

West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 – Preferred Policy Options
Schedule of Proposed Changes

10 June 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan covering the period to 2041. The emerging plan is currently at the Regulation 18 plan preparation stage with a consultation on 'Preferred Policy Options' due to take place in June 2025.
- 1.2 The draft Preferred Policy Options consultation paper was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2025, during which a number of comments were made on the text and draft policies of the document and how they might be strengthened and improved.
- 1.3 A number of committee members have also since followed up with further comments in writing.
- 1.4 The purpose of this schedule is to outline a number of proposed changes to the Local Plan preferred policy options paper as currently drafted and published for consideration by the Executive.
- 1.5 Table 1 proposes a number of changes in response to the comments arising from Overview and Scrutiny committee and Table 2 proposes a number of further changes in response to comments from Members and Officers outwith that process.
- 1.6 The proposed changes are of a minor nature and are intended to strengthen and clarify the Council's proposed approach. More substantive issues raised will be addressed as the emerging draft plan moves to the next stage of preparation.
- 1.7 For ease of reference, the proposed changes are set out in tabular form with text additions shown in **bold underline** and deleted text ~~struck through~~.
- 1.8 Subject to the agreement of the Executive, the proposed changes will be incorporated into the Local Plan preferred policy options paper prior to public consultation commencing.

Table 1 – Proposed Changes Arising from Comments made by Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 4 June 2025

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Foreword	<p>Amend fourth paragraph to refer to ‘education’ rather than schools as follows:</p> <p>‘We know this is all happening at a particularly challenging time. National planning policy has changed recently, which means we now need to plan for a much higher number of new homes. At the same time, our local infrastructure - roads, education, schools, healthcare - is already under pressure. The A40 continues to be a real pinch point, and many of our sewage treatment works are either at or near capacity. These are serious issues, and they can’t be ignored’.</p>
District Profile	<p>Amend reference to healthcare to include dentist provision, clarify that the text is referring to Council-owned leisure centres and add reference to the Windrush Valley in relation to the natural environment as follows:</p> <p><u>‘In terms of primary healthcare, the district is served by eight GP practices as well as a number of public and private dental practices. In terms of secondary care, there are</u> and community hospitals in Witney and Chipping Norton. Although deprivation decreased between 2015 and 2019, access to housing and services remains a concern, particularly in parts of Chipping Norton, Witney Central, and Witney East’.</p> <p>‘The district is home to four Council-owned leisure centres, floodlit astroturf pitches, and two outdoor heated swimming pools’.</p> <p>‘The region District includes 29 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, four National Nature Reserves, and the internationally significant Cassington Meadows Special Area of Conservation. The Wychwood Forest, the least developed area in Oxfordshire, is a notable feature of the district's 6,584 hectares of woodland. <u>The Windrush Valley plays a vital role in terms of natural flood management and has significant historical and cultural value as well as providing important recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.</u></p>

