no specific biodiversity focussed development policies, recognising that the Part 1 plan sets out to protect and enhance biodiversity through Core Policies 45 and 46. Policies on 'Watercourses' and 'The Wilts and Berks Canal' in the Part 2 plan are supportive of biodiversity and green infrastructure objectives.

Summary of consultation and engagement

- 4.38. The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal Engagement

- 4.39. The Council undertook informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in November 2016 to inform preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that helped to inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:
- Environment Agency recommended that a policy on watercourses should reflect current best practice and national guidance, including the River Wye Advice Note
 - Environment Agency commented that the policy on Wilts & Berks Canal should consider the need to assess impacts on ecology and water quality
 - Specialist Officers commented that the Part 2 plan should include an update to saved policy L3 in the Local Plan 2011 and should apply to all watercourses in the Vale
 - Oxfordshire County Council commented that an update to saved policy L12 in the Local Plan 2011 should refer to the need to protect and enhance open access areas as well as public rights of way and national trails
 - Oxfordshire County Council commented that the policy regarding the safeguarding for the route of Wilts & Berks Canal should provide more flexibility in delivering the route, and

- Equalities Officer commented that the policy on rights of way and national trails should consider access for all users, including people with disabilities.

4.40 The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in July 2017, following Preferred Options consultation. The responses received have helped to further refine the policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. Key comments were as follows:

- Oxfordshire County Council commented that the accompanying text in the Part 2 plan related to Green Infrastructure (GI) should also recognise Public Rights of Way as an important GI asset, and
- Oxfordshire County Council suggested a minor amendment to the accompanying text to the Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas policy to provide clarity that open access areas are defined and mapped by Natural England, and that Oxfordshire County Council provide additional mapping to show access points and permissive linking routes.

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

4.41 The Council published the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were received in relation to the housing policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 3** below. All representations received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.⁴¹

⁴¹ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 3: Summary of consultation responses related to green infrastructure

Policy	Summary	Council response
<p>Development Policy 29: Watercourses</p>	<p>The Environment Agency has suggested a number of amendments to the Watercourses policy.</p> <p>North Wessex Downs AONB Board welcomes the Watercourses policy and suggests that the policy is amended to add a specific reference to the particular importance of chalk stream habitats, their status as a special quality of the AONB, and the need to ensure that the watercourses, their surroundings and groundwater origins are safeguarded effectively.</p> <p>A comment objected to the policy on the grounds that the 10m buffer zone is too wide and would restrict development, and this has not been assessed in the Viability Study.</p> <p>A number of respondents support the Watercourses policy.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges the recommendations made by the Environment Agency and has considered them in refining the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The accompanying text is updated in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the recommendations made by the North Wessex Downs AONB. The accompanying text is updated in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan that refers to the importance of chalk streams in producing characteristic features that support wildlife habitats and protected species.</p> <p>Noted. The Viability Update and Statement to support the Part 2 plan concluded that the requirement in this policy for the provision of a 10m buffer zone will not have an adverse impact on viability.</p> <p>Support noted and welcomed.</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 30: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas	<p>The Council's Equalities Officers commented that the policy should improve access for those with disabilities.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council recommends that the health and wellbeing benefits are added to the supporting text.</p> <p>A number of comments highlight the importance of different transport actions including cycle paths and bridleways.</p>	<p>The Council consider the policy provides sufficient flexibility and has been informed by Equalities Impact Assessment. The accompanying text to the Part 2 plan ensures that development proposals consider how access to rights of way can be improved for all users, including provision for people with physical disabilities.</p> <p>Noted. The Council has considered this comment when refining the supporting text for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The accompanying text is updated in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan to make reference to the importance of design in contributing to health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Council recognise the importance of access to National Trails and Open Access areas. Oxfordshire County Council published the Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-2025 which covers cycle paths and bridleways to National Trails and open areas.</p>
Development Policy 31: The Wilts and Berks Canal	<p>Canal and River Trust support Development Policy 31, but would like to see a requirement in the policy to ensure that new development contributes to the restoration of the canal either via the S106 mechanism or Community Infrastructure Levy funding where such a contribution would meet the legal tests set out in Regulations 122 and 123 of the</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges and welcomes this support, and has considered the proposed amendment when refining this policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The policy and supporting text is updated in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan to reflect the Canal and River Trust's comments.</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).</p> <p>Wilts & Berks Canal Trust support the inclusion of Development Policy 31 in Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Wiltshire, Swindon & Oxfordshire Canal Partnership would like to see recognition of the creation of the new Jubilee Junction at Abingdon. The majority of the restoration will be on the historic route for the Wilts & Berks Canal.</p> <p>General support for Development Policy 31 in recognition of the opportunities the Wilts & Berks Canal can contribute towards heritage, biodiversity and recreation.</p>	<p>Support acknowledged and welcomed. The accompanying text to the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan makes recognition to a new junction at Abingdon. Additional text is included in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan that ensures the exception from the historic line to the south of Abingdon is also safeguarded in accordance with the policy. The accompanying text also ensures that if future development were to come forward to the south of Abingdon, the route will be reviewed through a masterplanning process in accordance with Core Policy 38 in the Part 1 plan.</p> <p>Support acknowledged and welcomed.</p>

Key Issues

- 4.42 Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.
- 4.43 The following key issues were considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version for the Part 2 plan:

Watercourses

- the need for a policy to protect the biodiversity and green infrastructure functions of all of the Vale's watercourses. Saved policies L2 and L3 in the Local Plan 2011 only protect specific watercourses and due to the nature and characteristics of the Vale, including the presence of nationally important chalk streams, it is important to protect and enhance all watercourses, and
- policy should consider a requirement for developers to provide buffer zones either side of the watercourse and encourage the removal of culverts.

Public Rights of Way and National Trails

- national policy requires local plans to include planning policies that seek to protect and/or enhance public rights of way and access. Planning policies should be considered to seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks, including National Trails
- any policy should complement and provide additional detail to the strategic policies in the Local Plan 2031 and design principles set out in the Design Guide SPD, and
- policy should also consider the need to seek financial contributions towards the improvements to public rights of way, open access areas and national trails and appropriate mitigation, clarifying whether such contributions will be collected through CIL or S106.

Wilts and Berks Canal

- national policy recognises canals and waterways as assets contributing to green infrastructure, and requires local planning authorities to set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure
- the Environment Agency has commented that any policy of this nature should ensure that invasive non-native species have been considered and

how their spread through any newly connected reaches of the canal network will be prevented

- any policy should also ensure that proposals for development identify where the source of water will be obtained from and consider the impacts on existing waterbodies or aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats, and
- the policy should safeguard an approximate route which would provide flexibility in delivering the long-term vision for the future restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal.

4.44 The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed green infrastructure policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:

- the policy and/or accompanying text related to watercourses should provide clarity in the policy in relation to the activities that are likely to be acceptable within a buffer zone
- the requirement for a 10m buffer zone in the watercourses policy should be considered in terms of the impact on viability
- the accompanying text to the watercourses policy should consider specific mention of chalk streams within the North Wessex Downs AONB
- the accompanying text to the Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas policy should consider providing a local context on open access areas, and
- the policy and/or accompanying text related to the Wilts and Berks Canal should consider the need to encourage development proposals to contribute towards improvements to or restoration of the Canal and to make reference that the exception from the historic line to the south of Abingdon is also safeguarded in accordance with this policy.

Conclusions

4.45. Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.

