

Annex B – Summary Overview of Draft Development Management Policies

Healthy, Strong Safe and Inclusive Communities		
These policies aim to foster sustainable, healthy, and inclusive communities through careful planning and integration of key principles related to development, green infrastructure, recreation, and food security.		
Policy	Description	To Note:
DMI – Key Principles for new development	<p>This policy outlines principles for new development to enhance the built and natural environment and local communities. It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure developments are proportionate and suitable for their location. • Integrate well with the existing built form and local character. • Protect the identity of settlements and avoid coalescence. • Maintain compatibility with adjoining uses and provide a high standard of amenity. • Safeguard important open spaces and provide safe access for vehicles and pedestrians. <p>The policy also includes provisions for mitigating risks to children and vulnerable people.</p>	A new, standalone policy which updates and streamlines the key principles currently embedded in Policy OS2 of the adopted local plan.
DM2 – Green Infrastructure	<p>This policy focuses on protecting and enhancing green infrastructure in West Oxfordshire, requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major developments to provide a Green Infrastructure Strategy. 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan to include a requirement for GI strategies in major developments and strategic scale developments to allocate 50% of sites to GI in line with

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic developments to allocate about 50% of the site to green infrastructure. • Ensuring long-term management of green spaces and promoting their multifunctionality (e.g., climate resilience, biodiversity, and health benefits). • Encouraging accreditation from schemes like 'Building with Nature' to ensure high-quality green infrastructure. 	the approach being taken at Salt Cross Garden Village.
DM3 – Sport, Recreation and Play	<p>This policy aims to protect and promote sport, recreation, and play facilities to support community health and wellbeing. Key provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding existing sports and recreation facilities. • Ensuring new developments contribute to sport and recreation needs, including on-site provisions or off-site contributions. • Supporting the creation of new facilities where there are identified needs. • Encouraging shared use of school and private sports facilities. • Designing new facilities to enhance biodiversity, inclusivity, and sustainability. 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.
Policy DM4 – A Healthy Food Environment	<p>This policy promotes healthy, sustainable food environments in new developments, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for food growing (e.g., community gardens, allotments). • Ensuring access to healthy food outlets, particularly near residential areas. • Incorporating food-growing spaces into public areas and private gardens. 	<p>New policy – Previous plan included very little reference to healthy food environments.</p> <p>Specific policy for food environments now better aligns with corporate priorities.</p> <p>Includes requirement to restrict hot food takeaways in proximity to</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting sustainable food production through design features like rainwater harvesting and composting. Encouraging community involvement and long-term management to maintain food environments. 	schools and other places where young people might congregate.
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Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency Policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions by minimising energy and resource demand and maximising renewable energy supply as well as contributing to nature recovery.		
Policy	Description	To Note:
DM5 - Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development	<p>This policy aims to proactively address the climate crisis, ensuring that new developments contribute to sustainable growth and energy efficiency while meeting the district's carbon reduction goals.</p> <p>This policy aims to ensure that all new developments in West Oxfordshire meet the UK's climate goals by achieving net-zero operational carbon emissions and minimising embodied carbon.</p> <p>It promotes a sustainable approach to development through energy-efficient building designs and the use of renewable energy.</p>	<p>Newly introduced policy to require sustainable design and construction of development in West Oxfordshire in order to meet net zero carbon emissions targets.</p> <p>The approach being taken is similar to Salt Cross Garden Village but would see the approach rolled out on a district-wide basis.</p>

