

5. Chapter 5: Sub-Area Strategies

Overview

This chapter sets out the Sub-Area Strategies that apply to different parts of the Vale to help us plan effectively and help ensure the plan is locally distinctive. The three sub-areas are:

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe – which covers the northern and north eastern parts of the Vale that have strong linkages with the city of Oxford. This area contains the Market Town of Abingdon-on-Thames, the Local Service Centre of Botley and several Larger Villages including Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Steventon and Wootton. A large part of this Sub-Area is located within the Oxford Green Belt.

South East Vale – which includes most of the Science Vale area and contains the Market Town of Wantage, the Local Service Centre of Grove as well as a number of significant employment sites, including Harwell Campus, Milton Park and Didcot A Power Station. The area also contains part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which stretches along the south of the district and a number of Larger Villages including Blewbury, East Hendred, Harwell, Harwell Campus, Milton and Sutton Courtenay.

Western Vale – which is a more rural area stretching from the North Wessex Downs (AONB) to the River Thames, containing the Market Town of Faringdon and several Larger Villages including East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield.

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area Strategy

Introduction

- 5.1. The Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area lies in the north of the Vale District (**Figure 5.1**). It has strong functional links with the city of Oxford and over 40 % of the Sub-Area is located within the Oxford Green Belt. The Sub-Area provides housing for residents working in Oxford and also functions as a significant employment area in its own right. The Sub-Area has good access to the strategic road network, including the A34 and A420.
- 5.2. The Market Town of Abingdon-on-Thames is the largest settlement in the Sub-Area. It benefits from an attractive frontage to the River Thames and an historic town centre. The second largest settlement in the Sub-Area is Botley, which is located on the south-western edge of Oxford, and consists of parts of the North Hinksey and Cumnor parishes. Botley has strong links with the city of Oxford and also functions as a Local Service Centre in its own right. The Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus is located nearby in North Hinksey.
- 5.3. The Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area contains a network of attractive rural villages, which include the Larger Villages of Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Kennington, Marcham, Radley, Steventon and Wootton.
- 5.4. The Sub-Area is a highly sustainable location for development, particularly due to its proximity to the city of Oxford and excellent public transport connectivity.
- 5.5. To help ensure our vision for the Vale of White Horse is achieved, our overarching priority for the area is to maintain the service and employment centre roles for Abingdon-on-Thames and Botley, whilst ensuring future growth is managed to minimise any pressure on the highway network and to respect the overarching purposes of the Oxford Green Belt.
- 5.6. This section sets out:
 - how the Sub-Area will change by 2031, and
 - our strategic policies to address the key challenges and opportunities identified in this Sub-Area:

Building healthy and sustainable communities

Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area – which sets out our strategic site allocations for this area

Supporting economic prosperity

Core Policy 9: Harcourt Hill Campus – which supports appropriate and sustainable development to meet future business needs of the University

Core Policy 10: Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter, Abingdon-on-Thames – which supports the redevelopment of this area to enhance the retail offer within the town

Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area – which supports the redevelopment of this area to provide for new retail, leisure and commercial provision

Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility

Core Policy 12: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area – which seeks to protect land needed for the delivery of highway schemes within the area

Protecting the environment and responding to climate change

Core Policy 13: The Oxford Green Belt – which seeks to protect the land that continues to meet the five purposes of Green Belt and maintaining the setting of and managing the growth of the city of Oxford.

Core Policy 14: Strategic Water Storage Reservoirs – which safeguards land for the provision of a reservoir to assist with the management of water supply in the South East of England, should this be needed.

