

Proposed Local Green Spaces, Special Landscape Area and Local Gaps Review

MID-CHERWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW



BRIARWOOD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | MCNP FORUM

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NOTE: this amended version of the Report includes the following changes:

- Deletion of 7 Local Green Spaces in the parish of Heyford Park
- Removal of Local Gap LG4, and re-numbering of LG6 as the new LG4
- Amendment of the area of Local Green Space KT5, together with additions to the description of the area in the Appendix.

1. Overall context and scope

Background and Purpose

- 1.1** As part of the review and revision of the existing made Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, Briarwood Landscape Architecture has been asked to provide a review assessment of:
- the new proposed candidate sites for Local Green Spaces;
 - a possible extension of a Special Landscape Area for the part of the Cherwell Valley within the Neighbourhood Plan 2 (NP2) area;
 - a series of potential and proposed Local Gaps associated with three settlements within the NP2 area;
 - suggested Important views and vistas around the village of Duns Tew.
- 1.2** The four elements of the commission are distinct pieces of work. This report outlines the methodology used in the review process for each element in section 3.
- 1.3** The review and evidence gathering process for each of the above elements has been considered within the context of the current national and local plan policies. Consideration has also been given to the emerging local plan policies too.
- 1.4** This report is intended to provide part of the evidence base for the updated neighbourhood plan.

2. Policy Context

Local Green Space

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.1** The current NPPF (July 2021) makes specific provision for the designation of Local Green Spaces. Paragraph 101 of the NPPF outlines that:

"The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space

should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period."

2.2 Paragraph 102 outlines the criteria by which a Local Green Space should be designated stating that the designation should only be used where:

"a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."

2.3 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF explains that:

"Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts."

2.4 Further guidance on Local Green Space designation is provided within the Government's online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) ref: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilitiespublic-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation>

The date of the guidance is 6th March 2014.

2.5 The stated purpose of a Local Green Space Designation is

"...a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities."

2.6 The one notable exception to an area being suitable for designation as a Local Green Space is where the land has planning permission for development.

2.7 Other criteria for Local Green Space designation given in the PPG include:

Provided land can meet the criteria at paragraph 100 of the National

Planning Policy Framework there is no lower size limit for a Local Green Space;

There are no hard and fast rules about how big a Local Green Space can be because places are different and a degree of judgment will inevitably be needed. However, paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land...;

Some areas that may be considered for designation as Local Green Space may already have largely unrestricted public access...other land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access (e.g. green areas which are valued because of their wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty);

A Local Green Space does not need to be in public ownership...;

Whether to designate land is a matter for local discretion. For example, green areas could include land where sports pavilions, boating lakes or structures such as war memorials are located, allotments, or urban spaces that provide a tranquil oasis;

New residential areas may include green areas that were planned as part of the development. Such green areas could be designated as Local Green Space if they are demonstrably special and hold particular local significance;

...If land is already protected by designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space;

The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, including why the green area is seen as special, but it must be reasonably close. For example, if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan

2.8

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part (adopted July 2015) does not have a specific policy relating to the designation of Local Green Space but mentions such a designation in the context of the text associated with Policy BSC 10: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Provision. The text states:

Consideration will be given to the need to designate Local Green Spaces (green areas of particular importance to the local community) in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG, through the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2.

2.9 The original Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' in March 2019. Since that time those Local Green Spaces designated in the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan have formed part of the Development Plan for Cherwell District. The existing Local Green Spaces are shown in Cherwell Local Plan on line interactive Adopted Policies Map (ref: <https://cherwell.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c4ffa2d7d99949b185c6d622a0f9d8ab>).

2.10 The current Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Policy PD7: Designation of Local Green Spaces states:

"The Local Green Spaces listed below are designated in accordance with NPPF requirements, as shown in Policy Map Figs. 9 to 18 and as further detailed in Appendix D. Development on the designated Local Green Spaces which does not relate to or complement their importance to the community will only be considered acceptable in exceptional circumstances."

2.11 Within the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan area, there are presently 24 designated Local Green Spaces.

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan

2.12 Within the emerging draft Cherwell Local Plan the following draft policy is considered relevant to the potential for a Local Green Space designation.

2.13 Draft Core Policy 54: Local Green Space states:

"Development will not be permitted within a designated Local Green Space unless consistent with the national policy approach to development within the Green Belt.

Inappropriate development within a designated Local Green Space will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.

The following sites are identified as Local Green Space as shown on the Policies Map and Appendix 7:

- *Derwent Green - Bicester*
- *Gavray Drive - Bicester*

- *Langford – Bicester*

The community value of a designated Local Green Space should be maintained and where appropriate, enhanced through improvements in access and community use, whilst also protecting the character of the space.

Any new development adjacent to a designated publicly accessible Local Green Space should provide active frontages to facilitate natural

surveillance, as well as maintaining access points and the use of sensitive boundary treatments.”

Special Landscape Area

European Landscape Convention (ELC)

"The ELC is the first international treaty dedicated to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe.

Signed by the UK government in 2006 and introduced in March 2007, the ELC provides a people-centred and forward-looking way to reconcile management of the environment with the social and economic challenges of the future, and aims to help people reconnect with place.”

2.14 Quote from The Landscape Institute
<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/13732-2/>

2.15 It is important to note that 'Brexit' refers to the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union (EU). The ELC is a convention of the Council of Europe, not the EU. Consequently, Brexit does not affect the status of this convention, and as of 31 January 2020, the UK remains a signatory.

2.16 Article 1 of the ELC states:

For the purposes of the Convention:

a "Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;

b "Landscape policy" means an expression by the competent public authorities of general principles, strategies and guidelines that permit the

taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes;

c *"Landscape quality objective" means, for a specific landscape, the formulation by the competent public authorities of the aspirations of the public with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings;*

d *"Landscape protection" means actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity;*

e *"Landscape management" means action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes;*

f *"Landscape planning" means strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.*

2.17 NB Underlining author's emphasis.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance

2.18 The NPPF states in paragraph 7 that:

"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development."

2.19 To achieve such sustainable development the NPPF outlines three overarching objectives in paragraph 8. One of which is environmental and states:

"– to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

2.20 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF says that strategic policies of the local planning authority should make sufficient provision for the:

"...conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation."

2.21 NB Underlining author's emphasis.

2.22 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF explains that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. In section (b) of paragraph 174 this enhancement of the natural and local environment should be achieved by:

"...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland..."

2.23 NB Underlining author's emphasis.

2.24 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states under the title Landscape that:

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1

2.25 Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement states that,

"Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows

Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 111 Section B - Policies for Development in Cherwell Harm the setting of settlements,*

buildings, structures or other landmark

features, or - Harm the historic value of the landscape.

Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate."

2.26 Within the supporting text for Policy ESD13 paragraph B.252 states:

"...One of the most important elements of the landscape which can add to the character and identity of an area are natural landscape features. Such features include Muswell Hill, Crouch Hill, Madmarston Hill, the River Cherwell and Otmoor, which all make those areas distinct and create a sense of place..."

2.27 NB underlining above author's emphasis.

2.28 In the context of the Cherwell Valley the following policy is relevant. Policy ESD 16: The Oxford Canal states:

"We will protect and enhance the Oxford Canal corridor which passes south to north through the District as a green transport route, significant industrial heritage, tourism attraction and major leisure facility through the control of development. The length of the Oxford Canal through Cherwell District is a designated Conservation Area and proposals which would be detrimental to its character or appearance will not be permitted. The biodiversity value of the canal corridor will be protected.

We will support proposals to promote transport, recreation, leisure and tourism related uses of the Canal where appropriate, as well as supporting enhancement of the canal's active role in mixed used development in urban settings. We will ensure that the towpath alongside the canal becomes an accessible long-distance trail for all users, particularly for walkers, cyclists and horse riders where appropriate.

Other than appropriately located small scale car parks and picnic facilities, new facilities for canal users should be located within or immediately adjacent to settlements. The Council encourages pre-application discussions to help identify significant issues associated with a site and to consider appropriate design solutions to these and we will seek to ensure that all new development meets the highest design standards."

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan

2.29 Within the emerging draft Cherwell Local Plan the following draft policies are considered relevant to the potential for a Special Landscape Area designation.

2.30 Draft Policy 53 relates to Green and Blue Infrastructure and states within the first paragraph that,

"The Council will promote the protection and enhancement of sites that form part of the existing green and blue infrastructure (GBI) network and will support improving sustainable connections between sites in accordance with relevant policies within this Plan..."

2.31 Draft Policy 50 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape (as outlined a paragraph 2.35 is also considered consistent to the designation of a Special Landscape Area within the NP2 area.

Local Gaps

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance

2.32 As outlined above Paragraphs 7, 20 and 174b of the NPPF are relevant to the designation of Local Gaps.

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1

2.33 Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement as outlined above is relevant.

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan

2.34 As currently worded, draft Core Policy 51 Settlement Gaps is consistent with the designations of Local Gaps. Draft Core Policy 51 states:

"Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlements character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements.

Development proposals will be considered in the context of Core Policy 50: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape in this Local Plan and in addition, will only be permitted provided that:

i. the physical and visual separation between the two separate settlements is not diminished

ii. cumulatively, with other existing or proposed development, it does not compromise the physical and visual separation between settlements, and

iii. it does not lead to a loss of environmental or historical assets that individually or collectively contribute towards their local identity.”

2.35 Draft Core Policy 50 also states:

"Core Policy 50: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

Development proposals will be expected to preserve the character and appearance of the landscape through the restoration, management and enhancement of existing areas, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

i. cause an unacceptable visual intrusion into the open countryside

ii. be inconsistent with local character

iii. introduce disturbances to areas with a high level of tranquillity

iv. cause coalescence between settlements

v. harm the setting of natural and built landmark features, or

vi. reduce the historic significance of the landscapes.

All major developments proposals must be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Smaller development proposals may also require an assessment to be submitted if deemed appropriate, having regard to the type, scale, location and design of the proposed development.

In determining development proposals within or adjacent to the Cotswolds National Landscape, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the area's scenic beauty and landscape qualities, including its wildlife and heritage.

The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan will be used as supplementary guidance in decision making relevant to the National Landscape.

Development proposals within the National Landscape will only be permitted if they are small scale, sustainably located and designed, and would not conflict with the aim of conserving and enhancing the scenic beauty of the area.

All development must comply with other appropriate Development Plan policies including Core Policy 83: Historic Environment and Archaeology"

2.36 NB Underlining is author's emphasis

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031 (made 2019)

2.37 Within the current Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, Policy PD3 states:

POLICY PD3: DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO HEYFORD PARK

"A zone of non-coalescence, defined on Policy Map Fig. 18, on the western boundary of Heyford Park shall prevent coalescence of any development proposals at Heyford Park with the village of Upper Heyford.

Within the zone of non-coalescence, the land should remain predominantly in agricultural use, but it may also accommodate:

Ecological mitigation and appropriate visual screening arising from development at Heyford Park

Footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways

Any development which is proposed adjacent to the designated strategic area of Heyford Park (as defined by Local Plan policy Villages 5) should not give rise to coalescence with surrounding settlements, to ensure that their separate identity and character are maintained."

2.38 As an accepted policy, PD3 is relevant by already acting to create a similar designation, and function, to a Local Gap.

Important Views

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.39** The NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance do not specifically mention important views or visual aspects of the landscape.

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1

- 2.40** Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement (as outlined in full above) expressly mentions visual matters and states,

"Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape... Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside..."

- 2.41** Underlining is author's emphasis.

Emerging Cherwell Local Plan

- 2.42** Draft Core Policy 50, 'Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape' as currently worded maintains the requirement to avoid visual intrusion into the open countryside.

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031 (made 2019)

- 2.43** Within the current Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, Policy PD4 states:

"POLICY PD4: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

Development proposals within the plan area must demonstrate sensitivity to the important views and vistas described in Table 4 and illustrated by photographs in the documents referred to in that Table, by including an assessment of the significance of the views and the effect of the proposed development on them. Proposals which cause significant harm to any of these views will only be acceptable where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh any harm.

Development proposals must also be designed such that there is no adverse impact on the sensitive skylines identified in Fig. 8 and referenced in Table 4.

Applicants for development in or adjacent to a Conservation Area must demonstrate in a Heritage Impact Assessment that they have taken account of the appropriate Conservation Area Appraisal, and of the Heritage and

Character Assessment at Appendix K, and demonstrated that the proposal causes as little harm to an identified view as possible and that any harm is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal. The development should not harm the Conservation Area and its setting, other heritage assets, or historic street and village views and longer distance vistas."

3. Methodology

Local Green Spaces

- 3.1** A series of 14 areas of land have been nominated as possible Local Green Spaces. Each piece of land has already been assessed by volunteers working on the update to Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.2** The prospective areas of land have been assessed by the volunteers on the basis of a minimum of 3 criteria. These criteria were:
- Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
 - How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its:
 - Beauty
 - Historic significance
 - Recreational value (including as a playing field)
 - Tranquillity or
 - Richness of its wildlife
 - Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its size if known.
- 3.3** As part of this review, each of the contender sites was visited during April and May 2023 and a photographic record made to help confirm or otherwise the findings of the volunteer assessment. Also to confirm the existing use of the particular piece of land.
- 3.4** Following the field survey, the findings of the site visit were compared with the volunteer assessments. This comparison established if the evidence from the volunteer assessment was robust and whether there were any shortcomings or contradictions/omissions with the requirements of the NPPF and guidance from the PPG. A conclusion has been made as to whether or not the particular area is considered

to fulfil the criteria for the area to be taken forward as a nomination for a Local Green Space.

Special Landscape Area

- 3.5** The process of assessing the potential for designating that part of the Cherwell Valley within the NP2 area as a Special Landscape Area (SLA) has followed other precedent studies. In particular, reference has been made to the methodology used in the review of the existing SLA within the former respective districts of South Northamptonshire ¹and Daventry².
- 3.6** A desk top study and field work have been undertaken. The assessment of the suitability or otherwise of the area has referenced to Box 5.1 of the Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment². Box 5.1 sets out a series of factors that can help identify a valued landscape. Value in this context means of value to the local community.
- 3.7** These factors include:

Landscape quality (condition): A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.

Scenic quality: The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).

Rarity: The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.

Representativeness: Whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.

Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.

¹ South Northamptonshire: A Review of Special Landscape Areas – June 2017 – Quartet Design Landscape Architects ² Special Landscape Area Study Daventry District – March 2017 - TEP

² Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition – 2013 – Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

Recreation value: Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.

Perceptual aspects: A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.

Associations: Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.

3.8 Reference has also been made to the publication 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations'³. This document states in paragraph 2.2.4:

"...Local landscape designation is supported by national policy in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but across England local landscape designations have been inconsistently applied due to past changes of emphasis in national planning guidance. Therefore, the absence of local landscape designations in England does not necessarily indicate there are no landscapes worthy of local designation..."