Core Objective 2	<p>Amend third bullet point to refer to distribution of healthy food also;</p> <p>‘Establishing a healthier food environment by enabling better food choices and encouraging local growth, <u>distribution</u> and consumption of healthy food’.</p>
Core Objective 3	<p>Amend second bullet point to refer to resilient and connected habitats and ecosystems. Also add reference to preventing habitat loss and fragmentation and working towards targets of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as follows;</p> <p>Promoting biodiversity <u>Nature Recovery</u> by supporting resilient <u>and connected</u> habitats and ecosystems, investing in natural capital, and achieving measurable net gains in biodiversity <u>in accordance with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire.</u></p>
Core Objective 3	<p>Amend bullet point 4 to refer to soil as well as biodiversity;</p> <p>‘Protecting the District’s environmental assets by preventing pollution and minimising its impacts on local amenity, health, landscape character, <u>soil resources</u> and biodiversity’.</p>
Core Objective 6	<p>Insert reference to small businesses as follows:</p> <p>‘Providing a balanced portfolio of high-quality employment land to meet diverse needs, including large and smaller businesses and <u>to</u> ensure flexibility’.</p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Core Policy 1 – Climate Change	<p>Strengthen text in relation to Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) so that developers are required to address the long-term implications of climate change rather than ‘explore’ as follows:</p> <p>‘Explores <u>Assesses</u> the long-term implications of climate change on the development and its surrounding environment, including the potential impacts on infrastructure, natural resources, and local communities’.</p>
Core Policy 5 – Supporting Economic Growth and Job Creation	<p>Amend policy title to refer to Economic Growth and Local Prosperity;</p> <p>Core Policy 5 – Supporting Economic Growth and Job Creation <u>Local Prosperity</u></p>
Core Policy 6 - Delivering Infrastructure In-Step with New Development	<p>Amend policy to strengthen approach in relation to the use of Grampian conditions and also to cross refer to the District-wide IDP as follows:</p> <p>‘All major developments, including those on allocated sites, must be accompanied by a comprehensive, site-specific Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP should <u>complement and draw information from the Council’s District-wide IDP</u>, clearly identify the range of infrastructure necessary to support the development and must:’</p> <p>‘To ensure that development is adequately supported by necessary infrastructure, the Council will, where appropriate, use planning mechanisms such as Grampian conditions or planning obligations. These mechanisms will ensure that’.</p> <p>Additional paragraph to be inserted as follows:</p> <p><u>Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is acceptable wastewater capacity and surface drainage both on and off the site to protect new and existing residents.</u></p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Core Policy 7 – Water Environment	<p>Amend policy to refer to consideration of sustainable drainage both on and off-site, to strengthen the wording around water supply and to include reference to consideration of the height of the water table as follows:</p> <p>‘SuDS must be incorporated into all developments to manage surface water runoff in a sustainable manner. Systems should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mimic natural hydrological processes, providing multiple benefits such as reducing flood risk, improving water quality, and supporting biodiversity. - Be designed to be multifunctional, creating aesthetically pleasing and ecologically rich landscapes while also providing recreational and educational value where appropriate. - Be accompanied by robust long-term maintenance plans to ensure their continued function and effectiveness. <p><u>- Consider any off-site enhancements that may be necessary’.</u></p> <p>‘Development must consider <u>address</u> both water supply and demand, ensuring water efficiency and resilience to future supply challenges’.</p> <p>‘Developments must be designed to mitigate water-related risks <u>including relevant consideration of the height of the water table</u>, enhance water quality, and promote water conservation in line with the environmental objectives of the District.</p> <p>Insert additional paragraph as follows;</p> <p><u>‘Demonstrate compliance through a water efficiency assessment’</u></p> <p>To include general reference to the water table under the ‘Local Water Management Strategy’ section of Policy CP 7:</p> <p>‘Major developments must be accompanied by a site-specific water management strategy that outlines the integrated measures being taken to address water use, flood risk, water efficiency,</p>

	and water quality. This strategy should also detail how long-term maintenance and monitoring of water infrastructure <u>including impacts on the water table</u> will be managed, ensuring its resilience and effectiveness’.
Core Policy 8 - High Quality and Sustainable Design	<p>Add walking alongside reference to cycling as follows:</p> <p>‘Developments should incorporate renewable energy technologies, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), and provisions for sustainable transport, such as <u>walking and</u> cycling and electric vehicle infrastructure’.</p>
Core Policy 9 – Healthy Place Shaping	<p>Amend policy to include reference to the provision of healthcare facilities and also to strengthen the requirement for early engagement in the planning process, as follows:</p> <p>‘Supporting access to healthy food options, <u>the provision of new and enhanced</u> healthcare, and essential services’.</p> <p>Developers are encouraged to <u>must</u> engage early in the planning process with health and well-being stakeholders, including the local public health team, healthcare providers, and community representatives, to ensure that health considerations are fully integrated into the design and delivery of the development.</p>
Core Policy 10 – Sustainable Transport	<p>Amend policy to more fully emphasise the importance of public transport solutions being integrated with other modes as follows:</p> <p>‘Development proposals must demonstrate how they minimise the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes <u>including the integration of multi-modes of travel</u>’.</p> <p>Amend policy to strengthen requirements for accessibility and inclusive transport;</p> <p>All development proposals will be required to address the needs <u>must provide for the needs</u> of people with disabilities and reduced mobility. Designs must adhere to inclusive transport principles, ensuring barrier-free access for all users.</p>

	<p>Amend low carbon transport infrastructure section of policy to refer to green mobility solutions;</p> <p>Developments must provide <u>green mobility solutions, including</u> safe, accessible, and convenient locations for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.</p>
Core Policy 11 – Historic Environment	<p>Amend reference in criterion a) to areas at greatest risk, in criterion b) from ‘seek’ to ‘pursue’ or similar, and in criterion c) from protect and promote to ‘preserve, enhance and promote’ as follows:</p> <p>a) Prepare, update and adopt conservation area appraisals and management plans, prioritising those <u>areas at greatest risk from</u> where development pressure is greatest or where the conservation area is most sensitive to change;</p> <p>b) Seek <u>Pursue</u> opportunities for heritage-led regeneration where appropriate;</p> <p>c) <u>Preserve, enhance</u> Protect and promote appreciation of the District’s archaeological resources; and</p> <p>Also to more strongly emphasise the importance of education in relation to recording and advancing understanding of a heritage asset’s significance, as follows:</p> <p>‘This should be done in a manner suitable to the asset’s importance and the impact of the development. The results of such studies must be published and made publicly accessible <u>in order to enhance awareness and understanding</u>’.</p> <p>Include reference to heritage, education and conservation efforts when referring to minimisation of unavoidable harm;</p> <p>‘Any changes to or loss of physical fabric, features, or remains should be investigated, recorded, and the results made publicly available <u>to support heritage, education and conservation efforts.</u>’</p>

