An aerial photograph of a golf course at sunset. The foreground shows a green fairway with a sand trap and a path. In the background, there are rolling hills, fields, and a small town under a colorful sky.

Uffington and Baulking Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031

**Uffington Parish Council
& Baulking Parish Meeting**

Made Version

July 2019

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Natural England

Historic England

Sport England

Uffington Primary School - Chair of Governors

P Butt Planning representing Developer - Redcliffe Homes Ltd (Fawler Rd development)

P Butt Planning representing Uffington Trading Estate

Grassroots Planning representing Developer (Fernham Rd development)

R Stewart representing some Uffington land owners

Steering Group Members

Catherine Aldridge, Ray Avenell, Anna Bendall, Rob Hart (Chairman), Simon Jenkins (Chairman Uffington Parish Council), Fenella Oberman, Mike Oldnall, David Owen-Smith (Chairman Baulking Parish Meeting), Anthony Parsons, Maxine Parsons, Clare Roberts, Tori Russ, Mike Thomas

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Executive Summary

This Neighbourhood Plan (the 'Plan') was prepared jointly for the Uffington Parish Council and Baulking Parish Meeting. Its key purpose is to define land-use policies for use by the Planning Authority during determination of planning applications and appeals within the designated area. It has been the subject of significant local consultation and will be adopted subject to a local referendum. It was prepared by a dedicated Steering Group (SG), comprising parish councillors and other Uffington and Baulking parish residents and representatives. The SG worked closely with the Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC) and with an independent consultant for professional advice.

The vision, set out by the SG following local consultation, is that in 2031 the community, comprising the villagers of Uffington and Baulking, will still sit in a peaceful rural setting, dominated by two of the most famous landmarks in the country: the White Horse Hill and the Ridgeway. There will continue to be strategic gaps between the villages consisting of farmland and wooded areas, as the surrounding countryside will have been protected from inappropriate development. There will, however, have been some building, consistent with the VWHDC Local Plan, and having regard to the results of the Housing Needs Assessment, to address the current and future needs of all sections of the community. Heritage assets will have been protected, the local economy will have been stimulated and opportunities for employment in the neighbourhood will have been optimised. The facilities, services and infrastructure will have been properly maintained and upgraded where possible, to a standard fit for a time approaching the middle of the 21st century.

From this vision, the following objectives were derived:

1. Ensure that any development in the future is sited where the community wants it.
2. Provide for the changing housing needs of the community.
3. Enhance the built environment of our villages.
4. Retain Uffington's and Baulking's identities as individual villages, each with a strong heritage.
5. Preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of Uffington and Baulking within the open landscape of the Vale and White Horse Hill and protect the valued green spaces within and around our villages.
6. Stimulate the local economy and optimise opportunities for local employment.
7. Protect and enhance our community facilities and recreation space so as to meet the needs of a growing population.
8. Ensure the infrastructure within the parishes of Uffington and Baulking is developed to support sustainable growth.

To deliver these objectives, the SG was split into 5 focus groups covering Landscape and Heritage, Housing, Design, Economy & Employment and Sustainability & Infrastructure. Each group gathered evidence, considered options and drafted policies to meet the objectives and address each issue. Following public consultation the agreed policies, supported by evidence, were incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan. The main issues considered were:

1. A need for clear, additional local guidance for applicants, developers, parish and district councillors involved in processing planning applications.
2. Protection of the landscape, its quality, heritage and biodiversity.
3. Scale and location of potential development sites.
4. Lack of affordable housing – in terms of numbers and affordability.
5. Design quality of developments, including location with respect to heritage assets and the maintenance of the character and appearance of the villages.
6. Traffic density and road access to/from the Plan area.
7. Flooding.
8. Quality of, and pressures on, local infrastructure including the school.
9. A need to maintain/develop local employment and support existing businesses including the agricultural economy and tourism.

Evidence was gathered through a review of previous village assessments, surveys and reports, including the Community Led Plan completed in 2015, in addition to higher-level policy such as the District Council Design Guide, Local Plans (Parts 1 and 2) and recent planning decisions. The SG also commissioned the following independent evidence gathering studies:

1. A Characterisation Study to identify the key features of the local area.
2. A Housing Needs Assessment, including a Housing Needs Survey of all residents, to identify the housing need over the plan period.
3. A Landscape Capacity Study to identify the capacity for, and visual impact of, building on each individual parcel (field or wood).

The Characterisation Study was conducted at the outset of the NP development work and set out clear consideration of the local area through a detailed study of the geography, topography, demographics, design and development of the NP area built form. It was used throughout the NP development process to inform choice and decision making regarding objectives and policy.

The Housing Needs Assessment sought to determine the right number and type of new houses. Following analysis of district and local historical data, coupled with district projections, a population increase of 17% was expected during the Plan Period for the Plan Area. Following similar analysis of district and local historical dwellings, coupled with analysis of district housing forecasts, adjusted for local and market factors, a further 67 dwellings were required for the plan period of 2011-2031, of which 48 were already completed/allocated through a development of 36 homes at Jacksmeadow and another 12 single dwellings. Therefore a further 19 dwellings were proposed for the NP area.

The Landscape Capacity Study followed a sequential classification and evaluation of landscape and visual factors to determine landscape sensitivity. The evaluation of landscape sensitivity was combined with landscape value to determine landscape capacity for development. The study recognised that each of the villages has a range of built forms which includes a strong and distinctive historic evolution. Both villages are surrounded by gently undulating open countryside with the protected hills of the North Wessex Downs AONB only a short distance away. The landscape capacity ratings were described using five orders of

magnitude: Low, Medium/Low, Medium, Medium/High and High. A total of 205 land parcels was evaluated in Uffington and 120 land parcels in Baulking, covering almost all of the designated plan area. Generally, land parcels to the south of the villages are considered to contribute positively to the setting of the AONB and consequently have low capacity for development. Land parcels located on the northern side reflect the various high quality landscape character attributes that are relevant to southern parcels and also contribute to the setting of the AONB but less directly, making the typical capacity Medium/Low.

Throughout the development of the Plan, the SG conducted a series of public consultations to gather the views of residents from within the Plan Area and from local official bodies such as the District Council, and to keep them informed of progress with the Plan as it matured.

Evidence from the studies described above and the consultation events led to the policies listed at Appendix 1, which should be read in conjunction with the more detailed text in the main report and the reference documents that support them. The VWHDC determined that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) was required.

In addition to the policies derived from the studies, the focus groups also developed a range of policies covering Design, Economy & Employment and Sustainability & Infrastructure. While these do not directly affect the numbers and locations of dwellings, these complementary policies are essential to ensure that the full range of Plan objectives is addressed. These policies are also listed at Appendix 1.

In conjunction with the Community Led Plan and the District Council's Local Plan (Part 1), coupled with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Steering Group expects that the Plan will inform planning decisions in the years to come. Whilst recognising the need for some development to support population growth, the Plan policies also make a major contribution to achieving the Vision.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Neighbourhood Plan (the 'Plan') has been prepared jointly by the Uffington Parish Council and Baulking Parish Meeting under the auspices of the Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC), following the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 (as amended) and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Within these provisions, a neighbourhood plan, along with a local (district) plan, forms part of the statutory development plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is brought into legal force by the local planning authority (also known as being 'made'). The key purpose of the Plan is to define land-use policies that can be used to help to determine planning applications and appeals within the designated area.

Plans must meet five 'basic conditions' which are defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and explained in detail on the Planning Practice Guidance website.¹ These are that:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the local authority, in this case the Vale of the White Horse District Council;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Development Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with, in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In addition, the Plan must show proper consultation with local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making the Plan.

Since neighbourhood plans must be consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan, these higher-level structures are briefly outlined.

1.2 National Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out planning policies aimed at sustainable development.² It also addresses the preserving and enhancing of natural and historic environments and encourages high quality design in the built environment. The Government updated the NPPF on 24 July 2018.³ This plan is consistent with the provisions in the revised NPPF. However under the transitional

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf

provisions in the revised NPPF, Plans submitted for examination on or before 24th January 2019 will be assessed against the 2012 version of the NPPF.

1.3 Local Strategic Context

The VWHDC published its adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1) in December 2016.⁴ LPP1 deals with the larger strategic sites and policies in the Vale. No strategic sites were identified in the Uffington and Baulking Plan area. Several of its 46 Core Policies (CP) are referenced later within this document.

This Plan area lies within the Western Vale Sub-Area, which stretches from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the River Thames and contains the market town of Faringdon and several larger villages (see Figure 1). Before the local government reorganisation in 1974, both Uffington and Baulking were in Berkshire.

The VWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (LPP2) was submitted for examination by the inspector in February 2018 and the examination hearings closed on the 6 September 2018.⁵ Part 2 contains detailed development management policies to complement those in LPP1, replacing the saved policies of the Local Plan 2011, and allocating additional development sites for housing and other uses. As with LPP1, no sites were identified in the Western Vale Sub-Area (See Figure 1 below) which includes the Uffington and Baulking Plan area.

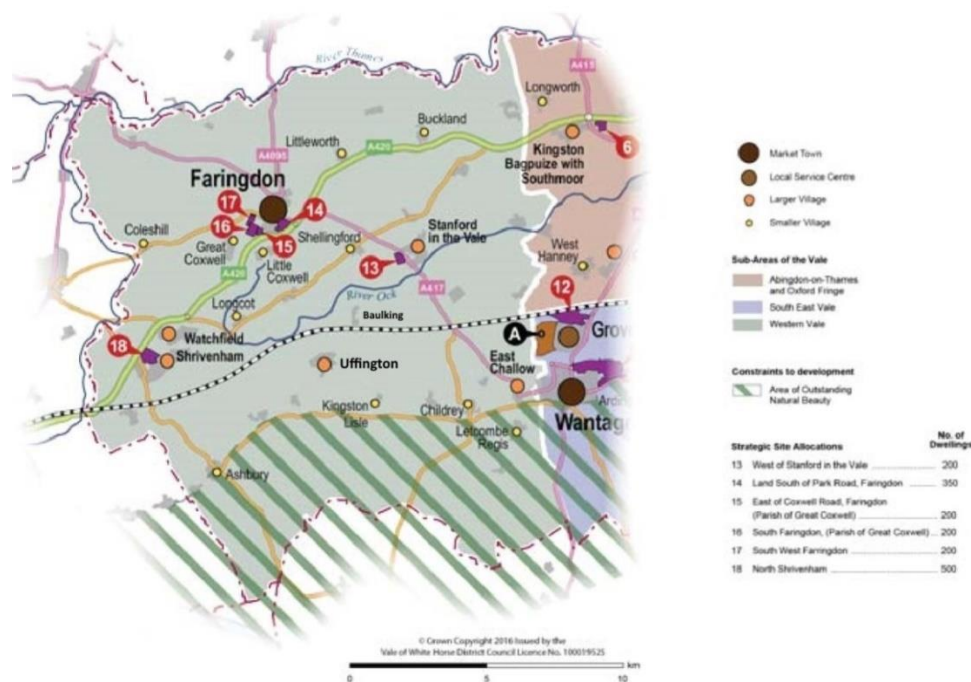


Figure 1 – Western Vale Sub-Area

⁴ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-local-plan-2031-part-1-strategic-sites

⁵ <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

1.4 Uffington and Baulking Villages

Both villages have a long history and are important areas for archaeological study, as described in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record.⁶ The general shape of each village has remained unchanged since the eighteenth century, when the first reliable maps were produced.⁷ The parish boundaries have also remained largely unaltered for 250 years.

1.4.1 Uffington Village

The loosely clustered buildings and the village layout define the feel and character of Uffington. Figure 2 shows that in 1785 the village had no obvious centre but houses were clustered particularly along Broad Street and High Street. There were few large houses and cottage-sized dwellings were the norm. St Mary's church, dating from the thirteenth century, is unusually large for a village of this size.



Figure 2 – Uffington Village 1785

There were, within and immediately surrounding the village, small areas of enclosed land or closes, as shown in dark grey in Figure 2 (and described more fully in *Landscape Reinvented*, Chapter 2).⁸ Beyond the closes lay the shared open fields, commons and meadows. Some of the historic closes remain intact and should be preserved.

Until the sale of the Craven Estate in the 1950s, there was extensive green space between the village dwellings, as shown by an aerial view of Uffington in 1946 (Figure 13 – 1946 Aerial View of Uffington and Baulking). Later, Uffington experienced significant growth in housing (see Section 4), mainly within the village boundaries.

⁶ In the past 40 years there have been finds of Roman pottery within the village of Uffington and Anglo-Saxon building foundations have been explored and artefacts found 1km north-west of the village and included in the OHER <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/historic-environment-record>

⁷ Craven map of Uffington parish 1785; tithe map of Baulking 1839 (copies of both held in Uffington museum).

⁸ A. Parsons, S. Millikin, *Landscape Reinvented* (Uffington Oxon: Uffington Museum Trust, 2015).

1.4.2 Baulking Village

Baulking is a smaller settlement, first referenced in the late Saxon period, and it grew as a farming community. Most of Baulking's housing is spread along the western side of an elongated Green, with the thirteenth-century church of St Nicholas prominently sited at its southern end. The church serves as a 'village hall' for the community. The form and size of Baulking has altered little since the early 1800s (see Figure 3).⁹ Like Uffington, the village was surrounded by closes.

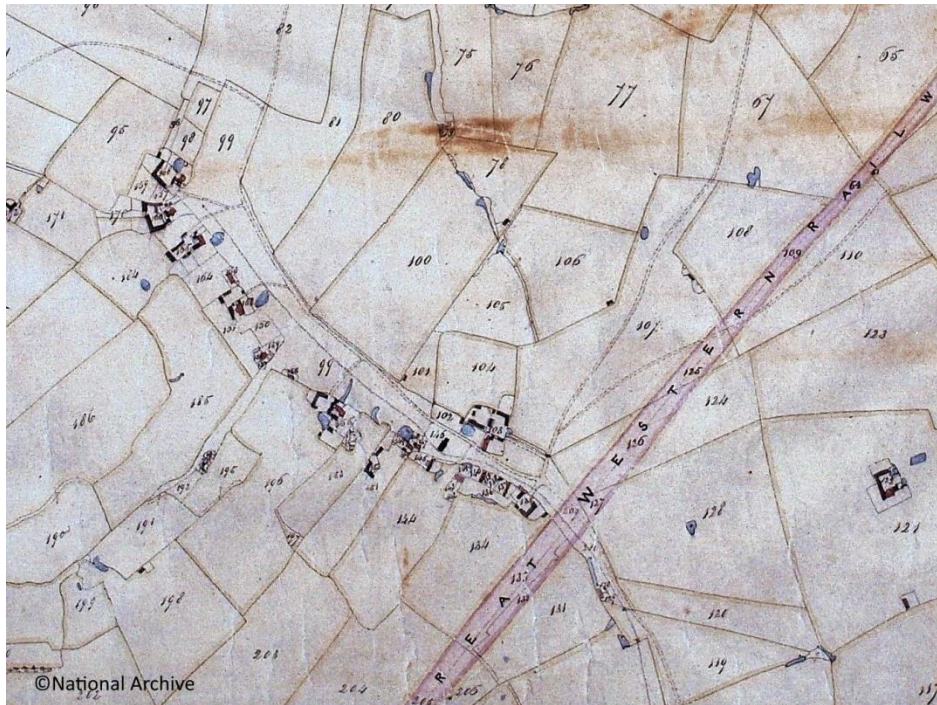


Figure 3 – Baulking Village Centre 1839

1.4.3 The Canal and Railway

Both villages were impacted by the completion of the Wilts and Berks Canal in 1810 and the Great Western Railway line from London to Bristol, opening in 1841, together with Uffington Station and a branch line to Faringdon. The Uffington Tile and Brick Company and the Junction Hotel were built near the station and northern loop of the canal during the 1840s. The brickworks closed in the 1920s and the branch line in 1964, as did the station and hotel. There is now a small trading estate near the site of the brickworks and old station (see Section 6).

⁹ See also map, Figure 15 – Baulking Village 1910.