3.9 NB Underlining is author's emphasis.

3.10 In assessing the 'value' of the Cherwell Valley within the NP2 area, use has been made of:

- Existing published landscape character assessments including the Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment
- Observations in the field,
- Data bases such as MAGIC website whose partners include

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

- **Historic England**
- **Natural England**
- **Environment Agency**
- **Forestry Commission**
- **Marine Management Organisation**

-
- Other published sources

³ Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations – The Landscape Institute
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Neighbourhood Plan|

Local Gaps

- 3.11** The evolving revised Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan proposes the designation of 5 Local Gaps to help maintain the physical and visual separation of the four settlements of Upper Heyford, Ardley, Caulcott and Middleton Stoney with respect to proposed and potential future development. The development pressures on Ardley are shown at Appendix 1 and the proposed Local Gaps are shown at Appendix 4.
- 3.12** Proposed Local Gap (LG) 1 was previously identified as a Non-coalescence Zone within the current made MCNP.
- 3.13** The four potential areas for review as part of this study include:
- Land to the north of the village of Caulcott (LG2)
 - Land to the east of the village of Middleton Stoney (LG3)
 - Land to the east of the village of Ardley (LG4)
 - Land to the north of the village of Ardley (LG5)
- 3.14** In reviewing the potential Local Gaps reference has been made to the methodologies used in other similar studies. These include the Chichester District Council Landscape Gap Assessment – 2019 and The Ivers Neighbourhood Plan: Referendum Plan October 2022 amongst others.
- 3.15** In order to appraise the landscape case for the draft policy, a site visit was undertaken by Briarwood Landscape Architecture to record the primary landscape characteristics of each of the proposed gaps. In conjunction with desk top studies this has informed an understanding of the potential effects of development within identified gaps and corridors on settlement character, and enabled an overview of the potential effectiveness of the proposed gaps and corridors in maintaining the separation of the respective settlements from potential encroaching development.
- 3.16** Each of the potential Local Gaps were visited on separate occasions during April and May 2023. When undertaking the respective site visits consideration was given to the following criteria:
- The perception of openness and enclosure of the landscape and the implication for the prospective size of the Local Gap;
 - Whether the area is predominantly undeveloped;
 - The presence or otherwise of a comprehensible pattern of land management and uses;

- The presence or absence of physical landscape features such as highways, watercourses, hedgerows, woodlands etc, that may be considered to be permanent within the landscape and which would help determine the boundary of any gap;
- The perception of visual separation both within and outside the potential Local Gap;
- The character of the individual settlement and the form of the edge of settlement closest to the proposed gap;
- The presence of any other landscape designation or heritage designation (such as conservation areas, scheduled monuments etc, where the landscape setting may be important) within or close to the potential Local Gap;
- The presence of public rights of way that enable an appreciation of the potential Local Gap and which form a transitional connection between an individual settlement, the Local Gap and the wider landscape (including the possible area of future development).

3.17 In reviewing the potential Local Gaps reference has been made to the adopted and emerging Local Plan for Cherwell and associated evidence base, the online Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) and the Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment – April 2017.

Important Views

3.18 The existing made MCNP includes a list of important views and vistas. These include:

- views of all the church towers within the MCNP area.
- Views referred to in Conservation Area Appraisals
- Those identified as part of AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment.

3.19 As part of the preparation process for the MCNP2, volunteer members of the MCNP Forum have put forward recommendations for further 'important views and vistas' within the parishes of Somerton, Fritwell and Duns Tew. The volunteers briefly described the nature of each of the particular views.

3.20 A series of five broad locations around the village of Duns Tew were suggested as being ones from which an 'important view' could be obtained. In Somerton eleven suggested views have been put forward while in Fritwell six views have been proposed.

3.21 In reviewing the suggested views, each location was visited and a photographic record made. The views were reviewed according to the volunteer description to check for accuracy and also assessed in the

context of visual quality and context in relation to the published landscape character assessment.

3.22 In assessing the views suitability for inclusion as an important view or vista, consideration has been given to the following criteria:

- Does the proposed view overlap or duplicate another view either proposed or existing;
- Is the view available from a publicly accessible vantage point;
- Does the view contain any notable detractors;
- Is the view an attractive and pleasing one;
- Does the view provide a wider understanding of the landscape and character of the parish;
- Is the vista a long distance view;
- Is the view irreplaceable/unique.

4. Assessment of Local Green Space Nominations

Local Green Space Nominations

4.1 The following pieces of land have been nominated as prospective Local Green Spaces within the NP2 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Local Green Space nominated spaces

Reference no	Parish	Site Address
1	Steeple Aston	Pocket Park, Nizewell Head
2	Steeple Aston	Water Lane Community Orchard
3	Upper Heyford	The Paddock
4	Lower Heyford	Station Road Allotments
5	Lower Heyford	Paine's Field
5	Lower Heyford	Land north of St Mary's Church
7	Middleton Stoney	Ardley Road Allotments
8	Kirtlington	Kirtlington Community Orchard
9	Somerton	Ardley Road Children's Play Area
10	Somerton	Community Allotments and Orchard
<i>LGS 11-17 have been deleted following removal of Heyford Park parish from MCNP.</i>		
18	Fritwell	'Fritwell Heights' land at north end of North Street
19	Duns Tew	Thornton's Field
20	Duns Tew	The village triangle adjacent St Mary Magdalene Church and 75 Main Street

21	Fritwell	Covert Field
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- 4.2** Each of the above pieces of land have been assessed by volunteers using a proforma table of criteria based upon the NPPF and NPC requirements and guidance. Their assessments are given in Appendix 2.

Review Assessment

Steeple Aston - Pocket Park, Nizewell Head



Representative View – Pocket Park Nizewell Head

Description and Land Use			
The area is located at the end of a residential street, Nizewell Head, and comprises of amenity grassland with swings and a goal post. The space is enclosed by fencing and some vegetation.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			The volunteer assessors state, "...it is much valued by the local community (confirmed by a survey carried out in 2020) mainly because it offers a safe recreational area for children from the immediate area".
a) beauty			No visual merit. The space is functional rather than attractive.
b) historic significance			

c) recreational value			
d) Tranquillity			No continuous noise or movement evident nearby
e) Wildlife			Native hedgerow trees and shrubs but grassland species poor. No bird or bat boxes or hibernacula's etc.
f) Public access			

Conclusion

- 4.3** The space is apparently well used by the local community but it is considered that the space does not fully meet the criteria for being demonstrably special to the local community.

Steeple Aston – Water Lane Community Orchard



Representative Views – Water Lane Community Orchard

Description and Land Use			
A primarily grassed space, containing fruit trees and informal seating, enclosed by stone walling and mature trees			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			The volunteer assessors state, "...the orchard was opened for community enjoyment in March 2023. Ideas for events and educational use are being developed. There is already significant support for the proposal from the local community".
a) beauty			Space made attractive by its mature setting, sloping topography and stone wall enclosure
b) historic significance			Traditional orchard within the local conservation area
c) recreational value			
d) Tranquillity			Adjacent to the road but no obvious or continuous noise or movement
e) Wildlife			Pollinating insects, wild flowers and mature trees providing habitat and foraging
f) Public access			

Conclusion

4.4 The space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Upper Heyford – The Paddock



Representative View – The Paddock Upper Heyford

Description and Land Use			
The area is grassland paddock, defined by fencing and hedgerows, bounded by Camp Road to the south and the access track to Paddock Cottage to the west. A farm gate entrance into the area leads off this access track			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
Is the area an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area is attractive but not beautiful. Overhead wires, adjacent buildings and fencing are visual detractors
b) historic significance			Within the Rousham Conservation Area but no historic significance attached to specific space
c) recreational value			No public access
d) Tranquillity			The primary location from which the area can be experienced is Camp Road which provides a key access route into Heyford Park. Noise and movement is apparent.
e) Wildlife			Evidence of wild flowers and potential for wildlife but no active management recorded
f) Public access			The area is private and only experienced from Camp Road to the south, which is a partially obscured view

Conclusion

- 4.5** It is considered that this space does not meet the criteria for being a Local Green Space.

Lower Heyford - Station Road Allotments



Representative View – Station Road Allotments

Description and Land Use			
The area is enclosed by a series of hedgerows. Allotments are located to either side of a central access which leads off from Station Road. Not all the allotments appear to be in use.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
Is the area an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area is attractive but not beautiful.

b) historic significance			Within the Rousham Conservation Area but no historic significance attached to specific space
c) recreational value			
d) Tranquillity			Relatively tranquil. There is some noise from vehicles passing along Station Road but the enclosing hedgerows when in leaf screen any movement
e) Wildlife			Potential for wildlife but no active management recorded
f) Public access			The area is private but affords some public access

Conclusion

4.6 It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Lower Heyford - Paine's Field



Representative Views – Paine's Field

Description and Land Use			
The space is currently a pastoral agricultural field that is partially divided by remnant hedgerows reflecting historic subdivisions.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
Is the area not an extensive tract of land?			The space is relatively large but no greater than some other existing Local Green Spaces.
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			
b) historic significance			Within the Lower Heyford and Rousham Conservation Areas
c) recreational value			Limited. A public right of way does pass through the space connecting Station Road to Freehold Street
d) Tranquillity			The noise and movement along Station Road reduce the level of tranquillity along the area's southern edge. Noise and activity is less apparent further north.
e) Wildlife			
f) Public access			A public right of way does pass through the space connecting Station Road to Freehold Street but the area is private and not generally accessible to the public.

Conclusion

- 4.7** It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Lower Heyford - Land to the north of St Mary's Church



Representative Views – Land north of Lower Heyford Churchyard

Description and Land Use			
The space is currently a mixed area of scrubland, grassland and woodland located between the Oxford Canal to the north and the residential properties and St Mary's Church to the south.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
Is the area not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area does not appear to be positively managed but has some aesthetic appeal and does from part of the landscape setting to St Mary's Church.
b) historic significance			Within the Lower Heyford and Rousham Conservation Areas
c) recreational value			The area is not accessible and has no direct recreational value
d) Tranquillity			Except for the noise and movement of the occasional train on the nearby railway and some limited noise from adjacent properties, the area is relatively tranquil
e) Wildlife			The area presents a range of habitats but does not appear to be actively managed for wildlife
f) Public access			There is no public access to the area which is private. However, the area can be seen from the publicly accessible vantage points of the towing path of the Oxford Canal to the north, the churchyard of St Mary's church and to a lesser degree from Church Lane to the south.

Conclusion

- 4.8** It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Middleton Stoney - Ardley Road Allotments



Representative View – Ardley Road Allotments

Description and Land Use			
The area is enclosed by a series of hedgerows. Allotments are located to either side of a central access which leads off from Ardley Road. Not all the allotments appear to be in use.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
Is the area an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area is attractive but not beautiful.

b) historic significance			No historic significance attached to specific space
c) recreational value			
d) Tranquillity			Relatively tranquil. There is some noise from vehicles passing along Ardley Road but the enclosed nature of the site means movement is screened from view
e) Wildlife			Potential for wildlife but no active management recorded
f) Public access			The area is private but affords some public access

Conclusion

4.9 It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Kirtlington –Kirtlington Community Orchard



Representative View –Kirtlington Community Orchard

Description and Land Use			
A dedicated community orchard. Mainly laid to grass with enclosing hedgerows. Fruit trees still immature			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			An attractive space

b) historic significance			Relatively newly created
c) recreational value			Passive. Seating available
d) Tranquillity			No continuous noise or movement evident
e) Wildlife			Potential for insects. Management regime unknown.
f) Public access			

Conclusion

4.10 It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Somerton – Somerton Children’s Play Area



Representative View – Somerton Children’s Play Area

Description and Land Use			
The area is primarily laid to grass and is defined through a combination of hedgerow vegetation and low fencing. The area contains a variety of timber play features, with safer surfacing beneath, together with seating			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			As a play area, the space is attractively laid out and benefits from attractive views into the wider landscape
b) historic significance			
c) recreational value			Principally for young children
d) Tranquillity			
e) Wildlife			
f) Public access			The volunteer assessment states the area is <i>'one of the few outdoor spaces that provides an opportunity for young people and their parents/guardians to meet and socialise outdoors'</i>

Conclusion

- 4.11** It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

Somerton – Somerton Community Orchard



Representative View – Somerton Community Allotments and Orchard

Conclusion

- 4.12** The nomination for the space to be a Local Green Space is considered to be premature. The space is currently still part of a much large agricultural field and the boundaries of the proposed community allotments and orchard, which have yet to be implemented, are not yet defined on the ground. The area does not meet the criteria for designation as a Local Green Space.

Fritwell – ‘Fritwell Heights’ land at the north end of North Lane



Representative Views – ‘Fritwell Heights’

Description and Land Use			
The area comprises managed grassland enclosed by hedgerows and post and wire fencing. The site is bound to the north by Fritwell Road and by agricultural land to the east, south and west. A public right of way (PRoW) runs along the edge of Fritwell and crosses the site, meeting Fritwell Road to the north			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area is pleasant but not beautiful. There are some visual detractors close to the adjacent property in the form of stored machinery and Heras fencing. It is not clear whether these are temporary features
b) historic significance			The area does not contain any historic assets or associations but is immediately adjacent to the Fritwell Conservation Area and has some value as part of the latter's landscape setting
c) recreational value			The area is private
d) Tranquillity			
e) Wildlife			There are no obvious wildlife or habitat features beyond the native species boundary hedgerows
f) Public access			A public right of way passes across the space that affords views to the village church and wider landscape but this is not dependent on the area being designated as a Local Green Space

Conclusion

4.21 It is considered that this space does not meet the criteria for being a Local Green Space.

Duns Tew – Thornton's Field



Representative Views – Thornton's Field

Description and Land Use			
The area is a grass paddock largely defined by post and rail fencing. An overhead transmission line passes over the area. The area is accessed by a gravel farm track.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The area some aesthetic merit but is not conspicuous from the adjacent field system
b) historic significance			The north-east corner of the area adjoins the Duns Tew Conservation Area
c) recreational value			The area is entirely private
d) Tranquillity			
e) Wildlife			There is no recorded management regime for the area to encourage wildlife
f) Public access			The area is private and there is no direct public access onto or across the area. A public right of passes to the north of the area and another public right of way passes to the south. Both rights of way afford views into and across the area

Conclusion

4.22 It is considered that this space does not meet the criteria for being a Local Green Space.

Duns Tew – The Village Triangle



Representative Views – Duns Tew Village Triangle

Description and Land Use			
The area is a triangular shaped piece of raised grassland with a single mature tree and a telegraph pole. The triangle is formed by the junction of two streets.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area not an extensive tract of land			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			The telegraph pole and traffic signs are visual detractors and the area consists of managed grassland
b) historic significance			The area is within the Duns Tew Conservation Area and is mentioned as having special visual significance but not historic significance in its own right
c) recreational value			The area is a visual amenity space
d) Tranquillity			The area is in the centre of the village and in the middle of a road junction
e) Wildlife			
f) Public access			

Conclusion

- 4.23** The space is centrally located and does act as a visual landmark/focal point but it is considered that this space does not meet the criteria for being a Local Green Space.

Fritwell – Covert Field



Representative Views – Fritwell Covert Field

Description and Land Use			
The area comprises a stretch of stream that bisects the space, grassland, mature trees and shrubs and a lime kiln that is a listed building.			
Assessment Criteria	Agreement with volunteer assessment		Commentary
	Yes	No	
The area is not an extensive tract of land?			
Reasonably close proximity to community			
Demonstrably special to local community			
a) beauty			Though not beautiful, the site has some aesthetic merit gained from the enclosing vegetation and proximity to agricultural fields
b) historic significance			The site has no known historic significance
c) recreational value			The site is primarily used for sport and in particular football but is not in continuous use as such. The site remains accessible via a pedestrian gate from the adjoining public right of way
d) Tranquillity			Part of the site is adjacent to housing and there is some perceived noise and movement but the remainder of the site is quiet and peaceful when not in use as a sports field
e) Wildlife			There is no evidence of any formal management of the site for wildlife and much of the area is amenity grassland. However, the site is enclosed and largely defined by a series of native species hedgerows with hedgerow trees that afford opportunities for wildlife
f) Public access			The site is owned by Oxfordshire Council and is accessed directly off a public right of way

Conclusion

- 4.24** It is considered that the space meets the criteria for being proposed as a Local Green Space.

5. Assessment of Special Landscape Area Nomination

River Cherwell Valley

Extent of area

- 5.1** In the Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment⁴ under the section 'Topography and Hydrology' the Cherwell Valley is described as a narrow valley that rises by approximately 70 metres from its base to the west and approximately 50 metres from its base to the east. The base of the valley is identified in the Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment as being between 60 metres and 70 metres Above Ordnance Survey Datum (AOD). Taking the latter valley base height, the maximum extent of the valley sides would be between the 120 metre and 130 metre contour to the west and between the 110 metre contour and the 120 metre contour to the east.
- 5.2** From desk top study and in the field observations, it is recommended that within the boundaries of the NP2 area, where applicable, the River Cherwell Valley should be considered as the area between the 120 metre contour to the west of the river, and the 100 metre contour to the east (see Appendix 3).

