



Bletchington & Hampton Gay & Poyle

Design Code

November 2025



Contents

For:



Community First
Oxfordshire

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Introduction

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) has been commissioned by Bletchingdon Parish Council and Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay and Poyle Parish meeting to prepare a Design Code in support of the refresh of the Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay and Poyle Neighbourhood Plan (BHGNP).

The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) rooted neighbourhood planning at the heart of the drive for quality development, stating “Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.” (Paragraph 132).

Why a Design Code for Bletchingdon & Hampton Gay & Poyle?

This Design Code will provide guidance on design matters that are specific to the village of Bletchingdon and also the smaller settlements of Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle to the south of the Parish. It will inform any future applications for development.

Also of relevance here is the Cherwell Design Guide 2017, which covers all forms of settlement within the wider District from urban to rural. However, all places are different and have their own qualities and so an overall guide at District level cannot necessarily bring out all the issues of importance to local people, hence the need for a more bespoke Design Code. Nevertheless, the Cherwell Design Guide does cover issues of relevance and especially detailed design matters in its Section 7. Its checklists are likely to be very helpful to communities preparing their own Design Guides.

The detailed work in the Cherwell Design Guide contains a large amount of material of which only a small part is likely to be pertinent to Bletchingdon and its surrounds. The Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay and Poyle Design Code will be proportionate and balanced, taking on board as much of the Cherwell Design Guide as is relevant.

In support of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Bletchingdon Character Assessment has also been prepared which identifies those features that contribute to identity, character and sense of place. It is further supported by the Conservation Area Appraisals undertaken by Cherwell District Council in the Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan policies provide a link for more detailed design guidance. A Design Code is able to address not only design considerations in major developments (i.e. sites of over 0.5 ha or more than ten dwellings) including the District Plan allocations (non-strategic matters include layout, scale, use of materials, and other matters), but also infill developments in the village and the design of individual buildings and spaces, as well as reflecting the aspirations to maintain a living countryside around the village and consider infrastructure pressures from across the wider Parish.

Why a Design Code for Bletchington & Hampton Gay & Poyle?

A design code is a tool to:

- Add to and support existing policy and guidance;
- Clarify what is expected from proposals;
- Raise the quality of housing development;
- Prevent inappropriate development; and
- Deliver locally distinctive development.

Effective Design Codes are “simple, concise, specific and rely on visual and numerical information rather than detailed policy wording” (National Model Design Code Guidance). The vision for the place needs to be aspirational and set the context for the subsequent development of the code covering matters such as:

- An appreciation of the existing area or site;
- Its natural, topographical, historical and heritage features;
- Its character and appearance; including patterns of development, density
- The mix of uses and facilities;
- The amount of green infrastructure and character of green space;
- The way in which it deals with traffic, parking, public transport, walking and cycling; and
- Sustainability including energy efficiency, net zero alignment and climate resilience.

The National Model Design Guide shows how good design and place making can be achieved by consideration of the 10 characteristics:



Design Code Approach & Methodology

Process - Building on the Character Assessment

The Design Code builds on the separate Character Assessment, which identified specific character areas across the communities.

To facilitate the character assessment, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group undertook a walkabout (with Community First Oxfordshire) of Bletchingdon, Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle. The walk indicated distinctive sub-areas within Bletchingdon based upon historical development and identity as well as differences in form and layout. A 'Placecheck' exercise was also undertaken by Steering Group volunteers, picking out particular characteristics. The fact that part of Bletchingdon has also been designated as a Conservation Area highlighted many heritage assets. Beyond the main village of Bletchingdon, two other locations, Enslow and Heathfield, comprise small hamlets in the open countryside – these have distinctive identities and so were treated as separate sub-areas.

Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle each comprise a separate sub-area, both communities have a long history as agricultural settlements. However, Hampton Gay in particular has been much reduced since the

nineteenth century and is far smaller than Hampton Poyle. Nevertheless, the hamlet continues and represents an almost uniquely isolated and tranquil place close to Oxford with a church, a derelict Manor House and a number of residents living in close proximity to the historic access lane. Parts of the Parish has Conservation Area status.

All of these places have their own history and identity, meriting separate assessment of character as a result. A summary of important community views within each character area is included in a separate section of the Character Assessment.

Overall, the village was considered as being composed of seven sub-areas, indicated on Figure 3 (below):

- A. Bletchingdon: Conservation Area, Church End & Bletchingdon Park
- B. Bletchingdon St. Giles & Oxford Road
- C. Bletchingdon: Sands Close & Duchy Fields
- D. Bletchingdon: Station Road & Enslow
- E. Bletchingdon: Heathfield
- F. Hampton Gay
- G. Hampton Poyle

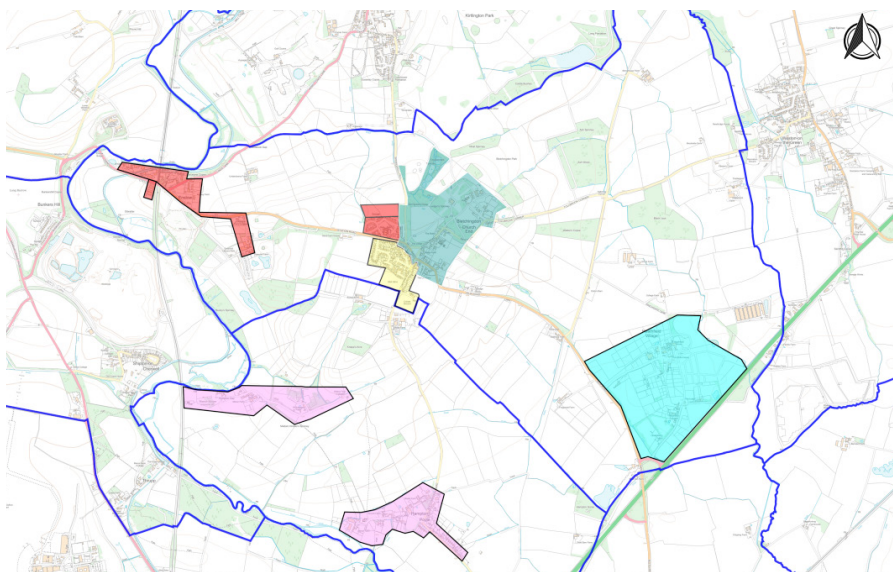


Figure 1 - Overview map of character areas

Design Code Approach & Methodology

Wider Context & Identity

Although located close to the City of Oxford and to growing suburbs such as Kidlington, Bletchington and the Hamptons have maintained their rural settlement character. The Cherwell Valley runs north to south through the character area before entering the Clay Vale to the south.

The Cherwell Design Guide is a very useful document for scene setting and references the landscape and geology in which the various settlements are located. It indicates the typical features that are characteristic of these areas. In section 2 the Cherwell Design Guide notes that:

“The character of the District varies from north to south, with ironstone to the north and limestone to the south. There are more subtle distinctions which are described in the Council’s Countryside Design Summary, CDC (1998).”

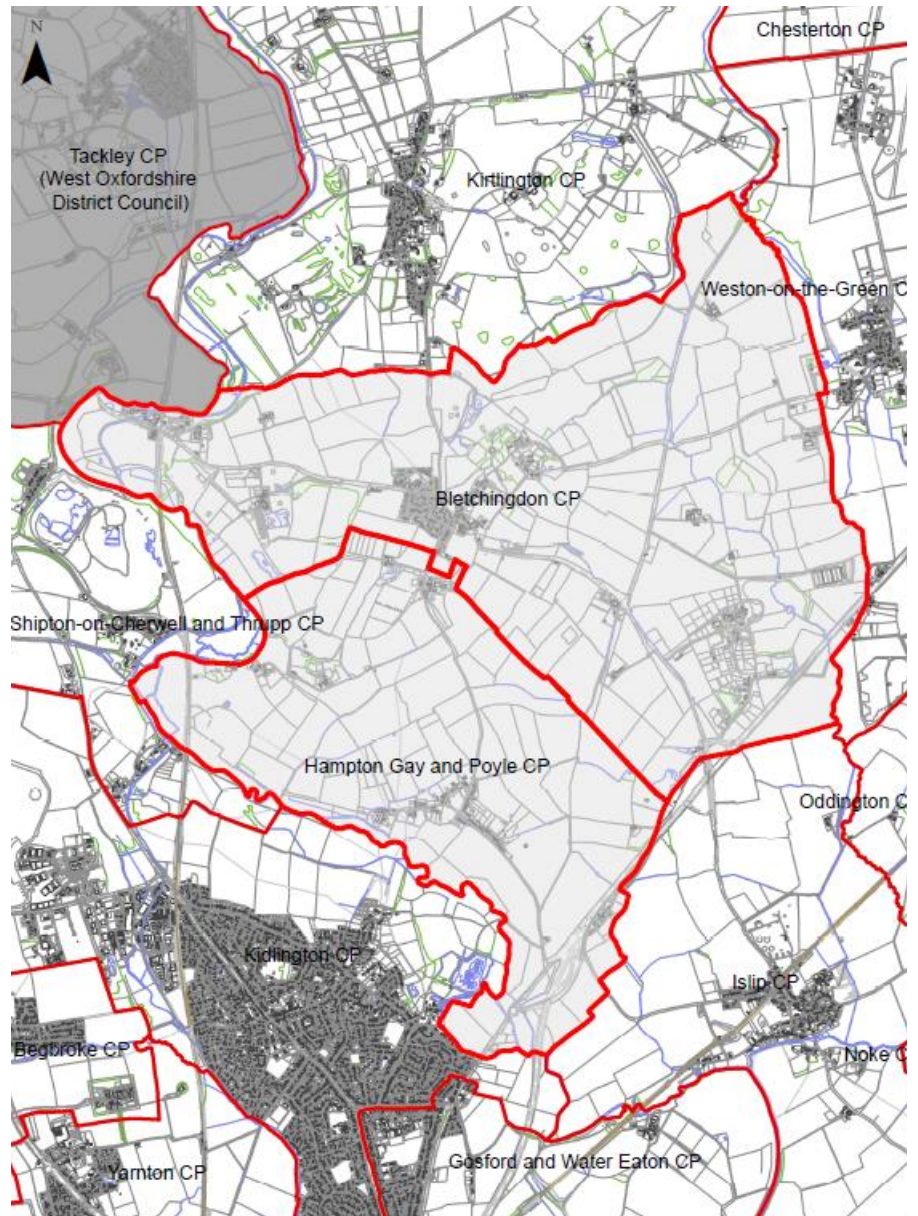


Figure 2 – Bletchington and Hampton Gay and Poyle Neighbourhood Area

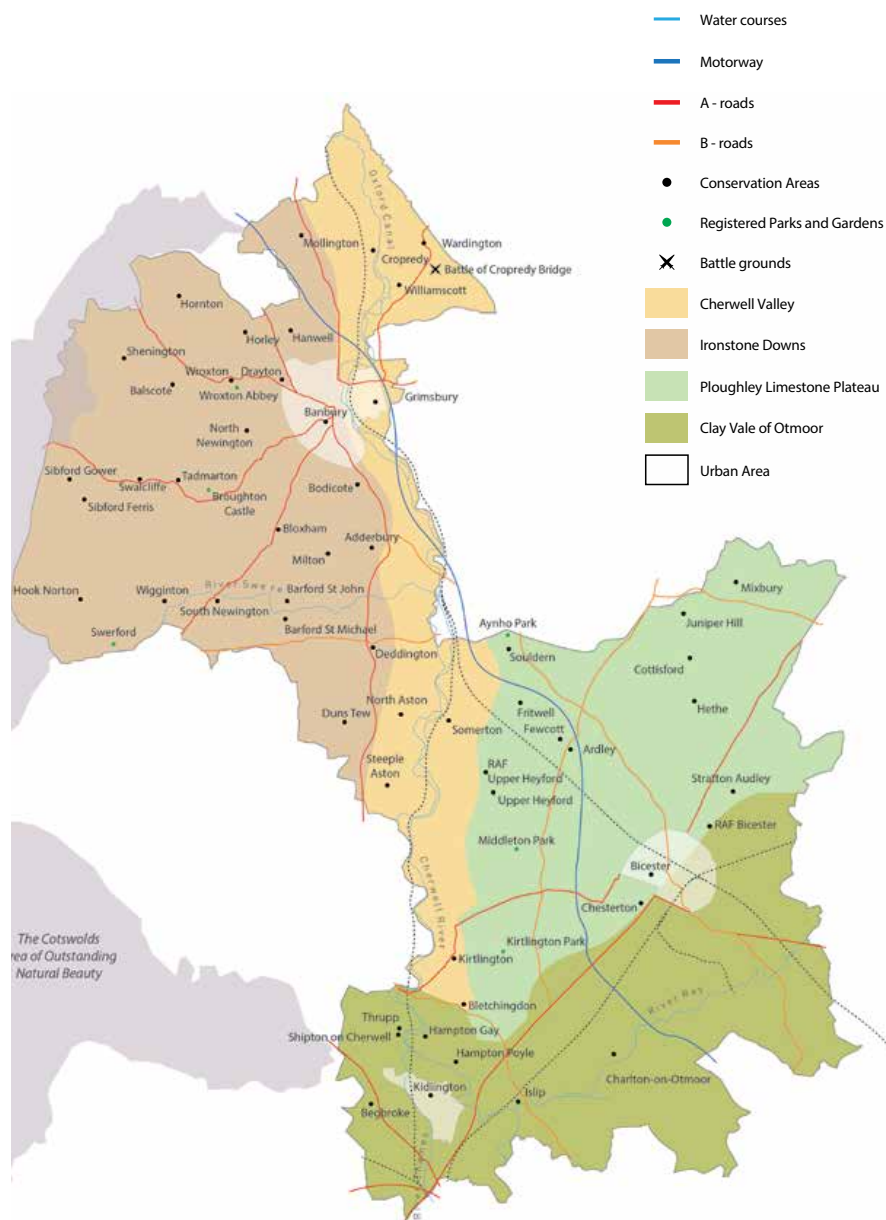


Figure 3 - Cherwell District Countryside Character Areas and Heritage Assets (source: Cherwell Design Guide 2018, p.23)

The Cherwell Design Guide classifies the District into four geographic character areas reflecting the influence of landscape and geology (see figure 3, to the left):

- The Cherwell Valley
- The Iron Stone Downs
- The Ploughley Limestone Plateau
- The Clay Vale of Otmoor

The Countryside Design Summary notes that variation occurs at the more local level, from village to village, street to street and building to building and that each area displays an overall character which distinguishes it from the others.