Core Policy 12 – Natural Environment	<p>Amend policy to refer to native wildflower meadows, to refer to development having to ‘prevent’ harm rather than ‘avoid’ harm to important habitats, species and ecological networks, and to refer to the establishment of ecological corridors and their re-connection in instances of fragmentation, as follows:</p> <p>‘Support nature recovery by implementing specific measures to restore biodiversity in areas of ecological decline, including but not limited to planting <u>native</u> wildflower meadows, establishing woodlands and hedgerows and creating wetlands’.</p> <p>All major development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid <u>Prevent</u> harm to important habitats, species, and ecological networks, including those identified as part of the emerging Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. - Provide <u>Establish</u> ecological corridors and/or networks that link <u>re-connect</u> fragmented habitats, allowing wildlife to move freely between important sites and habitats, both within the development and extending beyond to the surrounding landscape. <p>Strengthen policy wording so that development expands and develops ecological networks rather than contributing to their creation;</p> <p>‘-Contribute to the creation of <u>Expand and develop existing and new</u> ecological networks by creating and restoring natural habitats and improving connectivity for species listed in the LNRS.</p> <p>Amend requirements for new development section of policy to read; <u>Ensure Implement</u> sustainable management practices for <u>continuous</u> natural areas, such as ongoing maintenance, monitoring, and adaptive management, to ensure long-term benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem health’.</p>

	<p>Amend Protection of Local Wildlife Sites section to read;</p> <p>- Development will be expected to avoid loss, deterioration or harm to locally important wildlife and geological sites.</p>
Policy PL2 – Oxford Green Belt	<p>Amend policy to strengthen requirement for development proposals to prioritise the re-development of previously developed land, as follows:</p> <p>Development within the Green Belt must follow a sequential approach:</p> <p>Priority 1: Previously Developed (Brownfield) Land – Proposals should <u>must, wherever possible,</u> prioritise the redevelopment of previously developed land.</p>
Policy PL5 - Carterton – Witney – Oxford Rail Corridor (CWORC)	<p>Strengthen policy by removing references to ‘potential’ and ‘long-term’, as follows:</p> <p>‘A corridor of land is identified extending from Carterton to Yarnton to safeguard the potential <u>future</u> delivery of a long-term rail solution for West Oxfordshire. This corridor is intended to support sustainable transport infrastructure and improve connectivity across the region’.</p> <p>‘Within the identified corridor, proposals for new development must demonstrate that they will not hinder or prejudice the delivery of the long-term rail solution, including associated infrastructure’.</p> <p>‘Development within the identified corridor will be required to make proportionate financial and/or in-kind contributions towards the delivery of the long-term rail solution, including but not limited to feasibility studies, infrastructure works, and station facilities’.</p> <p>‘This policy seeks to balance strategic transport aspirations with sustainable development, ensuring that future growth supports and aligns with long-term infrastructure objectives’.</p>
Policy WIT2 – Witney Town Centre	<p>Amend policy in relation to flexible re-use to also include reference to healthcare and youth facilities, and also to refer to public transport, alongside active travel, as follows:</p>

	<p>3. Encourage flexible and adaptive reuse of vacant units to respond to market trends and changing consumer behaviours, including the potential for mixed-use schemes (e.g., co-working, community, <u>healthcare</u>, residential, pop-ups, <u>youth facilities</u> or cultural uses) where consistent with town centre function and amenity.</p> <p>8. Promote active and sustainable travel <u>including public transport</u>, supported by public realm investment and the implementation of the Oxfordshire County Council-funded High Street and Market Square improvement scheme.</p>
Policy CA1 – A Strategy for Carterton	<p>Strengthen reference to allotment garden provision, as follows:</p> <p>‘- Supporting the provision of high-quality public open space, biodiversity enhancements, community growing space and accessible natural green space in conjunction with new development’.</p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Paragraph 7.3.3	<p>Typographical error;</p> <p>Carterton_has</p>
Policy CN1 – A Strategy for Chipping Norton	<p>Amend policy to more fully emphasise the importance of, and extent to which, the design of new properties can influence the ability to work at home and also to include reference the District Council working with the Town Council, as follows:</p> <p>ii. Facilitating the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, creative and cultural industries, green tech businesses, and remote working opportunities through provision of flexible, modern workspace <u>and new residential properties designed with home and hybrid working in mind;</u></p> <p><u>The Council will work proactively with the Town Council, landowners and other partners to deliver coordinated and sustainable growth in Chipping Norton in accordance with this strategy.</u></p>
Policy BAM1 – A Strategy for Bampton	<p>Strengthen the importance of Neighbourhood Planning, as follows:</p> <p>‘The Council will work in partnership with Bampton Parish Council, the local community, infrastructure providers, and stakeholders to guide future change in a way that is balanced, inclusive, and resilient <u>including through the potential preparation of any future Neighbourhood Plan</u>’.</p>

