



# West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Annual Monitoring Report (2023 – 2024)

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## Section I - Introduction

### **Purpose of the Annual Monitoring report**

- 1.1 The primary purpose of the AMR is to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policies set out in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.
- 1.2 The AMR is also required to report on the following matters:
  - The progress of the Local Plan and any other related documents against agreed timetables;
  - Neighbourhood Planning;
  - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where this has been introduced; and
  - How the Council has fulfilled its obligations under the Duty to Co-Operate
- 1.3 This AMR focuses primarily on the 1-year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 but includes some information from outside this period where appropriate.

### **Structure of the report**

- 1.4 The following section of the report (Section 2) covers the four bullet points listed above whilst Section 3 summarises the implementation and effectiveness of adopted Local Plan policies against relevant indicators.

## Section 2 - West Oxfordshire Local Plan and associated documents

### Local Plan Progress

- 2.1 The existing West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 was formally adopted in September 2018.
- 2.2 In September 2023, reflecting the fact that the Local Plan became 5-years old, the Council undertook a review in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 The review is available [online](#) and concludes that whilst many of the policies remain consistent with national policy, they would benefit from being reviewed and re-considered in light of updated evidence and to reflect any changing circumstances.
- 2.4 Recognising the importance of having robust and up-to-date policies in place to guide development, the Council has committed to the preparation of a new Local Plan covering the period to 2041.
- 2.5 The timetable for preparing a Local Plan must be set out in a Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 2.6 The current LDS for West Oxfordshire was published in November 2024 and progress against the key milestones is summarised in the table below.

**Table 1 - West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme Key Milestones (November 2024)**

Stage/Milestone	Progress
Regulation 18 initial scoping consultation  August/October 2022	<b>COMPLETE</b>
Regulation 18 focused consultation on draft plan objectives, spatial strategy options and call for sites.  June/July 2023	<b>COMPLETE</b> (although consultation took place slightly later than anticipated from August – October 2023)
Regulation 18 consultation on preferred policy options/approaches  May 2025	Delayed as a consequence of significant, anticipated changes to national planning policy. It is prudent to take account of these changes in the next iteration of the Local Plan making process.
Regulation 19 publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan  October 2025	Not yet undertaken.

Regulation 22 submission of draft Local Plan March 2026	Not yet undertaken.
Examination and adoption 2026/27	Not yet undertaken.

## **Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)**

- 2.7 The Local Plan 2031 identifies land to the north of the A40 near Eynsham as a strategic location for growth (SLG) which is intended to accommodate a free-standing exemplar Garden Village of around 2,200 new homes plus 40 hectares of business land and various supporting services and facilities.
- 2.8 The Local Plan requires comprehensive development of the Garden Village (now referred to as Salt Cross) led by an Area Action Plan (AAP).
- 2.9 Following extensive stakeholder engagement, the final draft version of the AAP was submitted for independent examination in February 2021 with hearing sessions held in June/July 2021.
- 2.10 Following a pause in the examination to enable additional work on infrastructure phasing to be undertaken, the appointed Inspectors wrote to the District Council in May 2022 to confirm that the AAP is capable of being found 'sound' subject to a number of Main Modifications (MMs).
- 2.11 Consultation on those Main Modifications took place from September to October 2022 and on 1 March 2023, the Inspectors' issued their final report which concluded that the AAP can be formally adopted subject to a number of modifications.
- 2.12 However, a legal challenge was subsequently lodged by Rights Community Action (RCA) focusing on the conclusions reached by the Inspectors in relation to the soundness of AAP Policy 2 – Net Zero Carbon Development.
- 2.13 The legal challenge was successful and in March 2024, it was confirmed that the Inspector's report and proposed Main Modifications are quashed insofar as they relate to Policy 2.
- 2.14 As a result, the examination was re-opened in April 2024 with a new Inspector appointed. At the time of writing, examination hearing sessions are expected to be held in February 2025.<sup>1</sup>

## **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 2.15 West Oxfordshire does not yet have CIL in place but in March 2023, the Council's Executive agreed that new viability evidence should be commissioned to inform a new draft CIL charging schedule (and also to help inform the emerging Local Plan 2041).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/salt-cross-garden-village/salt-cross-area-action-plan-examination/salt-cross-area-action-plan-re-opened-examination-2024/>

- 2.16 Consultants were appointed to prepare new evidence with input from key stakeholders.
- 2.17 Consultation on a new CIL charging schedule took place between August and September 2024 with submission, examination and adoption to follow in 2025.

### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 2.18 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are intended to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted Local Plan. The District Council now has a number of SPDs in place. Details are provided in the summary table below with copies of the SPDS available on the Council's website [here](#).

**Table 2 - West Oxfordshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

Title	Purpose	Date of adoption
Affordable Housing	Supplements Local Plan Policy H3 – Affordable Housing and provides detailed guidance on the delivery of new affordable housing in West Oxfordshire.	27 October 2021
Developer Contributions	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS5 – Supporting Infrastructure and provides detailed guidance to developers, infrastructure providers and local communities on likely infrastructure requirements for developments in West Oxfordshire.	31 July 2023
Combe Village Design Statement	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS4 – High Quality Design and provides design guidelines that can help to shape any future development so that it blends in with Combe's distinctive rural landscape and heritage.	28 July 2023
West Oxfordshire Design Guide	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS4 – High Quality Design and contains a detailed analysis of both natural and man-made aspects of the District and detailed design advice.	2016

### Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.19 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) provide an extra tier of planning, to address locally specific issues within localities, mainly parishes in the case of West Oxfordshire. NDPs form part of the statutory Development Plan and are therefore a key consideration in decision making in West Oxfordshire.
- 2.20 Nine NDPs have been formally adopted or 'made' in West Oxfordshire. Details of these plans are provided in sequential date order in the table below.

**Table 3 - Made Neighbourhood Development Plans**

NDP	Date of adoption	Weblink
Cassington	26 June 2023	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wkojqf3/made-cassington-neighbourhood-plan-for-web.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wkojqf3/made-cassington-neighbourhood-plan-for-web.pdf</a>
Milton under Wychwood	26 June 2023	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/g4okpitt/milton-under-wychwood-neighbourhood-plan-made-26062023.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/g4okpitt/milton-under-wychwood-neighbourhood-plan-made-26062023.pdf</a>
Woodstock	23 January 2023	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/saynun5i/woodstock-neighbourhood-development-plan.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/saynun5i/woodstock-neighbourhood-development-plan.pdf</a>
Charlbury	14 June 2021	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wbenslr3/regulation-19-charlbury-decision-statement-14-june-2021-astrid-harvey-1.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wbenslr3/regulation-19-charlbury-decision-statement-14-june-2021-astrid-harvey-1.pdf</a>
Eynsham	6 February 2020	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ngkcklyhi/eynsham-neighbourhood-plan.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ngkcklyhi/eynsham-neighbourhood-plan.pdf</a>
Hailey	2 September 2019	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/flmhngyh/hailey-neighbourhood-plan.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/flmhngyh/hailey-neighbourhood-plan.pdf</a>
Shilton	2 September 2019	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/5fvkylce/shilton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/5fvkylce/shilton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf</a>
South Leigh	8 January 2019	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/mp5klvz1/south-leigh-neighbourhood-plan-v2.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/mp5klvz1/south-leigh-neighbourhood-plan-v2.pdf</a>
Chipping Norton	15 March 2016	<a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tlchsxc5/chipping-norton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tlchsxc5/chipping-norton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf</a>

2.21 In addition, there are a further six NDPs currently being prepared as outlined below.

- Ascott-under-Wychwood
- Brize Norton
- Ducklington
- North Leigh
- Stonesfield
- Wootton by Woodstock

## Duty to Cooperate

2.22 The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant authorities and certain prescribed bodies in relation to cross-boundary strategic planning matters. It applies during the period of plan-preparation i.e. up to the point at which the plan is submitted for examination.

2.23 The Duty to Cooperate is important not least because it is the first issue to be considered by a Planning Inspector when a Local Plan reaches the examination stage and if the Inspector finds that the duty has not been complied with, they will recommend that the local plan is not adopted and the examination will not proceed any further.

- 2.24 West Oxfordshire District Council has a strong track record of working actively and continuously with other local authorities and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.
- 2.25 In his report into the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the Inspector concluded that, where necessary, the Council had engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the plan and that the Duty to Co-operate had therefore been met.
- 2.26 More recently, in relation to the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP) the Inspectors in their report of 1 March 2023 also concluded that the Council had engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the AAP and that the duty to co-operate had therefore been met.
- 2.27 The District Council will continue to work closely with other local authorities and statutory bodies in the preparation of the new Local Plan 2041. Early engagement has already been undertaken through two rounds of informal Regulation 18 consultation and this will continue up until the point of submission and beyond as appropriate.
- 2.28 Discussions are currently taking place between the Oxfordshire local planning authorities regarding the preparation of a countywide Statement of Common Ground – the purpose of which will be to document the progress which has been made during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters.
- 2.29 This will form part of the District Council's evidence to demonstrate that it has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the new Local Plan. Where appropriate, the District Council may also seek to agree separate statements of common ground with individual authorities.

## Section 3 - Monitoring Results

4.1 The primary purpose of the AMR is to monitor the implementation of adopted Local Plan policies and in this section, we consider the extent to which policies are being delivered under the five main sections of the Local Plan:

- Overall strategy
- Providing new homes
- Sustainable economic growth
- Transport and movement
- Environmental and heritage assets

4.2 For each section, we consider the effectiveness and implementation of the various Local Plan policies with reference to relevant indicators and contextual information.

## OVERALL STRATEGY

### SUMMARY

- The majority of planning applications submitted during the monitoring period were approved, in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan 2031.
- The majority of planning applications that were appealed during the monitoring period were dismissed.
- The Local Plan continues to facilitate the delivery of new development in line with the vision and overarching strategic objectives. This ensures beneficial outcomes against the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan which seeks to enable a good quality of life for all and create a better environment for people and wildlife.
- The majority of planning approvals granted were located within the main service centres, rural service centres and villages in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy OS2.
- The majority of developments are suitably located to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of towns and villages and contribute to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.
- Ensuring that new development is located in the right places enables a good quality of life for all, by ensuring that housing, jobs and infrastructure can be delivered where it is needed, while protecting the characteristics of the district that make West Oxfordshire special.
- Maintaining an up-to-date Local Plan ensures a plan-led approach to managing development in West Oxfordshire can continue and that planning applications can be determined in accordance with the Plan and overarching vision and objectives.
- The majority of residential development has been delivered on undeveloped greenfield sites throughout the monitoring period, due to relatively limited available opportunities for brownfield redevelopment.



- The council has continued to secure funding through development for new infrastructure, but there remains a significant funding gap to deliver necessary infrastructure improvements in the district.
- The delivery of infrastructure is important if the Local Plan is to deliver against a range of Core Objectives and to meet the priorities of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2023 – 2027. Failure to deliver adequate supporting infrastructure is likely to have a detrimental impact on the quality of life for all.

4.3 The overall strategy for the Local Plan comprises five strands; a presumption in favour of sustainable development, ensuring development is located in the right places (i.e. focused primarily on larger, more sustainable settlements) prudent use of natural resources, high quality design and ensuring that new development is supported by appropriate investment in infrastructure.

4.4 Set out below is some commentary and statistical/monitoring information around these five main strands with links to each policy (and also the Council Plan) provided as appropriate.

**Planning Applications Determined in Monitoring Period (links to Policy OSI)**

4.5 A total of 1,437 planning applications were determined within the monitoring period (1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024).

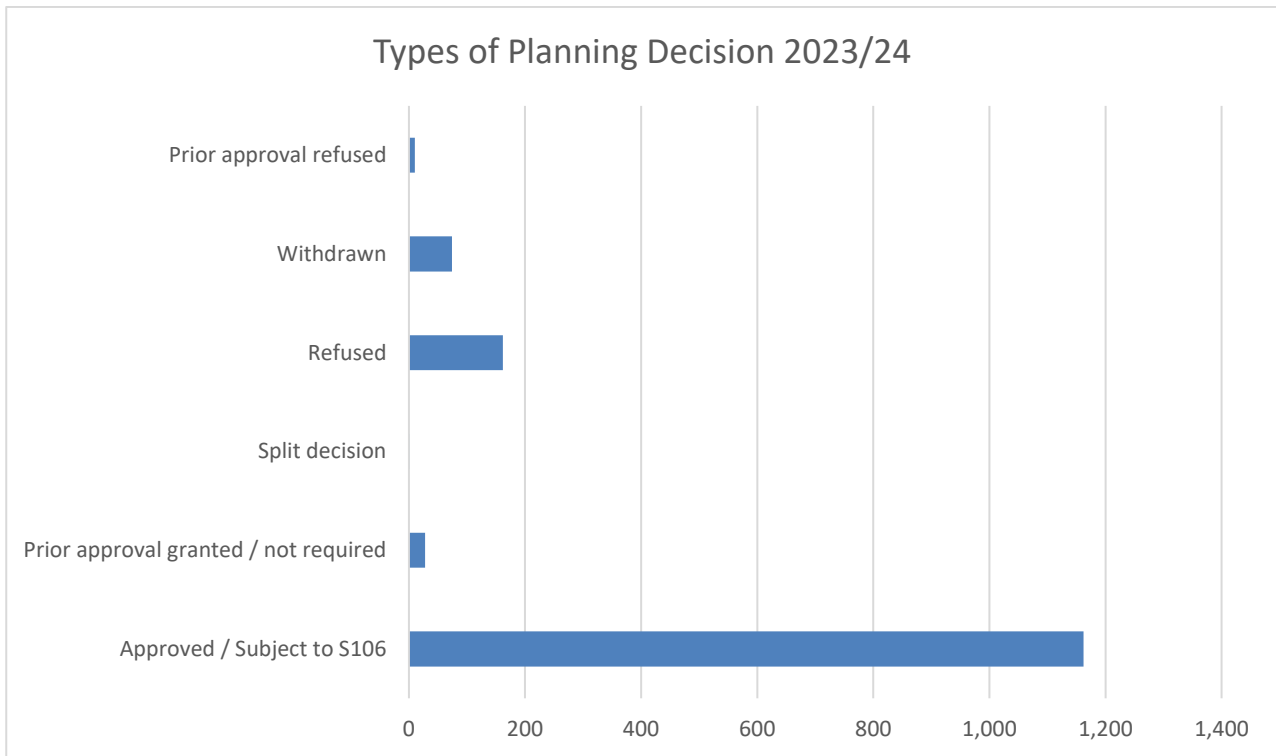
4.6 This includes applications that were subsequently withdrawn, but the figures serve to illustrate the level of interest in developing in West Oxfordshire and the important role the planning department plays in determining applications and implementing the policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

4.7 A breakdown is provided below. As can be seen, the vast majority of applications were approved in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is embedded in Local Plan Policy OSI.

**Table 4 - Types of planning application decision 2023-2024**

Type of decision	Number of applications 23/24
Approved / Subject to S106	1,162
Prior approval granted / not required	28
Split decision	1
Refused	162
Withdrawn	74
Prior approval refused	10

Type of decision	Number of applications 23/24
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,437</b>

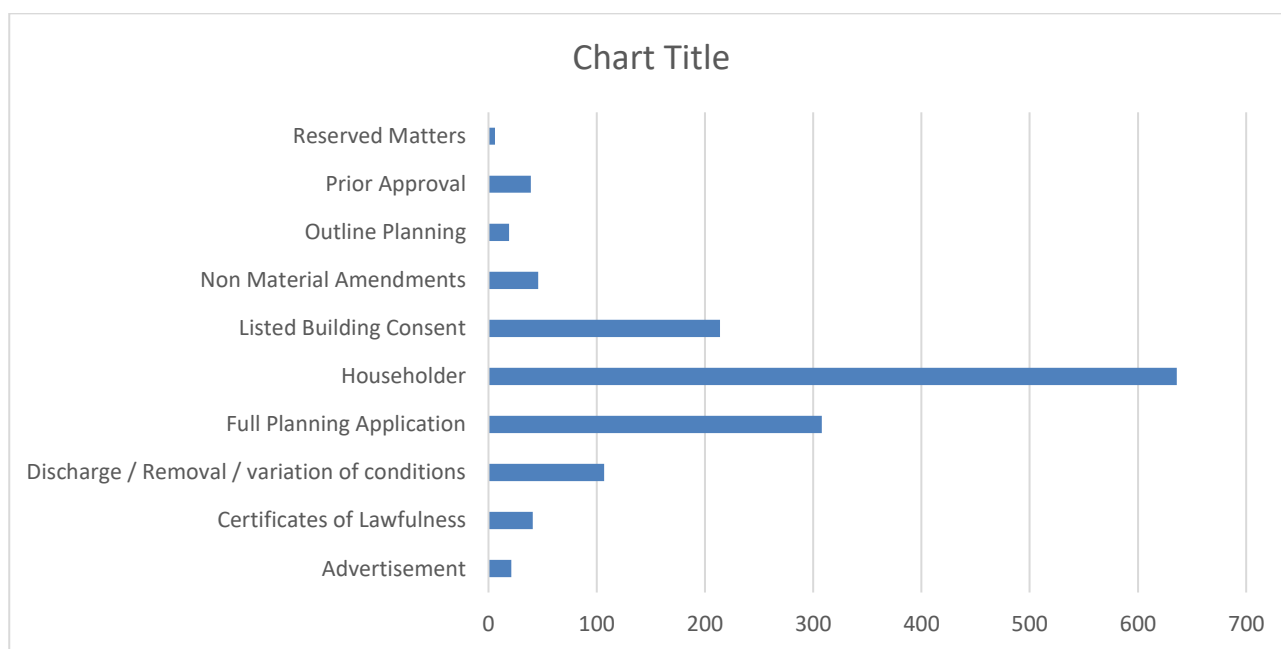


**Figure I - Types of planning decision 2023 - 2024**

**Table 5 - Types of planning application 2023 - 2024**

Type of application	Number of Applications 23/24
Advertisement	21
Certificates of Lawfulness	41
Discharge / Removal / variation of conditions	107
Full Planning Application	308
Householder	636
Listed Building Consent	214
Non Material Amendments	46
Outline Planning	19
Prior Approval	39
Reserved Matters	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,437</b>

4.8 Of the 1,437 applications that were determined, the majority were householder applications.



**Figure 2 - Types of planning application 2023 - 2024**

## Planning Appeals (links to Policy OSI)

- 4.9 A total of 43 planning appeals were determined within the monitoring period. The majority of these (23) were dismissed, with 18 allowed or allowed in part and 2 withdrawn on application.
- 4.10 The allowed appeals included a number of residential schemes as illustrated in table 6 below including major developments at Minster Lovell, Aston, Woodstock and Witney.

