

**SUMMERTOWN & ST
MARGARET'S
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN**

**DRAFT
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN**

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CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction to the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan**
 - 2. Localism and Neighbourhood Planning**
 - 3. Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum**
 - 4. The Neighbourhood Plan 2018–2033**
 - 5. Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA)**
 - 6. The Process of Neighbourhood Planning – Consulting Local Residents and Stakeholders**
 - 7. How the Forum is Organised**
 - 8. Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan: Vision and Objectives**
 - 9. Health and Community Policies**
 - 10. Business and Retail Policies**
 - 11. Transport Policies**
 - 12. Housing Policies**
 - 13. Environment Policies**
 - 14. Delivering the Plan**
- Appendices**
- 1 Map of the Plan Area**
 - 2 Map of the District Centre**
 - 3 Map of Green Spaces**
 - 4 Local Character Assessments**
 - 5 Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Process**
 - 6 Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum and Plan Structure**
 - 7 Walking and cycling map**

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

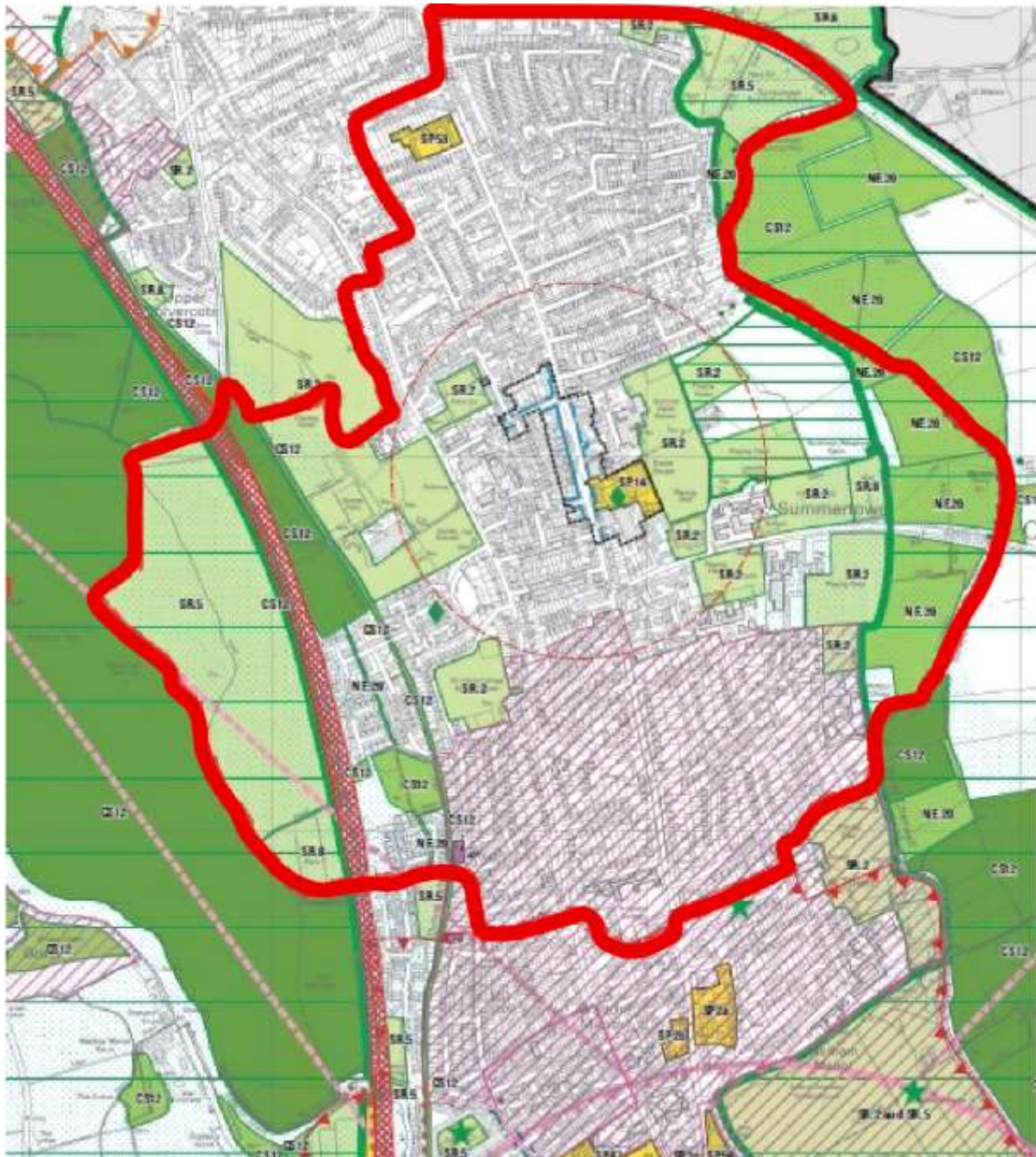
period. Fourteen per cent of the population is over 65 years of age, which is the highest proportion in the whole of Oxford. Eleven per cent of the population is in the 18–24 age group, which is almost half the rate in the rest of Oxford. Sixty-five per cent are white British, according to the census. 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. These policies have a specific impact on proposed planning applications, and can be implemented directly through the planning system.