2 Process

2.1 Steering Group and Timeline

In 2015 Uffington Parish Council and Woolstone and Baulking Parish Meetings published a Community Led Plan (CLP) (Reference Document A). This was based on responses to questionnaires on a wide range of local matters, distributed to every household. The creation of the Plan was supported by the great majority of the community and was therefore embedded in the CLP action plan. Following this recommendation, Uffington Parish Council set up a Steering Group in September 2015 to take the Neighbourhood Plan forward. The membership and terms of reference of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SG) are on the Uffington and Baulking Neighbourhood Plan website.¹⁰

2.2 Plan Period and Stage

The Plan period, 2011 to 2031, was chosen to be the same as the developing VWHDC Local Plan. Opting for the same period has allowed any housing allocation or target from LPP1 or LPP2 to be synchronised with policies in this Plan.

This draft of the Plan was published for pre-submission consultation on 7 May 2018 and was submitted for examination on 25 October 2018.

2.3 Approved Neighbourhood Plan Area

The area originally covered by the Plan was the whole of the three parishes of Uffington, Baulking and Woolstone. Woolstone withdrew from the planning process in November 2016 with the result that the Plan area was re-designated to comprise the whole of the parishes of Uffington and Baulking. This area was formally approved by the VWHDC on 9 March 2017 and is shown in Figure 4 below.

An independent Characterisation Study (Reference Document B), covering all three original parishes of the Plan area, was carried out on behalf of the Steering Group early in the exercise. This study has provided supporting factual evidence on many aspects of the Plan area and is referenced later in this document.

¹⁰ <https://www.uffington.net/community-neighbourhood-plans/neighbourhood-plan/>

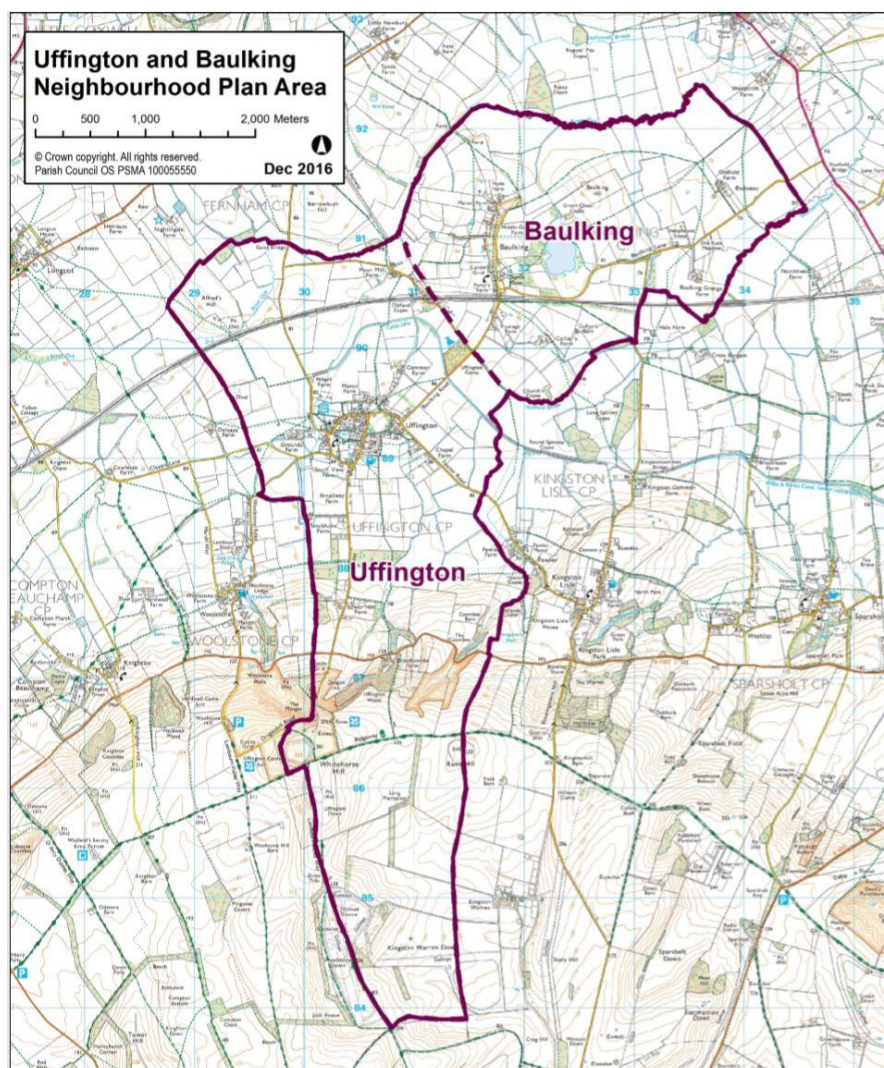


Figure 4 – Uffington and Baulking Plan Area

2.4 Information Dissemination and Consultation

Information about the Plan has been disseminated across the Plan area from the outset. We have used existing delivery mechanisms such as the Courier (the quarterly printed journal distributed across Uffington, Woolstone and Baulking parishes), the electronic newsletters circulated to Uffington and Baulking residents and regular reports to Uffington Parish Council meetings and to Baulking Parish meetings and residents' meetings.

A dedicated website (www.ubwnp.net) was created early in the programme to describe in some detail the methodology and on-going progress against the project plan. This website provided an opportunity for residents and others to comment on any aspect of the Plan. It also gave access to formal documents such as the agenda and minutes of Steering Group meetings, major reports commissioned by the Group, maps, charts and other data. The website and social media were updated regularly to ensure residents were made aware of draft documents, events of significance and to advertise consultation meetings.

Special public consultation events were held in the Uffington village hall to describe progress and, more importantly, to obtain local opinion on options and to answer any questions. There were five such evening events between January 2016 and April 2018. We also mounted a Neighbourhood Plan display and gathered opinions from parishioners at four Farmers' Markets (in Uffington on Sunday mornings) plus other similar events. Events were advertised on the website, on notices around the villages and via the villages' email systems.

The Housing Needs Assessment questionnaire also provided substantial input from parishioners on many matters connected with present and future housing.

The statutory 6-week pre-submission consultation exercise took place between 7 May and 26 June 2018. Consultees included the statutory list provided by VWHDC and all residents of the Plan area. Comments could be made in writing or by email. This process yielded further comments on the draft plan from residents, public bodies and developers or their representatives/agents.

Throughout the development of the Plan, regular consultation and discussions took place with officers from VWHDC both through their attendance at many of the NPSG meetings and through additional meetings to discuss specific points. The Consultation Report (Reference Document F) provides full details of the information gathered through all the above channels and the response to each.

2.5 Plan Review

The effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Plan will be formally reviewed:

- Every 5 years
and
- at the point of publication of the draft Local Plan / adoption of a new Local Plan / publication of new or draft national planning policy / or another event making a significant impact.

The Plan will be reviewed against measurable outcomes in order to determine whether the NP remains relevant and effectively addresses the needs of the local community, or whether any policies need updating.

Any changes affecting planning application requirements resulting from a Plan review will be notified to the VWHDC.

2.6 Methodology

The methodology, supported throughout by stakeholder engagements and consultations, was as follows:

1. Identify land use planning issues.
2. Determine Vision and supporting Objectives.
3. Group Objectives into topic areas and allocate to Focus groups (FG).
4. FG gather evidence, draft policies to meet Objectives, and consider options for addressing each issue.
5. Draft Neighbourhood Plan to include all topic areas and draft policies.
6. SG review and rationalise policies to identify overlaps and gaps.
7. Finalise the Plan and produce mandatory supporting documentation.

The process used is summarised in the following diagram:



Figure 5 – Overall Plan Creation Process

2.7 Land-use Planning Issues

Land-use planning issues were initially identified using evidence gathered in community consultations associated with the Community Led Plan (Reference Document A) in the period 2013 – 2015, the Community Led Plan itself, and evidence within the Characterisation Study (Reference Document B). These included the following:

- Need for clear, additional local guidance for applicants, developers, Parish and District Councillors involved in processing planning applications.
- Protection of the landscape, its quality, its rich archaeological heritage and its biodiversity (see Characterisation Study for more detail and references).
- Scale and location of potential development sites.
- Lack of affordable housing – in terms of numbers and affordability.
- Design quality of developments, including location, with respect to the historic environment, heritage assets and the maintenance of the character and appearance of the villages.
- Traffic density and road access to/from the Plan area.
- Flooding.
- Quality of, and pressures on, local infrastructure including the school.

- Need to maintain/develop local employment and support existing businesses including the agricultural economy and tourism.

Based on these issues, a public consultation took place in early 2016 focussing on a draft Vision and Objectives, and these were revised and formally agreed in February 2016. They were revised in minor ways in March 2017 following a review by the SG after Woolstone residents had voted to leave the planning process.

2.8 Vision and Objectives

Vision

Our vision is that in 2031 the community, comprising the villages of Uffington and Baulking, will still sit in a peaceful rural setting, dominated by two of the most famous landmarks in the country: the White Horse Hill and the Ridgeway. There will continue to be strategic gaps between the villages consisting of farmland and wooded areas, as we will have protected the surrounding countryside from inappropriate development. There will, however, have been some building, consistent with the VWHDC Local Plan 2031, and having regard to our Housing Needs Assessment, to address the current and future needs of all sections of our community. Our heritage assets will have been protected. We will have done our best to stimulate the local economy and to optimise opportunities for employment in the neighbourhood. The facilities, services and infrastructure will have been properly maintained and upgraded where possible, to a standard fit for a time approaching the middle of the 21st century.

Objectives

1. Ensure that any development in the future is sited where the community wants it.
2. Provide for the changing housing needs of the community.
3. Enhance the built environment of our villages.
4. Retain Uffington's and Baulking's identities as individual villages, each with a strong heritage.
5. Preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of Uffington and Baulking within the open landscape of the Vale of the White Horse and White Horse Hill and protect the valued green spaces within and around our villages.
6. Stimulate the local economy and optimise opportunities for local employment.
7. Protect and enhance our community facilities and recreation space so as to meet the needs of a growing population.
8. Ensure the infrastructure within the parishes of Uffington and Baulking is developed to support sustainable growth.

2.9 Topic Areas and Focus Groups

The Objectives were grouped into five topic/theme areas to be investigated by the FGs. Some FGs were augmented by non-Steering Group villagers.

Focus group	Landscape (and Heritage)	Housing	Design	Economy & Employment	Sustainability & Infrastructure
Objectives addressed	4, 5	1, 2	3, 4	6	7,8

Table 1 - Objectives Addressed by each Focus Group

2.10 **Creating the Evidence Base**

The FGs examined evidence from a wide range of sources, including:

1. Previous village assessments, surveys and reports.
2. Community Led Plan (CLP).
3. Characterisation Study.
4. Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (including a Housing Needs Survey).
5. Landscape Capacity Study (LCS).
6. Public consultations.
7. VWHDC Design Guide.
8. Local Plans (LPP1, LPP2 and extant saved policies from LP 2011).
9. Recent planning decisions.

Individual FG evidence is discussed in Sections 3 to 7.

2.11 **SEA and HRA Screening**

On 6 June 2017 a formal screening request was submitted regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the draft Plan. On 23 January 2018, the VWHDC formally determined that neither an SEA nor an HRA is required. See Reference Document J.

2.12 **Funding**

Creating an NP of this scale requires considerable time and effort. Whilst most of the work has been carried out by local volunteers, assisted by the VWHDC, there was a need for some specialist/subject matter expert support in areas such as the Plan creation and policy formulation, Landscape and Housing studies. Funding was also required to support venue hire, printing and community consultation sessions. Financial support for these was provided by grants from the organisations shown in Table 2 below.

Date	Source	Amount
09/12/2015	Groundwork grant	£3,933.00
18/02/2016	VWHDC Grant	£10,000.00
12/05/2017	Groundwork grant	£9,000.00
15/12/2017	White Horse Show Trust Grant	£3,000.00
	Total grant funds	£25,933.00

Table 2 – Funding Sources

3 Landscape

3.1 Objectives to be Satisfied

This section is based on the need to assess the impact of development on the landscape surrounding Uffington and Baulking and thus satisfy Objective 5:

- To preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of Uffington and Baulking within the open landscape of the Vale and White Horse Hill.
- To protect the valued green spaces within and around our villages.

3.2 The Landscape

3.2.1 North Wessex Downs AONB

Approximately a third of Uffington parish lies south of the Icknield Way (B4507) and within the North Wessex Downs AONB. This part of the Plan area is therefore included in the provisions of the AONB Management Plan, which has been accepted by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.¹¹

The North Wessex Downs Management Plan describes the North Wessex Downs as: 'Vast dramatic, undeveloped and distinct chalk downlands with nationally significant areas of semi-natural chalk grassland, contrasting with well wooded plateaux, arable lands and intimate and secluded valleys, all rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage; a national landscape that stands apart from the increasing urban pressures that surround it; where people live, work and relax; and where visitors are welcomed and contribute to a vibrant rural economy'.¹² This assessment is backed up by the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project.¹³

LPP1 recognises, particularly through CP44, that the Vale's distinct landscape character and key features need to be protected against inappropriate development and where possible enhanced. High priority will therefore be given to conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB and planning decisions will have regard to its setting. The landscape of the Plan area is greatly valued by its residents. Both villages are located north of the ridge and escarpment and of the AONB northern boundary, the B4507, from where the landscape becomes gently undulating, with a patchwork of fields with occasional woodland and tree-lined streams. All roads in the area (apart from the B4507) are small and unclassified.

A key issue for the Plan will be ensuring that development beyond the AONB boundary to the north does not visually damage the setting of either the AONB or the landscapes seen from it. The LCS confirmed this sensitivity (see Figure 6 – Landscape Capacity Study: Capacity of Land Parcels).

¹¹ AONB Management Plan 2010-2019.

¹² Natural England's National Character Areas Natural England NE482; NCA profile: 116 Berkshire and Marlborough Downs 2015; Oxfordshire County Council's 'Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study – Chalk Downland and Slopes':
<http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/Oxfordshire+Landscape+Types/Chalk+Downland+ +Slopes/Chalk+Downland+ +Slopes+Information+2004>

¹³
http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=846448207&CODE=0A91DA4AEA3ABE6676256230C1273165

3.2.2 White Horse Hill

The Uffington White Horse, believed to be about 3000 years old, is a highly stylised hill figure, 110m long, formed from deep trenches filled with crushed white chalk. The figure is set on the northern escarpment of the Berkshire Downs, 2.5 km south of Uffington, and overlooks the Vale of White Horse. The site is owned and managed by the National Trust. The Horse is by far the oldest such figure in Britain, and is of an entirely different design from any of the others. Dragon Hill, an adjacent significant feature, lies below the Horse and is a natural chalk hill with an artificial flat top, associated in legend with St George.

The most significant nearby feature is the Iron-Age Uffington Castle, which is located on higher ground above the White Horse. This hill fort comprises an area of approximately 3 hectares enclosed by a single, well-preserved bank and ditch. At 259m, it is the highest point in Oxfordshire.

The Ridgeway National Trail, based on the prehistoric Ridgeway, is 140km long and follows this major prehistoric feature from Wiltshire along the ridge of the Berkshire Downs to the River Thames at the Goring Gap. The route was adapted and extended as a National Trail in 1972. About 2.5 km is in Uffington parish and passes along the ridge south of the White Horse and adjacent to Uffington Castle.

About 1 km east of the White Horse there are medieval lynchets visible on the hillside.

3.2.3 Enclosure

Several fields south of Uffington village reveal ridge and furrow (see Reference Document B). This shows in Hoskins's words: 'where the arable strips of the open fields were fossilised under grass, so to speak, when sheep and cattle pastures were later created'.¹⁴ They have remained undisturbed to this day and it is important that they are protected (see policy L1).

The Uffington Enclosure Award, which also included Baulking and Woolstone, was completed in 1778.¹⁵ It led to the enclosure of the open fields – which had supported the communal approach to village agriculture – and to land being assigned to individual owners. The patchwork of fields, which can still be seen today, shows, relatively unchanged, the way the landscape would have appeared in the late eighteenth century.

Another legacy of eighteenth-century enclosure in the Plan area is the extensive network of public footpaths and other rights of way, many of which were given legal status at the time of enclosure. Today these footpaths are widely used for recreation by both residents and visitors to the area.

