DRAFT DELIVERY AND SITE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT

For Town Centres and Managing Development

Development Plan Document

Draft for Consultation

July 2011
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- GOVERNMENT CHANGES TO PLANNING SYSTEM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HOW WE ARE PROGRESSING THE WDF</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SCOPE OF THE DELIVERY AND SITE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENTS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PURPOSE AND STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- THE EVIDENCE BASE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- STRUCTURE OF DOCUMENT</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>LIST OF POLICIES INCLUDED IN THIS DOCUMENT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>ECONOMY, TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN CENTRE</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DESBOROUGH</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MARLOW</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRINCES RISBOROUGH</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICIES</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Schedule of Improvement Lines</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Map of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>List of policies replaced by this document</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Monitoring and Delivery of DSA District wide policies</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

List of Tables

Table 1  Open Space Standards in New Development
Table 2  Indicative Timing of Key Elements of the Town Centre Masterplan
Table 3  Marlow frontage length and percentages as at April 2011
Table 4  Princes Risborough frontage length and percentages

List of Illustrations

Figure 1  Proposed Green Infrastructure Network in the High Wycombe and Chepping Wye Valley Local Community Areas
Figure 2  Our Vision for High Wycombe Town Centre in 2026
Figure 3  High Wycombe Town Centre – Potential Land Uses & Roles
Figure 4  High Wycombe Town Centre Character Areas
Figure 5  HWTC12 Site Concept Diagram
Figure 6  HWTC18 Site Concept Diagram
Figure 7  Desborough Concept Diagram
Figure 8  Illustrative diagram for Land fronting New Road, Princes Risborough
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is the second Development Plan Document that the Council has produced as part of the Wycombe Development Framework. In 2008 the Core Strategy was adopted, which sets out the spatial strategy for the District up to 2026, identifying the broad location for development in the District. This focuses most development within High Wycombe and the strategy identifies three areas of change within the town. It also includes specific policies for Marlow, Princes Risborough and the Rural Areas. There are also a number of Core Policies for development of the District up to 2026.

1.2 The Delivery and Site Allocations document contains a mix of development management and site-specific policies which cover Sustainable Transport, Town Centres, Retail Environment and Infrastructure. There is a particular focus on delivering regeneration and improvement to High Wycombe Town Centre as well as policies aimed at supporting Marlow and Princes Risborough town centres.

2.0 WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

2.1 The Council produced a preferred options Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) in 2007 having earlier consulted on issues and options for this document in 2005. This set out main proposals for where development should occur and key areas that should be protected from development. The document also identified housing sites and land for other development needs including for business, shopping, leisure and community uses.

2.2 In 2009 the Council renamed this document the Delivery and Site Allocations (DSA) DPD and produced an update consultation document. The update consultation was produced in response to the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2008, new developments that had occurred, as well new evidence produced to support emerging policies.

2.3 In 2010 a further update was produced, concentrating on policies and sites for which options had been proposed in the previous consultation in 2009.

2.4 Proposed changes to planning system

2.5 The Coalition Government has signalled that there will be major changes to the planning system and has produced a draft “Localism” Bill. The key change that relates to the production of the Wycombe Development Framework is the proposal to abolish Regional Strategies (which means the South East Plan in this area) and their subsequent removal from the Development Plan. This would result in the loss of a number of key policies including those that set housing targets for the District. Other changes that are proposed include production of a National Planning Policy framework, Inspectors Reports on DPD’s no longer being binding and the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans and community led developments.

2.6 How we are progressing the WDF

2.7 As a result of the proposals to abolish the Regional Strategies the Council intends to review the housing targets as currently included in the adopted Core Strategy to ensure that the housing targets we use are based on a local assessment. It is intended that this review will be undertaken as a review of the Core Strategy and will include an assessment of the housing needs and supply as well as an economic assessment and review of employment land. This review will also include major housing and employment land allocations and designations, and will include other necessary development management policies.

2.8 This review has implications for the allocation of sites for housing and employment which so far have been included in the Delivery and Site Allocations (DSA) document. Those aspects of the DSA, outside of the town centres, will not be progressed now but will form part of the forthcoming Core Strategy review alongside the review of housing targets. They will be compiled in a “Position Statement” which will set out the latest emerging policy position in relation to those sites and policies. The remaining parts of the DSA are being progressed in this document.
2.9 The broad timetable for this work is set out below:

2011 Position Statement
2011-13 Delivery and Site Allocations (DSA) – for town centres and managing development
2013-2015 Core Strategy Alteration - Review of housing targets, allocations, protection of employment land and development management policies

2.10 Scope of the Delivery and Site Allocations document

2.11 This document also includes policies for sites that are important regeneration sites or would not have a significant impact on the provision of land for the delivery of housing.

2.12 This document does not include policies on the following:
- Employment land designations
- Housing Land Supply
- Allocations for employment or housing sites outside of the town centres.

It also does not seek to address all the other remaining specific land use designations that are currently shown on the Local Plan proposals map.

2.13 The “saved” policies in the Local Plan will continue to be applied to such areas and they will be used in determining planning applications until they are replaced by relevant policies in the Core Strategy, this Document or the future review of the Core Strategy.

2.14 The most up to date position on these policies can be found in a Position Statement, which the Council has produced pending a review of housing numbers in the Core Strategy. The position statement pulls together the emerging position on these areas based on the three previously produced consultation documents from 2007, 2009 and 2010. **The Position Statement is not a consultation document.**

2.15 Purpose and status of this document

2.16 The purpose of this document is to set out in a single document the policies that are being taken forward to submission and examination in 2012. It brings together the three different consultation documents that we have produced and incorporating any appropriate changes as a result of those consultations or new evidence that has been produced.

2.17 The Council is consulting on this document now to give the community and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on this approach and on the content of the document, as this will form the basis of the pre-submission document that we will consult on in 2012.

2.18 It is important to continue with the policies contained within this document as they introduce new policies and standards for open space, transport requirements and green infrastructure as well as supporting the town centres and delivering regeneration and improvements to High Wycombe Town Centre.

2.19 The Evidence Base

2.20 The preparation of this document is founded on an evidence base of information. This includes the outcomes of the consultations referred to above and includes the sustainability appraisal (see below). There are also a number of technical studies that have been important in shaping this document. These assessments are available on the Council’s website and copies can also be viewed or purchased at the Council’s Offices in High Wycombe.

2.21 Updated evidence is also available for the work we have done on the High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan and Retail frontages.

2.22 Sustainability Appraisal

2.23 In preparing this document, the Council have tested policies and sites (where appropriate) and options for them through a process called
2. WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

Sustainability Appraisal. This testing has provided the Council with an understanding of the social, economic and environmental issues which need to be taken into account. It has served as an important tool in highlighting what appropriate mitigation measures are required. Information from the evidence base and from consultation responses (particularly from technical consultees) has been an important input into this appraisal. The Sustainability Appraisal report has been revised and updated to reflect the revised scope of the DSA.

2.24 The draft Sustainability Appraisal is available on the website and at Council Offices. Because of the number of policies and options assessed it is a lengthy document, it therefore also includes summaries of the assessment for each policy and considered.

2.25 Structure of the Document

The document is in 3 main parts:

1. Introduction and Context
2. District wide development management policies – setting out policies that apply across the District
3. Town Centres policies and proposals – that set out what the main proposals for High Wycombe, Marlow and Princes Risborough town centres.

2.26 To accompany this there are a series of maps showing the site allocations and area (see Appendix A).

2.27 Monitoring and Delivery

2.28 The monitoring of the district wide policies is linked to the strategic policies in the Core Strategy, these are reported on in the Annual Monitoring Report. Appendix E shows how the monitoring and delivery of the policies in the DSA is linked to monitoring undertaken for the Core Strategy.

2.29 What is the purpose of this consultation and how to respond?

2.30 This consultation commences on 2nd September and extends for six weeks, ending on 14th October.

2.31 This is a draft document and it is the first time we have produced a “reduced” version of the allocations document. It contributes towards the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Core Strategy.

2.32 We want to hear your views

• Do you support the approach we have adopted in producing a reduced version of the allocations document and the reasons for this?
• Do you agree with the policies we have included in this document?
• Do you support the proposals to regenerate and improve High Wycombe Town Centre?

2.33 There are some issues which have already been agreed through the Core Strategy. This consultation is not seeking to look at the overall strategy. Instead, this consultation wants to know if you feel we are taking the right approach in our town centres, particularly in High Wycombe and whether you support the policies that aim to make development more sustainable in the future.

2.34 Please note that comments have to be received by the deadline above, it will not be possible to accept any late comments.

Please send your comments to:

Wycombe District Council
Planning Policy Team
Freepost HY120
Queen Victoria Road
High Wycombe
HP11 1BR

Email: spatial_planning@wycombe.gov.uk
Tel: 01494 421158
3.0 List of policies included in this document

**DSA1** Transport Requirements of Development Sites 9

**DSA2** Transport Improvement Lines 11

**DSA3** Former Bourne End To High Wycombe Railway Line 12

**DSA4** Scattered Business Sites 14

**DSA5** Town Centre Boundaries 15

**DSA6** The Primary Shopping Areas 16

**DSA7** District Centres 16

**DSA8** Thresholds for the Assessment of Schemes for Town Centre Impact 17

**DSA9** Green Networks and Infrastructure 19

**DSA10** Green Spaces 22

**DSA11** Protection and Enhancement of Sites, Habitats and Species of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance 22

**DSA12** Biodiversity In Development 24

**DSA13** Protection and Enhancement of River and Stream Corridors 25

**DSA14** Open Space in New Development 26

**DSA15** Reducing Flood Risk 28

**DSA16** Carbon Reduction 30

**DSA17** Infrastructure and Delivery 31

**DSA18** Viability - Delivering affordable housing and community infrastructure 33

**High Wycombe Town Centre**

**HWTC1** Delivering the Town Centre Vision 38

**HWTC2** Townscape 40

**HWTC3** Public Realm 41

**HWTC4** Connections, Movement and Access 43

**HWTC5** Economy 45

**HWTC6** Primary Shopping Frontage Zones: High Wycombe 47

**HWTC7** Secondary Shopping Frontage Zones: High Wycombe 47

**HWTC8** Town Centre Local Development Order area 49

**HWTC9** Easton Street 50

**HWTC10** Council Offices and Royal Mail Sorting Office 51

**HWTC11** Duke Street Car Park 53

**HWTC12** Swan Frontage 53

**HWTC13** Wycombe General Hospital 56

**HWTC14** Chilterns Shopping Centre And Frogmoor East 57

**HWTC15** Lily’s Walk (Former Gas Works Site) 59

**HWTC16** Buckingham House and Castle House 60

**HWTC17** Collins House / Corner of Bridge Street/Desborough Road 61

**HWTC18** Oxford Road roundabout 62

**HWTC19** Bridge Street 64

**HWTC20** Baker Street 65

**HWTC21** Oxford Road (west) 66

**HWTC22** Central Business Centre 67
3. LIST OF POLICIES INCLUDED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Desborough

HW1 Desborough Delivery and Design Framework 67
HW2 Delivering New Open Space and River Corridor Improvements 69
HW3 Green Street School 71

Marlow

MR1 Primary Shopping Frontage Zones: Marlow 72
MR2 Secondary Shopping Frontage Zones: Marlow 72
MR3 Riley Road 74
MR4 Portlands 75
MR5 Liston Road 76

Princes Risborough

PR1 Primary Shopping Frontage Zones: Princes Risborough 77
PR2 Secondary Shopping Frontage Zones: Princes Risborough 77
PR3 Land Fronting New Road 79
PR4 Land off Horns Lane 81
4. DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES

4.0 District Wide Policies

4.1 Sustainable Transport

This policy aims to tackle the transport related challenges created by major developments. These challenges include minimising their impact on the existing highway network and surrounding residential areas and the environment, while ensuring that they contribute to changing travel behaviour through the provision of a range of travel choices. The Council will as far as practicable seek to ensure that new development has a neutral effect on the highway network (also known as nil net detriment). This policy is designed to complement existing transport and land use policies.

4.3 This policy seeks to:

a. Ensure that new developments are well connected, making it easier for trips to be made by walking, cycling and public transport.

b. Deliver developments that are designed in a way that they balance the needs of movement with sense of place to create a high quality and safe environment that enables all users and, where applicable residents, to incorporate active travel into their every day lives, without being dependent on the car. (1)

c. Provide appropriate new and enhanced infrastructure to accommodate the trips generated by the development on the existing highway network.

d. Encourage, through the use of Travel Plans, the uptake of more sustainable modes of transport; minimise the trips generated by the development on the existing highway network; as well as contributing to the Wycombe transport strategy, which includes traffic management and the Smarter Choices programmes.

4.4 It is recognised that not every possible measure will be applicable in every case. The scale and layout of development will inform what measures should be put in place along with the recommendations from the Transport Authority, Buckinghamshire County Council.

4.5 The County Council adopted the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) in 2011. It will be supported by a number of strategic documents including the transport strategy for High Wycombe.

4.6 Policies CS16, CS20 and CS21 set out the strategic context and requirements for the assessment of development proposals in terms of transport impacts, mitigation measures and contributions toward the provision of transport related infrastructure.

(1) At the time of writing guidance on how this may be achieved is set out in publications such as Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2.
4. DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES

DSA1 Transport Requirements of Development Sites

1. All developments that require the submission of a Transport Assessment, in line with Appendix B of the DfT Guidance on Transport Assessment (March 2007), or any replacement to this guidance, or as required by the Highway Authority, should provide:

   Public Transport
   a) Access to a high quality, fully accessible, attractive public transport service.
   b) A new or enhanced service where development is not already served by a high quality attractive train or bus service. This may be provided directly or by way of a financial contribution, so that the service is maintained for a period of at least five years from an agreed occupation level.
   c) Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) units at all bus stops within or nearest to the site and equipped with hard standing and suitable lighting and high quality shelters.

   Walking and Cycling
   d) Routes for pedestrians and cyclists which are designed to be safe, direct, attractive and convenient, according with the principles of community safety including that of natural surveillance from the built development;

   Travel Plans
   e) Travel Plans, in line with BCC guidance on Travel Plans, should be provided that set out the long term travel management strategy for an organisation or site, built on an appropriate package of measures aimed at promoting sustainable travel. They should include modal share targets and mitigation measures as well as the measures outlined below:

   Smarter Choices
   f) Smarter Choices measures aimed directly at residents or users of the site that are the responsibility of the developer and/or occupier(s). These include but are not limited to:
      i. publicity and promotional material;
      ii. pro-active measures such as subsidised travel; and
      iii. personalised travel planning.

   Car Clubs
   g) Car club infrastructure in the form of parking spaces, drop off and pick up points, and, where appropriate, car club vehicles, and/or subsidised cost of car club membership, and facilities for electric vehicle car charging points.

   Car Sharing
   h) Priority parking spaces for car sharers at developments that are primarily destinations (ie non residential uses)

2. Design of development should allow for:
   a) the penetration of buses through the site and priority routing of buses onto the main traffic network, and,
   b) traffic management that ensures traffic queues associated with new development are managed in a way to minimise their impact on the main highway network; and
   c) layout and design of transport infrastructure, that creates high quality places that are locally distinct and not dominated by the needs of vehicular traffic in line with the principles of Manual for Streets, Manual for Streets 2 or replacement design guide.
4.7 In line with the Core Strategy as far as possible developments should look to accommodate the day to day requirements of residents within the site and/or provide direct and attractive links to local facilities in the vicinity of the site so as to minimise the impact of these trips on the highway network.

4.8 Transport modelling undertaken for the LDF(2) indicates that by 2026, the traffic growth forecast for the Wycombe area is 20% if no significant measures are implemented to address traffic growth both from development and natural growth. The County Council has a duty under the Traffic Management Act to manage this increased pressure on the road network and keep traffic moving to sustain economic vitality.

4.9 The key elements to accommodating growth in traffic at High Wycombe are:
- reducing the need to travel;
- managing traffic more effectively;
- Provision of alternative more sustainable travel modes to the car.
- ensuring that new developments are designed and located so as to offer good travel choices which are effectively promoted to potential users.

4.10 Through implementation of a package of measures this will enable the committed growth within Wycombe District to be accommodated without unacceptable consequences for others including other road users. New developments create opportunities to influence travel behaviour from the early decision to purchase a house or how to travel to work or school that takes into account travel options and create the conditions that ensure alternatives to the car are available and attractive. As part of this, and compared to the pattern of much postwar development, the design of development needs to avoid systematic segregation of pedestrian and vehicle traffic and rebalance the provision between the private vehicle and:
  a. pedestrians and mobility impaired
  b. cyclists
  c. public transport users
  d. car sharers

4.11 As most of the District’s growth is within High Wycombe a separate transport strategy is being developed to support the growth of the town(3). This is based around the County Council’s TRIM (Transfer, Re-route, Intercept, Manage) approach to managing traffic growth. This will facilitate the delivery of Wycombe’s requirements for housing and jobs while supporting the development and prosperity of the District.

4.12 Access to key services such as education and healthcare, together with employment centres, will inform the provision of transport in the District. Transfer between modes of transport will be supported through the provision of services that link to transport interchanges such as rail stations, key urban centres and the proposed new regional coachway. This will create better links to key destinations in the town including the rail station, hospital and town centre and the coachway will provide access from the town centre to the wider Thames Valley region.

Reducing the Impact of Major Development

4.13 This policy applies to major developments on the basis that they will be of a scale that means they will generate significant traffic movements and thus have the potential to have a negative impact upon the highway network. They will also by virtue of their size also be able to contribute significantly towards mitigating these impacts.

4.14 The requirement for a transport assessment (TA) is subject to the use class of a proposal(4) and the size. Appendix B of the DfT Guidance on Transport Assessment (March 2007) sets out the thresholds that will apply. There are also a range of uses that may require a transport assessment, these include a range of leisure and sui generis uses such as stadium, retail warehouse clubs, car related sales and hire etc. The Highway Authority will determine the need for a TA. Where a TA is required for development this policy will also be applied.

---

(2) Technical Note Wycombe LDF TN1 (2009)
(3) See page 37 LTP3, Local Area Strategies
(4) See Glossary
4.15 The County Council currently defines a high quality, fully accessible, attractive public transport service as the following:

i. Properties no more than 250m-400m walking distance of the nearest bus stop (this may be less on steep roads), and

ii. 7am – 7pm all day service (Mon – Sat) with a reduced service in evenings and on Sundays, and,

iii. A 15 minute daytime service. (Either a new or enhancement to an existing service, which is considered the minimum, in an urban area, to make public transport an attractive and viable mode of travel).

4.16 Where a high frequency rail service exists within walking distance of the site, this will also be taken into account when considering proposals.

4.17 Each site will be assessed on its own merits in terms of the most suitable and effective transport provision for that development to achieve the modal split targets defined in the Transport Assessment.

4.18 It is vitally important that new development provides appropriate measures to encourage sustainable transport behaviour as well as making contributions towards the wider strategy so as to offset the wider traffic impacts and meet the travel needs of users of the development.

4.19 Travel plans are important in identifying what measures will be put in place to secure sustainable transport movements from a new development. Travel plans should be produced in accordance with County Council guidelines and will need to be agreed by the County Council and the travel plan roll-out monitored as development progresses. The plan will need to include assessments of traffic impacts and targets for modal split.

4.20 In High Wycombe, taking into consideration the topography and distance to key services and attractors and experience in other towns that have implemented such measures, it was determined that the application of a town wide smarter choices programme could result in a reduction of between 4% and 6% in predicted traffic demand.

4.21 Developments that require a Transport Assessment as part of the planning process are required to provide measures to mitigate the impact of the development on the transport network both directly through measures such as Travel Plans that relate primarily to the development and indirectly by contributing to a wider programme of Smarter Choices as part of the Transport Strategy. Together this is a means of:

- minimising the wider impact of development on the transport network; and
- ensuring that trip reduction assumptions and modal split assumptions included in travel plans are achieved through the uptake of new sustainable travel options that are being provided by the developer.

**Implementation**

The Council will monitor:
- Commitments and measures proposed in Travel Plans
- Performance against Buildings for Life criteria 4 Access to public transport and 13 Pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly streets for major developments

**DSA2 Transport Improvement Lines**

Planning permission will not be granted for developments which would prejudice the provision of new or improved transport infrastructure on the Transport Improvement Lines identified on the proposals map and listed in Appendix B.
4. DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES

4.22 The County Council, as the Highway Authority, is responsible for all public roads in the District, apart from the M40 and the A404 (T) south of Handy Cross (which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency).

