

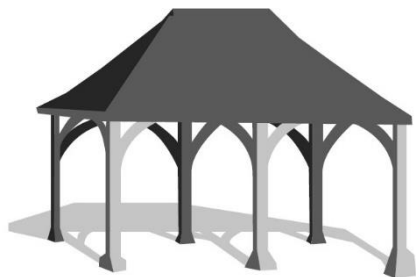


CHARLBURY  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PLAN 2031

**The future for our thriving community**

# **Basic Conditions Statement**

## **Submission Version – 28/07/2020**



**Charlbury**  
Town Council

# Section 1: Introduction & Background

- 1.1 This document is a 'Basic Conditions' Statement for the purposes of Regulations 15 (1)(d) and 22(1)(e) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). It has been produced by Charlbury Town Council to accompany the submission of the *Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (Submission Draft)* ["the CNP"] to West Oxfordshire District Council ["WODC"] which is the local planning authority.
- 1.2 This Basic Conditions Statement demonstrates how, in the opinion of Charlbury Town Council, the CNP meets the basic conditions and legal requirements set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to Neighbourhood Plans. Specifically, to meet these basic conditions the Neighbourhood Plan must:
- a) have appropriate regard to national planning policy and guidance;
  - b) contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - c) be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031;
  - d) be compatible with EU obligations.
- 1.3 The CNP sets out a positive vision for the future of the parish of Charlbury. The Plan aims to ensure that:
- The views and needs of the local community shape and direct development in the parish.
  - The imperative to tackle the climate emergency is addressed in consideration of all development within the parish.
- 1.4 The aims and objectives of the plan, reflecting responses to the 2016 Town Survey and other public consultation, are set out in section 3 of the CNP. The policies within the CNP are designed to achieve these aims and objectives.
- 1.5 The CNP includes policies addressing sustainable development, local housing needs and economic, environmental and design priorities. There are specific policies for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment of Charlbury and policies, together with design principles, for the type, location and character of any development proposed.

1.6 Documents of particular importance to the drafting of the CNP and this Statement include:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) [“the NPPF”]<sup>1</sup>
- The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (Sept 2018) [“the WOLP”]<sup>2</sup>
- The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023 (Oct 2018) [“the AONBMP”]<sup>3</sup>
- Planning Practice Guidance Neighbourhood Planning (revised 2019) [“PPGNP”]
- Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap (2018)

## **Background**

- 1.7 At the request of the Town Council, an advisory group was set up in 2013 to produce a strategic plan for Charlbury. Membership of the group was drawn from the community and the group reported regularly to the Town Council. Following advice from WODC and ORCC (Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, now Community First Oxfordshire (CFO)), the decision was taken at that time to use the Community Led Plan (CLP) model for the plan but the option was left open to produce a separate Neighbourhood Development Plan should that be considered appropriate at a later stage.
- 1.8 During 2013 and early 2014, a series of public meetings, workshops and other events were held in the town to engage the community and to identify the issues and aspirations of importance to the people of Charlbury.
- 1.9 Subsequently it was decided that work should be taken forward in two streams under an umbrella group named the Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum<sup>4</sup>. One stream would prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (the CNP) and the other a Community Action Plan (CAP). Further details of this process are included in section 4 of the CNP and in the separate consultation statement.
- 1.10 Preparation of the CNP has been carried out on behalf of Charlbury Town Council by the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. This group is chaired by a member of the town council. The steering group includes three town councillors (of whom 2 must be present at each meeting) and other co-opted members including two representatives from the Charlbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Feb 2019, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1936509/Local-Plan-BOOK-WEB.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plan 2018-2023 <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Agenda-Item-08-Appendix-A-2.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> NOTE: Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum is NOT a designated neighbourhood forum for neighbourhood planning purposes. It serves as an advisory body to Charlbury Town Council, which is the qualifying body for this Plan (see section **Error! Reference source not found.**).

1.11 To enhance the evidence base for the CNP, three pieces of work were undertaken at the request of Charlbury Town Council:

- A Housing Needs Assessment for the parish<sup>5</sup> – commissioned from consultants arc4.
- A Local Area Character assessment<sup>6</sup> - commissioned from Dr Kathryn Davies. Much of the work on this document was carried out by local volunteers under the guidance of Dr Kathryn Davies.
- Assessments of locations to be considered for protection as Local Green Spaces<sup>7</sup>. This work was carried out by local volunteers using a toolkit developed by Cotswold District Council and recommended to the steering group by WODC.

