

Agenda

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City Executive Board

Date: **Wednesday 10 April 2019**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **The Old Library - Oxford Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

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Details of how City Councillors and members of the public may engage with this meeting may be found on page 7 of this agenda.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record the meeting please let the Committee Services Officer know how you wish to do this before the start of the meeting.

City Executive Board

Membership

Chair/ Leader	Councillor Susan Brown	Leader of the Council, Board Member for Economic Development and Partnership
Vice Chair/ Deputy Leader and Members	Councillor Linda Smith	Deputy Leader (Statutory), Board Member for Leisure and Housing
	Councillor Ed Turner	Deputy Leader, Board Member for Finance and Asset Management
	Councillor Nigel Chapman	Board Member for Customer Focused Services
	Councillor Mary Clarkson	Board Member for Culture and City Centre
	Councillor Tom Hayes	Board Member for Safer, Greener, Environment
	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Board Member for Planning and Transport
	Councillor Mike Rowley	Board Member for Housing
	Councillor Louise Upton	Board Member for Healthy Oxford
	Councillor Marie Tidball	Board Member for Supporting Local Communities

The quorum for this meeting is three, substitutes are not allowed.

Future items to be discussed by the City Executive Board can be found on the Forward Plan which is available on the Council's [website](#)

Copies of this agenda

Reference copies are available to consult in the Town Hall Reception. Agendas are published 6 working days before the meeting and the draft minutes a few days after.

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AGENDA

PART ONE PUBLIC BUSINESS

Pages

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

4 COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON
THE BOARD'S AGENDA

5 COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES

6 ITEMS RAISED BY BOARD MEMBERS

9 - 20

Full Council resolved on 2 November 2018, to ask officers to report to CEB in January and again in April on the operation of Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in the winter of 2018/19. Further to the Board Member's update to CEB on 22 January, the attached report now presents an overview, for information, of the operation of SWEP in the winter of 2018/19.

7 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

At its meeting on 02 April the Scrutiny Committee will consider reports on the Oxford Living Wage and the recent audit of Fusion Lifestyle. Any recommendations to the City Executive Board flowing from that meeting will be published as a supplement.

8 SUMMERTOWN AND ST. MARGARET'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

21 - 124

Lead Member: Planning and Transport (Councillor Alex Hollingsworth)

The Acting Head of Planning Services has submitted a report ask the City Executive Board to recommend to Council that the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan be "made".

Recommendation: That the City Executive Board resolves to:

Recommend to Council that the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan be "made".

9 PROJECT APPROVAL AND DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR SPEND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOMELESS SHELTER AND ASSESSMENT HUB

125 - 138

Lead Member: Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing (Councillor Linda Smith)

The Head of Housing has submitted a report to seek Project Approval for the development of a new homeless shelter and assessment hub at Floyds Row to further develop services focusing on the prevention and relief of rough sleeping, including winter shelter provision. To request further capital funding from Council; and to delegate authority to enter into construction contracts accordingly.

Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:

1. **Give Project Approval** to the proposal to convert this building to deliver the initiatives as set out in this report, and within the allocated capital budget for this purpose;
2. **Request Council** that, subject to the outcome of the forthcoming architectural feasibility work being affordable and within the proposed budget envelope, that a revised capital scheme now totalling £458k (an additional £274k up from an original £184k) relating to Option C is included in the Council's 2019/20 capital programme (the funding of which is achievable albeit potentially from a variety of sources the ranking of which is still as yet to be finalised);
3. **Delegate** authority to the Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to enter into contracts for the conversion of this building to this purpose, on the basis that in the opinion of the Head of Finance this continues to represent best value; and
4. **Note** that the timely delivery of a new winter shelter service for the 2019/20 winter period is a priority in this project.

10 IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT TARGETED IMPROVEMENT OF AIR QUALITY.

Lead Member: Safer, Greener, Environment (Councillor Tom Hayes)

The Transition Director will submit a report to propose entering into a collaboration agreement, in respect of an Innovate UK funded project that supports the City Council's plans for Electric Vehicle charging and associated infrastructure.

This report will be published as a supplement.

11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 22 May
- 12 June
- 10 July
- 07 August
- 11 September
- 09 October
- 13 November
- 11 December

All meetings start at 6pm.

12 MINUTES

139 - 148

Recommendation: The City Executive Board resolves to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019 as a true and accurate record, subject to

13 MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

If the Board wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Board to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Board may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART TWO **MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licences for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Member's Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

HOW OXFORD CITY COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN ENGAGE AT THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Addresses and questions by members of the public, (15 minutes in total)

Members of the public can submit questions in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. Questions, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am two clear working day before the meeting (eg for a Tuesday meeting, the deadline would be 9.30am on the Friday before). Questions can be submitted either by letter or by email (executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk).

Answers to the questions will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary questions will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes that are published on the Council's website within 2 working days of the meeting.

The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted question or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the question and/or address is limited to 3 minutes, and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Board member or an officer of the Council. The text of any proposed address must be submitted within the same timescale as questions.

For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.

Councillors speaking at meetings

Oxford City councillors may, when the chair agrees, address the Board on an item for decision on the agenda (other than on the minutes). The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, stating the relevant agenda items. An address may last for no more than three minutes. If an address is made, the Board member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond or the Board will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

Councillors speaking on Neighbourhood issues (10 minutes in total)

Any City Councillor can raise local issues on behalf of communities directly with the Board. The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, giving outline details of the issue. Priority will be given to those members who have not already addressed the Board within the year and in the order received. Issues can only be raised once unless otherwise agreed by the Board. The Board's responsibility will be to hear the issue and respond at the meeting, if possible, or arrange a written response within 10 working days.

Items raised by Board members

Such items must be submitted within the same timescale as questions and will be for discussion only and not for a Board decision. Any item which requires a decision of the Board will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Board

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To: City Executive Board
Date: 10th April 2019
Title: Board Member update on the operation of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol winter 2018/19

Appendices	
Appendix A	Graphs comparing 2017-18 and 2018-19 SWEP attendance by temperature and by calendar month
Appendix B	SWEP Survey Results

Introduction and background

1. Following a motion by the Board Member for Leisure and Housing Services, Full Council resolved on 26th November 2018, to ask officers to report to CEB in January and again in April on the operation of Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) this winter. Further to the Board Member's update for information to CEB 22nd January, this report now presents an overview of the operation of SWEP this winter.

What is SWEP?

2. The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) sets out the measures that Oxford City Council and local homelessness organisations - St Mungo's (OxSPOT), Homeless Oxfordshire, Aspire and A2Dominion - will take to provide additional emergency accommodation in instances of severe weather for people who are sleeping rough.
3. SWEP opens on a forecast by the Met Office that the night temperature will fall to zero or below on 3 or more consecutive nights. SWEP then opens on the first night of this period - not after 2 or 3 nights – and remains open for so long as the temperature remains at zero degrees or below. There is also discretion to open on nights when the forecast indicates adverse weather conditions, for example, when there is snow on the ground or flooding or a period of changeable weather (say 2 nights below 0°C, then a warmer night or two, then below 0°C again).
4. When SWEP is triggered the Council works with local homelessness organisations and others including Thames Valley Police to make sure that people who may need to use the service are aware that it is open. People wishing to access SWEP are

required to present at O'Hanlon House between 9pm and 9.30pm, from where they will be directed to their allocated venue. Access to SWEP venues is between 10pm and 11pm, with admissions after this time, at the discretion of the venue coordinator.

5. SWEP emergency beds consist of roll mats and sleeping bags. Spaces are provided at a range of venues including O'Hanlon House and Simon House, and clients are allocated to the venue that is best placed to cater for their needs. Emergency beds are available for anyone who would otherwise be rough sleeping on the night, regardless of normal eligibility criteria for the Adult Homeless Pathway such as local connection. Each of the Oxfordshire District Councils is able to access one bed each within Oxford SWEP provision.
6. Oxford SPOT is responsible for SWEP coordination, allocating individuals to venues, and working with people accessing SWEP to ensure that support is provided to identify longer term solutions including reconnection or access to the Adult Homeless Pathway, where appropriate and enable them as appropriate to access longer term accommodation.
7. SWEP operates on a basic overtime model which involves experienced workers from the local network of homelessness organisations doing overtime shifts. SWEP operation therefore puts considerable pressure on core services for rough sleepers and single homeless people, particularly during periods of extended operation.
8. It is hoped that the Council will be able to move away from the current service model for SWEP from winter 2018/19 and officers are therefore developing plans for the future provision of winter-long emergency accommodation, including as part of the proposed development of Floyd's Row.

Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS)

9. In addition to the core SWEP provision, Churches in Oxford have also operated a rolling Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS), doubling the amount of spaces that they offered during winter 2017/18 to provide a total of 20 spaces each night between 1st January and 31st March 2019. The service is available for people with low level needs.
10. Oxford City Council has worked closely with Churches in Oxford to ensure that arrangements are in place for OWNS to operate safely, including confirming that buildings are compliant with fire safety regulations and tasking OxSPOT to coordinate referrals into the service.

Occasions when SWEP has been opened and discretionary openings

11. At the time of writing, SWEP has so far been triggered on 5 separate occasions this winter and for a total of 18 nights.

- 13th to 15th December (SWEP opened for 3 nights, on officer discretion)
- 2nd to 4th January (SWEP opened for 3 nights, in line with the Protocol)
- 17th January (SWEP opened for 1 night initially, on officer discretion, and closed the following morning)
- 22nd of January to 24th of January (SWEP opened for 3 nights, on officer discretion)
- 28th of January to the 4th of February (SWEP opened for 8 nights, in line with the Protocol)

12. On three of these occasions officers exercised discretion to open SWEP even though the normal criteria for doing so – that is, a forecast of 3 or more nights in a row with zero degrees Celsius or below - had not been met. The reasons for this were that:

- On the first period of opening (13th to 15th December) the temperature was forecast to fall to below zero degrees on two nights (13th and 14th December), rise above freezing on one night (15th December) but with an extremely low “feels like” temperature on this third night.
- On the third period of opening (17th January), SWEP opened initially for one night only. This decision was made because of the sub-zero temperature forecast for that night and a fluctuating forecast above and below zero over the weekend. The decision was made to close SWEP on the morning of Friday 18th January because there was no imminent forecast (starting within the following 48 hours) for 3 consecutive nights at zero degrees Celsius or below.
- On the fourth period of opening (22nd of January to 24th January), only for 2 nights sub-zero temperatures were predicted, but snow was forecast to fall on the 22nd January. Snow did fall on the 22nd with a small amount settling on the ground. 2 days later on the 24th January, most of this snow had melted and temperatures returned to above zero and the decision was made to close SWEP – after 3 nights of operation - on the morning of the 25th January.

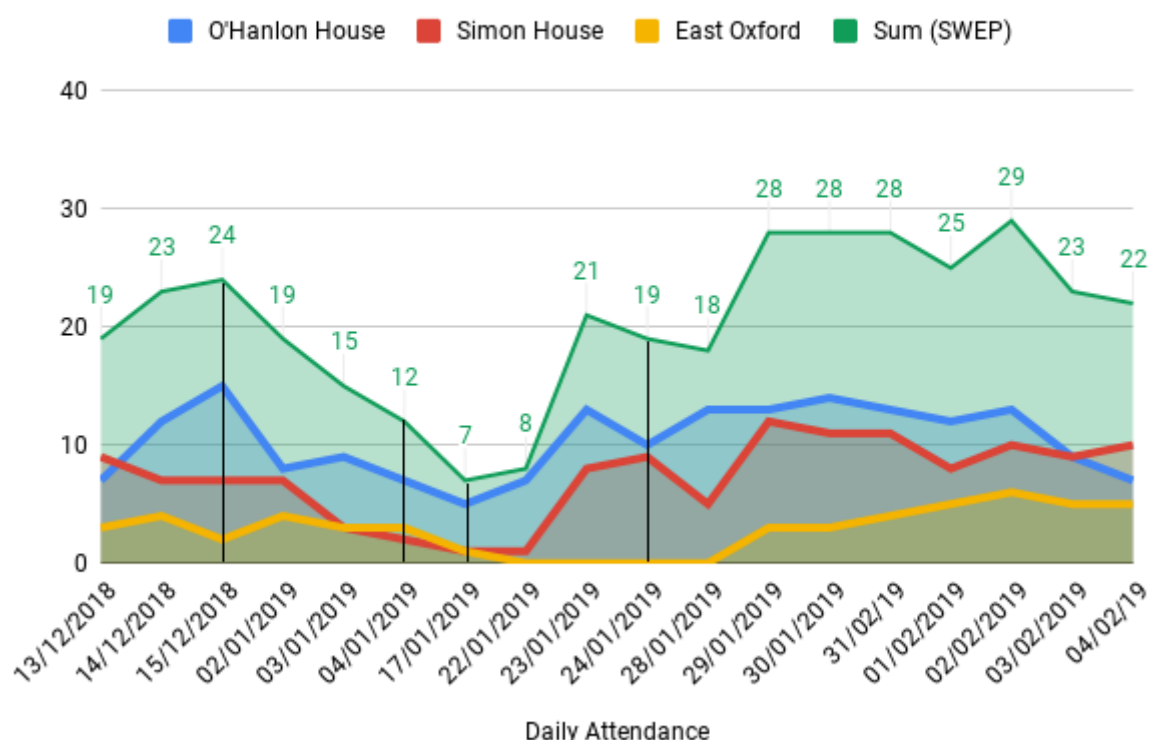
Number of people accommodated

13. During the five periods of opening so far this winter, SWEP has provided a total of 368 stays for 94 individuals with the maximum intake on a single night (2nd February) being 29 people. This is notably lower than the maximum intake of 41 people on a single night during winter 2017/18. Graphs comparing 2017-18 and 2018-19 SWEP attendance by temperature and by calendar month are shown at Appendix A.

14. The vast majority of people who have used SWEP this winter have been accommodated at O’Hanlon House and Simon House. Most SWEP users used the service on more than one occasion during periods of opening, with the average amount of stays being 4 per person and the average amount of people accommodated on a SWEP night being 20. Again, this is notably lower than the average intake of 24 people on a single night during winter 2017/18.

15. The table below summarises the intake to SWEP at individual venues and in total by night of operation over the winter 2018/19.

SWEP Attendance



16. In common with previous years, a significant proportion of SWEP users (40/94, 43%) were people who were not previously known to services. This is an important factor for the management of SWEP as people whose needs have yet to be assessed must be accommodated at the most secure venues [O'Hanlon House, Simon House].

17. Similarly, SWEP was well used by people without a known local connection to Oxfordshire (74/94, 79%) and by those without recourse to public funds (20/94, 21%). 16 of the 94 (17%) unique visitors to SWEP were women.

Availability of bed spaces in the Adult Homeless Pathway

18. During the periods when SWEP has been open this winter a total of 214 bed spaces have been commissioned in the Oxford Adult Homeless Pathway.

19. Officers work closely with accommodation providers year round to maximise bed occupancy. However, there are several reasons why from time to time a bed / room may be briefly unoccupied (void) including the need for maintenance, the temporary absence of the resident (for example due to arrest or hospital admission), and because the bed / room has been allocated to a person who has not yet arrived.

20. During the five periods of SWEP opening this winter:

- 13th to 15th December – all beds / rooms were occupied with the exception of 3 units which were awaiting the imminent arrival of the allocated occupants
- 2nd to 4th January - all beds / rooms were occupied with the exception of 8 units. Of these, 5 units were unoccupied because clients whose needs were appropriate for the service type / level had yet to be identified and 3 units where maintenance was needed before the bed / room could be re-allocated.
- 17th January – all beds/ rooms were occupied with the exception of 11 units. Of these, 7 were awaiting assessment for clients, 3 were beds which required maintenance before being free for allocation and 1 bed was waiting for a client to move in.
- 22nd of January – all beds/ rooms were occupied with the exception of 10 units – 3 were awaiting assessment of clients referred, 3 were awaiting clients to move in and 4 were maintenance voids.
- 28th of January all beds/ rooms were occupied with the exception of 5 units - 4 were awaiting assessment of clients referred and 1 was a maintenance void.

Exclusions from SWEP

21. SWEP aims to provide additional accommodation for all those who need it during extreme, adverse weather conditions. Unfortunately, during the first two periods of SWEP operation a total of 12 separate individuals were excluded from the service on one or more occasions.
22. This was because – based on the information available to them at the time – SWEP accommodation providers considered that due to their behaviour, the individuals concerned posed an unacceptable level of risk to staff, residents and other SWEP users. The identified risks included violence and threats to staff members and other service users.
23. Subsequently, officers met with the providers concerned and agreed an approach which includes personalised accommodation plans for all the high-risk individuals concerned and increased security and safety arrangements at Simon House. This plan was implemented ahead of the 3rd period of SWEP opening (17th January 2019) and ensures that all those who need to can access SWEP.
24. The personalised accommodation plans have ensured that all clients that were previously considered for exclusion could access accommodation. Furthermore, increased security at Simon House has ensured that 3 individuals who were identified as having high risk behaviours have made regular use of SWEP since 17th January, with a total of 25 stays over 11 days' of operation.
25. However, this arrangement has significantly increased the cost of SWEP provision this winter. Consequently, in January the Council submitted a bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Cold Weather Fund, which offers funding towards the cost of providing additional winter services. At the time of

writing officers are still awaiting MHCLG's decision on this bid but are optimistic that a total of £35,000 can be secured towards the cost of SWEP delivery in 2018/19.

Exit survey

26. In order to learn more about individuals' experiences of SWEP and how this might be improved a new service user questionnaire was introduced.
27. At the time of writing, we have received 31 responses from people who have used SWEP during the 5 periods of opening so far this winter. The majority of these have been from people who used the service in East Oxford (25) and at Simon House (6). So far, we have not received any responses from O'Hanlon House.
28. A brief summary of the feedback received is provided at Appendix B with key findings as follows:
- People who used the SWEP service were generally positive about their experience, rated the helpfulness of staff highly¹ and indicating that they would use the service again
 - People indicated that they heard about the service from a range of difference sources with the most common being day services (10) and outreach workers (10). Word of mouth (5), previous use of SWEP (5), and alerts via Oxford City Council's Website (3) and by text alert (1) were also mentioned
 - Suggestions for how to improve the SWEP service included not having to repeat registration details for every attendance (2), providing hot food (2), open SWEP for longer (details not specified) (2) and using alcohol tests for those coming in (1).

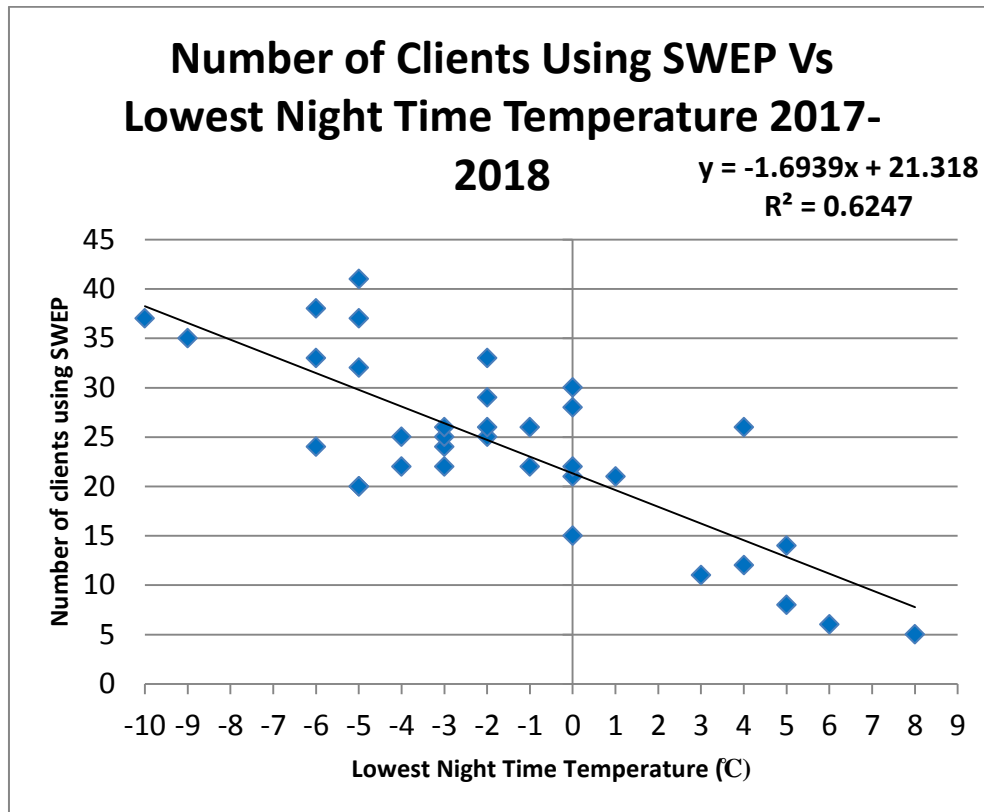
Conclusions and recommendations

29. Oxford's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol has ensured that additional emergency provision has been available to – and has been well used by – people who would otherwise have slept rough this winter.
30. The service has provided emergency accommodation to 94 individuals and made additional provision for clients identified as having high risk behaviours – ensuring that all those who need to access the service have been able to do so.
31. However, this development – providing personalised accommodation plans and additional security arrangements to ensure safety for all – demonstrates the breadth of need and behaviours that SWEP venue providers need to accommodate and manage, also bearing in mind that a significant proportion of SWEP users (43%) were people who were not previously known to services.
32. Meeting the diverse needs of all those at risk of rough sleeping and those who sleep rough is the essential purpose and challenge for the Adult Homeless Pathway and

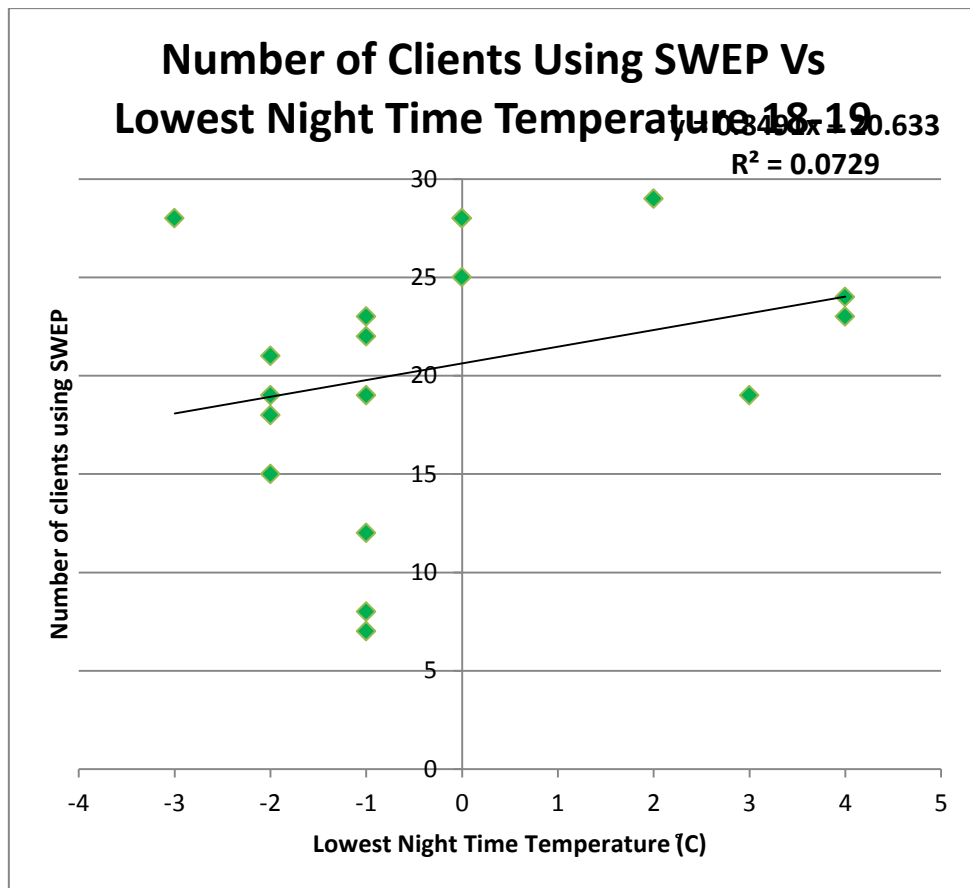
¹ On a scale of 1 ('not very helpful') to 5 ('very helpful')

additional emergency winter provision. Officers will draw on the experiences of and learning from the delivery of SWEP winter 2018/19 in developing plans for the future provision of emergency winter accommodation, including as part of the proposed development of Floyd's Row.

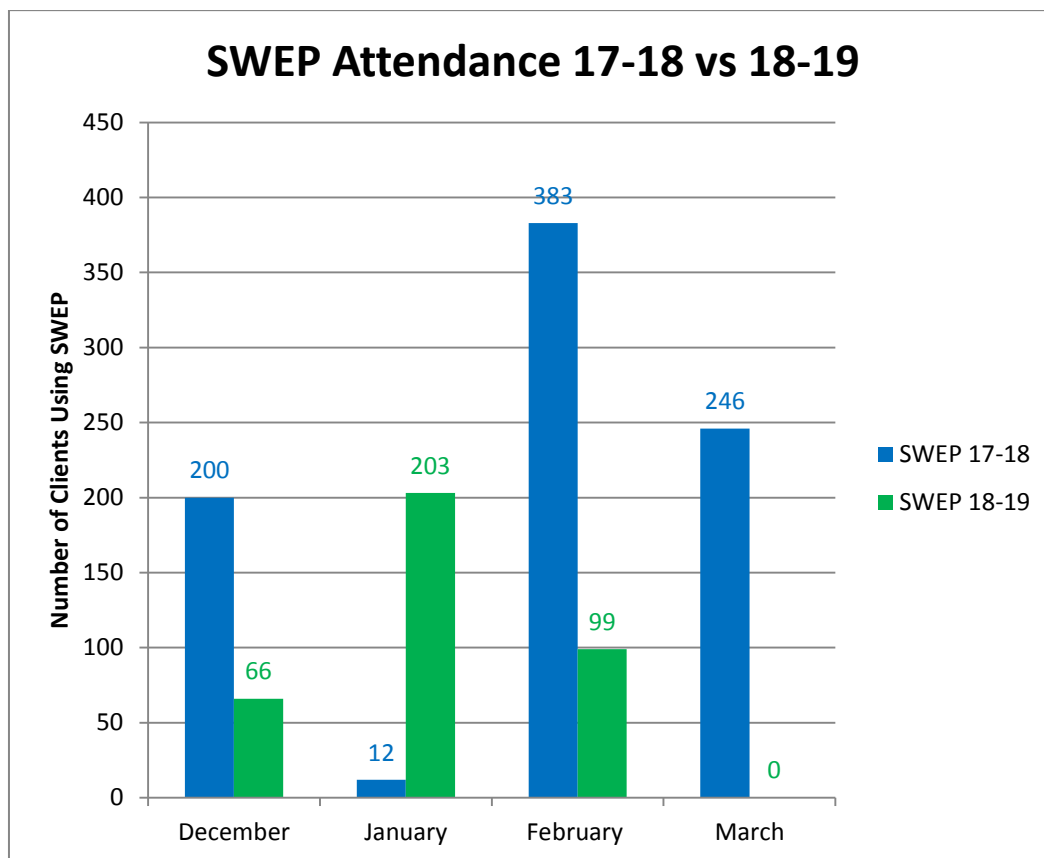
Appendix A: Weather graphs and monthly comparisons between SWEP opening 2017-18 and 2018-19



In 2017-18 temperatures were significantly lower than for winter 2018/19 and this correlated to higher rates of SWEP usage. This was a clear trend as can be seen by the high R^2 value and steep slope of the trend line.



For SWEP 2018/19 there is a very weak correlation between warmer temperatures and more clients attending. Temperatures in 2017-18 were in general much more severe.



This graph compares SWEP usage in 2017/18 and 2018/19. The following dates of opening in 2017/18 and 2018/19 contextualise the graph:

- **Opening periods 2017/18 (8 periods of opening; 35 nights):**

1. 8th-12th December (5 nights)
2. 24th-28th December (5 nights)
3. 31st December – 1st January (2 nights)
4. 4th – 11th January (8 nights)
5. 22nd February to 4th March (11 nights)
6. 22nd -28th February (7 nights)
7. 1st -4th March (4 nights)
8. 16th -20th March (5 nights)

- **Opening periods 18/19: (5 periods of opening; 18 nights)**

1. 13th-15th December; (3 nights)
2. 2nd-4th January; (3 nights)
3. 17th January; (1 night)
4. 22nd -24th January; (3 nights)
5. 28th January -04th February. (8 nights)

Appendix B: SWEP survey results

Summary based on 31 completed survey questionnaires of which 25 were from users of SWEP at the East Oxford venue and 6 people who used the service at Simon House. The SWEP survey was taken anonymously, so no demographics around the responses can be included.

i) Feedback score:

Feedback Score (out of 5)	East Oxford (Average, 25 respondents)	Simon House (Average, 6 respondents)
How was your SWEP experience?	4.8	3.2
Were our staff helpful?	5.0	3.8
Would you come again?	4.9	3.8

ii) How did you hear about SWEP?

	East Oxford	Simon House
Day Services (porch)	6	0
Day Services (unspecified)	3	1
Outreach Worker	10	0
Word of Mouth	3	2
The Hub	2	0
OCC Website	2	1
Used SWEP Before	4	1
Text Alert	0	1

i) Suggestions about how to improve SWEP:

Suggestions about how to improve SWEP:	Number of Respondents
Hot food	2
Alcohol test for guests	1
Not having to fill out personal details on registration every time	2
Separate space for loud snorers	1
Be open for longer!	2

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To: City Executive Board
Date: 10 April 2019
Report of: Acting Head of Planning Services
Title of Report: Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To consider recommending to Council that the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan be "made".
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Lead Member for Planning
Corporate Priority:	None.
Policy Framework:	Strong and Active Communities; Meeting Housing Needs; A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy; A Clean and Green Oxford
Recommendation: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
Recommend to Council that the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan be "made".	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033
Appendix 2	Risk Register

Introduction and background

1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to enable communities to get directly involved in planning for their areas. Neighbourhood planning allows interested communities to come together through a Neighbourhood Forum to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan comes into force as part of the development plan once it has been approved at referendum and it is therefore an important consideration when making decisions on planning applications from that date. The Council has 8 weeks from the date of the referendum to "make" the plan if approved at referendum.

2. Stages to date:

- The Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Area was designated by Oxford City Council on 10th July 2013
- The Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum was then designated on the 22nd January 2014
- The Draft Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 was submitted to the City Council by the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum on 2nd January 2018
- The Submission Stage Consultation (Regulation 16) took place for 6 weeks between Wednesday 30th May to Wednesday 11th July 2018
- The Examination period began on the 30th July 2018 (via written representations)
- Examiners report was received on 29th September 2018. The Examiner was satisfied with the Plan subject to a number of recommended changes to policies in the plan and that the Plan should proceed to referendum.

The Referendum

3. On Thursday 7th March 2019, the referendum on the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan took place. The question asked of residents within the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area was:

Do you want Oxford City Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Summertown and St. Margaret's to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

Results were announced late on Thursday 7th March 2019 and were as follows:
Yes: 93% No: 7% (Turnout: 18%)

The City Council's responsibility following the referendum

4. As more than half of those voting in the referendum voted in favour of the Plan the Council has a duty to 'make' the plan. This is a legislative requirement (*Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s38A (4a)(as amended)*).
5. The City Council would not be under a duty to 'make' the Plan if they consider that the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) (*Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s38A(6)*). This is not considered to be the case and therefore the City Council has a duty to 'make' the Plan.
6. Officers are pleased that the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been supported by the community and recognise the hard work undergone by the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum to get to this position.

Environmental Impact

7. A combined Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement was submitted as part of the supporting evidence to the examination. The conclusions of this statement considered that the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is currently judged by Natural

England to be in a favourable condition. The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has concluded that none of the policies within the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC either 'alone or in combination' with other plans, projects or programmes.

8. The City Council have undertaken a review of the screening work in the context of the Court of Justice of the European Union judgement (People Over Wind, Peter Sweetman and Coillte Teoranta, April 2018), which has changed the basis for undertaking habitats regulations assessments. This review concluded that the recent Court of Justice judgement does not affect the integrity of its earlier screening work and that the HRA has been undertaken on the precautionary principle basis. It concludes that the HRA (October 2017) remains appropriate and no changes are considered necessary in the light of the 'People Over Wind' judgement.

Financial Implications

9. The Community Infrastructure Regulations (CIL) (Regulation 59) requires the charging authority, Oxford City Council, to spend 15% of CIL receipts (known as the Neighbourhood Portion) within the area where the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was generated.
10. Once the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' the neighbourhood portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy receipts generated locally that can be retained and spent locally increases from 15% to 25%. The charging authority retains the Neighbourhood Portion but is required to engage with the Neighbourhood Forum, where development has taken place on how the Neighbourhood Portion will be spent. The use of the Neighbourhood Portion should be informed by the priorities expressed by the Neighbourhood Forum, including the priorities set out formally in the 'made' Neighbourhood Plan.
11. The Neighbourhood Portion of the levy can be spent on a wider range of things than the rest of the levy, provided that it meets the requirement to '*support the development of the area*'. This can include the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

Legal Issues

12. Under Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) the City Council has a statutory duty to support the neighbourhood planning process. Timely decision taking is important particularly at the start and at the end of the process and certain decisions must be taken within prescribed time periods. These are set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Importantly, Councils must now "make" a neighbourhood plan within 8 weeks of a "yes" vote at Referendum.
13. A neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the development plan for the area concerned following its approval at referendum.

