

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

- 6.1 One of the great assets of the Vale of White Horse is its rich and varied historic environment. Features of architectural or historic interest abound and contribute much towards the distinctive character and cherished identity of the district's towns, villages and countryside. These features add quality to the lives of both residents and visitors and lend support to the district's economic, social and cultural well-being.
- 6.2 The area covered by this Local Plan has supported human habitation for thousands of years, especially along the Downs where ancient hill-forts, long barrows and other remains are sited near the Ridgeway, one of England's oldest roads. The White Horse itself, from which the district takes its name, is a figure cut in the chalk thought to date from the Iron Age. Many settlements in the district were established in the Middle Ages and laid out in distinctive patterns which remain an essential part of their character. For example, the importance of Stanford-in-the-Vale as a medieval market centre is indicated by its two village greens. Some villages are compact and tightly knit, others are linear settlements stretching along roads. Estate villages, like Ardington and Coleshill, have a distinctive architectural character which derives from a long association with a single owner or estate.
- 6.3 The three market towns of the district also grew to prosperity in the Middle Ages; Abingdon, the largest, is now recognised as the oldest continuously inhabited town in England. It has a well-preserved centre with a medieval street pattern, numerous timber-framed buildings, monuments and major buildings of more than local significance (such as the County Hall and the almshouses around St Helen's Church), as well as associations with the once-great Benedictine Abbey. Wantage, located at the foot of the Downs, has roots deep in English history and is reputedly the birthplace of King Alfred the Great. It has a fine heritage of medieval and Georgian buildings and, in addition, some interesting Victorian architecture. The small town of Faringdon has Saxon origins. It retains a well-preserved medieval street pattern and the Market Place has a wealth of vernacular stone buildings from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.
- 6.4 What distinguishes the built heritage of the Vale is its variety. The district displays a subtle range of traditional building types and materials. This is because the geology of the landscape in which the buildings and villages stand is itself so varied. Traditional buildings have a close affinity with local materials: chalk and sarsen buildings are found on and near the Downs, rubble limestone walls and stone tile roofs on the corallian limestone ridge in the north of the district. The

timber-framed buildings of the clay vale, with thatched roofs, complemented sometimes by cob walls, are one of the district's most delightful features. Building materials are not strictly limited to local geology, however; timber framing is found throughout the Vale as are traditional Berkshire 'Orange' plain tiles and bricks.

- 6.5 As a resource the historic environment described above is of immense value but it is a resource that is finite and irreplaceable and especially vulnerable at times of change. The pace of change has quickened in recent years. Changes in farming are posing questions about the future use of traditional farm buildings and the volume of traffic is having a growing impact on the historic town centres. Traditional materials are expensive and owners of older buildings are turning increasingly to unsympathetic modern materials to repair or extend their properties. This emphasises the need for a strong policy framework which will help to manage change and safeguard the local heritage for the future. The responses to the Council's Local Plan Issues Report supported the proposition that much importance should be given to protecting our heritage and it should be given a high priority in the new Local Plan. This has been reflected in the policies set out later in this chapter.

Planning Guidance from Central Government

- 6.6 The government's advice to planning authorities on matters relating to the historic environment is contained mainly in two planning policy guidance notes, PPG15: *Planning and the Historic Environment*, published in 1994, and PPG16: *Archaeology and Planning*, published in 1990. In PPG15 the government has recognised that effective protection of all aspects of the historic environment is vitally important to achieving policies for environmental stewardship, especially those embodied in the concept of sustainable development. PPG16 emphasises the importance of archaeological remains as non-renewable resources, which in many cases are highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is essential if they are to survive in good condition. They should not needlessly or thoughtlessly be destroyed.