<p>DM6 – Renewable and low carbon energy developments</p>	<p>Supports West Oxfordshire’s transition to net zero by enabling well-designed, appropriately located renewable and low carbon energy projects — like solar, wind, hydro, biomass, heat pumps, battery storage, and district heating — while protecting valued landscapes, heritage, biodiversity, and communities.</p> <p>Encourages a diverse range of energy technologies, favouring community-led projects with local benefits.</p> <p>Applies stricter scrutiny within sensitive areas (Cotswolds National Landscape and Green Belt).</p> <p>Supports projects in line with local evidence, landscape capacity studies, and clear criteria for environmental and social impact.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Increased emphasis now placed on community-led proposals, identified areas of suitability and the protection of best and most versatile agricultural land.</p>
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<p>DM7 - Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience</p>	<p>Improve the energy performance and climate resilience of West Oxfordshire’s existing building stock through sustainable retrofitting — reducing carbon emissions, lowering energy bills, and improving long-term usability and resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make retrofit a planning priority. • Expect all development involving existing buildings to actively consider energy/carbon/climate improvements. • Support best practices like whole building audits and lifecycle assessments. • Balance improvements with heritage value protection. 	<p>Newly established policy idea to encourage retrofitting of buildings, recognising this as a key factor in achieving net zero carbon development</p>
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DM8 – Biodiversity Net Gain	<p>Ensures all new development in West Oxfordshire delivers measurable, lasting improvements to biodiversity — enhancing habitats and contributing to nature recovery.</p> <p>Mandatory biodiversity net gain targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% BNG for major developments • 10% BNG for minor developments <p>Prioritise on-site habitat creation and enhancement.</p> <p>Follow a Mitigation Hierarchy: avoid > minimise > mitigate > compensate.</p> <p>Use DEFRA’s Biodiversity Metric for measurable outcomes.</p> <p>Encourage biodiversity-friendly design (e.g. wildlife corridors, SuDS, native planting).</p> <p>Require Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) and long-term management (30 years) for major schemes.</p> <p>Allow off-site compensation only where on-site provision isn’t feasible, targeting priority nature recovery areas.</p> <p>Enforce monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure delivery and lasting benefits.</p>	<p>Local Plan 2031 sought to deliver net gains for biodiversity but set no targets. The emerging plan seeks to go beyond the national requirement for 10% BNG by requiring 20% in certain circumstances drawing links with the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire.</p>
DM9 – Waste and the circular economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the environmental impact of waste from new developments by embedding circular economy principles, minimising waste, promoting reuse and recycling, and future-proofing waste infrastructure. • Embed waste minimisation and resource efficiency into all development stages. 	<p>Local Plan 2031 policy included waste considerations in relation to prudent use of natural resources and environmental protection.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require Construction Waste Management Plans (CWMPs) for major schemes to reduce, segregate, and reuse construction waste. • Require Operational Waste Management Plans (OWMPs) to manage waste post-occupation, with clear storage, recycling, and composting provisions. • Apply the Waste Hierarchy: prevent > reuse > recycle > recover > dispose. • Encourage use of sustainable, recycled, and reusable materials. • Strongly support innovative waste infrastructure on strategic sites (300+ homes) like underground refuse systems. • Ongoing monitoring: waste audits during construction, annual operational reporting for major schemes. 	<p>The emerging Local Plan proposes a standalone policy for waste and the circular economy to minimise resource use, particularly in construction of new development.</p> <p>Developers will be required to submit construction and operational waste management plans with new development proposals.</p>
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An Enhanced Natural and Built Environment

Each of these policies is designed to protect and enhance the natural environment, ensuring that new development is sustainable and sensitive to local ecological and landscape features.

Policy	Description	To note:
DM10 – Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character through new development.	<p>To ensure new development preserves and enhances landscape character, especially in valued areas like the Cotswolds National Landscape.</p> <p>Development must be landscape-led, with design starting from an understanding of the landscape. Key elements include using local materials, integrating natural features (e.g., trees and hedgerows), and protecting views. Mitigation is required where harm is unavoidable, and long-term landscape management plans are necessary for major developments.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>
DM11 – Trees and Hedgerows	<p>To protect existing trees and hedgerows and encourage new planting in developments.</p> <p>Developers must retain and protect existing trees and hedgerows, incorporate them into designs, and provide compensation if removal is unavoidable. New trees and hedgerows should be native, integrated into the green infrastructure strategy, and maintained for five years.</p>	<p>Newly introduced, standalone policy on trees and hedgerows to protect existing and encourage new planting in new developments,</p> <p>Local Plan 2031 incorporated requirements for trees and hedgerows into overarching Green Infrastructure and Landscape Policy.</p>