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 (Esporta) in the grounds of St Edward's School, and the North Wall Arts Centre.

Spatial Policies

Policy HCS1 Community Facilities

All community facilities will be retained, and opportunities for improvements will be sought. 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) will be sought 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 welcomed.

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 NPA will be protected, and opportunities for enhancement will be sought.

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

Development will not be permitted 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: Protecting and Enhancing Sports, Leisure, and Community Facilities

Existing sports and leisure facilities will be protected, and opportunities for improvements will be sought. 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) will be sought 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. If this is not possible, financial compensation will be required to compensate for the loss of public amenity. 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 welcomed

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

A new Health Centre at Diamond Place in Summertown will be created, providing and expanding a range of primary care and associated 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

Alexandra Park should be redeveloped as a park, serving especially young people and children. 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.
Cotteslowe Children's and Community Centre	Provide support for children and community services in Cotteslowe.
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.

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

Planning applicants within the district centre will be required to identify precise parking requirements and to demonstrate how they meet this policy.

Any developments within the District Centre should maintain the same amount of publicly available short-stay visitor vehicle parking for shops and other businesses.

Applications which include provision for work space or commuter parking will be refused.

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

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
<p>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.</p> <p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 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 Sustainable Transport Design

All new development proposals should be designed according to the Manual for Streets 2 , where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, children, residents, and disabled people are put before those of the car and other vehicles.

- 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..**
- iv. Support should be given to development of freight-consolidation facilities outside**

¹ Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4, Oxfordshire County Council.

SSTM's area.

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

Note that 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'.



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 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



² North Oxford Transport Study.

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'.**
- 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
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. traffic calming;ii. implementing and enforcing a 20 mph speed limit throughout SSTM, including 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 NPA
<p>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> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. extending CPZs to the whole NPA;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 Housing Policies 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.

In doing so, the Neighbourhood Plan updates from a neighbourhood perspective the current housing policies: for example, the City Council Balance of Dwellings policy, which goes back as far as 2008.

Much of the NPA 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 neighbourhood housing policies on design, density, affordable housing, key workers' homes, and unit sizes.

Spatial Policies

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 opportunities 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.³

Policy HOS1 Local Dwelling Size
Eighty per cent of any new developments of 10 or more dwellings must consist of houses with no more than 1, 2, or 3 bedrooms.

Key-Worker and Affordable Housing

Of particular concern to local people during the consultations has been the lack of affordable housing for those on the housing waiting lists, for young people, and for essential public-service workers. This is also the case for other workers in the health services, local government, police, and care services.

Thus, there is a strong demand to retain and add to the stock of affordable housing both for those in housing need and for key workers.

³ Summertown: Achieving a balanced housing mix, Stephens et al, Brookes, 2016

The definition of affordable housing will follow current Oxford City Council policy. The definition of key workers will be agreed with the local authority but is likely to focus on low-paid public-service workers, the aim being to provide accommodation in Oxford for those who work in public services in the city, and in doing so to reduce the travel time and housing costs of these workers. The stated intention of the City to allow housing developments entirely for key workers is noted; this is relevant to the NPA as set out in the Preferred Options paper.⁴

Policy HOS2 Key-Worker and Affordable Housing

The primary purpose of housing development will be to address the needs of those who live and work in the NPA. Residential proposals of 10 or more units will not be supported if they solely meet open-market demand.

The principal community identified needs are for affordable housing, social housing and key worker housing.