4.23 It is the responsibility of the County Council working with Wycombe District Council to identify routes/junctions where improvements to the public highway may be needed in the future for transportation purposes to accommodate High Wycombe’s growth. These are formally safeguarded by the County Council as highway improvement lines. Although some of the schemes may not be implemented within this DSA period it is important that the proposed improvement lines are safeguarded.

4.24 The Council will not permit development that would prejudice the implementation of any of the schemes safeguarded by the County Council. There are different types of road and junction improvement lines and they are required to provide improvements to road networks, to increase road capacity, improve road safety, as well as creating additional public transport or non-vehicular routes.

4.25 An improvement line review was undertaken in 2007 to examine all of the historic improvement lines that regularly feature on land searches. This review recommended the revocation of some existing improvement lines and identified some lines for further review. A further review was undertaken in 2010 to determine if these improvement lines were still relevant and if they supported:

- LDF allocations;
- High Wycombe transport strategy;
- Local Transport Plan 3.

4.26 The review identified new improvement lines that would be required to support the DSA, in particular the High Wycombe town centre Masterplan. Appendix B contains a list of Transport Improvement Lines.

### DSA3 Former Bourne End To High Wycombe Railway Line

1. Planning permission will not be granted for developments that would prejudice the construction of a 5m wide walking and cycling corridor between High Wycombe town centre/railway station and Bourne End, as defined on the proposals map, utilising the track bed of the Bourne End to High Wycombe disused railway line. Wherever possible this route should be separated from vehicular traffic.

2. The development of sites near to the corridor will be required to provide convenient links to the route, in order to maximise the opportunities for walking and cycling.

3. Any future development proposals that would prevent suitable diversions being created, in order to provide the walking and cycling corridor, will be refused planning permission. In the event of making such diversions from the former railway track bed, the route chosen will not be significantly less direct or attractive.

4.27 The High Wycombe to Maidenhead railway line was constructed during the 1850's with the Marlow spur constructed in the 1870s. This route went via Loudwater and Bourne End and provided connections between Buckinghamshire and the Thames Valley and was the original High Wycombe to London line. With the publication of the Beeching Report (1963) and a decline in the line's use the 9km's of track between High Wycombe and Bourne End was closed in 1970 and has been safeguarded since 1976.
4.28 As part of the Thames Valley Multi Modal Study (TVMMS)\(^{(5)}\) a review was undertaken of the former Bourne End to High Wycombe disused railway line and its potential to be developed as a high quality public transport corridor. The study concluded that there was a long term opportunity to be part of a new north-south public transport link across the Thames Valley, but that this would not be financially viable before 2016. As a result the study recommended that “the relevant local authorities should prevent further development along the alignment, so that the route is preserved in the event of the case for the re-instatement of public transport route here strengthening in the future.”

4.28 Further work has identified that the prospects for a public transport route being created are very unlikely now, and well beyond 2016, however the route does offer great potential as a walking and cycling route as it is direct and well connected to homes, schools, jobs, railway stations, open space and town/district centres on a largely flat route through an attractive landscape. Hence the route is safeguarded for the provision of a dedicated walking/cycling route.

4.30 The ongoing protection of the former railway line supports sustainable travel, health and economic objectives of the Local Transport Plan 3 and would deliver travel and health benefits, encouraging both cycling and walking in High Wycombe. Its route along the valley floor is well positioned, as it runs through/adjacent to urban areas for almost all its length – close to schools, houses, work places, rail stations and town/district centres so it could be used for all types of cycling and walking journeys and it should be separated from vehicular traffic in order to make this route attractive to users.

4.31 Safeguarding the former railway line and providing a high quality walking and cycling route would form part of the Sustrans national cycle network. It is intended as a show case to promote walking and cycling in High Wycombe, for both local and longer distance journeys and would link with the existing east-west cycle route. The safeguarded route should be 5m wide as this is the minimum required to allow for the provision of pedestrian and cycling routes and is based upon the standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)\(^{(6)}\)

4.32 The safeguarding of the route in this way also allows for any future plans or investment decisions that could deliver public transport corridor along this route.

### Implementation

- In the short term delivering the section from High Wycombe rail station and London Road and Bourne End Railway Station to the northern end of Town Lane as outlined on the proposals map, to link with the existing east-west cycle route.

- In the longer term as funding allows, provide a high quality walking and cycling route, in discreet sections, eventually forming a continuous link in the Sustrans national cycle network, between High Wycombe Town Centre and Bourne End.

---

\(^{(5)}\) Atkins: Thames Valley Multi Modal Study: 2003
\(^{(6)}\) Former Bourne End to High Wycombe Railway Line Background paper: June 2010
5.0  Economy, Town Centres and Retail

5.1  This chapter includes district wide policies for scattered business sites, town centre boundaries, primary shopping centres, district centres and retail impact assessments.

### DSA4 Scattered Business Sites

1. Planning permission will be granted on scattered business sites where the proposed development:
   a. falls within B1, B2, and B8 use classes of the use classes order, or,
   b. is for uses that deliver economic development such as employment generating sui generis uses, community facilities or main town centre uses (as defined by National Policy), and,
   c. in relation to main town centre uses, has met the requirements of the tests as set out in National Policy, if it is not in an existing centre, and,
   d. would not be detrimental to and is compatible with surrounding land uses.

2. Planning permission will not be granted for residential uses unless it has been clearly demonstrated that:
   a. the re-use of the site for the uses specified in a. and b. above is no longer practicable or desirable, and;
   b. the re-use of the site for housing would overcome any site specific objections to employment re-use.

3. In order to demonstrate that a site is no longer practicable for employment generating uses by reason of a lack of potential occupiers, the site must be marketed:
   a. for a sufficient period of time, and;
   b. at a reasonable price for exclusively employment generating uses (stripping out any residential hope value), and;
   c. unencumbered by any sales agreement which gives priority to prospective developers, or renders the site unavailable to other prospective purchasers in the market.

5.2  Scattered business sites are spread throughout the residential areas, rural areas, town centres and local centres across the District. They are defined as sites that:

   a. Are not part of an existing or designated employment/business area and,

   b. Accommodate “B” uses as defined by the Use Class Order or are employment generating “sui generis uses”.

5.3  They range in size and the type of businesses that they accommodate, and are often much smaller sites and comprise only one or two businesses. These sites are a valuable part of the employment land portfolio in the District, as they provide small-scale local employment opportunities in smaller communities, and often offer small units suitable for start up businesses.

5.4  Because there are a large number of these sites scattered across the District, and often they are very small they are not shown on the proposals maps accompanying this document.

5.5  It is clear that due to a combination of circumstances some scattered sites may no longer continue in their traditional “B” use classes activity, especially in the current economic climate. The policy needs to allow a degree of flexibility and responsiveness to market conditions.

(?)  See Glossary
5.6 Redevelopment of these sites for uses that are employment generating or for community uses would be acceptable. In terms of the other uses that are permissible, sui generis uses are uses that do not fall within a specific class within the Use Class Order and are described as being a “use on its own”. In terms of employment generating uses the types of developments or uses that are covered by this description are uses such as builders yards, car dealerships and petrol filling stations. Community Facilities are identified in policy CS 15 of the Core Strategy and Main Town Centre uses are defined in the Glossary in Appendix F.

5.7 It is important that proposals for Main Town Centre Uses meet the requirements of national policy in terms of being supported by a sequential assessment demonstrating that there are no available sites for the proposed use in an existing centre. This is important in avoiding a development proposal having a negative affect on the vitality and viability of existing centres. Guidance on what a sequential assessment should cover is set out in National Policy.

5.8 In order for the Council to find it acceptable for a scattered business site to be redeveloped for housing it is important that it is shown to be vacant and has been marketed appropriately to demonstrate that there is no likelihood of the site being re-used for employment generating uses. The marketing requirements of the site will vary according to the economic conditions at the time, but as a minimum a site:

a. will need to have been marketed for a typical period to let a property/site of that type in the area or similar
b. have clearly visible and appropriate advertising on site
c. have been registered with local and national agents as appropriate to the size and location of the site

5.9 Residential uses will only be considered where it can be clearly demonstrated that the use of a site for employment generating uses or other uses identified in this policy is either no longer practicable due to, for example, inadequate access, or clear evidence of a lack of potential or existing occupiers, or no longer desirable due to an unacceptable impact on surrounding residential property, as evidenced by an ongoing record of complaints or nuisance or for reasons of compatibility with surrounding uses.

5.10 The acceptability of any proposal for residential uses will still be subject to other policies in the development plan such as affordable housing, design and any other applicable policies.

5.11 Town Centre Boundaries set out the general extent of the Town Centre where there are predominantly town centre uses. This includes the Primary Shopping Area (see below) where the main uses are predominantly retail, but is usually a broader area including a range of other uses such as offices, leisure and cultural facilities.

5.12 Under national planning policy, local authorities are required to designate the extent of town centres on their proposals maps. This is the area which is used in the application of the sequential and impact tests in relation to proposed non-retail town centre uses. The Glossary at Appendix F sets out the definition of town centre uses, impact test and sequential test.

5.13 The sequential assessment is the test required in national planning policy, whereby all in-centre site options are thoroughly assessed for their availability, suitability and viability before less central sites are considered for development for town centre uses. The sequential assessment is required for planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in...
accordance with an up-to-date development plan. It applies to extensions to retail and leisure uses only where the gross floor space of the proposed extension exceeds 200m². See Policy DSA8 for further detail on the town centre impact assessment.

5.14 The town centre boundaries for High Wycombe, Marlow and Princes Risborough are shown on the Proposals Map. For High Wycombe this incorporates the whole area which functions as the town centre, including the Wycombe General Hospital site and the area between Westbourne Street and Desborough Avenue.

DSA6 The Primary Shopping Areas

Within the primary shopping areas, as defined on the proposals map, retail development and all other defined town centre uses, are acceptable in principle. Development should:

- a. Create an attractive and vibrant interface with the public realm, and,
- b. Be of an appropriate scale for that centre, and,
- c. Not have any impact upon other centres in the identified hierarchy in Core Strategy Policy CS10 or other centres outside of the District.
- d. Be in accordance with policies for primary and secondary shopping frontages.

5.15 The Primary Shopping Area sets out the general extent of the main retail core. Primary shopping areas (PSAs) are those areas within town centres where retail development is concentrated, and national guidance says the extent of the PSA should be defined on the proposals map. The PSA is the area on which the sequential and impact tests are used in relation to proposed new retail development.

5.16 The PSAs for High Wycombe, Marlow and Princes Risborough are shown on the proposals map. The PSA for High Wycombe now includes the expanded Eden centre, opened in 2008.

DSA7 District Centres

1. Within the District Centres, as defined on the Proposals Map, the Council will:

   a. Allow development of main town centre uses that are of an appropriate scale and character for that centre and the catchment area it serves;

   b. Not allow development involving the change of use of a shop to a non-shop use where this would result in more than the following percentages of frontage length in the respective District Centres being in non-shop (i.e. non-A1) use:

      - Bourne End: 40%
      - Flackwell Heath: 40%
      - Hazlemere: 15%

2. All development should ensure an active shop frontage at ground floor level to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.

5.17 Wycombe District has three District Centres; Bourne End, Flackwell Heath and Hazlemere. These centres fall within Tier 3 of the Town Centre Hierarchy in Policy CS10 of the Adopted Core Strategy. This means that their role is to provide basic food and grocery shopping facilities, supported by a limited range of other shops and non-retail services serving their local communities.

5.18 Whilst the number of vacant units has increased slightly in Bourne End and Flackwell Heath, the overall vacancy rate in all three centres is reasonably low, and zero in the case of Hazlemere. Therefore, a frontage policy which seeks to maintain a high proportion of shop units is deemed appropriate for all three.

5.19 However, given the presence of vacant units in Bourne End and Flackwell Heath, it is considered...
appropriate to allow for a certain level of flexibility for non-shop uses, to avoid any adverse impact on vitality and viability which may be caused by an increase in vacant units. Given Hazlemere’s lack of any vacant units, it is not considered that such flexibility for non-A1 uses is necessary.

5. ECONOMY, TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL

### DSA8 Thresholds for the Assessment of Schemes for Town Centre Impact

The Council will require an impact assessment for retail and leisure schemes not in a designated centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan, which are above the following thresholds in the relevant areas:

- **An assessment of impact on High Wycombe town centre** – for any retail and/or leisure proposal in the District with a gross floorspace of 1,000m² and above.
- **An assessment of impact on Other Town Centres (Tier 2 of the Town Centre Hierarchy)** – for any retail and/or leisure proposal, within the relevant local community area (i.e. Marlow and North West Chilterns), with a gross floorspace of 500m² and above.
- **An assessment of impact on District Centres (Tier 3 of the Town Centre Hierarchy)** – for any retail and/or leisure proposal within the respective parish boundary or a 3km radius as the crow flies of the respective District Centre, with a gross floorspace of 250m² and above.
- **An assessment of impact on Local Centres (Tier 4 of the Town Centre Hierarchy)** – any retail and/or leisure proposals which would be likely to have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of local centres.
- **An assessment of impact on designated centres outside the District** – any retail and/or leisure proposals which would be likely to have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of these centres.

#### 5.20
National planning guidance currently sets a threshold of 2,500m² gross floorspace above which all retail proposals should be required to carry out an impact assessment on designated centres. However it also states that local planning authorities should consider setting local thresholds in development plan documents.

#### 5.21
In the case of Wycombe District, the most recent Retail and Town Centre Study(8) identifies that there is limited capacity for additional retail floorspace in the period up to 2016 and therefore that the 2,500m² gross threshold is inappropriate for the local circumstances of the District, and that retail developments under 2,500m² gross could have a significant impact on designated centres in the District.

#### 5.22
Therefore, the Council has identified a set of floorspace thresholds to be used where proposals for retail and/or leisure schemes fall outside designated centres, above which such schemes are required to carry out an impact assessment on the relevant designated centre. The different thresholds are applied to the different types of centre in the District as identified in the Town Centre Hierarchy in Policy CS10 of the Adopted Core Strategy. For retail development, this applies to proposals outside of the designated Primary Shopping Areas (Policy DSA6), outside of the defined District Centres (DSA7), and outside of local centres. For leisure, it applies to proposals outside of the defined Town Centre boundaries (Policy DSA5), outside of the defined District Centres (Policy DSA 6) and outside of local centres.

(8) Retail and Town Centres Study Update 2009, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners for WDC, April 2009
5.23 Based on the scale and role of centres within Wycombe District and the retail floorspace projections in the Retail and Town Centre Uses Study, large-scale development which serves a significant part of the District should be concentrated in High Wycombe town centre. This is the largest centre and should continue to act as the principal centre within the District. Generally all retail developments of 1,000m² gross or more should be concentrated in High Wycombe. All development proposals of this scale should be tested against the impact and sequential tests in national planning guidance, if they are located outside the designated centres.

5.24 Developments of between 500m² and 1,000m² may be appropriate in Marlow and Princes Risborough town centres, where development complements the town centres by providing for convenience food shopping and day-to-day comparison shopping facilities and other services. Shopping facilities outside these main centres (but within the respective Local Community Areas\(^\text{(*)}\) of these two town centres) should only cater for top-up and basket convenience shopping and services, and these developments are likely to be less than 500m² gross.

5.25 Similarly shopping facilities outside the main District Centre boundaries (but within the respective parish boundaries or within 3km of the District Centre boundary) should only cater for small-scale local shopping, and these developments are likely to be less than 250m² gross.

5.26 An impact assessment should be undertaken for any proposals which are likely to have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of other centres, including the District’s network of Local Centres (local parades and village centres) and designated centres outside the District (in which case further consultation should be carried out with the relevant local planning authority about such assessments).

---

\(^{(*)}\) Local Community Areas (LCAs) are the set of defined areas in Buckinghamshire which are used by Local Area Forums as a basis for their local community planning activities. In Wycombe there are four LCAs: High Wycombe, Chepping Wycombe, Marlow and North West Chilterns. It is considered that the latter two are appropriate areas for defining retail and/or leisure schemes which should be subject to a Town Centre Impact Assessment, with regards to Marlow and Princes Risborough respectively, as in both cases these areas contain the main town and their natural rural hinterland.
6.0 Environment and Infrastructure

6.1 This chapter covers a range of environmental and infrastructure related policies including Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity, River Corridors, Open Space, Flood Risk, Carbon Reduction, Infrastructure and Viability.

6.2 The Government published a Natural Environment White Paper in June 2011 called “The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature”, in relation to planning policy this includes proposals to strengthen partnerships, the creation of Nature Improvement Areas and consideration of biodiversity offsetting.

6.3 As the proposals in the White Paper are progressed we will assess the following proposals to assess what impact they have and where possible ensure that they are in line with new national requirements.

6.4 “Green Infrastructure provides a vital life-support system, encompassing a network of green spaces, access routes, landscapes and natural and historic elements that intersperse and connect Buckinghamshire’s urban and rural settlements with each other and the surrounding countryside. Operating at all spatial scales it enables a holistic overview of the natural and historic environment, acknowledging its multi-functional benefits for economy, wildlife and health and well being of local people ad communities”.

6.5 This definition of Green Infrastructure was agreed by the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium (of which WDC is a member) and published in the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy in April 2009

6.6 A key feature of Green Infrastructure (GI) is its multi-functionality. The Wycombe District GI Network (identified by the Council on maps 1 and 2) is made up of existing and proposed multi-functional green spaces and green links, both public and private assets, with and without public access, and in both urban and rural locations. These green spaces and links contribute to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and future sustainable communities resilient to the effects of climate change in the long term.

6.7 The network highlights the potential for improvement to green spaces and links, for example to enhance movement opportunities for wildlife and people. Using a network approach enables a holistic overview of the natural and historic environment, its benefits for economy, wildlife and the health and wellbeing of local communities.

6.8 At a sub regional/county scale, provision of Green Infrastructure is being addressed by the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium (of which WDC is a member). In April 2009, the Consortium published a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Buckinghamshire(10). This identifies several opportunities within Wycombe District in two Priority Action Areas.

---

**Legacy Notes**

**DSA9 Green Networks and Infrastructure**

1. All development should retain, protect and enhance the Green Infrastructure Network paying special attention to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, recreation and non-motorised access.

2. Developments of one dwelling or more will be required to contribute to the improvement of the Green Infrastructure Network and provision of opportunity areas (as identified on the proposals map); and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (as identified in the Biodiversity Action Plan). This will be secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

3. All development proposing new greenspaces or green links should be provided in a way that retains, reinforces or creates links within and to the Green Infrastructure Network so as to promote recreation, biodiversity and non-motorised access.

(10) Green Infrastructure Strategy for Buckinghamshire (2009)
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**Priority Action Area 2 (Aylesbury Environs)**
- Countryside Access Gateway G4 (Bacombe and Coombe Hills)
- Access Link L6 (Princes Risborough to Bacombe, Coombe and Whiteleaf Hills)
- Access Link L7 (Bacombe, Coombe and Whiteleaf Hills to Amersham)
- Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zones O4 (Chiltern Escarpment)

**Priority Action Area 3 (Wycombe District South and South Bucks)**
- Access Link L1 (High Wycombe to Bourne End)
- Access Link L2 (Wooburn to Burnham Beeches)
- Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zone O1 (Little Marlow Gravel Pits)

6.9 At a district scale, the Council is addressing GI provision through the identification of a Wycombe District specific Green Infrastructure Network\(^{(11)}\). The network includes public parks, river corridors, public rights of way, cycle routes, playing fields, informal green spaces, woodland and former railway corridors; identified in line with the methodology for Parish & Town Green Infrastructure plans\(^{(12)}\), and promoted by the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium. The aim of identifying the network is to provide suitable and sufficient green spaces for recreation, amenity and biodiversity purposes, connected by a series of green links that provide attractive, convenient routes for both wildlife and people.

6.10 Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy identifies areas within Wycombe District where new development will be principally focussed (High Wycombe, Downley, Hazlemere/ Widmer End/ Tyler’s Green, Loudwater and Wooburn Green) and it is in these areas where the identification, protection and enhancement of a local Green Infrastructure Network has been prioritised. In the long term the network will be defined district-wide.

6.11 The Green Infrastructure Network for the High Wycombe and the Chepping Wye Valley Local Community Areas is shown in Figure 1. Further information on the methodology used in identifying a green infrastructure network is set out in the Green Infrastructure background paper\(^{(13)}\).

