

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Thursday, 21 December 2023

Tel: (01285) 623553 or 623181
e-mail: Democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Monday, 8 January 2024 at 4.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Councillors Gina Blomefield, Gary Selwyn, David Cunningham, Roly Hughes, Angus Jenkinson, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann, Tony Slater, Clare Turner and Jon Wareing)

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting.

Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000 www.cotswold.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.

The quorum for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 3 members.
2. **Substitute Members**
To note details of any substitution arrangements in place for the Meeting.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
4. **Minutes (Pages 5 - 16)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 28 November and the Special Meeting held on 16 November.
5. **Chair's Announcements**
6. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**
To review actions from previous meetings.
7. **Public Questions**
A maximum of 15 minutes is allocated for an “open forum” of public questions at committee meetings. No person may ask more than two questions (including supplementary questions) and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation. The maximum length of oral questions or supplementary questions by the public will be two minutes. Questions must relate to the responsibilities of the Committee but questions in this section cannot relate to applications for determination at the meeting.

The response may take the form of:
 - a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
 - b) Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
 - c) Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.
8. **Member Questions**
A maximum period of fifteen minutes is allowed for Member questions. Questions must be directed to the Chair and must relate to the remit of the committee but may not relate to applications for determination at the meeting.

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chair may group together similar questions.

The deadline for submitting questions is 5.00pm on the working day before the day of

the meeting unless the Chair agrees that the question relates to an urgent matter, in which case the deadline is 9.30am on the day of the meeting.

A member may submit no more than two questions. At the meeting the member may ask a supplementary question arising directly from the original question or the reply. The maximum length of a supplementary question is one minute.

The response to a question or supplementary question may take the form of:

- a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
- b) Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- c) Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

9. **Corporate Plan 2024-2027 – to follow- 50 minutes**

Purpose

To present the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 to Cabinet, and that they agree to recommend to Full Council.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 11 January

Invited

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council
Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

10. **2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report (Pages 17 - 52)- 20 minutes**

Purpose

This report provides feedback to Cabinet from the recent consultation on the Administration's budget proposals.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 11 January

Invited

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

11. **Cotswold District Local Plan - Partial Update (Pages 53 - 210)- 50 minutes**

Purpose

To consider the recommendation to Council to start preparing a new local plan for the period 2026 to 2041 and to consult on a document that includes development strategy options.

To consider the recommendation to consult the public on a set of draft policies that update the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 (the adopted Local Plan).

To consider the recommendation to consult the public on an 'initial ideas' Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan consultation document.

For Cabinet to approve the updated Statement of Community Involvement and the updated Local Development Scheme documents.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 11 January

Invited

Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services
James Brain, Forward Planning Manager

NOTE: DUE TO SIZE, ANNEX C IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE PRINTED PACK. IT IS PUBLISHED FOR VIEWING ON THE WEBSITE.

12. **Work Plan and Forward Plan (Pages 211 - 224)**
For the Committee to note and review its work plan and to select Cabinet decisions for pre-decision scrutiny at future committee meetings.

(END)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
28/November2023



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 28 November 2023

Councillors present:

Gina Blomefield – Chair

David Cunningham

Angus Jenkinson

Gary Selwyn – Vice-Chair

Tony Slater

Clare Turner

Jon Wareing

Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and
Chief Finance Officer

Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer

Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services
Officer

Gemma Moreing, Business Information Lead

Stuart Rawlinson, Business Manager
Resources, Data and Growth

Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst

Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property
and Regeneration

Cabinet Members

Councillor Joe Harris – Leader of the Council

Councillor Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

OS.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Michael Vann, Roly Hughes and Dilys Neill.

OS.2 Substitute Members

Councillor Patrick Coleman substituted for Councillor Dilys Neill.

OS.3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

OS.4 Minutes

The Chair stated that amendments had been made to the online version of the draft minutes, following the publication of the agenda.

Several actions were discussed from the previous meeting;

- OS.294 on paragraph 6: In relation to Anti-Social Behaviour, the ERS Service lead was asked to provide more information to members.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28/November2023

- OS.294 on paragraph 6: In relation to the multi agency approach to crime prevention, an information sheet had been produced and would be shared with the Committee
- OS.299 on p10 Paragraph 2: In relation to Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Jenkinson's written report was to be circulated but had not been attached to the agenda papers*

*It was later stated by the Democratic services Officer that the report had been published on the website but had not been included in the agenda due to a technical error. The report had been emailed to members prior to the meeting.

The Chair stated that 'matters arising from the minutes' should be added to future agendas, in order to ensure completion of actions.

The minutes were proposed by Councillor David Cunningham and Seconded by Councillor Gary Selwyn.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2023.

For- 7, Against 0, Abstentions 0

OS.5 Chair's Announcements

The Chair made reference to the meeting with GWR that had occurred the week prior. The Chair stated that the meeting was a useful exercise, and that the Committee now had open lines of communication with GWR, who they hoped to work closely with them in the future.

The Chair also stated that they hoped the Committee papers had arrived to members who had opted into receiving print copies.

Members introduced themselves.

OS.6 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

OS.7 Member Questions

There were no member questions.

OS.8 Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy

The Forward Planning Manager introduced the item.

The purpose of the item was to seek approval to consult with partners and the public on a new five year Cotswold Housing Strategy. The strategy directly responded to the Council's Corporate Plan that seeks to address housing affordability and increase the supply of affordable housing.

As this was an item for pre-decision scrutiny, members were being asked to comment on it, making any relevant recommendations to Cabinet. Members discussed the report, including various points on the report itself, and the broader work surrounding it.

Members raised the following points on the report itself, which the Forward Planning Manager stated they would take away to amend or action necessary:

- Members commended the quality of the report and the utility and relevance of the work.
- On page 42 and 43, the housing need number was higher than in the Council's Housing Supply report. The Forward Planning Manager stated that the housing targets were being met. The figures on this page would be reviewed by the Forward Planning Manager after the meeting, as the table may be out of date.
- The Forward Planning Manager stated that the map on page 50 would be amended to include a key. It was also suggested that Waterloo Road be amended to 'The Waterloo'.
- In objective 3.2, members asked whether reference to retrofit could be included.
- It was also stated by the Forward Planning Manager that the consultation questions would be shared with the Committee once they were ready.
- It was confirmed by the Forward Planning Manager that the technical document would be available as part of the consultation.
- The Committee commented on the elements surrounding the strategy, including the neighbourhood and environmental elements to the housing. The Forward Planning Manager stated that the local plan included this information and they would not want to duplicate it, but would reflect on this as part of the strategy.

Members discussed the strategy, raising the following points;

- Members asked the Forward Planning Manager about the costs surrounding the proposal. The Forward Planning Manager stated that a digital consultation would be carried out using a platform that had been secured through grant funding. There was a marketing budget associated with it in order to engage residents, particularly younger people. Although uncertain of the specific figure, the Forward Planning Manager stated that it would be relatively modest.
- Members asked whether a Tourism Tax could be added as a part of this, or similar work. The Leader stated that they would welcome this, but were constrained by central government legislation, but they would continue to lobby on this. The Forward Planning Manager stated that paragraph three of the report also addressed this point.
- Members stated that the consultation on the strategy should be undertaken in such a way as to inform the public on issues outside of the Council's scope (including the above example) and potentially include a video explanation. The Forward Planning Manager stated that this was a good suggestion, and they would consider how to best incorporate this as part of the consultation.
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) inhabited by students were discussed. Specifically, it was stated that certain areas in Cirencester had over 10% of the housing utilised by students in HMOs. The Committee, Officers and the Leader discussed this, and it was stated that engagement with the Royal Agricultural University was already carried out through other documents associated with the work plan, but ways to include it within the housing strategy would be evaluated. The Leader caveated this by stating that HMOs were largely delivered through the private rented sector.
- Members discussed how social housing was allocated, and referenced a perception held by some that housing was made available to non-local people. The Leader stated that a local connection was necessary unless there was an exceptional circumstance, but stressed that the importance was to ensure plenty of provision of affordable housing.
- Members also stated that it was important to engage with the private rented sector to ensure quality provision of long term rented housing and dissuasion of short-term holiday rentals.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To recommend to Cabinet that the Council consults with the Royal Agricultural University to ensure that there is suitable provision of accommodation for students.
- 2) To recommend to Cabinet that the Council consults with businesses to ensure local employees have access to housing within the district.
- 3) To request that the consultation questions for the housing strategy are shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor David Cunningham proposed the resolution and Councillor Coleman seconded the resolution.

For- 7, Against 0, Abstentions 0

OS.9 Proactive Delivery of Affordable Housing

The Leader introduced the item.

The purpose of the item was to outline the Council's aspiration for a more proactive approach to increase the supply of affordable housing within the district, outline of how this can be achieved, and the resources required.

The Leader stated reported to the Committee that a senior officer to drive the housing level at a strategic level would be employed. The Leader hoped that this would provide more in-house expertise in this area, which was a Council priority

Members discussed the recommendation, which was 'to note' the report. Members highlighted that it is generally not the role of Cabinet to note reports, and that the Cabinet recommendations should highlight this. The Leader stated that the Officer would remove the "note the suggestion to" in the report.

The Committee discussed the definition of affordable housing, as it was highlighted that there are many types. The Leader stated that the form of affordable housing that the Council was aiming to deliver was tenure blind affordable housing. The Leader also stated that there needed to be more state built affordable housing, with the long term aspiration being for the Council to build housing.

RESOLVED: To note the Cabinet report.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor Turner.

For- 7, Against 0, Abstentions 0

OS.10 Q2 Performance Report

The Chief Executive Officer introduced the report, and provided highlights, including;

- Work had been undertaken on transitioning services from the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership, including the funding of the growth hub.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28/November2023

- Another round of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme had been undertaken, to deliver food and activities for eligible children across the district over the holidays.
- The Collaboration Agreement entered into by the Council and Bromford Housing to deliver the Down Ampney housing development had been delayed due to drainage concerns, but progress was now underway with drawings approved by members and a Planning Application due to be submitted in November.
- "Spotlight on Planning" Town & Parish Council Forum events were held during September in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh.

Members discussed the report and raised the following points, which the Chief Executive Officer stated written responses would be provided to;

- 'Deliver our Climate Change Action Plan' was considered to be off-target, but did not contain an update, could this be provided?
- On the asset management strategy, the report stated that costs were being finalised with the consultant, Members asked for more details on this cost.
- The 'Make My House Green' scheme was considered to be a success, what were the KPIs and the business arrangement with MakeMyHouseGreen regarding any discounts offered or fees paid to CDC?
- Who were the the installers for the EV charging points?
- 'Work with Ubico to adopt ultra-low emission vehicle technology', as the delivery of this was constrained by the technology available, should the action be removed?
- Further details were requested on the ecological emergency work, in relation to what this included?
- More details in the narrative were requested generally, and the Chief Executive Officer stated that this would be taken forward for future reports.
- Further details were requested on decarbonisation, and work to deliver decarbonisation, including a member briefing. The Chief Executive Officer stated that in light of the decision not to recruit a replacement sustainable transport officer, the Council were working alongside the County Council, to ensure this was still being carried out.

Members also asked for clarification on the council tax collection targets, these were clarified by officers as being cumulative targets.

The Democratic Services Officer added that Member training had been arranged on Biodiversity Net Gain and Retrofitting Historic Buildings but was not aware of decarbonisation training, and would follow this up with the Head of Climate Action.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor Turner.

For- 7, Against 0, Abstentions 0

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee
28/November2023

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The Democratic Services Officer added that Member training had been arranged on Biodiversity Net Gain and Retrofitting Historic Buildings but was not aware of decarbonisation training, and would follow this up with the Head of Climate Action.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

OS.11 Q2 Financial Performance Report

The Deputy Chief Executive introduced the report. The purpose of the report was to set out the latest budget monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year.

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that they would provide further detail of the variations at Annex A.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 28/November2023

Members asked for further details of reserves. The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that the reserves existed to ensure resilience in case of overspend, and was reviewed as an annual process.

Members made reference to the Publica Review, and asked if there was a reserve for this. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that £200,000 had been allocated from the Council priority fund to the Publica Review.

Members asked whether a visual overview could be added to the financial reports to make these more accessible to members of the public. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that this was considered good practice in accounting and would look at ways to do this.

The Committee also asked the Deputy Chief Executive whether there were any aspects of the report that stood out as being unusual or which Members should pay particular attention to. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that building control, land charges and public conveniences were the main reason for shortfall in income, which were historic shortfalls which would need to be addressed in the next budget.

Planning fee increases were also discussed, as these had recently been announced. The Cabinet Member stated that a report would come forward to Cabinet in February on this.

RESOLVED: To note the report, and ask that the amendments be made to the report accordingly.

For – 7, Against 0, Abstention 0

OS.12 Updates from Gloucestershire County Council Scrutiny Committees

Councillor Coleman had left the room at 19:21.

The Chair introduced the reports, which had been shared as a supplement before the meeting. The Chair thanked the members for the reports and their succinctness.

OS.13 Update on the Public Conveniences Review Group

Councillor Tony Slater introduced the item as the Chair of the Review Group and summarised the work that had been done.

The next meeting of the working group would take place on 5 December, and the group would review the costs provided by Danfo. The Group had engaged with Town and Parish Councils, who largely were not keen to take on responsibility for managing Public Conveniences.

The deadline for reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was January 2024, and the Committee asked that the Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration review the terms of reference see whether that needed to be sooner due to the need to report to Cabinet.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

OS.14 Work Plan

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
28/November2023

The Chair stated that an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been scheduled for 8 January 2024 in order to discuss the Local Plan and Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED: To note the work plan.

The Meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 7.30 pm

Chair

(END)



Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 16 November 2023

Councillors present:

Gina Blomefield –Chair
David Cunningham
Patrick Coleman
Angus Jenkinson

Gary Selwyn –Vice-Chair
Dilys Neill
Michael Vann
Tony Slater

Clare Turner
Jon Wareing

Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and
Chief Finance Officer

Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business
Manager
Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer

Observers:

Councillor Nikki Ind,
Councillor David Fowles

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council
Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader

a) Chair's Announcement

This item was not on the agenda, but added in at the Chair's discretion. The Chair highlighted the background to the meeting and introduced the house keeping rules of the meeting.

OS.301 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Roly Hughes.

OS.302 Substitute Members

Councillor Patrick Coleman substituted for Councillor Roly Hughes.

OS.303 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

OS.304 Publica Review

The purpose of the item was to scrutinise the decision taken by Cabinet on 2 November 2023 on the Publica Review.

The Leader introduced the item and outlined the background to the proposal. The Leader that Publica was set up to administer Council Services in 2017, but an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in 2022 identified that a review should be undertaken into whether Publica remained the correct delivery vehicle for the Council's services. Initially the review looked at selected services, but the scope was subsequently widened. The Leader emphasised that staff working for Publica were an invaluable asset regardless of whether their employment was through Publica or directly for the Council.

The Chief Executive then addressed the Committee and explained the process underlying the consultation. The Chief Executive stated that the Corporate Peer Challenge outlined what was working well, but also stated that the Publica model didn't provide sufficient strategic decision making capacity, and that there were issues of identity. Subsequently Human Engine, a consultancy, were appointed to review the partnership, and identified that moving some of the services in house would not resolve the identity issues. The Chief Executive stated that taking back the majority of services, as outlined in the report, would return decision making ability to the Council.

The Chief Executive also stated that Publica had been asked to make savings, and had identified £2m worth of these through the 'future Publica' programme. It was stated by the Deputy Chief Executive that the savings per Council would be around £660,000, and the Deputy Leader stated that withdrawing the Council's services from Publica would allow increased control and flexibility.

The report highlighted which services would be retained within Publica (e.g. ICT and HR), but the Chief Executive stated that transition plans were being worked on, utilising free consulting services from local partnerships in addition to the resources outlined in the report.

Members subsequently discussed the report and raised points on the pace of the proposals, the financial and governance arrangements.

Members made reference to the transition plan, which the Committee did not have access to. Members raised concerns over Cabinet approving the Human Engine recommendation without having the transition plans in front of them. The Chief Executive and Leader stated that the transition plans would be presented to the Committee at subsequent phases of the decision making. They also stated that the pace was dictated by another partner council, and the partner councils needed to be in alignment due to matters such as staffing and corporate governance. The Chief Executive stated that further details on finances and governance would be presented at future stages.

In regard to the pacing of the proposals, the need to retain staff was referenced. Although the need to scrutinise proposals and make sure governance arrangement were in place, providing clarity through a quick process was mentioned by members as a potential benefit to allow the Council to provide certainty to staff. Likewise, the Leader explained that the length of the process was dictated by the need to consult and ensure appropriate governance arrangements. The Chief Executive Officer also stated that an inbox for staff questions had been set up as a way for staff to ask questions and voice concerns, and that an FAQ document had been set up, which members would be given access to.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

16/November2023

Members reinforced their appreciation towards staff at all levels, including top level management, mentioning Jan Britton's good work as Managing Director of Publica.

Members discussed the TUPE arrangements, which would include providing the local government pension scheme to be a more attractive employer. The costs of this were explained by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

The Committee discussed the future Publica model, and the Deputy Leader stated that this represented insufficient savings for the Council, and that bringing most services back in house would provide greater control, as well as improve recruiting practices.

Members discussed the cost of the proposals, which included hiring a programme director and programme manager. The Deputy Leader advised that the Council would have enough information to make a decision, and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be involved at future stages throughout the transition period.

Members discussed whether Senior Officers employed directly by the Council would receive a pay increase, commensurate with an increase in responsibility. The Leader and Deputy Leader advised that a regular pay and grading proposal would be taken to Council to be approved, as a routine and separate matter, but if there was an increase in responsibility, an increase in pay may be appropriate.

Members discussed recommendations 2 and 3 of the report;

“2. AGREE That the Chief Executive oversees the creation of a detailed transition plan for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council

3. ENDORSE the approach to the further due diligence outlined in the financial implications of the report including analysis of the detailed payroll data required, which will be essential to calculate the short and long-term costs associated with the recommendations set out in the Human Engine report.”

Members stated that detail was lacking to support these recommendations, and that there was insufficient information to scrutinise these. Specifically, reference was made to the Gantt chart, which lacked detail. The Chief Executive stated that the Committee would be involved in transition plans at a later point and would be able to feed into the processes. The Committee discussed ways that it could feed into the process, and there was agreement that regular updates should be brought to the Committee.

The Leader explained the justification behind the decision, and highlighted that without the financial drivers, or the other partner who wished to withdraw from Publica, that the decision would still likely have taken place due to a belief that Publica was not the Council's preferred method to deliver services.

The Chair summed up the discussion and put together several potential recommendations, which were voted on by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To recommend to Council that recommendation 1 in the report is amended to read 'Approve the recommendations set out in the Human Engine report (that the majority of services are returned to the Council as per the detail provided on page 12 of the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
16/November2023

Human Engine report)', subject to the completion of due diligence and the agreement of the detailed transition plan.

Voting record - 7 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions

- 2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives regular updates on the Publica Review (at additional meetings where needed) at critical milestones including prior to future Cabinet / Council decisions. Updates to include oversight of staff concerns and HR implications and how those matters are being managed.

Voting record - 7 for, 0 against, 1 abstentions

Cllr Coleman left the room at 18:35 and Cllr Turner left at 18:50 and therefore neither voted.

There was discussion on two further possible recommendations to Council which related to key points arising from the discussion, but neither had a proposer or seconder and therefore they were not voted on:

- That the Council and its partners consider opportunities for Publica to offer the services retained within it to organisations outside of the existing Publica partner councils.
- That a review of senior officer remuneration should be considered in view of the additional responsibilities of senior officers once services are returned to the direct control of the Council. This should be factored into the financial costs.

The Meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 7.18 pm

Chair

(END)

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 08 JANUARY 2024
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM X
Subject	2024/25 BUDGET CONSULTATION FEEDBACK
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: Mike.Evely@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides feedback to Cabinet from the recent consultation on the Administration’s budget proposals.
Annexes	Annex A – Responses to the survey questions 1 to 4 Annex B – Alternative views on car park charges and charging periods Annex C – Suggestions for how the council could reduce spending, raise revenue and comments on Council Priorities or any other aspect of the Council’s spending and service delivery
Recommendation/s	<i>That Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the feedback from the budget consultation exercise and considers recommendations to Cabinet.</i>
Corporate priorities	The Council’s budget sets out the financial envelope for the Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan, which details how the Council will deliver against all of its adopted aims, priorities and principles.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	The Council used a wide range of communications channels to share the key budget messages and highlight the consultation to as many residents, businesses and community organisations as possible, encouraging them to take part.



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Cabinet considered the *2024/25 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update*, as a basis for consultation with the community, on 2 November 2023. This report sets out feedback from the consultation for Cabinet to consider.
- 1.2. The Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023 set out the Government's financial position at a time of significant economic challenge for the UK. The Bank of England raised interest rates over the last 12 months to mitigate the high level of inflation. Growth has been slow throughout the year with prospects for 2024/25 remaining weaker than other G7 economies.
- 1.3. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 18 December 2023 for 2024/25. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement is expected in early February 2024 following the consultation period which closes on 15 January 2024.
- 1.4. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and 2024/25 budget will be updated with the outcome of the Local Government Finance Settlement, along with any further adjustments identified since Cabinet considered the draft position in November.
- 1.5. Cabinet will consider the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy on 01 February 2024. Cabinet will recommend the 2024/24 revenue and capital budgets along with the associated Capital, Treasury Management and Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategies to the Council on 21 February 2024.

2. CONSULTATION PROCESS AND FEEDBACK

- 2.1. Consultation on the draft budget proposals ran from 03 November to 08 December 2023. The Council used a wide range of communications channels to share the key budget messages and highlight the consultation to as many residents, businesses and community organisations as possible, encouraging them to take part.

Budget Consultation Outcomes

- 2.2. The Council received 542 responses to the consultation, an increase of 153 when compared to the 2023/24 Budget Consultation (389 responses were received). Feedback to the quantitative survey questions is included at **Annex A**, views on parking from question 4 is included at **Annex B**. Comments on the Council priorities or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery is included at **Annex C**.
- 2.3. The main findings from the consultation are set out below.



Question 1 – To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach set out below?

- 2.4.** *As well as the position for 2023/24 described in our proposals, the Council expects the Government to cut the Council's funding in future years to provide more money for Children's and Adult's social care. Our approach to the Council's finances is to safeguard our services while delivering on our priorities of doing our part to tackle the climate emergency, delivering homes local people can afford to rent and supporting our economy, all whilst attempting to balance the ongoing budget. As a minimum, that will require small increases in Council Tax (see question 3) together with setting our existing and any new fees and charges to ensure other taxpayers do not subsidise them. Where the Council does decide to subsidise some fees and charges, the reasons for this will clearly set out. It will also require the remodelling of services to reduce costs through the use of new technology and other efficiency measures.*
- 2.5.** The response was positive to this question. 45.2% agreed or strongly agreed with the Council's approach. This compares with 30.1% who disagreed or strongly disagreed and 24.7% who neither agreed nor disagreed.

Question 1	Responses	% of Total
Strongly Agree	69	13.0%
Agree	171	32.2%
Neutral	131	24.7%
Disagree	87	16.4%
Strongly disagree	73	13.7%
TOTAL	531	

Question 1	Responses	% of Total
Agreed or Strongly Agreed	240	45.2%
Neutral	131	24.7%
Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed	160	30.1%
TOTAL	531	

Question 2 – Do you agree that the Council should make the proposed change to waste and recycling services?

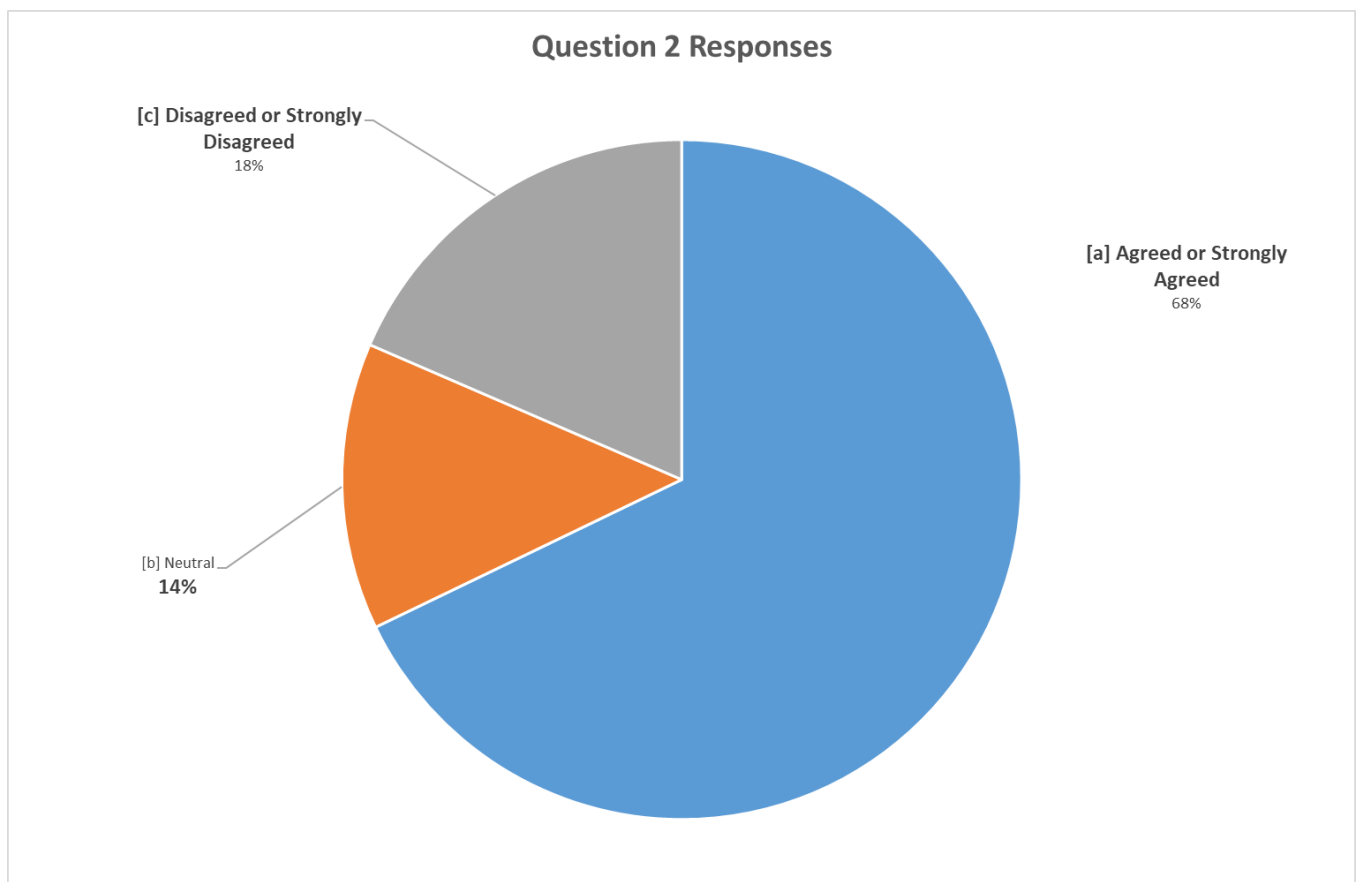
- 2.6.** *We are proposing to save £375,000 next year (£500,000 in a full year) from the cost of our waste and recycling service by changing when we collect from households by getting more from our vehicles and crews. We estimate that around 60% of households would see their collection day change with more households receiving an afternoon collection than at present. Do you agree that the Council should make this change?*



2.7. 67.9% supported the proposed changes to waste and recycling collection days. This compares with 18.5% who were not in favour of the proposal, and 13.6% who either indicated they were neutral on the proposal.

Question 2	Responses	% of Total
Strongly Agree	142	26.5%
Agree	221	41.3%
Neutral	73	13.6%
Disagree	52	9.7%
Strongly disagree	47	8.8%
TOTAL	535	

Question 2	Responses	% of Total
Agreed or Strongly Agreed	363	67.9%
Neutral	73	13.6%
Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed	99	18.5%
TOTAL	535	





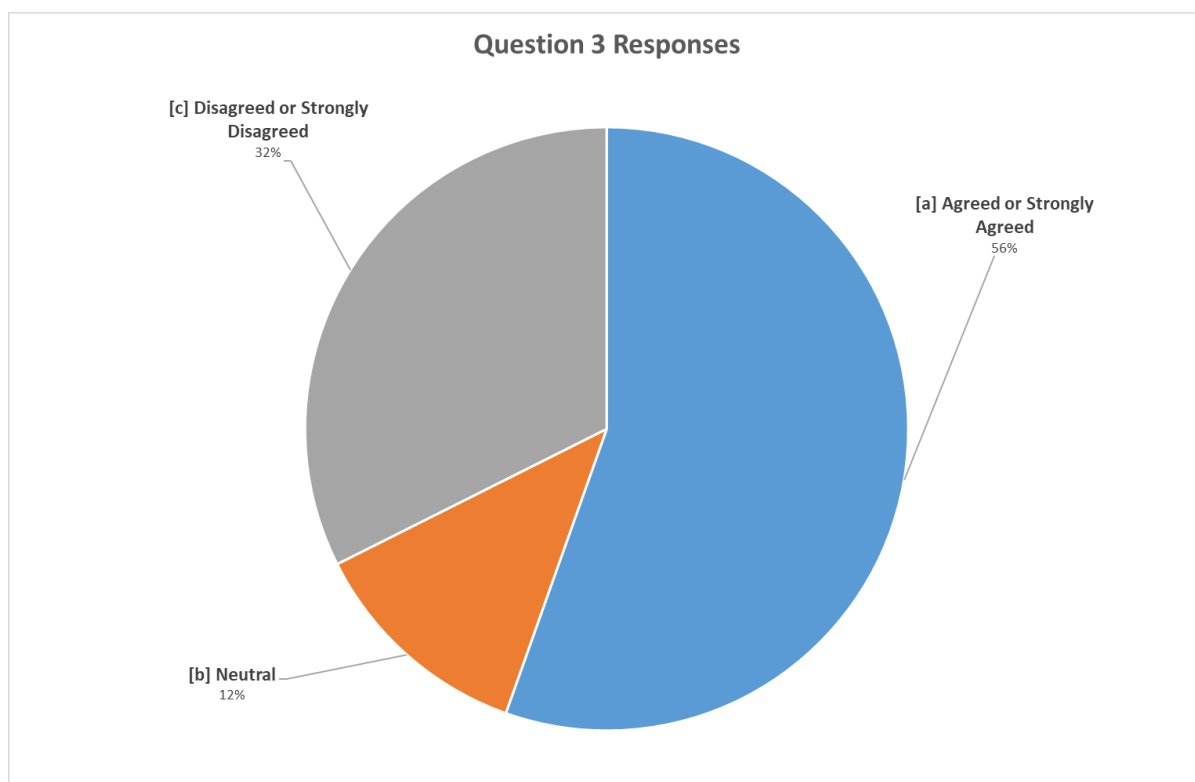
Question 3 – Do you agree with the proposed approach to increase Council tax?

2.8. *To support our priorities and help us to close our expected funding gap from the Government, we plan to increase Council Tax by 10p a week (£5 a year) for a Band D property (£3.33 for Band A up to £10 for Band G). Do you agree with this approach?*

2.9. The response to this question was supportive. 55.4% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed Council Tax increase. 32.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed whilst 12.2% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Question 3	Responses	% of Total
Strongly Agree	121	22.7%
Agree	175	32.8%
Neutral	65	12.2%
Disagree	76	14.2%
Strongly disagree	97	18.2%
TOTAL	534	

Question 3	Responses	% of Total
Agreed or Strongly Agreed	296	55.4%
Neutral	65	12.2%
Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed	173	32.4%
TOTAL	534	



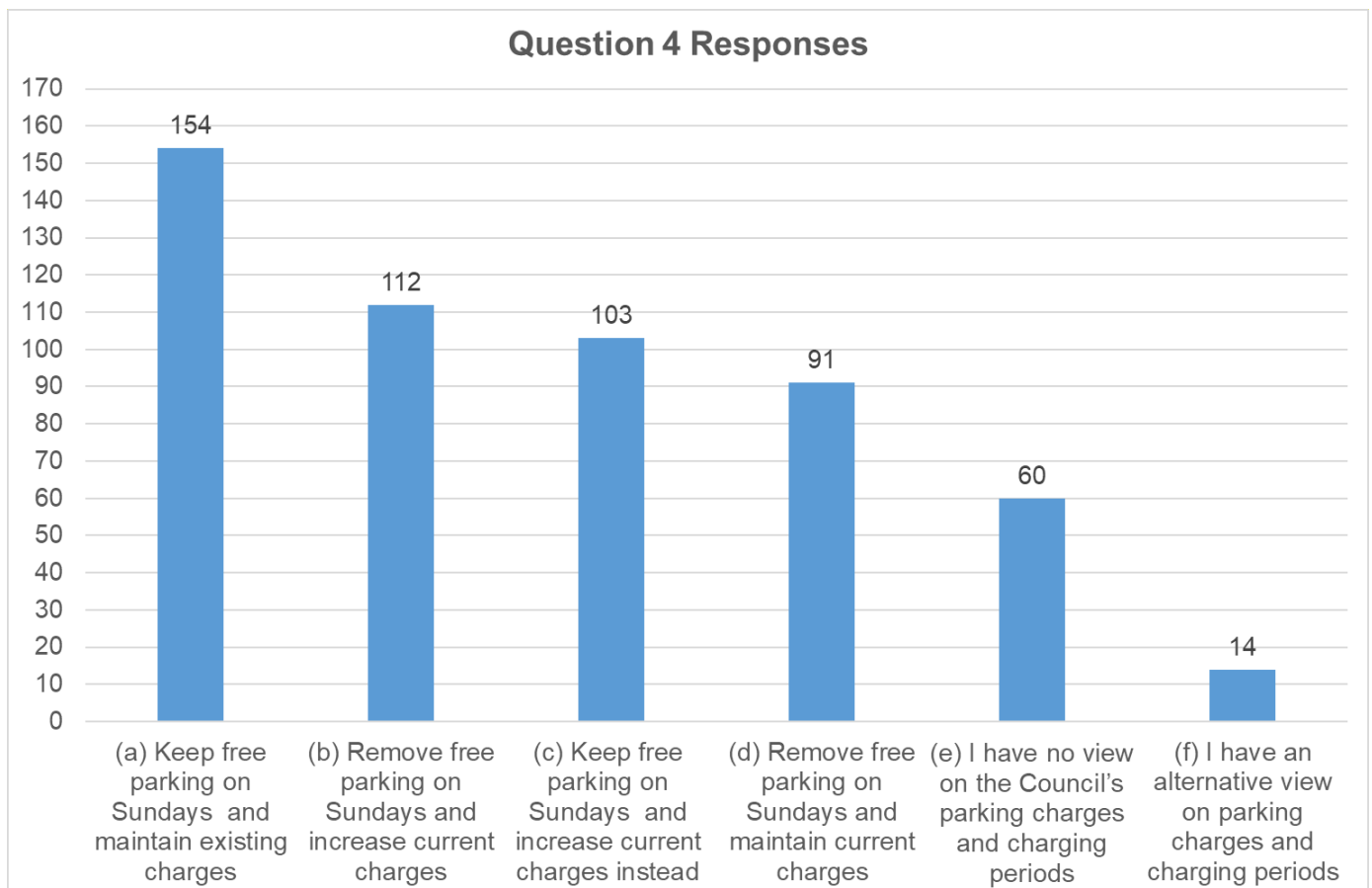


Question 4 – Tell us your view about potential changes to parking charges by selecting one of the statements below

In our budget consultation last year we asked residents about changes to charges and charging periods in our car parks but decided to leave them unchanged to help residents, visitors and businesses during the cost of living crisis. The financial pressures on the Council mean we believe we cannot afford for them to remain the same three years in a row. In the two years since we last increased our parking fees consumer prices have risen by 17%. We are therefore proposing to increase our parking charges by 15% in April 2024 which we estimate would raise an additional £375,000 a year. We have also identified that we could raise £100,000 by extending charging on Sundays to all our car parks (currently we charge only in Bourton-on-the-Water and Stow-on-the-Wold).

Could you tell us your view about potential changes to parking charges by selecting one of these statements:

2.10. 38.0% supported the removal of free parking on Sundays. This compares with 48.1% who indicated that the Council should keep free parking on Sundays, and 13.9% who either indicated they had no view or provided an alternative view on parking.





- 2.11. An element of the question also asked for views on the current charges and whether they should be increased or remain the same. 45.9% of respondents wanted no change to the current car park charges (Answers a + d) with 40.3% of respondents supporting an increase in charges (Answers b + c) change.

Question 4	Responses	% of Total
(a) Keep free parking on Sundays and maintain existing charges	154	28.8%
(b) Remove free parking on Sundays and increase current charges	112	21.0%
(c) Keep free parking on Sundays and increase current charges instead	103	19.3%
(d) Remove free parking on Sundays and maintain current charges	91	17.0%
(e) I have no view on the Council's parking charges and charging periods	60	11.2%
(f) I have an alternative view on parking charges and charging periods	14	2.6%
TOTAL	534	

Question 4	Responses	% of Total
[b + d] Remove free parking on Sundays	203	38.0%
[a + c] Keep free parking on Sundays	257	48.1%
[e + f] No view or an alternative view given	74	13.9%
TOTAL	534	

Question 4	Responses	% of Total
[b +c] Increase current charges	215	40.3%
[a + d] Keep current charges the same	245	45.9%
[e + f] No view or an alternative view given	74	13.9%
TOTAL	534	

- 2.12. There were 124 comments made on alternative views for car park charges and charging periods and these are shown in **Annex B**.

Question 5

Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery? Respondents were provided with a text box to make comments.

- 2.13. There were 225 comments made against question 5 and these are shown in **Annex C**.



3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1.** There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any changes to the 2024/25 budget arising from consideration of the consultation feedback will be included in the report to Cabinet on 01 February 2024.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1.** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.** A detailed risk assessment will form part of the Cabinet report in February 2024 regarding the 2024/25 budget proposals, and the revenue and capital budgets.

6. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1.** There are no direct climate or ecological implications arising from this report. The budget proposals are related to the Council priorities which include the climate and ecological emergency declarations.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1.** This report provides the Cabinet with the opportunity to consider amendments to the budget proposals for 2024/25 or longer term in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Any changes to the 2024/25 budget arising from consideration of the consultation feedback will be included in the report to Cabinet on 01 February 2024.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

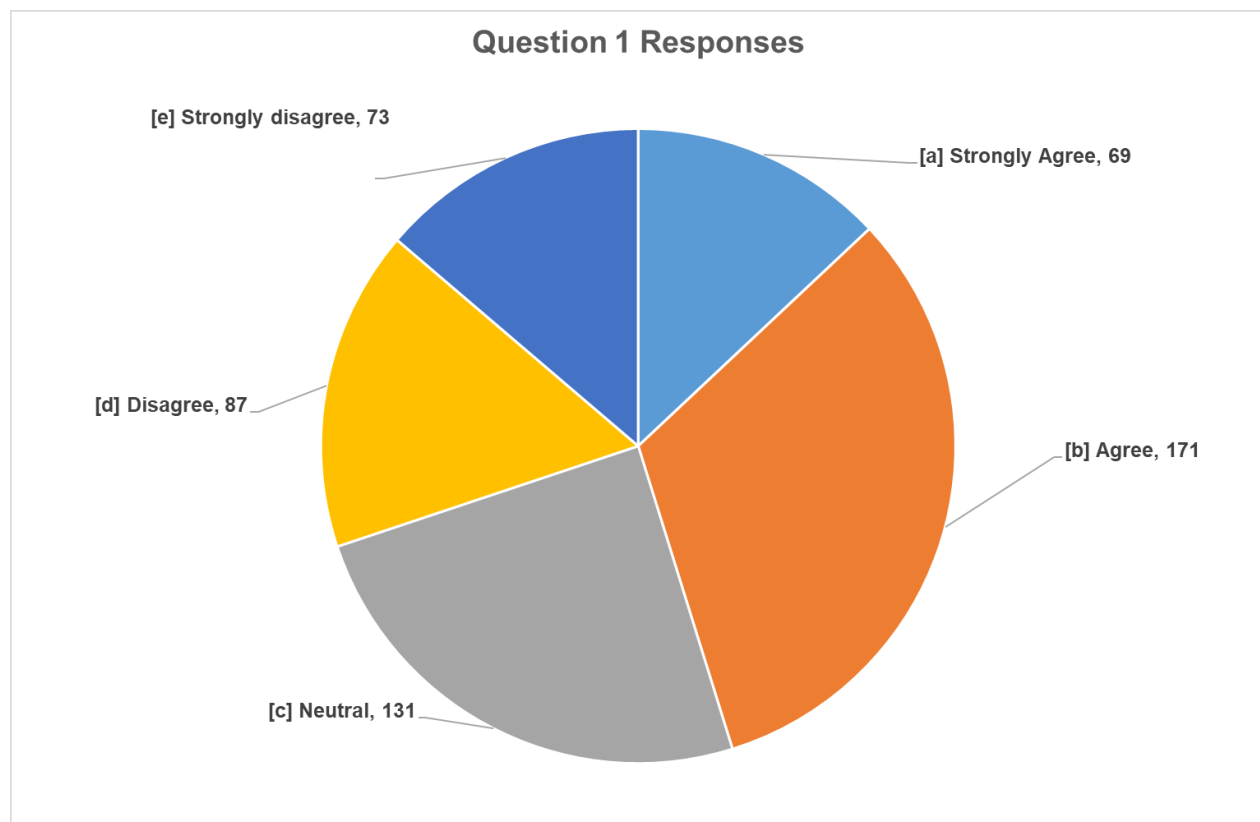
- 8.1.** None



ANNEX A

Question 1 – To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach set out below?

As well as the position for 2023/24 described in our proposals, the Council expects the Government to cut the Council's funding in future years to provide more money for Children's and Adult's social care. Our approach to the Council's finances is to safeguard our services while delivering on our priorities of doing our part to tackle the climate emergency, delivering homes local people can afford to rent and supporting our economy, all whilst attempting to balance the ongoing budget. As a minimum, that will require small increases in Council Tax (see question 3) together with setting our existing and any new fees and charges to ensure other taxpayers do not subsidise them. Where the Council does decide to subsidise some fees and charges, the reasons for this will clearly set out. It will also require the remodelling of services to reduce costs through the use of new technology and other efficiency measures.

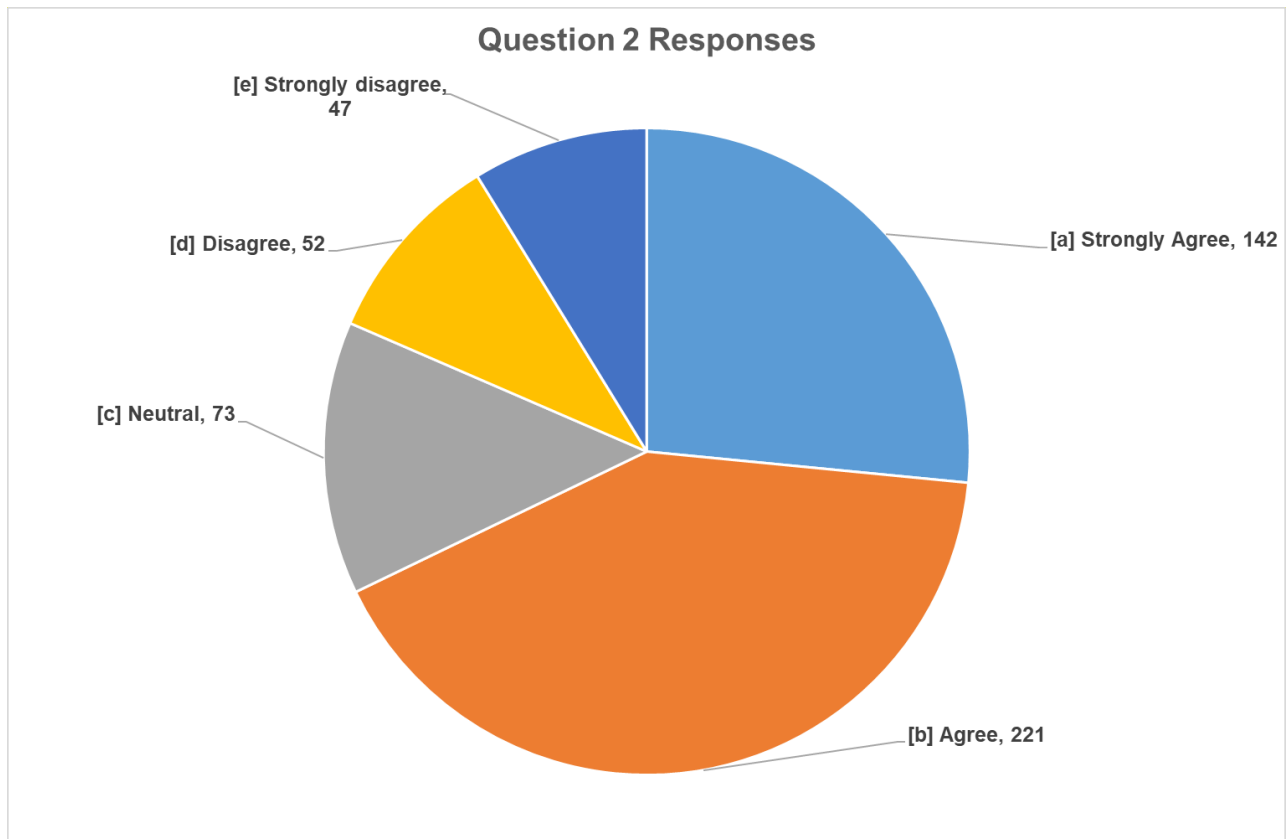


Question 2 – Do you agree that the Council should make the proposed change to waste and recycling services?

We are proposing to save £375,000 next year (£500,000 in a full year) from the cost of our waste and recycling service by changing when we collect from households by getting more from our vehicles and crews. We estimate that around 60% of households would see their collection day change with more households receiving an afternoon collection than at present. Do you agree that the Council should make this change?



ANNEX A

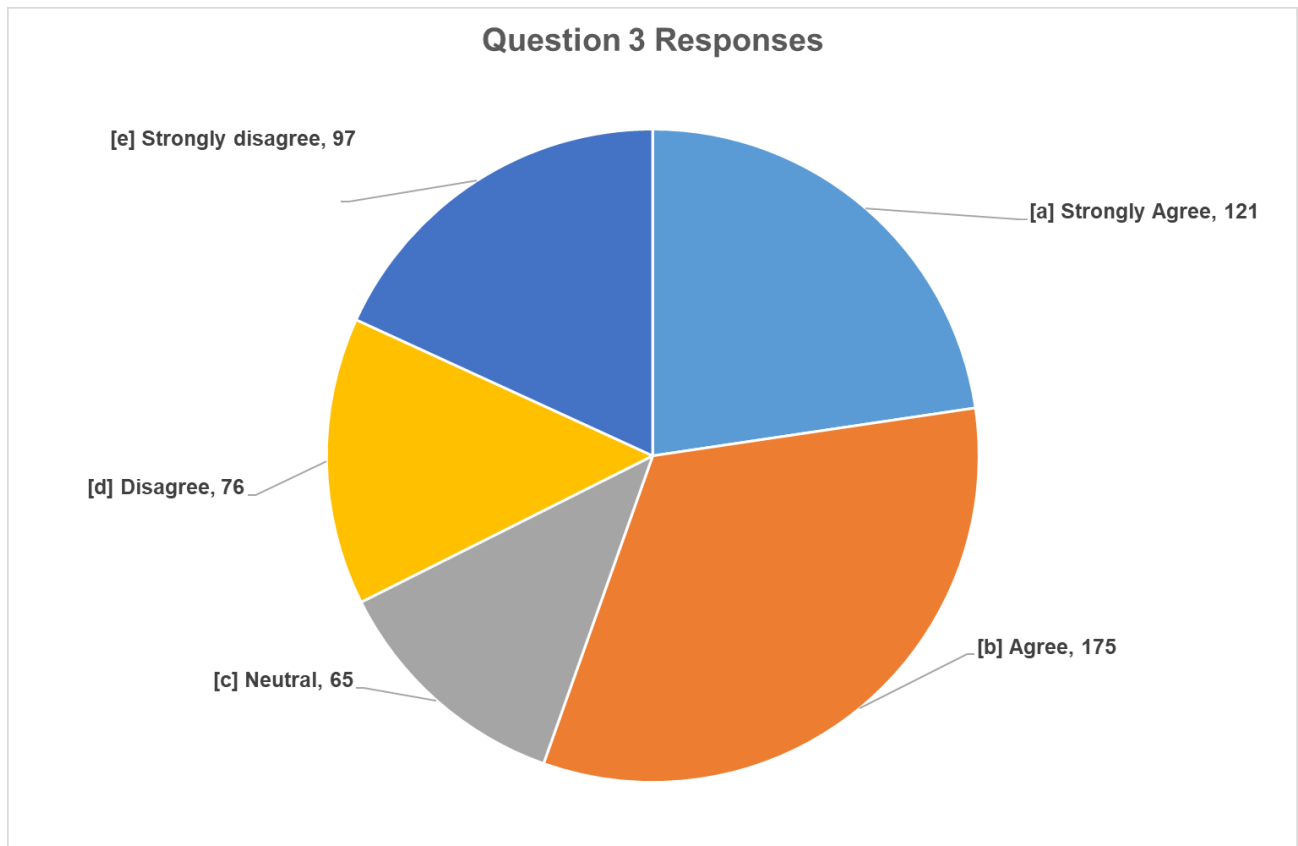


Question 3 – Do you agree with the proposed approach to increase Council tax?

To support our priorities and help us to close our expected funding gap from the Government, we plan to increase Council Tax by 10p a week (£5 a year) for a Band D property (£3.33 for Band A up to £10 for Band G). Do you agree with this approach?



ANNEX A



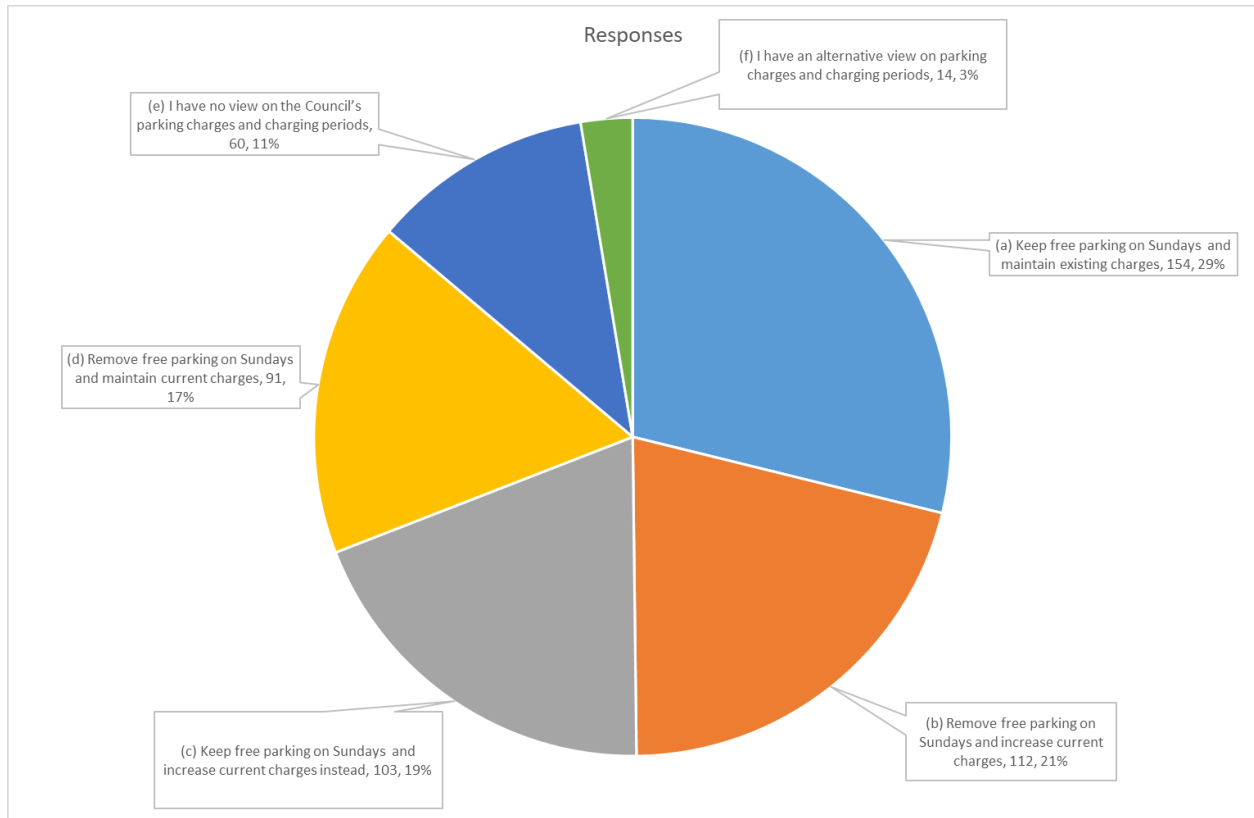
Question 4 – Tell us your view about potential changes to parking charges by selecting one of the statements below

In our budget consultation last year we asked residents about changes to charges and charging periods in our car parks but decided to leave them unchanged to help residents, visitors and businesses during the cost of living crisis. The financial pressures on the Council mean we believe we cannot afford for them to remain the same three years in a row. In the two years since we last increased our parking fees consumer prices have risen by 17%. We are therefore proposing to increase our parking charges by 15% in April 2024 which we estimate would raise an additional £375,000 a year. We have also identified that we could raise £100,000 by extending charging on Sundays to all our car parks (currently we charge only in Bourton-on-the-Water and Stow-on-the-Wold).

Could you tell us your view about potential changes to parking charges by selecting one of these statements:



ANNEX A



ANNEX B

This Annex shows the verbatim statements as written without any alteration or correction other than redactions to remove officer job titles or planning application references

Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods
Coach parking must be provided in Bourton by CDC to avoid major road safety and traffic flow issues in 2024.
Let the towns look after parking and managing
Parking is already expensive and the new machines painfully slow. If it gets any worse, people will stop coming in to the centre of town.
You have to keep free parking allocation to keep people coming to town/village centres which are already struggling. Further and higher charging is an easy option but short sighted in my view.
Free parking for all
the charges shouldn't be too high to encourage visitors to the town
The town of Cirencester is already like a ghost town. Raising parking charges will do business in the town no good at all.
Cash is legal tender, we should all be allowed to use it. I never go into town now, as refuse to be told i have to be cashless. Terrible for old folk, they cant cope with phone payments etc. We should have machines that take all payments.
I believe that an increase in charges is inevitable given the financial position of Local Government. My view would be that overnight parking should be chargeable, and Sunday parking could be kept in place or charged at a reduced rate. I also think tourist areas should see differing fees given that they are in areas with high footfall such as Bourton-on-the Water and Stow. There also needs to be a greater use of technology such as ANPR cameras and barriers to ensure that fees are being charged more accurately, rather than for example, paying for 2 hours and only using an 1 hour and 15 minutes.
Put up charges bur Reinstate free parking after 3.00 O'clock Mon to Sat and free parking on Sun
Start charging for anything longer than 1 hour on lay-bys along Cirencester to Cheltenham bypass - £100 per stay for lorries beyond one hour - that will help fund clearing up their mess
I am not happy at the withdrawal of the payment by cash option at parking machines.
If charges are to be made on a Sunday, they should only apply to a few central car parks.
Charge more for coach parking across the whole of the Cotswolds
You seriously need to bring back at least one cash meter, the town is losing so much revenue as so many people don't know how the card system works...I personally wouldn't use a card to pay for something as minimal as parking. I'd do what the majority of other's do, either travel to a town with cash meters or go to one of the towns with free parking.
there. should be a one hour. free parking ie for residents to shop and long term over one hour should be charged in all car parks
Permanently free parking to encourage shopping in local shops. The loss of revenue should be recovered from business rates.
Charging for parking does not help the high street. People will simply buy online.
Stop vanity projects and concentrate on delivering basic services to all. Garde Waste collection charges are way to high compared with surrounding areas and will encourage fly tipping, not very green policy if you need to drive long distances to Fosse Crossvf

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods

Locals parking badge for residents in tourist places like Bourton on the water. The extra money raised in the village by tourist should pay for households who pay council tax get a badge. Each household can apply for a free badge. To encourage locals to shop locally I'll year around

I think parking should be free - Cirencester Town is dying, increase the fee will drive people away from the town and thus reduce income, if Witney can do it why not Cirencester?

More free parking to increase footfall in town centres town centre is now dead need more customers not empty car parks

My view on keeping Sundays free of charge would help families and customers using the car parks to be able to enjoy a day out without the extra cost of parking.

Charge for Sunday parking but free for first hour. Keep cash and card payments as this will encourage more people to use the car parks, and why not pay on exit so you pay for what you actually use.

A rural bus scheme would help reduce car use and mobilise our ageing populace

Increase charges but Reintroduce 30min charge or more 20 min free bays and Let parish select 10 free parking days a year for events.

There should be free 1-2 hour parking to encourage more visitors / shoppers into our towns

Putting up car parking charges will result in towns becoming even more empty resulting in fewer businesses paying business rates. Why would I pay extra to park when I can go to an out of town shopping area and park for free.

Free after 3 was better for local people than free on Sunday which is largely restaurant goers. It would be good to give local people a number of free parking hours a year. This would soften the Blue ofcrased charges and make people think about whether they need to drive.

Taxing shoppers is a deterrent to footfall driving shoppers out of the town and to out of town centres or Witney.

Increase parking in line with inflation %. But, introduce a max 50p first 1/2hr. Keep after 6pm free. Introduce a reduced flat rate all day £3 Sunday charge.

Further increases on car parks will mean fewer people using them and going and parking elsewhere. We already pay for council services and this is making us pay again. No increases.

Parking should only be used to cover the cost of providing the parking itself and not as a revenue stream or redistribution mechanism

Introducing Sunday charging and increasing charges at other times will reduce footfall to the towns, ultimately resulting in those businesses paying less tax (or none at all), employing fewer people (and paying less tax) and damaging the reputation of the Cotswolds.

Could technology, cameras perhaps, increase revenues and compliance?

Increase car park charges for visitors whilst freezing residents parking fees

Increasing parking charges discourages visits to town centres and use of local businesses. Town centres would attract more visitors (and use of local businesses) if parking charges were reduced.

Charge the same on Sunday as for overnight parking. Other days increase 10%, but from 11am to 2pm double the staytime. This would encourage lunchtime shopping and dining, but not increase stay times across the board..

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods
a few 15 mins parking bays in each area for locals residents might help
It us ready far too expensive for regular visits to town. You are frightening away the visitors already. If you charge for parking on Sundays the town will die
Keep rates the same but Introduce 24hr charging in certain car parks. For example, Cirencester Market Place. Extend maximum parking durations in car parks - if someone is willing to pay why limit their stay? If parking fees must increase 30mins free should be enabled in all car parks.
Free on Sundays and free after 3PM
Do a Witney, help businesses by having free parking but time limited. Its our land
Any increase in charges will further reduce the footfall in local businesses - keep charges unchanged.
You have already killed towns and villages with parking charges. So you have ghost town with businesses going bankrupt and everyone drives to the trading estates, with free parking!
The car parks are always full since Covid, so raising charges will assist supply
Charge in all car parks across the Cotswolds evenly - some car parks are still fee free support working taxpayer and working families
Witney provides free parking and is booming. This should be looked at - it might encourage shoppers in who otherwise might not come to Cirencester and spend more money, growing the economy.
Ist hour should be free to encourage shoppers, then a lower hourly charge, Sundays should be free
Decrease car parking charges to encourage greater use by visitors to the town and therefore increase businesses and the viability of the town. You are killing the town and therefore your income. The
A more rigorous checking of parking and targeting those who don't pay, run over their time etc could bring in additional money.
Keep free Sundays and increase weekday charges
Remove Sunday parking, but increase charges by 7% rather than 15%
If you fill all the shops cut rates for local people to run shops make the centre of Cirencester a car free zone take away them stupid so called paths that people keep falling over then fill the area with market stalls three times a week the parking along by the black horse for disabled think of ten or more market stalls and lots more shops you will take the money in and keep parking charges the same
Reduced prices more free parking to increase town centre use
Don't charge on a Sunday, it will just push cars onto the surrounding streets. What about a discount scheme for residents for Mon to Sat parking. It works in Scarborough district. They also don't charge anyone from 30 Sept to 31 March and the car parks were busy and the various towns packed even on a wet No day.
So little parking is available that short term parking costs (2-3 hours) should be minimised but those needing long term in car parks should pay more. Priority should be given to shoppers to help rejuvenate the town commerce.

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods

Our town seems to be thriving again increasing parking charges will damage the viability of the town.

You want to encourage people to the Cotswolds, not push them to use side roads, housing estates and obstruct residents from parking! Witney still offers free parking, thus encouraging us to visit the town for shopping!!

Freeze parking charges as now. Reintroduce "free after three" to support local businesses. Pay for these changes by increasing the capacity of car parks (removing pedestrian walkways), and making general cost savings in council activities.

Parking is already expensive and will deter even more people coming into town if it is increased further. I already think twice about coming into town and paying for parking.

new meters installed that measure the time that we are in car park and pay only for time used on exit from parks

Parking up to 1Hr should be free to encourage local people to support their high streets. Car park fees outside this time should be increased with inflation including Sundays.

I'd agree with the increase in charges but local shopping need encouraging as much as possible due to the shift to online shopping. Increasing charges will not help with this.

As there are more visitors to Cirencester, especially in the summer, would it be possible to have some car parks which are cheaper for residents

I've always felt it was very cheap to park in our car parks and if you know the money is going towards ensuring our council can support its residents and deliver services, then it seems like a no brainer to raise money this way!

keep the charges the same and save money by not spending on pandering cyclists with priority schemes

we should protect the local economy from parking increases, if you drive people out of the TC to shop in retail parks businesses will close reducing your other revenue streams so it would be a short sighted step

The council should be encouraging people to use the shops in Central Cirencester as the town centre has taken a huge hit recently especially with Tesco closing and other shops as well. You have done away with the popular free after 3pm please do not treat people like cash cows raising the car parking fees and taking away free Sunday parking. Take a leaf out of West Oxfordshire DC with their free parking at Witney

Witney gives free parking...period! Town is thriving while most towns are becoming ghost town. I no longer shop in Ciren. Forcing people to pay by card is outrageous. Give people who pay their taxes (& your wages) the choice.

I think you are a bunch of robbing bastards

The free parking after 3pm meant that local shops were used. Now residents are pushed out to large shopping centres that offer free parking. It's had a huge impact on families and businesses alike and I'd love to see where the money made in those three hours if charging has been spent. You're trying to help families and businesses but have done the opposite.

Although you say you kept car parking the same, you actually removed the successful free after 3. This has seen a reduced footfall into the town centre, playing your part toward killing off a vibrant town centre. If you continue to over charge, then there won't be much of a town centre left to visit meaning you will not increase your income anyway.

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods
Free on Sundays and bring back free after three to support local businesses!
I will simply go elsewhere and spend my money with other businesses, driving customers away helps no one
Rarely park in Cirencester
High parking fees put people off visiting Cirencester. Keep them low.
You should leave parking charges and free Sundays as they are. You shouldn't be charging residents the amount you're short. Everyone has difficult decisions to make.
Double the charges in the Rissington Road car park in Bourton-on-the-water
I believe free parking on Sundays should be kept, Free after Three should be reintroduced and parking charges frozen or cut.
Unless I can find free parking I rarely stop in my town. I buy on line instead. Look at the number of empty shops and ask why? High rates/taxes and inconvenience.
free parking at all times
We need to encourage visitors not discourage!
Increase the business rates of the supermarkets and out of town outlets to cover the difference. Increasing the parking charges will kill the shops in the town centre which is already moribund.
An introduction of free or very low/token parking will encourage many more visitors and retail customers, the council should then be collecting additional tax from businesses, proportional to the increased revenue brought in by the scheme
Councils should sell off all car parks, use the income to rebate council tax and business rates and let commercial operators set their own pricing.
Parking is already expensive and the town needs to be accessible to all households.
all town parking should be free
There needs to be an Increase in business Rates on Out of Town Retail and the increased Rate Income used to subsidise In Town Parking Income , Likewise CIL Payments should be applied from Bathurst and Residential and Commercial New Developments within CDC with no exemptiond
Please re-introduce the free parking after 3pm
Free on Sunday and return of free after 3pm
Parking charges deter visitors and shopping. Be careful.
Increase out of town hyper market business rates to offset parking costs to support small shops in town.
All residential areas of Bourton-on-the-Water should have double yellow lines to dissuade tourists from parking for free here which reduces council parking revenues
Increase the parking charges on all days but not for registered businesses and residents.
Council tax here in the Cotswolds are already higher than most councils I feel it's unfair to expect residents who haven't no means of increasing their income to fund rising costs in fact I would support reduced council for pensioners
Each car park should have at least one coin machine for the elderly, tourists, and the technology disabled

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods
Make use of the car park on the Whiteway near the rugby club for normal public use (not season tickets)
Keep free parking for locals and charge people from outside area
Pay cuts/ freezes at the exec level to fund the service cost gap
Parking should be free as it would encourage more people into Cirencester. It's free in Witney!
witney thrives as a shopping destination because of plenty of free parking
Offer more spaces per car park for 30 or 60 mins free, for people to pick up, drop off and do single errands. It will help keep the town retail units commercially viable and you will collect more in rates. Offer small number of spaces for 3+ hrs at much higher premium. Rich people will pay for the convenience.
I can't get a blue badge as my husband has Alzheimers classed as hidden disability so parking charges anytime are major cost for me.
charge blue badge users a flat fee for use of car parks; car parking has already gone up a lot; i would remove free parking rather than increase fees everywher. people will shop in out of town centres more and more as parking is free.
20 minutes free parking would be handy to encourage local business usage - but I would not expect all day free parking
Allow coaches to Park in Rissington road car park at £20 a coach x 4000 coaches per anum will give an easy £80,000 for council coffers, easy money and good to support local business and clear the roads for local residents,
Parking in towns should be free of charge to support business and to encourage more spending on the high streets. Parking charges elsewhere should be charged at an appropriate and reasonable cost, also supporting businesses that rely upon visitors to the region and the local community to boost the economy.
Car parking fees should be reduced in price to ensure that the town centres survive. I currently live in CDC area and currently shop in Cirencester due to the parking fees being less than Cheltenham, if Cirencester car parks have an increase I charges I will go to the retail parks in Cheltenham
Increase free parking options for the first hour or 2 to encourage residents and tourists to depend money in local businesses thus increasing local business income keeping our towns and villages vibrant.
To encourage sustainable transport, parking charges should increase.
Raise council tax by more. Keep parking charges as they are and reintroduce cash payment options
Should be free every where
Parking charges stay the same, charge local businesses/clongonmariants to advertise their businesses
I think free parking on Sunday should be kept, raise prices by 15% (if absolutely necessary) but restore "free after three" for price-sensitive customers and to increase footfall in the town.
Parking charges is prominent way to improve the budget and should be utilized gracefully.

ANNEX B

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Q4. Alternative views on parking charges and charging periods

Increased charges weekday and weekend but have free after 3pm

As an independent trader in Cirencester I am reluctant to see any increase in parking charges as it discourages locals from supporting their local high street and drives them to shop in out-of-town superstores.

Should be left as they are, I don't shop in Cirencester as the cost of parking is awful.

It would be a mistake to charge for parking on Sundays as this would warrant more traffic wardens working unsociable hours - which would reduce the income.

Increase charges but look at other areas like evening and overnight parking through technology use.

I try not to park in CDC car parks as it costs more than parking in seaside towns like Newquay Poole etc

I think the free parking in the Council's car parks on Sundays should be kept and should be extended to the other days of the week.

ANNEX C

This Annex shows the verbatim statements as written without any alteration or correction other than redactions to remove officer job titles or planning application references

Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?
Yes be ruthless in cutting paid councillors and extra for each meeting they chair or vice chair.
We no longer go into town to shop due to excessive car parking charges. This harms local businesses and forces us to use the supermarkets and Amazon deliveries rather than local suppliers who are put out of business and give much needed competition to huge companies that make billions of profits but pay no tax.
Support for social housing is desperately needed
I think everyone realises that money is tight, but the council continues to spend money on things not needed. The updated road signs were not a good use of funds. Also, I know that the civil servants that work at trinity road are furious that more money was spent on councillors office refurb a few years after they were already done.
Freeze salaries. Stop spending money on vanity projects (new street signs).
Freeze elected members remuneration for the next 2 years
Change residual waste collections to three weekly - look at Wales
Make Cirencester great again
Please stop spending money on the 'Green' agenda and 'woke' issues. As a point of policy, reduce all non-front line staffing by a third and manage people properly as though they were in the private sector. Stop telling me how wonderfully you are doing - I can judge for myself. Start planning to amalgamate district and county councils - we do not need both. Abolish town councils - Moreton Town council is completely useless and yet the district council continues to support it. Realise that there is a whole bunch of folk who are fed up with CDC prioritising everything to Cirencester to the detriment of everywhere else. Become non political - politicians are worse than estate agents and local politicians are the worst.
Maybe not collect the green garden waste bin over the winter period eg. November to February
I would rather pay more council tax and leave the parking charges unchanged as it is important to keep town centres vibrant and support small businesses (I do not own or have any connection to a small business).
Sell the Trinity Road office's with so many of your staff still working from home 3.5 years after the pandemic.
Bin collection workers, waste a lot of councils money, bags go missing, bins get chucked about, so people have to keep getting new. Rubbish left on floor, some none collections. We pay for a service, we should receive a decent service.
There needs to be key consideration given to the service delivery models that the Council uses. The recent publication of the Publica Review may make residents wonder whether these changes will deliver value for money. The savings outlined in the Budget papers for Cabinet show savings from 'Future Publica', and yet the proposals agreed at 2 November Cabinet indicate that these savings are put into question if the majority of services are removed. These implications have not been spelled out fully as yet. Whilst fees and charges can be hiked and will need to be done, there has to be tightening up of the priorities to ensure that key services are provided for. I would also say the excellent work of Counter Fraud teams needs to be supported to ensure money is not lost from the Council. The other proposal I would like to see is another Climate Bond initiative or even a Community Recovery Bond which would help provide long term capital to the Council to help regenerate areas and invest in communities.

ANNEX C

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Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?
Build council houses (where there is public transport).
I only agree with the changes to the waste service if the service is going to work. It is no longer uncommon for rounds to be left incomplete now and I would worry that afternoon collecting would only make this worse. Parking charges for the small amount of shops in town should not increase it is already expensive for what there is to offer.
Cut the watched wage bill for top council officers, it's obscene
You waste my money by your inefficiencies
Get rid of the stupid booking slots for the fosse way tip / the town council tip in Cheltenham does not do this anymore.
I can't understand why it was so necessary to redecorate/refit the council offices
Practise 'good housekeeping' throughout offices to cut costs.
In light of the current proposed increases to costs for residents, it would be remiss of the councillors to receive any increase in pay that is in excess of what stated inflation is
As a resident I'm very concerned about how this council is managing our money - you must learn to manage budgets adequately, rather than continually waste money on vanity projects please (road signs, office furniture, consultancy fees etc)
Please prioritise the environment to protect our future
I think the priority areas for spend are: environment and health/mental health community support services
Still on parking...why not get a pay as you leave system, so you only actually pay for the amount of time you have stayed....payable obviously by cash or card .
is cleaning roads a necessary expenditure?
I don't understand the logic of saying that consumer price increases of 17% justify CDC raising its parking charges by 15% - that would only exacerbate the problem.
Stop funding EV charging projects , Council Comics with Joe Harris on the cover . Fire the climate change manager , reduce the number of councillors and stop pet Lib Dem political projects
Council is wrong to prioritise 'climate emergency' over other factors
Support for pensioners who do are not eligible for pension credit but who struggle financially. High council tax valuation compared with neighbours who have carried out extensions etc in recent years
I have written many t8mes about holiday homes using black wheelie bins. You tell us that they are a business and shouldn't use but do nothing about it. They are businesses and don't pay council tax but use bins. Top holiday homes produce a lot of rubbish. Either remove their bins and they use a commercial firm. Or charge them for a bin licence like our garden waste. I'm charged £57 for green bin. I agree why should people without a garden have to pay for my garden rubbish bin collection. So why should I pay for holiday homes to have their rubbish collected. Especially when lots of these houses are owned by foreign investors or businesses. As much as you have promised to change this to make it right nothing gets done. So local people who are not as well off pay for wealthy holiday home owners
Have council overheads been cut rather than ask residents to pay more. Any private business would not have this luxury. Waste collection and ability to park are surely basics functions to any council. Festivals are not nor are new street signs.

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You are a profligate council and have no clue as to what effect each change has on peoples perception of competency. Reduce your salaries, get rid of non-essential jobs. As for bin collections you cannot even guarantee the current collection schedule!

No public money should be spent on private property like for example, Resdale Hall.

If garden waste charge are increased more people will put garden waste in normal waste bins and have free collections and the landfill taxes will increase

I believe that more funding should be allocated to the Planning Department which is allowing the Cotswolds to becoming over developed with suburban style properties. We need more experienced Planning staff and greater CIL being charged to developers.

This has to be the worse questionnaire I have ever seen. Who do they expect to complete it with any real insight, and what value to they expect the results to have. Seriously, they should have asked someone with a clue to put this together if they want the actual opion of the community. I asked Chat GPT to have a look and analyse it. This is what it came up with ... so CDC, maybe take a look and redraft this.

_____ This questionnaire appears to have several issues that can make it ineffectual: Lack of Clarity and Conciseness: The introductory text in each section is somewhat lengthy and may confuse respondents. It's important to keep the language clear, concise, and easy to understand. No Explanation of Terms: The questionnaire introduces terms such as "Band D property," but it doesn't explain what they mean. This could lead to confusion for respondents who are not familiar with these terms. Too Many Optional Questions: Labeling questions as "optional" may reduce response rates as respondents might skip some questions, potentially missing out on critical information. Leading Questions: The questions in this survey may be considered leading because they include justifications for certain actions, which can influence respondents' answers. Limited Response Options: While the questionnaire uses a Likert scale for some questions, it doesn't provide an option for respondents to indicate if they are undecided or don't have enough information to answer. This omission could bias the results. Lack of Neutral or Middle Ground: In some questions, there's no "Neutral" or "Don't Know" option. A neutral option is essential for respondents who do not hold strong opinions on the topic. Limited Context: The questions are presented without extensive background information, which can make it challenging for respondents to provide informed and meaningful answers. Lack of Probing Questions: Probing questions that aim to understand the reasoning behind respondents' choices are missing. These can provide more in-depth insights. Complex Sentences: The sentences are somewhat lengthy and contain multiple clauses, which can lead to cognitive load and reduce comprehension. Open-Ended Questions: While the questionnaire includes one open-ended question, it's placed at the end and may not encourage respondents to provide additional comments. To improve the questionnaire's effectiveness, consider the following changes: Simplify the introductory text and provide clear definitions of any terms or concepts used. Eliminate the "optional" labels for questions to encourage respondents to answer all questions. Avoid leading language and present questions in a more neutral and balanced manner. Add a "Neutral" or "Don't Know" option to response choices where appropriate. Provide more context for each question to help respondents understand the implications of their choices. Include probing questions to understand the reasoning behind respondents' answers. Shorten and simplify sentences for improved readability. Consider reordering questions to create a logical flow. Encourage feedback

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and comments after each question, rather than having a single open-ended question at the end. These changes can help make the questionnaire more effective in collecting valuable and unbiased data.
I Disagree with the small increase at question 3 as the amount is negligible to households (£5 per year). Although few individuals enjoy paying Council Tax, surely a larger increase is warranted, given how difficult the ongoing funding of Public Services will be, as described in your proposals.
Use AI to reduce costs.
Please consider the support for disabled people. The cost of living increases have impacted disabled people hugely
Money has been wasted on new street signs in Cirencester, some streets still have the old ones. Redundancy payments made to staff who were unable to do their jobs properly, why were they not given warnings. According to the Standard 22 brand new gritters have been purchased this year! At what cost?
Keep customer service phone lines open all day. Use media channels to direct people to correct services/ authorities.
Having one container for all recycling reduces collection costs, improves recycling rates and is more efficient. This was shown in the last recycling consultation options paper. Why is this not being considered? Why are there no questions about garden waste charges? Combined with service reductions the cost has more than doubled in the past four years and further increases are unjustified, unreasonable and unsustainable (as you will lose more customers and increase the operating loss of the service.
If the situation is so bad financially, why did you waste money changing road signs unnecessarily in the past few years? Where else have you wasted money on fripperies?
Qualify spending an extortionate sum on decorating Joe Harris office
Council should merge with county council to save costs and simplify things
Like all Council Tax payers you should only spend the money you have and prioritise where you spend that accordingly. There should definitely be no Council Tax rises above the CPI rate as an absolute maximum.
You can't keep raising taxes.
There is no 'climate emergency'. It's not the council (or central government's) responsibility to 'deliver' things - just maintain the ground rules by which we all play and then get out of the way.
The council has to continue to plan for the climate emergency, so try to introduce measures to cut motor vehicle use. The current council tax banding is out of date and unfair; larger properties should pay much higher rates.
like many people i'm worried over the way the current council are spending our money. too much is wasted on expensive consultants, and then car park fees and council tax is increased to balance the books. what happened to all the money spent on the waterloo car park plans?