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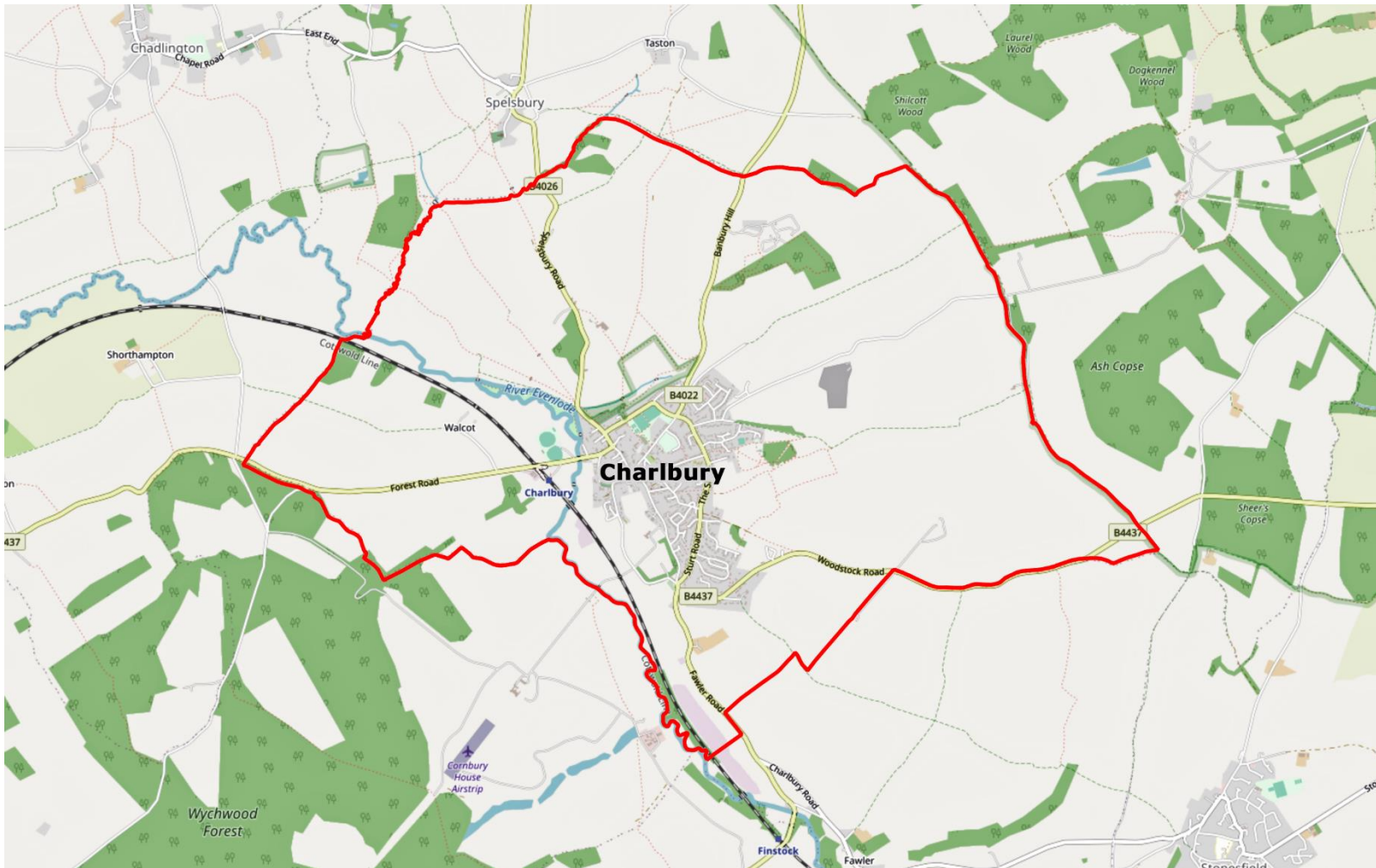
<sup>5</sup> Parish of Charlbury – Housing Needs Assessment – Final Report – January 2018 by arc4

<sup>6</sup> Charlbury Parish Character Assessment – Summer 2018 by Dr Kathryn Davies and the residents of Charlbury

<sup>7</sup> Charlbury Local Green Space Assessments – 2018 by residents of Charlbury

## Section 2: Legal Requirements

- 2.1 The CNP has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). It is being submitted by the Charlbury Town Council, which is the qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The CNP relates only to the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Area, which was designated by West Oxfordshire District Council on 17 September 2014 and is shown in Map 1 below and in section 1.5 of the CNP. The Neighbourhood Plan Area, which coincides with the civil parish of Charlbury includes the town of Charlbury, the settlement of Walcot and the surrounding rural area including outlying farms. There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to this area.
- 2.3 The CNP does not “constrain the delivery of important national policy objectives”, indeed it assists in achieving them at neighbourhood level. Neither does it deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure nor any other matters set out in section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2.4 The Plan will apply from the date of its adoption until 31st March 2031 running concurrently with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. It is recognised that the concerns and priorities of local residents may change over this period. It may therefore be necessary to revisit and revise the plan from time to time. Charlbury Town Council, as the Neighbourhood Plan Authority, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor its delivery.
- 2.5 The legal and policy context of the CNP is also set out in section 1 of the plan itself.



Map 1 - Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Area  
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## Section 3: How the Plan Meets the Basic Conditions

### 3.1 General Observations

- 3.1.1 This section of the Basic Conditions Statement describes how, in the opinion of Charlbury Town Council, the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 meets the basic conditions required for a Neighbourhood Plan as stated in paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.** Subsections 3.2 to 0 below cover each of the four conditions in turn.
- 3.1.2 The policies within the CNP are accompanied by supporting text which explains the context in which the policies are proposed including the “basic conditions” requirements and the relevant evidence base. To avoid duplication, references to this supporting text are included within this section where appropriate.
- 3.1.3 The Housing policies included in section 5 of the CNP have been formulated following in-depth consideration and analysis of a wide body of evidence and relevant planning policies, including those in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) and the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP), as well as the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) commissioned by the Town Council (Jan 2018). This analysis and consideration of the issues affecting Charlbury are set out in detail in the Housing Need & Policy Analysis, which is included as **Error! Reference source not found.** to the CNP.
- 3.1.4 The presumption in favour of sustainable development at Policy OS1 (and at paras 11-14 of the NPPF) is a given that underlies all the CNP policies. This is explored further in section 3.3 of this statement.
- 3.1.5 To avoid excessive duplication, the tables below contain summary commentaries but also include references to the sections, paragraphs and appendices within the CNP as appropriate, where further detail can be found.