---

\(^{(11)}\) Green infrastructure Background Paper (2009)
\(^{(12)}\) Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium (2009)
\(^{(13)}\) Green Infrastructure Strategy for Buckinghamshire (2009)
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

6.12 The Green Infrastructure Network is based on mapping the five key themes listed below. Only areas that comprise two or more of the elements within these themes satisfy the criteria of multi-functionality and have therefore been identified as existing Green Infrastructure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Themes</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>Eg. Private and public woodland, open countryside, river corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>Eg. Statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas as well as other important habitats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Environment</td>
<td>Eg. Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
<td>Eg. Greenspace, Incidental Open Space and other areas identified in various open space studies including the Council’s Open Spaces Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Eg. cycle ways, Public Rights of Way and former railway corridors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.13 There are two types of opportunity area covered by this policy; the broader corridor opportunities identified as part of the Green Infrastructure Network and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (see below).

6.14 The Green Infrastructure Network also includes Opportunity Areas\(^\text{(14)}\), which have been identified where there is a potential to enhance green links between areas of existing Green Infrastructure. It is within these Opportunity Areas that the GI Network can be enhanced by increasing the number of elements that they provide and increasing their multi-functionality. A strategy and action plan will be produced to identify and programme future improvements.

**Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs)**

6.15 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) see Appendix C are landscape scale areas which have been identified as the areas of greatest opportunity for strategic gains for biodiversity by the South East England Biodiversity Forum, informed by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Biodiversity Partnership. They cover large areas of the District and contain concentrations of priority habitats and species. More information on the location of BOAs, the selection process for them and their strategic biodiversity targets which support the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan can be found on the partnership website www.buckinghamshirepartnership.gov.uk/partnership

6.16 The main aim within the BOAs is to support Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets through protection, maintenance, restoration and creation of BAP priority habitats. They are areas of opportunity, not constraint. BOAs do not include all the BAP habitat in the District, nor do they include all the areas where BAP habitats could exist or be enhanced.

6.17 National planning policy guidance requires local development frameworks to identify opportunities to enhance and add to BAP priority habitats through appropriate policies and identify suitable areas for restoration or creation of new habitats. Delivery of Core Strategy Policy CS17 requires the protection and enhancement of “BOAs defined in future development plan documents”.

6.18 In addition to contributions raised through CIL, when biodiversity enhancements are proposed by development and occur in or adjacent to BOAs (including those that form part of the Green Infrastructure Network) enhancements should take account of the strategic aims of the relevant BOA. Appropriate enhancements within BOAs can include restoration or maintenance of existing habitats, new habitat creation to link fragmented habitats, or use of financial contributions towards initiatives promoting biodiversity within BOAs.

\(^{14}\) Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium (2009)
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**DSA10 Green Spaces**

1. Development that would result in the loss, fragmentation or reduction in size of green spaces shown on the proposals maps will be refused, except in exceptional circumstances.

2. The same approach will be taken to open areas of recreational amenity, nature conservation or landscape value in rural settlements that are “washed over” by the Green Belt or do not have a settlement boundary.

3. Where, in exceptional circumstances, it can be demonstrated that development within a green space is necessary, a substantial element of green space must be retained, and the overall character and quality of the space maintained, or, if this is not possible, alternative provision of equivalent quality should be made within a reasonable distance.

6.19 Designated green spaces are a key element of the District’s green infrastructure, the retention of which is important. They vary in character and size with the minimum area of designation usually being 0.1 ha, but they all contribute significantly to the landscape character, the townscape or have a recreational and community value. They play a particularly important role in and around the built environment but are similarly protected in rural settlements.

6.20 Green spaces form a key part of the green infrastructure. As a result of the Open Space Audit\(^{(15)}\), a major review of green spaces has been undertaken. This has resulted in the identification of a significant number of green spaces. The main factors determining the designation of a site as a green space relate to:

- Site Characteristics – their location, size, condition, and vegetation
- Visual/physical accessibility and connectivity
- Landscape value
- Use, including recreational and amenity value
- Biodiversity/Ecology value

6.21 It should be noted that designation of a green space does not mean that there is necessarily public access to it. Green spaces are identified in the main settlements in the District. They are not defined in the smaller settlements “washed” over by the green belt and in settlements beyond the green belt with no defined settlement boundary as these spaces are afforded protection either by green belt policy or policies relating to settlements beyond the green belt.

6.22 Proposals within a green space will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as where there is an overwhelming need for recreational facilities that cannot be accommodated elsewhere, or where there is proven functional need.

**DSA11 Protection and Enhancement of Sites, Habitats and Species of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance**

1. Development which would harm directly or indirectly the nature conservation or geological interest of the designated sites and habitats as identified on the proposals map, or protected species, will not be permitted unless:

   a. It has been clearly demonstrated that the benefits of the development outweigh the harm to the biodiversity or geological value,

   b. there is no suitable alternative site for the proposed development, and

   c. the loss can be mitigated or compensated to achieve a net overall gain in biodiversity or geodiversity.

2. The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of national and international importance. For the sites, their role within the wider national network of sites will be considered.

3. Development proposals in or potentially affecting a designated site, important habitat or protected species will need to submit an ecological survey and report.

\(^{(15)}\) Open Spaces Framework, WDC 2010
6.23 Designated sites, important habitats and protected species form a vital part of the biodiversity and geodiversity resource of the District. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, including plants and animals, the variety within and between species, and the diversity in ecosystems (the complex systems formed by interactions between living things and the inanimate world). Geodiversity is defined by Natural England as the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.

6.24 The local authority is required by law and national planning policy to protect and achieve a net gain in these resources. Core Strategy Policy CS17 sets the context for the conservation and improvement of environmental assets across of the District.

6.25 The sites and habitats affected by this policy are shown on the proposals map, with the sites of national and international importance being distinguished separately. All currently known sites are shown however these will alter in the future. Any currently unidentified sites that meet the defining criteria will also be covered by this policy. A current list of sites of local importance is available from Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre as the list changes over time. Biological Notification Sites are not shown on the Proposals Map as they have not been reviewed as part of the Local Wildlife Site identification process.

6.26 Individual species records are not shown on the proposals map but species protected legally or by national planning policy are covered by this policy.

6.27 This policy applies to the following (see the Glossary in Appendix F for definitions):

Sites of national or international importance
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Sites of local importance
- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- Biological Notification Sites (BNS)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Local Geological Sites (LGS).
- Ancient Woodland, veteran or ancient trees
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats and Species, legally protected species and their habitats, as well as species defined by S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

6.28 Development proposals potentially affecting the above sites, habitats and species are required to submit an ecological survey and report. Potential impacts on as yet unrecorded biodiversity resources must be considered. In addition, indirect effects may affect biodiversity sites some distance from the development proposals. The survey and report must be prepared by a suitably qualified or experienced ecologist and include:

- existing biodiversity interests and how the development is expected to impact on these;
- recommendations for mitigation to minimise harm;
- whether compensatory measures are also required and the timing of compensatory measures to ensure that compensation is in place before any accepted damage to biodiversity interests takes place
- how the development will deliver an overall gain for biodiversity
- consideration of existing or potential wildlife corridors on site and links from these to the wider ecological networks including those identified in the Green Infrastructure network
- a monitoring and management plan drawn up for the biodiversity interests of the development site to ensure the long term future management.

6.29 Further information and guidance on ecological surveys can be found on the Council’s web site (under guidance on submitting a valid planning application[16]). The Standing advice for protected species on the Natural England web site provides guidance when development proposals may affect protected species. For developments potentially affecting the River Wye and its tributaries the River Wye Advice Note is available on the Council web site.

6.30 More detail regarding the legislative and national planning policy background to all the above sites, habitats and species is provided in the Biodiversity Designations background paper (17) and the publication “Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire” (18). There is also information within these documents on the location and characteristics of these sites, habitats and species.

**DSA12 Biodiversity in Development**

1. A net gain in biodiversity will be sought when considering proposals for development. All development proposals should be designed to maximise biodiversity, where appropriate protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources or creating new areas or features.

2. Where potential biodiversity interest is identified on a site or the development creates an opportunity to provide a net gain in biodiversity, the Council will require an ecological survey and report to be submitted which demonstrates how biodiversity will be incorporated into a development proposal.

6.31 Policy CS17 sets the context for the protection of environmental assets of the District. The Council recognises that there are other areas of biodiversity importance in the District which may be affected by specific development proposals, in addition to those protected by law or planning policy as outlined in Policy DSA11 above. In addition many development proposals have the potential to benefit local biodiversity, even on relatively small development sites.

6.32 The importance of protecting, conserving, managing and also enhancing biodiversity in the wider environment outside designated sites is a key principle of national planning policy guidance. These areas contribute to a network essential for the maintenance of biological diversity, providing opportunities to offset the effects of climate change and allowing continued and improved provision of the ecosystem services which support human health, well-being and prosperity.

6.33 National planning policy states that opportunities exist for the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity and geological features as part of good design. This includes for example creating or improving areas of habitat on site, improving management of habitats, landscaping for biodiversity, or providing opportunities for wildlife on or within buildings. Where appropriate opportunities can also deliver Biodiversity Action Plan targets, for example within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (see policy DSA9). Particular consideration should be given to habitats that provide an important nature corridor or stepping stone function, including those within or linking to the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy DSA9).

6.34 The Council is currently updating its Housing Intensification Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and preparing a new Residential Design Guidance SPD for developers designing residential sites. These two pieces of guidance will provide further information on designing to maximise biodiversity on a site.

6.35 Development proposals are required to be supported by a Wildlife Checklist (19) this will identify if there is known or potential biodiversity interest on a site. This checklist is used to assess if development may harm potential or known biodiversity interest, or where development creates an opportunity to provide a net gain in biodiversity. In such cases the Council will require an ecological survey and report to be submitted.

6.36 The Council may impose appropriate conditions or require a developer to enter into a management or legal agreement prior to the development taking place. Depending on the locality and type of development, consideration will be given to collection of developer contributions through the Developer Contributions SPD or in future through the Community Infrastructure Levy to secure net benefits.

---

(17) Biodiversity Designations Background Paper (WDC, 2009)
(18) Biodiversity and Planning in Buckinghamshire (BBOWT, 2010)
gains for biodiversity within the District as a whole. This may be particularly appropriate if development is unable to provide adequately for biodiversity on a development site.

6.37 Watercourses and their associated corridors are a vital element of the Green Infrastructure of the District. They have several valuable functions – as a landscape feature, for biodiversity especially as a corridor to allow movement of species, for recreation, as a water resource and river maintenance. Core Strategy Policy CS17 outlines the approach that will be taken by the Council with respect to watercourses. Of particular importance in the District are the River Wye and its tributaries. These chalk streams are a globally rare habitat that has been designated as a priority habitat within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Additionally, the River Thames has a nationally important landscape value. However, all watercourses in the District, ranging from rivers and streams to canals and ditches, are intended to be covered by this policy.

6.38 Development proposals affecting watercourses will also be considered by the Environment Agency under separate legislation.

6.39 Planning proposals should not impact adversely on the functions of a watercourse and its associated corridor and must address the following:

- provision and/or maintenance of a buffer zone between the watercourse and the development, and a long term landscape and ecological management plan for this buffer
- conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including opportunities to deculvert watercourses and remove barriers to fish movements
- improvements in water quality and site run-off rates through the use of SUDS
- whether the development respects the scale of the riverside setting
- opportunities to enhance recreational use sensitive to the other functions of the river corridor

6.40 The de-culverting of the River Wye is part of the long-term vision and masterplan for High Wycombe town centre as set out in the High Wycombe town centre chapter of this document. Opportunity areas have been identified for improving the River Wye corridor through the town centre. These are:

i. Improvements to existing river channel at HWTC20 Baker Street
ii. De-culverting and implementation of an exposed river corridor at HWTC18 Oxford Road roundabout
iii. De-culverting and implementation of an extended and improved river corridor at HWTC12 Swan Frontage

6.41 Any proposals that come forward on sites HWTC18 and HWTC12 are required to demonstrate that the proposals do not prejudice the de-culverting of the River Wye in the longer-term.

6.42 The river/stream corridor should be at least 10m wide both sides of the watercourse, measured from the bank top, defined as the point at which the bank meets the level of the surrounding land. It should be maintained as natural or semi-natural habitat and should be free from all built development, including parking areas, private gardens and formal landscaping.

6.43 A minimum 10m wide buffer is required as this size of buffer provides the minimum width of habitat which is needed to provide the space for the functioning of riparian wildlife habitats, while being able to facilitate informal access for enjoyment of the river. This width also ensures that the river is buffered from land-based activities, e.g. reducing the levels of diffuse pollution reaching the watercourse.

6.44 Provision of a 10m buffer may not be achievable in some situations for example on some town centre sites where there is already significant built development and infringement of the river corridor. In this case environmental enhancements within a reduced buffer width, within the river channel and on the banks as well as on other areas of the site should be provided. Detailed design of the buffer zone will be determined on a site-by-site basis in consultation with the Environment Agency.

6.45 Further guidance is available in the River Wye Advice note (available on the Council web site) which contains principles that can also be applied to other watercourses.

**DSA14 Open Space in New Development**

1. For developments of four dwellings or above (gross), or any employment development of 2,500sqm or above (gross) provision for public open space to the following standards is required:
   a. 3.3 hectares of strategic open space per 1,000 population
   b. 1.15 hectares of local open space per 1,000 population
   c. This is in addition to any on site provision of private or communal open space required as part of providing sustainable, high quality environments.

2. Once the Council has moved to a new system of developer contributions based upon the application of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the standards set out in part 1. of this policy will apply to all development.

3. Developments of less than 40 dwellings (gross) or less than 5,000 sqm (gross) should provide off-site contributions for local and strategic open space.

4. Developments of 40 dwellings or above (gross) or 5,000 sqm or above (gross) should provide:
   i. Off-site contributions towards strategic open space.
   ii. a proportion of local open space on-site.

5. Development for strategic sites will be expected to all local and strategic open space requirements on sites as a minimum. Site specific requirements will be set out in a subsequent DPD.
6.46 National policy on Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation\(^{(21)}\) sets out the benefits and importance of open space, play and informal recreation and requires Councils to set standards for open space with regard to quantity, quality and accessibility at a local level. Emerging policy on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment endorses this approach but emphasises also the importance of quality and multi-functionality in open spaces. As a result the Council has undertaken open space audits\(^{(22)}\) and has developed local standards based on local needs\(^{(23)}\).

6.47 Open spaces deliver a variety of benefits and are an integral part of sustainable development. They play an important part in adapting to climate change by reducing temperature through evaporative cooling by plants, and providing shade in hot weather. They protect the health of communities by providing an opportunity for leisure and exercise and sustain biodiversity by providing habitats and helping it to adapt to climate change.

6.48 Development increases the potential number of people using open spaces and as a result adds to the pressure on existing open spaces. The Council therefore requires development exceeding the above thresholds to provide open space to meet its own needs, recognising that those thresholds may change as a result of the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Based on size, character, use and catchment of open spaces, the Council distinguishes between strategic and local open space provision.

6.49 The level of open space that development should provide for is set out in Policy DSA13 with the breakdown of those standards set out in Table 1. This approach is based on the evidence provided in the Open Spaces Framework, which includes the Council’s Local Standards on open space. This approach conforms with Government requirements as set out in PPG17 and its companion guide.

### Table 1 Open Space Standards in New Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Some types of open space are realistically best provided at a strategic level as they a) require a large space and/or b) serve larger catchments. These include: Public outdoor sport (1.2ha/1000) Park and semi-natural greenspaces (1.67ha/1000) Allotments (0.23ha/1000) Strategic play comprising NEAPs (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play) and/or MUGAs (Multi-Use Games Areas) (0.2ha/1000) Generally an off-site contribution with the exception of some strategic development sites, which will have to provide these categories on-site (see site-specific policies). Strategic contributions will typically have to be spent within the local community area where they occur</td>
<td>Allows a coordinated approach to open space provision and ensures that the quality of open spaces is maintained and enhanced. Allows flexibility to address the varying requirements between the different Local Community Areas (LCAs). Ensures that open space requirements are informed by the locality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Some open space facilities such as play are important to be provided locally. These include: Local play comprising LEAPs (Local Equipped Area of Play) and LAPs (Local Area of Play): (0.6 ha/1000) Public informal amenity space (0.55ha) Generally an on-site provision above certain development threshold (40 dwellings or 5,000sqm) or if the development site is in an area where no other meaningful spaces exist. Could be an off-site contribution to a nearby site where this is more appropriate.</td>
<td>Local provision for local recreation To create a sustainable, high quality environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.45</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{(21)}\) Planning Policy Guidance 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (DCLG, 2002)

\(^{(22)}\) Open Spaces Study (Scott Wilson, 2005)

\(^{(23)}\) Open Space Standard Setting (PMP, 2008)
Developments above 40 units (gross) or 5,000sqm (gross) are expected to `provide the local element of the open space standard on site (ie 1.15 ha / 1000) in areas where no other meaningful spaces exist. This is because this is the most effective way of securing provision and the sites and development are likely to be of sufficient scale to enable a meaningful and usable area of open space to be provided. In some cases the off-site contribution to a nearby site might be more appropriate.

The off-site contribution system is currently set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and the associated Developers’ Guide and this includes contributions towards the maintenance of open space. A partial review of this system is currently being progressed, including addressing the latest open space standards. The system will change with the introduction of a CIL and any revised thresholds will be set out either nationally, as part of the CIL charging schedule or in a future local development document.

Off-site contributions will either be pooled to enable the implementation of larger projects including the creation of additional open space, or will be used to improve the accessibility to, or quality of, existing open spaces, whatever is most appropriate in the locality.

Major developments create both greater demands on open space and opportunities to address wider open space issues. Proposals need to be brought forward as part of comprehensive proposals for major development sites (see site-specific policies for detail) with full requirements provided on site. Major sites are one of the main opportunities to increase the quantity of open space and will be required to provide open space on site.

Quality and accessibility standards will be applied in accordance with the standards set out in the Open Spaces Framework.

The Open Space Framework outlines the Council’s approach on how to overcome open space deficiencies in quantity, quality and accessibility in different parts of the District, and includes an action plan, which will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in circumstances. This will guide the use of developer contributions.

---

**DSA15 Planning for Flood Risk Management**

**Reducing Flood Risk**

1) Developments that are in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3 (as identified on the proposals map) and have not been allocated in a development plan document by the Council will not be permitted unless it has been demonstrated that:
   a) There are no other sites available in a lower flood risk zone as a result of a sequential assessment including an assessment against allocations in this (or any subsequent) development plan document; and where appropriate
   b) That the requirements of the exceptions test as set out in national policy have been met.
   c) In such circumstances the requirements of 2a) to 2d) below will also need to be fulfilled.

2) Applications on allocated sites greater than 1ha and that are in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3 will need to be supported by:
   a) A flood risk assessment that demonstrates the most appropriate layout of development on site in terms of flood risk has been applied; and
   b) Demonstration that a sequential approach has been taken within the site, directing the most vulnerable uses to the areas of lowest flood risk; and
   c) Demonstration that resilient and resistant construction methods for managing residual risk and delivering an overall reduction in flood risk have been assessed; and
   d) The provision of space for flood water storage through the use of open space or areas above ground (where appropriate).

Flood Zones 2 and 3 are identified on the Proposals Map although developers should consult with the Environment Agency for any updates to it.

Identification of additional areas of risk may trigger a requirement for a Flood Risk Assessment.
It is a key national requirement that in planning for new development policies and allocations should be informed by appraising, managing and reducing flood risk. Core Strategy Policy CS18 sets out that the Council will have regard to the risk of flooding when allocating land for development.

National policy on Development and Flood Risk sets out that a sequential approach to allocating sites for development should be followed and that this should be based upon a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which assesses the risk from different types of flooding in the District and the future effects of climate change on flooding. Through the SFRA and the Sustainability Appraisal of sites and options, the Council has identified that we must apply a sequential test as a number of allocations are within the Flood Zones 2 and 3. This sequential test was produced and has been agreed by the Environment Agency.

For sites not allocated, and therefore not covered by the Council’s sequential test, any application for sites in zones 2 or 3 or larger than 1 ha will need to demonstrate that there are no sites available in a lower flood risk zone. This assessment will need to include allocated sites. The scope of the sequential test should relate to the scale and location of a proposal and should be agreed with the Council beforehand. The Council needs to be satisfied that the sequential assessment justifies the site being developed before planning permission can be granted. Developments on sites over 1 ha in flood zone 1 need to be supported by a flood risk assessment because of the potential impacts on surface water drainage and the risk of flooding within the associated catchment that they may create.