Residential proposals for 10 or more units will be acceptable, subject to the other policies in this Plan and the Oxford City Core Strategy policies where 50 per cent of the housing provision is affordable including social housing and key worker housing.

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

4

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 HOS4 Specialist Housing

Specialist housing for elderly residents and/or vulnerable members of the NPA will be encouraged. It could be provided in a number of ways, some which may require planning permission:

Subdivision

Proposals for the subdivision of existing residential dwellings will be permitted 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 permitted. A planning obligation will be secured to ensure the occupancy of specialist housing in perpetuity.

Protecting Family Homes

Our area suffers from an acute shortage of housing, especially single flats and small family houses (C3 dwellings). A number of sites, potentially available for further housing, have been used for student accommodation of one sort or another. The Forum wishes to limit this tendency, which may lead to the erosion of the character of the neighbourhood area. The acquisition of land by educational establishments in the area has taken land away, denying smaller residential units to families, and has served to drive up the price of property, making housing inaccessible to all but a wealthy minority.

We recognise that an alternative might be that HMOs for student use are developed, but the City Council has powers to control this if needs be and is covered in HOC2.

We also recognise that many students already live in the area and make valuable contributions to the community. Some postgraduates are in effect junior workers for their institutions and come to the city with family dependants. The definition of students for the purposes of this policy does not include this group; it concerns undergraduates, foreign students, and secondary-level students.

This policy addresses a problem widely supported in the area and recognised in the Local Plan preferred options.

Policy HOS5 Protecting Family Dwellings

In order to protect the current housing stock, and sites suitable for general housing, proposals to convert existing C3 dwellings into student accommodation, or for new-build student accommodation on potential C3 sites, will not be supported.

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. But this may not be enough to prevent the gradual erosion of the character of Summertown. The attractive character of Summertown results from its distinctive mixture of Victorian, Edwardian and twentieth century architecture. There is at present nothing to stop a developer demolishing just about any building in Summertown, irrespective of its architectural merit or benefit to the community and replacing it with an undistinguished development. There is a strong argument to be made for the whole of Summertown to be protected by becoming a Conservation Area. This a matter for further consideration.

Policy HOS6 Character Assessments

New developments (including additions, alterations, change of use, and extensions) will be permitted only if they respond to and enhance the distinctive local character where it is described in the Character Assessments. This may include consideration of aspects such as materials, scale, siting use, layout, form, design, and intensity of activity within the built environment and the setting of the Plan Area. Where developers are required to submit a Design and Access Statement, they will be expected to demonstrate how their design and layout responds to the local character of the area.

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 gardens (front and back), green space, and trees.

Policy HOS7 Density, Building-design Standards, and Energy Efficiency

Development proposals of both traditional and innovative designs will be permitted where they respect the local heritage and character of the neighbourhood.

- a. Innovative and/or contemporary designs will be permitted 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;**
- b. Where more traditional designs are proposed, the material and designs should complement the local character;**
- c. Development should not result in the loss of gardens, both front and back, in accordance with Policy HOS8 below; or 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;**
- d. The removal of front gardens and front-garden walls to allow car parking will**

normally require planning consent, and home owners and landlords will be encouraged to re-instate front gardens and garden walls;

- e. **Proposals for new development should also 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.

Policy HOS8 Back-land Development

Proposals to intensify existing residential areas will be supported only where this can be achieved through good design and without harming local amenities. Any attractive prevailing character of the area must be protected. Development in rear gardens (except that which currently does not need planning permission) will not be supported, unless special regard is paid to:

- 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.

Policy HOC2 HMOs

The community does not favour the creation of any further Houses in Multiple Occupation in the area.

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 HOC3 Flats Above Shops

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

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. Development proposals will be encouraged where green spaces have no existing community use and they are not important to the character and quality of the local environment. This does not include areas of considerable habitat importance, and areas of amenity value such as the Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site, Canal Fields, Burgess Field Nature Park, Sunnymead Park, and Cherwell Fields (see Table 1). 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 Map 5.

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 encouraged.

Biodiversity

Development in the area and a changing climate represent the major threats posed to wildlife and habitats in Oxford. This is particularly true where wildlife corridors and existing green areas are concerned. It is therefore important to ensure that any development does not have an adverse impact on local habitats.