Appendix 3 – Plan showing Special Landscape Area nomination

- 5.3** In the south of the NP2 area the 110 metre contour is located some way from the perceived edge of the valley as demarked by a notable slope up from the valley base.
- 5.4** It is noted that the contour lines do not relate directly to features on the ground but can be mapped spatially. Also the River Cherwell becomes the boundary to the NP2 area in the south and the river valley extends westward beyond the NP2 area.

⁴ Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment – April 2017 – Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, Locality and AECOM

Description

- 5.5** The area is predominantly rural with agricultural fields of mixed arable and pasture, typically defined by a mixture of dense and tall hedgerows and belts of trees and woodland, forming the dominant pattern of the landscape. The Oxford Canal is in many instances a more prominent and obvious landscape feature than the River Cherwell. The latter meanders across a flat flood plain. Stands of mature willow and poplar often show where the location of river channel is amongst the low-lying pasture, which in many instances still has the flora and appearance of a traditional water meadow. The settlements and villages of Lower and Upper Heyford, Steeple Aston, Middle Aston and Somerton are all located on the valley sides together with of Rousham House and park and the Rousham Conservation Area. The Chiltern Mainline Railway passes along the valley base crossing and recrossing the Oxford Canal and the River Cherwell.

Landscape Character

- 5.6** At the county level, the area of the proposed Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area contains parts of 6 different landscape character types as identified in the online Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) ref: <https://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/>
- 5.7** The 6 landscape character types include:
- River Meadowlands
 - Farmland Slopes and Valley Sides
 - Vale Farmland
 - Farmland Plateau
 - Wooded Estates
 - Rolling Clayland
- 5.8** From the key characteristics of the various landscape character types and from field studies, it is possible to identify a series of key characteristics for the proposed Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area. These include:
- Flat, low-lying topography with occasionally flooded floodplain.

- Relatively high level of tranquillity with a general absence of movement and noise except close to roads and the mainline railway.
- Bridges crossing the River Cherwell, the Oxford Canal and the mainline railway are a feature throughout the valley.
- Meandering river channels with the river relatively widely separated from the Oxford Canal in the north of the area but with the two features coming close to one another in the south of the area.
- Grazing meadows of permanent pasture. Some quite extensive.
- Riparian character with a strong pattern of mature riverside and canal side willows, poplars and tree-lined ditches. Some stretches of pollarded trees.
- General absence of built development on the valley floor except for occasional residential properties, some occupying former mills, farmsteads and barns and others representing former railway worker and canal worker cottages.
- Larger arable fields on the gentler slopes, small pasture fields on the steeper slopes of the valley sides.
- A well-defined pattern of tall hedges and hedgerow trees both within the valley bottom and extending onto the valley sides together with small woodland blocks and belts on steeper slopes
- Small unspoilt villages with a generally strong sense of local vernacular as shown in their building materials and detailing, together with an overall rural character.
- Long, straight but typically minor roads running along the crest of the valley sides on a broadly north-south axis. Very few roads pass across the valley, east-west. The exceptions being the road between North Aston and Somerton in the north, the B4030 at Lower Heyford in the centre of the area and the A4095 to Kirtlington in the south.
- The Cherwell Valley provides opportunities for far-reaching and panoramic views from along the valley sides, and upwards from the base of the valley. Where field boundary and riverside vegetation occurs then views can be restricted and the sense of enclosure increases.
- Most notable in some views are the settlement churches that can be seen within and above the trees on the valley slopes.

- The eastern side of the valley is generally more open than the west, which is more wooded and has a greater sense of enclosure.



River Cherwell



Canal and church tower



Meadow and trees



Canal bridge



Fields and woodland

5.9 Table 5.1 below highlights the range of criteria that help in the identification of the proposed Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area as a valued landscape worthy of such a designation within the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2. It provides a summary of the distinctive characteristics (above) and demonstrates why the proposed Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area is special and relates the area’s characteristics to the criteria. Each of the criteria is assessed as high, medium or low.

Table 5.1 – Landscape Value	
Criteria	Summary Description
Landscape quality (condition)	High - The quality /condition of the landscape within the Cherwell Valley is considered to be generally good. The landscape maintains a strong framework of trees, woodland and hedgerows that define most of the agricultural fields and meadows that establish the rural nature of the landscape.

Scenic quality	<p>High - There is an absence of large scale and overtly modern development in landscape of the valley. Though modern trains run on the mainline railway along the valley floor many of the features of the railway such as bridges etc are historic. The villages and houses in the valley are overwhelming of a local vernacular and usually built of stone rather than from more modern construction materials. There are few visual detractors in the area. The valley floor in particular retains a quite traditional agricultural appearance with cattle grazing amongst pastoral meadows. The Oxford Canal, though quite busy with leisure traffic, provides interest and is visually attractive along much of its length.</p>
Rarity	<p>Medium – the River Cherwell rises to the north in Northamptonshire and enters the River Thames at Oxford. The Mid-Cherwell NP2 area contains much of the Cherwell Valley. Both to the north and south of the NP2 area the valley is typically less distinct as a feature within the landscape.</p>
Representativeness	<p>Medium - The few settlements present in the valley are villages which display a distinctive local vernacular and are mostly traditionally stone built.</p>

Conservation Interest	Medium – The Cherwell Valley within the NP2 area contains all or parts of several conservation areas including those for, the Oxford Canal, Steeple Aston, Somerton and Rousham. Rousham is a grade 1 Registered Park and Garden and is internationally recognised as an important designed landscape. Much of the area around Rousham forms part of the Rousham Conservation Area.
Recreational value	High – the Oxford Canal passes along the length of the Cherwell Valley within the NP2 area and provides opportunities for recreational boating and fishing. The Oxford Union Canal Walk is a long-distance trail that follows along the canal towing path and provides access for walkers along the base of the valley. A network of other public rights of way criss-cross the valley and its sides but few enable the river itself to be accessed.
Perceptual aspects	Medium – The Cherwell Valley within the NP2 area is predominantly rural in character. There is a relatively high level of perceived tranquillity with an absence of noise and movement except close to roads and the mainline railway. There are attractive panoramic views from the slopes of the valley across the valley floor and there are few visual detractors present.

Associations	<p>Medium – The Mid-Cherwell Heritage and Character Assessment – April 2017, that forms an appendix to the existing Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, outlines numerous historic and cultural associations with the Cherwell Valley focused on the villages, the Oxford Canal and the mainline railway.</p> <p>The area of the valley within the Rousham Conservation Area has direct associations with the 18th century landscape designer William Kent, and is considered to be a designed landscape.</p>
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Conclusion and Justification of Need

5.10 In landscape and visual terms, the proposed Mid-Cherwell Valley Special Landscape Area designation would support criteria-based policies within the revised Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan to enable the safeguarding, managing and promotion of the following special attributes of the River Cherwell Valley:

- The limited amount of modern built form development reinforcing the area's rural and predominantly agricultural character and the sense of relative tranquillity;
- The area's particularly distinctive character through the interplay of the partly wooded and farmed valley slopes that enclose the mostly pastoral valley base with its riparian feel;
- The generally good condition of the landscape that is generally well managed which needs conserving.

6. Assessment of Local Gap Nominations

Caulcott (LG2)

Purpose of Local Gap

- 6.1** The proposed Local Gap is intended to maintain a separation between the village of Caulcott and the settlement of Heyford Park to the north (see Appendix 4).

Local Gap Description

- 6.2** Overall, the proposed Local Gap is perceived as countryside, The area of the proposed gap comprises is broadly rectangular in shape and consists of several medium to large scale agricultural fields all of which are currently under arable production. The gap as suggested is well defined.
- 6.3** The northern boundary is defined by a series of hedgerows. One of which is identified as being part of the parish boundary between Lower Heyford and Heyford Park (formerly part of Upper Heyford). The eastern boundary is defined a field boundary vegetation and a water course. The southern boundary is bound by the Lower Heyford Road – the B4030 and the western boundary is bound by the Port Way local highway.
- 6.4** Internally, the Gallos Brook bi-sects the area on a broadly north-south axis. Public right of way 289/4/10 passes across the area running close to sections of the Gallos Brook. Public right of way 422/2/10 runs outside the proposed Local Gap following part of the gap's northern boundary and running parallel to the gap's eastern boundary.
- 6.5** Several residential properties and a series of farm buildings are located on the proposed boundary of the Local Gap along the gap's southern edge and accessed from Lower Heyford Road. The residential properties are typically

within well-defined plot/curtilages and are not considered to be significant detractors either visually or physically from the mostly undeveloped nature of the proposed gap. The farm buildings, though modern, contribute to the predominantly agricultural and countryside feel of the area.

Landscape Character

- 6.6** Within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, the area of the proposed Local Gap is identified as being entirely within the Farmland Plateau landscape character type (LCT). Consistent with the LCT, the area is mostly level topographically with some slight undulations, rural and open and consisting of medium to large arable fields with hedgerows of mainly hawthorn.
- 6.7** With reference to the online MAGIC resource <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> There are no statutory or non-statutory landscape designations on or close to the area. Within the current Cherwell Local Plan, the western part of the area is within the Rousham Conservation Area. The boundary of the conservation area follows the field boundary of the western most field within the proposed Local Gap.

Visual Context

- 6.8** The proposed gap is not readily perceived from the south and the main part of Caulcott. Dense and tall hedgerows running parallel to Lower Heyford Road act to restrict many potential views from the south.
- 6.9** To the north there is some intervisibility between the proposed gap and the existing edge of Heyford Park. Where these are present, they emphasise the separation of the area from Heyford Park. However, the existing hedgerows along the area's northern boundary restrict some views.
- 6.10** The main source of public views into the gap are from the public rights of way. Public right of way 289/4/10 as it passes through the area affords expansive internal views but little intervisibility with the wider area.

Landscape Commentary

- 6.11** Anticipated development would come from the north of the proposed gap with an extension of Heyford Park. Development up to the proposed gap's northern edge would still retain the gap as open predominantly agricultural

countryside. The gap would provide a perceptible and meaningful physical separation between any extension of development of Heyford Park from the north and the main part of the settlement of Caulcott to the south.

- 6.12** Retention and ideally strengthening and enhancement of the proposed gap's defining hedgerow boundaries would help to minimise any further visual coalescence between Heyford Park and Caulcott. The presence of two existing public rights of way allow a pedestrian connection between the proposed gap and both Heyford Park and Caulcott. The proposed gap has the potential to be a multi-use piece of green infrastructure.

Landscape Summary and Conclusion

Caulcott – proposed Local Gap				
Criteria	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Is the land predominantly open?				The area consists of mainly medium-large scale agricultural fields
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				There are several residential properties along the southern edge but these are not significant in reducing the perception of the area as countryside
Is there a comprehensible pattern of land management and uses?				The area is predominantly agricultural and arable
Are there clearly defined and coherent boundaries?				There is a strong framework of field hedgerows, a watercourse and two roads Lower Heyford Road and Port Way that help define the area
Is there a sense of visual separation?				The presence of field boundary hedgerows create a screen for the main part of Caulcott into and from the gap. Heyford Park is partially visible in the distance from northern parts of the gap.
Is there a distinct settlement form and edge?				Lower Heyford Road forms a physical barrier between the main part of Caulcott which lies to the south

Are there any landscape or heritage designations that might strengthen the need for a Local Gap?				The western part of the proposed Local Gap is within the Rousham Conservation Area. The area to the east would form part of the landscape setting.
Are there any public rights of way?				There are two public rights of way that would allow an appreciation of the Local Gap and which would allow
				a transitional connection to the wider landscape.
Does the area meet the criteria for a Local Gap designation in landscape and visual terms?				

- 6.13** With the proposed Local Gap in place, Caulcott would remain distinctly separate both visually and physically from potential development on the southern edge of Heyford Park.

Conclusion

- 6.14** Having undertaken an assessment of the area, it is considered that the proposed Caulcott Local Gap meets the criteria by which it can be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters.

Middleton Stoney (LG3)

Purpose of Local Gap

- 6.15** A potential Local Gap is suggested for an area of landscape to the northeast of the village of Middleton Stoney (see Appendix 4).
- 6.16** The intention of the gap would be to maintain a physical and visual separation between the village of Middleton Stoney and potential development to the north of the village associated with an expansion of Heyford Park and/or new industrial/commercial development around junction 10 of the M40.

Local Gap Description

- 6.17** The area of the potential Local Gap consists of several irregular shaped fields of small to medium scale. Currently the fields are under arable

production. A dense belt of riparian trees and shrubs follows the Gagle Brook. The brook itself forms the eastern boundary of the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan at this point.

- 6.18** The Dewar Farm quarry contains the gap area to the north. A series of existing field hedgerows prescribes a northern boundary to the potential Local Gap. The Gagle Brook defines the eastern boundary, the B4030 would define the southern boundary and the western boundary would be defined by a mix of property boundaries, hedgerows and the B430.
- 6.19** Two public rights of way pass through the area. Public right of way 297/3/10 follows the Gagle Brook – connecting between the B4030 in the south and the Claude Duval Way promoted walk to the north. Public right of way 297/8/10 passes through the area from south-west to north-east.

Landscape Character

- 6.20** Within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, the area of the proposed Local Gap is identified as being entirely within the Wooded Estatelands LCT. The area of the potential Local Gap reflects two key characteristics of the LCT – arable field and woodland.
- 6.21** With reference to the online MAGIC resource <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> and to the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- 6.22** There are no landscape, environmental or heritage designations in the area of the potential Local Gap. The adjacent land to the north though an active quarry is a Site of Special Scientific Interest with respect to the importance of its geology and fossil potential.

Visual Context

- 6.23** The proposed Local Gap is most visible internally from public rights of way. The area is well screened from the M40. There is some limited intervisibility with the existing edge of Middleton Stoney. Intervisibility with wider landscape is largely restricted through the presence of existing boundary vegetation and intervening built form.

Landscape Commentary

- 6.24** The potential Local Gap has value as a recreational resource owing to the presence of the two public rights of way. The potential gap has the ability to be well defined landscape features such as field boundaries, hedgerows, the

edges of built form and roads. The area has a predominantly agricultural character and is largely devoid of existing development.

Landscape Summary and Conclusion

Middleton Stoney – proposed Local Gap				
Criteria	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Is the land predominantly open?				Mainly agricultural fields
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				
Is there a comprehensible pattern of land management and uses?				Mainly agricultural with some riparian woodland
Are there clearly defined and coherent boundaries?				Roads, watercourses, woodland belts, garden boundaries and hedgerows
Is there a sense of visual separation?				There no intervisibility with other settlements. The Ardley incinerator can be seen but Dewars Farm quarry is not conspicuous
Is there a distinct settlement form and edge?				Middleton Stoney has a loose settlement pattern
Are there any landscape or heritage designations that might strengthen the need for a Local Gap?				
Are there any public rights of way?				There are two public rights of way that would allow an appreciation of the Local Gap and which would allow a transitional connection to the wider landscape.

Does the area meet the criteria for a Local Gap designation in landscape and visual terms?				
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- 6.25** The potential gap would provide an effective physical and visual buffer of relatively open landscape. The gap would be of an appropriate scale, and with a series of defensible boundaries, to help prevent visual and physical coalescence between the southward and westward encroachment of possible development and Middleton Stoney.

Conclusion

- 6.26** Having undertaken an assessment of the area, it is considered that the proposed Middleton Stoney Local Gap meets the criteria by which it can be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters.

Ardley East (LG4)

Purpose of Local Gap

- 6.52** The proposed Local Gap is intended to maintain a separation between the village of Ardley and the settlement, and future development, of Heyford Park to the south and west (see Appendix 4).

Local Gap Description

- 6.53** The proposed Local Gap comprises agricultural fields and a recreation ground to the north. Within the proposed boundary are a new residential development (Church View) off Station Road and farm buildings to the west of Upland Cottage.
- 6.54** The area, which is geometric but irregular in shape and is well defined. The northern edge is bound by Ardley Road. The western boundary is bound by Station Road and the south boundary is contained by the Chiltern mainline railway. The eastern boundary is defined a series of field boundaries.

- 6.55** The area is accessed by three public rights of way – 109/2/30, 109/24/10 and 109/22/30. All three pass through the area on broadly north-west south-west axis.