The sequential test is part of a hierarchical approach to avoiding and managing flood risk which seeks to ensure that sites at little or no risk from flooding are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. In those circumstances where a development requires a sequential test, a developer will need to provide evidence to the local planning authority that there are no other reasonably available sites which could be considered as being suitable and appropriate for the development that is proposed. If the proposed development is needed for wider sustainable development reasons in flood risk areas it must then satisfy the three criteria of the Exception Test (set out below), to ensure that the development would be safe for its occupants, and would not increase flood risk.

For the Exception Test to be passed:

a. It must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a SFRA where one has been prepared. If the DPD has reached the ‘submission’ stage the benefits of the development should contribute to the Core Strategy’s Sustainability Appraisal;

b. The development should be on developable previously-developed land or, if it is not on previously developed land, that there are no reasonable alternative sites on developable previously-developed land; and

c. A FRA must demonstrate that the development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

When development proposals come forward for those allocations that are in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3 it is important that it is demonstrated that they will reduce the risk of flooding through the provision of a detailed, site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The FRA should be undertaken in line with the most up to date requirements set out by the Environment Agency as well as reflecting requirements set out in SFRA.

The Environment Agency regularly updates the flood risk zones and reference should be made to their website.

---

(24) Wycombe District Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 & 2 (WDC, 2008)
(25) Flood Risk Sequential Test Background Paper, November 2009
(26) See para 7.4.4 page 44 recommendations for Development Control
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**DSA16 Carbon Reduction**

1. All new residential and commercial development should be designed to achieve at least the minimum national requirements for reducing the use of natural resources.

2. Planning permission will be refused if there is no provision of on-site energy generation through the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources in line with the standards and thresholds below, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible or viable:
   a. For residential developments between 1 and 9 units (gross) and commercial developments of 100 sq.m. and more, decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources should be used on-site to deliver a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2006 Building Regulations requirements.
   b. For residential developments of 10 units (gross) and more, decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources should be used on-site to deliver a minimum 15% reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2006 Building Regulations requirements.

3. In instances where it has been demonstrated that the requirements of part 2) above cannot be met the Council will seek an off-site contribution.

4. Site specific requirements for combined heat and power systems are set out in site specific policies and are counted towards the 15% target.

5. New development should also be designed to include measures that allow for adaptation to climate change.

6.63 Tackling Climate Change is an important challenge facing society. PPS1 Planning and Climate Change states that there is:

“A compelling scientific consensus that human activity is changing the world’s climate. The evidence that climate change is happening, and that man-made emissions are its main cause, is strong and indisputable.”

6.64 The UK has reacted to this by making a commitment to reduce carbon emissions in the 2008 Climate Change Act. This includes a commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 2050 by at least 80% compared with 1990 levels. The Council has responded to this by adopting a Carbon Reduction Strategy in 2011, this applies the UK commitment to the District resulting in the following targets based on 2005 levels:

- 21% by 2020
- 40% by 2026
- 76% by 2050

6.65 In 2006 the government announced a timetable for ensuring that all new homes built would have zero carbon emissions by 2016 through the application of the Code for Sustainable Homes, an environmental standard for residential dwellings. The Code sets new standards for construction. All new homes built from 2010 are required to achieve a Level 3 for the energy, those built from 2013 should achieve a Level 4, and from 2016, a Level 6.

6.66 The Code levels should achieve the following reductions in carbon emissions when compared to Building Regulation requirements in 2006:

- Code Level 3 25%
- Code Level 4 44%
- Code Level 6 100%

6.67 In the interests of clarity the 10 or 15% reduction referred to part (2) of the policy is in relation the percentages set out above. E.g. the policy requires that of the 25% required by Code Level 3, 10 or 15% should be onsite the remaining 15 or 10% to be achieved through the use of design and construction techniques.

6.68 The Incorporation of elements of the Code for Sustainable Homes in part L of the Building Regulations in October 2010, and phased increase in

---

(27) Page 8 PPS1 supplement Planning and Climate Change (2007)
(28) The Code for Sustainable Homes: Setting the standard in sustainability for new homes (DCLG, 2008)
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

the degree to which carbon emissions are reduced means that new developments will be required to be more energy efficient and generate a proportion of energy demands on-site.

6.69 The Core Strategy sets out in Policy CS18 the Council’s commitment to minimise waste and encourage recycling, conserve natural resources and avoid pollution in new development. This reflects emerging national guidance for adaptation to climate change in new development and will be achieved through measures including minimisation of water use, sustainable urban drainage, energy efficiency and use of renewable energy technology.

6.70 The carbon reduction policy aims to ensure that where it is feasible and viable new developments are designed in a way that reduces the amount of carbon they produce. The requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes mean that new buildings will have to be designed to be more energy efficient. The Council wishes to see an element of on-site energy generation being used to achieve this reduction.

6.71 The Council has based the targets in the policy on an assessment of a range of developments, considering both the viability and feasibility of a number of different technologies. The policy differentiates between small and large developments on the basis that smaller schemes are likely to find it more difficult to achieve the use of renewable technologies due to site constraints.

6.72 The policy allows for a case to be made on a site by site basis that demonstrates that the requirements of the policy are not achievable. This will need to be demonstrated by a technical report that clearly sets out why the requirements cannot be met. If reasons of viability are being used then this needs to be demonstrated by the use of an “open book” approach, as set out in policy DSA18 on Viability and Delivery, clearly showing the development finances of a scheme. In such circumstances the council will seek an off site contribution towards the implementation of the Carbon Reduction Framework.

6.73 On those sites where Combined Heat and Power (CHP) has been identified as requirement, the provision of CHP should not be limited to 15%, applications should be supported by assessments that demonstrate the contribution that CHP will make towards meeting carbon reduction targets.

6.74 The type of on-site energy generation will be dependant upon the level of energy efficiency achieved by the actual design of new development. Examples of how the requirements of the policy can be achieved are set out in the Living Within Our Limits SPD and guidance on how developments should be designed to adapt to climate change will be included in the forthcoming Residential Design Guidance SPD.

**Implementation**

The Council will monitor:

- The number of dwellings utilising on-site renewable energy
- Energy generated by renewable energy on permitted schemes

**DSA17 Infrastructure and Delivery**

1. In line with Core Strategy Policies CS21 and CS16, where development will create a need to provide additional or improved infrastructure, amenities or facilities, developers will be expected to make such provision.

2. Infrastructure is required to be delivered in a manner which supports the development of sites identified within the Delivery and Site Allocations DPD in order to ensure that the Council’s spatial strategy is delivered in a sustainable way.

3. Key infrastructure requirements to support the sustainable delivery of sites and projected population and housing change are set out in the Wycombe Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4. In order to secure and co-ordinate the delivery of infrastructure, the Council will work in partnership with other local delivery bodies, local authorities, developers and service providers.

(29) Evidence to Support Sustainable Construction Volume 1: Percentage Energy Requirement
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

6.75 National planning policy requires local planning authorities to undertake long-term infrastructure planning as part of their Local Development Frameworks. Infrastructure planning involves the production of an evidence base to show what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to deliver the spatial strategy for an area in a sustainable way and enable the amount of development proposed for the area, as well as considering when and how it can be delivered.

6.76 As a response to this requirement to address issues of infrastructure planning and delivery within the LDF, the Council has developed an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to identify the infrastructure requirements of service providers. By proactively forward planning for the requirements and delivery of infrastructure, this policy approach will help meet the key principles of the adopted Core Strategy and the vision for the community as set out in the Wycombe Sustainable Community Strategy and the Buckinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy. It will also support the planned development within the district and forms part of the evidence base to support the current Developer Contributions SPD framework (30).

6.77 The Wycombe Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a ‘live’ document which sits alongside this Delivery & Site Allocations DPD. It has been developed in consultation with service providers, who have identified (where possible) their future infrastructure requirements against projected housing and population change within the district.

6.78 Currently the IDP does not identify infrastructure requirements for the reserved locations for future development identified in Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy. As the development plan is implemented and the infrastructure requirements of service providers become more refined, the IDP will be required to be updated to reflect these changing priorities. This will include an update to inform the review of the Core Strategy. Therefore the most recent version of the IDP should be used when assessing infrastructure need.

6.79 The Council will continue to seek the delivery of infrastructure required to support new development through the current Developer Contributions SPD until the implementation of a Community Infrastructure Levy which will replace the current developer contributions regime. Where appropriate the Council will continue to use legal agreements to ensure the delivery of elements of infrastructure in individual circumstances.

Implementation

- The delivery of infrastructure will be sought through the Developer Contributions SPD, and subsequently through the Community Infrastructure Levy, once adopted by the Council
- The delivery of infrastructure outlined in the IDP will be monitored through the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report
- The IDP will be updated at appropriate intervals, to reflect the delivery of infrastructure, the changing requirements of service providers and changes to housing delivery projections.

(30) Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (WDC, 2007)
1. Schemes will be expected to deliver affordable housing, contributions to community infrastructure and carbon reduction in line with Policies CS13 and CS21 of the Core Strategy and Policy DSA16 of this document.

2. Where, because of the physical circumstances of the site and/or prevailing and anticipated market conditions a developer can demonstrate that the viability of a development proposal affects the provision of affordable housing, contributions towards community infrastructure and carbon reduction, the Council will balance the adverse impact of permitting the scheme on the delivery of affordable housing, contributions towards community infrastructure and carbon reduction and the harm to other planning objectives, with any identified planning benefits of the scheme.

3. Planning permission will not be granted where viability is brought into question and where the benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the harm to the delivery of affordable housing, community infrastructure, carbon reduction and other planning objectives.

4. Where current viability is proposed as a justification to deliver a reduced level of affordable housing and/or contributions towards community infrastructure and/or carbon reduction than that required by policy:
   
   i. The Council will require developers to share with the Council on an “open book” basis the development finances of the scheme. Where issues of viability arise there will be a need for the Council to obtain independent valuation advice with the full and reasonable costs of that advice to be met by the developer, and
   
   ii. Where, as a result of the assessment of viability, it is agreed that the full policy requirements and guidance cannot be met, the Council will consider the following courses of action:

   a) Review the timing of provision of financial contributions or direct infrastructure provision (including affordable housing) first, and only if necessary, then;

   b) Prioritise and review the level of financial contributions or direct infrastructure provision (including affordable housing), or other policy requirements. The Council will take account of the level of contribution being proposed when assessing the scheme;

   c) The Council will then undertake the balancing exercise referred to in paragraph 2 above. This balancing exercise will be undertaken on a site by site basis. Where, in the light of that balancing exercise, proposals are considered favourably, the Council will expect measures to be put in place to ensure the early delivery of the development.

   In addition the Council may:

   d) Require developers and other relevant providers to bid for other funding streams to enable delivery of the scheme and/or earlier delivery of infrastructure, or to increase infrastructure provision that may have been reduced;

   e) Include overage clauses in section 106 agreements to capture the uplift in value of schemes should market conditions improve.

5. The Council may issue additional or alternative advice regarding addressing viability through the Developer Contributions SPD or any other relevant Local Development Documents.
6. ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

6.80 We are experiencing ongoing uncertain market conditions. These problems have been exacerbated by problems of availability of finance both for individuals (for house purchase) and for developers (for development finance).

6.81 In Wycombe District house prices have fallen significantly from their height at the end of 2007 falling to a low point early in 2009, but rising by about 10% by early 2010. Since then prices have continued to rise across the South East and in Buckinghamshire. Sales volumes have also declined very markedly from their peak. Unemployment has also risen in line with regional and national trends, although levels are still well below the national average.

6.82 It is recognised that the decline in prices had an impact on land values and introduces uncertainty into the development industry. It is also recognised that viability can be an issue, at least in the short term. Longer term prospects are much more difficult to predict with any certainty.

6.83 The Core Strategy provides the overall framework for the contribution development should make to the provision of community infrastructure (Policy CS21) and affordable housing (Policy CS13). Policy DSA16 of this document sets the approach in relation to carbon reduction. Policy DSA19 explains in more detail how these policies apply when issues of viability arise.

6.84 In assessing issues of viability, the Council is concerned to avoid development that is not of the right quality, does not address necessary infrastructure requirements or fails to provide adequate levels of affordable housing. It is also concerned that planning permissions may be sought with reduced levels of contributions that are then not delivered, and in the meantime market conditions may have improved. As a result the Council will seek to secure mechanisms that address these issues and will carefully balance the impact of the proposals on the timing and level of affordable housing, contributions towards community infrastructure and carbon reduction to be provided relative to requirements in Policies CS13 and CS21 of the Core Strategy and Policy DSA18 of this document, and their impact on achieving other planning objectives, with the planning benefits of bringing forward the scheme.

6.85 As a basic principle, the Council would expect developers to explore the scope to address viability concerns first by means of delaying and/or phasing the timing of contributions and provision before considering reduced levels to maximise the delivery of much needed affordable housing and community infrastructure, albeit over somewhat longer timescales. Whilst it is recognised that the external funding climate may be more limited at this time, the Council may also want to explore with developers the scope to secure additional external funding to deliver affordable housing, infrastructure and carbon reduction. It will also want to see mechanisms introduced to recoup future uplift in values if market conditions improve in order to help make up the shortfall against policy requirements.

6.86 To assist with the deliverability of schemes that are delivering full policy target levels of affordable housing and contributions to community infrastructure, the Council may consider granting planning permissions for a longer period of time than normal (up to 5 years), to provide developers with certainty and to enable policy requirements to become viable over time.

6.87 The Council recognises that there are major uncertainties at the moment and that approaches to address viability issues may well develop over time. As such it is important that there is scope to provide updated advice on this issue through subsequent local development documents, including the Developer Contributions SPD.

6.88 More detailed guidance on addressing viability is to be set out in the Developer Contributions SPD, including in relation to the approach to valuation and also in relation to prioritisation of provision in the event of reduced levels of provision.
7. Area Specific policies  
High Wycombe Town Centre

High Wycombe town centre today

7.1 High Wycombe is an important town within the South East region and the main town within Wycombe District. The town is the focus for economic activity and service provision within the District and will be the focus for new housing and ongoing economic regeneration into the future. It is the focus for public transport, both bus and rail, being well connected to other areas of the District and beyond.

7.2 The town occupies the narrow valley floor at the confluence of the River Wye and the Hughenden Stream. While some of the surrounding valley sides have been developed, sufficient tree cover remains to provide an attractive wooded setting to the town. This setting is further enhanced by The Rye and the Wycombe Abbey School and grounds, both of which bring a sense of rural parkland into the town centre. Key features of the town centre include its medieval church, the fine Georgian Guildhall which terminates views west along the High Street and the distinctive Little Market House, designed by Robert Adam and colloquially known as the ‘Pepper Pot’.

7.3 In recent years a number of important developments have been completed including the Eden shopping centre and new bus station, The Gateway building for Buckinghamshire New University, the new Sainsbury’s on Oxford Street, and the new transport interchange at the railway station. In addition work has begun on two new hotel developments.

7.4 At the same time the town centre has also been affected by the national economic downturn, in particular evident through an increase in shop vacancies. Coupled with the opening of the Eden Shopping Centre and the resulting westward shift of retail focus, this downturn had a significant impact on the historic area of the town centre, in particularly upon the White Hart Street and Frogmoor area. This was accompanied by a reduction in footfall and general deterioration of environmental quality.

7.5 In response a Local Development Order was issued in the White Hart Street area to encourage new businesses into the area through elimination of the need to seek planning permission for a range of appropriate uses to assist in reducing the proportion of empty shop frontages in this zone.

Planning Context

7.6 Polices CS2 and CS3 of the adopted Core Strategy seek to strengthen the role of High Wycombe and its town centre, through focusing on new development, regeneration and transforming key areas of change. Ultimately it seeks to make High Wycombe a place of distinction, taking advantage of its natural assets, economic and locational strength and the wide cultural diversity of its population and the strength of its communities. The town centre is at the heart of this vision as a key destination for a whole range of activities.

7.7 Buckinghamshire County Council’s Second Local Transport Plan (2006-2011)\(^{(31)}\) recognised the important role of the town centre as part of a strong and vibrant economy that is attractive, people-friendly and accessible to everyone. The LTP strategy for High Wycombe aims to support urban renaissance and to achieve sustainable communities and sustainable growth in areas that are, or can be, well integrated with the town. The third Local Transport Plan\(^{(32)}\) also supports our aspirations for High Wycombe town centre and prioritises supporting the delivery of the town centre vision and masterplan, alongside accommodating new housing, employment growth, tackling congestion, increasing levels of active travel and addressing poor air quality in the town centre.

7.8 Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy brings together the aspirations of both authorities into a Shared Vision for High Wycombe.

\(^{(31)}\) Local Transport Plan 2006/07-2010/11 (Buckinghamshire County Council)  
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Previous work on developing the town centre vision and masterplan

7.9 In 2004 extensive consultation was undertaken through the programme of ‘Imagine the Future’ consultations on developing a vision for the town centre. Following this consultation David Lock Associates were commissioned to draw together this vision into a masterplan for the town centre.[33]

7.10 Through the consultation, key aspirations identified for the town centre were:

- A thriving economic centre
- A pedestrian friendly place, less dominated by roads
- A connected town centre – historic and expanded
- High quality public open spaces
- Reopening of the River Wye

7.11 The negative and divisive impact of the town centre roads and associated junctions, notably Abbey Way (A40) (elevated section) and to a lesser extent, Archway (A4128) were identified as a barrier to achieving these aspirations. The vision therefore aims to reconnect and enhance the town centre, reducing road and traffic intrusion through the removal or downgrading of these two sections of highway. A good standard of access is to be maintained through the provision of an alternative route through the town centre that avoids the divisive effects of the road infrastructure to be removed or downgraded.

7.12 Following on from the work by David Lock Associates, and further work the Council undertook in 2005[34] to identify potential phases of delivery, we included a policy within our submission Core Strategy DPD (April 2006) which identified High Wycombe Town Centre as a key area of change and set out our vision for the town centre as reflected in the town centre masterplan.

7.13 The Inspector’s report on the Core Strategy found that re-routing the combined A40/A4128 an ‘entirely supportable objective’[35] but that ‘the evidence base does not yet confirm that satisfactory re-routing of this heavily used and important A-road can be achieved within that or any other timescale, or even at all’.[36] The Inspector also wished to see a “clear mechanism for implementation”.

7.14 In conclusion the Inspector recommended the deletion of the proposals for the town centre [Policy 6(1), Figure 4.3 and paragraphs 4.28 to 4.31] leaving the Council with the option of bringing forward a separate, more convincingly founded town centre strategy – one capable of dealing with the divisive effects of the elevated road while also demonstrating its soundness.[37]

Delivering the Vision

7.15 This Delivery & Site Allocations document aims to turn our vision for the town centre into reality through the delivery of a range of proposals and policies that both strengthen and transform the town centre. The key elements of this are:

1. A responsive approach to maintaining the vitality and viability of the retail core of the town centre
2. A stronger focus on provision of employment opportunities in the town centre, particularly town centre offices
3. A longer term restructuring of the town centre, including the town centre road network, to re-establish High Wycombe as a “People Place”

7.16 Following on from the publication of the Inspector’s Report, we have undertaken further work to demonstrate the deliverability of the vision. This has involved:

- Looking further at the benefits to the town centre that could be realised through the implementation of the vision and how these can contribute to the creation of a town centre that meets our aspirations.
- Developing the evidence base required to prove the deliverability of the vision, including the impact of changes to the road network, the cost of implementing the changes and when these changes could be delivered.

7.17 To accompany the proposals contained within this document, a Public Realm Strategy and Design Code will be prepared for High Wycombe town centre which will provide greater detail in issues relating to the public realm, including building scale and mass, architecture, materials and features.

[34] Re-shaping High Wycombe: Stage Two of Developing a Masterplan for High Wycombe (September 2005, WDC)
[35] Inspectors Report on the Examination of the Wycombe Core Strategy DPD (May 2008, The Planning Inspectorate); paragraph 3.21
[36] Ibid, Paragraph 3.26
[37] Ibid. Paragraph 3.26
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Our vision – the future of High Wycombe town centre

Box 1 Our Vision for High Wycombe Town Centre

“In 2026 High Wycombe town centre will be a uniquely appealing and attractive destination with a thriving economic centre, and a high quality public realm, which emphasises the natural, historic and cultural assets of the town. The town centre will be a place where people choose to live, work and visit, with a variety of uses that include a good retail offer, high quality office and residential accommodation and cultural and educational opportunities centred around the Swan Theatre and Bucks New University campus.

