

NORTH WILTSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2011

Written Statement
June 2006

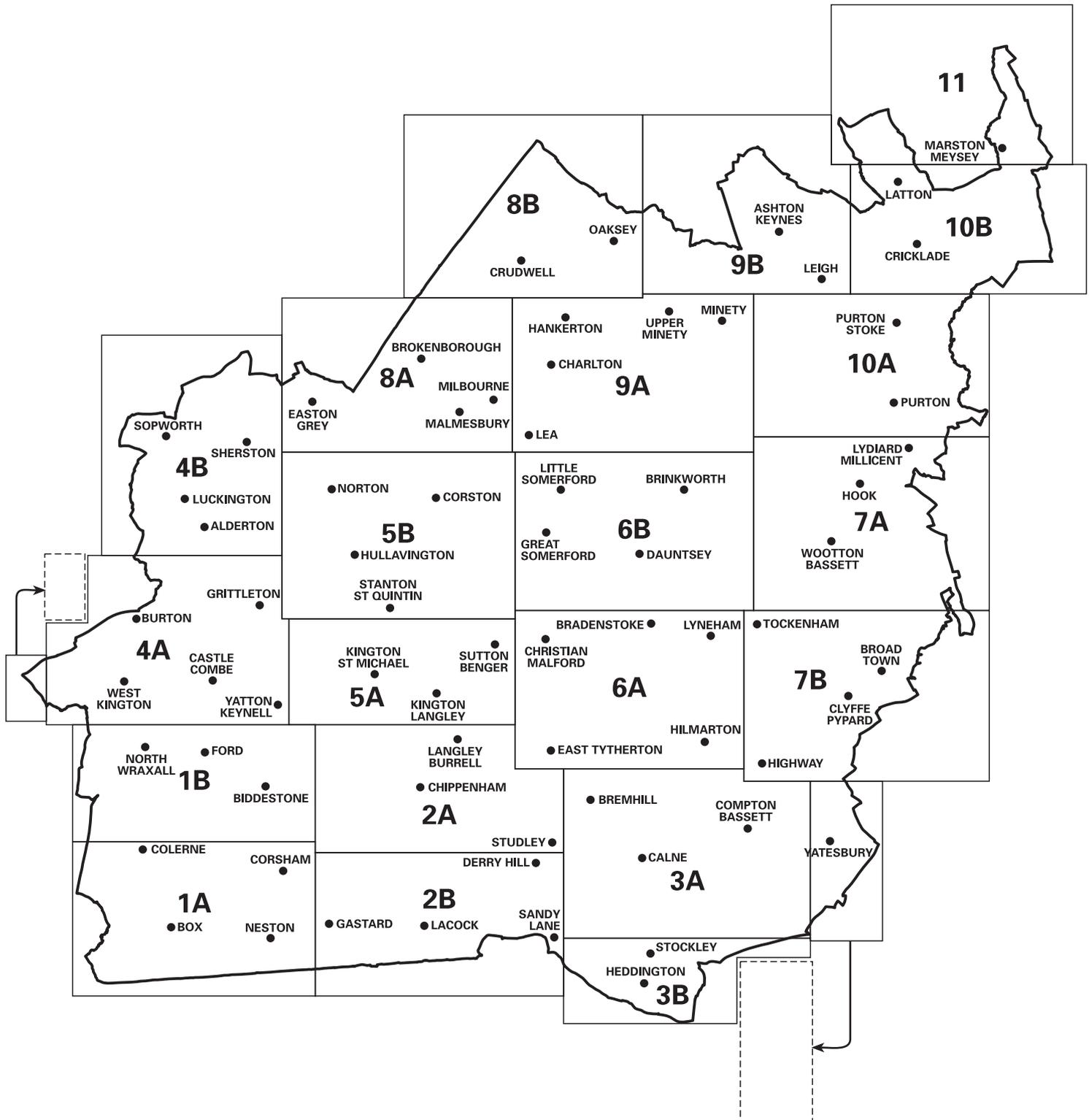
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Sheet Numbers 1 to 11



Note: Each sheet, except No. 11, is comprised of two maps, (e.g. 1A with 1B on the reverse)

PREFACE

North Wiltshire District Council is delighted to be able to offer our residents, partner organisations, businesses and potential investors in our District; the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. We hope that it will offer a Vision for the District that balances the protection of its valuable natural assets with the needs of our communities towards achieving sustainable growth.

The Plan follows on from the publication of the re-deposited Plan published in 2004 and the substantial number of representations, over 3500, that we received from about 680 individuals and organisations. We appreciate the time and effort that many have made towards making suggestions for improving the Plan. We took many of the suggestions on board and balanced the, often conflicting, views to create what we believe to be a fair and balanced Plan.

The Local Plan Inspector submitted in May 2006 a Binding Report in response to the Plan following a Public Inquiry during the Summer of 2005. It is a testament to the robustness of the Plan that he made few substantive alterations to its content. This Written Statement incorporates the amendments required by the Binding Report.

The North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 is a material consideration when dealing with planning applications. The previous North Wiltshire Local Plan 2001 is now revoked. We hope that the new North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 will be helpful to everyone as you assist us in the Council's principal aim: "Improving North Wiltshire".

Best Regards



Councillor Helen Dixon
Spatial Planning Portfolio Holder of North Wiltshire District Council

Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016

The Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016 was adopted on the 1st April 2006. Upon its adoption Wiltshire County Council issued a statement of the Conformity of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. The letter includes a summary which states:

“To summarise, in terms of conformity, the North Wiltshire Local Plan Revised Deposit Draft (November 2004) is considered to be in general conformity with the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2016 with the exception of part of Policy H3 that allows “limited infill” housing development in settlements that would not comply with Structure Plan Policy DP3.”

The Local Plan Inspector in his Binding Report removed the reference to “limited infill” in policy H3 and replaced it with; “small scale or limited development”. However, it is not considered that this alteration materially affects the County Council’s determination of non-conformity. The substance of the County Council’s comment is that policy H3 is more permissive of development in the villages that have framework boundaries (but few facilities) than policy DP3 of the Structure Plan apparently allows.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011

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INTRODUCTION

1. NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL VISION STATEMENT AND SPATIAL STRATEGY

The Vision: Planning to improve North Wiltshire through sustainable development.

1.1 Within this Vision are five underlying Aims expressing, at a local level, the objectives for sustainable development set out at National, Regional and County level.

- To facilitate a sustainable pattern of land uses to reduce the consumption of natural resources whilst making best use of existing assets.
- To protect, enhance and provide the housing and facilities the community needs.
- To facilitate good quality design and protect existing amenities where possible.
- Enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors to North Wiltshire through the conservation of the built and natural environment.
- To facilitate sustainable business development for a prosperous and robust economy.

Spatial Strategy for North Wiltshire

1.2 The Spatial Strategy will set out a framework for the implementation of the Plan's Vision and Aims to achieve a sustainable pattern of development across the District balancing the relevant economic, social and environmental matters and to contribute to improving the quality of life in the District.

1.2a. At the time of publication, the planning guidance and policy that informs the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 are contained within the following documents:

- Various Planning Policy Statements (PPS's), Planning Policy Guidance (PPG's) and Circulars as published by Central Government.
- Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10) published by the Government Office of the South West - September 2001.
- Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 Adopted Explanatory Memorandum and Written Statement - January 2001.

The NWLP 2011 has been prepared to be in compliance with the above documents insofar as they form a strategic basis for developing local planning policies.

1.2b In addition, the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan Alteration 2016 has undergone an Examination in Public and the Panel's Report was published in October 2004. The Joint Strategic Authorities of Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council have not formally approved the Structure Plan Alteration. The NWLP 2011 and its supporting information has taken into account the emerging planning position, but recognising the limitation that the relevant time-scale of this Plan (to year 2011) differs from the time-scale of the Structure Plan Alteration (to year 2016).

1.2(c) Swindon is a substantial settlement that lies to the north and east of North Wiltshire and much of the western edge of the built up area is contiguous with North Wiltshire's administrative boundary. Swindon has been identified within the Regional Planning Guidance as a Principal Urban Area where growth will be concentrated. It is known that the emerging

Regional Spatial Strategy will propose to replace this guidance with an intention to at least maintain or perhaps strengthen this role for the town. This approach underlies the NWLP 2011 where the towns of North Wiltshire are not intended to accommodate substantial strategic growth at the regional level.

1.3 North Wiltshire is officially classified as 81% rural. The pattern of settlements in North Wiltshire is unusual, having four medium sized and two small sized market towns, surrounded by numerous villages and rural settlements. The District is located between the Bath/Bristol and Swindon urban areas. These larger urban areas have a substantial impact on the District, most notably through the high levels of commuting from all the settlements in the District to these larger urban areas. It is important that future patterns of development across the District reverse the unsustainable influences from these large urban areas whilst still providing the housing and community infrastructure our market towns and rural communities require.

1.4 The larger settlements within the District are all affected by very similar issues summarised as:

- A lack of opportunity for people to live and work within the District contributing to high levels of out-commuting
- Insufficient provision of affordable housing and other types of community infrastructure
- Need to re-cycle previously developed land in urban areas to ensure the efficient use of land in sustainable locations.
- Pressure on existing retail centres from larger neighbouring urban areas and existing out of town retail uses.

This Plan does not propose to create a hierarchy of settlements across the District to address these contributors to unsustainability due to the similarity of issues affecting all the larger settlements. Future development at each settlement needs to be proportionate to its size and needs. The District Council recognises that the emerging Structure Plan does propose a hierarchy of settlements with Chippenham being identified as the principal centre for growth within the District. Once the Structure Plan is adopted the Council will ensure it plans in accordance with strategic planning policy focusing larger scale development at Chippenham whilst mitigating the potentially unsustainable impacts of the neighbouring larger urban areas of Bristol/Bath and Swindon.

1.5 Within North Wiltshire there are spatial issues that need to be included in this Plan but they also have wider sub-regional implications. These issues may or may not be site specific, such as the potential re-development of surplus MOD sites and the provision of public transport infrastructure/services across the District. The Local Planning Authority has published a Local Development Scheme, which will be reviewed on an annual basis, and any requirement for further Local Development Documents to deal with these issues will be considered.

1.6 The District's rural areas are also affected by issues contributing to unsustainable patterns of land uses that can be summarised as:

- Decline in the level of rural services eroding the vitality and viability of local communities
- A period of rapid change in the agricultural economy.
- Pressure for unsustainable forms of development within the countryside.

This Plan will contribute to ensuring the District's rural communities do not stagnate by providing for levels of future development that will maintain and where appropriate enhance

local services and encourage the diversification and promotion of the rural economy, whilst preserving and enhancing the built and natural environment.

1.6a Development in the countryside, will only be permitted if it supports farming, the rural economy, rural communities, and countryside based activities including recreation and diversification.

1.7 The existing balance between housing and employment opportunities across the District are encouraging high levels of out-commuting as there are insufficient opportunities within North Wiltshire for people to live and work. This Plan will mitigate this unsustainable situation by providing employment opportunities and housing land within the constraints of the Wiltshire Structure Plan over the Plan period up to 2011. It is anticipated this pattern of development will need to be continued after 2011 to continue to tackle this problem. In addition to increasing the employment opportunities within our six main towns (Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade), the Plan also encourages diversification of the rural economy. The provision of employment opportunities proportionate to their location and associated with the dispersed rural communities will reduce the need for car borne journeys to the towns within the District and the neighbouring larger urban areas.

1.8 The Plan will provide sufficient housing opportunities across the District to ensure everyone has the opportunity of a decent home. The Plan will provide sufficient housing land to achieve the housing land supply requirements of the Wiltshire Structure Plan. Residential development will be focused on previously developed land within the District's larger settlements that will contribute to securing balanced patterns of development in locations that will reduce reliance on the car and promote cycling, walking and public transport. Residential allocations in the Plan will be proportionate to the size of the settlement to ensure sustainable growth that addresses the affordable housing requirements of the settlement and surrounding area.

1.9 The need for affordable housing provision in the District is high. In the year 2000, 64% of first time buyers who were looking to access the housing market had an income too low to get on the housing ladder. This Plan will aim to provide this group and others in housing need with the opportunity of a decent home in sustainable locations.

1.10 In addition to the provision of affordable housing, the Plan seeks to ensure new development proposals provide the community infrastructure that is required as a consequence of development. The emerging Community Strategy will be a significant material consideration in determining the type and level of community infrastructure provision required. It is vital that the Council works in partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver the required community infrastructure.

1.11 Development that is appropriate in rural areas will be primarily focused at existing settlements. This Plan will facilitate sustainable development that makes the most of new leisure and economic opportunities in the countryside, whilst minimising any potential detrimental effects on established rural activities, communities, countryside quality and the natural environment.

1.12 The District's town centres are coming under increasing pressure from a combination of the competition from the regional shopping centres at Bath/Bristol and Swindon and historically approved out of town retail developments on the edge of settlements within the District. This Plan will implement policies based on retail needs to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the District's town centres by focusing retail, leisure and other key town centre uses in these centres. Based upon the size of the settlements and the range of retail services provided, the main retail centres are considered to be in the towns of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade.

1.13 The District's diversity is a strength and can be used in conjunction with the policies contained within this plan to provide a sustainable framework, resulting in the improvement of the quality of life for residents and visitors to North Wiltshire. This plan will provide the basis for sustainable development in order to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations.

2. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Consultation to Date

2.1 The District Council has carried out a wide ranging consultation on the Local Plan to maximise understanding of, and increase involvement in the planning process. Town and Parish Councils and local amenity groups have had the opportunity for involvement from an early stage in the development of the Plan.

2.2 The first stage of the consultation was the production of and consultation on the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Issues Paper in October 1999, this included public meetings at the six towns within the District and consideration through *Peoples Voice*. This document explained the broad planning issues facing the District inviting comments from all interested parties. Over 320 comments were received commenting on the spectrum of planning issues set out in the Paper.

2.3 Across the District a number of Local Plans Working Groups were established around some of the existing towns. These Groups comprised representatives from both the District Council, local councils, amenity groups and at times, developers. These Groups considered issues specific to individual settlements and their views were taken into consideration in the formulation of the First Deposit Draft Local Plan.

2.4 A further stage of informal consultation was undertaken in 2002 following the production of the District's Urban Capacity Study where all Town and Parish Councils were actively encouraged to consider the Study and submit their views on the issue of future residential land allocation within the Plan. This pro-active, inclusive approach to plan making was re-inforced by the use of the District Council's five Area Committees as a forum for consultation and discussion of the issues allowing all interested parties to express their views for consideration by the Council.

2.5 The First Deposit Draft Local Plan was published in April 2003, followed by a six week consultation period. Some 2780 comments were made (from about 500 individual representations) to the proposed Plan and its policies. These comments were given due consideration, with each element of the Plan being reviewed. The proposed amendments have been discussed at the public meetings of the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel of the Council. This consideration has led to the development of this Plan.

2.6 The housing policies of the plan have been informed by an updated Urban Capacity Study. The review was undertaken following the consultation period of the First Deposit Draft Local Plan 2011 and the results were published in October 2003. A further programme of consultation on the housing issues raised was undertaken with the Area Committees of the Council, beginning in November 2003 and ending in March 2004.

2.7 Following the publication of the Revised Plan, there was a six week consultation period until December 2004. There was a period for the collation of the representations for the Public Local Inquiry that took place in June to September 2005.

Major Development

2.8 The Government has established challenging time periods for the determination of major applications. The District Council is committed to achieving these Government performance indicators. In addition to the commitment of the Council, the business community must also play its part by consulting communities¹ and relevant statutory consultees² on planning applications before they are made, to clarify and resolve issues before the formal processes start. Failure of potential applicants to undertake appropriate pre-application consultation may not prevent the registration of a planning application or its determination. However, the Council's commitment to determining applications within the period prescribed by Government may result in the application's refusal when appropriate pre-submission consultation could clarify and resolve the relevant issues enabling the application to be determined positively by the District Council.

Links to the Community Strategy

2.9 The Local Strategic Partnership has met since June 2004. A Community Strategy was prepared in 2005. This Plan will be monitored alongside the Community Strategy. Using the Community Strategy process in this way the Plan will be able to deliver the land uses that the Community wants, within the constraints of National and Regional Planning constraints.

Service Levels Customers Can Expect of Planning Services

2.10 [deleted]

2.11 Planning Services has a One-Stop-Shop approach to planning services for its customers. The range of planning services can be summarised as:

Planning applications for the carrying out of works to buildings (including Listed Buildings), their change of use, protected trees or displaying advertisements or signs.

Building Regulation applications for new buildings and extensions, internal alterations, change of use of a building and installation or alteration of a controlled service or fitting, i.e. drainage, central heating components, doors and windows.

Future Planning for the District. The system that helps to plan our towns and rural areas has changed in a fundamental way. Up to now, local planning authorities such as North Wiltshire District Council have had a duty to prepare planning policies that assist in directing new development to the most appropriate places and to protect important land and buildings from inappropriate development. This has occurred up to now by the adoption of planning policy documents such as the Regional Planning Guidance (in our case, for the South-West of England), the Structure Plan (prepared by Wiltshire County Council) or the Local Plan (as prepared by ourselves).