Landscape Character

- 6.56** Within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, the area of the proposed Local Gap is identified as being entirely within the Farmland Plateau landscape character type (LCT). The area represents the key characteristics of the LCT including large regular arable fields, straight roads, level topography and low native species predominantly thorn hedgerows.
- 6.57** With reference to the online MAGIC resource <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> and to the adopted Cherwell Local Plan, the area is not covered by nor does it contain any statutory or non-statutory landscape or environmental designation.

Visual Context

- 6.58** The proposed gap is not readily perceived from the south or the main part of Ardley. The existing field boundary vegetation restrict views towards the village but there are more open views internally across the proposed local gap area.

Landscape Commentary

- 6.59** Anticipated development would come from an extension of Heyford Park to the west of the proposed Local Gap. The area of the proposed gap is valuable locally in landscape terms as an area of multi-functional green infrastructure; acting to provide recreational opportunities.

Landscape Summary and Conclusion

Ardley East – proposed Local Gap				
Criteria	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Is the land predominantly open?				The area is open arable fields and areas of grassland

Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				There is a recent residential development that runs parallel to Station Road but this does not unduly detract from the area as countryside
Is there a comprehensible pattern of land management and uses?				The area is predominantly managed farmland
Are there clearly defined and coherent boundaries?				Roads, railway, field and garden boundary treatments
Is there a sense of visual separation?				The generally enclosed nature of the area gives a perception of separation
Is there a distinct settlement form and edge?				Ardley has a clear settlement form and edge adjacent to the proposed local gap
Are there any landscape or heritage designations that might strengthen the need for a Local Gap?				
Are there any public rights of way?				Several rights of way make the area accessible to the public and provide connections to the wider landscape
Does the area meet the criteria for a Local Gap designation in landscape and visual terms?				

6.60 As a Local Gap, the area to the east of Ardley would assist in avoiding any physical or visual amalgamation of the village and any potential development to the west of the mainline railway. The Local Gap would help to maintain Ardley as distinct and separate rural settlement.

Conclusion

6.61 Having undertaken an assessment of the area, it is considered that the proposed Ardley East Local Gap meets the criteria by which it can be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters.

Ardley North (LG5)

Purpose of Local Gap

- 6.38** The proposed Local Gap is intended to maintain a separation between the village of Ardley and potential future development around junction 10 of the M40 motorway (see Appendix 4).

Local Gap Description

- 6.39** The suggested Local Gap is predominantly agricultural. The area does include the Ardley sewage works to the south-east of the area and the residential property and farm buildings of Willowbank Farm to the west and centre of the area. Elsewhere, the area consists of several medium to large scale geometric shaped arable fields together with several small and medium scale enclosures close to the settlement edge of Fewcott/Ardley and extending northwards through the central part of the suggested Local Gap.
- 6.40** Several public rights of way pass through the area. Public right of way 109/4/10 passes through the area on broadly north-south axis and connects from Fitwell Road through Willowbrook Farm and beyond the area boundary. Public right of way 109/3/20 runs broadly parallel to public right of way 109/4/10 and is separated from the latter by a distance of between approximately 100 metres and 300 metres.
- 6.41** Five shorter public rights of way are concentrated in the part of the area between the sewage works and junction 10 of the M40. The public rights of way include 109/6/10, 109/6/20, 109/7/10, 109/9/10 109/32/50, 367/31/20 and 109/8/10
- 6.42** The area follows clearly defined boundaries. The suggested northern boundary is defined by a series of existing field boundaries comprising hedgerows and a section of timber post and rail fencing. The eastern boundary is defined by highway fencing associated with the M40 motorway and extending south to the B430.
- 6.43** The southern boundary is irregular but similarly well defined. The southern boundary is defined primarily by the garden boundary treatments of Fritwell

Road. The western boundary is bound by Fritwell Road and is defined by a series of hedgerows.

Landscape Character

- 6.44** Within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, the area of the proposed Local Gap is identified as being mostly within the Wooded Estatelands LCT and a small part of the northern area within the Farmland Plateau LCT. In the context of the former the suggested Local Gap reflects the key characteristic of having a '*field pattern is generally characterised by a geometric pattern of medium to large-sized fields, with arable cropping in the larger fields.*' In respect of the latter, the area reflects the key characteristic of '*rectilinear plantations and shelterbelts.*' These are located on the eastern edge of the area close to the M40 (which they partially screen).
- 6.45** With reference to the online MAGIC resource <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> and to the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- 6.46** The south-east part of the area forms a Local Green Space designation. There are no environmental or heritage designations on or close to the area.

Visual Context

- 6.47** The proposed Local Gap is most visible in views from Fritwell Road and from public rights of way to the north. The area is relatively well screened from the M40 and those views that are currently present are oblique ones typically experienced at speed. Internally the various public rights of way do afford views across the area but the presence of existing vegetation, field boundaries and built form often restrict extensive views. There is some intervisibility with the existing edge of Fewcott/Ardley.

Landscape Commentary

- 6.48** The suggested Local Gap has value as a recreational resource owing to the presence of several public rights of way. The suggested gap is drawn to reflect defined landscape edges such as field boundaries, hedgerows, the edges of built form and roads. The presence of Willowbrook Farm though representing a reasonably large-scale development in the proposed Local Gap, nevertheless is presently of an agricultural character

- 6.49** Development to the north of the settlement and within the proposed Local Gap would substantially erode the distinct delineation of land uses that currently exists, resulting in significant change to the established settlement pattern and character of Ardley village. The distinction of Ardley as a rural village would be greatly diminished if large scale development were allowed to encroach too close to the existing built area perimeter.

Landscape Summary and Conclusion

Ardley North – proposed Local Gap				
Criteria	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Is the land predominantly open?				The area mainly consists of agricultural fields and horse paddocks
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Willowbrook Farm occupies part of the area but is agricultural in form. Ardley sewage works are not prominent
Is there a comprehensible pattern of land management and uses?				Mainly agricultural with some areas of woodland
Are there clearly defined and coherent boundaries?				Back gardens, roads, hedgerows and woodland belts
Is there a sense of visual separation?				There is some intervisibility between the edge of Ardley and the area, and with the M40 but the general openness of the area enhances the perception of visual separateness
Is there a distinct settlement form and edge?				Properties adjacent to the area have generally well defined and recognisable plots and curtilages
Are there any landscape or heritage designations that might strengthen the need for a Local Gap?				

Are there any public rights of way?				Several rights of way make the area accessible to the public and provide connections to the wider landscape
Does the area meet the criteria for a Local Gap designation in landscape and visual terms?				

6.50 The proposed gap would provide an effective buffer of relatively open landscape of appropriate scale between the existing settlements of Fewcott and Ardley, following a series of existing defensible boundaries, and potential development based around junction 10 of the M40.

Conclusion

6.51 Having undertaken an assessment of the area, it is considered that the proposed Ardley North Local Gap meets the criteria by which it can be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters.

7. Important Views

Somerton

- 7.1** A series of 11 suggested important views have been identified in the parish of Somerton (see Appendix 5 – Suggested Important Views – Somerton).
- 7.2** Each view has been taken by a volunteer (see Appendix 6 – Viewpoint Images – Somerton).

Viewpoint S1

- 7.3** Viewpoint S1 is taken from the Oxford Canal Walk and looks north-west along the towing path of the Oxford Canal. The view includes the flood plain and water meadows of the River Cherwell and views toward North Aston. The view is assessed as suitable for consideration as an important view within the MCNP2040.

Viewpoint S2

- 7.4** Viewpoint S2 is taken from the Oxford Canal Walk. The view looks southwest towards Upper Heyford.
- 7.5** The view is more enclosed than viewpoint 1 and shows less of the parish's context. While the view is attractive, similar views are afforded from other bridges moving south along the canal. The view is not considered suitable to being a protected important view as part of the MCNP2040.

Viewpoints S3 and S4

- 7.6** Viewpoints S3 and S4 are both taken from the water meadows to the west of the Oxford Canal.
- 7.7** Both views are attractive and both afford an understanding of landscape features that inform the local character. However, the specific locations of the views are from private land and without formal access to the public. The views are assessed as not being suitable for consideration as a protected important view as part of the MCNP2040.

Viewpoints S5 and S6

7.8 Viewpoints S5 and S6 are taken from locations approximately 100 metres apart. S6 is located on more elevated ground adjacent to the public highway. S5 is taken from a public right of way and is also suggested as being an important view for the parish of Fritwell.

7.9 Both S5 and S6 are panoramic views that look westward over the River Cherwell. The field of view of S6 largely overlaps and duplicates that of S5. It is considered that as S5 has been proposed independently by volunteers from both Somerton and Fritwell that this view, rather than S6, is most suitable as being put forward as important view within the MCNP2040.

7.10 The view allows an appreciation of the scale and expanse of the River Cherwell Valley and its historic importance as a transport corridor for the Oxford Canal and the Oxford to Banbury railway.

Viewpoints S7, S8 and S9

7.11 Viewpoints S7, S8 and S9 are sequential ones taken from the Portway public right of way. The views look westward across the landscape and into the River Cherwell valley. Views S8 and S9 occupy the same field of view. All three views show a similar landscape but one that exemplifies the predominantly agricultural character of the parish.

7.12 It is considered that view S8/S9 is worthy of being considered as an important view within the MCNP2040 but that view S7 is not.

Viewpoints S10 and S11

7.13 Views S10 and S11 are taken from the junction of public right of ways 349/13/20 and 3349/13/10. Views S10 and S11 occupy the same field of view and look northwards across an arable field towards Troy Farm. Though not unattractive, the view is of a single field that has no rare or unique characteristics and does little to provide a fuller understanding of the wider landscape's character. The views are not felt appropriate to be considered as an as an important view within the MCNP2040.

Fritwell

7.14 A series of 6 suggested important views have been identified in the area around the village of Fritwell (see Appendix 7).

- 7.15** Each location has been visited and suggested view taken. These are given in Appendix 8.
- 7.16** Viewpoint F1 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:
- "Raghouse Lane is a narrow, single-track road from the village of Fritwell and climbing gently southwards towards Heyford airbase / Heyford Park at the top of the limestone plateau – a popular route for walkers, dogs, horses, cyclists and agricultural vehicles associated with the surrounding farms. Looking back northwards towards the village, the traditional agricultural landscape is of hedgerows surrounding large open fields of grassland and low-growing crops under expansive skies."*
- 7.17** It is considered that the description of the view is an accurate one and that the view is an appropriate one to be considered as an as an important view within the MCNP2040.
- 7.18** Viewpoint F2 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:
- "Walking back northwards along Raghouse Lane towards the village offers long views across the farmland on either side together with trees, hedgerows, birds, butterflies, wild animals and a wild-life pond. On approaching the settlement a narrow s-bend in the road leads to the older traditional cottages and other properties in this area giving a traditional and visually attractive entrance to the Fritwell settlement area."*
- 7.19** The volunteer description outlines a sequence of potential views. In reality there is no one view that encapsulates all the elements mentioned. Views from the highway are, in summer, quite enclosed and segregated from one another by intervening vegetation.
- 7.20** The view is not considered suitable to being a protected important view as part of the MCNP2040.
- 7.21** Viewpoint F3 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:

"Footpath 219/1 leaves the village southwards towards Troy farm and when crossing the small bridge over the stream the view looking back to the north shows the agricultural fields and the treescape bordering the village from this direction."

- 7.22** The view does show the well treed and green edge of Fritwell. However, the view contains no obvious elements that make it distinctive to the village.

Similar views are found elsewhere in the area. The view is not considered suitable to being a protected important view as part of the NCBP2.

- 7.23** Viewpoint F4 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:

"Fritwell Footpath 219/9 leads from the historic II St. Olaves Church in the heart of the conservation area across ancient stone stiles. The path then heads north-west, uphill through tranquil grassland often grazed by sheep, cows or horses, towards the highest point of the village, before emerging near the village gates at the western end of North Street and commanding views back across the village and surrounding rural landscape. Fritwell is unique in the area for retaining a strongly defined historic settlement, and from this vantage point the layout of the village, which originally consisted of two manorial estates (II* Manor House historically DeLisle Manor on North Street and the site of Ormond Manor now Lodge Farm along East Street at the southern end of Fritwell) can be clearly seen."*

- 7.24** The view has some inherent aesthetic merit and provides an understanding of the history and historic character of the village. However, detractors are evident presently in the form of Heras fencing and building paraphernalia. These detractors are likely to be temporary in nature.

- 7.25** Subject to a better understanding of the timescale in which the detractors are likely to remain present, the view is considered suitable as a prospective important view within the MCNP2040.

- 7.26** Viewpoint F5 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:

"North Street leaves the village westwards towards Somerton. Views (eastwards) back towards the settlement are wide and expansive,

characterised by traditional agricultural landscape of low-growing crops, grassland and grazing animals. On entering the village the low density of the approach gives further opportunities for rural views between houses and at gateways."

7.27 In reviewing the view, it is assessed that the volunteer description is an accurate one. The view is considered suitable as a prospective important view within the MCNP2040.

7.28 Viewpoint F6 is described by the volunteer suggesting it as an important view as follows:

"Significant vista overlooking the Cherwell Valley, Clifton and a Victorian viaduct. Often used as a route for cyclists, runners and walkers."

7.29 The view coincides with that identified by volunteers from Somerton parish as S6 (see above). The view is considered suitable as a prospective important view within the MCNP2040.

Duns Tew

7.30 A series of 5 suggested important views have been identified in the area around the village of Duns Tew (see Appendix 9).

7.31 Each location has been visited and suggested view taken. These are given in Appendix 10.

Viewpoint DT1

7.32 Viewpoint DT1 is taken from public right of way 195/7/10 as it leads northwards from Hill Farm Lane, Duns Tew. The view is a panoramic one across a shallow valley and agricultural fields. Deddington church can be seen on the skyline in the far distance.

Viewpoint DT2

7.33 Viewpoint DT2 is taken from the purpose made viewing platform in the former sand quarry off Duns Tew Road. The view looks north across the former quarry which is now a nature reserve and Site of Special Scientific

Interest. The geologically important sand beds can be clearly seen in the middle distance. Residential properties on the edge of Duns Tew can be seen on the horizon.

- 7.34** It is noted that access into the reserve is via public right of way 195/3/20. The gate onto the public right of way from Duns Tew Road is padlocked so that the gate has to be climbed. This restricts access to the reserve and quarry to able bodied visitors when arriving from the south.

Viewpoint DT3

- 7.35** Viewpoint DT3 looks south from public right of way 195/2/10. The view is panoramic one and looks across mixed agricultural fields and areas of woodland.

Viewpoint DT4

- 7.36** Viewpoint DT4 looks southwards from public right of way 195/1/10. The view looks across a pastoral field. The field is typical of the local area.
- 7.37** There are no obvious views towards the Bartons, as suggested by the community volunteers. Views towards the Bartons appear restricted through changes in topography and the presence of existing vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the settlements. It is considered that DT4 is not recommended as being a suitable candidate for an Important View.
- 7.38** Viewpoint DT6 is included as an alternative. This view is a panoramic one and looks northwards from the public right of way across Common Barn Farm and includes agricultural fields and woodland.

Viewpoint DT5

- 7.39** Viewpoint DT5 is taken from public right of way 195/1/10 as it leads northwestwards from unnamed lane connecting between Duns Tew and Ledwell. The view is an expansive and panoramic one across a shallow valley and agricultural fields. Deddington church can be seen on the skyline in the far distance.

Conclusion

- 7.40** These are views that the community itself has judged to be important. It is considered that each of the nominated views is consistent with those existing views already designated as being important ones within the present Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan. Each view demonstrates a natural or historic feature(s) of the landscape that helps provide an understanding of the area around Duns Tew and its unique character. It is considered that each view can be supported for inclusion as an Important View within the emerging neighbourhood plan.