3.2.4 Underlying Geology

The underlying geology of the Plan area is described in the Characterisation Study (Reference Document B, Section 2.18). The two most relevant geological features are:

1. Gault Clay which underlies some of Baulking and most of Uffington. In the UK there has been relatively little construction on the Gault Clay due to its shrink and swell characteristics. This can generate high strain in building foundations and walls, which can lead to cracking and damage to structures. Shrink and swell problems are

¹⁴ W. G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1955).

¹⁵ A. Parsons, S. Millikin, *Landscape Reinvented* (Uffington Oxon: Uffington Museum Trust, 2015).

caused during changes in moisture content in the clay, in periods of drought and flooding or due to changes in vegetation. Foundations for new buildings in areas underlain by Gault Clay must be properly designed to take account of the shrink-swell potential and the effects on underground services must be properly considered to avoid cracked/leaking pipes leading to even greater damage.

2. Fuller's earth: Around Baulking there are nationally important deposits of Fuller's Earth, a highly absorbent clay used in a range of products. A major extraction operation to the east of the village began in the 1970s but this deposit of Fuller's earth has now been fully exploited and, since 2012, the site has been restored with woodland planting and a large body of water. Fuller's earth resources in the wider Baulking-Uffington-Fernham area are safeguarded in the adopted Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy (policy M8), September 2017.¹⁶

3.3 Statutory Designations

Together with the AONB (see Section 3.2.1), the following designations form part of the evidence used in the Landscape Capacity Study (see Section 3.4) as well as in formulating other policies:

1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The five scheduled ancient monuments in the Plan area are:

1. Uffington Castle.
2. The White Horse.
3. Dragon Hill.
4. Neolithic long barrow and Romano-British inhumation cemetery 70m north of Uffington Castle.
5. Bronze age bowl barrow and pair of Anglo-Saxon burial mounds 70m south of the White Horse.

2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

White Horse Hill is designated as an SSSI, as it is of both geological and biological interest. It is a geological SSSI due to its Pleistocene sediments, and a biological SSSI for its unploughed grasslands, one of the few remaining in Oxfordshire, along the chalk escarpment.

Fernham Meadows is SSSI-designated for the following two notified features:

1. Grassland with *Cynosurus cristatus* – *Centaurea nigra*.
2. Populations of national scarce butterfly species (*Strymonidia pruni*, Black Hairstreak).

3.4 Landscape Capacity Study

In order to assess the capacity of the Plan area to accommodate development, the SG commissioned an independent Landscape Capacity Study (LCS). Landscape Capacity is

¹⁶ Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy adopted 12th September 2017. Part 2 (Site Allocations) in preparation, adoption expected November 2020.

defined as the degree to which a particular landscape area is able to accommodate development or other change without significant effects on its character. In this study Landscape Capacity was assessed in units, or 'parcels', of land as defined by field/wooded area boundaries. Built-up areas and gardens were excluded. It was carried out initially as a desktop study, with subsequent checking on the ground in order to review and confirm parcel assessments which were deemed difficult to assess properly from a desktop study only.

The study, by Lepus Consulting, took place over the period May – November 2017. It used established principle in developing a method for the project which were based on Natural England guidance and similar to those successfully used by the VWHDC Local Plan and South Oxfordshire Landscape Capacity Assessments.¹⁷ The LCS report is at Reference Document D, which includes a description of the methodology used.

Landscape Capacity was rated on five increment scale as follows: Low, Medium/Low, Medium, Medium/High and High. 205 land parcels in Uffington parish and 120 land parcels in Baulking parish were categorised using the criteria defined below.

¹⁷ Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency Landscape Character Assessment (2002) and subsequent Topic Paper 6 Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity (2006). Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) A Guide to Commissioning a Landscape Capacity Study. The Landscape Institute / IEMA Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition (2013) (GLVIA).
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5601625141936128>
LPP2 Landscape Capacity Study
http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=846448323&CODE=D1D6B6913D83B27F1E7FD845116EEC02
<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-studies>
<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=789122104&CODE=498F5A0A897C751630F233DEB1E72432&NAME=19.+Landscape+Character+Assessment&REF=Local%20Plan%202031%20Part%202:%20Publication%20Version%20Publicity%20Period>

Low capacity	The landscape could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character and visual amenity. Occasional very small scale development may be possible providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.
Medium / Low capacity	A low amount of development can be accommodated only in limited situations providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.
Medium capacity	The landscape could be able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character. There are landscape and visual constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.
Medium/ High capacity	The area can accommodate larger amounts of development providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.
High capacity	Much of the area can accommodate significant areas of development providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.

Table 3 - Landscape Capacity Categories

The study came to the following conclusions:

Generally, land parcels to the south of Uffington village are found to contribute positively to the setting of the AONB and consequently have low capacity for development. Land parcels located on the northern side of Uffington village and much of Baulking parish reflect the various high-quality landscape character attributes that are relevant to southern parcels, and also contribute to the setting of the AONB, but less directly, making the typical capacity Medium/Low. It should be noted that no parcels were assessed as 'Green' (Med/High or High capacity).

Because of the granularity of the parcels, the study recommended that any proposals for development at any specific site in the study area (which will normally be smaller than the parcel in which it is situated) should be subject to separate landscape assessment. Such studies should be proportionate to the size of the proposed development and the sensitivity of its location.

Landscape Capacity maps showing the evaluation for each of the 325 parcels are in Appendix A of the LCS (Reference Document D) and the scoring of all parcels is in Appendix D of the LCS. The overall LCS map of the Plan area is shown, in less detail, in Figure 6. The conclusions of the study led directly to Policy L1.

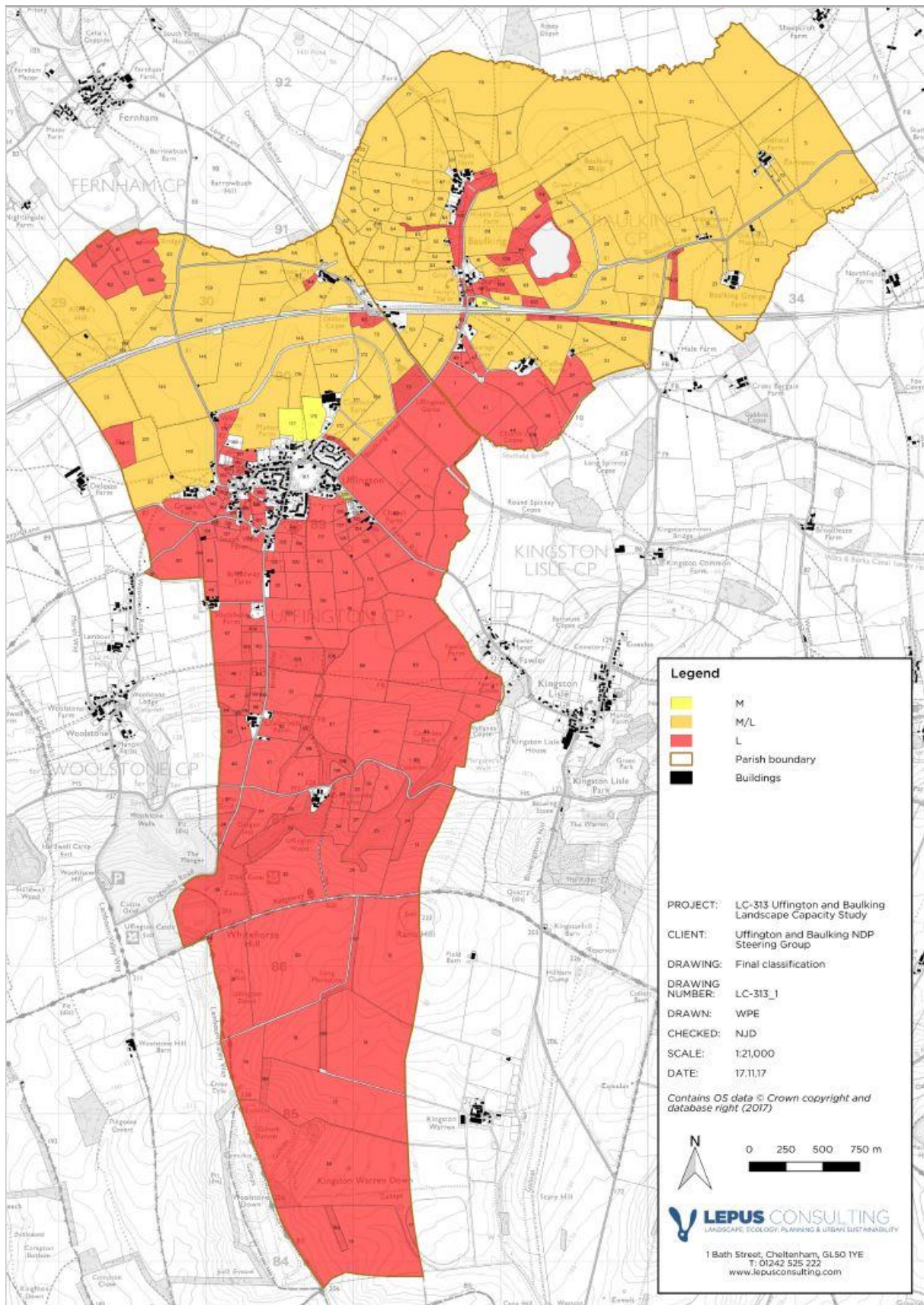


Figure 6 – Landscape Capacity Study: Capacity of Land Parcels

3.5 Public Views and Landscape Assessments

Widely visible within the landscape, largely due to its height in the relatively flat Vale, is the Grade-I-listed St Mary's Church in Uffington, with its octagonal tower. It is sometimes referred to as 'the Cathedral of the Vale' and provides a strong sense of place, history and identity at the heart of the village. Some of the best views of the church are on the approach from Fernham from the north where it is seen against the backdrop of the ridge of the AONB. It is also clearly visible from Woolstone Road and public footpaths from the south east where it is seen in context within the Conservation Area (see Section 4). The church also provides orientation in views from White Horse Hill.

In public consultations carried out to ascertain what people value in and around our villages, there has been frequent reference to certain public views which should be protected. These include the views from different locations looking south across the landscape towards the escarpment, the views from the White Horse Hill across the Vale, the views of the churches, of listed buildings and of other features of the Conservation Areas within the villages.

The LCS embodies public views within its assessment criteria and therefore these are implicitly included within Policy L1 below; accordingly, it is not appropriate to have a separate landscape policy focussing on views alone. As the LCS does not make any assessment of the areas shown white on the map (infill, gardens, farmyards etc) any proposals for development in these areas will be subject to other NP policies which may consider the preservation of public views (see for example Policy H4, D2). VWHDC officers have also introduced consideration of the material impact upon established public views in making judgements on recent planning applications.¹⁸

In order to capture and evaluate this impact, all proposals within the coloured areas should therefore have a landscape impact assessment carried out. For major developments (more than 10 dwellings) the latest version of the Guidelines for Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) process should be used. This defines an LVIA as 'a tool used to identify and assess the significance of the effects of change resulting from developments in both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity'.

Policy L1 has been designed to address the specific issue of landscape capacity. It is a particularly sensitive matter in the neighbourhood area. The policy should however be read within the wider context of the development plan. In particular policies H2A and H2B of this neighbourhood plan provide specific guidance on the scale and location of potential new residential development.

Policy L1 – Landscape Capacity and Assessment

Development proposals should take account of the landscape within their immediate locality and its ability to accommodate the development proposed.

Proposed development in the areas of the Plan which are shown coloured (but not those left white) on the Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) maps will be assessed with

¹⁸ See, for example, Head of Planning in P14/V2904/O; Conservation Officer in P16/V2665/FUL, P17/V1366/FUL and P18/V1197/FUL.

regard to the LCS capacity grading including the grading definitions in the categorisation table.

All development proposals within the LCS coloured areas should be accompanied by a landscape assessment of the proposed development, proportionate to the scale of the development. For major developments (10+ dwellings) an LVIA carried out in accordance with the latest Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) will be required.

Subject to the detailed requirements of this policy development proposals will be supported where they are located in parts of the neighbourhood area which have the capacity to accommodate the proposed development without significant effects on its character. Development proposals which would have unacceptable effects on the landscape character of its immediate locality or the wider neighbourhood area will not be supported.

3.6 Local Green Spaces

3.6.1 Background

'Green spaces' are described as being 'important to the health and happiness of local communities' in NPPF (Clauses 76, 77). Objective 5 requires the Plan to identify local green spaces (LGS) for special protection where the green area is demonstrably special to the community and holds a particular local significance. For example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

3.6.2 Methodology

The 'Call for Sites' exercise (see Section 4.7.2) asked all residents whether they wished to put forward any of their land for either housing or for consideration as Local Green Spaces. There were no offers of Local Green Space. Subsequently, in order to identify any potential Local Green Spaces to be designated by the policy, and following discussions at a community consultation event, the SG selected 17 potential sites. These sites included those owned by the Parish Council which had been omitted from the Call for Sites exercise, but which appeared to meet the NPPF criteria and which it felt were of particular local significance in both Uffington and Baulking. Letters were sent to all 15 landowners and four positive responses were received. Although not mandatory to gain landowner agreement to LGS designation, the SG decided only to include sites which had landowner agreement. For each landowner-agreed LGS, a more detailed assessment was carried out (see Reference Document H for assessment details). Only those sites which met the assessment criteria are included in the list below.

Note: sites 2 and 3 below were historical 'closes' which, together with the open fields, supported local husbandry over the centuries preceding Parliamentary Enclosure in 1778, (see also Section 1.4 and Figure 2).

Policy L2 – Local Green Spaces

The following areas are designated Local Green Spaces:

1. Jubilee Field, White Horse, Uffington.
2. Uffington Parish allotments, Fernham Road, Uffington.
3. Paddock and strip of land known as Puzey's Close and the Lady Walk, Uffington.

Development on land designated as a Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances.

Figure 7 and Figure 8 below shows these locations as well as common land in the Plan area.