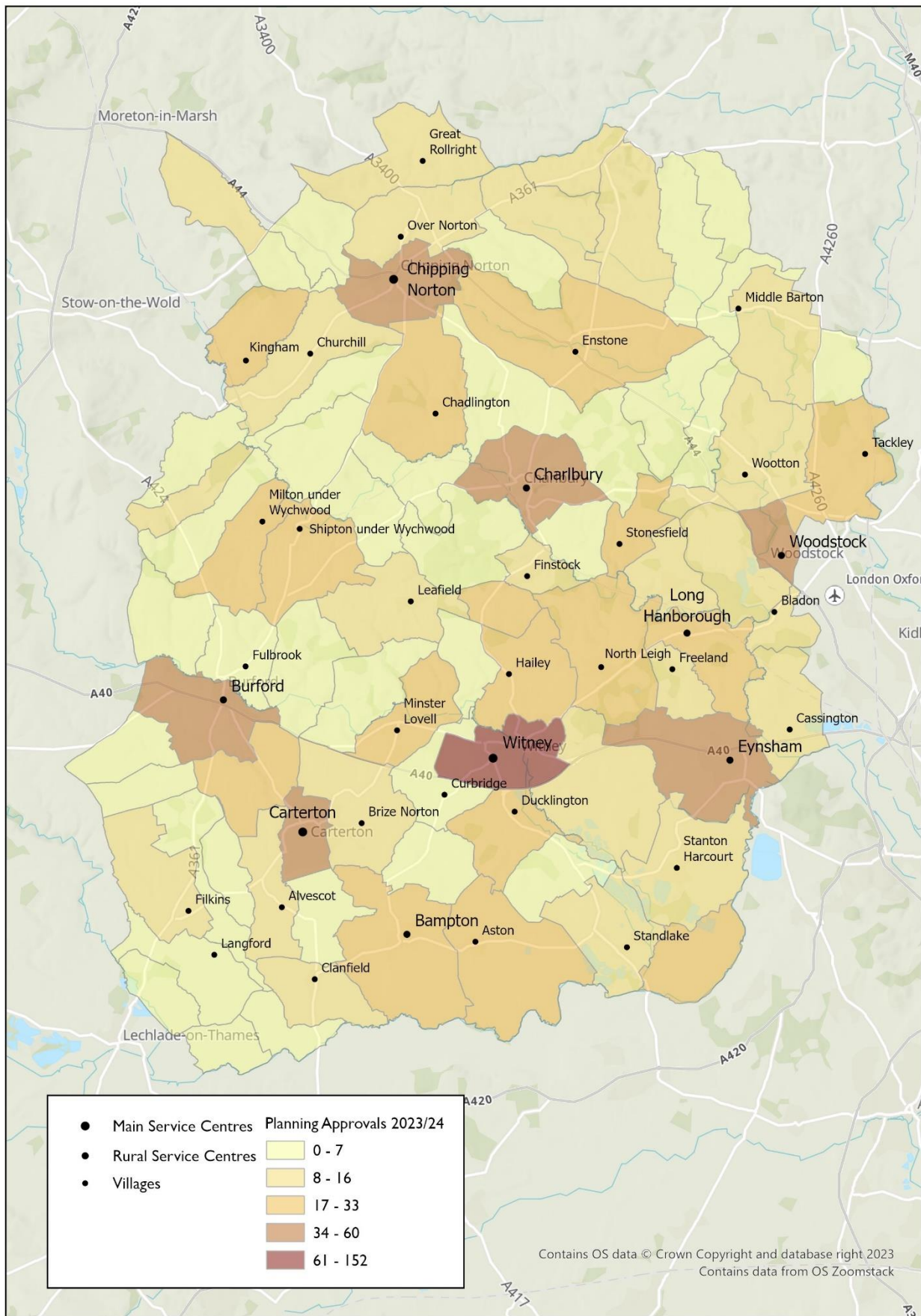
**Table 6 - Appeals allowed for residential development 2023 - 2024**

Reference	Location	Description
22/00821/FUL	Filkins	Conversion of existing forge and adjoining barn/outbuilding to create an independent dwelling together with associated works.
22/02425/FUL	Ducklington	Erection of a dwelling with detached double garage and associated works.
21/03503/FUL	North Leigh	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a dwelling with detached garage
22/03240/OUT	Minster Lovell	Outline planning permission for the development of up to 134 dwellings (Class C3) including means of access into the site and associated highway works, with all other matters reserved.
22/00986/FUL	Aston	Erection of 40 new dwellings with the provision of a new access and associated works and landscaping.
21/00189/FUL	Woodstock	Hybrid planning application consisting of full planning permission for 48 dwellings, 57 sqm of community space (Class E), a parking barn, means of access from the A44, associated infrastructure, open space, engineering and ancillary works, outline planning permission for up to 132 dwellings.
21/03342/OUT	Land Southwest of Downs Road, Curbridge Business Park	Outline planning application for a residential development comprising up to 75 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing provision) and public open space. All matters reserved.

## **Location of Development (links to Policy OS2)**

- 4.11 Local Plan Policy OS2 seeks to steer development to larger, more sustainable settlements where there are good opportunities for active travel and public transport and a good range of services and facilities available.
- 4.12 In this context, figure 3 below shows the concentrations of planning approvals in each town and parish between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
- 4.13 As can be seen, the majority of planning approvals were concentrated within the main service centres and rural service centres in line with the general approach of Policy OS2.
- 4.14 There were also higher concentrations of new permissions in a number of larger villages including North Leigh and Enstone. These locations have seen increased development activity in recent years, particularly for residential development and have growing populations.

**Figure 3 - All planning applications approved 2023 - 2024**



## Car use and accessibility (links to Policies OSI, OS2 and OS3)

4.15 11.5% of households in West Oxfordshire have no access to a car compared to 16% across Oxfordshire as a whole. Higher levels of car ownership may be a reflection of the rural nature of the district and relatively poor access to public transport in some rural areas, which may increase car dependency for many communities.

Figure 4 - West Oxfordshire car ownership statistics, Census 2021

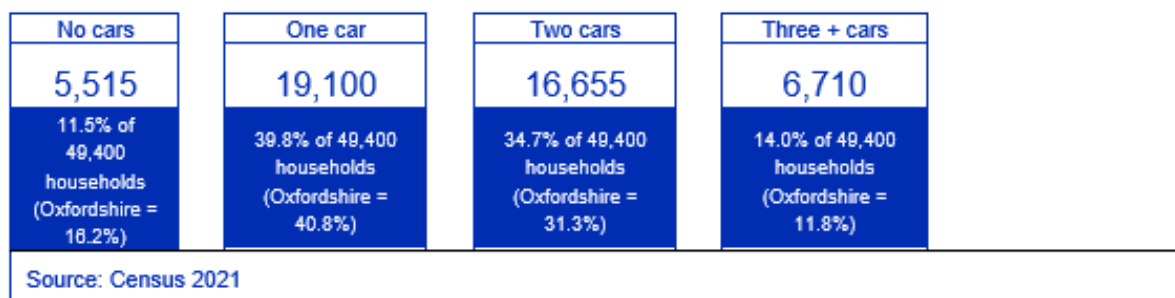
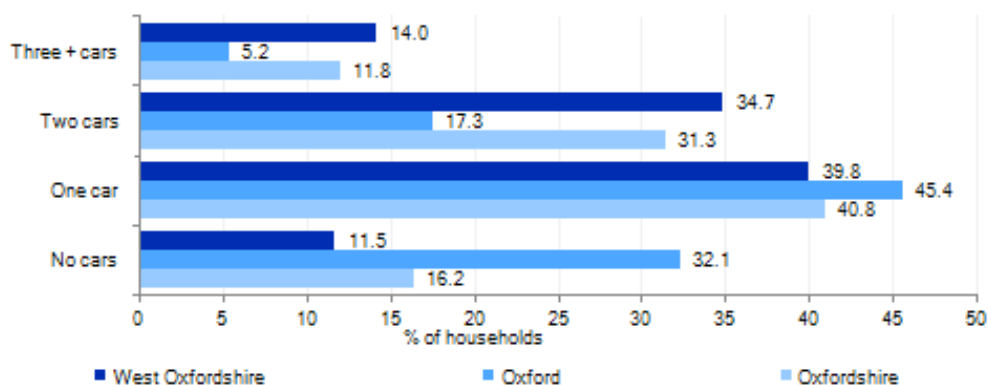


Figure: Car ownership  
Source: Census 2021



## Proximity of development to public transport (links to Policies OSI, OS2 and OS3)

4.16 The majority of development is focused within the main and rural service centres which are the most accessible locations for public transport services linking to other centres, particularly bus services.

4.17 Financial contributions towards improved bus services have been secured through new development that has been delivered in the district during the monitoring period.

4.18 There were 8 new residential development schemes approved during the monitoring period, located within 1.6km of a railway station. The total number of dwellings approved was 9, although 3 of these were replacement dwellings, so a net gain of 6.

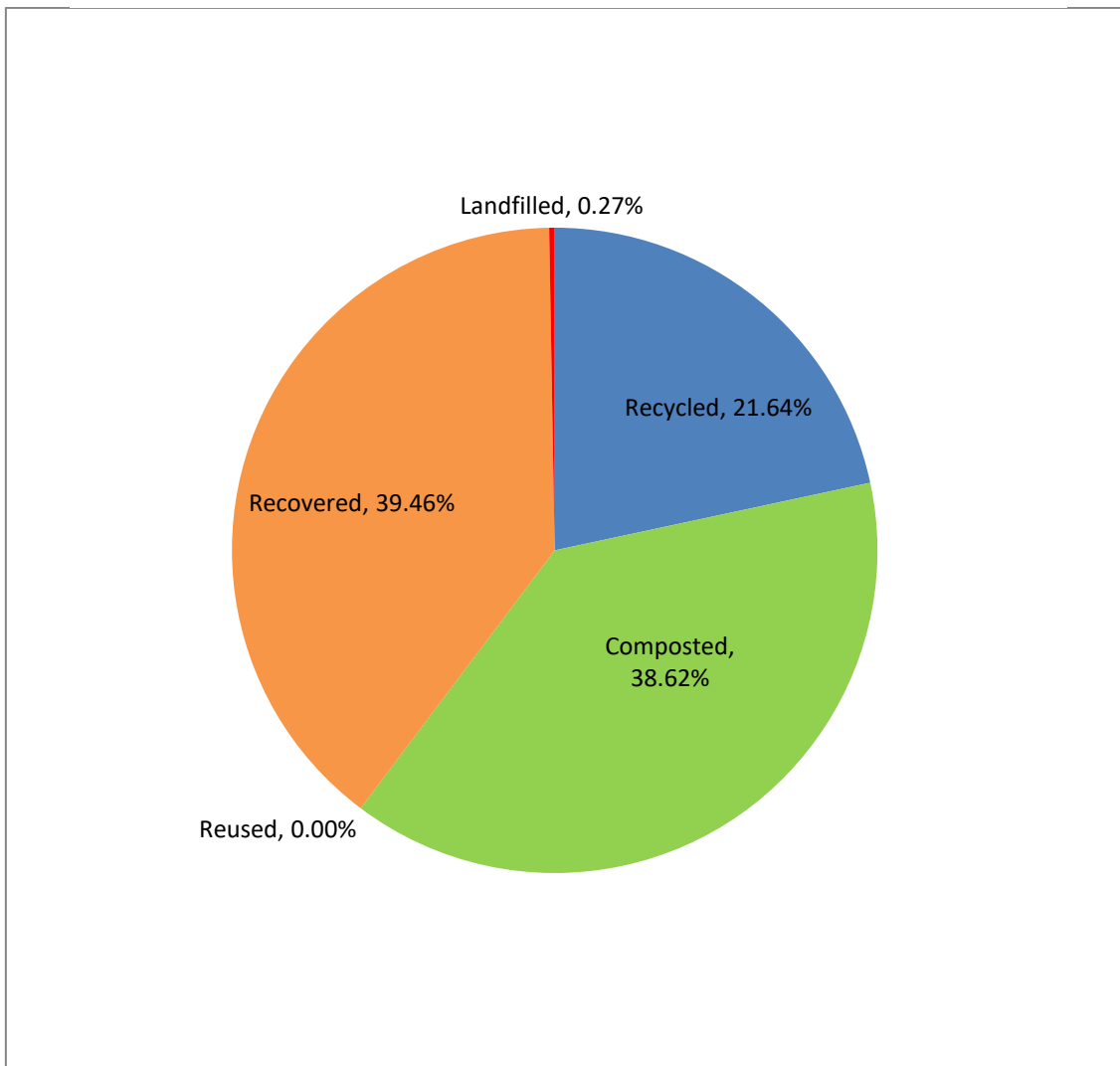
4.19 A total of 21 approvals were granted for residential development that were neither proximate to bus or rail services, totalling 27 dwellings. The majority of these applications were for replacement dwellings or redevelopment of brownfield land.

## Waste and recycling (links to Policy OS3)

4.20 A total of 12,849 tonnes of waste was collected by the local authority between 2023 and 2024. The majority of this waste was sent for recovery, recycling and composting. Only a very small proportion of waste was sent to Landfill.

4.21 The Local Plan includes a target to recycle or compost 70% of household waste by 2025.

**Figure 5 - Proportion of waste sent for recycling, composting or reuse in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024**





## **Brownfield land redevelopment (links to Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3)**

- 4.22 The Local Plan seeks ensure that development makes the most efficient use of land. There is relatively limited brownfield land available in the District since the majority of former industrial sites have already been developed, yet a significant amount of residential development has been delivered on previously developed land, though conversion or redevelopment.
- 4.23 Approximately 55 dwellings out of 896 (a total of 6%) were approved on previously developed land during the monitoring period.

## **Development at risk of flooding (links to Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3)**

- 4.24 There were 5 approvals for residential development within Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) totalling 6 dwellings during the monitoring period<sup>2</sup>. The majority of these approvals were for conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings.
- 4.25 There were few reported incidents of property flooding recorded during the monitoring period, despite periods of heavy rainfall and named storms during the monitoring period.
- 4.26 There were incidents of highway flooding recorded during the monitoring period however.
- 4.27 Incidents of highway and property flooding in West Oxfordshire are often a result of sewer inundation and overflowing their capacity. This is an issue that will need to be addressed to ensure that there is capacity for future development in the district.