As a result of the new planning legislation that commenced in September 2004, this system has been replaced by a *Regional Spatial Strategy* (that will have development plan status) and by a variety of documents that together will form what will now be called, the *Local Development Framework*. It is expected that as the LDF is created, it will form strong links to the *Community Strategy* and therefore ensure that all appropriate aspirations of the community that have a *spatial planning* dimension are taken into account.

¹ Town and Parish Councils are considered to be the most appropriate bodies to facilitate local pre-application consultation by developers.

² Advice on the contact details of statutory consultees can be obtained from Planning Services, North Wiltshire District Council.

The existing Structure and Local Plans affecting North Wiltshire will remain in force over the next few years to ensure that the District continues to have full planning policy coverage. This will ensure that the public, landowners and the developers of land will continue to have the benefit of up-to-date planning policies that support their interests.

The Council will produce, and monitor on an annual basis, a Local Development Scheme setting out the programme for approving Development Plan Documents and other relevant Local Development Documents. This will include the programme for preparing a Statement of Community Involvement which when approved, must be thereafter followed for each DPD or LDD undertaken.

Enforcement. We investigate and where appropriate take action against unauthorised development in North Wiltshire. If you have a concern that unauthorised development may have taken place please contact us on 01249 706444 or email planning@northwilts.gov.uk

Other advice on planning related matters. This is available at our main reception or over the telephone from 9am until 5pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am until 4:30pm on Friday. Contact the Customer Focus team on 01249 706444 or email planning@northwilts.gov.uk.

How Can I Get Involved?

If you have any queries or would like more information on the Plan, please contact:

Planning Services
Spatial Planning
North Wiltshire District Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

Telephone 01249 706444

email planning@northwilts.gov.uk

Or visit the Council's website at www.northwilts.gov.uk

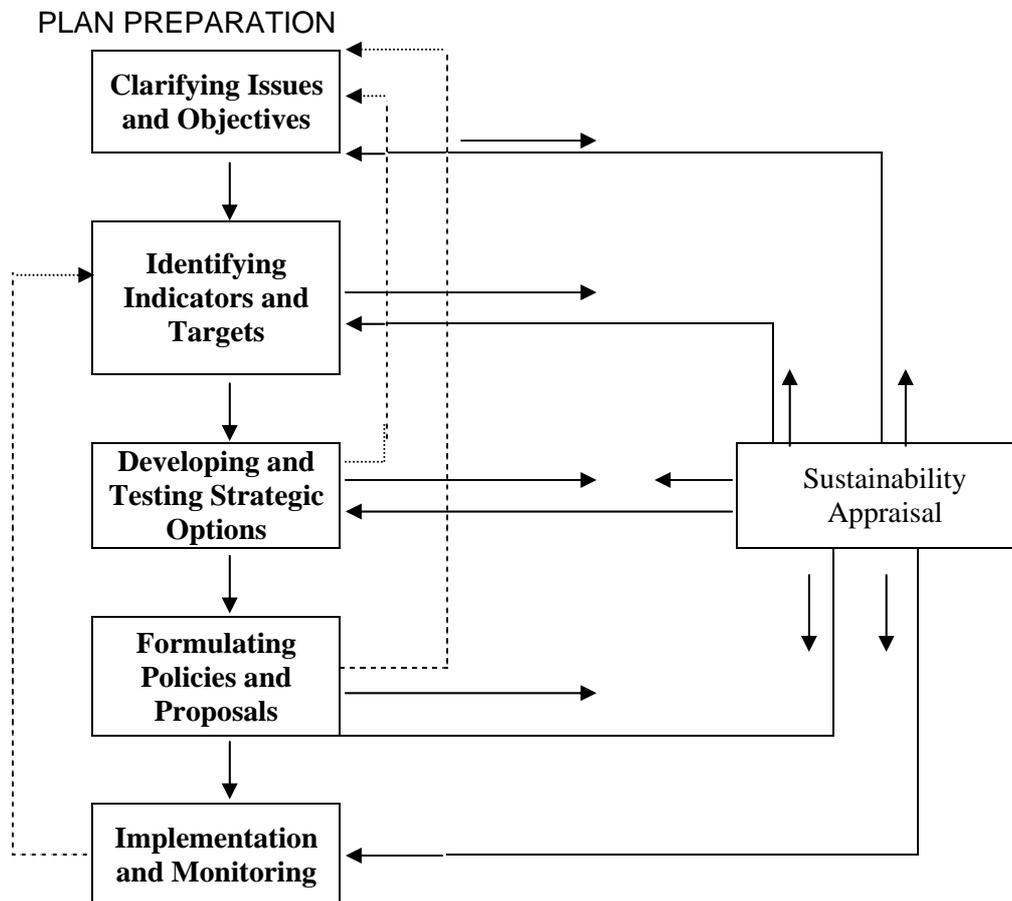
3. STATEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

3.1 The Local Plan First Deposit Draft has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, the results of which are available as a separate document. Appraisals took place at each stage of the plans preparation in order to ensure that its policies and proposals take us nearer to achieving sustainable development. This has been supplemented by a supplementary sustainability appraisal where substantial alterations or new policies have been included in the Revised Deposit Draft.

3.2 Government requires local authorities to carry out an environmental appraisal of their development plans. However, it is recognised that sustainable development is not limited to environmental concerns and that appraisals of plans need to encompass economic and social issues.

3.3 North Wiltshire District Council commissioned independent specialist consultants, Nicholas Pearson Associates Ltd, to assist in the design of an appropriate Sustainability Appraisal methodology to apply to the preparation of the Local Plan 2011. The following diagram illustrates the iterative process and the underlying basis of the Sustainability Appraisal which will ensure integration of sustainable development into each stage of preparation of the North Wiltshire Local Plan.

Figure 3.1: Sustainability Appraisal Flow-Chart



4. STATEMENT OF PLAN MONITORING

4.1 Regular monitoring will be essential to establish how both the Plan and the pending Community Strategy are working in practice, to assess whether the policies set out in them are being sufficiently implemented on the ground and having the desired effect. Monitoring will take place on an ongoing basis and will be displayed in an annual report; the results of this monitoring will be used to update policies and to formulate new policies as necessary.

4.2 Monitoring information should be used both to determine whether the policies in this guidance are being implemented and whether they may need to be reviewed. Monitoring may indicate that a particular part of the Plan requires some more detailed guidance to be prepared and this will be addressed through the development of supplementary planning guidance.

4.3 The review of other Council strategies and studies will also help to evaluate how the Plan is performing and whether any review is necessary. It is intended to review the North Wiltshire’s planning policy following the production of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Revised Deposit Draft. The monitoring information will then be used to inform the production and review of the North Wiltshire Local Development Framework. When the Plan is adopted regular reviews of the policies will be undertaken, and monitoring will be a vital part of this process.

4.4 When the Community Strategy for North Wiltshire is produced, the Local Plan will play an important role in delivering the land-use aspects of this Strategy. Accordingly there will be an opportunity to monitor both documents together and any identified changes in circumstances can be reflected in the policies and proposals of both documents.

4.5 The following table identifies key targets and indicators for a future monitoring system, they relate to the principles set out in Sustainability Appraisal. The regular monitoring of these may suggest new indicators that should also be considered.

Table 4.1: Plan Monitoring Targets and Indicators

Target	Key Indicators
A: SOCIAL PROGRESS WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF EVERYONE	
A1: Provision and access to safe, healthy and attractive living and working environments for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level and perception of crime - Road traffic accident data by category - Unemployment levels - No. of affordable homes built - No. of dwellings built - No. of houses required to meet the Structure Plan housing requirement
A2: Provision and access to community facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of services in towns and villages - No. of people registered per GP - Availability of public open space - Retail vacancy rates
A3: Reduced need for travel and reliance on the private car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Car ownership and use - Bus service availability - Length of cycle routes
A4: Reduced poverty and social exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waiting lists of social housing and registered homeless

B: EFFECTIVE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT	
B1: Quality and character of towns, villages and countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of land cover protected /designated for landscape and townscape value -
B2: Natural habitats and species diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of land cover with nature and biodiversity designation - No. of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) - Area of designated Wildlife sites damaged or destroyed as a result of planning permissions where overriding need not demonstrated. - %Planning permissions on sites that support protected species, with conditions and/or obligations aimed at retaining species. - Area of Local Nature Reserves within the District per 1000 population. - % New Housing with habitat creation and/or management built into the design of the development.
B3: Built and archaeological heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of listed buildings in appropriate use, or at risk of decay - Numbers and condition of built and archaeological designations
B4: Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of rivers
B5: Land and Soil Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area of farmland - No. of working farms - Net loss of greenfield land to development
B6: Quality of environment health: air, noise, light, odour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. environmental health complaints to North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC)
C: PRUDENT USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES	
C1: Reduced use of non-renewable energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewable Energy capacity installed by type
C2: Land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of new homes built on previously developed land - No sites and area of derelict or contaminated land - Amount of Reclaimed Land
C3: Waste management and minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % domestic waste recycled - Rate of waste disposal to landfill - % recycled/secondary aggregate construction material used in new build developments. - No. Community composting schemes.
D: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH AND STABLE LEVELS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT	
D1: Maintenance and improvement of attractive working environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available and vacant employment floorspace and land on identified industrial estates in urban and rural areas

CORE POLICIES

5. CORE POLICIES

C1 SUSTAINABILITY CORE POLICY

Development proposals will be examined for their performance against the sustainable development principles set out below.

Where performance on any sustainable development principle is considered to be low, development proposals will need to demonstrate that the benefits of the development substantially outweigh the disadvantages of not meeting all the criteria.

- i) Promotes or maintains the long term economic health of the local economy**
- ii) Promotes or maintains socially inclusive communities and their access to community infrastructure**
- iii) Promotes or maintains the quality of the natural and the historic environment**
- iv) Demonstrates the prudent use of natural resources and incorporates, where relevant, recycling, renewable energy and energy conservation measures.**

5.1 Sustainability is about making real change on the ground: i.e. change that promotes development that minimises the damage to the environment whilst maximising energy efficiency, recycling and the use of renewable resources. It does not mean no development but it does mean development that is appropriate and sensitive to its surroundings. Development should seek to incorporate all the sustainable principles set out in the policy.

5.2 A judgement on the “high” or “low” performance of proposed developments will differ from proposal to proposal. Detailed help will be available to potential applicants in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document. This will be prepared in the light of emerging policy guidance. There are many Government publications available to assist in this judgement including Planning Policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities; including its bibliography. However, the following working definitions of “high” and “low” performance are recommended.

5.3 A “high” performance standard is where there is a clear and demonstrable net benefit to the sustainable development principle arising from the development directly. For example, a mixed use development on otherwise economically inactive, previously developed land, bringing benefits to nearby communities will score highly. Its opposite in the shape of a single use, greenfield development, remote from public services will be considered to have a “low” performance standard: i.e. where the development would actively threaten the existence or reduce the potential for improvement of the sustainable development principles.

C2 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE CORE POLICY

Provision for the directly related community infrastructure costs of all major development proposals, appropriate to the scale of that development, will be sought. The local planning authority will examine each major development proposal for its need to contribute to the following community infrastructure

requirements and negotiate to secure planning obligations or by means of other appropriate methods to secure the requirements identified. The community infrastructure requirements are:

- **Affordable housing**
- **Education, skill training provision, and libraries**
- **Travel and transport infrastructure**
- **Community buildings and facilities**
- **Health care provision and social services**
- **New or improved public open spaces**
- **Leisure, sport and recreation provision**
- **Waste management and recycling**
- **Environmental protection and enhancement**
- **Information Communication Technology infrastructure**
- **Art in the community**

5.4 The community infrastructure list has been prepared with regard to the physical, social, cultural, economic and environmental consequences of major development. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the full consequences are taken into account and, where appropriate, addressed either through integration into the development proposal or by means of a financial contribution.

5.5 The process of negotiating such provision will be guided by national government circulars; particularly circulars 5/2005, "Planning Obligations" and 11/95, "The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions". The policy will also in the future be relevant in compliance with the regulations and guidance arising from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5.6 For the purposes of the policy, "major development" is generally defined as that involving 10 or more dwellings, other development 1000 m² in gross floor area or greater, involving land of 0.5 hectares or greater in area or where cumulative developments exceed those limits. Nothing in this policy shall prevent negotiations on smaller developments where the site specific circumstances or other policies within the plan require a contribution to community infrastructure.

5.7 In cases where the viability of a proposed development is claimed to be harmed by the identified requirements for community infrastructure, applicants will be expected to provide detailed financial viability information on that specific proposal as evidence of that harm. The local planning authority will in such cases prioritise the requirements in the order that they appear in the policy after taking into account the relevance of each requirement to the proposal.

C3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CORE POLICY

New development will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- i) Respect for the local character and distinctiveness of the area with regard to the design, size, scale, density, massing, materials, siting and layout of the proposal;**
- ii) Respect for the quality of the natural and built environment, including the historic environment, archaeology and ecology of the locality and where**

necessary include measures for the preservation or enhancement of such features;

- iii) Avoid creating developments with unacceptable low levels of privacy and amenities and avoid the unacceptable loss of privacy and amenities to adjacent dwellings or other uses to the detriment of existing occupiers development;**
- iv) Ensure access into and within the development is safe, minimises the risk from crime, and is convenient and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists, and people with disabilities;**
- v) Incorporate energy conservation features and design principles to promote the use of renewable energy sources and prioritise the use of local, natural and recycled materials, provide satisfactory arrangements for efficient water supply, use and disposal and proposals for the storage, collection and recycling of refuse;**
- vi) Promote sustainable patterns of development that will reduce the overall need to travel and support increased use of public transport, cycling and walking;**
- vii) Have a satisfactory means of access, turning, car parking and secure cycle storage and not result in a detrimental impact upon highway or pedestrian safety;**
- viii) Avoid overloading of existing or proposed services and facilities, the local road network or other infrastructure;**
- ix) Avoid locations that would generate, or be subject to, a detrimental effect upon public health or pollution to the environment by the emission or production of excessive noise, light intrusion, smoke, fumes, effluent, vibration, waste or litter.**

5.8 A high standard of design will be expected in new development, whatever its scale. It is the policy of the Local Planning Authority to encourage excellence, innovation and creativity in all development to ensure that schemes are compatible with the scale, character and distinctiveness of the local vernacular and landscape.

5.9 Good design and development is not easy to define, because it is subjective and depends on the value systems being applied. What is of particular importance is that good design is not just a matter of attention to the elevational treatments of individual buildings. Local character, quality and distinctiveness derive from the complex relationships between many elements that make up the built environment.

5.10 All applications for planning permission, listed building and advertisement consent will be expected to be accompanied by a statement setting out the design principles that have been employed. The amount of detail included within the design statement should reflect the nature and scale of the proposal, but, as a minimum should comprise a short written statement and supporting illustrative plans.

5.10a In considering the design principles in criteria (v), there may be opportunities to source building materials locally, from natural sources or through recycling in the interests of minimising unnecessary energy costs of manufacture or transportation.

C4 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORE POLICY

New business development, which promotes a diverse and robust economy, whilst having regard to the environmental impact, will be granted planning permission subject to the following criteria:

- i) Development is concentrated at the Districts larger settlements of Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Malmesbury, Wootton Bassett and Cricklade so as to reduce out-commuting.**
- ii) Development in all other areas is of a scale which will maintain and improve local services.**
- iii) Proposals in the open countryside, including the re-use of rural buildings, will only be allowed if they are in keeping with the surroundings and exhibit potential to sustain the local rural economy.**

5.11 The business development strategy for the District aims to safeguard and promote employment opportunities within North Wiltshire. New development will be directed towards the larger settlements in the interests of sustainability, to maintain and enhance the range of employment, housing and other facilities and to reduce the need to travel. This includes business development as part of mixed-use developments.

5.12 The strategy further seeks to encourage appropriate job opportunities within the smaller settlements to aid the creation of balanced and sustainable communities and to maintain employment prosperity within the District.

TOPIC AREA POLICIES

TOPIC AREA POLICIES

6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT TOPIC AREA

NE1 WESTERN WILTSHIRE GREEN BELT

In the Green Belt, outside the village of Box, approval will not be given, for the construction of new buildings, other than:

- i) For agriculture and forestry;
- ii) Essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purpose of including land within that designation;
- iii) The limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings or existing employment buildings.

The re-use of buildings will be approved providing:

- (a) it will not have a materially greater impact than the present use upon the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within that designation;
- (b) strict control is exercised over the extension of re-used buildings, and over any associated uses of land surrounding the building which might conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within that designation; and
- (c) the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction.

Approval will not be given for development, which would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt, nor would conflict with the purpose of including land within that designation.

6.1 The Western Wiltshire Green Belt was originally approved in 1966 and is part of the larger Green Belt around Bath and Bristol, which was introduced to check the sprawl of development on the edge of the built-up areas and to safeguard the surrounding countryside from development pressures. This policy will have regard to, and be read in the context of, national Planning Policy guidance.

6.2 The particular objectives of the Western Wiltshire Green Belt, relevant to North Wiltshire, are:

- To maintain the open character of undeveloped land adjacent to Bath, Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon
- To limit the spread of development along the A4 between Batheaston and Corsham

6.3 Existing Villages in the Green Belt: It is proposed to allow no new building beyond the categories normally appropriate in the Green Belt. This includes the scattered settlements of Ashley, Box Hill, Ditteridge, Kingsdown, and Middlehill. In the case of the village of Box,

infilling only is proposed within the tightly drawn framework boundary as shown on the Proposals Map defining the infill boundary.