Level of risk

14. The Risk Register is attached at Appendix 2.

Equalities Impact

15. Consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty imposed by s149 of the Equalities Act 2010. Having paid due regard to the need to meet the objectives of that duty the view is taken that the duty is met.

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SUMMERTOWN & ST MARGARET'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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1. Introduction to the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan

Welcome to our draft Neighbourhood Plan. Our two wards of St Margaret's and Summertown are a great place to live, work, and play. We want to make sure they stay that way and, over time, get better for young and old, parents and children, workers and residents alike. Having a Neighbourhood Plan can help us do that. We need a plan because there are a number of important pressures on the area which need to be shaped and controlled. One is that we live in an area whose main industry is education. This comes in all shapes and sizes but consumes large areas of land and is expanding, buying up potential residential land, and forcing up prices in an already high-cost area.

There are other reasons why Oxford leads the country in the relative price of property; they include its proximity to London and the good transport links. This leads to homes that are unaffordable for our teachers, nurses, and other key workers. Children of residents can rarely afford to stay here, and the emphasis on large new homes has meant that downsizing is a problem for elderly residents.

At the heart of the area is a vibrant and successful district centre (Summertown) which is well used and busy. We want to make sure it provides for local people's needs and still has a place for essential amenities and services. This means that it must offer the right amount of parking space.

Our area is divided by two major radial routes into Oxford whose increasing traffic flows bring congestion, pollution, and risks to the health of the area. We must find ways of managing the demand for movement – and the Northern Gateway will add considerably to these pressures – in ways which do not destroy what we have.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be negotiated with Oxford City Council, and some of its recommendations may not be possible. Once the Plan is approved, though, every planning application will have to take account of it, and it has legal force. The job of the Neighbourhood Forum will then be to monitor developments and act as a champion for the Plan and the needs of the area.

We are grateful to the many members of the Neighbourhood Forum and the wider community for their supportive and critical comments.

Yours sincerely

Sam Clarke

Chairman of the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum

2. Localism and Neighbourhood Planning

The option of creating Neighbourhood Plans was provided by the Localism Act (2011). They are used to decide the future of the places where people live and work, giving opportunities to:

- identify where people want new homes, shops, and offices to be built;
- have a say on what new buildings should look like; and
- grant planning permission for the new buildings that residents want to see go ahead.

Neighbourhood Plans allow local people to get the right type of development for their community, but the plans must still meet the needs of the wider area. This means that Neighbourhood Plans have to take into account the local council's assessment of housing and other development needs in the area.

However, neighbourhood planning goes beyond traditional 'land-use' planning activity, which tends to focus on regulation and management of development. Neighbourhood planning allows greater scope for plan makers, acting with the community, relevant agencies, and service providers to promote and manage change in an area.

As with all plan-making, the project requires leadership. Where there are neither Town or Parish Councils in an area, the Localism Act (2011) has given that leadership role to Neighbourhood Forums. Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in their areas. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should constitute the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

This carries significant responsibility in terms of producing a plan that is representative of the community. The way in which the process is led and implemented will need to secure confidence from the community in the Summertown and St Margaret's area and from those organisations and businesses that serve our needs. Confidence in the process and support for the outcomes will be more certain by starting this process in a demonstrably transparent way and continuing in that way through all stages of plan preparation. We have tried to do this by:

- showing a willingness to openly encourage opinions and suggestions from all individuals and organisations within the community, whether or not these present potentially conflicting, challenging, or critical views of the Plan or the process;
- presenting a reasonable, realistic, evidence-based, and cogently argued case to support the Plan at each stage of its preparation;

- making every effort to understand all views expressed by all individuals and groups and respond clearly on all matters raised in a timely manner; and
- demonstrating, in a form that is readily accessible and easily understood by the whole community, how the Plan reflects the views and opinions expressed during each stage of engagement and, where those views cannot legitimately be taken into account, explaining why that is the case.

3. Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum

The Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum came into existence following the Localism Act of 2011. It was initially a response to the likelihood of a major development on the Ewert House/Diamond Place area to the east of the Summertown shops.

The Forum was founded in 2011, submitted an application for designation to the City Council in 2012, and was designated in early 2014. The agreed areas covered are the electoral wards of St Margaret's and Summertown.



The Forum consists of a range of residents representing a wide cross-section of the community in the wards of Summertown and St Margaret's.

It had a simple constitution which was rewritten and approved at the 2015 AGM. The aim of the Forum is to improve the social, environmental, and economic well-being of the area.

It has two main purposes:

- 1) to provide a meeting place where issues of major significance to the neighbourhood can be discussed;
- 2) to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan which, when approved by a referendum, will establish principles for the future of the neighbourhood which developers and planners will need to respect.

4. The Neighbourhood Plan 2018–2033

The process which Neighbourhood Plans need to follow is set down in statute by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012). These regulations specify a series of consultations and tests to ensure the validity and conformity of the Neighbourhood Plan. The process that Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum (SSTMNF) has followed in developing the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan (SSTMNP) is set out in Appendix 5.

SSTMNF also has a duty to consult any statutory body whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan.

The Plan must also be in 'General Conformity' with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Oxford City Council Local Plan strategic planning policies. It is a spatial plan which has planning policies which affect how planning applications are determined, and community policies and projects which aim to help the community in Summertown and St Margaret's to deliver the desired changes.

It should be noted that this Plan should be read as a whole in relation to development proposals. This Plan does not provide a 'pick-and-mix' approach to development, but sets down a coherent framework of policies which, taken as a whole, seeks to deliver the Vision and Objectives of SSTMNF.

A final Plan must be approved by a Referendum, and, once this has taken place, the Plan will run for a further 15 years until 2033, unless further updated.

5. Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) comprises two wards. They are quite distinct but are connected by a vigorous district centre, which is known as Summertown. They are essentially residential in character and bounded by green spaces. Property prices are very high, and the predominant business is connected with education. A major development – the Northern Gateway – is soon to commence on the northern boundary and is likely to increase pressure on the area.

The area is described both by Health England and Oxford City Council, whose research is published on the Forum website based on census (2011) data. There are 4,800 households, with a total of 12,700 residents in the two wards. The population grew by 8 per cent in the ten years between censuses. The 18–24 age group showed a significant decline in that

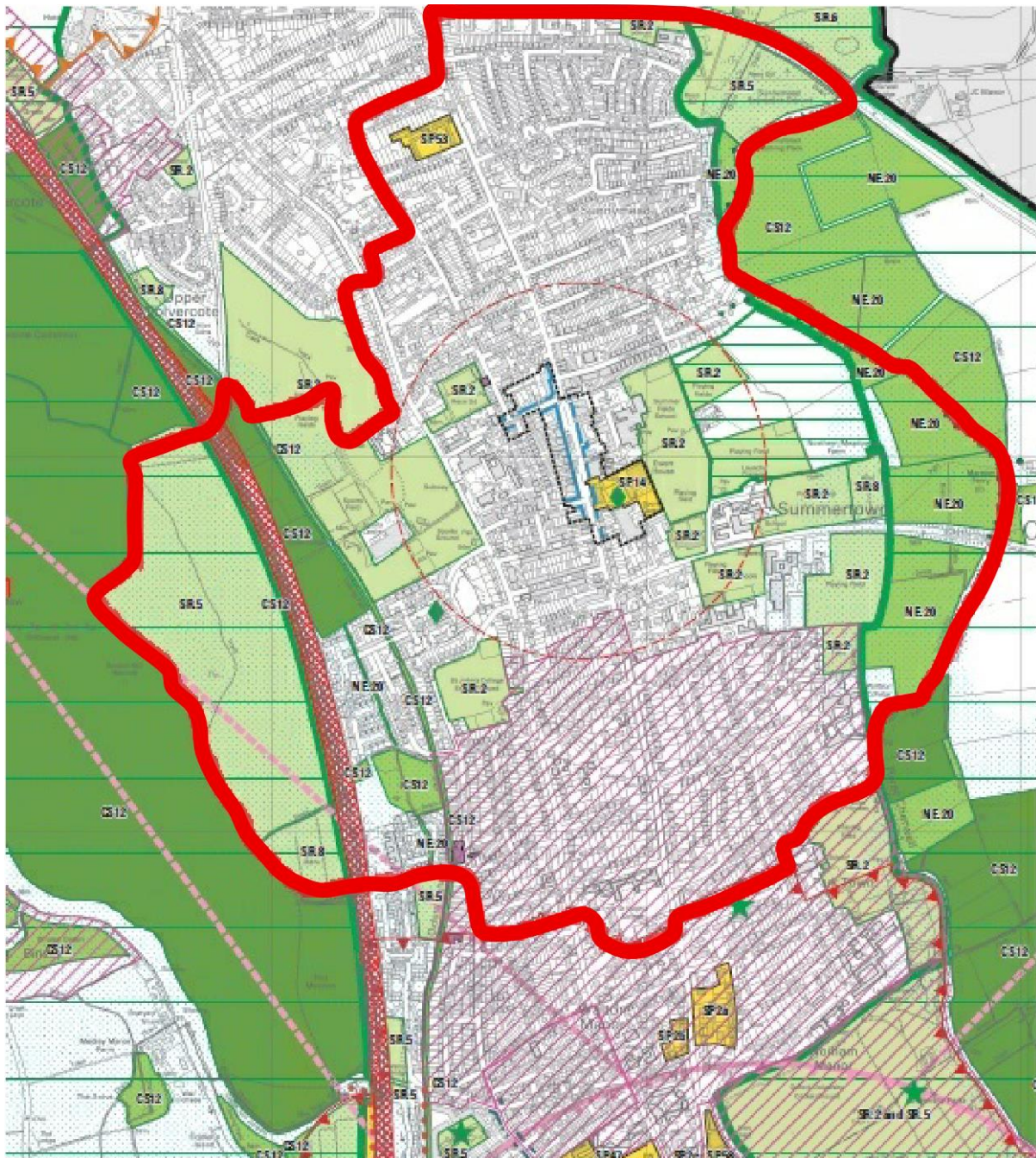
period. Fourteen per cent of the population is over 65 years of age, which is the highest proportion in the whole of Oxford. Eleven per cent of the population is in the 18–24 age group, which is almost half the rate in the rest of Oxford. Sixty-five per cent are white British, according to the census. Sixty-four per cent have a higher-education qualification, compared with 43 per cent for Oxford as a whole.

Fifty-six per cent of homes are owner-occupied; 10 per cent are social rented and 29 per cent are privately rented, the rest being rent free. There is a significant amount of under-occupancy compared with the rest of Oxford: in other words, a small number of people with a larger number of available bedrooms.

The centre of the area is the district centre of Summertown. The area is bisected by two main roads leading into the city centre and generating significant flows of traffic though the area.

Geographically, the area is bounded by green fields both to the east and the west, and much of it is flood plain.

The designated NPA is shown in the map in Appendix 1.



6. The Process of Neighbourhood Planning – Consulting Local Residents and Stakeholders

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should constitute the Neighbourhood Forum for the neighbourhood area.

SSTMNF was designated by Oxford City Council in January 2014. Following this, it was agreed that there was a need to create a Neighbourhood Plan. The first step of developing this Plan involved the identification of five working groups (1: Housing; 2: Health and Community; 3: Transport; 4: Environment, and 5: Retail and Business), in order to take forward the main issues in the Plan. An Issues Questionnaire was published in March 2015 to invite residents to identify the issues that were most important to them.

Using the results of this consultation, and evidence from local data sources, the groups have identified their own priorities and have consulted on them in public. They have formed outline policies which might appear in a plan. In March 2016 a leaflet was sent to every house in the area, inviting comments on proposed policies.

Following the results of this consultation, this draft Plan has been created. There will then be a formal consultation on the Plan and it will be amended as a result. Ongoing consultations with Oxford City Council will help to inform the relationship between SSTMNP and the Oxford Local Plan.

Once all of this has taken place, a Final Plan will go to a planning inspector. When approved, it will then be ready for a referendum of all residents. It requires a simple majority and there is no minimum number of voters needed. This process is set out in Appendix 5.

7. How the Forum is Organised

The Forum elects a Steering Committee with 6–10 members; members serve for a three-year term, which can be renewed. The Steering Committee elects a chair, treasurer, and convenors of five working groups (as described above). These deal with environment, health and community, housing, transport, and retail and business issues. It is the practice of the Forum to organise public meetings several times a year, including an AGM.

The Forum communicates through its website, aided by Facebook and Twitter accounts. It also has a mailing list of some 300, whose members receive regular updates.

Once the Plan is complete, the objective of the Forum will be to monitor and defend it, and to be a place where local people can discuss their needs.

The Steering Committee oversees and guides the five working groups identified in Section 6. These working groups have developed policies and project ideas from the results of consultations, and the gathering of evidence. The relationship between the five policy working groups, the Steering Committee, and the Forum is set out in Appendix 6.

8. Summertown St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan: Vision and Objectives

Our vision for the neighbourhood is to create an area which mixes commercial, retail, residential, and leisure uses, which is accessible to a wider range of residents, and remains attractive to residents and visitors alike. We envisage future development which echoes the character of the area and introduces challenging design, fit for the coming decades.

Our vision includes the maintenance of the highly successful retail and business centre with all that that involves, especially its diverse shops and accessibility to cyclists and pedestrians. Small units would be favoured, and conversion away from retail discouraged.

Being divided by two major arterial roads running into Oxford, our neighbourhood is directly affected by traffic flows, congestion, and pollution. Our vision is one of reduced traffic, of cleaner environments for pedestrians, and a major emphasis on sustainable transport provision.

The housing in the area, whether owned or rented, is among the most expensive in the country in relation to earnings. We have a vision of a more mixed provision, with particular emphasis on smaller units, provision for key workers and older people who may otherwise have to commute or leave the area, and increased choice for those currently squeezed out of the area.

The residents value the green space which surrounds them and wish to see more green spaces and better access to existing spaces. Our vision includes this and seeks to ensure that all development in the area adheres to the highest environmental standards.

Within the area there are a significant number of community facilities. These are highly prized by residents. Our vision is that these be retained and developed.

Our objectives are therefore to:

- Identify and create a template for local developments in harmony with the assessment of the character of each sub area.
- Maintain the variety, vibrancy, and accessibility of the retail centre in Summertown.
- Manage the traffic, congestion, and pollution from traffic and enhance sustainable modes of transport.
- Improve the availability of affordable housing in the area and maintain or increase stock.

- Retain green space and enhance the environmental footprint.
- Retain and develop community and leisure facilities.

Summertown St Margaret's (SSM) Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will take place through the implementation of a range of policies. The policies that the Forum has developed have been labelled according to the relevant Policy Area (e.g. EN for Environment, HC for Health and Community, etc.). Those policies that relate to the control of development (Spatial Planning Policies) have also been labelled as 'S' (e.g. HCS is a Health and Community Spatial Planning Policy). Those policies which relate to the delivery of projects or plans within the Forum Area (Community Policies) have been labelled as 'C' (e.g. ENC is an Environment Community Policy).

The Spatial Planning Policies, if approved by the referendum, will become part of the Statutory Local Planning documents which determine planning applications in the Forum Area. They will become part of the development plan. These policies have a specific impact on proposed planning applications, and can be implemented directly through the planning system. In this Plan the spatial policies are shown with light tonal grey shading to distinguish them from the community policies.

The Community Policies cannot be delivered through development (i.e. when planning applications are made) and therefore will need to be delivered directly by the Forum, or by working with partners/stakeholders. The Forum will seek to deliver these through working with external organisations, or accessing funding.

9. Health and Community Policies

The Neighbourhood Forum area contains three community centres (North Oxford Community Centre, St Margaret's Institute, and Cutteslowe Community Centre). These are in constant use, have large memberships, and enjoy wide support. There is a public library which has been rescued by the community after the injection of local financial support. In addition there is the Ferry Leisure Centre, widely used, with valued swimming and fitness facilities.

There are a number of well-used church halls, including those of St Michael's, the Baptist church, and Summertown United Reformed Church.

In addition there is a private health centre (Nuffield Health) in the grounds of St Edward's School, and the North Wall Arts Centre.

Policy HCS1 provides a mechanism to safeguard these important community facilities. It supports their improvement and/or their replacement. It also identifies opportunities that may exist for their replacement as part of wider development proposals.'

Spatial Policies

Policy HCS1 Community Facilities

The community facilities listed below will be safeguarded and proposals for their improvement will be supported:

- North Oxford Association Community Centre, Diamond Place, OX2 7DP
- St Margaret's institute, 30 Polstead Road OX2 6TN
- Cutteslowe Community Centre, 31 Wren Road OX2 7SX
- Summertown Public Library, South Parade, Summertown OX2 7JN
- Ferry Leisure Centre, Diamond Place, Oxford OX2 7DP
- St Michael's Church Hall, Portland Road OX2 7EZ
- Baptist Church Hall, 198 Woodstock Road OX2 7NQ
- Summertown United Reformed Church Hall, 294A Banbury Road OX2 7HN
- Nuffield Health Club (formerly Esporta), 269C Woodstock Road OX2 7NZ
- North Wall Arts Centre, South Parade OX2 7JN.

Where the loss of a community facility is unavoidable as a result of development, a replacement of that facility (the same size or larger, and with the same or improved facilities) should be provided as near to the facility as possible, or at a location equally or more accessible to Plan Area residents by walking, cycling, and public transport. Replacement facilities that would result in an overall improvement on the existing facility in terms of size, amenity, or enhancement to the Plan Area will be supported.

Allotments

Allotments are a valuable resource for fresh air, activity, and home-grown food. The Neighbourhood Forum Area contains two allotment sites on land owned by Oxford City Council. These are at Marston Ferry Road (51 plots) to the east, and Trap Grounds (>120 plots) to the west. According to their committees, both sites are full and there are often waiting lists for new allotment holders.

Consultation with the community has shown overwhelming support for retaining and supporting these allotments.

Policy HCS2 Allotments

All existing allotments in the Neighbourhood Area will be protected, and opportunities for enhancement will be supported.

Development proposals that safeguard and/or provide opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of allotments will be supported.

Development will not be supported where it results in the loss of allotments.

Community Facilities

There are a number of valued community facilities in the NPA. In the event of large scale development taking place in (eg Diamond Place) of over 10 units, there is a reasonable expectation that those facilities will be replaced with new facilities of a similar or better utility to the community. Policy HCS3 does not apply to sports and leisure sites that are allocated for other developments in the development plan. The Summer Fields School site is an obvious example.

Policy HCS3: Protecting and Enhancing Sports, Leisure, and Community Facilities

Existing sports and leisure facilities will be safeguarded from other development. Proposals for other development will not be supported'. Opportunities for the improvement of existing facilities will be supported'.

Where the loss of a facility and any attendant green space is unavoidable as a result of development, a replacement of that facility (the same size or larger, and with the same or improved facilities) should be provided as near to the facility as possible, or at a location equally or more accessible to Plan Area residents by walking, cycling, and public transport.

In the event that the provision of a replacement facility is neither practical nor viable', a financial contribution should be provided to secure an alternative facility and/or the improvement of an existing facility'.

Replacement facilities that would result in an overall improvement on the existing facility in terms of size, amenity, or enhancement to the Plan Area will be supported.

Community Policies

Health Centre

There are currently two GP practices (Summertown Health Centre and Banbury Road Medical Centre), both situated in old residential properties, where the facilities are totally inadequate in terms of space and ease of access. Neither of them meets the minimum standards for Primary Care premises. Consultation shows that there is strong support, from both the public and the health practitioners, to operate these two practices on one site, which should be at the centre of the Neighbourhood Area, and accessible by people of all ages, particularly those who are disabled and/or have mobility problems.

Proposed residential developments in North Oxford at Diamond Place, Wolvercote Paper Mill, and Northern Gateway will add to the pressure on health services in the area, and this is a further reason for creating a new centre with a range of ancillary services.

Details of the plan for a health centre and correspondence supporting it are included in the related Consultation Statement.

Policy HCC1 Health Centre
The Forum will work with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and other relevant partners to secure the development of a new health centre at Diamond Place, Summertown to provide a range of primary care and associated health services for the local community. The proposed new Health Centre should have dedicated short-stay car-parking spaces for peripatetic medical staff and for patients needing urgent consultations (equal to the number of parking spaces at their present health centres).

Alexandra Park

Alexandra Park, in the heart of the area, is dominated by tennis courts and by car parking on the southern edge. It has a utilitarian feel to it: it has no paths and few flower beds, shrubs or trees: there are no benches where people can sit and relax; it is a park only in name. It is clear from consultations carried out by the City Council that local residents would value the area more if it was made generally more user-friendly.

The tennis courts are an important and valued facility: the six grass courts are the only public grass courts in the city. It is important that the Council, the community, and the local tennis club do all they can to encourage their use, especially during weekdays. However, the overall area allocated to tennis restricts the space available for other play activities. The same is true of the car-parking area at the south end of the Park; during the week many of the spaces are used by Summertown shoppers.

The area could be redesigned with facilities especially provided for children and young people, attractively landscaped in a park setting. A link could be made to the Turrill Sculpture Garden and the Library complex to the south. The area could be redeveloped with the addition of a café to serve both the library and the park.

Policy HCC2 Alexandra Park

The Forum will work with the Oxford City Council and other relevant partners to secure the redevelopment of Alexandra Park as a park and with a specific focus to serve young people and children in the local community. 12 tennis courts (6 hard and 6 grass) should be retained, and the Council and the community should do all they can to encourage increased take-up of the facility. Six car parking spaces should be retained, and the remaining area grassed over and incorporated in the Park.

Promoting Healthy Living and Community Cohesion

Policy HCC3 Promoting Healthy Living and Community Cohesion

A set of projects to promote healthy living and community cohesion within the NPA will be identified and implemented after wider consultation to determine residents' wishes and priorities.



Examples of projects are included in the table below.

Project Title	Description
Promoting Community Facilities	Produce a booklet (in collaboration with Age UK Oxfordshire) outlining community facilities available in area.
Cuttesslowe Children's and Community Centre	Provide support for children and community services in Cuttesslowe.
Volunteering	Develop initiatives to develop a stronger (and younger) volunteer base for community centres.
Energy Efficiency	Produce information for residents on how best to increase domestic energy efficiency.
Building Design	Produce information for residents on how to improve the character of the area when building or extending their properties.

10. Business and Retail Policies

Spatial Policies

Short-stay Car Parking in Summertown District Centre

The vibrancy of Summertown as a District Centre depends on the availability of nearby short-stay car parking for shoppers and business clients. The current provision of short-stay car parking should be maintained and may need to be increased slightly for the proposed new development, including the Health Centre, in Diamond Place. Planning applicants within the district centre will be required to identify precise parking requirements and to demonstrate how they meet this policy.

Both the Oxford Transport Strategy and the Local Transport Plan 4 have proposals for sustainable travel. Particular schemes may be developed for the Summertown District Centre during the Plan period. They would be considered on their merits insofar as planning permission was required. In doing so Oxford City Council will come to its own judgement on any impact on the number of short stay car parking facilities serving the District Centre against the benefits of the sustainable travel facilities being promoted.

Provision of cycle parking in Summertown, both short-stay for shopping and businesses and long-stay for commuters, is insufficient. To encourage cycling as an alternative to car use, there needs to be a significant increase in the number of cycle racks (see TRC6).

Long-Stay car Parking

Car parking for commuters in Summertown St. Margaret's should be discouraged, as it adds to traffic congestion in rush hours.

Policy RBS1 Parking in Summertown District Centre

Any developments within the District Centre should maintain the existing amount of publicly available short-stay visitor vehicle parking for shops and other businesses. Development proposals which would result in the loss of existing short stay vehicle parking will not be supported.

Development proposals which include provision for work space or commuter parking will not be supported.

Developments which result in an increase in bicycle parking will be supported.

Community Policies

Summertown District Centre

Summertown is one of Oxford's more successful retail centres designated as a district centre. It comprises shops along the Banbury Road and more along South Parade. It has done well since 2008, and there are few vacancies, despite high rents. Along the west side shops are set in individual houses and served by a service road with parking; along the east side by larger blocks set well back from the road.

Our consultation shows a degree of frustration about what is and is not available in Summertown. Residents are unhappy with the proliferation of estate agents and coffee shops in particular. The character of the area is important to residents and is described in the character assessment of the shopping area (see Appendix 4). In particular this highlights the small units on South Parade and the west side of the Banbury Road. On the east side the building line and tree cover are much appreciated. All these features should be preserved.

As a result the community would like to see small retail units maintained on the west side, and residential or commercial use being limited to upper floors.

Similarly the community wishes to discourage ground-floor units becoming converted into offices or homes (use classes B or C), or student accommodation, within the district centre. From its first days the Forum has been worried about the addition of further supermarkets and wishes to discourage more being developed.

To maintain the balance of retail within the centre, the current Oxford City Council Local Plan has prescribed a proportion of retail. This has been undermined by more recent changes in legislation which allow change of use under permitted development rules. The

current amount of class A1 use (shops) is 57.8 per cent, with A2 (banks, estate agencies, etc.) being 22.9 per cent. Total A class use is 94 per cent. The plan proposes to make amendments to this proportion within the current Local Plan.

Policy RBC1 Summertown District Centre

The community wishes to encourage a thriving district centre with a wide variety of small units and ease of access to cyclists and pedestrians. Cycle parking in the district centre should be extended.

Acknowledging the complexity of planning for a thriving centre, the Forum wishes to work actively with the Planners to create a centre which has an optimal mix of outlets which

- **limit the amount of supermarket space;**
- **limit the number of banks and estate agents (class A2);**
- **maximise the number of independent and small-scale retailers;**
- **retain the ground-floor level for retail as opposed to domestic or commercial uses.**

11. Transport Policies

Spatial Policies

Sustainable Travel and Transport

The Forum Area is fortunate to have good road connections. There are two main north/south A-roads, with residential roads at right angles to them.

However, the quality of life in the Forum Area is significantly adversely affected by the sheer volume of traffic that passes through the neighbourhood at peak times. Traffic jams cause frustration and wasted time, atmospheric and noise pollution, and serious economic effects. Most of the traffic is passing through and does not need to be in the Forum Area.

The main roads through the area are very congested at peak times, with tail-backs on Woodstock, Banbury, Moreton, and Marston Ferry roads. It is predicted that traffic in SSTM will grow significantly in the next few years (NOTS and LTP4¹) unless measures such as congestion charging or work-place parking levies are introduced to reduce the volume of traffic. Work recently completed on the Woodstock Road roundabout and Cutteslowe roundabout seems to have improved traffic flow, but it is too early to know for sure whether

¹ Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4, Oxfordshire County Council.

this so and whether there will be any effect on congestion in SSTM. East/west flows between Woodstock and Banbury Road are dependent on minor residential roads. Most of the east/west traffic is directed down Moreton Road, a relatively narrow B-road. Traffic flow through the area needs redesigning.

Therefore, a set of policies has been developed by SSTMNF to reduce the impact of traffic in the SSTMNP Area, and to improve traffic flow on SSTM's main roads. Given the demography of the SSTMNP Area, the mobility and access needs of disabled and elderly people should be considered at all times.

Policy TRS1 captures these important matters. At the time of the publication of the Plan the Manual for Streets 2 (Department of Transport September 2010) represents a good model for the application of the principles in the first part of the policy. Plainly other models may supersede this approach within the Plan period.

A Transport Assessment and / or Travel Plan is required in appropriate cases as set out under the Local Plan Parking Standards, Transport Assessment and Travel Plans SPD.

Policy TRS1 Sustainable Transport Design

All new development proposals should be designed to ensure that priority is given to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, children, residents, and that disabled people are put before those of the car and other vehicles. In particular new development proposals should as appropriate:

- i. Ensure that the design and details of highways works which are required for new development proposals are appropriate in scale to the development and contribute to the conservation and/or enhancement of the area.**
- ii. All new residential developments should have secure, covered cycle parking with one space per bedroom.**
- iii. Favourable consideration should be given to 'Click and Collect' collection points.**

Policy TRS2 Sustainable Transport

All new development proposals should:

- i. Show how their proposal would encourage safe and sustainable modes of transport, including through infrastructure such as footpaths and cycle paths, pavements, cycle parking and storage, and electric charge points**
- ii. Where required, develop a Travel Plan to encourage sustainable transport and the provision of car-club and car-sharing facilities as appropriate to the scale of the development and**

- iii. **Where required, prepare a Transport Assessment linked to an air-quality assessment to ensure that the proposal delivers sustainable travel outcomes.**



Community Policies

Road Improvements

Road improvements should aim to improve the flow of traffic, reduce traffic congestion, and improve road safety. The needs of young persons, elderly people, disabled people, pedestrians, cyclists, and buses should be considered and prioritised over those of cars and other vehicles whenever road works are undertaken.

The traffic lights at the junction of Banbury, Marston Ferry, and Moreton Roads are perceived as dangerous for all road users. The present layout is confusing to motorists and cyclists, and there are no pedestrian crossings on the east and south sides of the junction. The NOTS² study has shown that two mini roundabouts could be accommodated at the junction. This and other possible solutions should be considered.

Policy TRC1 Road Improvements

Road-improvement works will need to consider the following:

The needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and buses should always be given a high priority

² North Oxford Transport Study.

whenever road improvements are being planned.

The Banbury, Marston Ferry, and Moreton Road junction and traffic lights should be reconfigured to improve safety and reduce confusion.

Reduction of Traffic



There is a noticeable difference in traffic flows in and out of term time in the NPA. Most of this is thought to be affected by the 'school run', but some of it will be related to University terms and holidays from work.

In order to reduce traffic in the NPA, the Plan envisages the following:

- i. Schools should be required to provide travel plans.
- ii. Parents should be discouraged from driving their children to school.
- iii. Pupils should be encouraged to cycle and walk to school, or use public transport.
- iv. There should be dedicated safe cycle routes and footpaths to all schools. Schools should provide school

buses.

People are more likely to leave their cars at home if there is efficient public transport, whether by bus, rapid transit, or tramway. The Plan supports the idea of a bus rapid transit system and/or a tramway running through SSTM, linking with city-wide public transport. Traffic passing through SSTM could be reduced by access measures such as congestion charging and preventing traffic entering or passing through the City centre.

Policy TRC2 Reduction of Traffic

Reducing the number of vehicles improves traffic flow and makes it easier to move about. It also reduces the level of atmospheric pollution. The following elements will be promoted through lobbying of the responsible organisations in order to reduce the level of traffic in the SSTMNP Area.

- i. **Encouragement of a mass transit scheme (bus rapid transit and/or a tramway).**
- ii. **Traffic-control measures, such as congestion charging, and bus gates in appropriate locations, to discourage traffic passing through SSTM to the city centre.**
- iii. **Reduction of traffic generated by the 'school run'.**

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| iv. | Promotion of flexi-time work and working from home. |
| v. | Regulations, as stipulated in LTP4, restricting access of HGVs inside the ring road unless strictly necessary and not at peak times, should be strictly enforced. |

Sustainable Active Transport

Sustainable Transport, such as walking, cycling, and using buses, is healthier and usually quicker than using a car in urban areas. It reduces traffic congestion and air pollution.

Sustainable Active Transport (walking, cycling, and other active methods) will be encouraged by improving pavements and crossings, and a comprehensive network of well-engineered cycling and walking routes.

There is currently no comprehensive network of cycling and walking routes throughout SSTM connecting with neighbouring areas, the city centre, Oxford Railway Station, and Oxford Parkway Station. Some of the routes are poorly designed and engineered. A comprehensive network of well-designed and well-engineered cycle routes and footpaths in SSTM is envisaged, linking with other routes in Oxford. Sections of poorly engineered routes which are in need of improvement should be identified and upgraded. The clarity of signage needs to be improved, and roads need to be well maintained and free from potholes.

Whenever possible, pedestrians need to be separated from cyclists, and pedestrians and cyclists from cars and other vehicles. At present this is usually done by painting lines on the pavement or road, but a more permanent marking, such as concrete kerbs set flush with the road surface, is required when cycle paths are re-engineered or when new ones are constructed. The topography of the area means that some dedicated cycle and walking routes will have to be 'shared space'.

Special consideration will be given to places where cyclists routinely cycle on pavements, to see whether this can be overcome by better cycle routes or 'shared space'.

Policy TRC3 Sustainable Active Transport
Sustainable Active Transport will be encouraged, and a comprehensive network of well-engineered cycling and walking routes will be promoted.

The following potential projects to promote sustainable active transport have been identified.