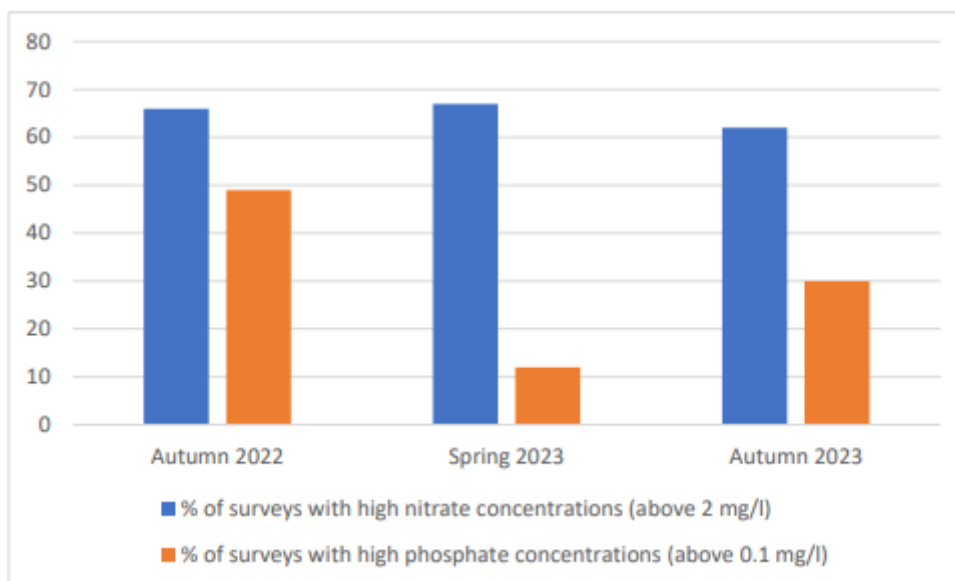
## **Water Quality (links to Policies OS1, OS2, OS3 and OS4)**

- 4.28 Water quality is measured on a river catchment scale and West Oxfordshire falls within two catchment areas: the Evenlode and the Windrush which are both major tributaries of the River Thames.
- 4.29 The annual water quality report for the Evenlode (2023)<sup>3</sup>, recorded high nitrate levels throughout the catchment and more variable phosphate levels, with high phosphate levels at disparate and specific locations across the catchment.

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<sup>2</sup> Calculated using GIS analysis – Any planning application boundary that intersects flood zone 2.

<sup>33</sup> [https://earthwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Evenlode\\_WaterBlitz\\_Autumn\\_2023\\_Report.pdf](https://earthwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Evenlode_WaterBlitz_Autumn_2023_Report.pdf)



**Figure 6 - Concentrations of pollutants in River Evenlode 2022-2023**

- 4.30 Levels of Nitrate concentration in the Evenlode have remained consistent between seasons, suggesting a widespread legacy of nitrate pollution and likely a reflection of agricultural land practices in the catchment.
- 4.31 Phosphate levels have varied more significantly between seasons and could be due to variations in rainfall. There were extreme low flows in the Evenlode in 2022 and this could have led to higher concentrations of pollutants being recorded at that time. Higher rainfall during spring 2023 and higher river flows are likely to have diluted concentrations of pollutants.
- 4.32 The latest Environment Agency data for the Evenlode Catchment<sup>4</sup> indicates that all 18 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 6 were rated poor and 12 were rated moderate.
- 4.33 Within the Windrush Catchment<sup>5</sup>, all 19 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 2 were good, 9 were moderate, 6 were poor and 2 were bad.
- 4.34 Discharges from storm overflows into water courses remain an ongoing problem.

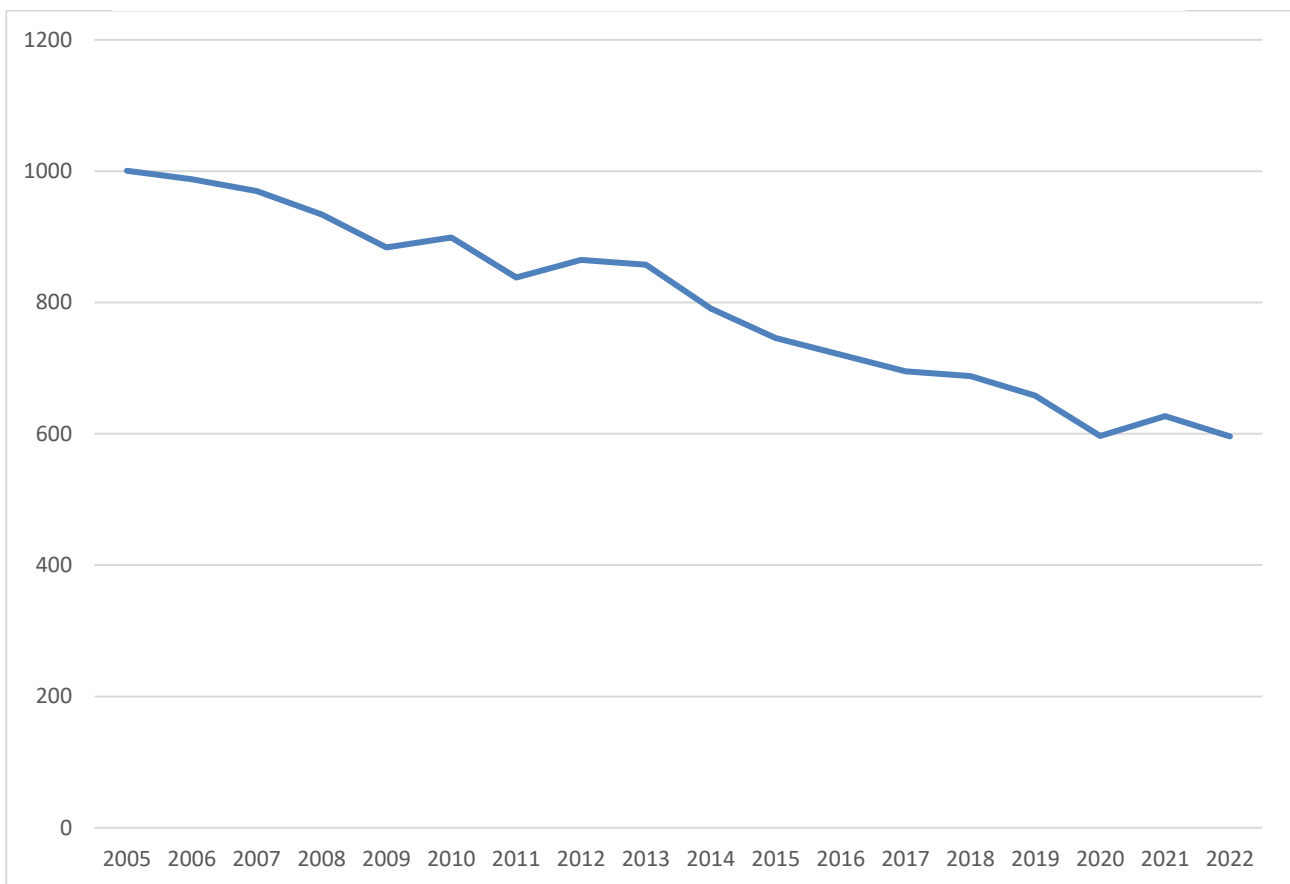
<sup>4</sup> [Evenlode Operational Catchment | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Windrush Operational Catchment | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

## Climate and Carbon (links to Policies OS1, OS2, OS3 and OS4)

- 4.35 The government publish statistics<sup>6</sup>, to produce a nationally consistent set of greenhouse gas emission estimates for local authority areas in England. The latest statistics published in June 2024 show the change in greenhouse gas emissions for different sectors over the lifetime of the Local Plan.
- 4.36 Figure 6 below, shows the trend in greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire since 2005. Notably, there has been as steady decrease since 2011 with a slight uptick in 2021.

**Figure 6 - Total Greenhouse gas emissions for West Oxfordshire 2011 - 2022**



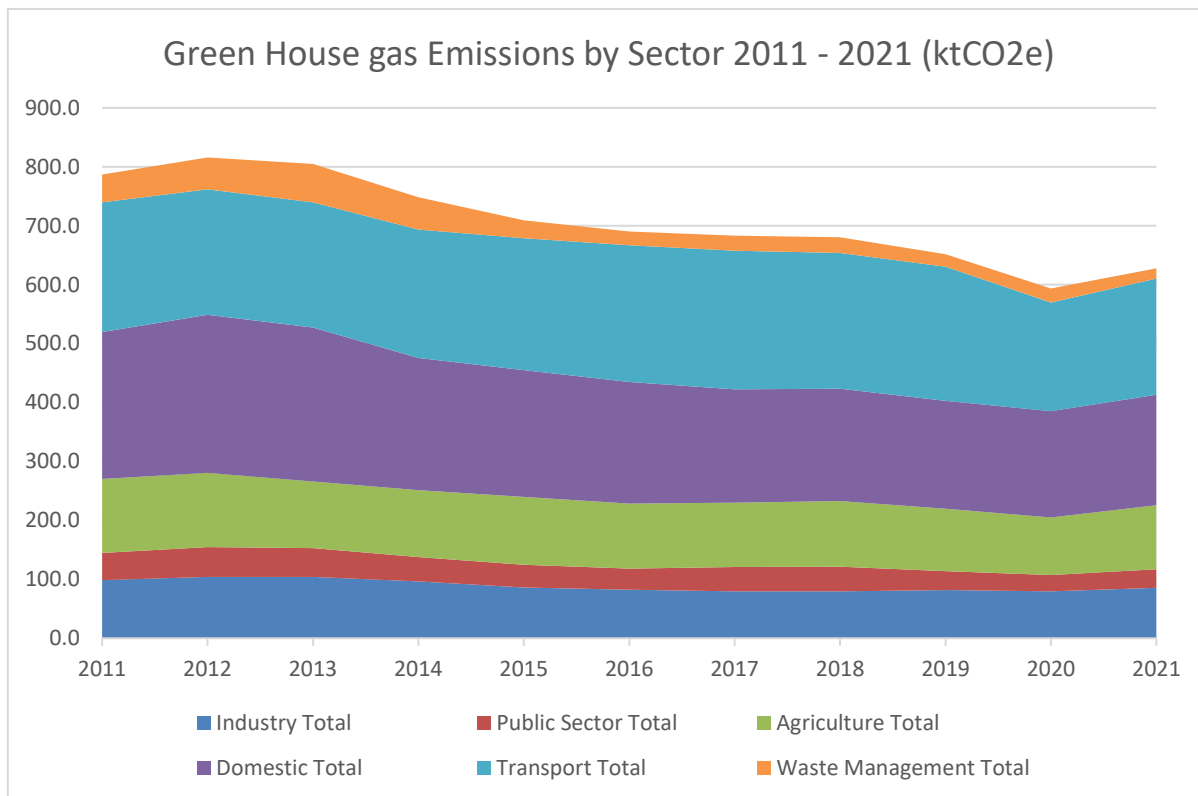
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<sup>6</sup> [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

4.37 The majority of greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire arise from domestic and transport emissions, which account for over 58% of the total.

4.38 Further action to reduce emissions from residential development and transport will be necessary to meet targets for net zero emissions by 2050 or earlier.

**Figure 7 - West Oxfordshire Greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2011 - 2021**



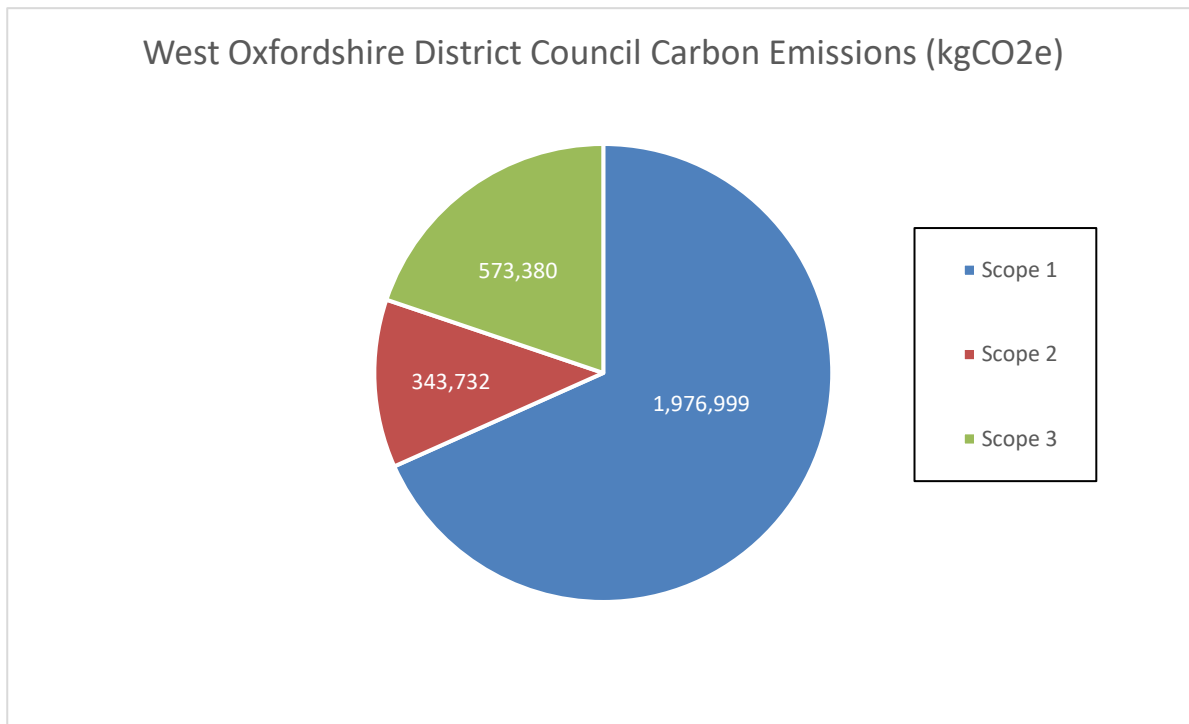
4.39 WODC have undertaken analysis to assess carbon emissions from the Council’s own operations during the monitoring period. These emissions are categorised as Scope 1 and Scope 2, which are directly from WODC own operations and buildings and Scope 3, which is related to emissions where the council does not have direct control e.g. staff business mileage.

4.40 Total carbon emissions from the council’s own operations for 2022/23 are illustrated on the chart below. The majority of the Council’s own emissions are categorised as Scope 1 and relate to the operation of the council’s own buildings, such as office space and the council’s vehicle fleet.

4.41 The Council published a Carbon Action Plan in 2020. Since then, it has become good practice to consider additional sources of emissions beyond those previously accounted for, including emissions where the lack of data means that these cannot be reported formally through the Council’s carbon reporting process. The Carbon Action Plan 2024<sup>7</sup> provides an updated version of the Climate Action

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tslaufqh/wodc-carbon-action-plan-20242030-oct-24.pdf>

Plan, covering actions to be undertaken between 2024 and 2030 to reach the carbon neutral target. Additional actions for procurement and waste have been included in line with best practice, while actions from the previous plan which are complete have been removed.



**Figure 8 - West Oxfordshire District Council carbon emissions 2023/24**

### **Provision of Supporting Infrastructure (links to Policy OS5)**

- 4.42 New development is required to deliver or contribute towards the timely provision of essential supporting infrastructure either directly as part of the development or through an appropriate financial contribution.
- 4.43 The Local Plan 2031 is supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sets out a range of highways, utilities, community and green infrastructure that is necessary to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- 4.44 Evidence<sup>8</sup> suggests that there is a significant funding gap relating to the cost of infrastructure in the district and this will have to be made up through a range of mechanisms including Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and central Government funding.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxnfffxd/infrastructure-funding-gap-analysis-june-2020.pdf>

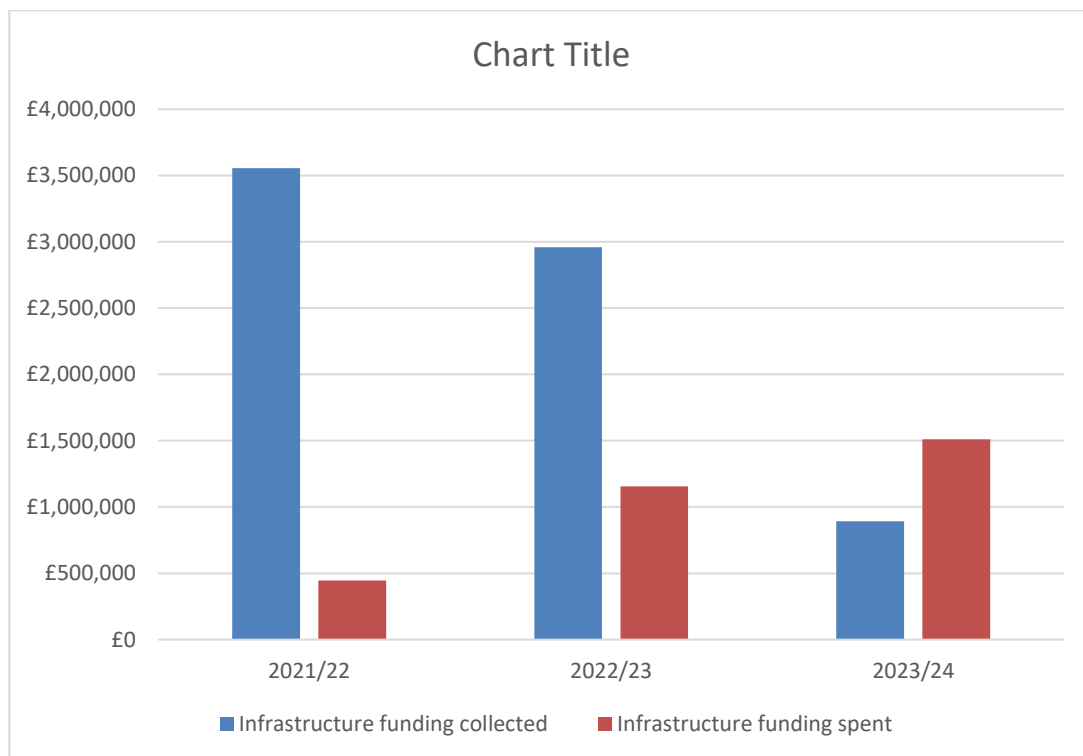
4.45 West Oxfordshire District Council do not currently operate CIL, so the majority of financial contributions for infrastructure funding are secured via S106 at present.