Policy ENS2 Biodiversity

Land which has significant wildlife or ecology value will be conserved and enhanced, and especially Burgess Field Nature Park, Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site, Sunnymead Park, and Cherwell Fields. Proposals which may result in harm, either directly or indirectly, to local wildlife or habitats of significant value, both within and beyond the proposed development, will not be permitted. See Table 1 above for designations.

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 Report⁵ 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 ENS3 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.**

⁵

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 ENS4 Rain-Water Infiltration

All 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 encouraged. All run-off water should be infiltrated into the ground with permeable surfaces (SUDS), or using attenuation storage, so that the speed and quantity of run-off is reduced.

See also HOS7.

Air Pollution

Policy ENS5 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 limits⁶ 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.

⁶ <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/uk-eu-limits>

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.

Policy ENS5 Pollution
Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that there will be no significant direct or cumulative adverse impacts from air pollution. Developments should not contribute to the exceeding of national or local air quality limits. Where significant adverse impacts are identified, or air quality limits will be exceeded, developers should first seek to reduce the level of pollution, and then to mitigate against the impacts of this pollution through using preventative steps.

Sustainable Construction

The UK Government signed the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015, which commits signatories to reducing carbon emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. In order for this target to be met, local government and communities and individuals have to take positive actions to reduce their carbon emissions. Approximately 25 per cent of emissions come from homes and businesses, both through their building and heating.

While the City Council has taken a lead in future-proofing its own estate, North Oxford has higher emissions than other parts of Oxford, and Oxford has higher emissions than most other parts of the country.

Many of the houses in the area are of a construction type which is particularly difficult to make more efficient. Therefore new buildings represent the best opportunities to make real gains in climate impacts.

All new sites for building should be required to generate 30 per cent of their own energy on site. They should be built to high environmental standards, whether for business or residential purposes. The abolition of the Code for Sustainable Housing and the more recent adoption in London of the Zero Carbon Homes standard have made defining levels of energy-efficient housing more complex. The aim should be to match the best possible standards of energy-efficient building that is viable.

The basis of this is to reduce the carbon footprint of households and businesses in the area and to take opportunities to generate clean energy from solar roofs and other non-intrusive renewable technologies.

Policy ENS6 Sustainable Construction

Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they will incorporate sustainable construction methods, and should meet the following criteria:

- i. Non-residential units should be constructed to BREEAM Excellent standard (or equivalent), or, if conversions, should meet BREEAM Very Good standard.
- ii. Residential units should be constructed at least to the equivalent of Sustainable Code 4 level or Zero-Carbon Homes standard as applied in London.
- iii. If consisting of 5 or more residential units, the proposal should generate at least 30 per cent of each unit's energy on site.