Project	Description
Woodstock Road and Banbury Road cycle routes	Most cyclists opt to go straight up and down either Woodstock Road or Banbury Road when going to and from the city centre. These cycle routes need to be re-engineered to ensure fast and safe routes.
Northern Gateway	The proposed Northern Gateway development will need good footpath and cycle-route access from the Forum Area.
Sustrans Route 51 (City Routes 1 and 1b)	This route is on the eastern side of SSTM. It links the city centre with Cutteslowe, Water Eaton Park and Ride, the new Oxford Parkway Station, and Kidlington, but needs reconsidering and re-engineering to ensure a better link with Oxford Parkway Station.
Sustrans Route 5 (City Routes 6 and 9)	This route runs from Jericho to Woodstock Road roundabout but needs reconsidering and re-engineering to ensure a link with Oxford Parkway Station.
Canal towpath	This route needs resurfacing as far as the ring road.
Diamond Place	The new development will need a Sustainable Active Transport travel plan. East/west routes have not been developed. Cycle paths need to link Diamond Place with Banbury Road, Woodstock Road, and Marston Ferry Road. It is proposed to have a new cycleway and footpath from Diamond Place to Old Marston via a bridge over the River Cherwell at the site of the former ferry by the Victoria Arms.
Bridleway 12	This is an existing but neglected bridleway which runs across Port Meadow from Aristotle Lane footbridge to Godstow Road Jubilee Gate. It could be re-routed along the western edge of Burgess Field, which would make it less susceptible to flooding in winter.
Stone Meadow to Burgess Field	A new cycleway and footpath from Stone Meadow to Burgess Field could be constructed, with a new bridge over the railway.
Marston Road cycle route	This cycle route should link with a new route to the city centre parallel to Cherwell River.

Walking and cycling maps are included in the appendices, highlighting opportunities for improvement.

Bus Service Improvements

Improvements to bus services will be promoted, including the following measures:

- i. Ensure frequent bus services up and down Woodstock Road and Banbury Road.
- ii. Create continuous bus lanes up and down Woodstock and Banbury roads from the city centre to the ring road, to Park and Ride facilities, and to Oxford Parkway Station.
- iii. Wherever possible bus stops should be positioned so that they do not affect traffic flow.

- iv. Bus services should be routed through residential areas relatively remote from Woodstock Road and Banbury Road, e.g. Sunnymead and Waterways.
- v. Ensure that bus routes connect with the rest of the city.
- vi. Encourage businesses to subsidise employees' sustainable-transport costs.
- vii. Tickets should be flexible and reasonably priced to encourage bus travel.

Policy TRC4 Bus Service Improvements

Improvements to bus services will be encouraged.

Road Safety

Lowering the speed of traffic is known to reduce the number and seriousness of road traffic accidents and to make residential areas pleasanter places to live in. Traffic-calming measures such as those in Beechcroft Road are very effective and popular with residents. Similar measures should be offered to residents where appropriate and when the opportunity arises.

The 20 mph limit has reduced the speed of traffic in SSTM, but most drivers break the limit. The speed limit should be introduced and enforced on all roads in the Forum Area.

The creation of shared space has been shown to slow the speed of traffic while maintaining or even increasing the flow. The concept should be used where appropriate in the NPA.

Special attention will be given to accident black spots to see whether road safety can be improved. Oxfordshire County Council monitors road traffic accidents, but there is a perception that not enough is done to improve road safety in the places where accidents occur. Residents will be encouraged to report potential accident black spots to the County Council, so that action can be taken to remove the potential danger.

Policy TRC5 Road Safety

Measures will be promoted to improve traffic flow while reducing traffic volume and improving safety for all road users by means of measures such as:
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. traffic calming; ii. implementing and enforcing a 20 mph speed limit throughout SSTM, including |
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|-------------|---|
| | Banbury Road and Woodstock Road; |
| iii. | creating shared spaces where appropriate in the SSTM Area; |
| iv. | improving areas of identified accident black spots. |

Parking (see also Policy RBC1)

Provision of adequate parking for cars, motorbikes, bicycles, and delivery/service vehicles is essential if Summertown is to continue to be a vibrant commercial area (see RBS1).

Improvement in overall parking could be achieved through the following initiatives:

- i. Controlled Parking Zones**
Controlled Parking Zones are a very effective way of managing car parking in residential streets. Waterways residents will be consulted as to whether they wish to have a CPZ.
- ii. Car-Club Sharing Schemes**
Car-club sharing schemes will be encouraged by the provision of dedicated parking spaces exempt from car-parking charges.
- iii. Work-Place Parking Levy**
Full consideration should be given to introducing a Work-Place Parking Levy.
- iv. Employers' subsidies of employees' public-transport costs**
Support would be given to employers subsidising employees' public-transport costs as an alternative to offering car-parking spaces.
- v. Joint ticketing for Park and Ride**
Support should be given to joint ticketing for parking at the Park and Ride and the bus into town, to make it easier and more economical.

Policy TRC6 Parking throughout the Neighbourhood Area
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<p>The Neighbourhood Forum will work with Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and other relevant partners to ensure that there is adequate visitor parking (see RBS1) for cars, motorbikes, cycles, and delivery/service vehicles at retail sports and leisure facilities in Summertown District Centre; and for the wider area encourage improvements to existing parking facilities by</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. extending CPZs to the whole Neighbourhood Area; ii. providing free dedicated parking for car-club sharing schemes; |
|--|

- iii. considering the introduction of a work-place parking levy;**
- iv. encouraging employers to subsidise employees' public-transport costs;**
- v. extending joint ticketing schemes to the Park and Ride option;**
- vi. installing electric car-charging points in all new homes, car parks and larger new developments.**

12. Housing Policies

The neighbourhood is one of the least affordable in Oxford in terms of house prices and private-sector rents, and is under significant pressure from housing developers who wish to build new housing units which are unaffordable to many who want to live and work in North Oxford. The problems created by the lack of affordable new and existing housing and unwelcome development pressure have been raised repeatedly in Plan consultations.

It is apparent that the current policies of the City Council towards housing development are not alleviating the pressures on the neighbourhood, and there is a need for a new approach. The objective is to seek to contain pressures of lack of affordability and a mis-match of dwelling sizes to ensure that there is a sustainable, balanced mix of new housing to meet the full range of local needs for present and future generations.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that this pressure is managed so that the neighbourhood is a place of mixed housing where people of all ages and incomes have a chance to live. The aim of the Plan is to increase opportunities for genuinely affordable homes; to protect the residential character of the area; and to ensure a mixed and balanced housing stock in the future.

Much of the Neighbourhood Plan Area has become particularly unaffordable for younger people or those on modest incomes, because of the long-term booming housing market in Oxford. The housing aims of the Plan are therefore to:

- Protect the existing housing stock and prevent loss of housing land for other uses.
- Increase housing choice for those who are currently squeezed out of the North Oxford housing market by high rents and house prices.
- Provide opportunities for elderly residents to stay in the Summertown St Margaret's area.
- Protect and enhance the character of the area.

There are relatively few large or medium-sized sites in the area that are available for new-build housing (for example, Diamond Place, Summer Fields School land, Majestic Wine in Summertown), but other sites of this scale may come forward in the plan period. The large holdings of Summer Fields school, linked to those of Wadham and St John's colleges, identified in the Core Strategy, give rise to particular concerns about traffic management and are dealt with in the relevant policies in this plan.

In addition, there are many, and continually occurring, smaller sites becoming available as a result of in-fills, back-land development, and demolitions of existing housing.

To all of these sites, the Plan will apply appropriate Oxford Local Plan policies on affordable housing, key workers' homes, and unit sizes, and as well as Neighbourhood Plan policies on design, density and character.

Spatial Policies

Specialist Housing

There is a demonstrable need for a supply of housing suitable for elderly persons and people with disabilities (at all stages of need), including opportunities for elderly persons who want to down-size. As people grow older, their housing needs often change and homes may become unsuitable, resulting in many single elderly residents living in large family-sized houses that are not appropriate for their needs. Some older people or those with disabilities may have special accommodation needs that are not provided by the existing housing stock.

Solutions could include house sharing or a lodger/elderly care scheme under the auspices of a housing association; or a grant-aided scheme to enable elderly people to adapt their homes to enable home sharing to take place. Permitted development is provided for housing in multiple occupation for up to six people, and this could provide a means for larger houses to be adapted to enable home sharing to take place.

Subdivision of homes may provide equity for necessary adaptations, or enable a family member to provide support through living next door. Where there is no suitable housing within the existing housing stock, or if adaptation/subdivision cannot be achieved, then an identified need for specialist housing may be able to be addressed through new housing.

Specialist housing should be specifically designed to meet the needs of older people, generally those of retirement age, and/or other vulnerable members of the community who require care and assistance and whose needs cannot otherwise be met through the existing housing stock. As such, it will be subject to additional standards and should be located close to shops and other services and amenities in the NPA.

Policy HOS1 Specialist Housing

Specialist housing for elderly residents and/or vulnerable members of the NPA will be supported. In particular:

Subdivision

Proposals for the subdivision of existing residential dwellings will be supported where:

- i. there would be no adverse impact on the character of the area, amenity of neighbouring occupiers, or highway safety; and**
- ii. any necessary alterations will not adversely affect buildings of historic and/or architectural merit.**

New residential proposals

Proposals which address an identified need for specialist housing for older people and/or other vulnerable members of the community who require care and assistance will be supported. A planning obligation will be secured to ensure the occupancy of specialist housing in perpetuity.

Character Assessments

The Character Assessments in Appendix 4 bring together the concerns about the changing environment and community structure of the area – for example, poor and inappropriate design of existing and new buildings; pull-downs followed by expensive new-builds; and loss of front gardens.

Haphazard development of this kind is a threat to the well-proportioned, often tree-lined streets of the NPA. Summertown Ward is particularly affected by this erosion of 'character' because, unlike most of St Margaret's ward which is part of NOVSCA, it has no Conservation Area protection and suffers from some poorly designed housing extensions and modifications, a proliferation of dropped kerbs, and demolition of garden walls.

The Plan introduces design guidelines to limit inappropriate development. The attractive character of Summertown results from its distinctive mixture of Victorian, Edwardian and twentieth century architecture.

Policy HOS2 addresses local character and distinctiveness. It supplements Policy HP9 of the Sites and Housing Local Plan within the neighbourhood area. It does not offer direct guidance on the proposals that would affect heritage assets. This matter is addressed by the NPPF and local planning policies. Policy HOS2 has been prepared to be distinctive to the

neighbourhood area. It will operate as a supplementary policy to Policy HP9 in the Sites and Housing Plan.

Policy HOS2 Local Character and Distinctiveness

Proposed development in the identified Character Areas (as shown in Appendix 4) will be supported where it responds positively to local character and distinctiveness. Proposals should demonstrate that the design and use of development will protect those features identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the area concerned and clearly show how the design guidance has been considered. Proposals that would be harmful to the character of the area as defined in the character assessment will not be supported.

Density, Building-design Standards, and Energy Efficiency

There is continued pressure for the cramming of new buildings on to sites to maximise development value rather than meet community needs. Along with over-development, many new-builds are either poor pastiche designs or formula designs by developers that do not respect the character of the area. Front gardens have been paved over for car parking, seriously affecting the character of local roads and residential streets. The loss of greenery and garden walls has been damaging to the character of the streets in the neighbourhood.

The Plan will restrict over-development of both infill and larger sites and promote good design and energy efficiency for all building. At the same time, the Plan will seek to protect against further loss of green space, and trees.

Policy HOS3 Density, Building-design Standards, and Energy Efficiency

Development proposals of both traditional and innovative designs will be supported where they respect the local heritage and character of the neighbourhood. In particular:

- a. Innovative and/or contemporary designs will be supported subject to the scale, layout, density, orientation, and massing of the proposal in order to respond to and protect the valued features of local character as described in the relevant Character Assessment and**
- b. Where more traditional designs are proposed, the material and designs should complement the local character.**

Development proposals will not be supported where they would result in the loss of green space, in accordance with Policy ENS1 on accessible public green space; or the loss of trees, in accordance with Policy ENC3 on trees;

Proposals to reinstate front gardens and garden walls will be supported.

Proposals for new development will be supported where they demonstrate how they will incorporate sustainable construction methods that promote the sustainable use of resources and:

- **that reduce carbon emissions by improving or generating waste efficiencies, including through the use of renewable and low-carbon technologies;**
- **that future-proof against the impacts of climate change;**
- **that provide adequate storage for recycling waste.**

Back-land Development

There is increasing pressure for backland development involving the re-use of parts of a number of rear gardens for further residential development. While such development may be acceptable under certain circumstances, it can have a considerable impact on the character and amenities of existing residential areas. The Plan seeks to ensure that backland development is appropriate to the neighbourhood in terms of design, privacy, and access.

The implementation of Policy HOS8 has the ability to secure the development of family or smaller houses.

Policy HOS4 Backland Development

Proposals to intensify existing residential areas will be supported where this can be achieved through good design and without harming local amenities. Any attractive prevailing character of the area should be protected. Development in rear gardens (except that which currently does not need planning permission) will be supported where it complies with the following criteria:

- i. the density and height of the proposal;**
- ii. the privacy and outlook from existing dwellings and, in particular, gardens;**
- iii. any proposed demolition of existing dwellings or parts of dwellings to form access. If this would create an unattractive breach in a consistent street frontage, this will not be permitted; and**
- iv. access arrangements that would cause significant material harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties will not be permitted.**

Community Policy

Housing Provision

The desired mix of housing is unlikely to be provided by the housing market alone, and therefore every effort should be made to encourage alternative providers such as community land trusts, co-operatives, and self-builders with an interest in building affordable housing using low-carbon designs.

Policy HOC1 Housing Provision
A creative and supportive approach to proposals from housing associations, co-operatives, self-builders, and co-ownership schemes will be adopted.
Where the local authority or other public bodies own residential building land, the Forum will advocate that non-market providers should be given first refusal to develop on these sites.

Flats Above Shops

The plan will encourage land owners and leaseholders to bring back into use residential accommodation above shops in the Summertown District Centre.

Policy HOC2 Flats Above Shops
Development which brings back into use empty flats above shops or businesses in the Summertown District Centre will be encouraged.

Local Dwelling Size

Recent development pressure on the area is characterised by pull-downs of existing houses outside the St Margaret's Conservation area and the development of larger homes (4–6 bedrooms) which are sold or rented at prices that are unaffordable to many who want to live in North Oxford, particularly younger people, essential public-service workers, and young families. These larger homes are also far too big and expensive for elderly people to maintain.

The need therefore is to give priority in our Neighbourhood Plan to smaller units of 1,2 and 3 bedrooms in conversions and new builds, to enable younger people in particular to get a foothold in the area at an affordable price, but also to allow elderly residents to down-size.

Evidence of the particular need in the area comes from a study undertaken by students at Oxford Brookes University who proposed a policy to emphasise 1, 2, and 3 bed houses should be adopted in order to balance the loss of smaller homes.

Policy HOC3 Local Dwelling Size
The Forum will work with the Oxford City Council and other relevant partners to identify the appropriate mix of new major residential development in the neighbourhood area and with a view to delivering 1/2/3 bedroomed homes

13. Environment Policies

The environment that surrounds us, the cultural, natural, and historic heritage, and the built environment are some of the greatest assets for the community, visitors, and businesses of the NPA. SSM is bounded to the east and west by highly prized and protected green and wild areas which are critical to defining the qualities of the area. Consultation with the community has shown strong support for policies which protect and enhance the green nature of the area.

The Plan strongly supports their protection and enhancement. New development should respect and enhance all aspects of the environment. Sustainable development has to be good for the environment, the economy, and the community at *the same time*. New development and growth should respect and enhance all aspects of the environment, making positive contributions when possible.

Spatial Policies

Green Spaces

Policy ENS1 seeks to protect areas of considerable habitat importance, green spaces, and areas of both amenity and environmental value. Areas of specific habitat importance and amenity value have been identified as the Burgess Field Nature Park, The Trap Grounds Wildlife Site, Sunnymead Park, and Cherwell Fields. These areas are considered valuable amenity areas and are shown in the map in Appendix 3.

Policy ENS1 is in accordance with the Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS21, which seeks opportunities to open up access to publicly accessible green space and improvements to public green space, and with Policy CS12 on Biodiversity, which seeks opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity of Oxford City.



Burgess Field Nature Park is a reclaimed landfilled site of some 8.5 ha on the eastern edge of Port Meadow, now home to roe deer, cuckoos, and many woodland birds and flowering plants. The area is popular for walking, running, and blackberrying. Greater access to this area of environmental and amenity value is encouraged, including (ideally) a new bridge over the railway line, which would provide easier access from Summertown. It is designated as a nature reserve by the City Council.

The Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site is almost the last remaining wild open space along the Oxford Canal between the city centre and the northern suburbs. The area (consisting of 2.9 acres of reedbed and ponds and 5.6 acres of woodland) supports a wide diversity of wildlife and is valued for its educational opportunities as well as its informal recreational use. The reedbed was designated as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) in the 1990s. The woodland was granted Town Green status in 2006, and the whole site was designated as a Local Wildlife Site in 2015.

Sunnymead Park is joined to Cutteslowe Park by a foot bridge to form Oxford's biggest park. It includes semi-wild areas alongside the Cherwell, a protected play area for children, hard football and basketball pitches, and an outdoor gym. The Forum wishes to designate it as a Local Green Space because of its special relationship with the community. Residents of the Sunnymead and Cutteslowe estates make extensive use of it. It is the only green lung for the Sunnymead estate, and it is of considerable ecological value, with its river border and extensive wooded areas.

Cherwell Fields are the eight fields immediately between the Cherwell River and the built-up areas of Summertown. They are currently grazed and provide no public access. They are, however, floodplain areas and they provide an important green lung for Oxford. They are not extensively cultivated and they function as important wildlife corridors. They form part of the larger "Thames and Cherwell at Oxford" Conservation Target Area and are important examples of river meadowlands. See the maps for the exact location.

Table 1 - Areas of Significant Amenity Value

Policy ENS1 Green Spaces

Development proposals should maintain or enhance the local environment of the NPA, both through the development's own attributes, and the way in which it is integrated with its surroundings.

Development proposals should maintain, and have regard to, and be appropriate in terms of the impact on the conservation of the natural environment, green spaces, and areas of significant amenity value identified on Appendix 3. Proposals for development at Burgess Field Nature Park, The Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site, Sunnymead Park and Cherwell Field (as detailed in Table 1 and shown in Appendix 3) will not be supported unless they promote the conservation or enhancement of their respective amenity or ecological importance.

Opportunities to conserve, enhance, provide, restore, and improve appropriate access to areas of significant amenity value, green spaces, and areas of important habitats will be supported.

Renewable Energy

Oxford is a centre for community renewable-energy generation and has led the way in implementing technologies such as solar roofs and hydro power. Despite this, the recent City Council Sustainability Report³ has indicated that Oxford generates only 0.6 per cent of demand from renewable sources. The best urban schemes report 20 per cent of energy demand being generated from renewable sources. There are many potential barriers to developing small and medium-scale installations. In order to encourage the development of renewable energy in all parts of the NPA, there will be a presumption in favour of renewable energy development, subject to Policy ENC2 and the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

Policy ENS2 Renewable Energy

Proposals for individual and community-scale energy from hydro-electricity schemes, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestion, and wind power will be supported, subject to the following criteria:

- i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider area;**
- ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and**
- iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.**

³

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20062/carbon_reduction_and_energy_saving/1094/oxford_sustainability_in dex_2016

Rain-Water Infiltration

Much of the area is on the flood plain, and residents of Oxford have often experienced the results of historic building on the flood plain. To reduce the risk of surface-water flooding, the minimum contribution to water run-off is therefore required, along with the need to facilitate maximum infiltration into the soil.

Therefore existing and new developments have a responsibility not to contribute to further flooding. This is best achieved by ensuring that the minimum of land is covered with concrete or other impermeable materials. The more rain that can be stored and allowed to soak into the ground, allowing the soil and water table to absorb extra rain, the lower the risk of surface flooding.

Policy ENS3 Rain-Water Infiltration

Where appropriate proposed developments will be required to demonstrate that they do not reduce rain-water infiltration. Those which demonstrate that they increase infiltration, or reduce run-off to watercourses, will be supported. Where appropriate all run-off water should be infiltrated into the ground with permeable surfaces (SUDS), or using attenuation storage.

See also HOS3.

Air Pollution

Policy ENS4 seeks to discourage development which exacerbates air pollution, especially from vehicular traffic in the area. Woodstock Road and Banbury Road are hotspots for particulate pollution derived from diesel vehicles. However knowledge of emissions and particulates comes from a total of 4 diffusion tubes left there for a year (2015/6). These have measured NO₂ levels as an average over that period and showed overall levels declining slowly over the year. There has been no measurement of particulates nor any spot measurements of spikes of NO₂ measurements.

The UK has agreed legal limits⁴ set out by DEFRA in line with EU directives. For NO₂ these require a maximum annual mean of 40 µg/m³. In addition spikes measured over an hour over 200 µg/m³ should not take place more than 18 times pa. Similarly, for PM₁₀ particulates, an annual mean of 40 µg/m³ is set (dropping to 30 µg/m³ in 2020) with a maximum no. of exceedences of 35 times pa at 50 µg/m³.

Currently there are no facilities in place to measure either of these regulated pollutants. This may worsen with increasing traffic from the Northern Gateway. The Plan seeks to ensure that any development reduces the levels of these life-threatening pollutants.

⁴ <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/uk-eu-limits>

Policy ENS4 relates to new development proposals. It distinguishes between the wider origins of air pollution in an area and the additional pollution that may be generated by new development proposals. Plainly in the hotspots of Woodstock Road and Banbury Road this issue is highlighted given the volume of local and through traffic which generate the baseline of air quality and/or the associated pollution.

Policy ENS4 Air Pollution

Development proposals should demonstrate that there will be no significant direct or cumulative adverse impacts from air pollution. Where significant adverse impacts on air quality are identified development proposals should include information on their ability to mitigate the impacts through on-site or off-site measures such as tree and hedgerow planting. Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on air quality (with or without identified mitigation measures) will not be supported.

Community Policies

Playing Fields

There are a number of playing fields in the area, owned by schools and colleges. They contribute to the character and green setting of the NPA and they need to be maintained and enhanced.

Policy ENC1 Playing Fields

Schools and Colleges will be encouraged to provide greater public access to their playing fields and associated sports and leisure facilities. Opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of these playing fields will be sought, along with improvements to biodiversity and habitats, particularly on the periphery of these sites.

Policy ENC2 Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy

To increase the use and production of renewable and low-carbon energy generation, development proposals will be encouraged that:

- i. deploy installations with the greatest renewable-energy output practicable;**
- ii. make use of, or offer genuine potential for use of, any waste heat produced.**

Particular support will be given to developments, conversions, extensions, and uses that:

- i. meet the renewable-energy demands of local communities;**
- ii. create opportunities for co-location of renewable-energy products;**
- iii. bring housing up to energy rating A and B standards.**

When assessing such proposals, consideration will be given to the wider benefits of providing

energy from renewable sources, as well as the potential effects on the local environment (including any cumulative impact of these proposals).

Protecting Tree Cover

In consultation there was strong support for policies which enhance the tree cover and green vegetation of the area. The area contains large numbers of mature and smaller trees. These are in private gardens, in parks, and on pavements. The trees provide habitat for birds, shade for pedestrians, and carbon dioxide absorption to reduce our carbon footprint and help us adapt to climate change. Current policy protects trees subject to planning applications. In the conservation area, mature trees are automatically protected, and the Forum would like to extend this to other areas.

Policy ENC3 Protecting Tree Cover

The community will support the planting of new, well-sited trees; it will encourage the Council and others to manage and maintain tree cover in good condition; it will resist opportunities to remove trees, especially mature trees; in the event that some must be removed, the community will seek opportunities to replant in suitable locations.

Enhancing the Street Setting

Residents particularly value the shade and softening of building lines afforded by trees planted in parts of the district centre. This represents an important part of its character. When there is development of any sort, there will be opportunities to build this 'green cover', which improves general well-being and the experience of moving around on foot or by bicycle.

Policy ENC4 Enhancing the Street Setting

Opportunities will be sought for enhancing the street setting which may include the following:

- 1. On-street trees will be conserved, and opportunities for increasing their number will be sought. The planting of wildlife-friendly tree varieties rich in pollen, nectar, seeds, berries, and fruits will be encouraged.**
- 2. All small informal green spaces and verges will be protected, maintained, and enhanced.**
- 3. The provision, retention, and enhancement of green front gardens will be encouraged.**

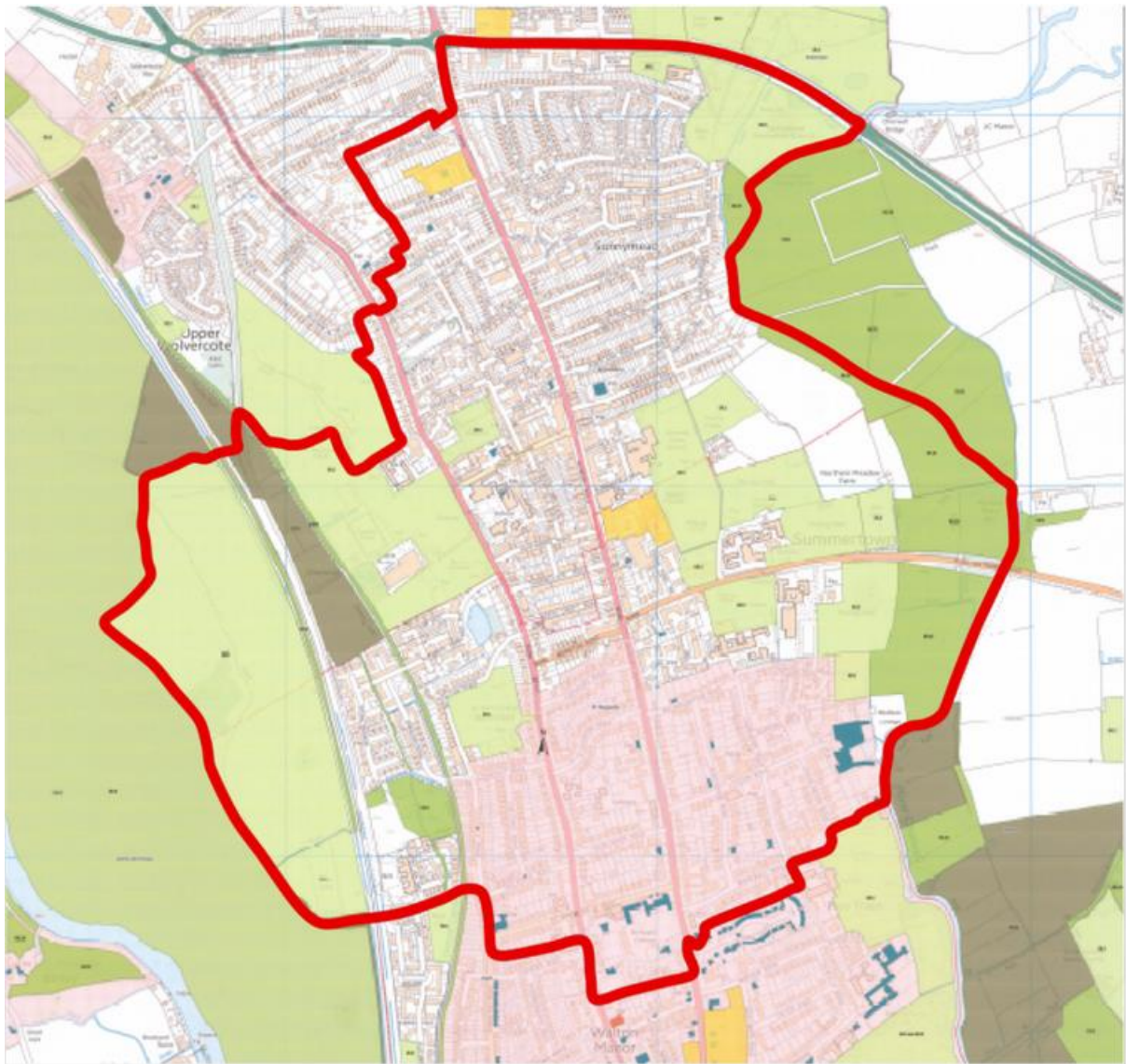
14. Delivering the Plan

The delivery of the Plan will be overseen by a successor to the current Neighbourhood Forum. While its shape and functions have yet to be determined, this body will be shaped during the final consultation stages. Its remit will be to occasionally revise or refresh the Plan, to monitor its impact on the planning process, and to identify new matters for the community to consider.

Those policies that are marked as Spatial Policies will, if approved at a referendum, become part of the Statutory Local Planning documents which determine planning applications in the SSM area. Planning officers and the Planning Committee will be required to take account of them when they decide on planning applications.

Those other policies that are identified as Community Policies do not form part of the planning process. They represent the wishes of the people of this area. It will be for the future Neighbourhood Forum and local councillors to support their implementation. The community will be required to identify and prioritise those policies that it feels are most important, and to identify the resources to carry them out.

Appendix 1 The Summertown St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area

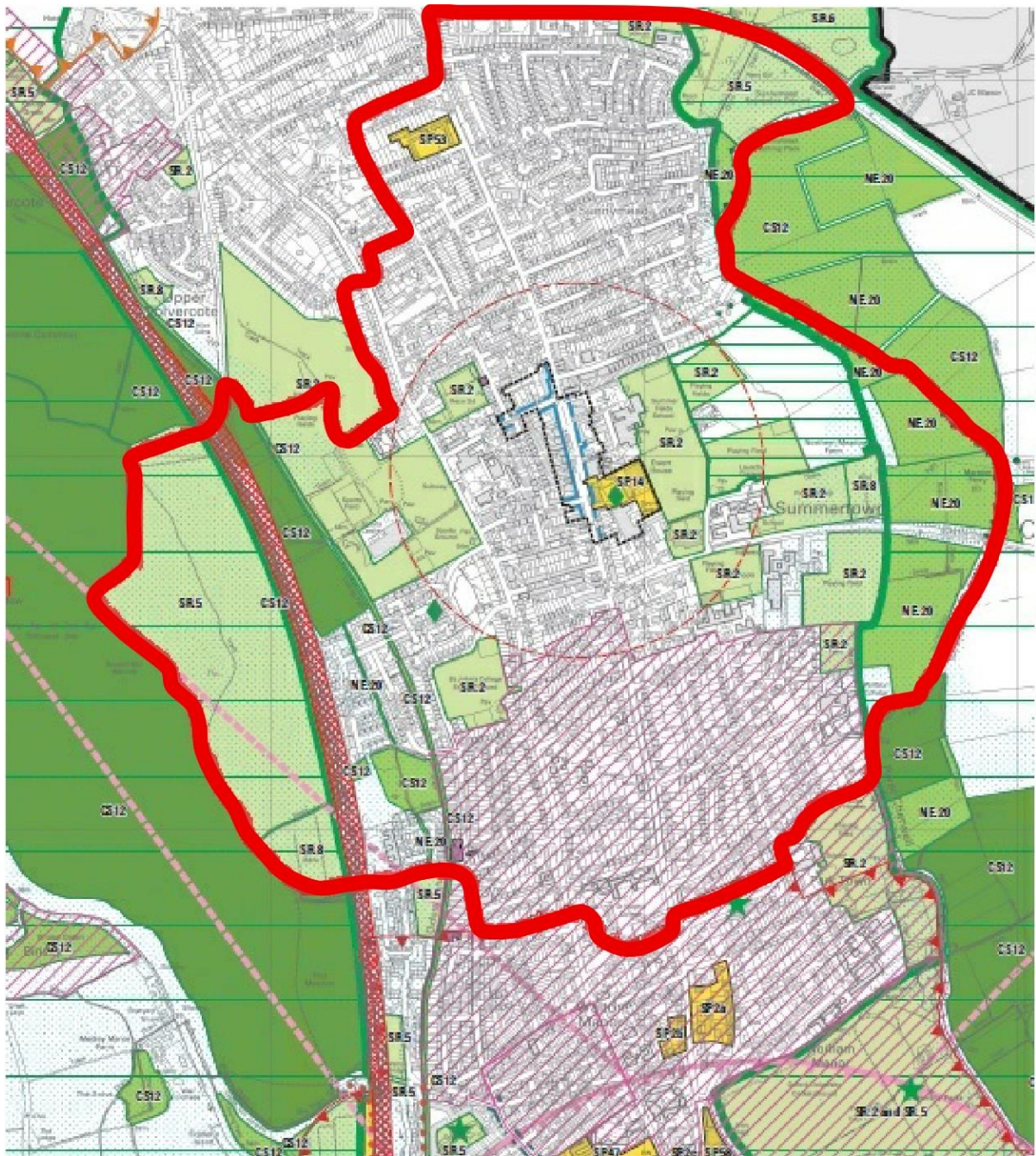


Summertown & St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area



Summertown District Centre

Appendix 3 Map of green spaces



Appendix 4: Local Character Assessments

The Purpose of Character Assessments

The Character Assessments (CAs) in the Neighbourhood Plan provide guidance for the consideration of planning applications and development in our neighbourhood.

