

Wootton by Woodstock Neighbourhood Plan

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INTRODUCTION: THE CHARACTER OF WOOTTON AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Wootton village is located to the northwest of Oxford in an area to the north of the Thames. Archaeological evidence indicates the land has been farmed since the bronze age with continual evidence of agriculture in and around the village through Saxon times to the medieval age.

Many of the residents of Wootton village feel incredibly privileged to live in a place where there is a real sense of community. Village amenities including the community shop, the public houses, the church, the sports hall, sports fields, allotments, the village hall and a well-used area of land owned by the Wootton Conservation Trust. All this contributes to a highly connected social network where people know each other, enjoy their leisure time with each other and support each other during times of adversity. This sense of community is unusually strong in Wootton, and something treasured by all of us. Given the pressures of development on the districts surrounding Oxford and the very limited infrastructure, especially related to transport, it was felt that the village residents should give their views on what constitutes sustainable planning for the future of Wootton. The production of the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan was agreed by the Wootton Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Plans are important tools for planners, planning committees and developers as well as communities. They allow communities to identify what is important to them and how they would like to see the places where they live develop in the future. They identify how a community can develop sustainably including consideration of human well-being, protection of biodiversity and minimising climate footprint both in terms of building and in subsequent operation of settlements (e.g. sustainable transport links).

This Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprising residents of Wootton, including representatives from the Parish Council. The plan has been prepared based on local knowledge by local people. During the preparation of the Neighbourhood plan village residents were kept informed of progress and consulted on their thoughts on what policies and wider considerations were appropriate for Wootton. We hope the results of this process lays out guidance for a vision of the future sustainable development of Wootton Village owned by the village residents.

It remains for us to thank all those involved including the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the residents of Wootton who have contributed their time and thoughts to the completion of this process. Too many people contributed to this Plan to be thanked individually so we hope that you will forgive us for not naming each one. They include all those who either ran or participated in the various workshops and public meetings, those who created, distributed and analysed the Village Survey, helped at the exhibitions, provided noticeboards, and communicated progress via Outreach or social media.

Our final thanks go to all those who take time to read, comment on and hopefully support this Plan. We recognise that there are constraints on what can be done but that the Plan strives to build on all that is good about Wootton to make it an even better place to live, work and visit. Many thanks to all.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Wootton Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), on 8 December 2020. The area coincides with the parish boundary (see Fig 1 page 3). The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations of 2012 (as amended).

1.2. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to March 2043. The Plan will form part of the development plan for the West Oxfordshire District, alongside the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2043. The Neighbourhood Plan has been developed alongside and with reference to the emerging Local Plan for WODC.

1.3. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to manage the quality of development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes part of the Council's statutory development plan and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided in the neighbourhood area. Plans should therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning. Although there is scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans should meet all the relevant basic conditions (see below).

1.4. In addition, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to an independent examiner that it has successfully engaged with the local community and stakeholders in preparing the Plan. If the examiner is satisfied that it has, and considers the Plan meets the above conditions, then the Plan will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority (over 50%) of the turnout votes in favour of the Plan, then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the neighbourhood area.

The plan should fulfil certain requirements and recognise certain conditions:

Does it conform to National Planning Policy and the Strategic Planning Policy?

Does it meet the guidelines on process and consultation?

Does it impact any listed buildings or building of special interest?

Is it in a Conservation Area?

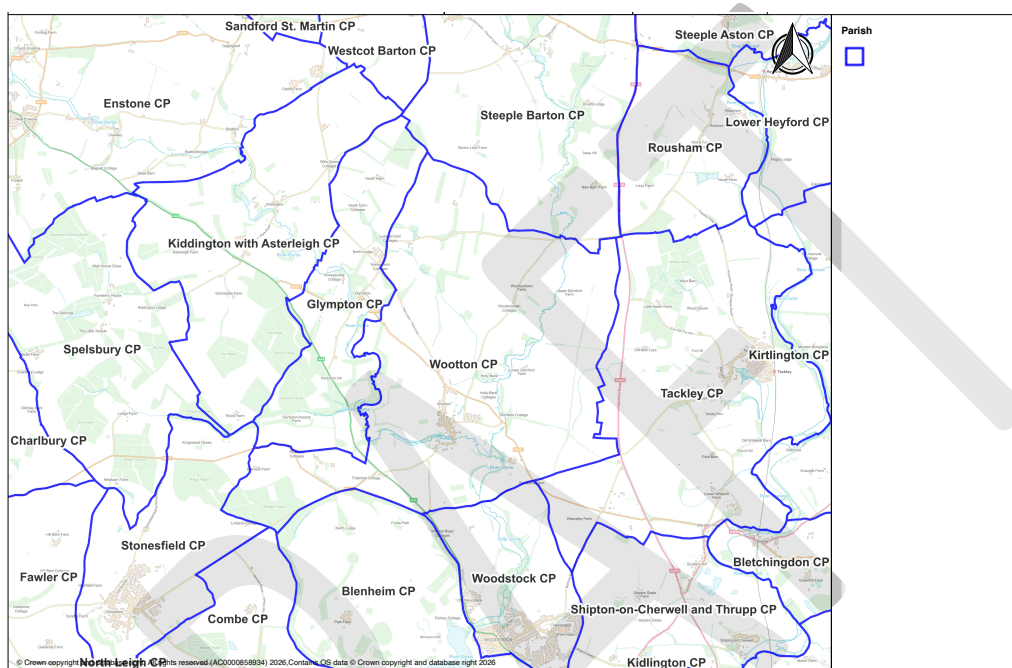


FIGURE 1 - DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

The village of Wootton lies to the north of the Thames, in the District of West Oxfordshire. Wootton is a village of approximately 250 households. The 2011 census recorded a population of 605 people.

Demographic statistics are available for Wootton from the 2021 census (see Appendix D for detail) and the Survey largely reflects the demographic from the census.

Census demographic information

Population of Wootton Parish in 2022 was 580 in 270 households.

The age profile is largely similar to England as a whole with significant differences being above the statistical normal in the 40-60 age group and below in the 20-40 age group.

Household size and composition is very similar to the rest of England. 66% of dwellings in Wootton accommodate one family and 30% accommodate a single person.

Greater differences from the overall census for England emerge **with accommodation type (flats, houses) and number of vehicles**.

In Wootton 97% of people live in a house or single storey dwelling, (77% in England)

65% of people in Wootton have 2 or more vehicles, (36% England)

Additional data collected by the survey and differences from the census data.

Age profile

The survey asked different questions related to age profile (for ease when completing). Of the respondents, almost half (48%) were in the 45-67 age group. This does reflect the pattern of the population shown in the census figures. However a large proportion of responses came from those over 67 and over 80 who are thus over-represented in the survey data. However, with 20-40 year olds being a smaller than average number in Wootton, they are quite well represented at 27% of survey responses.

Length of time living in Wootton

Just over half those responding to the survey have lived in Wootton for more than 16 years and only 16% are new to the village at less than 5 years.

Owners vs renters

94% of those responding are owner occupiers and their main residence is Wootton.

Village description and character

Wootton has a valley-side setting north of the river Glyme. It has a relatively compact core, with sporadic later development and several dispersed elements, such as Holly Bank House and Hordley, scattered throughout the surrounding landscape. The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ – this is addressed in the Design Code in Appendix A. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character.

The area has a highly distinctive open rolling landform and Wootton is one of a number of villages set partly in a valley extending up steep hillsides. Fields tend to be large and regular diminishing in size near the village. Dating from Enclosure, they are generally bounded by dry stone walling or hedgerows which are a distinctive feature of the parish and in the village itself. Walling materials are typically Oolitic limestone, laid as uncoursed rubble, or squared and laid in courses, in a variety of bed widths and colours.

Distinctive building features include the famous, creamy limestone, which, together with the extensive use of limestone slates for roofs, creates built environments of strong local character and consistency. Long fronts, narrow gables, steeply pitched roofs and dormer windows are typical.

The proximity of Oxford is important to the development of Wootton because it has long been an area for employment for Wootton residents. The universities are themselves major employers and have driven the development of high technology companies including through surrounding science and industrial parks. Oxford is the regional retail centre although the lack of public transport provision and cost of parking in the city means that many people in Wootton use nearby villages or services centres for convenience shopping (e.g. Witney, Kidlington, Woodstock and Chipping Norton).

Transport is significant problem in West Oxfordshire. Wootton has limited access to public transport with a two bus stops outside the village the A44 and a relatively limited bus service into Woodstock, Oxford, Charlbury and Chipping Norton. Cycle routes are lacking. Reaching most destinations in the local area requires the use of roads, many of which are dangerous for cyclists. It is important that plans for development within Wootton and around it consider the impacts on the already significant traffic congestion problems in the vicinity of the village. Potential mitigations to reduce dependence on private motor vehicles are discussed in the traffic and transport section of the plan.