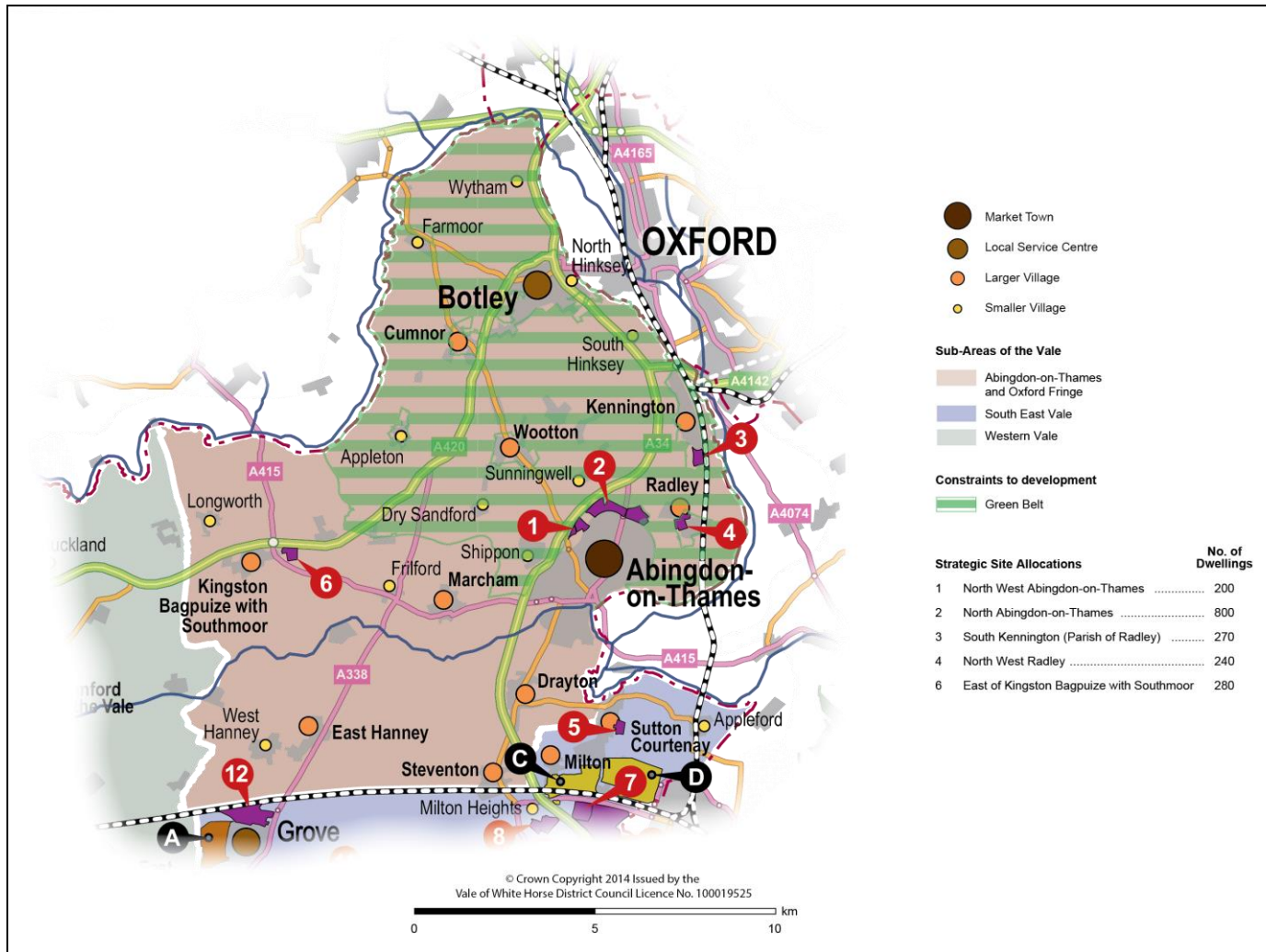


Figure 5.1: Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area

How the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area will change by 2031

The Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area will continue to provide an attractive place to live, with development carefully managed and the overarching purposes of the Oxford Green Belt protected.

Abingdon-on-Thames will continue to function as an important service and employment centre within the district. The historic character of the town centre will have been maintained and the Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter Area will have been comprehensively and attractively redeveloped.

Botley will continue to function as a thriving community on the western edge of Oxford and new housing will have been sensitively designed to complement the attractive environments of Cumnor Hill and North Hinksey village. The centre of Botley will be enhanced and modernised to function as a safe and vibrant Local Service Centre and the Seacourt Retail Park will have maintained its own identity.

Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus will be sensitively modernised to continue to provide further education and sports facilities to students and local residents. The area will also be successfully linked by public transport and a network of footpaths and cycle routes.

Joint working with Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Highways England and other neighbouring authorities will have identified a long-term solution to traffic management around Oxford, the A34, and in Abingdon-on-Thames and Botley.

The countryside and villages will have maintained their distinctive character and will be much enjoyed by residents, workers and visitors to the Vale. Growth within the Larger Villages will have helped to maintain or enhance their services and to provide for residents' day-to-day needs. New residents in the villages will be helping to sustain the services and social life of the rural communities.