NE2 THE SWINDON RURAL BUFFER

In the Rural Buffers, as defined on the proposals map, new development will be strictly controlled. Approval will not be given for the construction of new buildings which, individually or cumulatively, would lead to the coalescence of settlements. Subject to the proviso, new buildings for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, or other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted.

6.4 The Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 introduced a policy (DP13) for a series of Rural Buffers to be maintained to protect the separate identities of towns and villages and prevent their coalescence with Swindon. These settlements included Wootton Bassett, Lydiard Millicent, Purton and Cricklade. It states that Local Plans need to define an area for each settlement that is essential to maintaining its physical separate identity and distinctive character. The extent of the area is limited to only identifying land that is essential to protect the named settlements from the continued growth of Swindon. The policy is intended to protect the buffer from new buildings, to prevent any coalescence from building development pending a decision on the long-term future of the town. The policy is intended not only to prevent coalescence of settlements, but also new building development which might cumulatively lead to such coalescence. Other policies of the Local Plan apply to the Rural Buffer, including policies relating to the conversion of suitable buildings in accordance with the specified criteria. Tree planting and the conservation of the ancient woodlands and unimproved meadows in the area will be encouraged with the help and assistance of the Braydon Forest Countryside Management Project.

6.5 The general countryside and landscape policies apply to the Rural Buffer. Essential facilities for outdoor sport may include small changing rooms, or unobtrusive spectator accommodation. The extension, alteration, or replacement of dwellings will normally be acceptable in the Rural Buffer, provided proposals do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Similar considerations would also apply to existing employment buildings.

6.6 Other Uses Appropriate To A Rural Area: These are uses that comply with the general countryside policies of the Plan and can include outdoor sport, recreation and tourism facilities.

NE3 LOCAL RURAL BUFFERS

In the Local Rural Buffers, as defined on the proposals map, new development will be strictly controlled. Approval will not be given for the construction of new buildings which, individually or cumulatively, would lead to the coalescence of settlements. Subject to this proviso, new buildings for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, or other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted.

6.7 The purpose of identifying Local Rural Buffer areas is to prevent coalescence between settlements, cumulative or otherwise, and protect settlements separate identity and distinctive character. This is the same criteria as for the Rural Buffer but applied to main settlements other than those adjacent to Swindon. The Local Rural Buffers have been defined to protect areas of land considered as particularly at risk and in danger of development where this is undesirable.

6.8 Within such sensitive gaps between settlements, it will be important to restrict the erection of certain buildings that may generally be appropriate in the countryside, but which could lead to the visual coalescence of these settlements. The land can continue to be used for open uses, such as agriculture, woodland, and public and private open space. Buildings will be limited to those essential for the needs of agriculture or forestry, or justified in association with existing or open uses. Such buildings should generally be ancillary to or directly associated with the open use of the land, should be carefully sited, and should be of a scale and design to harmonise with the character and appearance of the area. Development will also be subject to the other policies of the Local Plan as appropriate.

NE4 AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

In Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape. The environmental effects of all development will be a major consideration. Development will be restricted to:

- i) The change of use of existing buildings; and/or**
- ii) That which is appropriate to the economic and social well-being of the area;**
- iii) That which is desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of its amenities;**

And provided the proposal:

- a) Conserves or enhances, the natural beauty of the landscape, including its open rural character, and any riverside or water features, wildlife sites, trees or woodland;**
- b) Is sited and designed so as to minimise its impact on the natural beauty of the area and, where possible, is located close to and in association with existing buildings; and**
- c) Uses appropriate building materials and landscaping.**

Other proposals and major developments including of an industrial or commercial nature will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. These proposals shall be subject to the most rigorous examination and will be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Consideration of such applications will include an assessment of:

- i) the need for the development, in terms of national considerations, and the impact of permitting it or refusing it upon the local economy;**
- ii) the cost of and scope for developing elsewhere outside the area or meeting the need for it in some other way;**
- iii) any detrimental effect on the environment and the landscape, and the extent to which that should be moderated.**

Major developments that are permitted will be carried out to high environmental standards through the application of appropriate conditions.

6.9 The two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the District are the North Wessex Downs and the Cotswolds. The policy has regard to current national Planning Policy Guidance. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and additional legal powers are contained in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

6.10 The purpose of designation is as follows:

- (a) The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- (b) In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development which in themselves, conserve and enhance the environment.
- (c) Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

6.11 The Cotswold AONB has a Conservation Board and the North Wessex Downs AONB has a Council of Partners. Both have Landscape Character Assessments and Management Plans which should be taken fully into consideration in addition to the landscape assessment for the district.

NE5 NATURE CONSERVATION SITES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Development which may affect a European Site or a proposed European Site will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Development that is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site for nature conservation, which is likely to have significant effects on the site (either individually or in combination with other plans and projects) where it cannot be ascertained that the proposal would not adversely affect the integrity of the site, will not be permitted unless:

- i) there is no alternative solution,**
- ii) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development, and**
- iii) in exceptional cases compensation measures are available to protect the overall coherence of the network of European sites.**

Appropriate conditions or planning obligations may be used where mitigation measures will successfully avoid adverse impacts to the integrity of the site.

6.12 European sites comprise Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). In England, these European sites received stringent statutory protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations (1994).

6.13 Within North Wiltshire there are two areas of international nature conservation importance, these are:

1. Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats cSAC (candidate Special Area of Conservation), comprising the Box Mine SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). European interest in the site, including the underground mine workings, is due to the presence of the Greater Horseshoe Bat, the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and Bechstein's Bat. These bats are dependent on caves, mines and other cavelike places for undisturbed hibernation over the winter, as well as old mature forests, rough pasture, or linking hedgerows and large old buildings for feeding and roosting in summer.
2. North Meadow and Clattinger Farm cSAC (candidate Special Area of Conservation), comprising North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and Clattinger Farm SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). European interest in the site is focused on the lowland hay meadows rich in herbs and grasses, of which these are two of the best examples in the UK.

6.14 For all proposed developments in the vicinity of, or in a site of international nature conservation importance, the local authority will consider the impact of the development to the sites and whether the development alone or in combination with other plans or projects will result in a 'likely' significant effect. The authority will require the developer to provide such information as may be reasonably required for the purposes of an assessment. English Nature will be consulted on appropriate assessments. If permission is granted, appropriate conditions or planning obligations will be used to mitigate the adverse effects on the site. English Nature's Habitats Regulations Guidance Notes will be used for reference.

NE6 NATURE CONSERVATION SITES OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Development in or likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development may have an adverse effect directly or indirectly on the special interest of the site, it will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation and/or geological value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard such sites.

Where development is permitted the authority will impose conditions or seek to negotiate planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and/or geological interest.

6.15 These SSSI's are part of a network of sites which represent the country's very best wildlife and geology, often standing out as the last remaining areas of natural habitat in our modern countryside. SSSIs are designated for their special nature conservation interest by the Nature Conservancy Council for England (known as English Nature), which serves to protect the interest of the site. SSSIs may include rare plants, animals, geology or landforms of special interest. There are a total of 31 SSSIs, covering about 705 hectares in North Wiltshire.

6.16 The essential characteristic of National Nature Reserves is that they are primarily used for nature conservation. Set up under the provisions of the National Parks and

Access to the Countryside Act 1949, to protect important national sites, the sites are owned or leased by English Nature, or bodies approved by them, or are managed in accordance with Nature Reserve Agreements with landowners and occupiers. North Wiltshire has one National Nature Reserve at North Meadow, near Cricklade, which is also a SSSI. Development that involves any potentially damaging works in these areas will only be granted under exceptional circumstances, as determined by statutory bodies such as English Nature.

6.17 A full list of SSSI's in the District can be found in Appendix 1.

6.18 Environmental Impact assessments will be required to be submitted with planning applications for developments that may adversely affect SSSIs.

NE7 NATURE CONSERVATION SITES OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE

Development likely to have an adverse effect on a Wildlife Site (including Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites) or a Local Nature Reserve will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation and/or geological value of the site.

Where development is permitted, the authority will impose conditions and/or seek to negotiate planning obligations to provide appropriate mitigation and compensatory measures.

6.19 Wildlife Sites have been identified by the Wildlife Sites Project Steering Group. As they are not statutory designations, the location, extent and number of sites are likely to change over time. Up to date information should be sought from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre.

NE8 NATURE CONSERVATION AREAS IN THE COTSWOLD WATER PARK

Development on and around those lakes identified on the proposals map as being of international or national importance for nature conservation in the Cotswolds Water Park will be subject to policies NE5 and NE6.

Development on other areas within the Water Park will only be permitted where:

- i) The value of the site for nature conservation, and its local contribution to biodiversity, would not be seriously harmed, or could be mitigated by planning conditions, obligations or the creation of new, equivalent wildlife features; or where**
- ii) Other material planning considerations are sufficient to override the importance of protecting the local nature conservation value of the site.**

6.20 The Cotswold Water Park forms the largest concentration of man-made lakes in Britain and has been created through mineral workings. It forms the most extensive marl lake system in the Country. All the lakes of the Water Park within North Wiltshire are Wildlife sites. Lake 52 is part of the Cotswold Park SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and the area contains several other grassland SSSIs and one cSAC (candidate Special Area of Conservation). Lake 40 has a very important reedbed habitat.

6.21 The Cotswold Water Park Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) sets out the nature conservation framework for the area and relevant targets which should be taken into consideration in any proposed development. The aim of the policy is to maintain the overall scale and importance of the area of the Water Park as a nationally and regionally important nature conservation area.

6.22 Development will normally only be permitted where it is compatible with sustaining the biodiversity resource of the site in particular, and the area in general, and where the proposed development is able to demonstrate that it can avoid irreversible change or damage to important nature conservation sites. The policy should be taken in the context of the Cotswold Water Park Strategy so that a balanced approach is taken between mineral working, recreation/tourism, development and nature conservation.

6.23 The Cotswold Water Park supports a substantial interest including nationally significant numbers of wintering birds and regionally significant numbers of breeding birds. An opportunity exists for permitting appropriate development and land uses in and around the lakes of the Water Park, where such development is able to either:

- (a) Demonstrate that the proposal will not reduce the wintering and breeding bird numbers, or adversely affect any other important wildlife or natural feature; or
- (b) Compensate for any potential reduction in the number of important wintering or breeding birds, or other adverse effects on any important wildlife or natural feature, by ensuring that adequate and suitable new or enhanced areas of replacement habitat are provided on a permanent or long-term basis as part of the proposals, such that the applicant can demonstrate that the nature conservation value of the area as a whole will not be diminished by the proposed development.

6.24 This policy should be considered in association with the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Local Plan strategy for mineral working, restoration and after use for the area. The Airfield Safeguarding Areas around RAF Fairford and South Cerney and RAF Lyneham shall also be taken into consideration in terms of the potential encroachment of birds which could interfere with air traffic.

NE9 PROTECTION OF SPECIES

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on badgers or species protected by Schedules 1,5 or 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 or Schedule 2 of The Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations (1994) and Protection of Badgers Act 2000.

Exceptionally, where the reasons for development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the species, national policy, and there are no suitable alternatives, the planning authority will impose conditions on the planning permission or enter into planning obligations to:

- i) facilitate the survival of the individual members of the species,**
- ii) reduce disturbance to a minimum, and**
- iii) provide adequate alternative habitats to ensure the population is maintained at favourable conservation status within its natural range.**

6.25 The presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. If the proposals are likely to have an effect on protected species or protected species habitat, protected species surveys must be undertaken and contact made with the other relevant bodies such as English Nature prior to the determination of the application. Detailed and adequate mitigation proposals must be submitted with the planning application where impacts on protected species are predicted.

6.26 European protected species under Annex IV to the European Union Habitats Directive receive extra protection under the Habitat Regulations (1994). English Nature should be referred to for further information. The local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) will also give information on species likely to be found in the area such as water voles.

NE10 MANAGING NATURE CONSERVATION FEATURES

Development which may adversely affect, directly or indirectly, landscape features which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora will only be permitted if it can be shown that the reasons for the development outweigh the need to retain the features and that mitigating measures can be provided for, which would reinstate the nature conservation value of the features.

Appropriate management of these features will be encouraged through the use of conditions or planning obligations and by entering into management agreements with landowners and developers where appropriate.

6.27 There is a legal requirement through Article 10 of the EC Habitats Directive, as transposed into Regulation 37 of the Habitats Regulations 1994, to encourage the management of features which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora.

6.28 This applies to designated and undesignated areas. Features of major importance are listed in supporting text for Policy NE11 Conserving Biodiversity. However this policy applies to any feature used as a wildlife corridor or as a refuge for wild species as they move through the landscape.

NE11 CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

Development proposals should ensure that species and habitats set out in the UK and local biodiversity action plans will be protected, and where possible, enhanced to help deliver BAP targets.

Development which would adversely affect, directly or indirectly, the biodiversity of the district will only be permitted when mitigating measures can be provided to retain and reinstate the level of biodiversity value. In order to achieve this, conditions and/or planning obligations will be used.

Appropriate management will also be encouraged through use of conditions, planning obligations and/or by entering into management agreements with landowners and developers, where appropriate.

6.29 The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (2002) was produced by the Wiltshire BAP Forum. It identifies key habitats which should be taken into consideration in any development. Briefly these include:

1. Deciduous Woodland such as at Bowood and Braydon Forest.
2. Wood/pasture and parkland features in some areas including Bowood.
3. Grassland habitats such as the seasonally inundated neutral grasslands/hay meadows at North Meadow Cricklade, the calcareous limestone grassland of the Cotswold and the Chalk downland of the North Wessex Downs.
4. Old hedgerows which form valuable reservoirs and corridors for wildlife.
5. Key wetland habitats including river systems, canals, and the extensive standing water of the Cotswold Water Park.
6. The Box Mine which accommodates rare bats and is a cSAC.
7. Arable land which supports species such as brown hare and stone curlew and is important for rare arable weeds.

The value of urban areas for wildlife should also be taken into consideration.

6.30 The UK BAP priority habitats that are found in North Wiltshire include:

1. Ancient and/or species rich hedgerows
2. Caves and natural rock exposures
3. Cereal field margins
4. Eutrophic standing waters
5. Lowland calcareous grassland
6. Lowland meadows
7. Lowland wood-pasture and parkland
8. Reedbeds
9. Wet woodland

6.31 Developers will be expected to submit an assessment of the ecological effects of their development proposal. If required, there should be a programme of avoidance, mitigation and management, that results in at least no net loss for biodiversity and a net gain where possible. Developers should seek opportunities for biodiversity gain; for example by the provision of land for creation of suitable habitats such as wetlands.

NE12 WOODLAND

The creation, conservation, enhancement and positive management of woodlands across the district will be supported. In particular, areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland should be protected. The retention of the visual amenity and nature conservation value will be sought in particular at the following:

- i) **Bird's Marsh Wood, Chippenham**
- ii) **Vincient's Wood, Chippenham**
- iii) **Pockeredge Drive Wood, Corsham**
- iv) **Woodland within Braydon Forest.**

6.32 Woodlands are a very important element within the landscape of the district. They enhance urban areas and edges and the wider countryside. They have landscape, visual and nature conservation value, are often historic features and can be used for recreation. Ancient and semi-natural woodlands are particularly important and are protected. Circular 9/95 (General Development Order Consolidation) should be referred to in this regard. The multi-purpose use of forestry and woodland is supported and should be carried out in accordance with the English Forestry Strategy and UK Forestry Standard.

6.33 Bird's Marsh Wood, Vincient's Wood and Pockeredge Drive Wood have been specifically identified in the Local Plan in view of their importance to the landscape setting of their respective towns, where they are not covered by other landscape designations. Bird's Marsh Wood is a large wood of approximately 24 hectares, which is valuable for its flora and its refuge for wildlife.

Vincient's Wood, under the control of the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, forms a significant landscape feature, the protection of which is further needed due to its being surrounded by housing and the Western Bypass.

The woodland at Pockeredge Drive forms part of a wider wooded landscape in the historic Box Tunnel Valley area.

Braydon Forest is a larger area covering a number of SSSI's. The Braydon Forest Project is run by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust with the aim of conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscape of the old Braydon Forest comprising pasture and coppice woodland.

NE13 THE GREAT WESTERN COMMUNITY FOREST

Development shall only be permitted where it does not prejudice the implementation of the Great Western Community Forest Plan.

6.34 The Great Western Community Forest is one of twelve forests for the community in the UK. Its aim is to develop a multi-purpose forest around Swindon, creating a high quality environment for everybody. The Forest covers a large area of the North East of the District. Development proposals should accord with the aims and objectives of the Great Western Community Forest contained in the "Great Western Community Forest Plan 1994". This is a non-statutory document with proposals extending over a period of 30 years.

6.35 The Forest Plan does not necessarily preclude appropriate development that would be acceptable in terms of other policies but matters that should be taken into account include:

1. The improvement of the landscape.
2. Increasing opportunities for access, recreation and cultural events.
3. Protecting areas of conservation and landscape value.
4. Creating new opportunities for conservation.
5. Creating new opportunities for environmental education.
6. Establishing supplies of local timber.
7. Improving the environment of housing and commerce.