8. Summary and conclusions

- 8.1** Briarwood Landscape Architecture has been commissioned by the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum to undertake a review and assessment of:
- A series of new proposed candidate sites for Local Green Spaces;
 - A possible extension of a Special Landscape Area for the part of the Cherwell Valley within the Neighbourhood Plan 2 (NP2) area;
 - A series of four potential and proposed Local Gaps associated with three settlements within the NP2 area;
 - Suggested 'Important Views and Vistas' around the village of Duns Tew.
- 8.2** This report is intended to provide part of the evidence base for the updated neighbourhood plan.
- 8.3** Each of the four distinct pieces of work has been considered within the context of the current national and local plan policies. Consideration has also been given to the emerging local plan policies too. For all four areas, it is considered that in respect of landscape and visual matters, there is strong policy support for their inclusion within the emerging Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2.
- 8.4** The review and assessment process for each particular piece of work follows its own set methodology. The methodology for establishing whether a piece of land can become a Local Green Space is prescribed within the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Guidance for England.
- 8.5** The methodology for reviewing for the suitability of the River Cherwell Valley draws upon those used successfully by other parts of the country in assessing the suitability or otherwise of areas as Special Landscape Areas. A similar approach was taken for the methodology used to review the four prospective areas suggested as Local Gaps.
- 8.6** Important Views are already a feature of the existing Mid-Cherwell Local Plan. However, further suggested views were reviewed in the

area around the village of Duns Tew from where they are largely absent currently.

- 8.7** A series of 14 areas of land have been suggested as potential Local Green Spaces. Each of the 14 areas have previously been put forward and assessed by volunteer members of the local communities in which the respective areas are located. In reviewing each of the areas, it is considered that 8 of the 14 do robustly meet the criteria for nomination as a Local Green Space.
- 8.8** Of the 6 spaces that are considered not to meet the criteria for being nominated as a Local Green Space, none can clearly demonstrate that they are special to the community. Two spaces are not directly accessible to the public and have no apparent management regime in place to demonstrate that they are being managed for wildlife and/or to enhance their beauty. One space remains an undefined area of an agricultural field and the intended community assets planned for the space have yet to be implemented. Another space has some minor use for children's play, but this activity is poorly provisioned, and the space has no other features that could be said to make it evidently special to the local community. The remaining two spaces have physical and visual detractors present and only have public access as a feature to suggest they might be special to the community.
- 8.9** It is considered that the River Cherwell Valley does have the strength of character to justify its designation within the emerging neighbourhood plan as a Special Landscape Area. The River Cherwell Valley should be considered as the area between the 120 metre contour to the west of the river, and the 100 metre contour to the east. It is noted that the contour lines do not relate directly to features on the ground but can be mapped spatially.
- 8.10** In landscape and visual terms, the proposed Cherwell Special Landscape Area designation would support criteria-based policies within the revised Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan to enable the safeguarding, managing and promotion of the following special attributes of the River Cherwell Valley which are identified as follows:
- The limited amount of modern built form development reinforcing the area's rural and predominantly agricultural character and the sense of relative tranquillity;
 - The area's particularly distinctive character through the interplay of the partly wooded and farmed valley slopes that enclose the mostly pastoral valley base with its riparian feel;

- The generally good condition of the landscape that is generally well managed and which needs conserving.

- 8.11** Having assessed the 4 potential Local Gaps, it is considered that all 5 meet the criteria by which they can be supported in landscape and visual terms. All 4 candidate areas, Caulcott, Ardley North, Ardley East, and Middleton Stoney are well defined with defensible boundaries. All 4 areas have their own identifiable character. Each forms a visual and physical divide between the existing settlement area and potential future growth/development areas not linked to the respective settlements. Each would assist in maintaining the distinctive and separate character of the respective settlements with which they are associated.
- 8.12** 11 suggested important views have been put forward by members of the community in the area around the village of Somerton. Of these, it is assessed that 3 are suitable for consideration as prospective important views within the MCNP2040. The remaining 7 views are regarded as unsuitable candidates owing to a variety of factors including accessibility, uniqueness of the view, duplication of other similar views etc.
- 8.13** 6 suggested important views have been put forward by members of the community in the area around the village of Fritwell. Of the 6, 4 are assessed as suitable for consideration as prospective important views within the MCNP2040.
- 8.14** 5 suggested important views have been put forward by members of the community in the area around the village of Duns Tew. These are views that the community itself has judged to be important. It is considered that each of the nominated views is consistent with those existing views already designated as being important ones within the present Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan. Each view demonstrates a natural or historic feature of the landscape that helps provide the area around Duns Tew with its unique character. It is considered that each view can be supported for inclusion as an Important View within the emerging neighbourhood plan.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Plan showing Development Pressure on Ardley



A: ALBION LAND proposal:

270,000 sq.m of warehousing. On two sites either side of the A43 adjacent to Cherwell Services. Planning applications 21/03267/OUT and 2 others submitted 2021 and their rebuttal of objections published March 2022.

B: TRITAX SYMMETRY PARK proposal:

"up to 300,000 sq.m" warehousing, adjacent to Baynards Green. Planning application 22/01340/OUT submitted May 2022.

C: OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE (SRFI) proposal:

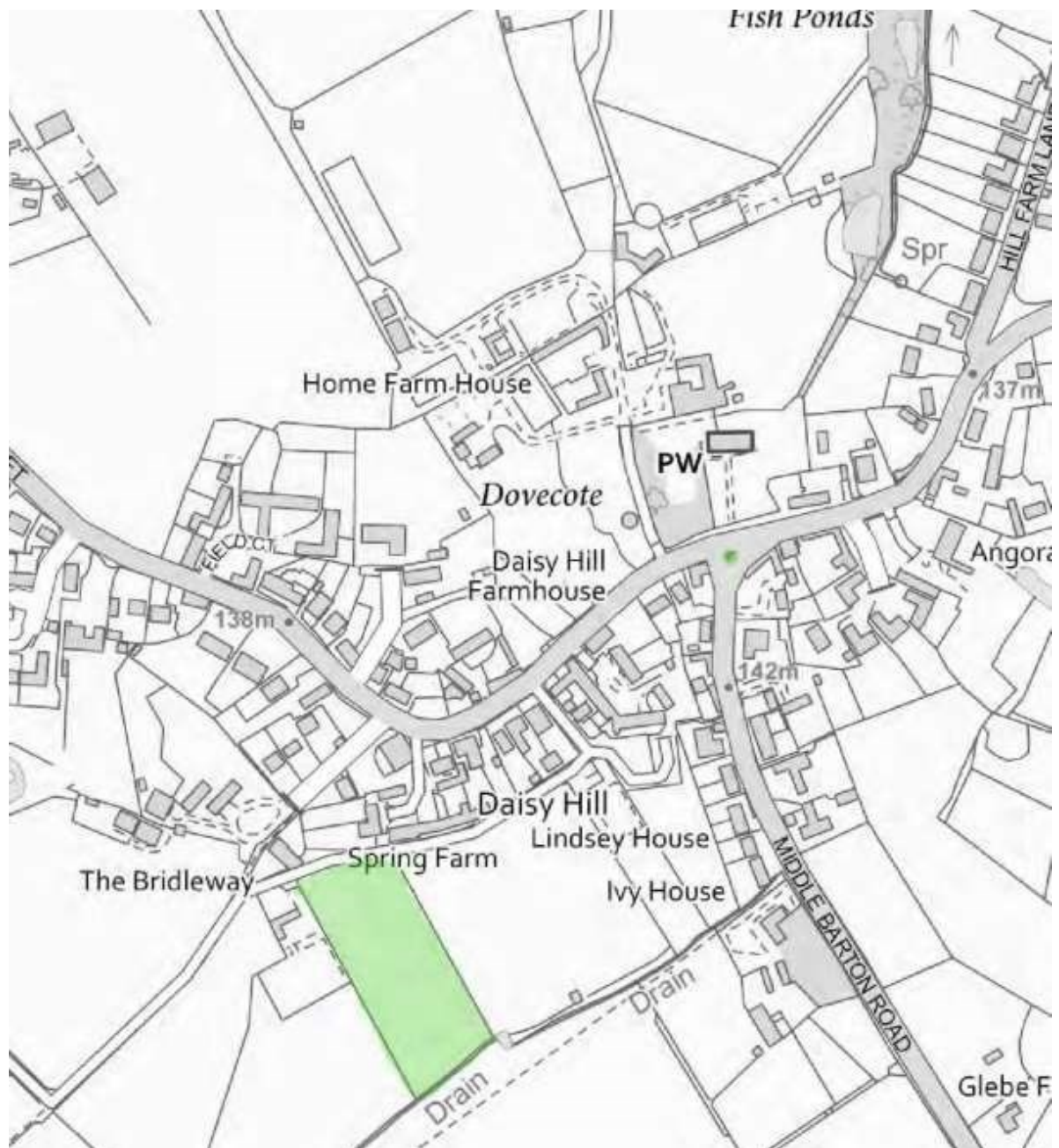
604,000 sq.m of warehousing plus rail interchange, to the south of Ardley. Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to be decided by Transport Minister. Submission to the PINS in early 2023.

Appendix 2 – Volunteer Assessments of Nominated Areas for Local Green Space Designation

Local Green Space

Duns Tew Thornton's Field

Local Green Space	
Site address	Thornton's Field, off Daisy Hill, Duns Tew
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	It's in the centre of the village and the conservation area therefore easily accessible for all.
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- it's registered with Cherwell as an asset of community value- it's a recreational area for walking and enjoying other leisure activities- it provides an attractive outlook for surrounding residences- the land allows access to a protected view/vista- there is an opportunity for wildlife and flora/fauna to remain untouched and grow- the land is grassland with some recently planted trees and is well maintained by the owners.
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	Yes.



Local Green Space

Duns Tew Triangle site

Local Green Space	
Site address	The village triangle, by St. Mary Magdalene Church, 75 Main Street, Duns Tew.
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Very much so
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- it is part of the setting and character of a significant building in the village being opposite the church- it provides the space for the annual village Remembrance Day service, and although very small, is the nearest we have to a village green- it's within the conservation area in the heart of the village- it provides an attractive space with Spring bulbs that have been planted
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	.Very much local, and very small – less than 0.1ha.



Local Green Space

Fritwell

Local Green Space	
Site address	<p>A small parcel of land at the end of North Street off Somerton Road at western edge of Fritwell.</p> <p>Area coloured yellow on the accompanying map.</p> <p>To be known as “Fritwell Heights”.</p>
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	<p>Yes, immediately next to settlement area and behind the last house at the western end of the village.</p>
Is the site demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?	<p>Fritwell Footpath no.9 leads from the historic II* St. Olave's Church in the heart of the conservation area across ancient stone stiles. The path then heads northwest, uphill through tranquil grassland often grazed by sheep or cows, towards the highest point of the village, before emerging near the village gates at the western end of North Street.</p> <p>The site marked for Local Green Space on the accompanying map is the field area (marked in yellow) towards the top of the slope and commands views back across the village and surrounding rural landscape.</p> <p>Fritwell is unique in the area for retaining a strongly defined historic L-shaped settlement, and from this vantage point the layout of the village, which originally consisted of two manorial estates, can be clearly seen.</p> <p>The footpath across this area is popular with Fritwell residents and has good connectivity with the network of footpaths which criss-cross this polyfocal village; linking the G II* Manor House (historically DeLisle Manor) at the western side of the village and the site of Ormond Manor (now Lodge Farm) at the southern end and enabling residents to transverse the village to the Church, school, village hall, shop/post office and access to other outlying paths.</p> <p>Fritwell Parish Council requests that “Fritwell Heights”, the area marked on the accompanying map, should be</p>

	<p>designated as Local Green Space for the reasons described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the highest point commanding views of village and rural landscape • Illustrates the historically significant pattern of the settlement • Is immediately adjacent to Fritwell's settlement area • Crossed by a popular footpath • Tranquillity and rural aspect • Good connectivity to all parts of the village, its amenities and wider footpath network
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land?	The area requested is the highest of the 3 small fields that divide this grassy area.



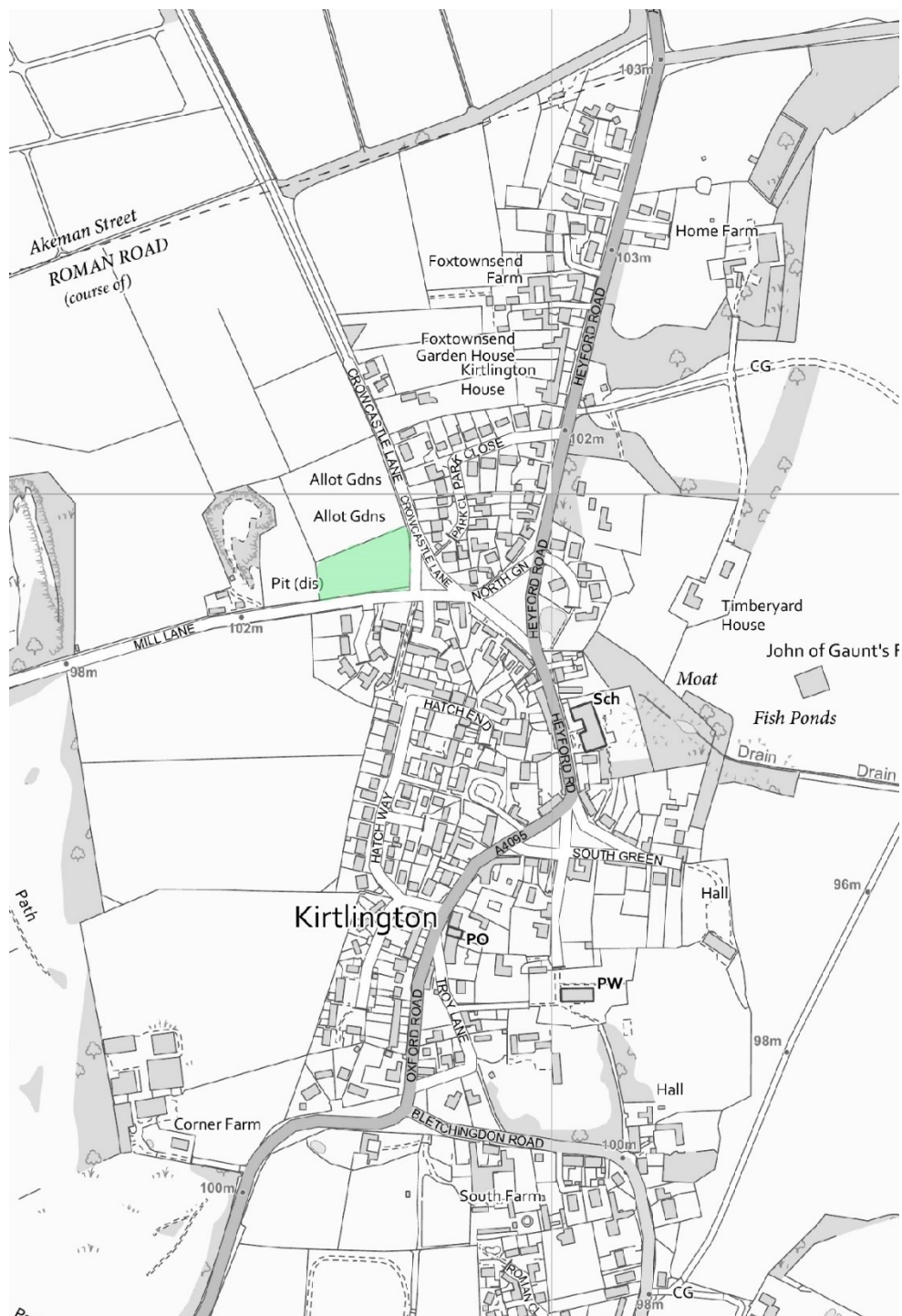
Local Green Space

Kirtlington Community Orchard KT5

Local Green Space	
Site address	Land to the west of Crowcastle Lane and north of the Mill Lane bridleway, Kirtlington.
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes. It is immediately south of the village allotments which were designated as LGS KT1 in the 2019 NP and west of the village pound [?designated village green status?].
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<p>The site is owned by Kirtlington Parish Council and held for the benefit of the village. It is in a tranquil location and the whole field had been made available as a grazing meadow to villagers for many years, either free of charge or at a peppercorn rental.</p> <p>In December 2020, part of the field (0.19ha) was planted as a community orchard with the support of The National Tree Council, the Parish Council, Oxfordshire County Council and villagers. Twenty-four fruit trees were planted and these are maintained by volunteers from the village and children from Kirtlington Primary School.</p> <p>In the 2021 flowering season, 38 species of wildflower were identified (excluding grasses and hedgerow species). Also, in 2021, a species-rich, native hedge was planted which divided the field in two. The orchard part of the grass is now mown by scythe by volunteers in August and September. The grass in other part of the field (0.28ha) remains as a grazing meadow, as the land there is unsuited to fruit trees. It is currently 'rented' annually for £1 to a villager for the grazing of two horses.</p> <p>The horse manure from the grazed part of the field is available free to the tenants of the neighbouring village allotments and to other villagers. [Wood pruned from the hedges in both parts of the field is available as free firewood to villagers?].</p> <p>The orchard is accessible to the public at any time and the central gathering area has been furnished with a picnic table and two benches.</p> <p>On a late January afternoon every year, the village Wassail celebration takes place on the site and all villagers are invited. There is mulled cider, traditional Wassail music and singing, and Morris dancers perform in Crowcastle Lane beside the site</p>

Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.