4.46. The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the green infrastructure policies for consideration in the Preferred Options for the Part 2 plan:

- a policy was included on watercourses to replace and update Saved Policy L3 of the Local Plan 2011. It is important that the policy ensures that all watercourses, including chalk streams, are protected and enhanced and are accommodated appropriately within new development

proposals reflecting comments from the informal engagement with specialist officers

- a policy was included that seeks to support improvements to the Public Rights of Way Network and protect National Trails. It was not considered necessary to have separate policies, therefore Saved Policies L10, L11 and L12 of the Local Plan 2011 were merged, and
- a policy was included on the Wilts and Berks Canal to replace and update Saved Policy L14 and L15 of the Local Plan 2011, to continue to support the long-term vision for the future restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal. However, it was not considered necessary to have separate policies, therefore saved policies L14 and L15 were merged. The Environment Agency commented that the policy should consider the need to assess impacts on ecology and water quality. This was reflected in the policy.

4.47 The Council has reached the following conclusions in respect of the policies related to Green Infrastructure, following stages of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan in March 2017 for consideration in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan:

- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.247 to the watercourses policy is amended to provide further clarity on the types of recreational activities that are acceptable within the buffer zones, reflecting comments made by Environment Agency at the Preferred Options consultation
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.240 to the watercourses policy is amended to include local context associated with the pressures affecting the health of watercourses in the Vale
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.260 to the Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas is updated to provide a general context on open access areas and their importance to the Vale in providing for a number of recreational activities reflecting comments made at public consultation on the Preferred Options version of the Part 2 plan. Oxfordshire County Council also commented that the Part 2 plan should provide clarity that areas of open access land are defined and mapped by Natural England, with additional mapping provided by the County Council to show access points and permissive linking routes. This is reflected in paragraph 3.262, with footnotes included to reference Natural England's 'CRoW and Coastal Access Maps' and OCC's 'Countryside Access Maps'
- the Wilts and Berks Canal policy and the additional accompanying text at paragraph 3.274 encourages development proposals to contribute towards improvements or restoration of the canal and appropriate mitigation, reflecting comments made by the Canal and River Trust

- the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership commented that the Part 2 plan should make recognition that the exception from the historic line to the south of Abingdon is also safeguarded in accordance with the policy. This is reflected at paragraph 3.270. Furthermore the accompanying text at paragraph 3.270 to this policy facilitates for a review of the route of the Wilts and Berks Canal through a masterplanning process, should future development come forward to the south of Abingdon.

4.48 A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

5.0 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 5.1 This section summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to the historic environment topic.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.2 Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies on 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. Key aims of the NPPF for local authorities are to "*set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment*"⁴² and the need to "*recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance*"⁴³.
- 5.3 To ensure heritage assets are conserved and enhanced, local planning authorities should:
- require developers to submit an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation in instances where development includes historic assets with archaeological interest⁴⁴
 - consider the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset⁴⁵
 - in instances where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage assets, refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh harm or loss⁴⁶, and
 - consider non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments subject to policies for designated heritage assets⁴⁷.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Legislation

- 5.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further guidance on the conservation and enhancement of designated and non-designated heritage assets. In particular, through plan-making local planning authorities should

⁴² CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

⁴³ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 127

⁴⁴ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 128

⁴⁵ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 132

⁴⁶ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 133

⁴⁷ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 139

identify specific opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, including the delivery of development within their settings that will make a positive contribution or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset.⁴⁸

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Part 1 plan), Adopted December 2016

- 5.5 The Vale of the White Horse has a rich and varied historic environment with a wealth of heritage assets to be found throughout the district providing attractive features for local residents and visitors alike. Heritage assets also support the district's economic and cultural well-being. Strategic Objectives 3 and 11 in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 ensure development is of a high quality that conserves and enhances the built, natural, historic and cultural assets of the Vale.
- 5.6 The Part 1 plan sets out two strategic policies relating to the historic environment and include:
- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness** ensures that all development achieves high quality design standards, and
 - **Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment** ensures new development conserves and enhances both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011

- 5.7 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continued to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.
- 5.8 The remaining saved policies relating to the historic environment that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:
- HE1: Conservation Areas
 - HE4: Historic Buildings
 - HE5: Historic Buildings
 - HE7: Historic Buildings
 - HE8: Historic Parks & Gardens
 - HE9: Archaeology
 - HE10: Archaeology

⁴⁸ Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 18a-004-20140306

- HE11: Archaeology

- 5.9 An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to consider if these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan. **Appendix 4** shows the outcome of this assessment. In summary, all of the saved policies are updated or carried forward into the Part 2 plan, with the exception of Saved Policy HE8: Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 5.10 It is not considered necessary to replace and update Saved Policy HE8 as Core Policy 39 in the Part 1 plan and the policy on heritage assets in the Part 2 plan sufficiently cover this level of detail when assessing development proposals of this nature.

Evidence

- 5.11 To support the preparation of up to date Development Management Policies in the Part 2 plan in relation to protecting the environment and responding to climate change, evidence has been drawn from a range of sources. Set out below is a short summary of each document that helped to shape the plan.

Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (2017)

- 5.12 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)⁴⁹ provides an understanding of the historic and cultural origins and development of the local landscape through a desk based programme of digital mapping, description and analysis. The HLC prepared by Oxfordshire County Council and Historic England forms part of the evidence base to support the Local Plan 2031 and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications which may affect the significance of a heritage asset.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 5.13 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 5.14 An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA report was published alongside the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the 'Publication Version' of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan.

⁴⁹ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-historic-landscape-characterisation-project>

- 5.15 In considering the Heritage theme, the Interim SA Report stated that Development Policy 35 sets out the Council's approach to conserve and enhance heritage assets in the Vale, in the context of the social, cultural, environmental and economic significance of the assets. The Report recommended that consideration is given to historic routes, which are a local feature, including pre-historic tracks such as the Ridgeway.
- 5.16 In the updated SA Report, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies related to heritage perform well and should appropriately compliment the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular the development policies provide additional detail to support Core Policy 39 (The Historic Environment).

Summary of consultation and engagement

- 5.19 The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal Engagement

- 5.20 The Council undertook informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in November 2016 to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that helped inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:
- the Conservation Team commented that existing saved policies are silent on the protection of historic routes
 - the Conservation Team commented that a policy on conservation areas should seek to protect historical and architectural features and provide guidance on shopfronts, and
 - Historic England commented that a policy on archaeology should ensure that both designated and non-designated nationally important archaeological remains should be retained in situ. The Part 2 plan should also refer to current national guidance, including Historic England's Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 5.21 The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in July 2017, following Preferred Options consultation. The informal received helped to further refine the policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. Key comments were as follows:
- Historic England supported the policies and/or accompanying text in relation to the historic environment, but suggested some minor changes

to provide further clarity and consistency with national policy, guidance and legislation, and

- Oxfordshire County Council suggested some minor changes to the accompanying text to provide further clarity, such as the role of the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

5.22 The Council published the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were received in relation to the housing policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 4** below. All representations received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 4: Summary of consultation responses related to historic environment