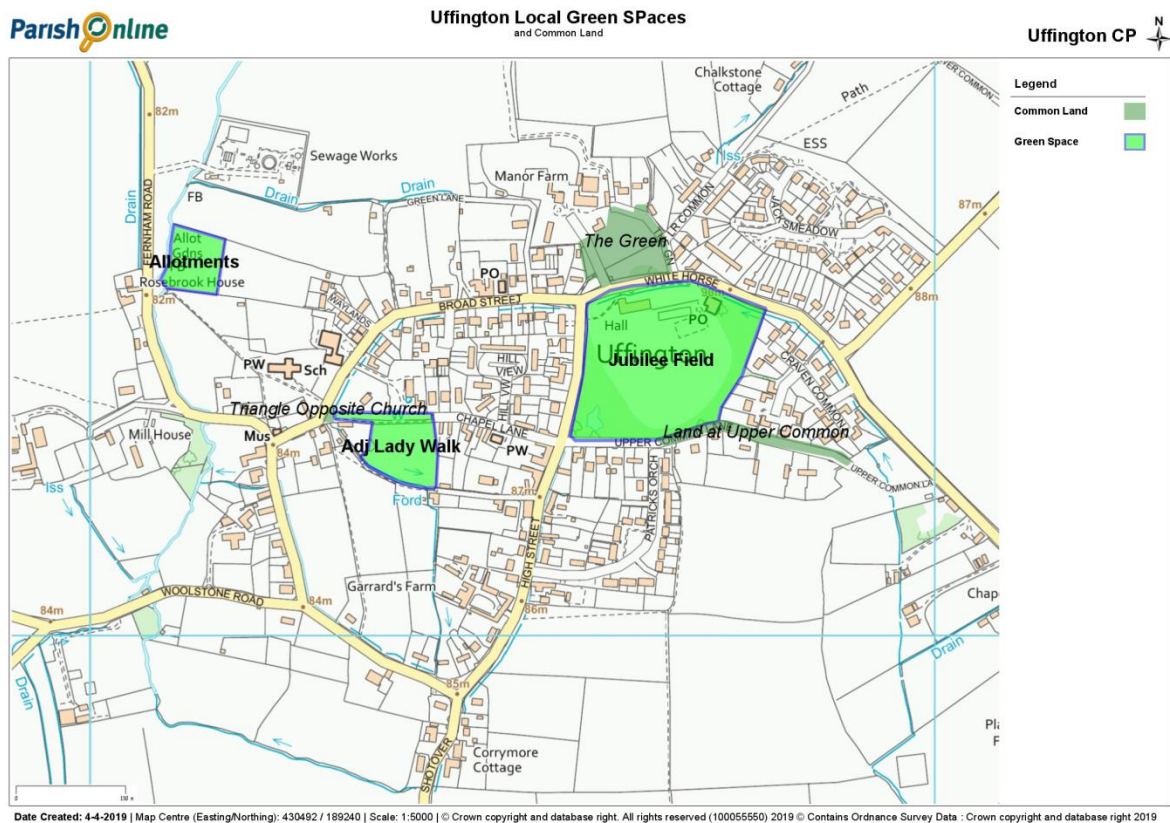


Figure 7 – Uffington Local Green Spaces and Common Land

3.7 Common Land

Common Land is land owned by one or more persons, where other people known as 'commoners' are entitled to use the land or take resources from it. There are several areas of registered Common Land within the Plan Area. Two are of a size to be relevant from a development perspective: the Green in Baulking village (see Figure 8 below) and an area, also called the Green, north of the Uffington village hall (Reference Document B, Section 7.6 and 7.7; Figure 7 above). Common Land benefits from a significant degree of protection from

development and so has not been additionally protected by designation as local green space.¹⁹ Works may take place on Common Land but many situations require additional consent.²⁰

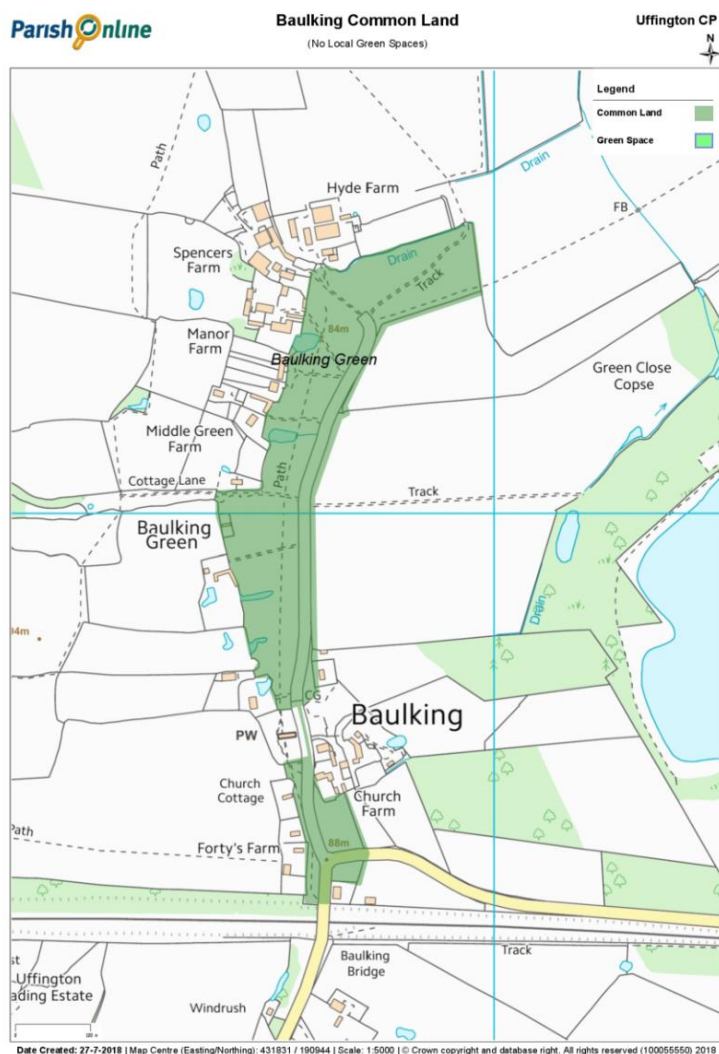


Figure 8 - Baulking Common Land

3.8 Uffington Sports Ground

The sports ground/playing field, although meeting the criteria for an LGS, has not been designated as such due to the existing protection provided by the trust deed governing its use. This protection reinforces the Sport England playing fields policy.²¹

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/common-land-village-greens> and <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/common-land-and-village-greens>

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carrying-out-works-on-common-land>

²¹ <http://www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy/>

4 Housing

4.1 Objectives to be Satisfied

The Housing Section is based primarily on the need to identify the housing requirement and to inform the strategy for the future provision of sites for housing in the Plan area and thus satisfy Objectives 1, 3 and 4:

- To ensure that any development in the future is sited where the community wants it
- To provide for the changing housing needs of the community
- To retain Uffington's and Baulking's identities as individual villages, each with a strong heritage

4.2 Vale of the White Horse District Local Plan

VWHDC LPP1 CP3 defines the settlement hierarchy. In this hierarchy Uffington is categorised as a 'Larger Village'. Larger Villages are defined as: 'settlements with a more limited range of employment, services and facilities. Unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities'. Development within them is defined in CP4 as follows:

- There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area of Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages in accordance with CP1.
- Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. This development must be adjacent, or well related, to the existing built area of the settlement or meet exceptional circumstances set out in the other policies of the Development Plan and deliver necessary supporting infrastructure.

Baulking is categorised as forming part of the 'Open Countryside' in CP3. Policy H3 addresses future development in Baulking.

4.3 Uffington And Baulking Conservation Areas

In 1970 the Berkshire County Council carried out a major review of Uffington and prepared a Village Plan which concluded that 'Uffington falls into a category of villages of high amenity value warranting maximum consideration'.²² This Village Plan is significant in laying the foundation for the built area, which is still largely in place, identifying houses of historic interest (some of which were later listed – see below), establishing the Conservation Area (on 3 February 1970) and recognising the need to preserve certain open spaces in the centre of the village and to retain particular views.

²² Uffington Village Plan (Berkshire County Council) 1970.

The VWHDC intends to carry out a full appraisal of the Uffington Conservation Area in the near future with the assistance of the Parish Council and this will provide more detailed supporting documentation to this Plan.

There is no equivalent village plan for Baulking but the Conservation Area was designated on 3 February 1971.

4.4 Listed Buildings

Uffington has 34 listed buildings and Baulking 12. Many are within the Conservation Areas (16 in Uffington, 12 in Baulking) as shown in Figures 9 and 10 below. Of particular note are the two Grade-1-listed buildings: St Mary's Church in Uffington and the Church of St Nicholas in Baulking. Although no survey of the condition of Grade II listed buildings has been carried out, the Steering Group is not aware of any which are in poor condition. The Parish Council has recently completed extensive repairs to the 400-year old museum building, which is also listed as an Asset of Community Value by the VWHDC.

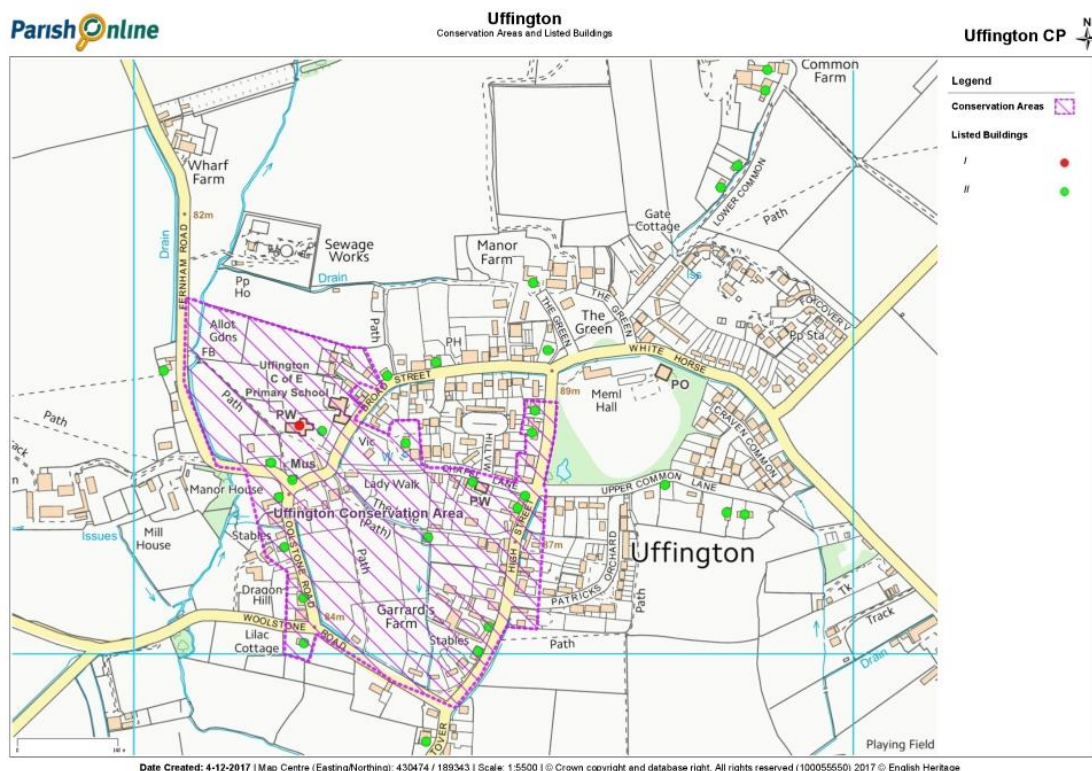


Figure 9 – Uffington Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

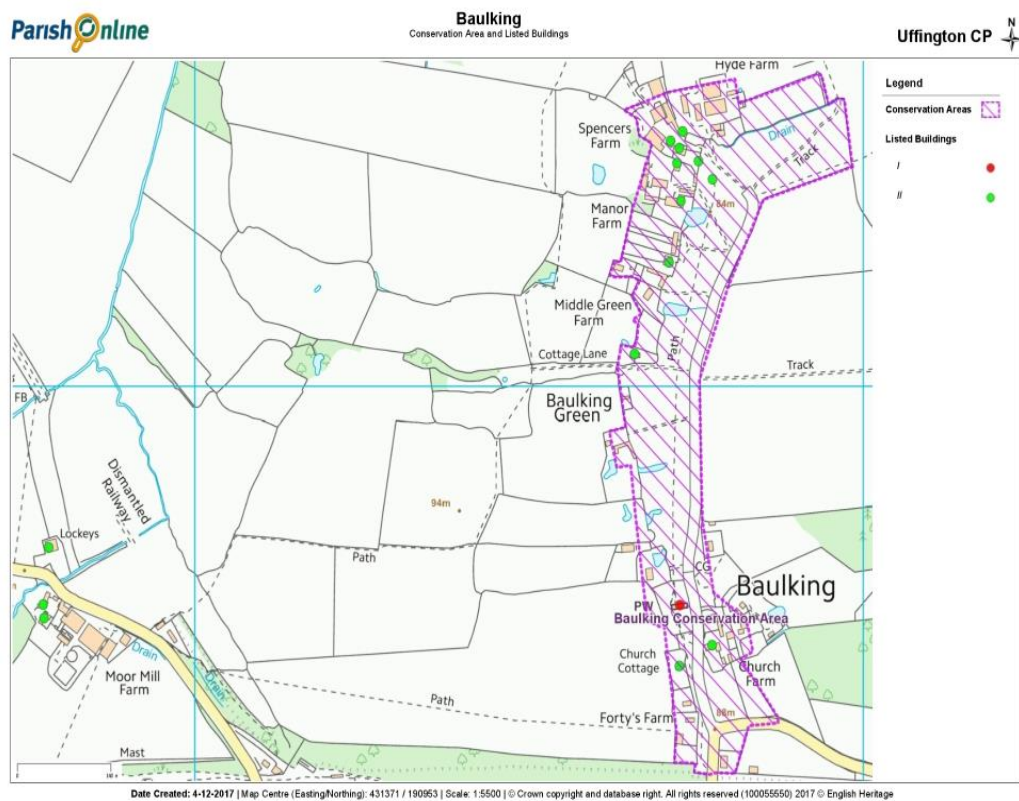


Figure 10 – Baulking Conservation Area and Listed Buildings



Figure 11 – St Nicholas Church Baulking



Figure 12 – St Mary's Church Uffington

4.5 Historic Housing Development in Uffington

Uffington has grown from being a rural, largely agriculturally based community. Until the middle of the twentieth century most dwellings were built around the 'core' loop of roads (High Street, Broad Street and Woolstone Road) forming the historic built area. Only the south side of the village, along Woolstone Road, was left comparatively open. There was little building outside the village, as is shown clearly around Uffington in Figure 13 below.



Figure 13 – 1946 Aerial View of Uffington and Baulking

Since the Second World War the number of residents employed on the land has steadily declined, although almost all the Plan area is still farmed.²³ More residents have been employed in the surrounding towns, typically in Swindon, Wantage and Oxford, or have commuted to work further afield from the GWR stations at Swindon and Didcot. As a result, the number of dwellings and residents has increased steadily and a wider range of housing types has evolved, particularly since the mid-1970s. The number of houses in these developments is shown in Table 4 below.

Location	Date of development	No of dwellings	Type of dwelling
White Horse	1920s, 1930s, 1940s	32	Houses
Hillview	1950s	22	Houses
Vicarage Land	1960s	6	Bungalows
Patricks Orchard	1970s	34	18 Houses, 16 Bungalows
Craven Common	1970s	24	Houses
The Green	1970s	3	Houses
Freemans Close	1996	16	Houses
Waylands	2007	11	7 Houses, 4 Flats
Fox Cover View	2009	5	3 Houses, 2 Flats
Jacks Meadow	2016	36	Houses
	TOTAL	189	

Table 4 - Developments in Uffington (3 dwellings or more) since the 1920s

The map in Figure 14 below shows clearly how Uffington has expanded most recently, mainly eastwards, along and into the spaces between the arterial roads and other built areas, leaving only a few areas suitable for further infill development. During this same period, the available facilities and infrastructure, such as primary schooling and drainage have increased only marginally and have come under increasing pressure (see Sections 4.7.3 and 7).

There have been only a few new houses built in the open countryside during the last 70 years, notably on Broadway and Fawler Road.

²³ UBW Neighbourhood Plan Characterisation Study (Reference Document B) Paragraph 2.31 et seq.

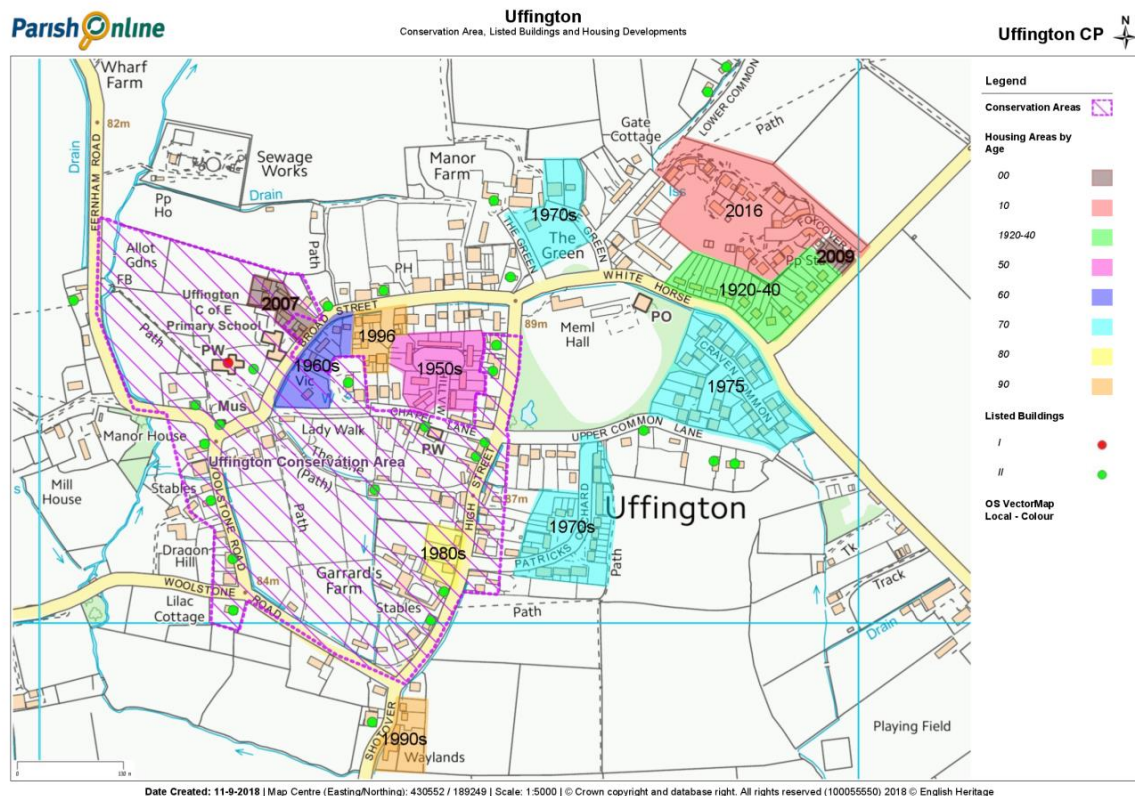


Figure 14 – Uffington Major Housing Developments 1920-2016

4.6 Historic Housing Development in Baulking

In the early nineteenth century Baulking village housing, including at least five farms, was based on the needs of the agricultural community and built mainly along the central Green. When the railway line from London to Bristol was built, it severed the southern section, including part of the Green, from the main body of the village, as shown in Figure 15 below. At the point where the railway crossed the Fernham Road, sidings and a branch line to Faringdon were built.