The Oxfordshire Structure Plan

- 6.7 The general strategy of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan as set out in policy G1 includes the requirement to restrain the overall development in the county in order to protect its environment, character and natural resources. More specifically, in relation to the historic environment, policy EN8 (EN4 in the plan to 2016) states that the fabric and setting of listed buildings should be preserved and the character or appearance of conservation areas should also be safeguarded or enhanced. Policy EN10 (EN6 in the plan to 2016) confirms that there should be a presumption in favour of physically preserving nationally important archaeological remains and their settings, whether scheduled or not. Where development affects other archaeological remains it should include appropriate measures to secure their preservation in situ, or where this is not feasible, features should be recorded

before the development takes place. These strategic policies provide the context for the more detailed local plan policies which follow.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

Conservation Areas

- 6.8 The main instrument the Council has for bringing into effect policies for conserving historic areas is conservation area designation. Section 69 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council to designate conservation areas to cover the parts of the district that are of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is considered desirable to preserve or enhance'. Conservation area designation introduces additional controls to an area: conservation area consent is required to demolish non-listed buildings, certain new building works that would elsewhere be permitted development require planning permission and written permission is required before carrying out certain works to trees. In addition designation requires the Council to formulate policies and proposals for the area's preservation and enhancement.
- 6.9 The prime consideration in the designation of a conservation area is the quality and interest of the area as a whole rather than of individual buildings. In the Vale there are currently 52 conservation areas. Their boundaries are shown on the proposals map and a list is included in Appendix 1. The majority were designated between 1969 and 1971, although reviews and extensions have been undertaken since. In 1990 a comprehensive review of all the rural conservation areas was carried out which resulted in amendments to seven conservation areas and the designation of three new ones.
- 6.10 The review of conservation areas cannot be carried out as part of the local plan process but has to be carried out separately in accordance with the requirements of the 1990 Act.

Preservation and Enhancement: Implications for Development

- 6.11 The purpose of designating conservation areas is not to bring change to a halt. Section 72 of the 1990 Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the special character or appearance of a conservation area when considering proposals for development. This not only includes development within a conservation area but also outside it if such development is likely to affect its setting. In considering development proposals the Council will assess the impact they will have upon the features which comprise the conservation area's special interest and character. There will be a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission or conservation area consent for proposals which do not preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the area concerned.

- 6.12 In assessing the appropriateness of proposals which involve the development or redevelopment of existing sites or buildings the Council's primary considerations will focus on:
- i) the special interest of the site or building;
 - ii) whether the site or building makes a positive contribution towards the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
 - iii) what the alternatives are for enhancing this contribution if it is not entirely positive.
- 6.13 Where the retention of a site or building in its existing condition is clearly desirable due to its special interest and/or the contribution it makes towards the area's character or appearance, the Council will expect developers to take this into account and will refuse proposals which do not achieve this objective. The Council will be particularly concerned to safeguard paddocks, greens, gaps between buildings and other open areas where these add positively to the character of a conservation area.
- 6.14 The Council recognises, however, that certain sites and buildings within conservation areas neither possess special interest nor make any positive contribution towards an area's character or appearance. In such cases, where it can be shown that an enhancement of the site or building can be achieved by new buildings or redevelopment, applications will be favourably considered (subject to other planning standards being complied with satisfactorily). To be acceptable new buildings will need to be designed to respect their context. The Council acknowledges that there can be no pre-determined design solutions, as what may be appropriate on one particular site may be undesirable on another, even within the same conservation area. Designing development in sensitive locations requires skill in the interpretation of local and distinctive characteristics and their translation into modern form. Successful designs for new buildings and extensions to existing buildings are most likely to reflect their context by a careful consideration of what the overall scale, form, height and massing of the building should be, where it should be located on the site or building, the materials to be used, and in what way, and the size, proportions and arrangement of doors and window openings. The Council may consider relaxing certain standards (e.g. car parking) which might otherwise rule out desirable proposals. Where total or partial demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area is proposed, and where a building has local architectural or historic significance an historic assessment will be required to be submitted as part of a planning application. If permission for demolition is granted a condition may be imposed requiring the building's recording prior to demolition.
- 6.15 In assessing the respect development proposals have for their context, the Council recognises that the special interest and character of a conservation area depends on much more than the quality and siting of its buildings. Whilst these are clearly important there are many other structures and features that can contribute

positively, such as walls, railings, gates and gate piers, paved and cobbled surfaces, trees, hedgerows and roadside verges. Other features such as the archaeological interest attached to street and plot boundaries may also be significant. These are often less easy to identify. The Council will seek to ensure the preservation of features like these and resist their removal or damage. At the same time it will welcome the removal or improvement of features which detract from the character of a conservation area, for example unattractive surfacing materials, signs, advertisements and shopfronts, lighting columns, bus shelters and telecommunication apparatus, which may be promoted under separate legislation.