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.**

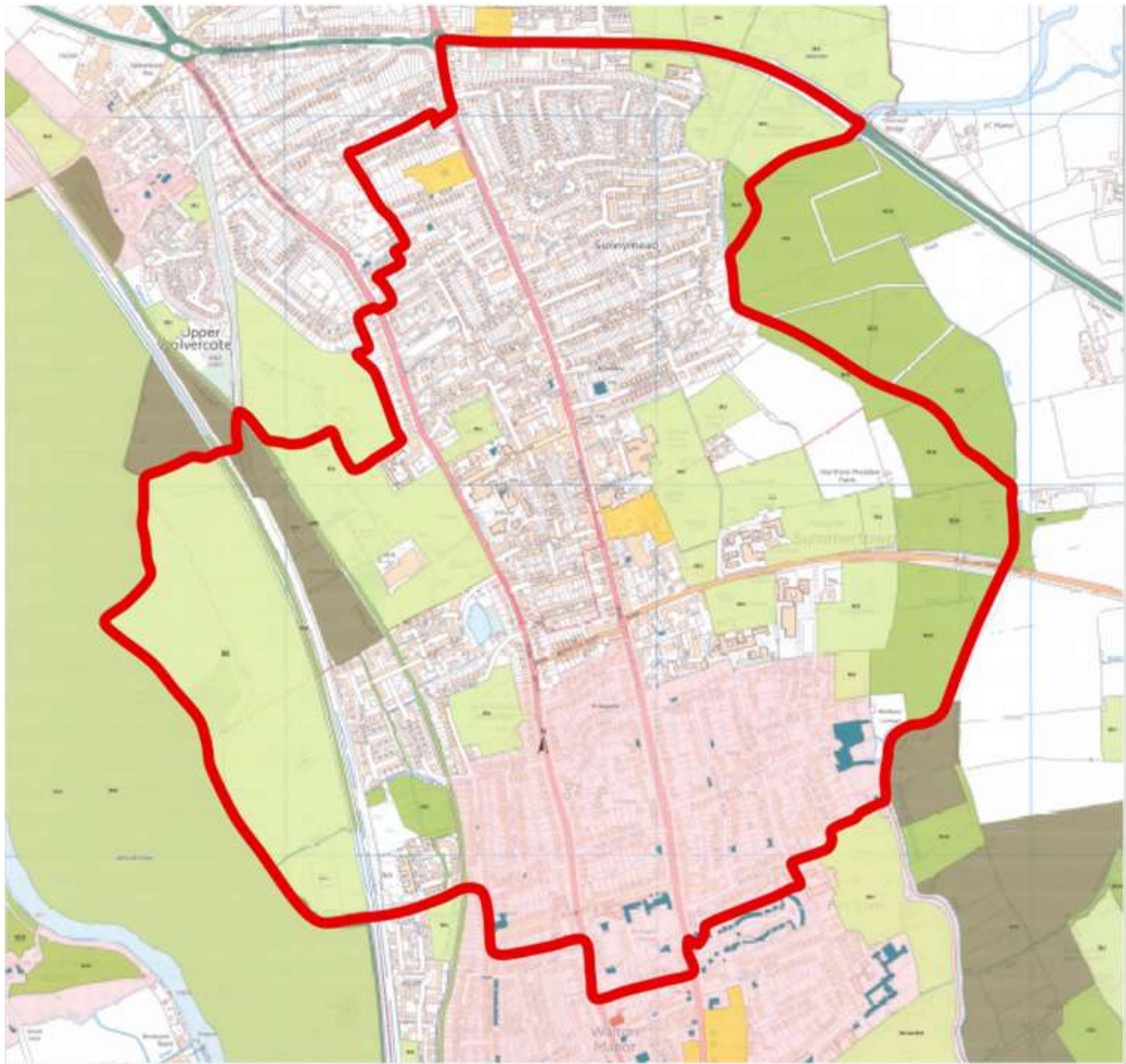
14. Delivering the Plan

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.

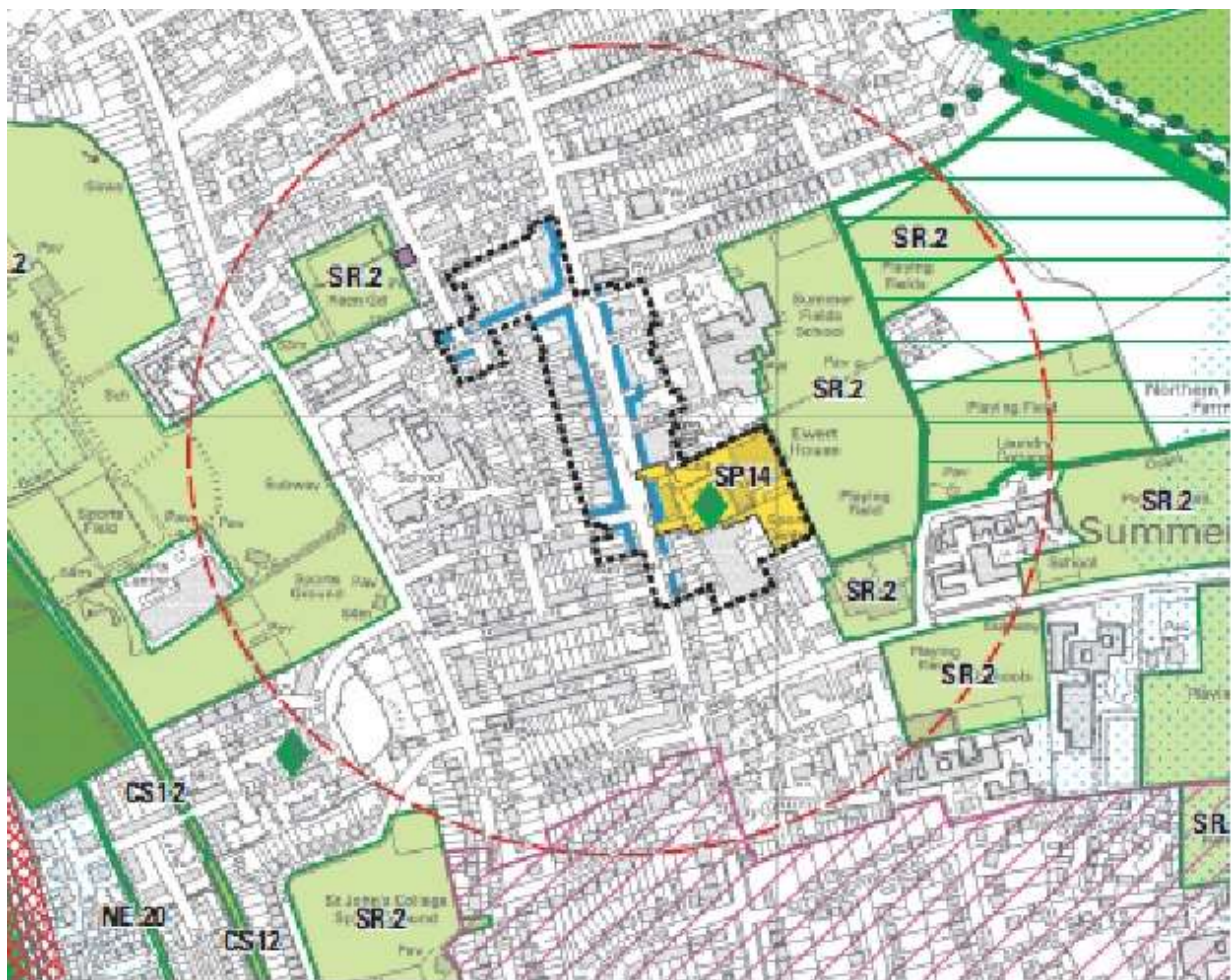
Those policies that are marked as Spatial Policies will, if approved at a referendum, become part of the Statutory Local Planning documents which determine planning applications in the SSM area. Planning officers and the Planning Committee will be required to take account of them when they decide on 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 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 HOS6 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 1820s. 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 Grimbly, who took over a grocery store in Cornmarket and made it into Oxford's best-known department store, Grimbly 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)