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Policy CHA1 – A Strategy for Charlbury	<p>Amend policy to remove unnecessary repetition of references to transport and to reflect the likelihood of additional car parking capacity being found, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supporting reliable and frequent public transport services and maintaining access to the railway station as a key regional connection; – Supporting increased use of the railway station by supporting integrated public transport services and proposals to increase car parking capacity. <p><u>– Supporting reliable and frequent public transport services, maintaining access to the railway station as a key regional connection, and encouraging increased use through integrated transport services.</u></p>
Policy EYN1 – A Strategy for Eynsham	<p>Amend policy to refer to education alongside skills and also to more fully emphasise the importance of connectivity between the West Eynsham SDA and Eynsham, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘- Maintaining and enhancing community facilities including <u>schools education</u>, healthcare, cultural venues, and open spaces; ‘- Improving access to local services and ensuring that new development is integrated into <u>and well-connected with</u> the wider village structure; ‘- Creating safe, direct routes for walking, cycling, and mobility users across Eynsham <u>including effective integration with the West Eynsham SDA</u> and to Salt Cross and Oxford; ‘- Enabling flexible and accessible employment space suited to local skills, <u>education</u> and enterprise needs.
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Paragraph 7.11.35	<p>Consider rewording to reduce ambiguity;</p> <p>Woodstock boasts high <u>an attractive</u> environmental quality underpinned by its architectural heritage, clean streets, and attractive <u>distinctive</u> shop frontages.</p>
Paragraph 7.12.1	<p>Add a comma after Charlbury in relation to list of Tier 2 settlements, as follows:</p> <p>Tier 2 – Service Centres</p> <p><i>Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Woodstock, Salt Cross Garden Village (new)</i></p>
Policy RA1 – Rural Area Strategy	<p>Proposed re-wording for paragraph 1 of RA1;</p> <p>The rural areas of West Oxfordshire, comprising Tier 3 Villages and Tier 4 Small Villages, Hamlets, and Open Countryside, will be supported to evolve in a way that <u>prioritises local need</u> that is locally responsive, environmentally <u>sustainability</u> responsible, and <u>protects</u> community-<u>integrity</u> focused.</p> <p>Amend policy to refer to ‘prioritising’ young households rather than ‘particularly’ and also refer to scale, as follows:</p> <p>‘Development in the rural areas will be supported where it:</p> <p>a) Meets demonstrable local needs, including:</p> <p>- Affordable and appropriately sized homes for local people, particularly <u>prioritising</u> young households and older residents wishing to downsize’;</p> <p>‘b) Reflects the scale, character, and function of the settlement, by:</p> <p>- Being proportionate in size <u>and scale</u> and sensitively located relative to the existing built form’;</p>

<p>Policy DM1 - Key Principles for New Development</p>	<p>Strengthen wording of first paragraph of DM1 as follows'</p> <p>'All new development proposals will be expected <u>required</u> to adhere to the following key principles to ensure that they contribute positively to the sustainability, character, and quality of the local area'.</p> <p>Amend bullet point 2 to refer to innovative design, as follows:</p> <p>'2. Integration with the Built Form and Local Character Development proposals must relate well to the existing built form, respecting the architectural styles, materials, and layouts that define local character and vernacular. Design should respond <u>innovatively and</u> sensitively to the distinctiveness of the area and maintain its identity; this is especially important in historic places such as Conservation Areas'.</p> <p>Also, to amend bullet point 8 to refer to the importance of local transport, as follows:</p> <p>'8. Safe Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Development must ensure the provision of safe, convenient, and inclusive access for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. Proposals should demonstrate how they integrate with <u>and relate to,</u> the existing <u>local</u> transport network and avoid adverse impacts on road safety or traffic congestion.</p>
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Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Policy DM2 – Green Infrastructure	<p>Amend policy such that it is clear, consideration will be given to the proportion of green infrastructure on a ‘sliding scale’ according to site size, as follows:</p> <p>‘Green Infrastructure in Strategic Sites For strategic development sites of more than 300 homes, around 50% of the site area should contribute to the overall green infrastructure network. This includes communal open spaces, parks, green corridors, water features, and other multi-functional green and blue spaces. <u>For smaller, non-strategic proposals, an appropriate proportion of green infrastructure will be required having regard to the overall site size and the extent of the developable area’.</u></p>
Policy DM3 – Sport, Recreation and Play	<p>Consider revising policy section to encourage standalone provision of facilities in first instance before considering shared use</p> <p>5. Maximising Shared and Community Use The Council will support and encourage shared use of school and private sport/recreation facilities, including through secured community access agreements, to increase public access and value <u>where the delivery of standalone facilities is unviable or would not represent the optimum use of existing assets.</u></p>
Policy DM4 – A Healthy Food Environment	<p>Amend policy to refer to the issue of soil and soil pollution, as follows:</p> <p>‘Allotments and Community Gardens: All new residential developments of 50 or more units must include dedicated spaces for community gardens or allotments. The design of these spaces should be integrated into the development’s layout, ensuring easy access for all residents, including those with mobility issues. These spaces should support sustainable food production, <u>use healthy, uncontaminated soil,</u> promote biodiversity, and be adaptable to different types of growing (e.g., vegetable patches, fruit trees, communal gardening spaces).</p> <p>And:</p>