- 6.16 Policies HE1 and HE2 below set out the criteria which development proposals, in conservation areas, will be expected to meet if planning permission and/or conservation area consent is to be granted.

POLICY HE1

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER WORKS WITHIN OR AFFECTING THE SETTING OF A CONSERVATION AREA WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THEY CAN BE SHOWN TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE ESTABLISHED CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA. DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED:

- i) **ON AREAS SUCH AS PADDOCKS, GREENS, GAPS BETWEEN BUILDINGS, GARDENS AND OTHER OPEN SPACES WHERE IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THESE AREAS DO NOT MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO;**
 - a) **THE CONSERVATION AREA'S SPECIAL INTEREST INCLUDING ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING, OR**
 - b) **VIEWS WITHIN, INTO, OR OUT FROM THE CONSERVATION AREA WHICH WOULD BE LOST OR DAMAGED WERE THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE PERMITTED.**
- ii) **WHERE IT RESPECTS ITS CONTEXT THROUGH APPROPRIATE SITING, SCALE, HEIGHT, FORM AND MASSING, DESIGN DETAILING AND THE CHOICE AND QUALITY OF MATERIALS AND FINISHES AND HAS REGARD TO THE DESIRABILITY OF;**
 - a) **PRESERVING THOSE FEATURES IMPORTANT TO THE SPECIAL INTEREST AND CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA; AND**
 - b) **REMOVING OR IMPROVING FEATURES IN THE CONSERVATION AREA WHICH DETRACT FROM ITS SPECIAL INTEREST AND CHARACTER; AND**
- iii) **IF LEVELS OF TRAFFIC, PARKING, NOISE OR OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE**

PRESERVATION OR ENHANCEMENT OF THE ESTABLISHED CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.

POLICY HE2

THE TOTAL OR SUBSTANTIAL DEMOLITION OF AN UNLISTED BUILDING THAT CONTRIBUTES POSITIVELY TOWARDS THE SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST, CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:

- i) THE BUILDING IS BEYOND REPAIR;**
- ii) THERE IS NO COMPATIBLE USE WHICH WOULD SECURE RETENTION OF THE BUILDING AND CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TOWARDS THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA; AND**
- iii) PROPOSALS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE HAVE BEEN PREPARED WHICH WILL BRING BENEFITS THAT OUTWEIGH THE LOSS RESULTING FROM THE DEMOLITION.**

6.17 Applicants will be required to submit supporting statements to substantiate that:

- a) the building is beyond economic repair and efforts made to secure its retention in a compatible use have failed; or
- b) substantial community benefits will be brought by a redevelopment of the building; and
- c) there is a firm commitment to the implementation of a redevelopment scheme within an agreed timescale.

Detailed Plans and Drawings

6.18 The Council will require the submission of detailed plans to illustrate how the design of the new development will respect its context and, where appropriate, to justify proposals involving demolition. Outline or change of use applications will only be accepted by the Council if these are accompanied by sufficiently detailed plans to show the effect of any new development on the features which contribute to the area's special character or appearance and which the Council considers it desirable to preserve or enhance.

6.19 Applications for conservation area consent to demolish unlisted buildings will also only be considered if they are accompanied by sufficiently detailed plans, showing, if appropriate, how the buildings will be replaced.