8. Encouraging community involvement in the creation and management of the Forest.
9. Protecting and enhancing strategic green corridors that are identified in the Forest Plan and which provide a range of integrated functions and activities.

NE14 TREES, SITE FEATURES AND THE CONTROL OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Permission will not be granted for proposals that would result, or be likely to result, in the loss of trees, hedges, lakes/ponds or other important landscape or ecological features that could be successfully and appropriately incorporated into the design of a development.

Planning conditions will be imposed and Tree Preservation Orders made, for safeguarding single and small groups of trees in the interests of public amenity.

6.36 It is the duty of the local planning authority to ensure, whenever it is appropriate, that in granting planning permission for any development adequate provision is made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees. The latter should be substantially native tree species of local provenance.

6.37 It will be expected that assessments to determine the nature conservation and landscape value features both within and adjacent to sites will be undertaken. Details of any assessment should be submitted with a planning application.

6.38 For example, a tree survey should be carried out of the site and directly adjacent land by a competent expert to establish the quality and condition of trees potentially affected by development as appropriate.

6.39 Development shall be designed to ensure the longevity of retained vegetation and features through appropriate management and mitigation measures. British Standard 5837: 1991 - Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction, offers relevant guidance for trees.

NE15 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

The landscape of North Wiltshire and its locally distinctive characteristics shall be conserved and enhanced, development will be permitted if it does not adversely affect the character of an area and features that contribute to local distinctiveness.

Development shall take into account:

- i) **The setting of, and relationship between, settlement and buildings and the landscape.**
- ii) **The pattern of woodland, trees, field boundaries, other vegetation and features.**
- iii) **The special qualities of watercourses and waterbodies and their surroundings such as river valleys.**

- iv) **The topography of the area avoiding sensitive skylines, hills and not detracting from important views.**

The best and most versatile agricultural land shall be protected from non-agricultural development.

6.40 The landscape shall be safeguarded for its own sake and in order to protect its intrinsic character and beauty. The authority shall find ways of enriching the quality of the whole countryside while accommodating appropriate development.

6.41 A landscape character assessment has been prepared for the district which defines 17 character areas. Each area is described in terms of its character, key characteristics, management guidelines and actions, and landscape sensitivity. It is intended that the assessment will become a supplementary planning document and development shall take it into account. The built up areas of Chippenham, Calne, Corsham, Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and Malmesbury have not been described in detail as they are not in open countryside.

6.41a Some sensitive landscapes close to and within settlements, such as river valleys and corridors, are included in Conservation Areas. These are covered in Policy HE1 Development in Conservation Areas.

6.42 Building in the open countryside, away from existing settlements or from areas allocated for development, shall be strictly controlled. All development in rural areas shall contribute to sustainability, be well designed, in keeping and in scale with its location, and sensitive to the area's landscape character and local distinctiveness. In particular, isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification.

6.42a The best and most versatile agricultural land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a in the Agricultural Land Classification. Where significant development of agricultural land is unavoidable, poorer quality land (grades 3b, 4 and 5) shall be used in preference to that of a higher quality, except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations.

NE16 RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy projects will be permitted provided that such development would not:

- i) cause harm to a designated historic area or natural landscape;**
- ii) conflict with the need to have special justification for development in the Green Belt.**

6.43 Renewable energy sources can contribute to the provision of diverse, secure and sustainable energy supplies and a reduction in the emission of pollutants. The Government is committed to providing targets for a proportion of UK's electricity demand being met from renewable energy sources.

6.44 The Strategic Framework for the Development of Renewable Energy in the South West has set a renewable electricity generation target of 11% to 15% by 2010. Achieving this target is expected to bring wide-ranging economic, social and environmental benefits to the South West Region.

6.45 Examples of renewable energy installations that can be considered in North Wiltshire include wind turbines, solar energy technologies, waste to energy, combined heat and power and biomass. Small battery charging turbines, appropriately located, are to be welcomed. It is recognised that this is not a definitive list and will change according to technological progress.

6.46 Proposals within the designated Rural Buffer, Local Rural Buffers, Conservation Areas, in (or affecting the setting of) Listed Buildings and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be especially scrutinised to ensure that they will not conflict with the purpose of those designations.

6.47 Only in very special circumstances will renewable energy installations be appropriate in the Green Belt. In considering whether such circumstances exist, the local planning authority will need to be satisfied that the wider environmental benefits of renewable energy production cannot be achieved by equivalent development opportunities available elsewhere within the District.

NE17 CONTAMINATED LAND

Development will only be permitted on land that is known or is suspected to be contaminated where there is a reasonable prospect of remediation. The Council will require planning applications on such land to be accompanied by a thorough survey showing the type and extent of contamination on and beneath the site.

On contaminated sites capable of remediation, development will only be allowed to proceed subject to the implementation of appropriate measures to remedy the contamination and/or where the land is made suitable for the proposed end use.

6.48 A key aim of the North Wiltshire Local Plan is to reuse developed land. Much of this land will have been used for industrial purposes and therefore liable to contamination. Future land uses must not be put at risk from pollution.

6.49 A full assessment of potential hazards and the measures necessary to counter these will be required before applications are determined. The responsibility for providing information on whether land is contaminated rests with the developer. Developers should liaise with the Environment Agency to establish the need for studies to be undertaken into potential effects on water resources.

NE18 NOISE AND POLLUTION

Development will only be permitted where it would not generate, or itself be subject to, harm upon public health or cause pollution to the environment by the emission of excessive noise, light intrusion, smoke, fumes, other forms of air pollution, heat, radiation, effluent or vibration.

6.50 The control of pollution is governed by the Environmental Protection Act (1990) and related legislation. Planning, however, has a role to play in separating potentially polluting land uses. New development should be designed to ensure that it does not cause environmental pollution, which then has to be controlled by other agencies. Appropriate mitigation measures will be expected to be incorporated into development proposals with a potential to pollute. Where measures cannot be achieved planning permission will be refused.

6.51 To minimise the air pollution from roads and buildings, development proposals will be expected to incorporate suitable landscaping to help remove air borne pollutants and particulates.

6.52 Lighting should be as energy efficient as possible or run off renewable energy and minimise upward light pollution.

6.53 Particular attention should be paid to those sites that are to include hazardous substances or be sited near to establishments where hazardous substances are used or stored. In such cases, early consultation with the Health and Safety Executive is recommended.

NE19 MINISTRY OF DEFENCE LAND

Development on Ministry of Defence land for military purposes and ancillary operational development will be permitted provided that it does not cause demonstrable harm to the character of the countryside by reason of scale, siting, or design.

6.54 Proposals should be in accord with and will be assessed against the other policies contained within this plan. However, where there are national security interests that cannot be accommodated within those policies digression from those policies may be appropriate. Planning applications will be expected to take note of the other policies and give a reasoned justification for any digression. It is recognised that in circumstances of an urgent nature and of national importance that development can be permitted by the Secretary of State, without consideration by North Wiltshire District Council. Such is the nature and extent of the Ministry of Defence's landholding; in North Wiltshire scope may exist to enable new military development to be accommodated within existing sites, without further serious detriment to the character and appearance of the countryside in general. Proposals should aim to improve the appearance of sites, including appropriate landscaping.

NE20 RE-USE OF MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The redevelopment, conversion and/or change of use of existing or former ministry of defence establishments to business, industrial or storage use (B1, B2 and B8), hotel (C1), non-residential institution (D1), or assembly and leisure uses (D2) will be permitted, where:

- i) The proposal will result in the removal of unsightly or inappropriate buildings or bring other environmental benefits;**
- ii) The proposal is of a form, bulk and general design in keeping with the local area;**
- iii) Redevelopment will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the existing building(s) are not suitable for re-use or conversion and the redevelopment does not exceed the general footprint of the existing building(s).**

Proposals for the development of open areas will not be permitted.

6.55 The Local Planning Authority will expect the developer to demonstrate the unsuitability of the existing buildings for conversion or re-use in their planning applications. Given the nature and location of MOD sites in North Wiltshire, proposals for the development of open areas will not be permitted, as these sites constitute substantial land holdings in severely unsustainable locations.

NE21 DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD RISK AREAS

Development in areas of flood risk will be expected to be in accordance with a sequential approach whereby sites are developed in order of risk, with a preference for the development of sites with no flood risk. Developers will need to demonstrate that for developments proposed in higher risk flood areas that there are no other appropriate sites available in lower risk areas. Development in flood risk areas must provide at least the minimum standard of flood defences that can be maintained for the lifetime of the development and must not:

- i) Impede flood flows, or**
- ii) Increase flood risk elsewhere, or**
- iii) Result in a net loss of floodplain storage.**

Where development proposals are on previously developed sites at risk from flooding, there should be a preference for areas already defended to the minimum standard.

6.56 The definition of areas at 'high risk' of flooding are detailed within Planning Policy Guidance note 25 – Development and flood risk (PPG25). When the annual probability of flooding, with defences where they exist, is 1.0% (1 in a 100 years flood) or greater, then the area would be classed as 'high risk'. A sequential approach is to be taken for the location of new development, with applications in higher risk areas demonstrating that there are no reasonable options available in lower-risk sites. In areas liable to flood a flood risk assessment should be undertaken to ascertain which category the site is in. The assessment should be in accordance to the approach detailed in PPG25, which also details the type of development that would be acceptable in the various flood risk category areas.

6.57 This policy accords with the Local Plan strategy to direct new residential development to the District's urban areas. High risk flood areas should only be redeveloped where there are no other suitable lower-risk sites available. Developers will also need to demonstrate if the site does not have existing defences, that there are no other suitable sites that already have defences in place.

6.58 New development should not put other areas at risk of flooding, thus the flood storage capacity must be protected to retain the watercourses' capacity to discharge and/or store flood flows without causing or making existing flooding problems worse. In exceptional circumstances, where development is permitted on undeveloped land in an area liable to flood, the developer will be required to submit details demonstrating that the scheme is designed to cope with the risk of flooding and includes effective measures to protect the land on a long term basis. The Environment Agency has made detailed floodplain maps available on its website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk).

NE22 SURFACE WATER RUN OFF

New development should not increase run-off from the undeveloped situation and for redevelopment reduce run-off. Development should not deplete or pollute ground water flows or result in discharges of pollutants into water courses. Proposals will be required to demonstrate Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) principles. Proposals within water source protection zones will not be permitted unless measures are included to maintain the quality and quantity of groundwater.

6.59 All development, especially where hard surfaces are created, will have an impact upon the water environment. Traditionally, piped water systems were used to dispose of water run off, but this method has the potential to increase the risk of flooding and local pollution incidents. PPG25 (Planning Policy Guidance note 25– Development and flood risk) states that sustainable drainage systems can play an important role in reducing this risk. The Council will actively encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems in development proposals. There are a number of principles that these systems follow:

- Control water discharge as soon as possible after precipitation;
- Slowing down the speed of discharge off-site;
- Dealing with runoff close to where the rain falls;
- Managing potential pollution at its source now and in the future; and
- Protecting water resources from point pollution (such as accidental spills) and diffuse sources.

NE23 WATER COURSES

Development adjacent to any watercourse will only be permitted where retention of a natural corridor is provided to cater for channel maintenance, enhancement and environmental interests.

6.60 The policy applies to all water courses, from main rivers to small streams and canals, and relates to the channel of water and its banks. Water courses should be preserved wherever possible in their existing and natural state, including their flow characteristics. The culverting of watercourses should be avoided wherever possible and, if required for example in connection with road access, should be kept to the minimum that is necessary. The opportunity for enhancement should be taken in and adjacent to new development.

6.61 Bank protection works can be particularly unsightly and damaging in appearance and other ways. Where such works are necessary to protect property or rights of way, care needs to be taken to ensure that the design and its use of materials do not unduly harm the amenities or appearance of the area.

7. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TOPIC AREA

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

7.1 North Wiltshire District is fortunate to have a wealth of historic features, such as conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, listed buildings and archaeological features. The aim of the following policies is to ensure that the Districts heritage is preserved, protected and where possible enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations.

Conservation Areas

7.2 A Conservation Area is defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Statements and planning briefs for individual areas and sites will be prepared by the District Council, as appropriate, which will describe the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas and provide advice and guidance on the enhancement of areas and the design of new development. These are available as Supplementary Planning Documents.

The designated Conservation Areas in North Wiltshire are shown on the Proposals Map, but it should be noted that this is for guidance only and is not definitive, as they are subject to a rolling programme of review and are subject to alteration through the plan period.

HE1 DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS

In Conservation Areas, proposals for development, advertisements and other works will only be permitted where the proposal will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Open spaces, village greens, gaps between buildings, fields, gardens and trees that provide attractive views and vistas to, from and within public areas will be protected from development that would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

When permitting development in Conservation Areas, the established historic streets, building lines and frontages, burgage plots and boundaries, the plan form of buildings, and other historic physical and landscape features will be conserved and incorporated into the proposal where appropriate.

7.3 In order to protect the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, there is a need for strict control over development, this does not preclude the possibility of new development, but any development should be designed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

7.4 Existing open spaces, village greens, fields, gaps between buildings, private gardens, and other parcels of land can make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas in particular, and such features often need to be preserved. The loss of just one site to development in environmentally sensitive areas can make it extremely difficult to resist further development in an area, resulting in the loss of an attractive setting or feature, and can erode the rural and open character of an area. Care will also be taken to ensure that views and vistas, including familiar and cherished scenes such as open views of a church tower, the local village green, any surrounding hillsides and river valleys, remain unspoilt.

7.5 In preserving and enhancing the townscape of areas, regard will be had to the historic layout and building lines which provide the opportunity to maintain a record of the evolution

of such areas and which endow such areas with a special character of their own, in relation to the spaces between buildings, as well as the buildings themselves. Retention of burgage plots, historic street patterns, plot boundaries, building frontages, and the plan form of buildings, is considered particularly important. New development in streets with a continuous frontage of buildings, situated with their front walls on the back edge of the pavement, needs to respect established building lines and avoid incongruous gaps and set-backs. Where such considerations are not satisfactorily dealt with, in connection with a particular proposal, the development will not normally be permitted, whether or not the proposal complies with any other policies as set out in the Development Plan.

HE2 DEMOLITION IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Development will not be permitted involving the demolition of buildings or structures that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Development involving the demolition of buildings, including parts of buildings and structures, such as boundary walls, will only be permitted in conservation areas where:

- i) The proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, such as removing unsightly, alien and modern features; and**
- ii) The form of any necessary replacement has been approved, and where a contract has been made for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment.**

7.6 Conservation Area Consent is required in general to demolish or remove buildings (including parts of buildings), or walls in a Conservation Area. Unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas will be assessed against the same criteria as listed buildings. Consideration will be given to the desirability of retaining any building or site as existing. Buildings and features of value, either in their own right, or because of the contribution they make to a pleasant townscape or village scene, cannot be replaced once lost.

7.7 Under Section 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, English Heritage may direct that the Section 54 powers, referred to below in 7.13, should apply where the preservation of a building in a Conservation Area is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the area. Such powers therefore enable the authority to seek to carry out urgent works to preserve unoccupied unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area, and to recover any expenses from the owner of such a building

HE3 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

New development and advertisements within or adjacent to Historic Parks and Gardens which do not respect their character, appearance or setting, will not be permitted.

7.8 In preserving and enhancing Historic Parks and Gardens the impact of development and advertisements within and also adjacent to them will need to be considered. The register of gardens and other land of special historic interest, produced for North Wiltshire in 1987 by English Heritage, is as follows:

Table HE3: Register of gardens and other land of special historic interest.

Bowood	Grade I	of Exceptional Interest
Corsham Court	Grade II*	of Great Quality
Lacock Abbey	Grade II	of Special Interest
Sheldon Manor	Grade II	of Special Interest
Hazelbury Manor	Grade II	of Special Interest

Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

7.9 North Wiltshire is fortunate in having an unusual diversity and number of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, including a great wealth of fine stone, brick and thatched buildings. This mixture of historic buildings gives a special character to the towns, villages and countryside. However, there is only a limited number of historic buildings and those surviving need to be carefully and responsibly preserved. For this reason, buildings placed on the Statutory List enjoy legal protection and cannot be altered, extended or demolished without prior Listed Building Consent.

LISTED BUILDINGS

HE4 DEVELOPMENT, DEMOLITION OR ALTERATIONS INVOLVING LISTED BUILDINGS

Development or alteration affecting a listed building will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

7.10 Listed Building consent is required prior to executing, or causing to be executed, any works for the demolition, alteration or extension of a listed building which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. A listed building includes any object or structure within its curtilage and any object or structure fixed to the building. PPG15 (Planning Policy Guidance Note 15) sets out the considerations relating to demolition and alterations of listed buildings.

7.11 Where a planning application is made for development within the curtilage or vicinity of a listed building, the planning authority will take into account the effect of the proposal on the setting of the listed building.

7.12 In considering applications for development which involves a change of use, the District Council will seek to secure the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of the buildings and structures. The historic use will be the first option, but if it is clearly demonstrated that the historic use is no longer appropriate, alternative uses that are compatible with the building will be considered.

The need to secure the continued use of historic buildings is paramount to their retention, restoration and long-term viability and thus will be an important factor in assessing planning applications.