<p>DM12 – Light Pollution and Dark Skies</p>	<p>To protect the night sky and minimise light pollution in West Oxfordshire.</p> <p>New developments must use energy-efficient lighting designed to minimise light spill and avoid skyglow. Special care should be taken in sensitive areas like dark sky sites. Lighting assessments and long-term management plans are required.</p>	<p>Newly introduced standalone policy aiming to reduce light pollution and protect dark skies.</p> <p>Local Plan 2031 incorporated such considerations into overarching Landscape Character policy.</p>
<p>DM13 – Air Quality and Pollution</p>	<p>To ensure that new developments improve air quality and safeguard human health and the environment.</p> <p>Developers must assess air quality impacts for major developments and areas with high pollution. Mitigation measures include sustainable transport, low-emission building designs, and green infrastructure. Construction phase air quality control is also required, particularly near sensitive areas.</p>	<p>Newly introduced standalone policy to minimise air pollution in the district.</p> <p>Previously covered by policies relating to transport infrastructure, resources and specific geographical areas such as air quality management areas.</p>
<p>DM14 – Listed Buildings</p>	<p>To protect the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings and their settings while allowing sensitive, high-quality changes.</p> <p>A heritage-led, design-focused strategy ensuring proposals conserve or enhance listed buildings, respect their setting, use sympathetic design, and manage harm with strong justification and public benefit.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>
<p>DM15 Conservation Areas</p>	<p>To conserve or enhance the distinctive character, appearance, and significance of West Oxfordshire’s Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Promote sensitive, well-informed development that respects the character of these areas while supporting restoration and adaptive reuse.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve/enhance character, appearance, views, and historic patterns • Support reuse/restoration of positive-contribution buildings • Carefully manage harm with clear public benefits • Encourage public realm and design improvements 	
DM16 – Archaeology and Ancient Monuments	<p>To protect and manage West Oxfordshire’s archaeological heritage, both designated and significant undesignated remains.</p> <p>Proactive protection through early assessments, in-situ preservation where possible, and robust mitigation (including recording and publication) if harm is unavoidable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve/enhance significance • Require archaeological assessments and field evaluations • Justify harm with substantial public benefits • Mitigate unavoidable impacts through investigation and dissemination 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.
DM17 – Historic Parks and Gardens	<p>To conserve and enhance the special historic interest, character, and setting of nationally important parks and gardens. Ensure proposals are based on thorough historical understanding, avoid harm to key features, encourage sensitive restoration, and promote public interpretation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve/enhance historic interest, views, features, and layout • Support restoration and better public engagement • Justify harm only in exceptional cases with clear public benefit • Require detailed evidence and heritage assessment for proposals 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.

Attractive, Accessible and Thriving Places

The overarching intention of these development management policies is to promote sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities across West Oxfordshire by shaping development in ways that strengthen local economies, reduce environmental impact, and enhance quality of life. The policies collectively aim to prioritise town centre vitality (DM20), make efficient use of land and existing buildings (DM21 & DM22), safeguard and provide vital community infrastructure (DM23), and integrate active, low-carbon travel into development (DM24 & DM25). Together, they ensure that growth is well-designed, locally responsive, and aligned with broader goals of sustainability, accessibility, and community wellbeing.

Policy	Description	To note:
DM 20 – Town Centres	<p>To promote, protect, and enhance the vitality, viability, and resilience of the five town centres in West Oxfordshire: Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Burford, and Woodstock.</p> <p>A town centre-first strategy, prioritising these locations for retail, leisure, community, and commercial uses, supporting a diverse, resilient economy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mixed uses (housing, culture, workspaces)• Enhanced public spaces and transport links• Protection of outdoor markets• Development tests for proposals outside these centres• Continued partnership with communities and businesses	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Threshold for impact assessments on out of centre developments reduced to 280 sqm.</p> <p>Primary shopping areas to continue to be defined but primary and secondary frontages no longer delineated.</p> <p>Increased support for the provision of outdoor markets and public realm improvements.</p>