Historic Buildings

- 6.20 The main instrument that brings into effect policies for ensuring the protection of historic buildings is statutory listing. Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the compilation or approval of lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. This is done by English Heritage and the criteria used in the selection process are applied consistently across the country. The Vale is fortunate in possessing a fine stock of well over 2000 listed buildings. These range from magnificent country houses to modest cottages and include structures such as bridges, memorials, telephone kiosks and gravestones.
- 6.21 The listing of a building relates to its interior as well as its exterior and extends also to include any object or structure fixed to it or which is within its curtilage and is fixed to the land and has been so since before July 1948.
- 6.22 The fact that a building or historic feature is included on the Statutory List does not mean it has to be preserved intact and unchanged in all circumstances. It does, however, mean that listed building consent will be required for its demolition (including partial demolition) and for proposals to alter or extend it in any way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.
- 6.23 When considering applications for consent the District Council will be guided in the first instance by the principle that, whatever their grade, there should be a presumption in favour of preserving listed buildings, including their settings and the features of special interest they possess. Applicants should therefore be prepared to justify their proposals and clearly demonstrate the effect of their proposal on the building concerned and, where appropriate, on its setting.
- 6.24 Proposals that involve the demolition of all or a substantial part of a listed building or major alterations or extensions that would significantly alter its character will require strong justification. The supporting information and evidence justifying the proposal should be submitted with the application and include photographs and accurate plans, including elevations and sections, and where appropriate a historical assessment of the building's development.
- 6.25 In the case of the total or substantial demolition of a listed building, applications have to be referred to the Secretary of State whose agreement is required if the scheme is to be given consent. The Secretary of State's expectations are: that such consent should not be given without clear and convincing evidence; that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or to find viable new uses and that these efforts have failed; that preservation in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; or that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits to the community which would outweigh the loss from demolition or major change. In the case of these types of proposals the Council will therefore require evidence on:

- i) the condition of the building and the costs involved in its repair and maintenance to allow it to continue in its existing use. The fact that, economically, redevelopment is more attractive than to repair and re-use, or that a site was sold at a price reflecting its redevelopment potential, will not be accepted as justification for demolition; and
- ii) the efforts made to retain the building in its use, including evidence of attempts to sell at a realistic price on the open market; and
- iii) the community benefits brought by a redevelopment of the building.

Claims that a replacement building would have more architectural merit than the listed building would in itself be unlikely to justify a proposal for demolition. If consent for the demolition of all or part of a listed building is granted a condition may be imposed requiring its recording prior to demolition. In assessing proposals affecting listed buildings, including features of special interest, the guiding principle is that there will be presumption in favour of their preservation.

POLICY HE3

PROPOSALS INVOLVING THE TOTAL OR SUBSTANTIAL DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING OR ITS FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE WILL NOT BE GRANTED LISTED BUILDING CONSENT EXCEPT IN THE MOST EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

- i) **EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO RETAIN THE BUILDING OR ITS FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE BUT SUCH EFFORTS HAVE FAILED BECAUSE**
 - a) **THE BUILDING IS WHOLLY OR SUBSTANTIALLY BEYOND REPAIR AT REASONABLE COST; OR**
 - b) **THERE IS NO USE WHICH IS COMPATIBLE AND CAN SECURE THE RETENTION OF THE BUILDING; OR**
- ii) **PROPOSALS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE BUILDING HAVE BEEN PREPARED WHICH WILL BRING SUBSTANTIAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS THAT OUTWEIGH DECISIVELY THE LOSS RESULTING FROM ITS DEMOLITION AND CANNOT BE PROVIDED SATISFACTORILY ELSEWHERE.**

POLICY HE4

PLANNING PERMISSION, FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS WILL NOT BE GRANTED UNLESS IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE SITING, SCALE, DESIGN, FORM, FINISHES (INCLUDING COLOUR) AND MATERIALS OF THE PROPOSAL RESPECT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BUILDING IN ITS SETTING,

INCLUDING ANY VISUAL, FUNCTIONAL, HISTORIC OR ARCHITECTURAL RELATIONSHIPS IT HAS.

6.26 When considering proposals for the alteration of listed buildings the Council will seek to adhere to the general principles and detailed guidance on the alteration of listed buildings set out in Annex C of PPG15. It will seek to safeguard listed buildings from unnecessary and inappropriate works, including demolition and unsuitable and insensitive alterations, additions or extensions. The Council will also seek to ensure schemes for external re-painting respect the character, detailing and style of the building. Listed building consent is unlikely to be forthcoming unless proper account is taken of the following issues relating to the special interest and character of the building:

- i) its importance and rarity value deriving from its type and function, its age and style, its siting and location, its historical association and its state of survival in an original or modified form;
- ii) its physical features of value. These may comprise features such as the design, arrangement and types of windows and doors, architectural elements of a decorative façade or, internally, fireplaces, doors, staircases, and panelling. Less obvious features such as the layout and plan form and the archaeological and technological interest of its surviving fabric (including the roof structure) may also be significant; and
- iii) its group value deriving from its location in a street, square, farm complex or other planned arrangement or from its association with other buildings close by sharing particular architectural forms or features.