7.13 Under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, a local authority may execute any works which appear to them to be urgently

necessary for the preservation of a listed building in their area. Such works may consist of or include works for affording temporary support or shelter for the building, but such works can only be carried out to unoccupied listed buildings, or those parts of the building which are not in use.

ARCHAEOLOGY

7.14 North Wiltshire has a wealth of archaeological features, which vary from isolated visible remains, such as earthworks, to broad tracts of countryside where the range of ancient features creates an archaeological landscape. Important features include barrow groups, ancient trackways, Iron Age Hill-forts, and the archaeological features of the North Wessex Downs and Upper Thames Valley. Although much of the area is famous for its ancient landscape, it also has many features representing later periods. Saxon and mediaeval settlements and their field systems and post-mediaeval features such as water meadows, parliamentary enclosures and chalk carvings, including the famous white horses. In the field of industrial archaeology there are a number of important features, such as the Canals. The District also has a large number of settlements and buildings of historic or architectural interest.

HE5 SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT FEATURES

Permission will not be granted where a proposal would have an adverse effect on a scheduled ancient monument or other nationally important feature of archaeological or historic interest or their setting.

There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation in situ of nationally important archaeological remains and their settings, whether the site is scheduled or not.

7.15 The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning or other applications, whether a monument is scheduled or unscheduled. Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. Preservation in situ of important archaeological remains is nearly always to be preferred. North Wiltshire's Sites & Monuments Record is maintained by Wiltshire County Council's Archaeologist.

HE6 LOCALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Development in defined areas of special archaeological significance, or in other locally important archaeological sites, will only be permitted where:

- i) Any archaeological remains would be unaffected by the proposals; or**
- ii) Satisfactory measures are taken to ensure the physical preservation of any archaeological remains in situ; or**
- iii) In cases where the significance of any archaeological remains is outweighed by the need for and benefits of the development, satisfactory measures are taken to excavate and record the site and its remains.**

7.16 Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource, highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. They form part of the national heritage and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism. The satisfactory measures that will need to be taken to excavate and record any site and its remains will need to be defined on a case by case basis, and in certain instances may be the subject of planning conditions.

7.17 Areas of Special Archaeological Significance: The term was first referred to in the Structure Plan and indicate the areas of greatest interest containing, for example, whole barrow groups, field systems, settlements, complex crop mark sites and other sub-surface features. A number of towns and villages also have known or suspected areas of archaeological significance, which broadly coincide with designated Conservation Areas. Only Cricklade and Malmesbury have so far been identified in the list of towns as Areas of Special Archaeological Significance, since this reflects the extent and depth of present day archaeological knowledge acquired from site investigations, as well as pressures for development or redevelopment. As the extent of information increases, it may be possible to identify more settlements as Areas of Special Archaeological Significance.

7.18 The policy will also be applicable to other locally important archaeological sites, which includes those defined by the County Sites and Monuments Records, or other sites as identified from time to time through site evaluation or excavation such as to justify their inclusion in the Records.

7.19 Ten areas in North Wiltshire have been defined by the County Council's Library and Museum Service and are shown on the Proposals Map and in Appendix 2. The defining of broad zones recognises that protection is possible in only a proportion of cases. Each individual case will need to be assessed on its own merit, with an archaeological evaluation being required to be undertaken to assess this.

HE7 ENABLING DEVELOPMENT – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Proposals involving enabling development will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances where:

- a) The scale of the proposed enabling development does not exceed what is necessary to support the principal development; and**
- b) The proposal (the principal development) to be subsidised by the proposed enabling development is in the national interest.**

7.20 In order to maintain nationally important listed buildings, or other 'heritage' resources such as historic parklands, the local planning authority may consider granting planning permission for financially beneficial development, the profit of which will be used to fund major repair work to the resource which it is important to preserve or restore. The development would generally not be permitted, for example, because the site is in the open countryside, where new build is contrary to Government guidance and adopted Local Plan policy. The local planning authority will consider such proposals only in exceptional circumstances. Where listed buildings are involved, it must be demonstrated that the proposed enabling development does not detract from their fabric or setting. A legal agreement will be sought to ensure the proposal, to be subsidised by the enabling development, is carried out within an agreed period of time following the implementation of the whole or part of the enabling development itself.

HE8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Where any nationally or locally important archaeological site or historic building is likely to be affected, applicants will be requested to submit an archaeological evaluation before planning permission is granted.

Where necessary, adequate archaeological investigation and recording will be required before, and / or during, building or other operations, in order to safeguard important evidence which might otherwise be destroyed without record.

7.21 Where important archaeological remains may exist, it is reasonable for the Planning Authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological evaluation to be carried out before any decision on a planning application is taken. Such sites are entered on the County Sites and Monuments Record. The purpose of an evaluation is to define the character and extent of any remains, thus indicating the weight, which ought to be attached to their preservation and the options for minimising or avoiding damage. The Local Planning Authority may also require that a “watching brief” is undertaken by a nominated archaeologist during any construction period, or a condition is sought that more excavations take place.

7.22 Whilst preservation of remains in situ is preferable to excavation and recording, the extent to which remains can or should be preserved will depend upon a number of factors, including the intrinsic importance of the remains. Where it is not feasible or reasonable to preserve remains, the local planning authority may require, by the imposition of conditions, the excavation of the site, together with its recording and eventual publication, prior to development commencing.

7.23 There may be similar requirements for archaeological appraisal and recording in respect of works to a listed building and its setting.

8. TRANSPORT TOPIC AREA

8.1 The movement of people and goods is key to the vitality of North Wiltshire. Transport needs, however, must be balanced against their impact on the environment of the Districts towns, villages and countryside. Careful planning, by shaping the pattern, scale and location of development, can influence transport choices in sustainable ways.

8.2 To this end and in line with Government Guidance the transport objectives of the Local Plan are to:

- Promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and moving freight.
- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling.
- Reduce the need to travel especially by the car.

T1 MINIMISING THE NEED TO TRAVEL

New development should be designed and located to minimise the need to travel whilst being accessible by cycling, walking and public transport. Housing developments should be accessible to jobs, education, health facilities, shopping, leisure and local services. Proposals will be permitted provided they meet these sustainable transport requirements.

8.3 To demonstrate their transport sustainability new developments will be required to produce Transport Assessments and Travel Plans (Policy T2) to the satisfaction of North Wiltshire District Council, Wiltshire County Council and the Highways Agency. Reducing parking through maximum parking standards, discounted to take into account accessibility will also be required (Policy T3). Full provision and priority access for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users will be required along with measures to improve road safety and enhance the environment (Policy T4).

T2 TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT & TRAVEL PLANS

Transport Assessments are required to identify the impact of a development on the transport network and Travel Plans are required to set out sustainable forms of travel to and from a development. Proposals that demonstrate no adverse impact will be granted planning permission. All planning applications above the thresholds detailed in Appendix 4 will be required to submit a transport assessment and travel plan.

For planning applications below the thresholds North Wiltshire District Council reserve the right to require a transport assessment and/or travel plan if there are access and/or parking issues.

8.4 The impact of new development on transport networks can be considerable. Not just on highway and junction capacity but also for cycle, pedestrian and public transport movements. Planning applications will be accompanied by a transport assessment clearly setting out how traffic is generated by the development and what measures are required to mitigate their impact (Policy T 4). It will not be acceptable for developers to solely propose measures to improve highway and junction capacity.

Transport Assessments will follow Government Guidance.

8.5 Travel Plans will be given varied weight in a planning decision, depending on the degree to which it can be secured through a planning condition or planning obligation and the extent to which it materially affects the acceptability of the development proposed. Travel plans should promote cycling, walking, public transport and car sharing. Travel plans should reduce traffic speeds, improve road safety and personal security, and include more environmentally friendly delivery and transport movements.

8.6 Plans will include targets, monitoring programmes and where appropriate enforcement measures should targets be missed. Proposals to minimise freight movements should also be included. Planning applications for new development must ensure a minimal reliance on car borne trips.

8.7 Unacceptable development will not be permitted because of the existence of a transport assessment or a travel plan.

T3 PARKING

Planning applications are required to provide levels of car, cycle and disabled parking in accordance with the Countywide standards set by the Highway Authority.

8.8 The provision of parking spaces in new developments influences people's choice of mode of transport. Over provision of spaces encourages the use of the car adding to congestion and environmental problems. By limiting the number of spaces and including proposals for cycle, walking and public transport access (Policies T2 and T4) car use can be reduced.

8.9 Reducing the number of spaces required enables the more efficient use of land, allows for the development of sites where providing parking would be difficult and focuses development on sites providing access for those without use of a car.

8.10 Appendix 3, Countywide standards, therefore, sets out maximum levels of parking spaces for a range of developments. The standards recognise that some locations, for example town centres, will have a higher level of accessibility by cycle, walking and public transport than others and thus require fewer parking spaces. The number of spaces then required will be calculated in accordance with the Highway Authority's methodology.

8.11 Developers may propose a level of parking provision below the maximum standards identified in Appendix 3. This may lead to an increase in on street parking and associated problems. Under such circumstances developers will be expected to fund the implementation and enforcement of on street parking controls and other traffic management measures (Policy T4).

T4 CYCLING, WALKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Planning applications are expected to make appropriate provision and give priority access for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users. Measures must improve road safety, enhance the environment and assist the access and movement of persons with a disability or impairment.

8.12 The key to reducing car use is making cycling, walking and public transport a safer, more attractive, reliable and convenient alternative. It is important that new development

is not just located where access by cycling, walking and public transport is possible but that provision is made to improve and give priority to those links.

8.13 Packages of measures are expected to include a range of the following:

- Bus shelters, laybys, bus boarders and timetable cases.
- Support for new/extended bus services.
- Bus priority measures.
- Cycle parking, lockers and shower/changing facilities.
- Links to and completion of routes on Cycle Network Plans, with down-lighting.
- Other cycle lanes, advanced stop lines, cycle activated signals.
- Contributions towards providing new railway stations and public transport interchanges.
- Safe routes to schools, shops, pubs, bus stops and other local facilities
- Pedestrian crossing facilities.
- Safe and convenient pedestrian routes with down-lighting.
- Cycle, pedestrian and public transport links to adjoining developments and town centres.
- Public rights of way.
- 20 mph zones, “Home Zones” and other traffic calming/management measures.
- Implementation and enforcement of on street parking controls.
- “Quiet Roads” networks on country lanes.

8.14 The mobility needs of all categories of disabled persons must be considered in any development and provided for in the list of measures above.

8.15 Well designed traffic calming and management measures can improve the quality of local neighbourhoods, enhance the street environment and improve road safety.

T5 SAFEGUARDING

Development affecting public rights of way, cycle and pedestrian routes will only be permitted where satisfactory provision, in terms of safety, attractiveness and convenience, is made to retain or divert the existing or proposed route. Land for the following transport proposals is safeguarded on the proposals map:

**Chippenham Bus Station
Corsham Railway Station
Cotswold Water Park Eastern Spine Road
Dualling of A350, North of Chippenham
Frogwell to Bumpers Farm Bus only link
Local Transport Plan Cycle Network Plans
Pockeredge Farm, Peel Circus, Local Distributor Link Road
Purton Railway Station
Spring Quarry Access Road
Swindon and Cricklade Railway
Swindon North Distributor Road
Thames and Severn Canal
Wilts and Berks Canal
Wootton Bassett Railway Station**

8.16 To ensure the future implementation of transport schemes the land necessary for their construction is safeguarded from inappropriate development.

T6 FREIGHT

Planning applications involving the significant movement of freight by road must be in locations easily accessible to the network of strategic and local lorry routes as identified in Wiltshire County Council's Local Transport Plan. Sites which use or have the potential to use the rail network for the movement of freight will be encouraged.

8.17 The efficient transport of goods is essential for the economy of North Wiltshire. Nonetheless there are increasing concerns, particularly over heavy goods vehicles, about the impact on the local environment. To balance the needs of freight movement and the environment a network of strategic lorry routes based on a box comprised of the M4, A303, A34, A36/A46/A350 has been drawn up as part of Wiltshire County Council's Local Transport Plan. As 85% of all freight traffic on Wiltshire roads has some business in the County there are considerable lorry movements off the Strategic Network so a supporting network of local lorry routes which minimise environmental damage has been devised.

8.18 The movement of freight by rail can substantially reduce lorry movements. Whilst rail can not serve all movements, developments generating substantial freight movements will be required to consider locations that can be served by rail.

9. HOUSING TOPIC AREA

Housing Land Provision

H1 REQUIRED LEVEL OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

In the Plan area, between 1991 to 2011, provision will be made for the development of about 13,500 dwellings.

9.1 [deleted]

9.2 As part of the preparation of this Plan an Urban Capacity Study was undertaken in 2001 in accordance with the requirements of the sequential approach to residential land allocation as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing. This has been reviewed in 2003 and the findings provides evidence that over the period up to 2011 sufficient land has been identified within the District's existing urban areas to achieve the residential land supply set out in Policy H1. Table H1 below illustrates the housing land supply for the period 1991 to 2011.

Table H1: Latest housing figures as of 1st April 2004

	No. of Dwellings
Structure Plan Requirement for North Wiltshire	13,500
Dwellings Built in the District 01/04/91 to 31/03/04	8471
Balance Required 2004-2011	5029
With Consent at 31/03/2004	2240
H2 Proposals (1612-1920)	1562
Urban Capacity Study Results at 31/3/04	
1. Residential Subdivision	50
2. Space above shops	119
3. Empty homes	35
4. Previously developed vacant & derelict land & buildings	530
5. Intensification of existing residential areas	140
6. Redevelopment of existing housing	100

7. Redevelopment of car parks	14	
8. Conversion of commercial buildings	74	
9. Review of existing allocations and large identified sites★	0	
10. Review of other existing allocations in plans	0	
11. Vacant land not previously developed	40	
	1100	1100
THE REST OF THE DISTRICT: (Windfall Supply – Brownfield)		588
TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLINGS PROVIDED FOR IN THE DISTRICT TO 31/03/11		13,961

Table H1. (All the windfall figures have been reduced by 30% as they were originally calculated in 2001 and cover a ten-year period, accordingly it is appropriate to discount them by 30%, to prevent double counting, as they now cover a seven-year period).

H2 ALLOCATED RESIDENTIAL SITES

The following sites, as shown on the proposals map, have been allocated to contribute to the residential development needs of the District for the period up to 2011.

Table H2: Allocated Residential Sites

Location	Estimated Number of Dwellings
Quemerford House and Land, Calne	16
Lower Quemerford Mill, Calne	12
Works Site, Pound Mead/Valley Road, Corsham	20
Works Site, Pound Mead, Corsham	20
Cattlemarket Site, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham (as part of a mixed use scheme)	150
Works, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham (as part of a mixed use scheme)	66
Foundary Lane, Chippenham (as part of a mixed use scheme)	250

Flowers Site, Wood Lane, Chippenham (as part of a mixed use scheme)	50
Works Site, The Forty, Cricklade	12
Land at Preston Lane, Lyneham	15
Outdoor Swimming Pool, Malmesbury	18
A B Carter Haulage Contractors, 14 Happy Land, Ashton Keynes	11
The Elms, Green Lane, Sherston	12
Former St Ivel Site, Wootton Bassett (as part of a mixed use scheme)	280
Brook Farm, Great Somerford	30
Filands School, Malmesbury	140
Chicken Factory, Sutton Benger	60 (as part of a mixed use development)*
Springfield School, Calne	110
Goldney Avenue, Chippenham	60
Rugby Club, Stoneover Lane, Wootton Bassett	100
Station Road, Calne	100
Primary School, Tetbury Hill, Malmesbury	30
Total	1562

*Unlike other sites listed in Table H2. Supplementary Planning Guidance has not been prepared and adopted for the Chicken Factory. Therefore, the mix and extent of uses on the site will require further discussion with the Council, taking into consideration the relevant policies in this Local Plan.

H3 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN FRAMEWORK BOUNDARIES

Proposals for residential development, including residential institutions and applications to renew permissions for residential development, within the Framework Boundaries as defined on the proposals map, will be permitted, provided that:

- i) Priority is given to the re-use of previously developed land and buildings.**
- ii) The proposal is for small scale or limited development in all villages except Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Cricklade, Malmesbury, Wootton Bassett, Purton, Lyneham and Sherston.**

and

- iii) **The most efficient use of the land is achieved compatible with the site's location, its accessibility and its surroundings. A minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare will be sought. In the towns, higher densities may be appropriate.**

9.3 [deleted]

9.4 The Council is committed to the view that previously developed urban land should be developed before greenfield land, unless it performs so poorly as to preclude its use, in accordance with the sequential test in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. The definition of previously developed land and buildings is contained in PPG3. The sources of land, which make up this category, are as contained in the best practice guide 'Tapping the potential – Assessing Urban Housing Capacity' (DETR, 2000). The council will annually monitor housing land to ensure sites are contributing towards the housing requirement figure as anticipated and, if necessary, will make amendments.

9.5 Villages and towns with framework boundaries are deemed to have suitable and sufficient services and facilities in order to accommodate further development of an appropriate scale, in accordance with this Plans Spatial Strategy. Allowing only small or limited development in villages with framework boundaries, ensures that development is of an appropriate scale to enhance and maintain the vitality and viability. Development on a larger scale is considered suitable for Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Cricklade, Malmesbury, Wootton Bassett, Purton, Lyneham and Sherston.