The CAs responds to the Core Strategy CS 18: 'Planning permission will only be granted for development that demonstrates high quality urban design through responding appropriately to the site and its surroundings, creating a strong sense of place, and contributing to an attractive public realm'.

The CAs provide a description of the site and surroundings in 14 CAs and set out a list of important assets to be protected and enhanced, and guidelines for development in those areas which planning officers should take into consideration in assessing planning applications. They link directly to policy HOS2 above.

Importance of the CAs

There is no doubt that the main asset of the Neighbourhood Forum (NF) area is its very particular character. In order that this character might be protected during the course of any further development or activity, the NF considered it vital to undertake assessments of the character of each district within the forum area.

The 14 Character Assessments have been prepared by residents of the NF area who have a keen interest in the district they have chosen to assess, with additional material contributed by a local historian and planning experts. The CAs here are a summary of detailed assessments which were created using the CA Toolkit recommended by Oxford City Council. The summary CAs will be consulted on as part of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

Each CA is summarised in a standard format, addressing:

- General Overview: a description of the district
- History, where significant
- Issues relevant to the district
- Assets, listing key aspects of character
- Guidance for new development: the main purpose of the Character Assessments.

General Overview of Summertown and St Margaret's

Summertown and St Margaret's Wards are mainly residential, mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century developments north of Oxford Centre. On the west and east they are framed by Port Meadow and the Cherwell Valley, with the Ring Road as the northern limit. Their southern boundary is less than half a mile from the city centre.

The NF Area is intersected by two important arteries from the north into Oxford: the Banbury and Woodstock Roads. Both roads are lined with substantial buildings, well set

back, leaving space for handsome trees and generous front gardens, which form part of the streetscape and create an impressive entrance to the city centre.

These two arteries are well served by public transport. There are designated bus lanes and modest facilities for cycling. There is a major district centre: the Summertown shopping and restaurant area in the Banbury Road, together with some significant services in South Parade.

St Margaret's Ward, which forms the southern section of the NF Area, consists mainly of large period houses and a significant number of colleges and schools. It is almost entirely within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

North of Summertown Centre, to the west of Banbury Road, the housing pattern gradually reduces from dense towards generously spaced. To the east of Banbury Road the trend is from well-spaced housing to much denser housing in the Cutteslowe area. Cutteslowe is the only part of the NF Area that still has low-cost housing, and as such it merits special consideration.

In the south-west, near the Oxford Canal, there is an area of closely spaced period housing at Hayfield Road, as well as two recently built estates, Waterways and Aristotle Lane estate.

History

Summertown was a late arrival in the history of Oxford. The first known building in the area was a stone-built inn, reputedly frequented by highwaymen, roughly where Ewert Place now lies. It was called Diamond House or Diamond Hall. In 1790 its ill repute forced it to close, and it was converted into four one-room tenements.

In 1820 the first advertisement was placed in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* for 'freehold land, in about 45 lots, near the Diamond House ... commanding pleasant and extensive views, superior soil for the growth of vegetables or fruit trees ... and excellent foot and carriage roads leading to the same'. An essential difference between Summertown and North Oxford is that Summertown was built entirely on freehold land, and North Oxford (apart from Park Town) entirely on leasehold land.

The earliest map to show Summertown and name it (though spelling it 'Somer's Town') was published in May 1824. In a map of 1832 it is named 'Summers Town'.

In 1832, Summertown was very much a separate village, its buildings outside the City boundary and therefore liable for lower County rates.

Summertown is shaped by two factors: the narrow gravel terrace between the Thames and the Cherwell, which provided the only land which could be built on (it is bounded on each side by low clay water meadows), and the two broad turnpike roads – still only 373 yards apart at South Parade, which made it inevitable that later developments would be at right angles to those roads.

Speculative building in Summertown was a response to a huge increase in Oxford's population, which more than doubled from 1801 to 1851, to nearly 26,000.

The first houses were built along the Banbury Road and in the three lanes running east from it. John Badcock in 1832 described himself as living in a 'humble cott', later converted into the Dew Drop Inn. The Banbury Road, apart from being a turnpike road, became the village street of Summertown. It was much busier than the Woodstock Road, which, on the eastern side, was largely given over to slum dwellings, known as 'Rows' and later as 'Yards'.

By Easter 1831, enough funds had been raised from St John's and other colleges and from 'pious and benevolent individuals' to build a church, St John Baptist, on a piece of land in Middle Way. As a result, the south end of Middle Way and South Parade became the heart of the village. Within a short distance could be found the village schools, the Congregational chapel, the post office, the Rose & Crown pub, the first Co-op shop, and the houses of the vicar, the schoolmaster, and the village policeman.

St John Baptist had a short life: in 1909 the new parish church of St Michael and All Angels was built; the old church fell into disuse and was demolished in 1924. However, the stones and the roof were used for the church hall in Portland Road, and so the shape of the original church can still be seen.

The remainder of the plot bought by St John's for the church was given by the College in 1848 for a church school. The numbers of pupils increased dramatically, even before 1870, when attendance became compulsory. In the 1930s, in an attempt to clear the Oxford slums, families were moved to the new suburb of Cutteslowe, where no school was provided. As a result, in 1936 there were 323 children on the Summertown school register, and steps were taken to build a new Infant and Primary School in Cutteslowe. Older children continued to be educated at Summertown until the Cherwell Secondary Modern School was opened in 1964 for pupils aged 11 and upwards.

In 1934 the infamous Cutteslowe Walls were built by a developer to separate the Council estate from private housing to the west. They were not finally demolished until 1959.

The school building in Rogers Street was demolished in 1971 to make way for a block of flats. Bishop Kirk School was opened as a Church-aided school for all the North Oxford parishes in 1966, taking children from 7 to 11, but it was closed and the land was sold for redevelopment in 1990.

Originally the east side of the Banbury Road was farm land. A green lane, now Summerfield Road, led to a market garden and then to a building which became a house called Summerfield, where a small school for boys was established – later to become Summer Fields School. On the east side of the lane joining Summerfield Road to Mayfield Road stood St Giles' Workhouse. This was a stone house built in 1824 but declared redundant in 1835.

Grand villas began to be built along the Banbury Road from the early 1820's. The first was Southlawn, built in 1822 at 367 Banbury Road as an investment by Crews Dudley, an Oxford dignitary after whom Dudley Court was later named. It too started life as an 'amateur school'.

In 1823 Summerhill, a large Italianate villa, was built at 333 Banbury Road. The annual school treat and parish functions were held in its garden.

Further up the road, on the corner of Rogers Street, was 'a gothic structure of curious appearance' built in 1831 by an Oxford wine merchant. Considerably extended, this property still occupies the corner of the street.

John Badcock, in his 1832 history, speaks of 'three admirable houses' in Summertown: Kimber's in Middle Way, Dudley's Southlawn, and a vast house later known as Apsley Paddox, built in 1830 to the north of Squitchey Lane. Its second owner, Charles Robertson, built a chapel next to his estate, which later became the Catholic Church of St Gregory and St Augustine. The Apsley Paddox estate has now been redeveloped for housing.

In the Inclosure Map of 1829, Richards Lane is shown for the first time. Robert Richards was a higgler (a pedlar) who lived in one of the two tiny cottages on the lane. The cottage is still there, joined to Henley House, which is now the Dragon pre-prep school.

The last Regency villa to be built in Summertown, The Lodge, was completed by 1840, and still stands between Middle Way and the Woodstock Road. Between 1852 and 1891 it was the home of Owen Grimby, who took over a grocery store in Cornmarket and made it into Oxford's best-known department store, Grimby Hughes.

On the corner of what is now Hobson Road (then Albert Road) stood The Firs, the last of the great early Victorian houses of Summertown. It was built in 1830 for Joseph Bates, a nurseryman who specialised in conifers. This may explain the number of fine fir trees in North Oxford. The house was demolished in 1961, to be replaced by Martin Court.

In 1851 Summertown had 228 inhabited houses with a population of 1,278. About one-third of the population was aged under 12, and only 21 people were over 70.

The 1881 census shows an increase in the Summertown population over the previous 30 years of only 142, and an increase in the number of houses by 54, of which 15 were unoccupied. Most of the building consisted of small houses on South Parade, Middle Way, Rogers Street, and Grove Street.

Meanwhile, further south in North Oxford, St John's College was granting building leases – a process which speeded up after 1877, when dons were allowed to marry. In North Oxford, houses were built with piped water, but this was still resisted in Summertown because of fear that a new rate would be levied. Summertown residents mostly continued to use their own wells, which were now more contaminated than they had been in 1830, when development began.

In 1889 the City boundary was extended to take in all the old parish of St Giles, which included Summertown. The roads were now to be made up, gas and water mains laid, and drains running into ditches connected with main drains. Every householder had to pay 5 per cent of the total cost.

In 1880 Owen Grimbly, who was a generous supporter of Summertown causes, laid out the 22 acres of the Sunnymead estate; but the roads – Herne (sic) Road, Islip Road, and Water Eaton Road – were slow to develop.

The second big development was on land to the south of South Parade, which had been bought by the Oxford Industrial and Provident Building Society. This provided in all 179 houses in seven roads, with the City Council requiring the Banbury Road houses to be set back 25 feet from the road.

The third development was between Sunnymead and Summer Fields. The land had once been Hawkswell Farm, bought by Alderman Francis Twining, who combined it with Stone's Estate, owned by an Oxford charity. Six roads were built on the Hawkswell Estate: Portland, Lonsdale, King's Cross, Victoria, Hamilton, Lucerne, and the Banbury Road frontage: in all, 350 houses.

The Congregational church (now the United Reformed church) was built in 1893 on the Banbury Road. The architect, Kingerlee, used very similar patterns for the church and for Twining's grocery next door. In 1897, a Baptist chapel was built in Woodstock Road.

With the completion of the six new roads on the Hawkswell Estate, all the Summertown freehold land had been built on. What remained was infilling.

A major employer in the mid-twentieth century was Oliver & Gurden, a cake factory in Middle Way, now Summertown Pavilion, which exported worldwide and employed 200 people in 1975, but industrial businesses were becoming rare in Summertown. By the 1960s, enormous changes were already evident in what had once been a small village. Older houses were making way for office blocks: for example, Mayfield House and Prama House. A library was built in 1960, and the Ferry Sports Centre in 1971.

Summertown continues to be a prosperous residential area, home to several independent and state schools and a successful shopping and business centre.

Schools

Schools play an important role in the composition of the area. There are seven primary schools (three independent) and four secondary schools (three independent) which contribute to the character of the area. The independent schools cater for students from a much wider catchment area, and this contributes to traffic problems in the NF Area at peak times.

Large green spaces

The NF Area is extremely fortunate to be framed on the west by Port Meadow, on the east by the Cherwell Valley, and on the north by Sunnymead/Cutteslowe Park. Public access to these large green spaces is precious and should be protected and where possible enhanced by any future plan.

Trees

A major feature of the NF Area is the presence of numerous mature trees, both in public spaces and in private gardens. Any future plan for the area should include specifications for the protection of these crucial assets.

Architecture

The high quality of much of the architecture in the neighbourhood is an important asset which we wish to protect and enhance. Now almost fully developed, the neighbourhood can pride itself on an architectural harmony between the various building phases that make up the whole. These different phases of construction were created by developers, architects, and builders with a clear vision in their own time – whether this was during the late 19th century or the mid 20th century. The current challenge is to require the limited new infill developments to show respect for the past, but also to create an impressive 21st-century legacy.

There is significant community concern about the current tendency to demolish existing buildings and erect infills which are often formulaic, poor pastiche, lead to overdevelopment of the site, and do not respect the surrounding character. The Plan will strongly encourage high-quality, low-carbon architecture.

Assets

Landscape

- . Green spaces with public access: where possible, access should be increased.
- . Overall leafy character: special care should be taken to protect all aspects of front gardens.
- . Large mature trees in most of the area.
- . Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site: this could be an inspiration for the Cherwell Valley development.
- . Allotments at Marston Ferry Road and the Trap Grounds.
- . Sunnymead and Alexandra Parks.
- . The Oxford Canal.

Transport

- . Satisfactory public transport (by bus), with potential for innovative improvements.
- . Convenient access to the city centre and Ring Road, with scope for much-improved cycling facilities.
- . Quiet residential streets, where the effort to avoid rat-runs should be continued.
- . Cycle track from Kings Cross Road to Marston Ferry: a good example of safe cycling provision which should be widely copied.

Notable buildings in Summertown

- . The North Oxford Association (NOA) Community Centre: a successful centre with the potential for further enhancement

- . Well-detailed period housing typical of various eras: the inevitable infill developments need careful consideration.
- Somerville House
- Diamond Cottages
- St Michael and All Angels' Church with surrounding churchyard
- . Summertown Church Hall, including the War Memorial
- . Summertown House
- . Summertown Villa
- . United Reformed Church
- . Twining's House
- . Dew Drop Inn
- . South Parade (for example, Nos 5 and 6)
- . Northern House School
- . St Edward's School
- . Old stone wall (South Parade, alongside St Edward's School and Prama House)
- . Old Bakehouse
- . Victorian terrace (Summertown Centre, west side)

Notable Buildings in St Margaret's

- . Several listed buildings, incl. St Margaret's War Memorial and Aristotle Lane canal bridge
- St Margaret's Church
- St Margaret's Institute
- St Andrew's Church
- Wolfson College
- St Hugh's College
- The Anchor Public House
- Houses within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area

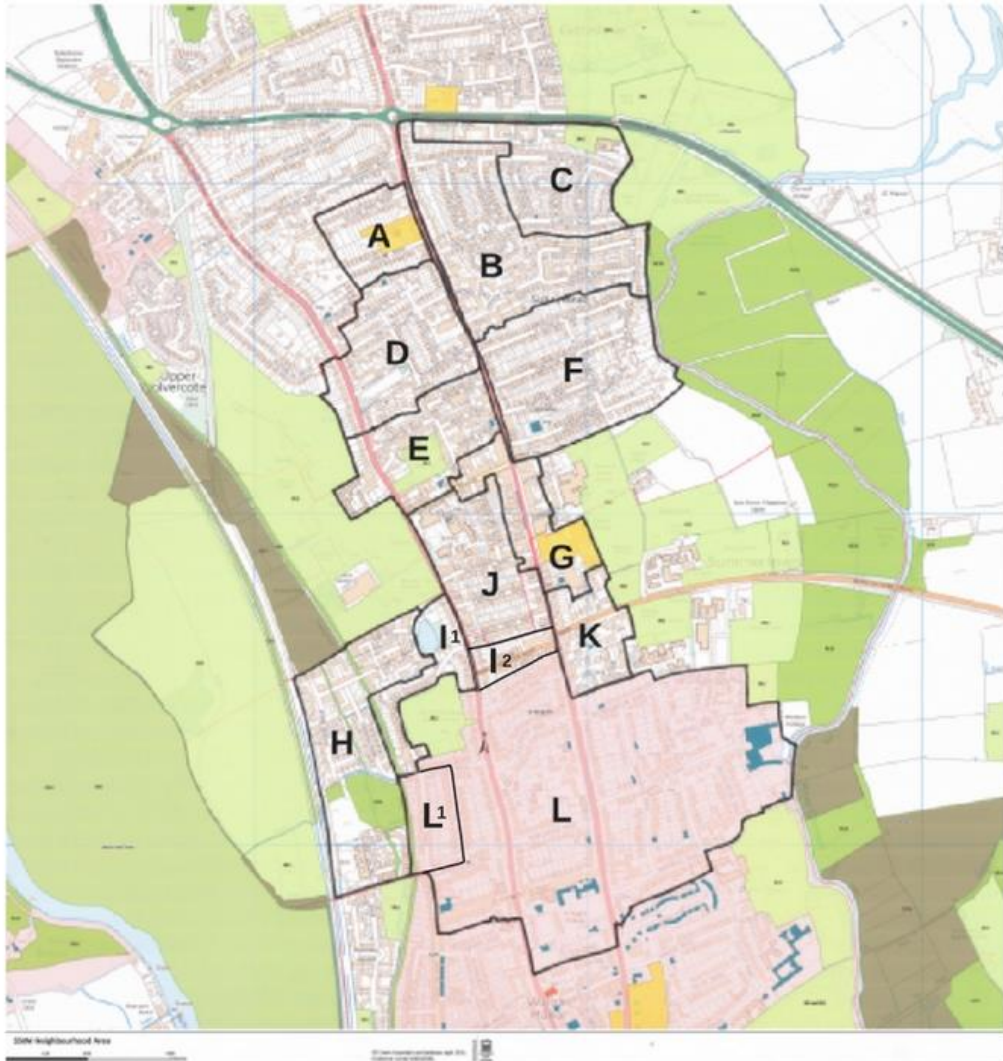
Important facilities

- NOA Community Centre
- Summertown Library
- Cutteslowe Community Centre
- Ferry Leisure Centre
- St Margaret's Institute Community Centre
- St Michael's Church hall
- Baptist Church, Woodstock Road
- St Andrew's Church community room
- Alexandra Park
- Aristotle Lane Recreation Ground
- The Canal and towpath
- The Trap Grounds Town Green and Local Wildlife Site
- North Wall Theatre/Gallery

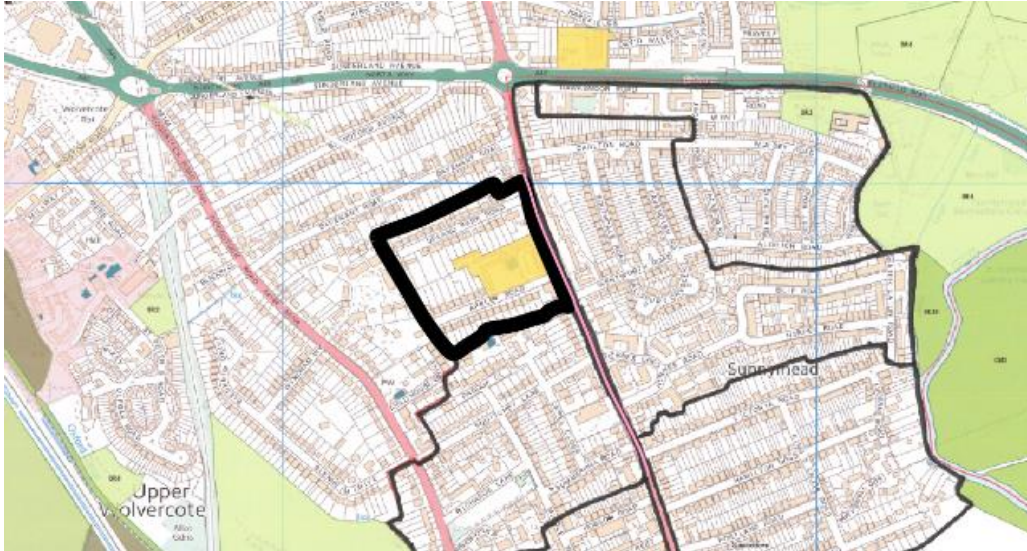
Detailed Character Assessments

List of summary areas

- A. Apsley Road and Upland Park Road
- B. Sunnymead
- C. Cutteslowe
- D. Squitchey Lane, Middle Way North, and related side roads
- E. Middle Way South and related side roads
- F. The Seven Roads
- G1. Summertown Shopping Centre
- G2. South Parade
- H1. Waterways Estate and Aristotle Lane Estate
- H2. Trap Grounds: Town Green and Local Wildlife Site
- I1 Bainton Road, Phoebe Court
- I2 Moreton Road
- J. South Summertown Terraces
- K. Cunliffe Close, Ferry Pool Road
- L. St Margaret's Ward and the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA) – the subject of an appraisal now adopted by Oxford City Council
- L1 Hayfield Road
- M. Woodstock Road
- N. Banbury Road



A. Apsley Road and Upland Park Road



General overview

These two cul-de-sacs are lined with well-maintained high-end housing. In Apsley Road almost all the houses are of the same standard 1930s design. The houses along Upland Park Road are even larger and of various designs, maintaining a traditionally romantic image. At the Banbury end of Apsley Road there is a large new development based around Summertown House, a substantial Victorian villa.

Both roads are lined with majestic trees, some of them pre-dating the houses. Due to the low density of the housing, there is no need for front-garden parking, and this enhances the green-space value of these roads.

Most of the houses have been extended but have maintained their original character. However, especially along Upland Park Road, there are four or five newly built houses. These are designed in similar style to the original houses but lack their finesse and delicate detailing. In contrast, the modern building on the corner of Banbury Road and Upland Park Road demonstrates that, while respecting existing style, an impressive new development is possible.

History

Summertown House is the historic focal point of this area, and there is a strong sense that this house has always dominated the area and should continue to do so. A good number of magnificent old trees indicate the rural history of this area.

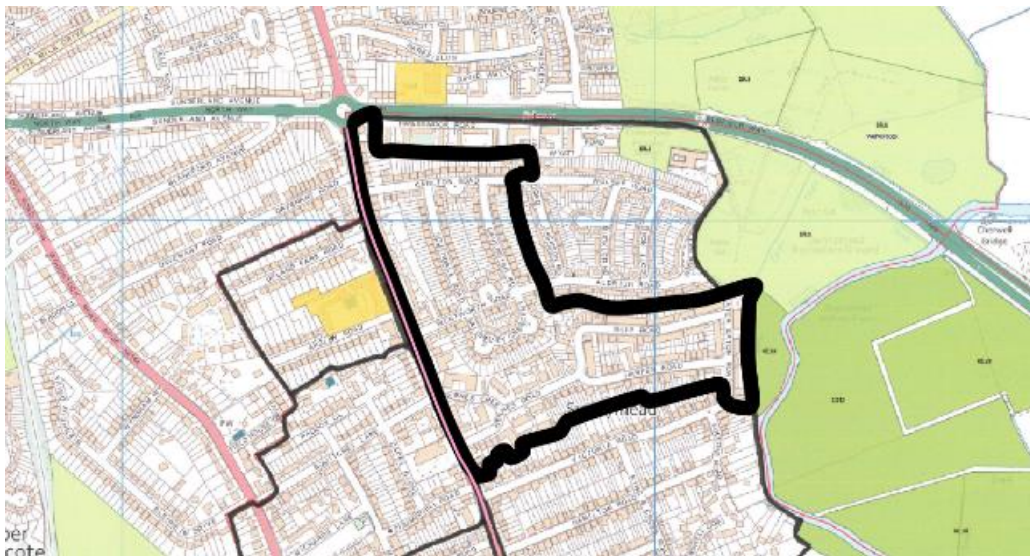
Assets

- An elegant pair of Summertown streets, each with its own individual character
- The cul-de-sac layout
- The Summertown House building, owned by the University: a good example of a new development which still 'fits in'. This is to be encouraged.

Guidelines for new development

- These are streets where infill housing should be of a very high standard, with serious attention to detail, but there are still opportunities to do something special.
- Street furniture and front-garden fencing should be carefully preserved, especially because this area does not suffer from front-garden parking and so has retained much of its original character.

B. Sunnymead



General overview

The Sunnymead area provides a harmonious transition from the more individual houses of the Seven Roads area to the more regimented order of the Cutteslowe estate. There is a mix of semi-detached and terraced early-19th-century houses, with an infill of post-Second World War houses of various designs. Some of the newer buildings are interesting, but not all.

Hernes Crescent, adjoining the Banbury Road, contains a mix of apartment blocks and retirement homes. Hernes, Harpes, and Islip Roads feature attractive terraced and semi-detached houses with modest front gardens that are well looked after. In significant sections of these three roads we find unspoiled late-Victorian and Edwardian architecture in a harmony which should be protected. Water Eaton Road has two distinctly different sides.

To the west: Victorian terraces and some characterful larger houses; to the east: more recently built and very bland apartment buildings, and some detached houses.

Carlton, Southdale, Cavendish, and Wentworth Roads and Salisbury Crescent are a distinct estate, featuring very similar semi-detached 1930s houses.

The sense of leafy greenness is mainly created by front-garden planting. As in many other areas of North Oxford, driveway parking is on the increase, reducing the attractiveness of the street scene.

Again, as in many other sections of North Oxford, a great many houses have been extended, although – and this is to be welcomed – the original facades have been preserved.

History

This area consists of two parts: the Edwardian and Victorian terraces in Harpes, Hernes, and Islip Roads and the 1930s development, which has many of the hallmarks of the Garden City movement. This resulted in generous back gardens which still contain some of the original fruit trees. As is often the case with locations near the Banbury Road, there are also some magnificent old trees here.

A dividing and divisive wall was erected along the border with the Cutteslowe estate in the 1930s, which highlighted the social contrasts of the era. The wall was not demolished until 1959, and is an infamous chapter in local memory.

Issues

- Increased housing density has led to more on-street parking. Where parking on both sides of the street is permitted in order to meet residents' needs, single-file traffic results.
- Front-drive parking reduces the leafy attractiveness of the area.
- The future of utilitarian garage blocks in Southdale and Cavendish Roads should be considered.
- The proliferation of buy-to-let properties and houses in multiple occupation needs to be considered.

Assets

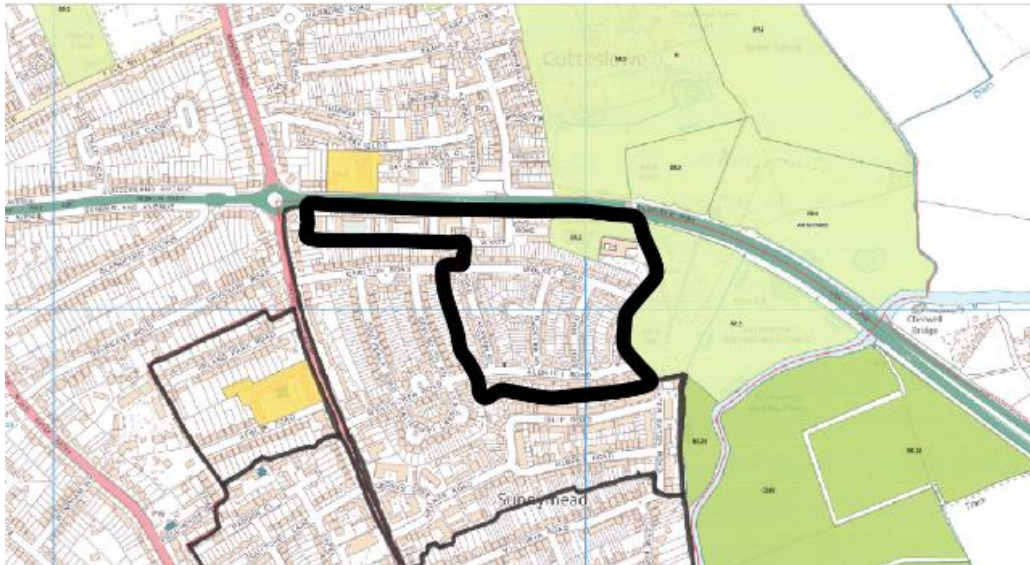
- The general character is that of a very quiet and resident-friendly community.
- Access, via a footbridge, to the Sunnymead Meadows on the banks of the Cherwell is a very positive asset.

Guidance for new development

- The existing harmony between late-Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the southern part of the area should be respected.
- Various mature trees deserve protection, and the retention of front gardens should be encouraged.
- The recent infills in Hernes Crescent and, in particular, the Tattersalls Eco houses are good examples of successful new developments.

- The policy of protecting original facades during the frequent housing improvements should be maintained.
- Green spaces should always be protected.
- Restrictions should be imposed to prevent further loss of front gardens and garden walls.

C. Cutteslowe



General overview

The principal section of this estate was built in 1932/34 for Council tenants. More recent development has taken place nearer to the Ring Road. Since 1980 many houses have been sold under the right-to-buy scheme, and some of these have been improved and extended.

This is a well-planned estate of mainly two-storey houses consistent in style, decoration, and brickwork, grouped in terraces of four or six. There are small front gardens (now reduced by off-road parking for cars) and access to back gardens, often through an alleyway by the side of houses. The streetscape is generally pleasant, with some on-street trees as well as small public spaces at street corners. Wren Road has views of the recreation grounds next to the River Cherwell and the open fields beyond.

The more recent development next to the Ring Road is dominated by rather large blocks of flats. These are surrounded by communal gardens, providing welcome play areas. The noise of the Ring Road is a major disadvantage.

A real benefit to the area is its closeness to recreation grounds, fields, and views of the Cherwell and the country beyond. There is a convenient footbridge over the Ring Road to the well-equipped Cutteslowe Park.

The Cutteslowe Primary School, the Children's Centre, and the Community Centre are bright and attractive hubs in the area. They are well placed next to the footbridge over the Ring Road and the recreation grounds. In addition there is a under-pass beneath the Ring Road.

History

This development must have been very welcome in the 1930s, as it provided the affordable housing now so desperately lacking in Summertown. At the time it was felt necessary to separate the Cutteslowe estate by a wall from the adjoining private estate: a rather shameful bit of history which was only corrected in 1959.

Issues

- The Cutteslowe area is a distinct residential and community area where housing is somewhat less expensive than in other parts of Summertown. It is the only part of the NPA where housing is relatively affordable.
- In contrast to most of Summertown, access to public transport is poor – which is unacceptable in an area requiring good connections to general facilities and services.
- A number of houses are now in multiple occupation, which unpopular in the community.

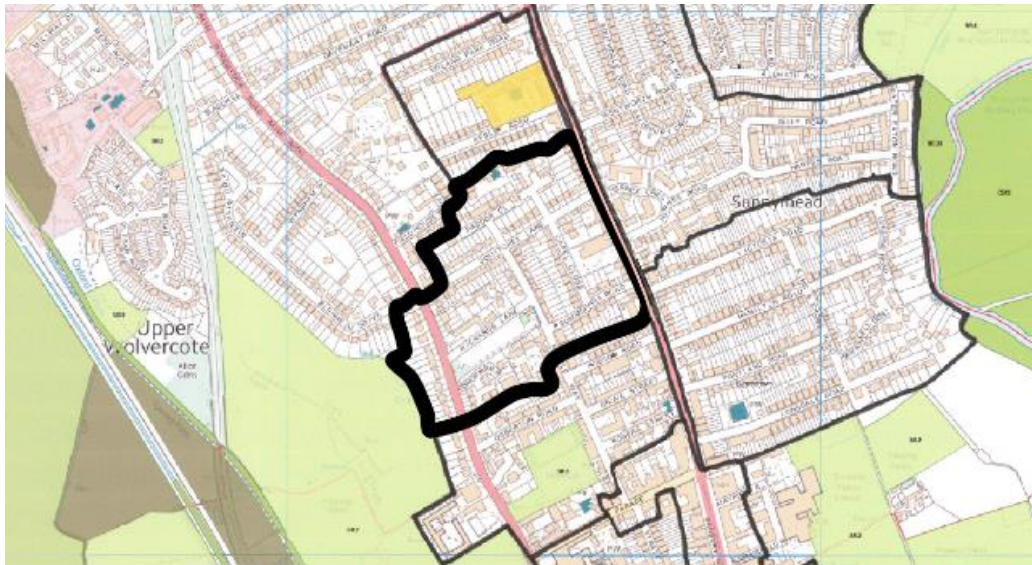
Assets

- Relatively affordable housing
- The 1930s architectural style of the area
- Access to major green spaces
- Cutteslowe Community Centre
- Cutteslowe Children's Centre
- Cutteslowe Primary School (the only one in Summertown)

Guidance for new development

- The basic 1930s architectural form, in terms of the scale and design of the estate, should be protected. Any new development should respect this form.
- Every attempt must be made to protect the affordability of housing in the area.
- Front gardens should be preserved, to safeguard the open leafy character.
- Cutteslowe residents need better access to affordable facilities.

D. Squitchey Lane, Middle Way North, and related side roads: Capel Close and Summerhill Road



General overview

This area between the Woodstock and Banbury Roads was developed later than the Victorian/Edwardian developments. It is situated north of the traditional Summertown Centre. The houses vary from large to very large mansions, some of which acknowledge the original rural origins of Summertown.

Squitchey Lane is perhaps the most significant road in this area. It is wide and straight, and so nowadays acts as a useful link road between the two North Oxford entrance roads. It is also a road of contrasts. The plots on the north side are very large, and indeed the houses near the Banbury Road end are massive. They have enormous front gardens, where the parking of two or three cars does not detract from the green nature of the road. This is accentuated by some majestic trees in front gardens.

On both sides of Squitchey Lane there are Art Deco-inspired semi-detached houses with typical curved bay windows. However, near the middle of the south side, there are rows of more modest terraced houses which try to imitate the splendid Art Deco style of their neighbours but fail to do so.

A special aspect of Squitchey Lane is the development of late-20th-century houses infilled in the large back gardens to the north of the original houses. The Paddox is a development of compact terraced houses build in a slightly alternative style. Paddox Close contains somewhat larger terraced houses, mixed with some bungalows. These two newer developments make practical use of ample garden space, and provide some welcome smaller housing among some very large houses.

Capel Close is a 'mixed bag' of large free-standing houses, all of different designs. The front gardens are not as generous as those in Squitchey Lane, and ubiquitous front-driveway parking has reduced the green aspect of the road unnecessarily, given that there is very adequate space for on-street parking. However, uncompromised green space still exists at the back of 333 Banbury Road, where D'Overbroeck's (an independent school) is building a sixth-form teaching complex. It is important that a green border between the school and the road is maintained.