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 35: Heritage Assets	<p>Historic England made one comment suggesting that it is sufficient for new development proposals to conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset, and that if proposals meet one or more criteria in the proposed policy then they can be much more strongly supported.</p> <p>One respondent stated that the policy is not necessary because of Development Policies 36 and 37 of Part 2 plan.</p>	<p>Noted. The Council has considered Historic England’s comments in refining the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The policy is updated to closely align with national policy and guidance, and to provide sufficient flexibility when assessing development proposals.</p> <p>The Council considers that the policy provides additional detail to support Core Policy 39: Historic Environment in the Part 1 plan and is consistent with national policy and guidance.</p>
Development Policy 36: Conservation Areas	<p>Historic England support the policy as part of a positive and clear strategy for the conservation, enjoyment and enhancement of the historic environment.</p> <p>One respondent suggested including text to explain when conservation area appraisals will be carried out.</p>	<p>Support from Historic England is acknowledged and welcomed.</p> <p>The Council continues to review the district’s Conservation Areas and will prepare or update Conservation Area Character Appraisals on a rolling basis. The Publication Version of the Part 2 plan includes a reference to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which sets out the Council’s duty to designate conservation areas and review their boundaries</p>
Development Policy 37: Listed Buildings	<p>Historic England welcomes the policy on Listed Buildings and suggests amendments to the policy.</p>	<p>Support from Historic England is acknowledged and welcomed. The Council has considered Historic England’s comment in refining the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.</p>

Key Issues

- 5.23 Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.
- 5.24 The following key issues were considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan:
- a policy on archaeology should ensure that both designated and non-designated nationally important archaeological remains should be retained in situ and should refer to current national guidance, and Historic England's Historic Environment Record (HER)
 - policies should set out the need to protect all heritage assets, including Historic Routes
 - a policy on Conservation Areas should seek to protect its historical and architectural features, and
 - the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 should include detailed policies on heritage assets within the Vale.
- 5.25 The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed historic environment policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:
- Minor amendments to policies related to the historic environment to reflect comments made by Historic England to ensure a positive strategy to conserving and enhancing the historic environment in accordance with national policy and guidance
 - the policy and/or supporting text on conservation areas should include reference to the importance of conserving and enhancing traditional shopfronts, and
 - the listed building policy should make it clear that the whole or partial demolition of a listed building will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, in line with national policy and guidance.

Conclusions

- 5.26 Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.

5.27 The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the historic environment policies for consideration in the Preferred Options version of the Part 2 plan:

- a policy was included that sets out the Council's approach to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings in the Vale, reflecting comments from informal engagement with specialist officers
- a policy was included on Conservation Areas that sets out measures to ensure Conservation Areas are protected from inappropriate development, which replaces Saved Policy HE1 of the Local Plan 2011. The Council's Conservation Team commented that the policy should also provide guidance on shopfronts. This was reflected in the supporting text at paragraph 3.293 where development proposals should take into account relevant principles set out in the Council's Design Guide SPD to ensure they reflect the special interest and character of the Conservation Area
- a policy was included that sets out measures to assess development proposals that affect a Listed Building and/or its setting, which replaces Saved Policies HE4, HE5 and HE7 of the Local Plan 2011
- a policy was included that sets out the Council's approach to the conservation and enhancement of Scheduled Monuments, nationally important archaeological remains and other non-designated archaeological sites, which replaces Saved Policies HE9, HE10 and HE11 of the Local Plan 2011. This reflected comments made by Historic England
- the Council's Conservation Team commented that the Part 2 plan should include the need to protect historic routes within the Vale. This was reflected in the supporting text at paragraph 3.308, where historic routes are recognised as an important archaeology features and are protected under the policy on archaeology and scheduled monuments, and
- it was not considered necessary to replace or update Saved Policy HE8 of the Local Plan 2011 as it was considered that Core Policy 39 in the Part 1 plan and the policy on heritage assets in the Part 2 plan will provide sufficient level of detail.

5.28 The Council has reached the following conclusions in respect of policies related to heritage, following stages of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan in March 2017, for consideration in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan:

- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.318 to the listed buildings policy is more closely aligned with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to proposals involving the demolition of a listed building, reflecting comments made by Historic England at the Preferred Options consultation

- the criteria in the heritage assets policy is updated to closely align with national policy, guidance and legislation, and to provide sufficient flexibility when assessing development proposals, reflecting comments made by Historic England at Preferred Options consultation, and
- the Part 2 plan includes additional text at paragraph 3.311 to the policy on conservation areas to ensure that proposals for shopfronts reflects the special interest and traditional characteristics of existing shopfronts in accordance with the Design Guide SPD and the policy, reflecting comments made by the Council's specialist officer.

5.29 A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

6.0 OPEN SPACE, LEISURE AND RECREATION

6.1. This section summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to open space, sports and leisure provision.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF)

6.2. Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government's principles for "Promoting healthy communities". Key aims of the NPPF is the need to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by creating a high quality built environment that supports health, social and cultural well-being and "*encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that open land can perform a function for recreation*"⁵¹.

6.3. To ensure development promotes health, social and cultural well-being, local planning authorities should:

- aim to achieve places which promote safe and accessible developments containing.....high quality public spaces which encourages the active and continual use of public areas⁵²
- ensure planning policies are based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision⁵³, and
- protect existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields subject to certain criteria.⁵⁴

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

6.4. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) requires local planning authorities to consider opportunities for promoting high quality open spaces, green infrastructure and opportunities for play, sport and recreation when making their local plans⁵⁵.

6.5. The PPG provides additional guidance on open space, leisure and recreation, in particular the need for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas.⁵⁶

⁵¹ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

⁵² CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 59

⁵³ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 73

⁵⁴ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 74

⁵⁵ Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 53-002-20140306

⁵⁶ Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 37-001-20140306

- 6.6. Guidance encourages local planning authorities to consider Sport England's guidance to assess the needs for sports and recreation facilities⁵⁷.

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (LPP1), Adopted December 2016

- 6.7. One of the key challenges and opportunities for the Vale is the need to ensure high quality and accessible services are provided as part of new development so existing and new residents can continue to enjoy a good quality of life.
- 6.8. Supporting the need to provide and enhance open spaces for recreation is also a key challenge and opportunity for the Vale.
- 6.9. Strategic Objectives 2 to 4 in the Local Plan ensures development is integrated into the environment, creates attractive places and are supported by a range of services and facilities to cater for existing and future needs.
- 6.10. The Part 1 plan sets out three strategic policies related to open space, sports and leisure provision and include:
- **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services:** ensures developers provide a range of supporting infrastructure and services, including the provision of open space, leisure and recreation facilities
 - **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness:** ensures that all development achieves high quality design standard, and
 - **Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure:** which seeks to ensure the appropriate provision of Green Infrastructure through new development.

Saved Policies in the Local Plan 2011

- 6.11. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continued to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.
- 6.12. The remaining saved policies relating to open space, leisure and sports provision that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:
- H23: Open space in new housing developments
 - L1: Playing Space

⁵⁷ Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 37-002-20140306

- L2: Urban Open Space and Green Corridors
- L4: Allotments
- L7: Retention of small-scale local leisure facilities
- L8: Provision of small-scale local leisure facilities
- L9: The provision of countryside recreation facilities
- L13: Proposed Park at Folly Hill, Faringdon
- L17: River Thames
- L18: Land South of the Abingdon Marina

6.13. An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to consider if these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan.

Appendix 5 shows the outcome of this assessment. In summary, eight of the ten saved policies are updated or carried forward into the Part 2 plan with two saved policies not being replaced. These saved policies taken forward are combined into three individual policies covering Leisure and Sports Facilities, Open Space and Countryside Recreation Facilities.

6.14. It is not considered necessary in taking forward saved policy L13 as the park at Folly Hill, Faringdon is now implemented and will be protected by Development Policy 32: Open Space in the Part 2 plan.