4.46 The Council collected a total of £892,062 of infrastructure funding through the monitoring period. A summary of financial contributions is shown in the table below. Further, detailed information is set out in the Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) published [online](#) annually.

**Table 7 - Section 106 infrastructure funding agreed, collected and spent 2023 - 2024**

Year	Infrastructure Funding Agreed	Infrastructure funding collected	Infrastructure funding spent
2023 - 2024	£3,183,352	£892,062	£1,510,850
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,183,352</b>	<b>£892,062</b>	<b>£1,510,850</b>

**Figure 9 - Section 106 infrastructure funding collected and spent 2021 - 2024**



## PROVIDING NEW HOMES

### SUMMARY

- The highest concentrations of new residential development have taken place within Main Service Centres, Rural Service Centres and larger villages in line with the locational policies of the Local Plan.
- In 2023/24, a total of new homes 683 were completed, below the 975 Local Plan requirement for the monitoring period.
- Overall, there has been an upward trend in housing delivery since the start of the Local Plan period (1<sup>st</sup> April 2011) although completions rates have decreased since 2021. Up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, a total of 7,719 new homes have been completed, set against a requirement for 8,075 over the same period (i.e. a modest shortfall of 356 dwellings over a 13 year period).
- The District Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land when calculated using the Government's standard method for assessing local housing need.
- Affordable housing continues to come forward as a significant proportion of total housing permitted and completed in the District.
- 238 new affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period, 35% of the total housing completions.
- Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio<sup>9</sup> in West Oxfordshire has worsened, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 10.46 in 2023. This is consistent with trends seen elsewhere including across Oxfordshire as a whole.
- The mix of dwelling types approved is broadly consistent with the indicative guidelines set out in the Local Plan. There have been some additional dwellings to meet the needs older people both permitted and completed during the monitoring period.
- A small number of self-build plots were secured during the monitoring period. The provision of self-build plots will continue to increase as larger housing allocations are built out over the lifetime of the Plan.

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<sup>9</sup> Ratio of median house price to median gross annual (where available) residence-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 2002 to 2023

4.47 The housing policies of the Local Plan deal with a range of issues including the overall number of homes to be provided, the distribution and location of those homes, affordable housing, housing mix, changes to existing dwellings and provision for specialist housing needs.

4.48 Housing related core objectives are as follows:

CO4 - Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet housing needs and reduce the need to travel.
CO5 - Plan for the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.
CO6 - Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build, as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, younger people, black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, families and travelling communities.

### **New residential permissions (links to Policies H1 and H2)**

4.49 Planning permission was granted for 918 new dwellings during the monitoring period, representing a net gain of 890.

**Table 8 - New permissions for residential development 2023 - 2024 (net residential dwellings)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>New permissions for residential development (net dwellings)</b>
I April 2023 – 31 March 2024	890

4.50 The majority of permissions across the monitoring period were major in nature involving developments of greater than 10 units.

4.51 A number of developments approved during the monitoring period were allowed at appeal and include further significant development to the west of Minster Lovell, to the West of Witney and to the north of Woodstock (the Woodstock site being allocated in the adopted Local Plan).

4.52 Total commitments for new residential development are illustrated in Table 9 below. It shows that the largest numbers of outstanding commitments (dwellings with planning permission that are yet to be built) are within and on the edge of Carterton, Brize Norton and Woodstock.

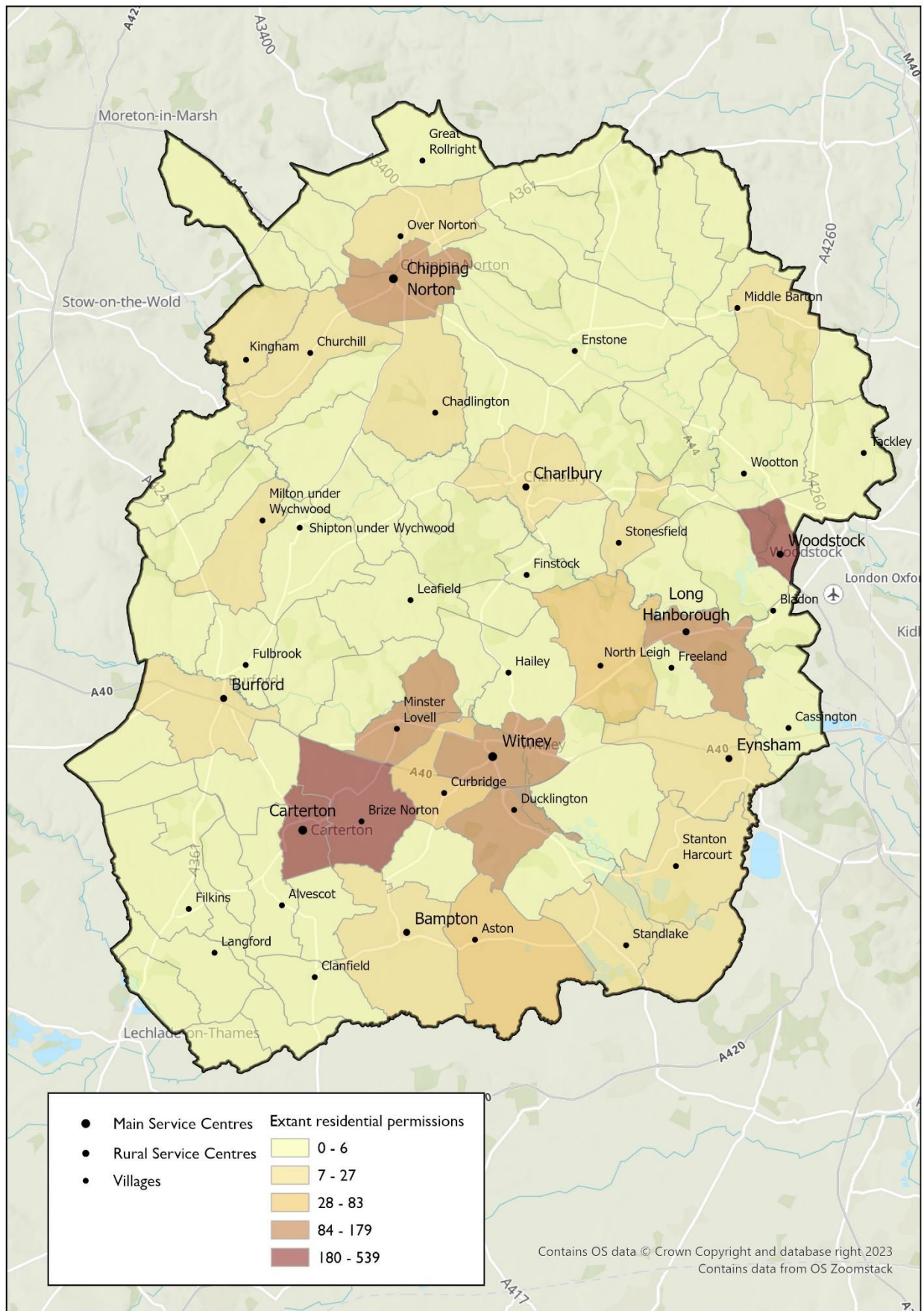
4.53 This pattern of development is consistent with Policy H1, but as the main service centres expand, neighbouring parishes accommodate a growing share of new housing development. This is the case at Witney where housing growth has extended into the parish of Curbridge and at Carterton where housing development has expanded into Brize Norton.



**Table 9 – Residential Commitments on major development sites April 2024**

Site Name	Number of units yet to be built as of 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024	Parish
North Curbridge (West Witney)	39	Witney
North Curbridge (West Witney)	74	Witney
Land west of Downs Road, Curbridge	75	Curbridge
Land east of Carterton (Brize Meadow)	258	Brize Norton
Land east of Carterton	99	Brize Norton
Land west of Shilton Road, Burford	22	Burford
Land North of Witney Road, Long Hanborough	150	Hanborough
Land West of Minster Lovell	134	Minster Lovell
Witney Road, Ducklington, Witney	120	Ducklington
Land south of Hit or Miss Farm, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	90	Chipping Norton
Land north of Witney Road, North Leigh	55	North Leigh
Land north of Foxwood Close, Aston	40	Aston
Chipping Norton War Memorial Hospital, Horsefair, Chipping Norton	14	Chipping Norton
Station Garage, Station Road, Kingham,	10	Kingham
Land to the rear of 65 High Street, Standlake	9	Standlake
Site Of Former 19, Burford Road, Carterton	10	Carterton
West End Scrap Yard, Witney	10	Witney
1 St Marys Court Witney	4	Witney
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,213</b>	

**Figure 10 - Residential Commitments by Parish 2024**



## Total Net Housing Completions (links to Policies H1 and H2)

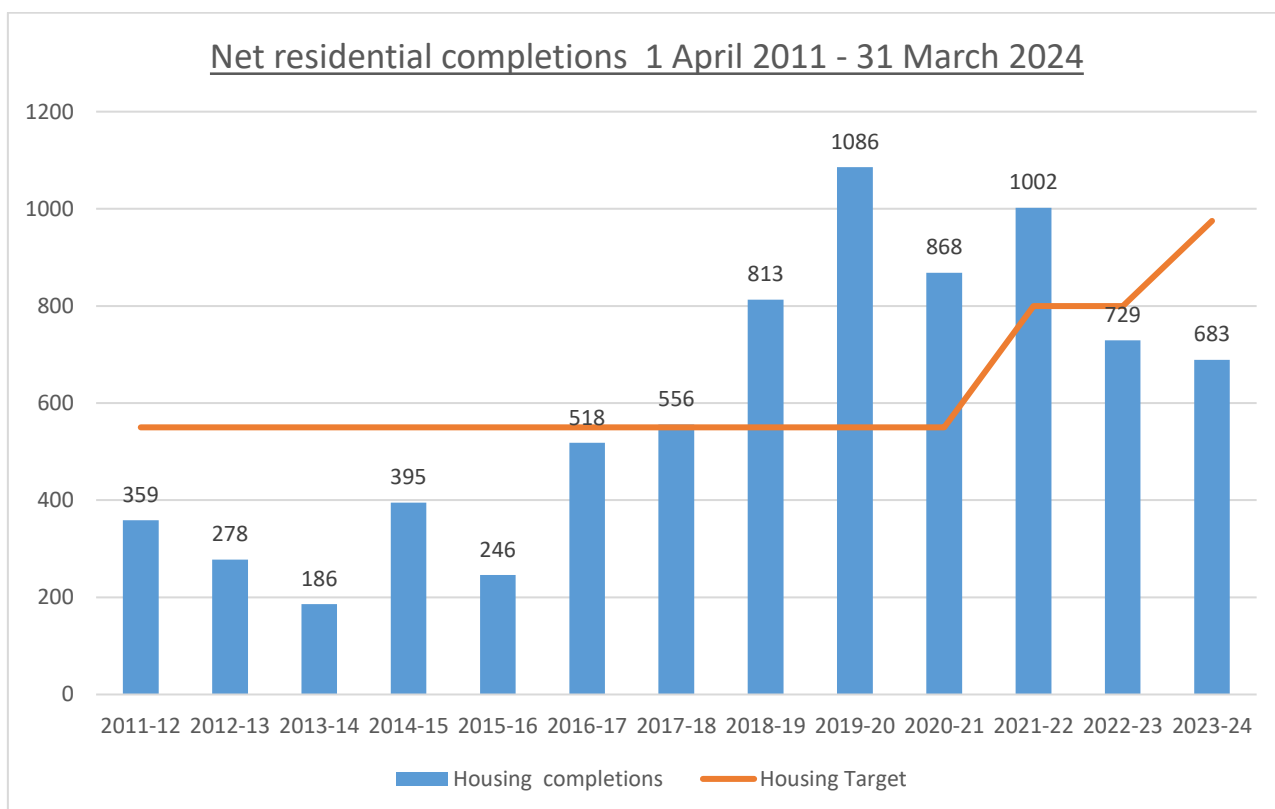
4.54 The Local Plan is based on an overall housing requirement of 15,950 homes (798 per year from 2011 – 2031). This includes 13,200 homes for West Oxfordshire’s own housing needs (660 per year) plus a further 2,750 (136 per year rounded) for Oxford City’s unmet housing need.

4.55 Policy H2 of the Local is based on a ‘stepped’ housing requirement which increases from 2021 onwards to take account of Oxford’s unmet housing need as follows:

- 550 dwellings per year (2011-2021)
- 800 dwellings per year (2021 – 2023)
- 975 dwellings per year (2023 – 2024)
- 867 dwellings per year (2024 – 2031)

4.56 Notably, in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, a total of 7,719 new homes have been completed in West Oxfordshire, set against a requirement of 8,075 new homes over the same period. Delivery was effectively on track until 2023, but has dropped off during the monitoring period, with a shortfall of approximately 356 now.

**Figure 11 - Net residential completions in West Oxfordshire 2011 - 2024**



4.57 As the Local Plan is over 5 years old and the Council has identified that the policies for the supply of housing require updating, West Oxfordshire District Council have reverted to the Standard Methodology for housing need for the purpose of calculating housing land supply.

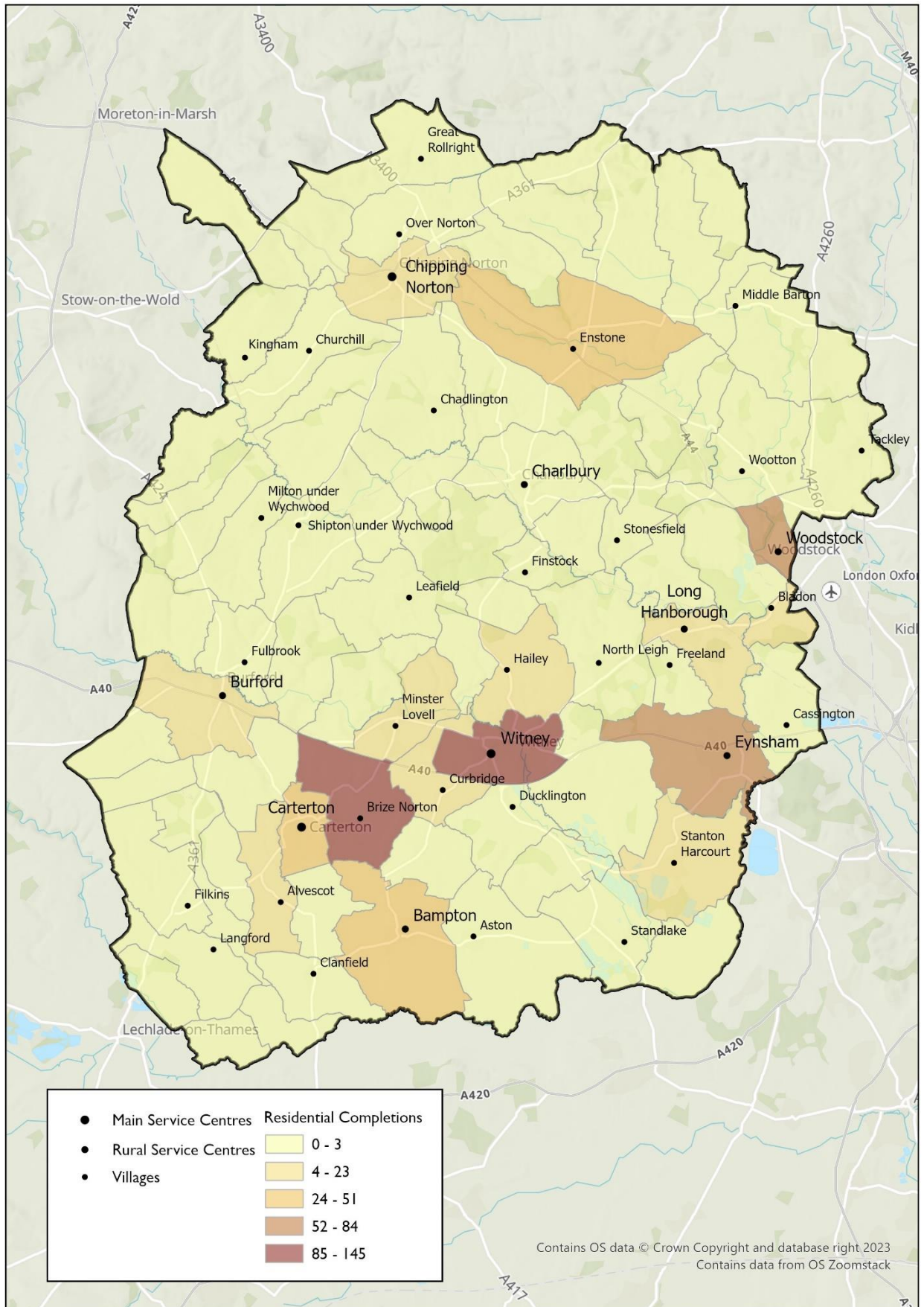
4.58 The standard calculation of housing need for West Oxfordshire is 549 dwellings per annum. The Council is not currently able to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply based on this measure.