Summerhill Road is slightly more modest but still includes large free-standing houses of various styles. Again front-drive parking is an issue in some stretches of the road, but the overall atmosphere remains very pleasant and open.

The northern half of Middle Way is entered from Capel Close by way of Summerhill Road. **Middle Way** is an eclectic mix of houses from different periods, with no common architectural theme. The northern half is more recently built and (in architectural terms) less interesting than the southern half. On the west side, there is the long rear wall of the elegant Summertown Villa, the front of which faces Woodstock Road but is invisible from Middle Way. Further down is Hyde Place: an ambitious new development of large red and yellow brick houses and an apartment block. However, the pastiche-Victorian style is not intricately worked enough to be special. On the east side, near the top of the road, there are houses resembling the Art Deco design of the north side of Squitchey Lane.

History

This area clearly demonstrates the architectural change that has occurred from the more regimented Victorian streets of the southern part of Summertown to a more modern and individual architecture.

Issues

- Squitchey Lane's function as a connecting road needs to be considered. It acts as a well used run between the Banbury and Woodstock roads.

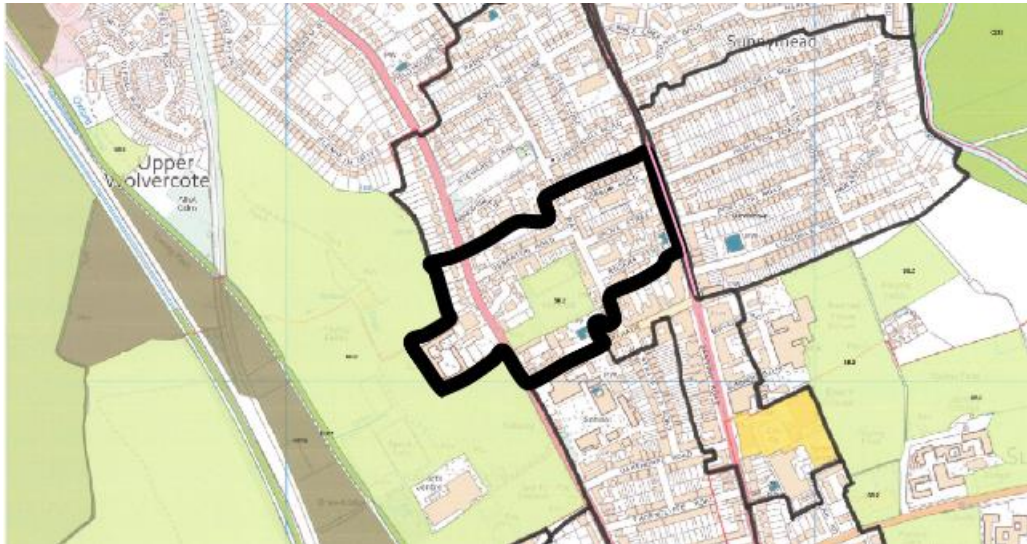
Assets

- An area with a variety of mostly attractive houses, some of them outstanding.
- A few very important houses which should be listed: for example, Summertown Villa.
- Outstanding front gardens in some streets, adding greatly to the amenity of the area.

Guidance for future development

- Since there is already such a variety of architectural styles, this is an area where responsible contemporary designs should be encouraged.
- Some of the pastiche infills lack the quality of the original designs. It might have been preferable, instead of imitating traditional styles, to build something radically different, and this should be kept in mind when future developments are considered.
- The magnificent trees in Squitchey Lane deserve protection.

E. Middle Way South and related side roads: Rogers and Grove Streets, Osberton and Hobson Roads



General overview

This area to the west of Banbury Road is marked by changing domestic architecture, from the pre-Victorian style of Rogers Street to the 1930s Art Deco style further north.

As its name suggests, **Middle Way** is situated between, and runs parallel to, Woodstock and Banbury Roads. The road contains many styles of building, demonstrating the transition from the early Victorian South Parade houses towards modern commercial buildings.

At the southern end, traditional cottages follow on from the Old Slaughter House Mews and the North Oxford Spiritual Church. This progression is interrupted by more contemporary infills. The two office blocks backing on to Alexandra Park, the grandiosely named 'Free Thinking House' and 'Summertown Pavilion', are examples of 1960s architecture which contrast with the rest of the street.

Rogers Street is at the heart of the original village of Summertown. Its houses are of varying character, some built when plots were first released in 1820, now almost 200 years ago. Others are much more recent. On its northern corner with Banbury Road, we find the 'Gothic Cottage' with large Horse Chestnut trees in its garden, opposite a small butcher's and fishmonger's shop (the last of its kind in Summertown). The Gothic Cottage sets the tone for this characterful street where the houses are either red brick or plastered and painted in white and pastel colours. Rogers Street has much charm and still conveys an impression of how the early-19th-century rural settlement of Summertown might have looked.

Grove Street, which has one-way traffic, has no front gardens or any other substantial greenery. At the end near Middle Way, there are cottage-styled terraced houses, some very picturesque, some average. The end near Banbury Road has been more recently developed as terraced houses, some of which are divided into apartments. The new buildings are sympathetic to the scale of the old, and the old and the new do not conflict.

Hobson Road starts the transition from the terraced houses on its south side to larger free-standing and semi-detached houses on its north side. The southern side of the street has an ordinary, in part utilitarian, terraced section, succeeded by more attractive well-detailed brick houses and a more recent terrace with front parking. Hobson Court, near Banbury Road, completes the street. This street is another 'mixed bag' of styles and periods, including Cavendish Court: an infill enclave of larger terraced houses with distinct steeply pitched roofs.

The east end of **Osberton Road** is built in a harmonious style, based on integrated continuous half-roofs projecting over the ground-floor bay-windows. Towards the west end there is a large and more recently developed apartment building, providing residential accommodation for elderly members of the community. On the north side, near Woodstock Road, there is an impressive country mansion.

A typical aspect of the area is the relatively recent increase in developments in available spaces: for example, Dudley Court and Martin Court, which are apartment blocks in generous green settings.

History

The southern part of this area formed the very first development of the Summertown village. It is a vital part the Summertown heritage, together with the roads below South Parade and the west side of the shopping parade. Its charm lies in its modest scale, which may have provided an early affordable sector to balance the larger Victorian houses of North Oxford.

Issues

- The scale – traditional and intimate – makes parking and traffic an issue.
- Apart from the Alexandra Park, which is self contained, there is a shortage of green spaces.

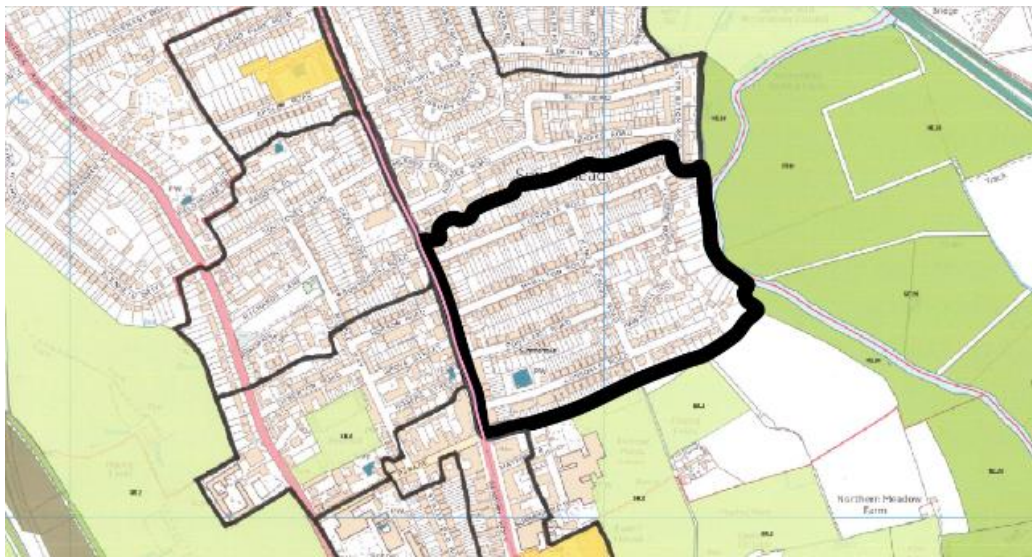
Assets

- Principally the location, close to the Summertown shopping centre
 - Seclusion from the heavy traffic of the two main artery roads
 - Several remarkable individual houses, some almost 200 years old
 - Good use of available space for more recent developments
 - The Old School building at the corner of Rogers Street, fully deserving its protected status.
- Alexandra park, covered elsewhere in the Plan.

Guidance for new development

- The 'in between' location of Middle Way could constitute part of a north–south cycle route, avoiding the main artery roads.
- Most streets could be enhanced by responsible traffic calming, using street greenery/trees in containers.
- The opening up of Alexandra Park will greatly improve the amenity of this area.
- The development of the various court-based apartment blocks demonstrates that old and new can exist together, provided that there is generous additional landscaping.

F. The Seven Roads



General overview

The Seven Roads are located to the north of Summertown centre and to the east of Banbury Road. They stretch from Lonsdale Road to Victoria Road. Four roads lead off the east side of Banbury Road: Lonsdale, Portland, Hamilton, and Victoria. At right angles to these lie King's Cross, commencing at Lonsdale, spanning the bottom of Portland, crossing Hamilton, and terminating at Victoria; Lucerne, running southwards from Victoria, parallel with the River Cherwell. Slight bends in Lonsdale, Portland, and Victoria Roads prevent the viewer seeing bus and other traffic on Banbury Road. Portland and Hamilton Roads have leafy hedges, bushes, and shrubs.

Lonsdale and Portland Roads, those nearest to Summertown, have some Victorian, but mainly Edwardian and interwar houses, with a few later infill houses. Hamilton and Victoria Roads have a mixture of Edwardian and interwar houses, with some later building interspersed throughout. Lucerne and King's Cross Roads have more modern houses.

Lonsdale and Portland Roads share the two heritage buildings near Banbury Road: the church, and its separate church hall building, with surrounding gardens and a war memorial. Here are solid Victorian and Edwardian semi-detached houses. Some detached, more recently built, houses on the 'private road' eastern end of Lonsdale Road are spacious and distinguished.

Hamilton, King's Cross, and Victoria Roads are more diverse, with a few Edwardian houses, many interwar semis, and some interesting modern building. In all these roads the roofscape varies according to the date of construction.

Hawkswell Gardens is a separate estate dating from the 1960s, containing bungalows, free-standing houses, and a block of flats.

To the east is the Cherwell valley but, disappointingly, there is no direct public route to this attractive green area.

History

In 1896 the tram route reached South Parade in Summertown, precipitating Francis Twining's purchase of the Hawkeswell Farm land in September 1900. Twining wanted homes for himself and his family, and customers for his shop next to the Congregational chapel on Banbury Road, so he bought fields to the north from a charitable trust (Mr Stone's Hospital) in September 1902, and sold them on to the Oxford Industrial and Provident Building Society. Hamilton, Victoria, and Lucerne Roads were laid out here. The Trust gradually sold the plots to individuals wanting to build their own home and perhaps another as an investment. Much of the intervening land was orchards. William Bridges, a founding director of the Building Society, built and lived in 'Hamilton House'.

Francis Twining facilitated the planning and construction of the houses in Lonsdale and Portland Roads. The builders used gravel from the pit near the river on the Hawkeswell Farm land. When this was worked out, the area was turned into tennis courts, which in the 1960s became Hawkswell Gardens. A footpath used to run from Islip (via Cutteslowe), along what is now Lucerne Road and down some disused steps to Lonsdale Road.

Issues

- Roadside parking in the relatively narrow streets creates a claustrophobic environment.
- Peak-hour traffic uses local streets as short cuts.
- The streetscape is cluttered with yellow lines, telegraph poles, and mixed-design street lighting .
- Some solar roof panels are visually intrusive.
- There is a lack of front-garden greenery in some recently developed houses.
- The change from owner-occupied houses to buy-to-let rentals risks a loss of community spirit.

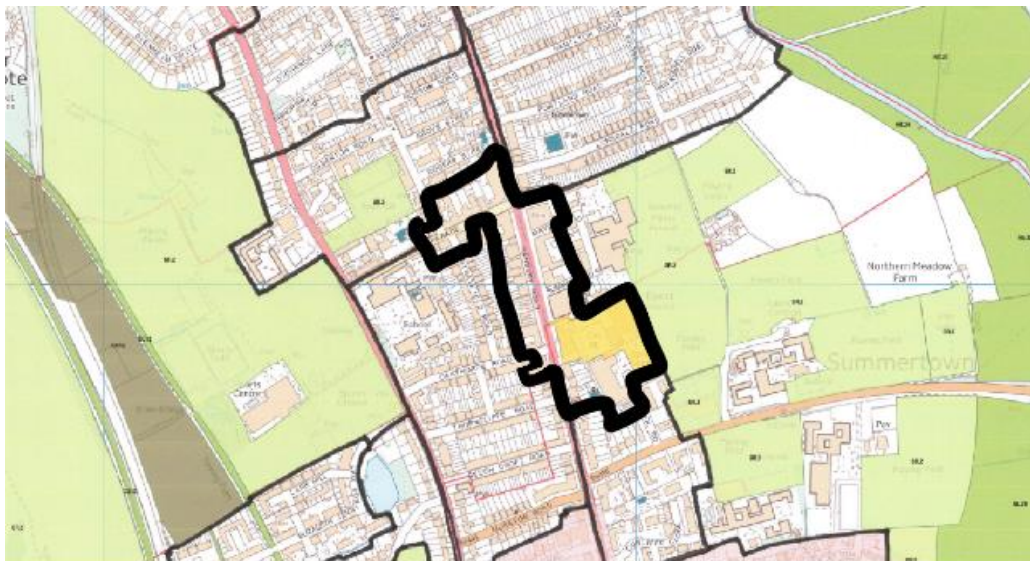
Assets

- Overall leafy atmosphere
- Houses set well back from the road, allowing for attractive gardens
- St Michael and All Angels' Church and surrounding garden
- Lychgate garden and King George's Walk (the path from Portland Road to the church)
- St Michael's Church Hall with War Memorial
- Cycle track from King's Cross Road to Marston Ferry Road
- Hawkswell Community Garden

Guidance for new development

- Resist replacing older spacious family homes with higher-density housing.
- Resist the construction of 'more of the same' pastiche-Edwardian semi-detached houses.
- Retain all existing trees and increase greenery where possible, including 'green' drive ways in front gardens.
- Explore possibilities for public access to the Cherwell valley.

G1. Summertown Shopping Centre



General overview

Summertown has the advantage of a wide-avenued, well-landscaped, and successful district shopping centre. The aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance its physical character, including key building forms, special buildings and terraces, its greenery, and street-scene features.

Both Banbury Road and South Parade are very busy streets, but the mix of uses has moderated the impact of the traffic and enabled the centre to be comfortable and user-

friendly: a destination at which to spend time, not just a shopping centre. Because the retail units are set back from the main road itself, wide spaces are created for walking, bus stops, cycle racks, trees, and pavement café areas. This is a huge asset.

The appearance of the centre, whether approached from the city centre or from the north down the Banbury Road, is positive and welcoming because of its wide pavements and trees. It is unusual for a city high street in that it is compact, less than half a mile in length from Marston Ferry Road to Portland Road. Both ends of the shopping centre are enclosed by residential development. South Parade is a specialised extension of the shopping centre, linking the Banbury and Woodstock Roads.

Building forms, scale, and architecture contribute strongly to the character of the centre. The Victorian terraces on the west side of Banbury Road and in South Parade form an important part of the character. The larger modern office/retail blocks on the east side of the Banbury road are of a reasonable scale and fortunately are set back from the broad pavement. It would not be acceptable for this type of large-plot development to encroach on the west side of the Banbury Road – except perhaps in the case of Suffolk House, a low-level block which currently houses Tesco and Sainsbury's mini-supermarkets. This building is not an attractive feature of the centre. Apart from Suffolk House, the west side consists of a distinctive Victorian terrace, consisting of pairs of shops with residential flats above, under steeply pitched tiled roofs.

South Parade is another early Victorian street, dating back to the earliest days of Summertown but much altered. Here restaurants dominate the street scene, but there are also two hairdressers, an art gallery, a kitchen design shop, a wholefood shop, and dress shops. West of Middle Way, the street becomes more institutional, with Summertown Library and two schools: St Edward's and Northern House.

History

Banbury Road was the main access route from the north to the historic city of Oxford. There was a turnpike further north towards Wolvercote and, in the early years, the spires of Oxford would have been visible from the high road. Diamond Hall, a public house notorious for highwaymen, was the only building in this area in the 17th century. Further building began in 1820, and in 1889 Summertown was incorporated into the City of Oxford. The public house is gone, but the ancient row of Diamond Cottages still remains behind the first shops of the Summertown Centre. Major development came quickly in the 1890s, by which time the west side of the Banbury Road shopping area had been built. The east side is clearly much more recent and was built at a time when pastiche-Victorian style was not in fashion.

The further development of Diamond Place should respect its heritage of place and name.

Issues

- When traditional shops become unsustainable because of high rents, or single-lease units become combined units, there is a risk that some of the character of the area will be lost.
- There is heavy through traffic, especially at peak hours.

- South Parade is used by drivers as a 'rat run' to the Woodstock Road.
- There are insufficient cycle-parking racks.

Assets

Landscape

- . Greenery on wide pavements outside Prama House, Marks and Spencer, and the Co-op on Banbury Road
- . St Anne's College premises on South Parade
- . The old stone wall alongside St Edward's School on the south side of South Parade
- . The old stone wall beside Prama House
- . Well-designed public pavement spaces

Transport

- . Excellent bus services
- . Balanced parking facilities

Buildings

- . A mix of retail/residential and community uses
- . Many small single-unit shops

Significant buildings

- . United Reform church
- . Twining's House
- . Dew Drop Inn

Public services

- . The Library
- . Two NHS surgeries and three dental practices
- . Public toilets

Guidance for new development

Ensure:

- . that the set-back and well-established plot sizes do not change, especially for the important Victorian terraces on Banbury Road and South Parade.

Retain:

- . the mix of retail/community services and residential use
- . single leases on buildings, to prevent larger stores coming in

Mitigate:

- . rat-running down South Parade, through traffic-management measures

Reduce:

- . traffic on Banbury Road, especially during peak periods

Protect and enhance:

- . the existing trees and green streetscene

- . significant buildings of local historical and architectural merit
- . community amenities, particularly the library and the NOA Community Centre.

G2. South Parade

General overview

South Parade has been the ‘village’ centre of Summertown from the 1820s to today, linking the Banbury and Woodstock Roads. Many original shop fronts are now cafés and restaurants; its community amenities – the Library and its sculpture garden, the North Wall Theatre and Arts Centre – are well used. Independent shops and small businesses thrive alongside residents’ houses. St Edward’s and Northern House schools dominate the street at the Woodstock Road end, and St Anne’s College student-accommodation block has a substantial frontage at the Banbury Road end.

The key challenge for future development is to maintain the balance of uses and populations that forms the character of the street.

The significant area of garage parking behind South Parade and BBC Oxford is a potential development site. It might be suitable for housing for elderly members of the community, because it is very close to shops and services.

History

South Parade existed as ‘Double Ditch’ before the surrounding roads were established, and it has a remarkable history. It became ‘South Parade’ in the 1930s, and into the 1950s it was the hub of trades and services: boot repairer, greengrocer (no. 39), funeral director, furniture dealer (35), gent's outfitters/draper (9), butcher, chemist, provision merchant, dairy, baker (1–2), two plumbers, carpenter, grocer, Post Office, sweet shop, forge (8), garden shop.

The Library and doctors’ clinic, and Prama House containing the offices of approximately 40 companies, were all built in the 1960s. St Anne’s student-accommodation block, housing 82 postgraduate students, was built in 1998.

Issues

Traffic and parking: this one-way street carries a great volume of traffic, including customers of local restaurants and businesses. However, parking is very limited, even for residents with permits. This results in congestion, with cars, taxis, and delivery vehicles straddling pavements and parking on yellow lines, making pavements inconvenient and sometimes hazardous. The parking spaces in Alexandra Park nearby are intended for park users but appear to be filled by local shoppers.

Assets

- . The mix of uses and population: independent shops, restaurants, cafés, businesses, and residential flats and houses
- . A varied streetscape with trees and shrubs (despite mostly paved front gardens)

Heritage

- The varied streetscape, with 19th-century buildings housing restaurants, cafés, shops, businesses, and homes.
- Individual buildings of historical and architectural importance:
- No 4: The purpose-built Co-op, 1899 (now vacant)



- Nos 5 and 6: stone-built (1823), part-vacant
- Northern House (1824, Grade 2 listed building)

Community facilities

- Library (and clinic) and Turrill sculpture garden
- North Wall Theatre and Arts Centre

Guidance for new development

- **Traffic and parking:** any future development must include parking sufficient for the users of the building and additional parking for residents and customers, to relieve congestion on the street.
- **Planning applications** must be assessed for their positive contribution to the character of the street, with its fine balance of shops, businesses, users, and residents. This is likely to be a major issue; currently the future of vacant properties at Nos 3/4/5/6 is unknown. Also the future of the parking area and garages behind South Parade may be an issue within the timescale of the plan.

H 1. Waterways Estate and Aristotle Lane Estate



General overview

These two developments, dating from the turn of the last century, are good examples of communities created through responsible architecture and the use of green spaces and bodies of water. They are both well-balanced areas with very light traffic due to their 'cul-de-sac' nature, which creates safe and attractive areas for all sections of their populations.

Elizabeth Jennings Way forms the main entry route into the Waterways estate, presenting a modern, civilised and well-planned streetscape which is well looked after and peaceful, with attractive planting. It is popular with families with young children, as well as with older retired people. The apartment blocks are a mixture of private and social housing, with many of the privately owned apartments rented out.

Lark Hill presents an architecturally distinct, quiet, 'mews' style of street. It has the eclectic feel of a village high street which has developed organically over the centuries, rather than over a mere decade. The interest lies in the variety of styles and the detailing, but the overall effect is harmonious.

Frenchay Road (from Hayfield Rd to Elizabeth Jennings way) is a tree-lined residential road with an interesting variety of styles and detailing within a coherent overall design on both sides of Frenchay Bridge.

Stone Meadow and Cox's Ground are integral parts of a well-designed estate with mixed private and social housing.

The estate is designed as a whole to appear varied but harmonious. There is a range of mainly traditional building styles within an integrated whole, built with good-quality materials.

Further south, along the Canal and across the Grade II listed Aristotle Bridge, is the Aristotle Lane Estate, which combines good-quality design with high-density housing. It consists of high-specification three-storey houses, designed as two crescent-shaped terraces, a straight terrace, and two roads of semi-detached and detached properties. All the houses are large, and the appropriate use of bay windows, arched doorways, and pitched roofs raises them above the level of pastiche. Materials are mainly classic Oxford yellow brick, with a few in red brick. All properties have dedicated parking. This upmarket estate makes good use of the available green space (Aristotle Recreation Ground), and its proximity to Port Meadow, the Canal, and St Edward's playing fields enhances the sense of living on the edge of the country.

The St. Philip And James' Church Of England Aided primary school forms an integral part of the area.

History

In the 19th century the eastern section of the Waterways estate was occupied by a brick works, and in the 19th and early 20th centuries by a major off-loading station for narrowboats carrying coal. Later on, there was a parts factory serving the Oxford motor industry, which also made engines for Spitfires during the Second World War.

At the corner of Aristotle Lane there was a well, which was famous in the 17th century as a destination for scholars walking into the country from Oxford.

Issues

- The area is not well served by public transport.
- Noise and vibration from the railway along the western boundary of the two estates are likely to increase with the projected railway-line development.

Assets

- A modern interpretation of the traditional Victorian/Edwardian North Oxford suburb
- Spacious layouts with plenty of greenery
- An environmentally important wildlife corridor connecting the two estates
- A general sense of peace, quiet, and security
- Attractive location near the Oxford Canal and, a little further, Port Meadow
- Well-designed off-street parking
- The pleasant lake at the entrance from Woodstock Road to the Waterways Estate

Guidance for new development

- Any significant changes to the buildings would disrupt and spoil the sense of controlled variety within the careful and harmonious overall design that is a hallmark of these two estates.
- All green areas and the canal corridor deserve full protection.



H.2 Trap Grounds: Town Green and Local Wildlife Site

Location

This wild open space, approximately eight acres in area, lies between the Oxford Canal to the east, the railway to the west, the Waterways Estate to the north, and the Aristotle Lane Estate to the south. Access is obtained from the canal towpath along Frog Lane, a footpath leading westwards, immediately south of the Frenchay Road bridge.

History

The present site is all that remains of a once very extensive area known as the Trap Grounds on the eastern edge of Port Meadow. The name (in use since at least 1790) may be a corruption of the designation 'Extra Parochial' ('outside the parish'), denoting the site's

exemption from the payment of church tithes; or it may indicate the former practice of trapping fish in channels leading across Port Meadow from the River Thames.

Frog Lane, which forms the northern boundary of the present site, is an ancient right of way which led to Port Meadow and was known for hundreds of years as 'The Upper Road to Wolvercote', and also as 'My Lady's Way' – a probable reference to an abbess of Godstow Abbey, which owned much of the surrounding land in the Middle Ages.

The present site was acquired by St John's College, presumably as a speculative venture, at around the time of the completion of the Oxford Canal in 1790. However, it was never developed for industrial or residential purposes, perhaps because of its tendency to flood. Instead it was used by the college as a rubbish dump until it was bought by Oxford City Council in 1965, presumably for future development. But the council allowed it to remain as waste ground and – despite its on-going use as an unofficial fly-tipping site – it gradually evolved into a mosaic of wildlife habitats, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife.

In 1996 an informal group of local people, calling themselves The Friends of the Trap Grounds, began mobilising volunteers to clear paths and glades in the woodland and eradicate invasive willows from the reed bed. When the site was finally earmarked for development in the draft Local Plan for Oxford (2001–2016), the Friends hired a barrister to argue that it should be exempted on account of its value for wildlife and for community recreation. When this initiative failed, the Friends launched a campaign to claim the site as a Town Green.

Current status

The western section was eventually registered by Oxfordshire County Council as a Town Green in 2006, following a four-year legal campaign which culminated in success in the House of Lords. In 2010 the eastern section was registered with the County Council as a Local Wildlife Site, and in 2015 the LWS designation was extended to cover the entire site. The whole site remains in the ownership of Oxford City Council and is now officially managed by the Friends in partnership with the council.

Character

This is the last remaining wild open space along the Oxford Canal between the city centre and the northern suburbs. It consists of two distinct halves, separated by a boardwalk: in the east, four acres of pond and reed bed – a rare fragment of a type of wetland habitat once common around Oxford – and in the west four acres of woodland, scrubland, meadows, small ponds, swamps, and a stream.

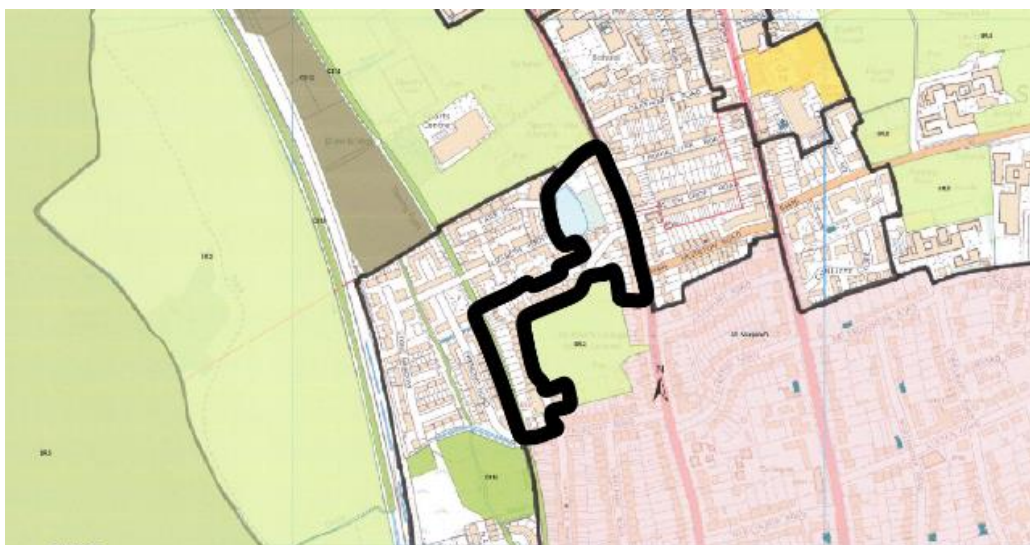
- **Spaces and views:** the site consists of a series of interlinked spaces, each different in character and enclosed by trees. Frog Lane, shady and secluded, leads westwards past Swan Pond and the main reed bed to a boardwalk which winds north–south alongside Castle Mill Stream through woodland glades, alongside Heron Pond to a bird-hide overlooking another small pond. From here, paths fan out to grassy meadows and

tussocky scrubland. There are distant views of houses to the north and south, but the prevailing sense is one of rural seclusion.

- **Landscape:** the landscape is defined by trees and water features. The trees are mostly 50-year-old willows, sycamores, and hazels, but in addition the Friends have planted almost 100 berry-bearing trees for over-wintering birds. The water features consist of the Frog Lane ditch (murky and often littered by beer cans thrown from the canal bridge); Swan Pond, created in the year 2000: sunny, open, and fringed by reeds that provide a haven for water voles, warblers, and water rails; the Mill Stream, with reeds on one bank and willows on the other; Heron Pond alongside the boardwalk, supporting a host of aquatic invertebrates; Tim's Pond, overlooked by a bird hide; Dragonfly Pool at the southern end of the boardwalk; and Kingfisher Pool in the wood. The grassland in the west and south of the site, now cleared of rampant brambles, supports a wide variety of wild flowers and many butterflies and solitary bees, not to mention lizards, grass snakes, and glow worms.
- **Uses:** the site is used by local people for quiet walks and contemplation, dog-walking, bird-watching, and blackberry picking; but it also has educational uses: children from the local primary school visit it for nature studies and storytelling sessions, and students from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University use it for field work (such as surveys of reptiles and amphibians) and as a case study in environmental management. Access for pushchairs and wheelchairs is reasonably good along Frog Lane, except in the wettest winters, and very good along the boardwalk in all weathers.

Fuller information about the natural history of the site and the activities of the Friends of the Trap Grounds is available at www.trap-grounds.org.uk .

I.1 Bainton Road and Phoebe Court



General overview

This road borders the north and west of the St John's College playing fields. The houses on the western side extend to the Oxford Canal via long gardens. Most are substantial, semi-detached houses with typical North Oxford steeply pitched roofs. Many owners have enlarged their houses with back extensions and loft conversions, visible from the towpath on the opposite bank of the canal. At the southern end of the road, a number of houses mainly date from the 1930s, with some modern in-fills, both detached and terraced. At the northern end, there are several large detached architect-designed houses, some very recently built.

Phoebe Court is an enclave of six undistinguished houses built in the 1990s. These all back on to the canal.

History

Bainton Road was laid out in 1906 and largely developed with houses of a uniform design by 1931. For a brief period there was a workshop for Morris Motors in the road. Pheobe Court was built in the 1990s.

Issues

- In common with much of the NF Area, parking is a major problem. As a result, many front gardens have been transformed into car parks, reducing the aesthetic and environmental amenity of the road.
- Bainton Road is used as a 'rat-run' for local schools, and the new nursery school will generate more peak-time traffic.
- The pavements are quite narrow and not level.
- Bainton Road is part of Cyclox Route No 5 but has no markings, which results in near collisions between cyclists and cars.