6.15. It is also not considered necessary in taking forward saved policy L18 as it will be covered by other relevant policies in the Local Plan 2031.

Evidence

6.16 A range of evidence base studies have been used to support the preparation of the policies. Below is a short summary of each study that has helped to shape the policies.

6.17 The Council has commissioned a number of evidence base studies to inform the policies in the Part 2 plan related for open space, leisure and sports provision. The studies have been undertaken in accordance with the current best practice and national guidance, including methodologies produced by National Governing Bodies such as Sport England.

6.18 The following studies have helped to inform policy and the development of local standards in the Part 2 plan.

Leisure and Sports Facilities Study 2013 - 2031 (2014)

- 6.19 This study⁵⁸ assessed the need for outdoor and indoor sport and leisure facilities. The assessment was undertaken in line with current best practice and national guidance. It assesses the current provision for a range of facilities and sets out local standards for new sports and leisure facilities, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility for enhancing facilities to provide for an increased population.

Local Leisure Facilities Report (2016)

- 6.20 This report⁵⁹ assessed the need for local leisure facilities, including village and community halls, outdoor bowls and outdoor tennis. The assessment was undertaken in line with current best practice and national guidance. The assessment included an audit to assess the quality of existing local leisure facilities in the district. The report considers and develops new local standards for various types of community and local leisure facilities, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

Open Spaces Report (2016)

- 6.21 This report⁶⁰ assessed the need for open space, including parks and gardens, amenity green space, equipped children's play areas, young people's space and allotments. The assessment was undertaken in line with current best practice and national guidance. The assessment included an audit of each recognised open space in the district. The report considers and develops new local planning standards for open space including children's play and youth provision, public open space (parks and gardens and amenity green space) and allotments, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

Playing Pitch Study (2015)

- 6.22 This study⁶¹ assessed the need for artificial grass pitches and grass pitches including cricket, football and rugby union. The assessment was undertaken in line with current best practice and national guidance including Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (October 2013). The assessment included site visits for each playing pitch in the district. The report considers and develops local standards for playing pitches in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

⁵⁸ Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Leisure and Sports Facilities Study 2013-2031; available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=627981333&CODE=4589D59B5ACF9D9B49FAD25E9C0D215F&NAME=13+COM+-+Communities%2C+Services+and+Recreation&REF=Local%20Plan%202031%20Part%201%20Examination%20Library>

⁵⁹ Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) Local Leisure Facilities Study; available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

⁶⁰ Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) Open Spaces Report; available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

⁶¹ Vale of White Horse District Council (2015) Playing Pitch Study; available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Viability Update (March 2017) and Viability Statement (October 2017)

- 6.23. The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd to undertake a viability assessment of the Part 2 plan. Viability assessment tests the effectiveness of the cumulative impact of the policies in the Part 2 plan and whether they would put a development at risk.
- 6.24. The Viability Update and Statement have assessed the viability of the leisure and open space policies and conclude that the development management policies that require the open space and leisure and sports provision are reflected in the modelling, and therefore do not add additional burdens to developers.
- 6.25. Development Policy 33: Open Space includes the provision for 15% of the site area to be laid out as public open space. The Viability Update has concluded that this requirement is reflected in the modelling and does not add additional burdens to developers.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 6.26. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 6.27. An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA report was published alongside the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the 'Publication Version' of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan.
- 6.28. In considering the Health theme, the Interim SA Report recognises that Development Policy 32: Open Space sets out measures and local standards for the provision of open space in association with new developments and the protection of existing open space. A combined standard for amenity green space and parks and garden will apply for new developments to ensure multi-functional green space is incorporated and design appropriately.
- 6.29. In relation to Development Policy 33: Leisure and Sports Facilities, the Interim SA Report recognises that access to indoor and outdoor facilities is important to allow communities and residents to participate in sporting activities and contribute towards health and well-being.

- 6.30. In the updated SA Report, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies relating to open space, leisure and sport perform well and should appropriately compliment the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), Core Policy 45 (Green Infrastructure) and the sustainable transport policies.

Summary of consultation and engagement

- 6.31 The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal Engagement

- 6.32 The Council undertook informal engagement with specialist officers within the Council in November 2016 to inform preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that have helped to inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:
- the Development Management Team commented that a policy on open space should be prescriptive on NEAP and LEAP requirements
 - the Development Management Team commented that the approach for requiring 15% of the residential area as public open space has been successful in securing open space for new major development proposals under the existing Saved Policy H23 of the Local Plan 2011 , and
 - the Leisure Team commented that the Part 2 plan should clearly define leisure and sports facilities.
- 6.33. The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in July 2017, following Preferred Options consultation. The responses received helped to further refine the policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. Key comments were as follows:
- Natural England were supportive of the countryside recreational facilities policy, and
 - the Council's Equalities Officer commented that the countryside recreational facilities should include the need for development proposals to take into account accessibility for all users, including people with physical impairments.

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

- 6.34. The Council published the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were

received in relation to open space, sport and leisure policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 5** below. All representations received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.⁶²

⁶² The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 5: Summary of consultation responses related to open space, leisure and sport facilities

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 32: Open Space	<p>Local Plan 2031 Part 2 approach to open space is too prescriptive. Open space standards should allow for a flexible response to individual characteristics of each site and development proposal.</p> <p>The standards in Appendix F indicate that Children’s Play and Youth Provision is excluded from the 15% of a site allocated for open space. Therefore onsite provision of all types of open space will exceed the 15% allowance. The provision for on-site leisure and sports facilities will reduce the area allowed for residential development.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council would like to see reference made in paragraph 3.264 to the benefits of open space in improving health and well-being and increasing opportunities for social interaction.</p> <p>Sport England would like to see the wording in Development Policy 32 more closely</p>	<p>Noted. The Council has undertaken an Open Spaces Report in line with current best practice and relevant national guidance, including the Fields in Trust standards. Development Policy 32 ensures that major proposals provide or contribute, towards open space provision allowing flexibility for individual circumstances. The 15% as stated in Appendix F applies only to the residential area and the provision of public open space such as parks and gardens and amenity green space. This approach has been successful in securing open space for new major development proposals under the existing Saved Policy of the Local Plan 2011 and has been tested in the Viability Update to support the Part 2 plan.</p> <p>Noted. The Council agree that the inclusion of 'health and well-being' and 'increasing opportunities for social interaction' in paragraph 3.264 would provide further consistency with national policy. This amendment would also align with the Council's Strategic Objectives set out in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1. In particular, SO 4 and SO 11 by ensuring high quality design standards to improve the health and well-being of Vale residents and to reduce social exclusion.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges Sport England's comment on the policy, in particular bullet 3. The Council has amended</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	aligned with the wording in paragraph 94 of the NPPF. Currently bullet 3 could result in playing fields being lost to other community uses and not sport or recreation.	the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan to closely align with national policy and guidance.
Development Policy 33: Leisure and Sports Facilities	<p>Sport England commented that the Policy needs to be reworded to closely align to the NPPF.</p> <p>Must make sure the policy is applicable to equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists, disabled users and all other applicable users and that builders implement accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Standards, as set out in Appendix F, need to be flexibly applied in the determination of future planning applications.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges Sport England's comment on the policy, in particular bullet 3. The Council has amended the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan to closely align with national policy and guidance.</p> <p>Noted. The Council consider the policy provides sufficient flexibility and has been informed by Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Noted. The Council has undertaken a Local Leisure Facilities Report, Leisure and Sports Facilities Study and Playing Pitch Study in line with current best practice and relevant national guidance, including guidance from National Governing Bodies and Sport England. Development Policy 32 ensures that major proposals provide or contribute towards leisure and sports facilities, allowing some flexibility for individual circumstances.</p>
Development Policy 34: Countryside Recreation Facilities	<p>Supportive of the inclusion of the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>Must make sure the policy is applicable to equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists, disabled users and all other applicable users.</p>	<p>Support noted and welcomed.</p> <p>Noted. The Council consider the policy provides sufficient flexibility and has been informed by Equalities Impact Assessment.</p>