### 3.2 Having appropriate regard to national planning policy and guidance

- 3.2.1 The CNP has been prepared with full regard to national policies as set out in the NPPF and is mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans. During the preparation of the CNP, two revisions to the NPPF were published, most recently in February 2019. Following these revisions, a review of the CNP was carried out to ensure compliance with the revised NPPF and to update references.
- 3.2.2 In line with NPPF paragraphs 13 & 29, the CNP seeks to “*shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development*” within the parish having regard to the specific local circumstances, needs, challenges and aspirations of the town and community of Charlbury.
- 3.2.3 The following matters of general significance are reflected throughout the CNP:

- **Charlbury’s location within the Cotswolds AONB.** In line with NPPF paragraph 172, CNP policies recognise the “*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty*” and that “*the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations*”.
- **The imperative to tackle the climate emergency.** In line with NPPF paragraph 149, the aims and objectives of the CNP include “*Aim 2: to address the challenge of climate change actively at the local level*” (see section 3 of the CNP).

3.2.4 The housing policies set out in section 5 of the CNP, seek to deliver Aim 3 of the plan “*To ensure that development in Charlbury is sustainable and meets the town’s local housing and employment needs*”. This aim reflects NPPF ¶29 in seeking to “*shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development*” within Charlbury to meet the needs of the town and community. The CNP emphasis on local needs reflects NPPF ¶77 which states that “*In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs*”. The policies also reflect Charlbury’s location within the Cotswolds AONB and the special considerations applicable to such areas as defined in NPPF ¶172.

3.2.5 NPPF ¶69 recommends that “*Neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area*”. As explained in CNP Appendix A (A.2), a “call for sites” was carried out but in view of revisions made to the WOLP following examination, a decision was subsequently taken not to allocate any sites but to adopt a “criteria-based” approach (see Appendix A Conclusion 1) reflecting the “*more restrictive approach to new housing development*” within the Cotswolds AONB adopted by the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

3.2.6 The following table summarises how specific provisions of the NPPF have been taken into account for each of the policies within the CNP. As well as identifying the relevant NPPF paragraphs, the table also includes references to sections, paragraphs and appendices within the CNP where further explanation may be found.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
CH1	Meeting the needs of the parish of Charlbury	77-78, 172	Section 5.2, 5.3.1 to 5.3.4, Appendix A	This policy seeks to shape development to meet local needs in a rural area in accordance with NPPF ¶77 and recognising the constraints associated with Charlbury’s location within the Cotswolds AONB [NPPF ¶172].



Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
CH2 CH3	Affordable Homes Lower-cost Housing	62, 77, Annex 2 definition of “Affordable housing”	5.3.5, 5.3.6, Appendix A	These policies recognise the challenges of housing affordability and hence the overwhelming local need for “Affordable housing” [as defined in Annex 2 to the NPPF] and other lower-cost housing.
CH4	Rural Exception Sites (RES)	77 plus Annex 2 definition	5.3.7 & 5.3.8	Policy supports RES to meet the housing needs of those with a local connection as per the RES definition in Annex 2 of the NPPF.
CH5	Maintaining affordable housing in the parish	7	5.3.9, 5.3.10 & 5.3.11	¶7 of the NPPF summarises sustainable development as “ <i>meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs</i> ” (drawn from Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly). Given the overwhelming local requirement for affordable housing, and the shortage of available land (e.g. due to Charlbury’s location in the Cotswolds AONB), there is a clear requirement for affordable homes to remain affordable for future residents.
CH6	Size and type of homes	61, 117	5.3.12, Appendix A.4 & Housing Needs Assessment	This policy addresses the requirements of ¶61 of the NPPF to reflect the assessed size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community. It also promotes effective use of land in accordance with NPPF ¶117.
CH7	Mix of affordable rented housing	65	5.3.12, Appendix A	This policy acknowledges the WOLP assessment of the required mix for new affordable rented housing but emphasizes areas of identified local need.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
CH8	Subdivision of dwellings to create smaller units	61, 117	5.3.13 & 5.3.14	This policy provides a specific extension to policy CH6 for alterations to existing homes. Assessment of current housing stock shows an excess of larger homes and a shortage of smaller properties. This situation has been exacerbated by the understandable tendency of many residents needing to “upsized”, to extend their existing homes rather than moving to a larger one. Proposals to divide large homes into smaller units are therefore welcomed as a possible way to redress the imbalance. In this way, such schemes will assist in achieving the mix of homes identified in policy CH6 [in line with NPPF ¶61]. By their very nature, such schemes will contribute to an improvement in the effective use of land in accordance with NPPF ¶117.
CH9	Development in residential gardens	70	5.3.15 & 5.3.16	This policy seeks to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, which would cause harm to the local area in accordance with NPPF ¶70.
CH10	Needs of older people and those with disabilities	61, 77	5.3.17, 5.3.18 & 5.3.19	In line with NPPF ¶61, this policy specifically addresses the identified needs of older people & those with disabilities. By reflecting identified local needs, it follows the guidance in NPPF ¶77.
ECT1	Rural Service Centre Role	83	6.2.3, 6.2.4 & 6.2.5	This policy provides support for a prosperous rural economy in line with NPPF ¶83. It recognises Charlbury’s important role as a rural service centre providing employment and vital services to the town and surrounding villages. It seeks to preserve and enhance that role for the benefit of the wider community as well as for the vitality of Charlbury itself.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
ECT2	Protecting retail, employment and services	83(d), 77	6.2.6, 6.2.7, 6.2.8 & 6.2.9	Building on policy ECT1, this policy seeks to retain premises used for retail, employment and the provision of local services in line with NPPF ¶83(d). Where change of use cannot be avoided, this policy, alternative employment or community use is preferred in furtherance of the above NPPF guidance but where this is not possible, the policy seeks to ensure that residential use meets the specific and identified local needs in line with NPPF ¶77.
ECT3	Home working	83	6.2.10 & 6.2.11	As with ECT1 and ECT2, this policy seeks to support a prosperous rural economy in line with NPPF ¶83. Specifically, this policy recognises that opportunities for large scale employment development are limited but that Charlbury, with good transport links and services, is well suited to home working, which can make a significant contribution to the economy and vitality of the town and its community. A significant number of residents already work from home within a wide variety of businesses and developments that can build on this are to be encouraged.
ECT4	Sustainable Tourism	83(c)	6.2.12 to 6.2.17	Continuing the theme of supporting the rural economy, this policy specifically addresses the promotion of sustainable tourism as highlighted in NPPF ¶83(c). This is particularly important and appropriate to Charlbury, located in the Cotswolds AONB and recently designated as a Cotswold Gateway Town by the Cotswold Conservation Board.
ECT5 ECT6	Protection of Community Facilities Children's Play Areas	83(d), 91, 92	Section 6.3	These policies draw together the promotion of a healthy and safe community in line with NPPF ¶¶ 91 & 92, plus protection of the existing community facilities and buildings on which such a community depends [in accordance with NPPF ¶83(d)].
ECT7 & ECT8	Parking	Section 9, notably 102(e) & 105	Section 6.4	These policies reflect the need to promote sustainable transport as set out in section 9 of the NPPF, particularly ¶102(e) and ¶105, having particular regard to the current pressures on parking space within the town and narrowness of town centre streets.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
ECT9	Walking & Cycling	Sections 8 & 9, notably paras 91, 102, 104 and 110	Sections 6.5 & 6.6	These policies continue the themes of promoting sustainable transport (NPPF section 9) and a healthy, safe community (NPPF section 8). In particular, they address the requirements set out in NPPF ¶¶ 91(a), 102(c), 104(d) & 110.
ECT10	Easy access for all			
ECT11	Public Transport			
ECT12	Electric Vehicle Charging Points	110(e)	Section 6.7	This policy and the associated “Community Aspiration 6” specifically address the requirement set out in NPPF ¶110(e)
ECT13-15	Road Safety	91	Section 6.8	These policies seek to enhance road safety, especially for pedestrians to help deliver a healthy and safe community in line with NPPF ¶91.
NE1	Protecting the Cotswolds AONB	170(a-b),172	7.1.1 & 7.1.2 7.2.1, 7.2.2, 7.2.4 & 7.2.6	This policy recognises Charlbury’s location within the Cotswolds AONB and seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage commensurate with its AONB status in accordance with NPPF ¶170(a&b) and ¶172.
NE2	Protecting Important Views	172, 185	7.1.1 & 7.1.2 7.2.1 to 7.2.4	Views are of major importance to the character of Charlbury and its surrounding countryside. By seeking to protect these views, this policy supports the great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB required by NPPF ¶172. The policy also recognises the significance of the views to the town’s historic environment and contributes to the conservation and enjoyment of that environment as called for by NPPF ¶185.
NE3	Protecting the Evenlode Valley	170(a-b),172	7.1.2 7.2.3 & 7.2.4	This policy builds on NE1 & NE2 to provide protection for a particularly important and sensitive landscape feature within the AONB.
NE4	Tranquility and Dark Skies	Para 180	7.2.8	In recognition of Charlbury’s sensitive location and landscape within the Cotswolds AONB, this policy seeks to avoid and mitigate the effects of noise & light pollution in line with NPPF ¶180(b&c).