History

The name Wootton means a settlement or enclosure by the wood. Wootton was part of an Anglo-Saxon royal estate on the edge of the Wychwood Forest. The Copping Knoll Bowl Barrow, scheduled as having significant national importance in 1974, is located on the Glympton Estate, 2 miles north of Wootton. The prehistoric burial mound dates back to the bronze age, approximately 2400-1500BC. Part of Grim's Ditch has been found, located to the north of the village, a series of Iron Age earthworks. These were believed to have served as defensive barriers or territorial boundaries. The name Grim is believed to originate from the Anglo Saxons, who named the feature after "Grim", a nickname for Woden, the Anglo-Saxon god of war. Roman Akeman Street which linked Watling Street north of St Albans with the Fosseway at Cirencester, passed Wootton and no doubt led to the establishment of several villas close to its boundaries. Wootton has at least three in evidence: two located west of the village off the Charlbury Road, and one close to Sansom's Cottage, southeast of Wootton.

The population of Wootton was 45 in 1086, at the time of the Domesday Survey. The population then rose steadily until 1377, the black death era, when it was 144. The 17th century saw a steady rise, and a sharp rise in the 18th century due to the success of the Woodstock gloving industry. A decline due to economic fortunes in the mid 19th and 20th centuries led to a fall in village built development. In the 1960s 26 new council homes were built on the east side of the village. Infilling throughout the village took place throughout the 1970s with a housing development, Manor Court, off Castle Road. A private development, Marriott Close, was built in 2019.

A church aided school was founded circa 1835. The Revd Parrott and Revd Lee were behind its foundation. The Parrott and Lee foundation provided clothing for pupils in need and the foundation continued to support children's education in the village until the closure of the school in 2023 due to lack of numbers. At its peak the school had over 120 pupils.

The village has been well supplied with public houses. At the peak the parish had four pubs: The George, renamed the New Inn, now known as the Duke of Marlborough; The Weathercock, renamed the Three Horseshoes; and the King's Head, now a private home. The one remaining pub, aside from the Duke of Marlborough located on the A44, is the Killingworth Castle - a thriving gastro establishment - located at the north end of the village.

As a self-contained agricultural society, prior to the availability of the motor car, the village shop was a crucial part of village life. Wootton Stores provided a place to shop, post a letter or draw pensions. In the 1990s the shop lost its Post Office and the shop struggled to compete effectively with those supermarkets within easy reach by car. The shop became community run in 2007 providing a much-improved asset supported by volunteers and a paid manager.

The playing field, located on Castle Road, was bought by the Parish Council in 1947. This became known as the Wootton Memorial Playing Field. It is a large grass area containing a children's play corner and a football pitch. The field now hosts the Flower Show which has taken place at different

village venues for over 130 years. The Burditch Hall, located in the corner of the field, was constructed in 1967. The hall was redeveloped by the community in 2024 to include an improved social area known as the Bridge Bar.

St Mary's church, in the heart of the village, dates back to the 13th century and was developed architecturally through to the 15th Century. In 1273 Henry III decreed that ten local oaks could be used to construct the tower. The font dates back to the 14th Century. The church has recently had a refurbishment providing an area without pews, allowing for social events to take place. Adjacent to St Mary's is the Village Hall. The hall, constructed of timber, was built in 1927. Run by a group of Trustees, the hall is a registered charity with the core aim of providing a destination to support the local community.

In 1953 a mains water supply was provided for the village, along with mains drainage. Prior to this, many cottages relied on their own private wells or shared communal ones. Rural electrification across Oxfordshire brought power to Wootton in the mid 1900s, but no gas main is linked (as of date of writing) although this has been considered at various times.

This map shows historical areas of Wootton Parish divided into areas to be used in the Design code and to define character [A1. Character Areas \(draft\).pdf](#)



FIGURE 2 - PICTURE OF WOOTTON FROM 1908.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The Parish lies within West Oxfordshire District situated in the county of Oxfordshire. WODC is the local planning authority for the area.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The following paragraphs of the latest NPPF version published in December 2024 are considered especially relevant:

- Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities (section 8)
- Promoting Sustainable Transport (section 9)
- Making Effective use of Land (section 11)
- Achieving Well Designed Places (section 12)
- Conserving and Enhancing The Natural Environment (section 15)
- Conserving and Enhancing The Historic Environment (section 16)

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY

The Neighbourhood Plan should be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan which primarily comprises *The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted 27 September 2018)* and the emerging *West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2026-2043*.

Wootton is defined as a 'Village' in the settlement hierarchy and remains 'washed over' by the Oxford Conservation area in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP 2031) (see Fig 3). The WOLP 2031 makes no development allocations in The Parish and expects development proposals to have regard to relevant Conservation area policy as set out in the NPPF.

WEST OXFORD DISTRICT PLAN 2031 POLICIES

*West Oxford Local Plan 2043 ("WOLP 2043") will shortly replace the current WOLP 2031. A comparison for each of the policies in the WOLP 2031 which are currently most relevant to the six policies in the Neighbourhood Plan (and listed in the section above) with the new policies being developed in WOLP 2043 is contained in **Appendix C**.*

The most relevant policies in the WOLP 2031 to the six policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are set out below

- **Policy OS2 Locating Development in the Right Places** – which includes a settlement hierarchy defining Wootton as a 'Village' and sets out a series of key design principles to shape sustainable development including having regard to National Planning Policy provisions on the Conservation area for managing development proposals.
- **Policy OS4 High Quality Design** – requiring new development to respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality.
- **Policy H1 Amount and Distribution of Housing**. The Spatial Strategy sets out the expected pattern of growth over the period of the Local Plan. Wootton is classified as a Tier 4 settlement.
 - Tier 1 - Anticipated to include a combination of small, medium, large and strategic-scale sites

- Tier 2 - Residential development is anticipated to include a combination of small and medium-scale sites, with additional large and strategic-scale development only taking place through existing permissions and allocated sites.
- Tier 3 - Small and medium scale growth will be supported in villages that have a reasonable level of services and facilities
- Tier 4 - New residential development at Tier 4 Medium Villages will typically be expected to be small-scale only (small scale is defined as 1-10 units)
- Tier 5 - Any residential proposals will be expected to be small-scale development and will only be permitted in limited circumstances as set out in Policy DM26
- **Policy H2 Delivery of New Homes** – allowing additional development in Villages in certain circumstances. For Wootton this would mean having regard to National Planning Policy provisions on Conservation area in managing development proposals. Whilst allowing for detailed amendments to Conservation area boundaries through neighbourhood plans, WOLP 2031 does not establish a need for changes to Conservation area boundaries which is a requirement in the first instance (see Policy EW10).
- **Policy H3 Affordable Housing** – defining the Parish as lying within a High Value Zone where 50% affordable housing provision is required on schemes of > 10 homes.
- **Policy H4 Type & Mix of Homes** – requiring housing schemes to provide or contribute towards the provision of good, balanced mix of property types and sizes
- **Policy E5 Local Services and Community Facilities** - supporting the development and retention of local services and community facilities to meet local needs and to promote social wellbeing, interests, interaction and healthy inclusive communities.
- **Policy T1 Sustainable Transport** – giving priority to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a good range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised, due to opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- **Policy T3 Public Transport, Walking and Cycling** – requiring all new development to be located and designed to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- **Policy EH2 Landscape Character** – requiring new development to respect and enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive natural and manmade features of the local landscape.
- **Policy EH3 Biodiversity** - ensuring development does not prevent the achievement of the aims of the Conservation Target Areas and protecting areas of Wootton from development which will have an adverse impact.
- **Policy EH4 Public Realm and Green Infrastructure** – protecting and enhancing existing areas of public space and green infrastructure assets and creating new multi-functional areas of space to achieve improvements to the network.
- **Policy EH9 Historic Environment** – requiring all development proposals to conserve or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of the historic environment, and to conserve or enhance heritage assets, and their significance and settings (in relation to the Wootton Conservation Area and to its listed buildings)
- **Policy EH10 Conservation Areas** – permitting proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting.
- **Policy EH11 Listed Buildings** – permitting proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building
- **Policy EH12 Traditional Buildings** – setting requirements for determining applications that involve the conversion, extension or alteration of traditional buildings

- **Policy EH13 Historic Landscape Character** – setting requirements for determining applications that affect the historic character of the landscape or townscape
- **Policy EW10 Woodstock Sub-Area Strategy** – proposing that the focus of new development to locations outside the Parish and limits new development in The Parish to meeting local community and business needs, steering development towards the rural service centres and larger villages. The policy also seeks to protect the Oxford Conservation area.
- **Policy OS3 Prudent Use of Natural Resources**

WOOTTON CONSERVATION AREA

The Conservation Area was designated by West Oxfordshire District Council in 1976 (see Plan B). Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, to protect areas of special interest as opposed to individual buildings. Local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