Key Issues

- 6.35. Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.
- 6.36. The following key issues were considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version for the Part 2 plan:
- policies related to open space and leisure in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 should refer to local standards set out in the leisure and open space technical studies
 - a policy is needed to ensure the provision of open space and the protection of existing open spaces. This policy has been successfully implemented by the development management team when assessing development proposals, and
 - a policy is needed to ensure the provision of leisure and sports facilities and the protection of existing leisure and sports facilities.
- 6.37. The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed open space, leisure and sport policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:
- the policies related to open space and leisure and sports facilities should be more closely aligned with paragraph 74 of the NPPF, in relation to the protection of existing provision
 - the accompanying text should reference the benefits of providing open space on health and well-being and social interaction, and
 - the requirement for 15% open space in the open spaces policy and requirements for sports and leisure facilities in the leisure policy should be considered in terms of their impact on viability.

Conclusions

- 6.38. Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.
- 6.39. The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the open space, leisure and sport policies for consideration in the Preferred Options for the Part 2 plan:
- a policy was included that set out measures and local standards for the provision of open space in association with new developments and the

protection of existing open space in the Vale, reflecting the Open Spaces Report. This policy replaces Saved Policy H23, L1, L2 and L4 of the Local Plan 2011 and reflect comments made by specialist officers in the Council

- a policy was included that set out measures and local standards for the provision of leisure and sport facilities provision in association with new developments and the protection of existing leisure and sports facilities in the Vale, reflecting local evidence contained within the Local Leisure Facilities Report, Leisure and Sports Facilities Study and the Playing Pitch Study. This policy replaces Saved Policy L7 and L8 of the Local Plan 2011 and reflects comments made by specialist officers in the Council
- a policy was included that supports the development of small-scale countryside recreational facilities in the open countryside. This policy replaced Saved Policy L9 of the Local Plan 2011, and
- it was not considered necessary to replace or update Saved Policies L13 and L18 of the Local Plan 2011 as it was considered other relevant policies in the Part 1 plan and Part 2 plan provide a sufficient level of detail when assessing development proposals of this nature.

6.40. The Council has reached the following conclusions in respect of the policies related to open space, leisure and sports policies, following stages of informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation in March 2017 for consideration in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan:

- the criteria of the open space and leisure policies are amended to be more closely aligned to paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in relation to the protecting of existing open space, leisure and sports provision, reflecting comments made by Sport England at Preferred Options consultation
- Oxfordshire County Council commented that the Part 2 plan should make reference to the benefits associated with open space for improving health and well-being and providing opportunities for social interaction. This is updated in paragraph 3.275 of the Part 2 plan
- criteria (i) of the countryside recreation facilities policy ensures development proposals take into account harm to the North Wessex Downs AONB, including its setting, reflecting comments made by the North Wessex Downs AONB Board, and
- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.290 to the leisure policy has been updated to include the need for development proposals to take into account the Council's Priority Action Plan in the Playing Pitch Study and Leisure and Sports Facilities Study to identify specific projects for leisure and sports provision, reflecting comments made by Sport England at Preferred Options consultation.

6.41 A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- 7.1. This sections summarises the process the Council has followed to formulate its policies in relation to the environmental health topic.

National Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 7.2. Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government's principles to "Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Key aims of the NPPF include contributing to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution⁶³ by preventing new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land stability⁶⁴. The NPPF also requires remediating and mitigating.....contaminated and unstable land where appropriate⁶⁵.
- 7.3. The NPPF also aims to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.⁶⁶

Noise Planning Statement for England (NPSE), March 2010

- 7.4. The Noise Planning Statement for England (NPSE)⁶⁷ clarifies the principles and aims of existing national guidance and related legislation in terms of noise. The Statement applies to all forms of noise, including environmental noise, neighbour noise and neighbourhood noise.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Legislation and Other Guidance

- 7.5. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional guidance on the national policies identified in the NPPF. In regards to land affected by contamination, the guidance places a strong emphasis on the need for Council's to adequately deal with contamination⁶⁸, in instances where it would cause harm to human health, property and the wider environment, or where it could limit or preclude new development.

⁶³ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 17

⁶⁴ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 109

⁶⁵ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 109

⁶⁶ CLG (2012) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 110

⁶⁷ DEFRA (2010) Noise Policy Statement for England, available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69533/pb13750-noise-policy.pdf

⁶⁸ Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 33-001-20140306

- 7.6. The need to adequately deal with contaminated land is a legal requirement set out within the Water Framework Directive⁶⁹.
- 7.7. Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also requires a risk based approach to be taken to identify and remediate land where contamination poses an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.
- 7.8. In preparing Local Plans, the PPG states that local planning authorities should have regard to the possible impact of land contamination on neighbouring areas, for example polluting surface water or groundwater⁷⁰. The PPG provides further guidance on the roles of developers and information required to support a planning application.
- 7.9. In regard to noise pollution, the guidance requires local plans to consider noise issues where new developments create additional noise or would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic⁷¹. In doing so, local planning authorities are encouraged to consider improvements to the acoustic environment in plan-making. The PPG sets out options to mitigate possible impacts from noise making developments depending on the type of development being considered and the character of the proposed location. This can include using good design to minimise noise transmission through screening by natural or purpose built barriers or the use of planning conditions and obligations to restrict activities at certain times⁷².
- 7.10. For noise sensitive development, the PPG sets out possible options to mitigate impacts, including the use of design to reduce the impact of noise from the local environment or by including noise barriers⁷³.
- 7.11. National guidance provides local planning authorities with the opportunity to develop and include in their Local Plans specific noise standards that can be applied to forms of proposed development and locations in their area⁷⁴.

Local Policy Context

Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Part 1 plan), Adopted December 2016

- 7.12. Some of the key challenges and opportunities in the Part 1 plan are the need to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and the promoting efficient use of natural resources. Strategic Objective 4 in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 seeks to ensure

⁶⁹ EU Water Framework Directive 2000, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

⁷⁰ Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 33-005-20140306

⁷¹ Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 30-001-20140306

⁷² Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 30-008-20140306

⁷³ Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 30-008-20140306

⁷⁴ Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 30-010-20140306

improvements to the health and well-being of Vale residents, by improving health and safety. Strategic Objective 12 seeks to minimise greenhouse gases emissions and pollution, including noise.

7.13. The Part 1 plan sets out three strategic policies relating to environment health and include:

- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness** which seeks to ensure that all development achieves high quality design standards
- **Core Policy 43: Natural Resources** ensures that land is of a suitable quality for development and that remediation of contaminated land is undertaken, and
- **Core Policy 44: Landscape** ensures the need to protect the key landscape features of the Vale against intrusion from light pollution, noise and motion.

7.14. In addition to the above, it should be noted that criteria (vi) in Core Policy 43: Natural Resources of the Part 1 plan only applies to development proposals that are located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Part 2 plan will need to consider including an additional policy to assess proposals adjacent or near to an AQMA and to set necessary measures to mitigate such impacts.

Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011

7.15. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of the Part 1 plan, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced, however some policies continued to be saved through the Part 1 plan and will be replaced by the Part 2 plan.

7.16. The remaining saved policies relating to environmental health that have been reviewed as part of preparing the Part 2 plan are:

- DC9: The impact of development on neighbouring uses
- DC10 The effect of neighbouring or previous uses on new development
- DC12: Water quality and resources

7.17. An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to consider if these policies remain appropriate and consistent with national policy and guidance, and if they should be replaced or updated by new policies within the Part 2 plan. **Appendix 6** shows the outcome of this assessment. In summary, two of the three saved policies have been updated or carried forward into the Part 2 plan with 1 saved policy (DC12) not being replaced.

- 7.18. It is not considered necessary in taking forward saved policy DC12 as Core Policy 43: Natural Resources in the Part 1 plan sufficiently covers this level of detail.

Evidence

- 7.19. A range of evidence base studies have been used to support the preparation of the policies. Below is a short summary of each study that has helped to shape the policies.

Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) (2016)

- 7.20. The Council continues to monitor levels of nitrogen dioxide throughout the district and produces progress reports and annual reports that contain details of recent air quality monitoring across the whole of the Vale. The latest Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) published in 2016⁷⁵ suggests that the air quality objective is breached at four monitoring sites in the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and at one other site in Abingdon.
- 7.21. The report has concluded that at Abingdon-on-Thames, the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide, particularly along Marcham Road, are close to the air quality objectives and levels at this location continue to be kept under review. The report has also concluded that within part of the AQMA in Botley, the objective is still being exceeded where houses are close to the A34, particularly adjacent to the southbound carriageway.

Oxfordshire Air Quality (2017)

- 7.22. Oxfordshire Air Quality⁷⁶ monitors levels of air quality across Oxfordshire. The information is presented on a live interactive website and a Daily Air Quality Index records the current levels of air pollution within a particular site or region.

Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2015)

- 7.23. The adopted Design Guide SPD⁷⁷ provides detailed guidance, by setting a number of design principles, intended to ensure development is appropriately located away from noise disturbance, whilst ensuring that development proposals are carefully designed to mitigate any potential impacts from noise.

⁷⁵ Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR), available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/environment/pollution/air-quality/how-we-monitor>

⁷⁶ <https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/>

⁷⁷ Vale of White Horse Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2015), available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/supplementar-2>

Viability Update (March 2017) and Viability Statement (October 2017)

- 7.24. The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd to undertake a viability assessment of the Part 2 plan. Viability assessment tests the effectiveness of the cumulative impact of the policies in the Part 2 plan and whether they would put a development at risk.
- 7.25. The Viability Update and Statement have assessed the viability of the environmental health policies and conclude that these development management policies bring forward the provisions of the saved policies and provide detail of those in the Part 1 plan, and therefore do not add additional burdens to developers.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 7.26. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken on all of the Development Management Policies and the conclusions relating to policies that protect the environment and respond to climate change are set out below.
- 7.27. An SA Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives. An Interim SA report was published alongside the 'Preferred Options' version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 document for public consultation in March 2017. The Interim SA Report has been updated to inform the 'Publication Version' of the Part 2 plan, taking into account the consultation responses received from public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan.
- 7.28. In considering the 'pollution' theme, the Interim SA Report stated that Development Policy 24: Noise Pollution ensures that development proposals set out a scheme of mitigation, where noise-generating development would result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses, environment or biodiversity. The policy ensures that noise sensitive developments are located away from existing sources of noise.
- 7.29. In the updated SA Report, it concludes the appraisal of the development policies related to environmental health perform well and should appropriately compliment the Core Policies as set out in the Part 1 plan. In particular, the development policies provide additional detail to support Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) and Core Policy 43 (Natural Resources).

Summary of consultation and engagement

- 7.30. The Council has undertaken both formal consultation and informal engagement which has shaped the policies. Below is a summary of the consultation and engagement that has supported the preparation of the policies.

Informal Engagement

7.31. The Council undertook informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council in November 2016 to inform preparation of the Part 2 plan. The responses received have identified a number of issues that helped to inform policy development to inform the Part 2 plan 'Preferred Options' consultation. Key comments included:

- general support from specialist officers within the Council and key stakeholders to a number of policies related to environmental health
- Environment Agency provided a number of comments to provide clarity and improve consistency of the contaminated land policy with national policy, including the role of water bodies and source protection zones
- Environment Agency commented that a policy on noise pollution should consider the impact on local biodiversity
- the Environmental Health Team commented that a policy on noise pollution should consider proposals for noise-sensitive development and noise-generating development
- the Environmental Health Team commented that a policy on air quality is needed to assess proposals within or near an AQMA. Policy should refer to mitigation options and the Council's Developer Guidance, and
- the Environmental Health Team commented that a policy on land affected by contamination should consider historical contamination.

7.32. The Council undertook a further stage of informal engagement with specialist officers within the Council in July 2017, following Preferred Options consultation. The responses received have helped to further refine the policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. Key comments were as follows:

- the Environmental Health Team commented that a minor change should be considered to criteria (ii) of the policy related to noise pollution to improve the effectiveness of the policy in relation to external amenity values.

Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017)

7.33. The Council published the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017 for public consultation. A number of comments were received in relation to environmental health policies. These comments have identified a number of key issues that have helped to refine the policies for inclusion in the 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Key comments are summarised in **Table 6** below. All representations received from public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan, related to this

theme, are summarised and are available to view in **Appendix 3** of the **Consultation Statement**.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Table 6: Summary of consultation responses related to environmental health

Policy	Summary	Council response
Development Policy 24: Noise Pollution	<p>Environment Agency, North Wessex Downs AONB Unit and The North Abingdon Local Plan Group support Development Policy 24 and supporting text. However, North Wessex Downs AONB Unit would like to see specific reference to maintaining and enhancing the tranquillity of the AONB.</p> <p>A number of comments relate to the effects that noise pollution can have off-site on the wider environment and the tranquillity of rural areas.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledge the Environment Agency's, North Wessex Downs AONB and North Abingdon Local Plan Group's support for Development Policy 24. The Council has considered this comment in updating the accompanying text for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.</p> <p>The Council considers Development Policy 24 sufficiently covers the need to ensure that proposals likely to create additional noise that would have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses, the environment and biodiversity, are appropriately mitigated.</p> <p>Furthermore, Core Policy 44: Landscape in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 seeks to ensure the Vale's landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced including features that contribute towards the tranquillity and need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise and motion.</p>
Development Policy 25: Air Quality	<p>South Oxfordshire District Council and North Wessex Downs AONB Board supported this policy.</p> <p>The Council's Air Quality Officer suggested that the policy should refer to the emerging Air Quality Developers Guidance.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges and welcomes the support.</p> <p>Noted. Development Policy 25: Air Quality ensures that development proposals of a large scale or likely to significantly impact on air quality, including where located in or near an AQMA will require an Air Quality Assessment to be undertaken in line with best practice</p>

Policy	Summary	Council response
	One comment would like a clearer definition of 'near' in relation to development proposals.	and guidance. Applicants will be required to take into account the Council's emerging Air Quality Developers Guidance. The Council acknowledges and welcomes the support and has updated the policy for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.
Development Policy 26: Land Affected by Contamination	Environment Agency support Development Policy 26 and its accompanying text. Policy should be strengthened to ensure that development does not occur in areas that are subject to pollution.	The Council acknowledge the Environment Agency's support for this policy and accompanying text. Noted. Development Policy 22: Impact of Development on Amenity ensures that development proposals take into account factors including pollution when considering cumulative and individual impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses. The design of new development should minimise any impacts for the short and long-term.
N/A	The Environment Agency has suggested amendments to the Water Quality section in Chapter 3 regarding the supporting infrastructure, such as the sewage network. They would expect the WCS (as well as any other relevant evidence base documents) to be updated to reflect any recent changes to your proposed site allocations or other changes within the Local Plan that may affect the environment.	Noted. The Council has considered Environment Agency's comments and has updated the accompanying text for the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The Council has worked collaboratively with Environment Agency and Thames Water to produce a Water Cycle Study to assess the impact of the site allocations on the network. The Water Cycle Study is published alongside the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. Furthermore, the Site Development Templates that support the additional allocations in the Part 2 plan ensure that development proposals will need to demonstrate there is adequate water supply capacity and/or waste water capacity to serve the development.