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
NE5 NE6	Biodiversity and Trees Blue/Green Infrastructure	170,171, 174 and 91	Section 7.3	These policies contribute to enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity (as called for in NPPF ¶¶170, 171 and 174) by identification and protection of blue/green infrastructure including important blue/green corridors and by requiring developments to included proportionate measures to preserve and enhance biodiversity appropriate to the location. Through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure these policies also contribute to the promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles in line with NPPF ¶91(c).
NE7	Local Green Space	99 to 101	Section 7.4 Appendix E plus supporting document	This policy designates 17 Local Green Spaces as permitted under NPPF ¶99. All sites were assessed using the Cotswold District Council toolkit (as endorsed by West Oxfordshire DC). In the opinion of Charlbury Town Council, all of the designated sites meet the conditions set out in NPPF ¶100. Assessment summaries are included within the CNP as Appendix E and the full assessments are available in the supporting document “Local Green Space Assessments”.
NE8	Flood Risk and Water Quality Management	155, 163 plus 170(e)	Section 7.5	This policy is in accord with NPPF ¶¶155 & 163 in seeking to ensure that developments do not increase flood risk in Charlbury or elsewhere along the Evenlode valley, and in promoting measures to reduce flood risk. In seeking to improve water quality within the Evenlode catchment, the policy is also in accord with NPPF ¶170(e).
NE9	Environmental Design Standards	150(b)	7.1.8, Section 7.6	This policy promotes excellence in environmental design in recognition of the declared climate emergency. The policy is in accord with NPPF ¶150(b) in acknowledging the need to align with government standards whilst encouraging developers to exceed the required standards where possible.
HE1	Protecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets	Section 16, notably 184, 187, 189-90, 197	8.6.1 to 8.6.6 Appendix D	Appendix D identifies local non-designated heritage assets and proposes them for inclusion in a local list, contributing to the records called for by NPPF ¶187. This policy seeks proportionate protection for these assets themselves and in recognition of their contribution to the character of the town and conservation area. This is in accordance with section 16 of the NPPF and in particular with ¶¶184, 189, 190 and 197.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Key NPPF Refs.	Key CNP Refs.	Commentary
HE2	Locally Appropriate Design	124-126, 127(c), 130	8.6.1 & 8.6.2, 8.6.7 to 8.6.12 Appendix C  Charlbury Parish Character Assessment	In line with NPPF ¶¶124-6, this policy together with the design guidance provided in Appendix C, seeks to ensure that development sustains and enhances the character and quality of Charlbury’s built environment and landscape. The guidance describes the distinctive characteristics and features of each area drawing on evidence from the Charlbury Parish Character Assessment produced during the preparation of the CNP and reflecting local aspirations. Guiding principles promote good quality design and encourage development that maintains and enhances Charlbury’s character and sense of place. Charlbury Town Council believes that the design guidance in Appendix C is in line with NPPF ¶127, particularly sub-paragraph (c).
HE3	Archaeology	189, 194 incl. footnote 63	8.6.13 to 8.6.15	In line with NPPF ¶189, this policy calls for prior evaluation of archaeological impact of developments in historically sensitive areas of the town or relating to heritage assets. The requirement for such evaluation, including for non-designated assets with archaeological interest is further emphasised by NPPF ¶194 and footnote 63.