	<p>‘Edible Planting in Public Spaces: Public realm areas, such as parks, streets, and squares, should incorporate edible planting, such as fruit trees, herb gardens, or edible shrubs, where appropriate. These areas should be designed with public access and food-growing opportunities in mind, providing a sustainable source of fresh produce and creating opportunities for community engagement and food education. <u>Soil quality, water availability and potential contamination should be considered when selecting sites for edible planting and they</u> They should also be designed with biodiversity in mind, incorporating habitats and/or features for wildlife such as orchards, hedgerows wildflowers, companion planting and shelter for pollinators.</p>
Policy DM6 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development	<p>Add reference to dual land strategies (e.g. use of pollinator friendly plants and solar panels, and to community benefits, as follows:</p> <p>‘Development proposals will be supported where they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Maximise the potential for the deployment, re-powering and life extension of renewable and low carbon energy technologies in appropriate locations; b) Avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the intrinsic character and beauty of the District, its biodiversity, the significance of its heritage assets and the special qualities of its towns, villages and countryside; c) Contribute positively to the decentralisation and diversification of energy supply; and d) Facilitate co-location of energy generation with potential heat customers and suppliers where viable; <u>and</u> <u>e) Explore opportunities for dual land use strategies, such as combining renewable energy with food production, biodiversity enhancement, or community access where feasible’.</u> <p>‘The following principles apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Solar Energy: Commercial-scale solar developments will be supported in ‘more suitable’ areas, subject to the protection of high-grade agricultural land and biodiversity. In relation to Grade 3 agricultural land, applicants will be expected to confirm whether the land is Grade 3a or 3b. <u>Proposals that</u>

	<p><u>incorporate dual land use - such as agrovoltatics or pollinator-friendly planting - will be particularly encouraged.</u></p> <p>Proposals in areas identified as ‘less suitable’ will need to be robustly justified, including with reference to the criteria used to identify the ‘more suitable’ areas’.</p> <p>‘5. Community-Led and Local Benefit Schemes</p> <p>West Oxfordshire District Council places particular value on community-led renewable energy developments. Proposals that are initiated by, or demonstrably benefit, local communities (including through an agreed financial payment or equivalent) will be strongly supported, including those which contribute to local energy resilience, affordability, <u>dual land use</u> and democratic ownership’.</p> <p>‘6. Development Management Criteria</p> <p>All proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development must:</p> <p>a) Give significant weight to the environmental, social, and economic <u>and community</u> benefits of renewable and low carbon energy generation’;</p>
<p>Policy DM7 - Policy DM7 - Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience</p>	<p>Amend policy to address non-heritage buildings in Conservation Areas, as follows:</p> <p><u>‘Heritage and Traditional Buildings</u></p> <p>a) For traditional or heritage buildings, a sensitive and informed retrofit approach is required. Proposals must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A whole building assessment that considers heritage significance, current energy performance, climate risks, and long-term use ii. Measures to minimise harm to heritage value through careful material selection, design, and sequencing of works iii. Input from appropriate professionals, including heritage, conservation, and energy experts where needed iv. Compliance with necessary consents (e.g. Listed Building Consent, works affecting TPOs) <p><u>v. For non-designated buildings within Conservation Areas, proposals must demonstrate an approach that respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole, while still maximising energy performance improvements where possible.</u></p>