The village is effectively made up of three areas: a) the Conservation Area incorporating the village Green and the listed buildings including the Church, b) the area south of the railway line inclusive of Colliers Farm and the (Old) Vicarage, and c) the houses to the North-East centred on Baulking Grange and Oldfield Farms. In the Conservation Area the buildings are of the late seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; only two properties were built during the twentieth century. South of the railway line are two large nineteenth-century houses; between the railway bridge and these two larger houses, four new homes were built in the twentieth century, three in the 1970s. To the North-East, set back from the road in open fields, are the nineteenth-century farms Baulking Grange (still a working farm) and Oldfield Farm, with two small cottages within its curtilage; a ribbon development of four houses, estimated to have been built in the 1950s, runs along Baulking Lane, just west of the driveway to the Grange.

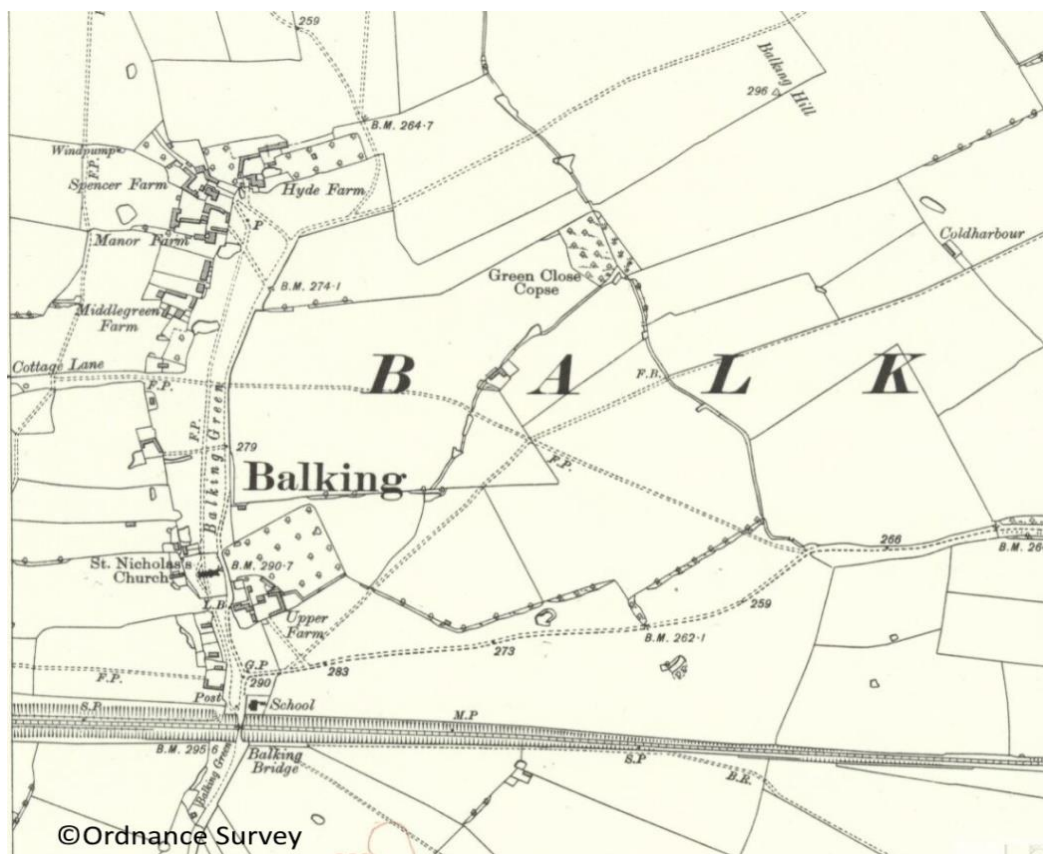


Figure 15 – Baulking Village 1910

4.7 Housing Need in the Plan Period

4.7.1 Housing Needs Assessment

In the absence of any allocation or target for the Western Vale in either LPP1 or LPP2, an independent Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was carried out in April/May 2017 to identify the number and type of dwellings required over the Plan period. The HNA was undertaken in line with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on Housing Needs Assessment in order to provide an independent, objective assessment of the need for housing in the Plan area.²⁴ As the NPPG states, 'Local housing need surveys may be appropriate to assess the affordable housing requirements specific to the needs of people in rural areas, given the lack of granularity provided by secondary sources of information'. Guidance was also used from the Planning Advisory Service Advice Note.²⁵

The study consisted of the following two elements:

- Primary data collection from a local housing survey, conducted in January 2017, gathered from responses to a questionnaire delivered to 325 occupied homes in Uffington and 41 in Baulking. 154 (42%) returns were received (Uffington 38%, Baulking 81%).

²⁴ To note: the revised HNA methodology to be introduced from January 2019 has not been used.

²⁵ Neighbourhood Planning Advice Note – Housing Needs Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans.

- Secondary data analysis drawing upon 2011 Census data, other national and local authority data, household and population projections.

The HNA report is at Reference Document C, which includes, in Section 3, a description of the methodology.

HNA Conclusions

The following summarises the conclusions of the HNA:

- Over the decade 2001 – 2011, the number of households in the Plan area increased by approximately 9%.
- Over the Plan period itself, 2011 – 2031, a similar rate of growth (9.5% per decade) is predicted, based on the HNA analysis of the primary and secondary data referred to above. This leads to a total requirement of 67 additional dwellings, both in the market and affordable sectors. However, 48 dwellings had already been completed, or received planning permission, by March 2018, through a development of 36 homes at Jacks Meadow and 8 other dwellings in Uffington plus 4 single dwellings in Baulking, leaving a balance of 19.
- Therefore, for the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan and in the context of the HNA analysis, a further 19 dwellings are proposed in the remainder of the period to 2031.
- Given local market signals the HNA proposed that these additional dwellings should be built mainly within the parish of Uffington. The HNA recommended, based on residents' feedback in the Housing Needs Survey, and from the earlier CLP questionnaire, as well as demographic changes, that these 19 additional dwellings should principally comprise 1-2 bed, 3-4 bed, semi-detached and bungalow homes for young couples, families and older people. Any self-build opportunities in the Plan area were also supported.

The SG endorsed the conclusions of the HNA and elements have been incorporated in policy H1.

4.7.2 Call for Sites

Before the Steering Group learned that LPP1 and 2 would not make an allocation to Uffington, Baulking and Woolstone, a 'Call for Sites' exercise had been initiated. This exercise identified sites with the potential for 80-200 homes. This figure should be taken as a first estimate. Sites were not assessed, and some may be unlikely subjects for development, while yet more may be potentially available since not all landowners contributed to the exercise. Overall, however, it was felt by the SG that the 19 dwellings required by the HNA was deemed to be achievable and could form the basis of a sound policy.

Based on map assessments, the 'Call for Sites' exercise and discussions with residents, it appears likely that the 19 dwellings identified as being required by the HNA could be accommodated as follows over the plan period:

1. Infill within the existing built area of Uffington village (policy H2).
2. Within existing farmyards/agricultural buildings (policy H2B).

4.7.3 Constraints on Sustainable Growth

While recognising that 19 additional dwellings reflect local needs defined within the HNA methodology, under VWHDC policy CP4 there is no numerical ceiling on housing growth.²⁶

It is appropriate however to record the main factors which place constraints on any substantial further housing in the Plan area. These factors are:

- Existing material factors required by all planning applications.
- The need to preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of Uffington and Baulking within the open landscape of the Vale and White Horse Hill (see Section 3).
- The need to preserve the individual character of Uffington and Baulking villages.
- The limited size of the Uffington primary school (see 7.3).
- Pressures on local healthcare services (see 7.4).
- The constraints of the local road network and the lack of bus services (see 7.5).
- The limited capacity in Uffington of water supply and both surface water and foul drainage infrastructure (see 7.6).

It should be noted that several of these reasons are the same reasons for the Plan area receiving no allocation in LPP1/2.

Policy H1 identifies the mix and type of dwellings sought for the delivery of new housing in the remainder of the Plan period. It also provides a context for the other housing policies. The Plan will be monitored on these and other matters. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to review the Plan in the event that delivery is not taking place as anticipated.

4.7.4 Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is defined by the Government as housing provided for rent or purchase on a subsidised basis to eligible households which cannot meet their needs on the open market.²⁷ It should be noted that this does not necessarily relate directly to any individual's ability actually to afford housing based on their personal circumstances. There are three main types of affordable housing tenures: social rented, affordable rented and intermediate.²⁸ Feedback from both the CLP and the HNA surveys indicated that there is a demand for affordable housing, and this is the basis of the specific recommendation in Policy H1.

VWHDC CP24, as part of the District-wide policies, covers affordable housing. The Council will seek 35% affordable housing on all sites capable of a net gain of eleven or more dwellings.²⁹ There are limited sites in the Plan area capable of triggering this affordable

²⁶ LPP1 policy CP4 indicates that 'The housing target for the Vale of White Horse District is for at least 20,560 homes to be delivered in the plan period between 2011 and 2031....'. This makes clear that the figure is not a ceiling but a minimum target. All housing delivery will contribute towards meeting the requirements of the joint Vale and South Oxfordshire DC Housing Delivery Strategy 2018:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/JOINT%20HOUSING%20DELIVERY%20STRATEGY.pdf>

²⁷ Affordable Housing is defined in the NPPF glossary <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

²⁸ Intermediate housing is a form of Affordable housing that can include shared equity.

²⁹ As required by LPP1 CP22 and 24.

housing threshold and it is unlikely there are any within the built areas. Affordable housing planning obligations often also reduce the value of residential land and are unpopular with developers. Additional affordable housing elsewhere in more sustainable areas in the wider VWH district is encouraged through LPP1 policy CP24.

4.7.5 Equality

It is important that all new housing recognises the need for equality of access for all sectors of the community. Because developments in the Plan area are unlikely to be large enough to justify these design standards, the Plan make no reference in Policy H1 below to M4 (2) category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings and M4 (3) category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings. If, however, a large enough development was to be proposed these standards would apply.

More comprehensive information can be found in the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Statement (Reference Document G).

Policy H1 – Type and Mix of Housing: Uffington and Baulking

Development proposals that meet the locational requirements identified in Policy H2A of this Plan and provide a range of housing types will be supported, particularly where the dwelling mix provides for:

- **Affordable housing.**
- **Housing suitable for young people/families.**
- **Housing suitable for older people.**

New residential developments which deliver one and two-bedroom houses will be particularly supported.

4.8 Location of Housing Developments

4.8.1 A non-allocating Plan

Due to the small number of houses identified by the HNA, the SG concluded in May 2017 that the Plan would be based on a non-allocating premise. All respondents to the 'Call for Sites' exercise were notified accordingly.

4.8.2 Village Built Areas

An Uffington village envelope was originally identified on the 1970 Uffington Village Plan, as shown on the map from the Plan below. Baulking does not have an equivalent defined envelope as no study of Baulking has been carried out.³⁰

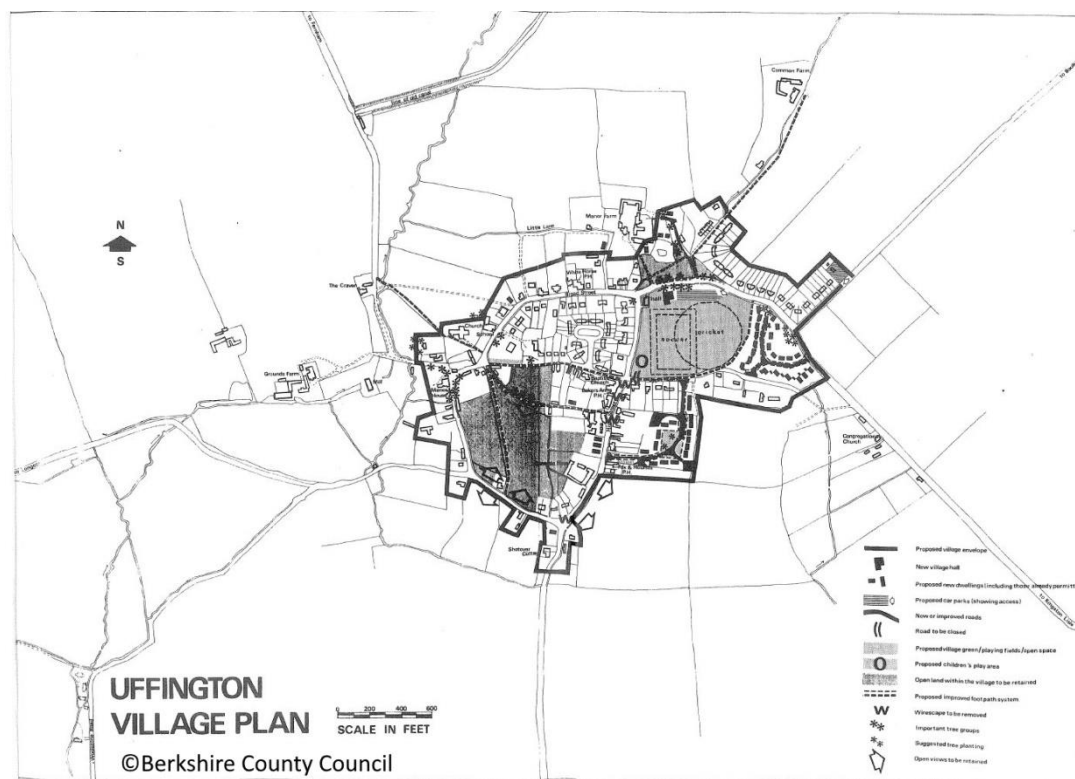


Figure 16 – Uffington Village Plan from 1970 Showing Village Envelope

It should be noted that the village envelope was based on the original (pre-WW2) housing area, extended to include Patrick's Orchard and Craven Common, which were being built/planned at the time the Village Plan was produced. This 1970 'village envelope' is no longer recognised by the VWHDC.

LPP1 CP3 (Settlement Hierarchy) and CP4 (Meeting Our Housing Needs) confirm that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area of larger villages in accordance with CP1.

In order to retain an identifiable village 'core' of houses and maintain easy pedestrian and cycling access to the majority of village facilities, and in order to prevent ribbon development along the arterial roads towards other villages, this Plan uses the 'built area' in a way that incorporates the intentions of the original village envelope, includes subsequent development and which can also accommodate future changes over time, avoiding the need for the outline to be re-assessed each time a new development is included. The built area forms the basis of policies H2 A and B below.