9.6 Within the District, all new residential development should be well designed and make a contribution to improving the quality of life. The Council is committed to the efficient use of land maximising densities whilst acknowledging the need to create mixed and inclusive communities. New housing developments or housing as part of mixed use developments should help to secure a better social mix by avoiding the creation of large areas of housing of similar characteristics.

H4 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

New Dwellings in the Countryside outside the Framework Boundaries, as defined on the proposals map, will be permitted provided that:

- i) **It is in connection with the essential needs of agriculture or forestry or other rural based enterprise;**
- ii) **It is a replacement for an existing dwelling where:**
 - a. **The residential use has not been abandoned; and**
 - b. **the existing dwelling is incapable of retention in its current state, is unsightly or is out of character with its surroundings and**
 - c. **the replacement dwelling is of a similar size and scale to the existing dwelling within the same curtilage.**

9.7 Justification for an agricultural, forestry workers, or other rural based occupational dwelling will be based on the functional and financial tests set-out within Government guidance. Permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that the need for a dwelling cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit or within the locality. If

planning permission is granted for an agricultural workers dwelling it can be expected to tie the dwelling to the farm buildings and/or the agricultural land of the unit by way of a legal agreement or other means. This will prevent it being sold separately without further application to the local planning authority.

9.8 Proposals to remove the occupancy condition on an agricultural, forestry or other occupational workers dwelling will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. there has been a genuine and unsuccessful attempt to market the property at an appropriate market rate based on the occupancy condition for a minimum period of 1 year; and
- ii. there is no agricultural or forestry need for the dwelling on the holding, nor is a need likely to arise in the foreseeable future; and
- iii. there is no agricultural or forestry need within the locality.

9.9 This policy reflects the strict controls placed on new residential development within the countryside at all levels of Planning guidance.

H5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN URBAN AREAS

The Council will seek to negotiate an element of affordable housing to meet local needs on all housing developments of either 15 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectare or more in size, within the Framework boundaries of Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Cricklade, Malmesbury, Purton and Wootton Bassett, subject to the following criteria:

- i. Negotiations by the Council will be on the basis of about 30% of the dwellings permitted being subsidised with an additional proportion being low cost housing, subject to the local need and site characteristics;**
- ii. Affordable housing should be provided on site, dispersed throughout the development, or in any event in clusters of no more than 15 dwellings, so as to contribute toward mixed and inclusive communities;**

and

- iii. Applications which are deliberately sub-divided or reduced unrealistically to avoid the threshold will not be accepted.**

9.10 The North Wiltshire Housing Needs Survey 2000 indicates a requirement for approximately 1,300 homes across the District over the 5 year period to 2005. This equates to an annual requirement for 260 affordable dwellings across the District the survey also highlighted a need for an additional 200 unsubsidised low cost dwellings aimed at first time buyers in order to contribute to the undersupply of small basis units available in the market place. As explained in policies H1 and H2, enough capacity for general needs housing has been identified so that it is not necessary to consider allocating large scale urban extensions and/or greenfield sites. Combined with the emphasis on reusing previously developed land, it is considered the increased likelihood of smaller sites coming forward for housing development will diminish the supply of affordable housing. Therefore it is deemed appropriate that this District adopts a lower threshold in accordance with Circular 6/98.

9.11 Government guidance emphasises the need for local authorities to provide a local definition of “affordable housing” giving consideration to the relationship between local incomes and the housing market. For the purposes of this plan the definition of affordable housing is:

“That provided, with subsidy, for people who are unable to resolve their housing needs in the local private sector market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes. The provision of an element of unsubsidised low cost market housing is regarded as being additional to the requirement for subsidised affordable housing.”

9.12 The definition, "with subsidy", includes contributions in the form of finance and/or land. Any subsidy mechanism that makes the dwellings affordable and accords with the definition will be appropriate.

9.13 Due to the high house prices in relation to local income levels in North Wiltshire, low-cost market housing provided without subsidy (i.e. housing offered for sale at or below the lower quartile of prevailing market values) is not regarded to be affordable. A proportion of unsubsidised low cost market housing is required from new housing developments in addition to the requirement for subsidised affordable housing. The amount will be determined on a site by site basis depending on site characteristics and the scale of development.

9.14 The Council will seek to negotiate on-site affordable housing provision in the interests of creating balanced communities, to be dispersed throughout the development or in any event in clusters of no more than 15 dwellings. The alternative provision off-site will only be considered, where there is the clear prospect of this being translated into the provision of affordable housing and on a scale not less than that which would have been expected on the original site. Such an arrangement might assist in meeting other plan objectives including the conversion/re-use of vacant buildings.

9.15 To ensure that these dwellings remain affordable, they should be in the control of a registered social landlord or other appropriate body. The Council will consider alternative or innovative combinations of providers, provided what is proposed contributes to meeting the target for affordable housing provision. Where it is proposed to develop and manage the affordable housing without the involvement of a Registered Social Landlord, applicants will be required to enter into an appropriate legal agreement with the Council to ensure that the affordable housing provided is occupied in perpetuity and can be used only for the purposes of providing dwellings to be occupied by people who have a local housing need and who cannot afford housing in the private rental or housing for sale sector.

9.16 Since April 2003 the Council's ability to assist in the enabling of affordable housing schemes has been affected by changes to the Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG), which allowed for refunding of grants made for affordable housing from the Housing Corporation. In future, where affordable housing is provided in accordance with this policy, the Council will not provide the developer with any form of subsidy. Further details are given in the adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This will be reviewed and updated in due course.

9.17 The Council acknowledges that local plan policies on affordable housing should be reasonably flexible, leaving room for other material considerations to be taken into account. The Council accepts that there may be particular site costs associated with the development of a site that may justify negotiating a reduction in provision of affordable

housing, or the level of financial contribution transferred for off-site affordable housing provision. Developers will be expected to submit details of such costs as part of the initial planning application documentation or as soon as these cost become apparent, if they are identified after the initial submission.

H6 AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS

The Council will seek to negotiate an element of affordable housing to meet local needs on all housing developments, within the Framework boundaries of the villages not the subject of Policy H5, subject to the following criteria:

- i. The council will negotiate on the basis that about 50% of the dwellings permitted will be subsidised housing with an additional proportion of low cost housing, subject to local need and site characteristics.**

and

- ii. Affordable housing should be provided on site, dispersed throughout the development or in any event in clusters of no more than 15 dwellings so as to contribute toward mixed and inclusive communities.**

9.18 The Rural White Paper states, "In settlements of 3000 or less, no thresholds apply" and "There is no reason why, in small villages if there is evidence of need and subject to financial viability, they should not seek to match every new market house with an affordable home". Owing to the high house prices in relation to local incomes, the Council will negotiate about 50% affordable housing provision on all residential developments in accordance with Policy H6. The level of contribution negotiated will be dependent on the level of housing need associated within the village and surrounding locality. If there is no need for affordable housing in the village there will be no requirement for a contribution for affordable housing. If the need is high a contribution of 50% or more will be required.

9.19 The Council will seek to negotiate on-site affordable housing provision in the interests of creating balanced communities, to be dispersed throughout the development or in any event in clusters of no more than fifteen dwellings. Alternative provision off-site will only be considered, where there is the clear prospect of this being translated into the provision of affordable housing and on a scale not less than that which would have been expected on the original site. Such an arrangement might assist in meeting other plan objectives including the conversion/re-use of vacant buildings.

9.20 To ensure that these dwellings remain affordable, they should be in the control of a Registered Social Landlord or other appropriate body. Where it is proposed to develop and manage the affordable housing without the involvement of a Registered Social Landlord, applicants will be required to enter into an appropriate legal agreement with the Council to ensure that affordable housing is occupied in perpetuity and can be used only for the purposes of providing dwellings to be occupied by people who have a local housing need and who cannot afford housing in the private rental or housing for sale sector.

9.21 Since April 2003 the Council's ability to assist in the enabling of affordable housing schemes has been affected by changes to the Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG), which allowed for refunding of grants made for affordable housing from the Housing Corporation. In future, the Council will not provide the developer with any form of subsidy. The developer will be able to gain a contribution from an appropriate social

housing body through the capital contribution that can be serviced through rents, with reference to the Housing Corporation's 'Rent Restructuring Frameworks and Target Rents.' Further details are given in the adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This will be reviewed and updated in due course.

9.22 The Council acknowledges that local plan policies on affordable housing should be reasonably flexible, leaving room for other material considerations to be taken into account. The Council accepts that there may be particular site costs associated with the development of a site that may justify a negotiated reduction in provision of affordable housing, or the level of financial contribution transferred for off-site affordable housing provision. Developers will be expected to submit details of such costs as part of the initial planning application documentation or as soon as these cost become apparent, if they are identified after the initial submission.

9.23 The provision of affordable houses, negotiated as part of planning agreements, will not be considered to have contributed to any existing need until they are in occupation.

H7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON RURAL EXCEPTIONS SITES

As an exception to normal planning policies small affordable housing developments will be permitted within and adjoining the villages in the District provided that:

- i) There is a demonstrable local need for affordable housing which cannot otherwise be met; and**
- ii) The scheme must be capable of implementation and proper management to ensure that the benefits of the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs will be held in perpetuity.**

9.24 This policy provides an opportunity for registered social landlords, other social bodies or private developers working with local communities or landowners to develop small sites with dwellings which can be made available to meet the identified local affordable housing needs in perpetuity. Government Policy Guidance acknowledges that the development proposed under this policy must be strictly contained to meet this specific purpose. It should be limited in scale and in normal circumstances proposals should not exceed 10 dwellings. Any proposals for more than 10 dwellings will need to be substantiated by the local housing needs survey.

9.25 Under no circumstances can provision be made by "cross funding" from market housing developed on the same site.

9.26 The affordable housing provision permitted by this policy must comply with the definition of affordable housing in this Plan. Any planning permission granted will need to be controlled by an appropriate legal agreement or other appropriate means to ensure the dwelling(s) remain affordable in perpetuity.

H8 RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS

Household extensions and development within a residential curtilage will be permitted provided that:

- i) It is in keeping with the host building in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing, other than in the exceptional case of historic buildings, where a change of style and/or materials might be desirable to indicate the evolution of the building; and**
- ii) It does not result in unneighbourly development, which would result in loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, oppression or other harm to amenities of occupiers of either adjacent dwellings or the application property itself; and**
- iii) It maintains the scale and siting of the dwelling in relation to adjoining development, open spaces and the character of the area and the wider landscape; and**
- iv) It does not result in the loss of or have a potentially adverse impact on protected trees, hedgerows or other important landscaping features.**

9.27 The objective of this policy is to secure householder schemes which are acceptable in terms of their effect on the dwelling itself, on adjacent dwellings and on the local area generally. Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Where proposals for annexe accommodation are put forward these should be of a scale that is proportionate to the existing dwelling and no larger than is functionally required. A legal agreement or other appropriate means may be required to ensure that the total property is retained as a single dwelling.

H9 GYPSY SITES

Proposals for the use of land for the stationing of residential caravans occupied by gypsies will be permitted provided that:

- i) It has reasonable access to local community facilities and services; and**
- ii) It would not unreasonably prejudice the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and land.**

9.28 In North Wiltshire there are six gypsy caravan sites and 27 sites in Wiltshire as a whole. Two large public sites exist outside, but close to, the District at Hay Lane, Wroughton (37 pitches) and Chiseldon Camp (12 transit pitches). Proposals for the stationing of residential caravans for occupation by bona fide gypsies in the countryside will be permitted where the planning authority is satisfied that a local housing need exists and that the proposal is an appropriate and acceptable way of meeting that need. The planning authority will then weigh up any harm that may arise due to the proposal, together with any other disadvantages, and, only where the advantages of the proposed development outweigh the disadvantages, will there then be special circumstances for considering granting a permission in the countryside.

9.29 Proposed gypsy sites should be located within areas which contribute to promoting sustainable patterns of development, through reducing the overall need to travel and supporting the increased use of public transport, cycling and walking.

10. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TOPIC AREA

BD1 EMPLOYMENT LAND

About 150 ha of land is made available for business development (Use classes B1, B2 and B8 uses) within the period 1991 to 2011.

10.1 In accordance with requirements set out in the Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011, the District Council is seeking to allocate land for employment generating development over the plan period 1991 to 2011. The Structure Plan employment provision for North Wiltshire is for about 150 hectares of land a large amount of the proposed employment land provision has already been completed or committed through planning permissions and local plan allocations. From the proposed employment land provision of about 150 hectares, around 52 hectares of land for employment uses remains to be identified.

10.2 The following table illustrates the employment requirements of the Structure Plan and how this relates to employment provision in the District from 1991 to 2011.

Table BD1: Employment Land Provision. Land to be provided over plan period. Figures as at 1st April 2004.

STRUCTURE PLAN PROVISION AND COMMITMENTS:	LAND IN HECTARES:
Structure Plan Requirement	150
Completions 01/04/91 – 31/03/04	36.27
Commitments (outstanding planning permissions) at 01/04/04 – (Planning consents only counted):	63.21
General Area: (Includes the difference between the gross and net hectares of employment zones)*	18.74
Total (as at 01/04/04) =	118.22
Structure Plan provision less permissions: (150 –118.22)	31.78
Proposed Allocations:	47.38
Total Land Provision:	165.60

Source: Wiltshire Structure Plan Monitoring, Employment Land & Floorspace, Report, 2004

*Please note, the General Area includes ALL land within an employment zone, and not just the buildings in association with that use, i.e. to include internal roads / parking areas / landscaping etc within employment sites.

Development shall be permitted for business development (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) on the following allocated sites, and outstanding allocations (from Adopted 2001 Local Plan):

Proposed Local Plan Allocations

Site	Area (Ha)
East of Beversbrook Farm and Porte Marsh Industrial Estate, Calne	4.4
Hunter's Moon, Chippenham	5
East of Leafield Industrial Estate, Corsham	3.29
Former St Ivel Site, Wootton Bassett (as part of a mixed use scheme)	3
Cocklebury Road, Chippenham (as part of a mixed use scheme)	2.5
Garden Centre, Malmesbury	3.9

Outstanding Local Plan Allocations

Site	Area (Ha)
Littlefields (Bath Road), Chippenham	13.2
Braydon Lane, Cricklade	2.7
Land to the North of Tetbury Hill, Malmesbury	1
Brickworks, Purton	3.1
Templars Way, Wootton Bassett	3.44
Interface Business Park, Wootton Bassett	1.85
Total Amount of Land Allocated	47.38 hectares

The District Council would also support further employment opportunities as part of mixed use development schemes at the Foundry Lane and Flowers Yard sites in Chippenham. It is envisaged that the redevelopment in each case will be predominantly based upon residential uses, employment activities will make a positive and sustainable contribution to the local area. Business development on these sites will be additional to the provision set out in Table BD1.

10.3 The Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011 regards employment land as that which falls within the following use classes: B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution). Whilst other uses (such as retailing, leisure and education uses) provide job opportunities, Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 act as a measure of economic strength.

10.4 In the interests of sustainability and with regard to Structure Plan requirements, the proposed employment allocations will be directed to the major settlements within the

District which exhibit greatest growth potential over the plan period to 2011. The proposed allocations will reinforce existing, established employment zones at these major settlements, reducing the need for out commuting where potential workforce growth exceeds outstanding employment allocations in these settlements.

10.4a The Adopted Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan 2011 includes the allocation of a number of preferred areas for strategic and local scale waste management facilities, on employment sites across the District. Employment allocations may, due to their shared characteristics and likely traffic generation, also be suitable for waste processing uses. Applications that are on a safeguarded site for such an allocation, such as the Purton Brickworks will need to have regard to the provisions of the Waste Local Plan.

10.5 The employment allocations have been identified which provide accessibility by a range and choice of sustainable transport modes, where sites are well related to the main settlements, road network and the strategic/ local lorry routes as identified in Wiltshire County Council's Local Transport Plan.

BD2 SAFEGUARDING EXISTING BUSINESS USES

Land and Buildings in existing business use (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) or, if vacant, last used for business purposes, or committed for such uses, will be safeguarded for these uses, unless:

- i) The continued use of the site for business uses raises unacceptable environmental or traffic problems, harming the character or amenity of the surrounding area;**
or
- ii) An alternative use or mix of uses offers greater benefits to the community and/or increases the employment capacity of the site through the creation of a higher number of jobs;**
or
- iii) The retention of a site or premises for business use has been explored fully without success (where actively marketed for at least 1 year at an appropriate market rate), and where the site is no longer required to meet economic development needs.**

10.6 The District Council will safeguard existing employment sites from redevelopment for alternative uses, where the existing site serves the local economy and provides opportunities for local employment. However, the Council recognises that it is important to adopt a flexible approach and to give sufficient scope to enable the release and reuse of surplus or otherwise unsuitable employment sites where appropriate.

10.7 Pressure to find land for residential uses should not reduce local employment opportunities by leading to a reduced mixture of uses in the locality and should be judged on the above criteria, depending on the site's location, size and role.