## **Net Housing Completions 2023 – 2024 (links to Policies H1 and H2)**

4.59 A total of 683 new homes were completed in 2023/24, falling short of the Local Plan requirement of 975 for the year.

4.60 Figure 12 below shows the location of these completions on a spatial basis.

Figure 12 - Net residential completions 2023 - 2024

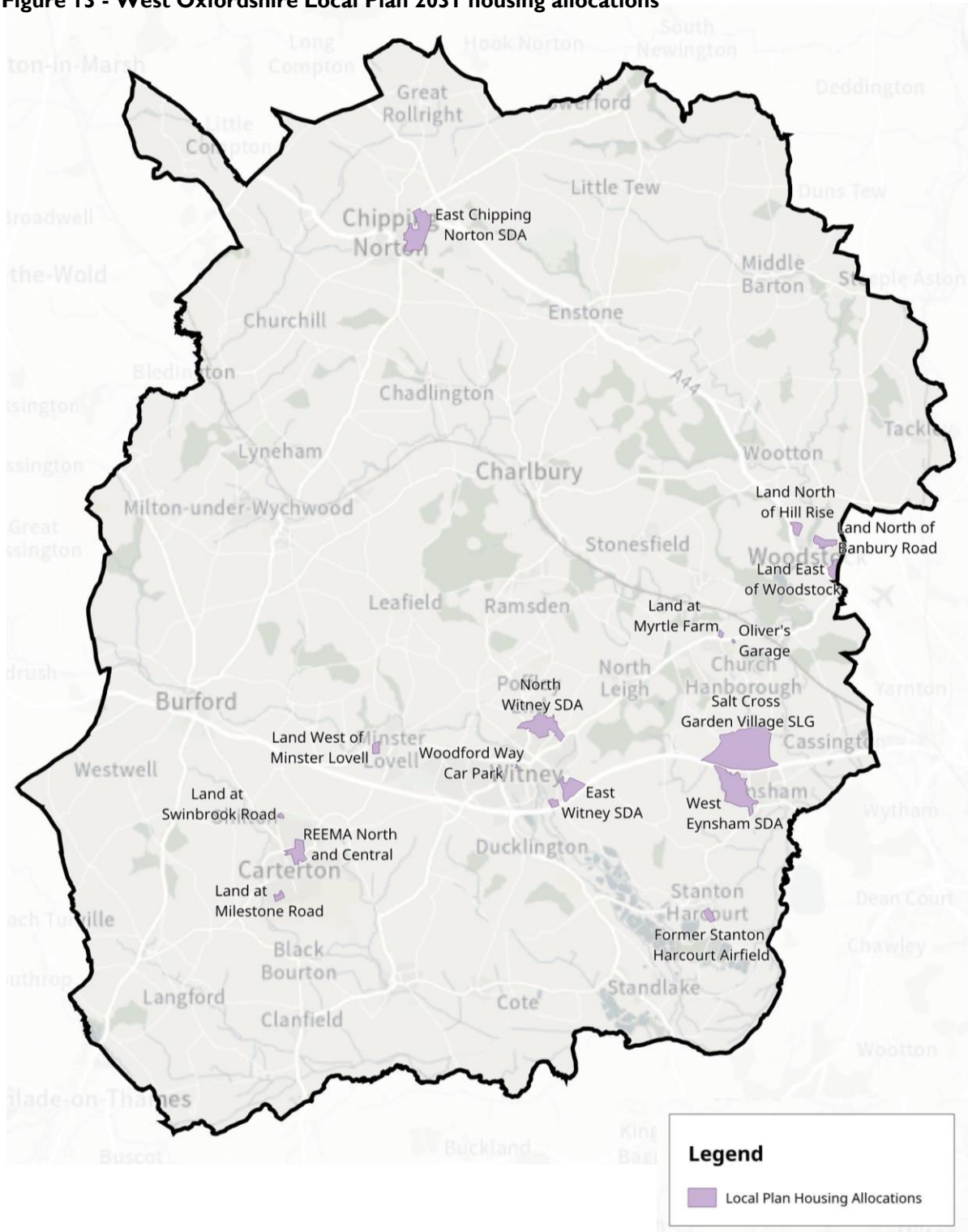


## Housing allocations (links to Policies HI, H2 and various site allocations)

4.61 The Local Plan allocates a number of strategic and non-strategic housing sites, some of which (primarily the smaller, non-strategic sites) have now been completed or are under construction and some of which are yet to come forward to construction, particularly the larger strategic sites.

4.62 The location of these allocated sites is shown on figure 13 below.

**Figure 13 - West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 housing allocations**



4.63 Table 10 below lists the various local plan housing allocations and the total number of completions recorded up to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

**Table 10 - Expected and actual completions on allocated sites**

Site Name	Allocated total dwellings	Expected completions 2018-2024 (Local Plan Housing trajectory)	Total Completions to 31 March 2024
East Witney SDA	450	125	0
North Witney SDA	1,400	175	0
Woodford Way Car Park	50	25	0
Land west of Minster Lovell	125	125	94
REEMA North and Central	300	81	81
Land at Milestone Road, Carterton	200	180	0
Land at Swinbrook Road, Carterton	70	70	30
East Chipping Norton SDA	1,200	173	252
Salt Cross Garden Village	2,200	220	0
West Eynsham SDA	1,000	312	237
Land east of Woodstock	300	275	180
Land north of Hill Rise, Woodstock	120	70	0
Land north of Banbury Road, Woodstock	160	0	0
Myrtle Farm, Long Hanborough	50	50	0
Oliver's Garage, Long Hanborough	25	25	25
Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield	50	50	66

## Affordable Housing Completions (links to Policy H3)

4.64 A total of 687 affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period. This included:

- 416 Affordable Rented properties
- 49 Social Rented properties
- 218 Shared Ownership properties
- 4 First Homes

4.65 The provision of new social rented properties is particularly welcome as this is generally acknowledged to be the most affordable form of affordable housing. The Office for National Statistics September 2024 data reveals that the average house price is £388,000 up 4.2% from August 2023 and the average monthly rent is £1,256 up 6% in the same period.

4.66 Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio in West Oxfordshire has worsened over the lifetime of the plan, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 10.46 in 2023. The affordability ratio is the ratio of median house price to median gross annual-based earnings of local residents.

**Table 11 - Affordable housing completions in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024**

Year	Affordable rented	Social rented	Shared ownership	First homes	Total
2023 / 2024	140	0	98	0	238
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>238</b>

4.67 All affordable housing completions during the monitoring period were focused on larger development sites, reflecting Local Plan Policy H3 which only requires on-site delivery of affordable housing for developments of 11 units or more.

4.68 Overall, 35% of total housing completions during the monitoring period were classed as affordable which is broadly in line with Local Plan targets. Future developments in High and Medium Value zones, as indicated in the Local Plan are expected to increase the overall proportion of affordable housing delivered on-site.

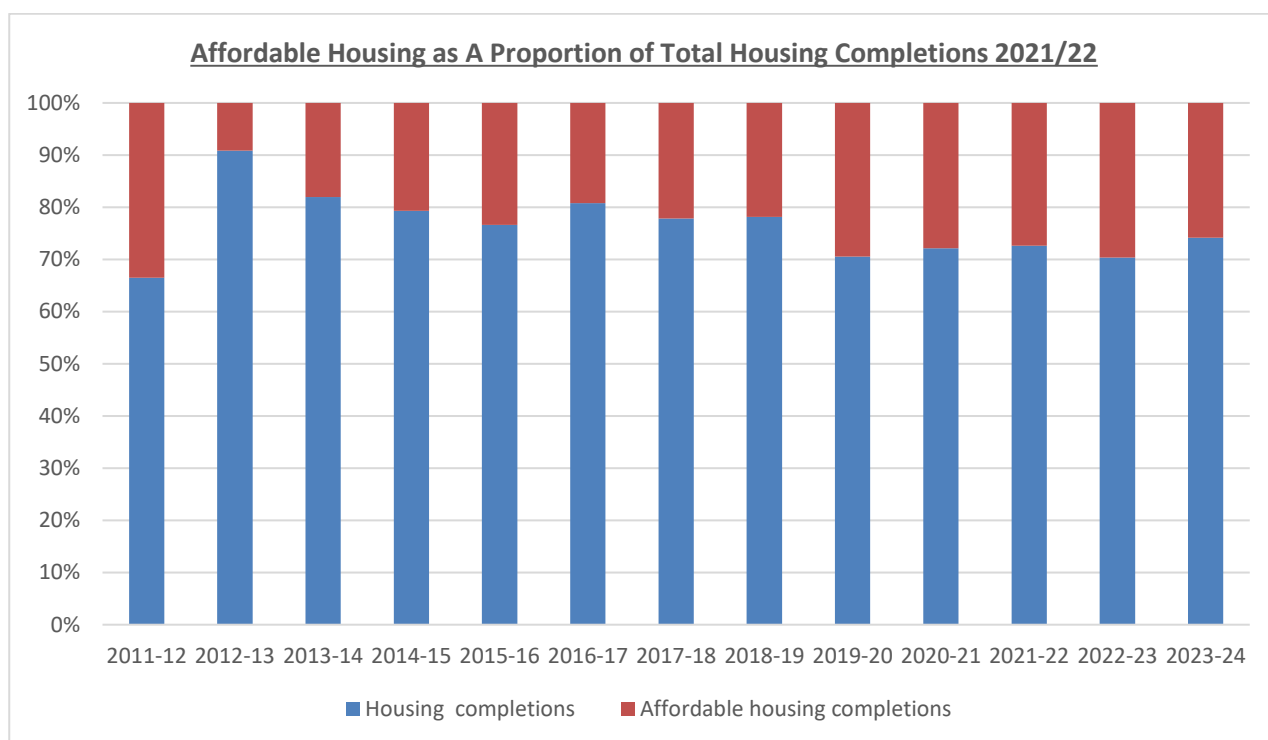
4.69 In some instances, a financial contribution (commuted sum) may be sought in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision. Such contributions are then used to fund the delivery of affordable housing within the District.

4.70 A total of **£593,049** was collected towards the provision of affordable housing during the monitoring period.

4.71 Much of this is awaiting allocation, but the Council remains in discussion with affordable housing providers about allocating this funding effectively.



**Figure 14 - Proportion of affordable housing completions 2011 - 2024**



### Affordable Housing Permissions (links to Policy H3)

4.72 A total of 287 on-site affordable housing units were secured through legal agreement in 2023/24 and will be delivered through future monitoring periods. It should be noted that this exceeds the indicative level of affordable housing need identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - 274 per annum.

4.73 These affordable units will be focused within the main service centres of Witney and Chipping Norton, Woodstock and the larger villages of Minster Lovell, Brize Norton and Aston.

**Table 12 - Affordable Housing required from S106 planning obligations signed 2023-2024**

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024		
21/00189/FUL	Land East of Hill Rise, Woodstock	90
21/03342/OUT	Land Southwest of Downs Road, Curbridge Business Park, Witney	30
22/00986/FUL	Land North of Cote Road, Aston	40
22/02498/OUT	Witney Road, North Leigh	22
22/02980/FUL	Bliss, Brassey and Wilkins House, Hailey Avenue, Chipping Norton	12

22/03240/OUT	Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell	57
22/00536/OUT	Land South of Hit or Miss Farm, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	36
22/01768/FUL	Land at Campbell's Close	37
<b>Total</b>		<b>287</b>

### Type and mix of new homes provided (links to Policy H4)

4.74 The population of West Oxfordshire has continued to grow over the lifetime of the Local Plan from around 104,800 in 2011 to 114,200 in 2021. This 9% increase is higher than the overall increase for England of 6.6% over the same period. The proportion of the population aged 65 and over remains higher in West Oxfordshire than the Oxfordshire average.

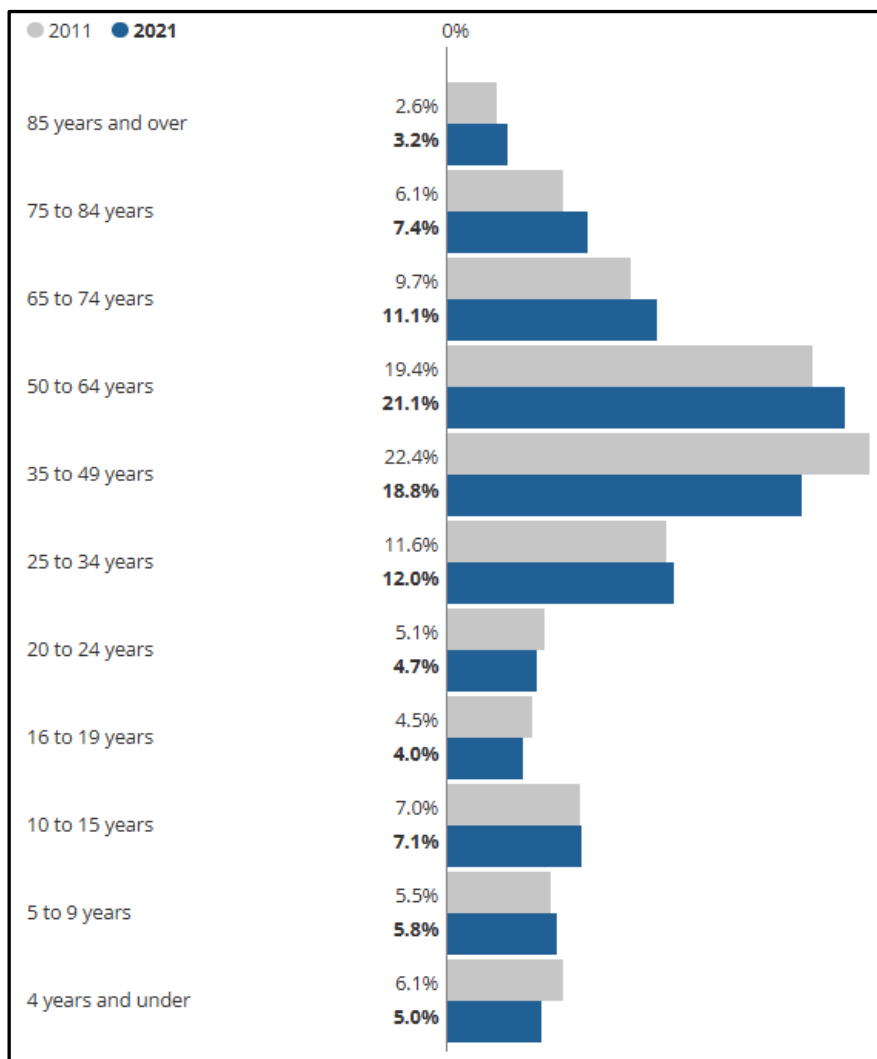


Figure 15 - Percentage of usual residents in West Oxfordshire by age group

4.75 West Oxfordshire has a higher dependency ratio than the Oxfordshire average. This is the ratio of non-working age people (those aged 0-15 and over 65) to working age population. It is therefore

essential that an appropriate mix of housing types is delivered in district to meet the varied needs of the population.

4.76 The Local Plan provides a general guide to the size of open market properties required to meet the mixed needs of the population as follows;

- 4.8% 1 bed properties
- 27.9% 2 bed properties
- 43.4% 3 bed properties
- 23.9% 4+ bed properties

4.77 Details of the new permissions granted over the monitoring period for different types and sizes of residential property are set out in the table 13. A number of approvals during the monitoring period were for outline planning permission and as such, details of dwelling size, type and tenure are unknown.

**Table 13 - Proportion of residential types and sizes granted permission between 2023 and 2024**

Size	Percentage
1 bed	15
2 bed	43
3 bed	23
4+ bed	18

4.78 It can be seen that during the monitoring period, that the majority of approved dwellings were 2 bed units, likely a result of a higher proportion of flatted developments being approved in 2023/24

## Meeting the needs of elderly (links to Policy H4)

4.79 The Local Plan indicates that particular support will be given to the provision of specialist housing for the elderly. There have been limited new permissions and completions for such accommodation during the monitoring period, but there has been some new provision of age restricted accommodation as indicated in table 14 below.