In the absence of an NPPF or Local Plan definition of a 'built area', for the purposes of this Plan 'built areas' are defined as a group of existing, non-agricultural buildings of a permanent nature, together with their immediate surroundings. They therefore do NOT include:

³⁰ Uffington Village Plan (Berkshire County Council) 1970.

- a. Individual buildings and groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings which are clearly detached from the continuous built areas of the settlement.
- b. Gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where they provide a transition between the surrounding countryside and the built areas of the settlement.
- c. Outdoor sports and recreation facilities and other formal open spaces on the edge of the settlement.

4.8.3 Infill

In Uffington there has been a steady stream of infill building over the past 50 years, with the majority within the last 15 years. Typically, there have been 1-2 buildings in this category built each year. There are some opportunities for further limited infill, particularly where the scale and density are consistent with existing dwelling spacing and appropriate to the location (see Section 5 for further details of size and style). In accordance with the NPPF, a specific density has not been specified.³¹

4.8.4 Brownfield Sites

Whilst the re-use of brownfield sites, also referred to as 'previously developed land', is a national priority for new building, there is only one significant brownfield site in the Plan area (Uffington Trading Estate).³² This is in Baulking parish and is discussed further in Section 6, as it is not a residential area. Uffington and Baulking villages currently do not have any significant brownfield sites, though before 1996 Uffington had two, which have since been developed: Freeman's Close and Waylands. However, a 2017 Court of Appeal judgment has recently confirmed that garden land in non-settlement locations can be regarded as brownfield land.³³

4.8.5 Conversion of Farm Buildings

Open countryside in the Plan area is used almost exclusively for agricultural purposes. There are fewer than ten working farms in the Plan area. With increasing mechanisation and changing use, some of these farms have redundant buildings, the sites of which may be suitable for housing, either as standard open market accommodation or as affordable Rural Exception housing, in accordance with LPP1 policy CP25, particularly for farm workers. Note that under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) in certain circumstances the redevelopment of redundant agricultural buildings is permitted development, while larger scale work requires full planning permission. Note also that reference to 'rural buildings' in Policy H2B below refers to agricultural, equestrian, utility and other permanent structures that may be found in rural areas.

³¹ NPPF, Paragraph 59.

³² NPPF Annex 2, Glossary. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

³³ Dartford Borough Council v The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Ors [2017] EWCA Civ 141.

Policy H2 – Location of New Housing development

H2A - Housing development within the built area of Uffington will be supported provided it meets all of the following criteria:

- **The scale and density of development is appropriate and proportionate to the location.**
- **It is well related to other buildings within the built-up area.**
- **It is in keeping with the character of the local area.**
- **It is both proportionate and responsive to the scale of existing buildings in close proximity to the development.**
- **it respects the character of the landscape within and surrounding the village.**

H2B - Outside the built area of Uffington village new dwellings will be supported where they accord with other policies in the development plan including Neighbourhood Plan policy L1 or in national planning policy. The following types of new housing development will be supported where they accord with other policies in this Plan in general, and with Policy D1 in particular:

- **The creation of a dwelling involving the reuse, extension and conversion of a rural building which is of permanent and substantial construction and is capable of conversion without extensive reconstruction.**
- **Replacement dwellings including the use of brownfield sites.**
- **Rural workers' dwellings.**
- **Rural exception sites where the dwellings will meet a specific evidenced rural housing need.**

Insofar as appropriate to particular proposals for new residential development, the integrity of listed buildings, their settings and any features of architectural significance should be safeguarded.

H2C - Any proposals for new residential development in the North Wessex Downs AONB will be determined having regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the designated area and within the context of Policy CP44 Landscape of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1.

Where proposals comply with these national and local policy tests housing development should be designed to ensure that the natural beauty of the landscape is conserved and enhanced. In addition, housing development within the setting of the AONB should contribute to the protection and enhancement of this valued landscape, its Scheduled Ancient Monuments and SSSIs as appropriate to its location.

Baulking is identified in the adopted Local Plan Part 1 as being located in the open countryside. The Neighbourhood Plan has prepared evidence to support the potential for limited new development to meet identified local needs within the context provided both by local plan policies and Policy H2B of this neighbourhood plan.

Policy H3 is included within the Plan to address a specific set of circumstances. Whilst Baulking is a separate community it is located within the countryside. In this context the Plan

addresses two potentially conflicting matters. On the one hand there is evidence of specific housing need from the HNA. On the other hand, in the adopted development plan Baulking is identified as being within the countryside. The policy seeks to set out an appropriate balance. It reflects the overarching planning policy position set out in the Vale of Horse Local Plan and Policy H2B of this Plan. At the same time, it provides the opportunity for housing proposals to address a genuine evidenced local need to be considered in a positive way. The series of criteria in the policy identify the circumstances that would need to be met in order for any such proposals to achieve support through the planning process. The policy has been designed, where appropriate, to support the delivery of individual dwellings to support local needs. The policy does not support large scale or speculative development proposals.

Policy H3 – Housing Development in Baulking

Proposals for new residential development in Baulking will be considered against national planning policy, policies in the development plan and policy H2B of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposals for housing development in Baulking to meet local housing need will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- **They provide for an evidenced local need which cannot otherwise be delivered within a location which accords with policies in the development plan.**
- **They are of a scale and size which directly relate to the identified local need.**
- **They would not have an unacceptable impact on the visual and landscape amenities of Baulking in general, and the gaps between the existing dwellings in particular.**
- **They would safeguard the amenities of existing residential properties.**

and

- **They would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Baulking Conservation Area.**

4.8.6 Historic Environment and Conservation Areas

It is a requirement of National guidance and development plan policy that designated historic heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas (see section 4.4), are conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.³⁴

Thus, housing development within the setting of a heritage asset will only be supported provided the proposed development conserves or enhances that environment.

³⁴ NPPF Section 12, LPP1 Policy CP40.

The Plan area contains many non-designated buildings, particularly dwellings built in the 19th century and earlier, which also may contribute to the creation of an historic environment and which contribute strongly to the sense of place and local identity. There are over 50 such houses in total in the Plan Area.³⁵ Some of these buildings formerly had other uses but are now houses. For example: the Uffington village forge, public houses, the fire station, a former Quaker meeting house and Congregational chapel and in Baulking the Old Schoolhouse, Vicarage Farmhouse and the Old Brickworks. Junction House was a hotel at Uffington Station.

These non-designated buildings are referenced as 'other local features' which make a contribution to the historic environment in policy H4A below, together with other non-designated heritage assets such as walls, trees, ponds, hard surfacing, landscaping and street furniture, ridge and furrow.

The design aspects of new buildings in the Conservation Areas are addressed in Section 5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) also imposes a statutory duty so that '....special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'. This duty applies when considering any proposed development.

Policy H4 – Housing Development within Conservation Areas or the Setting of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings of Uffington and Baulking
H4A - Housing development within the Conservation Areas, or within the setting of the Conservation Areas or listed buildings in the Plan area, will only be supported provided the proposed development conserves or enhances the special interest and significance of the Conservation Area or listed building.
All housing development should maintain established public views of listed buildings and other local features where those views form part of the special interest and significance of the buildings or features.
H4B - A heritage impact assessment should be submitted in support of all applications for planning permission where there is any potential impact on heritage assets. Any such assessment should be proportionate to the size of the proposed development.

³⁵ Examples of groups of non-listed houses which make a significant impact on the street scene, include: the Primary school, Benjy's Cottage, Church Cottage and Walnuts close to the Church entrance in Broad Street Uffington; the Clock House, Wheelwright Cottage and Packers Forge in the High Street (see Figure 20); Manor Farm cottages located on the edge of Baulking Green.

5 Design

5.1 Objectives to be Satisfied

The Design Section aims to satisfy the following objectives:

- To enhance the built environment of our villages.
- To retain Uffington's and Baulking's identities as individual villages, each with a strong heritage.

A recent White Paper, 'Fixing our broken housing market', states that local and neighbourhood plans...are expected to set out clear design expectations following consultation with local communities using visual design codes.³⁶ This has been amplified in the revised NPPF published in July 2018.

The Vale Design Guide 2015 together with LPP1 policies CP37 and CP40 has helped the SG towards fulfilling this national ambition.³⁷ The Design Guide encourages the use of skilled design professionals to ensure high quality solutions. Proposed local design policies focus on features within the villages but lean strongly on several of the principles within the Guide as a source of evidence. The text of the Guide including its appendices has also provided relevant evidence. For example, Appendix E.2 (Zone 4, 'Chalk villages along the spring line') contains descriptions of the local building character, providing evidence supporting the design policies below.

Another important source of evidence is Reference Document E, J. Cooper's study of the character of houses in Uffington. She analyses, building by building, the architectural features of many of the older houses in Uffington. She concludes that with the importation of new building materials, a significant proportion of the building within Uffington over the past 90 years 'has been undistinguished architecturally, with little reference to local character'. Just two examples taken from this work are: the use of concrete blocks at White Horse and the yellow bricks at Craven Common. The bricks used in the new village hall are also at odds with the local character. A small number of houses in Baulking parish, for example the houses to the west of the entrance to Baulking Grange Farm, suffer from the same design weakness. With so much of the character of the village relying on a palette of local materials, these imported materials still look out of place. J. Cooper's report provides strong evidence to support Policy D2.

In promoting their sites in the present day, developers have tended to refer to the diversity in existing design styles and quality in Uffington to argue, in effect, that their standardised design will blend readily into the village. This practice leads inevitably to a dilution of the design coherence across the village.

Where proposals for permitted development are being considered and developed, property owners will be strongly encouraged to have regard to the Guide and local design policies. Property owners should be encouraged to produce good design irrespective of the scale of the development proposed and/or the need for planning permission. This will help to ensure that the quality of the existing built environment is safeguarded.

³⁶ 'Fixing our broken housing market', February 2017, Section A65.

³⁷ The Design Guide is available at the Vale web site: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk>. The Guide has the status of a Supplementary Planning Document and as such will be a material consideration in determining planning applications; it carries considerable weight in decision making.

All Design policies refer to both Uffington and Baulking.

Policy D1 – Overall Design Quality

All new development should be of a high-quality design which takes account of its location and reflects its particular local identity. Where appropriate the development concerned should take account of the principles included in the Vale Design Guide 2015.

5.2 Local Building Design

5.2.1 Scale of New Building

The need for a constraint on the form and massing of new building and on ridge heights has been emphasised in a number of recent local planning decisions;³⁸ see Policy D2.

The location, scale and height of some recent new building in Uffington have impeded some established public views of St Mary's Church and other important historic features of the parish. Recent development has also led to an increased proportion of larger houses in Uffington, while opportunities have not been taken to vary the placement of houses within their plots to reflect the tradition in the village. These developments, particularly those close to St Mary's Church and the primary school within the Uffington Conservation Area, have led to an unfortunate loss of character. This evidence is one of the determinants of Policies H1, H2 and D2 which stress the need for sympathetic siting and massing in the future.

Although there are occasional historic landmark buildings, traditional houses within the villages are small/medium in size, of a simple design, with good proportions to the elevations and typically 5.5 to 8 metres in height to the ridge. As with most traditional buildings in the Vale, they adopt a consistent form, with rectangular floor plans and pitched roofs (see Vale Design Guide 5.1.5).

5.2.2 House Design

Among the older dwellings there are a number of traditional shapes which are seen in Uffington and Baulking. Two forms are common:

- Thatched cottages built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have a steep roof pitch and ridge height typically 7.5m, with 1.5 or 2 storeys.

³⁸ See for example comments on planning applications P16/V0265/FUL (2016) and P17/V1366/FUL (2017). Both are for the same site.



Figure 17 – Typical Thatched Roof Cottage

- A simple nineteenth-century slate-roofed cottage shape, normally without hipped ends and with a ridge height typically 5.5 – 6m, and normally with 2 storeys.



Figure 18 – Typical Slate Roofed Cottages

- An individual, modern hipped and slate-roofed house designed to be sympathetic to local vernacular with wood cladding and limited to 1.5 storeys and a maximum 7m roof height.



Figure 19 – Modern Uffington House

There are of course a number of examples of more modern designs of housing. Roof heights are generally in keeping with adjacent properties; roofing materials are usually slate or tile, and construction, textures and colour palette generally unfussy.

These ridge heights and the prevalent angle of pitch are important indicators for new development. The examples above have unfussy facades, with no more than a simple porch. Designs reflecting (but not imitating) these traditional shapes (and others) are likely to be successful. However, weight will be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area, while respecting local context and scale.

Materials used for building in the Plan area are detailed within the VWHDC Design Guide. Chalk block, sarsen stone and orange (Berkshire) brick (almost always in Flemish bond) with timber framing are the norm for older dwellings, with weather-boarding an occasional feature. Roofs are thatch, slate or red/orange clay tiles. Designs reflecting these materials, brickwork, textures and colours will help to enhance and place a new building in context. (Note that chalkstone itself will usually not be practical in a new building; a whitewashed rendered surface or alternative stonework reflecting the village context may be used.)

In summary, the following design styles are to be avoided:

- Standardised designs typical of the urban environment with no concessions to this locality.
- A crude pastiche of older styles, often overly complicated and including 'bolt-on' elements that are out of place.
- The use of materials and colour palette which are a poor imitation of those found in the historic parts of the villages.

5.3 **New building outside, or on the edge of, the settlements**

Section 6 of the Vale's Design Guide focusses on good design of buildings located in large grounds and in small groups of buildings such as hamlets and farm buildings. In these locations landscape is the dominant feature. In the Plan area, this section of the Guide will be

particularly relevant, not only for stand-alone dwellings and farm-yard clusters but also around the edges of settlements. Here development is more sporadic, there is significant space between houses and open landscape is the main backdrop for dwellings. There are five Design Guide principles which are particularly relevant to the parishes in these situations:

DG77: landscape

DG78: clusters or grouping

DG79: scale, form and massing

DG80: facades and elevations

DG81: boundary treatments

Policy D2 – Building Scale and Design

New buildings or extensions will be supported where they are proportionate to their plot sizes, where they do not dominate neighbouring buildings and where they do not close important gaps or otherwise impede public local views. At the edge of the settlements, the sporadic nature of development will be maintained and the form and massing of any new building scaled accordingly.

Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the following distinctive features in the neighbourhood area:

- 1. A simple floor plan and pitched roof (following the Vale Design Guide 2015 principles DG52 and DG57).**
- 2. Ridge heights that do not exceed those of buildings in the immediate vicinity.**
- 3. Façades and window details which follow principles in the Vale Design Guide 2015 DG58 to 61.**
- 4. Materials and colour palette which follow the Vale Design Guide Section E zone 4 and Community Led Plan Section 5 Housing and Design.**

Proposals which would result in outstanding or innovative designs will be supported where they would raise the standard of design more generally in the neighbourhood area and respect the local context and scale of existing built development.

5.4 Public Space

Streets and other public spaces that are attractive encourage social interaction, act as meeting points and add to the character of the neighbourhood. VWHDC LPP1 policy CP37 (particularly Sections ii – v) provides guidance in this area. In addition, the evidence below is used to focus policies on the valued features of our public space.

A range of boundary treatments to properties can be identified in the villages. Where gardens front the road, there is widespread use of picket-fencing or post-and-rail combined with hedges. Low walls and railings provide more formal definition. The walls are made from a variety of materials, including chalk and sarsen stone around the church and Uffington museum, as well as brick and combinations of all three. Hedgerows of native species often adjoin the street and soften the visual links through to the wider landscape. The use of evergreen fast-growing conifer species as a screen is a modern visual intrusion.

Increasingly there is use of close board fencing in recent developments, without mitigation or softening by hedging. This is particularly visually intrusive at the boundary between garden and open fields. It is also a significant impediment to movement of some wildlife (see Section 7.5). This approach is not supported by Policy D3. It supports more traditional and ecologically sensitive approaches to this important component of the built environment in the neighbourhood area. Natural stone walls, post and rail fencing and hedges using native species will be particularly appropriate in the neighbourhood area.

Roads within the villages are bounded primarily by grass verges and ditches, with either no kerb or a low kerb. Hedges are frequently found on at least one side of the street, even in more developed areas. The roads in the older parts of the village do not conform to a standard highway design, the resulting restricted sight lines, road widths and boundaries being defined by built form and vegetation – this creates a need for slower speeds and for passing places and creates a more human scale and character. Over-engineered proposals should be avoided. All proposals should have an over-riding objective to secure a simple rural character and design with proportionate safety measures.

