

Infrastructure and service provision

- G3** Proposals for development will not be permitted unless the planning authorities are satisfied that necessary infrastructure, on- or off-site transport measures, recreation, leisure, educational, health and community facilities, services and environmental improvements are available, or will be provided. Where appropriate phasing will be used to coordinate development with the provision of infrastructure.

In determining infrastructure and other requirements the local planning authorities will take into account the cumulative impacts of development.

Contributions will be sought from developers and/or landowners in accordance with Government advice.

The provision of recreation, leisure, educational, health and community facilities will be encouraged in settlements where there are deficiencies.

Green Belt

- G4** A Green Belt will be maintained around Oxford, to:

- a) preserve the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;
- b) check the growth of Oxford and prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl;
- c) prevent the coalescence of settlements;
- d) assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- e) assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Development in the Green Belt will only be permitted if it maintains its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt or harm its visual amenities.

Development outside settlements

- G5** The countryside will be protected from harmful development.

Special consideration will be given to development for agricultural, forestry or outdoor recreational needs or for other uses appropriate to a rural area which cannot reasonably be accommodated in a nearby settlement.

Energy and resource conservation

- G6** All new developments should incorporate best practice in energy efficiency and resource conservation, in particular through passive solar design, small scale renewable energy, providing high levels of insulation, water conservation measures and by minimising the use of construction materials, maximising use of recycled and secondary materials in place of primary aggregates and minimising production of waste.

New developments should make adequate provision to facilitate storage, re-use, recycling and composting of waste.

Transport

Sustainable travel

- T1** Transport measures and development proposals should give emphasis to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and balance these against ease of traffic movement, thereby improving travel choice and reducing dependence on private motorised travel. Suitable provision should be made for servicing, for the needs of disabled people and for promotion of safety.

Car parking

- T2** A comprehensive approach will be adopted for the provision and management of car parking space with the aim of promoting sustainable travel choices. Local plans should include appropriate local policies and proposals.

Maximum standards for parking provision (cars, cycles etc.) will apply to development proposals, taking into account alternative forms of transport (available or to be provided to the site) and the wider transport strategy for the area.

Park and ride schemes will be supported where they support the functions of the principal transport corridors and where they form part of a wider transport strategy for an area.

Public transport

- T3** Increased use of public transport will be sought through the encouragement and promotion of convenient, reliable, secure and high standard public transport services and through improved integration between different modes of transport and improved interchange facilities.

Freight

- T4** The carriage of freight by rail, pipeline or other means rather than road will be encouraged. The impact of freight operations on people and the environment will be reduced through partnership arrangements between the County Council and operators.

Freight distribution centres will be permitted only if located with good access to the freight networks and in or adjoining a major settlement.

Networks for pedestrians and cyclists

- T5** Networks of routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be promoted and developed particularly within and linking to urban areas, so as to improve access to facilities and widen travel choice.

Local plans will define comprehensive pedestrian and cycle routes and will promote improvements.

Networks for motorised travel

T6 The County Council will promote and support a comprehensive strategy for the safe and convenient carriage of people and freight by road, rail or special track.

The County Council in partnership with transport infrastructure providers, the operators of public transport services and other agencies will in particular promote the development and management of the following principal transport hubs, corridors and projects related to the Plan's overall development strategy and its regional context, to meet both strategic and key local movement requirements:

- transport measures in and around the City of Oxford to support its role as a regional transport hub;
- the corridor between Oxford and Bicester;
- the corridor between Oxford and Witney;
- the corridor between Oxford and Didcot;
- the corridor between Grove/Wantage and Didcot; and
- the development within the county of the East-West rail link.

The principal transport corridors, the rail and trunk route networks and other projects referred to are defined in the Key Diagram.

The Local Transport Plan will:

- identify the manner in which the road and rail network and the operation of the premium bus network and other key public transport services will combine to provide an enhanced quality of travel to support the spatial development strategy of the Structure Plan;
- assign roads in the county together with any special track to a hierarchy of networks supporting the spatial strategy of this Plan and identify their function at each level of the hierarchy;
- identify network improvement schemes; and
- identify the potential for integration between networks both for people and freight.

Development proposals that would have a significant adverse affect on the safe and efficient function of a network will not be permitted.

Land required for network development or improvement schemes will be safeguarded in the local plans/local development frameworks.

Service areas

T7 The frequency of service areas on the major highway network will be limited. New service areas or extensions will be permitted only if they are of a high standard and where there is a transport need for improved roadside services.