**Table 14 - Specialist elderly accommodation permissions and completions 2023 - 2024**

Reference	Description	Location	Status
18/03035/RES	Residential development comprising 91 dwellings (50% affordable), 59 assisted living units (C2 use class) and a 64 bed care home (C2 use class)	Shilton Road, Burford	14 assisted living units completed during monitoring period and 20 units still to be built.  Construction of the care home has commenced and expected completion during 2024/25 period.
22/03370/FUL	Erection of six single storey age restricted dwellings	Land West Of Colt House, Aston Road, Bampton	Permission granted
22/01768/FUL	Demolition of existing retirement dwellings. Construction of 37 no. replacement age restricted apartment units	Campbells Close, Woodstock	Permission granted

## Provision for custom and self-build housing (links to Policy H5)

4.80 In order to address the need for custom and self-build housing, the Council requires that all housing developments of 100 or more dwellings should include 5% of the residential plots to be serviced and made available for self-build purposes.

4.81 Two sites exceeded the threshold for the delivery of on-site self-build residential plots during the monitoring period at Hill Rise in Woodstock and to the west of Minster Lovell.

4.82 Providing access to self-build housing opportunities can provide a more affordable path to home ownership to some people. Although the provision of such plots has been relatively low during the monitoring period, more opportunities will rise as the larger housing allocations of the Local Plan start to come forward.

## Provision for travelling communities (links to Policy H7)

- 4.83 There were no new planning applications for new gypsy and traveller accommodation during the monitoring period.
- 4.84 In 2023, there were a total 13 Gypsy and Traveller sites in West Oxfordshire with a total of 110 pitches accommodating 74 households. In addition, there were 4 Travelling Showperson yards, with 24 plots accommodating 26 households.
- 4.85 WODC has jointly commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with the other Oxfordshire local planning authorities. The findings of the study will be taken into account in the determination of any future planning applications and in developing the new Local Plan 2041.

## Land at Cuckoowood Farm, Freeland (links to Policy H8)

- 4.86 One planning application was granted permission at Cuckoowood Farm during the monitoring period

**Table 15 – Planning approvals at Cuckoowood Farm 2023 - 2024**

Permission Reference	Description	Address
23/02909/FUL	Erection of a building for the garaging of fairground vehicles.	Cuckoo Wood, Caravan Park, Freeland

## SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

### SUMMARY

- The new permission rates for employment development have remained stable over the past 3 years. The uptake of land for business uses, particularly in locations identified in the Local Plan serves to support economic growth and help to provide a balance between homes and jobs.
- The Local Plan identifies a need for at least 27 hectares of additional employment land to be delivered in the District by 2031. Much of the land required was identified within existing employment sites and urban extensions, which have been a focus for employment land provision during the monitoring period.
- The Local Plan continues to direct the majority of business development, particularly larger scale development to the main and rural service centres.
- There has been a range of new business development permitted in rural parts of the district during the monitoring period, although this has been relatively minor in nature. The West Oxfordshire local economy remains diverse, with professional, scientific and technical services the largest business sector in the district.
- Tourism development in West Oxfordshire has been primarily focused on the provision of visitor accommodation during the monitoring period.
- There have been a number of proposals during the monitoring period to increase the provision of community services and facilities in West Oxfordshire, although some existing community facilities have been lost to other uses.
- Barriers to housing and services remains the most significant deprivation domain in West Oxfordshire with almost half the population falling within the most 40% most deprived areas nationally. The availability of services and facilities in West Oxfordshire's settlements has remained fairly stable since the adoption of the Local Plan.
- There have been no changes to the extent of town centres during the monitoring period and only minor changes in terms of land use within town centres over the same period. Although there are some vacancies in town centre premises, the vacancy rates do not present too much cause for concern.
- The overall health of town centres is considered to be good as they continue to meet a range of Local Plan and council Plan objectives.

4.87 The economic growth-related policies of the Local Plan cover a number of issues including the provision and protection of employment land, the rural economy, tourism, town centres and the provision and protection of community facilities.

4.88 Core objectives are as follows:

## **Core Objectives**

CO3 - Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town and village centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve those centres.

CO7 - To support sustainable economic growth which adds value to the local economy, improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities, capitalises on economic growth in adjoining areas, improves local skills and work readiness, removes potential barriers to investment and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.

CO8 - To enable a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy.

CO12 - Look to maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.

CO13 - Plan for enhanced access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

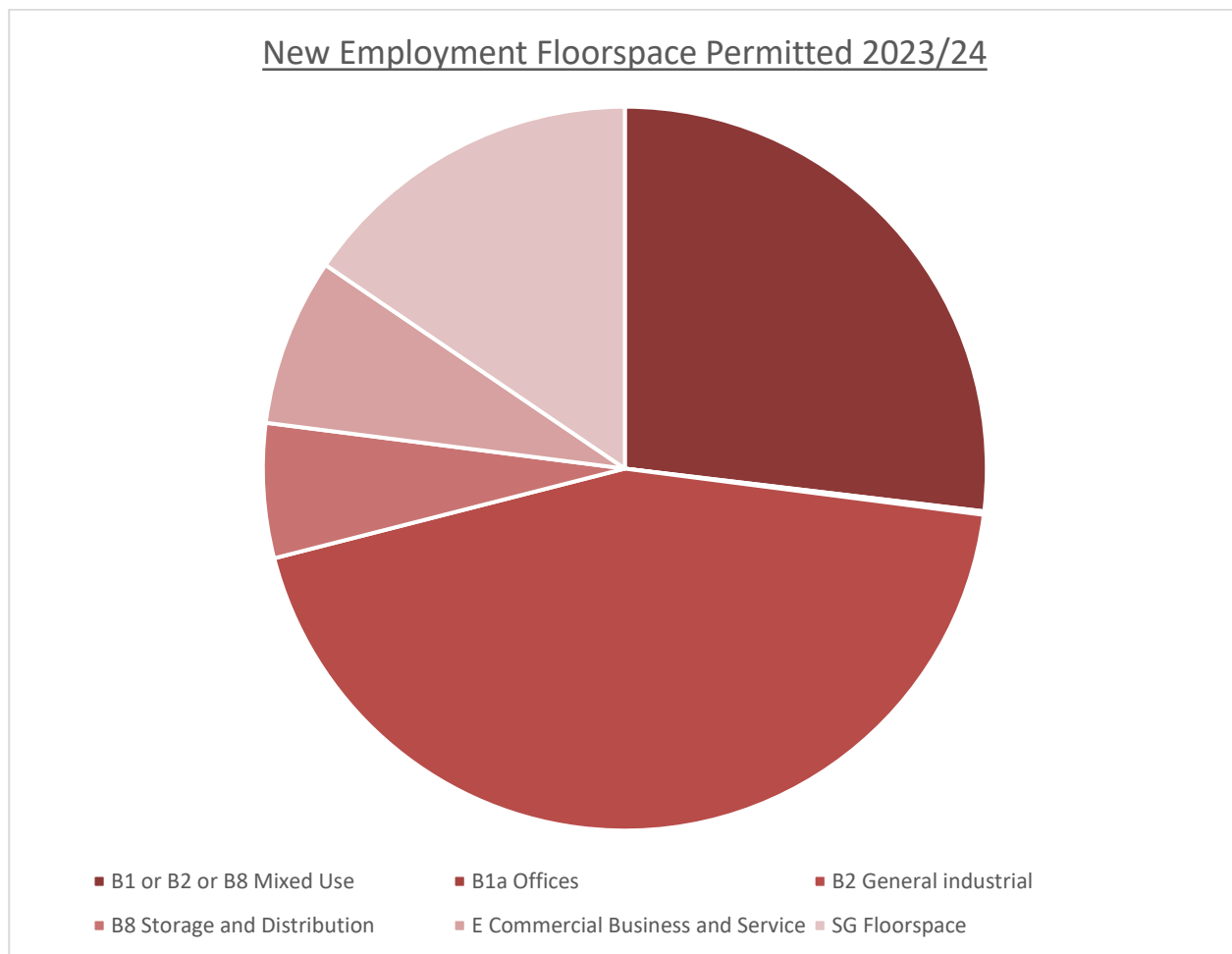
## **New Employment Permissions (links to Policy EI)**

4.89 A total of 27,709m<sup>2</sup> of new employment floorspace was granted permission between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

4.90 The largest proportion of new employment floorspace permitted was for General Industrial development.

4.91 The largest individual proposal was for the erection of five industrial units at Lakeside Industrial Estate at Standlake.

**Figure 17 - proportions of new employment floorspace permitted 2023 - 2024**



4.92 The area of land illustrated on figure 17 below was identified to meet the employment needs of the Local Plan within the Witney sub-area.

4.93 There were two new approvals for employment and commercial development within the West Witney Industrial Area during the monitoring period.



**Figure 16 - Location of new employment floorspace permitted, West Witney 2023 - 2024**



**Table 16 - Approvals for new employment floorspace at West Witney**

Permission Reference	Address	Description
23/00873/FUL	Range Road Windrush Industrial Park	Construction of two new storage buildings within service yard of existing property
23/03129/FUL	Book End Witney	Erection of eight drive-up storage units, alterations to the existing parking and turning area, and associated works

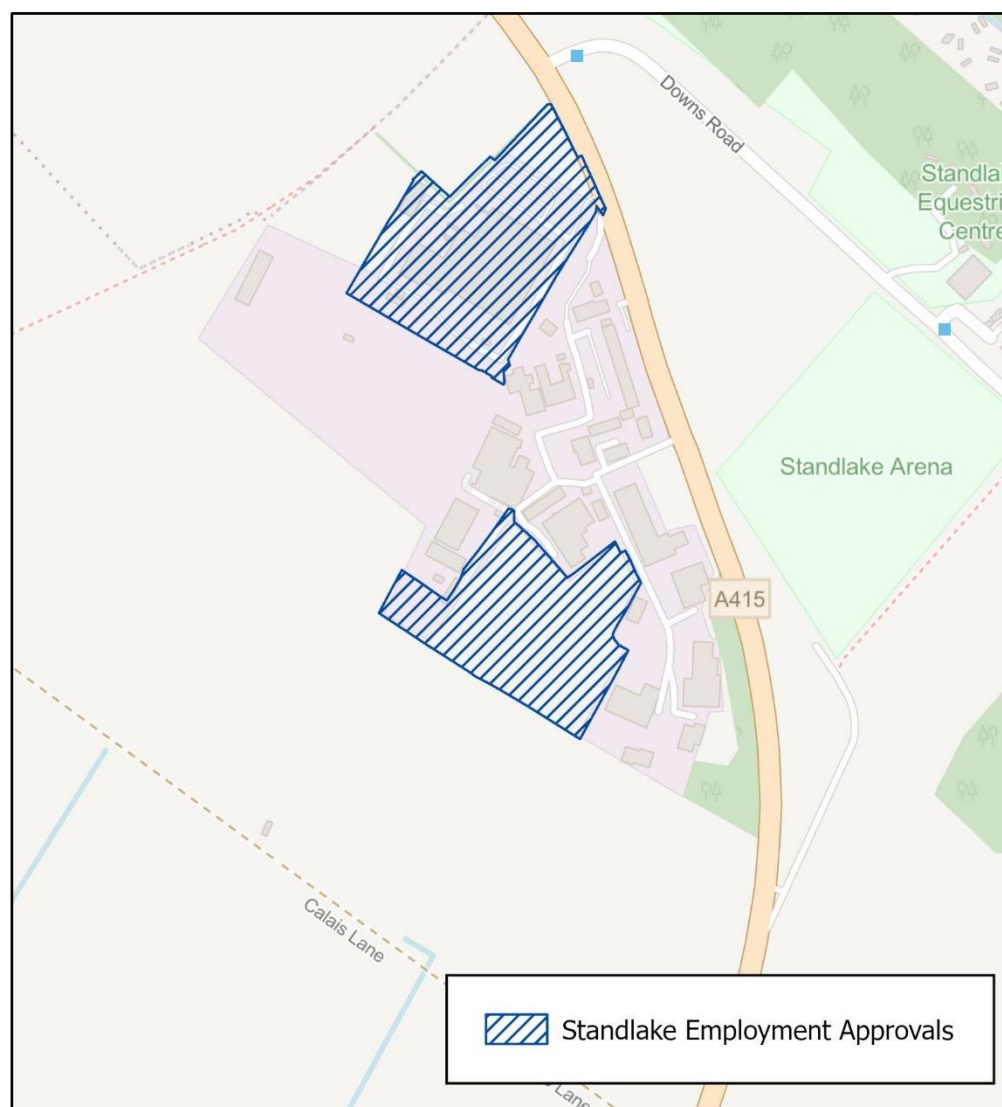
4.94 New business development at other towns and villages was planned to be focused primarily at the Lakeside Industrial Estate at Standlake..

4.95 There were two schemes approved in this area during the monitoring period as illustrated by table 17 and figure 17 below.

**Table 17 - New approvals for employment floorspace at Standlake**

Permission Reference	Address	Description
23/00301/FUL	Lakeside Industrial Park	Erection of five industrial units
23/00907/FUL	Cotswold Farm, Standlake	Change of use from egg packing plant to flexible Class B2 use (general industry), Class B8 use (storage and distribution) or Class E g ii use (industrial processes).

**Figure 17 - New employment floorspace permitted at Standlake 2023 - 2024**



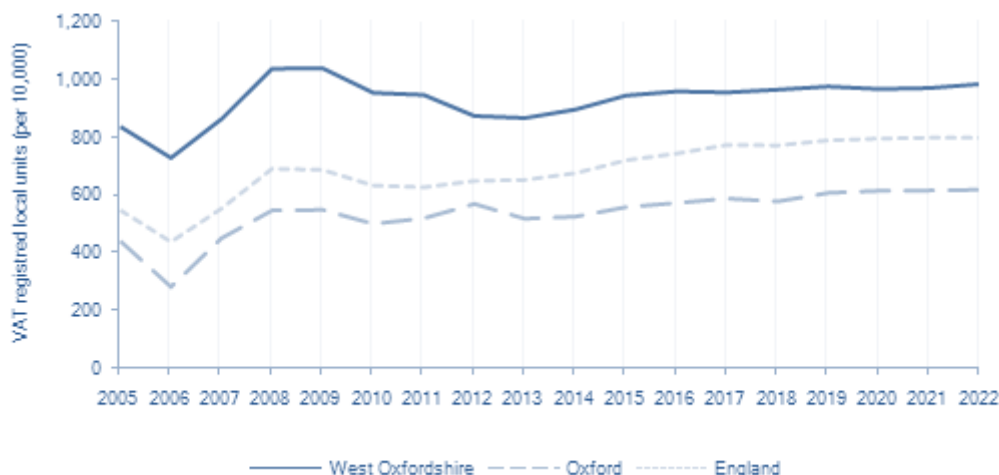
## Rural economy (links to Policies E2, E3 and E4)

4.96 Figure 18 below shows that the largest industry groups for businesses based in West Oxfordshire are professional, scientific and technical services followed by the construction sector and the retail industry.

**Figure 18 - West Oxfordshire largest business sectors, ONS 2022**



Figure: Businesses (VAT based local units) per 10,000 working age population  
Source: Office for National Statistics



4.97 The majority of businesses employ less than five people. Businesses employing less than 10 people represent approximately 86% of all local businesses.

4.98 Local Plan policy directs larger businesses and employers to the main service centres but seeks to support the rural economy by taking a positive approach to small rural business premises and diversifying the land-based sector.

4.99 The development of new small employment sites within and adjacent to rural service centres and villages are supported where commensurate with the scale and character of the area.

4.100 Outside of the main towns there were limited new permissions granted for new commercial floor space at service centres and villages. New permissions were relatively minor in nature and consistent with the requirements of Policy E2

4.101 As part of the supporting evidence for the new Local Plan, the Council has commissioned an economic needs assessment which will provide up to date evidence on the amount and type of new employment floorspace needed in the period up to 2041.

**Table 18 - New permissions for commercial and business development in service centres and larger villages**

Parish Name	Permission Reference	Description
Freeland	23/02909/FUL	Erection of a building for the garaging of fairground vehicles.
Hanborough	23/00851/FUL	Erection of a replacement storage building with glazed canopy link to main building
Leafield	23/01429/FUL	Replace existing storage shed with new log cabin for use as pre-school office/meeting room and erection of new storage shed in revised position.

4.102 As a rural district, much of the economic activity in West Oxfordshire relates to agriculture.

4.103 A total of approximately 1,553m<sup>2</sup> of new agricultural floorspace was permitted during the monitoring period, primarily relating to the formation of new storage for equipment and farm produce.

4.104 A limited number of change of use applications for business developments have been permitted during the monitoring period although nothing significant in nature.

4.105 Policy E3 supports the re-use of traditional and non-traditional buildings for employment, tourism and community uses to support the rural economy, but there have been few applications for such development during the monitoring period.