Strategic policies for the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area

Building healthy and sustainable communities

- 5.7. Abingdon-on-Thames is our largest settlement: it has the largest range of services and facilities, a good employment base, excellent public transport links to Oxford and beyond, and it has the highest need for affordable housing across the Vale. For this reason, land is identified to the north of the town that is deemed to be sustainable for strategic growth.
- 5.8. The strategic development to the north of Abingdon-on-Thames will provide much needed housing in our most sustainable settlement and help to facilitate the delivery of an upgrade to the A34 junction at Lodge Hill. This not only provides access to the strategic road network but would also help to alleviate existing traffic issues within the town.
- 5.9. A number of sites are also allocated for strategic growth at the Larger Villages of Kennington (within Radley Parish), Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor and Radley. These villages are suitable locations for development in the Vale, with comparatively high levels of services and facilities, good public transport connectivity with opportunities for improvement and good access to a wide range of employment.
- 5.10. The strategic sites will be designed to integrate successfully with the local community and to minimise any harmful effects. Appropriate infrastructure, such as open space, leisure provision and new services and facilities will all be delivered alongside the housing.
- 5.11. Our strategy for meeting our housing needs in this Sub-Area is set out in **Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area**.

Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area

Our over-arching priority for this Sub-Area is to maintain the service and employment centre roles for Abingdon-on-Thames and Botley and ensure growth is managed to minimise pressure on the highway network, whilst protecting the Oxford Green Belt.

Development in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in **Core Policy 3**:

Market Town:	Abingdon-on-Thames
Local Service Centre:	Botley
Larger Villages:	Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Steventon and Wootton
Smaller Villages:	Appleton, Dry Sandford, Farmoor, Frilford, Longworth, North Hinksey, Shippon, South Hinksey, Sunningwell, West Hanney and Wytham

Housing Delivery

At least 5,438 new homes will be delivered in the plan period between 2011 and 2031. 1,790 dwellings will be delivered through strategic allocations. 962 dwellings remain to be identified and will be allocated through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or Neighbourhood Development Plans or through the Development Management process. The contribution of all sources of housing supply for this Sub-Area are shown in the following table:

Category		Number of Dwellings
Housing requirement for the full plan period (Apr 2011 to Mar 2031)		5,438 ^a
Housing Completions (Apr 2011 to Mar 2016)		1,175
Housing Supply (Apr 2016 to Mar 2031)	Known Commitments	2,011
	Local Plan 2031 Part 1 allocations	1,790
	Local Plan 2031 Part 2 allocations	722 ^b
	Windfalls	240

^aThis target addresses needs arising in the Vale of White Horse. If or when required, needs arising elsewhere in the Housing Market Area, will be addressed in accordance with **Core Policy 2**.

^bThe Local Plan Part 2 allocation identified in the above table will be reduced where dwellings are allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans or come forward through the Development Management Process.

Continued overpage

Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area continued from previous page

Strategic Allocations

Development will be supported at the strategic site allocations through a masterplanning process involving the community, local planning authority, developer and other stakeholders where development meets the requirements set out within the Site Development Templates shown by **Appendix A** and are in accordance with the Development Plan taken as a whole. The following table shows how the level of housing required within this Sub-Area through strategic development sites will be distributed:

Part 1 Allocations

Settlement/ Parish	Settlement Type	Site Name	Number of Dwellings
Abingdon-on-Thames	Market Town	North Abingdon-on-Thames	800
		North West Abingdon-on-Thames	200
Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor	Larger Villages	East Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor	280
Radley		North West Radley	270
		South of Kennington	240
Total			1790

Employment

3.20 hectares of employment land is identified for future business and employment growth in accordance with **Core Policy 6**. In addition, the following strategic employment sites will be safeguarded for employment use in line with **Core Policy 29**.

Strategic employment sites:

Abingdon-on-Thames:

Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon Business Park, Nuffield Way, Drayton Road Industrial Estate, Fitzharris Trading Estate, Abingdon Science Park, Radley Road Industrial Estate, Barton Mill in Audlett Drive.

Botley:

Curtis Industrial Estate, Hinksey Business Centre, Minns Business Park, Seacourt Tower.

Supporting economic prosperity

- 5.12. The Sub-Area functions as an important centre for employment and contains a number of strategic employment sites, including Abingdon Science Park, Abingdon Business Park, Curtis Industrial Estate, Hinksey Business Park, Minns Business Park and Seacourt Tower.
- 5.13. Our strategy for meeting business needs in the Sub-Area is set out in **Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area**.
- 5.14. Higher Education facilities such as the Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus will be supported in their important role in ensuring local residents are equipped to take up the skilled jobs that will be provided in the Science Vale and wider area (**Core Policy 9**).
- 5.15. The Steventon Storage Facility, formerly used by the Home Office as a storage depot, is a 30 hectare site used for warehousing and distribution. It is located in the open countryside between Steventon and East Hanney. Although there is relatively little traffic arising from the site now, if used more intensively, it would result in significant amounts of traffic on an unclassified rural road. There is an aspiration for the business use to be relocated to a more sustainable site, at a scale that would generate a similar number of jobs to those currently on the site⁴⁹. This matter will be reviewed through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