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Cost savings via slimmed down management would seem the obvious approach rather than further raids on already stretched residents and their families
The climate emergency and delivering affordable homes should be less of a priority and health and social care should be a priority with services for those suffering with ill mental health, long term health conditions or disability and to provide more support to carers
Focus on core delivery of key services - cut the optional such as 'climate emergency' spend - this should be led and funded at a national level not by local councils.
I note that the cost of the extra local Plan work is factored in for 24/25, but by April 25 only £95,000 remains in the reserve for extra work, beyond normal capacity. As significant work is likely still be needed by then, I would question the 25/26 budget. Is it the case that none of the proposed increase in planning fees (25% for minor applications, and 35% for major applications etc, from April 24, then CPI afterwards) has not been factored into the budget for 24/25 and afterwards. I say this as the net budget remains static for planning in general. I know that the government is not ring-fencing additional money to Planning. but I would have expected the base Planning Budget to be increased, raising the possibility of some more staff, or at least ensuring part of the increased budget was used to ensure the funding of the remainder of the Local Plan work, and also the work of Development Plan, and those who advise, and ensuring a robust Local Plan, being taken through tje Examination and modification stage, which is highly likely to stretch 2+ years beyond April 25. Please consider this matter, and include income and expenditure, for planning, as knowing about the fee changes, the net figure means little to me, regarding assumptions on allocation of the % fee income, and how the 'modelling, works, and the apparent future money needed to complete the Local Plan.
Because of the failure of the CEO not able too balance his budget I believe a 5% reduction in salary should be effective from April 2023. We as the "customer " of the council are expected to cut our corns to suit our income, therefore I would expect the council do the same and investigate other ways of reducing costs besides continuing to raise charges on everything. There is a point when many "normal " people cannot or will not pay additional charges. We are constantly paying for services that are not delivered due to poor decision making by CDC
It doesn't matter whether waste is collected morning or afternoon but it shouldn't be fewer collections than we have now. You should be transparent in terms of priorities & must put on hold any 'nice to do' or 'vanity' projects. Any services for the most vulnerable in our society should be prioritised & kept as far as possible. Look for efficiencies & how you charge & pay suppliers eg. fixing pot holes which I understand is open to abuse. They can come out again to fix a hole right next to one they've just done & get paid twice.
You need to take a long hard look at the Publica fat cats who have creamed off large salaries for the past six years. Many of the directors and business managers are unsuitable and should not be in post. When was the last time you saw some of them in the building. £100K salaries for people who WFH and clearly don't deliver is not what residents want.
I'd like the Council to take practical steps to tackle climate change and continue to provide much needed support for people at risk of homelessness.
Any net zero policy spend should not be included ahead of basic services.

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Cotswold council tax is one of the highest in the country families are already struggling you really don't want to make that worse by increasing council tax
£5 pa increase is way too low double it and spend wisely.
It's crucial for the council to actively support the growth and stability of local businesses, as they are the backbone of the community and a source of local employment. One tangible way to do this would be to offer more assistance on business rates.
We need good services so it's essential we pay for them.
Eliminate wasteful spending. Minimise environmental action to smart regulation which is within the tolerance of local government. Cut headcount of staff, especially in social areas.
Stop wasting money on things which don't need doing, like the money you wasted on new road signs, for example....
Please protect the library it's so important to the community.
We're in a cost of living crisis and the council wants to squeeze people harder. We're having to tighten our belts. Perhaps the council should do the same rather than continuing to squeeze local residents further. I have little confidence in the efficiency of many aspects of the services provided. Why is none of this really addressed!! It's just always about getting more money.
Stop sending that expensive colour magazine round to every household,saves in printing and distribution costs
We need to focus more on how millions of visitors each year pay more for the infrastructure they use.
There really isn't enough detail on the council's priorities for me to say that I agree with question 1. I am really interested to see how the council will use the increased income from the Steadings to boost the town's economy.
Look at the non-statutory services and reduce those. Why have you changed the Council's logo and how much has it cost? Surely it has taken valuable staff time that could have been better used on delivering services. Replacing street name plates.... why?? Waste of money.
Coaches off the road in Bourton on the water, open Rissington road car park to them and make Bourton safe and keep businesses open
I know its incredibly hard to meet budgets...but every family is struggling to juggle budgets and by increasing council tax and car parking people wont afford basics on life....or come into town to shop thus affecting communities more
Look at reducing your costs by reducing spending on vanity projects and trying to make savings as apposed to your current way of spending more and then having to increases council tax, parking and waste collection to recover your poor decisions.
Why not have a simple list of your proposals so we can see - too confusing trying to work through the page you have provided a link to !!!
We must ATTRACT people to our town not scare them away. Rubbish collection is a farce. they are finished by mid day. Leaving things to please themselves
The argument of raising prices in line with inflation doesn't work when most people's wages don't. Inflation is reducing our wages, and yet we make it work; so should the council.

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Stop spending money on unnecessary wants. We don't need clean and green officers. We just want a good basic service for all.
Do a staff review and make redundant al those looking inwards and spend the money on the outward looking services. Like teachers, rubbish collection
It sounds like council tax should go up more than you have suggested to fund services.
Cut councillor allowances and reduce number of councillors
Concentrate on KEY services and stop expending our money on unnecessary 'green' initiatives.
I'd like to se all climate 'emergency' spend removed from your plans and those funds used to maintain and improve other services.
You could have saved thousands by not holding virtue signalling global climate meetings for a start.
reduce benefits and get people to work full time
Support working tax payers and families more and those that actually pay for the services, reduce benefits and move people into full-time work, do not provide funding for illegal immigrants, freeze salaries for CDC employees and remove their benefits such as free parking
The state of the roads is a disgrace, and I am pretty sure the amount of compensation given out and the patchy nature of the resurfacing means that it is a false economy.
Why don't you increase the council tax by more than £5? Really 10p a week is nothing for band D. Or a larger increase for those in Band G?
No drop in frequency of waste collection
I agree that the council needs to regain control of its finances and make some difficult decisions. However, it must retain core services and look really hard at some of the significant recent expenditure on 'discretionary projects'. This is where the most serious cuts should be made including, for example, expenditure on consultants or additional insulation, at the council's expense, of properties. Neither should the council expect residents, who are facing their own financial challenges, to fund 'vanity' or 'discretionary' council projects.
Stop spending on consultations that lead to nothing. Put green policies on hold until the cost of living crisis is over
I would suggest that the changes are lowered to bring in more people to the town centres not increasing them and forcing people out
Challenge the overhead and depth of management
Cut jobs that provide little value but add bureaucracy
Get more local people on the council that have grown up in the town they will have so much more knowledge and know what the people of the town needs remembering they pay your wages talking of wages go through your pay grades and jobs and make some cuts their so people of the town know it's not just them your fleecing and the biggest grip of all time in this and every town is the bloke with a white spray can that drives around all day putting a white circle around a pot hole get rid of that and that will save a massive amount of money or give him a shovel and some tarmac and get him or her to fill as many holes as they can see this has to be the biggest grip of all people I would say 95%
Stop vanity projects and self promotion videos to save money

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There is a need to get more businesses into Town. Perhaps the council should look at how other councils are doing things. Again good example is Scarborough District Council, as a lot of their tourist destinations were busy, with no empty shops. You appear to be determined to destroy the town centre. Also encourage more dog friendly establishments. Stop wasting money on non essentials like new street signs, nothing wrong with replacing broken ones with plain simple versions. Also when the next elections happen please have the decency to canvass people properly to give them the opportunity to question candidates - not everyone in the area are retired and home during the day.
I object to net zero initiatives from the council - net zero plans should be government and country wide. Piecemeal local measures are tokens and, in the great picture, pointless.
It would be useful to know about the council's plans to increase income if any
Repair potholes. Tidy grass verges.
Please tell us what you plan to do to deliver affordable housing
I pay a huge amount in tetbury and there are NO SPORTS FACILITIES AT ALL PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL. Many people feel that Tetbury is always overlooked in favour of Cirencester and we just pay for the King's security. Is this true?
new parking meters and charges have killed cirencester upside is no more looking for parking spaces as the caar parks are always empty
I would like to understand where the split of the money is going from the council, how much is spent on social services for example. I do not agree with later bin collections in the afternoons especially in hot summer months, we do not want bins all over the streets for a good portion of the day and also not good for the bin crews.
Charge car users more and put money into sustainable transport - buses, cycling and walking
Dog waste and littering are not being followed up once reported to CDC
Stop prioritising Cirencester
Garden waste collection should not be increased, as those of us with small gardens have no means of composting. However, no collectionss need to be made between December and March when grass starts to grow!
I Have disagreed with the increase in Band D by £5.00 because I think it should be more. £10 pa is still less than £1.00 a month
There is no "climate emergency", so all council expenditure being made for that purpose should be terminated immediately. Councillor allowances should be reduced by 15%, the cabinet system replaced by the committee system, the post of business development manager abolished, and more scrutiny made of Publica and Ubico's financial performance. The council should make no grants to charities or voluntary groups. Senior management roles should be shared with other councils. The resultant savings should be invested in lower council tax.
Parking fees in Cirencester are expensive as they are, so they should not change. This would support businesses in town and support a vibrant local community, which is able to enjoy our lovely town. If parking fees are continually increased, we would be forced to buy goods online and, sadly, prevent us from regularly enjoying our beautiful market place and town centre.
No I priority should be roads, resurfacing not filing potholes that need constant repair and addressing flooding

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Leave climate to govt policy and concentrate on local service to the paying public
You should be reducing spending. Why did Tetbury Council spend £10k on iPads? What other immediate savings could be made? The LAs thing business needs is parking costs on Sunday or increases generally. Why can't you think outside the box and remember businesses pay exorbitant rates and you doggedly pursue them through the courts even though they've seen their margins slashed due to high cost of goods energy and minimum wage costs? When are you going to support the local economy instead of going on and on about climate change? STOP SPENDING OUR MONEY
Make green spaces girl friendly
Stop subsidising low income families with free meals. Spend more on anti social behaviour.
No mention of councillors pay and expenses! Are refuse collections to remain as frequent as they currently are? I don't mind a later collection but they need to as frequent as they currently are. You are not giving a full picture on which to make informed decisions!!
a new tax band is needed to cover very large property and mansions at an higher rate
I'd like to thank the refuse collectors in my area they do a great job. They even run between houses collecting the bins. They are always very polite and helpful.
I believe that in an area where tourists visit all year round, the cuts to the information service are shortsighted.
Pay to sort out Coach Park in Bourton on the Water !!!
Waste collection days should not be extended any more than they are - 2 weeks is already a push. Food waste must stay at weekly for all of our general health. A 15% increase in parking is a massive stretch. I am sure there is a more manageable level eg 5-10%. We need to continue to encourage people to visit our town. The issue is more lack of parking. More parking will generate more income, then prices will not need to rise. As tax payers we already pay tax to the government, so I don't agree that they should reduce funding to Councils.
Wasted money on new street signs. New changed within the council over the last few years of office changed within political groups and refurbishing offices. All the effort, hours and expense previously involved with moving into a Publica now all going out the window...:waste of public money!!!!!!
It's good that you are being open and transparent about the challenges. All public services are woefully underfunded in this country. We also suffer by virtue of our rurality and I'm not sure people always appreciate how difficult/challenging/expensive it is to service such a vast geographical area as the Cotswolds. Well done especially for increasing the charges on garden waste - I always objected to having to subsidise people having their grass cuttings taken away in a lorry! What's wrong with a good old fashioned compost heap!?
spend less on paving unnecessary areas, use the money saved to lower business rates for shops in town
Vastly increasing the cost of green waste bin collection and halving the number of collections had proved very challenging when you have large hedges to cut.
stop using expensive consultants to deliver meaningless concepts on the town which will be unviable, unpopular and unnecessary

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Given the spending since the last local election I have no confidence in CDC spending plans. Councillors should resign.
When you are struggling with your budget, you should be prioritising the services you have to provide and that doesn't include trying to lead the way to Net Zero.
If green bin charge kept increasing, the council will lose revenue if some householders change from having 2 bins to just one. The charge needs to stay reasonable.
Like too many I'm never quite sure which tier of local govt does what but in Moreton the following are imperatives: better/more mental health support for young people, more leisure facilities for young people to reduce high incidence of shop-lifting, property damage, etc. Road maintenance is disgrace in comparison with Chippenham and Oxfordshire. Many cars, including my own, have had severe damage done to wheels, steering and tyres because of potholes. Claims are rejected and those holes which have been mended have only been bodged and will soon need work. Uneven paving stones throughout the town provide many trip hazards for the elderly. It would be good to engage with local residents more effectively. I sit on the Moreton Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group (the second, the first resigned en masse ground down by delays and bureaucracy). Less than 10% of residents replied to a survey delivered to every household intended to inform and harness reaction. The apathy is woeful but when the Town Council pledged some money to deliver a communications plan several of us, with professional expertise in this field, had drawn up, it was kicked into the long grass by the TC and no funds have materialised.
do not cut any climate emergency work or services
Stop sending the posted newsletter - I expect most go in the bin
It would be good to get the roads sorted and provide more public conveniences ideally with a reduced charge
Cuts should be made to other services / efficiency improvements made to reduce costs. Increasing car parking charges will drive people out of the town centre and to free car parking outside of Cirencester at "out of town" shopping areas in other towns. This will force businesses to close in the town centre and lose additional revenue for the council, thus drive more people away.
Stop charging so high for green bins
Stop wasting money on Joe's glass office, needless advisors and a flag for every occasion except the ones that matter
Please stop the vanity projects. I would love to know how much money is spend on PR. Every week there is a new video involving a Cllr. Clare Bloomer recently had a video around menopause. Important subject, but actually is this just promoting her personal business that she runs? Conflict of interest? With yet more CDC money used to promote a Lib Dem or Cllr personal interest? It's too easy to blame central government for cutting funding, when your overspending during a time of reduced income has left the Council on the verge of bankruptcy in a few years
There should be no further planning approvals until the Planning Enforcement department is adequately resourced to ensure developers are held to account and fulfil their obligations.
Spend less - please - on consultation fees and needless paperwork

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Each non-direct job should be assessed and ceased unless it is vital to the efficiency of service delivery. However removing jobs that then add to the workload of direct staff is false economy and should be avoided. The detailed activities under each service delivery heading should be assessed anything not essential to quality service should be ceased. Where services are outsourced consideration to bringing them back in house should be undertaken. Shared services such as Ubico could be considered to maintain critical mass and keep overheads low.
More efficiencies needed, lots of scope
Cut the heating in your council offices.
Get rid of the over complex recycling and have wheelie bin for all recycling
Rubbish collectors should work a full 8 hours per day not the current 4 or 5 hours.
Council needs to look at more intelligent use of existing capital not punish its communities with more costs just because they live here.
The council needs to get more efficient in all its operations and services...there is too much waste in the public sector
Think about cutting long term unemployment benefits to subsidise the living conditions of all people including extra childcare/ socialising opportunities for those young/ impressionable in lockdown or to fill in potholes
Please prioritise schools, education and young people above everything else, even if it means other services deteriorating significantly.
You should just maintain necessary services. People can't afford grand climate emergency spending. It isn't a priority when you have families losing homes and relying on food banks. Hunger is a priority. Children within these families and their welfare are a priority. Keep to the basics and do them properly.
On many occasions I have heard people saying they do not come into Cirencester any more to park. The reason being there is no option of using coins for parking. Not everyone has a suitable phone or credit card. Therefore foot fall and use of Cirencester facilities are not being used. Please put coin machines back into car parks at least one on each site. Thank you.
The Council green waste service has been depleted by the massive increase in the licence fee. If the fee had been kept as reasonable as other local Councils did (WODC) the take up would have been larger bringing in more revenue. This Summer has seen more green waste being dumped on roadside verges in our area.
Fund Tourist Offices, tourism is the life blood of the Cotswolds. Look at ways of improving internal efficiency I stead of wasting money hand over fist.
The garden waste recycling charge is already a challenge to pay for many, including myself. For people unable to access the council's recycling centres, the recycling of garden waste is a significant problem.
Think before you spend!
Have to live in the real world and increase income as necessary
The state of local roads are perilous. Prioritise unless you want litigation where deaths occur
I think there should be a 6 month option charge for the garden waste service as most people do not use the yearly service between End of October to beginning of April. And also there should be no increase in the charge next financial year.

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cut councilers expences
No more jollies!
There are no comments here about road maintenance at all. I feel it is really letting down one of the most beautiful areas in the world. There are also no comments about supporting the NHS in the district either.
The condition of the basic infrastructure does not reflect an AONB. We have spend enough on Police and adult social care. We need to see better value out of road maintenance contracts and even consider stopping outsourcing altogether. The present deliveries with regard to the basics are pathetic and never really seem to satisfy the ordinary council tax payer. Bins aren't being emptied, roads are a disgrace and there is rubbish everywhere. Stop virtue signalling and focus on the basics.
Cotswold district is home to a disproportionate number of second homes and very high net worth owners, these high value homes should have an additional levy placed upon them in order to proportionately contribute to the local tax system
Services should be pared back to the bare essentials only.
The Council needs to be careful about trying to stretch workers too far. Mental health issues are on the increase and this is impacted by long hours and trying to squeeze as much as possible from workers, whilst also trying to reduce resources. Staffing should be aligned - same pay levels and benefits for doing the same job (as per job evaluation schemes).
too many pensioners have to pay high council taxes, many would like to down size but don't want an appartment. Where are the bungalows and small houses being built for this generation?
Chasing Green Transport Proposals linking Kemble to Cirencester is not something CDC should apply our resources to. Costly mistakes have been made e.g. the paving of the Pedestrianised area of Cirencester, studies on Multi Storey Car Parking(c 8 times more expensive than surface car parks. We need to improve employment encourage industry to provide alternative meaningful employment and bolster and attract Retailers occupation of the CBD. Frontagers and occupiers can be encouraged to maintain landscaped areas to lessen demand on Council workers or subcontractors. CDC should not finance Solar Panel or Heat Pump Studies. These should stand or fall depending on financial viability and not be subsidised by the Public Purse. Improving the collection of costs for Damage to Highways and Footpaths from unusual Traffic utilising Highways to facilitate Development Work should be properly collected and the funds used expeditiously to repair roads reducing claims on CDC for trips and damage to vehicles, More cost effective choices of Council vehicles. Less utilisation of Consultants to bolster Staff shortages and adoption of more efficient work practices and ethos
Reintroduced the weekly green bin collection, even if the price increases. Fortnightly makes no sense for a gardener.
The Council need to look at ways to become more efficient and productive. There is too much bureaucracy and inefficiency
There is a lack of rural buses, mini buses could be used to support residents

ANNEX C

This Annex shows the verbatim statements as written without any alteration or correction other than redactions to remove officer job titles or planning application references

Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?

As a social worker for a neighbouring LA, I know that huge savings can be made in children's services if an investment is made towards prevention and family support (children's centres, family support workers etc) children in care cost a lot of money. Savings can also be made by increasing bus charges and providing free bus pass for those on a low income and good monthly bus pass for those who use bus service regularly. Monitoring roads for speeding more regularly would provide an income generated from fines, these need to be means tested. Develop better cycling routes in rural areas to reduce car use to meet environmental targets. Reduce general waste collections further, but keep recycling collection the same, don't charge for garden waste as this service is most likely used by those in higher council tax bands anyway, so they're already paying for this service. Increase and normalise respite care for elderly so that relatives are able to continue to care for their relative in their own home, which will reduce admission to subsidised care homes. Increase wages to reduce high cost locum/ agency council staff.

Spend less on discretionary budget activities such as climate crisis measures.

Climate is not your priority. Infrastructure is, cut back on your workforce and concentrate on delivering basics. Enough has been spent on adult and child social care. Fed up with paying more for nothing.

In order to improve help in providing affordable housing & support for struggling families I would suggest increasing Council Tax by double the proposed increase; £10/yr Band D, £20/yr Band G

Think cost of living should take precedence over climate change plans which should be greatly reduced

Make the WRITTEN budget proposal pack easier to find. The link from the meeting page you link to for the public pack doesn't seem to download anything! Raises question WHAT ARE YOU HIDING by making it so difficult to find and read the papers? Surely the packs should be a quick link from the main budget page...

I'm new to the town and believe as a high council tax payer residents should have perhaps 2 hours a day free parking vouchers to shop and meet ... this system worked well in Bakewell when I lived there

Jobs like Engagement officer and Environmental officer (recently created posts) are not required they just double up what is being done at local council level

If the council proposes to increase charges for Green waste collections as "it should be paid for by those who use it" perhaps this should be extended to all aspects? Otherwise it is simply an unfair charge. Many don't use other council services so why do those who don't be expected to pay for them?

Do the basics that you are required by law to do and nothing else. Get rid of Greening consultants and advisors and all other vanity projects. My income is not increasing so why should yours, why should I be poorer for your vanity projects.

Fix the potholes!

Why can people on attendance allowance in some areas get reduced council tax but not in the Cotswolds survey this should not be a postcode lottery

There should be less focus on the "climate emergency". The UK is 1% of global emissions, any action we take will not even be measurable.

ANNEX C

This Annex shows the verbatim statements as written without any alteration or correction other than redactions to remove officer job titles or planning application references

Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?
Potholes, roads are a bloody disgrace. Pay freezes for all but the lowest paid. Look for further ways to cut wastage. Remove job and finish style contracts for council employees and redeploy them.
Parking charges are a way of generating income from out of area residents, especially in the summer. The downside is that you may find residents with cars choosing alternative places to shop. It may therefore not raise as much money as hoped
I think these are necessary increases to maintain social care & green policies
If you need to increase council Tax I strongly feel higher band residents should be asked to pay proportionally more than those in lower bands.
Bike routes!!!!!! Make it safe and enjoyable to not use a car at all
Disgrace that charges are made to remove large domestic items. No wonder there is fly tipping.
The priority should be and must be minimising the cost of all services, reducing unnecessary services and keeping Council Tax at the lowest level.
Coach parking has to be created by CDC to allow businesses to continue, coaches are the only visitors in Winter and without them businesses will board up in October and return in April, you cannot continue to ignore this.
Get the pot holes mended properly. I have seen several example where works are carried out to one pot hole but it leaves untouched another, slightly smaller, within feet of the original. This means that the original fix is not so good and work will only have to return later to repair the second or third nearby pot hole(s). Our cars are getting damaged at a huge cost to ratepayers and councils wriggle out of paying compensation. Take a tip from what is done in other countries. They will cut out an entire area and fix it properly. The quality of the fix is better and will last longer.
Wage freeze for all employees earning £35000 & above
I hope you are not planning yet a other hike in the fees charged by councillors.
Why on earth are you proposing a 24% pay uplift to all staff by changing their pension scheme to a more expensive one when your residents are facing tax rises to fund it?
I think the charges are larger enough. I would come into Cirencester much less often if they increase. I think twice before coming into town at the moment
A target to reduce headcount by 10% would ultimately have no effect on services once it had bedded in
Needs to focus on improving its planning services including enforcement
More cycle parking and preferably covered
Cut councillors 'allowances' especially Joe Harris taking 30,000 of tax payer money
Less coloured glossy brochures.
An increase of £5 per household PA for a Band D property is a ridiculously small increase. I wouldn't think it unreasonable to increase by more than that
Is it possible to raise Council Tax more for those in the uppermost bands?
Better rewinding, wildlife corridors and planting, including supporting improvement to Abbey Grounds lake. £10 pa increase in council tax for band D should be increased.
Skew the increase in council tax more towards higher value properties paying a larger percentage increase than lower value properties.
Please give priority to the recruitment of Planning & Enforcement Officers.

ANNEX C

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Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?
It is not clear to me what benefits a very well-paid climate manager delivers. Furthermore, the cost of some campaigns is not transparent. For example, how much did Mr. Motivator cost?
Why don't you raise money through speed cameras? Previously not popular, but surely now...
Faced with substantial cuts in the Government grant to the Council, then it may be necessary to increase Council Tax by more than inflation.
The Council should consider staying afloat financially, if it requires focusing on long terms goals than immediate needs.
Don't agree with green bin increases
Cut overheads. Cut unproductive staff. Work harder
I definitely think that costs could be cut on waste and recycling services. I barely fill one 50l kitchen bin a week so think that reducing the number of non-recyclable collections would not only save money but encourage people to recycle more. Ditto the food waste bins which could be reduced to every 2 weeks rather than every week.
Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council is not willing to unreasonably shoulder the burden of the financial difficulties of the higher authorities by increasing the precept on behalf of the residents.
First question poorly worded and therefore cannot answer.
Stop wasting money on new road signs that don't need replacing. Stop wasting money on pointless service, and photos etc. Organise the offices and staff alot better. Stop wasting money on subcontracting debts. Turn lights off in offices. Stop wasting money on silly expenses.
Would like to see the council stick to it's climate and ecological commitments
I don't think this survey tells us very much. I had expected a breakdown on spending. I think the council should concentrate on the services it is meant to provide and not get drawn into extra. No more talking shops about issues that our outside the councils remit.
Cut out the net zero nonsense! P S I have PV cells on my roof, care about the environment but do not think the world is burning up.
Prioritise budgets to increase the use of facilities in towns. encourage tourism to bring in additional funds

ANNEX C

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Q5. Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's priorities, its finances or any other aspect of the Council's spending and service delivery?

I think the budget challenges for the Council are great. However, there are a number of points which I think are worth mentioning when the Council is considering how it may wish to proceed in bridging the financial challenges that it faces. It needs to have a tight control on the money it spends on behalf of residents, and every decision needs to feed back into the goal of driving down the Council's financial gap. The recent decision to bring services back in-house presents a very clear risk for financial implications. The implications are not clearly spelt out, unless of course, you go to West Oxfordshire District Council where you will find the financial implications for the same report which have been omitted for Cotswold District Council. It clearly states that there is a risk of recurring costs (increase in pension liabilities), one-off costs from the transition (redundancies, extra staff to manage the transition). The Cotswold report does not show this. Whilst the original review was to look at a select number of services, this wider review is clearly now a big financial risk which will only add pressure to the budget gap. This will need to be clearly set out and addressed as part of the Budget. The other area I would say that needs to be improved is looking at how technology can be used to manage day to day services and increase revenue. Charging for car parks stops at 6, why is that? If the Council wishes to double down on an increase in charges, why not extend the hours of revenue? The technology is available to install and use to make it possible. There would be a cost but a long term gain. This is why I think overnight parking should be examined. Car parks in the bigger towns like Cirencester do get use in the evening and overnight, so this could be a game changer. I would also like to see how the Council looks at refuse and moves to a two bin approach (one general and one recycling). The bags are hopeless as they keep breaking and are often left strewn over narrow pavements which are a common feature in the Cotswolds. The system of refuse in Tewkesbury is so much easier. The Council also needs to think of innovate way of funding services. Long term bonds which are open to all and other financial raising methods need to be explored. It is clear that central government won't be increasing budgets anytime soon so the Councils will need to become more creative.

There is no mention of actually undertaking road sweeping which is a statutory function CDC should be doing as this would help prevent flooding by ensuring drainage is clear

I think the Council should drop the "climate emergency" agenda, which has no basis in real science or fact. The money saved by not pursuing such an agenda, could save the council and those living in the Cotswolds much money. However, perhaps, it being an agenda from higher, corporate interests, the UK government would further cut funds to the Council? The "climate emergency" agenda is not in the best interests of the earth or the people, but is rather a control mechanism, sapping our prosperity. Drop it and focus on helping the people who need it, and patching up the potholes in the roads.

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Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET (11 January 2024)
Subject	COTSWOLD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN UPDATE & THE CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services Email: juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainability Email: charlie.jackson@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager Email: james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	<p>To consider the recommendation to Council to start preparing a new local plan for the period 2026 to 2041 and to consult on a document that includes development strategy options.</p> <p>To consider the recommendation to consult the public on a set of draft policies that update the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 (the adopted Local Plan).</p> <p>To consider the recommendation to consult the public on an ‘initial ideas’ Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan consultation document.</p> <p>To approve the updated Statement of Community Involvement and the updated Local Development Scheme documents.</p>
Annexes	<p>Annex A: Cotswold District Local Plan Consultation: Executive summary and consultation instructions.</p> <p>Annex B: Cotswold District Local Plan (2026-2041): Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy consultation document.</p> <p>Annex C: Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031): Draft Policies. <u>NOTE: DUE TO SIZE, ANNEX C IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE PRINTED PACK. IT IS PUBLISHED FOR VIEWING ON THE WEBSITE.</u></p> <p>Annex D: Local Development Scheme 2024 to 2027.</p> <p>Annex E: Statement of Community Involvement (January 2024).</p> <p>Annex F: Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan ‘initial ideas’ consultation document.</p> <p>Annex G: Updating the Adopted Local Plan – the scenarios.</p>



<p>Recommendation/s</p>	<p>That Cabinet resolves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recommend to Council that Cotswold District Council begin the preparation of a new Local Plan that would extend the plan period from 31 March 2031 to 31 March 2041 and approves the Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy consultation document, as presented at Annex B, to be published for a six week public consultation; b) Approve the draft policies consultation document at Annex C for a six week public consultation; c) Approve the updated Local Development Scheme as presented at Annex D is approved; d) Approve changes to the Statement of Community Involvement as presented at Annex E; e) Approve the emerging Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan ‘initial ideas’ consultation document for a six week public consultation as presented at Annex F; f) Note upcoming national policy changes and the impact this may have on the preparation of the Local Plan at Annex G; and g) Delegate authority to the Forward Planning Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to agree questionnaires and make minor and typographical corrections to the consultation documents prior to being published for public engagement.
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>To update the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan to make it green to the core. To publish a Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>The following Publica / Council teams have been consulted: Development Management, Economic Development; Heritage, Design and Ecology; Strategic Housing; Housing; Parking; Climate Action; Estates; and Senior Management.</p> <p>The following external organisations and groups have been consulted on aspects of the consultation documents: Gloucestershire County Council, neighbouring local planning authorities, landowners and agents, Cirencester Town Council, Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Cirencester Chamber of Commerce.</p>



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The substantive purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council continues to update its adopted Local Plan while, simultaneously, beginning preparation of a new Local Plan to replace the existing one. Against a complicated and uncertain legislative background officers consider that developing these two pieces of core work coterminously with a view to the likelihood of merging them at a later date is the wisest course for the Council to follow in ensuring that it maintains a robust Local Plan and a healthy five-year housing supply.
- 1.2. Planning reforms: The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) (the Act) sets a framework for the government to reform to the English planning system, including the way local authorities prepare local plans. These upcoming changes are significant and create uncertainty and added risks. This makes it difficult to navigate the plan-making process and alight on the most prudent course of action. This report and its recommendations allows the council to 'hedge its bets'.
- 1.3. Terminology: This report refers to several types of plan-making terms, so the following definitions provide a useful reference:
- **Adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 (the adopted Local Plan):** the extant plan used to determine planning applications.
 - **Partial update of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 (Partial Update Plan):** The plan the Council has been preparing to date. It updates parts of the adopted Local Plan, mostly the development management policies, and it does not extend the plan period or alter the development strategy.
 - **Development strategy:** This is a core component a local plan. It specifies the quantum and location of development to meet identified needs. For example, the extant Local Plan's development strategy is defined by policies DSI to DS4 and the 'S' settlement policies.
 - **Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041):** Specifies the quantum and location of development in Cotswold District during the period 2026 to 2041.
 - **Replacement Plan:** It combines the Partial Update Plan and the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) into a single and comprehensive full local plan that meets development needs from 2026 to 2041. To achieve this the Replacement Plan would need to be submitted by 30 June 2025.
 - **New Style Plan:** The government is changing how future local plans are made. From 1 July 2025 authorities that haven't already submitted their draft local plan for independent examination in public will need to prepare and submit their local plan using new plan-making regulations. The new regulations are expected in late 2024. A New Style Plan would include a new/updated development strategy and a few development management policies of local importance that are not covered by the new National Development Management Policies (a new sister document to the National Planning Policy Framework, which the government proposes to introduce).



- 1.4. Diagram I shows how these terms interact with one another. Annex G provides a detailed explanation of the plan-making scenarios and the complexities of navigating the government's plan-making reforms.

Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041)

- 1.5. The adopted Local Plan development strategy remains sound for the time being, although there are currently just over seven years remaining until the end of the plan period in 2031. It is recommended that the Council takes proactive action now by starting the preparation of a new local plan. This will enable a smooth transition to a new local plan. It will also help to ensure that a five year housing land supply can be maintained in the years to come and that plan-led development, which has the benefit of community participation, continues.
- 1.6. There are two recommended ways that the new local plan could be delivered. Members do not have to decide which way is best now and can keep their options open for the time being. The decision on the chosen approach can be made further down the line and will largely depend on progress before the June 2025 deadline for submitting local plans set by the Act.
- 1.7. The Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) would identify land to meet additional development requirements arising up to 2041. Indicatively, the council will need to allocate land to deliver up to 3,300 additional dwellings by 2041. This is the principal mechanism for increasing the supply of affordable housing, a core ambition of the council. Additional evidence would determine the housing and other development requirements.
- 1.8. The consultation document is based on an initial assessment that considers various high level development strategy options and proposes a preferred development strategy based on the current available evidence. This would deliver additional required development across several settlements, including strategic scale growth at Moreton-in-Marsh. Additional evidence and community consultation is needed to test and develop this initial work.

Partial Update Plan (2011-2031)

- 1.9. The council is already partially updating its adopted Local Plan to make it "Green to the Core". A set of draft policies are now ready to be consulted on, which builds on the consultation responses received in 2022 at the 'Issues and Options' stage of plan-making. The draft policies also respond to changes in national guidance and new evidence base studies undertaken to inform the Partial Update Plan. There are approximately 60 new or updated policies.

Local Plan consultation: February – March 2024

- 1.10. The Local Plan consultation invites local communities to help shape the new development strategy and the draft Local Plan policies. Diagram 2 provides a useful pictorial summary of the different components. This is a Regulation 18 consultation. The consultation would run from 1 February 2024 until 14 March 2024.
- 1.11. Included within the consultation is a 'call for sites' and an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The former invites landowners to make land available for consideration to help meet future needs. The council will assess these sites in its Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in 2024. This will provide a shortlist of potential



development sites for allocation in the new Local Plan. The IIA is an early stage environmental assessment that has helped to shape the local plan consultation. It helpfully includes a points of the compass assessment of development options in the district's larger settlements.

Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan – initial ideas consultation

- 1.12. The proposed Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan consultation is on an 'initial ideas' document that presents town centre analysis, a vision, principles and objectives and emerging ideas on the several opportunity sites within the town centre.
- 1.13. The consultation would also run from 1 February 2024 until 14 March 2024. This aligns perfectly with Cirencester Town Council's consultation on its draft Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan.

Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme

- 1.14. The council's Statement of Community Involvement and the Local Development Scheme have been updated. These now direct engagement to the Council's digital engagement platform, Citizen Lab, and update the timetable for delivering planning documents and plans; respectively.

2. BACKGROUND

English Planning Reforms

- 2.1. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) (the Act) sets a framework for the government to reform to the English planning system, including the way local authorities prepare local plans. In early autumn 2023 the government consulted on its plans to implement parts of the Act which relate to local plans. The stated intentions of these reforms are to make plans simpler, faster to prepare and more accessible. The Royal Town Planning Institute¹ and Shropshire Council² have prepared useful summaries of the proposed changes. Key information to note is:
 - Plan-makers have until 30 June 2025 to submit plans under the existing legal framework and; Plan-makers have until 31 December 2026 for their plans to be adopted, with all independent examinations also having been completed by this point.
 - The new system is likely to go live in late 2024 and authorities that do not meet the 30 June 2025 submission deadline for old style plans will need to prepare plans under the new system.

¹ NPPF: Transitional arrangements for plan-making (Royal Town Planning Institute, Feb 2023)

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/blog/2023/february/nppf-transitional-arrangements-for-plan-making/#:~:text=On%20plan%20making%20under%20the,been%20completed%20by%20this%20point.>

² Summary of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: Consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms

(Shropshire Council, Sept 2023) <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s35850/Appendix%201%20-%20Summary%20of%20Governments%20Consultation%20on%20Implementing%20Plan-Making%20Reforms.pdf>



2.2. The council currently has 18 months to submit its local plan (partial or replacement) under the extant regulations.

The adopted Local Plan - Reviews

2.3. The adopted Local Plan was adopted in 2018. A ‘review’ of the adopted Local Plan was undertaken in 2020. This concluded that a partial update was appropriate, which commenced in 2021. This included preparing a framework masterplan for Cirencester Town Centre.

2.4. In September 2023, the council approved a further ‘review’ of the adopted Local Plan housing requirement. This concluded that the local housing need of the district had not changed significantly and that the minimum housing requirement provided by the adopted Local Plan did not require updating. Proactively updating the development strategy now does not alter the conclusions of that review.

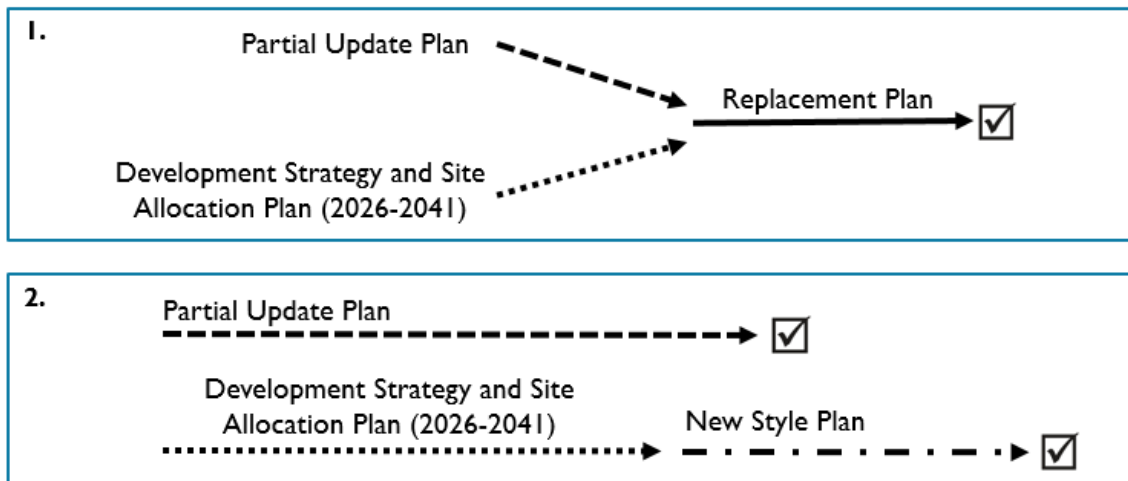
Navigating the complexities of the current and emerging plan-making system

2.5. This information is to note only. It helps to explain why councillors are being asked to consider consulting the public on a Partial Update Plan (2011-2031) and a Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) independently of one and other.

2.6. Annex G provides a detailed explanation of the plan-making scenarios and the complexities of navigating the government’s plan-making reforms, although a summary is offered below.

2.7. Diagram 1 shows how the council can progress updating the adopted Local Plan without coming unstuck by the emerging planning reforms. Both scenarios start off the same – i.e. the council continues with the ongoing Partial Update Plan and commences a new Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041)³.

Diagram 1: Plan-making scenarios



2.8. Scenario 1. A Replacement Plan: would combine the Partial Update Plan and the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) before the combined Replacement Plan is submitted for a single independent examination in public. This would largely depend on whether the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041)

³ Note that local planning authorities can produce two development plan documents at the same time.



is sufficiently advanced to be submitted before the Act's June 2025 deadline but it would also depend on the detail of upcoming changes to the regulations. This route is preferred as it would be more cost effective than Scenario 2 and the Replacement Plan would be adopted sooner than the equivalent in Scenario 2. It would also secure the policies of the Partial Update Plan up to 2041 instead of 2031. However, owing largely to the uncertainty surrounding the planning reforms and the consequent transitional arrangements, this paper does not offer a recommendation to combine the Partial Update Plan (the policies) and the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) now. A review of this position should occur no later than December 2024, by which time planning reforms and local evidence gathering should provide a clearer steer.