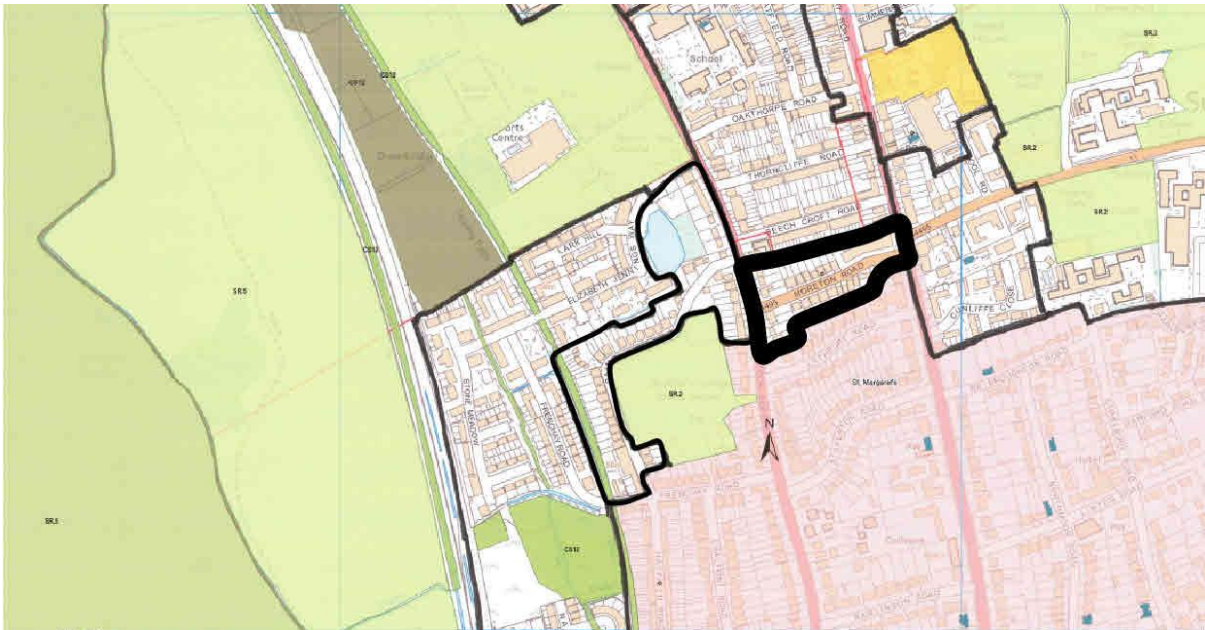
Assets

- A quiet neighbourhood with attractive open views over St John's sports field
- Proximity to the Oxford Canal
- Good access to public transport on the Woodstock Road

Guidance for new development

- There are no obvious sites ripe for development (the nursery school was the last vacant plot).
- Some in-fills in the gardens of large houses near the Woodstock Road may occur.
- The canal frontage is a community asset which may need to be protected from some overbearing extensions.

I.2 Moreton Road



General Overview

Moreton Road is an extremely pleasant suburban road. The houses are ideal for family life. They are perfectly situated for local amenities. The high quality of the architecture and the very green and leafy nature of the road all contribute to a good community spirit and a very stable community.

There is a strong building line set back from the road allowing generous front gardens, the original covenants having stipulated that the houses could not be built closer than twenty feet from the road.

The houses are mainly two storey with hipped roofs, giving a feeling of light and openness. The Edwardian planning of the road is very attractive. The original houses have stayed remarkably intact with hardly any extensions and very few external modifications. They have bay windows and retained their original (mainly) sash-windows.

There is one attractive 1930s house at the east end on the south side of the road and next to it some ugly Oxford University flats, an extension of the corner Banbury Road house, and lockup garages in what was the garden. Four late twentieth century houses have been built on vacant plots on the south side of the road.

Diamond Court is a block of retirement flats at the north east corner of the road. The block is on a larger scale than the original houses but the facade has been broken up with render and brick, and stepped to fit in with them. The appearance of the building is softened by mature trees in the front garden.

History

The Ordnance Survey map of 1898 shows a farmhouse and farm buildings to the north east of the land that became Moreton Road. In 1905, after the death of Henry Bull of Maids

Moreton House, the land on the south side was sold for the construction of five houses to cost no less than £1000 each. The OS map of 1919 shows most of the houses in the road had been built by then. A Carmelite Convent built on the site of the farmhouse was itself demolished in 1988 to make way for Diamond Court

Issues

Traffic congestion is a problem. The 3000 vehicles that pass up and down the road every day cause tail backs, noise and atmospheric pollution. Two twenty mph roundels painted on the road have caused a small reduction in traffic speed but further traffic calming measures are needed. It is hoped that the Woodstock and Banbury Roads Corridor Study will address the road's traffic problems.

- Residents have to stay alert for proposed developments that involve demolition of any of the Edwardian houses which would damage the character of the road, there having been three such issues since 2009.

Parking signage posts are unnecessarily obtrusive.

The tarmac pavements and kerbs are in poor condition making it difficult for wheelchairs.

Marked cambers of the road and pavement cause car doors to jam and cars ground as they enter and leave driveways.

Assets

- Architect (Frank Mountaine, Symm and W.H. Warwick) designed Edwardian houses, still fully intact.

- The road has seen considerable modern development in recent years and yet it has managed to retain its Edwardian character

- Front gardens of sufficient size to allow for car parking without affecting the pleasant feel of the road.

- Leafy and green appearance of the road.

Guidance for new development

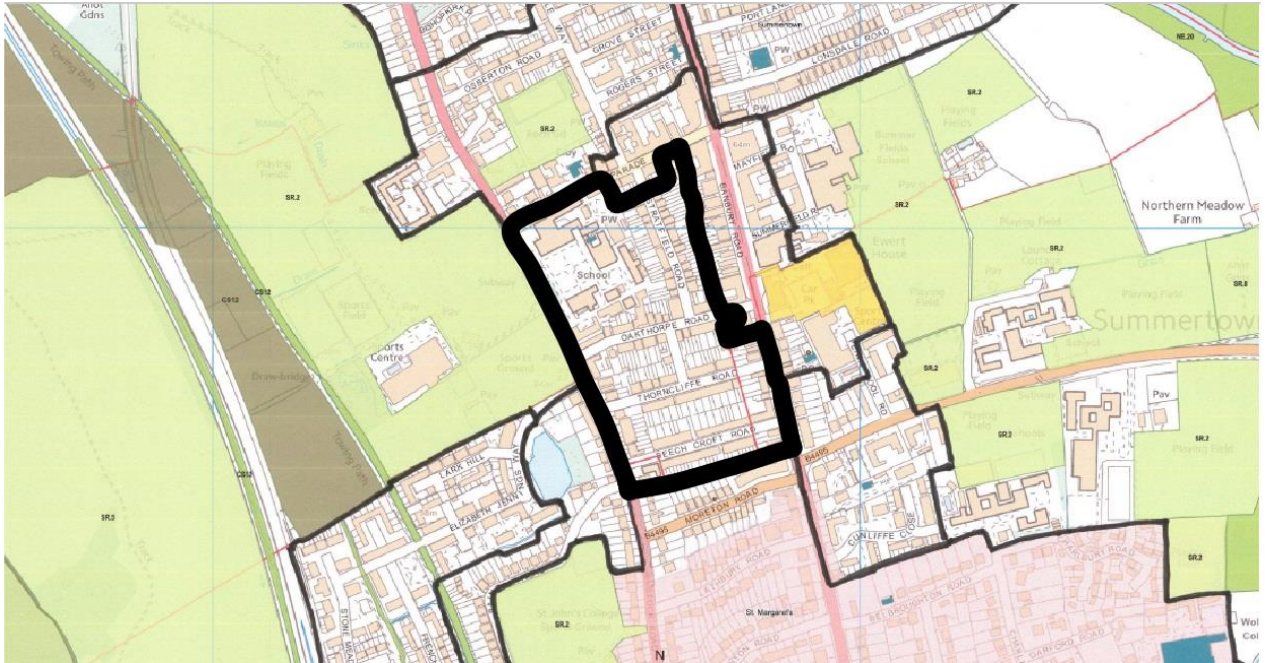
- Demolition of the original Edwardian houses should be strongly resisted.

- It will be important to ensure that any development is of high architectural merit and in keeping with the surrounding buildings.

- The leafy appearance created by the front gardens to be protected.

- Care to be taken with regard to garden walls and railings.

J. South Summertown Terraces



General overview

This area is arguably the most characteristic part of Summertown. It consists of the following four roads: Stratfield, Oakthorpe, Thorncliffe, and Beechcroft. Thanks to Victorian and Edwardian values and foresight, this area exemplifies the best of these periods. There is diversity in unity here.

The housing frontages are in line and are well set back from the road, due to a covenant in the 1894 deed which triggered the development. The designs followed various period-typical templates which, in almost all cases, resulted in the creation of two- or three-storey houses with bay-windows and gables. These houses are either semi-detached or appear in clusters of four to six.

The brickwork is mostly Oxford yellow, with some use of red brick. Carved sandstone details over doors, gables, and around windows, which at first appear standard, are in fact sufficiently different to make each facade individual, and this applies to the streetscape as a whole. Many well-crafted details contribute to the cohesive visual interest of the area, reflecting the original vision of the builders-developers. Fortunately most of these have been retained by subsequent owners.

The area is a textbook example of Victorian and Edwardian urban design that enhances the quality of living in this area and engenders community involvement.

With very few exceptions, the area's original character has been respected during later development, and it is of vital importance that this should continue. Green spaces are limited to front gardens, which contain trees and planting that need to be preserved.

History

Before 1820, when house building started, the only house in this area was Diamond Hall. In J. Badcock's survey of 1830, 'Summertown' was a small village of about 90 houses. It was a healthy place of open fields and orchards, and indeed some of the surviving apple trees are now more than 100 years old.

The land between Woodstock and Banbury Roads – from what is now Staverton Road to South Parade – was owned by Henry Edward Bull Esq., who started selling off plots in 1870. After the City of Oxford boundary was extended in 1889 and water pipes were laid, this land was quickly recognised as an excellent speculative opportunity. These four 'Speculators' Streets' were given romantic semi-rural names: Beech-Croft, Strat-Field, Oak-Thorpe and Thorn-Cliffe. The roads were built between 1890 and 1894 and were named by 1897. The 'Suburban Village of Summertown' of 1888 was already being transformed. Covenants required a minimum prime cost per house of £300 to £400, depending on location, presumably to maintain standards. Other stipulations were 'No ale beer...and no noisy, offensive or dangerous trade or business'. We owe a debt to the Victorians who provided us with an impressive legacy in the form of these streets.

Issues

- Competition for parking space is an issue.
- Front-garden conversions to provide car-park areas reduce the appeal of the area.
- Some street lighting is out of character.
- Shabby garages are an eyesore, for example in Oakthorpe Place.
- Proximity to the Summertown shopping centre and the streets' location between the Banbury and Woodstock Roads leads to additional traffic (rat runs) that are beyond the capacity of the roads.
- The operation of the one-way system and the provision of cycling facilities require further review.

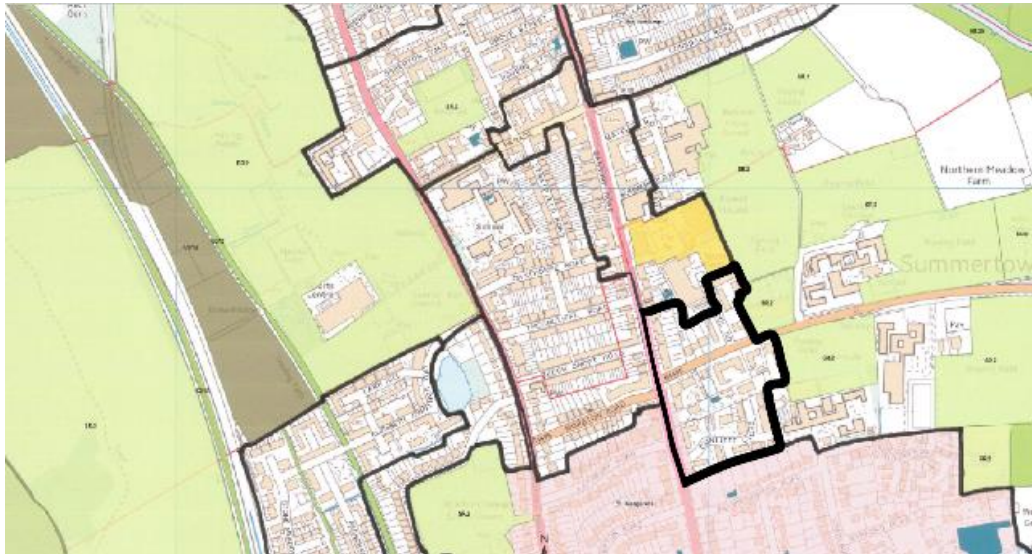
Assets

- A great community spirit with a good mix of families, despite the rising costs of the properties
- The harmony of the remarkable period architecture
- Proximity to community facilities, shops, restaurants, and public transport
- The 20 mph speed limit and traffic-calming measures
- Several historically significant buildings that warrant listing as heritage assets

Guidance for new development

- There is little availability for infill building, but, where this is planned, great care should be taken to respect the cohesive Victorian character of the area.
- This area should be appraised for conservation-area status, and current planning policy should recognise the urgent need for this.
- Any further transport planning should avoid increasing the traffic in these roads, and solutions for reducing traffic should be considered when circulation plans are reviewed.

K. Cunliffe Close, Ferry Pool Road



General overview

Cunliffe Close is an estate with only one entrance, directly from the Banbury Road. It has a unique style not found elsewhere in the NF Area. It was built within the grounds of Somerville House, a monumental mansion dating from the end of the nineteenth century, now rather dilapidated. The estate respects its origin in a wooded parkland area: magnificent trees from that era still stand, and there is an abundance of greenery. The housing consists of upmarket terraces, built to three or four designs. Some houses have balconies with either strong horizontal wooden or integrated iron railings. The houses are all painted white: a ruling colour which dates this estate from the 1960s. The layout is well thought out, with low-key parking spaces and the provision of separate garages.

The presence of **Somerville House** is signalled along the Banbury Road by a high stone wall, although the mansion itself is set well back in a wooded area and is not visible from the road. The De La Salle Brothers have an undistinguished modern building at the back of the plot. Their traditional garden adds to the tranquillity of the location.

Nearer to the Banbury–Marston Ferry Road junction there is a modern terrace divided into blocks of four well-designed and very large yellow-brick houses, each with bay windows, a pitched roof, and a front garden with railings. These complement the Victorian buildings along the Banbury Road. Car access at the back of this development solves the parking issue.

The area along both sides of **Marston Ferry Road** is dominated by a series of apartment blocks, of varying architectural merit.

North of the Marston Ferry Road junction, the Banbury Road houses have a typical turn-of-the-century (1900) character. Some houses are used as doctors' and dental surgeries. Behind the Galaxie Hotel, just south of the shopping centre, are **Diamond Cottages**, a row of four ancient houses which date back to the earliest days of the Summertown settlement. They are overshadowed on the east side by the high blank wall of the Ferry Leisure Centre.

History

The Cunliffe estate has clearly benefited from being built in the wooded grounds of Somerville House. The nearby houses in Banbury Road remain a tribute to the grandest building of the Victorian era.

Issues

The main issue is the complex junction of the Banbury Road, Marston Ferry Road, and Moreton Road. The crossing point on the eastern side of the Banbury Road is particularly dangerous for pedestrians. The traffic-light system causes confusion in some of its phasing.

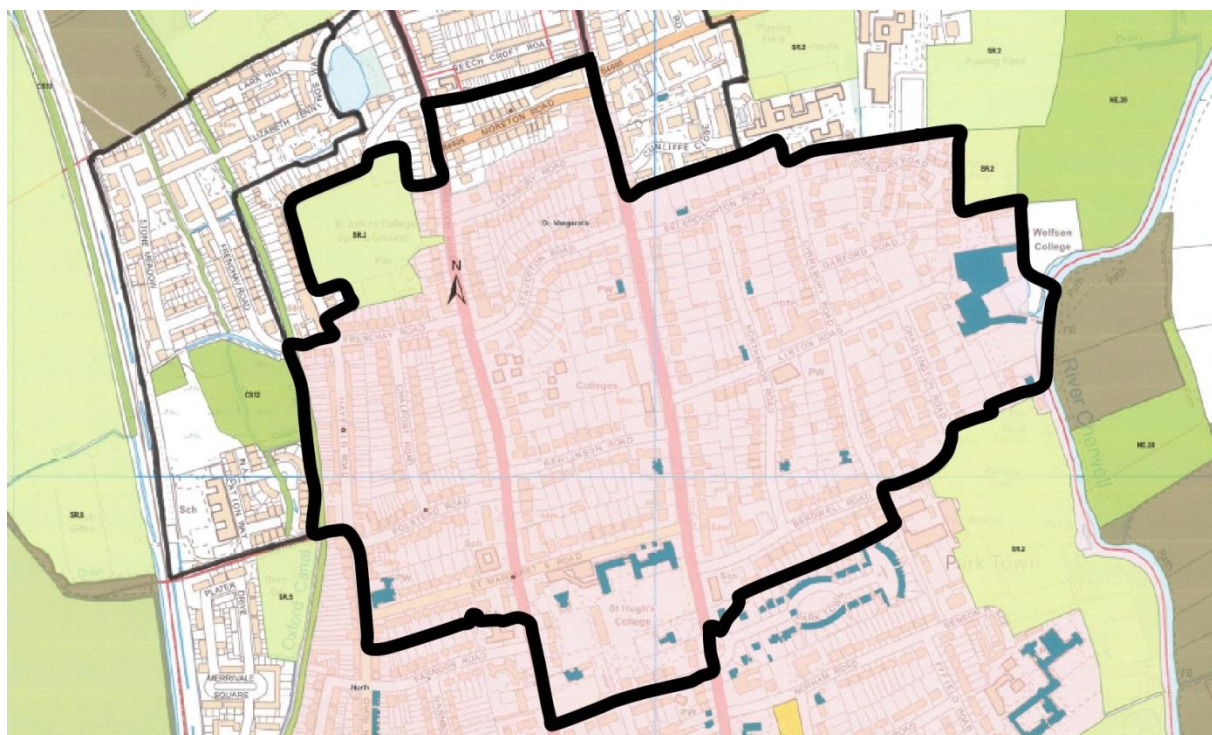
Assets

- The tranquillity and greenery of Cunliffe Close
- Very good parking for most residents
- Well-preserved heritage trees
- Recent designs complementing the area's Victorian heritage and respecting the generous off-set from the road

Guidance for new development

- The only opportunity for major development in this area would be around the Grade 2-listed Somerville House. If this was to be considered, extreme care should be taken to retain its historic woodland character.
- If the various GP surgeries are moved to a new facility, parking solutions will be required to suit the new usage.
- The historic trees should be protected in any new planning application.

L. St Margaret's Ward and the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA)



General Overview

St Margaret's Ward comprises more than half of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA). This is characterised in the existing draft NOVSCA appraisal, now a decade old and unadopted, as 'one of the most complete Victorian suburbs in England'.

See: https://www.oxford.gov.uk/directory_record/375/north_oxford_victorian_suburb

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 s.69 requires Local Planning Authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time, and to formulate and publish proposals for their further preservation and enhancement.

In response to pressure from the local City Councillor, an independent consultant was appointed to prepare a new conservation appraisal in Summer 2015. A date of January 2016 for the final report was given. As a result, the Neighbourhood Forum determined that a Character Assessment of St Margaret's Ward by Forum members (as undertaken in the Summertown Ward) would not be appropriate or necessary. Unfortunately, the consultant was not able to continue the project, and in August 2016 a new firm, Artemis Heritage, was appointed to conclude the appraisal.

Artemis' Appraisal, dated January 2017, is now with the Local Planning Authority and was published on 17 March 2017. See:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/.../id/240/north_oxford_conservation_area_appraisal.pdf.

A public consultation terminated on 14 April 2017, and the appraisal was duly adopted by Oxford City Council in 2017.

Nearly the whole of St Margaret's Ward was built on the St John's College Estate; but, since many architects were involved from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, there is a variety of house styles. Victorian Gothic, Neo-Jacobean, and Arts & Crafts predominate, with more modern additions: the occasional adventurous townhouse, but more frequently a Victorian pastiche or a suburban 1950s villa.

Artemis Heritage divided the NOVSCA area into eight sections, which reflect varying building styles. Four of these are in St Margaret's Ward:

- (a) the Bardwell Estate, north of Park Town and east of the Banbury Road: Edwardian and Arts & Crafts houses;
- (b) the Banbury Road: a major artery road bordered by vast Victorian houses set back in mature front gardens;
- (c) St Margaret's, west of the Banbury Road, bordered by the Oxford Canal: mostly Victorian terraces and semi-detached properties reflecting the social class of their early residents;
- (d) Lathbury and Staverton roads: early twentieth century.

The majority of the NOVSCA area is in St Margaret's Ward, and the remainder is largely in North Ward. North Ward is not part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The new Appraisal was keenly awaited by the Neighbourhood Forum, and it has informed the sections in Area L below on Issues, Assets, and Guidance for New Development. The Appraisal forms an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan as it relates to St Margaret's Ward. A separate character assessment of Hayfield Road, completed by local residents before the Artemis appraisal was commenced, is included as section L.1.

History

The St John's Estate was developed by the College in the years after 1850 to provide homes for the rapidly expanding middle classes: mainly well-to-do tradesmen and the retired or financially independent.

After 1877, when dons were allowed to marry, some settled in North Oxford; but the suburb had largely been built by that stage, thanks to the efforts of speculative builders funded by the Oxford Building and Investment Company. It is an Oxford myth that the liberation of the dons was the reason for the building of North Oxford.

St Margaret's Ward has remained largely residential, although, as the twentieth century progressed, larger mansions were converted into flats, hotels, student accommodation, and private educational establishments.

In the past 15 years there has been a further change which may be more damaging to the NOVSCA area than any in the twentieth century, caused at least in part by the steep rise in

North Oxford prices and the Government's encouragement of buy-to-let. The result has been a decline in the social mix which characterised the early NOVSCA area, a lack of affordable housing, and the creation of a rented sector prohibitive to those on an average income.

A further result has been the many small changes in the appearance of houses and streets in the conservation area. Houses have been extended, doors and windows altered, front gardens replaced by parking places and bins. The greenery for which North Oxford is known – mature trees, leafy front gardens, and glimpses between houses to vistas beyond – is being eroded. The Conservation Area needs to be supported by an Article 4 Direction if a remarkable 19th and early 20th century Victorian estate is to be preserved and enhanced.

Issues

- The need to re-engineer the major artery roads is raised time and again by residents. Currently roads are patched only when an accident to a cyclist or a series of complaints from ward councillors is considered serious enough to merit urgent action.
- North/south roads are overcrowded, often grinding to a standstill at rush hours. East/west roads are increasingly becoming cut-throughs, and there is a particular concern about the five roads south of Summertown: Moreton, Lathbury, Staverton, Rawlinson, and Canterbury. The 20 mph signs on side roads are not respected. The County Transport Plan does not address these difficulties in any detail, although, without substantial and expensive new infrastructure, principally on Banbury Road and Woodstock Road, the success of the Northern Gateway will be compromised.
- On current trends, buildings along the major artery roads will soon be the exclusive province of colleges, other educational establishments, and commercial enterprises. While these should be applauded for renovating several of the great North Oxford mansions, they often fall short when it comes to maintaining former front-garden areas – usually asphalted and used as car parks and bin stores.
- Owners of private houses also continue to replace their front gardens with parking areas. The removal of low front walls and vegetation changes the proportions of streets and reduces the sense that planting in front gardens is for the enjoyment of the whole community.
- The steep rise in house prices in the NOVSCA area has led to houses being (a) treated as capital assets, and often left empty by absent owners, and (b) extended and altered in ways commensurate with their owners' wealth but unsympathetic to the Conservation Area. A stringent policy on 'iceberg houses' would assist in controlling excessive basement developments.
- Infill building in back gardens, and in the gaps between houses, changes the relationships between houses and the street scene, leads to 'overlooking', and reduces the open, orchard quality of back-garden areas.

- Cycle routes are not properly funded or managed. Currently the cycle routes along the Banbury and Woodstock roads, and Cyclox Route no. 5, are only partly completed and are frequently without markings.
- Heritage assets need the protection of local listing.

Assets

- The Conservation Area illustrates the history of North Oxford, both in architectural and social terms. It is an invaluable but fragile physical expression of Oxford's Victorian and post-Victorian rise in academic, religious, and civic importance.
- Buildings on the main artery roads – Woodstock and Banbury – are now largely owned by institutions, but side streets still remain mostly domestic in character. The domestic quality of much of St Margaret's is a special characteristic of the area.
- There is easy access to:
 - i) Port Meadow, an SSSI
 - ii) The Trap Grounds designated as a "Town Green" and "Local Wildlife Site"
 - iii) the Oxford Canal and towpath
 - iv) Aristotle Recreation Ground

Apart from these public green spaces, there is a high degree of 'greenery' from front gardens, from glimpses between houses, and from trees planted in pavements.

- Access to public transport is excellent.
- St Margaret's has a refurbished and thriving community centre – the St Margaret's Institute – held on a 999-year lease from St John's College, and run by and for the community.
- A vital 'community hub' at the junction of Hayfield/Kingston/Polstead roads, consisting of a shop/ delicatessen, a garage repair workshop, a pub, and the community building – is soon to be joined by a small new commercial/office development.
- Several Grade II listed buildings and heritage assets are listed by Artemis Heritage in their Appraisal (See the list appended to this item.)

Guidance for new development

- The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the creation of a rolling five-year conservation management plan for the protection of the NOVSCA St Margaret's area. This should be taken into account in any development proposal.
- The appearance of the canal frontage along Bainton/Kingston Roads should be protected by controlling the size/light-pollution effect of house extensions/garden studios.

- Railings are now being put in where originally feather-board (close-board) fencing was used. This is particularly concerning in the Arts & Crafts part of the NOVSCA area, e.g. Belbroughton/Northmoor/Charlbury roads, where iron railings are changing the cottage-style look of the streetscape. Part of the reason for this may be the 'Railings Guide' produced by the City Council and Oxford Preservation Trust, which specifies appropriate railing types and inevitably suggests that railings are the best choice. This will not always be the case.
- There are very few sites now available for development fronting on to roads in the St Margaret's Area. However it is likely that large back-garden areas will be identified for infill projects. These need to be designed sensitively to maintain as far as possible the 'glimpses through' which are defined as a central characteristic of the area, both in the current draft Appraisal and in the new Artemis Heritage draft.
- A major feature of North Oxford is its 'leafiness'. As far as possible, and accepting the need for off-street parking, trees and vegetation in front gardens should be maintained and enhanced.
- Developers should start from the presumption that the NOVSCA Conservation Area is a heritage asset in itself, and that any development must enhance or at least conserve its character, as defined by the existing and new draft Appraisals.

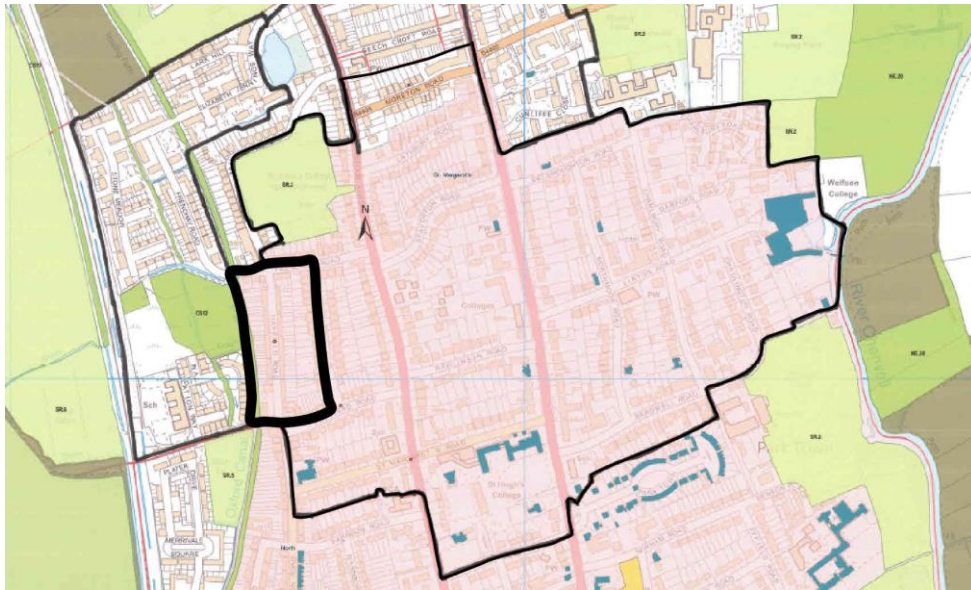
Grade II Listed Buildings in St Margaret's Ward

1 Belbroughton Road
 2–4 Charlbury Road
 7 Linton Road
 2 & 20 Northmoor Road
 St Margaret's Church and Vicarage
 First World War Memorial
 Canal Bridge over Aristotle Lane
 105 & 121 Banbury Road

Possible Grade II/Heritage Assets in St Margaret's Ward, as listed by Artemis Heritage under 'Locally Significant Buildings'

Cherwell Boathouse, Bardwell Road
 3, 5, 9, & 10 Belbroughton Road
 11 Chadlington Road
 22 & 29 Charlbury Road
 18 & 20 Northmoor Road and St Andrew's Church
 2 Polstead Road
 St Margaret's Institute, Polstead Road
 12 Rawlinson Road
 94 Woodstock Road
 106 Banbury Road

L.1 Hayfield Road



GENERAL OVERVIEW

Hayfield Road is consistent with the rest of the Conservation Area in that its houses are constructed of red brick, with slate roofs and stone detailing, but it has a uniform character that sets it apart from the surrounding streets. The houses are all well-proportioned two-storey buildings fronting directly on to the pavement. Built in symmetrical pairs with intermittent side passageways, they are configured in blocks of eight or ten dwellings.

The uniformity of the terraced frontages makes the variations from house to house all the more striking, notably in the individual ornamental stone carvings of fruits or plants set over each front door which were a signature of the architect, H. W. Moore, linking these plain and unpretentious dwellings with the grander North Oxford houses in the suburb that were also designed by Moore.

Unlike the predominantly leafy appearance of most of the suburb, there is little greenery in the street. Consequently the residents particularly value the pair of birches planted next to the bollards at the southern end, and cherry and plum trees in the car park at Aristotle House (due to be replaced when the site is redeveloped), which soften the urban character of the street.

On the west side, the back gardens of the houses reach down to the bank of the Oxford Canal. Number 57 has the only two-storey extension in the street, owing its existence to the fact that there was once a dairy in the back garden.

HISTORY

Hayfield Road is shown on Benjamin Cole's map of 1720 as a lane called "The Upper Way to Wolvercote". At the south end, from at least 1718 there was a hostelry, known first as Heyfield's Hutt, named after the landlord of the time. It was eventually rebuilt in 1937 as The Anchor Inn, which still stands today.

Commercial premises were (and still are) confined to this end of the street. Next to the public house were stables, dating from the eighteenth century, when annual horse races were held on nearby Port Meadow. The stables evolved into a hansom-cab business, and since the 1930s a garage, now known as Aladdin, has operated on the site. Next to Aladdin two shops were established in 1890 in a building currently occupied by a thriving delicatessen and newsagent's business.

Opposite the shop was a working coal wharf, constructed in 1789 when the Oxford Canal reached this point from Coventry. Until its demise in the 1960s, the coal trade operated from Navigation House, a large brick building on the site, which was eventually replaced by a large office building, known as Aristotle House, in 1973. (These premises are due to be demolished and replaced by four four-bedroomed houses, offices, and two flats.)

In October 1888 the Oxford Industrial and Provident Land and Building Society completed the building of 72 "model artisans' dwellings" to a design by H Wilkinson Moore, the St John's College architect, on land leased from the College. They were mainly leased to local tradespeople and sub-let to manual workers and their families.

The houses were gradually sold off as freehold in the 1960s. With rising house prices and increased affluence, many have been refurbished and extended at the back. In 1985 the permanent closure of the street to cars and motorcycles at the south end excluded the heavy lorry traffic that used to shake the foundations, and reduced the noise and exhaust fumes that used to penetrate beyond the house fronts.

ASSETS

The Anchor pub and restaurant is a valued amenity. Constructed in 1937, it is typical of public houses built at that time. Over the doors it has the original Hall's Brewery motif in metalwork, and the latest refurbishment, in 2013, uncovered the Hall's Brewery tiles to the right of the door on to Hayfield Road. The patio at the front contributes to the area's open feel.

The Aladdin Garage next door is a fairly low building set well back from the street, which houses the works, with a yard in front. While the building is not particularly attractive, it has the merit of not imposing itself on the street. On a gatepost is an attractive carving of Aladdin's lamp, by local sculptor Martin Jennings.

At 4-6 Hayfield Road the ground floor is currently occupied by The Hayfield Deli, with four flats above. The building is somewhat larger than properties in the rest of the street, but it has similar features – red brick, slate roof, and stone detailing over the door at each side of the building, very similar to that over the doors of all the houses in the street.

At the south end there is easy access to the Aristotle Lane Recreation Ground and to Port Meadow; at both ends of the street there is easy access to the Canal towpath and the Trap Grounds Town Green and Local Wildlife Site. All these offer green spaces and opportunities for fresh air and exercise that are greatly valued by local residents.

ISSUES

Of greatest concern to residents is the need to retain the closure of the street at the south end. The bollards across the road outside the shop ensure that the street is safe enough to form part of a designated cycle route for the many children who travel along it to the local primary and secondary schools. Concomitantly, it will always be necessary to retain the turning circle at the south end of the street, which is essential for the use of emergency vehicles and delivery services.

A second general concern is the need to retain or replace the trees at the south end, which help to alleviate the stark visual impact of the street.

A matter of future concern may be the aspiration of some residents to extend their properties by excavating basements under their houses. There are currently no basements in Hayfield Road; such a proposal would need very careful consideration, given the construction of the properties on the very edge of the Thames Valley gravel terrace, and the consequent risk of undermining the foundations.

GUIDANCE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

The following list summarises the most important features which it is desirable to maintain in order to preserve the distinctive character of the street.

- The human scale of the street, with an absence of over-bearing buildings.