Key Issues

- 7.34. Reflecting national policy, local policy, evidence base studies, formal consultation and informal engagement, there are a number of key issues that need to be considered in formulating the policies. The key issues considered at the Preferred Options and Publication stage are set out below.
- 7.35. The following key issues were considered when preparing policies for inclusion in the 'Preferred Options' version for the Part 2 plan:
- the need to include local noise standards in the policy that can be applied to forms of development or specific locations
 - the need for policy to refer to current national guidance, e.g. World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines for Community Noise; Noise Planning Statement for England and the Council's emerging guidance relating to noise mitigation
 - national policy requirements for local planning authorities to consider the impacts that noise can have on health, well-being and local biodiversity
 - national policy direction that development proposals should be appropriately located where noise-generated and noise-sensitive developments will not impact on environmental amenity, health and well-being and local biodiversity
 - the need for policy on land affected by contamination should be consistent with current legislation, e.g. the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and refer to current national guidance and the Council's best practice, and
 - the need for a policy to ensure that development proposals located on known or suspected land affected by contamination, are appropriately located having regard to a contaminated land questionnaire.
- 7.36. The key issues considered as part of the process of refining the proposed environmental health policies for inclusion in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan were:
- the policy and/or accompanying text on noise pollution should ensure that development proposals take into account impact on landscape, including the North Wessex Downs AONB and its setting, and
 - the policy on air quality should provide further clarity in relation to the 'proximity' to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Conclusions

- 7.37. Set out below are the conclusions that the council reached to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. These conclusions were reached following

consideration of the key issues that were identified from the emerging evidence base, and from the informal engagement and formal stages of consultation.

7.38. The Council has reached the following conclusions in relation to the environmental health policies for consideration in the Preferred Options for the Part 2 plan:

- a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure land affected by contamination is appropriately remediated and mitigated, taking into account the Council's developer guidance for dealing with land contamination, reflecting national policy and guidance. This policy reflects comments made by specialist officers within the Council
- a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure that development proposals are appropriately located to minimise the impact of existing sources of noise, reflecting national policy and guidance. This policy reflects comments made by specialist officers within the Council
- a policy was included that sets out measures to ensure development proposals located adjacent or near to an existing AQMA are appropriately located and mitigated, reflecting comments made the specialist officers within the Council, and
- it was not considered necessary to replace or update saved policy DC12 of the Local Plan 2011 as Core Policy 43: Natural Resources in the Part 1 plan sufficiently covers this level of detail when assessing development proposals.

7.39. The Council has reached the following conclusions in respect of policies related to environmental health, following stages of informal engagement with specialist officers in July 2017 and public consultation on the 'Preferred Options' version of the Part 2 plan in March 2017, for consideration in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan:

- the accompanying text at paragraph 3.177 to the policy on noise pollution includes the need to ensure that development proposals also take into account Core Policy 44: Landscape in the Part 1 plan where proposal are likely to impact on the landscape, including the North Wessex Downs AONB, reflecting comments made by the North Wessex Downs AONB Board at the Preferred Options consultation. This policy also makes clearer reference for development proposals to take into account the Council's emerging guidance in relation to noise mitigation, and
- the policy on air quality provides further clarity as to when development proposals will need to demonstrate measures/mitigation to minimise impacts associated with air quality, with particular reference to their proximity to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This reflects comments made at the Preferred Options consultation.

7.40. A list of the policies proposed at Preferred Options stage and included in the Publication Version of the plan are provided at **Appendix 7**.

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 POLICIES RELATED TO DESIGN AND AMENITY

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary of policy</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?</i>
DC3: Design Against Crime	Provision must be made to increase safety and deter crime	Fully consistent	The Council consider that this policy is sufficiently covered by Core Policies 37 and 38 in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and the principles set out in the Design Guide SPD.	No
DC4: Public Art	Developments of 0.5ha to include public art where it makes a significant contribution to appearance of scheme	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management team and the Arts Development Officer in implementing schemes for public art from development proposals.	Yes
DC7: Waste Collection and Recycling	New developments must make adequate provision for the sorting, storage and collection of waste	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Environmental Health team.	Yes
DC9: The Impact of Development of Neighbouring Uses	Development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Environmental Health team.	Yes
DC10: The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development	Development will not be permitted if it is likely to be affected by existing or potential sources or noise, emissions or pollution	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Environmental Health team.	Yes

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary of policy</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?</i>
DC16: Illuminated Advertisements	Consent for illuminated advertisements will not be given if it would harm the visual amenity or cause a hazard to highway safety	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management team and Specialist Officers.	Yes
DC20: External Lighting	Applications for planning permission, or the consent for the display of advertisements, which involve external lighting will only be permitted subject to certain criteria.	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management team, Specialist Officers and the Environmental Health team and is useful in determining this type of proposal.	Yes

APPENDIX 2: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 POLICIES RELATED TO LANDSCAPE

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2</i>
NE6: The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Development in the AONB will only be permitted if it will conserve or enhance the area	Fully consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44 provides sufficient level of detail to assess development proposals within the AONB. The Landscape Character Assessment will also provide further detail to support the policy and provides the level of detail required to assess landscape impact and sufficient flexibility for assessing development proposals.	No
NE7: The North Vale Corallian Ridge	Development that would harm the North Vale Corallian Ridge will not be permitted unless there is an overriding need for development all steps are taken to minimise impact	Fully consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44 in the Part 1 plan and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment will provide sufficient level of detail.	No
NE8: The Landscape Setting of Oxford	The conservation of Oxford's landscape setting will take priority in considering proposals for development in areas within view of the city	Fully consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44 in the Part 1 plan and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment will provide sufficient level of detail.	No
NE9: The Lowland Vale	Development in the Lowland Vale will	Fully consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44	No

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2
	not be permitted if it would harm the long open views within it across the area		in the Part 1 plan and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment will provide sufficient level of detail.	
NE10: Urban Fringes and Countryside Gaps	Development or change of uses which would harm these areas will not be permitted	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management team and the Landscape Officer to assess proposals that are likely to compromise the gap between settlements. This policy will be supported by additional detail in the Landscape Character Assessment.	Yes
NE11: Areas of Landscape Enhancement	A landscaping scheme must be provided for development affecting areas of damaged or compromised landscape	Fully consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44 in the Part 1 plan and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment will provide sufficient level of detail.	No
NE12: Great Western Community Forest	Development within the community forest must, wherever possible, make a positive contribution towards creation of a diverse woodland environment. Proposals which prejudice aims and objectives of the Great Western Community Forest will not be permitted.	Full consistent	There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as it is considered that Core Policy 44 in the Part 1 plan and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment will provide sufficient level of detail.	No