The settlements in the Bletchington and Hamptons Parishes fall into the following character areas although it should be noted some are close to a boundary between different character areas:

- Bletchington and surrounds including Enslow - Cherwell Valley
- Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle – Clay Vale of Otmoor
- Heathfield hamlet – Ploughley Limestone Plateau

These areas have their own characteristics which will be referenced in this Design Code. The Cherwell Design Guide - Section 7 addresses detailed matters concerning use of materials, roofscapes, and other built forms.

Design Code Approach & Methodology

Design Code – Important considerations

In terms of street scene, landscaping, and access, important questions are:

1. What are the most valued features of the Parishes that we would like to encourage in future planning applications?
2. How can the character of the historical core and successful features of subsequent developments inform future development?

Key points include:

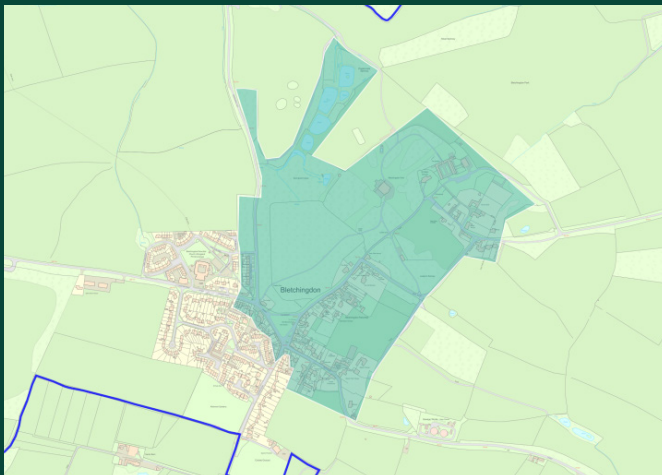
- Future development should protect and enhance Bletchington and both Hamptons as special places and enable new residents to feel they are part of the village. New developments should not be out of proportion with the settlement or out of character.
- New developments should be designed so they are 'close', meaning a pedestrian scale of layout that reflects village character and identity. There should be non vehicular connectivity such as pedestrian walkways and cycle tracks to and from all areas of the village, where possible, relating to the concept of the 15-minute neighbourhood, including local community hubs, retail areas and to the main centre.
- Vehicular traffic should be routed whenever possible onto the main peripheral roads.
- New development should include diversity of housing design & building materials; and avoid regimented lines of housing lacking in variety.
- Nature restoration – Biodiversity Net Gain and the inclusion of street trees is crucial to the streetscape and overall 'feel' of developments. Tree planting should be included in the plans of all new developments. Barriers between gardens should be permeable to allow for movement of wildlife.
- Parking in new developments must follow LPA guidelines and design of the integration of car parking should be considered carefully.
- Sustainability and energy efficiency measures should be embedded within plans and designs for new neighbourhoods.

It is recommended that all schemes would benefit from engagement in a LPA or an independent Design Review Panel to ensure compliance with the Design Code and, where necessary, Local Planning Authority enforcement. There is precedent for design engagement - in the case of Duchy Fields on the edge of the village, there was substantial engagement between the developers, District Councillors, the Parish Council and the local community.

AREA: A

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Area A: Bletchington Conservation Area, Church End & Bletchington Park



Key plan

Bletchington is an example of a nucleated compact village with inward looking views towards the village green rather than expansive views out to surrounding countryside. It is characterised by being a 'Cotswold Stone' village typical in the southern parts of Cherwell District. This sub-area is focussed on the village green, the heart of the village and falls within the designated Conservation Area. There are over 40 listed buildings in the settlement. The church is a very attractive, ancient structure but is not very visible from most of the settlement which is some distance away and screened by Bletchington Park. The settlement has very narrow lanes and a rustic feel is apparent especially in this older part of the settlement where the sense of enclosure is of a strong, inward looking character formed by houses closely fronting lanes. There is no street lighting.

"The village core is the intersection of five roads, focussing on The Green in the centre. Islip Road (B4027) to the south and Station Road to the west, runs through the village on the southern edge of The Green. Weston Road (formerly The Causeway) leaves The Green at the northeast, and Oxford Road and Kirtlington Road lead to their respective urban centres to the north and south. The positioning of the manor and park has pushed the houses southwards to skirt the Park and radiate out from The Green." (Cherwell District Council, Bletchington Conservation Area Appraisal: 2008, p. 26).

Many of the cottages dating from the 1600s have been demolished and over time replaced by buildings in the 18-19th centuries. The Green itself provides the setting for surrounding buildings and is the only green space – there are no recreational or sports uses in this locale but there is an old public house (closed) and the church; the public house has large areas of land to the rear which has been used for events and is very much part of the village setting.

Whilst many houses in the settlement were built using coursed limestone rubble with stone slate roofs, the Conservation Area Appraisal undertaken by Cherwell DC in 2008 identified many roofs were being replaced with concrete tiles. Likewise in recent decades new housing developments have often used reconstituted stone which has mellowed over time such as at Sands Close and Springwell Close. The latter is a recent development of affordable housing within the Conservation Area which was built to a style and with materials that complement the existing character of the immediate area.

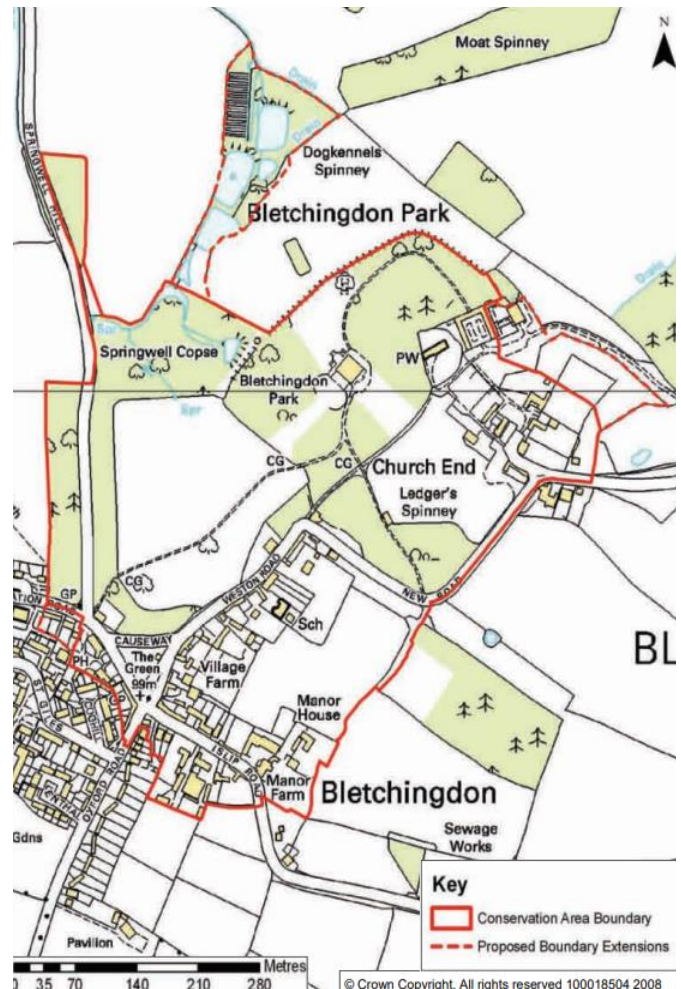
Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Bletchingdon Park

The houses which edge the Park are 17th and 18th century are all constructed of natural limestone rubble with slate or stone slate roofs. Some roofs that would have likely to have been thatched have been replaced with Cotswold coloured concrete plain tiles which tends to detract from the local vernacular. The main House and most of the Parkland lies within the Conservation Area of Bletchingdon, the House itself is Grade II* listed and there are four other listed structures in the park. There are relatively few buildings in the Bletchingdon Park area, the dominant building being the Palladian Villa, which dates back to 1782. The house has two main storeys, with a cellar below ground and a late 18th century Mansard roof, creating a third storey. Extra height is achieved by the provision of chimneys, historically used as a status symbol. Local limestone and ashlar has been used to build the property, and repairs over the years have been in appropriate matching stone.

In 2018, applications for Planning and Listed Building Consents were submitted for changes to the main house at Bletchingdon Park and in association with this, a comprehensive Design Code and Method Statement was prepared which can be seen on Cherwell District Council's website. This advises in detail on how future work shall be carried out for instance Tinker Barns Stone (from a local quarry) must be used for dry stone walling here.

The Design and Access Statement submitted at the time states that, "the house sits on high ground at the northern edge of the Village of Bletchingdon in Oxfordshire. The surrounding village lies mostly to the south and east of Bletchingdon Park. The wooded grounds of the house give way to fields sloping down from the village. The church of St Giles lies to the east of the house. The house is generally approached from the Lodge in Bletchingdon Village via a drive that crosses some of the parkland and arrives over a small bridge at the south-west front. From here the drive continues to the north-east to the former Stables Block. The stables have been in separate ownership from the House for many years."



In terms of materials the walls of the main house are of ashlar limestone on three elevations and coursed limestone on the other one. The roof is of slate surrounded by a stone balustraded parapet. The surrounding pleasure grounds are enclosed by a rubble stone built ha-ha. The wider estate is enclosed by dry stone walls.

Weston Road from The Green

The villa and its extensive parkland and ground takes up about two thirds of the Conservation Area but is generally now hidden from view. It is accessed via a gated lodge off the Village Green. The current owner is undertaking extensive works to return the landscape to as it was when the house was built. Bletchingdon Park Stables, now under separate ownership to the park, is a key landmark in its own right on the north-east edge of the Conservation Area.

This Sub-Area has influenced the whole of the settlement over time and Bletchingdon Park especially remains a very significant asset in terms particularly of its historical and aesthetic value, as set out in the Design and Access Statement in 2018. Bletchingdon Park's location and scale reinforced the tendency of the village to expand southwards from the Village Green over the centuries.

The Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2042 may reverse this long-established direction of growth by allocating land near Speedwell Hill, which, if endorsed, will need to carefully consider the stricter design requirements in and around the Bletchingdon Conservation Area – the setting here will be very important.



View across The Green from Western Road



Weston Road from The Green

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Church End

Church End is a separate hamlet developed around St Giles Church. The church has ashlar dressings and stone slate roofing” (Cherwell District Council, Bletchingdon Conservation Area Appraisal: 2008, pp. 33-34). It consists of a series of stone cottages and houses around small, single-track lanes leading to the Church (which dates from the 13th century). Park House, Courtyard House, and Church End House are all two and a half storey buildings, while the other residences are all one and a half and two storey. The larger buildings dominate the courtyard area, an impression which is enhanced by the areas of grassed open space.

The chief building material is the coursed limestone rubble walling and stone or slate tiling typical of the southern part of the Cherwell District.



Church End cottages and converted stables



Church End cottages and converted stables



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

This sub-area is dominated by the designated Conservation Area although boundaries are not contiguous. Many of the characteristic features of the Conservation Area have been adopted in recent developments notably at Duchy Fields which in many respects has set a desirable template many aspects of which could be replicated in new development.