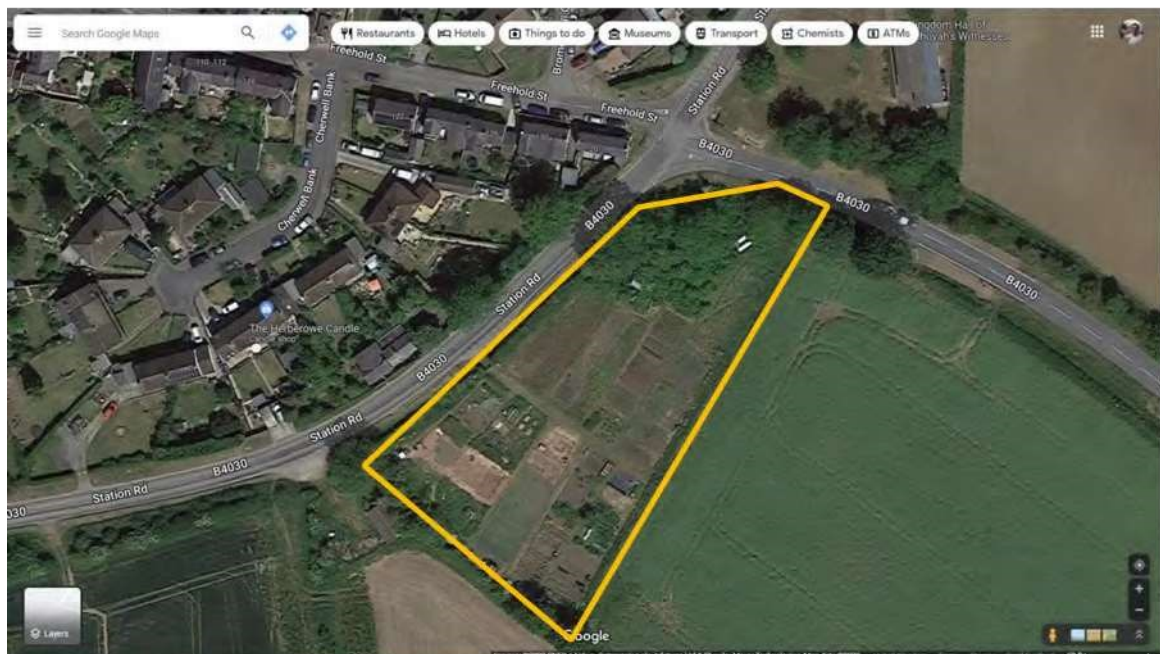
The site is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. The total area is 0.47ha.



Lower Heyford and Caulcott – Local Green Spaces 2023

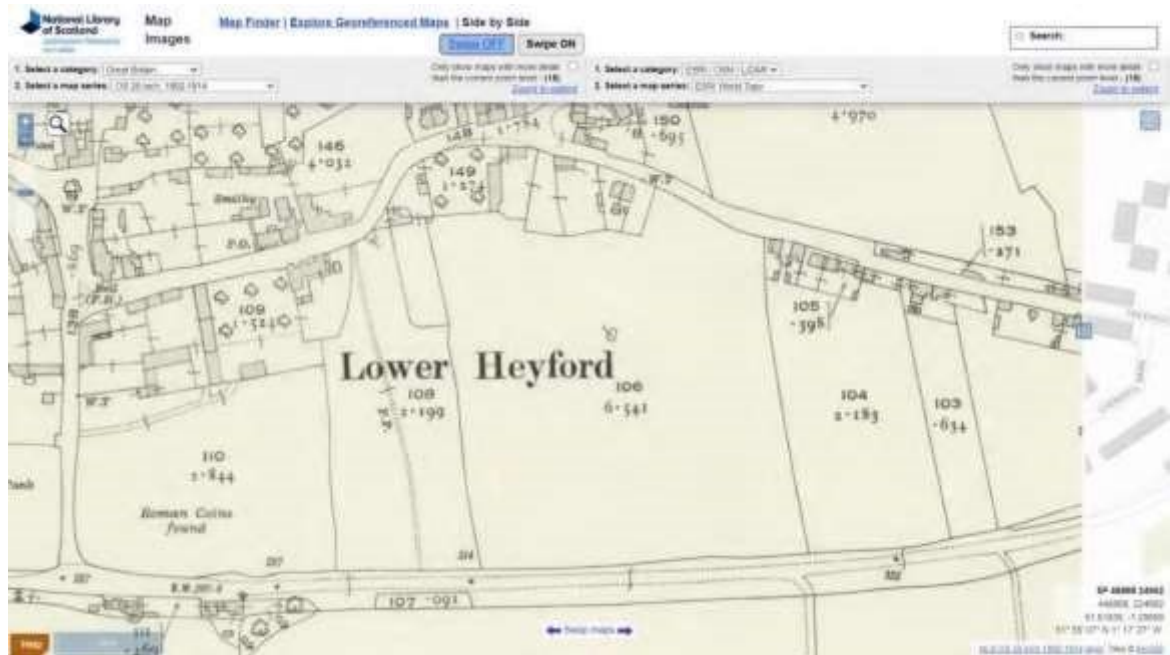
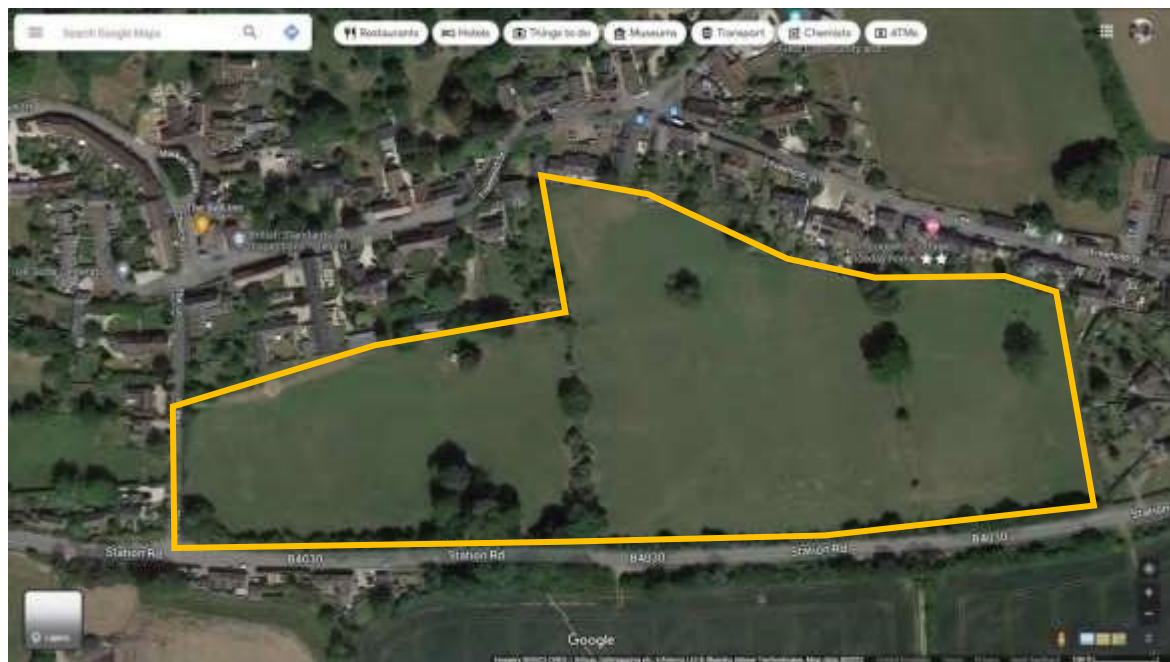
ALLOTMENTS

Location	Station Road, by Freehold Street crossroads facing Toll Gate Cottage and Cherwell Bank properties.
Good proximity	Yes
Not extensive	Yes
Special to the community	Recreational value, richness of wildlife
In conservation area	Yes
Additional information	The village allotments have been in continuous use for over 100 years and are well utilised by parishioners. Provides a social space for physical fitness, with both recreational and therapeutic value, as well as the health benefits from organic vegetable and fruit production. The site includes wildflower and wooded wildlife safe areas and a community orchard with heritage varieties.



PAINE'S FIELD

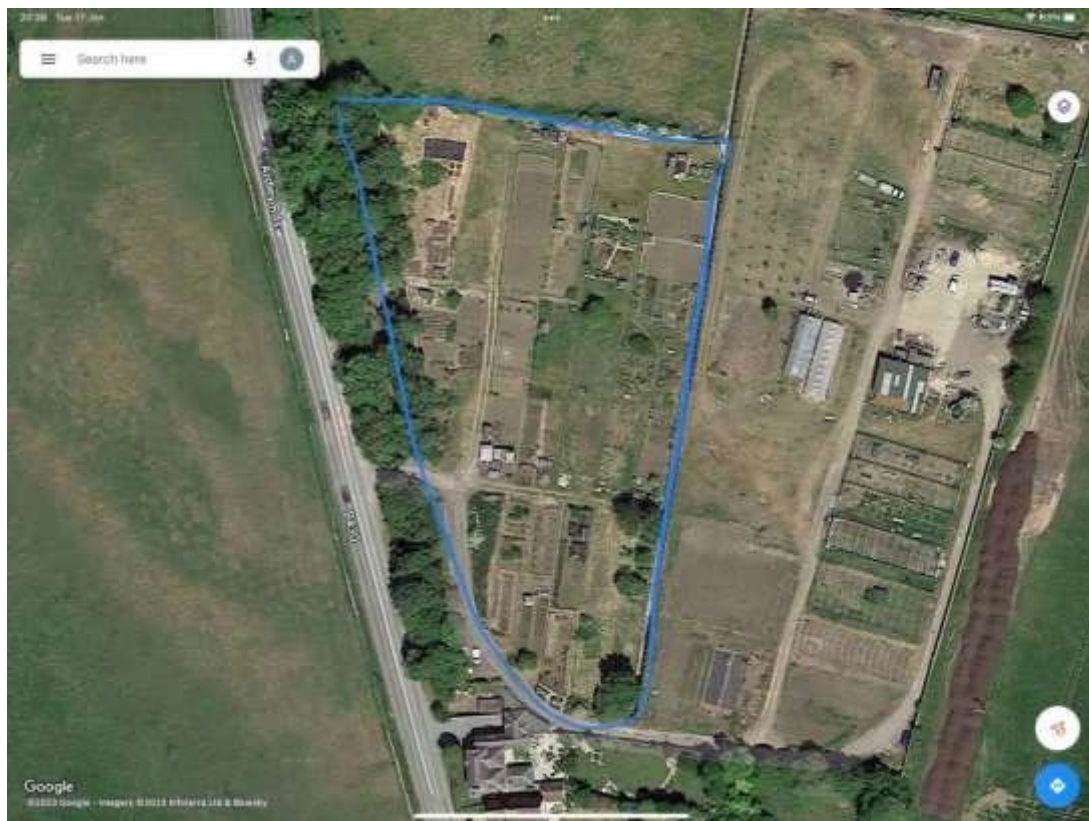
Location	Completely enclosed between Station Road, Freehold Street and The Lane, Paine's field is accessed via the public footpath from Freehold Street.
Good proximity	Yes
Not extensive	Yes
Special to the community	Richness of wildlife, Beauty, Historical significance, Recreational value
In conservation area	Yes
Additional information	<p>Paine's field lies to the rear of Paine's Cottage and the many other listed dwellings abutting the field. It comprises unimproved permanent pasture and could be classed as ancient grassland since it has never been cultivated. The field outline has remained the same since medieval times and, indeed, silver and other Roman coins were found during the 1900s, confirming its historical significance [1]</p> <p>As an unspoilt tract of ancient grassland, Paine's field forms a critical part of our social history. It provides a local sense of place, and is also what <i>Inside Ecology</i> [2] calls the 'glue habitat' for established plant and wildlife communities, thus forming a reservoir for biodiversity and a link/corridor habitat to the rest of the valley.</p> <p>As well as a regularly used public footpath, Paines field is bordered and crossed by ancient hedgerows or hedgebank remnants, and includes mature trees and native wild plants. The hedgerows have not been trimmed and so have enhanced its biodiversity. The richness and beauty of this environment is particularly valued and enjoyed by villagers for recreational walking.</p> <p>Most ancient grassland communities are often tiny relics of much larger areas, so the extent of Paine's Field indicates it is a rare habitat that should be recognised and preserved complete.</p> <p>(https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol1/pp330-345)</p> <p>[1] https://insideecology.com/2018/04/23/ancient-grasslandsinengland-a-summary/</p>



Local Green Space

MIDDLETON STONEY - Allotments

Local Green Space	
Site address	Allotments, Ardley Road, Middleton Stoney
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes. It is within five minutes' walk of most of the local community's homes.
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<p>The site is owned by the Villiers Park Educational Trust, and leased to the parish council. The lease hasyears to run.</p> <p>There are approximately 20 allotment plots, of which only one is currently vacant. The allotments were created in 19..... and are greatly valued by the local community for their recreational value and their importance for food growing.</p> <p>Allotments are one of the examples given in Government guidance about candidates for designation as Local Green Spaces.</p>
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	The site is located just to the north of the settlement and can be regarded as part of the village. The site is not extensive, being about 1.1ha. in area.