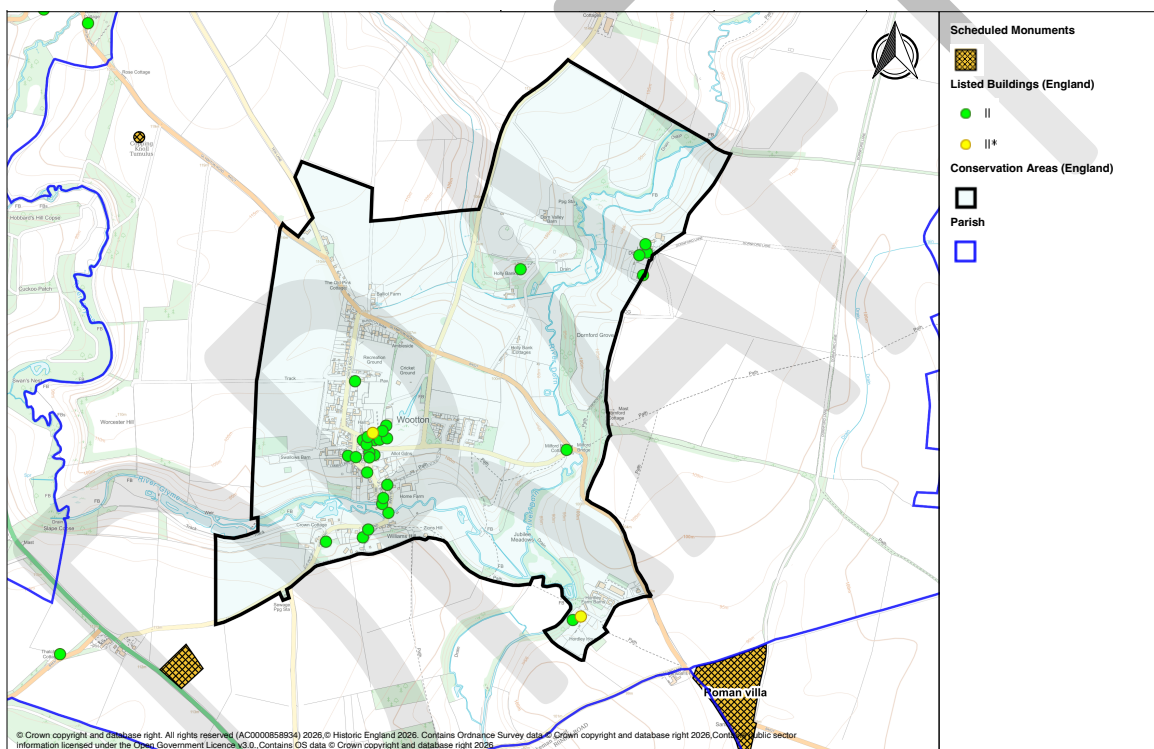


FIGURE 3 - WOOTTON CONSERVATION AREA

COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES: THE NP SURVEY, EXHIBITION AND CONSULTATION

During the preparation of the Neighbourhood plan village residents were kept informed of progress and consulted on their thoughts on what policies and wider considerations were appropriate for Wootton. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group also verbally reported to the Parish Council on progress. The draft Neighbourhood Plan will be presented to the public at St Mary’s Church in March 2026. The following consultation and information gathering activities have been carried out.

Consultation process for the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix B for full report on consultation)

Stage 1: exhibition and information about the NP process

The consultation started in March 2024 by a month long exhibition which was held in the Church at the centre of the village. The exhibition had been widely advertised in the village in the previous weeks. The church is open every day from approximately 8am to 7.30pm. It has a much used community space. The exhibition was advertised with posters around the village, on the village Whatsapp which has over 200 members, in the Parish newsletter and with a large banner outside the church. It was entitled “ Wootton’s Evolution- past and future” . Over 120 people signed the visitors book and 70 completed postcards and email comments were received. This exercise formed the basis of the questions in the survey which came later.

Stage 2: We’re fortunate enough to benefit from a former Wootton resident who has launched a charity called Footwork and My Place, who assist local people to engage with thinking about what they need in their neighbourhood to design and deliver successful projects and developments. Two of their project managers and young “pioneers” from London attended a Steering Group Meeting and then visited Wootton to train 8 local teenagers to conduct our pilot NP survey at the Wootton Flower on Sept 7th 2024. The show was attended by over 400 people. The NP Steering Group had a stand to explain the purpose of an NP.

Stage 3: The survey was compiled using information from the stage 1 and 2 consultations. It was launched on May 27th 2025 at the Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Hall. Posters with QR codes linking to the survey were placed throughout the parish. The survey was distributed throughout the village in hard copy form, via the Church and the Village Shop, the link was posted several times on the Wootton Whatsapp (210 users) and various gatherings were visited to distribute paper copies and encourage completion.

The questionnaire was designed to collect information on a range of issues related to the Neighbourhood Plan. It is available at: <https://form.jotform.com/250872502321347>

167 residents of Wootton returned the questionnaires and responses were analysed and presented graphically in the analysis of village survey available at: <https://eu.jotform.com/report/25229198027205618>

Stage 4: the final consultation comprised an exhibition in the centre of village at St Mary’s Church with publicity to encourage residents to read the draft plan and comment. The exhibition started on March 25th 2026 and feedback was encouraged over the following 7 weeks.

VISION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Vision	Objectives
<p>Wootton will have grown successfully as a community whilst protecting the value of the Conservation Area. New homes have addressed local need, and these schemes have been well designed to ensure that the rural character of the village has been preserved and the significance of the Conservation Area has been sustained and enhanced.</p> <p>The community has worked successfully with landowners and other stakeholders to improve access and links for people and wildlife that surround the village and connect it with the wider countryside. Whilst change in the wider area has been significant, it has provided opportunity for improved connectivity while preserving the green infrastructure network of the Parish, the enhancement of biodiversity; and the mitigation of climate change.</p> <p>Key words describing the community's vision for the future were collected in the survey. Some of these are: <i>haven for wildlife, peaceful, rural, safe, friendly.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conserve the special heritage assets of the village and its landscape setting • To preserve and enhance recreational opportunities in the countryside close to the village • To manage growth in the village through sensitive infill and affordable housing schemes that meet local needs • To create and integrate a safe and convenient walking and cycling network to serve the village and improve access to the wider countryside. • To improve access to public transport • To ensure the continuity of a strong and vibrant community using the existing social assets such as the pubs, shop, church and sports facilities • To designate protected green spaces and local features and views.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE POLICIES

The following policies relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area of Wootton Parish. They focus on specific planning matters that are of greatest interest to the local community.

There are some parts of the Parish that are not affected by these policies, and there are many other policy matters that have been left to the adopted and forthcoming West Oxfordshire Local Plan to cover. This has avoided unnecessary repetition of policies between this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, though they have a mutual, helpful inter-dependence. It is anticipated that WODC will take the content of this Neighbourhood Plan into consideration during the preparation of the new Local Plan 2043.

Each policy is numbered and titled, and it is shown in bold. After each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy.

THE LAND USE POLICIES

Policy one: Active and sustainable transport and travel, traffic and parking

The goal of the policy is to improve routes and accessibility with an emphasis on encouraging active travel where possible. The policy seeks to encourage safe, accessible and convenient means of walking and cycling in the parish and an increased use of public transport. It reflects the aims of WOLP Policy EH4 that aims to protect and enhance existing green infrastructure.

There are a number of footpath routes through and out of the village. Few of the paths are suitable for those who require the use of mobility aids, such as wheelchairs or scooters; or for parents with babies in prams or buggies and many crossing points are hazardous and unpleasant. There are no cycle paths close to Wootton, and the A44 and B4027 are both dangerous to walkers and cyclists. Public transport is also lacking in Wootton and the only bus stops are located on the A44 some distance from the village.

1a) Development proposals that may harm the functioning or connectivity of the footpath and active travel network will not be supported. Proposals which fragment the routes will be resisted, unless this can be replaced in a way that improves the overall network.

1b) Development proposals that would make an appropriate contribution to the improvement and/or extension of the network will be supported.

1c) Policy to support and actively encourage junction safety and traffic calming. There is a need for greatly improved walking paths along stretches of the B4027, especially at the junction with Castle Road and at Milford Bridge. It is outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan to proscribe improvements but traffic calming measures which are sorely needed will be encouraged and supported by the Parish Council. The survey shows strong demand for increased traffic calming through the village and most notably on the B4027. Junction improvements at the A44, Stratford Lane/B4027 and Castle Road/B4027 were considered particularly important by survey respondents. In addition, an interview with the owner of the Village Pub, The Killingworth Castle, revealed that they would strongly support traffic calming measures on the B2047, improvements to the junction with Castle Road and the B4027 and in addition, the introduction of a safe walking route behind the pub, parallel with Castle Road (see footpath maps).