Buildings in this sub-area are mostly one and a half to two storey cottages, usually terraced, with gable roofs. Cottages tend to be small, facing the streets and sited close to the kerb. Front gardens are uncommon as at Islip Road, shown above. Infill schemes should replicate the layout and character of the original village where possible rather than more urban style housing estates and adhere to densities extant in the Conservation Area., specifically at and close to The Green. Springwell Close, an affordable housing development, also sets a density level that replicates the existing terraced housing in the sub-area.

Within and beyond the designated Conservation Area there are also many listed buildings and proposals for development should respect their settings as well as ensuring that both infill and refurbishment works maintain the quality of built form reflecting building lines and orientation and materials such as stone roof slates, limestone coursed or rubble walls as well as dry stone walls to boundaries. Steeply pitched roofs are typical.

Around The Green in particular, strong building lines and a sense of enclosure stand out as key character elements. This is afforded by terraced housing in places such as at The Row, a curving terrace opposite the Green. In new infill development in this sub-area strong building lines should be adhered to, providing continuity. Larger houses tend to be sited behind high boundary stone walls set back from the kerb line with wide grass verges such as at Weston Road.



Cottages at Islip Road with The Row shown in the distance



Example of recent terrace at Duchy Fields (outside this sub-area but cited as an area that has delivered some of the highest quality of design in recent times). The scheme achieves good design quality outcomes with steeply pitched roofs, red brick chimneys, recessed windows and limestone coursed walling of varying widths.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Extensions with flat roofs would be out of keeping with local character here.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard within the Conservation Area and other parts of the sub-area for consistency, whilst on more prominent high quality buildings ashlar finishes might be applied.

Apartments have been built recently at Duchy Fields occupying large, free-standing buildings. These provide a visual focus and are larger in scale than the local vernacular – future buildings should be of an appropriate scale in this sub-area.

Heritage assets including the setting of listed buildings should receive greater protection from plot fragmentation, intensification and other issues arising from new development.

Demolition of any pre 20th century buildings or structures in this sub-area will not normally be permitted and where this happens all materials and features should be re-used either in new development or off site in the village. Back garden development involving demolition of donor properties may not be appropriate here. The latter should reflect all matters relating to design in regard to this specific context.

New homes should use similar materials and colour palette to complement existing homes in the older parts of the village i.e. pre 20th century. Buildings over 2-storeys would be out of character with the vernacular. New homes should be similar in height and size to the existing cottages and terraced housing of this sub-area. Unlike Duchy Fields, the use of render to front elevations of homes would be out of character with the vernacular.



Church End cottages



Cottages at Church End



Cottages at Church End

Roofs

Gabled roofs will generally be more appropriate, but the Duchy Fields scheme has some examples of hipped dormers. Variation in roofscapes in each development is encouraged to avoid uniformity of design. Flat roof extensions would be out of character with the vernacular. Thatched roofs should be avoided in the sub-area and replacement of traditional roof coverings should be like for like i.e. Concrete tiles or red clay tiles should not replace stone slates. Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill.

Existing roofscapes in the sub-area should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-areas and the wider Parish including pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees, roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone.

Doors & Windows

In keeping with many of the traditional properties of the sub-area, new development should comprise a variety of window and door types including dormer windows on hipped roofs.

Doors may also have portico type structures above them or other character features. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre 19th century.

Upvc doors or windows should be discouraged in the Conservation Area or in the wider sub-area.

Boundaries

Proposals should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, timber garden gates, verges, stiles, to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods. In this respect reference to dry stone walling methods as in the Bletchingdon Park DCMS will be helpful. Homes with existing drives are limited in the sub-area and vehicle gates less typical.

Front gardens should be avoided with homes being close to the street edge. The Duchy Fields development shows best practice.

Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges in association with stone walls.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

Although largely comprising the Conservation Area, this is the location where five roads meet, and traditionally housing and other properties were built close to these roads. To avoid issues caused by narrow lanes and the lack of scope to make highway improvements in this sensitive area, a 20-mph limit has been imposed in the village since 2023.

The sub-area like most of the rest of the village has no street lighting keeping its lanes dark and avoiding the glow in the Conservation Area and its streets and lanes. This principle should also be upheld in respect of new development throughout the village.

This pinch point is a good example of this tendency which has added to the character. Narrow winding lanes provide an inward-looking focus with The Green at its heart.

New developments should ensure pedestrian and cycle safety through use of convenient access routes, alleyways, paths with verges and use of materials to emphasise different surface treatments to emphasise street hierarchy.

All new highways design should support a more conducive pedestrian and cycle friendly environment encouraging a greater increase in permeability and active travel. The Conservation Area and The Green should be highly accessible to modes other than cars.

This Design Code requires speed humps, high boundary walls at corners and other traffic safety measures help to slow drivers down. At all times within new developments design should favour active travel over car use.



Junction showing narrow lanes

The Design Code also notes patching or replacement of worn surfaces should match existing resin bound gravel where driveways are present or hoggins on footpaths/cycleways. Tarmac is not encouraged as a surface within new development. In terms of a mix of hard surfaces Duchy Fields has worked well but within the Conservation Area this over emphasis on hard surfacing needs to be rolled back in favour of more generous green spaces including verges with bollards, hedges and tree planting.

Note: Whilst alternatives may be considered for approval by a Design Review Panel it may also be a more attractive solution to break up larger swathes of hard surfacing to create more permeable surfaces for driveways. In any event residents should avoid patching their own driveway areas with different materials which

would create a cluttered, unsightly appearance and will need to submit proposals for approval within the Conservation Area.

Parking provision is a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Within developments garage parking should be discretely sited behind homes with fully accessible EV charging points including for e-bikes. Garages doors must be in keeping with the local vernacular. Open style driveways to streets will not be in keeping with the character of the sub-area.



Whilst resin bound gravel driveway surfaces such as at Duchy Fields, differentiate parking areas from streets, these may be subject to heavy wear over time.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Nature & Landscape

The historic core of the village is well vegetated due mainly to the tall deciduous trees around The Green and the mature trees bordering Weston Road in Bletchingdon Park. The latter is also set within an extensive historic parkland landscape interspersed with woodland areas and views out into wider countryside.

This historic area of the village is also likely to be very significant for biodiversity with for instance old buildings attracting birds and bat species and parkland attracting meadow species. Hedgerows and other features of significant age will be valuable habitat for such foraging species. For these and other reasons it is not often appropriate to develop in back gardens or subdivide plots in this historic sub-area.

Key vegetation that should be protected especially within the Conservation Area and if possible throughout the sub-area, and also enhanced are the native deciduous woods behind the Old Rectory along new Road, the remaining wooded area to the north of the 21st century Springwell Close development and a strip of deciduous trees along the track to Manor farm which is still within the Conservation Area.



Trees to be retained: Manor Farm footpath

Existing Natural Assets

Historic existing ponds and streams must not be infilled or culverted as a result of development. Historic fishing ponds have been included in the Conservation Area in recent years and should be seen as opportunities for enhancement as biodiversity corridors and key habitats.

Development in the form of extensions and refurbishments of existing buildings must ensure key features are retained and incorporated including old outbuildings, boundaries including walls, hedgerows, verges, gates, stiles. New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements but also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls can additionally provide small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement for wildlife.

Areas set aside for nature should be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. roadside ditches, bollards, walls). Ancient trees, hedgerows and ponds and other natural features should be protected for their landscape and biodiversity value. Layout designs should also incorporate them as features such as in focal points and along footpaths. Notable Ancient trees including those in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council for the sub-area. Where these are removed to enable infilling as part of a planning approval they should be replaced and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into homes in existing buildings (conversions, refurbishments) as well as new build. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.

There may be space available for pollinators using verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained and enhanced e.g. by less regular cutting of verges in Spring to Summer to provide a chance for species to thrive. Use of anti pollinator chemicals such as neonicotinoids should be especially removed from management and maintenance regimes in this sub-area (e.g. spraying verges).

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Public Spaces

Public spaces including public realm and formal areas may be limited within the sub-area, but including Bletchingdon Park, the Conservation Area contains many natural areas that contribute significantly to character and identity and indeed for human well being as well as biodiversity. These places should be maintained and can act as a “habitat reservoir” for species under pressure elsewhere.

Where new development is proposed, and depending upon its scale, a greater emphasis within developments on green rather than hard landscaping will be important in this sub-area.

There is a distinct difference here compared to the Duchy Fields scheme which has a more dominant landscape treatments of hard textured surfaces to emphasise vehicle pedestrian safety. Apart from at its outer edges informal more natural landscaping is limited at Duchy Fields.

New development in the sub-area should have more natural features incorporated such as hedgerows, fruit trees on streets and so forth. Wildlife corridors and paths need to be encouraged in new developments to support biodiversity and link it with the historic areas of parkland, woodland and meadows.

The use of such areas being beneficial to health should encourage their long-term asset management and improvement. Planting along footpaths and in parks should avoid non-native species or high maintenance species that may also spread rapidly. Plants that are listed as pests or are invasive such as Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Rhododendron should be monitored and removed safely as soon as identified.



Above: predominant hard surfacing at Duchy Fields would not be appropriate within the Conservation Area or wider sub-area. Note also the roof types including red clay tiles which also would not be in keeping with the historic core of the village.

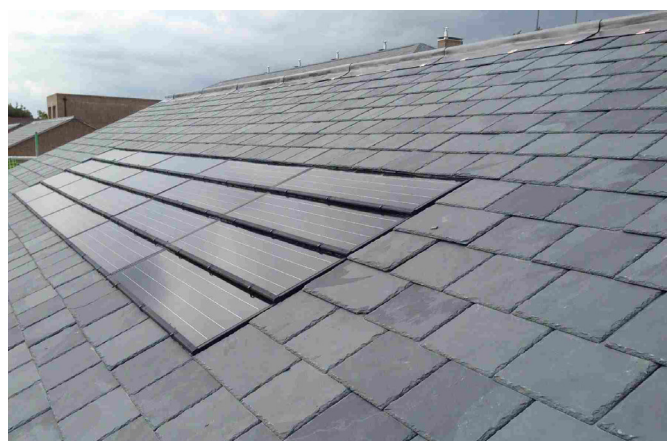


Uses

Maintaining vitality and strength of the village facilities requires opportunities to be facilitated especially as some facilities such as post office, bakery, public house and so on that used to operate within this sub-area have ceased to exist. It is important that such facilities are accessible easily on foot, by bicycle so lock up facilities for bikes and EV charging points for bikes and cars may help support business sustainability.

Retention of key facilities such as the last public house, The Blacks Head, should be enabled through more innovative approaches such as use of outbuildings or garden land for events or even seasonal holiday accommodation or (as in many places) conversion into a community facility with a shop, post office functioning from the premises. Development of the public house building into separate residential uses will be detrimental to the Conservation Area, the character of The Green, (which is the key green space of the village) and the legacy for Bletchington's wider heritage.

In larger infill schemes there may be an opportunity for a community orchard, an asset that is currently missing from the village. An expansion of existing allotments elsewhere in the village would reflect the likelihood that they will be more accessible than in or near the Conservation Area.



Integrated solar pv in stone slate roof



Homes & Buildings

New homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain and provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps will be a requirement to ensure sustainable, affordable designs.

The latter should be sited discretely and not within key views such as from The Green. In new development, access for emergency vehicles and discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is usually tested in the layout configuration. Design considerations should also apply to addressing diverse net zero matters, such as the siting of cycle storage, greywater storage and use, and positioning of photovoltaic panels on rear facing roof slopes not on front elevations, where possible.

New housing should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes where garages are sited. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian and cycle access ways to connect to the village centre this should be encouraged.

Retrofitting of older homes in the sub-area may be subject to limitation as to siting of energy efficient facilities such as heat pumps. However new development can potentially extend low-cost energy to existing homes too using smart meters. New terraces in particular suit a joined-up approach to deliver net zero bringing down costs and this should be instituted as part of an agreed design included in the planning application.

As a settlement with dark skies, street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to "Dark Skies" over the settlement, unless required by a planning condition.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
A

Materials & Design

Due to the significance of heritage in the sub-area, the salvage and storage of original traditional materials should be a priority to enable re-use. Demolition should be resisted and where it does occur conditions should be imposed to require the stock of materials to be stored safely under supervision at the expense of the applicant.

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces. Where these are bordering The Green or facing onto convergent lanes that join at The Green these should adhere where possible to specifications similar to those in the Bletchington Park DCMS.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/garage space and where this is not possible materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space. Good use of space might include creating easily accessible pedestrian routes through the village and to the wider network of pathways into the countryside.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should reflect the character of the immediate area and be in keeping with the existing structure in terms of design, orientation, materials. Ideally such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street. Within the Conservation Area permitted development rights might be removed such as adding additional storeys. Flat roofs should be avoided.

Barns, former agricultural buildings and other pre-20th century structures should be retained.