Buildings in St Margaret's

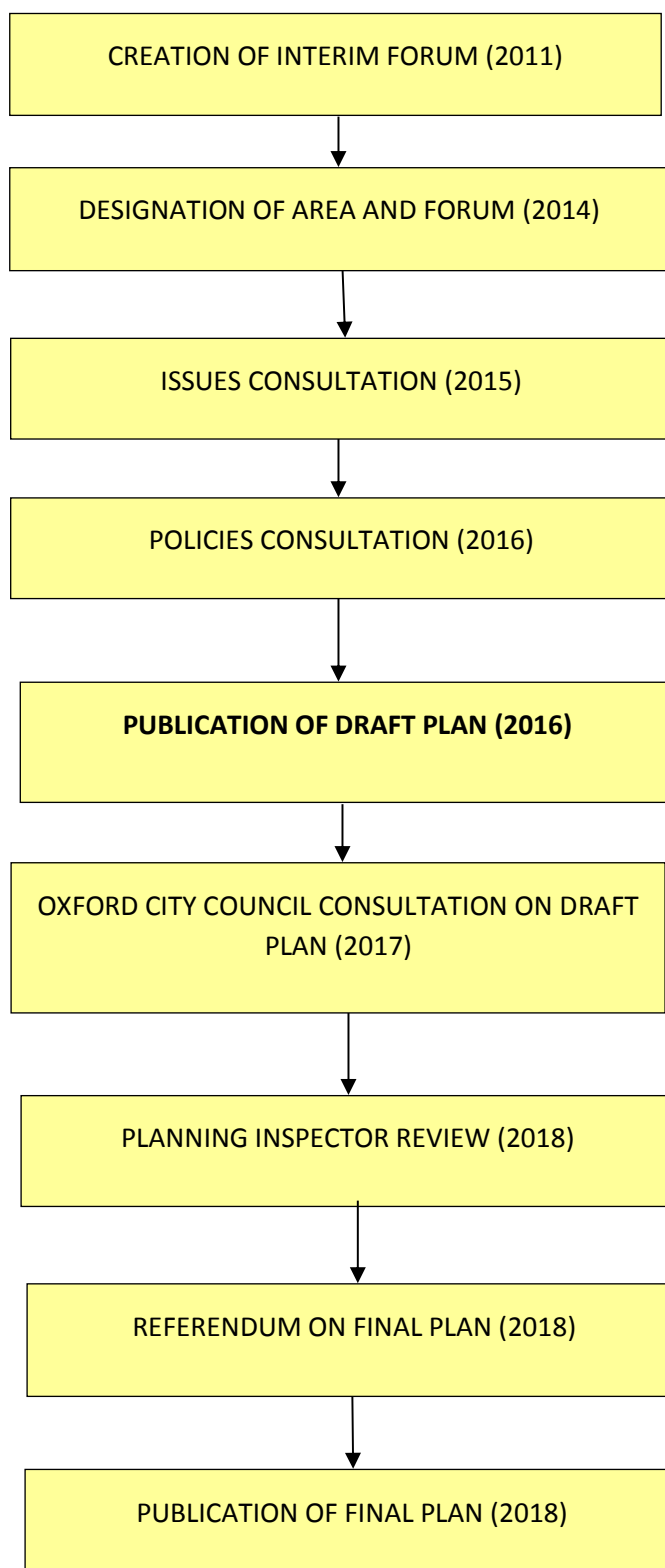
- . Several listed buildings, incl. St Margaret's War Memorial and Aristotle Lane canal bridge
- St Margaret's Church
- St Margaret's Institute
- St Andrew's Church
- Wolfson College
- St Hugh's College
- The Anchor Public House
- Houses within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area