1d) Policy to favour measure to enhance traffic calming in and around the village Development proposals in and around the village to prioritise "soft" engineering safety measures such as retaining localized narrowing using Cotswold stone walling to naturally reduce vehicle speeds. A 20mph speed limit is already in force in the centre of the village. Further proposals, as a result of new development, or the initiative of the Highway Agency to further reduce traffic speeds on the roads leading to the village, particularly the B4027, would be strongly encouraged and is supported by residents' response to the survey. Work is continuing with the LCWIP and other bodies to encourage walking and cycling routes in and around the village. A major constraint to increasing 'active travel' in Wootton is road safety. In addition to preserving the heritage and Cotswold village aesthetic, verges and dry-stone walls like those pictured below help with traffic calming.

1e) Policy to introduce loading space outside village shop and restrict long-term parking there.

There are some pressure points for parking and for vehicles to pass in the centre of the village. It is a policy of this plan to introduce a reserved parking area for loading immediately outside the village

shop and an area for short term parking outside the shop to prevent the spaces close to the shop being used by residents parking permanently.



FIGURE 4 – WOOTTON STORES LOADING SPACE

Policy Two: Green infrastructure, environment and recreation

Wootton is a historic Tier 4 village which enjoys Conservation Area status, is proximal to the Cotswolds AONB and Blenheim Palace a prominent UNESCO World Heritage site and is defined by its rolling landscape, stone cottages, and in particular its setting along the Rivers Glyme and Dorn. This policy seeks to protect this profile and its distinct character while responding to 21st-century environmental challenges. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a network of existing green infrastructure assets in the Parish comprising natural, amenity and public open spaces and footpaths and bridleways. It also identifies opportunities to enhance the network to improve habitat and/or human connectivity.

Development proposals should:

- demonstrate how they sustain and enhance biodiversity;
- have regard to visual impact and the protection or enhancement of connectivity;
- For either new development or the refurbishment of existing structures, they should wherever possible encourage biodiversity and protected species.

2 a) Policies to protect significant views

Policy: Development should sustain and enhance the special architectural and historic significance of the Wootton Conservation Area. Specific protection is afforded to the view of St. Mary's Church and the village when approaching from the A44, and views across the Glyme Valley and the Dorn Valley should also remain unobstructed.

WOLP Policy EH2, Landscape Character, (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) explicitly supports the community's desire to preserve the village's rural identity and setting. The survey shows demand for protected views and open spaces. The map shows views to be protected and the list below names specific areas, which although within the Conservation Area, require special consideration before any form of development which does not protect these views, is approved. This policy reflects WOLP43 policy DM15 conservation areas and pinpoints specific local assets to be protected.

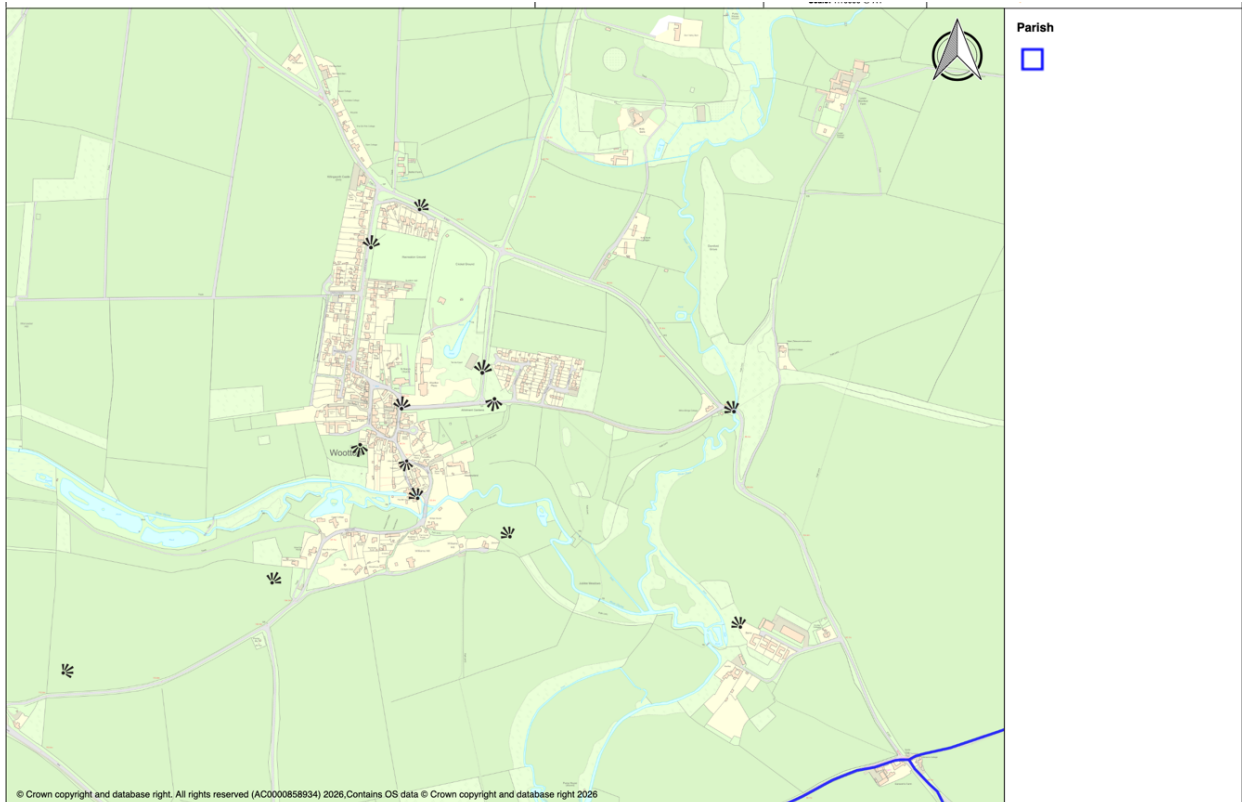


FIGURE 5 – PROTECTED VIEWS

The following views:

1. View of Wootton across Brown's Bottom and ponds from West End ROW footpath
2. View of Wootton from footpath
3. View of Wootton from ROW footpath Zions Hill
4. View from Hordley Barns looking west
5. View from Milford Bridge towards Holly Bank
6. Views from Mill Lane looking both north and south
7. View south west from Lambs Lane
8. View of the Church from the South
9. View over the allotments and across the Piece
10. View along the Butts
11. View north from Castle Road to Balliol Farm
12. View north from Burditch Bank
13. View north towards Wootton from West End Rd near Junction with A44

This policy reflects the WODC LP43. Policy DM15 which states:

Development proposals within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area: Respect the setting of the Conservation Area, including the impact on views and vistas within, into, and out of the area, and preserve or enhance those that contribute positively to its significance. Respond to local distinctiveness and reflect the architectural and historic qualities identified in Conservation Area Character Appraisals and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide. Retain and respect the historic street pattern, original plot boundaries, and significant spaces such as paddocks, greens, gardens, and gaps between buildings which contribute to the area's spatial character

Descriptive list of areas to be protected from development (see map for reference)

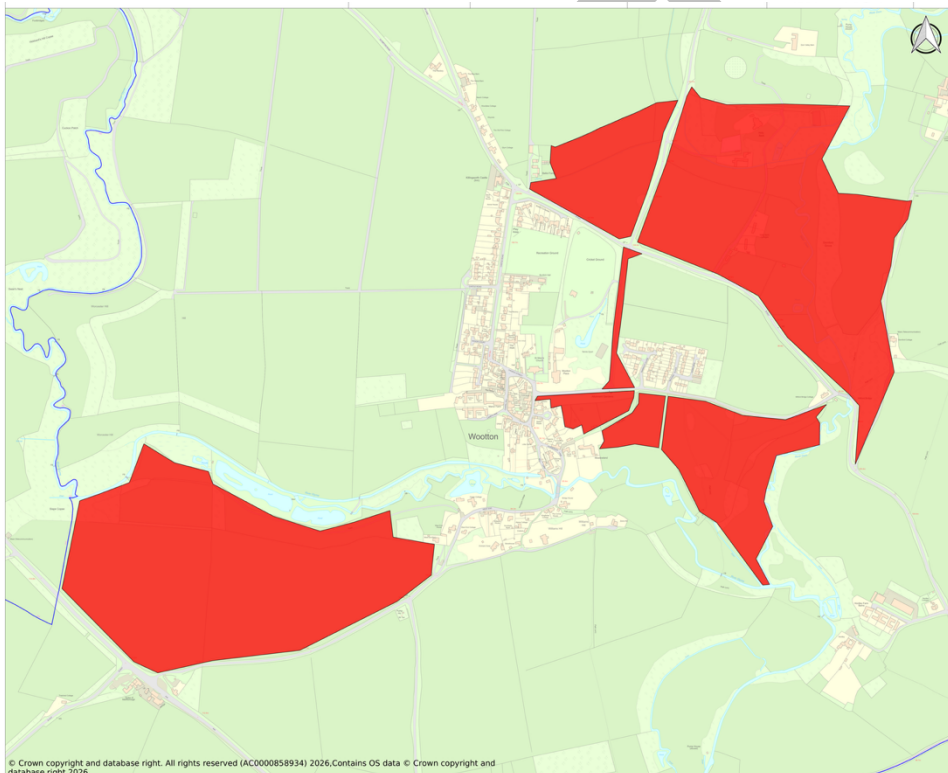


FIGURE 6 - PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT

- a. The Wootton Conservation Trust land - Jubilee Meadows and Long Meadow
- b. The Piece
- c. Banks of the rivers Glyme and Dorn within the Parish of Wootton.
- d. All the land between A44 and river Glyme to the west of the village curtilage. The area is known as Brown's Bottom
- e. Fields along the Dorn valley toward Wootton Downs farm and Lower Dornford, to Rousham road and parish boundary, along with the wooded area to the West of Lower Dornford road.
- f. The verges along the Butts along with the small green wooded area between Marriot Close and The Butts/Rousham Rd.
- g. The Allotments and the paddock east of Walnut close south of the Allotments.