Development proposals

T8 Proposals for development should be permitted only if they provide adequate access and mitigation of adverse transport impacts.

Protecting and enhancing the environment

Landscape character

- EN1** Local planning authorities will ensure that proposals for development contribute to the protection, maintenance and, where possible, enhancement of Oxfordshire's landscape character, and in particular the natural beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to reflect their national importance. Development will be permitted only if it does not unacceptably damage the local landscape.

Biodiversity

- EN2** The following sites of at least national importance will be protected from damaging development:

- Special Areas of Conservation;
- National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest; and
- sites which support specially protected species.

On other sites of acknowledged nature conservation importance development will be permitted only if there is an overriding need or if damage to the ecological interest can be prevented by the use of conditions or planning obligations.

In determining proposals for development local planning authorities will seek environmental measures and promote the use of conditions and management agreements to help protect, manage and expand the biodiversity resource of the county, in particular priority habitats and species.

Agricultural land quality and soil

- EN3** Development of the best and most versatile agricultural land shall have a regard to the quality and productiveness of such land alongside other sustainability considerations. Where significant development of agricultural land is unavoidable, areas of poorer quality land shall be used in preference to that of a higher quality, except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations. Where undeveloped agricultural land is to be developed, any adverse effects on the environment shall be minimised.

Historic and cultural heritage

- EN4** The fabric and setting of listed buildings including Blenheim Palace and Park, a World Heritage Site, will be preserved and the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings will be preserved or enhanced. Other elements of the historic environment, including historic parks and gardens, battlefields and historic landscapes will also be protected from harmful development.
- EN5** The conservation of Oxford's architectural and historic heritage, including its green spaces and its landscape setting, will take priority in considering proposals for development in and around the city.

Archaeology

- EN6** There will be a presumption in favour of preserving in situ nationally and internationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings. Development affecting other archaeological remains should include measures to secure their preservation in situ or where this is not feasible, their recording or removal to another site.

Geology

- EN7** Nationally and regionally important geological features including geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Regionally Important Geological Sites shall be protected from harmful development and retained in situ unless there are exceptional reasons justifying their removal, in which event their presence shall be appropriately recorded.

Water quality

- EN8** Development that will lead to unacceptable deterioration in water quality will not be permitted.

Flood risk and surface water drainage

- EN9** Development in undeveloped areas at high risk from flooding or in the functional floodplain will not be permitted. A flood risk assessment will be required for proposals for development except where there is little or no flood risk. Proposals for redevelopment of existing buildings and their curtilage within areas of high flood risk should aim to improve conditions locally and not worsen flood risk elsewhere.

New development should not lead to an increase in run-off, which would exacerbate flood risk elsewhere. The use of sustainable drainage systems to regulate run-off will be required as part of development proposals.

Water resources and waste water infrastructure

- EN10** Development will be permitted only where adequate water resources and waste water infrastructure for the development already exist or can readily be provided without risk to existing abstractions, water quality, the water environment or nature conservation.
- EN11** Proposals for major new reservoirs in Oxfordshire will be permitted only if there is a proven need for increased water resources which cannot be met in more economical and environmentally less intrusive ways, and all reasonable measures to manage demand for water, including controlling loss through water leakage, have been taken.

Developing the local economy

Provision for employment development

E1 Development for employment purposes should be located so as to meet the objectives and priorities of this Plan. In particular it should:

- provide for the requirements of activities which contribute to the regional and local priorities for economic development. This includes providing a range of accommodation for small businesses and innovation, skills development, business infrastructure and linkages within the knowledge based economy;
- be located mainly in or adjoining urban areas or in existing concentrations of employment with good accessibility from residential areas, particularly by non-car modes of transport;
- as far as practicable incorporate measures to encourage shorter journeys to work and travel on foot, by cycle or public transport;
- not be of a scale or character that gives rise to large increases in commuting in the area or low intensity uses of land which generate heavy traffic on local roads.

Priority should be given to development which supports educational, scientific and technological sectors and responds to the needs of established and emerging clusters within the county.

Oxford City

E2 In Oxford, development for employment uses will be expected to take place primarily on previously developed land or in conjunction with redevelopment schemes for mixed uses incorporating housing, town centre or other facilities. Development should have regard to the priorities set out in Policy E1 and to the objective of providing a range of accommodation for businesses in Oxford and contributing to the diversity of local employment opportunities, while maintaining or improving the balance between jobs and resident workforce in the city.

Where employment use of a site ceases, its future use should be assessed in the light of the above considerations, its suitability for alternative uses and whether there is a realistic prospect of it being re-used for employment purposes.