Meeting needs for retailing

- 5.16. Abingdon-on-Thames is one of the main shopping and commercial centres within the district. The town offers a mix of national retailers and small independent traders, and provides a good range and choice of services such as banks, cafés and restaurants. Recent enhancements to the Abbey Shopping Centre have improved the attractiveness of the town centre, and proposals for further improvements in the Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter area will be supported in line with **Core Policy 10**.
- 5.17. The main shopping centre in Botley is known as West Way. Although popular, offering a range of shops and services, including restaurants and a library, the age and condition of its buildings detract from the centre's appearance. Elms Parade is located in close proximity to the West Way centre and includes a number of independent shops. Proposals for the refurbishment of Botley's Central Area, including the West Way Shopping Centre and Elms Parade, will be supported in accordance with **Core Policy 11**.

⁴⁹ Refer to Saved Local Plan 2011 Policy E15

Oxford Brookes Harcourt Hill Campus, Botley

- 5.18. The Harcourt Hill Campus is one of three sites occupied by Oxford Brookes University, and provides teaching facilities, student accommodation and supporting uses including sports facilities. It is currently home to the Westminster Institute of Education.
- 5.19. Harcourt Hill Campus is located in a wooded section of the Oxford Green Belt on the urban-rural fringe. Its curtilage falls within the setting of protected views of the countryside setting from Oxford and also the panoramic views of the city's famous towers and spires.
- 5.20. The University wishes to improve the quality of the campus and is reviewing its future role. Work has commenced on a masterplan for the long-term development of the site in consultation with the local community, Oxfordshire County Council and other stakeholders. The masterplan is intended to ensure that the campus evolves in a coherent and comprehensive manner to provide improved educational facilities, including student accommodation and academic buildings.
- 5.21. **Core Policy 9** supports the redevelopment of the Harcourt Hill Campus. Transport and access matters will need to be agreed with Oxfordshire County Council and supported by a transport assessment including area level impact assessment. Proposals will also need to meet the requirements of **Core Policy 13: the Oxford Green Belt**.

Core Policy 9: Harcourt Hill Campus

The Council will work proactively with Oxford Brookes University, Oxfordshire County Council, local residents and other appropriate stakeholders to help the university to develop a masterplan for the Harcourt Hill Campus site that meets the university's longer term business needs for predominantly educational uses and in a manner that respects its Green Belt setting and urban-rural fringe context.

Proposals for the upgrading or redevelopment of the Harcourt Hill Campus will be supported in principle where guided by an agreed masterplan that sets a clear vision for the future use of the site. The agreed masterplan and any subsequent proposals should be prepared to clearly identify and address key site issues including, but not limited to, the following matters:

- i. the scale of development proposed and intended uses
- ii. the integration of built form into the landscape which will be assessed at the planning application stage with reference to a comprehensive landscape, tree and planting strategy
- iii. sustainable site access including by public transport, and the effective management of car trips and car parking demand to a level that can safely be accommodated on the local road network, and
- iv. the safeguarding of long distance views of the site from Oxford and to ensure that new development does not detract from views of the existing spires by reason of its height or form.

Abbey Shopping Centre, Abingdon-on-Thames

- 5.22. The retail offer in Abingdon-on-Thames consists of the traditional town centre and major edge of town sites located to the western side of the town, including the Fairacres Retail Park and the site occupied by Tesco.
- 5.23. The Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter Area form a key part of the town centre. Together, they provide a range of shops and community services, along with flats and offices. The Local Plan 2011 identified the need for redevelopment of the area, as the buildings had become dated, and refurbishment of the 1960s shopping precinct was highlighted as a key element of the strategy to enhance the vitality and viability of Abingdon-on-Thames town centre.
- 5.24. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)⁵⁰ for the area was adopted by the Council in 2011 and sets out planning and urban design principles to guide the design of high quality, retail-led redevelopment proposals.
- 5.25. The first phase of redevelopment, which involves improvements to the Abbey Shopping Centre, has been completed. The next phase focuses on the Charter Area, and could involve provision of a large food store. The redevelopment of this area remains a key objective in seeking to improve Abingdon-on-Thames town centre. **Core Policy 10** supports proposals for enhancement and refurbishment of the Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter Area.
- 5.26. The most up-to-date retail study⁵¹ indicates an increased need for provision of food (convenience) and non-food (comparison) retail floorspace to meet the envisaged population growth in this Sub-Area up to 2031. Owing to the heavily constrained nature of the existing town centre and lack of available brownfield land, it is important that the redevelopment of the Charter Area optimises the land available for retail use without compromising the provision of key community and health facilities, which are essential to maintaining a thriving town centre.
- 5.27. Making the town centre more attractive for cultural and recreational activities will help to ensure town centre vitality, which is a corporate objective for the Council.