2c) Protection of fields in Wootton Parish to the North of Stratford Land and East of the A44 (see map) Development that would result in the coalescence of Wootton and Woodstock, or which would result in Wootton losing its distinct separate identity, will not be supported. The Neighbourhood Plan survey shows that the community strongly desires the distinction between Woodstock and Wootton to be preserved. This policy seeks to prevent the coalescence of Wootton and Woodstock by reinforcing the Policies of the Local Plan. **Reference WOLP43 DM15**

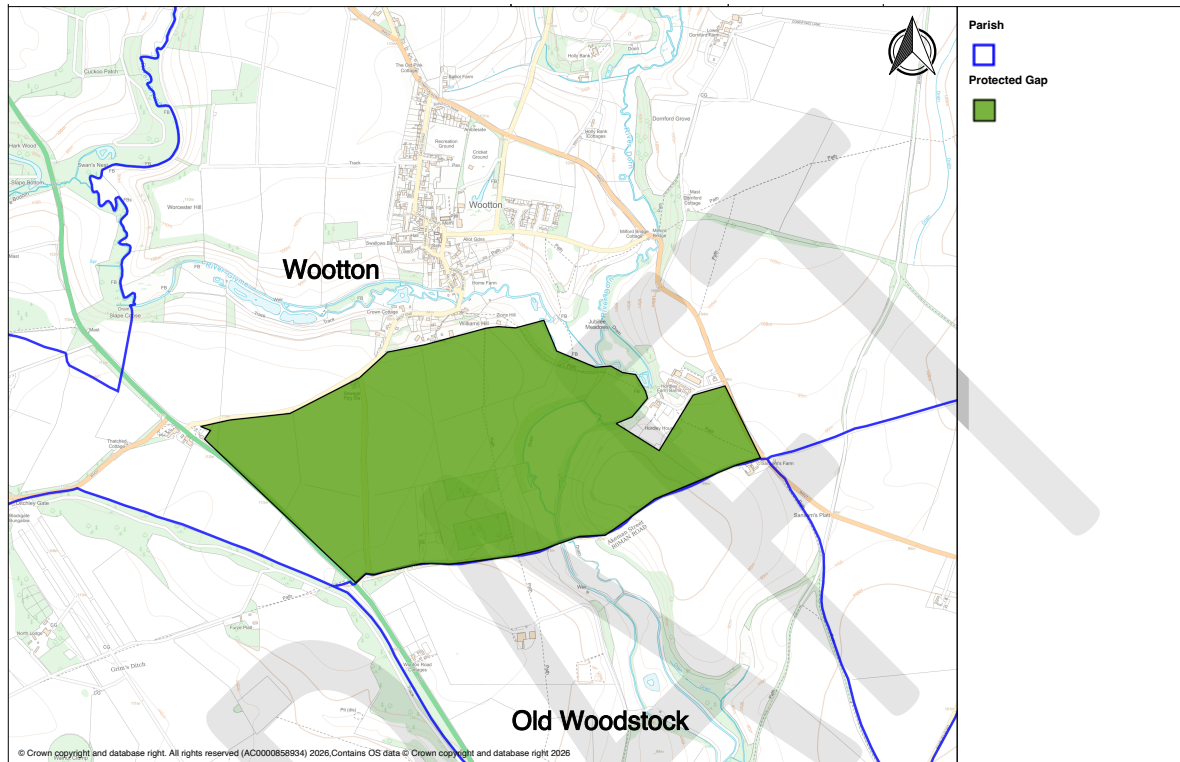


FIGURE 7 – PROTECTED WOOTTON-WOODSTOCK GAP

2d) Biodiversity Net Gain and Nature Recovery WOLP Policy EH3 and the Environment Act 2021

All development shall deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, prioritized through the restoration of grasslands and ancient semi-natural woodlands. The **Jubilee Meadows and Long Meadow Nature Reserve** are designated as an essential biodiversity resource, and the work of the **Wootton Conservation Trust**, which manages this site, is key to ensuring this policy is delivered.

2e) Footpath and Bridleway Connectivity Policy: To improve village permeability, the creation of circular footpaths using existing and new permissive paths is strongly supported. Examples of proposed circular footpaths are detailed in the maps below. The introduction of linked footpaths around the village, through the village and into Woodstock, Glympton, Tackley and Blenheim are a priority. This reflects **WOLP Policy EH4**, Green Infrastructure, (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C). It has benefits such as improved links to the village shop and pub from the Oxfordshire Way encourage visitor spending and shifting local trips to walking reduces car-related emissions and parking problems.

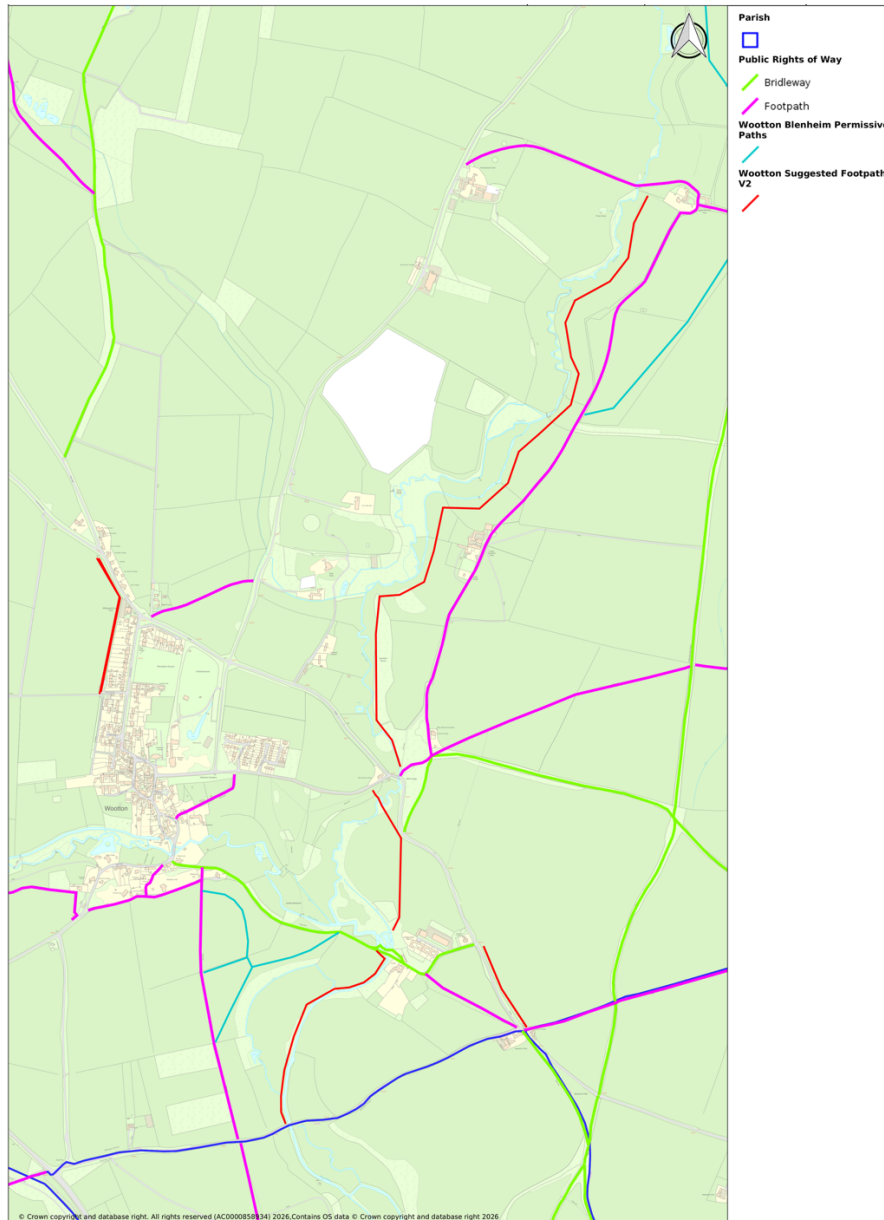


FIGURE 8 - FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS, PERMISSIVE PATHS AND SUGGESTED FOOTPATHS.