**Table 19 - New permissions for change of use and re-use of non-residential buildings in West Oxfordshire 2023 – 2024**

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02948/FUL	Change of use from former Telephone Repeater Station (Sui Generis use) to furniture workshop (Use Class B2) and erection of a single storey side extension	Tackley
23/00864/FUL	Change of use from Class E (c)(ii) (formally A2 financial and professional services) to Class E (b) (formally A3) food and drink	Witney
23/01705/FUL	Change of use of agricultural storage area to a drinks bar and a glass wash area to serve the existing wedding venue	Filkins & Broughton Poggs
23/01326/FUL	Temporary change of use and operational development in association with business and storage operations (Retrospective)	Asthall

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02948/FUL	Change of use from former Telephone Repeater Station (Sui Generis use) to furniture workshop (Use Class B2) and erection of a single storey side extension	Tackley
23/02000/FUL	Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Witney

4.106 There have been a number of holiday lets and other tourism related developments permitted during the monitoring period, supporting an increase in tourism accommodation and activity in the district.

4.107 The most significant tourism related development approved during the monitoring period was for a holiday park at the former Leaffield Technical Centre.

4.108 As the provision of short-term holiday accommodation increases, particularly through changes to existing dwellings, regard should be had to the impact on existing communities, the increase in temporary residence within settlements and the impact this can have on house prices and service provision.

**Table 20 - New permissions for tourism development in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024**

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02297/FUL	Proposed new dwelling to replace redundant stables and store, to create holiday let	Bampton
22/03408/FUL	Partial demolition of existing buildings and development of a holiday park comprising short stay holiday accommodation units and associated leisure facilities	Leaffield
23/02676/FUL	Erection of a gardeners bothy, entrance kiosk, installation of artwork and a boathouse kiosk with fenced enclosure	Great Tew

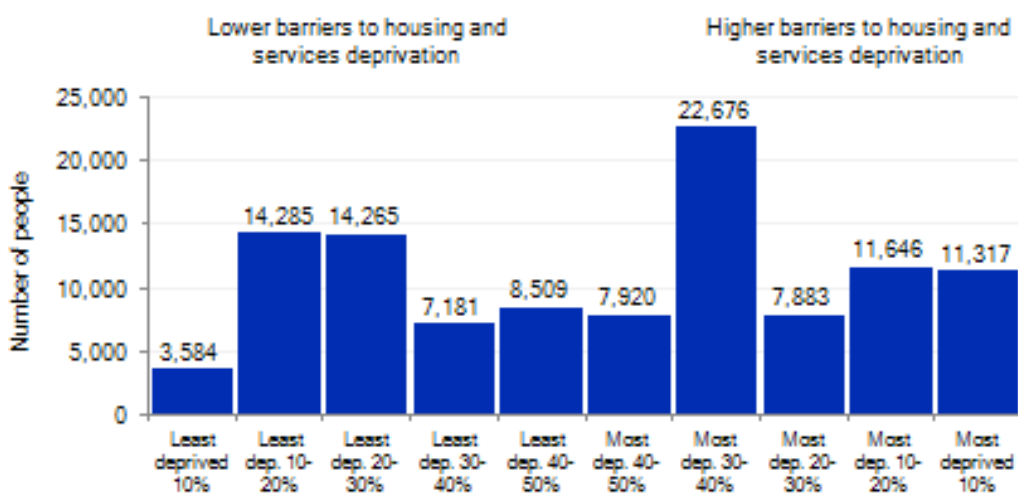
## Local services and community facilities (links to Policy E5)

4.109 The 'Barriers to Housing and Services' deprivation domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: geographical barriers, which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and wider barriers which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.

4.110 Figure 19 below shows that a significant proportion of West Oxfordshire's population falls into the most deprived areas nationally for this measure of deprivation when combined for physical accessibility and affordability.

**Figure 19 - Number of West Oxfordshire residents in areas with higher barriers to housing and services deprivation**

Figure: Number of people in each deprivation decile, ID 2019 Barriers to Housing and Services domain  
Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Indices of Deprivation 2019)



4.111 The District Council supports the development and retention of local services and community facilities to meet local needs and to promote social wellbeing, interests, interaction and healthy inclusive communities. This is reflected in Local Plan Policy E5.

4.112 Records indicate that there have been a number of proposals relating to the expansion and improvement of community services and facilities during the monitoring period.

4.113 These will help to ensure the continued integrity of community uses and support activity of communities in West Oxfordshire.

**Table 21 - Planning permission for new community services and facilities 2023 - 2024**

Permission	Description	Granted
24/00095/FUL	Installation of new pre-fabricated classroom to the rear of the property.	Ascott-under-Wychwood
23/00593/FUL	Erection of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Building,	Carterton
.23/00288/FUL	The erection of a community workshop building on land alongside Charlbury Community Centre.	Charlbury
23/00749/FUL	Erection of extension to South elevation to provide a purpose built community gym.	Charlbury
23/01148/FUL	Erection of a sports amenities building for Charlbury Primary School with associated works	Charlbury
23/02096/FUL	Change of use from dwelling to dental practice rooms	Chipping Norton
23/00361/FUL	Erection of a temporary pavilion together with associated works to include provision of temporary mobile staff WC's,	Glympton
23/02187/FUL	Change of use of agricultural and grassland to a playing field with boundary fencing to create a playing field for Hanborough Manor School with erection of an ancillary facilities block	Hanborough
24/00101/FUL	Construction of pre-fabricated school outbuilding for learning purposes.	Kingham
23/00513/FUL	Demolition of existing pavilion. Erection of a new single storey cricket pavilion with provision of external spectator seating and associated works	Langford
23/00480/FUL	Erection of a wooden tennis club house surrounded by a fence to match the existing tennis court fencing	Ramsden
23/02000/FUL	Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Witney

4.114 There have been relatively few losses of community uses to other forms of development during the monitoring period suggesting that Policy E5 is acting effectively.

4.115 Permission has been granted for the conversion of two long standing vacant public houses during the monitoring period.

4.116 Chipping Norton lost it's last remaining high street bank as the Barclays closed it's branch and it's use as a café was allowed. Barclays retain a local service within the town hall.

**Table 22 - Loss of community services and facilities 2023 - 2024**

Parish Name	Reference	Address	Description
Eynsham	23/01971/FUL	Boot Inn Barnard Gate	Demolition of single and two storey side and single storey rear extensions. Conversion of former Public House to a pair of semi detached dwellings with two storey side and rear extensions and associated car parking spaces.
Hailey	23/00729/FUL	The Saddlers Arms, New Yatt Lane	Change of use of former public house and ancillary living accommodation to a dwellinghouse.
Chipping Norton	23/01183/CLP	Barclays Bank, High Street	Certificate of Lawfulness (to allow change of use from bank to restaurant / coffee shop)

### **Town Centre Vitality and Viability (links to Policy E6)**

4.117 There are currently 5 designated town centres in West Oxfordshire in the main and rural service centres as follows:

- Witney
- Carterton
- Chipping Norton
- Burford
- Woodstock

4.118 There were 112 new permissions granted within or on the edge of these town centres within the monitoring period.



**Table 23 - Planning approvals within town centres 2023 - 2024**

Town Centre	Number of new approvals	Proposals of note
Witney	14	<p>A mixture of householder listed building consents and advertisement consent approved in Witney town centre during the monitoring period.</p> <p>There was no significant development or changes of use approved during the monitoring period.</p>
Carterton	9	<p>There was a significant number of new residential dwellings approved in Carterton Town Centre with a total of 19 flats and apartments approved.</p> <p>New commercial premises were also approved at 19 Burford Road at the northern edge of the town centre to create mixed use development.</p>
Chipping Norton	19	<p>Majority of approvals minor in nature comprising alterations to listed buildings and advertisement consents.</p> <p>The most significant approvals in the town centre include the erection of 6 dwellings to the rear of the High Street, the conversion of a retail unit to a cinema and 8 apartments and the closure of the Barclays bank and change of use to a café.</p>
Burford	13	<p>The majority of new permissions granted within Burford town centre were Listed Building consents for alterations and extensions to listed buildings.</p>
Woodstock	6	<p>All applications relatively minor in nature and relate to alterations and improvements to existing buildings.</p>

4.119 There has been no change to the total area designated as town centre space during the monitoring period and only limited changes to land use and premises within these town centres.

4.120 Town centre surveys were undertaken in November 2023 to quantify the number of vacant units. Chipping Norton had a total of 14 empty units. Carterton had a total of 1 empty unit and Witney a total of 34 across a number of locations including Corn Street, Market Square, High Street and Marriot's Walk (no change for Witney from the previous monitoring period).

4.121 The health of the District's Town Centres is key to meeting a number of Local Plan and Council Plan objectives as these are often to focal point of communities and the most accessible locations for residents to access services and facilities. Although there are some vacancies within town centres, they remain healthy, vibrant and active. As part of the supporting evidence for the new Local Plan, a

retail and other commercial leisure needs assessment has been commissioned to provide evidence of the type and amount of floorspace needed in the period up to 2041.

4.122 There have been some changes to accessibility in Town Centres, including restricted access to motor vehicles in Witney and the introduction of parking permits in Woodstock. Such changes have been introduced to improve the town centre environment while keeping them accessible for residents, vulnerable road users and people with disabilities.

## TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

### SUMMARY

- The majority of new residential and commercial development is located in the most accessible locations at town centres and rural service centres.
- Limited public transport improvements and enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling have been delivered in rural areas during the monitoring period.
- Car ownership and distances travelled to access key services and facilities remain higher than the Oxfordshire average.
- Funding has been secured towards highways improvements and monitoring of travel plans during the monitoring period.
- There has been good progress on a number of strategic highway schemes including the Access to Witney project (Shores Green Slip Roads) and the A40 smart corridor project.

4.123 The transport and movement policies of the Local Plan cover a number of issues including the location of development, improvements to the highway network, public transport, walking and cycling and parking provision.

4.124 Core objectives are as follows:

### Core Objectives

CO1 - Enable new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type in locations which will help improve the quality of life of local communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car, can be minimised.

CO10 - Ensure that land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.

CO11 - Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of public transport.

CO13 - Plan for enhanced access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

CO15 - Contribute to reducing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.

CO16 - Enable improvements in water and air quality.

CO17 - Minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.

### Location of Development (links to Policies T1 and T3)

4.125 The Local Plan gives priority to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a good range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised.

4.126 The Local Plan identifies 3 Main Service Centres and 7 Rural Service Centres which offer the widest range of services and facilities, are accessible by a choice of transport modes and offer a range of job opportunities.

#### Main Service Centres

- Witney
- Carterton
- Chipping Norton

#### Rural Service Centres

- Bampton
- Burford
- Charlbury
- Eynsham
- Long Hanborough
- Woodstock
- Salt Cross Garden Village (proposed)

4.127 Planning permission was granted for 26 residential schemes at the service centres during the monitoring period totalling 212 dwellings, so although a large proportion of residential development is being directed to the most sustainable locations in accessibility terms<sup>10</sup>, a proportion of development is being directed towards larger villages, some of which are less accessible.

4.128 The District Council has secured funding towards public transport improvements from developments commercial developments and developments that have been approved outside of the service centres.

4.129 The council currently holds £13,047 that is yet to be allocated towards highways and sustainable transport projects.

**Table 24 - Section 106 contributions towards public transport in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024**

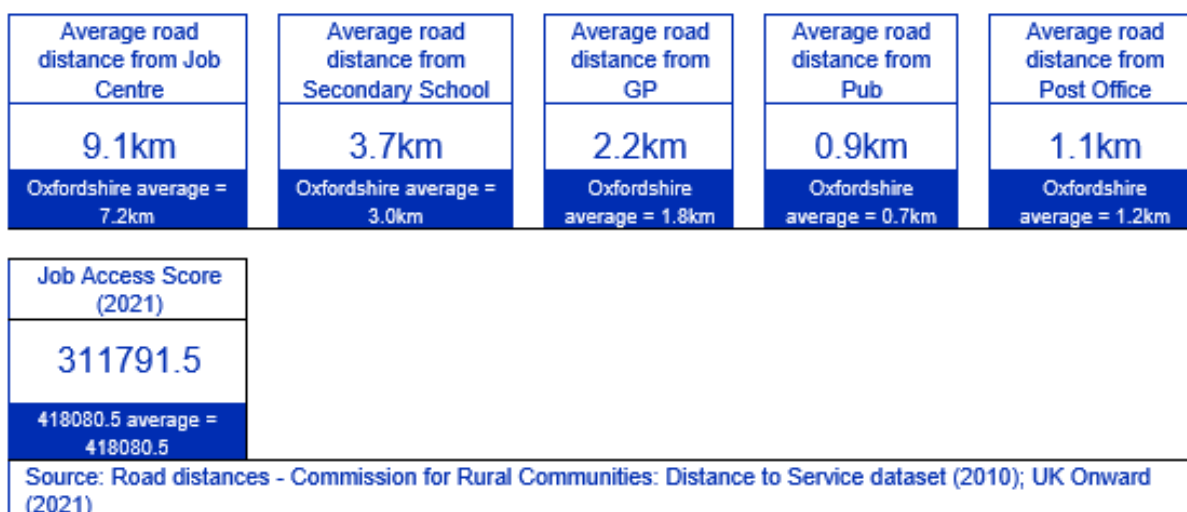
Year	Public Transport contributions secured / collected / spent
2023/2024	£50,000 (The Driving Centre, Enstone Airfield) Contribution to Middle Barton Community Bus  £200,000 was also secured for car parking for the same application

4.130 Notwithstanding the fact that a good proportion of development is directed towards service centres, the rural nature of the district and fact that many settlements in the district have limited or no

<sup>10</sup> See Policies OS2 and H2 for further information

services at all, accessibility to key services and facilities in West Oxfordshire is relatively poor, resulting in relatively high car dependency.

**Figure 20 - West Oxfordshire accessibility to key services and facilities 2021**



Source – Oxfordshire Insight – Local Insight profile for West Oxfordshire. OCSI 2022

## Highway Improvements (links to Policy T2)

- 4.131 All development in West Oxfordshire is required to demonstrate safe access and an acceptable degree of impact on the local highway network.
- 4.132 Development proposals that are likely to generate significant amounts of traffic should be supported by a transport assessment and travel plan.
- 4.133 The tables below indicate the level of financial contributions towards highway improvements and monitoring fees secured during the monitoring period.

**Table 25 - Travel Plans submitted and monitored during monitoring period**

Year	Proposal	Contribution / Spend
2023/24	Erection of a new office building, warehouse and starter units development in a mix of BI (E(g)) and B8 use class	£1,633.99 Travel Plan monitoring

- 4.134 The Local Plan also identifies a number of strategic highway infrastructure schemes, the latest position in relation to which is summarised below.

**Table 26 - Local Plan 2031 identified highway infrastructure schemes.**

Scheme Name	Status
Downs Road Junction, Witney	Complete - New roundabout providing access to the A40 from Downs Road was delivered via development contributions at North Curbridge

Scheme Name	Status
Shores Green Slip Roads	<p>Detailed scheme design is nearing completion, and the discharge of planning conditions are well underway. Internal approvals have been secured to release the project funding and to enter into a construction contract to begin mobilisation and enabling works. Subject to securing land access and discharge of planning conditions, mobilisation and enabling works are scheduled to commence later this year.</p> <p>(Source - Witney TAC Report by Oxfordshire County Council September 2024 Place Planning Team Update)</p>
West End Link Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at North Witney which is yet to come forward.
Northern Distributor Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at North Witney which is yet to come forward.
Eastern Link Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at East Chipping Norton which is yet to come forward.
Western Spine Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at West Eynsham which is yet to come forward.
A40 improvements	<p>Oxfordshire County Council has successfully negotiated with funding partners Homes England and the Department for Transport (DFT) to confirm £126m in funding to deliver the A40 Eynsham Park and Ride to Wolvercote scheme.</p> <p>The new scheme focuses on improving bus travel and enhancing walking and cycling infrastructure along the A40, providing a connection to the Eynsham Park and Ride,</p> <p>Subject to planning permission, construction could start in early 2026 and last for two years.</p>

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE ASSETS

### SUMMARY

- No major residential development was approved in the Cotswolds National Landscape during the monitoring period. Larger residential schemes were approved in a limited number of service centres and villages.
- A number of single dwellings and minor schemes were approved elsewhere in the protected landscape including small villages and open countryside.
- There are 101 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire, totalling 1737.11 hectares. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 147.03 hectares since last year (2023). There are 16 Local Geological sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.
- There are 5122.55 hectares of NERC S41 habitats in West Oxfordshire. This has increased by 155.37ha since 2023.
- There have been records of 145 priority species in West Oxfordshire within the last 10 years. We have not received records from three priority species in the last 10 years.
- The farmland bird index for West Oxfordshire is 1.02, which shows the index fell 0.14 from 2022.
- The number of heritage assets on the Historic England assets at risk register decreased from 8 to 5 to the end of the monitoring period.
- There were approximately 45 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 253 dwellings during the monitoring period.
- Of the 274 planning applications that were refused in 2021/23, 114 of these were located within Conservation Areas
- There were 448 applications for Listed Building consent determined during the monitoring period. Of these, 398 were approved.