### 3.3 Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development

3.3.1 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives to sustainable development: Economic, Social and Environmental.

3.3.2 Key ways in which the CNP will contribute to securing net gains to these three objectives for sustainable development are:

- The CNP sets out a positive vision for the future of the parish and community of Charlbury based on responses to the 2016 town survey and other public consultation.
- The aims and objectives of the CNP [CNP section 3] overwhelmingly seek to secure a sustainable future for the town and community. The CNP policies are designed to address these aims and encompass economic, social and environmental matters.
- The recognition (by the Town Council in particular) of a climate emergency has been a major consideration in the drafting of the Plan. In this regard, Aim 2 of the CNP is “*To address the challenge of climate change actively at local level*”. This aim underlies many of the CNP’s policies in relation to the natural environment [Section 7], transport [Policies ECT9-12] and energy efficiency [Policy NE9].

- The CNP takes a positive, criteria-based approach to the provision of new housing to meet the Parish’s identified needs and thereby to support a sustainable future for the community, the town and its landscape setting. [CNP section 5 – policies CH1 to CH10].
- The CNP recognises the challenges of an ageing population and the need to maintain a diverse and sustainable community. It also recognises that housing affordability is a major issue and identifies the types of housing needed to address these challenges. [Also CNP section 5 – policies CH1 to CH10].
- The CNP supports the Charlbury’s role as a rural service centre and seeks to protect and enhance local services, facilities and infrastructure [CNP Section 6 – policies EHT1 to EHT6].
- The CNP seeks to promote walking and cycling and safe pedestrian access for all for a healthy lifestyle and the reduction of car journeys [CNP Section 6 – policies ECT9 to EHT 15].
- The CNP supports the protection and enhancement of environmental and historic assets [CNP Sections 7 & 8 – policies NE1 to NE9 and HE1 to HE3]

3.3.3 The contribution of the CNP to sustainable development is considered section by section in the table below.

CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
5	CH1 to CH10	Housing	To shape development to meet the local needs identified in CNP Appendix A and to maintain the town as a diverse and sustainable community	<b><u>Neutral/Positive</u></b> THE CNP does not identify sites but supports the possibility of rural exception sites to meet local needs [CH4].	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The focus on local need serves to maintain and enhance the vitality of the town and protect the viability of vital local services. Policies CH2, CH3 and CH5 also look to the needs of future generations by seeking to ensure that housing remains affordable to future residents.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> These policies seek to ensure that development respects and avoids harm to the natural and historical environment – an important factor in achieving sustainable development.

CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
6.2	ECT1 to ECT4	Economy & Employment	To support and enhance Charlbury's role as a rural service centre (RSC)	<b><u>Positive</u></b> These policies support developments which maintain and enhance local services, and support homeworking or sustainable tourism.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Policy ECT2 in particular seeks to protect facilities and services that are important to the community, and to retain community benefit where change of use cannot be avoided.	<b><u>Neutral</u></b> Although these policies do not address the environmental objective directly, support for homeworking [ECT3] will serve to reduce commuter journeys and related carbon emissions.
6.3	ECT5 & ECT6	Recreation and Community Facilities	To protect and enhance provision of community services and facilities including Children's Play Areas	<b><u>Neutral/Positive</u></b> Insofar as policy ECT5 is able to prevent the loss of commercial businesses (e.g. shops and pubs), this will have a positive impact.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Protection and enhancement of local services and facilities, (including children's play areas [ECT6]) are important for the wellbeing of the community and residents of the town.	<b><u>Neutral/Positive</u></b> The protection and retention of outdoor amenities will have a positive environmental impact.
6.4	ECT7 & ECT8	Parking	See section 6.8 below			



CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
6.5	ECT9 & ECT10	Walking & Cycling	To promote walking and cycling and ensure safe access to local facilities for all.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The provision of safe walking routes to access local services (e.g. shops) will help to increase the usage and continued viability of those facilities.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Increasing the use of walking and cycling for short journeys and the provision of safe access to services will make a major contribution to maintain and fostering a healthy and vibrant community.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Encouraging walking and cycling for short journeys will reduce car journeys with a consequent reduction in carbon emissions.
6.6	ECT11	Public Transport	To retain and enhance public transport provision and accessibility.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Easy access to Charlbury by public transport will improve the viability of local businesses and services making them readily accessible to a wider clientele and pool of potential staff.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Access to good public transport services will help to maintain Charlbury as a vibrant community.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Good public transport links will reduce the number of car journeys with consequent reduction in carbon emissions.
6.7	ECT12	Electric Vehicles	To encourage the use of electric vehicles in preference to those using fossil fuels.	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Reduction in conventional car usage in favour of electric vehicles will lead to a quieter, less polluted environment and reduction in carbon emissions.

CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
6.8 and 6.4	ECT13 to ECT15 plus ECT7 & ECT8	Road Safety and Parking	To improve road safety, especially for pedestrians and to address issues of safety, convenience and visual impact related to parking.	<b><u>Neutral/Positive</u></b> There may be some positive impact from improving accessibility to local businesses for visitors to the town.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> These policies will help to provide a safer built environment with better and safer accessibility to services.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> As with ECT9 & ECT10 [see 6.5 above], improvements in pedestrian safety will encourage a reduction in car journeys with a consequent positive impact on carbon emissions and pollution levels.
7.2	NE1 to NE4	Landscape Character	To conserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting within the AONB and to protect and enhance the environment	<b><u>Neutral</u></b> It should be noted however, that any failure to protect Charlbury's strong landscape setting could have a substantial negative impact on the economy of the town (e.g. as a tourist destination)	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The strong landscape surrounding Charlbury is a key feature defining the character of the town and much loved by members of the community.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> These policies make an important positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
7.3	NE5 & NE6	Biodiversity and Blue/Green Infrastructure	To protect & enhance the natural environment, including important blue/green corridors, to protect wildlife and achieve a net gain in biodiversity.	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Protection of the natural environment and water courses is vital to the health and wellbeing of current and future generations.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> These policies provide a high level of protection for blue/green infrastructure leading to gains in biodiversity and protection of wildlife and water courses.

CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
7.4	NE7	Local Green Spaces	To protect green spaces of particular importance to the town and community of Charlbury.	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The designated sites are of great significance to members of the community and make important contributions to the life of the community and setting of the town.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The designated sites make important contributions to the natural environment and to the character and setting of the town.
7.5	NE8	Flood Risk and Water Quality	To maintain & enhance the quality of ground waters; manage & reduce flood risk.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Failure to address these issues could have a serious negative economic impact.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Reduction of flood risk and management of water quality are crucial to the needs of future generations.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Reduction of flood risk is essential for the protection of the natural and built environment. Policy NE8 also seeks to reduce water course pollution.
7.6	NE9	Environmental Design Standards	To encourage excellence in environmental design standards to address the challenges of the climate emergency.	<b><u>Neutral/Positive</u></b> While initial costs may be greater, the lifetime costs of ownership of homes built to higher standards should be lower.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Encouragement of excellence in environmental standards will help to foster a well-designed and safe built environment equipped for the future needs of a low-carbon community.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> Incorporating the best environmental design standards will improve energy efficiency and contribute to the move to a low-carbon economy.

CNP Section	Policies	Topic	CNP Focus	CNP Impact on Sustainable Development		
				Economic	Social	Environmental
8	HE1 to HE3	Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design	To secure a sustainable future for Charlbury's historic environment and to reinforce local distinctiveness.	<b>Positive</b> Sustaining Charlbury's historic character helps to attract visitors who use its shops and facilities and businesses to locate here.	<b>Positive</b> By protecting and respecting Charlbury's historic environment, these policies contribute to the cultural well-being of the community.	<b>Positive</b> These policies make a significant contribution to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

### 3.4 General conformity with the strategic local plan policies

- 3.4.1 The strategic local plan policies relating to the Charlbury Neighbourhood Area are defined in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP), which was adopted in September 2018. For the purposes of the WOLP, Charlbury lies within the Burford-Charlbury sub-area (WOLP Chapter 9 – Strategy at the local level) and is designated as a Rural Service Centre.
- 3.4.2 By the time that the WOLP was adopted, preparation of the CNP was well advanced so that much of the early work on the CNP was based on draft versions of the WOLP. However, Charlbury Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group kept in close contact with WODC during this time and actively engaged in the consultation processes for the WOLP.
- 3.4.3 Following examination and at the request of the examiner, revisions were made to the WOLP which included significant changes for the Burford-Charlbury sub-area. As a result, a significant review of the CNP was undertaken to reflect the WOLP changes. This review primarily affected the housing policies in section 5 of the CNP.
- 3.4.4 The most significant late WOLP changes for Charlbury relate to a revision of housing allocations for the Burford-Charlbury sub-area in recognition that the majority of the sub-area (including the whole of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Area) lies within the Cotswolds AONB and that, consequently, a more restricted approach to development was appropriate in this area. In particular, the housing allocation for the sub-area was revised downwards, four formerly proposed site allocations within the sub-area, including one in Charlbury, were removed from the plan and there was an increased emphasis on the need to reflect local needs within the AONB. Reflecting these changes, the decision was taken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group that the CNP would adopt a “criteria-led” approach to housing focussed on meeting local needs and would NOT include any site allocations. The analysis leading to this decision is explored in more detail in the “*Housing Need & Policy Analysis*”, which is included as **Error! Reference source not found.** to the CNP and the decision is summarised as “Conclusion 1” in that appendix and in section 5.1 of the CNP.

3.4.5 The table below outlines how, in the opinion of Charlbury Town Council, each of the CNP policies is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the WOLP. Chapter 2 (Overall Strategy) of the WOLP includes the main strategic policies (prefixed OS) but many of the other policies included in the WOLP may reasonably be considered to be strategic in nature, serving to meet the WOLP's clear expression of objectives in the opening Chapter 'Our Vision'. To reflect this, WOLP references in the table below are not restricted to the "OS" policies but include those WOLP policies that appear particularly relevant to the issues addressed by each CNP policy.