- 2.9. Scenario 2. A Partial Update Plan and transition the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) into a New Style Plan: Scenario 2 would submit the Partial Update Plan for independent examination in public before the Act's June 2025 deadline. However, the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) would become a 'New Style Plan' and would be examined separately after June 2025. This would be the council's fall-back position if conditions outlined in Annex G are not met. This option is more costly (e.g. there would be two examinations in public). It would also take longer to adopt the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) than Scenario 1. The Partial Update Plan policies would also be extant up to 2031 instead of 2041.
- 2.10. To reiterate, no decision needs to be taken now on which route to choose. The key decision now on this matter is whether or not to start preparing a Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041).

3. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN (2026-2041)

- 3.1. You may ask why the council should go to the trouble of updating its Local Plan vision, objectives and development strategy now, especially given it has a five year housing land supply and over seven years until the end of the adopted Local Plan period.
- 3.2. If long standing councillors cast their minds to the old Local Plan, which expired in 2011, it took seven years to update and was formerly replaced in 2018. There are various mitigating reasons why it took so long but the impact was hard felt across the district with it suffering several years of not being able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply and communities having to accept off plan development without their participation. It put the council and communities on the back foot for several years and resulted in at least 27 planning appeals and two Judicial Reviews where the lack of a housing land supply or an up to date housing requirement was a significant material consideration.
- 3.3. From April 2026 (just over two years' time) there will be less than five years remaining of the Local Plan period. Not having an adopted Local Plan housing requirement for the full five year period from April 2026 adds uncertainty to the way the five year housing land supply will be measured. For example, the council may become increasingly dependent on the government's 'standard method for calculating the housing needs' and its annual fluctuations as a basis for calculating the five year housing land supply. This would give the



council less control of delivering its housing target. Furthermore, as the council approaches the end of the plan period - 31 March 2031 - it will naturally have less housing supply to meet its housing target. Together, this will increase the risk of the council being unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing, which would engage the government's presumption in favour of sustainable development in areas outside of the Cotswolds National Landscape, formerly known as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- 3.4. The reason for updating the development strategy now is to ensure the council has long term control of its housing supply. Importantly, it also provides local communities with the opportunity to shape future growth and infrastructure in and around their neighbourhoods, rather than having to react to speculative development. Put simply, the council is advised to make hay whilst the sun shines.

How many additional houses are required to meet identified needs to 2041?

- 3.5. It is estimated that the Council would need to allocate land for either around 2,100 or 3,300 additional dwellings. You may wonder why two figures? This is because of government proposals to update the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which may or may not confirm that past over-delivery of housing from the previous Local Plan can be factored into the number to be planned for in the new Local Plan. The government has indicated that it will update the NPPF this autumn and the Housing Minister, Michael Gove, indicated in a speech to MPs that the NPPF update could be published as soon as week commencing 11 December. The council will (hopefully) not have to wait long for the government to confirm the position. Furthermore, the government is due to publish updated housing need figures in March 2024 so again the council will need to consider any further resulting changes. During 2024 officers will be updating various needs assessments to finalise housing and economic requirements / targets.

What are the development strategy options?

- 3.6. A topic paper (Annex C) identifies eight options.
1. Additional non-strategic site allocations
 2. Main service centre focus
 3. Dispersed growth
 4. Village clusters
 5. New settlement(s)
 6. New strategic site(s)
 7. Focus growth around transport nodes
 8. Request neighbouring authority to deliver some of the housing need.

What is the proposed development strategy?

- 3.7. A combination of options 1, 2, 6 and 7 is proposed to accommodate the bulk of additional development needs up to 2041. The current development strategy of identifying 'Principal Settlements' would continue where the principle of development is supported. However, the strategy would have a greater focus on reducing carbon emissions and focussing growth



at locations with good transport connectivity and access to services, facilities and employment. Accordingly, some settlements may become a Principal Settlement and other settlements may have their Principal Settlement status rescinded.

- 3.8. Additional non-strategic site allocations would be made at the Principal Settlements whilst ensuring that the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape remains limited and that development is directed away from areas at higher risk of flooding. In addition, given that Moreton-in-Marsh is a transport hub, which has a railway station; good provision of services, facilities and employment; and has various sites outside the Cotswold National Landscape, the town would become a focus for strategic-scale growth of at least 1,500 additional dwellings up to 2041.
- 3.9. The adopted development strategy of enabling small-scale residential development in Non-Principal Settlements (Policy DS3) would also continue, although it would have an increased emphasis on settlements that have better access to services, facilities and employment. Consideration may be given to whether some sites could be allocated in Village Clusters (Scenario 4). Together, development in Non-Principal Settlements, Village Clusters and windfall sites would provide additional flexibility within the housing land supply should any site allocations not come forward as planned.
- 3.10. Open market housing would continue to be prohibited outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (i.e. in open countryside) unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations.
- 3.11. It is important to note that this is an early stage regulation 18 consultation. The council is not being asked to commit to agree / approve the draft proposed strategy; this happens at the regulation 19 stage. However, the draft development strategy does provide councillors, public, key stakeholders, businesses, visitors, developers and landowners with an indication of where evidence and options are beginning to align.

Broad areas for growth

- 3.12. The Integrated Impact Assessment provides an objective assessment of the development strategy options. It also provides a 'points of the compass' assessment of the district's key settlements, identifying key constraints such as the Cotswolds National Landscape, flood zones and other areas or assets that national policy considers to be of particular importance⁴.

When will we see which sites will be allocated for development?

- 3.13. This will occur at the next stage in the plan-making process. At this stage the council will be inviting landowners to make their land available for development through a process called a 'call for sites'. The Council will use this information to update its Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), which will provide a high level assessment of their suitability. Suitable candidates will be considered in combination with other evidence through the site allocation process.

⁴ NPPF (2023) paragraph 11 and Footnote 7



4. PARTIAL UPDATE PLAN (2011-2031)

4.1. The council is partially updating its adopted Local Plan to make it “Green to the Core”. The council now has a set of draft policies that it wishes to consult on, which builds on the consultation responses we received in 2022 at the previous ‘Issues and Options’ stage of plan-making. The draft policies also respond to changes in national guidance and new evidence base studies undertaken to inform the update. There are approximately 60 new or updated policies; key changes include:

- *NEW* Sustainable Development Chapter that sets out local development principles including giving greater prominence to the updated design code (which will be consulted on separately in 2024) and health and wellbeing outcomes.
- *NEW* Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Chapter that includes new policies to deliver net zero development and communities and updated policies that seek to strengthen adaptation. This includes ten new climate mitigation policies, covering issues such as renewable energy, retrofit, embodied carbon, new build operational energy and district heating. The transport policy has undergone a significant update to emphasise the importance of delivering active travel and public transport.
- New accessibility standards have been incorporated in Policy DS3 (Policy DS3 Small-Scale Residential Development in Non-Principal Settlements) to ensure new housing developments have reasonable access to services, facilities and employment to reduce social isolation, vehicle dependence / cost of living issues and transport CO2 emissions.
- Several sites in the adopted Local Plan are proposed for de-allocation. The most prominent is Kemble Community Gardens, which would instead benefit from a Local Green Space designation covering the entire site.
- Updated Cirencester Central Area policy to support the emerging town centre masterplan Supplementary Planning Document.
- Various proposals to deliver more affordable housing. Includes: increasing the requirement from 30% to 40% on brownfield and from 40% to 50% on greenfield sites; changing the requirement for a financial contribution in the Cotswolds National Landscape and any future ‘designated rural areas’ from 6-10 dwellings to 3-9 dwellings with all developments of 10 or more homes requiring on-site affordable housing provision instead of the current 11 or more dwelling requirement; removing a loophole for avoiding affordable housing contributions by submitting several smaller schemes; a new policy for entry-level exception sites; and many more.
- New policy, ensuring that replacement dwellings are not inappropriately large. It also closes a loophole where applicants gain permission through permitted development rights or a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use of Development and build a new replacement dwelling in a location that would otherwise be unsuitable.



- New policy providing further support for community-led housing developments to deliver more genuinely affordable housing, whilst providing a further boost to the housing land supply.
- New policy requiring all major housing development (for example, 10 or more dwellings) to contribute towards homeless housing provision to meet the identified need in the district and to address the Council's strategic objectives on delivering more affordable housing.
- Providing greater protection to safeguarded employment sites, which are coming under pressure from changes of use to other uses, particularly C3 (dwellinghouses).
- Updates to Special Policy Areas policy (EC4) to reflect development proposals at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester and the Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh.
- A new policy on equestrian related development incorporating and updating former Policy 31 from the Local Plan (2006), to support equestrian related development; to ensure new uses for traditional buildings and reduce the pressure for new, isolated buildings in the countryside.
- New guidelines on Tree, Hedges and Woodlands.
- The Local Plan incorporating the requirement for developments to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain.
- A new policy to safeguard dark skies in the Cotswold District.
- A new policy for the Sherborne Park Estate near Northleach. The policy enables the production of a masterplan for the estate, which will provide the framework for determining planning application(s) on the estate in future.
- An update to the infrastructure delivery policy (INF2) to remove an "exceptions" trapdoor and reduce debates of viability at the Development Management stage.

5. LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION: FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2024

- 5.1. The Local Plan consultation invites local communities and interested parties to help shape the new development strategy and the draft Local Plan policies. This is a Regulation 18 consultation, which builds upon the 'Issues and Options' consultation that was undertaken in 2022. The consultation would run from 1 February 2024 until 14 March 2024.
- 5.2. The consultation will comprise four distinct elements and a set of instructions. Members of the public and other stakeholders are free to engage with all four elements or matters that only interest them (Diagram 2).

Digital Engagement

- 5.3. Over the last two years the council has been working with the government to trial software and practices to increase rates of digital engagement in the planning process, improve user experience of the planning system and to reduce back office administration. Together with its partner West Oxfordshire it has been awarded c.£250,000. The council will be using a



platform called Citizen Lab to run future Local Plan consultations. This system uses Artificial Intelligence software that can auto tag and summarise representations, which should speed up back office process and analysis.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 5.4. The 2012 Town and Country Planning Regulations (as amended) require the Council to prepare and keep up-to-date its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI explains how and when different groups, organisations and communities can get involved with the local planning consultations and planning documents. They provide a framework for consultation and community engagement.
- 5.5. The council last updated its SCI in November 2020 and, for the most part, it remains relevant and up-to-date. However, officers seek to make several amendments (Annex F), which are primarily to promote the use of the digital engagement platform, especially from the development industry and private planning consultants. The SCI update also specifies that the council will be using auto-summarisation technology.

Diagram 2: The components of the Local Plan consultation.



6. CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN

- 6.1. The council's Corporate Plan and adopted Local Plan commits it to publish a masterplan for Cirencester town centre. This builds on a commitment contained in the adopted Local Plan (Policy S3: Cirencester Town Strategy).
- 6.2. The original basis for the masterplan was to coordinate major redevelopment opportunities within the town centre. Some of the key sites are currently surface level public car parks owned by the Council. They are allocated for redevelopment in the adopted Local Plan on the assumption that replacement capacity would be provided by the development of a multi-storey car park on one of the sites. Although work on that multi-storey car park project



has paused, master planning work for the town centre is still necessary to deliver the council's Corporate Plan.

- 6.3. Since the Local Plan was adopted, the council has identified several factors that necessitate a continued master planning approach.
- Changes in shopping habits are affecting the “traditional” high street, including how changing uses may impact footfall and car parking demand.
 - A significant part of the town centre is a Scheduled Monument, which adds to the complexity of formulating feasible and viable redevelopment proposals for individual allocated sites.
 - The council’s administration is deeply committed to promoting sustainable development, which includes facilitating a shift towards active and sustainable modes of travel, as well as opportunities to enhance the local green infrastructure and biodiversity networks.
- 6.4. The council has been working closely with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and Cirencester Town Council (CTC) who have vested interests in the town centre’s viability and vitality. GCC has recently prepared a Cirencester Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan⁵ and assisted in the preparation of multimodal interchange study⁶ and public transport assessment between Tetbury and Cirencester via Kemble train station⁷.
- 6.5. CTC’s Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is working with local volunteers to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Cirencester and has carried out extensive community engagement that will assist with preparing a vision and set of objectives for the masterplan. CTC has indicated their intention to align their draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation with Cotswold District Council’s consultations, so draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation will also commence on 1 February 2024 and will end of 14 March 2024.
- 6.6. Bearing the above and other considerations in mind, a master planning approach is considered necessary to establish a clear vision and development objectives for the town centre, which will inform the council’s design briefing and design appraisal roles.
- 6.7. The masterplan is intended to be an urban design framework for the town centre. It will fulfil multiple functions, including those described in summary below.
- Describe and illustrate how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented across Cirencester town centre.
 - Include a vision and development objectives for the whole town centre, establishing a context for proposed and potential interventions.
 - Address the allocated sites and other potential areas of change within the town centre, which are likely to be developed at different times by different developers.

⁵ [Cirencester Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan \(GCC, June 2022\)](#)

⁶ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/nhebyw1i/cirencester-area-public-transport-study-potential-public-transport-hub-for-cirencester-itp-jan-2023.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/lrrd1zej/cirencester-area-public-transport-study-cirencester-kemble-public-transport-options-study.pdf>



- Coordinate the phased delivery of more detailed design instructions and guidance (e.g. development briefs or masterplans) for specific sites within the town centre, as and when the need for them arises. This will include identifying front runner opportunities.
- 6.8. The vision and development objectives will respond to the factors described above, adopting a positive and innovative approach to the changing role of the high street.
- 6.9. The consultation document (Annex F) presents an emerging masterplan that offers a proposed vision and set of guiding principles for the town centre. It presents urban design analysis of the town centre and offers suggested land uses and reimagined corridors through the town centre. The document has been prepared by Mace, the Council's specialist master planning consultant, in partnership with CTC's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The consultation is designed to spark a debate about the future of the town centre to help inform a full draft of the masterplan later in 2024.
- 6.10. The emerging masterplan is supported by a library of evidence⁸ that seeks to guide, influence and ultimately establish the masterplan's feasibility. Work includes:
- Cirencester Access and Movement study – this study seeks to quantify future parking needs and options for meeting these needs. It will also consider opportunities to increase active travel between the town centre and the suburbs;
 - Archaeological Survey – a desktop assessment to understand likely mitigation;
 - Cirencester Area Public Transport Options Study – this study examined opportunities to improve public transport links between Cirencester and Kemble train station.
 - Cirencester multimodal transport hub study – this study examined potential areas for a new public transport hub in the town centre;
 - Cirencester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan;
 - Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA);
 - Cirencester Town Centre Health Check; and
 - Forecast Change in Uses to 2051 – a study that seeks to understand future land use needs i.e. to establish if retail uses will decrease over time.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are financial implications associated with preparing and updating a local plan. The costs can be considered in several discrete parts:
- **Updating the evidence base** – includes costs associated with consultants and the commissioning of studies.

⁸ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/cirencester-town-centre/>



- **Policy writing** – includes legal and specialist expertise / input to help shape the emerging plan and review all supporting documents.
- **Undertaking the Regulation 18 and 19 formal consultations** – includes costs associated with managing the Council’s Local Plan consultation database and interactive consultation system, procuring consultants (where required) to help run the consultation and other activities such as venue hire, printing of materials, etc.
- **Preparation of the publication/submission plan** – includes specialist expertise / input to ensure that the development strategy remains sound, having considered the comments received. If it is robust, then there would be costs associated with making any final amendments to the plan and associated documents, and printing of all documents for submission to the Secretary of State. If it is not sound, then a further targeted Regulation 19 consultation would be required.
- **Examination, adoption and legal challenge** – includes costs associated with hiring an independent Planning Inspector and a Programme Officer to support them. There would also be costs associated with having specialist consultants (where appropriate) to represent the Council, including a specialist barrister(s). Members of the public are free to legally challenge the adoption of a Local Plan within a set timeframe. Should the Local Plan be legally challenged this is likely to incur additional costs.

7.2. At 1 April 2023, the opening balance on the Local Plan reserve was £677,000.

7.3. It is estimated that an additional £550,000 will be required to prepare the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041). This would include commissioning additional evidence to test and justify new site allocations and aid the delivery of four supplementary planning documents (SPDs) listed at paragraph 7.6.

7.4. Additional funding will be required should the council need to use the fall back approach, shown in Diagram 1 (scenario 2). This may require up to an additional £500,000, although it is difficult to quantify at this stage as it requires far greater clarity on the new plan-making system. The new system is being advertised as being quicker and more efficient but this remains to be seen in the absence of secondary legislation. Furthermore, the planning system will continue to operate within a legal framework, where planning judgements need to be justified / evidenced. This is often where the costs and resources sit.

7.5. There will be a cost to the council if it chooses not to update or delay the preparation of the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041). History offers a useful reminder. Between 2011 and the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018, the council received 27 planning appeals where the housing land supply was challenged, 17 of which found the lack of a five year housing land supply to be a significant material consideration. Tewkesbury Borough Council provides a useful indication of cost. It recently lost three appeals, where the five year housing land supply was contested, at an estimated cost of £500,000.

Local Development Scheme – project timetable

7.6. The Council’s Local Development Scheme has been updated – see Annex E. This document sets out the key plan-making milestones and dates. The timetable is subject to periodic



review. Milestones may change if, for example, significant additional issues are identified through the consultation process and/or the review of the Council’s evidence base. This will be kept under review by the Local Plan Programme Board. The following table summarises the key milestones contained within the Local Development Scheme for the replacement plan.

DATE	STAGE
February 2024	Local Plan preparation (Regulation 18)
January 2025	Local Plan publication consultation (Regulation 19)
June 2025 to August 2026	Submission and Examination in Public
August 2026	Inspector’s Report
September 2026	Adoption

7.7. The Local Development Scheme also contains information on other additional plan-making projects, specifically supplementary planning documents (SPD). As the name suggests, these documents supplement local plans and guide the application of local plan policies. The Local Development Scheme identifies four SPDs that will be delivered alongside the replacement plan.

- Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan SPD;
- Cotswold Design Code SPD;
- Affordable Housing SPD; and
- Developer Contributions SPD.

It is worth bearing in mind that adopting the eventual Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan commits the council to additional long term costs. The council owns several regeneration sites in the town centre (typically car parks) and therefore it commits the council to act as lead and/or partner developer. During 2024 and as the masterplan begins to crystallise the council will undertake a market appraisal that will examine the gross development value of the masterplan proposals. This will support a wider review of the council’s Asset Management Strategy that is currently underway.

8. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The Forward Planning team is central to the delivery of several corporate projects and there is an expectation that these will be delivered in a timely and cost efficient manner.
- 8.2. The plan-making process employs a project management approach that actively monitors the time, cost and quality. This helps to anticipate risks and costs early in the process and aids transparency. It also helps to ensure an appropriate level of resource to keep the council’s local plan up-to-date.



- 8.3. The council has recently announced that the Forward Planning function is one of many services returning to the council from Publica. Restructuring is likely add some disruption to day to day services during 2024/25. However, it is not expected to fundamentally affect the delivery of projects listed in the Local Development Scheme. This will be kept under review.
- 8.4. Councillors may be interested to note the 'State of the [Planning] Profession' report published by the Royal Town Planning Institute in November 2023⁹, which offers some useful insights and trends on the planning profession.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Local Plan and extant plan-making process

- 9.1. Local planning authorities must review local plans at least once every five years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community¹⁰. The council's Local Plan reviews discharge this duty.
- 9.2. Commencing the preparation of the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) does not alter the conclusions of the recent review of the adopted Local Plan housing requirement. The adopted Local Plan policies continue to carry full weight with measuring the housing land supply. Rather, the decision to prepare a replacement plan is confirmation of the Council's commitment to take proactive action to plan for needs arising in the 2030s.

Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement

- 9.3. By keeping the Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme up-to-date the Council ensures compliance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). This is an important consideration in the independent examination of the updated Local Plan.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1. Annex G examines the benefits and risks of navigating the plan-making process.
- 10.2. Planning reforms are complicating the plan-making process and are requiring convoluted approaches to ensure progress can be made without placing the council at risk of losing hundreds of thousands of pounds of investment and years of work. Although not advocated, it is completely understandable why some councils have paused their plan-making activities until the new system beds in.
- 10.3. The advocated approach is to continue with the Partial Update Plan and to begin a new plan with a plan period of 2026 to 2041 that focusses on updating the council's the development strategy and allocating sites to meet development requirements up to 2041.

⁹ <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/stateoftheprofession23>

¹⁰ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>



- 10.4. By December 2024, the council will need to make a judgement call based on whether sufficient work has been made on the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) to merge it with Partial Update Plan to create a single Replacement Plan that can be submitted ahead of the 30 June 2025 deadline.
- 10.5. It is worth noting that there will be lots of councils wanting to submit their local plans by June 2025. This could create a bottle neck in the system and may affect the council's ability to adopt its Local Plan by December 2026, after which point time would be up and the Local Plan would need to switch to a New Style Plan. Officers are keeping the Planning Inspectorate informed of the council's plan-making timetable.
- 10.6. Even if all goes to plan and the combined Replacement Plan is submitted by June 2025, there is still a risk that the council will not have this plan adopted by April 2026 (i.e. the point when there will be less than five years remaining of the adopted Local Plan period). This has implications on the way the five year housing land supply is measured and the council may still need to take proactive measures to address this. However, waiting for a New Style Plan increases this risk and the potential length of time when there may be ambiguity in the way the five year housing land supply is measured.
- 10.7. Project management risks and the mitigation taken are also detailed in the Local Development Scheme (Annex E).

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT (IF REQUIRED)

- 11.1. The emerging Local Plan is supported by an Integrated Impact Assessment that considers these legal duties and requirements. An updated Integrated Impact Assessment will be available to review and comment on during the public consultation.

12. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS (IF REQUIRED)

- 12.1. The council has declared a climate emergency which commits it to preparing an action plan to show how it will support the district to become carbon neutral. The council has also committed to make the Local Plan green to its core. An update to the Local Plan will directly support local communities and businesses to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

13. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 13.1. Recommendations (a) and (b): Cabinet / Council could decide to only continue with the Partial Update Plan. Annex G examines the merits of. Another option would be to pause work on the Partial Update Plan until when the New Style Plan goes live. This option is not advised as it is contingent on various external factors that are not in place yet and are not in the council's control. For example, a general election in the next 12 months could result in new political party taking power who may have a different take on how the plan-making process should operate. This would also not provide enough time to adopt a Replacement Plan, thereby securing the council's housing land supply, before there is less than five years remaining of the adopted Local Plan period.



- 13.2. Recommendations (c) and (d): The Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement documents are regulatory requirements of the plan-making process and therefore there are no reasonable alternatives.
- 13.3. Recommendation (e): Cabinet could decide not to publish the Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan for consultation. If such a decision was chosen it would not be able to progress its corporate objective to prepare a town centre masterplan for Cirencester.
- 13.4. Recommendation (g): Granting delegated authority to make minor changes to the consultation plan and agree the questionnaire will aid the timely publication of the consultation material in the New Year. Cabinet could decide not to grant authority to the Forward Planning Manager or grant authority to a more senior council officer.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1. None

ENDS

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YOUR
COTSWOLD
YOUR **PLAN**

CREATING A FUTURE
THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE



Cotswold District Local Plan Update Consultation

Executive Summary and Consultation Instructions

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)
Regulations 2012

Regulation 18 consultation/participation

1 February 2024 to 14 March 2024

Contents

Introduction	1
Consultation Instructions	1
Part 1: Background to the consultation	1
Part 2: The consultation documents	2
Part 3: Guidance on how to make your comments	3
Part 4: Contacts	4
Executive Summary: Development Strategy Options Topic Paper	6
Development Strategy Options and Preferred Development Strategy	6
Vision and Objectives	7
Chapter 5A: Sustainable Development (New Chapter)	8
SD1 - Sustainable Development	8
SD2 - The Climate and Ecological Emergencies	8
SD3 - The Cotswold Design Code (formerly EN2)	8
SD4 - Health and Wellbeing	8
Chapter 5B: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation (New Chapter)	8
CC1 - Retrofitting Existing Buildings	8
CC2 - Renewable Energy (including sub policies CC2a-CC2d)	9
CC3 - Net Zero Carbon New Buildings (including sub policies CC3a-CC3f)	9
CC4 - District Heating	9
CC5 - Managing Flood Risk (formerly EN14)	9
CC6 - Water Infrastructure Management (formerly INF8)	10
CC7 - Green Infrastructure (formerly INF7)	10
CC8 - Sustainable Transport (formerly INF3)	10
Chapter 6: Local Plan Strategy	10
DS1 - Development Strategy	10
DS2 - Development within Development Boundaries	10
DS3 - Small-Scale Residential Development in Non-Principal Settlements	11
DS4 - Market Housing Outside Principle and Non-Principal Settlements	11
Chapter 7: Delivering the Strategy	11
S1 and S4 to S19 - Principal Settlements	11
S3 - Cirencester Central Area Strategy (and subsidiary policies S3(a) to S3(d))	11
Chapter 8: Housing to Meet Local Needs	12
H1 - Housing Mix and Tenure to Meet Local Needs	12
H2 - Affordable Housing	12

H3 - Rural Exception Sites.....	12
H4 - Specialist Accommodation for Older People.....	12
H5 - Dwellings for Rural Workers Outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements.....	13
H6 - Removal of Occupancy Conditions.....	13
H7 - Gypsy and Traveller Sites.....	13
H8 - Replacement Dwellings.....	13
H9 - Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.....	13
H10 - Community-Led Housing.....	13
H11 - Homelessness Housing Provision.....	13
Chapter 9: Economy, including Retail and Tourism.....	13
EC1 - Employment Development.....	13
EC2 - Safeguarding Employment Sites.....	13
EC3 - Proposals for all types of Employment-Generating Uses.....	14
EC4 - Special Policy Areas.....	14
EC5 - Rural Diversification.....	14
EC6 - Conversion of Rural Buildings.....	14
EC7 - Retail (deleted policy).....	15
EC7 - Agricultural and Forestry Buildings.....	15
EC8 - Town Centres.....	15
EC9 – Retail and Leisure Impact Assessment.....	15
EC10 - Development of Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions.....	15
EC11 - Tourist Accommodation.....	15
EC12 - Equestrian Related Development.....	16
Chapter 10: Built, Natural and Historic Environment.....	16
EN1 - The Built, Natural and Historic Environment.....	16
EN3 - Local Green Spaces.....	16
EN4 - The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape.....	16
EN5 - Cotswolds National Landscape.....	16
EN6 - Special Landscape Areas.....	17
EN7 - Trees, Hedges & Woodlands.....	17
EN8 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity: Features, Habitats & Species.....	17
EN9 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity: Designated Sites.....	17
EN10 - Historic Environment Designated Heritage Assets.....	18
EN11 - Historic Environment Designated Heritage Assets (Conservation Areas).....	18
EN12 - Historic Environment: Non-designated Heritage Assets.....	18
EN13 - Historic Environment: The Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings.....	18

EN15 - Pollution and Contaminated Land.....	18
EN16 - Dark Skies.....	18
EN17 - Management of Accessible Open Green Spaces.....	18
EN18 - Sherborne Park Estate Masterplan.....	18
Chapter 11: Infrastructure.....	18
INF1 - Strategic Infrastructure Delivery (formerly policies SAI, SA2 and SA3).....	18
INF2 - Infrastructure Delivery (formerly Policy INF1).....	19
INF3 - Social and Community Infrastructure (formerly Policy INF2).....	19
INF4 - Highway Safety.....	19
INF5 - Parking Provision.....	19
INF6 - Vale of Evesham Heavy Goods Vehicle Control Zone (deleted policy).....	19
INF6 - Telecommunications Infrastructure (formerly INF9).....	20
Chapter 12: Other Spatial Issues.....	20
SP1 - Gloucester and Cheltenham Green Belt.....	20
SP2 - Cotswold Airport.....	20
SP3 - The Thames and Severn Canal.....	20
SP4 - The River Thames.....	20
SP5 - Cotswold Water Park Post-Mineral Extraction After Use.....	20
SP6 - Former Cheltenham to Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Line.....	20
Appendices.....	20
Appendix E - Established Employment Sites.....	20
Appendix K - Glossary.....	21
Appendix M - Vacant Building Credit Calculation Methodology.....	21
Appendix N - Schedule of Strategic and Non-Strategic Policies.....	21
Appendix O - Map of Biodiversity & Geodiversity Designated Sites.....	21
Appendix P - Schedule of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Designated Sites.....	21
Appendix Q - Light Pollution and Dark Skies.....	21
Policies Maps.....	21
Local Plan sections to be included / updated in next Local Plan consultation.....	22

Introduction

Cotswold District Council is partially updating its adopted Local Plan to make it “Green to the Core”. The adopted Local Plan covers a period from 2011 to 2031. At the same time, the Council is also considering development needs up to 2041 and options for how these may be delivered.

This is a Local Plan ‘Regulation 18’ consultation. It builds on the consultation responses we received in 2022 at the previous ‘Issues and Options’ stage of plan-making. The consultation also responds to changes in national guidance and new evidence base studies undertaken to inform the Local Plan Update.

This document contains a summary of:

- the proposed Local Plan policy updates;
- the development strategy options for the period up to 2041, as well as a preferred development strategy and broad locations for future growth; and
- a Call for Sites to deliver different types of potential development needs up to 2041, such as market housing, Affordable Housing, employment and commercial development.

The document contains instructions on how to submit your response to the consultation.

The proposed technical updates to the Local Plan policies and a topic paper on the development strategy options are provide in separate documents. Part 2 of this report explains how you can access these.

Consultation Instructions

Part 1: Background to the consultation

The Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 was adopted in 2018. Local Plans need to be periodically reviewed to keep them up to date. Housing requirements, for example, must now be reviewed at least once every five years. This does not necessarily entail a full-scale update – effectively a replacement Local Plan – but can be a targeted update focussing on specific issues. However, although the Local Plan is performing well with delivering its adopted requirements and current needs, the Council is taking the opportunity to consider development needs and development strategy options beyond the current Local Plan period before these become a problem.

This does not mean that the previous ‘Issues and Options’ (Regulation 18 stage) consultation undertaken in 2022 was unnecessary ⁽¹⁾. What is now being consulted upon continues and builds upon that initial work, albeit now in the context of a potentially more comprehensive and wide-ranging update to the Local Plan.

The process of updating a Local Plan involves several stages. The initial stages involve issues, options and policy proposals being discussed with stakeholders, including the public (formally known as a

¹ The initial “Issues and Options” Regulation 18 consultation centred on eighteen Topic Papers dealing with a range of different issues. These remain relevant and can be accessed via [the Council's website](#): Accessibility of New Housing Development; Biodiversity; Responding to the Climate Crisis; Design; Economy and Employment; Green Infrastructure; Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing; Historic Environment; Housing Affordability; Housing Need, Requirement, Land Supply and Delivery; Infrastructure; Landscape; Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services; Neighbourhood Development Plans; Retail and Town Centres; Sustainable Tourism (*to follow*); Sustainable Transport and Air Quality; and Water Quality, Water Resources and Flooding.

Regulation 18 stage). This is followed by a finalised replacement Local Plan (formally known as a Regulation 19 stage). The next step is then an Examination in Public where an independent Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate assesses the soundness and legal compliance of what's proposed and considers representations made in response to the formal consultations. At each stage there is an opportunity for stakeholders to participate in the process and have their views heard.

In this second Regulation 18 stage consultation, the Council is putting forward its draft policies and policy objectives. What is different and indicative of this consultation, however, is that consideration is also being given to development needs / requirements up to 2041 and the potential development strategy for this period. This strategy would dictate how and where any land for additional development that is needed to meet identified requirements to 2041 should be allocated. This includes broad areas of the district where growth in, for example, housing and employment provision may take place. The identification of specific development sites will follow in the next iteration of the emerging Local Plan.

A Local Plan may need to be updated or entirely replaced for a variety of reasons. It may be because legislation has changed or because important new data or evidence has emerged that means existing policies are weakened or are even unsound – these can broadly be termed as 'technical updates'. Ensuring that the Council can maintain a 5 year housing land supply⁽²⁾ is an example of a more strategic reason for revision.

Updates can also address issues that have emerged or intensified since the Local Plan was adopted that really must be tackled without delay and which are either not covered by existing policy or existing policy is no longer adequate. An example of a key issue in the second category derives from the Council's declarations of Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies.

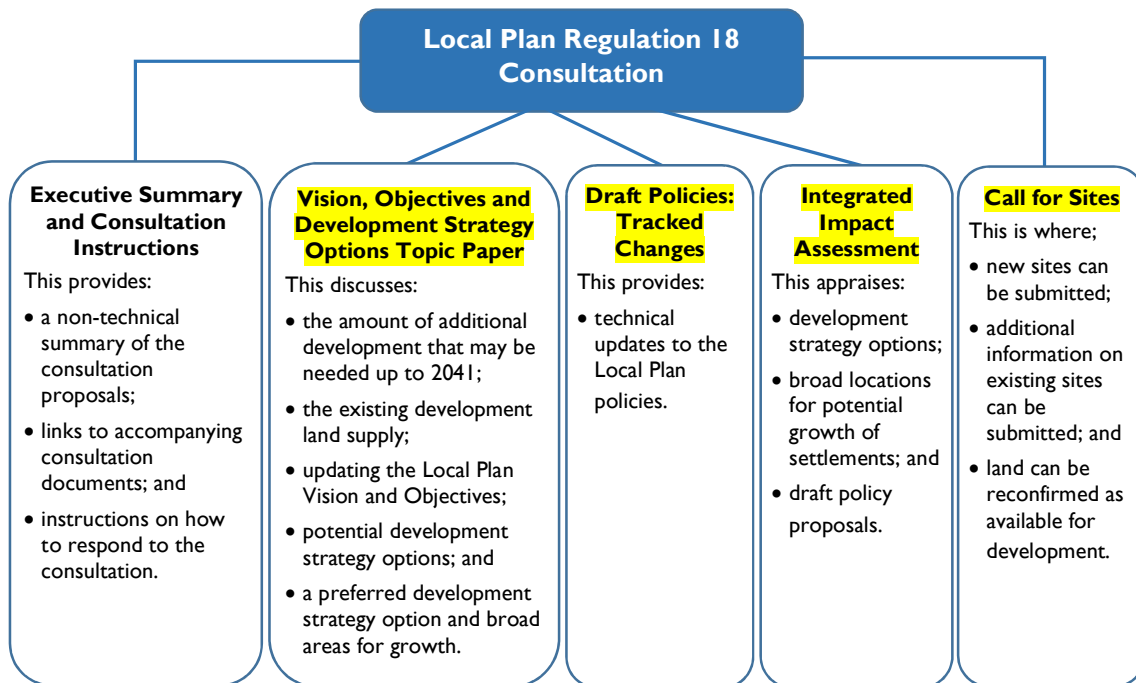
In reflecting these declarations in its [Corporate Plan](#), the Council has committed to making its Local Plan 'Green To The Core' with an aim to: "Develop an updated Local Plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure". Stated actions include "Draft new policies and updating existing policies to give effect to new Council strategies, such as the Economic Recovery Strategy, the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plans and the Renewable Energy Strategy." While this could be carried out as a Partial Update, the ongoing need to plan to meet future housing and other development needs by allocating sufficient land needs to be part of a deeper review.

The Council encourages anyone to participate in the consultation to help inform the next stage of the Local Plan process. This includes whether you are a resident, business, landowner, town or parish council or anyone else. In taking part in the discussion, it is important to bear in mind the last step of the process – the Examination in Public. The Inspector will be focusing on whether the Local Plan is sound, and one key consideration for the Inspector will be whether there is sufficient evidence to support the proposals. If you do suggest new alternative policy suggestions, please remember that if we take them on board we need to be confident we can robustly and justifiably support them when the Local Plan is examined.

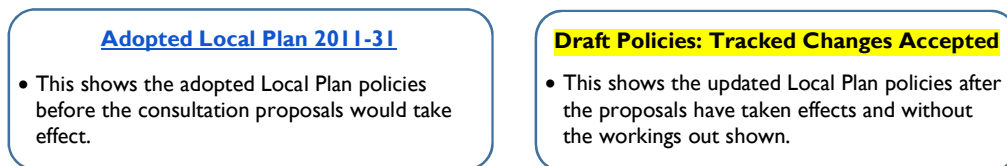
Part 2: The consultation documents

The Local Plan consultation is summarised in the diagram below.

² A 5 year housing land supply is a supply of specific deliverable housing sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the housing requirement set out in the adopted Local Plan.



To show the Local Plan policies before and after the consultation proposals have taken effect, we have also provided:



The consultation documents can be accessed via the Council's online consultation system your.cotswold.gov.uk. Hard copies are also available to view at all public libraries in Cotswold District, as well as the Council offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX and the Moreton Area Centre, High Street, Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 0AZ. Hard copies can also be obtained on request by contacting the Council's customer services team on 01285 623000 or email customer.services@cotswold.gov.uk. Please note charges may apply.

Part 3: Guidance on how to make your comments

Please help the consultation to run smoothly and efficiently by following these simple steps.

1. **Please respond using the online consultation system (your.cotswold.gov.uk).**
2. You can **respond to as many or as few questions as you wish.**
3. **Letter, email or pdf / Word document (or similar) submissions are discouraged** unless you are unable to use the online consultation system (e.g. if you do not have access to a computer or smartphone). Help is available via the online consultation system to anyone who needs assistance or, if you really need to speak to someone, please call the phone number provided in Part 4 (Contacts) below.

Respondents in the development industry and town and parish councils will be asked to use the online consultation system if their representation is submitted by letter, email, pdf / Word document (or similar), unless it is part of the Call for Sites.

4. **Please make your representation succinct, clear and to-the-point.** This helps us to understand and consider your points and helps us to respond more quickly.
5. Consultation responses will be refined down to a list of material planning considerations. **Campaigns making multiple representations on the same point carry no extra planning weight than a single representation making the same point(s).** Submitting petitions or multiple representations on the same point is therefore discouraged.
6. Please **do not promote a site in your response to questions unless a question specifically concerns a site.** Quite simply, we do not need to know this information and it adds time when analysing representations. It also risks your representation being classed as “Not Duly Made” and disregarded.
7. If you wish to submit a new site, reconfirm the availability of an existing site or tell us additional information about a site that you have already submitted, please do so in the Call for Sites part of the consultation.

We are calling for sites for all types of development needs identified in the Local Plan, such as market and Affordable Housing, employment / commercial development, gypsy and traveller pitches, renewable energy and other types of development that may be needed. If you have already submitted the site but there no further update, it is helpful to reconfirm that the site is still available but you do not need to resubmit the entire site submission.

Site submissions can be made on any land that is available for development. At this stage, the Council is seeking sites that can deliver five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres or more of floor space). The Council is unlikely to allocate land in areas with high flood risk (i.e. Flood Zones 2 or 3 identified on the [Flood Risk Map](#)), although such land may be suitable for green or blue infrastructure.