- The use of red brick and slate roofing.
- The stone-washed or white-painted lintel above each front door.
- Windows and doors sympathetic to the original Victorian sash windows, by use of traditional materials and styles which echo the existing window styles.
- Original garden walls with their typical North Oxford red brick with half-round coping.

Some characteristics of the street have deteriorated over time, detracting from the overall appearance. It would be beneficial if the deterioration could be halted or reversed. For example:

- The stone ledge detail on the chimney stacks has frequently crumbled, and the original red clay pots have been replaced by a jumble of different styles. Restoration would be a welcome enhancement to the roofscape.
- Similarly the tiled partition ridges on the roofs with their decorative stone filials have in some places deteriorated markedly.
- On one or two houses, roof lights have been fitted to the street-facing side. The installation of further Velux windows – or dormer windows or solar panels – would spoil the roofscape and detract from the harmonious character of the street.
- Apart from the traditional postbox outside the Deli, the street furniture is unattractive, consisting of a clutter of street signs, ugly modern street lamps, meter boxes, and several metal telecommunications boxes at the south end. Over time these things will need to be replaced, ideally with designs which better suit the area, particularly the street lamps.

This character assessment, produced in May 2017, is based on a more detailed document compiled in 2014 by Jonathan Clarke and the Hayfield Road Residents' Association as a supplement to the Draft North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area Appraisal.

M. Woodstock Road

General overview

Woodstock Road, the A4144, is one of two main arterial roads connecting North Oxford with the city centre. It is a very attractive wide road with gentle curves and slopes, lined by mature trees and shrubs on pavements and in the front gardens of houses. The leafy green appearance of Woodstock Road is usually the first feature listed by anyone describing the attractions of North Oxford. Unfortunately this road is now dominated by traffic, with tailbacks at peak times. There is significant air and noise pollution.

Most of the houses are large detached houses built in the first half of the twentieth century. There is no dominant architectural style, but the overall effect is very pleasant. Many of the houses have had minor alterations, no doubt for practical reasons, but these have not adversely affected their appearance or architectural integrity. There is some later infill development, and in some places small houses and small blocks of flats have been built on larger plots after demolition of the original houses. These modern developments are often of Edwardian-pastiche design and of little architectural merit. The houses are partly hidden by the trees in their front gardens. These front gardens are large enough to accommodate off-road parking with ease. The property boundaries are a mixture of brick and stone walls, fences and hedges.

St Edward's School, located half-way down the road on the east side, is a significant collection of buildings adding to the interest of this important entrance road. The playing fields opposite are part of a smooth transition to the Oxford Canal green space. The 1960s teaching block, by the main entrance to the school complex, is a low point in an otherwise splendid series of red-brick Victorian Gothic buildings.

The Woodstock Road is wide enough to allow for three lanes of traffic, including a bus lane on the east side of the road. The pavements are wide enough to allow for a cycle lane on the west pavement, but currently this is little more than a painted white line. The tarmac of the road is in poor condition. The pavements, also tarmac, do nothing to improve the landscape. There is little good-quality street furniture, and no benches for pedestrians other than at bus stops. The double yellow lines, indicating no parking, and the white line indicating the cycle track, are obtrusive.

The entrance to Elizabeth Jennings Way has an undistinguished modern block of flats, best described as Edwardian-pastiche, on the south corner and a view towards playing fields and a small Edwardian sports pavilion on the north corner.

The streetscape is saved by glorious mature trees. Most of these are in front gardens, but there are four mature (and one replacement) lime trees in the west pavement.

History

Woodstock Road was first developed by successful tradesmen building a few large houses in the first half of the nineteenth century. Two of these three large houses remain. Henley House has been converted into Lynam's School. Functional school buildings have been built in front of it, but the whole site is well hidden behind a stone wall and superimposed hedge; Summertown Villa is a substantial Regency-style house, built in 1840, which cannot be seen as it is set well back from the road; The Avenue, built by George Kimber, the original developer of Summertown, was demolished and replaced by Bishop Kirk School in 1964. The school was in turn demolished in 1994 and replaced with Bishop Kirk Place housing.

Issues

- Woodstock Road works beyond capacity at peak times. The North Oxford Transport strategy (NOTS) predicts that in 2026 south-bound peak morning traffic will have increased

by 44 per cent. This increasing gridlock will be intolerable and makes no sense in terms of the city's economy or the quality of life of either residents or commuters. Traffic is made worse by east–west traffic to Headington being channelled along Moreton Road (B4495), a short residential road, to Marston Ferry Road.

- The character of the area is in danger of being eroded by piecemeal demolition of houses and overdevelopment of their plots with poorly designed pastiche houses. The character of individual houses is being damaged by unsympathetic alterations. This is another argument for including the area in a Conservation Area and protecting the integrity of these houses with an Article 4 Direction.

- Woodstock Road has very poor foundations, with the result that heavy traffic causes rutting of the road surface and potholes. Both roads require frequent patching and resurfacing. In the long term it would be more economical for them to be re-engineered. This would also provide an opportunity to lay a tramway. The rails for the tramway could be laid in grass, which would break up the monotony of tarmac and improve the appearance of the road.

- A well-engineered cycle lane down the Woodstock Road is essential if cycle use is to be encouraged. The present cycle lane is inadequate. Oxfordshire County Council proposes a Cycle Super Route down the Woodstock Road. This needs to be continuous and dedicated solely to cyclists, separating them from vehicular traffic and pedestrians. It should be clearly indicated by the colour of the surface, yet unobtrusive.

Assets

- Woodstock Road Baptist Church is on the southern corner of Beechcroft Road. The 1897 church hall is hidden by a utilitarian 1930s hall with a 21st-century entrance. It is set back from the Woodstock Road, its lawn and mature pine trees providing a pleasant green space.

- Keble and St Hugh's sports ground is at the north-west end. It gives a sense of space to the road, despite being partly hidden by a high chain-link fence and hedging.

- The attractive Arts & Crafts house on the corner of Lathbury Road was recently saved from demolition and redevelopment. It is in the NOVSCA area. The attractive, but less important, Edwardian house on the corner of Elizabeth Jennings Way was demolished and replaced by inferior Edwardian-pastiche flats. It was not in a Conservation Area.

- The leafy green character of the Woodstock Road should be regarded as a heritage asset and protected for the future. All but two of the trees on this stretch of the Woodstock Road are in private gardens and unprotected. They are vulnerable to residents worried about falling branches, intolerant of shade or fallen leaves, or just wanting more off-road parking. This is a strong argument for extending the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA) up to the Ring Road.

Guidance for new development

- A continuous dedicated bus lane from Peartree Park and Ride and Oxford Parkway Railway Station down the Woodstock Road to the city centre is urgently needed.
- More radical solutions, such as city-centre congestion charging and a tramway, need to be considered in the medium term.
- Respectful contemporary architecture should be encouraged.

N. Banbury Road

General overview

Banbury Road is one of the main artery roads into the city of Oxford, a signature entrance route, and the backbone of the Neighbourhood Forum Area. It is broad, tree-lined, and characterised by a series of grand, detached Victorian mansions at the approach to St Giles.

At the Cutteslowe roundabout, where the Banbury Road enters from the north, the route begins fairly modestly with low-rise housing and some elegant flats, shielded from the road by landscaped trees and greenery. On the west side there are two high-end B&B hotels. These and the large building next to them are a tribute to recent architectural practice, respectful of the road's heritage. On the east side, near Hernes Road, there are well-designed modern retirement flats.

The new d'Overbroeck's School site, soon to be completed, spans the Banbury Road just beyond the Squitchey Lane intersection. This consists of a grand refurbished Italianate Villa (formerly a Masonic Lodge) to the west, which is to become the main building, with a modern school complex behind it and a new boarding house opposite. Further down on the east side is the striking church hall of St Michael and All Angels, with the church itself on the next corner. This is followed by a row of Victorian terraced houses, many of them converted to Bed & Breakfast establishments.

Following some important commercial building on the west side (legal and insurance offices, and BBC Oxford), the Summertown shops commence. Here the Banbury Road is in a 20-mile-an-hour zone. The shopping centre has a pleasant, pedestrian-friendly ambience and draws in a great deal of outside trade. The broad pavements host a weekly farmers' market and are generally crowded with walkers, and there are public benches as well as pavement cafés. There are many essential retail outlets: for example, four supermarkets and two chemists, and several restaurants, cafés, a bar, and a popular pub. The area has a very mixed demographic, being frequented by local residents, office workers, and teenagers from nearby schools.

Beyond the shopping centre, the magnificent Victorian mansions of the internationally famous North Oxford Estate begin and continue all the way to the city centre. The high Victorian stone walls hiding the wooded gardens around Somerville House and the Fairfield Residential Home are worthy of note.

Banbury Road sets the mood for those arriving in a unique city and, with its numerous high-quality hotels and restaurants, encourages many to stay longer. It is arguably the finest of the city's arterial roads.

History

Banbury Road has a lively history. As a turnpike it dates back to the 16th century, and North Parade and South Parade (two attractive streets, leading off it, lined with galleries and restaurants) were named after the troop positions of the rival armies in the Civil War. Diamond Hall was a well-documented 17th-century public house along this route, reputedly frequented by highwaymen. Its name lives on in the area.

The Banbury Road became very significant towards the end of the 19th century, when Summertown was incorporated into the City of Oxford and was quickly developed. Victorian foresight and imagination then set the scene for this splendid tree-lined avenue, which is a fitting entrance to one of the most exciting cities in the world.

Issues

- Banbury Road is heavily used by buses, cars and cycles, all competing for road space. The splendid trees both on the pavement and at the edge of gardens prevent the road being substantially widened. As a result, various traffic-management measures need to be considered as a matter of urgency.
- The off-set junction with Marston Ferry Road and Moreton Road creates confusion for drivers and danger for pedestrians on the eastern side of Banbury Road.
- The approach routes to pedestrian crossings need reviewing.

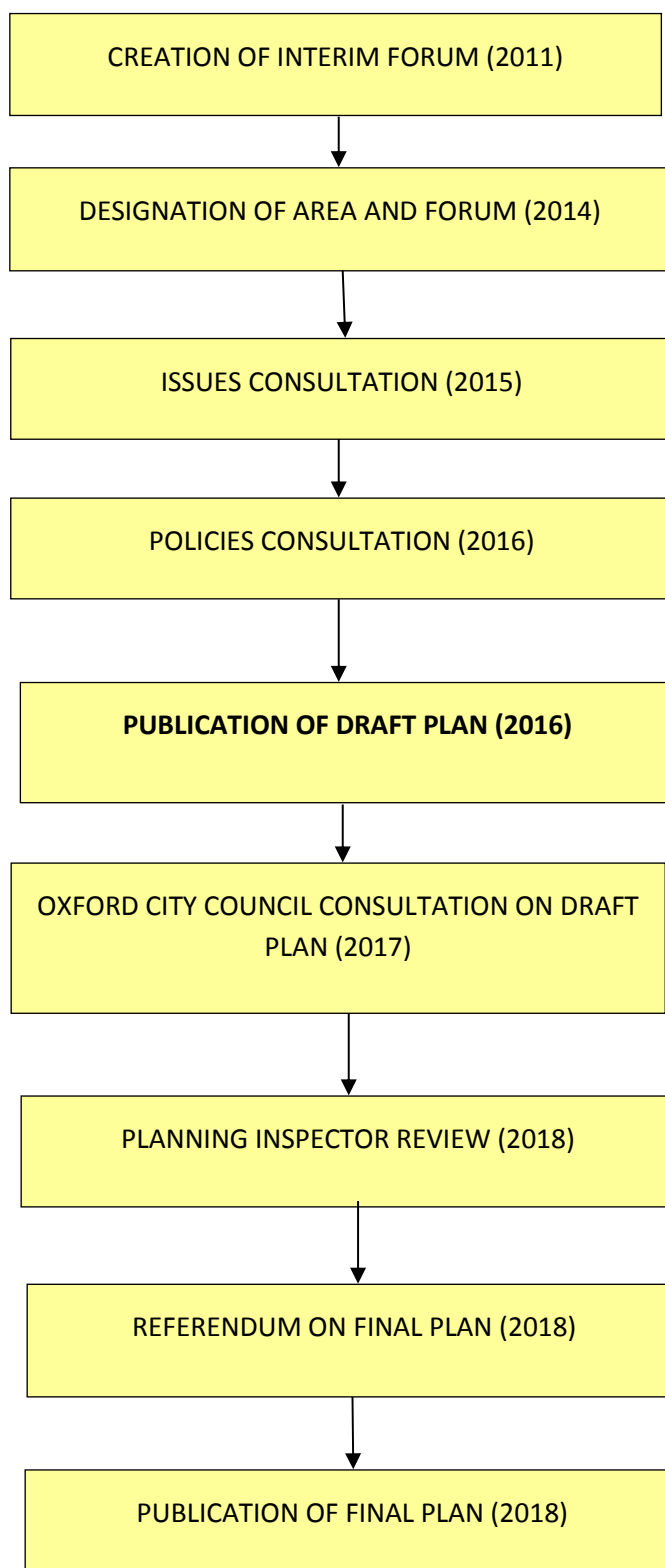
Assets

- Great overall impression as a gateway to Oxford
- Powerful Victorian heritage
- Well-set-back buildings leaving space for generous front gardens and pavements with mature trees
- Very good public transport
- Some responsible recent architecture respecting the road's heritage
- A truly green access corridor

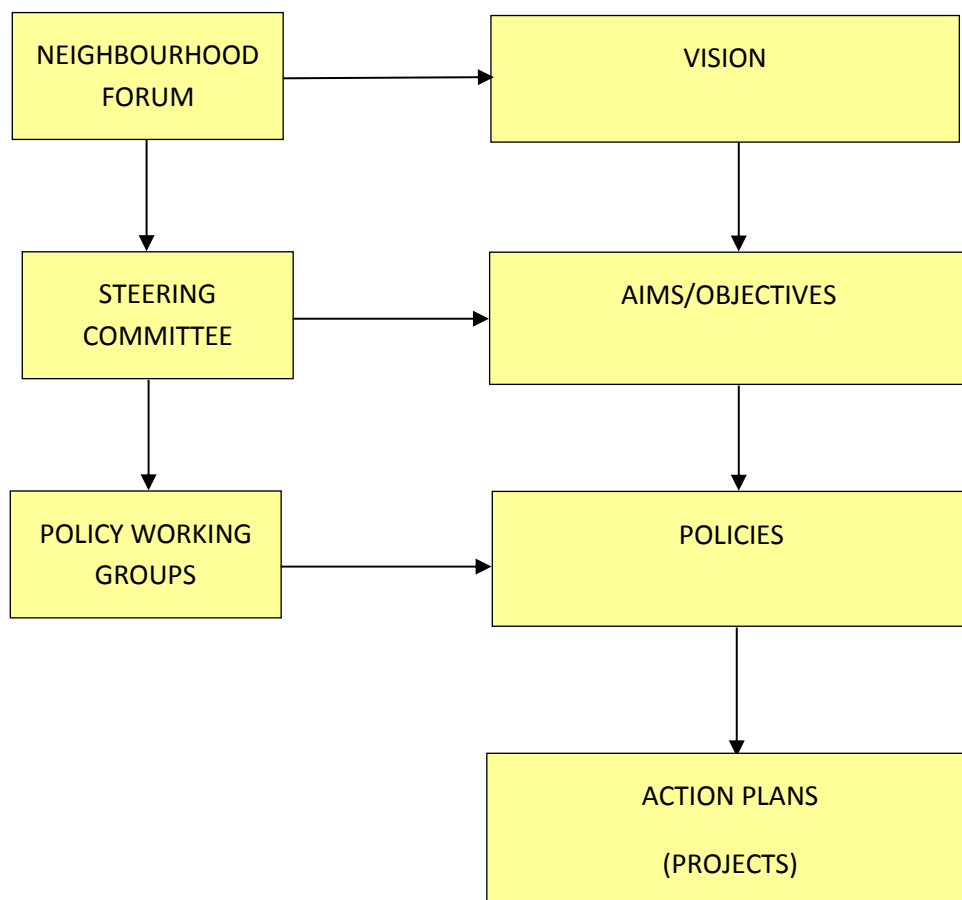
Guidance for new development

- All trees need to be protected.
- Potential new buildings should be set back and shielded by well-designed green frontage.
- Banbury Road is robust enough to accept contemporary architecture, but this needs to be of the highest quality if it is to justify its place in Oxford's impressive gateway.

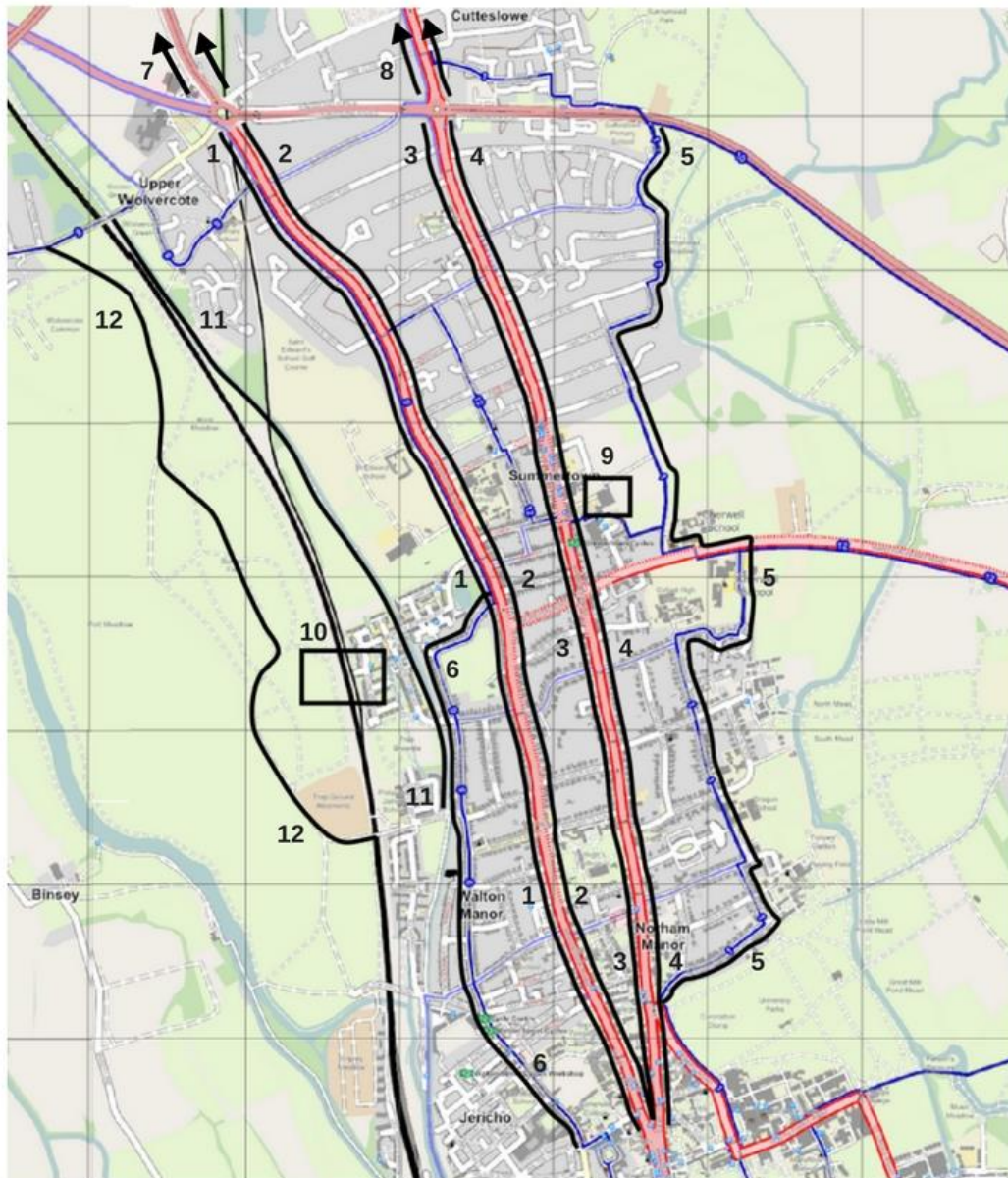
Appendix 5 – Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Process



Appendix 6 – Summertown and St. Margaret’s Neighbourhood Forum and Plan Structure



Appendix 7 - Walking and cycling map



Legend for Cycling and walking map

- 1&2** Complete Woodstock Road cycle route N/S which is protected from traffic and pedestrians and is continuous
- 3&4** Complete Banbury Road cycle route N/S which is protected from traffic and pedestrians and is continuous
- 5** Maintain Sustrans Route 51 N/S
- 6** Improve signing on Sustrans Route 5 and separate from traffic
- 7** Connect Woodstock Road cycle tracks with Northern gateway routes
- 8** Connect Banbury Road cycle routes with Oxford Parkway station and upgrade cycle way on both sides of road
- 9** Diamond Place. Develop cycle and footway connections in all directions and develop footpath to Old Marston
- 10** Develop footbridge from Stone Meadow to Burgess Field
- 11** Resurface canal towpath north of Aristotle Lane bridge
- 12** Reclaim bridleway (No 12) across Port Meadow

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Appendix 2: Risk Register

Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
							I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Legal challenge to the Plan for failing to 'make' the Plan at a meeting of the Council within 8 weeks of the referendum.	The Statutory requirements are that a decision needs to be taken by the City Council within 8 weeks from the date of the Referendum (7th March 2019). This report for the Plan to be 'made' is therefore being taken for a decision to City Executive Board at this meeting on 10th April and then onto Full Council on 29th April, both of which are within the statutory 8 week period. So the only slight risk is that the necessary decisions are not taken at these planned meetings.	Threat	Legal challenge received	City Council most likely to be ordered to 'make' the Plan as soon as possible at a Council meeting, which would be underway in any event.	08-03-2019	Tom Morris	2	3	2	3	2	2	Impact: Minor Probability: Unlikely	The City Council believes it to have followed the statutory requirements making a succesful legal challenge risk highly unlikely				

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To: City Executive Board
Date: 10 April 2019
Report of: Head of Housing
Title of Report: Project Approval for the development of a Homeless Shelter and Assessment Hub at Floyds Row

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek Project Approval for the development of a new homeless shelter and assessment hub at Floyds Row to further develop services focusing on the prevention and relief of rough sleeping, including winter shelter provision. To request further capital funding from Council; and to delegate authority to enter into construction contracts accordingly.
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Deputy Leader, Portfolio for Leisure and Housing
Corporate Priority:	Meeting Housing Needs, and An Efficient and Effective Council
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018 to 2021
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Give Project Approval to the proposal to convert this building to deliver the initiatives as set out in this report, and within the allocated capital budget for this purpose; Request Council that subject to the outcome of the forthcoming architectural feasibility work being affordable and within the proposed budget envelope that a revised capital scheme now totalling £458k (an additional £274k up from an original £184k) relating to Option C is included in the Council's 2019/20 capital programme (the funding of which is achievable albeit potentially from a variety of sources the ranking of which is still as yet to be finalised); Delegate authority to the Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to enter into contracts for the conversion of this building to this purpose, on the basis that in the opinion of the Head of Finance this continues to represent best value; and Note that the timely delivery of a new winter shelter service for the 2019/20 winter period is a priority in this project. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Risk Register
Appendix 2	Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The number of rough sleepers in Oxford increased by 510% between 2012 and 2017, with 61 people counted sleeping rough on a given night in November 2017. This represents a rate of 10.2 people per 10,000 households – over five times higher than the national average of 2 people per 10,000 households.
2. Whilst the Council's November 2018 street count showed a reduction in the number of people sleeping rough (45), an intelligence-based estimate carried out at the same time indicated that a total of 94 people may be sleeping rough in the city on any given night.
3. The Council currently commits £1.8m per year on services to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, and the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 sets out an approach to do more. This is in line with the Government's new rough sleeping strategy which sets out the government's vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027 (published Aug 2018, with an action plan and funding intentions published in Dec 18).
4. The plan for a 'rapid re-housing approach and assessment hub' forms part of Oxford City Council's comprehensive service development strategy to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, drawing on successful examples in other large cities. The provision of such a service should result in a step change in our ability to ensure that nobody has to sleep rough on the streets of Oxford and also will ensure that we meet Members' strong commitment to provide continuous temporary winter shelter for rough sleepers over the 19/20 winter period.
5. The identification of a suitable building to operate such a service in Oxford's City Centre is challenging. A hub is currently funded using a two-year Government grant, but this is daytime only and does not provide emergency accommodation.
6. A Council-owned building at Floyds Row is considered to provide an ideal location for an enhanced offer to rough sleepers, that would not only provide a winter shelter, but also a range of other services and short-stay accommodation options designed to prevent and relieve rough sleeping. We anticipate that with specialist support being provided, in a safe and secure environment, persons rough sleeping in the city can be supported to quickly progress towards sustainable independence.
7. Such a facility would form part of a wider service provision for persons at risk of rough sleeping, through a comprehensive range of services and dedicated supported accommodation pathways.

Proposal

8. The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 and the opportunity of assembling an MHCLG funding bid has enabled the Council to develop a proposal that aims to:
 - Increase the scope and effectiveness of ‘front-end’ engagement and assessment services
 - Provide extra emergency accommodation open to all rough sleepers, including those with No Local Connection (NLC) and No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) every night throughout the winter
 - Develop the range and effectiveness of sustainable Move On routes and options for individuals who are eligible for pathway accommodation and those who are not
 - Consolidate and improve the efficiency of accommodation and other services, including for those with NLC/ NRPF, and vulnerable groups including women and persons identifying as LGBTQI
9. The proposal is to use the building at Floyds Row to provide this new facility. This will require rapid mobilisation and the completion of building works in a very short time period.
10. The proposed services that will be run from Floyds Row are envisaged to be as follows:
 - a) Daytime Assessment Hub (part of 1 wing - daytime) - 5-20 clients a day
 - b) Winter Shelter (1 wing overflowing as necessary) – 20+ clients a night
 - c) Somewhere Safe to Stay (1 wing) – 20 clients
 - d) Staging Post (1 wing plus other bedrooms if possible) – 20 clients
11. Each service has different characteristics – for example different eligibility requirements and facilities. These will need to be reflected in the physical design of each service. Most of the accommodation will be very temporary, short stay, dormitory style bed spaces, ranging from roll-mats for the winter shelter to beds in the ‘Staging Post’ service. An indicative service specification for these services is being developed and this will continue to be refined through the co-design and commissioning stages of the project, involving various stakeholders and service users.
12. It is envisaged that the service will be commissioned to a third-sector provider, ideally an organisation with experience of such facilities and outreach to rough sleepers, that are also a registered provider. Additional agencies are also likely to engage with clients in this space, on an individual and group basis. The Council will monitor the contract accordingly, to ensure the Provider delivers the service as agreed.

Options

13. As part of the usual asset management activities of the Council’s commercial portfolio, officers have been considering various options for the use of the building going forward. In summary these were:

- a) Use as a homeless shelter and assessment hub - £180k p.a. rent (over 5 years)
- b) Continue to market the building to let for office use - £180k p.a. rent after initial spend
- c) Freehold sale - approx. £1.4m valuation
- d) Conversion to residential use albeit previous feasibility work suggested that this is unviable.

14. Developing the first option, three approaches were set out and costed (capital and revenue):

- a) Option A [Phase One]. Only one wing of the building would be developed. This would provide a winter shelter for six months per year, for 20 rough sleepers, and a daytime assessment hub.
- b) Option B [Phases One and Two]. Two wings of the building would be developed, in order to provide the service above, as well as an additional residential assessment wing. Both services could be operated year-round, providing shelter for 40 clients.
- c) Option C [All three phases]. This is the full development of Floyd's Row. Three wings of the building could be developed and shelter provided for. This would include both services outlined in Option B and an additional staging post wing, providing shelter for up to 60 clients in total.

15. Significant work has already been undertaken with regard to this project. A small project team has been assembled and various teams have supported initial feasibility work to prepare a business case preparation. This includes:

- Significant feasibility work of the building itself, including a measured survey; discussions with Building Control; the preparation of high-level costings for capital development and refurbishment, with good knowledge of the building and of the alterations necessary; a planning application for change of use has been submitted; and various specialist surveys undertaken;
- The Outline Business Case for the project has been approved by the Council's (internal) Development Board with support from various Council teams;
- The work required from an architect has been specified and tendered. Work is expected in a two stage approach in a very compressed timescale of 8 weeks, comprising of feasibility work, consultations and co-design to produce a concept design; then following sign-off, to move to developing technical drawings and a costed build specification;
- Direct Services have been sent the draft proposals, plans and timelines as advance notice of the request for a quotation, and to help schedule various trades in a busy summer period, whilst at the same time delivering to agreed budgets and quality;
- Revenue costings have been undertaken by the rough sleeping and single homelessness team, based on costs of running similar services. The rental income assumptions within this have been discussed with Housing Benefit to ensure that these will be acceptable. Full HB subsidy is expected on the current proposal (as the anticipated provider is an RP);

- A grant application is being prepared for the second round of the Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) funding (£14m nationally). This bid round closes on the 31st March, with an announcement expected “hopefully in Spring”;
- Conversations have started with the Oxfordshire Community Foundation and City Conversion partnership to explore alternative and corporate giving initiatives that might support this project;
- Meetings have taken place with St Mungo’s with a view to agreeing a contract variation in the last year of their contract (2019/20) to deliver this service. The service would then need to be retendered going forward; and
- A wider ‘transformation project’ around the adult homeless pathway, joint commissioning (countywide) and the inter-relationships of various projects is being launched.

16. The next priority for the project is to commission an architect and move into design and specification phases, prior to agreeing and commissioning the build contract in May 2019.

Financial implications

17. The headline budget position and the consideration of the 3 options is as set out in the following table:

Item	Y1 Capital spend	Revenue				
		2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24
		Y1*	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5

SUMMARY: OPTION A (Winter Shelter Only)						
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	184	329	284	284	284	284
TOTAL FUNDING	184	273	30	30	30	30
NET	0	-56	-254	-254	-254	-254
<p>The current capital funding (£184k) is fully utilised to deliver the winter shelter for six months. The identified revenue funding from reserves (£153k) is also fully deployed in year 1 to ensure operation within the financial envelope. However, there is a £254k revenue deficit from year 2 onwards, making this option unsustainable beyond year 2 without a substantial increase in base budget. The option does not provide the best value return from investment.</p>						

SUMMARY: OPTION B (Two wings for Winter Shelter and SStS)						
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	276	669	918	822	822	822
TOTAL FUNDING	184	669	833	645	645	645
NET	-92	0	-85	-177	-177	-177
<p>This option is the mid-point between Options A and C. Current capital funding (£184k) is fully utilised to deliver as much of two wings of the building as possible (a £92k capital shortfall at present). The identified revenue funding from reserves (£153k) is deployed across years 1 and 2, which ensures operation within the financial envelope in year 1. There is a £72k revenue deficit in year 2, increasing to £177k from year 3 onwards, making this option unsustainable beyond year 2 without a substantial increase in base budget. The option does not provide the best value return from investment.</p>						

SUMMARY: OPTION C (Full Development - Whole building/ three wings)						
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	458	719	1022	959	959	959
TOTAL FUNDING	184	719	1022	959	959	959
NET	-274	0	0	0	0	0
<p>All the capital funding expected to be required to complete the project is committed. The total building project cost, to open the full service, including professional services, fees and contingencies is £549k. (£458k capital is required, with £91k currently identified as being funded from revenue in year 1, for professional fees). £274k additional capital funding is required to meet the shortfall. The identified revenue funding from reserves (£153k) is fully deployed across all years, to ensure operation within the financial envelope. This option provides the best value return from investment, delivering the full service with best use of rental income streams. The costs assumed in this model will increase if the commitment to invest in full is not made prior to end April 2019 (when build contract will be scheduled).</p>						

18. Option C is the only option that presents a near sustainable business case over the MTFP period. The revenue analysis suggests that the scheme is roughly neutral i.e. self-financing given the weekly costs that can be charged and recovered from housing benefit, together with the initial anticipated capital shortfall being funded from earmarked homelessness reserves, a future Government funding bid or/ and available GF capital receipts. We are submitting a bid for government funding but will not know the outcome of this in the timeframe required to commit to the undertaking the works needed to open the facility by Winter 2019/20. The homelessness reserves could be utilised to underwrite the £300k shortfall to enable the project to be launched but if other funding is not secured, use of the reserves for

this project will mean these reserves will not be available to meet other homelessness demands.