⁵⁰ Vale of White Horse District Council (2011) Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter, Abingdon Development Brief

⁵¹ Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) (2014) Retail and Town Centre Study – Vale of White Horse District Council – November 2014

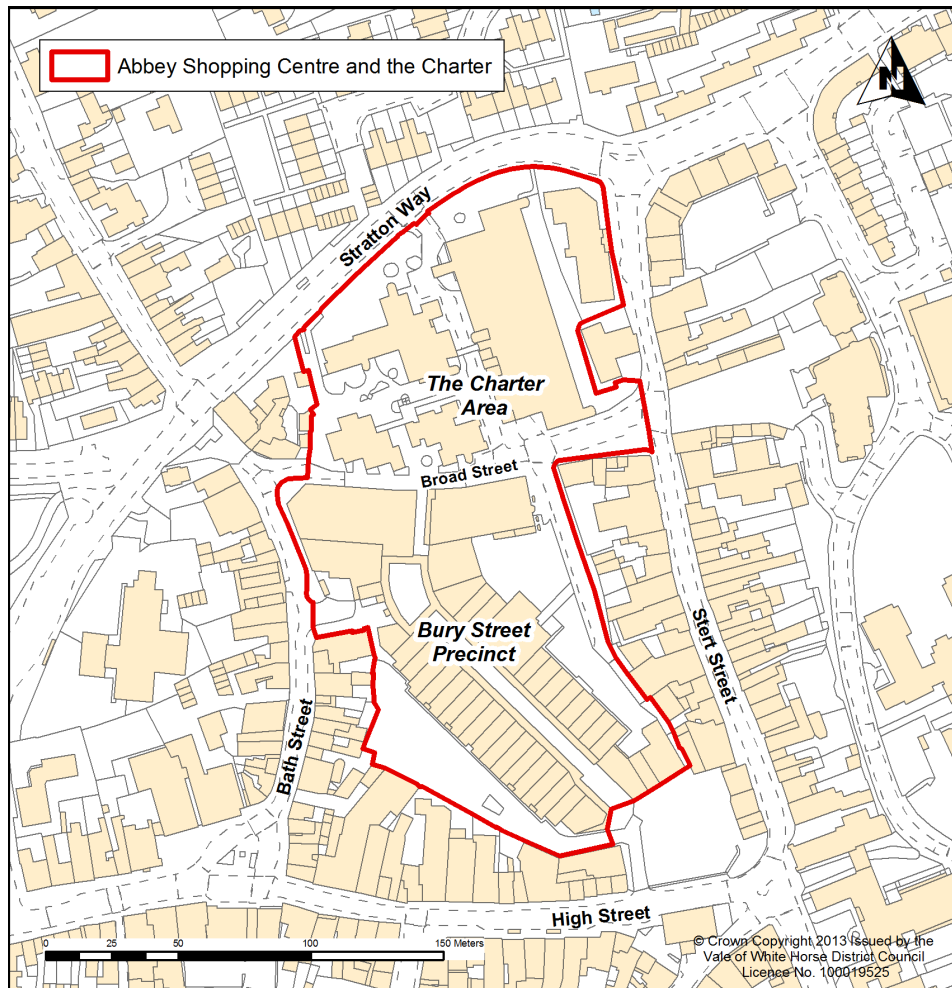


Figure 5.2: Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter Area

Core Policy 10: Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter, Abingdon-on-Thames

Within the Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter Area (as defined on the Adopted Policies Map), proposals for retail-led development will be supported. Applicants will need to demonstrate that proposals reflect the planning and urban design guidance set out in the adopted Supplementary Planning Document for the area to deliver high quality retail-led development, which successfully complements and integrates with the existing Phase 1 Abbey Shopping Centre.

Proposals should ensure that the retail element (A1 use) of the Charter is maximised to ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced over the plan period.