The town centre will be well connected and accessible on foot, by road and by public transport. The provision of an improved street network will allow for the integration of the historic and expanded town centres, with new high quality public spaces connecting key areas together through more direct and attractive linkages for pedestrians and cyclists and creating opportunities to enjoy the River Wye.”

7.18 Fig. 2 sets out what our vision for High Wycombe town centre in 2026 could look like.

Fig 2. Our Vision for High Wycombe Town Centre in 2026
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Policy HWTC1 Delivering the Town Centre Vision

1. All development within the town centre should contribute towards delivering the vision for High Wycombe town centre as set in Box 1 and illustrated in Fig. 2, through:
   a. High quality design and the mix of land uses and activity that they provide, and/or;
   b. directly through the provision of land and/or infrastructure, and/or
   c. indirectly through financial contributions in line with WDC developer contribution policy (or any other policy or tariff introduced through the Community Infrastructure Levy)

Where infrastructure is expected to be provided on site, this is set out within individual site specific policies.

2. All development within the town centre should also contribute towards meeting the following objectives for the town centre:
   a. To transform people’s perceptions of the town, focusing new economic growth and development in the town centre and creating a diversity and richness of uses that satisfies community needs and enhances the natural and built environment.
   b. To reduce the physical impact of the highway network on the environmental quality of the town centre and re-establish High Wycombe as a People Place, where people on foot and cyclists take precedence, whilst maintaining accessibility to the town centre.
   c. To give High Wycombe an improved sense of place and make it a focus for the community and for civic activity, facilitating the integration of the ‘old’ and ‘expanded’ parts of the town centre, connecting key areas of activity together and protecting and enhancing where possible the historic townscape, environment and landscape setting of the town centre.
   d. To create a high quality public space network within the town centre to act as focal points for the community and make a strong contribution to the image of the town.
   e. To utilise the River Wye for Place Making by reopening it through the town centre and increasing access to it, whilst maintaining and enhancing its biodiversity value. Ensure no development prejudices future opportunities for the reopening of the River Wye.
   f. To create a clear spatial structure for future growth and change for the town centre and a planning and delivery framework that optimises the beneficial impacts of development and regeneration and targets investment where the greatest number of town centre objectives are met, with consideration to reducing immediate and ongoing costs where appropriate.

3. All development should support the implementation of the longer-term vision for the town centre. Planning permission will not be granted for any development which prejudices the implementation of this longer-term vision.
7.19 Core Strategy Policy CS3 ‘High Wycombe Principles’ sets out the strategic objectives for the future of High Wycombe and it is essential that the plans contained within this document and future development proposals within the town centre contribute towards achieving these overall objectives for the urban area. Our vision for the town centre is set out in Box 1 and illustrated in Fig. 2. The vision reflects the objectives set out in Policy CS3 and builds on the strengths and opportunities identified within the town centre. Based on the vision, Policy CS3 and national planning guidance, a set of objectives for the town centre have been developed to help guide and shape the proposals and policies for the town centre and individual sites contained in this document. These objectives are set out in policy HWTC1 and seek to ensure that the town centre and development proposals fit within and contribute to achieving the wider vision for High Wycombe and the District as a whole.

7.20 The town centre is not only the primary retail and employment focus in the District, it also marks the location of a key junction in the local and regional transportation network. The centre is made up of series of physical and natural features, including building blocks, public spaces, green spaces, highway infrastructure, as well as different communities and individuals who access the town centre for services and employment. However its valley bottom setting places limitations on its scope to accommodate significant growth and change. Responding to all of these considerations requires a clear framework to be put in place to ensure developments deliver their full potential, and fit together seamlessly with each other and their surrounds to contribute to the overall vision for the town centre.

7.21 Development within the town centre plays a key role in this, however big or small, through the land uses it provides, its design and interaction with its surrounds and the provision of infrastructure to support the town centre, both in the immediate and longer-term. Developments will contribute in different ways and in extents dependent on their location, size and type of development. Contributions could be sought through the direct provision of infrastructure on-site, making land available to meet infrastructure needs, financial contributions through our developer contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy regime, or a combination of all or part of these elements. Where sites are required to provide infrastructure directly this is set out in individual site policies. In other cases, the extent of contributions will be decided during the planning application process.

When will the town centre vision be delivered?

7.22 The vision for the town centre is long term and it is expected that it will take the length of this plan to 2026 and beyond to deliver it in its entirety. However the delivery of the vision needs to start now and there are opportunities to start this process and to see improvements to the town centre in the short to medium term. It is important however to ensure that the short to medium term opportunities do not prejudice the longer term achievement of the vision.

7.23 Table 2 below provides a summary of the indicative timing of the main elements required to deliver the masterplan. A further indication of the timing of individual sites is set out in the site specific policies and within the background paper.(38)
### 7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### Table 2 Indicative Timing of Key Elements of the Town Centre Masterplan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Key Elements to be Delivered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 - 2016</td>
<td>• More flexible and responsive approaches to town centre retail frontages&lt;br&gt;• Environmental and connectivity improvements within the town centre, including widening of the subway at BNU and pedestrian crossing linking the Rye to the town centre&lt;br&gt;• Creation of an alternative cross-town route, linking Marlow Hill to West Wycombe Road&lt;br&gt;• Key town centre development sites start to come forward, including the former Gas Works site and in the Baker Street area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 – 2021</td>
<td>• Interim closure of Abbey Way flyover, including de-dualising and bus only access, to assess the impacts of highway changes&lt;br&gt;• Environmental improvements on the closed parts of the flyover&lt;br&gt;• Removal of Oxford Road roundabout and environmental improvements to this area&lt;br&gt;• De-dualising of Archway and creation of a boulevard approach to the town centre from the north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021 onwards</td>
<td>• Removal of Abbey Way elevated section and related realisation of development and civic and public spaces&lt;br&gt;• Major town centre developments come forward including at Swan Frontage and Oxford Road roundabout&lt;br&gt;• Re-location of High Wycombe Fire Station&lt;br&gt;• Continuing implementation of improvements to the town centre public realm, including opportunities for de-culverting of the River Wye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Principles for Delivering the Vision

**7.24.** The following policies set down key principles for how development within the town centre will be expected to contribute to the achievement of the town centre vision. Proposals for individual areas and sites flow from these principles.

### TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM

**Policy HWTC2 Townscape**

1. All development within the town centre should contribute towards the enhancement of the town centre townscape
2. Development proposals should demonstrate consideration of the impact of the development on the overall townscape of the town centre. Where there is potential for a development to have significant visual impact on townscape, a Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment should be undertaken with consideration given to:
   • Impact on existing key views and opportunities for the opening up of new views
   • Relationships to adjacent buildings and important features within the townscape
7.25 The setting of High Wycombe town centre, occupying the narrow valley floor which runs east to west at the confluence of the River Wye and the Hughenden Stream, is key to the character of the town. As a result of topography it is highly visible from the surrounding valley sides and the importance of the relationships amongst and between elements of the built and natural environment is therefore significantly greater.

7.26 The valley bottom setting of High Wycombe results in the disparate buildings or parts of the town centre being viewed in close juxtaposition, and results in a much more intimate relationship between the town centre and its setting. Views across the roofscape of the town can be had from a number of important public locations, and particularly as one enters the town centre from either the north or the south. As a result of the setting, the impact of any development on and across the townscape of High Wycombe is substantially greater than might otherwise be the case.

7.27 Further detail relating to issues of townscape, and in particular to views, can be found in the supporting background papers and will be developed further as part of the proposed Public Realm Strategy and Design Code.

Implementation

- See Policy HWTC1 for indicative phasing
- Delivery mechanism: Private developer; Wycombe District Council

Policy HWTC3 Public Realm

1. An improved public space network will be provided within the town centre, including:
   a) New spaces at:
      i. HWTC12 Swan Frontage
      ii. HWTC18 Oxford Road Roundabout
      iii. Archway
   b) Improvement to the existing public space at Frogmooor
   c) Enhanced pedestrian links between new and improved spaces and the existing built and natural public space network, in particular between the town centre and the Rye

2. In order to achieve a high quality public realm, public spaces and streets should be designed to achieve:
   a) Connectivity – public spaces should be well related to surrounding pedestrian movement patterns and land uses
   b) A Vibrant Place – ground floor uses fronting on to a public space must deliver active frontages, with interactive uses including retail, cafes and restaurants
   c) Use and interaction – the use of street furniture and hard and soft landscaping should encourage pedestrians to meet and pass through the spaces
   d) Opening up of the river – public spaces at HWTC12 Swan Frontage and HWTC18 Oxford Road roundabout should be designed to maximise the place-making potential of the River Wye

3. Development which is adjacent to new and/or existing public spaces is required to:
   a) Define their ground-floor edges with interactive uses including retail, cafes and restaurants
   b) Demonstrate consideration to the enclosure of, and sunlight penetration to, adjacent and nearby public spaces
   c) Contribute positively to the character of the town centre
7.28 Town centres should be people places. However there are currently few places within the town centre that people can linger and socialise in comfort, uncompromised by the retail, business, or movement functions of the town centre. There is a need therefore not only to seize opportunities to create new spaces, but also maximise the place-potential of existing streets and spaces.

7.29 The success of the town centre depends not only on its land uses and accessibility, but also the degree to which it encourages visitors to linger and explore once they arrive. All people visiting the town centre eventually become pedestrians, and as such are highly sensitive to environmental quality. This sensitivity makes the delivery of a positive public realm crucially important and means that spaces must not only be clean, safe and convenient, they must also be attractive and stimulating places to be.

7.30 Good public spaces often relate visually and or physically to the movement network within which they sit, but in a way which does not interfere with the proper function of that network so that potential for conflict between different user groups is minimised. The relationship between public spaces and the movement network should be carefully considered.

7.31 A stimulating public realm results not only from visual quality but also from the degree to which interaction is encouraged and conflict minimised. For instance the success of cafés and public spaces both depend upon people lingering in them, making them highly compatible uses. Equally, interesting shop fronts interact well with busy, well connected pedestrian routes. Through location and design, developments should seek to maintain or increase positive interactions while minimising the potential for conflict. In order to secure the delivery of stimulating and successful public spaces, uses more likely to yield interactive frontages, such as retail, cafes and restaurants, are required at the ground floor of buildings which enclose key new public spaces.

7.32 Elsewhere in the town centre good quality active frontages are the minimum requirement. Further guidance relating to the quality of active frontages within the town centre will form part of a future Public Realm Strategy and Design Code for the Town centre.

7.33 The creation of a positive public realm requires developments adjacent to public spaces to enclose the space with a scale and form that complements the size of the space and the use to which it is put. The impact of proposed buildings on the climate, sunlight penetration and general level of comfort to those using public spaces should also be fully considered. Buildings should also be designed to respond positively to the buildings, patterns of movement, and spaces which surround them. Opportunities to contribute to local distinctiveness and a visually rich and stimulating public realm through architecture should be explored.

7.34 The quality of the landscape is another unique and positive characteristic of the town centre, so all opportunities to improve access to and the visual presence of this valuable resource in the town centre should be taken.

7.35 Natural features can make a significant positive contribution to the character and quality of a place. The River Wye, currently culverted through much of the town centre, represents a significant underused resource. A key aspiration for the town centre is to de-culvert the river, particularly in locations where it can make a significant contribution to busy public spaces in the town centre, notably at HWTC12 and HWTC18. Policy DSA13 Protection & Enhancement of River Corridors protects these future opportunities.

**Implementation**

- See Policy HWTC1 for indicative phasing
- Delivery mechanism: Private developer; Wycombe District Council
Policy HWTC4 Connections, Movement and Access

1. Changes to the Town Centre Highway Network
   a) Changes to the town centre highway network (as listed out in Appendix B) will be secured, to result in:
      i. the creation of a new street network which will facilitate the longer-term removal of Abbey Way flyover
      ii. effective traffic management so as to maintain accessibility to the town centre
      iii. reduction of the physical impact of the highway network on the environmental quality of the town centre
   b) Where changes to the highway network are required outside the existing highway boundary, existing Transport Improvement Lines will be amended as required and new Transport Improvement Lines designated.
   c) Changes and/or improvements to the town centre highway network should be designed to assist in the creation of a street network, that:
      i. helps to build and strengthen the communities they serve
      ii. meets the needs of all users
      iii. forms part of a well-connected network
      iv. is attractive and has its own distinctive identity
      v. is cost-effective to construct and maintain
      vi. is safe for all users

2. Public Transport
   a) Routing of public transport within the town centre and to the proposed regional coachway should be convenient and attractive for current and future passengers whilst minimising the impact on pedestrians in the town centre.
   b) Through the implementation of changes to the street network, priority routes and measures for buses will be provided, where necessary, to achieve high levels of accessibility to the town. Provision will include an east-bound bus priority route from Lily’s Walk to Queen Victoria Road.

7.36 Core Strategy policy CS3 High Wycombe Principles states that the focus of the town centre transport network should be to establish High Wycombe as a ‘People Place’ where people on foot, cycle and using public transport enjoy a network designed with their needs in mind, reducing the impacts of roads and traffic. Alongside this the satisfactory operation of the highway network and maintaining access to the town centre should be maintained.

7.37 Within the Local Transport Plan 3(39) the urban strategy for High Wycombe prioritises supporting the delivery of the town centre vision and masterplan, through an approach that aims to:
   - Transfer journeys within High Wycombe to walking, cycling and bus
   - Re-route cross town journeys from inappropriate routes to distributor roads
   - Intercept car journeys using existing park and ride, Coachway or rail services
   - Manage the network to ensure it operates effectively for all users

7.38 Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy brings together the aspirations of both authorities into a Shared Transport Vision for High Wycombe.

7.39 Currently High Wycombe can experience high levels of traffic and queuing on major

approaches at peak times. Highway infrastructure and traffic movements dominate the town centre, negatively impacting on the experience and movements of pedestrians and cyclists within and across the town centre. The masterplan proposals aim to alleviate the divisive nature of the highway infrastructure, whilst maintaining the satisfactory operation of the network and thereby achieving the objectives of Core Strategy policy CS3.

7.40 The vision and masterplan for High Wycombe town centre propose significant changes to the current highway network, as listed out in Appendix B. It is important to ensure that these changes to the network do not recreate the problems of division and negative environmental impact that are currently seen by Abbey Way flyover and Archway. Manual for Streets (40) has been adopted as the appropriate design standard for the town centre street network, promoting a balanced approach to design where the street network is designed for all users and where focus is on place making along the entire route. Design of the network should meet the principles of Manual for Streets (as set out in part 1(c) of Policy HWTC4). Further information on this design approach is available within the background documents.

7.41 The adoption of the Manual for Streets design approach has resulted in a subtle change of vocabulary, from a traditional concept of highway & roads, whose main function is accommodating the movement of motor traffic, to a concept of the creation of a street network within the town centre. Streets have to fulfil a complex variety of functions in order to meet people’s needs as places for living, working and moving around in, and while movement is still a key function there are several others, of which place function, is the most important.(41)

7.42 The physical changes proposed to the highway network require the designation of new and amendments to existing Transport Improvement Lines where changes are proposed outside of the existing highway boundary. Transport Improvement Lines are designated by Buckinghamshire County Council as the highway authority and the proposals maps show the indicative location of the Transport Improvement Lines. See policy DSA2 Transport Improvement Lines for the further information.

7.43 In order to ensure that the development of the town centre and the urban area and district as a whole is undertaken as sustainably as possible, it is important that the proposals for the town centre aim to promote and encourage the use of public transport where possible. This includes ensuring that bus routing is as convenient for users as possible, increasing the penetration of the town centre and making bus journeys as attractive to the user as possible. Changes to the town centre network include the provision of an east-bound bus lane linking Lily’s Walk with Queen Victoria Road for east-bound bus services. As well as improving bus penetration of the town centre, this would allow more services to use Church Street in one direction only, without prejudicing its two way use by key cross-town services, thereby reducing the number of bus movements in the Church Street area and addressing concerns raised about traffic and bus intrusion in this area. A new bus stop within the public space created at the Swan Frontage (HWTC12) will provide ready access to the High Street and the heart of the historic retail area and would be in close proximity to the BNU campus and the hospital. Further detail on operation of these routes will be considered in consultation with bus operators.

7.44 All development within the town centre should also have consideration of the principles set out in Policy DSA1 Transport Requirements for Development Sites.

Implementation

- See Policy HWTC1 for indicative phasing
- Delivery mechanism: Private developer; Wycombe District Council; Buckinghamshire County Council
- Development within the town centre will be expected to contribute as required to the delivery of transport infrastructure (either directly or indirectly) as set out through individual site specific polices, the Developer Contributions SPD, or any subsequent developer contributions regime and as set out in Policy DSA1 Sustainable Transport Requirements for Development Sites

---

7.45 High Wycombe is the main focus of employment, services, transport and other facilities, including retail and leisure within the District. It is vital therefore that its economy continues to succeed and grow to support the vital role it has within the life of the district.

7.46 The strategy for economic growth within the district and within High Wycombe is set out within the Council’s Sustainable Economic Prosperity Strategy. The Core Strategy (policies CS2 and CS3) continues to see High Wycombe as fulfilling a central role in the future economic growth of the District.

7.47 National policy states the Council should promote the vitality and viability of its town centres, focusing new economic growth and development in main town centres, with the aim of offering a wide range of services to communities whilst conserving the heritage of centres and where appropriate enhancing a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic society.

7.48 It is important that High Wycombe maintains a vibrant and diverse economy, anticipating and accommodating the needs of its residents, workers and visitors. Fig. 3 illustrates the potential role of key areas of the town centre in relation to different economic functions.

**TOWN CENTRE ECONOMY**

**Policy HWTC5 Economy**

1. The town centre will be the focus of retail activity and other town centre uses including leisure, office, hotels and arts/entertainment, incorporating as appropriate residential development.

2. The town centre will have a central role as a location for quality office development. Opportunities for new or enhanced quality office accommodation will be created, particularly at key gateways into the town centre, increasing the attractiveness of the town centre for investment and complementing the improvements to the town centre’s public realm.

**Fig. 3 High Wycombe Town Centre – Potential Land Uses & Roles**
7.49 High Wycombe is the main comparison shopping destination and the main location for major retail developments serving the whole of the District. The opening of the Eden Centre in 2007 saw an increase in retail and leisure floorspace within the town of 85,000m². It is important to continue building on this success and in particular to continue to support the vitality of areas of the town which have suffered from high rates of unit vacancies over the past few years. Policies HWTC6-8 set out the Council’s approach to retail development within the town centre.

7.50 Leisure and tourism uses, such as the Swan Theatre, cinema and bowling alley are also important uses within the town centre which attract visitors to the town centre.

7.51 The vitality of the town centre is enhanced by people living within it. Individual site policies within this chapter include policies for mixed-use development which incorporate an element of residential use. In addition, the upper floors of existing buildings could be converted to residential use, providing a satisfactory living environment would be created in accordance with other policies within the Development Plan. There is a careful balance to be struck between the benefits brought to the town centre through having people living within it and the need to protect employment uses within the town centre. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of such changes and the balance of uses within the town centres.

7.52 The Council’s approach to business development in the town centre is to seek opportunities for reinvestment in and/or redevelopment of existing office stock which may have fallen vacant and need updating to reflect current accommodation demands. In addition, opportunities for new business and office accommodation have been identified. In particular opportunities at HWTC12 Swan Frontage offer the potential to create high-quality headquarter type office development, which is currently not provided for within the town centre. There are strong links between the environmental quality and place-making of the town centre and the profile and quality of investors it can attract. This type of development will bring a higher profile user to the town centre, and will contribute to place-making in this location whilst showing that High Wycombe is a place to do business. Individual site policies set out allocations for the delivery of new or reinvestment opportunities for business and office developments within the town centre.

### Implementation

- Development and investment will be delivered throughout the plan period
- Phasing for specific sites is set out in individual site policies
- Delivery mechanism: Private developer; Wycombe District Council
- Town centre initiatives such as the Local Development Order, will form part of a responsive and proactive approach to maintain the vitality and viability of the retail core for both existing retailers and new retail opportunities. Where sites are required to deliver particular land use requirements this is set out in site specific policies
High Wycombe Town Centre Shopping Frontage zones

7.53. These policies set out different target proportions for frontage length to be retained as A1 use in the primary and secondary shopping frontages.