Lifespan

At Duchy Fields green and social infrastructure is supported through a local trust and this model can be replicated. Where appropriate, stewardship arrangements (long-term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses. In maintaining open spaces both formal and informal use of toxic sprays using classified chemicals such as glyphates etc. should generally not be permitted by contractors or volunteers deployed under stewardship of long-term maintenance arrangements.

AREA: **B**

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Area B: **Bletchington** **– St. Giles & Oxford Road**

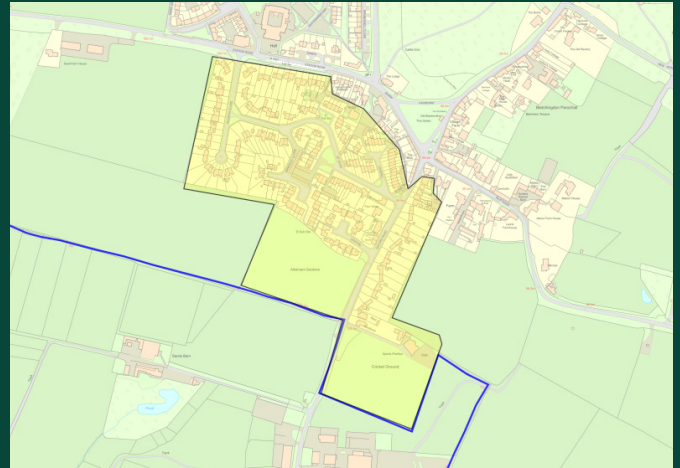
The general character of this sub-area is largely one of post war suburban development from the 1960s and 70s onwards and as such, it may be regarded as a location where consideration of design and respect for the heritage of the village was given less regard in more recent decades.

This locale bounded broadly by Oxford Road, the allotments and to the south and Valencia Close; is one in which the estate layout has reflected increased car use. There are some aspects of design here which align with the village historic vernacular such as grass verges in places, narrow winding lanes and a lack of street lighting. There are green spaces with mature trees which help soften the landscape of this sub-area. Sometimes cars cannot find space to park and end up being sited on communal green spaces see below. There are also many bungalows in this area which are less characteristic of the historic settlement.

In general, it is very different from the historic village centre due to its layout of cul-de-sacs and loop roads. Beyond this location vestiges of the historic village are still existing such as along Oxford Road where village character is more intact.

Duchy Fields will be a relevant benchmark to this sub-area. In small infill schemes, a terraced layout will be appropriate, these may be curved or straight for short distances to provide a more varied roofscape. Duchy Fields precedents may not be appropriate in new development in the sub-area particularly if a large area were brought forward for development.

It would certainly help to screen the existing roads and cul de sac using new development. Frontage development in particular should address the issue of views through to the less vernacular parts of the sub-area effectively screening these from historic approaches.



Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Open Land Adjoining Sub-Area

Whilst there may be limited scope for infilling in this sub-area it also backs onto a large area of open farmland which forms an L shape linking with Station Road and wrapping around the post war estates up to the allotments. If this were ever to be brought forward for development wholly or in part, its design should embrace many of the principles applied at the Duchy Fields scheme, without following exactly the scheme as a precedent. The current Cherwell Local Plan identified Site RUR H1 and set out policy regarding its future allocation and implementation and some of these design considerations could definitely be relevant to this location. Further guidance should be sought with reference to Sub-area C Land North of Station Road, below.

Whereas Duchy Fields embraces considerable hard surfacing with different textures to distinguish between pedestrian and vehicle priority and discouraging speeds, a mix of softer landscaping, using existing trees and other features to help the transition between built up areas and countryside beyond will be more appropriate. In addition, this area (like site RUR H1) should have a much larger allocation of greenspace both formal and informal comprising not less than 50% of the site. This would incorporate play areas and pocket parks, semi natural meadow land and woodland edges/hedgerows integrated through-out any development area enabling walking and cycling away from vehicular traffic.

With a smaller area available for development, densities will need to be higher and this can reflect the older estates within the sub-area so more terraced housing, smaller front gardens, discrete garages (not blocks), and walkways/cycleways only connecting up with the existing estates. Cul de sacs should be avoided and access lanes should be winding and with focal points at corners – this could be a green or blue space or a building. Bungalows should be discouraged here due to large land-take.

Other matters to be avoided will include red clay tile roofing, and large, one-off over-sized buildings such as apartment blocks. It would be better to integrate these into a more terraced housing vernacular.

Looking the other way, Oxford Road also retains a rural scene with a mix of older pre-war housing both detached and terraced, many with large front gardens. Walls using render is more common than stone housing on more outlying properties. Behind these frontage properties, north of Oxford Road, farmland is immediately present. This sub-area is generally close to the rural edge other than more modern estates to the south side of Oxford Road.



The uniformity and regimentation of building lines and roofscapes can be seen in this image of Valencia Close.



There are some very unattractive areas such as flat roofed garage blocks at Annersley Close which appear run down and face directly onto the street providing a dead frontage. These would be better sited and designed with more character sensitive development today as at Duchy Fields.



Evidence of unauthorised car parking on grass verges and green spaces.



Oxford Road bisects the sub-area and provides a more rustic view with verges and drystone boundary walls, approaching the intersection with other roads at The Green. On the right-hand side more modern housing with clay tile roofs, and rendered walls plus some with reconstituted stone finishes, is interspersed with older properties which often have large front gardens to Oxford Road.



Attractive old cottages, with coursed limestone, slate roofs and red brick chimneys, on Oxford Road at junction with Lenthal. Note lack of front garden and access straight onto pavement edge.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Houses are generally two-storey with some bungalows and some three-storey in a mix of terraces and semi-detached properties. Materials used in buildings are a mix of artificial stone, painted brick/render and tiled roofs, and white weatherboarding. Over time there have been a series of small extensions and porch infills with limited scope for large extension. Layouts of more modern generally two storey housing but often mixed with bungalows, long gardens, spacious open plan front gardens and garage blocks. There are no apartment blocks here.

There are more uniform development patterns with less staggered building lines, less varied roofscapes. This sub-area is car dominated especially with on street parking in some roads, parking on pavements and grass verges. There are some garage blocks in different stages of condition and private drives.

The green spaces in this area are very important including allotments, playing fields and equipped play areas. The 1960s developments such as Annarsley Close benefit from mature landscaping and feature mature trees. Few drystone walls exist except on boundaries to main roads.

There is, therefore, a limited sense of historical vernacular. However, these are tight-knit communities, and the communal value is high. The scope for infilling gaps in frontages or extensions here are limited.



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

This sub-area, away from its main road frontages is quite suburban in style with car dominated post war housing filling in the gaps east of Station Road and south of Oxford Road. In these areas, most buildings are two storeys, often in suburban style layouts with cul de sacs. Infill schemes should replicate the layout and character of the original village where possible rather than more urban style housing estates and adhere to higher densities extant in the Sub-area.

On Coghill Close, for example, terraced housing with rendered or weatherboarded front elevations benefit from long front gardens often with driveways. Homes here back onto the of the Conservation Area and from that location there are views through revealing the more suburban housing of the post war estates.

These should be screened so that the setting of the Conservation Area is protected and enhanced through good design and use of traditional styles and materials.

Any new development should adopt a more terraced layout with garages discretely positioned at the rear rather than in garage blocks as the latter tend to become dominating features of the street scene over time. To maintain spaciousness, using green verges or corners with existing mature trees should be retained and integrated.

Development should replicate the layout and character of the original village where possible rather than more urban style housing estates and adhere to dominant densities extant in the sub-area.

Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to existing path networks this should be progressed.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard.

At Duchy Fields many design features were applied that are worthy of repeating in this sub-area. Steeply pitched gabled roofs for instance, coursed limestone walls, red brick chimneys (albeit not excessively tall which was an aesthetic choice) and other examples should be adopted in this sub-area. However, the introduction of red clay tiles there is not typical of the village and in any new development within or adjacent this sub-area there should be reversion to more widespread use of stone slate or similar roofing rather than red clay or concrete tiles. Currently there are some homes with stone elevations within the post war estates and on the main road frontages and continuing to use such traditional materials will be important to achieve consistency in the sub-area.

Although terraced housing should predominate, building lines should be varied to reduce uniformity. Roads designed with a winding lane pattern will help achieve this as well as to maintain spaciousness. Using green verges or corners with existing mature trees should be provided in new development.

On more prominent buildings or those that might stand out such as in a corner position, higher quality ashlar finishes might be applied.

Changes or extensions of any sort such as altering window openings or building areas of flat roofs would be out of keeping with local character. Flats or buildings over 2 storeys will generally be discouraged.

Over-sized buildings on corner plots will be discouraged.

New development will now be required to take climate change, biodiversity net gain and nature recovery into consideration in line with this Design Code as set out in the following pages.

Roofs

Gabled and hipped roofs will need to achieve some variation in roofscapes in new development to avoid uniformity of design. Village roofscapes should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-areas and the wider Parish including:

- Steeply pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering.
- Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.
- Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill.

Doors & Windows

In keeping with many of the traditional properties in the village, new development should have dormer windows with render. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre 20th century.

Boundaries

Front gardens should be avoided with homes being close to the street edge. The Duchy Fields development shows best practice. Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges.

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, such as in main streets to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods especially to main roads. In this respect reference to dry stone walling methods as in the Bletchingdon Park DCMS will be helpful.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

No through traffic will be enabled in this area for traffic and especially commercial deliveries. New developments should ensure pedestrian and cycle safety through use of convenient access routes, alleyways, paths with verges and use of materials to emphasise different surface treatments to emphasise street hierarchy.

Junctions and highways schemes that are designed to slow traffic and encourage safety will be encouraged, with speed humps, high boundary walls at corners to slow drivers down. Masterplans should be designed to give priority to the pedestrian and cyclist, not for vehicles. Narrow lanes running from main thoroughfare will all support this more conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly environment encouraging greater increase permeability and active travel. Bike parking should be encouraged with lockable facilities in the sub-area.

Parking provision is a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Inside new developments garage parking should be discreetly sited behind homes. Within developments garage parking should be discreetly sited behind homes with fully accessible EV charging points including for e-bikes. Garages doors must not be metal up and over doors or fibreglass and instead should be designed to reflect the vernacular.

Open style short driveways to streets will be acceptable provided EV charging points for cars and bikes are included. Driveway materials must complement acoustic management measures and attractive legacy surfacing. Street lighting, amenity or other external lighting will not normally be permitted except possibly at accident hot spots to improve safety.

Where possible garage courts and blocks should be removed to be replaced by driveway and on plot parking.



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding elevated areas of open countryside should be protected. On the peripheral edge, new development should define the field boundary by creating shelter belts and restricting views from afar. The intention being to screen development from the countryside and discourage future incursions beyond the established settlement boundary.

Existing Natural Assets

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements and also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. roadside ditches).

Mature trees, hedgerows and ponds should be protected for their landscape and biodiversity value. Layout designs should incorporate them as features such as in focal points and along footpaths. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will encourage semi-mature trees of native species to be replanted upon development being approved.

Hedgerows should be maintained and enhanced where these form a boundary to a development area or a corridor through the village out to the open countryside, including areas outside the settlement boundary. These hedgerow/field boundaries are wildlife habitats, and where they exist already should be expanded and strengthened. These corridors should encourage active travel, creating or linking into heritage trails and public footpaths. Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

Public spaces including public realm and green infrastructure within the sub-area such as play areas, parks, gardens and allotments all contribute to character and identity and must be maintained as accessible to all.

The use of such areas being beneficial to health should encourage their long-term asset management and improvement and where possible developer contributions might fall under Stewardship arrangements, under S106.

Planting along footpaths and in parks should avoid non-native species or high maintenance species that can spread rapidly. Plants that are listed as pests or are invasive such as Himalaya Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, even Rhododendron should be monitored and removed as soon as identified.

In maintaining open spaces both formal and informal use of toxic sprays using classified chemicals such as neonicotinoids, glyphates etc. will NOT be permitted by contractors or volunteers.



Oxford Road allotments



Uses

Maintaining vitality and strength of the village amenities requires opportunities to be realised such as direct safe walking routes to shops, to pubs and other facilities.



Homes & Buildings

New housing should encourage sustainability with the use of renewables such as air source/ ground source heat pumps and solar panels, greywater harvesting.

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.



Two examples of a solar panels fitted flush within a natural slate roof (not retrofitted).

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
B

Retrofitting of older homes should be enabled through provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps. The latter should be sited discretely with no visibility from the street or from key views such as from The Green. Homes should be oriented differently to maximise solar gain. Orientation of buildings will also be important to ensure for example that PV solar panels are not visible from the street being sited ideally on south facing rear roof elevations.

Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to the village centre this should be explored.