DM21 – Previously developed land and development densities	<p>To prioritise the re-use of brownfield (previously developed) land and encourage higher-density development, especially in urban areas and near transport hubs.</p> <p>Encouraging efficient land use with higher-density, well-designed developments that respect local character and include the infrastructure, green space, and amenities needed for sustainable, inclusive neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Newly introduced policy to encourage use of brownfield land and encourage higher development densities in sustainable locations.</p>
DM22 – Reuse of non-residential buildings	<p>To enable the sustainable re-use of traditional and modern non-residential buildings in rural areas, supporting the rural economy, farm diversification, and community needs.</p> <p>Support re-use for employment, tourism, and community purposes, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional buildings retain their character and structural integrity. • Non-traditional buildings are in suitable locations or part of diversification schemes. • Proposals are well-designed, sensitive in scale, sustainable, and respect local character. 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Continued encouragement for re-use of non-residential buildings to meet community needs for employment, services and rural diversification.</p>
DM23 – Protection and provision of community facilities and services	<p>To protect, enhance, and sustainably provide essential community facilities like schools, healthcare, pubs, libraries, and local shops, which support wellbeing, social cohesion, and community resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain facilities wherever possible. • Any proposed loss must be justified with clear evidence of non-viability, a 12-month marketing effort, and community engagement. 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise alternative community or employment uses before considering residential or commercial uses. • Provide new or improved facilities in areas of growth, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, and responsiveness to future needs. • Protect existing facilities from unjustified loss. • Apply a sequential approach to alternative uses. • Give additional weight to Assets of Community Value (ACVs). • Require Community Infrastructure Statements for large developments. 	
DM24 – Active and Healthy Travel	<p>To fully integrate walking, cycling, and active travel into the planning and design of developments in West Oxfordshire, reducing car dependence and supporting healthier, low-carbon lifestyles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect existing walking and cycling routes. • Prioritise creating safe, direct, and high-quality active travel infrastructure in new developments. • Embed active travel in place design and public realm improvements. • Integrate routes with green infrastructure and natural spaces. • Collaborate with communities to extend and enhance networks. • Safeguard existing active travel networks. • Require new, well-connected, and high-standard active travel routes in all developments. 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design developments around active travel principles. • Integrate green infrastructure with travel routes. • Promote community initiatives to support active travel. • Require Active Travel Plans for major developments. 	
Policy DM25 – Parking Standards for New Development (Car and Cycle Parking)	<p>To manage parking provision in new developments, supporting sustainable travel choices, reducing car dependence, and encouraging cycling while responding to local needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage lower car parking levels, especially in well-connected areas. • Prioritise walking, cycling, and public transport infrastructure. • Support electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and inclusive parking design. • Align with Oxfordshire County Council’s parking standards. • Provide appropriate, context-sensitive car and cycle parking for residential and non-residential uses. • Require high-quality, secure cycle parking. • Ensure well-designed, safe parking integrated into site layouts. • Support car-free or low-car developments in suitable locations. • Mandate EV charging infrastructure. • Provide accessible parking for Blue Badge holders. • Include visitor parking and integrated mobility services in large developments. 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Reflects the current position of OCC in relation to parking standards in different locations.</p>

Meeting the Housing Needs of All

These policies align with broader planning goals of enhancing housing diversity, affordability, and sustainability in West Oxfordshire. They also focus on empowering local communities to take control of housing solutions while addressing specific accommodation needs like those of travelling communities.

Policy	Description	To note:
DM26 – Windfall Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides a framework for considering housing proposals on unallocated sites.Prioritises previously developed (brownfield) land and directs growth to higher-tier settlements (Tier 1–3).A restrictive approach applies to Tier 4 areas (small villages, hamlets, countryside) permitting development only in limited, justified circumstances.Aims to support sustainable growth, protect rural landscapes, and contribute to housing supply.	A new standalone policy setting out the circumstances in which speculative windfall development may be permitted. Links to draft Core Policy 2 – Settlement Hierarchy.
Policy DM27 – Creating Mixed and Balanced Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensures new housing developments offer a variety of housing types, sizes, and tenures to meet local needs.Focuses on inclusivity by requiring accessible and adaptable homes, including wheelchair adaptable units in major schemesEncourages mixed-tenure developments to promote social cohesion and reduce segregation.Development proposals must justify how they contribute to a balanced, diverse housing stock.	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.

<p>Policy DM28 – Affordable Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to increase affordable housing to address local needs and affordability challenges. • Requires 40% affordable housing on qualifying market-led schemes (lower threshold within Cotswolds National Landscape). • Prioritises on-site provision, with exceptions subject to viability and local benefit. • Supports Rural and First Home Exception Sites, with strict criteria to meet local needs and preserve community balance. • Focuses on integrating affordable homes within developments and emphasising social rented housing. 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Increased support for social rent and rural and first home exception sites.</p> <p>Applies a flat rate % requirement across the District rather than splitting the District into different zones.</p>
<p>Policy DM29 – Specialist Housing for Older People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports provision of accessible, suitable housing options for older people, including extra-care and sheltered housing. • Encourages developments in sustainable, well-serviced locations. • Responds to the needs of a growing ageing population by promoting inclusive, community-focused living environments 	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Stronger requirement for provision to be made as part of larger strategic developments (300+ units).</p>