Roadways are often shared between pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and vehicles; although this contributes to the rural character, it requires care and consideration by all.

[See over]

Policy D3 – Boundary Treatment

Boundaries of new developments will be supported where they are wildlife friendly, reflect the traditional, rural context of the villages and be defined by walls, post-and-rail fencing or hedges consisting of native species. These boundary features should be of a height which preserves the open views within the villages.

Policy D4 – Highways and Footpaths

Proposals which include new footpaths and/or highways will be supported where these features respect the rural nature of the neighbourhood area in general terms and their local context in particular. Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the principles of DG31 of the Vale Design Guide 2015.

Policy D5 – Utility Supply

Proposals which require utility supplies will be supported where these features respect the rural nature of the neighbourhood area in general terms and their local context in particular. Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the principles of DG41 of the Vale Design Guide 2015 and be installed below ground.

Proposals within conservation areas which would result in the sinking of existing utility supplies below ground will be particularly supported.

The two photographs in Figure 20 (1900) and Figure 21 (2018) evidence the impact of overhead cables on a street scene within the Conservation Area.



Figure 20 – Uffington High Street c.1900



Figure 21 – Uffington High Street 2018

Uffington and Baulking have historically been dark environments and hence the magic of the stars at night was easily enjoyed on a clear night. Uffington is low lying so that street lighting in local towns is not directly visible. This means that the night sky can be seen from within the village subject only to interference from local lighting. This has gradually become more intrusive, a trend which could be reversed. This evidence leads to the following policy which also aligns with NPPF Paragraph 125. Policy D6 addresses this important local matter. It acknowledges that a degree of external lighting may be necessary for safety and legibility. However, it does not offer support to floodlighting, illuminated advertising and the harsher elements of lighting on to buildings in the neighbourhood area.

Policy D6 – Dark Skies

The ‘dark sky’ environment characteristic of our villages will be safeguarded to minimise light pollution, maintain the amenity of neighbours and the character of the area.

Development proposals will be supported which incorporate appropriate lighting for safety – such as waymarking – provided it is not intrusive to neighbours and the wider village (see the Vale Design Guide 2015 principle DG40). Security floodlighting and illuminated advertising will not be supported. Insofar as planning permission is required soft architectural lighting of buildings will be supported.

The Campaign To Protect Rural England (CPRE) believes that darkness at night is one of the key characteristics of rural areas, constituting a major difference between rural and urban. In the Plan area, and in order to preserve its rural character, the Parish Council/Parish Meeting will therefore follow the recommended practices as outlined in the CPRE 2014 ‘Shedding Light’ report.³⁹ Outside the Plan area it will remain for the CPRE to lobby for appropriate change in order to reduce light pollution locally.⁴⁰

³⁹ <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/dark-skies/item/download/3497>

⁴⁰ CPRE and Dark Skies <http://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-do/countryside/dark-skies>

6 Economy & Employment

6.1 Objective to be Satisfied

The Economy and Employment Section aims to satisfy Objective 6:

- To stimulate the local economy and to optimise opportunities for local employment.

6.2 Background

Historically many villagers were employed on the land, in the supporting infrastructure and in domestic work. Further employment was added with the arrival of the railway in the 1840s.

The Plan area today is still mainly agricultural open countryside but just a few farms work the land, employing many fewer people than in the past.

From the early 1960s to the present, Uffington, in particular, has grown in size, as greater use of private cars has meant that access to work farther afield has become easier. During this period Uffington had a small petrol station and garage, though this closed in the early 2000s. This period has also seen the end of some traditional service businesses, including several public houses.

The primary school, shop and pub continue to provide some local employment. Domestic work including cleaning, gardening, maintenance etc. also continues. Some new small businesses have emerged and working from home has become more common.

Outside the villages, there has been a growth in businesses supporting equestrianism. The White Horse and Uffington Castle attract around 150,000 visitors each year, bringing passing trade to the Plan area, including bed-and-breakfast services. An attractive campsite beneath the Hill also brings tourists to the village.

Uffington has hosted an annual White Horse Show for over 40 years; this event regularly attracts over 10,000 visitors.

6.3 Future Commercial Development

It makes sense to use the Uffington Trading Estate to the full, utilising its current profile of existing business units and seeking to enhance its potential to offer greater local employment through further expansion. However, the allowable usage of new site units will be determined by the constraints of large vehicle accessibility, and the desire to keep light and noise factors to a minimum, in this open countryside environment. This policy has been supported by the community as part of the CLP of 2015.⁴¹

⁴¹ Community Led Plan Section 12 (see Reference Document A).

Policy EE1 – Commercial Development

EE1A – Proposals for uses offering local employment opportunities in Use Classes B1 (offices), B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage & distribution) as well as tourism and leisure will be supported where they would not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of dwellings in the immediate locality of the site concerned, where there is capacity in the local highway network to accommodate the vehicular traffic generated by the proposed development and where satisfactory access and car parking arrangements can be achieved.

EE1B – Proposals for the change of use of retail or employment facilities to other uses will not be supported unless the proposal concerned demonstrates that it complies with Policy CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises of the adopted Local Plan Part 1 or any successor policy on this matter.

Policy EE1A aligns with LPP1 policy CP28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites. Policy EE1B seeks to safeguard existing retail and employment uses in the neighbourhood area. It reflects the importance of such uses in general, and the village shop in Uffington in particular, to the sustainability of the neighbourhood area. It makes a connection with Policy CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises of the Local Plan Part 1. That policy identifies circumstances where the potential for alternative uses may exist.

6.4 Agricultural Development

As part of Objective 6 the continuation of a robust agricultural economy will be strongly supported in the Plan area, retaining the countryside nature of the locality as expressed in our Vision and Objective 5. Diversification will be encouraged where appropriate to avoid the loss of more farms.

LPP2 includes draft Policy 11. This is relevant to the NP's local policies on agricultural development and on supporting local businesses including tourism.

The Plan area has a number of farm houses that are now private homes, together with outlying buildings. Whilst housing on redundant farmyards is an option (see Policy H2B), this Plan will also seek to retain viable farmyards or, if not viable as farmyards, use of them for small-scale commercial purposes.

Policy EE2 – Agricultural Development

EE2A – The development and diversification of agricultural and other rural land-based businesses in the Plan area will be supported.

EE2B – The re-use of uneconomic/former farm buildings for appropriate rural business activities will be supported where it accords with the policies of the Development Plan and the NPPF.

6.5 Supporting Local Businesses

LPP2 includes Development Policy 13: Village and Local Shops. 'Proposals for the development or extension of village and other local shops with less than 500m² gross retail floorspace, designed to meet the day-to-day needs of the local population, will be permitted, provided they comply with other relevant policies in the Local Plan 2031.' This Plan seeks to safeguard our existing retail businesses, and the services that they provide to the community, these being the village shop and post office, and the Fox & Hounds pub.

Compared to the Vale District the Plan area has a higher percentage of home workers, and of businesses run from home.⁴² This Plan will support this sector of the community, which is associated with reduced car dependence and therefore with the long-term sustainability of the area.

Policy EE3 – Small Shops and Businesses

EE3A – Proposals for the development or extension of the village shop, or any other future small shops designed to meet the day-to-day needs of the local population, will be supported provided they do not adversely affect residential or visual amenity and give rise to highway problems.

EE3B – Where planning permission is required, the establishment and operation of small-scale businesses run from homes will be supported, provided they do not detrimentally impact on the residential amenities of other dwellings in the immediate locality and do not significantly increase vehicular traffic in the settlement concerned.

6.6 Supporting the Growth of Tourism

Tourism is valuable to the Plan area; it brings in revenue from outside the local area, supporting our community, its businesses and services. In this way, it also creates job opportunities.

The principle is outlined in CP31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy, stating that 'The Council encourages new development to advance the visitor economy for leisure and business purposes'. This expands to state that: 'small-scale development to support the visitor economy, including farm diversification and equine development, will be supported provided that proposals are in keeping with the scale and character of the locality and which would not adversely affect heritage assets or their setting. Larger developments will only be supported in exceptional circumstances'.

⁴² ONS census March 2011 and HNA review (see Reference Document C).

Policy EE4 – Tourist and Leisure Facilities

The development and expansion of sustainable tourist and leisure facilities will be supported in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities and where the range, scale and nature of the provision or expansion does not unacceptably detract from the rural character of the area and any heritage assets and their setting.

7 Sustainability and Infrastructure

7.1 Objectives to be Satisfied

The Sustainability and Infrastructure Section aims to satisfy Plan Objectives 7 and 8:

- To protect and enhance our community facilities and recreation space so as to meet the needs of a growing population.
- To ensure the infrastructure within the parishes of Uffington and Baulking is developed to support sustainable growth.

7.2 Background

Sustainability and Infrastructure considerations span seven topics:

1. Education.
2. Healthcare.
3. Natural Environment.
4. Broadband and mobile reception.
5. Flooding and Drainage.
6. Mobility including traffic, public transport and parking.
7. Amenities (including visitors' facilities).

Topics 1, 2 and 6 are directly impacted by the scale of new developments. So, as recorded in Section 4.7.3 (Constraints on sustainable growth), the pressures on the primary school, on local healthcare provision and on local roads, and the lack of bus services, are all likely to make significant additional housing in this area an unsustainable option.

This Plan does not include policies for the village primary school and healthcare services since these functions are governed at county level; hence we, as one of many local stakeholders, cannot, in the context of the Plan, dictate them although we will endeavour to influence them where possible. We have also decided not to include policies on broadband and mobile reception since these services in the Plan area are now generally satisfactory.

However, the school and healthcare have both been a concern to the community and we outline the issues below.

7.3 Uffington Primary School

The village primary school is highly valued and is regarded as being at the heart of the community. It is close to being full. A widely held local view is that parents from the catchment area who wish to send their children to this school should be able to do so. New development will make it harder to fulfil this aspiration.

The OCC Pupil Place Plan 2015 remarks, in relation to the impact of potential development on Uffington school, that a 'feasibility study should be conducted into increasing the annual admission number to 20 (from 15), which could be facilitated by acquiring additional site area' (Reference Document B, paras 3.46 et seq). Given the limited footprint of the school building,

and the tightly packed nature of the building within the school grounds, school governors noted that this would probably mean expansion upwards, to put a second storey on the mostly single storey extant structure.⁴³ However, this was considered to have significant financial impact against a limited requirement for pupil numbers expansion. It should be noted that decisions in this area are the responsibility of the County Council, made in conjunction with the school Governors, but that control of such strategic planning does not rest exclusively with the school Governors.

The Governors analysed the position in December 2016 when there were 98 pupils within a maximum capacity of 105. The position has changed little since with currently 96 children on roll. There remains some capacity in some year groups but others are already full. The Governors at the time concluded that the School had capacity to support more children from its catchment area.⁴⁴ Additional places could be created by reducing the number of places available to children from outside the catchment area; the latter currently occupy about 20% of places.⁴⁵ Indeed there already appears to be a trend of reducing outside placements within the school, with more of the available places being offered to children within the catchment area.

7.4 Healthcare

Healthcare services in the Plan area are close to becoming unsustainable without further investment; there is a considerable and increasing pressure on healthcare provision arising from new housing in our area as well as in neighbouring areas. For these purposes, healthcare means services provided in local towns, including GP and dentistry services, as well as Allied Health professionals (AHP) such as physiotherapists, dieticians etc. We note that, compared with the VWH district as a whole, our population is weighted towards older people, resulting in greater healthcare needs than the average.

Leading on from the CLP, further research on the question of liaising with local NHS to provide health care support for the elderly at home, has shown that the majority of Uffington, and Baulking residents are registered with one of the following GP surgeries: Elm Tree Surgery in Shrivenham, White Horse Medical Practice in Faringdon or Church Street & Newbury Street practices in Wantage. The first named is in Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group, and the others are in South West Locality of the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Different CCGs may have different policies and priorities. The foreword to the Locality Place Based Primary Care Plan for South West Oxfordshire Locality, which includes the medical practices in Faringdon and Wantage, states

‘Our aim of continuing to deliver primary care services close to home can only be met by a plan which addresses each of these local populations according to their unique needs. However, it is clear that not all primary care services can or should be reproduced independently in each town and village. GPs and our colleagues in the community healthcare system therefore seek to retain the local strengths of what we have now, while moving positively towards far greater integration and cooperation between services. We cannot afford to miss any opportunities to reduce duplication of

⁴³ While the school has significant land to the rear, the main school building is set within tightly constrained boundaries at the sides and the front, with access to the rear needing to be retained.

⁴⁴ The primary school catchment area includes the parishes of Uffington, Woolstone, Baulking, Fawler and Kingston Lisle. See

https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/childreducationandfamilies/educationandlearning/schools/catchmentmaps/3251_all.pdf

⁴⁵ Information provided by J-P. Roche, school Governor.

work, share expertise and information, and use technology to communicate more effectively with patients and each other.'

There is a statutory obligation for any new residents to be allocated places at a GP surgery of their choice, while they live in its catchment area. However, adding to an over-subscribed list leads to further degradation of the service. Only further investment in local surgeries will avoid an unsustainable position.

While there are dental practices offering private treatment in the local area, access to NHS dentistry is very limited in our locality and we understand there is no financial incentive for dentists to increase their capacity to treat NHS patients. AHP services are also under severe strain in the Plan area.

7.5 The Natural Environment

The NPPF states (Paragraph 109) that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The Local Plan Part 1 contains policies relevant to our area:

- CP44: landscape including protection of trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, water courses.
- CP45: green infrastructure.
- CP46: conservation and improvement of biodiversity.

The Plan area supports a range of priority habitats, so defined because they are regarded as the most threatened and thereby require conservation action.⁴⁶ There are two wildlife sites within the area, both on the Downs.⁴⁷ An old native black poplar, 'now one of our rarest trees', grows in a paddock south of Woolstone Road.⁴⁸

Several protected animal species are found within the Plan area. These include barn owls, red kites, grass snakes, bats, great-crested newts and water voles. The effect of any development on protected species will have to be fully considered and appropriate mitigation sought.

Unfortunately, in recent years populations of some unprotected species have declined, notably, frogs and hedgehogs. The NP policy on site boundaries (Policy D3) aims to reverse some of these trends.

Uffington parish has earmarked green spaces in NP policy L2. In addition, both villages have significant areas of garden, pasture and grassland (including the churchyards) all of which serve as environments for a wide variety of species. In the open countryside, and excluding the AONB, there is one significant woodland (Fox Cover) and many small spinneys as well as the lake east of Baulking. The corridors connecting these separate elements are important.

⁴⁶ See Characterisation Study of Plan area. Baulking parish contains deciduous woodland and a traditional orchard habitat. Uffington parish also contains deciduous woodlands, a lowland meadow, large areas of lowland calcareous grassland to the north of White Horse Hill.

⁴⁷ Kingston Warren Down; see Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape study and Thames Valley Environmental record centre.

⁴⁸ O. Rackham, *The History of the Countryside* (London: J.M. Dent, 1986).

Policy S1 offers support for new green infrastructure provided that it is stocked with native species. Where appropriate this approach, of which the new green spaces form a part, will assist in compensating for the loss of habitat that results from wider development.

Policy S1 – Green infrastructure and wildlife corridors

S1A - Proposals for the development of new green infrastructure, either in their own right or as part of a wider development, will be supported where they are stocked with native tree, plant and grass species.

S1B - Where appropriate to their locations, development proposals will be supported which include provision for the network of wildlife corridors within and around the villages to be managed to ensure they are preserved and enhanced. These corridors include:

- **The watercourses within and around Uffington village, and those in the open countryside of both parishes, and the trees and vegetation alongside them.**
- **Footpaths, bridleways and roadside verges including the trees and plants alongside them.**

Taking full account of wildlife needs, proposals which incorporate the effective management and maintenance of hedgerows, field boundaries, plus woodland and spinneys, will be particularly supported.