Comments received during the consultation will be considered and used to inform the final draft of the Local Plan, which will be subject to another public consultation before the Local Plan is submitted for examination.

This consultation lasts a period of six weeks, commencing on **1 February 2024 and ending at 23:59 14 March 2024**. Please ensure your representations are submitted by this deadline. Unless there are mitigating circumstances, we will not accept late representations because this will affect the overall Local Plan timetable, as well as being unfair to those who have adhered to the deadline.

For further information about the Council’s Local Plan consultation process and the next steps in the Local Plan process, please see our [Statement of Community Involvement](#) and our [Local Development Scheme](#). We have also prepared a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the consultation process, how to access the online Citizen Lab Portal and related matters. [The FAQs are here \[INSERT LINK\]](#).

Part 4: Contacts

Where the consultation is taking place: your.cotswold.gov.uk

Address: Forward Planning Team, Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX

Email: Local.plan@cotswold.gov.uk

Any individual or organisation can request to be added to the Local Plan consultee database by contacting Local.Plan@cotswold.gov.uk or telephoning 01285 623000.

Executive Summary: Development Strategy Options Topic Paper

Development Strategy Options and Preferred Development Strategy

Consideration has been given to the amount of additional development that would be needed for the 15 year period from 1 April 2026 to March 2041, as well as the development strategy options for accommodating additional growth. Based on current estimations:

- The local housing need for this period is around 7,400 dwellings ⁽³⁾. This would reduce to 6,330 dwellings if past over delivery is deducted from the number that needs to be planned for.
- The local housing need is the starting point for determining the housing requirement. The housing requirement may be higher or lower than the local housing need. For example, more homes may be required to increase affordable housing delivery or fewer homes may be required to protect assets or areas of particular importance (e.g. the Cotswolds National Landscape). The requirement would be determined further down the line and the local housing need is used as the basis of this analysis for indicative purposes.
- Around 5,150 dwellings' worth of housing land supply for the new plan period has already been identified.
- Sites capable of delivering around 2,250 additional dwellings would be needed to fully deliver the local housing need or around 1,180 dwellings if past over delivery is deducted from the number that needs to be planned for.
- The adopted Local Plan includes 14% more housing land supply than the housing requirement to provide flexibility in case any sites were not delivered as expected. If the same flexibility were to be provided in the housing land supply up to 2041, around 3,290 additional dwellings would be needed or 2,070 additional dwellings if past over delivery is deducted.
- The number of homes that need to be planned for may increase or decrease as further evidence comes to light (e.g. the housing need is updated annually). However, these figures provide an indication of the scale of development that may be needed up to 2041.
- The needs / requirements and land supply for other types of development would be further assessed and will form part of the updated development strategy.

Eight development strategy options have been identified to accommodate additional development up to 2041. These include:

- Scenario 1: Additional non-strategic site allocations
- Scenario 2: Main service centre focus
- Scenario 3: Dispersed growth
- Scenario 4: Village clusters
- Scenario 5: New settlement(s)
- Scenario 6: New strategic site(s)
- Scenario 7: Focus growth around transport nodes

³ Based on the Government's 'standard methodology for assessing housing need, although an alternative methodology may be used if there is an exceptional circumstance for doing so.

- Scenario 8: Request neighbouring authority to deliver some of the housing need.

A combination of Scenarios 1, 2, 6 and 7 would be proposed to accommodate the bulk of additional development needs up to 2041. The adopted development strategy of identifying Principal Settlements would continue where the principle of development is supported. However, the strategy would have a greater focus on reducing carbon emissions and focussing growth at locations with good transport connectivity and access to services, facilities and employment. Accordingly, some settlements may become a Principal Settlement and other settlements may have their Principal Settlement status rescinded.

Additional non-strategic site allocations would be made at the Principal Settlements whilst ensuring that the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) remains limited and that development is directed away from areas with higher flood risk. In addition, given that Moreton-in-Marsh is a transport hub, which has a railway station; good provision of services, facilities and employment; and has various sites outside the Cotswold National Landscape, the town would become a focus for strategic-scale growth of over 1,500 additional dwellings up to 2041.

The adopted development strategy of enabling small-scale residential development in Non-Principal Settlements (Policy DS3) would also continue, although it would have an increased emphasis on settlements that have better access to services, facilities and employment. Consideration may be given to whether some sites could be allocated in Village Clusters (Scenario 4). Together, development in Non-Principal Settlements, Village Clusters and windfall sites ⁽⁴⁾ would provide additional flexibility within the housing land supply should any site allocations not come forward as planned.

Market housing would continue to be prohibited outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (i.e. in open countryside) unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations.

An assessment of potential broad locations for growth is provided in the accompanying document titled, 'Cotswold District Local Plan Update: Integrated Impact Assessment'.

The feedback received on the development strategy options will be considered alongside relevant evidence as it emerges and used to refine the preferred approach.

Vision and Objectives

The adopted Vision has been updated to also include:

- Responding to the climate crisis;
- Providing more socially rented homes;
- Making the Local Plan Green to the Core;
- Supporting health and well-being; and
- Enabling a vibrant economy.

The adopted Objectives have been updated to also include:

- Zero carbon developments;
- Transitioning to a low carbon economy whilst maintaining a vibrant economy;
- Providing more opportunities to access affordable housing, particularly social rented housing;
- Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Ensuring that development supports positive health outcomes; and
- Reducing transport carbon emissions.

⁴ Windfall sites are sites not specifically identified in the development plan. The windfall allowance for the new Local Plan period is based on the assumption that the current windfall allowance of 138 dwellings per annum will be rolled forward.

Chapter 5A: Sustainable Development (New Chapter)

SD1 - Sustainable Development

A new overarching policy is being introduced, which commits the Council to working proactively with applicants, stakeholders and other partners to support proposals that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of Cotswold District. The policy sets out the expectations that developments will need to deliver. For example, mitigating climate change (including adaptation measures); protecting, enhancing and creating opportunities to improve access to nature and green spaces; secure measurable and ecologically meaningful Biodiversity Net Gain, as locally as possible; and so on.

SD2 - The Climate and Ecological Emergencies

A new overarching policy that confirms the Council's support for development proposals that deliver various climate and ecological principles. For example, minimising emissions resulting from the construction and lifetime use of buildings; maximising the use of renewable energy and resources; incorporating measures that provide climate change adaptation and increased climate resilience; and maximising opportunities to encourage a modal shift in transportation from fossil fuelled transportation to more active travel and sustainable forms of transport.

SD3 - The Cotswold Design Code (formerly EN2)

The former Policy EN2 (Design of the Built and Natural Environment) is substantially updated and relocated within the Sustainable Development chapter, which provides the policy hook for the forthcoming update to the Cotswold Design Code. The policy sets out key design principles that will be required of developments, such as creating safe and accessible environments that are not vulnerable to crime, that encourage active travel and make it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle in their neighbourhoods, as well as improving access to public transport. The policy also includes a set of additional overarching requirements: for example, avoiding or minimising light pollution; reuse existing buildings rather than constructing new ones; and be designed to be adaptable to prolong the useful life of the development. The Council has commissioned LDA to prepare an updated Design Code which will be delivered as a new Supplementary Planning Document in 2024. This policy will require further revisions to reflect this work. It will also need to be updated to reflect other evidence studies that justify the inclusion of new policies that seek to ensure new development is able to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change (e.g. see Climate Mitigation and Adaptation chapter).

SD4 - Health and Wellbeing

The environment in which we live affects our health and well-being, and as a social objective, it is a key component of sustainable development. The Council will support development proposals that promote health and well-being and maximise opportunities to ensure healthy and inclusive communities for all, by creating environments that encourage healthy lifestyles and appropriate health infrastructure. Proposals must consider and prioritise health outcomes, meeting the needs of different groups in the community, including older, younger people and those with disabilities. The policy includes both a requirement for a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and the provision (and guardianship) of a defibrillator(s) for qualifying developments.

Chapter 5B: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation (New Chapter)

CC1 - Retrofitting Existing Buildings

Retrofitting existing buildings with energy efficiency and adaptability to climate change measures often does not require planning permission. However, a new policy is provided to support the responsible retrofitting of buildings when planning permission is required. This includes the fitting of energy

efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewable energy generation. The policy promotes the use of an energy hierarchy, which prioritises measures that reduce energy demand, followed by measures that increase energy efficiency and finally measures that generate renewable energy. The policy also requires retrofit measures to avoid compromising permeability, ventilation or structural stability, whilst also minimising harm to the heritage significance of buildings. There is policy for retrofitting different types of building, community scale retrofit, as well as encouraging low(er) carbon retrofit.

CC2 - Renewable Energy (including sub policies CC2a-CC2d)

Elements of this draft policy – particularly regarding identification of “areas of search” for deployment of facilities and the deployment target to 2050 - await completion of the Renewable Energy Strategy. The policy, its supporting text and the Policies Map will be updated when that is complete.

The policy is in two parts. The first part of the policy is more generally applicable and sets out criteria for all standalone renewable and low carbon energy-generation, energy storage proposals and distribution networks. Subsequent parts of the policy set technology specific criteria / suitable areas applying to specific types of project, e.g. wind, solar, hydro, energy storage and community renewable energy schemes.

It should be noted that the first part of the policy sets out a provisional deployment target for the District to generate 20% of its electricity demand from renewable sources by 2050. This is subject to completion of the Renewable Energy Strategy and may be revised upwards. The supporting text for the policy explains how this target has been formulated.

CC3 - Net Zero Carbon New Buildings (including sub policies CC3a-CC3f)

A suite of new policies that sets sustainable construction requirements for all new build residential developments. Net Zero carbon buildings in operation are supported by five core principles: energy efficiency, low carbon heat, Renewable energy generation, embodied carbon and no carbon offsetting and very limited role for energy offsetting. These principles have been used to inform the proposed policies. This includes a requirement for zero operational emissions and supplying energy demand through onsite renewables. Specific requirements are set for space heating demand; total energy use; on-site renewable energy generation; connection to a low- or zero-carbon District heating network where available; and for new developments to be fossil fuel free. There is also a requirement for developments to make a financial contribution to the Council’s carbon offset fund where the use of onsite renewables to match total energy consumption is not feasible.

CC4 - District Heating

District heating, also known as a heat network, is a system that uses a singular central heat source to distribute hot water through a network of insulated pipes to multiple individual buildings. The structure is commonly used to fulfil heating and hot water requirements in apartment complexes and densely populated areas.

Cotswold District is less densely populated than more urban areas and district heating schemes will not always be the best solution. However, they can be an effective means of cutting carbon emissions where conventional systems are unsuitable. A new policy is therefore introduced to ensure that the district heating schemes are well-designed, equitable and are low carbon.

CC5 - Managing Flood Risk (formerly EN14)

Formerly EN14, policy CC7 has been updated and moved to the ‘climate change’ (CC) chapter within the updated Local Plan. Extreme weather events and the future demands of development from population increase, are likely to increase flood risk to both development itself and areas downstream; and the policy will form a part of the overall response to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate

change. The existing flood risk policy is updated to promote and trigger investigation into natural methods of flood mitigation, such as targeted woodland planting; and consideration of flood risk from all sources of flooding including that from surface water; a new clause to safeguard (in policy) two areas with the potential for flood storage near Cirencester; and to take into account the multi-functional benefits of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) for all developments, to manage and help reduce the rate of water run-off.

CC6 - Water Infrastructure Management (formerly INF8)

This policy has been moved to the 'climate change' (CC) chapter within the updated Local Plan. There is increasing conflict between climate change scenarios (such as increased storm events and dry periods) and the future demands of development from population increase; on water resources in a 'seriously water stressed' area and water quality, with increased or concentrated pollutants entering watercourses. The policy seeks to ensure that there is adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to serve all new developments, and that development is designed to be water efficient and reduce water consumption. It also promotes Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) that can help limit as far as possible surface water entering the public sewer system. The policy requires the use of conditions to ensure where there is insufficient water/wastewater infrastructure capacity, the occupancy of new homes should not be permitted; and development that results in a new residential dwelling will be required to incorporate water conservation measures to achieve a maximum water consumption of 110 litres per person per day.

CC7 - Green Infrastructure (formerly INF7)

This policy has been comprehensively updated to take account of the new guidance in the NPPF, including the new definition of Green Infrastructure. The increased importance of linking new and existing GI using intelligence from the Nature Recovery Mapping, the Network and forthcoming Strategy all of which are mandatory under the Environment Act 2021. It has also considered new National guidelines and best practice, which are set out in Natural England's GI Framework published in 2021 and Building with Nature, an industry Best Practice Guide. The update also refers to the Cotswold District GI Strategy and Cotswold Design Code.

CC8 - Sustainable Transport (formerly INF3)

Formerly INF3. Comprehensive update. Amongst the many policy proposals, the policy links to the Gloucestershire Transport Decarbonisation Plan and Cotswold Transport Decarbonisation Strategy and includes targets from both documents. It includes a requirement for the early delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure. It also provides a hierarchy of road users for the design and layout of sites.

Chapter 6: Local Plan Strategy

DS1 - Development Strategy

Minor updates. The housing requirement is not updated. The 5 year housing land supply is updated to show the position as of April 2023 (6.9 years), rather than April 2017. Similarly, the overall Local Plan housing land supply / delivery is updated to show the position as of April 2023 (now 9,671 dwellings).

DS2 - Development within Development Boundaries

Minimal changes. Confirms that development should not harm open spaces or gaps that make a positive contribution to the character of the settlements, which makes the policy consistent with DS3. Development boundaries updated to exclude undeliverable Local Plan site allocations and include additional developed land.

DS3 - Small-Scale Residential Development in Non-Principal Settlements

New accessibility standards to ensure new housing developments have reasonable access to services, facilities and employment to reduce social isolation, vehicle dependence / cost of living issues and transport CO2 emissions. Further clarity provided to support applicants and case officers on what land qualifies as being 'in a non-principal settlement', as well as what is meant by 'proportionate scale to the settlement' and 'complements the form and character of the settlement', which relates to the updated Design Code.

DS4 - Market Housing Outside Principle and Non-Principal Settlements

Minimal changes (e.g., clarification of the types of housing development that are supported in the open countryside).

Chapter 7: Delivering the Strategy

S1 and S4 to S19 - Principal Settlements

References to development allocations that now have planning permission would be removed. Furthermore, the following development allocations that are no longer deliverable / developable and it is proposed to also remove these from the Local Plan:

- Cirencester (C17): 42-54 Querns Lane, as the site cannot deliver 5 or more dwellings.
- Fairford (F35B): Land behind Milton Farm and Bettertons Close, as the site is unavailable.
- Fairford (F44): Land to rear of Faulkner Close, Horcott, as the site is now unsuitable due to the neighbouring Site of Special Scientific Interest and because the access is unachievable.
- Kemble (K2A): Land at Station Road, as the site is unavailable and will become part of Kemble Community Gardens.
- Lechlade (L18B): Land west of Orchard Close, Downington, as the site is unavailable.
- Willersey (W1A and W1B): Garage Workshop and Garden behind the Nook, Main Street, as the site cannot deliver 5 or more dwellings.

Policy S18 (Moreton-in-Marsh) proposes to allocate land at the Fire Service College for a new primary school, as well as enabling development of 310 homes, a neighbourhood centre and employment development. In addition, a route is protected for a new link road in Moreton-in-Marsh, which would futureproof the transport strategy for Moreton.

Further site allocations would be made for different types of development if the Local Plan period was extended to 2041. The Sustainability Appraisal that accompanies this consultation identifies broad locations for potential growth of settlements. See Policy INF1 of this document where infrastructure requirements of additional growth are discussed.

S3 - Cirencester Central Area Strategy (and subsidiary policies S3(a) to S3(d))

Revised Policy S3 and its subsidiary policies features a fundamental redraft of the existing strategy for Cirencester Central Area. All but one of the land allocations that were formerly in Policy S1 have been carried forward and incorporated into the revised policy.

Several important (and ongoing) changes have taken place since the Local Plan was adopted in 2018:

- The Council has a new Corporate Strategy that places great emphasis on meeting the challenges of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergencies, requiring the Local Plan to now be "Green to the core" – this has many implications for the future planning of the town centre including modal shift in transport and renewable energy that sit alongside orthodox issues such as conservation of the historic environment.

- Changes in the nature of the “traditional high street” due primarily to internet shopping are challenging the dominance of retail as a keystone policy for town centres. To be resilient and robustly meet the challenges of a rapidly changing future, town centres need to have a broader mix of “main town centre uses” and be more flexible and responsive to change.
- Work to progress a Framework Masterplan SPD for the Central Area – a requirement of the adopted Local Plan – has progressed significantly and is a major driver behind the changes to the Town Centre Strategy.

Taken together the cumulative effect is that the current retail-dominated town centre strategy is out of date. It is inadequate to meet the challenges of the future and assist in delivering the Framework Masterplan SPD.

The revised Strategy is a significant departure from the adopted version. In blunt terms it is far more specific and directional about what the council wants to see when redevelopment takes place. For example, it proposes to divide the town into porously demarcated precincts (the subsidiary policies), each with their own distinctive mix of uses that mirror the proposals in the emerging Framework Masterplan.

Officers have worked closely with consultants Mace and with Cirencester Town Council in development of the Framework Masterplan and the revised policy.

Members should note that Government changes to the Use Classes Order and Permitted Development Rights have made it more difficult for LPAs to be in complete control of how their town centres develop. Shops, some other main town centre uses together with some employment and light industrial uses are now lumped together in Use Class E. Change of use from Class E to Class C3 (dwelling houses) is possible as permitted development (subject to prior approval). A survey undertaken two years ago by officers indicated that up to 50% of premises in the town centre could be susceptible to this change. To date this existential threat has not materialised (probably due to the robust economic health of Cirencester’s town centre) but it does serve as an unhelpful “wild card” in the planning of our town centres.

Chapter 8: Housing to Meet Local Needs

H1 - Housing Mix and Tenure to Meet Local Needs

Removal of references to the scrapped government Starter Homes scheme. New requirement for accessible housing to enable people to live longer at home in older age.

H2 - Affordable Housing

Various proposals to deliver more affordable housing. Includes: increasing the requirement from 30% to 40% on brownfield and from 40% to 50% on greenfield sites; changing the requirement for a financial contribution in the Cotswolds National Landscape and any future ‘designated rural areas’ from 6-10 dwellings to 3-9 dwellings with all developments of 10 or more homes requiring on-site affordable housing provision; removing a loophole for avoiding affordable housing contributions by submitting several smaller schemes; a new policy for entry-level exception sites; and many more.

H3 - Rural Exception Sites

Minimal changes, including defining a “strong local connection”.

H4 - Specialist Accommodation for Older People

No changes to the housing requirements. Clarity on how the requirements will be monitored. New requirements for developments to promote active lifestyles and older peoples’ engagement in community life. Changes also proposed in the Design Code.

H5 - Dwellings for Rural Workers Outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements

Various proposals to ensure new dwellings for rural workers and extensions to those dwellings do not go beyond what is needed and do not enable the creation of market housing in locations that would otherwise be unsuitable.

H6 - Removal of Occupancy Conditions

Merger of different policies that deal with the removal of occupancy conditions. Requirement for newly created dwellings to comply with the Nationally Described Space Standard.

H7 - Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Deletion of allocation at Meadowview, Fosseyway, near Bourton-on-the-Water, which now has planning permission. Updated need for Traveller pitches.

H8 - Replacement Dwellings

New policy, ensuring that replacement dwellings are not inappropriately large. It also closes a loophole where applicants gain permission through permitted development rights or a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use of Development and build a new replacement dwelling in a location that would otherwise be unsuitable. The new policy reinstates several aspects of a revoked policy from the former adopted Local Plan.

H9 - Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings

New policy, which support extensions but sets some limitations on the size of extensions to help protect the unspoilt character of the Cotswolds and the wider district and to maintain a range of housing types, particularly the stock of smaller / typically lower priced house types to meet the needs of Cotswold communities.

H10 - Community-Led Housing

New policy providing further support for community-led housing developments to deliver more genuinely affordable housing, whilst providing a further boost to the housing land supply.

H11 - Homelessness Housing Provision

New policy requiring all major housing development (for example, 10 or more dwellings) to contribute towards homeless housing provision to meet the identified need in the District and address the Council's strategic objectives on meeting affordable housing. Contributions will be by way of a financial contribution from the developer.

Chapter 9: Economy, including Retail and Tourism

EC1 - Employment Development

Minor textual changes to improve comprehension. An additional requirement for applicants to encourage travelling to and from work by sustainable methods of transport.

EC2 - Safeguarding Employment Sites

As noted in the summary of Policy S1, the government's changes to the Use Classes Order and subsequent amendments to Permitted Development rights have had a significant impact on policy planning. And not just in town centres. It has presented a major challenge to the council's long-standing policy of safeguarding employment sites to ensure the district's economic prosperity and resilience. Unless an industrial unit is classed as B1 or B8, all other existing units on an established employment or industrial estate are within Class E and could, with prior approval, change use to residential (Class C3). It hardly requires detailed explanation to see the myriad difficulties this can cause, not least for the people and families who may end up living in one of these conversions.

Our powers of control are limited. The use of Article 4 Directions is possible but can attract prohibitive levels of compensation. Officers have surveyed extant employment and industrial estates. The egregious ones have been identified and the policy is now amended thus:

Appendix E identifies established employment sites that are important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses. These sites and their locations are likely to raise compatibility issues with residential use and proposals for change of use need to be scrutinised carefully. Consequently, to safeguard both the employment uses and the living conditions of any prospective residential occupiers of converted premises, some Appendix E sites are identified as requiring prior approval and may require express planning permission for a change of use.

Having regard to new employment development on established or allocated sites, it is proposed to prevent automatic permitted change to residential by requiring that conditions are imposed restricting the use and requiring express planning consent for any subsequent change.

Other alterations to the policy and supporting text are minor textual amendments to bring it up to date with legislative and related changes.

EC3 - Proposals for all types of Employment-Generating Uses

Minor textual amendments to bring the policy and supporting text up to date with legislative and related changes.

EC4 - Special Policy Areas

The proposals primarily relate to the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) in Cirencester and the Fire Service College (FSC) in Moreton-in-Marsh. The policy is still under development but the policy proposal shows the direction of travel.

- The RAU is seeking to grow its role as the UK's global agricultural university, including the delivery of a new Innovation Village and growing its student population. The update makes Policy EC4 more flexible to accommodate the RAU's growth plans by broadening the types of use that will be supported on the site and requiring purpose-built student accommodation to support the expansion of the RAU.
- The FSC proposal allocates 2ha of the existing site for a new primary school, which would be in addition to the existing St David's Primary School. The existing 7ha employment site allocation (ref: MORE6) would be expanded to around 10ha and the uses would be broadened from office to also include general industrial and storage and distribution uses (B2, B8 and E(g) use classes). The proposal also includes some 'enabling' housing development, the profits from which would be secured towards redeveloping life expired buildings on the FSC site and regenerating the wider site. Mitigating highway impact on the town centre is a key aspect of this proposal with a potential new road connecting Todenham Road to London Road (A44).

EC5 - Rural Diversification

Minor changes to ensure new rural buildings are necessary and, where they are built, safeguards are in place to remove a loophole for subsequent redevelopment into housing in an otherwise unsuitable location.

EC6 - Conversion of Rural Buildings

Clarification that this policy does not apply to conversions to dwellings. Clarification that works must not go beyond what might sensibly or reasonably be described as a conversion, as opposed to a rebuild, which is not supported.

EC7 - Retail (deleted policy)

Policy deleted. The discussion regarding Policy S3 touched on the need for town centres to diversify and not be “monocultures” revolving around a dominant retail use. It is important however to note that retail remains, plainly, a very important town centre use. But it can no longer be seen as the keystone. A broader mix of “main town centre uses” will help to ensure our centres remain healthy, vibrant places that are able to flex and adapt to changing economic, environmental and other circumstances. Revised Policy EC8 retains policy “essentials” regarding retail: the baby has not been thrown out with the bathwater.

EC7 - Agricultural and Forestry Buildings

A new policy for (typically larger scale) agricultural building proposals, which are not covered by permitted development rights.

EC8 - Town Centres

Formerly “Main Town Centre Uses” this policy is a significant revision in respect more of emphasis than textual addition or amendment. It incorporates elements of EC7 retail.

In a nutshell this revised policy plays down the dominance of retail while elevating the profile of other main town centre uses. It is, in other words, an attempt to level the playing field. The reason for this has been explained earlier in relation to SI. “Main town centre uses” do not include residential use but the policy is explicit that, in certain circumstances, this may be acceptable.

The revision also encourages towns preparing or revising Neighbourhood Development Plans to consider preparing strategies for their town centres to make them more resilient to change. While this is not a compliance requirement for NDPs it would represent good strategic planning if this general move away from retail dominance was adopted across the district.

EC9 – Retail and Leisure Impact Assessment

This remains a requirement of the NPPF and is retained for that reason. Minor textual amendments to bring the policy and supporting text up to date with legislative and related changes. This includes amending the title to “Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments”.

EC10 - Development of Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

Policy amended to close a loophole where attractions are proposed that are alleged to only be viable if they are accompanied by accommodation. DM advises that the accommodation is often the main business interest rather than the attraction. Effectively therefore the amendments seek to prevent market housing proposals coming forward by the back door. This is at present a “hot topic” as the current government consultation on further changes to permitted development rights includes a proposal to enable change from short-term lets to permanent dwellings and vice versa.

EC11 - Tourist Accommodation

This policy has been completely redrafted from the title “Tourist and Visitor Accommodation” onwards.

The existing policy is not coherent in places. It has inherent contradictions and has proved challenging for DM colleagues to use.

From hotels to caravans and “glamping” sites the revised policy is far more systematic, rigorous and straightforward in addressing the various permutations and types of accommodation available for visitors. For example, the revised policy follows national policy (NPPF (2023) Annex 2) in identifying hotels as “main town centre uses”. In that context the sequential approach to assessing proposals is embedded in the revised policy. Therefore, hotels should be in designated town centres. Proposals

outside designated centres – sequentially edge of centre and then out of centre - are subject to progressively more rigorous assessment and planning hurdles.

Apart from straightforward compliance with the NPPF, there are sound planning reasons for taking this approach. The need to diversify the mix of uses in our town centres has been pointed out elsewhere, and hotel accommodation will assist greatly in that. The need to encourage modal shift in transport means that concentrating uses of this type in centres may reduce the need for car journeys because public transport or other forms of movement are more available and attractive. Concentrating this type of use in designated centres, and discouraging their development in other areas, is more sustainable in the long term.

EC12 - Equestrian Related Development

Policy EC12 is a new policy, incorporating former Policy 31 from the Local Plan (2006), to support equestrian related development; to ensure new uses for traditional buildings and reduce the pressure for new, isolated buildings in the countryside. In permitting private and commercial enterprises, the policy seeks such development to be in keeping with, and prevent an adverse (and/or cumulative) impact on; the quality and character of the landscape and surrounding environment, including existing buildings, dwelling(s) (residential amenity), or highways, and to take into account local biodiversity and habitats. Dwellings proposed in connection with equestrian related development will only be permitted following certain criteria, to prevent the creation of such a development as a pretext for future housing/building in the countryside.

Chapter 10: Built, Natural and Historic Environment

EN1 - The Built, Natural and Historic Environment

Minimal changes. The changes made to EN1 are for points of clarity.

EN3 - Local Green Spaces

Extend LGS6 Kemble – Community Gardens at Station Road to include the land that was formerly allocated for residential development (ref: K2A).

EN4 - The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape

The policy, which applies to the whole District, (including Special Landscape Areas and the Cotswolds National Landscape), remains unchanged. Additional supporting text is included to clarify the holistic role of the landscape as recommended by Natural England, where it not only has aesthetic value but also plays a key role in health, biodiversity, the local economy, tackling the climate and ecological emergencies, as well as providing a clear sense of place; and the opportunities and challenges in often competing needs i.e. when balancing the need for new development (residential or renewable energy proposals), with the conservation and enhancement of the high quality landscape.

Retaining all the landscape policies broadly as is (EN4, EN5, EN6), they remain a counterweight to increased pressures for development and can be considered on a case-by-case basis.

EN5 - Cotswolds National Landscape

The policy remains unchanged. On 22nd November 2023, the Government rebranded Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) as National Landscapes. In Cotswold District the Cotswolds AONB becomes the Cotswolds National Landscape. This retains the same designation and status in practical terms. Consequential changes have been made to EN5 to reflect the rebranded name. We are aware that other references to the AONB in the emerging Local Plan update will also need to be updated. This will be done in the next iteration of the Local Plan update.

EN6 - Special Landscape Areas

The policy remains unchanged. Consequential change in the supporting text due to the more recent review of Special Landscape Area (SLA) designations.

EN7 - Trees, Hedges & Woodlands

New guidelines have emerged since the adoption of the Local Plan and the policy has been updated to reflect these changes. In particular, the NPPF 2023, The England Tree Action Plan 2021-2024, the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy 2021 and forthcoming Action Plan and the Gloucestershire Nature Recovery Network and forthcoming Nature Recovery and Action plan. The NPPF specifies that the plan should provide street trees in new developments, to recognise the contribution trees play to climate change, the environment and Green Infrastructure (GI) and the opportunities to incorporate trees in new development such as parks and community orchards. Veteran trees and woodlands are referenced in the policy, but their role as irreplaceable habitats is new. The policy now includes intelligence from The Gloucestershire Tree Strategy, which highlights the deficit of trees in the Cotswold District and the number needed to address the deficit. The definition of 'trees hedgerows and woodland' has been updated and broadened to include small copses, orchards, linear belts, and woodland blocks. New guidelines from the Gloucestershire Nature Recovery Network and forthcoming Nature recovery and Action plan provide the ecological mapping data needed to plant more trees in the right places, this along with the Cotswold Design Code, and Cotswold GI Strategy. Missing and now added from the original policy was the need to plant more trees and their long-term maintenance.

EN8 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity: Features, Habitats & Species

There are four key updates to the policy.

1) The need to provide at least 10 % Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in line with the expected mandatory figure required by Government via the Environment Act 2021.

2) Reference to the mitigation hierarchy, (avoidance, mitigation, compensation) which developers will need to apply.

The mitigation hierarchy is the principle that environmental harm resulting from a development should be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.

3) The Ten Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles have also been included in the policy. For development these are:

Principle 1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy

Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere

Principle 3. Be inclusive and equitable

Principle 4. Address risks Principle

Principle 5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution

Principle 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity

Principle 7. Be additional

Principle 8. Create a Net Gain legacy

Principle 9. Optimise sustainability

Principle 10. Be transparent

4) Added to the policy is the requirement for all new housing to provide three swift bricks and opportunities for bat roosts within each new dwelling, located on a suitable elevation.

EN9 - Biodiversity & Geodiversity: Designated Sites

The updated policy includes specific reference to habitat sites in or near the Cotswold District. As a point of clarity the hierarchy of UK nature conservation designations and two maps illustrating where these are, are also included. Also, new to the policy is the reference to the mitigation strategy for recreational effects on North Meadow and Clattinger Farm and Cotswold Beechwoods Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). To enable development to come forward that might otherwise cause likely

significant recreational effects on the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC or the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC, the Council has worked with Natural England and neighbouring Local Authorities to prepare recreation mitigation strategies for the SACs.

EN10 - Historic Environment Designated Heritage Assets

The policy remains 'sound' and no update is proposed.

EN11 - Historic Environment Designated Heritage Assets (Conservation Areas)

Very minor alterations requested by the Council's Development management and Heritage and Design teams to do with the significance of heritage assets.

EN12 - Historic Environment: Non-designated Heritage Assets

Textual amendments to bring the policy and supporting text up to date with legislative and related changes. Additional requirement for assessment of land prior to submission of applications included at the request of DM/specialist officers.

EN13 - Historic Environment: The Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings

Textual amendments to bring the policy and supporting text up to date with legislative and related changes.

EN15 - Pollution and Contaminated Land

The policy remains unchanged. Additional text in the reasoned justification to highlight overlapping issues, such as water quality, and links to other policies elsewhere in the Local Plan i.e. to provision of green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and water management infrastructure.

EN16 - Dark Skies

A new policy to recognise the importance of Dark Skies in the Cotswold District. The Cotswolds National Landscape has relatively dark skies at night, compared to other parts of the country. The District is ranked 13th in terms of the darkest skies in England. The policy aims to protect the dark skies of the Cotswold District, to reduce light pollution by requiring development to use the latest lighting technology and the retrofitting of old lighting. This policy reflects the policy stance of the National Cotswold Landscape.

EN17 - Management of Accessible Open Green Spaces

A new policy to address concerns about the long-term management of these spaces, by providing clarity regarding what is required by applicants. How and what will be managed for how long, the source of funding and by who and the approach taken to manage the space.

EN18 - Sherborne Park Estate Masterplan

A new policy is provided for the Sherborne Park Estate near Northleach. The policy enables the production of a masterplan for the estate, which will provide the framework for determining planning application(s) on the estate in future. The policy identifies the various things the masterplan will include. It also specifies that small-scale development will be supported where it is consistent with the masterplan for nature-based tourism; rural land use-based employment; education; access improvements; habitat creation; and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Chapter 11: Infrastructure

INFI - Strategic Infrastructure Delivery (formerly policies SAI, SA2 and SA3)

It is proposed to merge the three strategic infrastructure policies into one and remove completed infrastructure projects from the Local Plan. An update of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be undertaken to assess the strategic infrastructure requirements of any additional planned growth (e.g.

health care, education, water and wastewater, transport, flood risk, libraries, etc.). Additional required infrastructure items will be specified in the next iteration of the Local Plan.

The proposals at Moreton-in-Marsh come with some high priority infrastructure considerations (e.g. education, water infrastructure and highways). Discussions are ongoing with the lead education authority (Gloucestershire County Council) and the water infrastructure provider (Thames Water). We are aware of the need for a new primary school and the desire for a new secondary school in Moreton.

Highway congestion in Moreton is believed to be an issue, especially in and around the town centre. Transport modelling is being undertaken to confirm the situation. First and foremost, options are being explored to reduce traffic and deliver modal shift from private vehicle trips to more sustainable forms of transport. A new road may be required to direct some through traffic away from the town centre. This would need to be planned in combination with the future movement strategy for Moreton town centre. The route of the road has not been confirmed but it would likely be via the east of the town where the land and landscape are less constrained. The type of road and the road users also require further consideration. We are working the cost and viability of this proposal.

A plan for the delivery of required delivery will be included in the new Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the next iteration of the Local Plan.

INF2 - Infrastructure Delivery (formerly Policy INF1)

Textual amendment to delete clause 3 which requires applicants to submit viability assessments where infrastructure requirements are a threat to scheme viability. In effect an “exceptions” trapdoor. Deleted because, following advice in Planning Practice Guidance, the Local Plan is subject to a viability assessment that includes the infrastructure requirements identified during plan preparation and included in relevant policies. It follows that proposals that are fully in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan are deemed to be compliant and, by extension, viable. If proposals are not viable, they are not compliant with the Local Plan. It is a matter for the applicant to address that – and that may include submitting a viability assessment in certain circumstances - rather than seeking an exception to a policy requirement as a matter of course.

INF3 - Social and Community Infrastructure (formerly Policy INF2)

Textual amendments for clarification and to tighten up the policy requirements.

INF4 - Highway Safety

Various updates to optimise highway safety in new developments. For example, requiring: design that constrains vehicle speeds; avoids the severance of communities; installs footpaths along ‘desire lines’; and requiring development not be designed in accordance with the Manual for Streets guides, LTNI/20 and guidance issued by Active Travel England.

INF5 - Parking Provision

Various updates, which will include: a requirement for electric vehicle charging points; revised parking standards; a requirement for developments to also include parking for bicycles, eBikes, micro-mobility modes, shared vehicles and Blue Badge holders at preferential locations; a new requirement that car parking in developments does not dominate the street scene or public realm and should be located in non-preferential locations; and a requirement for parking for delivery vehicles.

INF6 - Vale of Evesham Heavy Goods Vehicle Control Zone (deleted policy)

This policy is shared by Cotswold District, Stratford-on-Avon and Wychavon Councils. Wychavon has confirmed that the policy will be deleted from its Local Plan (the South Worcestershire Local Plan, currently under review) because the county council deems it unnecessary. The policy is therefore metaphorically a three-legged stool with one leg missing and is effectively useless. Consequently, it is proposed to delete it from the Local Plan. There is no reference to the policy in the Gloucestershire

Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Gloucestershire County Council has not objected to the policy being deleted.

INF6 - Telecommunications Infrastructure (formerly INF9)

The policy and supporting text have been updated to avoid reference to specific technologies (given the pace of change); including consequential changes to remove out of date references, for clarity, and in response to development management suggestion for the use of a condition and seek the optimum infrastructure available. This will enable the development to be 'future proofed' in respect of digital connectivity as far as possible and provide future occupiers for example, the opportunity to work at home, reduce car use/emissions and enhance the provision of local services. The changes help clarify and support the policy as beneficial to the environment, economic growth and social wellbeing, in line with the NPPF.

Chapter 12: Other Spatial Issues

SP1 - Gloucester and Cheltenham Green Belt

The policy remains 'sound' and no update is proposed.

SP2 - Cotswold Airport

The policy remains 'sound' and no update is proposed.

SP3 - The Thames and Severn Canal

This policy has adjusted to include a reference to the need for infrastructure contributions to support the operation of the canal. The supporting text now reflects that the River Thames is a key Green Infrastructure asset in the District and as such offers opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity. The supporting text reiterates the Council's support for the reopening of the Thames and Severn canal and its wider potential for wellbeing including active travel.

SP4 - The River Thames

The supporting text now reflects that the River Thames is a key Green Infrastructure asset in the District and as such offer opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity. A reference to Gloucestershire Nature Recovery Network and Cotswold Green Infrastructure are signposted for when environmental improvements are made.

SP5 - Cotswold Water Park Post-Mineral Extraction After Use

The policy remains unchanged. Additional text in the reasoned justification both notes the recent expansion of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to reflect the ecological importance of the Cotswold Water Park; and to consider future guidance and agreements that relate to this cross-boundary area.

SP6 - Former Cheltenham to Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Line

The policy remains 'sound' and no update is proposed.

Appendices

Appendix E - Established Employment Sites

Appendix E has been updated to show know updates to Established Employment Sites. Work is ongoing to reappraise the Established Employment Sites, which will inform the next iteration of the emerging Local Plan. Particular consideration is being given to whether sites are important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses, or where there may be an unacceptable impact on intended occupiers resulting from the introduction of residential uses either now or in the future, which has an impact on permitted development rights.

Appendix K - Glossary

The Glossary is updated to include revised or new definitions that are important for the Local Plan. For example, a new Affordable Housing definition is provided, which reflects national policy.

Appendix M - Vacant Building Credit Calculation Methodology

The Council has already adopted a methodology setting out how Vacant Building Credit is calculated in the District. It is being incorporated within the Local Plan.

Appendix N - Schedule of Strategic and Non-Strategic Policies

National policy now requires Local Plans to identify strategic and non-strategic sites. This schedule does this job.