<p>Policy DM8 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Nature Recovery</p>	<p>Add reference to swift and bee bricks, and strengthen requirement for major development to join the Great Crested Newt District Licencing scheme, as follows:</p> <p><u>'Biodiversity Enhancement</u> The design of new developments must be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment to ensure that adequate impact assessment and mitigation, compensation and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement are incorporated. Development proposals should avoid fragmentation of habitats and, where possible, integrate enhancements for species into the built environment (e.g., bird and bat boxes, hedgehog highways, <u>swift and</u> bee bricks, pollinator-planting and green walls)'. 'All major developments will be required to consider joining <u>join</u> the District Licensing Scheme for great crested news via NatureSpace where ponds within 500 metres of the site will be affected either directly or indirectly as a result of the proposal in any of the impact risk zones'.</p>
<p>Policy DM9 - Waste and the Circular Economy</p>	<p>Delete reference to landfill, as follows:</p> <p>'3) Measures to reduce the use of single-use materials and <u>minimise</u> construction waste <u>requiring</u> disposal, to landfill.</p> <p>5) Disposal: Waste sent to landfill <u>requiring final disposal</u> should be minimised to the greatest extent possible, <u>with preference given to energy recovery where appropriate</u>.</p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Policy DM10 - Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character through New Development	<p>Amend policy to refer to 'will' and not 'may', as follows:</p> <p>'Landscaping and Planting': High-quality landscaping should be integrated into the design of new developments to enhance the local character, mitigate the impact of built structures, and create a harmonious transition between the built and natural environment. This may will include planting native species, retaining existing trees and hedgerows <u>where relevant</u>, and providing green infrastructure to enhance biodiversity.</p>
Policy DM11	<p>Consider additional wording for policy to ensure that new planting does not undermine other aims of green infrastructure delivery;</p> <p>Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity: The provision of new trees and hedgerows must be considered as part of the broader green infrastructure strategy for the development. This includes ensuring that planting schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase connectivity between habitats, creating wildlife corridors and linking with existing natural features and - Enhance biodiversity by planting a variety of native species that support local wildlife. <p><u>-Do not inhibit pedestrian and cycle connectivity in development</u></p>
Policy DM12 – Light Pollution and Dark Skies	<p>Add reference to colour temperature limits in relation to dark skies, as follows:</p> <p>'1.2 Lighting Design and Specification</p> <p>Use of Appropriate Lighting: External lighting should be appropriate to the nature and use of the development and should minimise light levels in areas that do not require illumination. All lighting should be designed to prevent skyglow (the brightening of the night sky over urban areas) and to limit spill into adjacent areas.</p> <p>Energy-Efficient and Low-Impact Lighting: Developers should use energy-efficient lighting solutions and consideration should be given to the use of automatic controls to enable lighting to be switched off or dimmed when it is not needed, particularly in <u>sensitive</u> areas with low human activity at night (e.g., in rural or residential areas).</p>

	<p><u>Colour Temperature: All external lighting should use lamps with a correlated colour temperature (CCT) of 3000 Kelvin or lower, particularly in or near designated dark sky areas, wildlife-sensitive zones, and rural locations. Warmer light sources reduce skyglow and are less disruptive to wildlife and human circadian rhythms.</u></p>
Paragraph 8.4.49	<p>Add reference to the potential use of other technologies such as hydrogen, as follows:</p> <p>‘At the same time, West Oxfordshire includes a wide range of towns, villages and more rural areas and it is important that parking requirements reflect this diversity. The policy supports more sustainable travel in locations where it’s realistic, while ensuring safe and appropriate levels of parking are still provided where needed. It also responds to emerging needs around EV infrastructure and inclusive design, helping to future-proof new developments and support the delivery of healthy, accessible and well-connected places. <u>This includes consideration of other low-emission technologies, ensuring flexibility as transport systems evolve</u>’.</p>
Policy DM26 – Windfall housing development on unallocated sites	<p>Suggest adding reference to Neighbourhood Plans as follows;</p> <p><u>Policy DM26 - Windfall Housing Development on Unallocated Sites</u></p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>Windfall housing developments on unallocated sites will be positively supported, provided they are consistent with the overall spatial strategy of the Local Plan and other relevant policies, including the general development principles outlined in Policy DM1 <u>and made Neighbourhood Development Plans</u>.</p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Policy DM30 – Custom and Self-Build Housing	<p>Add reference to agricultural land quality, as follows:</p> <p>‘Overview This policy supports the delivery of custom and self-build housing in West Oxfordshire to diversify the housing market, increase housing choice, and meet identified needs. Proposals will be approved in suitable, sustainable locations subject to compliance with other relevant policies of this Plan. <u>Where development is proposed on greenfield land, particular regard should be given to the quality of agricultural land, with avoidance of the best and most versatile land (Grades 1–3a) wherever possible’.</u></p>
Paragraphs 8.5.59 – 8.5.68	<p>Insert new paragraph to reflect the overall findings of the latest Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), as follows:</p> <p><u>The most recent gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment for West Oxfordshire (2024) identifies a residual need for 28 pitches for gypsies and travellers in the period 2023/24 – 2041/42, including 2 pitches in the short-term to 2027/28 and 26 pitches in the longer-term. For travelling showpeople, the evidence suggests a total need for 8 plots, including 4 in the short term to 2027/28 and 4 in the longer term to 2041/42.</u></p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Policy DM32 – Travelling Communities	<p>Amend policy to refer to the possibility of strategic sites making provision ‘off-site’, as follows:</p> <p>‘Strategic sites that do not include such provision will only be permitted if clear evidence shows that there is no identified need, or if a well-reasoned rationale demonstrates that the site is unsuitable for this purpose. <u>In such cases, consideration may be given to meeting the need through an off-site proposal, provided it delivers equivalent benefit, meets the identified need in full, and is secured through appropriate mechanisms such as planning obligations.</u> Proposals that actively incorporate accommodation for travelling communities will be viewed favourably in the overall planning balance’.</p>
General	Add a ‘glossary of terms’ including in relation to green infrastructure.