4.135 The environmental and heritage section of the Local Plan covers a broad range of issues relating to the natural and built environment including the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly AONB)

landscape character, biodiversity, green infrastructure, sport and recreation, renewable energy, flood risk, pollution and heritage.

4.136 Core objectives are as follows:

### **Core Objectives**

CO9 - Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.

CO14 - Conserve and enhance the character and significance of West Oxfordshire's high quality natural, historic and cultural environment – including its geodiversity, landscape, biodiversity, heritage and arts – recognising and promoting their wider contribution to people's quality of life and social and economic well-being both within the District and beyond.

CO15 - Contribute to reducing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.

CO16 - Enable improvements in water and air quality.

CO17 - Minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.

### **Development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (links to Policy EH1)**

4.137 In line with national policy, the Local Plan has a generally restrictive policy against major development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswolds AONB), with great weight applied to conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty, landscape and countryside including wildlife and heritage.

4.138 The Local Plan allocates no land for residential development within the Cotswolds National Landscape, but planning permission was granted for approximately 33 new dwellings during the monitoring period.

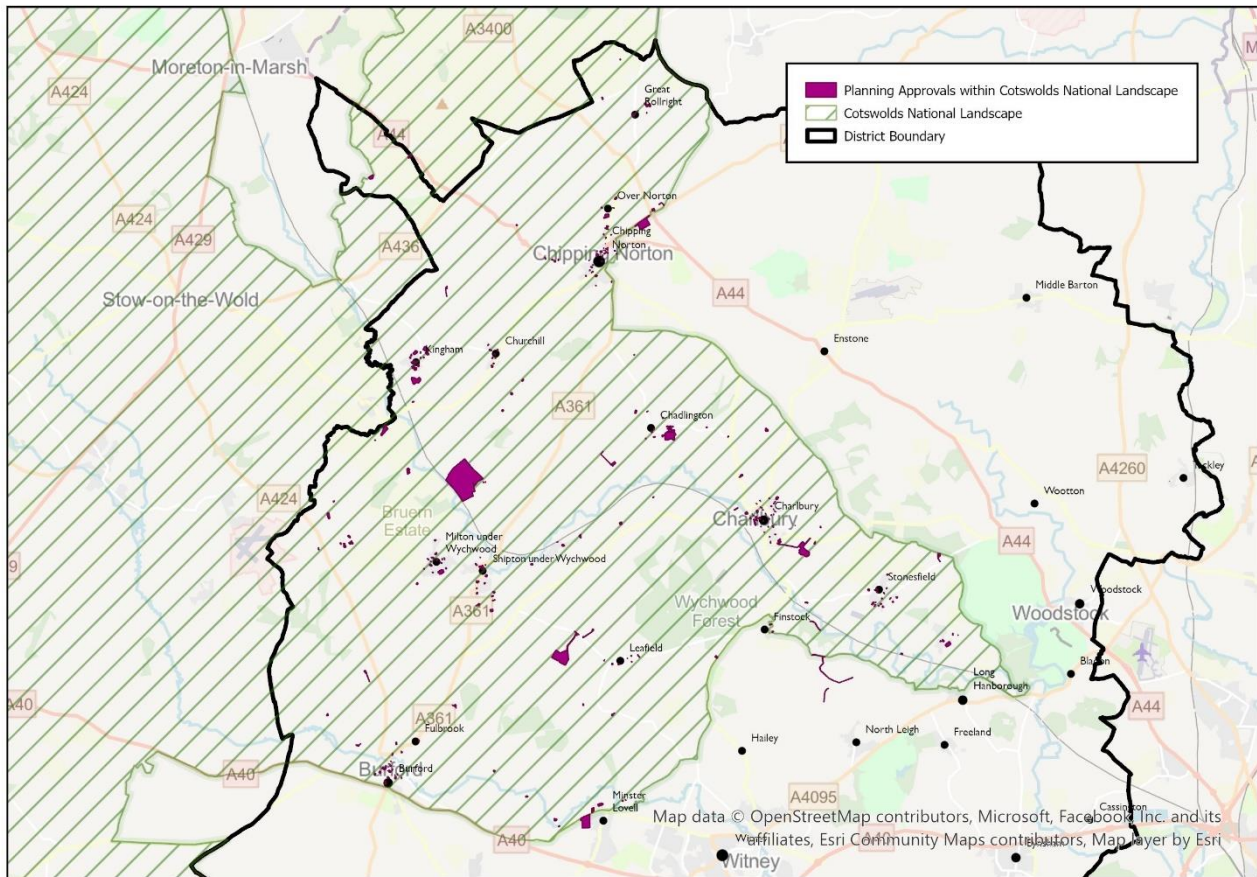
4.139 None of these proposals are major in nature and relate predominantly to the development of single dwellings.

4.140 One scheme of 7 dwellings was approved within the built-up area of Chipping Norton.

4.141 There were however 388 new permissions granted for a mix of development types and land uses within the Cotswolds National Landscape during the monitoring period, including:

- 188 householder applications approved
- 70 Full Planning approvals granted
- 76 applications for listed building consent granted

**Figure 21 - Location of planning applications approved within Cotswolds National Landscape 2023 - 2024**



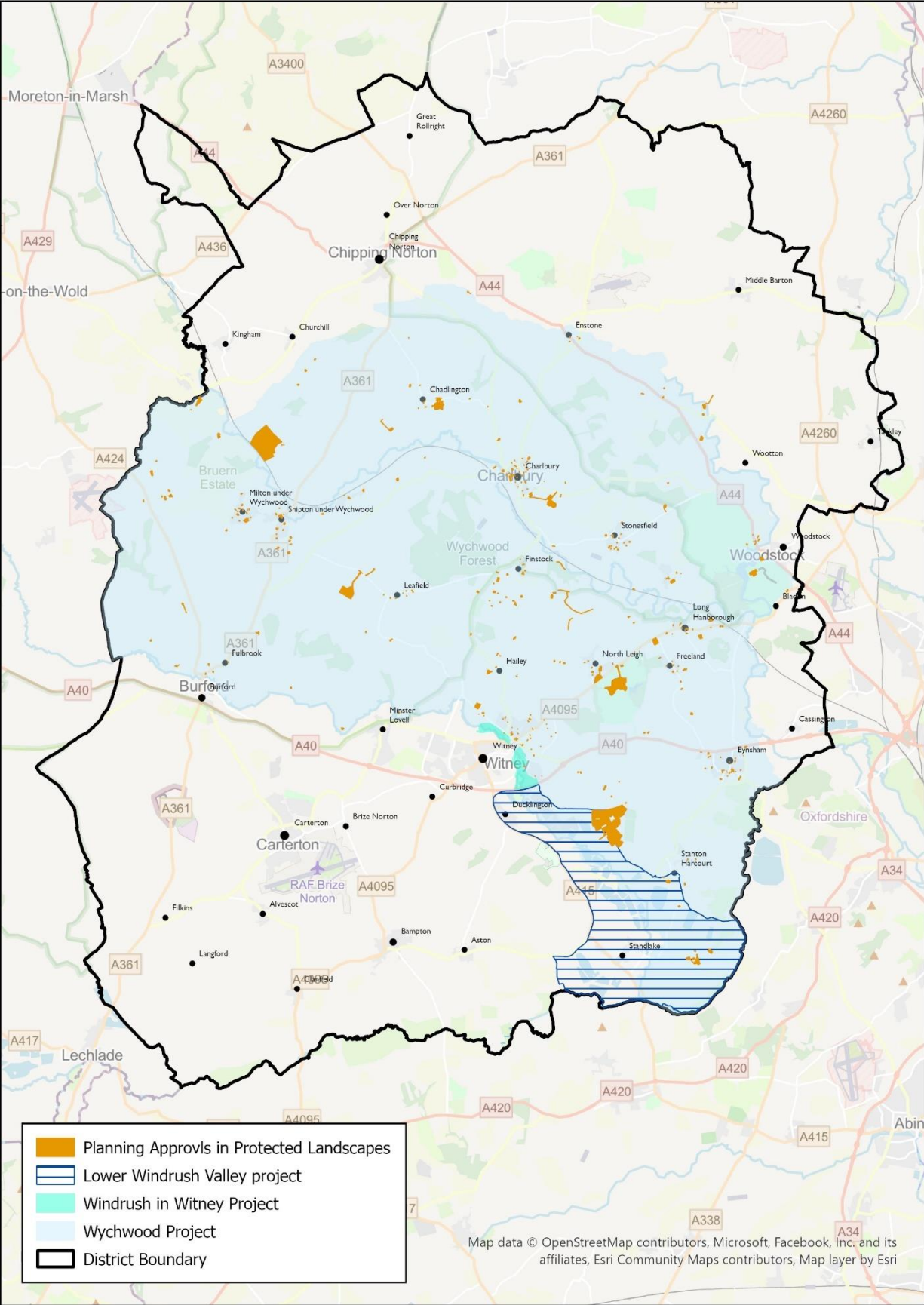
4.142 In addition to the Cotswolds National Landscape, the Local Plan identifies a further three special policy areas, that have been identified for special landscape protection, conservation and enhancement:

- Lower Windrush Valley Project Area – An area of major landscape change associated with mineral extraction and after uses, especially for recreation, tourism and nature conservation.
- Windrush in Witney Project Area – A fundamental component of the town’s attractive character.
- Wychwood Project Area – A project that aims to restore the landscape character and mix of habitats associated with the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood.

4.143 A total of 512 planning approvals were granted within these various landscape project areas during the monitoring period.



**Figure 22 - Location of planning approvals in landscape project areas 2023 - 2024**



## Biodiversity (links to Policy EH3)

4.144 Local Plan Policy EH3 aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in West Oxfordshire, with a focus on protected sites and species and ensuring that development contributes towards the aims and objectives of Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) within the District.

4.145 Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) produce a Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which provides useful information on areas of biodiversity importance, priority habitats, priority species and the distribution and status of farmland birds.

4.146 The information from the TVERC AMR is reproduced below for information.

**Table 28 - Areas of sites designated for Intrinsic Environmental Value in West Oxfordshire**

Designation	2023	2024
Local Geological Site	333.33	333.33
Local Wildlife Site	1590.08	1737.11

4.147 Records indicate that there has been a slight increase in the area of land designated as a Local Wildlife site in West Oxfordshire between this and the last monitoring periods.

4.148 There are 101 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 147.03 hectares since last year. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.

4.149 Figures for changes in area are derived from an analysis of site boundary data following a site selection panel meeting during the analysis year. Counts in this report are based on the number of sites, rather than polygons, thus counts may differ from previous reports aside from any changes arising from panel decisions.

### Changes in area of UK priority habitat

4.150 This indicator identifies the UK NERC Act section 41 habitats of principal importance (priority habitats) within West Oxfordshire.

4.151 Table 29 below provides details of the UK priority habitats which have been identified within West Oxfordshire. The changes in the UK priority habitats are mostly attributable to new information such as confirmation of boundaries of habitat types.

4.152 The changes largely represent an improved understanding of the habitat resource in West Oxfordshire, rather than the creation or loss of habitat.

**Table 29 - Changes in area of UK priority habitat**

S4I Habitat	2023 (area in ha)	2024 (area in ha)
Coastal And Floodplain Grazing Marsh	1491.22	1517.67
Eutrophic Standing Waters	304.12	339.45
Hedgerow (Priority Habitat)	7.85	7.85
Lowland Beech And Yew Woodland	16.97	17.15
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	182.80	189.34
Lowland Dry Acid Grassland	6.33	12.55
Lowland Fens	52.69	53.73
Lowland Meadows	225.57	237.28
Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	1528.92	1578.25
Lowland Wood Pasture And Parkland	764.36	783.31
Mesotrophic Lakes	256.62	221.11
Open Mosaic Habitats On Previously Developed Land	28.80	33.09
Purple Moor Grass And Rush Pasture	1.24	1.24
Reedbeds	2.13	2.13
Rivers	8.54	29.24
Traditional Orchards	57.85	57.85
Wet Woodland	31.17	31.21
Wood Pasture And Parkland	0.00	10.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>4967.18</b>	<b>5122.55</b>

## Changes in number of UK priority species

4.153 The number of priority species in West Oxfordshire is 145.

4.154 Three species have been removed from the list, as no new records have been made within the last ten years. This does not mean that they are not present, only that no records have been added to the TVERC database since 2011.

4.155 West Oxfordshire District Council have a duty to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district. The biodiversity duty was introduced in January 2024. Consideration will be given as to what actions can be taken to enhance biodiversity in West Oxfordshire. The District Council published its own Nature Recovery Strategy (2024 – 2030) earlier this year<sup>11</sup> and will continue to work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to identify further priorities through the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Oxfordshire.

4.156 During the monitoring period, money was secured, collected and spent on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) schemes in the district as set out in Table 30 below.

**Table 30 - Funds secured, collected and spent for BNG projects 2023/24**

Planning Reference	Value	Purpose
21/03711/FUL	£45,000	Funding secured through S106 agreement for biodiversity and landscape enhancements at Tar Farm, Stanton Harcourt
20/02422/FUL	£106,260	Funds collected for BNG relating to Swinbrook Road development at Carterton.
21/00228/FUL	£214,535.93	Funds spent on Biodiversity Net Gain at Radford Farm, Chipping Norton

## Sport and recreation (links to Policy EH5)

4.157 Funding has been secured and spent on a number of improvements and proposed enhancements to sports, recreation and children's play during the monitoring period which should support the integrity and ongoing use of community services and facilities in West Oxfordshire.

4.158 There were few planning applications for sport and recreation developments in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbk0ob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf>

**Table 31 - Planning approvals for sport and recreation developments, 2023 - 2024**

Proposal	Location
Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Unit 13 Eagle Industrial Estate Witney
Reserved matters application for a sports pavilion and associated infrastructure including 65sq.m solar panel array (Amended).	Land West Of Witney North Of A40 And East Of Downs Road

### Renewable Energy Provision (links to Policy EH6)

4.159 There were four applications for larger, utility scale solar scheme in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period. Two of which were refused and two of which were approved.

**Table 32 - Planning approvals for utility scale solar development 2023 - 2024**

Planning Reference	Location	Description	Decision	Reason
23/02917/FUL	Ramsden	Installation of a ground mounted solar PV, energy storage system together with associated infrastructure	Refused	Landscape and heritage impact including setting of National Landscape.
23/01524/FUL	Hailey	Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage	Refused	Landscape, heritage and ecology impacts, including setting of conservation areas and listed buildings.
21/03711/FUL	Stanton Harcourt	Installation of renewable energy scheme comprising ground mounted photovoltaic arrays	Approved	
22/02472/FUL	Burford	Solar park and energy storage facility	Approved	

### Flood Risk (links to Policy EH7)

4.160 There were few approvals for residential development approved in areas at risk of flooding during the monitoring period.

4.161 Where planning application boundaries overlap with flood risk areas, these are often access points or form part of the residential curtilage or garden, rather than buildings being proposed in flood risk areas.

4.162 Two dwellings were approved within Flood Zone 2 during the monitoring period, one at Ascott under Wychwood and one at Bampton.

### Heritage (links to Policy EH9)

4.163 There were approximately 27 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 36 dwellings during the monitoring period.

4.164 There were 214 applications for Listed Building consent during the monitoring period. Of these, 188 were approved.

4.165 Historic England maintain a list of heritage assets<sup>12</sup> that are at risk to help understand the overall state of England's historic sites. The programme identifies those sites that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. There are 5 heritage assets on the heritage risk register in 2024. There is one listed building and 4 scheduled monuments. The number of assets at risk has declined since 2023 when there were 8 assets at risk in West Oxfordshire. The 3 assets were removed from the register, possibly as a result of changing agricultural practices and securing grant aid funding for nature conservation.

**Table 33 - West Oxfordshire Heritage at Risk**

Designated Name	Heritage Category	Condition	Principal Vulnerability	Trend
Church of St Nicholas	Listed Building grade II*	Poor	The floors are in poor condition and there are problems with damp.	
Rectangular enclosures 1100yds (1010m) NW of Mount Owen Farm	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Arable ploughing	Declining
Waterman's Lodge bowl barrow, one of a pair of Bronze Age barrows on the western edge of Wychwood Forest	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Animal burrowing - Badger - extensive	Declining
Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh	Scheduled Monument	Generally unsatisfactory with	Deterioration - in need of management	Declining

<sup>12</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results/?advsearch=1&county=Oxfordshire&searchtype=harsearch>

		major localised problems		
Pair of bowl barrows immediately south of Blindwell Wood	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Animal burrowing - Badger - extensive	Declining