BD3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ON UNALLOCATED SITES

Proposals to provide business development within the framework boundaries of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade, will be permitted subject to:

- i) The proposed use being of an appropriate size and form for the location; and**
- ii) The proposed use being accessible by a range of transport modes.**

10.8 Whilst employment allocations are identified at the major settlements within the District, employment opportunities which are beneficial to the local economy will be encouraged on unallocated sites. Proposals for business uses may be attracted to a range of smaller sites within the main settlements, including vacant units, accommodation above shops etc. Whilst the pressure for residential development on urban, brownfield sites is acknowledged it is the purpose of this policy not to sterilise opportunities for incremental business growth where an appropriate proposal is submitted to the District Council.

10.9 Sites that are suitable for business development within these settlements will also be more accessible by a range of transport modes, which is supported in the interests of sustainability.

RURAL EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

BD4 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN, OR ON THE EDGE OF VILLAGES

Development proposals to provide new small scale or expanded business uses (Use classes B1, B2 and B8) will be permitted within, or adjoining villages with framework boundaries, provided that:

- i) The development is appropriate with regard to the settlement's scale, form and character; and**
- ii) The proposal will not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding road network.**

10.10 The District Council seeks to encourage economic vitality within rural areas, where compatible with the scale, character and appearance of the settlement. It is considered that there are opportunities for small-scale business and industrial developments in locations that are well related to villages, where these settlements are accessible to a range of local services and by a range of transport modes. This may be in the form of either new buildings or the conversion and reuse of existing buildings.

BD5 RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals for business uses (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) in the countryside will be permitted where development:

- i) Involves the re-use of existing rural buildings suitable for conversion, where the architectural and historical interest of the original building is not compromised; or**

- ii) **Involves limited new building located within or well related to an existing group of buildings which respects local building styles and materials, and is in keeping with it's surroundings; or**
- iii) **Involves the limited expansion or replacement of an existing premises, where the development would be more acceptable and sustainable than might otherwise be achieved through conversion;**
and in all cases;
- iv) **The proposal does not lead to dispersal of business uses that would be detrimental to town and village vitality and economic viability; and**
- v) **Due consideration is given to the impact on the road network in the vicinity of the development.**

10.11 Whilst proposals in the open countryside, remote from settlements, are not normally appropriate, opportunities for the re-use of existing, or new/replacement buildings may be acceptable where the development is of a appropriate scale and situated within or are well related to an existing complex of buildings. Buildings suitable for conversion comprise those that are not ruinous and where conversion would not perpetuate a rural eyesore, nor lead to over intensive development or unsightly external storage. A new/replacement building may be viewed as being more acceptable and sustainable if for instance the development would bring about an environmental improvement in terms of the impact of the development in its surroundings and landscape. A proposal which is extensive in size and scale, or which is unsympathetic to its surroundings will not be considered appropriate in this context.

10.12 The proposed development must be compatible with the rural surroundings and may provide opportunities to promote the local rural economy through change of use to business uses which can have a positive impact on local employment.

BD6 RE-USE OF RURAL BUILDINGS

In the countryside, the re-use of buildings will be permitted provided that:

- i) **The proposed use will be contained within the building and does not require extensive alterations, re-building and or extension; and**
- ii) **The proposed use respects both the character and setting of the subject building and any distinctive local building styles and materials; and**
- iii) **Consideration is given to whether a building by reason of its design and or location would be more appropriately retained in or converted to, in order of preference, employment, community, or residential use; and**
- iv) **There being no abuse of the concession given to buildings erected with the benefit of permitted development rights; and**
- v) **The proposal will not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding road network.**

10.13 The District Council's first priority will be to ensure rural buildings are re-used for purposes that make a positive contribution to the rural economy. The characteristics of different buildings will influence their suitability for preservation and other uses. In general, the order of preference for these uses are agricultural uses, countryside related uses (ie equestrian centres, sports facilities etc), community uses (i.e. village halls), specialised industrial uses (i.e. small workshops) and social activities (i.e. restaurant/public house). Any residential development will require special justification. If the existing building is in poor structural condition that in part requires complete reconstruction, an application must include full details of the structural work necessary and a design statement.

10.14 The conversion of buildings to business uses may have a more positive impact on local employment opportunities. Some buildings are well related to existing settlements where their use for employment purposes will promote economic activity within a rural area creating local jobs and providing a more sustainable environment.

BD7 FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Proposals for farm diversification will be permitted where:

- i) The proposal would not materially prejudice the agricultural operations of the farm;**
- ii) The scale of activities associated with the development is appropriate to the rural context and will not undermine the viability of uses in the surrounding settlements;**
- iii) The proposal does not adversely affect the character of the surrounding environment and amenities of local residents; and**
- iv) The proposal will not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding road network.**

10.15 Agriculture is the primary use of rural land and the use that most influences the physical appearance and character of the countryside. However, employment in agriculture has generally fallen steeply and farmers are increasingly diversifying into other activities to supplement their incomes.

10.16 Government guidance emphasises the importance of diversification into non-agricultural activities for many farm businesses. Following the consistent decline in farm incomes, this provides a strong opportunity to broaden the base of the rural economy and to provide new and varied employment opportunities in rural areas.

10.17 Diversification can include a wide range of enterprises of an appropriate scale, including non-food crops, woodland planting, recreation and leisure uses, the management of land to provide environmental benefits, farm shops, craft workshops and small-scale tourist attractions, contracting, equestrian businesses, woodland management, 'pick your own', nature trails, holiday accommodation and light industrial use. Such activities often help to sustain agricultural, forestry or horticultural holdings as viable units, and hence they can reduce the likelihood of farm fragmentation. However, PPS7 (Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) demonstrates that the appeal of the countryside is central to its economic prosperity and that development should therefore

be of an appropriate scale and nature, so that they do not have an adverse impact upon the character, appearance or quality of the surrounding countryside. They should also be capable of being served by the existing local transport network.

10.18 In assessing the acceptability of diversification proposals, a significant consideration will be the requirement for new buildings to be provided. Matters relating to new buildings and changes of use within rural areas for employment purposes are contained within policies BD4 and BD5. Where diversification proposals require new building work, applicants will need to demonstrate that these proposals are satisfied in this regard.

BD8 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Proposals for telecommunications development, including applications for prior approval under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995, will be permitted provided that:

- i) There is a demonstrable need for the development;**
- ii) Where proposals are sited within nationally designated areas including Areas of Outstanding National Beauty, it can be demonstrated it is in the national interest and incapable of being accommodated outside these areas;**
- iii) Opportunities to share existing buildings, masts or other structures have been fully explored; and**
- iv) Proposals are sited, designed and landscaped so as to minimise impact on the built or natural environment.**

10.19 The Government's framework for telecommunications development is set out in PPG8 (Planning Policy Guidance note 8 – Telecommunications). This outlines the importance of good communications both economically and socially and sets out the Government's policy to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems, whilst minimising the environmental impact of any installation.

10.20 Siting and design are particular concerns and operators proposing new masts should show that they have fully explored the possibility of mast sharing or use of existing buildings or other structures. Only where it can be clearly demonstrated that the technical needs of the operator cannot be achieved by siting apparatus on an existing mast, building or other structure will new masts be permitted.

10.21 Within the District it has become apparent from the consultation responses to previous planning applications for telecommunications masts there is a perception these transmitters are a threat to public health. A Government commissioned report published in the year 2000 concluded that "the balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near to base stations" but the possibility of harm could not be ruled out with confidence. The Government accepts that more research is required but it advises that any risk to health should be regulated under Health and Safety legislation rather than by the planning system. The only material consideration for the Local Planning Authority should be compliance with current European Union guidelines on public exposure to electromagnetic fields. Planning applications should therefore include a

statement explaining how the proposal will comply with the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) which have been adopted by the E.U. Council.

10.22 [deleted]

BD9 SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Permission will be granted for signs and advertisements provided:

- i) They would not prejudice public safety;**
- ii) They are suitable in size, siting and design for both the building and/or the immediate locality; and**
- iii) Cumulatively with existing and other proposed signs and advertisements, they do not affect the visual amenity in the locality.**

10.23 Under current legislation, the District Council controls outdoor advertising in the interests of amenity and public safety. In Conservation Areas and with regard to listed buildings, advertisements should relate sensitively to the building to which they are fixed and/ or to the character and appearance of the street scene or local area. In particular, regard will be had to the design, materials, colour, siting and method of illumination.

10.24 Public safety will also be a significant factor particularly where the proposed signage is likely to give rise to confusion, or interfere, with traffic signs and signals, or will result in glare or dazzle.

11. RETAIL TOPIC AREA

R1 TOWN CENTRE PRIMARY FRONTAGE AREAS

Proposals for shops, financial and professional services, and food and drink establishments (Use Class A) will be permitted within the defined town centre primary frontage areas at ground floor level of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade subject to the following criteria. where:

- i) They do not individually or together with other proposals undermine the vitality or viability of the town centre;**
- ii) The proposal is consistent with the scale and function of the town centre;**
- iii) No more than 5% of uses within the Primary frontage areas are non shopping uses (A1 use) or that there are no more than any two adjacent units in uses other than A1 uses, whichever is less; and**
- iv) Consideration is given to ensuring that proposals do not eliminate separate access arrangements to the upper floors, which could be used for residential or alternative uses.**

11.1 The six town centres are of a sufficient size to provide a broad range of facilities and services, including the retailing of convenience and comparison goods, financial and professional services and restaurants/ pubs to serve local residents, shoppers and visitors. The town centres can provide a range of uses which have benefits for the environment, where the need to travel is reduced by creating combined trips.

11.1A Specifically, Chippenham is a market town and is classified as the major retailing centre within the district area. In general terms it is performing well as a town centre, with a nominal vacancy rate. Malmesbury and Calne are also market towns. The shopping in Malmesbury is dominated by comparison goods and the provision of services, with a similar position being presented in Calne although there are also two large central supermarkets present. Corsham is an attractive town centre, linear in nature. The centre attracts both locals and visitors with this being reinforced by the presence of numerous niche retailers. Wootton Bassett is again linear in nature and is anchored by two small shopping centres/ arcades and three primary supermarkets. Finally, Cricklade is the smallest of the centres in the district, providing predominantly day to day services.

11.2 The District Council commissioned a Retail Needs Assessment Survey in 2004. In future, this will be used to inform decisions for planning applications. The Retail Survey has found that there has been a general shift away from smaller town centres in North Wiltshire, with the regional centres including Swindon absorbing much of their traditional trade. There is a need to continue to maintain and develop the towns and to enable the 'claw-back' of the trade lost to competing centres.

11.2a In line with Government guidance contained within PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) a network of six town centres is proposed, with large-scale development directed towards Chippenham.

11.2b A sequential approach to the assessment of sites will be used. All options in the town centres will be thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered for development for main town centre uses. The sequential approach requires that locations are considered in the following order:

- First, sites in existing centres which are an appropriate scale of development in relation to the role and function of the centre; and then
- Edge-of-centre locations, with preference given to sites that are or will be well-connected to the centre; and then
- Out-of-centre sites, with preference given to sites which are or will be well served by a choice of means of transport and which are close to the centre and have a high likelihood of forming links with the centre.

11.2c In line with PPS6 main town centres uses which will be assessed through the sequential approach include retail, leisure/entertainment facilities, offices and culture/tourism facilities.

11.3 This Local Plan defines the primary frontage areas within which the Local Planning Authority is seeking to ensure the main use remains as shops (Use Class A1) because this will contribute to making sure the vitality and viability of the town centres in North Wiltshire are maintained and enhanced. The Local Planning Authority will seek to ensure no more than 5% of uses within the Primary frontage areas are non shopping uses (A1 use) or that there are no more than any two adjacent units in uses other than A1 uses, whichever is less, thus ensuring Use Class A remains the main function of the Town Centre Primary Frontage Areas. However, it is recognised that other uses including employment, offices of local and central government, leisure and entertainment, hospitals and higher education can ensure the health of a town centre and these will be directed towards the Town Centre Secondary Frontage Areas subject to the requirements of Policy R2.

11.4 This policy applies to new uses, change of use and the reuse of vacant buildings.

R2 TOWN CENTRE SECONDARY FRONTAGE AREAS

Proposals for shops, financial and professional services, food premises, leisure facilities and night clubs (Use Class A, D1 and D2) will be permitted within the defined town centre secondary frontage areas of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade, subject to all the following criteria:

- i) They do not individually or cumulatively undermine the vitality or viability of the town centre.**
- ii) The proposal is consistent with the scale and function of the town centre.**
- iii) Consideration is given to ensuring that proposals do not eliminate separate access arrangements to the upper floors, which could be used for residential, community or employment uses.**

11.5 Whilst the Local Planning Authority seeks to ensure that retailing remains the primary function in the town centres, it is recognised that growth in other sectors such as offices, and community and leisure uses can contribute towards sustaining activity in these centres. This is so long as the vitality and viability of the centres are not compromised. Different and complementary uses can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors.

11.6 The appropriateness of leisure proposals will be considered against the nature and role of the centre, site availability, quality and availability of car parking, the likely traffic generated and compatibility of adjoining uses. In considering applications for leisure

proposals, the District Council will ensure that the design and any conditions attached mean that the amenities of nearby residents are fully considered.

R3 RETAIL DESIGNATIONS

Development shall be permitted for retail development (Use Classes A1, A2 and A3) at:

Bath Road Car Park, Chippenham – 0.5ha

11.7 The Retail Needs Assessment Survey 2004 has included a sequential analysis of sites within the North Wiltshire towns. The Study has proposed that Chippenham as the largest town is suitable for future retail development, which will address the need to 'claw-back' lost trade to regional centres such as Swindon and Bath.

11.8 This site is considered to represent a natural extension to the Chippenham Town Centre.

R4 PROPOSALS OUTSIDE TOWN CENTRE PRIMARY AND TOWN CENTRE SECONDARY FRONTAGE AREAS

Retail development proposals (Use classes A1, A2, A3,) on the edge, or outside, the defined Town Centre shopping areas of Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett, Corsham, Malmesbury and Cricklade, will only be permitted where:

- i) There is a demonstrable need for the development;**
- ii) It can be demonstrated the sequential test approach has been followed, whereby there are no suitable sites in the town centre and edge of centre sites;**
- iii) Proposals do not individually or cumulatively undermine the vitality or viability of existing centres; and**
- iv) The proposal is accessible by a range of means including walking, cycling and by public transport.**

Applications to vary the goods sold or to allow subdivision of units will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre.

11.9 This policy relates to retail proposals situated on the edge of or outside the defined town centre primary and town centre secondary frontage areas. For the purposes of this policy, the definition of 'edge of centre' is that contained within national planning guidance and are such locations within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the Town Centre Primary Frontage Areas boundary. The definition of an existing town, district or local centres as noted within national planning policy guidance. In both cases retail developments should not be of such a scale, or type, or in such a location as to undermine the vitality or viability of the existing centres and should be accessible by a range of transport modes.

11.10 Developers will be expected to submit a retail assessment and supporting information for all proposals of 1500 square metres or more. Assessments may also be

necessary for smaller developments, depending on the relative size and nature of the development in relation to the centre. Developers will be expected to demonstrate a need for additional facilities and that the sequential approach, as defined in national Planning guidance, has been applied when selecting sites for new development. The Council will expect developers to demonstrate flexibility in terms of the format, design and scale of their development, tailoring these to fit local circumstances.

11.11 The Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications will take into account the findings of the Retail Needs Assessment undertaken in 2004.

11.12 If planning permission is granted, appropriate conditions or other means of legal agreement may be used to limit the size of the units and the range of goods to be sold, in order to prevent harm to the existing town centres.

R5 LOCAL SHOPS AND SERVICES

Proposals for local shops and services (Use Class A) will be permitted within towns and also within the framework boundaries of, villages provided that:

- i) The proposed retail use is consistent with the scale and function of the local centre or village and;**
- ii) The proposed development would improve the range of local social and community facilities.**
- iii) The proposed development will contribute to meeting local people's day-to-day needs, so reducing the need to travel.**
- iv) The proposed development would not harm the vitality or viability of a town or local centre in the vicinity.**

11.13 Local shopping areas can consist of individual or a small group of shops. For example, a newsagent, sub post office, pharmacy or hairdressers. These shops provide a valuable service to local residents in meeting local convenience shopping requirements. For example, a small parade of shops and services may be appropriate for new housing developments or such shops can help to maintain and enhance a village community. Where appropriate, the provision, or expansion, of small-scale retail facilities should be encouraged, particularly where they are accessible by a range of transport modes and appropriate to the character and function of the area.

R6 EXISTING LOCAL SHOPS AND SERVICES

The change of use of existing local shops and services (Use Class A), local centres will be permitted subject to:

- i) The business no longer being viable and every reasonable attempt to market the premises has been made.**
- ii) Development would result in the provision of alternative services of equivalent or greater community benefit.**
- iii) There are alternative facilities, within walking distance, available in the locality.**

11.14 The District Council seeks to retain the provision of existing shops and services, which provide a local service. The retention of local convenience shops, which residents might use on a weekly, if not daily basis, is considered particularly important. The loss of A1, A2 and A3 uses, which have a detrimental impact to the vitality or viability of the local shopping area, will not normally be permitted unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

11.15 However, the Council acknowledges that it would be unreasonable to resist a change of use where local patronage is such that a business (e.g. a public house) is no longer viable. In these circumstances, applicants will need to demonstrate that the existing use is not well supported and is not capable of being viably operated, or that there are satisfactory alternative facilities available within a convenient walking distance.