Table 2 – Further Proposed Changes arising from other comments made by Officers and Members

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Foreword	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>It's not a final <u>set of policies</u> plan just yet, but it's an important milestone, and your feedback will help us shape the full draft we plan to publish for consultation later this year.</p> <p>We're also looking to protect the long-term potential for a rail link <u>to provide a service</u> between Carterton, Witney, Eynsham and Oxford - something that could make a huge difference to how people travel across the district.</p> <p>But ambition only works if it's grounded in reality. The <u>Our</u> plan's policies need to be achievable - capable of being delivered without making development unviable or putting too much strain on what we already have.</p>
Paragraph 1.8	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>1.8 This document is not a full draft of the Local Plan. Instead, it outlines the Council's current thinking on the plan's overall structure and direction. <u>It will be followed by a focused consultation on potential development sites building on the overall spatial strategy outlined in this document.</u></p>
Objective 5	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximising the efficient use of the District's existing housing stock including empty homes and leveraging the opportunities presented by the re-use of previously developed land and buildings. Enabling the delivery of a continual <u>continuous</u> supply of high quality and sustainable new homes to meet identified housing needs over the period 2025 – 2041.
Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change

Paragraph 5.149	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>5.149 Proposals that cause harm to designated heritage assets will only be permitted if there is clear and convincing justification with significant public benefits. Where <u>harm or</u> loss occurs, appropriate recording and dissemination of findings are required. This approach balances conservation with responsible development, ensuring West Oxfordshire's historic environment remains a valued and protected part of the District's future growth.</p>
Core Policy 7 – Water Environment	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Development must consider both water supply and demand, ensuring water efficiency and resilience to future supply challenges. <u>All new developments must incorporate suitable measures that address both water supply and demand to increase efficiency and build resilience for future demand.</u> Proposals for new dwellings must meet a target of no more than 90 litres per person per day of water use. This can be achieved through:</p>
Core Policy 12 – Natural Environment	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Integration with the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</p> <p>In order to align with the emerging Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Support</u> Consult the LNRS to ensure that projects are aligned with the District's priority areas for nature recovery. - Where appropriate, collaborate <u>reflect the results of collaboration</u> with local conservation groups, landowners, and stakeholders to support nature-based solutions.
Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Paragraph 6.43	<p>Amend as follows:</p>

	<p>6.43 The policy seeks to safeguard a broad corridor of land from Carterton to Yarnton for the potential delivery of a long-term rail solution service <u>to Oxford</u> in West Oxfordshire.</p>
Paragraph 6.48	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>6.48 The A40 is a vital transport corridor but suffers from chronic congestion due to high levels of car dependency and volumes of traffic. Without significant improvements to alternative transport options, planned housing and employment growth will exacerbate this issue, leading to further delays, economic inefficiencies, and reduced quality of life for residents. Developing a long-term rail solution provides a viable alternative to car travel, helping to ease the burden on the A40 and improve overall traffic flow.</p>
Paragraph 6.50	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>6.50 The policy is also needed to ensure that land critical for delivering a rail solution is safeguarded, preventing short-term development decisions from obstructing <u>longer</u>-term transport goals. This forward-thinking approach is essential to creating a resilient and sustainable transport system capable of accommodating future growth while reducing environmental impacts.</p>
Paragraph 6.52	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>6.52 Our preferred approach is to proactively safeguard a strategic land corridor from Carterton to Yarnton for a potential long-term rail solution, ensuring that future development within this corridor does not obstruct its delivery.</p>

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Witney in 2041 – A Draft Vision	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Low-Carbon Transport and Infrastructure Investment</p> <p>With investment in low-carbon transport, modern infrastructure <u>including a restored rail link to Oxford</u>, and accessible services, Witney will reduce its dependency on car travel, easing congestion and improving air quality. Growth will be shaped sensitively around the town’s landscape and heritage, ensuring the character of both Witney and surrounding villages is respected.</p>
Strategic Objectives for Witney	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>3. Addressing Congestion and Improving Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce traffic congestion through strategic infrastructure investments including the West End Link and <u>rail and road</u> improvements to the A40 corridor.
Policy WIT1 – A Strategy for Witney	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>d) Enhancing sustainable transport connectivity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Aligning with the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and Witney’s Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP); ii. Facilitating the delivery of strategic walking and cycling routes, mobility hubs, and secure cycle parking; iii. Supporting enhancements to public transport, including the provision of zero-emission buses and improved links to Oxford and key destinations, <u>and re-building the railway line to Oxford</u>; iv. Enabling the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and support for shared mobility solutions.