Important facilities

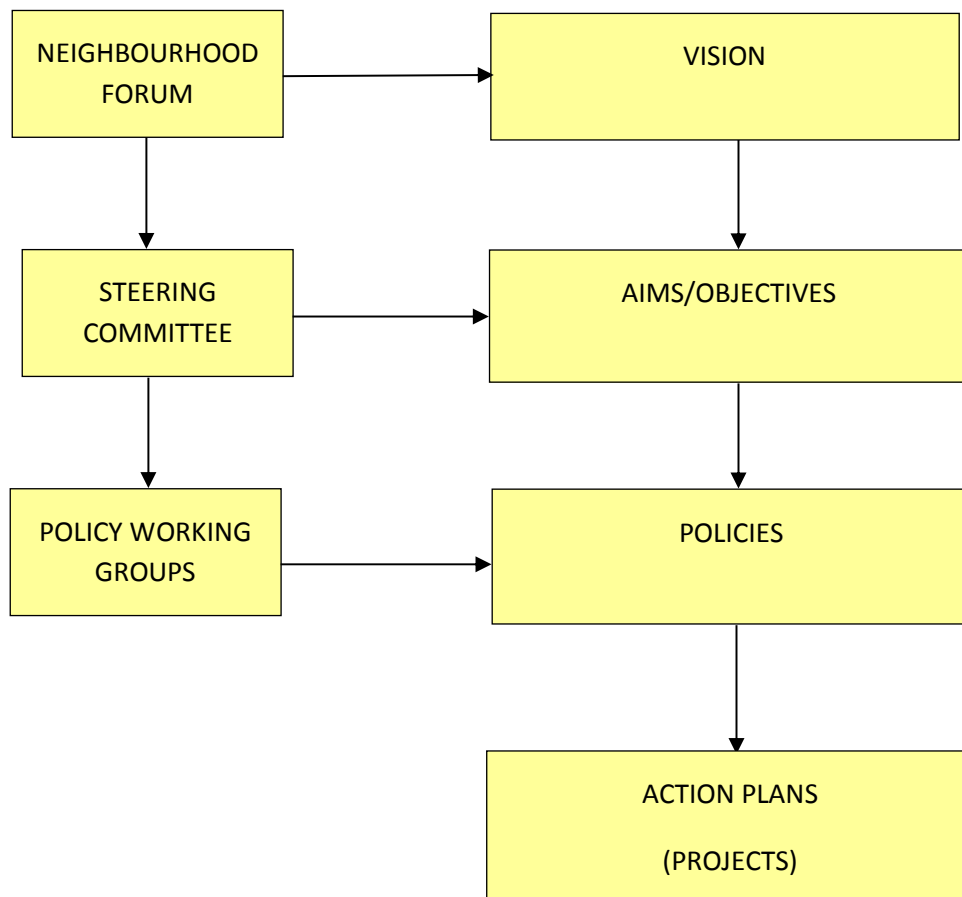
- NOA Community Centre
- Summertown Library
- Cutteslowe Community Centre
- Ferry Leisure Centre
- St Margaret's Institute Community Centre
- St Michael's Church hall
- Baptist Church, Woodstock Road
- St Andrew's Church community room
- Alexandra Park
- Aristotle Lane Recreation Ground
- The Canal and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