Proposals should demonstrate how they will mitigate their transport impact, including improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Central Botley

- 5.28. The West Way shopping centre is a 1960s, part-covered shopping centre that forms the main shopping area in Botley. The West Way centre is located to the rear of Elms Parade, which contains a number of small independent shops. This shopping area has served Botley well over the years but the West Way centre is now in need of refurbishment to fulfil its potential as a Local Service Centre.
- 5.29. The most recent Retail and Town Centre Study⁵² identifies that Botley is a similar size, in terms of retail units and floorspace, to the Market Town of Faringdon. Despite this, it does not perform as a town centre and does not provide the range of services and other facilities that would be expected. The identified retail need for Botley is approximately 1,500 sq.m of floorspace which will need to be delivered over the plan period.
- 5.30. The Retail and Town Centre Study identifies that around 25 % of residents in the Botley retail catchment area do their main convenience shopping in the immediate area, with the majority travelling into the city of Oxford. The provision of a food superstore in Botley would address this imbalance. The study also notes that the provision of leisure and entertainment facilities, other than restaurants and pubs, is limited in Botley. Redevelopment of the area could therefore include commercial leisure facilities, thereby helping to improve the overall offer and appeal of Botley as a shopping and leisure destination.
- 5.31. Redevelopment of the central area could provide a large supermarket, shops, offices, hotel, car parking and other uses to meet the needs of Botley and the surrounding area. **Core Policy 11** therefore supports proposals for the redevelopment of the Botley Central Area (**Figure 5.3**), which includes the West Way Shopping Centre and Elms Parade.

⁵² Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) (2012) Retail and Town Centre Study – Vale of White Horse District Council, March 2013

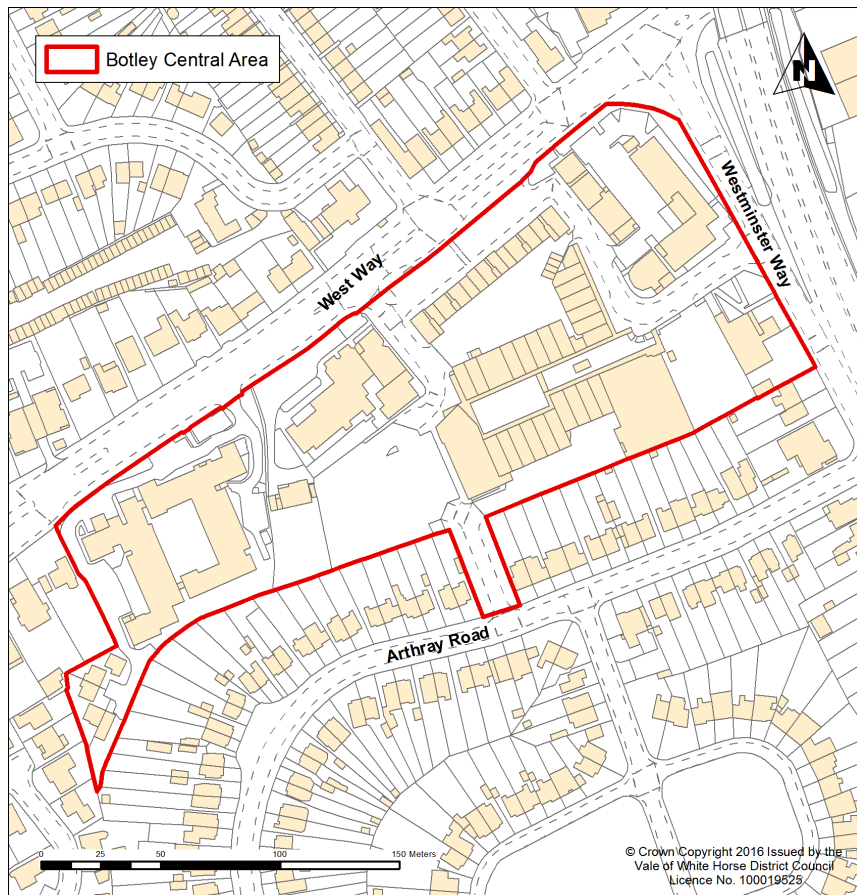


Figure 5.3: Botley Central Area

Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area

Proposals for a comprehensive retail-led redevelopment and upgrading of Botley central area, as defined on the Adopted Policies Map, will be supported provided that:

- i. taken as a whole, the proposals support the role and function of Botley as a Local Service Centre, providing a well-integrated mix of shops and services to meet day-to-day shopping needs of the local area
- ii. effective use is made of development potential above ground level and on more peripheral parts of the site for a mix of uses that may include, but are not limited to, office, community, residential, hotel and leisure activities
- iii. existing residential and community facilities, including: the community hall, library, Church of St Peter and St Paul and Baptist Church are replaced with facilities of an appropriate size and quality to meet current and likely future local needs
- iv. it can be demonstrated that proposals will not harm the character or appearance of the local area, particularly West Way, Arthray Road and Westminster Way
- v. proposals for the site are prepared through a comprehensive masterplanning process providing an integrated solution to site access, traffic management, air quality management, servicing and sufficient car parking, whilst prioritising the pedestrian customer environment, and

- vi. proposals that seek to demolish Elms Parade should demonstrate that its successor is of at least equal architectural merit and particular attention should be given to provide at least the same level of active frontage.

Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility

Safeguarding of land for strategic highway improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area

- 5.32. This Sub-Area benefits from excellent public transport connectivity, particularly to the nearby city of Oxford. However, there are also a number of transport related constraints. In particular, these include:
- Abingdon-on-Thames and Botley are constrained by congestion from traffic accessing Oxford via the A34, the Botley Interchange, including traffic accessing Oxford from the A420 and Botley Road, and
 - Drayton Road (B4017) is a key route into Abingdon-on-Thames from the south. This road already suffers from significant congestion in both the morning and evening peak periods, which results in long and unreliable journey times. The River Ock bridge and the double mini-roundabouts at the junction with Marcham Road/Ock Street are also physical pinch-points which restrict vehicle flow.
- 5.33. The transport constraints at Abingdon-on-Thames are a key reason why strategic growth is not currently planned to the south of the town.
- 5.34. However, a potential long-term approach to alleviating traffic congestion to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames is the provision of a new southern bypass, including a second Thames crossing. Additional development to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames is inappropriate without the provision of this new bypass⁵³.
- 5.35. Part of the potential route for a southern Abingdon-on-Thames bypass falls within the South Oxfordshire District. The Council will work positively with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that any proposals for a new road are developed in partnership and meet the requirements of both Councils⁵⁴.
- 5.36. The long-term potential for a new crossing of the River Thames in conjunction with a southern town bypass is protected by **Core Policy 12**, which ensures that development proposals in this area do not prejudice its potential future delivery.

⁵³ ATKINS (2014) Evaluation of Transport Impacts Assessment, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

⁵⁴ A Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared with VWHDC, SODC and OCC relating to this matter.

- 5.37. The delivery of south facing slips to the A34 junction at Lodge Hill, in conjunction with strategic development to the north of the town, will make a positive contribution to alleviating traffic congestion and providing improved access to the strategic road network. Land to enable the delivery of this scheme is also safeguarded in accordance with **Core Policy 12**.
- 5.38. Oxfordshire County Council is developing a strategy for the A420 to enhance key junctions and improve capacity on this route. Contributions will be sought from developers along the A420 corridor towards improvements to this route and further details are set out in the Site Development Templates – **Appendix A**.

Core Policy 12: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- South Abingdon-on-Thames Bypass linking the A415 to the West and South East of the town, including a new River Thames crossing
- Diamond Interchange at the A34 Lodge Hill Junction
- Land for improvements to Frilford Lights.

New development in these areas should be carefully designed having regard to matters such as building layout, noise insulation, landscaping and means of access.

Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact the delivery of the identified schemes (as shown by maps in Appendix E and the Adopted Policies Map)* should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the transport schemes listed above.

* the area shown on the Adopted Policies Map illustrates where policy CP12 will apply. It does not seek to show a precise alignment for the transport scheme, which will need to be informed by detailed design work, carried out in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant parties.

Protecting the environment and responding to climate change

The Oxford Green Belt

- 5.39. The Oxford Green Belt was first conceived in 1956 and its boundaries approved in 1975, some 40 years ago. The purpose of the Oxford Green Belt in the Vale of White Horse District is to prevent urban sprawl around Oxford by keeping the land permanently open, and to preserve the rural setting and special character of the city of Oxford.
- 5.40. The Council took into account the government's policy in the NPPF relating to Green Belt and concluded that in the light of housing requirements over the plan period, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development in the district and the findings of a local green belt boundary review, exceptional circumstances existed to revise the Green Belt boundaries in the district.
- 5.41. The local Green Belt Review⁵⁵ assessed land around inset settlements in the Vale against the purposes of the Green Belt and the considerations of the NPPF⁵⁶. Having regard to that assessment, and housing needs the Council concluded that the exceptional circumstances exist to justify removing from the Green Belt a number of parcels of land.
- 5.42. This plan has therefore altered the Green Belt boundary to remove land from the Green Belt at Abingdon, Kennington and Radley to be allocated as new strategic housing allocations, as shown in **Appendix I**.
- 5.43. The local Green Belt Review undertaken does not preclude, and would inform any future Green Belt Review, should this be needed, to contribute to meeting any identified unmet housing need within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area in which, this matter, is addressed by **Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire (Chapter 1)**.

Core Policy 13: The Oxford Green Belt

The Oxford Green Belt area in the Vale, as amended following the local Green Belt Review, will continue to be protected to maintain its openness and permanence.