Appendix O - Map of Biodiversity & Geodiversity Designated Sites

A map of the main Biodiversity & Geodiversity Designated Sites has been provided, which supports Policy EN9.

Appendix P - Schedule of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Designated Sites

Because some of the Biodiversity & Geodiversity Designated Sites are so small and are not easily identifiable on a District-scale map, a schedule of the sites has also been provided. This includes coordinates of the sites. This currently only contains Sites of Special Scientific Interest but the schedule will be expanded to include other types of Biodiversity & Geodiversity Designated Sites to further support Policy EN9.

Appendix Q - Light Pollution and Dark Skies

A map showing the areas of the District with light pollution and dark skies has been provided to support of Policy EN16.

Policies Maps

A schedule of changes to the policies maps has been provided. This will be updated to reflect any additional site allocations or further evidence prior to the next iteration of the emerging Local Plan. This schedule of changes includes:

- Changes to Principal Settlement Development Boundaries (Policies DS1 and DS2) to exclude undeveloped land or include developed land / proposed site allocations.
- Changes to Policies S1-S19, H7 and EC4 to remove deleted site allocations and include new or extended site allocations.
- Changes to the boundaries of Established Employment Sites (Policy EC2). For example, to include the extension of a site or where the site has been lost to residential development.
- Update to the Chipping Campden Key Centre boundary (Policy EC7) to incorporate some additional Main Town Centre Uses.
- Extension to Kemble Community Gardens at Station Road, Kemble (Policy EN3).
- Revision of the Special Landscape Area at Moreton-in-Marsh (Policy EN6) to exclude land that is now developed.
- A new map showing the location of designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites are located.
- A new map identifying the Cotswold District Dark Sky areas (Policy EN16).

Local Plan sections to be included / updated in next Local Plan consultation

Please note, the following sections of the adopted Local Plan will be updated or may remain unchanged in the next iteration of the emerging Local Plan:

- Introduction
- Portrait
- Issues
- Appendix A - Local Green Space at Church Westcote
- Appendix B - Vision and Objectives
- Appendix C - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation
- Appendix D - Cotswold Design Code
- Appendix F - Parking Standards and Guidance
- Appendix G - Natural and Historic Environment Objectives
- Appendix H - Strategic Principles for Green Infrastructure in Gloucestershire
- Appendix I - Index of Policies v Local Plan Objectives
- Appendix J - Monitoring Indicators
- Appendix L - Replacement of 'Saved' Policies

**YOUR
COTSWOLD
YOUR PLAN**

**CREATING A FUTURE
THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE**



Cotswold District Local Plan Update Consultation

**Vision, Objectives and Development
Strategy Options Topic Paper**

**Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)
Regulations 2012**

Regulation 18 consultation/participation

1 February 2024 to 14 March 2024

Contents

1. Executive summary	1
2. Summary of adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031).....	3
Development strategy.....	3
Development requirements.....	2
Land supply	2
3. Implications of extending the Local Plan period to 2041	3
Extended Local Plan Period	3
Vision and Objectives.....	3
Development needs.....	4
Development requirements.....	5
Land supply	5
4. Vision and Objectives	6
Proposed updates to the adopted Local Plan Vision	7
Proposed updates to the adopted Local Plan Objectives.....	8
5. Development Strategy Options	9
Scenario 1: Additional non-strategic site allocations	10
Scenario 2: Main Service Centre focus	10
Scenario 3: Dispersed growth.....	11
Scenario 4: Village clusters.....	12
Scenario 5: New settlement(s).....	12
Scenario 6: New strategic site(s).....	13
Scenario 7: Focus growth around transport nodes	14
Scenario 8: Request neighbouring authority to deliver some of the housing need	15
6. Preferred Development Strategy and Broad Locations for Growth.....	15

1. Executive summary

1.1 This report considers the amount of additional development that may be needed if the Local Plan period was extended to 2041, enabling the Local Plan to look ahead over a 15 year period from the base date of 1 April 2026. It discusses updating the Vision and Objectives of the adopted Local Plan to reflect this, as well as to make the Local Plan green to the core. Finally, the report considers potential development strategy options up to 2041 and proposes a preferred development strategy option.

1.2 Based on current estimations, the following provides a useful indication of the amount of additional development that may be needed:

- The housing need calculated by the Government's 'standard methodology' for the extended plan period is currently around 7,400 dwellings (although there may still be an exceptional circumstance to use an alternative housing need methodology). This would reduce to around 6,330 dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted from the number that needs to be planned for.
- The local housing need is the starting point for determining the housing requirement. The housing requirement may be higher or lower than the local housing need. For example, more homes may be required to increase affordable housing delivery or fewer homes may be required to protect assets or areas of particular importance (e.g. the Cotswolds National Landscape). The requirement would be determined further down the line and the local housing need is used as the basis of this analysis for indicative purposes.
- Around 5,150 dwellings' worth of housing land supply for the extended plan period has already been identified.
- Additional housing land supply would be needed for around 2,250 further dwellings to fully deliver the local housing need or around 1,180 dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted from the number to be planned for.
- The adopted Local Plan includes 14% more housing land supply than the housing requirement to provide flexibility in case any sites were not delivered as expected. If the same flexibility is provided on the local housing need for the Local Plan period up to 2041, around 3,290 additional dwellings would be needed or 2,070 additional dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted.
- The number of homes that would need to be planned for may increase or decrease before the Local Plan Update is submitted for independent examination in public. However, these figures provide a reliable and useful indicator of the scale of development that would be need if the plan period was extended to 2041.
- The needs / requirements and land supply for other types of development would be further assessed and these would be included within the updated development strategy.

1.3 Updates to the Local Plan Vision and Objectives are suggested. In summary, the adopted Vision has been updated to also include:

- Responding to the climate crisis;
- Providing more socially rented homes;
- Making the Local Plan Green to the Core;
- Supporting health and well-being; and

- Enabling a vibrant economy.
- I.4 The adopted Objectives have been updated to also include:
- Zero carbon developments;
 - Transitioning to a low carbon economy whilst maintaining a vibrant economy;
 - Providing more opportunities to access affordable housing, particularly social rented housing;
 - Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain;
 - Ensuring that development supports positive health outcomes; and
 - Reducing transport carbon emissions.
- I.5 Eight potential development strategy options have been identified to accommodate the additional growth:
- Scenario 1: Additional non-strategic site allocations
 - Scenario 2: Main service centre focus
 - Scenario 3: Dispersed growth
 - Scenario 4: Village clusters
 - Scenario 5: New settlement(s)
 - Scenario 6: New strategic site(s)
 - Scenario 7: Focus growth around transport nodes
 - Scenario 8: Request neighbouring authority to deliver some of the housing need
- I.6 A blend of Scenarios 1, 2, 6 and 7 are believed to be the most appropriate way to accommodate the bulk of additional development needs up to 2041.
- I.7 This would entail the continuation of the adopted development strategy of identifying Principal Settlements as locations where the principle of development would be supported. However, the updated development strategy would have a greater focus on reducing carbon emissions and focussing growth in locations with good transport connectivity and access to services, facilities and employment. Accordingly, having been reviewed as part of this process, some Non-Principal Settlements may become a Principal Settlement and some Principal Settlements may have their Principal Settlement rescinded.
- I.8 Additional non-strategic site allocations for different types of development would be made at the Principal Settlements whilst ensuring that the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) remains limited and that development is directed away from areas with higher flood risk. In addition, given that Moreton-in-Marsh is a transport hub, which has a railway station; good provision of services, facilities and employment; and has various sites outside the Cotswold National Landscape, the town would become a focus for strategic-scale growth of over 1,500 additional dwellings and additional land for employment development.
- I.9 The adopted development strategy of enabling small-scale residential development in Non-Principal Settlements (Policy DS3) would continue, although it would also have an increased emphasis on settlements that have better access to services, facilities and employment. Consideration may be given to whether some development should be focussed within Village

Clusters, which could potentially involve some additional land being allocated for development (Scenario 4). Together, development in Non-Principal Settlements, Village Clusters and windfall sites⁽¹⁾ would provide additional flexibility within the housing land supply should any other allocated land not come forward for development as planned.

- 1.10 Open market housing would continue to be prohibited outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (i.e. in open countryside) unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with development in such locations.

2. Summary of adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031)

- 2.1 Before discussing the development strategy for the extended plan period, a high level summary is provided of the adopted Local Plan development strategy. The adopted strategy has successfully delivered the identified development needs and requirements for the Local Plan period so far.

Development strategy

- 2.2 The adopted Local Plan period is from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2023.
- 2.3 The adopted Local Plan development strategy identifies 17 Principal Settlements, which are the focus of strategic housing growth. These are:
- Cirencester
 - Andoversford
 - Blockley
 - Bourton-on-the-Water
 - Chipping Campden
 - Down Ampney
 - Fairford
 - Kemble
 - Lechlade
 - Mickleton
 - Moreton-in-Marsh
 - Northleach
 - South Cerney
 - Stow-on-the-Wold
 - Tetbury
 - Upper Rissington
 - Willersey
- 2.4 The principle of development is supported inside the development boundary of the Principal Settlements (Policy DS2). Small-scale residential development is also supported in Non-Principal Settlements, which are not specifically identified in the Local Plan (Policy DS3). Open market housing is prohibited outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (i.e. in open countryside) unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations.
- 2.5 The plan also provides for different types of housing needs, including a suitable mix of housing (Policy H1); Affordable Housing (Policies H2-H4); housing for older people (Policy H4); and Gypsy and Traveller sites (Policy H7).
- 2.6 The Plan also has an economic development strategy, which amongst other things includes: safeguarding established employment sites (Policy EC2); supporting three Special Policy Areas (Policy EC4); enabling diversification of businesses in sustainable rural locations (Policy EC5);

¹ Windfall sites are sites not specifically identified in the development plan. The windfall allowance for the new Local Plan period is based on the assumption that the current windfall allowance of 138 dwellings per annum will be rolled forward.

and protecting town centres and the delivery of new main town centre uses (Policies S3 and EC7-9).

Development requirements

- 2.7 Policy DS1 of the adopted Local Plan ⁽²⁾ identifies a minimum housing requirement of 8,400 dwellings (Use Class C3) for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2031 (the current Local Plan period). There is a separate requirement of 580 nursing and residential care bedspaces (Use Class C2) over the 14-year period 2017-2031. Based on the Housing Delivery Test equivalence calculation ⁽³⁾, this represents an additional, but separate, requirement of 322 further dwellings. The combined requirement is 8,722 dwellings for the plan period.
- 2.8 The Local Plan policies discussed in the previous section included need figures for different types of housing, which are delivered as part of the total housing requirement. For example, there is a need for an average of 157 dwellings of Affordable Housing a year between 2015 and 2031, as well as 665 sheltered and extracare housing units between 2017 and 2031.
- 2.9 Policy DS1 also includes a requirement for 24ha of Use Class B employment land over the Plan period. The requirement takes consideration of a forecast 16.6ha increase of Use Class B1 (now Use Class E(g)) land (including 64,626sqm of office floorspace), a 2.1ha reduction of Use Class B2 land, and a 9.9ha increase of Use Class B8 land.

Land supply

- 2.10 When the Local Plan was examined, its housing land supply comprised dwellings completed since the beginning of the plan period; sites with extant planning permission; one strategic site allocation (part of which was expected to be completed after 2031); various non-strategic site allocations within or adjacent to the development boundaries of the Principal Settlements; and a windfall allowance.
- 2.11 At the point of adoption, the Local Plan was expected to deliver 9,614 dwellings (Use Class C3) over the plan period. This provided a 14% degree of flexibility over and above the 8,400 dwelling (Use Class C3) minimum requirement, which was needed in case any sites were not delivered as expected.
- 2.12 The Local Plan did not allocate sites to deliver its nursing and residential care accommodation requirement (Use Class C2). Policy H4 instead provided a supportive mechanism to enable this type of housing to be granted planning permission in suitable locations in order to deliver the requirement.
- 2.13 The housing land supply was expected to deliver an average of 100 dwellings of Affordable Housing a year, which was below the need of 157 Affordable Homes a year. Two locations were identified for accommodating Gypsy and Traveller needs and a permissive policy was provided to accommodate any further Gypsy and Traveller pitch needs.
- 2.14 The Local Plan included several employment allocations and planning permissions to deliver the requirement. Cirencester was the only location where main town centre use allocations were made.

² [Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 \(adopted 3 August 2023\)](#)

³ Para. 11 of the [Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book](#) (MHCLG, July 2018) explains, “The ratio applied to other communal accommodation will be based on the national average number of adults in all households, with a ratio of 1.8”. Therefore, 580 bedspaces / 1.8 = 322 dwellings

3. Implications of extending the Local Plan period to 2041

- 3.1 Consideration is now given to the implications of extending the Local Plan period to 31 March 2041, enabling the Local Plan to look ahead over a 15 year period from the base date of 1 April 2026.
- 3.2 It is important to note that consideration of this matter does not affect the outcome of the Review of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 Housing Requirement ⁽⁴⁾, which the Council undertook in August 2023. In particular, consideration of extending the plan period is a proactive measure at a time when the Council's adopted Local Plan policies remain up-to-date and sound. The adopted Local Plan policies continue to be the starting point for determining planning applications and that the District continues to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply.

Extended Local Plan Period

- 3.3 The extended plan period would align the Cotswold District Local Plan with the plan periods of other Gloucestershire Local Planning Authorities (with the exception of Stroud District Council who are planning up to 2040). This has strategic planning benefits, such as the joint commissioning of evidence studies.

Vision and Objectives

- 3.4 The updated Local Plan development strategy would need to reflect the updated Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan. The specific changes to the Vision and Objectives are provided as part of the Local Plan consultation. A summary is provided below.
- 3.5 The adopted Vision has been updated to also include:
- Responding to the climate crisis;
 - Providing more socially rented homes;
 - Making the Local Plan Green to the Core;
 - Supporting health and well-being; and
 - Enabling a vibrant economy.
- 3.6 The adopted Objectives have been updated to also include:
- Zero carbon developments;
 - Transitioning to a low carbon economy whilst maintaining a vibrant economy;
 - Providing more opportunities to access affordable housing, particularly social rented housing;
 - Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain;
 - Ensuring that development supports positive health outcomes; and
 - Reducing transport carbon emissions.

⁴ [Review of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011- 2031 Housing Requirement \(CDC, August 2023\)](#)

Development needs

- 3.7 As of October 2023, the standard methodology ⁽⁵⁾ calculates the housing need of Cotswold District to be 4,930 dwellings over the next 10-year period (an average of 493 homes a year). Applying the standard methodology housing need over the 15 period from April 2026 ⁽⁶⁾ identifies a total need of 7,396 dwellings ⁽⁷⁾.
- 3.8 This figure may change ahead of the Local Plan being submitted for independent examination in public. For example, the housing need is partly based on housing affordability data, which is updated annually. The standard methodology is also expected to be updated following an update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and wider planning reforms resulting from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. There may be a change in government with potential further updates to national policy. There may also be an exceptional circumstance(s) for using an alternative methodology to calculate the housing need, which would be determined later. All these factors may increase or decrease the housing need.
- 3.9 This analysis is also based on the local housing need alone (i.e. an unconstrained assessment of the number of homes needed in an area). It does not take consideration of the various other factors, which must be assessed to provide a housing requirement (explained further in the next section). This may result in a housing requirement that is higher or lower than the housing need.
- 3.10 The Government has also indicated in a recent consultation ⁽⁸⁾ that it intends to confirm that past over-delivery of housing from the previous Local Plan can be deducted from what needs to be provided in the new plan. This is a particular issue in Cotswold District.
- 3.11 In the first 15 years of the adopted Local Plan period between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2026, there was a requirement for 6,507 dwellings. This is based on:
- A requirement for 6,300 (Use Class C3) dwellings (i.e. 420 dwellings x 15 years); and
 - A requirement for 207 further dwellings resulting from the adopted communal accommodation (Use Class C2) requirement between 2017 and 2026 ⁽⁹⁾.
- 3.12 In the first 15 years of the adopted Local Plan period between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2026, it is estimated that 7,573 dwellings will have been delivered / released to the market. This is based on:
- 7,340 (Use Class C3) dwellings being delivered ⁽¹⁰⁾; and
 - 233 dwellings released to the market resulting from the net increase in bedrooms from completed communal accommodation developments (Use Class C2).
- 3.13 This provides a figure of 1,066 dwellings of over-delivery on the housing requirement(s) at 1 April 2026.

⁵ [PPG: Housing and economic needs assessment \(last updated 16 December 2020\)](#)

⁶ [PPG: Housing and economic needs assessment \(last updated 16 December 2020\)](#) Para: 012 Ref. ID: 2a-012-20190220

⁷ Calculated using non-rounded figures

⁸ [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy \(DLUHC, updated 21 September 2023\)](#) – Chapter 4, paragraph 9

⁹ Based on the annualised adopted C2 requirement between 2017 and 2026 (i.e. 23 dwellings x 9 years)

Policy H4 requires 580 nursing and residential bed spaces between 2017 and 2031. This is an annualised requirement for 41.4 bedspaces or 373 bed spaces for the 9 year period between 2017 and 2026. This equates to 207 dwellings, based on the Housing Delivery Test equivalence calculation of 1.8 dwellings per bedspace.

¹⁰ Based on [Appendix 1](#) of the [Housing Land Supply Report \(CDC, August 2023\)](#)

- 3.14 Based on the current standard methodology housing need calculation, the extended Local Plan period would have an identified need of around 7,400 dwellings between from 1 April 2026 and 31 March 2031. If past over-delivery is deducted, this figure would reduce to around 6,330 dwellings.
- 3.15 The need for additional employment, retail and other types of development would be determined and incorporated into the updated development strategy up to 2041. It is anticipated the need / requirement for other types of development will align with housing growth.

Development requirements

- 3.16 Local Planning Authorities must use their local housing need as the starting point for determining development requirements. The determination of requirement is based on an assessment of various relevant planning matters. For example, whether more development should be provided to deliver additional affordable housing, an economic growth strategy, strategic infrastructure improvements or so that an authority can take on unmet need from a neighbouring authority. Such circumstances could necessitate a requirement that is higher than the need. The converse also applies. For example, protected areas or assets of particular importance may provide a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area. There may also be insufficient deliverable / developable land to meet the identified need of the plan area, in which case the authority would, if possible, seek to deliver the unmet development need in a neighbouring authority. In simple terms, the development requirement(s) is the minimum target that the district is required to deliver over a period of time.
- 3.17 This analysis does not attempt to predict what the updated development requirement(s) will be. It instead uses the identified need figure(s), where available, as a reliable and useful indicator of the amount of development that may be required if the Local Plan period were to extended to 2041.

Land supply

- 3.18 The Council's latest housing trajectory update ⁽¹¹⁾ sets out the housing land supply that has already been identified for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2041 (as of 1 April 2023). This comprises:
- 2,217 dwellings from the Chesterton strategic site in Cirencester ⁽¹²⁾;
 - 528 dwellings on other sites that already have planning permission;
 - 203 dwellings are expected on adopted non-strategic site allocations; and
 - 2,070 dwellings are expected as windfalls ⁽¹³⁾.
- 3.19 Since 1 April 2023, two further sites have been added to the housing land supply, which would likely provide 130 additional dwellings after 2026 ⁽¹⁴⁾.

¹¹ Provided at [Appendix I](#) of the [Housing Land Supply Report \(CDC, August 2023\)](#)

¹² Based on data supplied by Bathurst Development Limited in April 2023, contained at [Appendix 3](#) of the [Housing Land Supply Report \(CDC, August 2023\)](#)

¹³ This figure is calculated by rolling forward the annual windfall allowance of 138 dwellings per annum over the 15 year period, as calculated by the [Housing Land Supply Report \(CDC, August 2023\)](#)

¹⁴ The [Fairford Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) made a site allocation in June 2023, which gained planning permission for 87 dwellings in October 2023 (ref: 22/03770/OUT). The access issue of the 43 dwelling site allocation in Tetbury (ref: T31B) has been resolved, enabling this site to also be included in the housing land supply. (

- 3.20 In total, around 5,150 dwellings' worth of housing land supply has already been identified for the extended Local Plan period. This leaves a gap of around 2,250 further dwellings to meet the housing need for the plan period, or around 1,180 dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted from the number needed to be planned for.
- 3.21 As with the adopted Local Plan housing land supply, it would be necessary to identify additional homes to provide flexibility within the housing land supply to accommodate fluctuations in the wider economic and housing market over the plan period. If 14% flexibility was again provided, the housing land supply would need to be around 8,440 dwellings or 7,220 dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted.
- 3.22 This would increase the number of additional homes that would need to be identified for the extended plan period to around 3,290 dwellings or 2,070 dwellings if past over-delivery is deducted.
- 3.23 These figures are intended to provide an indication of the potential number of additional homes that may need to be identified in the Local Plan up to 2041. As previously discussed, the housing need may change, there may be an exceptional circumstance for using an alternative housing need calculation or the housing requirement may be higher or lower than the housing need. However, the above information provides useful context of the scale of the housing land supply that may need to be identified for the purpose of considering strategic housing options.
- 3.24 Annual monitoring of planning permissions is being undertaken for other types of development to establish the current development land supply for employment and retail uses.

4. Vision and Objectives

- 4.1 This section shows our proposed updates to the adopted Local Plan Vision and Objectives, which we would welcome your views on.
- 4.2 Having a Vision and a clear set of Objectives is helpful for a number of reasons:
- They help to guide the overall content of the Local Plan, providing context for emerging policies and proposals;
 - They form part of the Local Plan itself and therefore have an influence on how development proposals are put together and assessed; and
 - They allow us to measure progress once the plan is adopted, helping us understand if the plan is delivering as expected.
- 4.3 We have tried to make it clear for you to see where we propose deleting existing parts of the Vision or Objectives and adding new parts in. To achieve this, we have used the following formatting:
- Proposed deletions from the adopted Local Plan are shown in ~~red, strikethrough font with a yellow background~~.
 - Proposed additions to the Local Plan are shown in red, underlined font with a yellow background.

Proposed updates to the adopted Local Plan Vision

The Local Plan's Vision supports the following priorities, which are set out in the District Council's Corporate Strategy:

- Deliver the highest standards of service
- Respond to the Climate Crisis
- Provide Socially Rented Homes
- Make our Local Plan Green to the Core
- Support Health and Well-being
- Enable a vibrant Economy
- Provide high quality services at the lowest possible cost to Council Taxpayers
- Protect and enhance the local environment whilst supporting economic growth
- Champion issues which are important to local people

Vision

By delivering clear objectives, by ~~2031~~ 2041, the Local Plan will have:

- contributed to responding to the Climate Crisis;
 - contributed to enabling a strong, competitive and innovative local economy;
 - supported the delivery of a range of housing that helps to meet the requirements of all sections of the community;
 - further capitalised on the District's key strengths, notably its high quality historic and natural environment; and
 - helped to create more healthy, sustainable, mixed communities.

Cirencester and will continue to be the main focus for additional housing and employment growth, while its function as the dominant business location, service and cultural centre for much of the District will have been enhanced.

Beyond Cirencester, much of the planned, positive change will have occurred in the most sustainable towns and larger villages so that the provision of the majority of services and facilities is met from within those settlements, serving the surrounding rural areas.

The development needs of communities, businesses, and visitors will have been enabled taking particular account of:

- climate change, nature recovery and flood risk;
- the area's internationally recognised natural, built and historic environment; and
- the provision of adequate supporting infrastructure.

Proposed updates to the adopted Local Plan Objectives

The following Strategic Objectives will help to deliver the Vision and guide development throughout the District over the period to **2031** **2041**.

1. Natural, **Built** and Historic Environment

Through the use of appropriate planning policies in the development management process:

- a. Conserve and enhance the high quality, local distinctiveness and diversity of the natural and historic environment.
- b. Deliver environmental and biodiversity net gain.**
- c. Ensure that new development is of high quality and sustainable design, which reflects local character and distinctiveness, is appropriately sited, and provides attractive and inclusive environments.
- d. Protect the open countryside against sporadic development, while also avoiding coalescence of settlements, particularly around Cirencester.
- e. Support the creation of new green infrastructure to enhance environmental quality and provide health benefits.

2. Population, **and Housing and Health**

Through establishing the District's OAN for the Plan period and allocation of land:

- a. Provide an adequate supply of quality housing, of appropriate types and tenures **(particularly social rented housing)**, to at least meet objectively assessed needs.
- b. Identify suitable land in appropriate locations to provide sufficient pitches for gypsy and traveller accommodation, to meet the needs established through the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment.
- c. Ensure that development supports positive health outcomes and the delivery of local health and wellbeing strategies that seek to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and address inequalities.**

3. Local Economy

Through implementation of the OAN, Economic Strategy and allocation of land:

- a. Supporting the local economy **to transition to a low carbon future** and enabling the creation of more high quality jobs in the District, which meet local employment needs.
- b. Enabling our residents to work more locally.**
- c. Encouraging the vitality and viability of town and village centres as places that support a diversity of activities and uses that includes:**
 - **for**-shopping, leisure, cultural and community activities;
 - **opportunities to access affordable homes;**
 - **opportunities to attain rewarding careers; and**
 - **becoming active transport hubs to aid health outcomes and reduce emissions and pollution.**
- d. including m** **M**aintaining Cirencester's key employment and service role.

- e. Support sustainable tourism in ways that enable the District to act as a tourist destination which attracts higher numbers of longer-stay visitors.

4. Infrastructure and Service Provision

Through implementation of the IDP, maximise the quality of life by maintaining and supporting the delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities needed to support local communities and businesses.

5. Sustainable Travel

Through the implementation of the Local Transport Plan, Gloucestershire Transport Decarbonisation Plan and Cotswold Transport Decarbonisation Strategy:

- a. Reducing transport carbon emissions.
- b. Reducing car use by promoting a hierarchy of users.
- c. Locating most developments in sustainable locations where there is better access to jobs, services and facilities and public transport.
- d. Supporting improvements in public transport and walking / cycling networks.

Reduce car use by:

- a. Locating most developments in sustainable locations where there is better access to jobs, services and facilities and public transport.
- b. Supporting improvements in public transport and walking/ cycling networks.

6. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Change and Flood Risk

Reduce the environmental impact of development and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by:

- a. Requiring new development to be zero carbon and supporting the sympathetic retrofit of historic buildings.
- b. Making the best use of land by maximising the use of previously-developed land.
- c. Supporting the provision of renewable energy schemes.
- d. Maximising water and energy efficiency, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable construction methods, and reducing pollution and waste.
- e. Supporting the principle of waste minimisation and encouraging the reuse of buildings to avoid unnecessary demolition.
- f. Locating development away from areas identified as being at high risk from any form of flooding or from areas where development would increase flood risk to other.

5. Development Strategy Options

- 5.1 This section considers different development strategy options that may be able to accommodate the additional needs / requirements for different types of development, which we would also welcome your views on.

Scenario 1: Additional non-strategic site allocations

- 5.2 Scenario 1 would roll forward the adopted Local Plan development strategy of focussing the majority of additional growth at Principal Settlements, including allocating some sites outside existing development boundaries. The supporting evidence for identifying Principal Settlements would be updated. This may result in some settlements no longer being a Principal Settlement and / or other settlements becoming a Principal Settlement.
- 5.3 Many of our other larger settlements offer a good range of services and employment opportunities. However, the ability of smaller settlements to absorb additional growth in a sustainable manner is more limited because people tend to need their cars more to access services and employment opportunities and other travel options are typically less available.
- 5.4 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below (please note: this is not intended to be exhaustive).
- Well supported through consultation when the last Local Plan was prepared;
 - Accepted as a 'sound' approach by the previous Planning Inspector and the Government;
 - Likely to encourage less car use and thus reduce transport related carbon emissions by offering more alternatives (public transport, walking and cycling) and good access to services and facilities;
 - Allows for a proportion of future growth to take place in smaller settlements thus helping support their vitality and viability and enabling development sites to be locally identified (e.g. through Neighbourhood Plans), although getting the threshold right for an appropriate amount of development in each case is important;
 - Would help to provide a balanced mix of sites and opportunities;
 - Would continue to ensure the scale and extent of development within the Cotswolds National Landscape remains limited; and
 - Many larger settlements (e.g. Cirencester, Tetbury and Moreton-in-Marsh) have already absorbed a large amount of growth in recent years and/or have future growth already committed.
- 5.5 It is currently uncertain whether this option can deliver the indicative target number of additional homes.

Scenario 2: Main Service Centre focus

- 5.6 Scenario 2 would involve focusing the vast majority of future development (beyond existing commitments) more specifically at the main service centres. These have not yet been determined.
- 5.7 The main services centres offer a broad range of services and facilities, good public transport accessibility and provide a mix of job opportunities. Some of the main services centres lie outside the Cotswolds National Landscape where the scale and extent of development is expected to be limited.
- 5.8 Under this scenario, proportionately less development (beyond existing commitments) would then take place in Principal Settlements that are not the Main Service Centres. The Principal Settlements that are not the Main Service Centres would retain a development boundary,

inside which the principle of development would continue to be supported. However, they would not receive any allocations for additional housing growth.

- 5.9 Development elsewhere would continue to be restricted to the extent it currently is in the adopted Local Plan.
- 5.10 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- The Main Service Centres offer the broadest range of services and facilities in the District and are thus potentially well-placed to accommodate further growth;
 - Several Main Service Centres have land available outside the Cotswold National Landscape;
 - Allows for a comprehensive strategy in some settlements (e.g. a new Transport Strategy for Moreton-in-Marsh);
 - Several Main Service Centres have already absorbed a significant amount of growth in recent years; and
 - Proportionately less development taking place in the smaller settlements would limit the opportunity to provide new homes in those locations, including affordable housing.

Scenario 3: Dispersed growth

- 5.11 Scenario 3 would involve a more ‘dispersed’ approach to the future pattern of development so that instead of growth being steered mainly towards the District’s Principal Settlements or Main Service Centres, it would be more evenly distributed across the District.
- 5.12 Thus, whilst some additional growth would still take place in the Principal Settlements, there would be a much stronger emphasis on small to medium-scale development taking place in villages across the District.
- 5.13 Under this scenario, we would anticipate that the more restrictive approach that currently applies to very small villages, hamlets and the open countryside would continue to apply.
- 5.14 Adopting a more ‘dispersed’ approach to growth such as this would mean that more small and medium-size sites would need to be identified either through the Local Plan or through Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.15 National policy emphasises the contribution that such small and medium sites can make to meeting overall housing requirements.
- 5.16 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- Small and medium-size sites are generally able to deliver new homes more swiftly than larger strategic sites;
 - Could offer a greater degree of local influence and control (e.g. new sites brought forward through Neighbourhood Plans);
 - A large number of the settlements fall within the Cotswolds National Landscape where the scale and extent of development is expected to be limited;

- A significant number of the villages are relatively poorly served by public transport, services, facilities and employment opportunities, leading to potentially higher car use and carbon emissions; and
- Such an approach could ‘cumulatively’ place strain on local infrastructure capacity.

Scenario 4: Village clusters

- 5.17 Like Scenario 3, Scenario 4 is based on a dispersed approach to the future pattern of growth but, instead of villages being treated separately, they would be considered collectively in small groups or ‘clusters’ based on the services, facilities, employment provision and transport accessibility they are able to cumulatively offer. Each village ‘cluster’ would then be the focus for an appropriate and proportionate amount of growth, potentially with site allocations made in the Local Plan.
- 5.18 The logic of this approach is rooted in the NPPF, which emphasises that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services and that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 5.19 This could apply to clusters of existing larger villages but it could also potentially apply to some smaller villages where the current Local Plan adopts a more restrictive approach to growth, particularly where these are close to other larger villages that offer a broader range of services and facilities.
- 5.20 To be clear, this does not mean identifying land between villages for development. It is about identifying land within or adjacent to existing settlements that form part of a village cluster.
- 5.21 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- It would consider the ‘collective’ opportunities and advantages presented by settlements rather than treating each in isolation;
 - Likely to bring forward some development opportunities in locations where historically this has not been possible, thus potentially helping them to thrive;
 - Potential to increase community cohesion and inclusivity;
 - However, could potentially lead to a perception of loss of identity between different settlements; and
 - Smaller settlements can be poorly served by public transport with limited opportunities for walking and cycling, albeit development may offer an opportunity for improvements.

Scenario 5: New settlement(s)

- 5.22 This option would initiate the development of one or more new settlements in the District. The new settlement(s) would grow to include all the services, facilities, employment provision and accessibility standards found within a Main Service Centre. The size criteria of the new settlement and the potential location are yet to be determined.
- 5.23 Delivering a new settlement has a long lead in time from conception of the idea to the first spade being put in the ground. A new settlement would therefore also be expected to deliver housing towards the mid to end of the new Local Plan period and would also likely continue

delivering into the next Local Plan period. A new settlement may therefore form only part of the housing land supply solution.

- 5.24 At this point we are seeking general ‘in principle’ views on such an approach rather than identifying any potential locations. However, because there is a presumption against major development taking place within the Cotswolds National Landscape other than in exceptional circumstances, the likelihood is that any such new settlement would need to be located outside of this area.
- 5.25 National policy recognises that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).
- 5.26 National policy also makes it clear that any such approach should include careful consideration of a number of factors including infrastructure opportunities (existing or planned) size and location (ability to be self-supporting) the quality of places (e.g. garden city principles) and likely rates of delivery given the lead-in times for large scale sites.
- 5.27 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- The principle of establishing a new settlement is supported by national policy;
 - Provides the opportunity to create a well-designed, ‘green to the core’, sustainable and self-sustaining location for new homes, jobs and supporting services and facilities;
 - Provides the opportunity to create significant new infrastructure investment including education, public transport and green space;
 - In acting as a focus for growth under the new Local Plan, it could reduce development ‘pressures’ on other locations within the District;
 - Development of this scale would have a significant lead-in time to delivery so other sites are likely to be needed to meet shorter-term requirements (e.g. 5 year housing land supply);
 - Larger sites are generally more complex to assemble and deliver;
 - May deliver housing after 2041, so provides longer-term housing land supply; and
 - Development of this scale would likely have a significant environmental, social and economic impact, irrespective of location.

Scenario 6: New strategic site(s)

- 5.28 This option would deliver one or more new strategic sites at a Principal Settlement(s) at a level that meets Main Service Centre expectations. As with a new settlement, strategic sites have a long lead in time from conception of the idea to the first spade being put in the ground. A new strategic site would therefore be expected to deliver housing towards the mid to end of the new Local Plan period and, similar to the Chesterton strategic site, would likely continue delivering into the Local Plan period. This may therefore form only part of the housing land supply solution.
- 5.29 At this point we are seeking general ‘in principle’ views on such an approach rather than identifying any potential locations. However, because there is a presumption against major

development taking place within the Cotswolds National Landscape other than in exceptional circumstances, the likelihood is that any such new settlement would need to be located outside of this area.

- 5.30 National policy recognises that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).
- 5.31 National policy also makes it clear that any such approach should include careful consideration of a number of factors including infrastructure opportunities (existing or planned) size and location (ability to be self-supporting) the quality of places (e.g. garden city principles) and likely rates of delivery given the lead-in times for large scale sites.
- 5.32 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- The principle of delivering strategic scale sites is supported by national policy;
 - Provides the opportunity to create a well-designed, ‘green to the core’, sustainable and self-sustaining location for new homes, jobs and supporting services and facilities;
 - Able to make use of and improve existing services, facilities, employment opportunities and transport connectivity within a Principal Settlement or Main Service Centre;
 - Provides the opportunity to create significant new infrastructure investment including education, public transport and green space;
 - In acting as a focus for growth in the new Local Plan, it could reduce development ‘pressures’ on other locations within the District;
 - Development of this scale would have a significant lead-in time to delivery so other sites are likely to be needed to meet shorter-term requirements (e.g. 5 year housing land supply);
 - Larger sites are generally more complex to assemble and deliver;
 - May deliver housing after 2041, so provides longer-term housing land supply; and
 - Development of this scale would likely have a significant environmental, social and economic impact, irrespective of location.

Scenario 7: Focus growth around transport nodes

- 5.33 Under this final scenario, we would look to focus future growth (beyond existing commitments) along key public transport corridors and around public transport hubs (e.g. rail stations).
- 5.34 In focusing development where the availability of public transport is good, people will be less likely to use their car, helping to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, particularly with increased electrification of our public transport services.
- 5.35 Public transport options in Cotswold District are, however, variable in terms of coverage and frequency.

- 5.36 In terms of bus services, some parts of the have a reasonably good level of service (e.g. the A429 Fosse Way corridor). However, coverage across much of the rest of the District, in particular more rural areas, is sporadic or even non-existent in some locations, particularly off-peak.
- 5.37 In terms of rail services, Cotswold District has two railway stations. Kemble railway station serve the Golden Valley Line (London - Swindon - Cheltenham). Moreton-in-Marsh railway station serves the North Cotswold Line (London - Oxford - Worcester).
- 5.38 Moreton-in-Marsh has various potential development opportunities located outside the Cotswolds National Landscape. Kemble is also located outside the Cotswolds National Landscape and has land available, although development opportunities are more constrained by the sensitive landscape that surrounds the village.
- 5.39 Kingham railway station is located in West Oxfordshire District but serves the east of Cotswold District. This area is located inside the Cotswolds National Landscape and will unlikely be suitable for strategic scale growth.
- 5.40 Taking account of the above, a public transport-focused scenario would see future additional growth focused in locations where there are good current and potential future opportunities to use public transport such as the A429 corridor and Moreton-in-Marsh in particular where there is also a railway station.
- 5.41 Some broad commentary on this potential approach is provided below.
- Would help to encourage ‘modal shift’ away from the use of the private car and towards increased use of public transport;
 - Potentially reduces carbon emissions – particularly with the electrification of bus services;
 - Development along transport corridors would increase public transport use and would make services more viable;
 - Allows for a comprehensive strategy in some settlements (e.g. a new Transport Strategy for Moreton-in-Marsh);
 - Coverage of public transport across the District is variable, unpredictable and outside of the Council’s control; and
 - This approach would mean further growth to some settlements, which may have already absorbed a significant amount of development in recent years.

Scenario 8: Request neighbouring authority to deliver some of the housing need

- 5.42 If it is not possible to deliver the full local housing need within the District, it would be necessary to enquire with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities whether they could accommodate some of the District’s need. It has not yet been determined whether this option is necessary.

6. Preferred Development Strategy and Broad Locations for Growth

- 6.1 A hybrid of several of the development strategy scenarios is proposed.