POLICY HE5

DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING ALTERATIONS (INCLUDING PARTIAL DEMOLITION) ADDITIONS OR EXTENSIONS TO A LISTED BUILDING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IF:

- i) **ITS SITING, DESIGN, SCALE, FORM, FINISHES (INCLUDING COLOUR) AND MATERIALS ARE UNSYMPATHETIC TO THE BUILDING'S SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST;**
- ii) **IT FAILS TO RETAIN THOSE FEATURES OF THE EXISTING BUILDING WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO ITS SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST.**

6.27 Proposals for the alteration of a listed building may expose or destroy fabrics or features of architectural or historic interest. In these cases the Council may make it a condition of listed building consent that applicants arrange and undertake suitable programmes of recording. In some circumstances exploratory opening up, with

listed building consent, may be necessary before the listed building application for the main work is considered.

- 6.28 Hidden features of interest are sometimes revealed during alteration works, early windows and doors, panelling or wall paintings may come to light. In circumstances where the Council considers features of interest may be revealed during the course of the alteration works, a condition of the listed building consent will require a watching brief to be carried out during the course of the work. If hidden features of interest are revealed during the course of the works advice of the Council's Conservation Officer should be sought.

POLICY HE6

WHERE DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING A LISTED BUILDING IS PERMITTED THE PROPER RECORDING AND/OR RETENTION OR RE-USE OF FEATURES AND FABRIC OF THE BUILDING WILL BE REQUIRED WHERE SUCH FEATURES:-

- i) ARE KNOWN TO EXIST BUT WILL BE REMOVED IN THE COURSE OF THE DEVELOPMENT,**
- ii) WERE FORMERLY HIDDEN BUT ARE REVEALED IN THE COURSE OF WORKS WHICH HAVE BEEN PERMITTED SUBJECT TO A WATCHING BRIEF CONDITION.**

- 6.29 In the majority of cases the best way for preserving a listed building is to keep it in an active and economically viable use. The best use is normally one similar to that for which it was designed, as this is likely to be accommodated with minimal effect upon the special interest and character of the building. However, in cases where the original use is no longer viable or appropriate, or its continuation would now have a damaging effect on the building or its setting, the Council will consider alternative uses flexibly. Nevertheless it will wish to ensure that these represent the least damaging approach and will secure the retention of the building, including the features which contribute to its special interest.

POLICY HE7

PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF ALL OR PART OF A LISTED BUILDING OR LAND AND BUILDINGS WITHIN IT'S CURTILAGE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE NEW USE CAN BE ACCOMMODATED WITHOUT ANY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT UPON ITS FEATURES OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST, AND WILL NOT GIVE RISE TO ANY HARMFUL EFFECTS UPON THE BUILDING'S APPEARANCE OR CHARACTER.

Historic Parks and Gardens

- 6.30 English Heritage has compiled a *National Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. The sites are categorised using the same grades as used for listed buildings (I, II* and II). At present no additional statutory controls follow from the inclusion of a site in the register but local planning authorities have a responsibility towards enabling and ensuring their protection when preparing development plans and determining planning applications.
- 6.31 In the Vale, eight historic parks and gardens have been included in the register, they are shown on the proposal map and listed in Appendix 2 of this Plan. The coverage of parks and gardens is to be extended and as part of that process a local register has been prepared for Oxfordshire.
- 6.32 The protection of these historic landscapes requires more than policies aimed at preventing unsympathetic development. Arrangements need to be in place for their proper management. Where development is to be permitted the Council may wish to secure via a legal agreement or a planning condition, an appropriate management plan for the park or garden which will cover such matters as the replanting or restoration of lost features, the on-going care of existing trees, hedges and wooded areas, and, where appropriate, the creation of new areas of landscaping. Expert advice on the conservation of historic parks and gardens can be obtained from English Heritage and the Garden History Society.