Policy DM30 – Custom and Self-Build Housing	<p>This policy supports the development of custom and self-build homes in West Oxfordshire to diversify the housing market and provide more affordable options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger developments (100+ dwellings) must include at least 5% of serviced plots for self-build homes. • If on-site provision is not feasible, off-site provision may be accepted. • Plots must be marketed for 12 months to those on the Council's Self-Build Register. • Affordable custom and self-build plots will be integrated in large developments. • Custom and self-build homes must adhere to design standards. 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.
Policy DM31 – Community-Led Housing	<p>Supports small-scale, sustainable, community-driven housing projects, particularly affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Parish Councils are encouraged to identify sites for community-led housing through Neighbourhood Plans. • Community-led exception sites will be allowed where the majority of housing is affordable, with some market housing allowed to ensure viability. • Development should be led by not-for-profit organizations and be democratically controlled by the community. • Affordable housing, particularly social rented homes, should be prioritised. 	Newly introduced policy to encourage community led housing schemes.
Policy DM32 – Meeting the Needs of	<p>This policy aims to provide suitable accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.</p>	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan to take account of recent

Travelling Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic sites (300+ homes) should include accommodation for travelling communities. • New sites or expansions of existing ones must meet accessibility, environmental, transport, living conditions, and community integration criteria. • Loss of existing sites will only be permitted with clear justification and alternative provisions. • Community-led proposals will be supported. 	evidence of the accommodation needs of travelling communities.
Policy DM33 – Loss, Replacement, and Sub-Division of Existing Dwellings	<p>Protect existing housing stock, encourage efficient use of existing dwellings, and support adaptations or subdivisions for new homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for alterations, extensions, or subdivisions should respect the character of the building and area and provide satisfactory living conditions. • Replacement dwellings must be proportionate and not harm historical or ecological significance. • Loss of dwellings to non-residential uses will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances. • Long-term empty homes should be brought back into active use. 	Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.

Vibrant, Resilient and Diverse Local Economy

These policies reflect a strategic approach to managing growth and supporting economic development while ensuring sustainability, protecting local character, and fostering inclusive opportunities for skills development.

Policy	Description	To note:
Policy DM34 - Provision and Protection of Land for Employment:	<p>Supports the delivery of West Oxfordshire's economic vision by providing high-quality employment spaces for diverse sectors such as green technologies, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and life sciences.</p> <p>Encourages development on allocated sites and previously developed land in sustainable settlements, while protecting existing employment land. Loss of employment land will only be permitted if it's no longer viable for employment use, or if it provides significant public benefits like affordable housing or infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Reflective of new evidence of economic needs through to 2041 including key growth sectors.</p>

Policy DM35 - Supporting the Rural Economy:	<p>Facilitates small-scale employment sites, farm diversification, and rural enterprise, ensuring growth is sensitive to the rural character and landscape.</p> <p>Supports sustainable rural economic development by promoting small-scale, well-designed developments within Tier 1-3 settlements and allowing specific rural businesses in Tier 4 areas, provided they do not harm the countryside or local amenities. Encourages diversification to sustain farm viability and promotes rural workers' dwellings where necessary.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p> <p>Clearer links with Core Policy 2 settlement hierarchy to provide additional clarity.</p>
Policy DM36 - Learning, Skills, and Training Opportunities:	<p>Ensures growth in West Oxfordshire is accompanied by the creation of educational and training opportunities that support social mobility and workforce skills.</p> <p>Encourages major developments to include education facilities and requires larger developments to submit a Community Employment Plan (CEP) to integrate training, apprenticeships, and local employment initiatives.</p>	<p>New policy to reflect the importance of learning and skills both in terms of national policy and locally.</p>
Policy DM37 - Sustainable Tourism	<p>The policy is designed to guide the sustainable growth of tourism in West Oxfordshire, balancing the benefits of tourism with the protection of the district's natural, cultural, and heritage assets. Tourism will be encouraged where it is beneficial to local communities, supports local businesses, and reduces seasonal pressures.</p>	<p>Updates, refines and strengthens the approach of the current local plan.</p>
Policy DM38 - Supporting Digital Infrastructure for Home and Co-Working	<p>This policy promotes the development of digital infrastructure to support remote working, home-based businesses, and co-working spaces in West Oxfordshire. It addresses the growing demand for high-speed connectivity, particularly in rural areas, to ensure equitable access to digital services.</p>	<p>New policy to reflect the increased importance of home and hybrid working.</p>