Policy HWTC6 Primary Shopping Frontage Zones: High Wycombe

1. Primary Shopping Frontage Zones in High Wycombe are defined on the Proposals Map
2. Planning permission will not be given for changes of use from class A1 to other uses where this would result in more than the following percentages of ground floor frontage length in non-A1 use as specified below for the following areas (with permitted changes indicated in brackets):
   a) High Street western section – 50% - (changes to any other A uses).
   b) Eden (sector closed at night) – 20% (changes to A3 use only). NB Upper floor is within the Secondary Shopping Frontage Zone.
   c) Eden (walkways open all hours) – 15% (changes to A3 use only).
   d) Oxford Road (North) – no loss of A1 frontage length permitted.
   e) Chilterns Shopping Centre/Frogmoor East – this area is subject to a site-specific policy advocating a mixed-use reconfiguration or redevelopment of the centre. In the interim, changes from A1 to A2, A3 or D1 will be accepted within the shopping centre. Proposed changes from A1 to other uses on the exterior frontage will be accepted as long as they maintain an active frontage.
   f) Octagon Parade & White Hart Street South – 40% (changes to any other A uses).

All frontages to retain an active frontage at ground floor level.
The relevant frontage lengths are defined on the Proposals Map.

Policy HWTC7 Secondary Shopping Frontage Zones: High Wycombe

1. Secondary Shopping Frontage Zones are defined on the Proposals Map.
2. Planning permission will be permitted for proposals which:
   a) result in no net loss of frontage lengths in Class A use; and
   b) retain an active frontage.
3. Exceptionally to this approach, the Council will allow development for the provision of Community Facilities as identified as a class D1 use or by Core Strategy policy CS17 which retains an active frontage.

7.54. The Council has designated varying target percentages of frontage length in A1 use for different parts of the primary frontages. This is based on an analysis of the current performance and potential role of different sectors of the primary shopping area, whilst acknowledging that national planning policy still presumes that primary frontages contain a high proportion of retail uses.

7.55. The approach to measuring town centre uses based on frontage length. This is designed to reflect the fact that it is the effect of the shop frontage presented to the street which has a key impact on overall character, diversity and vitality.

7.56. Similarly, active frontages at ground floor level are key in creating the impression of a healthy and vibrant centre, and in ensuring that locations are places that people want to visit. Even where a more flexible approach to use classes is being advocated, it is vital that units continue to reflect this, and that they offer visual interest on the frontage even where they are not in A1 retail use.

7.57. The varying approaches to each sub-area of the town centre have been proposed following a survey and analysis of occupancy across the town centre carried out in April 2011. The justification for the different approaches adopted for each area are as follows:

(42) See Glossary for definitions of use classes
(43) Town Centre Retail and Frontages Policies Background Paper (WDC, 2011)
(44) See Town Centre Retail and Frontages Policies Background Paper (WDC, 2011) for the results of the survey
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

High Street (West): Non-A1 Frontage Maximum: 50%

7.58 The High Street currently contains just over 50% of non-shop uses, partly reflecting the relatively high proportion of uses such as banks, building societies and pubs established here before frontage rules were introduced. However, A1 uses continue to be the predominant part of the offer in the High Street, and the proportion of vacant frontage lengths is currently reasonably low. Therefore a target maximum proportion of frontages in non-A1 use has been outlined here which aims to retain a degree of flexibility whilst maintaining A1 as the main use in the High Street.

7.59 This reflects the risk that any decrease in the percentage of frontages in A1 uses below 50%, in combination with the more flexible policy approach being applied to the area covered by the High Wycombe Town Centre Local Development Order, could risk harming the vitality and viability of this part of the town centre. The ability to change to any other A uses, so long as the A1 proportion remains no less than 50%, reflects the pre-existing diversity of uses on the High Street.

Eden (area closed off in the night): Non-A1 Frontage Maximum: 20%; Any non-A1 to be A3

7.60 In the sector of Eden which was formerly part of the Octagon Centre (defined as the part which is closed in the night), the proportion of frontage length at ground floor level in A1 use is at or just above 90%. However there is a high level of vacant frontages. The Council considers that there is potential for some of the units to become food court-type operations. Therefore the policy approach proposed is that up to 20% of the frontage length could change to A3. It is considered that other A uses would be less appropriate in a covered mall such as this. It is considered appropriate to retain the upper floor of the Octagon Centre in the secondary shopping frontage.

Eden (section with walkways open 24-hours a day): Non-A1 Frontage Maximum: 15%

7.61 It is now over three years since Eden opened its doors, and almost all of the units are now filled with traders. This very low level of vacancy, combined with a high proportion of frontage length in A1 use, means that a low target for frontage length in non-A1 use is proposed. For non-A1 uses, A3 is considered appropriate for ground floor frontages.

Chilterns Shopping Centre / Frogmoor East

7.62 To encourage a comprehensive redevelopment or reconfiguration of the centre, a site specific policy (MU27) is proposed for this site. In the meantime, a flexible approach is proposed for proposals for change of use from A1, given the fact that there is currently an extremely high vacancy rate in this area. However, it is considered that the Chilterns Shopping Centre as an indoor mall would be a less appropriate area for certain uses, such as A4 or A5 use. A totally flexible approach (subject to maintenance of an active frontage) can be taken on the exterior of the site, i.e. Queen Square (northern side) and Frogmoor, where there is already a preponderance of non-A1 uses.

Octagon Parade & White Hart Street South area

7.63 This is an area where the vacancy rate is currently reasonably low, but it is considered that the area is still potentially vulnerable. Therefore it is proposed to adopt a target non-A1 percentage maximum of 40%, with scope for changes to other A uses. This approach recognises the current mix of uses in this area whilst acknowledging the need for a degree of flexibility in this potentially vulnerable area.

Oxford Road North

7.64 Currently there are no vacant frontages on this strip and therefore it is not seen as necessary to adopt a more flexible approach. This will help increase footfall between the new Sainsburys and the old part of the town centre.
This very central area is critical in terms of location, being situated in the historic core of the town centre between the High Street and Eden. It is also an area which has suffered a particularly high rate of vacancy in the past and is vulnerable to wider economic pressures and trends.

To help revive and regenerate the area, the Council has created a Local Development Order (LDO) in this area. This covers the area bounded by White Hart Street (northern side), Church Street (west and south sides), Queen Square (both sides) and Oxford Street (southern side in stretch between Bull Lane and Queen Square).

The LDO allows changes of use for ground floor premises to a wide range of uses (all retaining an active frontage but excluding sui generis uses). The LDO is due to expire on 29th July 2013. When it has expired it is proposed that the area reverts to being a primary shopping frontage. However, as it is not yet known what the impact of the LDO will have on the mix of uses in the area, it is not possible to set a target percentage for non-A1 uses at this point in time. This will need to be done in a later local development document.

This is also supported by a range of initiatives which are carried out by the Council and partner organisations, including town centre management initiatives.

High Wycombe town centre is a diverse area of different characters and land uses. Eight different character areas have been identified within the town centre (see Fig. 4), which will all contribute towards the achievement of the vision, through their land use, streetscape and design. It is important that each area integrates with the immediate and wider town centre and positively enhances the town centre's identity as a whole, through the creation of a sustainable, stimulating and vibrant town centre environment.

Where redevelopment opportunities lie within character areas, the requirements in relation to land use mix and infrastructure provision are set out within site specific policies.

---

(45) Local Development Order for the White Hart Street area of High Wycombe Town Centre, WDC 2010
(A) CIVIC QUARTER

7.71 The civic quarter is located on the eastern side of High Wycombe Town Centre and consists primarily of office and civic uses such as the District and County Council offices, the town hall and the magistrate’s court. This mix of uses make the Civic Quarter one of the key employment areas in the town centre. Also within this area is the High Wycombe railway station, with the rail line forming the northern boundary. To the south east is the Rye, which is the primary open space and parkland serving the town. The civic quarter is partly within the High Wycombe Town Centre Conservation Area and is comprised of a range of listed and locally listed buildings, as well as large office buildings dating from the 1960’s.

7.72 As part of the masterplan for the town centre, there are proposals in this area to change Easton Street and Queen Victoria Road from one-way streets to accommodate two-way traffic.

HWTC 9 EASTON STREET
1. This site is allocated as a Town Centre Business Area/Mixed Use site.
2. Redevelopment proposals for this site should be primarily for B1 office uses.
3. Redevelopment proposals that include other ancillary town centre uses should be part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the area, and secure active ground floor frontage onto Easton Street.
4. Any redevelopment proposals in this area should satisfy all of the following:
   a) Respect the setting of the scheduled ancient monument (site of the hospital of St. John the Baptist) on the south east boundary of the site and be supported by an archaeological assessment;
   b) Be in keeping with the High Wycombe Town Centre Conservation Area and listed buildings within the site;
   c) Provide high quality pedestrian links from and through the site to the railway station;
   d) Retain the existing level of public car parking.
7.73 The Easton Street area is located on the eastern side of High Wycombe Town Centre and is primarily an office area. It is adjacent to the railway station and within walking distance of the town centre and the Rye, and is a key employment location. The area is a mix of historic buildings including listed and locally listed buildings and large office buildings dating from the 1960’s, it is also partly within the High Wycombe Town Centre Conservation Area.

7.74 The area would benefit from comprehensive regeneration and redevelopment. This should make the most of its key location to secure new quality office accommodation as part of improving the office “offer” in the town centre.

7.75 Given the heritage interests within the area and the scheduled ancient monument adjacent to the area, it is important that the archaeological impact of redevelopment proposals are thoroughly considered and are supported by an archaeological assessment.

7.76 Some ancillary town centre uses may be appropriate, particularly where they assist in securing active ground floor frontage onto Easton Street, and form part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the area, and assist in providing a coherent design solution for the area. There is also scope for some limited residential development in this area. Redevelopment proposals should also seek to create safe and good quality access to the railway station improving Birdcage Walk which runs alongside the station car park and include repairing the broken frontages onto Easton Street.

Timing:
Anticipated timing of development: 2016 onwards

7.77. This site is part of a cluster of uses that are civic in their nature and is currently occupied by the District Council Offices and the Post Office sorting office and is a prime location for offices in the town centre. In the long term there is potential for the sites to be redeveloped together as part of the ongoing regeneration of the town centre envisaged by the Town Centre Masterplan.

7.78. Redevelopment of this site provides the opportunity to introduce an element of flexibility given the location of the site in the town centre and close proximity to the Swan Frontage site. This flexibility would allow for the possibility to incorporate some other town centre uses on the ground floor of any redevelopment especially fronting onto Queen Victoria Road. Development on the post office site will only be acceptable if an alternative location for the sorting office is identified and is deliverable.

Timing:
Anticipated timing of development: 2016 onwards

Wycombe District Council
This site is immediately adjacent to the railway station and the rear exit from the station (from Platform 3) opens out onto this site. It is also next to Sword House, an 8-storey office block occupied by Wilkinson Sword and other companies; and near to the Totteridge Road local shopping precinct.

The site is currently occupied by a surface car park and thus fails to maximise the use of the space immediately next to the railway station. A higher density development could see the creation of flats or offices with continued provision of car parking to serve rail users and local demand. This would be a more efficient use of land in this intrinsically sustainable location.

**7.80** The site is currently occupied by a surface car park and thus fails to maximise the use of the space immediately next to the railway station. A higher density development could see the creation of flats or offices with continued provision of car parking to serve rail users and local demand. This would be a more efficient use of land in this intrinsically sustainable location.

**Timing:**
Wycombe District Council, private developer

**HWTC12 Swan Frontage**

This site is allocated for a mixed use development (see Fig. 5 for indicative development blocks) comprising:

- Block 1 – A1, A3 and/or A4 uses on ground floor, with B1 office and/or residential development on upper floors only;
- Blocks 2 & 3 – B1 office development, and/or, higher or further education facilities. Development should provide active frontage on all ground floor frontages, including as appropriate A1, A3 and/or A4 uses;
- The creation of two new public spaces

Development of this site will be required to:

- Deliver active frontages onto the new street network and public spaces in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
- Deliver high quality designs which reflect the location of the site as a gateway to the town centre and its potential important public space within the town, and which help create a “sense of place” in this location
- Ensure that designs respect the townscape and in particular do not negatively impact on important views of the Swan Theatre and All Saints Parish Church

**B) CULTURAL QUARTER**

The cultural quarter is one of the most important areas in the town centre due to the dramatic way in which it is viewed when entering the town centre from the south, and to the prominence of key town centre uses – the Wycombe Swan Theatre, the Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) Gateway building, and the Wycombe General Hospital – within it. The importance of this area will only increase as a result of the key opportunities presented by the changes to the street network and removal of the eastern ramps of Abbey Way Flyover.
The Swan Frontage is the area to the south and west of the Swan Theatre and is adjacent to the landmark Bucks New University Gateway building. The site includes the Liberal Club, Fire Station, Royal British Legion and the eastern ramps of Abbey Way flyover. The site also includes the northern and western arms of the Abbey Way gyratory and the green space located in its centre.

As a result of its visual prominence and pivotal location, this site represents one of the most complex yet powerful redevelopment opportunities in the town centre, and is a key component in the delivery of the vision for the town.

This site offers an opportunity to provide high quality development at this gateway location (see Fig. 5 for the indicative location of development blocks). Block 1 offers the opportunity to extend the retail offer in the town through an expansion of the Eden Centre with a new pedestrian entrance point into the centre from the new public open space. This will link these two areas of the town that are currently divided by the existence of the flyover ramps. The provision of A1 (shops), A3 (restaurants and cafes) and A4 (drinking establishments) uses will provide an active and vibrant environment in this location. A5 (hot food takeways) uses will only be allowed in this location if the take-away element of the business is subsidiary to a restaurant use.

Block 2 and Block 3 (the indicative location of Block 3 is shown on Fig. 5 without a block outline) have been identified for new high quality office development, in line with the Council’s economic strategy. Due to its prominence and location this site has the best potential within the town centre to deliver large-scale headquarter-type office accommodation which is currently underprovided for with the town centre. Development of this nature will help raise the profile of the town centre and the high-quality place-making vision we have for

---

(46) Wycombe Sustainable Economic Prosperity Strategy (WDC; 2009)
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

this site. In addition to office development, there is also flexibility and potential to accommodate the provision of higher or further education facilities in this location to complement the area as a focus for cultural and educational experience.

7.86 All development in Blocks 2 and 3 must provide active frontage on all ground floor frontages which complement and contribute to the vitality and environment of the public spaces surrounding them. This could include the provision of A1 (shops), A3 (restaurants & cafes) and A4 (drinking establishments) on the ground floor only.

7.87 An extension of the existing Swan Car Park (Block 4) will provide the additional necessary car parking requirements to support the development of Blocks 2 and 3. There is opportunity within this block for A1, A3 and A4 uses on the ground floor only to complement the public space outside the Swan Theatre (b). The development of Block 4 for alternative town centre uses will only be permitted if the development proposals for Blocks 2 and 3 can demonstrate that additional parking at Block 4 is not necessary to provide the required level of car parking to support their developments.

7.88 Redevelopment in this location requires the re-location of existing uses. In particular in order to achieve the high quality development expected here, the fire station will need to be found an alternative site within the town which will meet the operational needs of the fire service. It is desirable that the existing Royal British Legion and Liberal Club are also re-located to allow for the comprehensive redevelopment of this site. However it may be possible to bring forward development proposals which retain both or one of these uses on site without compromising the high quality development expected.

7.89 Changes to the current highway network will allow for the creation of two high quality public spaces in this location, which will provide a key focal point for people to meet and linger (see Fig. 5 for the indicative location of public spaces). Public space (A) will form a focal point for pedestrians, linking the High Street to BNU, Swan Theatre and the hospital, as well as to the Eden Centre through a new pedestrian entrance into the shopping centre off the public space. Improved pedestrian links at this location will be legible and convenient for pedestrians, offering a pleasant experience within a high-quality public realm. Within this space there are opportunities for the de-culverting of the River Wye, which will contribute significantly to a ‘sense of place’ in this location.

7.90 Public space (B) will significantly enhance the area around the Swan Theatre, creating an environment around which offers a quality visitor experience and befits the Swan Theatre as a major arts destination.

7.91 Redevelopment of this area also offers a unique opportunity to make the current green space within the gyratory more accessible, integrating it into the town centre as well as with the adjacent University.

7.92 In 2010 a feasibility study concluded that de-culverting of the River Wye in this location was feasible. The study identified that there were opportunities to improve the existing corridor (behind the fire station) and extend this westwards to meet a new deculverted section located where the eastern flyover ramps are currently in situ (see Fig. 5). In line with our overall vision for the town centre and this site, and in accordance with Environment Agency policy and Policy DSA13, development proposals which propose building on the existing culvert and/or prejudice future opportunities for de-culverting will not be permitted.

7.93 The Council will produce a Development Brief for this site, which will give further detail on development and design principles. All development proposals should have regard to this Brief.

(47) River Wye De-culverting Feasibility Study (PBA, June 2010)
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Fig. 4 High Wycombe Town Centre Character Areas

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development 2021 – 2026
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer and Wycombe District Council
7.94 The Council wishes to underline its support for continuing hospital use here and flag up potential uses to reflect its support for Wycombe General Hospital Trust’s vision for the site.

7.95 Wycombe General Hospital Trust is committed to consolidating and continuing its operations at this site, which it regards as a key site due to its location in the town centre. The trust’s objective for the site is to consolidate and update the facilities there rather than any radical redevelopment such as a further PFI bid. Addressing parking for hospital staff and users is seen as a particular priority. Making the best use of the facilities at the site may involve reconfiguration within the site.

7.96 The student residence facilities at the southern-most portion of the site may become surplus to requirements, and if so would become available for other uses, with residential being an appropriate use here given the current residential nature of this part of the site.

7.97 The Council supports the Hospital’s vision for this key town centre site, and wishes to assist with the trust’s objective to maintain and consolidate its operations at what is a central, and thus intrinsically sustainable, site. The proposed mix of land uses on the particular parts of the site is designed to assist the trust in meeting its objectives.

7.98 This part of the town centre is one which could see changes to the road layout nearby as a result of the Council’s town centre proposals. It is important that any future development at this site is consistent with and supports the objectives of these changes, and also considers issues of access for pedestrians and service vehicles into and through the site.

**Timing:**
Anticipated timing of development: 2016 onwards.
Delivery mechanism: Wycombe General Hospital Trust
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

(C) HISTORIC TOWN CENTRE & (D) MEDIEVAL QUARTER

7.99 The historic town centre exhibits characteristics which establish it as a market town, including a wide street defined by important ecclesiastical, civic, and commercial buildings. Although many town centre uses have shifted westwards with the opening of the Eden shopping centre, the historic town centre continues to fulfil a key commercial and retail role, and hosts the market three days per week.

7.100 Although it contains buildings in a variety of architectural styles, the fine grain of burbage plots are still evident, modest scale of buildings, and restrained use of local materials lend a sense of cohesion which is strengthened by use of Yorkstone paving utilised in the pedestrianisation scheme in 1998-1999.

7.101 The medieval quarter exhibits greater complexity in both development pattern and materials. The streets are much more narrow and winding, plots are smaller, and buildings more complex in form and use. This area is a key link between the historic town centre and the Eden shopping centre.

7.102 There are no significant development proposals or allocations proposed in these areas of the town centre. However, any development proposals in these areas are required to contribute to the characteristics identified above and be in line with the appropriate town centre policies.

(E) FROGMOOR AND ARCHWAY

7.103 Frogmoor is a triangular-shaped open space bounded to the east by the Chilterns shopping centre and terminated to the north by the railway viaduct. To the west is a partial block fronting onto Frogmoor but backing onto Archway, a dual carriageway subject to proposals for downgrading and public realm improvements.

7.104 The wide public space known as Frogmoor was redesigned early in the 21st century, and intermittently hosts markets and fairs, however the area is currently suffering the combined effect of economic downturn and opening of the Eden centre. Key aims for this area include the creation of a more welcoming entry to the town centre from the north, improving links with the Eden centre, improving the balance in favour of pedestrians, and encouraging greater utilisation of Frogmoor as a key public space in the town centre.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HWTC14 Chilterns Shopping Centre And Frogmoor East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. This site is allocated for mixed-use development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Comprehensive reconfiguration or redevelopment of the Chilterns Shopping Centre will be supported in principle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Development proposals for this site should include retail as a predominant use fronting onto Frogmoor frontage, and other acceptable land uses are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hotels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commercial leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Residential on upper floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Any developments proposals for the site should:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contribute to the regeneration of Frogmoor open space through design and financial contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Retain active frontages at ground floor level onto Frogmoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Retain listed and locally-listed buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.105 The Chilterns Shopping Centre, built in 1987, was High Wycombe’s second shopping arcade (after Octagon) and has, over the course of its lifetime, been home to major stores such as Marks & Spencer and C & A. Its location has meant that some of the units on the western side of the mall have dual frontage into the mall and onto Frogmoor.