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 POLICIES RELATED TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
L3: Urban Open Space and Green Corridors	Within the Green Corridors development will only be permitted in certain circumstances	Not consistent	The policy is regularly used by the Countryside Officer but should be updated in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to apply to all watercourses in the Vale.	Yes
L10: Safeguarding and Improving Public Rights of Way	Development over Public Rights of Way will not be permitted unless alternative provision can be made	Fully consistent	The policy is regularly used by Specialist Officers and the Development Management team but needs to be updated in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to reflect national guidance.	Yes
L11: The Ridgeway	Development will not be permitted if it would harm the Ridgeway, important trees and hedgerows or diminish the enjoyment of its users	Fully consistent		Yes
L12: The Thames Path	Development that would adversely affect the Thames Path will not be permitted	Fully consistent		Yes
L14: Wilts and Berks Canal L15: Wilts and Berks Canal	Restoration of the historic canal Proposed new route for the canal south of Abingdon	Fully Consistent	These policies are used by the Development Management team and need to be replaced in Local Plan 2031 Part 2. The Council continues to support the future restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal.	Yes

APPENDIX 4: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
HE1: Preservation and Enhancement Implications for Development	Development affecting the setting of a conservation area will not be permitted unless it can be shown to preserve or enhance the area	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by Conservation Officers, but is currently out of date and needs replacing in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to reflect national guidance. This policy is regularly used by Conservation Officers, but is currently out of date and needs replacing in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to reflect national guidance. However there is no need to have three separate policies going forward.	Yes
HE4: Development within setting of listed building	Development within the setting of a listed building will not be permitted unless it respects the characteristics of the building	Consistent		Yes
HE5: Development involving alterations to a listed building	Alterations to a listed building will not be permitted if it is unsympathetic to the listed building or fails to retain features of special architectural or historic interest	Consistent		Yes
HE7: Change of use of listed building	Proposals for a change of use of a listed building will not be permitted unless it will not harm the building	Fully consistent		Yes
HE8: Historic Parks and Gardens	Development within or in the setting of a historic park or garden will only be permitted if there is no significant harm to the site	Fully consistent		There is no longer a need to retain or update this policy in the Part 2 plan as it is considered that Core Policy 39 in the Part 1 plan and the policy on heritage assets in the Part 2 plan will provide sufficient level of detail.

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
HE9: Archaeology	An archaeological field evaluation is required where there are reasonable grounds for believing that important remains will be disturbed	Fully consistent	These policies are regularly used by Conservation Officers, but is currently out of date and needs replacing in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to reflect national guidance. However there is no need to have three separate policies going forward.	Yes
HE10: Archaeology	Development will not be permitted if it would cause damage to the site or setting of nationally important archaeological remains	Fully consistent		Yes
HE11: Archaeology	Archaeology should be preserved in situ. Where this is not possible, recording should be undertaken	Fully consistent		Yes

APPENDIX 5: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 POLICIES RELATED TO OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
H23: Open Space in new housing development	15% of residential area to be laid out as public open space	Fully consistent	These policies are regularly used by the Development Management team and is useful in determining this type of proposal, however an update to the policy should clearly define open space and what constitutes useable open space. There is no need to have separate policies on open space going forward.	Yes
L1: Playing Space	Development on existing outdoor playing space will only be permitted if a deficiency in such space will not be created or added to or in listed circumstances	Fully consistent		
L2: Urban Open Space and Green Corridors	Development that would result in the loss of urban open spaces will not be permitted	Not consistent		
L4: Allotments	Development on allotments will only be permitted where a deficiency in provision is not created or added to or where equal or better provision is achieved	Fully consistent		
L7: Retention of small-scale local leisure facilities	Loss of existing local leisure facilities will not be permitted unless there is no longer a need or if alternative provision is made	Fully consistent	These policies are used by the Development Management team, however an update to the policy is required to clearly define what constitutes Leisure and Sports Facilities. There is no need to have separate policies on sport and leisure facilities going forward.	Yes
L8: Provision of small-scale local leisure facilities	Small-scale development for open space, sport and recreation will be permitted within or on the edge of settlements	Fully consistent		Yes

Policy	Summary	Consistency with NPPF	Reasoning	Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	provided they meet certain criteria			
L9: The provision of countryside recreation facilities	Small-scale developments to provide facilities for informal countryside recreation will be permitted provided certain criteria are met	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management team.	Yes
L13: Proposed Park at Folly Hill, Faringdon	Park to provide outdoor recreational opportunities proposed	Fully consistent	The policy is no longer applied by the Development Management team as the park at Folly Hill, Faringdon is now implemented and will be protected by other policies in the Local Plan 2031.	No
L17: River Thames	Development along the River Thames will only be permitted where the special environmental qualities are protected or enhanced	Fully consistent	This policy is rarely applied by the Development Management team and could be merged other policies.	Yes
L18: Land South of the Abingdon Marina	Development need to facilitate the quiet recreational use of the area south of the Abingdon Marina will be permitted.	Fully consistent	This policy is no longer applied by the Development Management team and will be covered by other policies in the Local Plan 2031.	No

APPENDIX 6: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH POLICIES

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?</i>
DC12: Water Quality and Resources	Development will not be permitted if it would adversely affect the quality of water resources	Fully consistent	<p>Development Management team has commented that a part of this policy is useful. The point related to contaminated land is adequately covered by the NPPF and the inclusion of a Part 2 plan policy related to land affected by contamination.</p> <p>It is considered that this policy is sufficiently covered by Core Policy 43: Natural Resources in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.</p>	No

APPENDIX 7: POLICIES RELATED TO ‘PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE’ PROPOSED AT PREFERRED OPTIONS AND INCLUDED IN THE PUBLICATION VERSION OF THE PART 2 PLAN

Preferred Options Policies	Publication Version Policies
Development Policy 19: Public Art	Development Policy 20: Public Art
Development Policy 20: External Lighting	Development Policy 21: External Lighting
Development Policy 21: Advertisements	Development Policy 22: Advertisements
Development Policy 22: Impact of Development on Amenity	Development Policy 23: Impact of Development on Amenity
Development Policy 23: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments	Development Policy 24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments
Development Policy 24: Noise Pollution	Development Policy 25: Noise Pollution
Development Policy 25: Air Quality	Development Policy 26: Air Quality
Development Policy 26: Land Affected by Contamination	Development Policy 27: Land Affected by Contamination
Development Policy 27: Waste Collection and Recycling	Development Policy 28: Waste Collection and Recycling
Development Policy 28: Settlement Character and Gaps	Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps
Development Policy 29: Watercourses	Development Policy 30: Watercourses

Preferred Options Policies	Publication Version Policies
Development Policy 30: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Area	Development Policy 31: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Area
Development Policy 31: The Wilts and Berks Canal	Development Policy 32: Wilts and Berks Canal
Development Policy 32: Open Space	Development Policy 33: Open Space
Development Policy 33: : Leisure and Sports Facilities	Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities
Development Policy 34: New Countryside Recreation Facilities	Development Policy 35: New Countryside Recreation Facilities
Development Policy 35: Heritage Assets	Development Policy 36: Heritage Assets
Development Policy 36: Conservation Areas	Development Policy 37: Conservation Areas
Development Policy 37: Listed Buildings	Development Policy 38: Listed Buildings
Development Policy 38: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments	Development Policy 39: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments

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