Policy No.	Policy Title	WOLP Refs.	CNP Refs.	Commentary
CH1	Meeting the needs of the parish of Charlbury	OS2, H1, H2, EH1, BC1	5.3.2 to 5.3.4 Appendix A	This policy is in conformance with the housing delivery requirements for the Burford-Charlbury sub-area as set out in WOLP policies H1 and H2 but seeks to shape development in Charlbury to meet local needs in recognition of the constraints arising from Charlbury's location within the Cotswolds AONB [WOLP policies OS2, EH1 and BC1 and also paragraphs 9.6.28 & 9.6.29]. For further explanation, see the referenced paragraphs and appendix within the CNP.
CH2 CH3	Affordable Homes Lower-cost Housing	OS2, H3, BC1	5.3.5, 5.3.6 Appendix A	These policies are in line with WOLP policy H3 and go further to support developments of predominantly affordable and/or lower-cost housing which will remain affordable for future residents. They are included in recognition of the overwhelming local need for affordable and lower-cost housing.
CH4	Rural Exception Sites (RES)	OS2, H3, BC1	5.3.7, 5.3.8	This policy endorses the support for Rural Exception Sites included within WOLP policy H3 in recognition that such developments can deliver affordable housing to those with local connections, thereby providing a uniquely important contribution to meeting local needs.
CH5	Maintaining affordable housing in the parish	N/A	5.3.9 to 5.3.11	This policy respects the WOLP but seeks to ensure that affordable housing is available to future residents given the constraints on available land for replacement housing.
CH6 CH7	Size and type of homes Mix of affordable rented housing	OS2, H4, 5.64	Footnote 21 5.3.12 Appendix C	These policies reflect the housing mix requirements in WOLP policy H4 with more specific local context aimed at the delivery of balanced housing stock.

Policy No.	Policy Title	WOLP Refs.	CNP Refs.	Commentary
CH8	Subdivision of dwellings to create smaller units	H6	5.3.13, 5.3.14	This policy is compatible with WOLP policy H6 but recognises subdivision as a way of redressing the imbalance of housing mix from larger to smaller homes.
CH9	Development in residential gardens	OS2, EH10	5.3.15, 5.3.16	This policy seeks to ensure that any development within residential gardens does not cause harm to the town's character and appearance. It respects the general principles included in WOLP policy OS2 as well as those appropriate to the conservation area in policy EH10.
CH10	Needs of older people and those with disabilities	H4, BC1	5.3.17 to 5.3.19	This policy is in line with the housing type and mix requirements specified in WOLP policy H4 but focuses on the needs of older people & those with disabilities in line with WOLP policy BC1.
ECT1	Rural Service Centre Role	OS2, E1, E2, BC1	Aim 4, 6.2.1 to 6.2.5	The WOLP designates Charlbury as a Rural Service Centre (RSC) [WOLP policies OS2 and BC1]. CNP policy ECT1 actively supports this role and the rural economy in general [WOLP E2], identifying practical measures required to reinforce the RSC role.
ECT2	Protecting retail, employment and services	OS2, E1, E2, E5, BC1	Aim 4, 6.2.6 to 6.2.9	This policy strongly supports WODC's commitment to development and retention of local services and community facilities as set out in WOLP policies E5 and BC1. Although the WOLP does not designate Charlbury as a town centre for specific protection under policy E6, such protection is an important objective of the CNP [CNP Aim 4]. Recognising that change of use may be inevitable in some cases, this policy seeks to direct such changes to provide other employment or community benefits where possible. This approach reinforces WOLP policy E1 and is in line with the aspirations of WOLP policies E5 and BC1.
ECT3	Home working	E2, BC1	6.2.10, 6.2.11	As with ECT1 and ECT2, this policy seeks to support a prosperous rural economy in line with WOLP policies E2 and BC1. Opportunities for employment development are limited but Charlbury, with good transport links and services, is well suited to home working, which can make a significant contribution to the economy and vitality of the town and its community.

Policy No.	Policy Title	WOLP Refs.	CNP Refs.	Commentary
ECT4	Sustainable Tourism	E4, BC1	6.2.12 to 6.2.17	The WOLP strongly supports sustainable tourism [policies E4 and BC1]. CNP policy ECT3 is in line with and reinforces these policies as appropriate for Charlbury in view of its location within the Cotswolds AONB and status as both a Cotswold Gateway and Walkers are Welcome Town. This policy expands on the WOLP policies by including features to be welcomed in appropriate development applications.
ECT5	Protection of Community Facilities	E5, BC1	6.3.1 to 6.3.5	This policy endorses WOLP policy E5
ECT6	Children's Play Areas	OS4, EH5	6.3.6 to 6.3.9	This policy endorses the commitment to provision of children's play space included in WOLP policies EH5 and OS4, providing local detail.
ECT7 ECT8	Parking Station Car Park	T4, BC1	Section 6.4	These policies are consistent with WOLP policy T4 but expand on it in recognition of the specific problems relating to Charlbury and the priority given to the issue by members of the community. This is explained further in paragraph 6.4.4 and other text within section 6.4 of the CNP.
ECT9 ECT10	Walking & Cycling Easy access for all	OS2, T1, T3, BC1	6.5.1 to 6.5.3	These policies endorse and expand on the WOLP promotion of walking and cycling, and its commitment to pedestrian safety in line with WOLP policies OS2, BC1, T1 and T3.
ECT11	Public Transport	OS2, T3, BC1	6.6.1, 6.6.2	This policy endorses WOLP policy T3 in its commitment to public transport provision and emphasise the importance of safe and easy access to that transport.
ECT12	Electric Vehicle Charging Points	CO17, 7.14	6.7.1, 6.7.2	This policy contributes to promoting and enabling the move towards renewable energy usage by removing obstacles to the use of electric powered vehicles. This is in line with the climate emergency commitments of Oxfordshire County Council, WODC and Charlbury Town Council. It echoes WOLP Core Objective CO17 and the provision of charging facilities is specifically mentioned in paragraph 7.14 of the WOLP.
ECT13-15	Road Safety	T3, BC1	Section 6.8	In line with WOLP policy T3, these policies seek to enhance road safety, especially for pedestrians and to provide safe access to Charlbury Primary School.