- 6.2 The preferred development strategy would continue the adopted strategy of identifying Principal Settlements and allocating land for different types of development in these locations (Local Plan Policy DSI and Scenario 1 of this report). This strategy has successfully delivered the development needs of the adopted Local Plan period. The adopted Local Plan established that the Principal Settlements are generally the most sustainable locations for development with the best services, facilities, employment opportunities and transport connectivity. This development strategy was tested at an independent examination in public and was found to be sound.
- 6.3 It is proposed that a review of the supporting evidence that underpins the Principal Settlements would be undertaken, particularly considering the updated Objectives and Vision. This would include a greater emphasis on responding to the climate crisis, transitioning to a low carbon economy and reducing transport carbon emissions. This may result in some settlements no longer being a Principal Settlement and / or other settlements becoming a Principal Settlement. The preferred development strategy would also focus more development at settlements that function as Main Service Centres (Scenario 2).
- 6.4 The preferred development strategy would have a greater focus on additional growth (beyond existing commitments) along key public transport corridors and around public transport hubs (Scenario 7). In so doing, the scale and extent of additional development within the Cotswolds National Landscape would remain limited and development would be directed away from areas with higher flood risk.
- 6.5 Where possible, the adopted development strategy sought to balance growth of settlements proportionately, albeit the Cotswolds National Landscape was a considerable constraint to achieving this. The aim was to grow each Principal Settlement by around the same percentage increase relative to the original size of the settlement in 2011. The same broad aim would be applied to distributing additional development in the updated development strategy.
- 6.6 Cirencester is already in the process of delivering a strategic site, which is expected to be completed around 2038. The town may receive further growth up to 2041.
- 6.7 Moreton-in-Marsh is a transport hub, which includes a railway station. There are various sites located to the south, east and north of the town that are available for development and that are located outside the Cotswolds National Landscape and areas at higher risk of flooding. These sites would likely have access to the level of services, facilities and employment opportunities of a Main Service Centre. It is estimated that a combination of these development plots could deliver over 1,500 additional homes by 2041. Moreton-in-Marsh would therefore be identified as a broad location for strategic scale growth (Scenario 6). This approach would enable further development in the town to be planned comprehensively (e.g. transport, water / wastewater, education, etc.). In addition, unlike single large strategic sites of 500+ dwellings¹⁵, which typically have long development lead-in times, the combination of the smaller development parcels on offer would enable shorter lead-in times.
- 6.8 It is anticipated that the remaining need for additional development up to 2041 (beyond existing commitments and windfalls) could be delivered by additional non-strategic site allocations in accordance with Scenarios 1, 2, 6 and 7.
- 6.9 Unlike the adopted development strategy, consideration may also be given to Village Clusters (Scenario 4) and potentially allocating some sites within or adjacent to settlements that form

¹⁵ As assessed in "[Start to Finish: What factors affect the build-out rates of large scale housing sites?](#)" (Lichfields, Second Edition, February 2020)

part of a village cluster. Additionally, the adopted strategy of enabling small-scale residential development in Non-Principal Settlements would continue (Local Plan Policy DS3), albeit with a greater emphasis on settlements with better access to services, facilities and employment. Unlike the adopted strategy, the Non-Principal Settlements may be identified in the Local Plan. Development within the Village Clusters and Non-Principal Settlements, together with additional windfalls, would provide additional flexibility within the housing land supply.

- 6.10 Open market housing would continue to be prohibited outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements (i.e. in open countryside) unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations.
- 6.11 Neighbouring authorities accommodating some unmet housing need of the District requires further assessment (Scenario 8). However, this option, as well as other options, would remain open if required.
- 6.12 Further details of broad locations for growth are provided in the accompanying document titled, 'Cotswold District Local Plan Update: Preferred Options Consultation Integrated Impact Assessment'.

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COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Statement of Community Involvement

January 2024

Contents

I. Introduction/Summary	3
Equality	3
Accessibility	3
1.1 The Benefits of Consultation	3
1.2 Review of the SCI	5
1.3 What is the Planning System?	5
1.4 What is the role of the Council in planning?	5
1.5 Our Consultation Commitments	6
2. Consulting on Planning Policy Documents	7
2.1 What do we consult on?	7
Development Plan Documents	7
Supplementary Planning Documents	7
Neighbourhood (Development) Plans and Orders	8
Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule	8
2.3 Other Planning Policy Documents:	8
Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan	8
Evidence	9
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	9
The Duty to Cooperate	9
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	10
Brownfield Land Register	10
2.4 Who do we consult?	11
Local Communities	11
Statutory Consultees	11
Developers and Landowners	12
Service Providers	12
Database of Consultees	12
2.5 How do we consult?	12
Other engagement	13
Plan Making - Consultation Protocol	13
Feedback Protocol	16
2.6 Exceptional Circumstances	16
2.6 When can I be involved?	17
2.7 Key Stages of Consultation	17
3. Neighbourhood Planning	22

3.1 What is the role of the Council in Neighbourhood Planning?	22
3.2 The key stages in preparing Neighbourhood Plans/Orders:.....	23
4. Consulting on Planning Applications.....	25
4.1 Community Involvement by the Developer	25
4.2 Pre-Application discussions with the council	26
4.3 Legal consultation requirements	26
5. Appendices	28
5.1 Specific consultation bodies:	28
5.2 Duty to Co-operate bodies	29
5.3 General consultation bodies	29
5.4 Other consultees.....	29
6. Glossary	30
Cotswold District Council	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2020 – Addendum 2023.....	33

I. Introduction/Summary

This document, the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), outlines how you and the wider community can get involved in the planning process, subject to [exceptional circumstances](#). Planning affects the daily lives of us all, the homes we live in, the parks and open spaces we use and the roads we travel on. These are just some of the activities that planning is responsible for or involved in.

We are committed to ensuring that we involve the community, interested organisations and statutory stakeholders in planning and development matters which affect them. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to find out how to get involved. A SCI states who the Council will consult, when and how on applications and planning documents.

The SCI provides a framework for future consultation and community engagement, it is intended to be a flexible approach, and to address and expand upon (where appropriate) the requirements for consultation on plan-making and planning applications set out in legislation.

Equality

We understand and respect that people are unique and have individual differences. We celebrate this diversity and encourage positive relationships between people with differing needs.

We are committed to equality of opportunity both in the services we provide and as an employer and we believe that every individual should be treated fairly and equally.

The Local Plan [Equality Impact Assessment](#), under the Equality Act 2010, analyses the impact that the Local Plan proposed policies are likely to have on particular groups in the community.

Accessibility

We are committed to making our website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. We intend to publish all documents relating to the Local Plan, evidence base and others mentioned in this SCI in an accessible format. For further information please see: [support accessibility](#)

I.1 The Benefits of Consultation

Essentially, the purpose of consultation is to produce a better outcome. By fully involving people at the beginning of the planning process, there will be a better understanding of the issues and needs that are important to the community. A Local Plan can then evolve which reflects those views as far as possible and adequately mitigate the effects of new development. The main benefits of community involvement are:

- **Strengthening the evidence base for plans, strategies, and planning decisions** – stakeholders and local communities bring a different perspective to planning, and should be valued for their expertise, opinions and insight.
- **Community commitment to the future development of an area** – local people can be encouraged to make a difference in their area, with long-term benefits.

- **Promoting regeneration and investment** – by publicising proposals and inviting the involvement of stakeholders and local communities, we can demonstrate our commitment to improving areas and facilitating joint working to achieve better quality outcomes; and
 - **Fostering ownership and strengthening delivery** – many elements of the Local Plan will require joint working between the Council, local communities and stakeholders.
- **Involving communities at an early stage of document preparation** (known as ‘front loading’) and throughout, will help to identify and resolve issues earlier in the process, thereby avoiding the need for lengthy independent examinations and delays in plan production. The aim is to seek consensus on issues early in the process. This will offer the public and organisations an opportunity to influence the content of the plan by sharing their knowledge and views.

The regulations for producing an SCI

The preparation of a SCI is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

An SCI must set out how the Council intends to achieve community involvement, public participation and cooperation in the preparation of their Local Plan, including any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), as well as setting out how they intend to involve the public when consulting on planning applications. The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 also requires SCIs to be up to date and to set out how we will support groups undertaking neighbourhood planning.

In short, the aim of the SCI is to ensure that all sections of the public and community, including local groups and organisations, are actively involved in the planning process and are notified of plans that may affect them.

Unless otherwise stated the ‘Regulations’ referred to in this SCI are: ‘The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)’. The ‘Regulations,’ set out the minimum requirements for community involvement, in local plan making.

Legislative changes

There have been a number of changes in planning legislation since the adoption of our first SCI in 2007, which had minor revisions in 2010 and 2012. Our second SCI was adopted in 2014 following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 and the Local Plan Regulations which came into force in 2012.

This review is therefore vital to ensure that we continue to meet the latest statutory requirements and do all we reasonably can to encourage involvement in the planning process. Recent legislative changes include for example:

- [Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017](#)
- [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended)
- [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#) (2018) and [Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK](#)

1.2 Review of the SCI

The SCI should be reviewed every 5 years from the date of adoption. It is our intention to revise this document on an on-going basis to address any particular problems or successes which we experience, such as re-evaluate the languages we use. Revisions may also be necessary to reflect best practices, changes to legislation, policy or guidance.

The SCI is a 'Local Development Document' (LDD), which is a collective term to describe the SCI, as well as other planning documents like the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). As SCIs are no longer defined as a 'development plan document' (DPD) there is no longer a requirement for the SCI to be examined and approved by the Secretary of State; and no longer a requirement for the Council to consult when reviewing and updating our SCI. Once adopted, it will supersede the Council's previously adopted SCI (2014).

1.3 What is the Planning System?

Development is influenced by national and local policies. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's national planning policy and includes things like use of land, sustainability, good design and managing flood risk.

The [Adopted Local Plan](#) is our long term strategy to ensure Cotswold District can meet local needs for new homes, employment, shops, open space and infrastructure like roads, schools and leisure facilities. It also includes policies which are used to decide planning applications.

The Local Plan is prepared taking national policy into account. We also publish additional information on how some of these policies will be used. These documents can be found here on the Local Plan Evidence Page: [Evidence base and monitoring](#)

At an even more local level, some town and parish councils and their communities are preparing or have adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans add detail to Local Plan policies and influence what happens at a local level, for example identifying Local Green Spaces.

To date Tetbury and Tetbury Upton, Lechlade on Thames, Northleach with Eastington, Fairford, South Cerney, Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood Preston Neighbourhood Plan, Somerford Keynes and Shorncote Neighbourhood Plan have adopted Neighbourhood Plans. There are a number of other Neighbourhood Plans underway, their progress can be found on the website: [Neighbourhood planning](#)

On a very site-specific scale planning applications are needed for most types of development, such as building a house or an extension, or changing the use of land or buildings. We need to approve these planning applications before work can start. All planning applications must take all national and local policy into account, including that of Neighbourhood Plans. Therefore, to do this it is important that we find out people's views about the Local Plan or Planning applications as early as possible.

1.4 What is the role of the Council in planning?

Council staff and elected Councillors are involved in making planning decisions and the [Corporate Plan](#) provides a steer on how we act and operate. We work together in a fair and positive way to secure good development which is sustainable i.e. *meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs* (NPPF, para. 7).

Spatial Planning - The Forward Planning Team

This team provides the planning framework for the Cotswold District through the Local Plan. They develop the Local Plan through consultation and engagement with local communities, organisations and statutory stakeholders. This also includes consultation and engagement on Supplementary Planning Documents and strategic Master Plans. The team also assists the Community Partnership Officer in helping Town and Parish Councils to develop their Neighbourhood Plans.

The Community Infrastructure Team

This team is responsible for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The CIL is a charge placed on development, such as new homes and extensions to homes according to their floor area. The money generated through the levy contributes to the funding of infrastructure to support development growth in Cotswold District

Development Management Team

This team receives, considers and decides planning applications. The team deals with hundreds of applications every year ranging from extensions to houses right up to new housing estates and business buildings.

We assess all planning applications against national policy set out in the NPPF and the Local Plan. Specialists within the team give advice on listed buildings and conservation, biodiversity and green infrastructure, tree preservation and landscaping. We also consult external organisations on technical aspects of an application such as flooding, traffic, and parking.

Councillors - Our elected Councillors have a key role to play in the planning process, activities include:

Representation - Listening to and representing the views and concerns of residents on planning applications.

Committees - Making decisions on some of the more significant or controversial planning applications and those that cannot be determined by officers under delegated powers.

More information can be found about the role of your local Councillor can be found here - [Elected representatives](#)

1.5 Our Consultation Commitments

We will actively encourage the community to play an integral role in addressing local issues. Everyone should be provided with the opportunity to be involved in planning. Plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement.

We will apply the following principles to all of our planning consultations:

- Involvement will be open to all, regardless of gender, faith, race, disability, sexuality, age, rural isolation and social deprivation, for example.
- We will seek views from interested and affected parties early in the process when comments can have the greatest influence, and throughout.
- Consultation publications will be clear and concise and will not include avoidable “jargon”, without understating the complexities of any decision.

- We will give sufficient and proportionate information and reasoning to allow for an informed response and we will give sufficient time for responses to be made, taking into account any statutory time requirements.
- All responses will be considered conscientiously.
- Anyone who asks us to do so will be kept informed, where the issue is relevant to them and consulted on emerging plans in accordance with data protection principles.
- We will consult by a method appropriate for the purpose.

2. Consulting on Planning Policy Documents

2.1 What do we consult on?

We will consult on development plans and accompanying documents including, but not limited to, Development Plan Documents (DPD), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), Neighbourhood Plans and Orders and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule. As a minimum we will endeavour to meet the consultation requirements set out in the relevant regulations.

Development Plan Documents

Development Plan Documents (DPD) are planning policy documents which guide development in an area. They set out detailed planning policies which planning officers use to determine planning applications. DPDs form the statutory ‘development plan’ which includes any minerals and waste plans at County Level and alongside community-led ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans. A Development Plan Document is a document produced by the local authority such as a Local Plan.

For Cotswold District, the [Adopted Local Plan](#) is the statutory development plan setting out the principal policies and proposals for land use in the District. It contains a development strategy, allocates sites for future development and sets out policies used in decision making on planning matters. It must be supported by evidence and accord with national planning policy and guidance.

Planning law stipulates that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

DPDs are also subject to the ‘duty to co-operate’ engagement on any cross boundary strategic matters e.g. housing, transport and flood risk. Each DPD is also accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and includes Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which shows how the policies reflect sustainable development objectives.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Whilst not having development plan status, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can be used to expand policy or provide further detail to that already contained within the Local Plan. They can be used to provide guidance but cannot be used to set out new policy. SPDs can be a material consideration in planning decisions.

There will be formal community involvement in the preparation and adoption of the draft document. The preparation process allows for documents to be prepared quickly. Although not subject to independent examination, the underlying principles of soundness still apply.

Neighbourhood (Development) Plans and Orders

A Neighbourhood (Development) Plan (or NDP) is a community-led planning policy document, supported by the District Council that sets out policies for a designated neighbourhood area (normally a parish area). It can be used to influence the shape and type of development that will take place in a designated area. It can also allocate sites for development including land for housing and employment, safeguard areas of local green space and include policies for managing development.

A Neighbourhood Development Order grants planning permission for a particular type of development in a designated area.

The process for consultation is set out in [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#). Once it is adopted or 'made' by the District Council, a Neighbourhood Plan or Order forms part of the Development Plan and is a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge placed on development, such as new homes and extensions to homes according to their floor area. The money generated through the levy will contribute to the funding of infrastructure, such as highway improvements, flood defences and schools, to support development growth in our District.

A Charging Schedule sets out the levy rate(s) that the authority will charge; the rate is charged per square meter. Like Local Plans it is subject to independent examination before it can be adopted. [The current rates can be found on the Council's website](#).

The CIL Charging Schedule will need to be reviewed periodically, usually at the same as the Local Plan.

In the event of a review of the CIL Charging Schedule, the processes for consultation and examination required to adopt such a schedule, as set out in [the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 \(as amended\)](#), will need to be repeated as appropriate. Any other legislative changes and requirements will be taken into account.

2.3 Other Planning Policy Documents:

Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan

The Cirencester Master Plan (or its successor) will provide a framework for the development of the Town Centre. In preparing such a framework there will be a need for consultation and engagement.

The adopted Local Plan 2011-31 paragraph 7.4.24 outlines the need for a Cirencester Master Plan

7.4.24 The Town Centre will, in the longer term, deliver significant retail and business opportunities along with new homes. This would be guided by a Town Centre Master Plan that will be produced by the District Council in association with other stakeholders,

including the Town Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the local community, businesses and the Civic Society. The master plan will update and review the existing SPD and build upon the principles that are essentially still valid and supported. It will seek to develop Cirencester Town Centre in a holistic manner, balancing the need to manage traffic, and improve the appearance of the public realm with other competing, environmental, social and economic objectives.

The master plan will be considered for adoption by the Council. This will be accompanied by a consultation report that summarises the main issues raised and the main changes made to the draft document.

The Council maintains an evidence base to support the Local Plan and also produces a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which lists the programme for the preparation and review of planning documents, and the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) to assess whether adopted planning policies are being successfully implemented and achieving their intended aims.

Evidence

All plans are supported by a wide variety of evidence which is produced and updated throughout plan preparation stages. To keep communities informed and involved in the plan making process we will publish the SCI and any other documents forming part of the evidence base as they are completed.

Evidence is not normally consulted on but it is made publicly available on our website.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

The timetable for the production of the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents is published in a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is regularly reviewed and published when there are changes to ensure the most updated timescales are publicly available.

The Duty to Cooperate

In addition to public consultation on plans, local planning authorities are required to cooperate with each other, and other bodies, when preparing, or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters. This 'Duty to Co-operate' is set out in the Localism Act (2011) and described in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance on plan-making.

The 'Duty to Co-operate' is not defined as consultation, but it ensures that we work effectively with neighbouring authorities and other public bodies to address strategic issues that affect local plans and cross local authority boundaries.

Cotswold District shares a boundary with the following local planning authorities:

- Cheltenham Borough Council;
- Gloucestershire County Council;
- Oxfordshire County Council;
- Swindon Borough Council;
- Stroud District Council;
- Stratford Upon Avon District Council;
- South Gloucestershire;

- Tewkesbury Borough Council;
- Vale of the White Horse;
- Warwickshire County Council;
- West Oxfordshire District Council;
- Wiltshire County Council;
- Worcestershire County Council; and ☐ Wychavon District Council.

The Local Plan Regulations 2012 sets out the public bodies that we are required to cooperate with and we will engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis ([see Appendix](#)). The Duty to Co-operate is not a duty to agree, but we will make every effort to secure necessary cooperation.

Planning practice guidance establishes the council's responsibilities further (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making>). In accordance with regulations the council includes details of what actions have been undertaken in accordance with the duty to cooperate in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) published annually.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is an integral and iterative part of the plan preparation process and is required for each Local Plan document, and SA and/or SEA for some Neighbourhood Development Plans and SPDs. It looks at the environmental, social and economic effects of a plan to make sure that the plan promotes sustainable development and takes the most appropriate approach given the alternatives.

At each stage of the Plan preparation there is a corresponding stage of the SA/SEA and these documents are made available during public consultation, including publishing any SA/SEA reports alongside early consultation documents. We will consult on the updated versions at the same time as we consult on the Local Plan. For example, the SA Report should be published alongside the Publication version of a DPD. This allows any interested party the opportunity to comment on the potential environmental, social and/or economic effects of a particular proposal or policy as it emerges.

Due to their technical nature, these documents may also be shared with specific social, economic and environmental consultees for their input. As a minimum we will meet the consultation requirements set out in the relevant regulations. Copies will be available on the website and at deposit locations.

Brownfield Land Register

The Council also has a duty to publish a Brownfield Land Register of previously developed land suitable for housing having regard to the criteria set out in [The Town and Country Planning \(Brownfield Land Register\) Regulations 2017](#)

Proposals to give any land on the register Permission in Principle (PIP) i.e. establish the principle of residential development, will be subject to consultation where appropriate in line with prevailing legislation and guidance. Further information on the Register can be found at: [Brownfield land registers - GOV.UK](#)

2.4 Who do we consult?

The following broad sectors of the community will be engaged in the preparation of planning documents in accordance with the relevant legislation:

Engagement should be between *'planmakers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees'* (NPPF, 16c)

[The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) sets out the legal requirements for consultation and public participation in respect of local planning documents. This includes specific and general consultation bodies, local residents and businesses.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDPs) is community-led, prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum with support from the District Council, and like the CIL, it has its own set of legal requirements for consultation and examination (see chapter on Neighbourhood Planning).

Local Communities

We will engage with a range of groups and individuals who may have a role or interest in shaping the planning of Cotswold District, including any who have asked to be consulted. By 'community' we mean the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work and operate in the District. This includes, but is not limited to, for example local residents, businesses, schools, and community groups and other 'general' consultation bodies that are considered appropriate.

The interests of local communities can be represented by town / parish councils or voluntary groups such as Residents' Associations. These are easy to identify, have the capability to be involved, and offer continuity of representation at a local / neighbourhood level. Specific interests or perspectives can be represented by interest groups. Some Town and Parish Councils are also preparing and have adopted Neighbourhood plans, which can contribute to the evidence for the Local Plan.

Local residents are relatively easy to identify, however, particular sections of local communities can be harder to reach. We will endeavour to engage with groups in our community that can find us less accessible (e.g. disability groups and ethnic groups) these are sometimes referred to as 'hard to reach' groups); and encourage involvement from groups that have traditionally not been involved in the planning process (for example younger people). We will seek to engage with the local community through both our general consultation procedures and if appropriate, through more targeted events, (e.g. public meetings, exhibitions and other forums).

Statutory Consultees

There are certain groups that we must involve when consulting on the Local Plan. The Regulations 2012 identify specific organisations that where appropriate we are required to consult, and more general bodies. These are sometimes known as 'statutory' consultees and include organisations such as the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and Highways England. A list of who we must consult is contained within the Regulations and set out in [Appendices](#).

Developers and Landowners

Most developers are familiar with the planning system and seek to be involved. Many can be identified via previous involvement and have the capability to be involved. Similarly, many landowners will be keen to understand and consider the implications of any policies / decisions for their land holdings. As the potential 'deliverers' of development these groups will have an important part to play in identifying options for the Local Plan.

Service Providers

Service providers include local health trusts, schools, colleges, transport providers, emergency services, utilities providers, community development organisations and voluntary groups.

Database of Consultees

A free-standing register of consultees is maintained and up-dated regularly by our Forward Planning team.

On 25th May 2018 the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force. We need to ensure that contact details are up-to-date and that consultees are happy to remain on our database. If consultees consent to us holding their contact details we will notify them of future Local Plan consultations and the publication of future planning policy documents that support the Local Plan. Consultees can ask to be removed from the database at any time.

If you would like to be added to the database or need to amend your details, please email local.plan@cotswold.gov.uk call our Front of House Team on 01285 623000 or view the Planning Policy webpages on the Council's website at www.cotswold.gov.uk to find the latest consultation link.

We will protect the personal details of respondents in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) or its successor.

2.5 How do we consult?

'Plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement...' (NPPF, 16c).

'Plans should be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation' (NPPF, 16e).

The various methods of engagement that we could use for consultations are listed below:

- **Council's website** – The main source of all documentation we publish.
- **Email** – Enables large numbers of people to be contacted quickly and efficiently.
- **Media releases** – News releases to local media to raise interest and awareness
- **Social media** – Use of social media to raise awareness. Particularly useful for targeting working age and young people.
- **Availability of consultation documents** – Relevant documents will be made available online and in paper form at a variety of public locations, including libraries.

- **Leaflets and posters** – Information will be displayed in public locations, distribution to large groups, could be more targeted to specific groups
- **Meetings, workshops, ‘Drop-in’ sessions and focus groups** – These will be organised where appropriate to facilitate face to face engagement with relevant parties.
- **Community events** – Where relevant we will bring our consultation to local community venues
- **Online videos** – Short videos published on the website, for example via social media or on YouTube.
- **Virtual meetings** - Workshops and Focus Groups, for example via zoom or webex.
- **Target events** - such as exhibitions with harder to reach groups for example, e.g. those who find us less accessible or are traditionally unlikely to engage

This list is not intended to be exclusive, there are other engagement methods that we may use. It is also not a commitment that all methods will be employed at relevant regulation consultation stages.

In order to ensure engagement with a wide range of organisations and individuals, all of our planning documents and planning applications will be available to view, where possible and access from our website: [Planning policy](#)

In addition, paper copies of planning policy documents are available to view at our office. During consultation periods, documents may also be made available at a number of deposit locations across the district, including libraries. We may make these documents available electronically to town and parish councils and statutory bodies. Requests for printed copies of documents may carry a printing, posting and administration charge.

Other engagement

In addition to meeting statutory consultation requirements during each stage of plan preparation we may also undertake preliminary engagement when there are opportunities for communities and interested bodies to shape the plan early on at the evidence gathering / survey stage. A range of methods, such as information gathering meetings and workshops, focus groups and targeted consultation may be used. The methods of consultation we use will vary depending on the nature of the planning policy document, the stage of the document being consulted on and the geographical scope or nature of the planning issue being considered. This may involve more than one round of consultation.

‘There is considerable flexibility open to local planning authorities in how they carry out the initial stages of local plan production, provided they comply with the specific requirements in [regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#), (‘the Local Plan Regulations’) on consultation...’ (NPPG, 2019, Paragraph: 034 Reference ID: 61-034-20190315)

Plan Making - Consultation Protocol

Typically planning policy documents follow a similar process of formal engagement, as laid out in relevant legislation or statute; public consultation on an initial document, a draft or submission version is then consulted upon following consideration of representations received; the document is submitted for examination where recommendations for modifications can be consulted upon and made, before adoption.

The following protocol* is principally set out with the Local Plan (DPD) in mind; and other statutory consultation such as SPDs and CIL, as appropriate.

We will endeavour to deliver the following protocols to assist with discharging duties contained within planning legislation:

At the start of the consultation, we will always notify statutory consultees and groups or individuals registered on our planning policy consultation database for planning matters, ideally by email or if specifically requested by letter, of the commencement dates and period for comment, along with clear guidance regarding how to comment.

Copies of the draft/submission Local Plan and any supporting documents will be made available for inspection during normal office hours at the Council's main offices in Cirencester, the Moreton Area Centre and at local libraries*, in accordance with the latest regulations; and will be published on our website.

Notice will be given by local advertisement of the fact that the draft/submission Local Plan and its supporting documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.

Standardised representation forms will be produced at the pre-submission stage of plan production so that comments are framed around the 'tests of soundness' upon which Local Plans are examined. Representations will be able to be submitted via the Council's website.

Responses are strongly encouraged through the online consultation software as this will help to process comments in a more timely manner. However, written comments including by email (send to local.plan@cotswold.gov.uk) or letter (FOA: Forward Planning) are equally valid methods of submitting comments and will be manually inputted into the Council's online consultation software.

We will acknowledge receipt of all representations on planning policy. Correspondence sent to Local.plan@cotswold.gov.uk will receive an automated receipt.

We will publish comments received as soon as feasible on our website. However, comments must be 'duly made' (see glossary) to be considered within the plan making process.

We will summarise comments received after each consultation stage, and this will be made available via a 'consultation statement' that accompanies the emerging local plan and other planning documents. This will be made available via the Council's website and will be updated following the completion of a formal consultation.

The choice of feedback such as workshop, report or summary will be based on a proportionate approach, dependent on the stage a document has reached and the need for expediency for example.

We will prepare a consultation statement in line with prevailing Regulations setting out:

- which bodies and persons have been consulted
- how these bodies, and any other persons, were consulted,
- A summary of the main issues raised; and
- how those main issues have been addressed in the Local Plan and set out the number of representations received.

This document will outline how the main issues raised by consultation have been addressed, including any benefits this brought to the process, setting out the changes made to a planning policy document following consultation.

**Please also note the section below 'Exceptional Circumstances'*

All 'duly made' comments on the relevant planning policy document will be carefully considered. It is important to note however, that it will not always be possible or appropriate to take a comment on board or decide an issue in accordance with the comment received. There may be other material considerations such as requirements of legislation or national policies to which the Council must adhere. At Examination only soundness or legal compliance issues can be addressed by the Inspector.

We often receive a high volume of correspondence and are unable to respond to individual comments that we receive during a particular consultation. Petitions and campaigns are often equally of value as a reflection of particular concerns and can be useful where a community is not used to expressing its views in writing to the Council. Where such multiple, high volume, similar and/or repetitive representations are made on an issue however, these will be taken into account, but maybe considered as a single representation, in a proportionate approach. The duly made comments we receive on our planning policy documents will be made publicly available online at the earliest opportunity.

Respondents to consultations, particularly those in the development industry and private planning consultants, will be encouraged to submit representations via the Council's online consultation system. Letter, email or pdf / Word document (or similar) submissions will be discouraged unless respondents are unable to use the online consultation system (e.g., if a

respondent does not have access to a computer or smartphone). Respondents may be requested to submit their representation via the online consultation system if they submit their representation by letter, email or pdf / Word document (or similar).

Feedback Protocol

We aim to provide feedback which is publicly available following informal community involvement activities and or statutory consultation processes associated with the Local Plan.

Feedback will include:

- An acknowledgement of your comments
- A summary, or full response report, of comments; and
- An outline of the actions taken and the reasons why in relation to a representation. - Frame the responses on a 'we asked, you said, we did' basis, where possible.

Developing the Local Plan and associated documents such as SPDs will be an ongoing process. As well as consulting the community, we will undertake research and produce draft documents. To ensure that people are aware of progress, we intend to provide an ongoing commentary on our website and in other council publications where appropriate.

We will, in addition, make our consultation report or summary document available at our council office and on our website as soon as possible, at: [Planning policy](#)

To assist with a more efficient consideration of representations and provide feedback, it is likely artificial intelligence (AI) will be used in future to support planners by summarising responses to aid, but not replace, the existing system of taking comments into account.

2.6 Exceptional Circumstances

Responding to Covid-19 safety guidelines has affected all aspects of our planning functions. In particular, they have affected the ability to make documents available in public places including local libraries, hold exhibitions, circulate leaflets, attend forums or meetings and the submission of paper-based representations as well as the ability for people and groups to meet together to prepare joint responses to applications and planning documents.

There may be times when we cannot meet all of our commitments due to exceptional circumstances, even though we have listed them in this document. We will always be committed to keeping essential services running but the way we deliver some services may change.

For example, during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 we were not able to display printed copies of some of the Council's documents at the Customer Service Centres because the Centres in Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh were closed.

There may be other exceptional circumstances in the future which prevent us from doing what we have said we will. We will always follow the latest government advice on how to protect the community and our staff. In the meantime, we will try to use our website and social media more and conduct virtual meetings and conversations where that is possible.

Government advice (in October 2020) states:

The local planning authority should then make any temporary amendments that are necessary to allow plan-making to progress, and that continue to promote effective community engagement by means which are reasonably practicable. Local planning authorities are strongly encouraged to use online engagement methods to their full potential. (NPPG, Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 61-078201200513)

2.6 When can I be involved?

How long does the Consultation Process last for each Planning Policy Documents?

We will normally consult on our plans for the minimum statutory periods of public consultation.

- Development Plan Documents, e.g. Local Plan - 6 Weeks
- Supplementary Planning Document - 4 Weeks
- Community Infrastructure Levy - 4 Weeks
- Scoping of Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment - 5 Weeks
- Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation - 4 Weeks
- Draft Neighbourhood Plan/Neighbourhood Development Order - 6 Weeks

The key stages are shown in more detail in the tables showing consultation involvement below.

Please note that if a consultation period will run over an established busy holiday period (for example Christmas or Easter) we may seek to extend the consultation period in such circumstances.

We will ensure that the time periods of consultations are clearly publicised. Late responses will be kept on file, but these will be unlikely to influence the content of documents, and will not be considered to be 'duly made' (see the Glossary for what is considered to be 'duly made').

We will consult on our planning policy documents at the relevant stages of plan-making, and we will be guided by up to date legislation, government guidance and best practice advice, and from our communications team, where appropriate. We will carry out planning policy consultations in line with our commitments as set out at the beginning of this SCI, and in accordance with the latest timetable set out in our Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Once the Plan has been submitted for Examination, the Council will take a proportionate approach to further consultation. During this busy Local Plan period it is unlikely the Council would seek resource intensive and/ or specific engagement activities (such as workshops) at this time.

Any main modifications to the Local Plan after submission to the Planning Inspectorate will be subject to a further 6-week consultation period, or as otherwise directed by the Inspector.

2.7 Key Stages of Consultation

The tables below show the key stages of consultation for planning documents and the opportunities to be involved. This table highlights the formal stages only and it does not list

informal engagements that may take place with organisations and groups in between the formal stages.

Development Plan Documents (including the Local Plan) DPDs

Table 1 - Key Stages in the Preparation of the Local Plan (DPD)

Stage	The Local Plan - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
Stage 1 Evidence Gathering	Public Participation - Early engagement with interested parties through meetings and information gathering.
Stage 2 Draft Plan Regulation 18	Public consultation on the scope of the plan, draft policies and draft proposals. This stage may include more than one round of consultation depending on the nature of the plan being prepared. A period of 6-8 weeks consultation. Comments received during the consultation are considered and used to inform the next stage of plan preparation.
Stage 3 Proposed Submission Regulations 19 and 22	Public Participation and Public Representations - Public consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the plan. A period of 6-8 weeks consultation. Representations received during the consultation are considered prior to the plan being submitted to the Secretary of State
Stage 4 Submission Regulation 22	The plan is submitted to the Secretary of State and an Independent Planning Inspector is appointed.
Stage	The Local Plan - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?

<p>Stage 5 Examination Regulations 2325</p>	<p>Formal Representations - The plan and representations are considered by the Independent Planning Inspector at a public examination. The purpose of the examination is to consider if the plan meets relevant legal requirements and if it is 'sound'. Soundness is tested by considering whether it is justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Any interested parties will be invited to speak at the examination, or to prepare written statements, setting out their concerns. Anyone can observe the examination hearings but only those invited by the Planning Inspector can participate. At the end of the hearings the Planning Inspector will issue a report to the Council containing recommendations relating to the plan</p>
<p>Stage 6 Adoption Regulation 26</p>	<p>The Council will consider the recommendations made by the Planning Inspector and decide whether to adopt the plan.</p> <p>All consultees will be notified of any decision to adopt.</p>

The Cotswold District Local Plan was adopted in August 2018 - [Adopted Local Plan](#)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Table 2 - Key Stages in the Preparation of the CIL Charging Schedule

Stage	How & What?
<p>Stage 1 Evidence gathering and early engagement</p>	<p>Early engagement with interested parties through meetings and information gathering, when necessary.</p> <p>Public Participation</p>
<p>Stage 2 CIL Draft Charging Schedule Regulation 16</p>	<p>Public consultation on Draft Charging Schedule. The Council will publish a 'Statement of the representations procedure' setting out how and when consultations can be made.</p> <p>Public Participation & Formal Representation</p>
<p>Stage 3 Submission Regulation 19</p>	<p>An Independent Examiner is appointed to conduct an examination of the Charging Schedule.</p>

Stage	How & What?
Stage 4 Examination Regulation 21	<p>The Charging Schedule is considered by an Independent Examiner at a public examination. Any interested parties will be invited to speak at the examination, or to prepare written statements, setting out their concerns. Anyone can observe the examination hearings but only those who have asked to speak will be heard. At the end of the hearings the Examiner will issue a report to the Council containing recommendations relating to the Charging Schedule.</p> <p>Formal Representation</p>
Stage 5 Approval Regulation 25	<p>Approval and publication of the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule</p> <p>Cotswold District Council adopted the CIL charging schedule in August 2018 and implemented CIL on 1 June 2019. More information can be found on the Cotswold District Council website.</p>

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Table 3 - Key Stages in the Preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Stage	Supplementary Planning Documents - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
Stage 1 Evidence Gathering Prepare draft SPD	<p>Early engagement with interested parties through meetings and information gathering. Preparation of the evidence base and input at an early stage.</p> <p>The preparation of draft documents will include the informal involvement of local communities and stakeholders in the development of policies.</p> <p>Public Participation</p>
Stage 2 Draft SPD Regulations 12	<p>Public consultation on a draft version of the SPD. Minimum 4 week period. Representations received during the consultation are considered and used to inform the final version of the plan.</p>

Stage	Supplementary Planning Documents - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
and 13 Representations and finalise SPD	Public Participation and Formal Representations
Stage 3 Adoption Regulation 14	We will make final changes as appropriate. A final version of the SPD is prepared and adopted by the Council.

3. Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced into law by the Localism Act (2011) and gives communities the power and opportunity to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the growth of their local area. Neighbourhood Planning is not a legal requirement but a right which communities can choose to use; they can draw up either a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order or both.

Neighbourhood Development Plans can allocate land or establish policies for land use; and have a say on what buildings should look like, where housing should go or what infrastructure should be provided for example. These plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan and have regard to the national planning policy framework.

Once approved at referendum (community vote) Neighbourhood Development Plans 'come into force' as part of the statutory development plan and sit alongside the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans carry equal weight to the Local Plan. Decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the development plan, i.e. using the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan, as well as any other material considerations.

Neighbourhood Planning allows communities a stronger role in shaping their local area through three distinct statutory powers:

Neighbourhood Development Plans are documents that set out a number of new planning policies for a defined neighbourhood area. A Neighbourhood Development Plan is prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum and is aligned with and supports the strategic needs set out in the Local Plan for the wider local area.

Neighbourhood Development Orders grant planning permission for specific types of development in a particular neighbourhood area. They can apply to a specific site or sites or wider area, or for a certain type(s) of development

Community Right to Build Order is a form of Neighbourhood Development Order to grant planning permission for small scale development for community benefit on a specific site(s) in a neighbourhood area.

3.1 What is the role of the Council in Neighbourhood Planning?

Like Local Plans, regulations cover Neighbourhood Plan / Development Order preparation and referendum stages and should be prepared in accordance with [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) or in accordance with subsequent legislation and guidance. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans are produced by local communities with the support of the Council. We have a duty to provide advice and direction at all stages (making and modifying) that we consider appropriate to help communities produce a neighbourhood plan or order¹.

We will support and assist neighbourhood planning groups, for example by:

- Provide initial advice and information to those expressing an interest in neighbourhood planning;

¹ [Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017](#), Section 6 (assistance) - amends Section 18 (SCI) of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)

- Determine applications for a Neighbourhood Forum where appropriate²;
- Determine applications to designate a ‘neighbourhood area’;
- Carry out screening to identify and provide an opinion and advice on the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal or Habitats Regulations Assessment;
- Share and provide advice on documents and relevant information from within the Local Plan evidence base;
- Practical assistance, such as mapping, where possible;
- Provide advice on community engagement, publicising consultation including in the preliminary stages of neighbourhood plan making;
- Provide advice and informal comments on draft policies, on the emerging plan and other supporting documents;
- Make formal representations at the pre-submission and submission consultation stages;
- The Council will undertake the consultation on the Submission Plan or order, and organise and fund the examination and referendum;
- Consider the examiner’s report and determine whether the plan or order should go forward to referendum. Where an examiner recommends modifications, it is the Council’s role to consider and make the modifications;
- If the Plan or order passes the referendum, the Council will ‘make’ the Neighbourhood Plan or order as part of the development plan and publish on the Council website unless it considers that this would breach, or be incompatible with any EU obligation or any of the Convention Rights;

3.2 The key stages in preparing Neighbourhood Plans/Orders:

Table 4 - Key Stages in the Preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Order

Stage	The Neighbourhood Plan or Order - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
Stage 1 Designation	Neighbourhood Area Application is submitted to the Council. No statutory consultation is required if the area proposed is a single parish. If this area is not the same as the parish or town council boundary, we will consult on the application for a minimum of 6 weeks Formal Representations
Stage 2 Draft plan	The community will engage with and involve their residents in the plan preparation process and must report what they have done in their Consultation Statement. Draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order is prepared.