2f) Policy to support Dark Skies

Wootton village has minimal street lighting installed which means there is a low level of disturbance to both people living in the village from streetlights and also to nature. The survey shows that the majority of residents support a dark sky policy and are against installation of street lighting in most instances, so new housing developments, modifications to the roads, such as traffic calming and other developments in the future should either maintain the “no street lights” policy or use lighting that is designed not to cause light pollution. Where possible, motion sensitive and LED lights should be used. Motion-sensitive and LED solutions reduce long-term energy and maintenance costs.

- Many councils across England support measures to protect and enhance the dark night sky. The policy reflects the purpose and objectives of **policies WOLP EH2 and EH8** (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) on Pollution and Artificial Light of the WOLP. For all proposed developments, factors that will be considered when deciding the

appropriateness of artificial lighting, include the location, the hours of operation, the quantity of lights proposed, brightness and control, and direction of the beam.

- However there are instances where careful consideration is needed in relation to installing street lighting. There are some areas of the village where lighting is important, for pedestrians in particular, and where a lack of lighting discourages using active transport such as cycles, or walking, or reaching the local bus stops. There is some natural conflict between dark skies and the need for safer transport and pedestrian routes. Those without cars are more likely to favour additional lighting and over the period of the plan, this should be taken into careful consideration and the least intrusive forms of lighting could be used.
- New housing and commercial development, as well as changes to existing development, should respect the policy to minimise the impact of lighting, and this plan does not support the use of extensively lit driveways or floodlighting.

2g) Policy to ensure the protection of rivers and river banks, and water quality

The rivers Glyme and Dorn are a "precious resource" that should be protected through mandatory water quality monitoring for new developments ideally in accord with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) (National standards for sustainable drainage systems). The consultation exercise shows demand for the historic practice of river swimming in the Glyme to be enabled. This policy both specifically supports protection of the river banks, the monitoring management of water quality and the active encouragement of the creation of recreation on public areas of the river, including swimming space.

2h) This policy reflects WOLP Policy EH4 (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) regarding flood risk management in relevant to Wootton especially in the long term. While there is little flooding outside the water meadows at the moment, the plan supports the WODC on flood risk management and also the use of water meadows as protected land to help control flooding.

Policy Three: Housing development and provision of new homes

In accordance with **Policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan**, (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) support will be given to appropriate limited housing development which respects the character and local distinctiveness of Wootton and which would help maintain the vitality of the village.

In accordance with national policy and policy **OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan**, as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) unless there are very special circumstances, residential development in the Parish will comprise the following:

- A. Limited infilling in the village;
- B. Limited affordable housing for community needs;
- C. The partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, provided it would not have a greater impact than the existing development or cause substantial harm and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need.

In respect of criterion A) above, 'limited infill development' will be classed as development on sites which form a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage provided that gap does not comprise an important visual feature.

In respect of criterion B) above, 'limited affordable housing for local community needs' is taken to mean that affordable housing which is necessary to meet a locally identified need for new affordable homes. Any such proposals should be located on previously developed or undeveloped land, either within or adjoining the built-up area.

The new **West Oxfordshire Local Plan 43 (draft)** identifies an overall housing requirement in the period 2026 – 2043.

Wootton is defined as a village Tier 4 in West Oxfordshire’s settlement hierarchy. Therefore, in addition to meeting the relevant criterion of Local Plan policies OS2 and H2 and to be in accordance with national policy (NPPF), any windfall housing provision will need to meet an identified local housing need and will comprise:

- Limited infilling
- Limited affordable housing for local community needs; or
- The partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land provided the proposed development would not have more impact than the existing development and not cause substantial harm to the conservation area.

Policies and evidence of community support from consultation

Wootton is identified within West Oxfordshire’s settlement hierarchy as a **village** (with a 2021 Census population of c.600) and sits within a wider strategy that focuses most growth on the main towns while supporting **limited development in villages** where it respects local character and helps sustain communities. In particular, in the consultation for the 2043 Local Plan, West Oxfordshire’s proposed update to Core Policy 2 contains a revised [Settlement Hierarchy](#) which categorises Wootton as a **Tier 4 Medium Village**, where “smaller-scale growth to meet local needs, guided by sustainability and service provision” will be supported. “Smaller scale” development in this case is defined as between 1-10 units. The Neighbourhood Plan’s housing approach is therefore to shape *how* any small-scale change happens in Wootton - prioritising well-integrated proposals that respond to local needs - while remaining in general conformity with the strategic approach and policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the emerging thinking for the new 2043 Local Plan, and any other relevant Spatial Development Strategies implemented under the 2025 Planning & Infrastructure Act in England.

3a) Local engagement indicates a strong preference for **incremental, small-scale growth**, with residents favouring **small housing groups (3–5 dwellings), individual plots, and conversions** rather than large estates. This preference is consistent across age groups, and is associated with concerns about **traffic, parking and infrastructure capacity**. The survey evidence also shows that support for new homes increases when development is clearly linked to local benefit—particularly affordability and the ability for local households to remain within the parish.

3b) In spatial terms, community responses place exceptional importance on maintaining a **defined green gap between Wootton and Woodstock** to protect settlement identity and avoid coalescence. This aligns with the Local Plan’s strategic principles, which emphasise maintaining settlement identity and supporting village development only where it respects character and local distinctiveness. Accordingly, the Neighbourhood Plan supports housing that reinforces Wootton as a distinct village, avoids visually or functionally linking Wootton and Woodstock, and protects valued green infrastructure, key views and rural setting.

3c) Consistent with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan, housing proposals in Wootton should be directed first to: (i) **sites allocated** in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan; (ii) **previously developed land within or adjoining** the built-up area; and (iii) **undeveloped land within** the built-up area, where proposals meet the Local Plan’s general principles (including good access, landscape sensitivity, and avoiding harmful impacts). Proposals on **undeveloped land adjoining** the built-up area would only be supported where there is convincing evidence that they are necessary to meet identified housing needs, and where they accord with Local Plan distribution and general principles.

3d) The Wootton Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of **affordable housing** where it is demonstrably meeting local needs, reflecting both local sentiment and Local Plan policy. In addition to on-site affordable provision of qualifying schemes, the Plan recognises the continued role of **rural exception sites** (primarily affordable housing to meet specific local needs) as part of West Oxfordshire's established approach to rural affordability. Where new homes come forward, priority should be given to a mix that supports: smaller and more attainable homes for younger households; options for **downsizing** for current residents; and homes that are accessible and adaptable over the life course, consistent with the Local Plan's emphasis on a balanced mix and meeting the needs of different groups.

3e) The site of the former **Wootton School**, owned by the Parrott & Lee Educational Foundation, has been vacant for some time but has residential development potential. At present, the site has permission for a change of use to an Art Gallery and associated artists' studios. This Neighbourhood Plan, supported by survey responses to a question on alternative uses for the site, strongly favours **community or non-commercial use** of the site, followed by proposals which would retain the physical character of the site, or which could be aimed at residential development for affordable housing, for the elderly or for those with mobility problems. See also policy 6 on Community Buildings.

3f) During the Neighbourhood Plan period, other potential sites for development might be brought forward on a speculative basis. In addition to the considerations set out in earlier paragraphs, any housing should achieve a high standard of place-making and be demonstrably locally distinctive. The survey evidence shows strong support for homes that "fit" Wootton visually, include **gardens and off-street parking**, use sympathetic materials, and protect trees and wildlife. In applying other relevant planning considerations, proposals should have regard to national policy in the **National Planning Policy Framework** (including delivering well-designed, sustainable development and meeting housing needs, as well as considerations affecting backland development) and should also address cross-cutting requirements such as **biodiversity net gain** (where applicable) and sensitive lighting where dark skies are valued locally.

3g) Subject to landowners' willingness, there are **limited areas** with the potential for small scale new housing development within and immediately adjacent to the village. Community responses to the eleven potential sites identified indicated strong preferences. Sites (where 1=most preferred and 10=least preferred) are shown ranked on the map below (FIGURE10), using average ranked responses. A further map (FIGURE 11) shows **additional potential areas for development** which have been suggest since the consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan supports these two locations for small scale development and with adherence to the design code specified in this document.