As a settlement with dark skies street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to “Dark Skies” over the settlement.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Materials & Design

Due to the significance of heritage in the sub-area, the salvage and storage of original traditional materials should be a priority to enable re-use. Demolition should be resisted and where it does occur, conditions should be imposed to require the stock of materials to be stored safely under supervision at the expense of the applicant.

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites, every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/garage space and where this is not possible, materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so, in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Ideally such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street.



Lifespan

Where appropriate, stewardship arrangements (long term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses.

AREA:
C

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Area C: Bletchington – Land North of Station Road

Sands Close & Duchy Fields, North of Station Road

This sub-area lies to the south west of the Conservation Area and is very close to it. Recent developments at Duchy Fields have been undertaken to a high standard of design reflecting the proximity to this important area of the village and the adjacency to Bletchington Park, with views over open countryside.

Sands Close was built some decades ago and provides a cul de sac of circa 8 houses. It has mellowed with time in terms of its appearance. The houses are simple two-storey rectangular buildings built of artificial stone block and concrete roof tiles with white painted timber windows and black plastic rainwater goods. Front gardens are tidy with off street parking and small rear gardens. The close is well cared for with tarmac roads and pavements.

Duchy Fields has set a higher quality design benchmark, and this should be reflected in new development in this area. Key features include spaciousness in layout with views and a sense of openness, with some drystone boundary walls to streets and lanes, and importantly no through traffic making it more tranquil.

The development includes terraces of 2-2.5 storey homes creating a higher density and using traditional materials such as Cotswold stone. In places design details resemble Dutch style town houses with gables and steeply pitched roofs with tall chimneys. Streetscape is varied with good sense of enclosure, marked out surface parking spaces rather than garages; streets have detailed porous surfaces, kerb details, and so forth.



Bletchington Community Hall

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

In 2013, land was brought forward under application 13/00004/OUT for a site north of Station Road. The Duchy Fields development was approved to provide a new school, village hall, retail outlet and 18 affordable housing units plus 40 market homes. The proposal was community led in partnership with the Duchy of Cornwall, the owner of this Crown land. The community benefits were very significant and much needed, and no doubt weighed heavily in the balance; elsewhere assets would more typically comprise public open space play parks and other amenities.

Its Design and Access Statement set out a vision of a community in close proximity to community assets and with views over open countryside. It provides pedestrian/cycle friendly development with parking sited out of view behind homes, sharp junctions to prevent fast cornering, and with homes built tight to the street edge.

Detailing is meticulous with an emphasis on quality materials including natural Cotswold stone walling, heritage metal casement windows, wide painted timber doors, Welsh slate and Red Clay plain tiles and cast aluminium traditional style gutters.

Tall chimneys, cast stone window and door surrounds, porch canopies, black metal fencing, and traditional metal streetlights add to the bespoke feel of the area. In particular, quirky features such as a circular first floor loggia to the flat above the shop and lead clad turrets add to the interest. Two of the larger free-standing houses on the site are designed in an arts and craft style with dormer windows and large overhanging roofs with special eaves support brackets. The design was heavily influenced by the Duchy of Cornwall and is very traditional.

It is essential that the design features are adhered to for any future alterations especially on the street scenes. There is limited scope for extensions in the design. Streets are paved in porous block paving and conservation grade kerbs with resin bound tarmac and hoggin to footpaths. Enclosure is by Cotswold stone walls with toppler stones.

Materials used for these homes emphasised the stone-built character of Bletchingdon (e.g. with stone walls, slate roofs, dormers with lintels) and included surface treatment to streets and paths to emphasise pedestrian and cycle safety. It has achieved a high level of design and this in a location close to the historic core of the village so it makes sense that any new development should emulate its values and details.

There are many examples of new developments in and around other “stone villages” in Oxfordshire that deliver good design. It should be noted the design and layout makes it difficult in future for any extensions of an ad hoc nature at Duchy Fields.



New terraced housing at Duchy Fields

The allocated site west of Springwell Hill RUR H1 in the Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2042 (LP), will be located immediately adjacent to Duchy Fields. It overlooks arable countryside and also is in proximity to the Conservation Area and Bletchingdon Park. It has been noted that this part of the sub-area may be more visible from surrounding areas especially from northern approaches to the settlement.

Draft LP Policy RUR H1 says that development here must preserve positive vistas as well as the historic approach to the Conservation Area from the north. It adds the key characteristics of the Conservation Area are to be reflected in development design. A large area of public open space in the west of the site will allow space for SuDS and is the reason that density overall is circa 15 dwellings per hectare, unlike Duchy Fields itself.

Allowing for screening buffers and open space and areas for biodiversity enhancement the residual development area should actually follow a higher density than Duchy Fields. It should be noted that development here should also address stewardship provisions to ensure that long-term management and maintenance of assets such as open space, play areas and so forth are funded in perpetuity.

The detailed Design Code and Method Statement for the Grade 2* Listed Bletchingdon Park may also have some bearing and influence on how this overarching Design Code for Bletchingdon is applied in this Sub-area, for example in specifying dry stone walling using Tinkers Barn or similar Cotswold stone.



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

In this sub-area, most buildings should be two to two and a half storeys, as in the historic core of Bletchingdon, often with a strong building line with terraced housing set to a high density. At Duchy Fields, crescents and terraces of houses (stepped where necessary to follow the contours) with narrow width street frontages and minimal front gardens create the street scene. There are also apartments at Duchy Fields which can be integrated well with new housing especially in focal point buildings.



Duchy Fields - Crescent form

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Feature corner buildings as above create a “stop end” to streets as at Duchy Fields. Avoiding flat roofs other than for very small areas and entrance canopies will be important. Steeply pitched roofs in clay plain tiles and natural slate will be preferred, especially where looking outwards to the countryside.

Steeply pitched roofs here have seen the introduction of red clay tiles which are not typical of the village and in any new development reversion to more widespread use of stone slate or similar will be preferred. Although terraced housing predominates, building lines should be provided with minimal uniformity. Changes or extensions of any sort such as altering window openings or building areas of flat roofs would be out of keeping with local character.

With greater visibility from the Kirtlington direction less emphasis on use of render on key elevations and on red roof tiles will enable new development to blend in with the Conservation Area which is in the direct line of sight as one approaches Bletchington from the north.

Narrow lanes with a winding lane pattern to maintain spaciousness, using green verges or corners with existing mature trees should be provided in new development. It is clear from the policy in the LP that no vehicular through access will be possible into site RUR H1 from Duchy Fields, only from Springwell Hill. This will encourage active travel as there will be pedestrian and cycle routes through to the community hall, school and village shop.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, consideration of colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard. On more prominent buildings or those that might stand out such as in a corner position higher quality ashlar finishes might be applied.



Application of coursed local limestone walling of random course heights and stone widths at Duchy

Residential development on land west of Springwell Hill should encompass both housing and apartments, in a more high-density setting and adopting measures to ensure there is no light pollution forming a “glow” at night that would impact this very important area of the village adjoining the Conservation Area. External and amenity lighting as well as any limited street lighting and its effects, should not therefore be visible from the northern approaches to the village or from the Conservation Area.

New development will be required to take climate change and nature recovery into consideration in line with this Design Code as set out below. Orientation of buildings will be important to ensure for example that PV solar panels are not visible from the street being sited ideally on south facing rear roof elevations.



Fields will also be required in new development



Generous eaves overhangs on brackets which add interest. Flush eaves detailing should be avoided. Chimneys add interest to the roofscape

Details – Roofscapes

Gabled and hipped roofs will need to achieve some variation in roofscapes in new development to avoid uniformity of design. Village roofscapes should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-areas and the wider Parish including:

- Steeply pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering.
- Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.
- Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill.



Lead clad hipped roofed dormers are characteristic of larger feature properties in dominant positions as above.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Nearly all houses in the Conservation Area along Weston Road and the Green have chimneys as defining features (apart from one modern house which is set back from the road). It is noted that chimneys do not have to be that tall to still draw and 1 to 1.5m above the ridge would be ample.

Whilst some existing houses have functioning log burners, and may be popular for aesthetic reasons, from a green perspective these should be seen as a significant contributor to CO2 emissions as well as smoke generation and should be replaced by renewables such as heat pumps. Future developments may be subject to restriction on log burners but this notwithstanding, Oxford red brick chimneys remain a traditional feature of Bletchingdon and should continue to be seen as a requirement in new build.



More domestic scale terraces shown. In addition, use of render makes an attractive contribution to the streetscene.



Dormers of differing sizes and gables add interest to the roofscape in Duchy Fields and should be referenced in new development.

Details - Doors & Windows

In keeping with many of the traditional properties, new development should comprise a variety of window and door types including dormer windows on hipped roofs. Doors may also have portico type structures above them or other character features. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre 19th century.



Windows should usually be set back in deep recesses, with stone mullioned surrounds and metal casements. Windows should not be flush with the masonry. Upvc windows are discouraged.



Front doors with projecting canopies to highlight the entrance and add interest.



Cast metal (aluminium) black rainwater goods and oversized hoppers as at Duchy Fields are encouraged.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Boundaries

Front gardens should be avoided with homes being close to the street edge. The Duchy Fields development shows best practice.

Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges.

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, railings such as in main streets to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods.

In this respect reference to dry stone walling methods as in the Bletchingdon Park DCMS will be helpful.



White painted bespoke gates to gardens with high stone walls to define gardens (not timber fences) as at Duchy Fields will be required in new development. Corner plots at junctions of streets should have high stone boundary walls.



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

No through traffic will be enabled in this area for traffic and especially commercial deliveries. New developments should ensure pedestrian and cycle safety through use of exclusively convenient access routes, alleyways, paths with verges and use of surface materials to emphasise different modal priority and to emphasis street hierarchy.

Junctions and highways schemes that are designed to slow traffic and encourage safety will be encouraged, with speed humps, high boundary walls at corners to slow drivers down. Masterplans should be designed to give priority to the pedestrian and cyclist, not for vehicles. Narrow lanes running from main thoroughfare will all support this more conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly environment encouraging greater increase permeability and active travel.

Parking provision is a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Within developments garage parking should be discretely sited behind homes with fully accessible EV charging points including for e-bikes. Garages doors must not be metal up and over doors or fibreglass and instead should be designed to reflect the vernacular.

Open style driveways to streets will not generally be in keeping with the character of the sub-area. Driveway materials must complement acoustic management measures and attractive legacy surfacing. Street lighting, amenity or other external lighting will not normally be permitted except in a few locations where vehicular-pedestrian conflict may arise.

The Design Code requires either patching or replacement to match existing resin bound gravel in these cases. Alternatives may be considered which may be more attractive to break up larger swathes of surfacing and which may be more permeable for driveways in new development such as grasscrete type solutions. In any event residents should avoid patching their own driveway areas with different materials which would create a cluttered appearance and will need to submit proposals for approval.



Traditional street lighting/generous open spaces flanked by dense terraces of buildings (not individual detached houses)



Block paving (not tarmac) with speed ramps with conservation kerbs. Tight radii to reduce speed. High stone boundary wall at corner reduces visibility and also helps to slow down traffic.



Whilst resin bound gravel path surfaces differentiate pedestrian areas from streets, heavy wear over time on driveways may cause replacement with swathes of tarmac which should not be permitted.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding areas of open countryside should be protected.

On the peripheral edge, new development should define the field boundary by creating shelter belts and restricting views from afar. The intention being to screen development from the countryside and discourage future incursions beyond the established settlement boundary. These hedgerow/field boundaries are wildlife havens and where they exist already should be expanded and strengthened. These corridors should encourage active travel creating or linking into heritage trails and public footpaths.



Example of hoggins paths to public footpaths. Planting to set the buildings into the landscape. Stiles and gates should be added as well as wooden bollards to prevent damage to paths by motorised vehicles and by unauthorised parking on green spaces.



Example of street signage and generous landscaping – feature directional signage accompanying pedestrian and cycle routes through new development into the countryside should be distinctive.



Defined boundaries

Streets, Driveways & Parking

Mature trees, hedgerows and ponds should be protected for their landscape and biodiversity value. Layout designs should incorporate them as features such as in focal points and along footpaths. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will require semi-mature trees of native species to be replanted upon development being approved.

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements and also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. ditches at roadside).

Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

Public spaces, including public realm, green infrastructure within the sub-area such as play areas, parks, gardens and allotments all contribute to character and identity and must be maintained as accessible to all. The use of such areas being beneficial to health should encourage their long-term asset management and improvement and where possible developer contributions might fall under stewardship arrangements, via S106 agreement.

Bike parking should be encouraged with lockable facilities in the sub-area.

Planting along footpaths and in parks should avoid non-native species or high maintenance species that can spread rapidly. Plants that are listed as pests or are invasive such as Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, even Rhododendron should be monitored and removed as soon as identified.

In maintaining open spaces both formal and informal use of toxic sprays using classified chemicals such as neonicotinoids, glyphates etc. will NOT be permitted by contractors or volunteers.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Uses

Maintaining vitality and strength of the village amenities requires opportunities to be realised such as direct safe walking routes to shops, to pubs and other facilities, ideally encouraging extra retail provision.