Proposed Local Green Spaces

Somerton

Site details	Somerton Children's play area	Proposed allotment area
Name and address of the proposed site (please attach a site plan showing boundary, access to the site & area that the site will serve)	Somerton Playground --- Ardley Road Somerton Oxfordshire OX25 -----	Somerton Allotments and Recreational Area (SARA) ---- Aston View Somerton Oxfordshire OX25
Site area (ha)		
Owner of the site	Cherwell District Council	Ian Corner (a local farmer and landowner) now but the Parish Council in process of purchasing
Is the owner aware of the proposal to designate their land	Yes	No not yet but will discuss at next PC meeting
Is the owner supportive of the proposal to designate their land?	Yes	
Site History		
What is the site currently used for?	The site is leased to Somerton Parish Council and is currently a designated children's play area and has been for over 36 years.	The site is currently agricultural land that has been inactive for several years due to the awkward space but is in the process of being amicably sold to Somerton Parish Council by a local farmer who owns the land

Is the proposal to designate the site as a Local Green Space supported by any of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Council • Local Community Groups • Community leaders If yes, please provide details	The designation of this site is supported by: Parish Council as per last MCNP	The designation of this site is supported by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish council • ??The resident local MP and attorney general • ??The parochial church council • Somerton Village Hall Committee • Somerton Social Club Committee • Somerton Women's Independent Group
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Site details	Somerton Children's play area	Proposed allotment area
		• Local Somerton residents
The Designation Tests		
Does the site already have planning permission for development? If yes, please provide details	No	No
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan	No	No

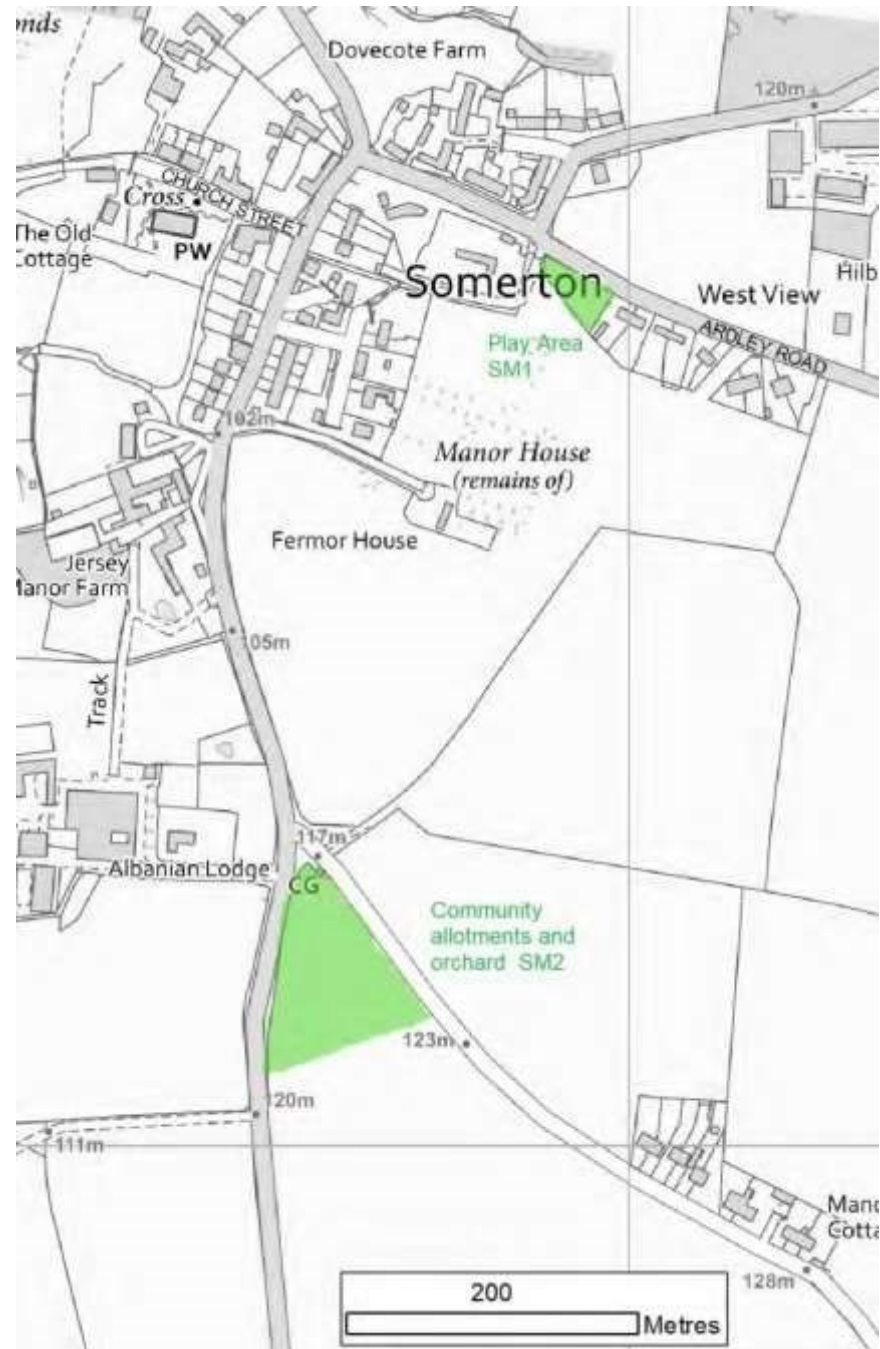
Is the site reasonably close to the community it serves	Yes, the site is near most residential properties within the village of Somerton. It is also close to the two main focal points in the village where people naturally congregate i.e., the church and village hall. The nearest residential properties lie immediately adjacent to the space on three of the four sides of the space, and it is adjacent to	Yes, the sites lies on the ----- side of the village. The nearest properties lie further along the road upon which the site is situated. It is also situated on Heyford Road which is the main road that runs through the village.
	Public right of way.	
Can the site be shown to be demonstrably special to the local community?	Yes	Yes

<p>The proposed designation of spaces must be based on evidence to demonstrate why the green area is demonstrably special to the local community</p>	<p>This is the only space in the village to provide a recreational area for young children. It is also the only space in the village that lends itself to providing safe recreational facilities that include fixed play features such as climbing frames etc for young children.</p>	<p>The space (2.1 Acres) has several purposes to provide allotments, a communal orchard a small meadow area and outdoor space for communal events gatherings Research undertaken has demonstrated there is a demand for allotments amongst residents, therefore this space will enable the parish council to meet its statutory duty to provide enough allotment plots. The space will also provide a small space for children to play ball games. Ball games are not possible within the existing play area because of the limited space. The communal orchard and the space for communal events will provide a focal point and a gathering space where people and the rest of nature can successfully come together. The</p>
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Site details	Somerton Children's play area	Proposed allotment area
		harvest from the orchard will be used to benefit residents.

Is the site an extensive tract of land (please provide details of the size of the site in hectares)	The space is unobtrusive, proportionate to the size of the village and has a local feel to it. It is contained within a clearly defined boundary. The space is surrounded by hedges and trees to connect visually and physically with a remote rural village.	The site will retain a local feel and be in keeping with the rurality of the area. The proposed use of the area will enhance biodiversity with the wildlife and insect population that it will attract and help to facilitate a biodiversity corridor to the next village are. The size of the space 2.1 Acres is proportionate to the size of the village.
If site/ space was designated can the site endure beyond the end of the plan period?	Yes, this is one of the few outdoor spaces in the village that provides an opportunity for young people and their parents / guardians to meet and socialise outdoors. It is important in supporting the maintenance of mental wellbeing, physical health and provides a safe exercise space for young children.	Yes, this site will provide facilities both statutory and good to have facilities that do not currently exist within the village
Is there a management plan in place for the site?	The Parish Council manage the site and a subcommittee of committed parents is in the process of being set up.	Initially the Parish Council but ultimately the new Somerton Allotments Recreational Association (SARA) group will manage the site reporting back to the PC under a devolved management model based on NSALG guidelines.
Who will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the land	The Parish Council	Parish Council / SARA

<p>Please provide any other information that you consider would be helpful to the assessment</p>	<p>Following the national COVID pandemic we have learnt that the provision of outdoor meeting spaces is important and healthier in preventing the spread of seasonal viruses.</p>	<p>Over the last couple of years, the demographic of the village has changed resulting in a significant rise in children and young people. The demand for a recreational and outdoor communal space has become a higher priority than previously. The cost of living is also encouraging people to take a keener interest in growing their own fruit and vegetables.</p>
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Local Green Space

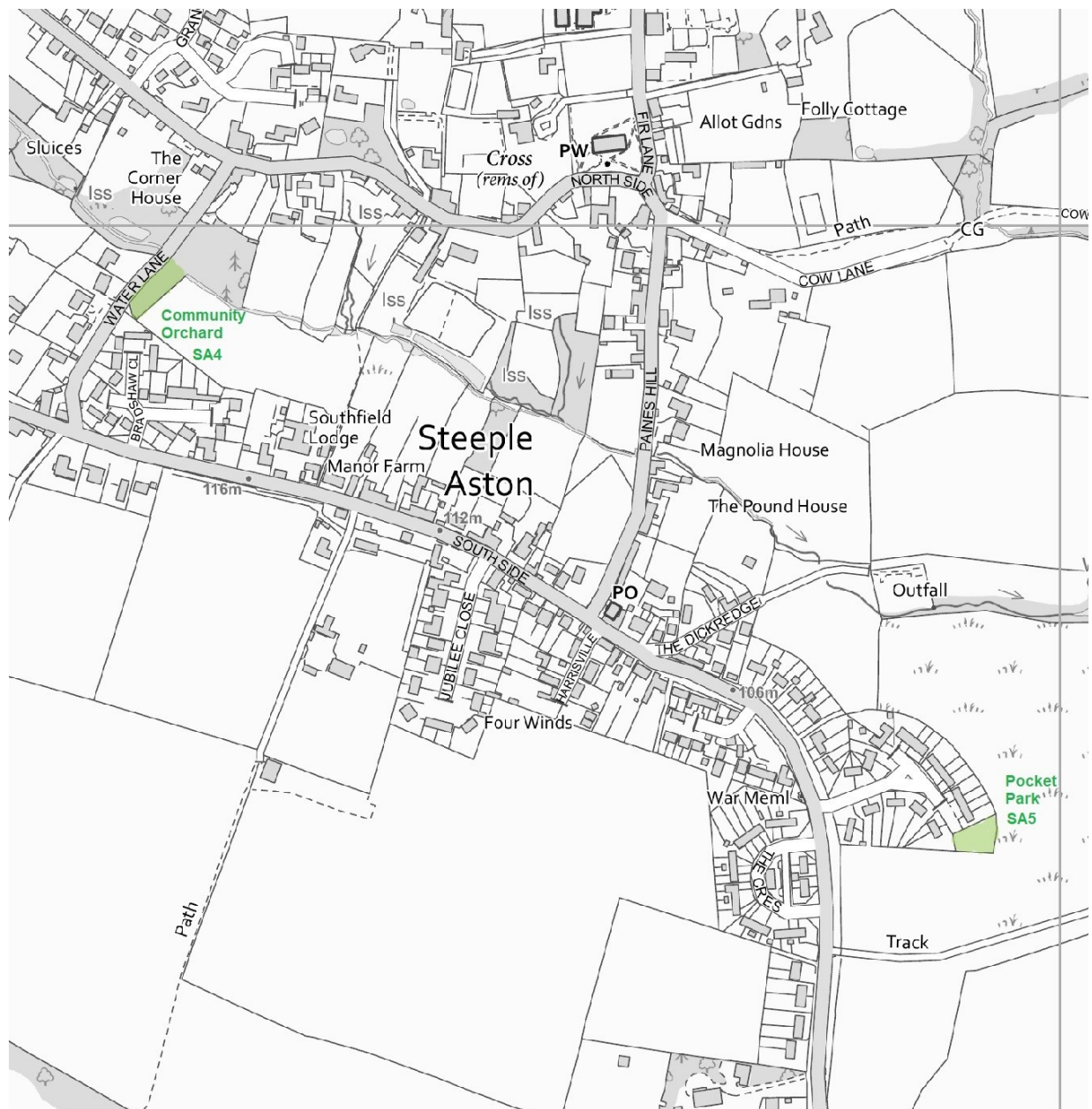
Steeple Aston SA4

Local Green Space	
Site address	Water Lane Community Orchard
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes – central in the village
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<p>This small area of land was gifted to the parish council in 2022 to ensure that it becomes available for the local community to enjoy in perpetuity. It has been, and will remain, an orchard – accessible through a gate in a low wall by the pavement on Water Lane, and visually already well-connected to the community. The land is part of the “green heart” of the village, of which another element – the Field adjacent to Payne’s Hill (SA3) – was designated in NP1. Both are within the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The parish council has created a management committee to take forward plans. The orchard was opened for community enjoyment in March 2023. Ideas for events and educational use are being developed. There is already significant support for the proposal from the local community.</p>
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	Yes. Area approx. 0.1ha.

Local Green Space

Steeple Aston SA5

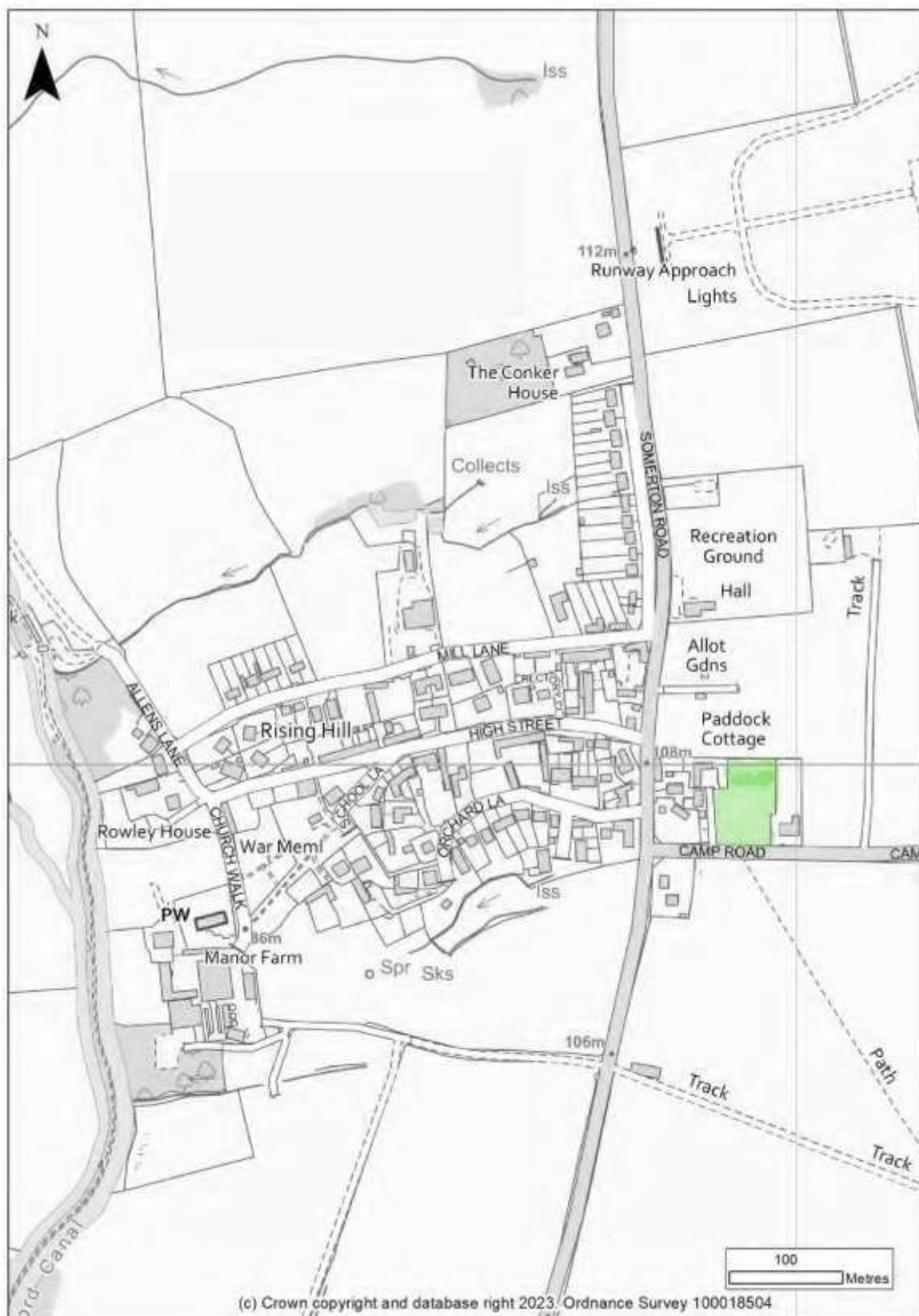
Local Green Space	
Site address	Pocket Park, Nizewell Head
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes, immediately adjacent to dwellings.
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	<p>The Pocket Park was created by the local authority in the 1960s when the adjacent council estate of Nizewell Head was built.</p> <p>The space is just large enough to contain swings and goalposts, and is largely grassed. It is much valued by the local community (confirmed by a survey carried out in 2020) mainly because it offers a safe recreational area for children from the immediate area.</p> <p>The main recreational facilities in the village are a 15 minute walk from this estate. Although the park is designated as a Local Space by Cherwell, it would benefit from the additional protection of LGS status. The park is leased by Cherwell to the parish council.</p>
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	Yes. Less than 0.1ha.