Development will be permitted in the following settlements, which are inset to the Green Belt (as shown on the Adopted Policies Map), where the proposed development is within the existing built area of the village and in accordance with **Core Policies 3 and 4**:

- Appleton
- Botley

⁵⁵ Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd. Terra Firma Consultancy (2014) Vale of White Horse District Council Green Belt Review, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence>

⁵⁶ NPPF, paragraph 80

- Cumnor
- Kennington
- North Hinksey
- Radley, and
- Wootton

Proposals for inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances*.

The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is considered inappropriate except where they are:

- buildings for agriculture or forestry
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it
- the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces
- limited infilling in Shippon, South Hinksey, Wootton Old Village and Wytham
- limited affordable housing for local community needs as set out in **Core Policy 24**, or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

The following forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt:

- mineral extraction
- engineering operations
- local transport infrastructure that can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location
- the re-use of buildings, provided that they are permanent and of substantial construction, and
- development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

* 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (NPPF, Paragraph 88).

Strategic Water Storage Reservoirs

5.44. Thames Water is examining the means by which sufficient water can be provided to meet the future needs of the region. Shortlisted options under consideration include new strategic water storage capacity in the Upper Thames Catchment. Thames Water has identified the

possible need for a major new reservoir in the district between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon or to the north of Longworth to help manage water supply and ensure current and future needs can be met.

- 5.45. The Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2014, published by Thames Water, identifies three potential options to address its long term water resource management in the south east, including the development of a large storage reservoir, wastewater reuse and a water transfer option.
- 5.46. Thames Water has confirmed that the Upper Thames Reservoir (UTR), proposed to be located within the Vale between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon, remains its preferred option if a large storage reservoir solution were to be selected. As part of the preparation of the Part 2 plan consideration will be given to a revision of the boundaries of the safeguarded area for this reservoir.
- 5.47. As an alternative to the preferred option, a smaller reservoir solution may be selected instead to support a storage reservoir or water transfer scheme at a site to the north of Longworth or in South Oxfordshire, at Chinnor. A decision is expected by Thames Water on its chosen long term water resource option by 2019, following the conclusion of the WRMP 2019.
- 5.48. As the Vale's Local Plan 2031 Part 1 will be adopted ahead of the WRMP 2019, land will need to continue to be safeguarded for new reservoir capacity in accordance with **Core Policy 14**.
- 5.49. Land safeguarded for a proposed reservoir between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon includes an area identified by the Environment Agency as important for a proposed flood alleviation scheme to the west of Abingdon. This is shown at **Appendix F**.
- 5.50. The sites will continue to be safeguarded until such time as they are no longer considered necessary, as set out in the WRMP 2019, or in light of subsequent decisions made by Thames Water or the Secretary of State.
- 5.51. If progressed, a storage reservoir may constitute a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008, for which a Development Consent Order would be sought from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Core Policy 14: Strategic Water Storage Reservoirs

Land is safeguarded for a reservoir and ancillary works between the settlements of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon, and to the north of Longworth unless subsequent publication of Thames Water's Resources Management Plan 2019 indicates that the location is not necessary for future reservoir provision.

Development that might prejudice the implementation of a new reservoir on the safeguarded sites will be refused. The safeguarded areas for the reservoirs are shown on the **Adopted Policies Map** and **Appendix F**.

The proposed reservoir/s, if included as a preferred option in an adopted Water Resources Management Plan, must be brought forward through a masterplan, development brief and design statement following consultation on these documents by Thames Water with the community, the local authority, the local highway authority and the statutory environmental bodies and utility providers.

Any proposal for a reservoir must:

- i. mitigate the impact of construction on local people, the environment and roads
- ii. minimise the effects on the landscape of an embankment reservoir through its design, general configuration and the use of hard and soft landscaping
- iii. maximise the creation of wildlife habitats and biodiversity
- iv. promote the recreational uses of the reservoir consistent with the landscape and biodiversity values of the proposal and having regard to the traffic impacts of such uses
- v. include a new route for the diverted Hanney to Steventon road, to include provision for an off-road cycle path in relation to the reservoir proposal between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon
- vi. make provision for the new route of the Wilts and Berks Canal in relation to the reservoir proposal between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon
- vii. include measures to avoid or mitigate any other significant adverse effects identified through the environmental impact assessment of the proposal, including on the local and wider highway networks and on surface water and fluvial flooding, and
- viii. minimise any impact on the archaeological significance of the site, to include the retention of in situ archaeological remains, where possible, and their full investigation and recording with the results deposited in a public archive.