Homes & Buildings

New housing should be sustainable, with the use of renewables such as air source/ ground source heat pumps and solar panels, greywater harvesting.

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and today these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.

Homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain. Infill schemes should replicate the layout and character of the original village where possible rather than more urban style housing estates and adhere to higher densities extant in the Sub-area. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to existing path networks this should be progressed.

Retrofitting of older homes should be enabled through provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps, as is practicable. The latter should be sited discretely with no visibility from the street or from key views such as from The Green. New housing should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to the village centre this should be progressed. New homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain.

As a settlement with dark skies street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to “Dark Skies” over the settlement.



Two examples of a solar panels fitted flush within a natural slate roof (not retrofitted).

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including some common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Details: Materials & Design

Due to the significance of heritage in the sub-area, the salvage and storage of original traditional materials should be a priority to enable re-use. Demolition should be resisted and where it does occur conditions should be imposed to require the stock of materials to be stored safely under supervision at the expense of the applicant.

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces. These should adhere where possible to specifications similar to those in the Bletchingdon Park DCMS.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/garage space and where this is not possible materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so, in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space.

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Where possible existing structures and features should be incorporated into new development.



Lifespan

Stewardship arrangements (long-term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses. Site RURI should be subject to a long-term stewardship vehicle.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
D

Area D: Bletchingdon – Station Road & Enslow

Enslow is a small hamlet on the banks of the River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal. It lies some 1.5 miles to the west of Bletchingdon within the Parish of Bletchingdon where the medieval road linking London with Chipping Norton crossed the Cherwell. This road is now known as Station Road (B4027) and connects Enslow with Bletchingdon.

The land to the west of Bletchingdon down to Enslow is largely open countryside both to the North and the South. This stretch of Station Road is tree and hedge lined with established growth, giving minor glimpses of the land beyond, save for the open entrance to Underdown Farm which gives far reaching views to the north and up to Kirtlington in the northeast. Approaching Bletchingdon out of Enslow is a series of twisting, climbing bends followed by a long straight that brings Bletchingdon nicely into focus on the approach. There is no footpath or road lighting on this stretch and the only man-made feature of note is the new Cotswold Stone wall entrance to Greenhill Leisure Park.

The unique, distinctive and cherished aspects of Enslow are in part its haphazard residential, commercial and industrial juxtaposition, evolved over time as the roads, railway and canal came into existence. But this does give it an untidy, cluttered personality on the north side of Station Road, whilst on the south side, this remains largely untouched and natural. The Character Assessment relates much of Enslow's history as a transport hub at the southern end of the Cherwell valley.

Enslow had a water mill that was recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086, and again in 1340 and in the 17th and 18th centuries.

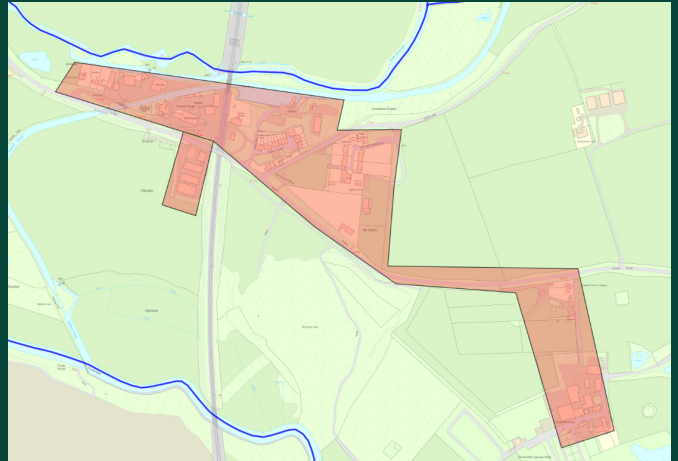


Figure 4 - Enslow Mill, 1881



Figure 5 - Bletchingdon Station, 1961

In 1718 the road was made into a turnpike, and at some stage the timber bridge was replaced with a stone one of pointed arches. In 1814 the stone bridge was widened on its downstream side to almost double its former width.

The arrival of the Oxford Canal led to the building of a wharf and associated buildings in 1788. From 1845 the Oxford and Rugby Railway ran through the hamlet and in 1850 Bletchington railway station was built there. British Railways closed the station in 1964, but the line remains open as part of the Cherwell Valley Line.

The communal value of Enslow centres mainly around the canal/ marina and those that work to support it and live on it. And when the Rock of Gibraltar public house was open, this too would have been a significant contributor. There may also be some communal value to those in the community that have relied on employment from the businesses in Enslow either for themselves or through their family generations.

Enslow itself has less than 40 residential properties of various plot sizes, age and character, a similar number of permanent canal boat moorings and a wide variety of agricultural and commercial businesses giving the area a mixed use and 'chaotic' feel to the built elements. It has an interesting historical mix of buildings with many of traditional construction of stone with slate roofs. The uses are all in proximity to each other forming a compact settlement but there is also a lot of green space close to the homes and in parts extensive views over countryside towards Kirtlington and Bletchington. Biodiversity in this area of the Parish is extensive. Two small housing developments have been built in recent years. Firstly, Ingleby Paddocks on the East side

of the A4095, a development of some seven sizeable modern homes, originally with B1 home working conditions and Canal Close, just off Canal Way, off the B4027, a recent addition of fourteen modern homes, may also individually have communal value to those who now live there. However, with no amenities and limited access for pedestrians, both these sites are isolated.



Enslow is a small-scale, self-contained community within the countryside. Whilst it is a very accessible place its lack of services means it is car dependent. This view shows how commercial and residential layout of Enslow sit side by side.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

This sprawling linear sub-area stretches along Station Road, extending from the listed Greenhill Farm at one end to the main Enslow settlement sitting north of the road close to its junction with the canal, railway and river.

Enslow is a close-knit community living in a mix of old and more recent small-scale development including flats which contribute in this part of the sub-area to a compact higher density settlement pattern. It is also mixed with commercial buildings close to the canal and road. Along the canal there are many permanent moorings and a marina which at one time would have benefited from having a public house on the canalside. Having had no investment for years this has closed, increasing car dependency still further.

Enslow offers scope for new build but also for conversion of existing structures. There is no doubt the canalside offers scope for significant environmental enhancements and new facilities, but this may be frustrated to an extent by the location of some commercial uses. One example is the Old Stop House occupied as commercial premises. Its conversion and extension along the waterfront could provide a welcome addition of new apartments but it may currently be limited by ownerships and mixed uses.

Some of the industrial/commercial uses sit closely alongside residential buildings and if the former should discontinue operations or move site this would provide an opportunity for much improved design of new development. The canalside in particular offers scope for much more attractive development on both sides and if considered suitable for new development a development brief should be provided to take sites forward and taking this Design Code into account.

The focus would need to be on greener more sustainable buildings however than has been built recently at Enslow. This might also potentially enable a

local shop or roadside use to be viable at this location reducing car dependency.

Most residential buildings are two-storey of traditional construction. Around the settlement are a number of historic listed structures. There may be opportunities to reinforce the compactness through discrete infilling as has happened at Canal Close.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard.



Old Stop House viewed from north bank of canal adjoins commercial uses in an important canalside location.



Canal Close – 14 stone-built properties with stone slate roofs, wooden casement windows and off-street parking. Note the varied roofscapes.



Movement

Roofs

Gabled pitched roofs will be required to achieve some variation in roofscapes in each development to avoid uniformity of design. Building lines and orientation may also be varied. Village roofscapes should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-area and the wider Parish including:

- Pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering.
- Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.
- Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill

Doors & Windows

In keeping with the variety of styles in the settlement, new development could have a range of features including recessed windows, wooden casements, dormer windows. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre 20th century.

Boundaries

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods.

Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges.

Streets, Driveways & Parking

Whilst accessible, Enslow is car dependent due to a lack of services - public transport and basic amenities. Other than along the main Station Road, no through traffic will be enabled in this area due to its fragmentation by various historic infrastructure. Note the station closed in 1961.

Sharp junctions appropriate to streets, narrow lanes running from main thoroughfare will all support this more conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly high density living environment, encouraging greater increase permeability and active travel.

Parking provision is likely to be a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Due to the space limitations and constraints garage parking may not always be feasible and small lateral driveways may be more suitable as at Canal Close. Where possible garages should be discreetly sited behind homes. Open style long driveways will not generally be in keeping with the character or practicability of the sub-area.

New developments should ensure pedestrian and cycle safety through use of convenient access routes, alleyways, paths with verges and contribute to improvements for access such as towpath connections if appropriate. Use of materials to emphasise different surface treatments to emphasis street hierarchy and priorities will be important where there is mixed residential and commercial traffic.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding elevated areas of open countryside should be protected. The proximity to unspoiled countryside and attractive living conditions suggest Enslow residents want to keep the community small scale and compact. Biodiversity and nature restoration will be a priority here.

Existing Natural Assets

Mature trees, hedgerows and ponds should be protected for their landscape and biodiversity value. Layout designs should incorporate them as features such as in focal points and along footpaths. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will require mature trees of native species to be replanted upon development being approved.

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements but also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. ditches at roadside).

Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

Public spaces including public realm and green infrastructure within the sub-area are extremely limited albeit walks into tranquil countryside offer alternatives. The access to such areas being beneficial to health should encourage their long-term asset management and improvement and where possible developer contributions might fall under stewardship arrangements, under S106. Bike parking should be encouraged with lockable facilities in the sub-area including close to the Marina.



Uses

Maintaining vitality and strength of the hamlet amenities requires opportunities to be realised for employment and leisure as well as provision of other assets (e.g. retail). Different uses are in juxtaposition in this sub-area and this is likely to continue.



View to the rear of the now closed Rock of Gibraltar Public house, flats and yard by the canal.



Homes & Buildings

New housing should be sustainable with the use of renewables such as air source/ ground source heat pumps and solar panels, greywater harvesting.

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and today these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.

Homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain. New housing whether new build or conversions, should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes. New homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain.

As a settlement with dark skies street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to “Dark Skies” over the settlement.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including some common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Materials & Design

Due to the significance of heritage in the sub-area, the salvage and storage of original traditional materials should be a priority to enable re-use. Demolition should be resisted and where it does occur conditions should be imposed to require the stock of materials to be stored safely under supervision at the expense of the applicant.

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/garage space and where this is not possible materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so, in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Ideally such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street.



Lifespan

Where appropriate, stewardship arrangements (long term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
E

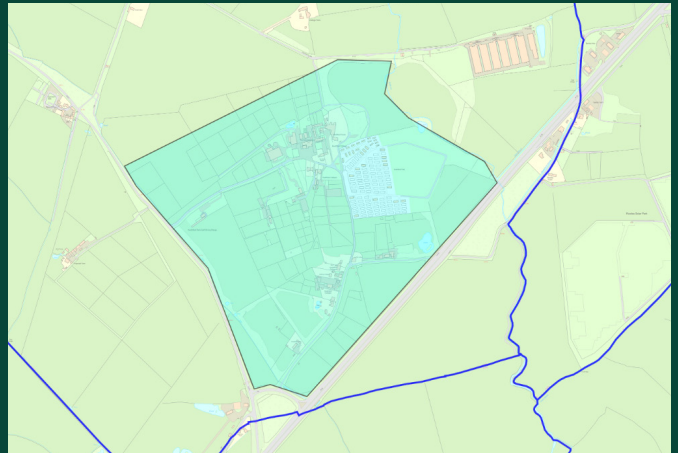
Area E: Bletchington – Heathfield

Heathfield is a hamlet lying to roughly 2.25km the southeast of Bletchington. Historically it was an area of common land used for rough grazing that was only brought in to more modern use in the early 19th century. In landscape terms it forms part of the Ploughley Limestone Plateau and Heathfield occupies a large open flat area of land. Villages here are typically two storey stone cottages predominantly.

Heathfield is an anomaly, an outlier and its design is ad hoc and organic offering scope to rebuild or infill in places. It is evolving in part as a sort of off grid community with mobile homes laid out on plots at Heathfield Park. Although electricCity supply and other utilities are present serving existing homes and recent conversions Heathfield also potentially offers the prospect of scaling up to deliver better insulated higher quality modular homes. This opportunity for low carbon development makes particular sense in less connected locations.

Until the 1960's there was little or no building development and a small but fluctuating community. It is rather reminiscent of the organic growth of some older plotland developments like Peacehaven in Sussex. It has a single main access in and out. Whilst further organic growth might occur a Design Code should be able to achieve a more efficient and attractive layout whether this is for some infilling or a larger scheme. Whatever happens a more compact place with decent amenities for residents would be desirable rather than extending the footprint over larger areas of land.