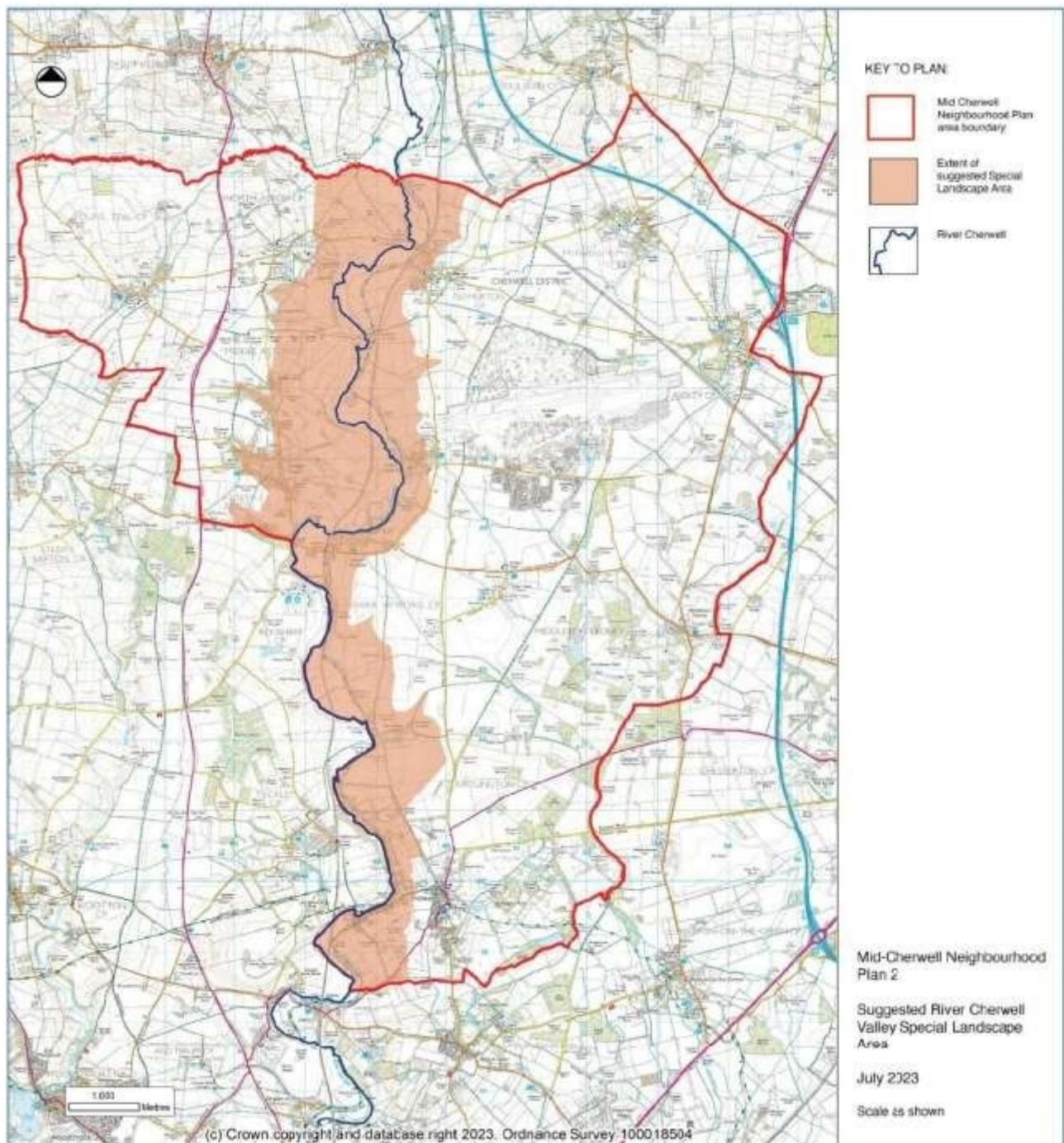
Local Green Space

Upper Heyford The Paddock

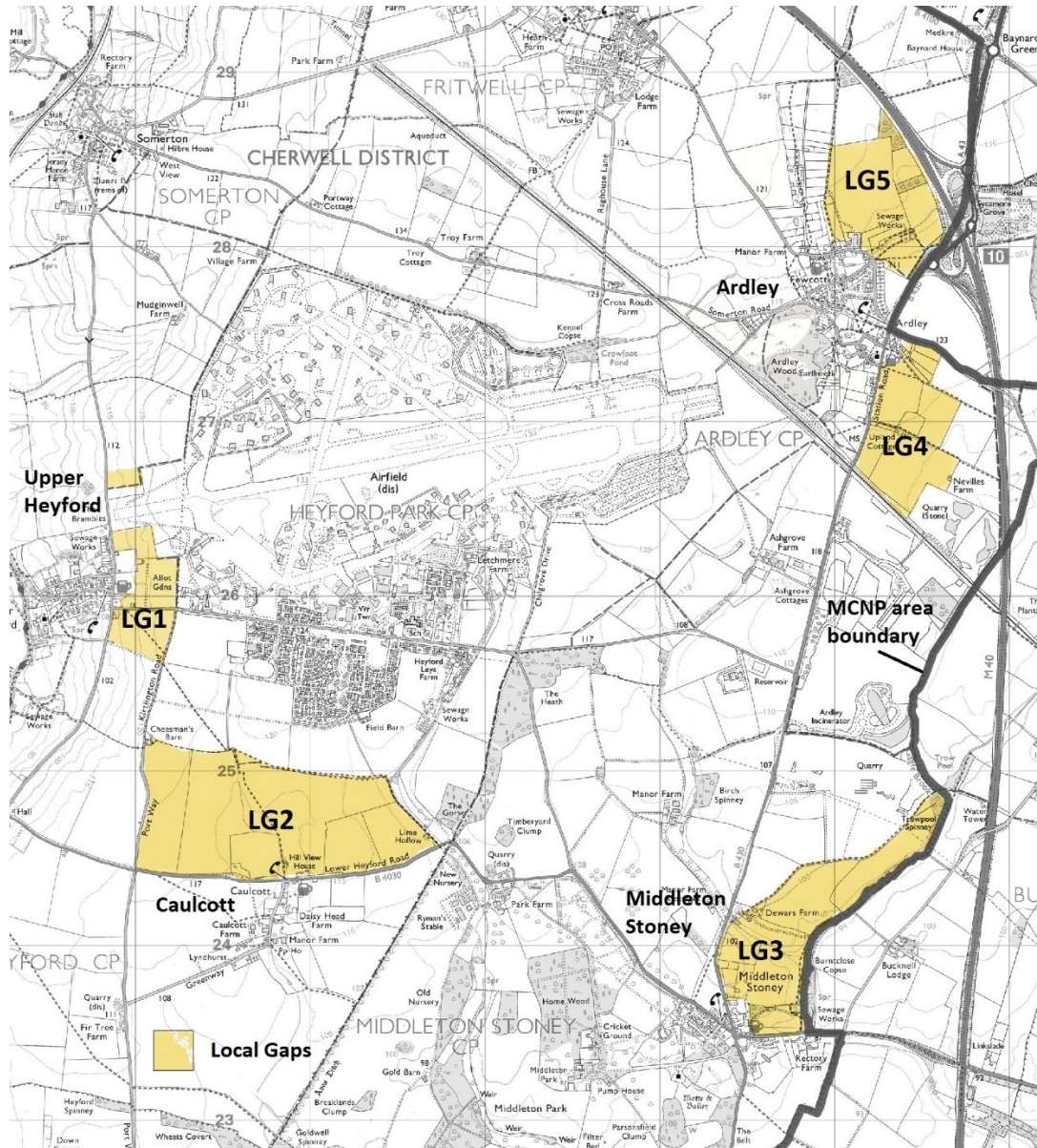
Local Green Space	
Site address	The Paddock, Upper Heyford. OX25 5LJ
Is the site in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes within the village of Upper Heyford.
How is the site demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, for example because of its: - beauty - historic significance - recreational value (including as a playing field) - tranquillity or - richness of its wildlife?	The site is a paddock which has been left for many years to rewild. It is a haven for wildlife with a varied habitat, including hedgerow and wildflowers. It has created an abundance of wildlife, including many types of birds, insects and small mammals. It offers a tranquil setting for wildlife and for residents to observe the wildlife, while waiting for a bus, or to just contemplate quietly over the paddock gate. It is a lovely place to hear a wide range of birdsong.
Is the site local in character and is not an extensive tract of land? State its area if known.	The site is a small paddock completely at ease with its rural setting. Approx 0.4ha.



3 Plan Showing Special Landscape Area Nomination



4 Plan of Proposed Local Gaps



5 Suggested Important Views – Somerton



Appendix 6 – Viewpoint Images - Somerton



#1 Looking North along canal, showing boat sheds and water through reeds.



#2 Looking S/W along canal towards Upper Harford



#3 From River canal looking north towards 'St James' church, Burnham



#4 The Station Station: looking S/W towards Burnham Road canal bridge



#5 From S/W across Burnham Ring road and across the Channel bridge and Tiddington



#6 From Burnham looking across the Canal at Tiddington



#7 From Burnham looking across the Canal at Tiddington



#8 From Burnham looking across the Canal at Tiddington



#9 View South-west over Redgrave all Farms



#10 Footpath to Redwell via Tree Farm



#11 Looking North-west from Footpath

Appendix 7 – Suggested Important Views – Fritwell



Appendix 8 – Viewpoint Images - Fritwell

Descriptions and Importance of Fritwell Viewing Points and Vistas marked on the map

(The number is the viewing point and the splay of the triangle indicates the direction of the vista)

1. Raghouse Lane is a narrow, single-track road from the village of Fritwell and climbing gently southwards towards Heyford airbase / Heyford Park at the top of the limestone plateau – a popular route for walkers, dogs, horses, cyclists and agricultural vehicles associated with the surrounding farms.

Looking back northwards towards the village, the traditional agricultural landscape is of hedgerows surrounding large open fields of grassland and low-growing crops under expansive skies.

2. Walking back northwards along Raghouse Lane towards the village offers long views across the farmland on either side together with trees, hedgerows, birds, butterflies, wild animals and a wild-life pond. On approaching the settlement a narrow s-bend in the road leads to the older traditional cottages and other properties in this area giving a traditional and visually attractive entrance to the Fritwell settlement area.

3. Footpath 219/1 leaves the village southwards towards Troy farm and when crossing the small bridge over the stream the view looking back to the north shows the agricultural fields and the treescape bordering the village from this direction.

4. Fritwell Footpath 219/9 leads from the historic II* St. Olaves Church in the heart of the conservation area across ancient stone stiles. The path then heads north-west, uphill through tranquil grassland often grazed by sheep, cows or horses, towards the highest point of the village, before emerging near the village gates at the western end of North Street and commanding views back across the village and surrounding rural landscape. Fritwell is unique in the area for retaining a strongly defined historic settlement, and from this vantage point the layout of the village, which originally consisted of two manorial estates (II* Manor House historically DeLisle Manor on North Street and the site of Ormond Manor now Lodge Farm along East Street at the southern end of Fritwell) can be clearly seen.

5. North Street leaves the village westwards towards Somerton. Views (eastwards) back towards the settlement are wide and expansive, characterised by traditional agricultural landscape of low-growing crops, grassland and grazing animals. On entering the village the low density of the approach gives further opportunities for rural views between houses and at gateways.

6. Significant vista overlooking the Cherwell Valley, Clifton and a Victorian viaduct. Often used as a route for cyclists, runners and walkers.

Fritwell - Suggested Important Views



Viewpoint 1 - View from Raghouse Lane railway bridge looking north



Viewpoint 2 - View from Raghouse Lane at the approach to Fritwell

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2

Fritwell - Suggested Important Views



Viewpoint 3 - View looking north-west from public right of way 219/1



Viewpoint 4 - View looking south-east from public right of way 219/6

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2

Fritwell - Suggested Important Views



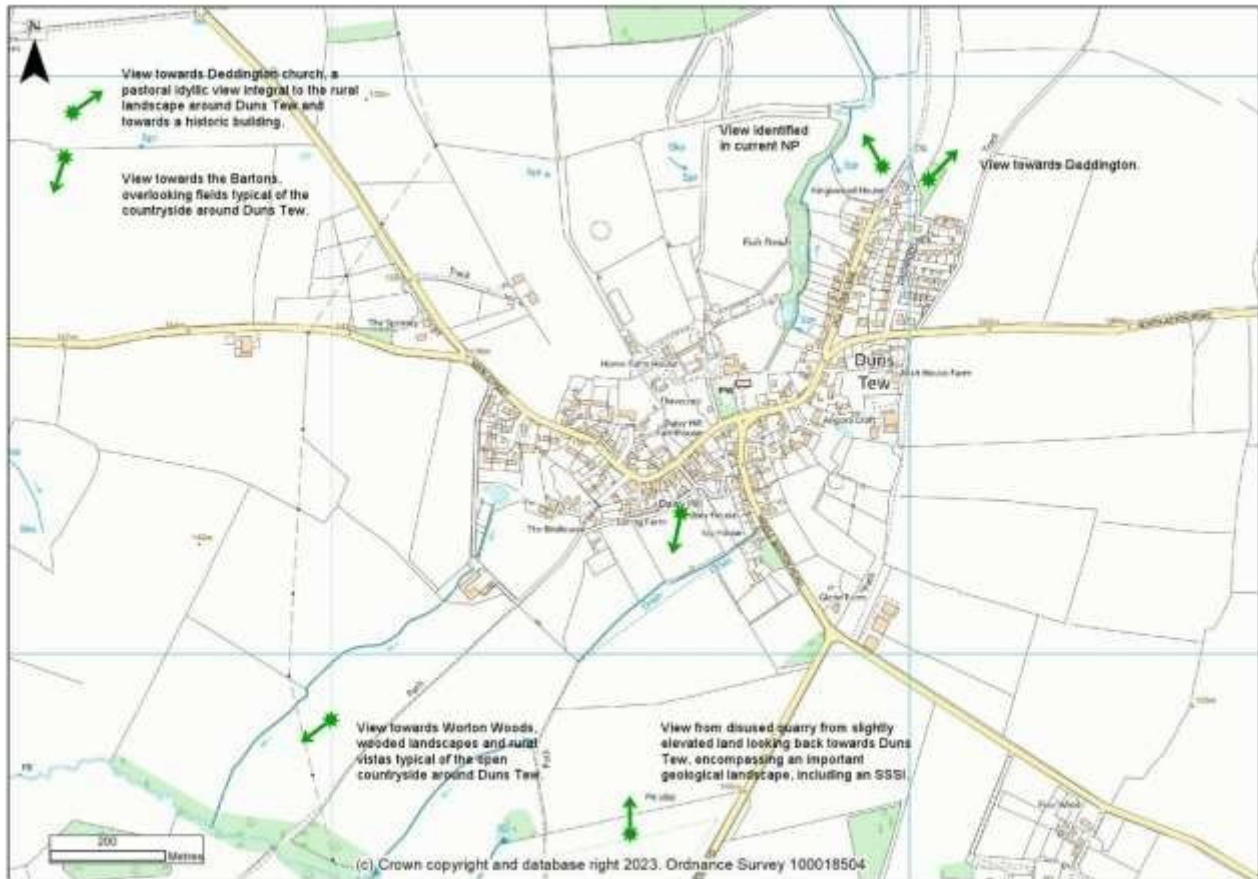
Viewpoint 5 - View looking east along North Street



Viewpoint 6 - View looking west from public right of way 349/2/10

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 3

Appendix 9 – Suggested Important Views – Duns Tew



Appendix 10 – Viewpoint Images – Duns Tew

Duns Tew - Suggested Important Views



Viewpoint 1 - View from public right of way 195/7/10 as it leads northwards from Hill Farm Lane, Duns Tew



Viewpoint 2 - View from the purpose made viewing platform in the former sand quarry off Duns Tew Road

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2

Duns Tew - Suggested Important Views



Viewpoint 3 - View looking north from public right of way 195/2/10



Viewpoint 4 - View looking southwards from public right of way 195/1/10

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2

Duns Tew - Suggested Important Views



Viewpoint 5 - View looking northwards from public right of way 195/1/10



Viewpoint 6 - Alternative view looking northwards from public right of way 195/1/10

Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2