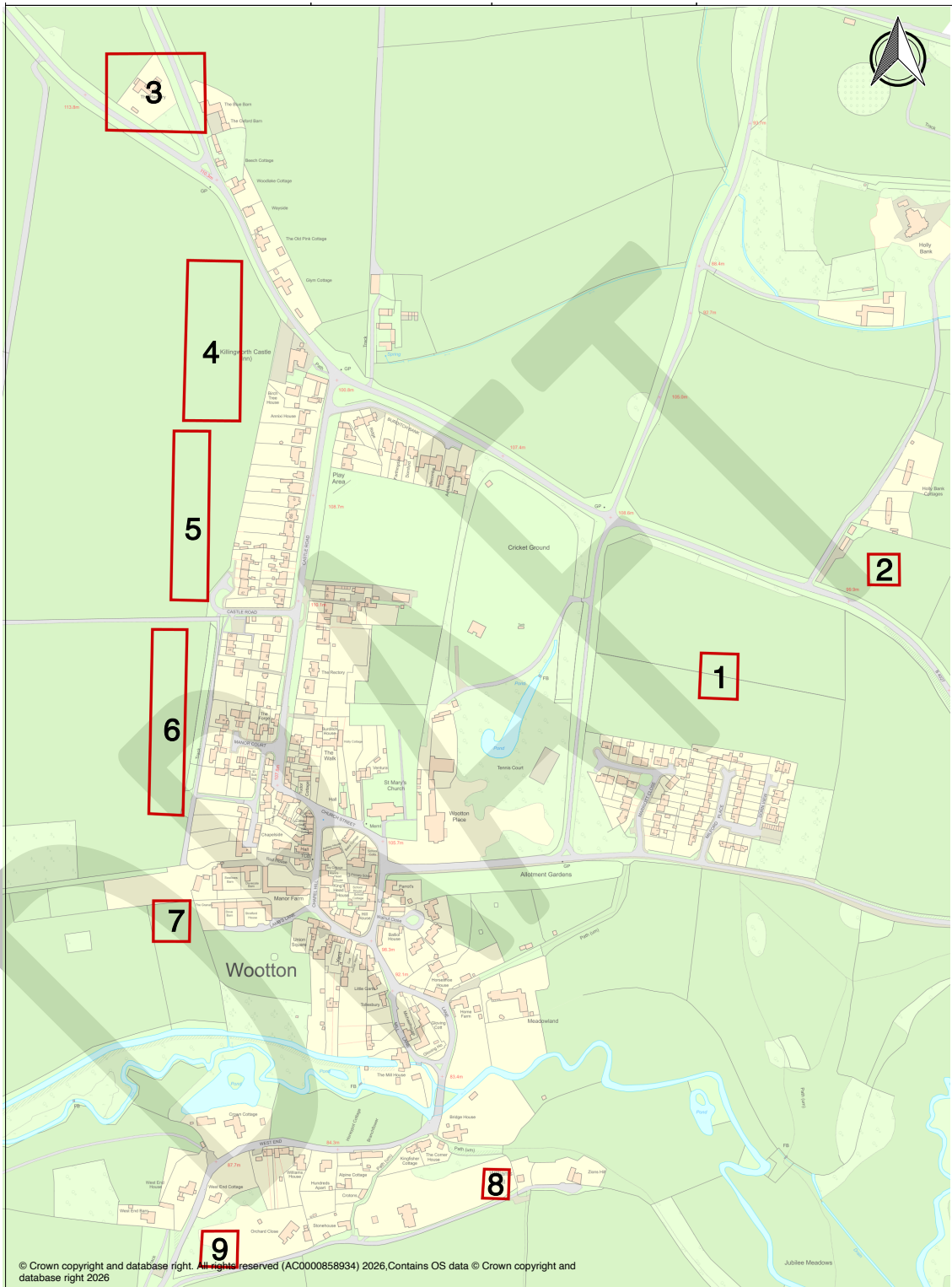


FIGURE 9 – AREAS WITH POTENTIAL FOR SMALL SCALE HOUSING (RANKED FROM SURVEY)

Site	Average rank (1=top, 9=bottom)
1. Glympton Road	3.2
2. Holly Bank	4.3
3. Tew Lane / Glympton Road Junction	4.5
4. Behind Castle Road North	4.6
5. Behind Castle Road Middle	4.9
6. Behind Castle Road South	5.3
7. Glyme Valley West	5.9
8. Top Lane	6.1
9. Top Lane / Quarry	6.3

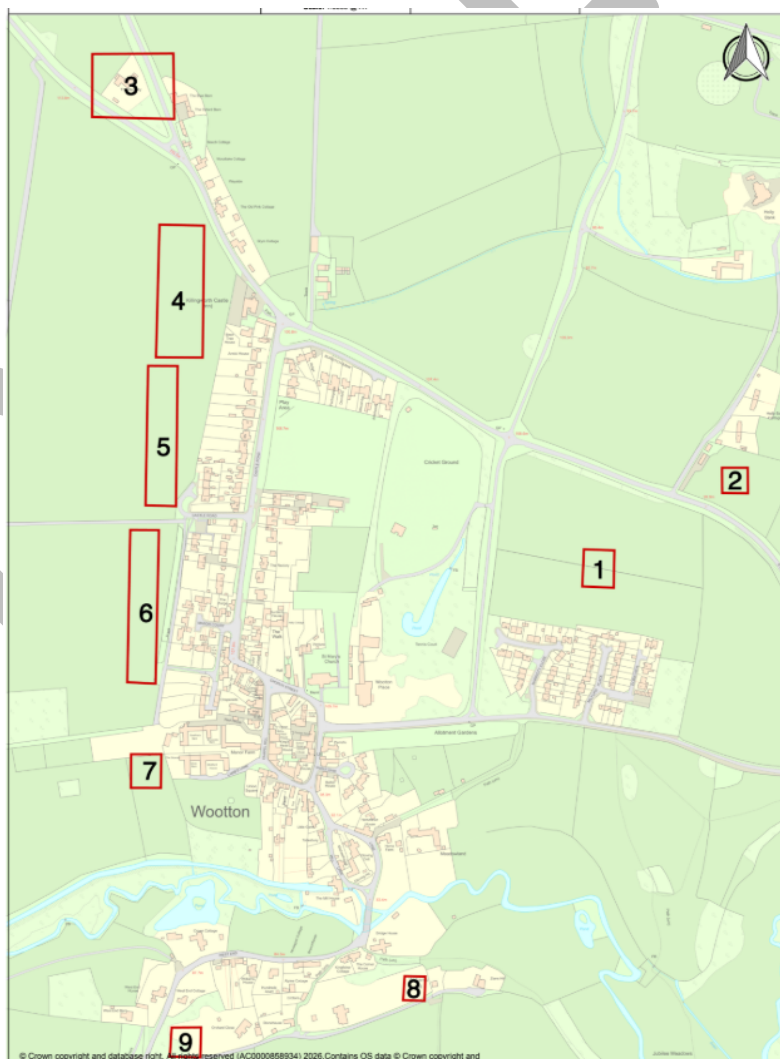


FIGURE 10 - SHOWING THE OUTCOME OF THE RANKING FROM THE COMPLETED SURVEY



FIGURE 11 – ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Policy Four: Wootton Conservation area and the Design Code for Wootton

Development proposals should sustain and enhance the historic environment, particularly the special architectural and historic significance of the designated Wootton Conservation Area and its setting. Features identified as positive characteristics of the Conservation Area and its immediate setting are defined in the Wootton Design Code attached as Appendix A. **Development proposals in Wootton Village should have full regard to the essential design considerations and general design principles set out in the Wootton Design Code attached as Appendix A.**

The policies establish the importance of high-quality design of new development in the Conservation Area, its setting and the remainder of the village to maintain and enhance its character. It directs applicants bringing forward proposals in and around the village to the design codes contained in the Wootton Design Code attached at Appendix A. The Code is an integral part of the policy and is extensive in setting out the positive characteristics of the conservation area and in distinguishing the different character areas of the Parish. It is therefore published as an Appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Code has been prepared and consulted on as part of this Plan preparation.

The Code refines the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2015 and establishes the principles of essential design considerations within the distinct area typologies of the village, its nucleated core and linear extensions. These design considerations set out features of each typology that make it distinctive, and the extent of each is defined in the Design Code Document. In turn it complements Policies OS4 and EH9 of the WOLP (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) by highlighting characteristics of the Parish.

The policies require that development proposals demonstrate, where relevant to the nature and location of the proposal, that full regard has been paid to the Code. The policies do not advocate pastiche or historic solution; however, it is important that any new development demonstrates a connection with local character and place making.

Policy Five: Locally listed buildings, hard landscape features

There are a number of listed buildings in the Parish of Wootton and these are afforded considerable protection already.