Heathfield is not a designated village but is an isolated settlement, in a currently unsustainable location. There are no bus services and residents are car dependent. The roads are not adopted and there are no streetlights or pavements. There is no village centre and the only hotel, the Oxfordshire Inn, ceased operations back in 2016. Part of the former inn is now known as Walkers Barn and has been converted and modernised to provide residential units.



Walkers Barn flats, formerly part of Oxfordshire Inn



Former Oxfordshire Inn, now closed

There are some attractive stone-built structures which potentially anchor the settlement in design terms but which are often swamped by what today are irregular, poorly sited random structures. Visual interest is limited as are views over countryside as a consequence. Heathfield House is an impressive house from the nineteenth century which is now a care home. Staff quarters are in adjacent property. Walkers Barn is an attractive conversion to flats of a stone barn. Meadow Walk is a development of modern two storey housing and there are old farm buildings, shed used by former businesses and mainly equestrian buildings.

Up to 151 luxury lodges are planned on land within the sub-area (see above) and many plots are marked out and already built on. This could expand the need for mains services to be installed, and also potentially off grid low carbon housing infill could be achievable here. However, any proposal for planning permission would need to avoid damaging views, hedges and spaces, protect the characteristic alley ways and spaces between buildings, and use natural materials. A mix of dwelling types should be delivered within the settlement. Any infill development should be limited in number to avoid a significant change in the overall open character of the area.



Heathfield Lodges



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

In this sub-area, most permanent buildings are single or two storey occupying randomly sized plots, often developed organically without any adherence to an overall design concept or code. Building lines do not exist in general but there are key structures around which a purpose-built design could be achieved. Street lighting is non-existent and a Dark Sky ethos prevails.

There is scope to maintain spaciousness, using green verges or corners with existing mature trees to integrate with new two storey infill development.

This could be a sub-area where low carbon, modular housing could be developed. Infill schemes should replicate the layout and character of the homes in this landscape. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to existing path networks this should be progressed.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard. On more prominent buildings such as corner plots, or even large former agricultural sheds there may be scope for infill development to replace such structure without undermining openness. Old buildings that are retained may have potential for biodiversity and this should mean new development must compensate for BNG losses.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Roofs

Gabled roofs will be required to achieve some variation in roofscapes in each development to avoid uniformity of design. Village roofscapes should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-areas and the wider Parish including:

- Pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering.
- Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.
- Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill.

Doors & Windows

Due to the mix of styles and the ad hoc nature of the sub-area’s buildings, new development could be quite varied. New homes could be stone built or may have an element of render or weatherboarding on front elevations. Windows could be recessed, could have stone lintels above or below, possibly including dormer windows. Doors may also have portico type structures above them or other character features.

Boundaries

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, railings such as in main streets to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods.

Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges.



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

No through traffic exists in this area for traffic. Pedestrian vehicle conflict may be evident as a result of the informality of layouts so new developments should ensure pedestrian and cycle safety through use of convenient access routes, alleyways, paths with verges and use of materials to emphasise different surface treatments to emphasis street hierarchy. Sharp junctions appropriate to a proper efficient street layout. Narrow lanes running from the main thoroughfare will all support this more conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly environment encouraging greater increase permeability and active travel.

Parking provision is a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Inside developments garage parking should be discreetly sited behind homes. Open style driveways to streets will not be in keeping with the character of the sub-area.

Street lighting will not generally be approved.



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding elevated areas of open countryside should be protected. The proximity to unspoiled countryside and attractive living conditions suggest Enslow residents want to keep the community small scale and compact. Biodiversity and nature restoration will be a priority here.

Existing Natural Assets

Mature trees, hedgerows and ponds should be protected for their landscape and biodiversity value. Layout designs should incorporate them as features such as in focal points and along footpaths. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will require mature trees of native species to be replanted upon development being approved.

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements but also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. ditches at roadside).

Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

Public spaces including public realm and green infrastructure within the sub-area such as play areas, parks, gardens and allotments all contribute to character and identity and must be maintained as accessible to all. The use of such areas being beneficial to health should encourage their long-term asset management and improvement and where possible developer contributions might fall under Stewardship arrangements, under S106. Bike parking should be encouraged with lockable facilities in the sub-area.



Uses

Maintaining vitality and strength of the hamlet amenities requires opportunities to be realised such as direct safe walking routes to shops, to pubs and other facilities where possible such as for extra retail provision.



Homes & Buildings

Support for more modular housing at Heathfield should ensure low carbon housing, with renewable energy generation in various forms being provided. New housing will have to be much more sustainable than Bletchington's Duchy fields with the use of renewables such as air source/ ground source heat pumps and solar panels, greywater harvesting. Homes should be oriented differently to maximise solar gain. New housing whether new build or conversions, should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes.

Laying out foundations according to preconceived agreed designs should enable self /custom build to develop attractive homes here as at Graven Hill. Modular homes could be required to deliver say 10% of all new homes at Heathfield as part of agreements with landowners but this requires conformity with the emerging Cherwell Local Plan.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
E

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and today these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.

As a settlement with dark skies street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to “Dark Skies” over the settlement.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including some common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Retrofitting of older homes should be enabled through provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps. The latter should be sited discretely with no visibility from the street or from key views. New housing should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to the village centre this should be progressed. New homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain.

Materials & Design

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/ garage space and where this is not possible materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so, in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Ideally, such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street.

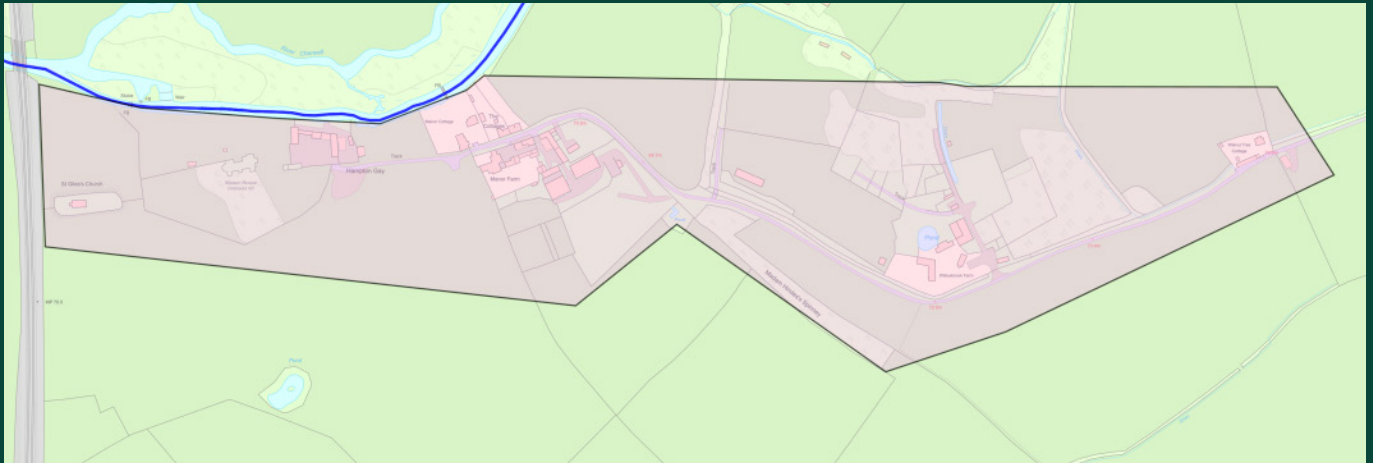


Lifespan

Where appropriate, stewardship arrangements (long-term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses.

AREA: F

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Area F: Hampton Gay

Hampton Gay is an ancient hamlet located in the Clay Vale of Otmoor. Its population has declined over the centuries, and the area comprises an abandoned village landscape typical of many lost villages of England. Part of the landscape is a Scheduled Monument. Its Conservation Area also sits within the Oxford Green Belt. Although less than 20 minutes by car from the centre of Oxford, traffic permitting, it has a very rural feel and a sense of isolation from a busy world.

The village has diminished over time to the extent its church now stands in isolation from the rest of the hamlet. Today it is a small rural community with only eight scattered dwellings plus associated farm and other buildings. There are four listed structures: St Giles Church, Manor Farm house and barn, and the ruins of the Old Manor House dating from the sixteenth century.

The surrounding landscape is of great historic value. What remains of Hampton Gay-the open fields containing earthworks, the small hamlet, ruined house and mill illustrate the ongoing depopulation of this manor estate throughout the medieval and modern periods (Cherwell District Council, Hampton Gay, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Conservation Area Appraisal: 2007, p. 16).

Some older structures including a paper mill burned down in the 1880s and the Manor House have been derelict for many years due to decay and destruction and without employment the number of residents has declined. Work is ongoing on refurbishments of high quality and in keeping with character.



St Giles church across the fields at Hampton Gay

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

The settlement is accessible only by a single-track lane. The buildings vary in orientation but generally are of traditional stone construction. The area is typified by low limestone walls.



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

This very small hamlet comprises a small number of dwellings 8 no. and sits within an abandoned historic landscape. It is farmed but retains many historic landscape features. There is a single access lane. Most buildings are two storey stone built with Oxford chimneys and dormers. Manor Farm house is an imposing three storey structure.

Any new development here would need to respect the historic nature of the Conservation Area and the character of the settlement within its rural hinterland. It is not anticipated that there will be anything other than conversions and limited infilling due to this highly sensitive context. Buildings are usually two storey cottages stone built with Oxford chimneys and dormers. Manor Farm House is a large structure with outbuildings.

In this sub-area, the hamlet is fairly linear but although buildings are scattered there is a sense of enclosure in that part closest to the open fields and the isolated church. Any new development here would need to respect the historic nature of the Conservation Area and the character of the settlement within its rural hinterland. In most cases any development at scale would disturb very important settings. Green Belt designation ensures protection of the rural landscape as well as the buildings. In general, therefore further new building should be discouraged. However, whilst some infilling might be possible where buildings are in decline this does not imply so called enabling development.



Ongoing refurbishment work at the ruined Manor House 2024



Views front and rear of the farmhouse

Building lines do not exist in general but the settlement is linear in its orientation rather than a compact place clustering around a church. Structures are stone built.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard.



Village street cottages, Hampton Gay – note stone built, slate roofs, dormer windows and recessed windows with rustic timber doors. Parking is opposite.



Roofs

The roof of any infill development should be consistent and proportionate to the original building.

Pitched roofs should typically be at 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering. Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.

Doors & Windows

In keeping with many of the traditional properties, any infill new development should have stone lintels above windows including dormer windows with render. Doors may also have portico type structures above them or other character features. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre-20th century.

Boundaries

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, railings such as in main streets to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods.



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

No through traffic is possible. The narrow lane running to the main B Road will support a conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly environment encouraging greater increase permeability and active travel. However, this is a location that would attract visitors and walking and cycling from surrounding settlements. Reliance on the narrow lane could potentially be hazardous so improved access by non-car modes will be of benefit to the local community.

Parking provision is specific to each proposed infill. Garage parking should be discreetly sited behind homes where possible.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding elevated areas of open countryside should be protected. The impact of any development in the areas of historic landscape would negate development. This does not imply so called enabling development.

Existing Natural Assets

Mature trees must be protected for their landscape value along footpaths but also for their biodiversity value and should be given enhanced status within the Parish area. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will require mature trees of native species to be replanted upon infill development being approved.

Hedgerows should be maintained and enhanced where these form a boundary to a development area or a corridor through the village out to the open countryside, including areas outside the settlement boundary.

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements but also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. ditches at roadside).

Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

There are no public spaces within the hamlet although there is a footpath network.



Uses

There are no amenities and residents here will rely on deliveries or are otherwise car dependent, making trips for work or for shopping and leisure purposes. There is no public house within easy access.



Homes & Buildings

Energy efficiency of homes should be enabled through provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps. The latter should be sited discretely with no visibility from the street or from key views, ideally on south facing roofs. New infill should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes. New infill should be oriented to maximise solar gain.

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and today these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including some common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site.

Materials & Design

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new infill developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces.

Space Between & Around Buildings

Where possible, any infill should maintain existing spaces between buildings.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Ideally such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street.