POLICY HE8

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR IN THE SETTING OF AN HISTORIC PARK OR GARDEN INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY CONSERVE AND CAUSE NO SIGNIFICANT HARM TO THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND THE FEATURES OF SPECIAL INTEREST IT POSSESSES.

Archaeology

- 6.33 Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource that represent an irreplaceable record of past times. Often the remains are fragile and highly vulnerable to damage by development or agricultural activity.
- 6.34 The Vale has a long history of settlement and an important archaeological heritage, with remains dating from prehistoric times. The range of sites and features is very extensive including burial mounds, field systems, historic tracks and ancient settlements. Most are buried below ground but some, such as the Barn at Great Coxwell, are significant features in the local scene.
- 6.35 The presence of early people in the area, perhaps as much as 350,000 years ago, is shown by finds of flint tools in the gravel terraces of the Thames valley. Other

civilisations have come and gone over the centuries, leaving evidence of their way of life. The Vale has a wealth of settlements and routeways from the prehistoric, the Roman occupation and the Saxon, Norman and Medieval periods. Examples include the Neolithic long barrow at Wayland Smithy, the Iron Age hillfort at Uffington Castle, the Roman temple at Frilford, the lost medieval villages at Seacourt and Tulwick (near Grove) and the White Horse itself.

- 6.36 Some nationally important sites are scheduled as ancient monuments by the government on the advice of English Heritage. At present there are 68 scheduled monuments within the district. They are listed in Appendix 3. A re-survey of sites is currently being undertaken and is expected to increase the number significantly. Scheduled monuments are given statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, which requires scheduled monument consent to be obtained from the Secretary of State for any works that affect them. The scope of this control is more extensive and more detailed than that applying to listed buildings.
- 6.37 Because the scheduling process is not comprehensive, many archaeological remains have no statutory protection; However, most of the known remains are identified on the Oxfordshire County Council's *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR). Prospective developers are advised to refer to this and to consult the County Archaeologist prior to making a planning application. These consultations will give advance warning of sensitive sites where an archaeological assessment will be required prior to the submission of an application.
- 6.38 Development proposals affecting a site of archaeological interest (whether or not a scheduled ancient monument) will be examined carefully to determine whether or not remains and features will be damaged. In order to make this assessment developers will be expected to provide information in support of their application to include:
- i) the assessment of the nature, character and importance of the site and its setting in archaeological terms; and
 - ii) the likely impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains; and
 - iii) if necessary the measures to be taken to ensure suitable mitigation of the impact of the proposed development, having regard to the desirability of avoiding disturbance of archaeological remains and of preserving them in situ.
- 6.39 The assessment should be carried out using a suitably qualified archaeological organisation and can involve desk-based studies, geophysical survey, non-invasive assessment and field evaluation e.g. trial trenching.
- 6.40 In some circumstances an archaeological watching brief may be a condition of consent.

POLICY HE9

WHERE THERE ARE REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR BELIEVING THAT IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS MAY BE DISTURBED OR OTHERWISE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL THE APPLICANT WILL BE REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION OF THE SITE AND ITS SETTING BEFORE THE PLANNING APPLICATION IS DETERMINED.

- 6.41 Where specially important archaeological remains and their settings would be damaged by proposed development, the Council will be guided by the principle that there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.

POLICY HE10

DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IF IT WOULD CAUSE DAMAGE TO THE SITE OR SETTING OF NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS, WHETHER SCHEDULED OR NOT.

- 6.42 On other sites of archaeological importance the Council will need to be satisfied that either appropriate and satisfactory arrangements have been made to achieve preservation of remains in situ, or a programme of investigation and recording has been agreed, or that the impact of the proposed development is mitigated through suitable design, layout and construction methods. These requirements may be the subject of planning conditions or legal agreements.

POLICY HE11

DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE PRESERVATION IN SITU. WHERE THIS IS NOT PRACTICABLE OR DESIRABLE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO COMMENCE UNTIL A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION INCLUDING EXCAVATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLISHING RESULTS HAS BEEN AGREED AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION SECURED.