11.16 If necessary, the Council will commission its own survey in order to establish the viability of existing premises.

R7 UPPER FLOORS IN TOWN CENTRES

Use of upper floors of new and existing premises within town and local shopping centres for residential use, or in some cases community or employment uses, will be permitted, provided the use does not jeopardise the retail use of the ground floor.

11.17 The District Council seeks to promote residential use on the upper floors of retail premises, where such a use does not jeopardise the retail function of the ground floor use. Encouraging residential uses in shopping areas can add to the vitality and viability of the centre, increasing activity and providing a mixture of uses which reduces the need to travel in the interests of sustainability.

11.18 Where it is not possible to provide residential uses on the upper floors of premises in town centres, and where the floorspace is not required in connection with the ground floor retail use, a change of use to a community or employment use may be considered acceptable. Such uses could add to the diversity of town centre uses and be beneficial to the local community and economy.

11.19 In both cases, proposals will need to accord with policies elsewhere in this plan, and in particular the development control core policy.

12. COMMUNITY FACILITIES TOPIC AREA

CF1 LOCAL COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION FACILITIES

Within or adjoining the Framework Boundaries of Towns and Villages as defined on the Proposals Map, the provision of local community and education facilities will be permitted.

Land for the following local community and education facilities is safeguarded on the Proposal Maps:

**Land between Knockdown Lane and Sopworth Lane – Proposed School
Stoneover Lane, Wootton Bassett – Proposed School
Land off Blackwell Hams, Pewsham Way, Chippenham – Proposed Community Hall,
Barn at Derriads Farm, Chippenham – Proposed Community Use**

12.1 To facilitate a sustainable pattern of land uses, local community and education facilities need to be sited within or adjoining the communities that use them. Proposals, no matter how desirable from a social and community point of view, will need to be sympathetically designed to take account of adjoining properties and the area in general. Proposals will be required to take account of all the policies contained within the plan; in particular proposals will have to accord to the Development Control Core Policy.

12.2 To ensure the future implementation of proposed local community and education facilities the land necessary for their construction is safeguarded from inappropriate development.

CF2 LEISURE FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE

Proposals for leisure facilities and open space within or adjoining the Framework Boundaries of Towns and Villages as defined on the Proposals Map will be permitted.

Proposals for the redevelopment, replacement or improvement of existing leisure facilities or open spaces, will be permitted provided that:

- i) The replacement or improved facilities will be at least equivalent in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, and there will be no reduction in the overall capacity of leisure facilities and/or open spaces in the area of the development to accommodate demand; or**
- ii) The Council accepts that the loss of the existing facility or open space would not result in a deficiency, in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility in accordance with the methodology in North Wiltshire's Open Spaces Study, either now or in the foreseeable future and a clear environmental justification can be made for an alternative use; or**
- iii) The proposed development is for outdoor or indoor leisure facilities that will be of sufficient benefit to the community to outweigh the loss of the existing facility or open space; or**
- iv) Development proposals will improve facilities ancillary to its use.**

12.3 For the purposes of this Plan, open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity. It is acknowledged that it may be inappropriate for some forms of recreational facilities to be located next to existing settlements, due to the characteristics of the use. Examples include, motor sports where they would impact the amenity of an adjoining settlement, and water sports where canals, lakes, reservoirs and rivers are not always available within or adjacent to settlements. Open space as a visual amenity: even without public access, people enjoy having open space near them to provide an outlook, variety in the urban scene, or as a positive element in the landscape.

12.4 By definition, open space is of public value and accordingly the loss of any open space through development needs to be justified. The local planning authority will weigh any benefits being offered to the community through a development proposal against the loss of open space that would occur. Proposals, no matter how desirable from a social and community point of view, will need to be sympathetically designed to take account of adjoining properties and the area in general. Proposals will be required to take account of all the policies contained within the plan; in particular proposals will have to accord to the Development Control Core Policy.

CF3 PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

Proposals for new housing development will be required to make provision for open space on site, to provide 15m² for Local Parks and 3m² for play areas per person. The Council will accept in the appropriate circumstances, financial payments from developers for provision of open space according to the following order of preference:

- i) Provision of open space elsewhere which is appropriately located in relation to the development;**
- ii) Contributions towards the upgrading of existing nearby open spaces.**

Development will be required to make contributions to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity and/or quality of open space and the future maintenance of open space provided to meet needs arising from the new development as set out in North Wiltshire's Open Spaces Study.

12.5 All residential developments regardless of scale have the potential to contribute to the increased need generated to improve existing open spaces or provide new open spaces. The preference will be to provide new open space provision on site. However, this may not be practical for minor residential development proposals (ten dwellings or less). For these minor residential proposals, the use of a financial contribution would normally be considered appropriate.

12.6 Open space provision will be required in accordance with the Council's defined approach contained within the Open Space Study 2004.

13. TOURISM TOPIC AREA POLICIES

TM1 GENERAL POLICY FOR TOURISM

Proposals for new tourist accommodation will be expected to be located in, or adjacent to, existing towns and villages. Proposals for tourist development within the countryside that improves or extends the range of tourist facilities, including tourist accommodation will be permitted, provided that:

- i) It would result in the conversion of a suitable rural building; or**
- ii) Forms part of a farm diversification scheme; or**
- iii) Is an extension to existing facilities, of a scale appropriate to its location.**

Proposals for touring sites for caravans and/or tents will only be permitted where there is a proven need for this type of development.

13.1 The tourism industry is important to the economic success of the District, safeguarding existing and generating new jobs and contributing towards a living countryside. The development of tourism must, however, be sensitive to the environment in which it lies and not reduce the attractiveness of the countryside or negatively affect the amenity of local residents.

13.2 The definition of tourism for the purposes of this Plan is that used by the Tourism Society:

"The temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and the activities during their stay at these destinations."

Development proposals that do not accord with this definition of tourism will not be regarded as tourism developments.

TM2 WILTS AND BERKS / THAMES AND SEVERN CANALS

Restoration of the Wilts and Berks, including the North Wilts Branch, and Thames and Severn Canals along the routes as defined on the proposals map, will be supported in principle by protecting the alignment by:

- i) Not permitting development likely to destroy the canal alignment or its associated structures;**
- ii) Seeking an alternative alignment where development that cannot be provided elsewhere threatens the canal or its associated structures;**
- iii) Ensuring that where the canal is affected by development, the alignment is protected or an alternative alignment is provided and the canal is restored as part of that development process.**

13.3 Any proposal affecting the original route of either the Wilts and Berks or Thames and Severn canals will need to be given careful consideration to allow for the preservation of the canal as an amenity and recreational feature. The canal network within the District has the potential to achieve greater accessibility to the countryside from the District's residents and visitors. The use of disused towpaths along stretches of disused and restored canal will be encouraged.

TM3 SWINDON AND CRICKLADE RAILWAY LINE

It is proposed to restore, for leisure purposes, the route of the former railway line from Tadpole Lane, Swindon to Cricklade, subject to not causing demonstrable harm to any areas of nature conservation interest along its route.

13.4 The route of the former Swindon and Cricklade railway line from the south of Cricklade extends into Swindon Borough to link with Mouldon Hill Country Park. In the long-term, there is the possibility of considering extending any restored railway line route around the north side of Mouldon Hill, within Swindon Borough, and across the River Ray to Moredon Bridge, within North Wiltshire.

TM4 THE THAMES PATH NATIONAL TRAIL

In connection with the establishment and enhancement of the proposed Thames long distance path, development will not be permitted where proposals are likely to result in a significant adverse effect on the amenities and open landscape along the river and footpath route.

13.5 The Secretary of State for the Environment approved, in September 1989, the proposals of the Countryside Commission for a Thames long distance footpath, submitted under Section 51 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The route mainly follows existing rights of way, but in certain areas, new rights of way will need to be created to complete the route. The riverbanks and adjoining open areas are important in creating a green living corridor of nature conservation and landscape value. Such measures as tree planting and water habitats, involving the creation of bays and backwaters in certain suitable locations to create still water areas for plants and nesting will be encouraged.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Nature Conservation Sites of International and National Importance in North Wiltshire

Appendix Two: The Ten Areas of Special Archaeological Significance in North Wiltshire

Appendix Three: County Wide Parking Standards

Appendix Four: Transport Assessment & Travel Plans Thresholds

APPENDIX ONE

NATURE CONSERVATION SITES OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE IN NORTH WILTSHIRE

List of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in North Wiltshire

1. Emmett Hill Meadows (at Upper Minety)
2. Calstone and Cherhill Downs
3. *Clattinger Farm (at Oaksey) (North Meadow and Clattinger Farm cSAC)
4. Colerne Park and Monk's Wood
5. Ravensroost Wood (at Braydon)
6. Corsham Railway Cutting
7. King's Play Hill (at Heddington)
8. Sutton Lane Meadows (at Sutton Benger)
9. Little Grubbins Meadow (at North Wraxall)
10. Distillery Farm Meadows (at Minety)
11. Stanton St. Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting
12. *North Meadow, Cricklade (North Meadow and Clattinger Farm cSAC)
13. Out Woods (at North Wraxall)
14. Pike Corner (at Ashton Keynes)
15. Bincknoll Dip Woods (at Lydiard Tregoz)
16. Acres Farm Meadow (at Oaksey)
17. Upper Waterhay Meadow (at Ashton Keynes)
18. Rack Hill (at Yatton Keynell)
19. West Yatton Down (at Yatton Keynell)
20. Danks Down and Truckle Hill (at Yatton Keynell and North Wraxall)
21. *Box Mine (Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats cSAC)
22. Honeybrook Farm (at Slaughterford)
23. Restrop Farm and Brockhurst Wood (at Purton)
24. Goldborough Farm Meadows (at Broad Town)
25. Bencroft Hill Meadow (at Stanley)
26. Lake 52, Cotswold Water Park
27. Stoke Common Meadows
28. Cloatley Manor Farm Meadows
29. Wootton Bassett Mud Spring
30. Kellaways-West Tytherton, River Avon
31. Harries Ground, Rodbourne

* Starred are the three Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the two candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC). *North Meadow is a national nature reserve.

APPENDIX TWO

THE TEN AREAS OF SPECIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN NORTH WILTSHIRE

Upper Thames

A series of continuous cropmark complexes between Ashton Keynes and Inglesham, defining settlements and field boundaries of the later prehistoric and Romano-British period. The Saxon town of Cricklade is included. (28 sq.km; Thames Valley gravels; mostly arable, some pasture).

River Avon (Sherston-Malmesbury)

A large cluster of cropmark sites around the Roman town southeast of Easton Grey. The Saxon town of Malmesbury is included, and the medieval village earthworks at Brokenborough. (15 sq.km; limestone; largely arable, some pasture).

Cricklade-Purton

Extant remains of medieval ridge and furrow field systems which were enclosed as small fields in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. The hedgerows are well developed and generally well preserved. The ridge and furrow is also well preserved since the fields are pasture and not normally ploughed. (10.75 sq.km; clay, alluvium, glacial drift, and pasture).

Box

Well preserved lynchets and related features on valley side, probably medieval. (0.4 sq.km; limestone and Midford sands; pasture and old grassland).

Allington

Cropmarks illustrate a possible Iron Age / Romano-British settlement area. The medieval settlement attached to Sheldon Manor is included. (2 sq.km; limestone and clay; mostly arable).

Kington Langley

An area in which early mediaeval enclosure of land is well illustrated by aerial photography. Most of the features are extant. (0.5 sq.km; Kellaways sands; mostly pasture).

River Avon (Chippenham)

Cropmarks prove existence of probable Romano-British settlement concentrated upstream of Chippenham. (6 sq.km; Avon gravels; arable and meadowland).

Clyffe Pypard

Large expanse of medieval settlement earthworks with associated agricultural features. (6 sq.km; greensand, gault and Kimmeridge clay; pasture, arable and old grassland).

Sandy Lane

Roman town of Verlucio. (3.75 sq.km; greensand; arable, pasture and woodland).

Northern Chalkland

Territory extending from the Ridgeway to the Vale of Pewsey, including the Kennet Valley. The archaeology includes an exceptional palaeolithic deposit on the edge of Savernake Forest, potential mesolithic sites in the Kennet alluvium and the full range of later prehistoric, Romano-British, Saxon and medieval antiquities on the chalk. (400 sq.km;

principally middle and upper chalk, clay-with-flints and valley bottom deposits; arable, old grassland, woodland, pasture).

AREAS OF SPECIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN NORTH WILTSHIRE

Location	Prehistoric	Celtic Fields	Romano British	Saxon	Medieval	Post Medieval
Upper Thames	✓		✓	✓		
River Avon (Sherston / Malmesbury)			✓		✓	
Cricklade/Purton					✓	✓
Box					✓	
Allington	✓		✓		✓	
Kington Langley					✓	
River Avon (Chippenham)			✓			
Clyffe Pypard					✓	
Sandy Lane			✓			
Northern Chalkland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

APPENDIX THREE

COUNTYWIDE PARKING STANDARDS

Maximum Car Parking Standards

Land Use/Use Class	Maximum Parking Standard
A1 Retail	
Retail and food retail < 1000m ² GFA (Gross Floor Area)	1 per 35m ²
Retail > 1000m ² GFA	1 per 20m ²
Food Retail > 1000m ²	1 per 14m ²
A2 Financial and Professional Services	
	1 per 30m ²
A3 Food and Drink	
Restaurants, Cafes, Public Houses, Bars	1 per 25m ²
Takeaways	1 per 10m ²
B1 Business	
< 2500m ² GFA	1 per 30m ²
> 2500m ² GFA	1 per 35m ²
B2 General Industry	
GFA < 235m ²	1 per 30m ²
GFA > 235m ²	1 per 50m ²
B8 Storage and Warehousing	
GFA < 235m ²	1 per 30m ²
GFA > 235m ²	1 per 200m ²
C1 Hotels and Hostels	
	1 per bedroom
C2 Residential Institutions	
Hospitals	1 per 4 members of staff + 1 per 3 visitors
Nursing Homes	1 per 4 beds + 1 per 2 members of staff
C3 Dwelling Houses	
5+ beds	3 per unit + 1 space per 5 units
up to 4 beds (incl. flats)	2 per unit + 1 space per 5 units

Sheltered Accommodation	1 per 2 units + 1 space per 5 units
Other 'Retirement' Homes	1 per unit +1 space per 5 units
D1 Non Residential Institutions	
Places of Worship, Church Halls, Public Halls	1 per 5m ²
Clinics, Health Centres, Surgeries	5 per consulting room
Libraries	1 per 25m ²
Art Galleries and Museums	1 per 40m ²
Education Centres	
Staff	2 per 3 staff
Visitors	1 per 7 staff
Pupils	1 per 10 2 nd yr 6 th formers
College Students	1 per 4 students
Parents:	
Infants	1 per 12 pupils
Primary	1 per 20 pupils
Secondary	1 per 30 pupils.
D2 Assembly and Leisure	
Cinemas, Music and Concert Halls	1 per 5 seats
Dance Halls, Bingo Halls, Casinos	1 per 5m ²
Sports Facilities	1 per 2 players + 1 per 5m ² of spectators area.
Field Sports	Max. no. participants

Minimum Cycle Parking Standards

Land Use/Use Class	Minimum Cycle Parking Standard
Retail and Leisure Development	4 cycle spaces + 2 space per each 500m ² above 1000m ² GFA
Employment Development	4 cycle spaces + 2 space per each 500m ² above 1000m ² GFA
Housing Development	
New flats	Preferred: 1 secure covered space per flat (e.g. a cycle parking locker). Alternative: 1 Sheffield type stand per 2 flats.
Low cost housing and housing without a garage	1 secure covered space per dwelling (e.g. a cycle parking locker).
Special needs housing	None
Housing with garage	None
Secondary Schools	
Staff	2 spaces per 3 staff
Visitors	1 space per 45 pupils
Pupils	1 space per 10 pupils (5-11 years) 1 space per 3 pupils (over 12 years)
Sixth Form Colleges and Colleges of Further Education	
Staff	2 spaces per 3 staff
Visitors/Pupils	1 space per 5 pupils
Hospitals	
Staff	1 space per 4 staff
Visitors	1 space per 5 beds
Health Centres, Surgeries, Clinics	
Staff	1 space per 4 staff
Visitors/Patients	2 spaces per consulting room
Libraries/Museums	
Staff	1 space per 3 staff
Visitors/Pupils	1 space per 50m ² or part thereof
Sports Centre and Grounds	
Staff	1 space per 4 staff
Players	1 space per three players/visitors

APPENDIX FOUR

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT & TRAVEL PLANS THRESHOLDS

USE	Threshold above which Transport Assessments/Travel Plans are required. (m ² refers to Gross Floor Area)
Food retail	1,000m ²
Non-food retail	1,000m ²
Cinemas and conference facilities	1,000m ²
Leisure facilities	1,000m ²
Business	2,500m ²
Industry	5,000m ²
Distribution and warehousing	10,000m ²
Hospitals	2,500m ²
Higher and further education	2,500m ²
Stadia	1,500 seats
Housing	100 dwellings