Lifespan

The important historic landscape setting of the hamlet should be protected and where opportunities are afforded and are appropriate long-term stewardship of green assets should be considered.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

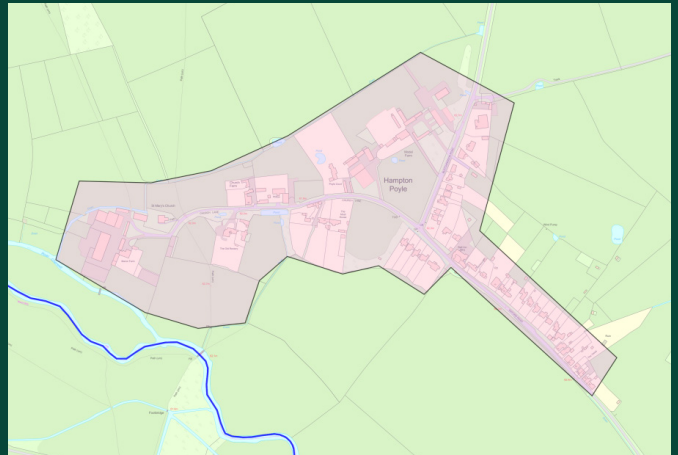
AREA:
G

Area G: Hampton Poyle

Hampton Poyle is a village which has seen growth and decline over many centuries. In the Tudor era, the two wealthy families, the Dormers and the Crokes, were responsible for several of the dwellings in Church Lane. Later, the estate was changed hands several times, ending up in the ownership of the Annesley family in 1795. It passed through several generations until the death of Arthur Annesley, 11th Viscount Valentia, in 1927. The Annesley estate at Hampton Poyle was broken up and sold to its tenants in 1929.

The settlement sits within the Cherwell flood plain and comprises small scale arable farmland and a low-lying pastoral landscape. The oldest area is along Church Lane close to the Cherwell River and this is contained within a Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal undertaken by Cherwell District Council in 2017 details the extensive character of this settlement. Much of the buildings comprise of oolite limestone although there is some red brick housing. Stonesfield or Welsh slates have been replaced in places with concrete tiles. The whole of the area of Hampton Poyle sits within the Oxford Green Belt.

The Conservation Area covers the historic core and Church Lane (which is a dead end, hence no through traffic), which leads to the church and one of the farms: 'The buildings in the Conservation Area are very much rooted in the vernacular style of the district, with oolite limestone walls and chimneys with brick additions. Not all of the original roof coverings have survived, all the thatch in the village has now gone and a number of Stonesfield slate roofs have been replaced in heavier concrete tiles. A number of the buildings now have Welsh slate and there are also roofs of clay tiles on some outbuildings, others are either roofless or have corrugated iron and asbestos cement' (Hampton Poyle Character Assessment, Cherwell District Council: 2017, p. 24).



St Mary's Church, towards the north-western end of Church Lane, was begun in the 13th century and extended in the 14th century. It was then subject to restoration twice in the Victorian period.

Here the plot sizes are generally larger than in other parts of Hampton Poyle and the buildings much older. Whilst there are buildings on both sides of Church Lane, these are intermittent and there are a number of gaps between them, including boundaries of two fields. Church Lane has various mild bends and is tarmacked, but there is no pavement, only grass verges.

The houses are generally much older and have been built primarily with local stone, grey in colour, although extensions and additions show some brickwork. Several of the buildings in Church Lane date from the 16th and early 17th centuries. Among the oldest is the former Rectory - it is partly an early 16th-century building, but the main block dates from about 1802.

Manor Farm, the successor to the mansion house called Hampton Poyle Place, dates from about 1625, except for its early 19th-century windows. It is L-shaped in plan, has two stories with attics, and is built of local limestone with a stone band at the first floor on the south. The Old Manor House is 17th century and was probably built when one of two wealthy families owned the village, the Dormer or Croke families. Poyle Court was built around the same time; it retains its L-shaped plan and has two ancient stone stacks on each end gable, and was re-fronted in circa 1800, when a battlemented parapet and wooden casements in 'gothic' style with square stone frames were inserted. Other houses on the lane are not quite so old but are largely built in older styles with local stone.

The other part of the settlement comprises what are essentially ribbon development houses along the east side of Bletchingdon Road and the north side of Oxford Road, with [four] houses on the south side of Oxford Road near to the junction with Bletchingdon Road. There are very few spaces between the houses but open space on most of the south side of Oxford Road. The houses on Bletchingdon Road face hedges and trees that mask one of the farms in the village. If there were gaps between the houses on both roads, they were filled as the ribbon development was completed.



Built Form

Development Layout, Building Lines & Orientation

This historic village has a largely linear form along three roads. It includes a large Conservation Area within a historic landscape in which there are many archaeological priority areas located on Church Lane. The latter comprises a long rustic lane through the countryside terminating at the ancient church of St Marys and Manor Farm. Buildings and farmsteads are scattered along its length, built with stone with slate roofs but there is some evidence of refurbishment and extension in this vicinity. Some more modern materials are also evident such as concrete roof tiles.



Church Lane - traditional stone cottages and outbuildings dominate but also sit alongside recent new builds that embrace the similar use of materials. Note also weatherboarding on outbuildings.



The greater height of the new buildings is mitigated by being set back from the road and the view is broken up by more traditional buildings in the grounds.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Even at the heart of the settlement there are more modern homes but progressing along Church Lane the Conservation Area begins with a mix of very old structures both homes and farm structures. It is extremely important that the Conservation Area retains its tranquillity and its heritage assets. It includes the Cherwell River (which runs to the side of the lane and can be seen below running behind the wheelie bins in the photo) and is well stocked with mature trees and hedgerows. Church Lane also offers space for wildlife as it is effectively bypassed by traffic using the other two main roads.

The more modern parts of the village are located along Bletchingdon Road and Oxford Road. Here there is a range of styles, varied building lines, terraced cottages, to suburban style semis and including chalet style bungalows. On Church Lane there is a sense of enclosure in parts but elsewhere the village is very open in scale with the countryside having a strong presence.

Whilst this linear form of village is suitable only for infilling and conversions this is particularly the case in the Conservation Area. Any development here would need to respect the historic nature of the Conservation Area and the character of the settlement within its rural hinterland. Buildings are generally two storeys tall stone built with Oxford chimneys and dormers.

Along Bletchingdon Road and Oxford Road there are stone built houses and cottages sometimes with outbuildings. However, there is also a mix of modern styles including brick-built homes. New development of bungalows, or chalet style bungalows, and use of brick facings in new homes should be considered inappropriate in the village.

Note that the built-up area is confined to one side of Bletchingdon Road with views over countryside and similarly for sections of Oxford Road. Infilling might be possible along these roads and should adhere to the design quality that reflects the Conservation Area as set out below. New buildings should not exceed the heights of other traditional two storey buildings in the settlement.



The junction of Church Lane with Oxford Road approaching from Bletchingdon Road – this may be seen as the focus of the village with the public house being at its most accessible point from all three directions.



Mix of housing along Bletchingdon Road looking east



Chalet bungalows
- Out of keeping with more traditional village character

Green Belt designation ensures protection of the rural landscape as well as the buildings. However, some infilling might be possible where buildings are in decline. Building lines exist in ribbon development form but in the Conservation Area plot sizes and orientation vary along Church Lane.

Use of traditional materials including stone and slates, colour palettes, roofscapes, traditional windows and doors should all be applied to the highest possible standard. The larger Duchy Fields scheme at nearby Bletchington might not be appropriate here as most proposals will be small infill – but mainly as the design of Duchy Fields reflects a more urban feel with harder landscaping which would not be applicable in Hampton Poyle. Two storey buildings at Duchy Fields tend to be greater height compared with original cottages in Bletchington and so strict control should be exercised to ensure that two storey homes at Hampton Poyle do not excessively dominate compared to other existing structures. A solution is to set back new buildings from the road so there is more spaciousness.

However, there could be some individual large buildings proposed and many of the principles adopted at Duchy Fields might be applied here for instance relating to use of Tinkers Barn or other Cotswold stone structures, recessed and dormer windows and slate roofing.

Roofs

Pitched or hipped roofs will be required to achieve some variation in roofscapes in each development to avoid uniformity of design. Village roofscapes should be applied to new development including extensions in the sub-areas and the wider Parish including:

- Pitched roofs typically 40 – 45 degrees; roofs of slate, reconstituted stone or Cotswold stone this profile and covering.
- Scale including height should reflect sizes of existing properties in the vicinity.
- Red “Oxford” brick chimneys should be provided in new infill.



Coursed limestone various widths etc at Duchy Fields might be good for benchmarking new development at Hampton Poyle.

NB. Larger buildings should not be close to the kerb here but should be set back from the road to be more in keeping with existing scale and heights.

Doors & Windows

In keeping with many of the traditional properties, new development should have stone lintels above windows including dormer windows with render. Doors may also have portico type structures above them or other character features. Doors, windows, chimneys, gates, and boundary walls should all demonstrate continuity with village styles from the pre 20th century.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

Boundaries

Proposed development should retain key features such as high boundary stone walls, gate posts, verges, railings such as in main streets to lower-level dry stone wall boundaries, using “cock and hen” or other suitable methods.

Boundary timber fences will be discouraged in the sub-area. More open areas will be preferred including more open front gardens on side roads, verges.



Movement

Streets, Driveways & Parking

The roads through the main part of the village are busy and there is limited scope for a conducive pedestrian/cycle friendly environment discouraging greater increase permeability and active travel. It may be feasible to create a segregated cycle way along Bletchingdon Road enabling connectivity to the other villages cutting across country. Bike parking should be encouraged with lockable facilities in the sub-area.

Parking provision is a sensitive issue in the sub-area and new development should not overload local lanes, vistas and open spaces with on street parking. Inside developments garage parking should be discreetly sited behind homes.



Nature & Landscape

Ecologically important areas in and around the settlement are accessible via Public Rights of Way from this sub-area and views of the village from surrounding elevated areas of open countryside should be protected. The impact of any development in the areas of historic landscape would negate development.

Existing Natural Assets

Mature trees must be protected for their landscape value along footpaths but also for their biodiversity value and should be given enhanced status within the Parish area. Any felling of any such trees that are unprotected will require mature trees of native species to be replanted upon development being approved.

Hedgerows should be maintained and enhanced where these form a boundary to a development area or a corridor through the village out to the open countryside, including areas outside the settlement boundary.

New infill developments should retain biodiversity areas to meet BNG requirements but also allow access through and between gardens through wildlife friendly barriers. Areas set aside for nature must be protected from illegal parking and dumping through landscape features (e.g. ditches at roadside).

Note that stone boundary walls or garden walls should provide very small gaps to allow biodiversity and movement.

Swift boxes and other amenities for bird and bat species should be incorporated into new homes. Greywater collection should provide some facilities to top up ponds in dry weather to support biodiversity.



Public Spaces

Public spaces including public realm and green infrastructure within the sub-area such as the village green contribute to the character and identity of the settlement. Use of natural spaces are beneficial to mental and physical health. Stewardship arrangements, potentially funded under S106 would be of benefit to the village.



Uses

The village suffers from lack of facilities although it retains its public house. It remains dependent on deliveries and car journeys to work, for leisure and other purposes. Maintaining the vitality and strength of the village amenities will be enhanced through direct safe walking and cycling routes to facilities in Bletchington. New development can help sustain such valued community assets.



The Bell Inn, Hampton Poyle



Homes & Buildings

Energy efficiency in homes should be enabled through provision of renewable energy including photovoltaics and heat pumps. The latter should be sited discretely with no visibility from the street or from key views, ideally on south facing roofs. New housing should have provision for EV charging for cars and bikes. Where opportunities exist to recreate pedestrian access ways to connect to the village centre this should be progressed. New homes should be oriented to maximise solar gain.

Discrete siting and screening of refuse bins is referenced and today these considerations should also apply to greener matters such as siting air source heat pumps, cycle storage, and positioning of photo voltaic panels on rear roof slopes not on front elevations.

As a settlement with dark skies additional street lighting should not be permitted in new development where this would increase light pollution in gardens or be disruptive to “Dark Skies” over the settlement.

Mature trees in gardens should be recorded and held on a Tree Register by the Parish Council. Where these are removed to enable infilling prior to any planning approval they should be replaced as part of any permission and maintained for a minimum of five years until proven to be viable.

There may be space available for verges, fruit trees and hedgerow retention and these should be retained if part of the original character of the site. In larger infill schemes food growing areas such as allotments and including some common areas for traditional orchards might be feasible.

Character Assessment & Design Code Sub-Areas

AREA:
G

Materials & Design

The use of traditional materials and styles should be implemented in all new developments including treatment of hard and soft surfaces.

Where older buildings are included in new development sites every effort should be made to integrate such buildings and individual features into the scheme including homes or outbuildings/garage space and where this is not possible materials should be re-used in the new development. Corner buildings at junctions of streets are especially worthy of retention and re-use of features and materials.

Space Between & Around Buildings

It is often the case that the sub-area may be characterised by buildings being in close proximity with small distances between boundaries; so, in new development this may also be relevant. Very dense sites might allow for increases in height to create more usable internal space.

Extensions & Conversions

In this sub-area, changes and additions to existing buildings should be limited by the current design, orientation, materials. Ideally such changes should be modest in scale and not be visible from the street.



Lifespan

Where appropriate, stewardship arrangements (long-term maintenance) for green and blue infrastructure or community facilities in new development should be set out under Section 106 Agreements. Assets of Community Value should be protected from conversion to other uses.





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