Document Section/Paragraph/Policy	Proposed Change
Paragraph 7.2.20	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Promoting a 24-Hour Economy <u>Promoting a Vibrant Night-Time Economy</u></p>
Paragraph 7.2.29	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.2.29 Progress with the North Witney SDA has been slower, largely a result of previous land assembly difficulties. However, <u>however</u> a comprehensive outline planning has now been submitted (24/00482/OUT) which covers the majority of the site and includes an illustrative masterplan for the whole site.</p>
Paragraph 7.2.30	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.2.30 The application is for a residential-led, mixed-use development including a new primary school, community space/retail, open space and a new northern distributor road. The information submitted with the application indicates that the site is capable of accommodating up to 1,250 new homes.</p>
Paragraph 7.2.31	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.2.31 Without prejudice to the current outline application which is pending determination, for the purposes of this preferred options paper it has been assumed <u>for now</u> that 1,250 new homes will be provided at North Witney in the period up to 2041. This is in order to help identify the assumed 'residual' number of new homes that will need to be met through new site allocations (c. 6,500).</p>

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Paragraph 7.5.4	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.5.4 Levels of deprivation are low and employment levels are high, with over a third of the working-age population working from or mainly from home. Car usage for commuting is high, and public transport usage is comparatively low, <u>reflecting the poor services available</u>.</p>
Paragraph 7.5.5	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.5.5 Bampton is served by the Pulhams No. 19 bus route, providing hourly services to Carterton and Witney six days a week. There are no Sunday services, and train access is limited, with the nearest station with an hourly service being Hanborough <u>14 miles</u> some distance away.</p>
Bampton – Key Issues for the Local Plan to address	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Infrastructure and Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although Bampton has a good range of community facilities, these are likely to need enhancement to support a growing and changing population. • <u>Bampton's sewage treatment works are under capacity and lead to frequent spills</u> • The plan should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The capacity of the primary school and GP services. o Support for youth facilities, public spaces, and recreational provision. o Long-term sustainability of key assets such as the library and arts/cultural facilities.
Paragraph 7.6.8	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>7.6.8 The town centre encompasses just under 10,000 square metres of retail floorspace, largely composed of independent, boutique retailers specialising in <u>art</u>, antiques, homewares, crafts, and fashion. A low retail vacancy rate and rising footfall illustrate its commercial vitality.</p>
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Eynsham in 2041 – A Draft Vision	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>A Sustainable, Green and Low-Carbon Place to Live</p> <p>Eynsham’s future will be shaped by sustainability and climate resilience. Development will respond positively to the challenges of climate change by promoting high energy standards, biodiversity enhancement, and excellent public and active transport links, <u>with access to a railway station in the Salt Cross Garden Village</u>. A balanced mix of homes, services, and green infrastructure will ensure the village remains inclusive and adaptable to future needs.</p>
Policy DM26 – Windfall Housing Development on Unallocated Sites	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Windfall housing developments on unallocated sites will be positively supported, provided they are consistent with the overall spatial strategy of the Local Plan and other relevant policies, including the general development principles outlined in Policy DM1.</p> <p>Windfall Development at Tier 1 Principal Towns, Tier 2 Service Centres, and Tier 3 Villages</p> <p>Within the Cotswolds National Landscape <u>and Tier 3 Villages</u>, evidence of specific local housing need will be required, such as needs identified through a neighbourhood plan or affordable housing needs specific to a settlement.</p> <p>Windfall Development in Tier 4 Small Villages, Hamlets, and Open Countryside</p> <p>A more restrictive approach will apply to windfall developments in Tier 4 areas, in line with the overall spatial strategy (Policy CP3). In these areas, new dwellings will only be permitted in the following circumstances:</p> <p>– The proposal complies with the general development principles set out in Policy DM1 and does not conflict with other relevant development plan policies.</p>

Policy DM28 – Affordable Housing	<p>Amend as follows:</p> <p>Developments that involve the re-use or redevelopment of vacant <u>domestic</u> buildings will benefit from a reduced affordable housing contribution, equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the buildings.</p>
Appendices	Insert appendix summarising alternative policy options that have been considered (where applicable).