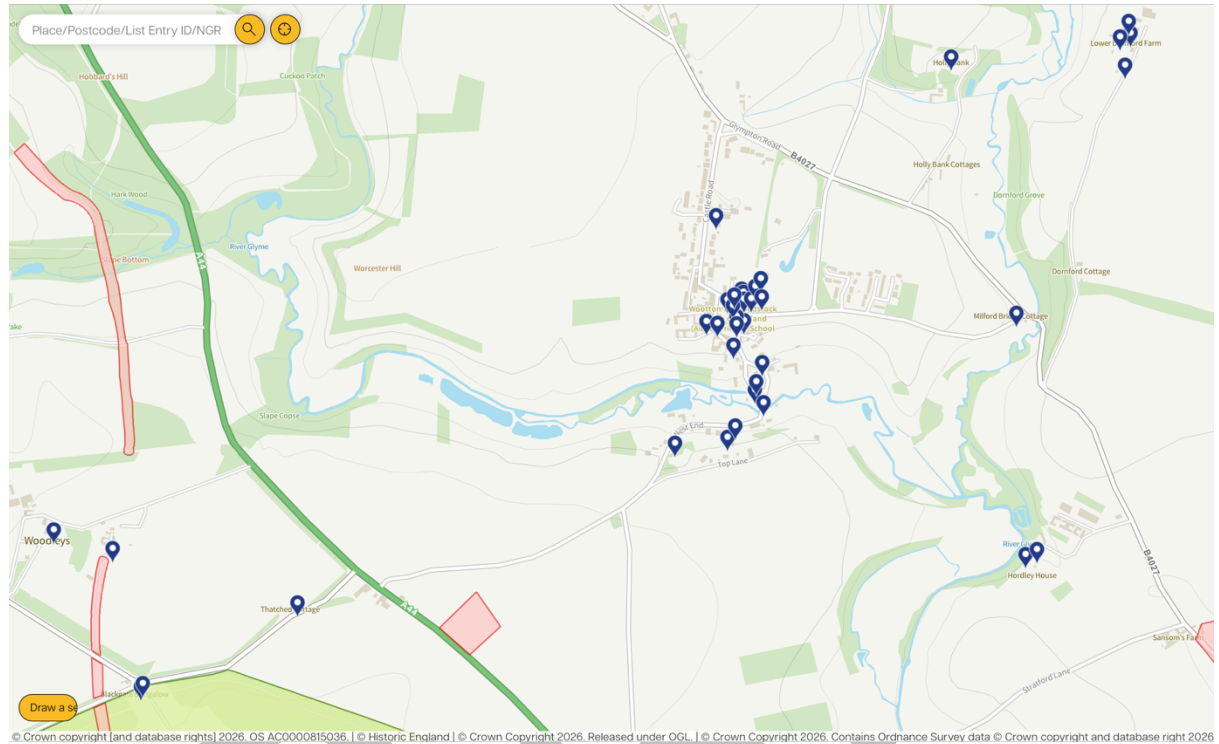


FIGURE 12 - LISTED PROPERTIES WITHIN WOOTTON PARISH

5a) The list below adds structures and building of local importance and reflective of the village heritage. The policy identifies these buildings or structures as Locally Listed Buildings (also known as non-designated heritage assets) in order to give them additional protection as heritage assets, in recognition of the important contribution they make to the special character of the Parish in line with WOLP Policy EH9, Historic Environment (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C).

Locally listed buildings and structures

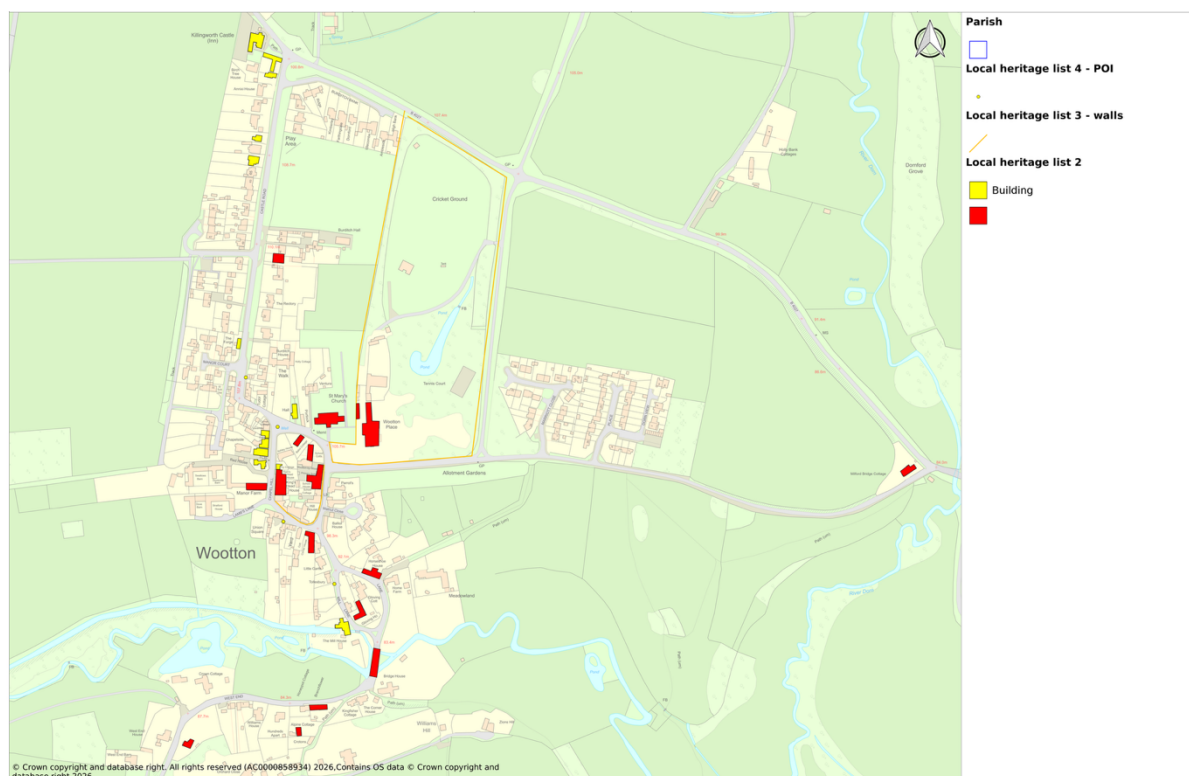


FIGURE 13 - LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Including:

- Pumps: Church Street and Castle Road
- Wells: Mill Lane and Church Street (village Centre)
- Raised pavement at junction of Chapel Hill and Church Street
- Wellside Cottage, The Red House, Ivy Cottage, Forge Cottage, The Mill House, Nos 67 and 71 Castle Road
- The old signpost, village centre
- The Village Hall.

Full details, with photos and descriptions, of these non-designated heritage assets are in Appendix A1 alongside the Design Code.






Guidance from Historic England states:

Whilst the planning protections for non-designated heritage assets are not as strong as those for designated heritage assets, they are still important. Specifically, paragraph 216 (superseded paragraph 197) of the NPPF states that ‘the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy Six: Protection of amenities provided by community buildings and spaces

The policy supplements and refines existing development plan policy on community, open space, sport or recreation facilities and by seeking to ensure that the long-term potential value of land in community use is not lost without good reason. Given the small nature of the village, the loss of any of these facilities would be significantly detrimental, so even though a specific type of community use may no longer be viable, the opportunity to retain the premises or land in this use cannot be lost. Development proposals which would affect the use of the identified community facilities of the policy, or which would significantly undermine their quality, will be resisted unless suitable alternative provision is made. The provisions of policies E5 (Local Services and Community Facilities) and EH5 (Sport, Recreation and Children’s Play) of the WOLP (as may be amended by WOLP 2043 See Appendix C) will **continue to apply**. Examples of this are:

- a. St Mary’s Church
- b. The Wootton Conservation Trust land - Jubilee Meadows and Long Meadow
- c. The Piece
- d. Banks of the rivers Glyme and Dorn within the Parish of Wootton.
- e. Wootton Village Hall
- f. The Village Stores
- g. Wootton Allotments
- h. Sports Field and Recreation Equipment
- i. The Memorial Playing Fields
- j. The Killingworth Castle Public House
- k. The former village School
- l. The Butts and green space with old quarry, between Rousham Road and Marriot Close

 <p>ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH</p>	 <p>LOOKING ACROSS JUBILEE MEADOWS</p>
 <p>THE PIECE</p>	 <p>GLYME RIVER WEST OF WOOTTON</p>  <p>GLYME RIVER EAST OF WOOTTON</p>



VILLAGE HALL



VILLAGE COMMUNITY SHOP



ALLOTMENTS



MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELDS



THE KILLINGWORTH CASTLE



VILLAGE SCHOOL



THE BUTTS



MARRIOT CLOSE & MILFORD PLACE

In addition to existing development plan policies which protect these facilities and encourages new facilities, the policy also allows for a partial change of use of a facility, it this is intended to help secure its longer-term viability. This may be an important way of putting to use space that is no longer needed, but which can make a financial contribution to sustaining the facility. However, such changes should be shown not to undermine the community functions of the use.

The Use Class Order of September 2020 now deems such these uses as either Class F2 ('Local Community Uses') or in the case of the school and Church, F1 ('Learning and non-residential Institutions'). The pubs are now deemed 'sui generis' (i.e. not included in any class of uses) Collectively, these facilities are cherished by the community and offer a valuable and vital resource to support community life and therefore warrant the protection of policies.

APPENDIX A :

Design Code and Character Appraisal and Map

APPENDIX B:

Consultation process with evidence

APPENDIX C:

Planning framework WOLP 43