7.106 Since the opening of Eden in March 2008, some of the operators have relocated out of the centre and into the new development. Moreover, the offices above the ground floor have been entirely vacant since 2003. Whilst there is an extant planning permission for a new hotel on the site, this has not been implemented. Furthermore, the number of vacant units has increased partly due to the opening of Eden and the economic downturn, and this has affected the quality of the environment in the shopping centre and, due to the dual frontages, on Frogmoor.

7.107 Whilst A1 uses still have an important role to play in this part of the town centre, a mixed-use allocation would provide flexibility for a range of uses (mostly A uses) within a radically reconfigured shopping mall. This in turn could help to regenerate Frogmoor which suffers from a poor quality environment, problems of antisocial behaviour and low footfall during the day, despite its rich history, potential as a prime public space and attempts to create a successful food and drink quarter. It is also important to strengthen linkages between the High Street and retail core and Frogmoor to ensure that Frogmoor is part of the integrated town centre as set out in policy HWTC1.

7.108 Efforts to successfully create a vibrant food and drink/leisure quarter here should be redoubled. Therefore, the reconfiguration of the Chiltern Shopping Centre should have the objective of being the creation of such a quarter fronting onto Frogmoor, accompanied by supporting retail uses. The Council will work proactively with the landowners to facilitate such a scheme, subject to agreement with current tenants and satisfactory arrangements for their relocation – either within or outside the site - being part of the plan.

7.109 In advance of such a comprehensive scheme coming forward, proposals such as for changes of use will be assessed against the policy set out in HWTC6 (Primary Shopping Frontages).

7.110 It is vital that Frogmoor is regenerated and used in a manner befitting its status as a key piece of open space in the town centre. The Council will work proactively with stakeholders to draw up a strategy looking at how this can happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Timing:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated timing of development: First phases 2011-16; latter phases 2016-21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery mechanism: Royal London Asset Management (owners of the Chiltern Shopping Centre), private development partners, WDC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(F) EDEN QUARTER

7.111 The Eden shopping centre was completed in 2008 and was designed to respond to a number of needs which were incapable of being met in the historic town centre. It included not only retail premises with greater floorspace than was previously available, but also a new bus station, leisure and restaurant uses.

7.112 The severance which results from the Abbey Way flyover, coupled with an internalised public space network, has however reduced the degree to which the new development connects with the existing built and movement network of the town centre.

7.113 Proposed changes to the street network result in opportunities to improve the way Eden relates to the rest of the town centre through the creation of a better connected and attractive public space network which utilises and supports the unique characteristics of the town, and a rebalancing of priorities to accommodate pedestrian movements.
This 1.33ha site is a former gasworks site south of the Eden Shopping Centre and west of the Bucks New University campus. The site has been cleared of its former industrial uses and is currently unoccupied. The site has an allocation from the 2004 Local Plan for mixed use development, which may include leisure, residential and retail warehousing uses (restricted to the sale of bulky goods) Outline planning permission was granted in 2005 for large format retail (with bulky goods restrictions) and residential uses.

It is important that the best use is made of this important edge-of-centre site which has the scope to accommodate a range of town centre uses, and thus support the viability of the core of the town centre. In addition its close proximity to residential areas of the town on its southern and western boundaries means that residential development on this site is also acceptable.

It is expected that any retail proposals for this site will be appropriate for the site’s edge-of-centre location and will support but not detract from the core of the retail area of the town (Eden Centre, Chilterns Centre and the High Street area). It is anticipated that larger retail units suitable for the sale of bulky goods (see glossary for definition) would be appropriate to front on to Lily’s Walk, as opposed to smaller ‘high street’ units found elsewhere in the retail core. Retail proposals which propose the sale of comparison and/or convenience goods (as opposed to bulky goods already deemed acceptable on this site) must be subject to (a) a sequential test, and (b) an retail impact assessment on the impacts of the proposal on the vitality and viability and retail function of the town centre, reflecting the site’s edge-of-centre location and the requirements of Policy DSA5 Town Centre Boundaries.

This site has a key role to play in the delivery of the vision for High Wycombe Town Centre. The provision of a new road link through the site is integral to the rerouting of traffic through the town centre. An existing improvement line runs along the western boundary of the site and it is proposed that this is amended to reflect the land take requirements of the design of the link road. Further detail of the design of this new link and junction arrangements are available within the supporting technical evidence. Any proposed access points from this site will need to show that they do not prejudice the operation of the existing and proposed network, particularly in relation to network capacity and safety.

It is acknowledged that the developer of this site may require assistance from both the planning and highways authorities in the delivery of the link road, in particular in the acquisition of land outside of the boundary of this site.

The site should contribute positively to the delivery of an active streetscape along all of its frontages, in line with the approach adopted in the design of the town centre street network. This is particularly important along the Gas Works Link Road to help create a streetscape and sense of place along this new piece of street network.

(48) High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan: Highway Design Report (Jacobs, July 2011)
7.120 In line with this, ground floor residential development will not be permitted on the northern boundary of the site fronting onto Lily’s Walk. Due to its close proximity to the Eden Centre and the retail core of the town centre, it is appropriate for active town centre uses to front onto the street in this location, ensuring that the uses on the site co-exist coherently with the rest of the town centre.

7.121 Following the provision of the gas works link road there will be an opportunity to ‘stop up’ the southern end of Rutland Street, meaning that it would no longer be part of the highway network and no longer open to traffic. This redundant piece of highway should then be incorporated into the design proposals for this site to support the objective of comprehensive development.

Timing:
• Anticipated timing of the development 2011 – 2016
• Delivery mechanism – private developer, Wycombe District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council
• Funding – this site will be expected to deliver the new link road

HWTC16 Buckingham House And Castle House

1. This site is allocated for mixed-use development, comprising of town centre uses and residential development.

2. Development of this site will be required to:
   a. Be designed to accommodate and contribute towards the provision of a new route between Marlow Hill and the A40 West Wycombe Road (as set out in Appendix B).
   b. Provide residential development on upper floors only, ensuring the delivery of active frontages on to the new street network, in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
   c. Shorter-term proposals, and/or partial redevelopment of the site, should plan for, and not prejudice, the longer-term comprehensive redevelopment of the entire site. Proposals should also demonstrate how Rutland Street, when ‘stopped up’ would be incorporated into a comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

7.122 This is a 0.95ha site located south of the Eden centre, west of the Lily’s Walk mixed use allocation and east of the Desborough Road/West End Road/Bridge Street crossroads, and is therefore in a strategically important location. The site is currently occupied by a mixture of offices and storage uses.

7.123 Given the strategic location of this site it is potentially suitable for more intensive forms of mixed use development with buildings up to 4 storeys being appropriate in this location. Located within the town centre boundary, the site is suitable for a variety of town centre uses.

7.124 It is expected that any retail proposals for this site will be appropriate for the site’s edge-of-town location and will support but not detract from the core of the retail area of the town (Eden Centre, Chilterns Centre and the High Street area). It is anticipated that larger retail units suitable for the sale of bulky goods would be appropriate to front on to Desborough Road, as opposed to smaller ‘high street’ units found elsewhere in the retail core. Retail proposals which propose the sale of comparison and/or convenience goods (as opposed to bulky goods already deemed acceptable on this site) must be subject to (a) a sequential test, and (b) an retail impact assessment on the impacts of the proposal on the vitality and viability and retail function of the town centre, reflecting the site’s edge-of-town location and the requirements of Policy DSA5 Town Centre Boundaries.

7.125 The provision of the gas works link road is a key element of re-routing traffic through the town centre. Any redevelopment of this site will be required to accommodate this new link at the eastern end of the site, at the junction with Lily’s Walk and Desborough Road.
7.126 This site fronts on to Desborough Road which will be a significant link within the realigned town centre street network. The site should contribute positively to the delivery of an active streetscape, in line with the approach adopted in the design of the town centre street network. This is particularly important along the Gas Works Link Road on the sites eastern boundary to help create a streetscape and sense of place along this new piece of street network.

7.127 The proposed changes to the highway network, in particular the provision of the link road between Queen Alexandra Road and Desborough Road allows for the opportunity to ‘stop up’ Rutland Street, which currently divides this site in two at its junction with Desborough Road. This means Rutland Street would no longer be part of the highway network and no longer open to traffic. If Rutland Street were to cease as adopted highway, then development proposals at this site would be expected to bring forward a comprehensive design which utilises the land in the most efficient way.

7.128 The site is currently in multiple landownership and it is recognised that part of the site may come forward for redevelopment in advance of the whole site being available. In such circumstances development proposals should show how part of the site can be developed in the shorter term, without compromising a longer-term high quality comprehensive development.

**Timing:**
- Delivery mechanisms - private developers and Wycombe District Council
- Funding – this site will be expected to provide land for, and/or make a financial contribution towards delivery of the new link road

**HWTC17 Collins House And Corner Of Bridge Street/Desborough Road**

1. This site is allocated for mixed-use development, comprising of town centre uses and residential development.
2. Development of this site is required to:
   a. Provide residential development on upper floors only, ensuring the delivery of active frontages on to the new street network, in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
   b. Be designed to accommodate and contribute towards the delivery of changes to the town centre street network as set out in Policy HWTC4 and in Appendix B, including junction improvements at the junction of Bridge Street and Desborough Road and any widening required of Desborough Road and/or Bridge Street.

7.129 This small site (0.19ha) is located at the junction of Desborough Road and Bridge Street and is immediately adjacent to the Eden Centre and the bus station. It is currently occupied by the tired and drab-looking 1960s Collins House, whose appearance severely detracts from the visual appearance of the site and which has been identified by the Council as a potential redevelopment opportunity.

7.130 Given the location of this site close to the Eden Centre and within the Primary Shopping Area it is more suitable for more intensive forms of mixed use development than is currently provided. A mixed use development in a high quality, well-designed scheme which gives consideration to its relationship with adjacent buildings would be appropriate for this site.

7.131 Bridge Street is an important link within the town centre highway network, particularly for the operation of buses accessing and egressing the bus station. Junction improvements, and potential widening of Bridge Street and/or Desborough Road...
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

at the southern end of Bridge Street will help assist in the free-flow of buses where possible. Development in this location is required to contribute to the delivery of this infrastructure as set out in Policy HWTC1 (Part 1).

7.132 This site sits in a prominent location on the corner of Desborough Road and Bridge Street which will be highly visible within the re-arranged town centre street network. The site should contribute positively to the delivery of an active streetscape, in line with the approach adopted in the design of the town centre street network.

**Timing:**
- Timing of delivery: 2016-21
- Delivery mechanism: Private developers and Wycombe District Council

---

**HWTC18 Oxford Road Roundabout**

1. This site is allocated for a mixed use development comprising of town centre uses (see Fig. 6 for indicative development blocks) and the creation of a new public space

2. Development of this site will be required to:
   a. Deliver active frontages onto the new street network and public space in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
   b. Deliver high quality designs which reflect the location of the site as a gateway to the town centre and its potential important public space within the town, and which help create a “sense of place” in this location
   c. Be designed to accommodate and contribute towards the delivery of changes to the town centre street network as set out in Policy HWTC4 and in Appendix B.

3. Through their design, development on this site will also be expected to contribute to the provision of a high quality public space in this location, incorporating the following:
   a. Improved pedestrian routes linking the Eden Centre with White Hart Street; Frogmoor; and Archway, which pass through the centre of the space
   b. De-culverting of the River Wye, as set out in Policy DSA13
   c. Retention of access to the Eden car park and service area from Archway and Oxford Road

4. Shorter-term development proposals which prejudice the longer term aspirations for this site, in particular the reconfiguration of the highway network, the provision of a public space and opportunities for de-culverting of the River Wye, will not be granted planning permission.

7.133 This 1.3ha site occupies a key location between the Eden Centre and the historic High Street. The site is currently dominated by existing highway, in particular the western ramps of Abbey Way flyover and the Oxford Road roundabout. Block 2’s current uses include a nightclub, offices and a new hotel is currently under construction.

7.134 This site offers an opportunity to provide high quality development at this gateway location in the town centre. The removal of the western ramps of Abbey Way flyover and Oxford Road roundabout creates the possibility of a new open space, providing a better quality and more direct link between the Eden development and the rest of the town centre. It also presents an opportunity to regenerate an area that is a marginal location in terms of retail frontage and creates new retail and office floor space in the town centre.

7.135 The provision of an alternative route for traffic through the town centre allows for significant changes to the highway infrastructure which currently dominates this site. In the medium term (2016-2021), the de-dualising and reduction in use of Abbey Way flyover would allow for the removal of Oxford Road roundabout and a simplification of this junction whilst maintaining access to the Eden Car...
Park and service yard. In the longer term (2021-2016) the removal of the flyover ramps would create further development space in this location.

7.136 Fig. 6 shows the indicative location of development opportunities created through the changes to the highway network. Block One sits to the south east corner of the site and encompasses land currently occupied by the west-bound lanes of the flyover. There is also possibility that this block could extend southwards, incorporating the existing car park ramps into the design (whilst retaining access and egress) and linking with the frontage of the existing Tesco store. In addition to retail and/or office development there would also be potential to provide additional car parking on the upper floors of the development.

7.137 Block Two encompasses the existing Octagon Parade building. Phase One of the redevelopment of this building, a 120-bed hotel, is currently under construction. Following the reconfiguration of the highway network there is potential for this building to extend westwards and deliver a high quality building in this location. If the remainder of the existing building were to come forward for redevelopment prior to the reconfiguration of the highway, then proposals should show that they would not prejudice further extension and redevelopment in the longer term.
7.138 Changes to the current highway network will allow for the creation of a high quality public open space in this location, which will provide a key focal point for people to meet and stay. Improved pedestrian links between the Eden Centre with White Hart Street, Frogmoor and Archway will be legible and convenient for pedestrians, offering a pleasant experience within a high quality public realm.

7.139 In 2010 a feasibility study concluded that de-culverting of the River Wye in this location was feasible\(^{(49)}\). The study identified that there were opportunities to de-culvert a section of the river located where the western flyover ramps are currently in situ (see Fig. 6) which would contribute significantly to “place-making” in this location. In line with our overall vision for the town centre and this site, and in accordance with Environment Agency policy development proposal which propose building on the existing culvert and/or prejudice future opportunities for de-culverting will not be permitted.

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development 2021 – 2026
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer, Wycombe District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council

(G) DESBOROUGH

7.140 The Desborough area of the town centre has a distinctive character and architectural style from the Eden Centre which it sits adjacent to. The area is made up of small-scale units in a mixture of retail and residential uses. The area operates as distinctive local centre for local residents, in particular meeting the needs of the local ethnic population.

**HWTC19 Bridge Street**

1. This site is allocated for mixed use development consisting of A uses, B1 offices, and residential uses.
2. Development of this site will be required to:
   a. Provide residential development on upper floors only, ensuring the delivery of active frontages on to the new street network, particularly on to Bridge Street, in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
   b. Deliver high quality designs which reflect the prominence of the site on the corner of Bridge Street and Oxford Road
   c. Provide a new pedestrian link through the site to provide better connectivity between the Eden Centre and Bridge Street to Desborough, in particular to Brook Street and Westbourne Street

7.141 This 0.65ha site is located on the corner of Bridge Street and Oxford Road on the western side of the town centre and faces both the Eden Centre and the Sainsbury’s superstore. The site consists of a mixture land uses accommodated in small individual low level buildings.

7.142 This site sits in a prominent location on the corner of Oxford Road and Bridge Street which will be highly visible within the re-arranged town centre street network. A high quality design which reflects this prominence should therefore be provided. The site should contribute positively to the delivery of an active streetscape, in line with the approach adopted in the design of the town centre street network.

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development – 2016 onwards
- Delivery mechanisms – Private developer, Wycombe District Council

\(^{(49)}\) River Wye De-culverting Feasibility Study (PBA, June 2010)
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

(H) BAKER STREET

7.143 The Baker Street area, currently tucked between the western end of the town centre and the Desborough Area, is set to become much more prominent following the completion of the Westbourne Link as part of the new town centre street network. It is currently occupied by a number of surface car parks and a scattering of medium sized employment and industrial buildings.

HWTC20 Baker Street

1. The site is allocated for a primarily mixed use development consisting of B1 business and residential uses.
2. Development of this site will be required to:
   a. Provide for no net loss of existing employment floorspace
   b. Provide a new link road running north to south to the east of the site linking West Wycombe Road and Desborough Road, using the existing Westbourne Street (as set out in Appendix B).
   c. Provide for public open space and access to the River Wye along the length of the river corridor through the site. Measures to enhance the river corridor should also help to reduce and manage flood risk at this location.
   d. Provide pedestrian and cycle links through the site which contribute to improving connectivity between the town centre and Desborough
   e. Retain an appropriate level of parking to meet strategic requirements
   f. Deliver active frontages onto the new street network, in line with the principles of Policy HWTC3
   g. Rationalise the number of access points onto Westbourne Street so that only one access/egress point onto Westbourne Street is provided.

7.144 Baker Street is an area of 2.4ha on the border between the town centre and Desborough. The site is currently made up of a mixture of small business units and a surface car park owned and operated by Wycombe District Council. The River Wye runs along the northern edge of the site before entering a culvert alongside West Wycombe Road.

7.145 This site offers the opportunity for a mixed use development which could make a significant contribution towards achieving improvements to the town centre as well as meeting identified open space needs for the Desborough area.

7.146 The site was previously allocated for employment uses within the Local Plan, but a mixed use allocation, incorporating residential development, would allow for an approach which would provide an appropriate mix of uses on the site, and assist in enabling the provision of open space and environmental improvements in this area. Scheme promoters will need to demonstrate that an appropriate amount of residential development is proposed which enables a viable redevelopment of the site, whilst ensuring that there is no net loss of existing employment floorspace. Housing development should include 40% affordable housing in line with Core Strategy policy CS13.

7.147 In order to help address issues of open space deficiencies in this area, and to capitalise on the River Wye corridor in this location, development is required to provide open space and public access to the River Wye on the northern section of the site. The open space is envisaged to provide an informal recreation space adjacent to the river where people can meet and enjoy the river corridor. There is potential to re-establish the River Wye at this location, enhancing its biodiversity value and providing continuous public access along it. This would provide an important green amenity space to the west of the town centre. Proposals for the river corridor are required to be in line with Policy DSA13.
7.148 This site has a key role to play in the delivery of the vision for High Wycombe Town Centre. The provision of a new road link joining Westbourne Street to West Wycombe Road on the eastern boundary of the site is integral to the rerouting of traffic through the town centre. A transport improvement line is proposed along the eastern boundary of the site to reflect the land take requirements of the design of the link road. To help facilitate the flow of traffic along Westbourne Street the number of access points onto Westbourne Street is required to be rationalised through any development proposals. Further access to the site can be achieved on the western side of the site. By rationalising the access points, there will be an opportunity to ‘stop up’ the redundant roads, which could include East Richardson Street and/or Landsdales Road, meaning that they would no longer be part of the highway network and no longer open to traffic. These redundant pieces of highway should then be incorporated into the design proposals for this site to support the objective of comprehensive development.

7.149 The construction of the Westbourne Street Link and junction with West Wycombe Road will result in this site sitting in a prominent location and being highly visible within the re-arranged town centre street network. A high quality design which reflects this prominence should therefore be provided. The site should contribute positively to the delivery of an active streetscape, in line with the approach adopted in the design of the town centre street network.

7.150 When assessing an appropriate level of parking to be retained on site, scheme promoters should, in conjunction with the planning authority, consider recent and planned changes to the overall car parking stock with the town centre and the needs of both the development itself and surrounding developments.

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development - 2011 onwards
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer, Registered Social Landlord and Wycombe District Council
- Funding – this site will be expected to provide the link road between West Wycombe Road and Desborough Road and a significant area of open space on-site.

---

**HWTC 21 Oxford Road (west)**

1. This is site is allocated as a town centre office site development proposals will be restricted to class B1 (a) of the Use Classes Order unless they are small scale and complementary to the function of the area.