The detailed character assessments are contained in our appended file entitled Detailed Character Assessments

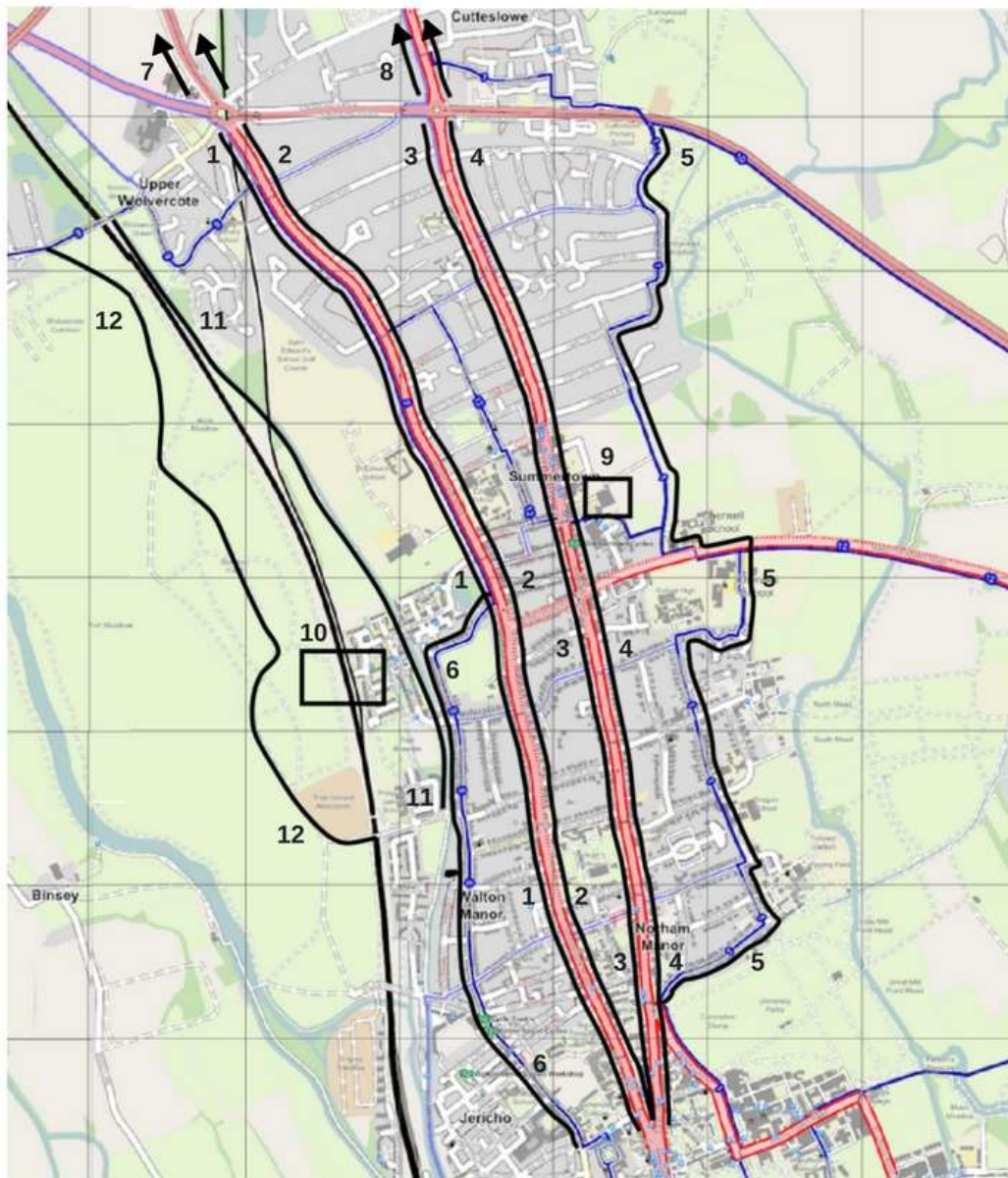
Appendix 5 – Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan Process



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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