Policy No.	Policy Title	WOLP Refs.	CNP Refs.	Commentary
NE1	Protecting the Cotswolds AONB	OS2, EH1, EH2, BC1	Section 7.1 7.2.1, 7.2.2	This policy seeks to ensure that development conserves and enhances the landscape and heritage of the Cotswolds AONB. This reflects and endorses WOLP policies EH1 & EH2 and also the general principles within policies OS2 and BC1.
NE2	Protecting Important Views	OS2, EH1, EH2, EH10, EH14, BC1	Section 7.1 7.2.1 to 7.2.3	This policy is designed to protect views of, from and within the town and its surrounding landscape whose importance was emphasised in the Parish Character Assessment. This is consistent with WOLP policies covering the Cotswolds AONB [EH1], the sensitive nature of the landscape [EH2] and the conservation area [EH10]. This policy also helps to protect the setting of the registered historic park of Cornbury [EH14].
NE3	Protecting the Evenlode Valley	OS2, EH1, EH2, BC1	Section 7.1 7.2.3, 7.2.4, 7.2.5, 7.2.6, 7.2.7	The strong and sensitive landscape of the Evenlode valley is Charlbury's most distinctive landscape feature and of critical importance to its setting. Its contribution to the AONB is recognised in the 1998 Landscape Assessment. The inclusion of this specific policy to protect the Evenlode Valley is therefore justified and is consistent with WOLP policies EH1 and EH2. The protection included in this policy also helps to avoid coalescence between the town of Charlbury and the hamlet of Walcot in line with the general principles of WOLP policy OS2.
NE4	Tranquility and Dark Skies	OS2, EH2, EH4, EH8	7.2.8	This policy reflects and endorses WOLP policies EH2, EH4 and EH8 with regard to the effects of noise & light pollution.
NE5 NE6	Biodiversity and Trees Blue/Green Infrastructure	OS2, OS4, EH3, EH4, BC1	Section 7.1 Section 7.3	These policies endorse and follow WOLP policies EH3 & EH4 whilst providing important additional and locally appropriate detail. WOLP policy EH4 acknowledges the role of Neighbourhood Plans in adding to WODC's green infrastructure plans through policies such as these.



Policy No.	Policy Title	WOLP Refs.	CNP Refs.	Commentary
NE7	Local Green Space	OS2, OS4, EH4, BC1	Section 7.4 Appendix E plus supporting document	This policy designates 17 Local Green Spaces(LGS) in accordance with the NPPF (see table relating to 3.2.6 above). This further adds to WODC's green infrastructure plans in accordance with WOLP policy EH4. All candidate LGS sites were assessed using the Cotswold DC toolkit approved and recommended by WODC. Use of this toolkit addresses the requirements for LGS designation set out in the NPPF. Summary assessments are included in Appendix E to the CNP and full assessments are available in the supporting document "Local Green Space Assessments".
NE8	Flood Risk and Water Quality Management	OS2, EH7, EH8, BC1	Section 7.5	This policy endorses and follows WOLP policy EH7 providing important additional and locally appropriate detail. The policy also addresses the issue of water quality within the Evenlode Catchment area in recognition of the importance of this water course and the significant concerns relating to water quality issues. This latter aspect of the policy is in line with WOLP policy EH8.
NE9	Environmental Design Standards	OS4 WO Design Guide	Section 7.6	This policy encourages design excellence to mitigate climate change. It is in line with WOLP policy OS4 whilst encouraging developers to exceed statutory requirements.
HE1	Protecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets	EH9, EH10, EH12, EH16	8.6.1 to 8.6.6 Appendix D	Appendix D of the CNP identifies local non-designated heritage assets and proposes them for inclusion in a local list. This policy requires significant weight to be given to the value of these assets in themselves and for their contribution to the character of the conservation area. This is in accordance with WOLP policy EH16 and also reflects WOLP policies EH9, EH10 and EH12.
HE2	Locally Appropriate Design	OS4, EH9-16 WO Design Guide	8.6.7 to 8.6.12 Appendix C	This policy builds on WOLP policy OS4, seeking to ensure that development sustains and enhances the character and quality of Charlbury's built environment and landscape by following the design guidance provided in Appendix C. It supports WOLP policies EH 9-16 as well as the WO Design Guide.
HE3	Archaeology	EH9, EH11, EH12, EH15, EH16	8.6.13 to 8.6.15	This policy supports the archaeological requirements of WOLP policies EH9, 11, 12, 15 and 16 by seeking prior evaluation of archaeological impact where appropriate.



## 3.5 Compatibility with EU obligations

3.5.1 The Plan is compatible with EU obligations in relation to human rights, habitat protection and environmental impacts. Specifically:

- Where Local Green Space and Local Listing designations are proposed, consultation and notification of their inclusion in the Plan has occurred with the landowners concerned. Others potentially affected by the proposals have also been consulted and have had the opportunity to comment on them, as set out in the Consultation Statement.
- In accordance with requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC, West Oxfordshire District Council prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion in January 2020 which concluded that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan is not required. Specifically, at paragraph 5.3, the screening report stated: “*West Oxfordshire District Council considers that the draft Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan (CNP2031, September 2019) is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and thus does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*”.
- The District Council also confirmed via their Habitat Regulations Screening Opinion that no further Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required. Paragraph 6.2 of the WODC Screening Report includes the sentence: “*The HRA of the Local Plan remains valid and there is no new material and relevant information that should be considered*”.