2. Residential uses will not be permitted

7.151 This site is made up of two areas, either side of the Oxford Road and is an important office location on the western side of the town centre. This is a well located and modern site any proposals that come forward should be for B1(a) uses (see appendix F) or provide benefit to the existing businesses on site. Proposals for other uses will need to be supported by an appropriate sequential assessment in line with national policy if they are for other town centre uses.
This site is located on the northern edge of the town centre, overlooking the former Compair site, Morrisons and accommodates a number of businesses.

Proposals for other town centre uses will need to be accompanied by a sequential and impact assessment in line with national policy (where appropriate).

HWTC 22 Central Business Centre

1. This site is allocated as a town centre employment site.
2. Development proposals are restricted to classes B1, B2, and B8 of the Use Classes Order
3. Other uses that deliver economic development such as public and community uses, and main town centre uses will also be allowed, where they:
   a. support the business uses of the area, and,
   b. are small scale, and,
   c. generate employment and,
   d. complement the role of the area in character and function.
4. Residential uses will not be permitted.

This site is allocated as a town centre employment site. Development proposals are restricted to classes B1, B2, and B8 of the Use Classes Order. Other uses that deliver economic development such as public and community uses, and main town centre uses will also be allowed, where they support the business uses of the area, are small scale, generate employment and complement the role of the area in character and function. Residential uses will not be permitted.

Desborough Area

Context

The Desborough area to the west of the town centre, is identified as a Key Area of Change in the Core Strategy. The area is diverse culturally and in terms of land use, mixing local shops, residential, industrial and other employment uses. It is this mix that gives it its own distinct character. It is also an area of deprivation in relation to crime and the environment, and is severely deficient in open space.

Desborough is a place in its own right, with a clear identity but which is still very much part of the town, this policy seeks to secure the future of Desborough as a vibrant and diverse part of the town. The Core Strategy identifies some key principles for the future of the area, these include:

- Integration of the area with the expanded town centre, including improved east/west pedestrian and cycle links
- Provision of a new open space in the eastern part of the Desborough area to address existing deficiencies
- Opening up of the River Wye to re-establish and enhance its biodiversity value and provide continuous public access along it
- Regeneration of employment areas, complemented by the conservation of the industrial heritage

A further important issue for the area are the proposed changes to the town centre road network (see the High Wycombe town centre area section) and it’s potential wider implications.

See Open Space Framework appendix 2 p.36
7.157 The grid of streets is a key part of Desborough’s character. Where this becomes more entangled around the Green Street area, redevelopment should address and improve the legibility of the area, increasing walking and cycling links, particularly links to existing open spaces, future open spaces and the River Wye.

7.158 Large, characterful buildings reflecting the industrial heritage of Desborough should be re-used where possible. The industrial buildings have the flexibility to be converted to a number of uses including residential, business and small-scale retail etc. evolving to meet the needs of the local community. New buildings should also incorporate this type of flexibility, allowing for current and future regeneration.

7.159 New development should use traditional materials, reflecting appropriately the mixture of industrial and residential buildings throughout the area. Buildings are well fenestrated and address the street well. New development must do likewise and avoid ‘gated’ developments.

7.160 On street parking is an issue in the area so new development must not exacerbate this. Parking provision must be carefully designed and in character with the area, i.e. avoiding the creation of breaks in frontages and ensuring developments address the street (51).

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development - 2011 onwards
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer and Wycombe District Council
- Quality of development through the Building for Life assessments

---

(50) See Open Space Framework appendix 2 p.36
(51) See Manual for Streets (Department for Transport, 2007) for further guidance
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Fig. 7 Concept Diagram for the Desborough Area

HW2 Delivering New Open Space and River Corridor Improvements

Open space deficiency and improvements to the river corridor in the area will be addressed by the following means:

1. Allowing sites located adjacent to the River Wye in the Desborough area (as defined on the proposals map) to be redeveloped for a mix of uses subject to the provision of the following:
   a. 50% of the site area is made available as public open space, and
   b. The public open space adjoins the river and ensures full public access to it, and
   c. To provide for a continuous open space/movement corridor at least 8m wide alongside the river (see Fig. 7).
   d. On existing employment areas the Council will require an element of employment generating development in proportion to the size of the site being proposed for redevelopment.

2. Provision of open space in the form of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and Community facility on the Green Street School site (see HW3 site specific policy)

3. All other sites within the Desborough area but not identified as having a direct part to play in addressing open space needs will be required to make a financial contribution to open space.
7. AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Justification

7.161 The Open Spaces Framework (WDC 2010) identifies that the Desborough area is severely deficient in open space, lacking in a range of open space facilities apart from playgrounds. There are insufficient informal open spaces such as semi-natural green spaces and green corridors as a result of the dense development pattern of the area as well as deficiencies in the facilities at the main open space in the area, the Desborough Recreation Ground, limiting its use for outdoor sport. There are also significant barriers preventing easy access to open spaces in adjacent areas such as the A4010, the railway line and the topography of the area.

7.162 In light of this the framework has identified a number of options for improvement to try and alleviate the deficiency. This policy seeks to deliver these improvements through allowing the redevelopment of sites along the River Wye to create informal open spaces that also open up stretches of the River Wye, improving public access to River, creating a number of linked open spaces as well as improving biodiversity. It is important that the design of these developments ensures that the open spaces are integrated into the existing urban fabric so that they are accessible and visible from the surrounding area and not isolated by the new development.

7.163 Desborough has traditionally played a key role in accommodating a range of business’s and the majority of sites located alongside the river are existing employment sites. In order to stimulate the regeneration and improvement of Desborough and to meet the overwhelming deficiency in open space, this policy seeks to facilitate the development of sites alongside the River Wye. Key to the development of these sites is the provision of a significant amount of the site – 50% of the site as open space alongside the River, enabling in the long term access along the river, creating pockets of informal open space as well as improving the biodiversity of the area.

7.164 It is important that Desborough maintains a role as a source of business premises and as such employment sites that come forward should include proposals that will continue to generate jobs. This will be assessed in light of the size of the site under consideration, the potential the site has to accommodate jobs and the degree to which the wider aspirations of the policy are being met. Modern business developments make more efficient use of land than older developments and therefore will require less land/floorspace, up to date worker floorspace ratios should be used to calculate numbers of jobs a development can generate.

Timing:
- Anticipated timing of the development - 2011 onwards
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer and Wycombe District Council
- The Council will monitor
  - amount of open space
  - improvements to the River Wye
  - loss/gain in business floorspace
Green Street School is on the corner of Green Street and Desborough Street and has been closed for a number of years. It is currently in use as a community facility for the local area and the former playground is being used informally as a play area, adjacent to the school is a play area for young children.

The school is an area of deprivation, in relation to crime and disorder and the environment and a critical area of open space deficiency. The Open Spaces Framework specifically identifies that there are no formal play facilities for teenagers in the Desborough area.

This site offers an opportunity to address a specific deficiency through the provision of a multi-use games area and informal open space. Maintaining provision of a community facility in this central location will also provide an accessible focus for the local community and contribute towards community cohesion.

The school is partly within the Leigh Street Furniture Heritage Conservation Area, any redevelopment will need to be supported by an appropriate assessment that shows how it relates to the Conservation Area.

There is scope for a small scale residential development if necessary to act as enabling development for the delivery of the open space and community uses. This should not prejudice the delivery of a comprehensive community facility on the site and would ideally be located to the rear of the site and accessed from Jubilee Road. This will enable the MUGA to be provided at the front of the site adjacent to the existing play area creating a cohesive open space solution in this area. This will also allow for the new residential development to continue an existing frontage and back onto adjacent properties creating a legible street layout.

Timing:
Anticipated timing of the development is 2014 – 2019.
Delivery mechanisms – private developer, Wycombe District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council.
Funding – funds from developer contributions combined with on-site provision of open space by the residential development to provide the open space and community facilities.
8. Marlow

Introduction

8.1 Marlow is a vibrant place with many assets, not least its historic core and its setting both on the banks of the River Thames and the edge of the Chiltern Hills. It has a strong economic base aided by its strategic location in the Thames Valley with good connections to the nearby Berkshire towns. It has a lively town centre which, together with its riverside setting, is popular with tourists.

8.2 The Core Strategy (Policy CS 5) sets out the strategic policy framework for the town. It states that Marlow should remain an attractive, vibrant and accessible place that meets the day-to-day needs of those who live, work in or visit the town. Key themes in the policy are:

- Making the most of the town’s Thames-side location;
- Appropriate traffic management and addressing parking problems;
- Maintaining the strength of the town as a local employment centre;
- Ensuring that the limited opportunities for providing housing in the town address the needs of the community; and
- Facilitating the provision of a country park on the Little Marlow Gravel Pits area.

8.3 In relation to the town centre in particular, Policy CS5 says the vitality and viability of Marlow town centre should be maintained, conserving its historic core and improving its facilities and services to better serve the local catchment.

8.4 Policy CS10 sets out the town centre hierarchy for the District, and puts Marlow at Tier 2 (Other town centres) of this hierarchy. The policy states that these town centres should be important service centres serving their rural catchment areas, and state that development in these centres should not seek to serve residents in other towns, or rural areas outside their primary catchment areas.

MR1 Primary Shopping Frontages - Marlow

Within the Primary Shopping Frontages in Marlow, as defined on the Proposals Map, the Council will only accept development which:

- results in no net loss of Class A1 frontage length, and
- maintains an active ground floor frontage.

Exceptions to this approach may be made where development:

- Demonstrably assists in the continued preservation or rehabilitation of a listed building which would not otherwise be achieved;

Policy MR 2 Secondary Shopping Frontages - Marlow

Within the Secondary Shopping Frontages in Marlow, as defined on the Proposals Map, the Council will only allow development which:

- Does not result in a net loss of Class A use class frontage length; and
- Does not result in more than 60% of frontage length being in non-A1 (i.e. non-shop) use; and
- maintains an active ground floor frontage

8.5 The protection of retail premises in shopping frontages is important in supporting the health of Marlow town centre. As noted in relation to High Wycombe, this document is proposing to change the detailed approach to measuring the extent of different town centre uses within the main shopping frontages, from the number of units to frontage length. This reflects the fact that it is the effect of the shop frontage presented to the street which has a key impact on overall character, diversity and vitality.
8.6 Vacancy rates in retail units in Marlow town centre increased in 2008-9 but then fell again, and have always been less severe than in High Wycombe, a trend underlined by the Town Centre Occupancy Survey\(^{(53)}\) carried out in April 2011. More of an issue for Marlow town centre is a relatively high proportion of A3 units.

8.7 Overall it is considered appropriate to continue a strong degree of protection for A1 frontages particularly in the face of a relatively high proportion of non-A1 uses in the town centre. Over-dominance of A3 uses in the heart of the town centre (i.e. in the primary shopping frontages) would threaten to undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre by reducing its diversity and core shopping function. Therefore, in terms of the protection for A1 use in the primary shopping frontage there should be no net loss of A1 shopping frontage. For the same reason it is not proposed to change the length of primary shopping frontage, which covers the majority of the primary shopping area.

8.8 In terms of the secondary frontage in the town, it is considered appropriate to propose a policy approach which protects a similar split of A1/non-A1 uses as are currently in place in the town (currently 43% A1; 57% non-A1), given the very low vacancy rate here.

Table 3 Marlow frontage length and percentages as at April 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marlow</th>
<th>Primary percent</th>
<th>length (m)</th>
<th>Secondary percent</th>
<th>length (m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Glossary for explanation of Use Classes

\(^{(53)}\) Town Centre Frontage Zones Topic Paper (WDC, July 2011)
8.9 The retail unit on this site remains the largest unit in Marlow and constitutes the main foodstore for the town. Planning permission has been granted for the initial expansion of the store by Sainsbury’s, and whilst the store is currently closed for the refurbishment works associated with this permission, the store is expected to reopen towards the end of 2011 or early 2012. The permission constitutes a modest expansion of the previous Waitrose store on the site.

8.10 It remains the Council’s aspiration that comprehensive development should be delivered on the Riley Road site and this is reflected in the approved Riley Road Development Brief (April 2009). Previous studies and plans have recommended that the implementation of an enlarged food store at Riley Road should be a priority. The Council’s most recent retail expenditure capacity projections showed there to be sufficient capacity in the town for new food store development over the plan period, and that there was significant capacity above the permitted Sainsbury’s expansion of between 771m² and 993m². However, with the implementation of the Waitrose basket store at Chapel House, much of this projected capacity has been taken up.

---

MR3 Riley Road

1. This site is allocated for comprehensive mixed-use development primarily for retail use. Food retail, as a primary use (well integrated with existing town centre retail), with some ancillary residential uses, will be acceptable.

2. Key Development Requirements:

   a. Maximum use of the area through land assembly, possible realignment of Riley Road, and provision of a comprehensive servicing and rear access to the West Street frontages;

   b. The design and appearance of the buildings should reflect their function and respect the open aspect of Riley Park Trust, Marlow Conservation Area and residential buildings to the north;

   c. Provision of public parking to meet current and future needs;

   d. Retaining and enhancing the pedestrian links to West Street;

   e. Protecting existing rear servicing before the provision of the above comprehensive scheme

   f. Compliance with the Riley Road Development Brief.

   g. Environmental enhancements to the car park, pedestrian links and Riley Park Trust boundary
8.11 This is an underutilised town centre site, within the Marlow Conservation Area, to the rear of High Street and West Street. This site is highly accessible and well related to the town centre facilities.

8.12 Situated adjacent to the town centre shopping, leisure and public transport facilities, the site is ideally located to provide a sustainable residential development which will put to good use accessible urban land and introduce a use whose form and function are sympathetic to the character and quality of the area, and will contribute to the vitality of the town centre.

8.13 Now that the Waitrose basket store is operating at Chapel House, no further retail sites are required in Marlow town centre. Therefore both
Portlands and the Liston Road Car Park (see below) are no longer required as potential sites for a food store, as was proposed in one option of the 2009 consultation. Therefore the housing allocation on this site from the Local Plan should remain.

**MRS Liston Road car park, Marlow**

1. Allocate the site for residential development together with decked car parking.
2. The development should provide the following:
   a. Make provision for the equivalent amount of parking to support Marlow Town Centre.
   b. Incorporate a design and layout which is sensitive to the Marlow Conservation Area and does not overly impact on surrounding amenity.

8.14 Land for development in Marlow town centre is highly constrained. Redevelopment of Liston Road car park provides an opportunity to make better use of the land available.

8.15 The development of Liston Road Car Park would enable the provision of residential development in a highly sustainable town centre location and would facilitate the improvement of parking facilities, thereby supporting Marlow’s town centre.
9. Princes Risborough

9.1 Policy CS6 of the Wycombe Core Strategy sets out the strategic policy for Princes Risborough. The policy states that Princes Risborough will be strengthened as a vibrant market town at the heart of a network of sustainable communities. Key themes for policy development in the town are:

• Community
• Economy
• Transport and access
• Tourism
• Town centre
• Environment

9.2 In relation to the town centre the policy encourages limited new retail development in or on the edge of the town centre to improve its vitality and viability. The policy also highlights issues concerning the relationship between vehicles and pedestrians in the High Street and town centre, and the importance of safeguarding the historic core, and maintaining the accessibility of the town centre.

9.3 Policy CS10 sets out the town centre hierarchy for the District, and puts Princes Risborough at Tier 2 (Other town centres) of this hierarchy. The policy states that these town centres should be important service centres serving their rural catchment areas, and states that development in these centres should not seek to serve residents in other towns, or rural areas outside their primary catchment areas.

9.4 The protection of retail premises in shopping frontages is important in supporting the health of Princes Risborough town centre. As noted in relation to High Wycombe, this document is proposing to change the detailed approach to measuring the extent of different town centre uses within the main shopping frontages, from the number of units to frontage length. This reflects the fact that it is the effect of the shop frontage presented to the street which has a key impact on overall character, diversity and vitality.

9.5 Vacancy rates in retail units in Princes Risborough increased in 2008-9, although these increases were less severe than in High Wycombe, and the Town Centre Occupancy Survey carried out in April 2011 found that the vacancy rate had stabilised since 2009. The latest survey found that vacant frontages in the town now stand at around 7% of the total frontage length.
9.6 However, in terms of frontages, it is not considered necessary to alter these for Princes Risborough, given the continuing need to protect the core of the town centre for retail use to ensure vitality and viability. In terms of the primary frontage, it is still considered appropriate to continue a high degree of protection for A1 uses; in the secondary frontage, it is considered appropriate to propose a target of A1/non-A1 mix which reflects the current situation on the ground (currently 44% A1: 56% non-A1), given the very low level of vacancies here (under 3% of total frontage length according to the latest occupancy survey).

9.7 New allocations such as for larger scale development are not considered appropriate given the small-scale nature of retail units in the town and its position in the town centre hierarchy.

9.8 There have been a number of local initiatives in the town in recent months to look at measures to revitalise the town centre, including the recent Town Centre Benchmarking Report published as part of the Retail Revival project led by Princes Risborough Town Council. The outputs of this project included a Town Centre Benchmarking Report, a town action plan and the creation of a business network in the town.

### Table 4 Princes Risborough frontage length and percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Princes Risborough</th>
<th>Primary percent</th>
<th>length (m)</th>
<th>Secondary percent</th>
<th>length (m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Glossary for explanation of Use Classes
### PR3 Land Fronting New Road

1. This site is allocated for a small-scale mixed use development suitable for retail, residential, community uses, business, hotel and leisure development.

2. Development should:
   
a. Taking into consideration the likely incremental approach to re-development of this site, development schemes should not prejudice potential further incremental development of the site.

b. Front New Road or front any new formalised pedestrian links.

c. The design of the development must have regard to New Road.

d. Provide additional tree planting along New Road to improve the streetscape.

e. Provide improved boundary treatments in accordance with guidance outlined in the Princes Risborough Conservation Area Character Survey.

f. Provide environmental improvements to retained parking areas.

g. Enable improved and/or more frequent pedestrian crossing points along New Road.

h. Provide new and/or improved pedestrian links from New Road to High Street and Duke Street.

i. Rationalise the number of vehicular access points into the site.

**9.9** This site is located in a prominent position in the heart of this vibrant market town. It consists of land to the rear of properties fronting the High Street. There are a small number of commercial units on this site fronting New Road (A4010); this is the main route connecting Aylesbury with High Wycombe.

**9.10** The site is mainly used for car parking for commercial properties located on the site. There is not a comprehensive approach to parking, with several parking areas each served by an independent access from New Road. This has resulted in this area having an unattractive appearance and a lack of formalised function, despite the fact that the area is located within the Princes Risborough Conservation Area.

**9.11** A comprehensive approach to redevelopment of this land resulting in fewer vehicular access points, would achieve major visual improvements and provide the site with a clear function. Improvements to boundary treatments and additional landscape features would enhance the appearance of the area. Improved and additional pedestrian access points that are well designed and considered safe to use, along with better crossing points over the A4010 will help revitalise the area by encouraging increased footfall through the area. Any retail uses proposed should be at a supportive scale to the town centre, rather than at a competing level.

**9.12** Given that the site is in multiple ownership, land is expected to come forward in a piecemeal fashion over a number of years and therefore any re-development should take account of this to ensure that the site with part- implemented development, still functions as a place and does not appear as development in progress.

### Timing:

- Anticipated timing of the development after 2016
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer and site owner
Fig. 8 Illustrative diagram for Land fronting New Road, Princes Risborough
This 0.78 hectare site is located in a prominent corner location in the centre of Princes Risborough. The site currently has a range of uses - it contains a small parade of shops fronting Horns Lane, a car parking area with public toilets and a fire station accessed from New Road. The parade of shops is designated as a primary shopping frontage zone. The site is located with the Princes Risborough Conservation Area.

Comprehensive redevelopment of this prominent corner would have significant visual amenity benefits. New Road is characterised by wide verges either side of the highway and regular building lines. Therefore it is considered that development of this site should respect this established pattern of development and retain this attract vista, by ensuring any redevelopment does not result in buildings further forward than the establish building line on this side of New Road.

An additional pedestrian crossing point over New Road would provide substantial accessibility benefits to the town and would likely increase footfall passed this site. It would ensure safer linkages, including for potential new residents, with public open space located north-east of the site. Development of this site must contain a substantial amount of A1 use and parking, as these existing functions of this site, are considered to significantly add to and ensure the vitality and viability of the Princes Risborough primary shopping area.

**Timing:**
- Anticipated timing of the development – 2016 - 2021
- Delivery mechanisms – private developer and site owner