19. Members should note that whilst this proposal seeks to utilise as yet uncommitted homelessness reserves, it is nonetheless our main objective that these are in the first instance not called upon, and are replaced by Government grant, or if used are speedily replaced. This is due to the scale of the unknowns that could be encountered during the MTFP period, namely the potential for the County Council to reign back even further on its reducing homelessness commitments, reduced Government grant funding; increased service demand (the number of people and the complexity of needs); and continued pressure on statutory homelessness services (prevention, relief, and main homeless duties/ interim accommodation provision) from new Homelessness Reduction Act duties.
20. We have made these resources available so that in the absence of any alternative capital funding the Council does not let this opportunity pass it by and a flagship homelessness facility, ideally located and easily accessed, providing the space and range of necessary, specialist emergency and longer term services is started in time to meet the 2019 winter provision timeline. There are significant risks to this decision and the parallel application for Government funding is also necessary to replenish the homelessness reserves resources, as is considered prudent and necessary to operate a continued effective service offer to homeless households in Oxford.
21. We are also working with the City Conversation Partnership now known as Oxford homeless movement to pursue further fundraising initiatives which we hope will supplement the services we will be able to offer from Floyds Row.
22. Over the MTFP period, further work is proposed to fundamentally review spending on the wider commissioning of rough sleeping and single homelessness services. The intention would be to ensure the most effective service delivery outcomes from Council investment, and ensuring best value. If the (continuous) review of this initiative demonstrates that it needs to remain a priority for spend, then the expectation, is that current revenue spend on other homelessness commissioned services will need to be redirected to support this as a priority going forward.

Legal issues

23. The Council has the duty to prevent and relieve homelessness under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The Council also has general powers under the Localism Act 2011 to provide additional community well-being services.

Level of risk

24. A Risk Register is provided at Appendix 1.

Equalities impact

25. An Equalities Impact Assessment is provided at Appendix 2. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for vulnerable and marginalised households.

Conclusion

26. That the Council should look to use this opportunity to undertake the new development of a Homeless Shelter and Assessment Hub at Floyds Row.

Report author	Dave Scholes
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Service area or department	Housing and Property
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Background Papers:	None

Appendix 1 - Risk Register - Floyds Row - 10th April 2019 CEB

Polly McKinlay

Dave Scholes

Martin Shaw

Rachel Lawrence

PM

DS

MS

RL

Project Manager - Senior Commissioning Officer (Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness)

Project Sponsor - Housing Strategy and Needs Manager

Property Services Manager

Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessnes Manager

					Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Controls				
Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence			I	P	I	P	I	P	Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Planning permission not approved	Planning permission not awarded or conditions unacceptable	Threat	Objections are raised against the application that lead members to vote against the proposal	Scheme cannot go ahead/appeal must be sought	11.3.19	PM	5	2	2	1	1	1	PM attending planning committee	Ongoing	Planning permission was granted 12.3, limited conditions were made but these have yet to be discharged.	90	PM
Building Control not approved	Building Control does not give approval to overall design concept	Threat	Design concept did not take into account building control	Unable to deliver concept and/or need to spend money/time reconfiguring	11.3.19	PM	4	2	4	2	3	1	Advance conversations were had with building control. Will seek to engage them with architectural consultants early.	Ongoing	To progress when architect appointed	25	PM
Design stage identifies further and currently uncosted build requirements	Additional and previously unidentified issues being identified during the build process that require additional works or spend	Threat	Build requirements not being thought through in draft design	Could increase time or cost	11.3.19	PM/DS	3	3	2	3	2	2	There is a 10% project contingency and a 10% build contingency, built into the costings. Feasability work has been undertaken to ensure draft design is based on building requirements as far as possible. Process of co-design will help further ensure this.	Ongoing	Contingencies have now been built into budget and feasibility work undertaken. Planned co-design timeable being put together	50	PM/DS
Design stage identified further planning requirements	Design stage identifies further works that require further planning permission	Threat	Original planning application did not forsee additional requirements	This could create delays on process & further risk of no approvals	11.3.19	PM	2	3	2	2	2	2	We have liased with planning to ensure that the initial correct planning application was made and we will be clear with the architectural team that external works should be avoided where at all possible	Ongoing	Original planning application approved, further discussion to be had with architect when appointed	50	PM
Further building control requirements	Building control identifies items required not currently costed - e.g. fire modifications, additional showers and toilets	Threat	Draft costings did not take into account building regulations	Would increase overall cost	11.3.19	PM/DS	3	3	2	3	2	2	There is a 10% project contingency and a 10% build contingency, built into the costings. We have done some initial work with building control, and will make it a prioirty when the architectural team is appointed. We will investigate similar projects to see how they navigated requirements.	Ongoing	Contingency built in, conversations had, and more still to have. Visits arranged to similar projects.	50	PM and DS
ODS costs excessive	Direct Services are not able to achieve (close to) the expected costs identified in the QS schedule of works from the architect.	Threat	Costs are unrealistically low or ODS charge is too high	Would make the project more expensive, or create delays if if meant we had to go to tender	11.3.19	PM/DS/MS	3	3	3	3	2	2	Architect has been made aware of limited cost envelope and overheads have been costed in project. Further discussions will be had with ODS about limited cost envelope	Ongoing	See description	50	PM/DS/MS
Phased approach	If project needs to have a phased approach in order that winter shelter can be delivered earlier than other parts of the service (for 2019/20 winter)	Threat	Increased costs of phasing (e.g. erecting barriers), risks to clients if building work taking place whilst building already being occupied.	If project needs to have a phased approach in order that winter shelter can be delivered by 1st October	13.3.19	PM/DS/MS	3	4	2	4	2	4	Ensure that phased approach is properly costed and that health and safety guidance is followed and given to architects/constructors as relevant.	Ongoing	Approval to undertake phased approach has been sought and so project team will actively proceed with mitigations. 20% project/build contingency included in costing should absorb cost of phasing	40	PM/DS/MS
Council governance delays	Council governance processes are unable to agree to move the project forward at exactly the point where this is needed	Threat	Council governance processes are slow and/or officers not understadning of processes and deadlines	Delay in award of and progression with build contract	11.3.19	PM/DS	2	3	2	2	1	1	A project timeline will be assembled so that the project team are aware of critical points and when submissions must be made	Ongoing	Key dates are being scheduled in and papers being prepared- e.g. the April CEB	50	PM
ODS build/supply chain delays	Direct Services cannot schedule the work to start as expected, nor can complete within the proposed contract length, or experience difficulties mobilising required suppliers - e.g. for a new boiler.	Threat	ODS not prepared and/or timeframe unrealistic and/or suppliers not mobilised quickly enough	Would create delays on the project and delay opening	11.3.19	PM/DS	4	3	3	3	2	3	Advance planning, consideration of a phased approach to delivery and internal discussions with ODS to make them aware of timeframe and prepare to deliver project. Advance planning for supply chain issues - e.g. being aware of lead in time required to source new boiler.	Ongoing	Initial discussions taken forwards with ODS. Phasing still being considered	30	DS/MS

QS delays	QS requires longer than a week to cost the works schedule	Threat	Timeline unrealistic or architect does not appoint QS with sufficient time and/or expertise	Would create delays on the project	11.3.19	PM/DS	2	4	2	3	2	2	The limited timeframe has been made very clear in the tender and will further be made clear to the architectural team who will be closely managed by the client to ensure that appointment of QS is not delayed	Ongoing	Further discussions to be had once architect appointed	50	PM/DS
ODS tender delays	Direct Services require more than a week to provide a costed tender	Threat	Timeline unrealistic or ODS do not have sufficient time and/or expertise	Would create delays on the project	11.3.19	DS/MS	2	3	2	3	2	2	Advance planning and internal discussions to make clear to ODS that timeframe is had	Ongoing	Further discussions to be had with ODS	30	DS/MS
Poor architectural quality	Architects firm does not complete the work to the required standard	Threat	Architects do not have sufficient expertise or time. Client does not instruct sufficiently	Could mean project of poor quality	11.3.19	PM/DS	4	3	4	2	2	2	A tendering process has been undertaken to ensure that a high quality firm is selected, and a draft specification written to ensure the brief is clear. They will be managed closely throughout the process by a client who has sufficient understanding of project requirements.	Ongoing	Bids are being evaluated on 13/3 and 14/3, draft spec has been given. Project timeline for first two phases is being constructed to ensure high client contact	50	PM/DS
Architectural delay	Architects firm does not complete the work in the required timeframe	Threat	Architects do not have sufficient time. Client does not manage sufficiently, or timeframe unrealistic	Would create delays on the project	11.3.19	PM/DS	3	3	3	3	2	2	The limited timeframe has been made very clear in the tender and will further be made clear when architects appointed, with a timetable laid out from the start. The client will manage the architects throughout the design process, to ensure they stay on track.	Ongoing	To progress further when architect appointed. Project timeline for first two phases is being constructed to ensure that tight timelines are stuck to	50	PM/DS
Procurement delay	Use of the portal creates delays in process	Threat	Portal has minimum time requirements	Would create delays on the project	11.3.19	PM	2	4	0	0	0	0	Solved - timeline reflects accurate speed of procurement which is not creating delays	Ongoing	Solved	100	PM/RL
Project not used by clients	Client refusal to use project/insufficient engagement	Threat	Poor reputation, design creates risks for clients	Project cannot reduce rough sleeping numbers as hoped	13.3.19	PM/RL	3	3	3	3	2	2	Clients are engaged in design of project, to ensure it reflects service user needs. All rough sleeping data indicated high levels of need for this service. Street engagement approaches will be amended to reflect this new provision, as will the relationship between this service and others in the adult homeless pathways/ other pathways.	Ongoing	Co-design and consultation being built into design process	50	PM/RL
HB income insufficient 134	Insufficient income from housing benefit	Threat	Rate card is knocked back for being excessive. Claims are not made and/or clients are not followed up for payment	Scheme is forced to draw on reserves more than intended	13.3.19	PM/RL	4	4	3	2	2	2	Clients will not be asked to pay a direct service charge in the 72h SSTS service. The service specification will include making HB claims as a specific role requirement. Voids and bad debt provision have already been factored into calculations and HB Service Manager has been consulted on scheme and agrees with the concept/ HBV eligibility expectations	Ongoing	Further work to be done in determining rate card and spec, however positive foundations have been laid	75	PM/RL
Antisocial/harmful behaviour	Clients using project behave in a way that has impacts on other clients in the project and on the surrounding area/city centre	Threat	Antisocial behaviour of clients is not appropriately managed by service providers, design of building facilitates antisocial behaviour	Scheme gets a bad reputation amongst rough sleepers and amongst the public/neighbours which takes officer time to resolve and decreases project outcomes, clients are scared to use it and continue to sleep rough, major incidents happen which gives poor reputation and puts people at risk	13.3.19	PM/RL	3	4	3	3	3	2	Design will seek to include features that help provide a safe environment and reduce anti-social behaviour. Specification will include an anti-social behaviour management plan and stakeholder engagement	Ongoing	Architects spec includes concepts such as PIE, which will help to design a safe environment. ASB management plan will be based on work already undertaken at Bonn Square	50	PM/RL
Demand too high/Supply too low	Too many rough sleepers need to use the service and it does not have capacity, resulting in waiting lists	Threat	The number of rough sleepers increases more than anticipated or move-through the project is insufficient	The project does not have (or is perceived not to have) the expected impact on reducing numbers of rough sleepers, and members and public call for additional initiatives which cannot be funded.	13.3.19	PM/RL	2	4	2	4	2	3	Demand modelling for service, flexible capacity, flexible approach to commissioning of other services as required - subject to funding constraints. Tight management of adult homeless pathway, of voids etc, to ensure maximum throughput	Ongoing	Work has started on maximising effectiveness of services and adult homeless pathway - more to be undertaken	30	PM/RL
Demand too low/supply too high	There are not enough clients in need to fill the capacity of the service	Threat	Lower numbers of rough sleepers than expected. Particularly a risk in later years of the project, where we hope demand will decrease	Number of clients too low means insufficient housing benefit income	13.3.19	PM/RL	3	2	3	2	1	2	Other options for use of the space to be identified so that some space can continue to attract income without the entire service needing to be decommissioned. Staff numbers to be flexible, by some posts being awarded on temporary contracts	Ongoing	Other options for income generation/use of space are still being explored	30	PM/RL

Capital costs shortfall	The funds required to build the project cannot be met from income sources and so need to be covered by housing reserves.	Threat	Unsuccessful bid to MHCLG and failure of fundraising attempts	Housing reserves reduce significantly and by the end of the current MTFP period, the Council would need to assess homelessness risks against the size of the reserves and potentially make financial adjustments to improve the position	13.3.19	PM/RL	3	3	3	2	3	1	Bid being submitted to RRP Fund. Advice of RS advisor will be sought prior to submitting bid to ensure maximum chance of success. External trusts (e.g. OCF) pursued for fundraising opportunities.	Ongoing	Waiting to hear from OCF. Will be making bid fo RRP by end of March	50	PM/RL
Provider (revenue) costs increase	A service provider cannot be identified to to provide the service specified within the cost envelope envisaged	Threat	Unrealistic demands from service provider, poor relationship and/or negotiation between client and service provider, unrealistic cost estimates from client	Service revenue costings increase without income to meet them and/or reduced service offer must be put in place	13.3.19	PM/RL	4	4	3	3	3	2	Advice of initial service provider is being sought, so they can provide inut into costings which appear realistic and appropriate. Cost information from comparable services have been used, with the staff team required and FTEs considered	Ongoing		50	PM/RL
Revenue cost shortfalls	The funds required to keep the service running cannot be met from income	Threat	Other services (e.g. SWEP, sit-up) cannot be decommissioned as expected. Limited income can be sourced using outdoor space.	Required service costs cannot be met meaning that service offer needs to be reduced or increased draw on housing reserves	13.3.19	PM/RL	4	4	3	4	2	2	Alternative options to be identified for raising income. Only limited assumptions made about services that can be decommissioned (e.g. sit-up will continue for all of 19/20). Detailed financial modelling has already been undertaken through the outline business case and project management processes	Ongoing	Further options to be explored for raising income, especially given that it has now been identified that the numbre of car parking spaces will likely need to be reduced according to planning conditions	50	PM/RL/DS
Poor service outcomes	The service does not suceed in moving people off of the street and into sustained positive outcomes	Threat	Poor performance by service provider, insufficient enablers (e.g. poor sytems, limited availability of move-on options, staffing issues)	Service attains a poor reputation and only has limited success in ensuring that nobody has to sleep rough on streets of Oxford	13.3.19	PM/RL	3	3	3	3	3	2	Tightly specified service specification with clear monitoring arrangements in place to ensure outcomes are achieved. Broader transformation programme of work to ensure that enablers are in place - e.g. expansion of move on accomodation	Ongoing	Further work to do on wider transformation programme and on specifying and defining service outcomes and measurements but we have a good base to progress from	30	PM/RL
Difficulty in mobilising service provider	Service Provider does not have staff and sufficient logistics in place in order to open service by early winter.	Threat	Service Provider is unable to mobilise sufficiently in order to provide service specified, and on time, due to poor time management and planning, any legal difficulties (e.g. TUPE implications), or unrealistic demands from the Client	Service cannot be provided on time	13.3.19	PM/RL	4	4	4	3	3	2	Early and consistent consultation with service provider, quick resolution by Client to any issues that arise, advice sought promptly and as needed, Client to provide realistic timeframe and mitigations for delays in getting to full staffing capacity	Ongoing	Earily discussions have been had with service provider who are aware of timeframe. Advice being sought on legal implications e.g TUPE	30	PM/RL
Dissatisfaction from other local stakeholders	Other providers may challenge the approach of Client not initially procuring the service	Threat	Initial service provision will not be procured - instead, existing contract will be modified	Other providers service performance in other projects declines. RS&SH team members time is taken up in resolving disputes. Potential (though unlikely) challenge.	13.3.19	PM/RL	2	3	2	3	1	2	Maintain good relationships with other service providers and give them some input into project. Seek legal/procurement advice on liklihood and basis for any challenge. Seek to tender the new contract from year 2 on.	Ongoing	Other service providers being made aware of approach to be taken and being included in discussions about other ways they can contribute	40	PM/RL

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Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment – Floyds Row - CEB 10th April 2019

1. Which group (s) of people has been identified as being disadvantaged by your proposals?
What are the equality impacts?

No groups have been identified as being disadvantaged by this proposal. The initiative recommended focuses on better meeting the needs of rough sleepers and vulnerable homeless persons through ensuring access to emergency short-stay accommodation and new engagement and assessment services.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

The service specification for this service is being designed, including the interface between this and other services in the adult homeless pathway. Consideration as to the protected characteristics of customers is considered within this process, and action taken to provide the most appropriate assistance to customers circumstances and needs. The new services proposed offer access to more clients than previously, including those rough sleeping in Oxford but without local connection or recourse to public funds. The need to ensure the safety and security of all persons using the building is key, recognising that the services will be assisting highly vulnerable people, many with complex needs, with a key requirement being the safety and needs of vulnerable women and persons who may identify as LGBTQI+. The design brief also requires effective disabled access provision to be made to all services.

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

No groups have been identified as being disadvantaged by this proposal, and it is expected to have a positive impact on many vulnerable people as outlined. As much co-design will be incorporated into initial designs as the timescale for rapid delivery will allow, and further service user engagement opportunities are to be identified and exploited in later phases of this work, and in the operation of the services themselves.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

No adverse impacts, relating to protected characteristics, have been identified.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

All plans and requirements will be monitored throughout the development period, and through regular contract management and monitoring once the new services are commissioned.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Dave Scholes, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager. Date: March 2019

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Minutes of a meeting of the CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD on Wednesday 13 March 2019

www.oxford.gov.uk



Committee members:

Councillor Brown (Chair)

Councillor Turner

Councillor Clarkson

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Tidball

Councillor Linda Smith (Deputy Leader)

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Hayes

Councillor Rowley

Councillor Upton

Officers:

Gordon Mitchell, Chief Executive

Caroline Green, Assistant Chief Executive

Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer

Richard Adams, Community Safety Service Manager

Tanya Bandekar, Service Manager Revenue & Benefits

Andrew Brown, Committee and Member Services Manager

Rachel Lawrence, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager

Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager

Carolyn Ploszynski, Planning Policy and Place Manager

Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer

Claire Sutton, Team Leader, Design & Heritage Team

Anna Winship, Management Accountancy Manager

Ian Wright, Head of Service Regulatory Services and Community Safety

John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Andrew Gant

Apologies:

No apologies were received

157.Declarations of Interest

None.

158.Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public

None.

159. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Board's agenda

Councillor Gant addressed the Board in relation to items 12 and 16 on the agenda. (Re-designation of Neighbourhood Forums & their Neighbourhood Areas and Review of Civic Flag Flying Arrangements respectively). In relation to the former he was pleased to note the very positive outcome of the recent referendum on the proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan put forward by the Summertown & St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum and placed on record his thanks for the officers who had supported the process in 4 polling stations. In relation to the latter he was disappointed to see the proposed removal of a requirement for new flag flying requests to be formally considered by a cross-party group and asked that it be restored.

The Chair was not minded to change the proposed revision to the protocol for flag flying. The proposals before the Board sought to reduce the need for such occasional decisions in the first place but to enable them to be made more swiftly if the need did arise. She however reassured Councillor Gant that she would take soundings from opposition leaders before such a decision was finally made.

160. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None.

161. Items raised by Board Members

None.

162. Scrutiny Committee Reports

The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on Approach to City Centre Public Space Protection Orders) and the Board's draft response were before the Board as were the Committee's recommendations and Board responses to Securing Social Value Through Procurement and Street Art & Graffiti.

Street Art & Graffiti

Councillor Gant said the Scrutiny discussion had been useful and from which had emerged broad support for street art which was seen as most valuable when having been preceded by wide consultation. He thanked the Board for its response.

The Board Member for Safer, Greener, Environment (Councillor Tom Hayes) said the Scrutiny discussion had been helpful. It was important to remember that street art was not graffiti and was pleased that the Committee was broadly supportive of the ability of street art to add cultural value to a place. He acknowledged the importance of prior consultation.

The Board Member for Customer Focused Services (Councillor Chapman) said the report's reference to graffiti being removed from private property in public spaces within 48 hours should be amended to reflect the fact that while it would be removed as soon as possible it was that which was particularly offensive which would be removed in a very short timescale.

The Chair had understood that commercial concerns occupying Council property were required to have shutters of a design which let light through and to which it was difficult to apply graffiti. She noted, however, that many did not and asked why this was so.

Oxford Direct Services had a central role in relation to graffiti removal but as a company with its own Board and governance arrangements, it was not appropriate for its work to be scrutinised by the Council's Scrutiny Committee.

Approach to City Centre Public Space Protection Orders

Councillor Gant said there had been general but not unanimous support for the proposed consultation. That the consultation would be open and transparent was welcome. The Committee has requested to see the subsequent report.

Securing Social Value Through Procurement

The Scrutiny Officer explained that the thrust of the three social value recommendations concerned improving the amount of weighting given to social value within council awarded contracts, and improving compliance with higher international environmental standards for suppliers.

The Board Member for Finance and Asset Management (Councillor Ed Turner) said the Finance Panel's recommendations had been helpful and he had been happy to support them. This was a matter in relation to which the Council should be demonstrating leadership and should do more in the future.

The Board confirmed its agreement to the report's recommendations.

163. Corporate Enforcement Policy

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to review the current Corporate Enforcement Policy and recommend the renewal of the Policy.

The Board Member for Planning and Transport (Councillor Alex Hollingsworth) introduced the report which set out the broad principles and aims behind the Council's strategic approach to enforcement. The approach was successful and it was therefore appropriate to recommend that it continue for a further three years.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

Approve the existing Corporate Enforcement Policy for a further three years

164. Extension to Central Conservation Area

The Acting Head of Planning Services had submitted a report to inform the City Executive Board of the results of the consultation period and authorise officers to consider these results further.

The Board Member for Planning and Transport (Councillor Alex Hollingsworth) introduced the report. The proposed extension would, inevitably, have potentially significant consequences for some landowners and others with an interest in the area.

The initial consultation had made it clear that some further consideration was desirable as well as deciding, at this point, to remove the area entitled “southern boundary around Folly Bridge”.

The Team Leader, Design & Heritage Team, explained that the area to be removed from the proposal was already protected but might be included in an expanded conservation area to the South of the City at some point in the future.

The Planning Policy and Place Manager said a further report, following the further consideration, would come to the Board in the Summer.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Authorise** the Head of Planning to consider further points raised during public consultation and return a report with recommendations on areas for inclusion within the Central Conservation Area to the City Executive Board for decision; and
2. **Approve** the removal of the area entitled ‘southern boundary around Folly Bridge’ in the January 2019 consultation document from further consideration for Central Conservation Area boundary alteration in line with officer recommendations

165. Project Approval for the acquisition of properties into the Housing Revenue Account

The Head of Housing had submitted a report to seek Project Approval for the acquisition of properties by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), specifically new units that may be purchased ‘off-plan’ from a developer. The purpose is to deliver more affordable housing, and to manage these properties within the Council’s HRA let at Social Rent levels.

The Board Member for Housing (Councillor Mike Rowley) introduced the report. He was pleased to be able to propose the purchase of 9 properties “off plan” to be used as social rented housing. He noted that this was a more cost effective means of acquiring properties than buying those already built.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Give Project Approval** to the proposal to purchase accommodation, as set out in this report, and within the allocated capital budget for this purpose;
2. **Note** that the expected budget requirement for this project was set out in the 2019/20 Council budget report, albeit at the time of drafting the budget report, the expectation was these acquisitions would receive grant as part of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal (OGD) activity, whereas use of Retained Right to Buy receipt funding is now proposed to part fund this project instead;
3. **Delegate** authority to the Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to approve any property purchases for this project and to enter into agreement on the basis that in the opinion of the Head of Finance this continues to represent best value; and

4. **Note** that any properties purchased are to be used as social rented housing and let to housing applicants in housing need and on the Housing Register in Oxford, as secure tenancies.

166. Performance monitoring - quarter 3

The Head of Financial Services and Head of Business Improvement had submitted a report to note the projected financial outturn and the current position on risk and performance as at the 31st December 2018.

The Board Member for Finance and Asset Management (Councillor Ed Turner) introduced the report. He was pleased to report a favourable variance in relation to the General Fund. There was a considerable underspend in the Capital Programme but the establishment of a Project Management Office was intended to put more rigour into the management of capital projects. Future reports would have more information about the delivery of the Capital Programme. Two indicators were not meeting their targets: the number of new homes granted permission in the City; and the net increase in number of businesses operating in the City. This was regrettable but it was recognised that these were measures over which the Council has no direct control.

The Board Member for Planning and Transport said the housing shortage was a serious matter for the Council. The emerging Local Plan identified 60 sites for housing and officers were working with land owners and interested parties to bring these sites forward, this was a high priority for the planning team.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

Note the projected financial outturn and the current position on risk and performance as at the 31st December 2018.

167. Re-designation of Neighbourhood Forums and their Neighbourhood Areas

The Acting Head of Planning Services had submitted a report to re-designate the Forums and Neighbourhood Areas for Summertown and St. Margaret's and Wolvercote.

The Board Member for Planning and Transport (Councillor Alex Hollingsworth) introduced the report noting that there was a statutory requirement for neighbourhood forums to be re-designated after 5 years. He also drew attention to the fact that Neighbourhood Plans were subordinate to Local Plans.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Approve** the redesignation of Summertown and St. Margaret's Forum in respect of the original designated neighbourhood area to which it related; and
2. **Approve** the redesignation of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum in respect of the original designated neighbourhood area to which it related.

168. Corporate Debt Policy

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report to approve the proposed Corporate Debt Management Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Board Member for Customer Focused Services introduced the report. The policy sought to strike a fine balance between the proper need to collect monies owed to the Council while, at the same time, doing so in way which took account of the fact that many of those who owed money were vulnerable and in financial difficulties through no fault of their own. Officers implemented the policy in a pragmatic way dealing with each case on its merits. It was noteworthy that there were very few complaints about the way in which debt was collected.

The Service Manager Revenue & Benefits said the team took care to treat all those from whom money was owed as individuals, seeking to help and advise them where possible. All of the team's staff had safeguarding training so they would be alert to any safeguarding issues they might come across in the course of their work. Enforcement was never undertaken unless a bill had been issued.

The Chair thanked the Service Manager Revenue & Benefits for the work of her team which, it was widely recognised, did an excellent and important job in a compassionate way.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

Approve the proposed Corporate Debt Management Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

169. Allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds 2019/20

The Head of Housing Services had submitted a report to seek approval for the allocation of homelessness prevention funds with the purpose of helping to meet the objectives of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018/21.

The Board Member for Leisure and Housing (Councillor Linda Smith) introduced the report which sought agreement to approve a total of £1.7m on a wide range of measures to prevent homelessness. Preventing homelessness was not just a matter of providing additional beds, as witnessed by the range of measures described. Those experiencing homelessness often have complex and overlapping needs which are exacerbated by the Government's welfare reforms and cuts to services previously provided by the County Council and NHS. The effectiveness of the many and various measures were carefully monitored to ensure that the funding was being put to good use.

The Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness Manager was able to report the recent confirmation by MHCLG that the Council has been allocated a further £0.5m for 2019/20 as part of the MHCLG Rough Sleeping Initiative. She also indicated that, as shown in the report, the cost of SWEP provision in 2018/19 had been forecast to be up to £50,000. However, despite needing to increase safety and security measures in relation to some high risk users mid-winter and opening SWEP on officer discretion on

three occasions, the relatively mild winter has meant the costs of delivery are now expected to be lower than expected. MHCLG has also now confirmed that they will cover costs up to £35,000. This was welcome however the financial effect of this will simply be to reduce the proposed draw down from the homelessness reserve in 2019/20.

The many projects and different sorts of provision supporting this area of work could make it difficult to see at a glance how many beds of what type were available. The Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness Manager agreed to provide clarification to the Board Member for Planning & Transport on the number of beds commissioned in the Adult Homeless Pathway including schemes to enable users to move on.

The Chair said the Council would like to be in a position not to have to allocate resources for this area of work but given its commitment to supporting these most vulnerable members of the community and reductions in services elsewhere there was no alternative. She thanked officers for all their excellent work over the last year in this very challenging area.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Approve** the allocation of Homelessness Prevention funds to commission homelessness services in 2019/20 as outlined in paragraph 56 to 58 below and in Appendix D, including the following changes to allocations
 - Big Issue Service Broker – that this Payment by Results contract is ended and a contingency of £3,125 is made available to facilitate this
 - OxTHINK – allocation increased from £4,396 in 2018/19 to £5,272 to cover costs relating to the continuation of licence agreements for service providers' staff and further system development. This allocation to be reviewed in year to take account of alternative ICT solutions, including the new housing database.
 - Emmaus – that funding is reduced from £10,000 in 2018/19 to £5,000 and will taper to zero in 2020/21 in recognition of the fact that Emmaus' second-hand furniture superstore is expected to be financially self-sustaining in 2020/21 and will continue to provide work opportunities
 - Network development - £5,000 towards the development and delivery of a programme of networking, learning and development for commissioned service providers' staff and others as appropriate
 - Access to leisure services - £5,000 to support former rough sleepers to access the Council's leisure facilities free of charge.
 - Contingency for Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness - £1,587 allocated for in-year changes to committed allocations.
2. **Approve** that the Council enter into 24 month [1st April 2019 to 31st March 2021] grant agreements with the Response Organisation and Homeless Oxfordshire to deliver a combined Acacia / Housing First Service, with increased capacity to meet the needs of chronic and entrenched rough sleepers; and
3. **Delegate** to the Head of Housing in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing the discretion to revise the intended programme within the overall budget if required.

170. Review of civic flag flying arrangements

The Head of Law and Governance had submitted a report for the City Executive Board to consider the outcomes of a review of the Council's arrangements for flag flying and to agree a new protocol for flag flying and bell ringing together with lists of annual flag flying and bell ringing commitments.

The Chair introduced the report and proposed the addition to Appendix 2 of the Living Wage Flag, to be flown for a week at the beginning of April when the rate of the latest Oxford Living Wage takes effect.

In further discussion it was agreed that flags should also be flown to mark the following:

- a) International Day of Persons with Disabilities - 03 December
- b) Earth Day - 22 April (given recent Council resolution re Environmental Emergency), noting that if Earth Day fell on a weekend it would not be possible to fly the flag due to the timing of other commitments and a lack of available trained staff.
- c) For 2019 only the European Flag on Brexit Day (29 March).

All of which subject to the usual constraints about the ability to fly flags in certain circumstances as set out in the report

The City Executive Board resolved to:

- 1. **Adopt** the Oxford City Council Protocol for Flag Flying and Bell Ringing attached as Appendix 1 with the addition of those flags listed above.
- 2. **Agree** the List of Annual Flag Flying Commitments attached as Appendix 2; with the inclusion of flag flying commitments for the Living Wage (first week of April), Earth Day (22 April) and International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December).
- 3. **Agree** the List of Annual Bell Ringing Commitments attached as Appendix 3; and
- 4. **Delegate** responsibility to the Head of Law and Governance for the operation of the protocol, including the arrangements for considering one off requests, and for holding and maintaining the List of Annual Flag Flying Commitments and the List of Annual Bell Ringing Commitments.

171. Corporate Plan Update 16-20

The Assistant Chief Executive had submitted a report to seek approval for the 2018-19 Annual Update on the Corporate Plan 2016-20.

The Chair introduced the report which she reminded the Board would be one of the last updates of current plan before work began on the period beyond 2020.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

- 1. **Approve** the Annual Update on the Corporate Plan 2016-20, as set out in Annex 1; and
- 2. **Delegate** authority to the Assistant Chief Executive to make minor textual/formatting changes to the Annual Update Report in advance of formal publication.

172. Approach to the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to approve the approach to setting standards of behaviour in the City Centre.

The Board Member for Safer, Greener, Environment (Councillor Tom Hayes) introduced the report. Prior Scrutiny consideration had focused on whether or not the proposed consultation should take place and, if so, what form it should take. He emphasised that the consultation, focusing on what behaviours were acceptable in the City Centre, would be very wide ranging and inclusive and, therefore, conducted by a number of different means to ensure maximum engagement. The outcome of this consultation would inform whether a statutory consultation on a PSPO would be undertaken at some point in the future. It was important to be clear from the outset that the Council did not and would not seek to criminalise rough sleeping or homelessness and would speak out against those who did.

The Chair said there was an unwarranted inference by some that those who were homeless were, somehow, necessarily anti-social. The highest incidence of anti-social behavior was associated with drunkenness of people who, for the most part, were not homeless. It was agreed that these proposals should be developed in a way which saw that the interests of homeless people and rough sleepers were properly protected.

It was recognised that the police had an important role in relation to these matters and other 'low level' crime but that, with diminished resources, their involvement appeared to be limited. Councillor Hayes said he continued to seek views from the police about these matters.

The Community Safety Service Manager said that PSPOs represented just one means of tackling inappropriate behaviours and were designed to have a declaratory effect.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Approve** a city centre consultation process to determine the standards of acceptable behaviour in the city centre and the acceptability and appropriateness of a City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order for tackling particular behaviours; and
2. **Endorse** the use of the Anti-social Behaviour Enforcement Policy to address behaviours in the city centre addressed by the 2016-19 City Centre Public Space Protection Order.

173. Minutes

The City Executive Board resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 07 March as a true and accurate record subject to recording an apology for absence from Cllr Tidball.

174.Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 10 April
- 22 May
- 12 June
- 10 July

All meetings start at 6pm.

175.Matters Exempt from Publication

No matters were considered in confidential session.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.55 pm

Chair

Date: Wednesday 10 April 2019