Figure 22 – Water Vole in Uffington Stream 2018

7.6 Flooding and Drainage

Flooding in the Plan area has had a significant impact in the past and it is the aim, in future, to minimise the likelihood of flooding and drainage overflow problems by all practical means; and particularly to prevent new developments from exacerbating the situation. To ensure that where local areas are known to flood (through residents' observations / evidence), but are not recorded on the Environment Agency flood maps which are often incomplete or out of date, this evidence will be maintained in future by the Parish Council. Reference Document L presents, in map and photographic evidence form, the flooding which has taken place in Uffington village since 1990.⁴⁹ Baulking has no serious flooding issues.

LPP1 policy CP42 provides clear directions aimed at minimising flooding arising from new development. Developers should take account of published material on flood risks when preparing proposals in the neighbourhood area. These include Reference Document L to this neighbourhood plan and information held by the Environment Agency and other statutory bodies.

⁴⁹ [OCC Flood Toolkit states](#) 'Please note the Surface Water Flood Map Layers as defined by the Environment Agency – This information is suitable for identifying which parts of counties or towns are at risk or have the most risk. It is unlikely to be reliable for a local area and very unlikely to be reliable for identifying individual properties at risk. In addition, there are national assumptions concerning the local drainage network and these might not reflect what is actually in place at any given location'.

Policy S2 – Flooding

Developers must demonstrate that their proposals do not create or exacerbate risk of flooding or drainage overflow to existing properties in the Plan area, whether from fluvial, pluvial or ground water.

7.7 Traffic, Travel and Mobility within the Villages

7.7.1 Traffic, Travel-to-work and Shops

For several decades, there has been a commercial bus service providing some access to nearby towns. In July 2016 this commercial service was withdrawn. The village has also operated a minibus service for many years, using volunteer drivers, providing regular visits to Wantage and Faringdon and less frequent trips to Swindon; this has always been well used by those without access to a car. An increased service has been operating since the demise of the commercial bus service with other local villages added to scheduled stops.

There has never been a public transport service accessing nearby towns at times suitable for full-time commuting workers. This lack of bus transport has meant that working families in the Plan area have often needed two cars. And those who are not working also need at least one car, unless they rely on taxis, lifts or the minibus to get to local towns.

The nearest A roads are the A417 and the A420, both about four miles from Uffington. The network of lanes connecting the villages to these A roads is quite narrow, single track in places and often poorly surfaced. Any new development in the Plan area will add to the current pressure on the A420 and this problem will get worse as more houses are built in Swindon, Faringdon and Shrivenham. Our policies covering economy and employment, homeworking, numbers and types of new homes are supportive of a strategy which recognises that local traffic density will need to be contained over the coming decades (see Policies EE1-4).

This Plan does not propose any policies to address these concerns about public transport or traffic problems outside the villages as these are the responsibility of the County Council. In a recent application (2016) for 44 houses in Uffington, the County Council objected as it saw the location as highly unsustainable for housing development, largely because of the lack of public transport in the immediate vicinity.⁵⁰ It considered that the development was likely to be extremely car-orientated due to the limited options available to residents who need to commute elsewhere for their employment or education, contrary to CP35. The application was rejected.

Traffic growth remains a serious concern of the community and a significant constraint on development in our area. There may be long-term solutions available beyond the Plan period - such as many more (self-drive) buses, or deliveries using drone technology. Partial

⁵⁰ Planning Application P16/V3185/O (2016).

Safe cycle routes up to access points on the main strategic routes which have regular public transport services (the A420 and the A417) are unlikely to be feasible. However, we recognise that if employment on the Uffington Trading Estate expands (see Policy EE1A), some improvements in cycle safety on the roads leading to the estate will be necessary – for example by means of warning signs and passing places.

Roadside parking in Uffington village currently restricts traffic flow and reduces visibility. While it is unlikely that the current level of on-road parking can be reduced, our policies will ensure that new development does not add to this by being compliant with OCC's Residential Road Design Guide.⁵¹ It is possible that, if the primary school is developed longer term to accommodate more pupils, opportunities can be found for all staff parking to be off-road, thereby relieving some of the problems of car parking at the west end of Broad Street.

Policy S3 – Mobility and Safe Movement within Settlements

S3B: Facilities to support energy-efficient transport, such as charging points, will be encouraged.

The term 'amenities' is used to describe public facilities such as meeting places, shops, pubs, churches, cultural and sports facilities, open spaces and playgrounds. This neighbourhood is currently well served by such amenities. In particular, the village hall in Uffington provides meeting places for clubs, societies and private functions. The church at Baulking is used to provide village hall functions.

⁵¹ www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/newdevelopments/DesignGuidePublication.pdf

excellent walking, cycling and riding on local roads, the Ridgeway Trail and in the AONB. We also have the Jubilee Field (protected by covenants and LGS designation), for families and annual funfair, and the Uffington Sports Ground (protected by covenants) which offers excellent facilities for organised team games, including football, cricket and tennis. It is important that protection of these assets is continued, in the interests of residents of both villages. Protecting these areas and facilities reinforces the Sport England playing fields policy.⁵²

The aims of the Plan with regard to amenities are:

1. To maintain this high amenity value when accepting further development.
2. To ensure that occupants of new developments have good access to amenities, where necessary via new pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to existing routes.
3. To provide good facilities for increasing numbers of visitors to the area.
4. To alleviate capacity constraints that could arise, irrespective of the size and location of new development, on the use of communal facilities.
5. To ensure communal facilities are readily accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Consistent with LPP1 Policy CP7 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations, the Parish Council/Parish Meeting will give high priority to the amenities aims set out in the Plan in spending funds secured through Section 106 and Section 278 agreements and the CIL.

⁵² See <http://www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy/>

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Policy Summary.

List of Reference Documents

- A. Community Led Plan.
- B. Characterisation Study.
- C. Housing Needs Assessment.
- D. Landscape Capacity Study.
- E. J. Cooper, 'An investigation into the origins and character of the houses and cottages of the village of Uffington in Oxfordshire' (Certificate in Architectural History Dissertation, Department of Continuing Education, University of Oxford, 1999). (Copy in Uffington museum.)
- F. Consultation Statement.
- G. Equalities Impact Statement.
- H. Local Green Spaces: evidence.
- I. Deliberate omission*
- J. SEA Screening statement.
- K. Baulking Only Housing Policy Need & Evidence..
- L. Uffington Historic Flooding Information.

POLICY SUMMARY

Focus Group Area	Objective(s) to be satisfied	Policy Reference	Policy
Landscape	5	L1 Landscape capacity and Assessment	<p>Development proposals should take account of the landscape within their immediate locality and its ability to accommodate the development proposed. Proposed development in the areas of the Plan which are shown coloured (but not those left white) on the Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) maps will be assessed with regard to the LCS capacity grading including the grading definitions in the categorisation table.</p> <p>All development proposals within the LCS coloured areas should be accompanied by a landscape assessment of the proposed development, proportionate to the scale of the development. For major developments (10+ dwellings) an LVIA carried out in accordance with the latest Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) will be required.</p> <p>Subject to the detailed requirements of this policy development proposals will be supported where they are located in parts of the neighbourhood area which have the capacity to accommodate the proposed development without significant effects on its character. Development proposals which would have unacceptable effects on the landscape character of its immediate locality or the wider neighbourhood area will not be supported.</p>
		L2 Local Green Spaces	<p>The following areas will be designated Local Green Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jubilee Field, White Horse, Uffington. • Uffington Parish allotments, Fernham Road, Uffington. • Paddock and strip of land known as Puzey's Close and the Lady Walk, Uffington. <p>Development on land designated as a Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances.</p>
Housing	1, 2, 4	H1 Type and Mix of Housing: Uffington and Baulking	<p>Development proposals that meet the locational requirements identified in Policy H2A of this Plan and provide a range of housing types will be supported, particularly where the dwelling mix provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing. • Housing suitable for young people/families. • Housing suitable for older people. <p>New residential developments which deliver one and two-bedroom houses will be particularly supported.</p>

		H2A Location of new Housing Development	<p>Housing development within the built area will be supported provided it meets all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scale and density of development is appropriate and proportionate to the location. • It is well-related to other buildings within the built up area. • It is in keeping with the character of the local area. • It is both proportionate and responsive to the scale of existing buildings in close proximity to the development. • it respects the character of the landscape within and surrounding the village.
		H2B Housing Development Outside Built Area	<p>Outside the built area of Uffington village new dwellings will be supported where they accord with other policies in the development plan including Neighbourhood Plan policy L1 or in national planning policy. The following types of new housing development will be supported where they accord with other policies in this Plan in general, and with Policy D1 in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a dwelling involving the reuse, extension and conversion of a rural building which is of permanent and substantial construction and is capable of conversion without extensive reconstruction. • Replacement dwellings including the use of brownfield sites. • Rural workers' dwellings. • Rural exception sites where the dwellings will meet a specific evidenced rural housing need. <p>Insofar as appropriate to particular proposals for new residential development the integrity of listed buildings, their settings and any features of architectural significance should be safeguarded.</p>
		H2C Housing Development In AONB	<p>Any proposals for new residential development in the North Wessex Downs AONB will be determined having regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the designated area and within the context of Policy CP44 Landscape of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1.</p> <p>Where proposals comply with these national and local policy tests, housing development should be designed to ensure that the natural beauty of the landscape is conserved and enhanced. In addition, housing development within the setting of the AONB should contribute to the protection and enhancement of this valued landscape, its Scheduled Ancient Monuments and SSSIs as appropriate to its location.</p>
		H3 Housing Development in Baulking	<p>Proposals for new residential development in Baulking will be considered against national planning policy, policies in the development plan and policy H2B of this neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>Proposals for housing development in Baulking to meet local housing need will be supported subject to the following criteria:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They provide for an evidenced local need which cannot otherwise be delivered within a location which accords with policies in the development plan. • They are of a scale and size which directly relate to the identified local need. • They would not have an unacceptable impact on the visual and landscape amenities of Baulking in general, and the gaps between the existing dwellings in particular. • They would safeguard the amenities of existing residential properties. <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Baulking Conservation Area'
		H4A Housing Development within Conservation Areas or the Setting of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings of Uffington and Baulking	<p>Housing development within the Conservation Areas, or within the setting of the Conservation Areas or listed buildings in the Plan area, will only be supported provided the proposed development conserves or enhances the special interest and significance of the Conservation Area or listed building.</p> <p>All housing development should maintain established public views of listed buildings and other local features where those views form part of the special interest and significance of the buildings or features.</p>
		H4B Heritage Impact	A heritage impact assessment should be submitted in support of all applications for planning permission where there is any potential impact on heritage assets. Any such assessment should be proportionate to the size of the proposed development.
Design	3, 4	D1 Overall Design Quality	All new development should be of a high-quality design which takes account of its location and reflects its particular local identity. Where appropriate the development concerned should take account of the principles included in the Vale Design Guide 2015.
		D2 Building Scale and Design	<p>New buildings or extensions will be supported where they are proportionate to their plot sizes, where they do not dominate neighbouring buildings and where they do not close important gaps or otherwise impede public local views. At the edge of the settlements, the sporadic nature of development will be maintained and the form and massing of any new building scaled accordingly.</p> <p>Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the following distinctive features in the neighbourhood area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A simple floor plan and pitched roof (following the Vale Design Guide 2015 principles DG52 and DG57). • Ridge heights that do not exceed those of buildings in the immediate vicinity. • Facades and window details which follow principles in the Vale Design Guide 2015 DG58 to 61. • Materials and colour palette which follow the Vale

			Design Guide Section E zone 4 and Community Led Plan Section 5 Housing and Design. Proposals which would result in outstanding or innovative designs will be supported where they would raise the standard of design more generally in the neighbourhood area and respect the local context and scale of existing built development.
		D3 Boundary Treatment	Boundaries of new developments will be supported where they are wildlife friendly, reflect the traditional, rural context of the villages and be defined by walls, post-and-rail fencing or hedges consisting of native species. These boundary features should be of a height which preserves the open views within the villages.
		D4 Highways & Footpaths	Proposals which include new footpaths and/or highways will be supported where these features respect the rural nature of the neighbourhood area in general terms and their local context in particular. Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the principles of DG31 of the Vale Design Guide 2015.
		D5 Utility Supply	Proposals which require utility supplies will be supported where these features respect the rural nature of the neighbourhood area in general terms and their local context in particular. Where appropriate to the development concerned the design of new proposals should incorporate the principles of DG41 of the Vale Design Guide 2015 and be installed below ground. Proposals within conservation areas which would result in the sinking of existing utility supplies below ground will be particularly supported.
		D6 Dark Skies	The 'dark sky' environment characteristic of our villages will be safeguarded to minimise light pollution, maintain the amenity of neighbours and the character of the area. Development proposals will be supported which incorporate appropriate lighting for safety – such as waymarking – provided it is not intrusive to neighbours and the wider village (see the Vale Design Guide 2015 principle DG40). Security floodlighting and illuminated advertising will not be supported. Insofar as planning permission is required soft architectural lighting of buildings will be supported.
Economy and Employment	6	EE1A Commercial Development	Proposals for uses offering local employment opportunities in Use Classes B1 (offices), B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage & distribution) as well as tourism and leisure will be supported where they would not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of dwellings in the immediate locality of the site concerned, where there is capacity in the local highway network to accommodate the vehicular traffic generated by the proposed development and where satisfactory access and car parking arrangements can be achieved.
		EE1B	Proposals for the change of use of retail or employment facilities to other uses will not be supported unless the proposal concerned demonstrates that it complies with Policy CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises of the adopted Local Plan Part 1 or any successor policy on this matter.
		EE2A Agricultural Development	The development and diversification of agricultural and other rural land-based businesses in the Plan area will be supported.

		EE2B Re-use of Buildings	The re-use of uneconomic/former farm buildings for appropriate rural business activities will be supported where it accords with the policies of the Development Plan and the NPPF.
		EE3A Small Shops	Proposals for the development or extension of the village shop, or any other future small shops designed to meet the day-to-day needs of the local population, will be supported provided they do not adversely affect residential or visual amenity and give rise to highway problems.
		EE3B Small Businesses	Where planning permission is required, the establishment and operation of small-scale businesses run from homes will be supported, provided they do not detrimentally impact on the residential amenities of other dwellings in the immediate locality and do not significantly increase vehicular traffic in the settlement concerned.
		EE4 Tourism and Leisure	The development and expansion of sustainable tourist and leisure facilities will be supported in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities and where the range, scale and nature of the provision or expansion does not unacceptably detract from the rural character of the area and any heritage assets and their setting.
Sustainability and Infrastructure	7, 8	S1A Green infrastructure	Proposals for the development of new green infrastructure, either in their own right or as part of a wider development, will be supported where they are stocked with native tree, plant and grass species.
		S1B Wildlife Corridors	<p>Where appropriate to their locations, development proposals will be supported which include provision for the network of wildlife corridors within and around the villages to be managed to ensure they are preserved and enhanced. These corridors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The watercourses within and around Uffington village, and those in the open countryside of both parishes, and the trees and vegetation alongside them. • Footpaths, bridleways and roadside verges including the trees and plants alongside them. <p>Taking full account of wildlife needs, proposals which incorporate the effective management and maintenance of hedgerows, field boundaries, plus woodland and spinneys, will be particularly supported.</p>
		S2 Flooding	Developers must demonstrate that their proposals do not create or exacerbate risk of flooding or drainage overflow to existing properties in the Plan area, whether from fluvial, pluvial or ground water.
		S3A Mobility and Safe Movement within Settlements	All new developments should provide appropriate off-road car parking, integrated into the landscape, and which complies with OCC's Residential Road Design Guide.
		S3B	Facilities to support energy-efficient transport, such as charging points, will be encouraged.

Categorisations to be used for Policy L1

Low capacity	The landscape could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character and visual amenity. Occasional very small scale development may be possible providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.
Medium / Low capacity	A low amount of development can be accommodated only in limited situations providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.
Medium capacity	The landscape could be able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character. There are landscape and visual constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.
Medium/ High capacity	The area can accommodate larger amounts of development providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.
High capacity	Much of the area can accommodate significant areas of development providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and surrounding landscape character.