²
²

In areas where there is no town or parish council, such as a ‘parish meeting’

Stage	The Neighbourhood Plan or Order - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
preparation	Council provides on-going support and assistance, informal comments Public Participation
Stage 3 Pre Submission Regulations 14	Public consultation on the Pre-Submission plan. A period of 6-8 weeks consultation. <i>Consultation coordinated by the Neighbourhood Planning Group or Forum.</i> Council makes formal representations. Public Participation & Formal Representations
Stage 4 Submission to Local Planning Authority Regulations 15, 16, 22 and 23	The Plan or Order is submitted to the Council. If the Plan or order meets certain legal requirements the Council formally publicises and consults on the Plan. Public consultation on the Plan or Order. Minimum 6 week period. Council makes formal representations. Public Participation & Formal Representations
Stage 5 Submission of plan to examination Regulations 17 and 24	The Council, in liaison with the Neighbourhood Planning Group/Parish or Town Council/Neighbourhood Forum, will appoint an independent examiner who is sent all representations and who assesses the draft Plan or Order against required criteria. The Council organises and funds the examination.
Stage 6 Independent Examination Regulations 18 and 25	The examiner has 3 options: a) That the plan/order proceeds to referendum as submitted; b) The plan/order is modified by the LPA to meet basic conditions and then the modified version proceeds to referendum; c) That the plan/order does not proceed to referendum. If the Plan or Order proceeds to referendum and more than half the votes agree (50% plus one vote), it can proceed to adoption.
The Final Stage Adoption Regulations 18 and 25	The Plan or Order is “made” (adopted) by the Council.

Stage	The Neighbourhood Plan or Order - How and what? Public Participation/ Formal Representations or Both?
Proposals for the modification of a Plan	Council advises and assist modifying an existing Neighbourhood Plan, proportionate to the changes proposed.

The process for modifying neighbourhood plans, should be flexible to correct errors and keep them up-to-date, and should therefore be proportionate to the changes proposed.

Minor updates that would not materially affect policies may be made by the local planning authority, with consent from the qualifying body. In these circumstances, there is no need to repeat consultation, examination and the referendum. Substantial revision to a neighbourhood plan would need to go through the later stages of the process (see table above), from pre-submission consultation onwards.

To date Tetbury and Tetbury Upton, Lechlade on Thames, Northleach with Eastington all have adopted Neighbourhood Plans. There are a number of other Neighbourhood Plans underway, their progress can be found on our website.

The Neighbourhood Planning web pages can be found here: [Neighbourhood planning](#)

For further Information see: [Locality Neighbourhood Planning: Home](#)

4. Consulting on Planning Applications

A planning application is submitted to the Council when planning permission is needed for a change of use or physical works, for example. The planning application may consist of an application form, accompanying plans and supporting details.

Planning decisions are made in line with the development plan unless material considerations such as national planning policies indicate otherwise.

This section covers our method for consultation and publicity on planning applications, as well as the opportunities for community participation regarding proposals determined by Cotswold District Council. It considers how community involvement should relate to different stages of the application process i.e. pre-application, application and postapplication.

4.1 Community Involvement by the Developer

Section 61W of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 added to by the Localism Act 2011, places a legal duty on developers to consult local communities on very large-scale development proposals prior to submitting a planning application. For large scale proposals where there is no legal requirement to consult, the Council agrees with the suggestion in the National Planning Policy Framework that it should strongly encourage developers to involve the local community from an early stage. This may take a variety of forms such as

local exhibitions, public meetings, circulation of leaflets or the creation of a well-publicised dedicated website, including a facility to make comments.

Community involvement should ideally be sought in two stages:

1. views should be sought from groups on what may be appropriate for a site so that these comments can, wherever possible, be taken on board before the proposals are drawn up; and
2. further views should be sought on the evolving proposals before a planning application is submitted, so that changes can be made in response before submission, and also so that people are already aware of the background and the proposals when we carry out consultations on the application.

Where an applicant has arranged some community involvement prior to making a planning application, we expect a supporting report to be submitted setting out the type of community involvement, undertaken, the views expressed and the changes made by the applicant in response; if no changes have been made, the report should explain why not.

Anyone proposing development of any scale is likely to find that early information of and consultation and discussion with neighbours, or others, likely to be affected by the development will ease the planning process.

4.2 Pre-Application discussions with the council

We encourage developers to seek our views on development proposals before they submit an application. While any views we express will not bind the Council in its subsequent decision on any planning application, these pre-application discussions help to identify key issues, and help to ensure that the application closely accords with our planning policies. We charge a fee for pre-application advice in accordance with the publicly available detailed information and scale of charges on the Council's website.

4.3 Legal consultation requirements

All consultations will be undertaken in accordance with prevailing legislation and advice.

We ensure that we carry out all consultations that we are required to undertake and allow the necessary time period for comments to be made. Consultation according to individual site characteristics and the nature of development proposals, may include:

- Advertising proposals in local newspapers;
- Placing a site notice as near as possible to the application site;
- Advising in writing occupiers of properties immediately adjacent to the application site and directly affected by the proposal;
- Consultation as required with statutory consultees – such as the Environment Agency.

Where appropriate, we also consult others including the following:

1. We provide details of applications on our website. We provide public access to scanned application documents and drawings once applications are complete and ready to be processed. People can register to be notified by email about applications in their area or any part of the district they are interested in. Comments on proposals can be submitted online.

2. We consult other groups and bodies as appropriate to the particular nature of the proposals or its location. The relevant groups or bodies are too numerous to list in full here, but include, for example:
 - Gloucestershire County Councils Highways
 - Thames Water
 - Wessex Water
 - Neighbourhood Planning Groups

Any amendments to application details may be the subject of further consultation. The extent of any consultation will be determined by assessment in terms of impact, the comments received and the relevance of the revisions.

Copies of all current applications are kept for public inspection at the District Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester. Town and parish councils are notified by email alert of applications for their area. A local viewing may be possible by prior agreement with the clerk.

All applications are scanned and entered onto our website using a continuously updated Planning On-Line system. Members of the public are able to view on-line application forms, full plans, drawings, applicant correspondence, submitted comments and can comment on them directly via the website. Comments from interested third parties are removed from the website after the application is determined and any timeframe for an appeal has expired.

Any planning-related comments made in response to a planning application will be placed on file. This is available for public inspection and the applicant will also be able to read the comments made. All representations, whether in support or against the application, will be taken into consideration during the decision making process.

A decision whether or not to grant planning permission can either be taken by the Planning Committee or by Development Management Officers. Over 90% of applications are determined by Officers using the adopted Scheme of Delegation. The scheme includes planning permissions or consents, including Listed Building Consents, TPO applications and Permission in Principle (PIP) applications. The Scheme of Delegation is available from our offices or can be viewed on our website.

Lists are published of the applications due to be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the Planning Committee including the officer's report to that meeting. Public speaking invitations/ notifications will be sent out to those who have submitted or commented on a proposal 10 days prior to the meeting.

People who have objected to or supported an application (or their representatives) are allowed to speak at meetings of the Planning and Licensing Committee subject to certain rules. This facility is also available to a representative of the town or parish council, and the applicant or agent. Information about public speaking is available either from our offices or can be viewed via our website [Public participation](#).

All decisions are available for inspection on our website. The email alert system allows anyone to subscribe and will provide information at various stages of the determination process.

To promote transparency in the decision making process the applicant and the community need to know why a planning application has been permitted or refused. The decision notice

and the associated Committee or delegated reports therefore give the reasoning behind decisions. Where the Planning Committee makes a decision against officer recommendation, the reason for this an alternate view is reported in the minutes of the meeting. All information, including Officer reports, is publicly available, on our website.

5. Appendices

The legislation for specific and general consultation bodies can be found in the Local Plan Regulations 2012: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/regulation/2>.

Please note the following lists are not exhaustive and also relate to successor bodies where relevant.

5.1 Specific consultation bodies:

The following specific consultation bodies must be consulted where the Council considers that they may have an interest in the subject of the planning document:

- a) The Coal Authority
- b) The Environment Agency
- c) Historic England
- d) Marine Management Organisation
- e) Natural England
- f) Network Rail
- g) Highways England former Highways Agency
- h) A relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area (such as):
 - a. Adjoining local planning authorities
 - b. Gloucestershire County Council
 - c. Parish and Town Councils within and adjoining Cotswold District Council's area
- i) Electronic communications companies who own or control apparatus situated in Cotswold District Council
- j) Exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area:
 - a. NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (former Primary Care Trusts)
 - b. Relevant utility and infrastructure providers (including water, sewerage, electricity, gas and telecommunications)
- k) Homes England (former Homes and Communities Agency)
- l) Active Travel England

5.2 Duty to Co-operate bodies

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a Duty to Co-operate, which is designed to ensure that all organisations involved in planning work together on strategic issues.

The authorities and agencies that the Council will co-operate with are specified in Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/regulation/4>

The following bodies are prescribed as Duty to Co-operate stakeholders (though this may not be an exhaustive list):

- a. The Environment Agency
- b. Historic England
- c. Natural England
- d. Mayor of London
- e. The Civil Aviation Authority
- f. Homes England
- g. Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- h. The Office of Rail Regulation
- i. Integrated Transport Authorities
- j. Gloucestershire County Council as the local Highway Authority
- k. The Marine Management Organisation
- l. Gloucestershire (GFirst) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)*
- m. Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP)*

**have regard to their activities*

5.3 General consultation bodies

We also consult with general organisations and other consultees that we consider appropriate and have an interest in our policies and who can help us with information and ideas, such as, but not limited to;

- a) Voluntary bodies some of all of whose activities benefit any part of the administrative areas
- b) Bodies which represent the interest of different racial, ethnic or national groups within the administrative area
- c) Bodies which represent the interests of the different religious groups within the administrative area
- d) Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons within the administrative area
- e) Bodies which represent the interests of person carrying on business within the administrative area (such as local Chambers of Commerce)

5.4 Other consultees

We may consider the need to consult where appropriate include, for example;

- Relevant educational bodies (such as The Royal Agricultural University)
- Bodies which represent the interest of environmental groups within the administrative area (such as Council Protection of Rural England, Cotswold Conservation (AONB) Board, Cotswolds Canals Trust, The Woodland Trust, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group)
- Relevant service providers (such as transport providers) and local community groups
- Bodies which represent health and sporting groups (such as Sport England)
- Registered Social Landlords, The House Builders Federation
- Emergency Services
- Gloucestershire County Council

Please note that this list is not an exhaustive one.

Any individual or organisation may request to be added to the Local Plan consultee database by contacting Local.Plan@cotswold.gov.uk or 01285 623000.

**For Neighbourhood Planning see Schedule 1 'consultation bodies' for Regulations 14 and 16 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/schedule/1/made>*

6. Glossary

Area Action Plan (AAP): a Development Plan Document focused on a specific location or an area subject to significant change or requiring conservation.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): part of the Local Development Framework to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in the Local Development Documents are being implemented.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): A site with a statutory national landscape designation to provide special protection for the area's natural beauty.

Community: The term 'community' we use to mean the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work or operate in the District. This includes residents, businesses, community groups and service providers. There are different groups that make up our community and have different needs and expectations.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A charge that allows local authorities to raise funds from most types of development in their area to fund essential infrastructure.

Development Plan: document setting out policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings (usually the Local Plan)

Development Plan Document (DPD): a Local Development Document that has 'development plan status.

Development Management Policies: a suite of policies which set out the criteria against which planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings are determined. Such policies will ensure that development accords with the vision and objectives set out in the Local Plan.

‘Duly made’ (comments): Term referring to assessment of comments received during public consultation. To be considered ‘duly made’ they must;

- Be received within the specific consultation period – late comments at the formal stages will not be accepted;
- Not be anonymous;
- Not be offensive, libellous or otherwise breach the law i.e. inadmissible; and □ Relate to the document, its contents or preparation, and/ or as otherwise stated.

Examination Hearing: This is a public examination into the soundness of a development plan document by a Planning Inspector.

Independent Examination: The purpose of an independent examination is to consider the ‘soundness of a plan’ by an independent Planning Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination to consider the document as a whole and determine its soundness. In assessing this, the independent Planning Inspector will consider all representations made on the submitted document and the changes that have been suggested by those making representation.

Local Development Document (LDD): the collective term for Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents etc

Local Development Framework (LDF): The previous planning system, introduced in England and Wales by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Local Development Framework(LDF) was a term used to describe a 'folder' of documents, which included all the local planning authority's local development documents with a set of separate of DPD's, the first of which was the Core Strategy.

Local Plan: see ‘Development Plan’.

Local Planning Authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.

Made: Refers to the final stage of Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) preparation in which the Plan is successfully ‘made’ (approved) by the Local Planning Authority

Masterplan: is an all-encompassing term. Its scope can range from a 10 year implementation at the regional scale, to an illustrative plan of small-scale groups of buildings.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework Introduced a new planning system. Its aim is to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and promote sustainable growth. It replaces previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance. Updated 2019.

Neighbourhood Plan: See Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Neighbourhood Development Plans: A plan prepared by a Parish or Town Council or a neighbourhood forum for a particular neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood Development Order: Grants planning permission for a particular type of development in a particular area. This could be either a particular development, or a particular class of development (for example retail or housing).

Participation: The extent and nature of activities undertaken by those who take part in public or community involvement.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: This is an act which makes provisions relating to spatial development and town and country planning; and the compulsory acquisition of land.

Planning Application: An application to the Local Planning Authority to seek permission for development or use of land.

Representations: Comments submitted in response to a formal or informal consultation.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL): housing landlords that are registered with the Housing Corporation. The term currently applies to housing associations and not for profit companies. RSLs are obliged to have publicly available policies and procedures for allocating tenancies.

Scoping: The act of or involving an investigation or discussion to determine the effect a proposed policy or project would have on a community or the local environment.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): A document that sets out what consultation will take place with the community on planning policy documents and planning applications

Supplementary Planning Documents: These documents contain policy guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in the Local Plan.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): a local development document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides detail of policies and proposals in the Local Plan

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental, and economic factors).

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2020 – Addendum 2023

The SCI should be reviewed every 5 years from the date of adoption. However, we also intend to make some minor revisions to ensure the document remains up to date and relevant to forthcoming consultations, on an on-going basis. The list of anticipated revisions is below. In due course the document will be reviewed in full.

Requirement / update	Adopted SCI 2020 – already included?	SCI minor revision 2023
New NDPs that have been made	Yes – include new NDPs	<p>Page 5, section 1.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairford • South Cerney • Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood • Preston Neighbourhood Plan • Somerford Keynes and Shorncote Neighbourhood Plan
New hyperlink to Local Plan	Yes – broken link	<p>Page 7, add in new hyperlink - 'Adopted Local Plan'</p> <p><i>https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2011-to-2031/</i></p>
Use of AI in auto-summary of representations - inform	No – new use of technology, new/future process	<p>Section 2.5 – Feedback Protocol page 16 – additional text, at end.</p> <p><i>To assist with a more efficient consideration of representations and provide feedback in a timely manner, it is likely artificial intelligence (AI) will be used in future to support planners by summarising responses to aid, but not replace the existing system.</i></p>

<p>Ensure that campaigns/ group objections/ comments on a single issue are treated as one representation rather than 100s – resource issue – repetitive representation.</p>	<p>No – for example, e-campaigns and ability to send multiple/ high volume identical or similar representations to a single issue which are resource intensive to acknowledge and consider individually.</p>	<p>Section 2.5 ‘Plan-making - Consultation Protocol’ p15 – additional text.</p> <p>‘...We often receive a high volume of correspondence and are unable to respond to individual comments that we receive during a particular consultation. <i>Petitions and campaigns are often equally of value as a reflection of particular concerns and can be useful where a community is not used to expressing its views in writing to the Council. Where such multiple, high volume, similar and/or repetitive representations are made on an issue however, these will be taken into account, but maybe considered as a single representation, as a proportionate approach.</i></p> <p>The duly made comments...’</p>
<p>Missing word error</p>	<p>No – end of sentence</p>	<p>Section 2.5 - Plan Making - Consultation Protocol page 15 ‘...following <i>consultation.</i>’</p>
<p>Encourage the use of online consultation system</p>	<p>Yes – improve</p>	<p>Section 2.5 ‘Plan-making - Consultation Protocol’ page 14 – insert word - ‘Responses are <i>strongly</i> encouraged through...’</p>

Encourage the use of online consultation system	Yes - promote the use of the digital engagement platform, especially from the development industry and private planning consultants.	<p>Section 2.5 'Plan-making - Consultation Protocol' page 15</p> <p>- Add in paragraph at end of the section -</p> <p><i>Respondents to consultations, particularly those in the development industry and private planning consultants, will be encouraged to submit representations via the Council's online consultation system. Letter, email or pdf / Word document (or similar) submissions will be discouraged unless respondents are unable to use the online consultation system (e.g. if a respondent does not have access to a computer or smartphone). Respondents may be requested to submit their representation via the online consultation system if they submit their representation by letter, email or pdf / Word document (or similar).</i></p>
Documents need to be accessibility compliant	Yes – word accessibility checked already	N/A
CDC logo	Yes – remove old version and update	Update to new CDC logo on front cover
Statutory Consultees	<p>Yes – new statutory consultee to include in list.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/active-travel-england</p>	<p>Appendix – Section 5.1 Specific Consultation Bodies – include</p> <p><i>1) Active Travel England</i></p>
Consultation Database hyperlink – new system	Yes – link to Objective Limehouse	Section 2.4 Database of Consultees page 12 -

		<p>Remove need for hyperlink in text.</p> <p>Remove ‘...or sign up using this link: <u>Consultation Home</u>’.</p> <p>Insert text ‘...or view the <i>Planning Policy webpages on the Council’s website</i> www.cotswold.gov.uk to find the latest consultation hyperlink’.</p>
<p>‘Coronavirus Development Management and Building Control’ – specific reference to Covid19 measures that are no longer relevant. (Exceptional Circumstances section however, remains useful).</p>	<p>Yes – delete – not current practice.</p>	<p>Section 2.6 Exceptional Circumstances</p> <p>Delete subsection –</p> <p><i>Coronavirus Development Management and Building Control</i></p> <p>At the moment, Autumn 2020, we have had to adapt some of our processes and procedures to maintain the safety of our team and our clients. Our offices are now closed but staff are working remotely and electronic applications and pre-application responses will continue to be processed. We can assess samples from photographs, manufacturers details and also hold video conferences.</p> <p>Our consultations will all be electronic as we reduce paper handling as much as possible. Anyone wishing to make comments on applications should do so online or by e-mail. For more information please</p>

		visit. Coronavirus – Planning and building
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Cotswold District Council

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

2024 to 2027

January 2024

Contents

1.	2	
2.	Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 - 2031) – Partial Update	2
3.	Cotswold District Local Plan (2026 - 2041) – New Local Plan2	
3.	2	
4.	3	
5.	3	
6.	4	
7.	4	
8.	44	
Appendix I – Document Profiles		6

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the Cotswold District Council Local Development Scheme (LDS). It explains what planning policy documents the Council already has in place and what will be prepared during the three-year period December 2023 – November 2026.

2. Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) – Partial Update

3.1 The extant Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 to 2031 was formally adopted on 3 August 2018. The plan carries full weight in the determination of planning applications, providing an overall framework for growth in the period up to 2031. National policy requires local plans to be kept up to date and a review of the Local Plan has to be carried out within 5 years of adoption.

3.2 Cotswold District Council carried out a review of the local plan in 2020 and it concluded that partial update is required to take account of new corporate objectives and other material considerations such as the National Planning Policy Framework. Key dates are provided in Annex I.

3. Cotswold District Local Plan (2026 - 2041) – New Local Plan

3.3 The context that applies to the Partial Update also applies to this plan.

3.4 In addition to the Partial Update the Council has decided to begin a full update of adopted Local Plan. This is in response to emerging national reforms to the plan-making process but to also being the process of identifying land to meet needs arising in the 2030s in advance of the close of the extant plan period in 2031. This work will help to ensure the council maintains an enduring five year housing land supply in the 2020s and 2030s.

3.5 The focus of work in 2024 will be to consult on and prepare evidence to aid the drafting of a new vision, objectives, and development strategy and site allocations for the new 2026-2041 plan period. Key dates are provided in Annex I.

3.6 A review of the Local Development Scheme will be required before the end of 2024 to establish if the Partial Update and New Plan can be joined to form a single plan update. This is contingent on sufficient progress being made on justifying a new development strategy and site allocations ahead of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 local plan submission deadline of 30 June 2025.

3.7 If insufficient progress has been made the council will submit the Partial Update for independent examination. The New Plan will begin the transformation to a New Style Plan as proposed by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. In either scenario the Local Development Scheme will need to be updated to make clear the council's position.

3.8 The Local Development Scheme also demonstrates the council's commitment and investment to update its plan in a period of significant planning reforms. Further commentary and explanation can be found in the January 2024 Cabinet Meeting paper.

4. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

4.1 The community infrastructure levy (CIL) is a charge that can be applied to new developments in order to help pay for supporting infrastructure. Most new development which creates net additional floor space of 100 square metres or more, or creates a new dwelling, is potentially liable for the levy.

4.2 The levy only applies in areas where a local authority has consulted on, and approved, a charging schedule which sets out its levy rates and has published the schedule on its website.

4.3 The Council adopted its CIL charging schedule in June 2019.

4.4 The effect of the Council's new local plan will require the council to update its existing CIL charging schedule as a result of new and or updated policies and viability evidence. A supplementary update will be added to the Local Development Scheme by the end of 2024.

4.5 The government's national planning practice policy guidance sets out how a charging schedule should be prepared. It explains a charging schedule is prepared and adopted as follows:

- a) the charging authority prepares its evidence base in order to prepare its draft levy rates, and collaborates with neighbouring/overlapping authorities (and other stakeholders);
- b) the charging authority prepares and publishes a draft charging schedule for consultation;
- c) representations are sought on the published draft;
- d) the charging authority must take into account any representations made to it before submitting a draft charging schedule for examination;
- e) an independent person (the "examiner") examines the charging schedule in public;

- f) the examiner's recommendations are published
- g) the charging authority has regard to the examiner's recommendations and reasons for them;
- h) the charging authority approves the charging schedule.

4.6 The 2019 Regulations removed the requirement to consult on a preliminary draft charging schedule. However, charging authorities can consult more than once where they consider it to be appropriate.

5. Supplementary Planning Documents

5.1 Supplementary Planning Documents do not form part of the statutory development plan but are important material considerations in the determination of planning applications. Their main purpose is to elaborate on specific Local Plan policies and explain in more detail how those policies will operate.

5.2 Over the next three years the following Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared.

- Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan;
- Developer Contributions;
- Design Code; and
- Affordable Housing.

5.3 A requirement to deliver a Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document is set out in the adopted Local Plan 2041. The purpose of the proposed document will be to provide detail to the Cirencester town centre strategy contained within the Local Plan (which itself will be updated through the partial update of the Local Plan) to assist landowners and developers to bring sites forward in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

5.5 The Developer Contributions SPD is intended to provide additional clarity on the use of Section 106 and CIL. The project will also need to align with the proposed Gloucestershire Local Developer Guide, which is expected to be a joint project with all Gloucestershire local planning authorities.

5.6 Further information on the anticipated purpose, scope and timing of these documents is set out at Appendix I.

6. Neighbourhood Planning

6.1 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.

6.2 There are currently eight adopted (made) Neighbourhood Plans in Cotswold District:

- Fairford (adopted May 2023)
- Kemble and Ewen (adopted May 2021)
- Lechlade on Thames (adopted October 2016)
- Northleach with Eastington (adopted March 2016)
- Preston (adopted May 2021)
- Somerford Keynes and Shorncliffe (May 2021)
- South Cerney (adopted December 2021)
- Tetbury and Tetbury Upton (adopted December 2017)

6.3 There are 12 other Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress~:

- Ampney Crucis
- Andoversford
- Blockley
- Chedworth
- Chipping Campden
- Cirencester
- Down Ampney

- Ebrington
- Moreton-in-Marsh
- Siddington
- Stow-on-the-Wold and Swells
- Upper Rissington

6.4 Because the progress and timing of neighbourhood plans are beyond the control of the District Council, the LDS does not include any information on their anticipated timetables. Further information can however be obtained from the District Council's website¹.

7. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

7.1 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains how local communities and other stakeholders will be engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan and other related documents. It also provides information about how local communities and other stakeholders will be engaged in relation to the determination of planning applications.

7.2 Local planning authorities are required to review their Statements of Community Involvement every five years. The Council's current SCI was adopted in November 2020² and will therefore need to be refreshed no later than October 2025 or sooner if required. An addendum was made to the SCI in December 2023.

8. Local Plan Monitoring Reports

8.1 In accordance with national planning regulations the Council is required to produce a monitoring report addressing various matters including plan progress and implementation, neighbourhood planning, CIL (where applicable) and the duty to co-operate.

8.2 The Council prepares various monitoring reports, these include:

- Authority Monitoring Report;
- Housing Land Supply Report (this calculates the Council's 5 year land supply);
- Residential Land Monitoring Statistics;
- Economic Land Monitoring Statistics;
- Brownfield Land Register;
- Infrastructure Funding Statement.

8.3 Where possible, the Council updates and publishes the above reports on an annual basis. All documents are saved on the Council's Local Plan evidence webpage³ apart from the Infrastructure Funding Statement which can be found on the Council's CIL webpage⁴.

9. Risk Assessment

9.1 There are a number of risks that could affect the timetable set out in the LDS. These are indicated in the table below, along with contingencies where possible.

Potential Risk	Impact / Contingency
Staff Resources	<p>It is envisaged that the staffing requirements for the preparation of the Local Plan will be met primarily from the Forward Planning Team with input, as required, from other teams within the Council. Subject to availability, Development Management staff and the Climate Action Manager will be required to assist with updating specific policies in the extant Local Plan.</p> <p>Short term contracts will be considered where appropriate, together with secondments with neighbouring authorities. Every effort will be made to rationalise workloads wherever possible and to make use of staff in other sections where their skills are appropriate to the task, notably development control, housing strategy and sustainable communities. Specific studies will be undertaken by external specialist consultants where necessary.</p>

¹ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

² <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/8d88d41e4a43c5c/9101-statement-of-community-involvement.pdf>

³ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/bztce2k3/cotswold-district-annual-monitoring-report-may-2020.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-infrastructure-levy/infrastructure-spending-and-funding/>

Potential Risk	Impact / Contingency
Availability of PINS for Examination	The timetable for the preparation and adoption of Local Plans depends on the capacity of the Planning Inspectorate to undertake Examinations at the appropriate time. Every effort will be made to seek early confirmation that the proposed timings are acceptable.
Changing national policy, guidance and evidence	Changes to national planning policy and guidance and updated evidence can generate new issues or produce additional, unforeseen requirements and these could potentially impact on deadlines or even affect the premise of the entire project. The Council will keep abreast of latest national guidance and best practice; revise the Local Plan timetable if necessary; and ensure adequate budgetary provision for consultancy support if required.
Failure of the Local Plan to meet tests of soundness and legal compliance	Officers will attend relevant training or seminars on best practice, as well as maintaining a dialogue with the Planning Inspectorate and neighbouring authorities. Consultants appointed to undertake specific studies will be required to ensure their work meets the tests of soundness. All evidence will be robust and officers will make use of the soundness and legal self-assessment toolkit. The Local Plan process will follow the regulations and outlined procedures.
Funding for evidence	Inadequate funding to support evidence gathering could significantly delay the delivery of the Local Plan update. The risk has been mitigated by the establishment of the Programme Board and reporting structures to ensure requirements are identified early and worked into the budget plan.
Cooperation of other external bodies	The new planning system involves complex arrangements for cooperation, consultation, engagement and evidence gathering. Failure on the part of the other bodies to respond in time or to provide adequate responses which require subsequent clarification could cause significant delay to work programmes. Officers will maintain an ongoing dialogue with partners to ensure the duty to cooperate is met. Any particular delays will be reviewed in the timetable. For joint working on evidence, clear working arrangements with other bodies will be required with strong programme management.
New data becoming available	Evidence will need to be as up to date as reasonably as possible. This could impact progress if the timing of data is delayed. Evidence will need to be amended accordingly, taking a proportionate approach. Only major shifts in official government projections should justify changes to the strategy, though some tweaks to policy direction may be necessary.
Large numbers of representations received	Representations that are not submitted through the online system (e.g. by email or letter) have to be manually entered, which is a time consuming task. It may be necessary to bring in other staff, or temporary assistance. This will require sufficient workstations with internet access to facilitate the exercise. The Council has sought to mitigate this risk by investing in a new digital engagement platform, which incorporates artificial intelligence auto summarisation technology.
Neighbourhood Plans and other corporate projects	The Council has a legal duty to support the delivery of Neighbourhood Plans and this will continue to have an impact on resourcing. Early and continued engagement with Town and Parish Council's will be vital especially in terms of establishing anticipated project timetables. The Council is also preparing a guide to make clearer the level of support Town and Parish Council's can expect from the Council. It may be necessary to bring in other staff, or temporary assistance, at certain times. A good example would be securing support to deliver a Habitats Appropriate Assessment.

Appendix I – Document Profiles

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Partial Update)	
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Overview	The Local Plan sets out the overall framework for future development growth in Cotswold District to 2031. A partial update will update components of the adopted local plan to take account of the Council's corporate plan, emergency declarations and other material considerations (for example the National Planning Policy Framework).
Geographical coverage	District-wide
Timetable	<p>Informal engagement (Regulation 18) – Q1 2024</p> <p>Publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 19) – Q1 2025</p> <p>Submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 22) – Q2 2025</p> <p>Examination – Q2 2025 to Q2 2026</p> <p>Adoption – Q3 2026</p>
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Forward Planning (planning policy) team under the direction of the Forward Planning Manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council's Forward Planning Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041	
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Overview	The Local Plan sets out the overall framework for future development growth in Cotswold District to 2041. The plan takes account of the Council's corporate plan, emergency declarations and other material considerations (for example the National Planning Policy Framework).
Geographical coverage	District-wide
Timetable	<p>Informal engagement (Regulation 18) – Q1 2024</p> <p>Publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 19) – Q1 2025</p> <p>Submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 22) – Q2 2025</p> <p>Examination – Q2 2025 to Q2 2026</p> <p>Adoption – Q3 2026</p>
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Forward Planning (planning policy) team under the direction of the Forward Planning Manager.

Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council's Forward Planning Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan	
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Overview	Intended to supplement the Local Plan 2041 providing additional detail on the Cirencester Town and Cirencester Central Area policies. It will seek to develop Cirencester Town Centre in a holistic manner, balancing the need to manage traffic and improve the appearance of the public realm with other competing, environmental, social and economic objectives.
Geographical coverage	Cirencester Central Area (town centre area)
Timetable	Feasibility Assessments – 2023 Informal consultation – Q1 2024 Further consultation – Q1 2025 Adoption – Q2 2025
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) and the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041.
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Forward Planning (planning policy) team under the direction of the Forward Planning Manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council's Forward Planning Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement on the preparation of the document to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Developer Contributions	
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Overview	Intended to provide further guidance on the Council's approach towards the use of and inter-relationship between planning obligations, planning conditions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). A trigger for this project will be the completion of review of the Council's Charging Levy, emerging Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041 and/or a countywide Developer Contributions Guidance Document.
Geographical coverage	District-Wide
Timetable	Informal consultation – Q4 2025 Further consultation – Q2 2026 Adoption – Q4 2026

Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) and the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041.
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Forward Planning (planning policy) team under the direction of the Forward Planning Manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council's Forward Planning Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement on the preparation of the document to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Cotswold Design Code	
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Overview	Intended to supplement the Local Plan 2041. The SPD will set out clear principles and standards for how development should be designed in the district, focusing on the priority aspects of design. As a code, it will also signpost users to other sources of regulation, guidance, assessment tools, and best practice.
Geographical coverage	District-Wide
Timetable	Informal consultation – Q2 2024 Draft Design Code consultation – Q1 2025 Adoption – Q2 2025
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) and the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041.
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Forward Planning (planning policy) and the Heritage and Design teams under the direction of the Forward Planning Manager and the Heritage and Design Manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council's Forward Planning Team and the Heritage and Design Team and others services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement on the preparation of the document to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Affordable Housing	
Status	Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Overview	Intended to supplement the Local Plan 2041. The SPD will assist the Council in meeting its objective of delivering affordable housing to meet the identified housing needs. The SPD is designed to provide supplementary guidance on the Local Plan's affordable housing policies.
Geographical coverage	District-Wide

Timetable	<p>Informal consultation – Q4 2024</p> <p>Draft affordable housing consultation – Q2 2025</p> <p>Adoption – Q4 2025</p>
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) and the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan 2026 - 2041.
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council's Strategic Housing team under the direction of the Strategic Housing Lead, in consultation with the Forward Planning Manager and The Development Management manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Housing Team and others services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement on the preparation of the document to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



CIRENCESTER

TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN SPD FOR
CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE: INITIAL IDEAS

Prepared for Cotswold District Council
December 2023



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL





This document is an emerging outline of the Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan (the masterplan). The masterplan will be a Supplementary Planning Document that builds upon and provides more detailed advice and guidance on policies in the Cotswold District Local Plan and the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan. Collectively, they will guide and help coordinate future development and infrastructure in Cirencester Town Centre.

The draft is in its early stages and no decisions have been made regarding it. One of the first steps in testing and developing these ideas is to gauge your response and gather your opinions and suggestions.

The draft is partnered by proposed changes to the existing strategy and policies for the town centre in the Local Plan that are also being consulted upon. These policies are intended to support delivery of the masterplan when it is adopted in due course and after further public consultation. Ideally the two – the emerging masterplan and the Local Plan policies – should be read together.

The following key points are addressed:

- Long-term sustainability and healthy place-shaping of the Town Centre and of wider Cirencester, addressing modal shift in transport through high-quality streets, safe routes and public spaces which encourage people to walk, cycle, explore and stay;
- Encouraging and supporting a diverse mix of uses and services to strengthen Cirencester's economy, helping it to be more responsive and resilient in the face of rapid change;
- Encouraging mixed-use communities within the Town Centre as part of a wider diversification and move away from a monoculture/dominance of one particular use within the Town Centre;
- A forward-looking Town Centre which people aspire to live in, work in, study and experience, while providing exciting opportunities to grow new ideas, skills and businesses

To take part in the consultation, go to your.cotswold.gov.uk.

Let us know what you think!



CIRENCESTER TODAY

EVOLUTION OF CIRENCESTER

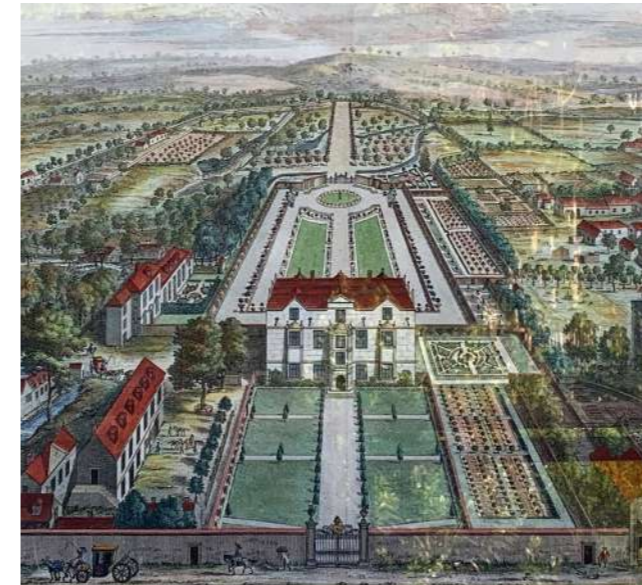
A review of historical mapping illustrates Cirencester's considerable evolution over the last 2,000 years. The diagrams below illustrate Cirencester's evolution from an important Roman settlement through to a medieval market town through to the expansion associated with the dawn of the industrial revolution and the arrival of the railway; through post war industrial decline and more recently the development of the town's retail focus and movement networks which have shaped the town to the present day.

Roman era ————— 1735



Corinium Dobunorum was the Romano-British settlement at Cirencester. After the invasion of Britain by the Emperor Claudius in AD 43, a Roman fort was established at Corinium. Three main Roman roads met in Corinium: the Fosse Way, Akeman Street, and Ermin Way.

By the 12th century the construction of the present Parish Church of St. John the Baptist had begun. Throughout the Medieval and Post-Medieval Period, Cirencester is referenced as the "New Market", which witnessed an increased prosperity based on the wool trade. The market place was at the heart of the town with the principal streets radiating from it towards the sites of the former Roman gateways which still served as entrances of the town. However, most of the core of Roman settlement was lost.

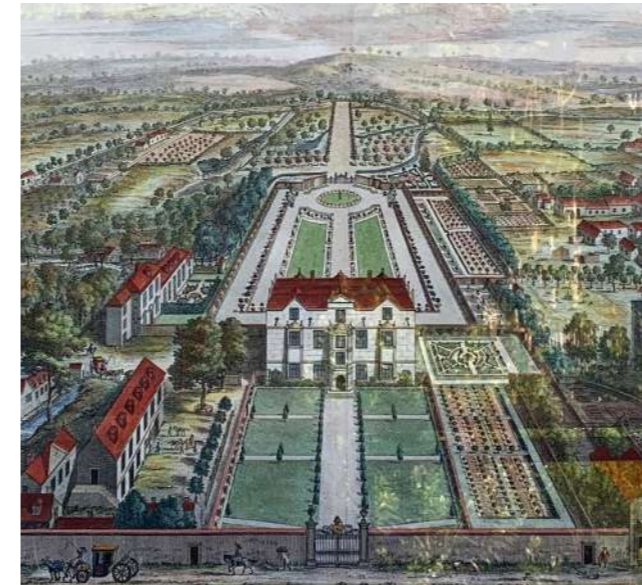


1875 ————— 1920



In 18th century Cirencester, the development of Cirencester Park by Allen, first of Earl Bathurst, was a very important physical change. The 18th century saw the eventual decline in the wool trade and growth of the corn trade together with the market and banking activities needed to support the trading. A branch of the Thames and Severn Canal was created on the south edge of the town and helped maintain some industry based on the coal until the arrival of the railway.

From 1900 a station was built at Watermoor, south-east of the town centre. The town-centre developed outwards towards the railway lines. Small hamlets and farms developed in the surrounding landscape. During the inter-war years there was no significant development, apart from small clusters forming around the outskirts of Cirencester.





1940-1970

Present



Following the ceasing of corn trade and edge-tool manufacture, Cirencester Town station and Watermoor station were closed in 1964 and 1961 respectively. During this period a considerable town expansion occurred. Housing development expanded along almost all approaches to the town. However, the loss of rail links led to total dependence on road transport. An inner ring road system was completed in 1975 in an attempt to reduce town-centre congestion.

Today, Cirencester still functions as a market town and it is marketed as the capital of the Cotswolds. The town serves as a centre for surrounding villages, providing employment, amenities, shops, commerce and education. It is also a commuter town for larger centres such as Cheltenham, Gloucester, Swindon and Stroud.



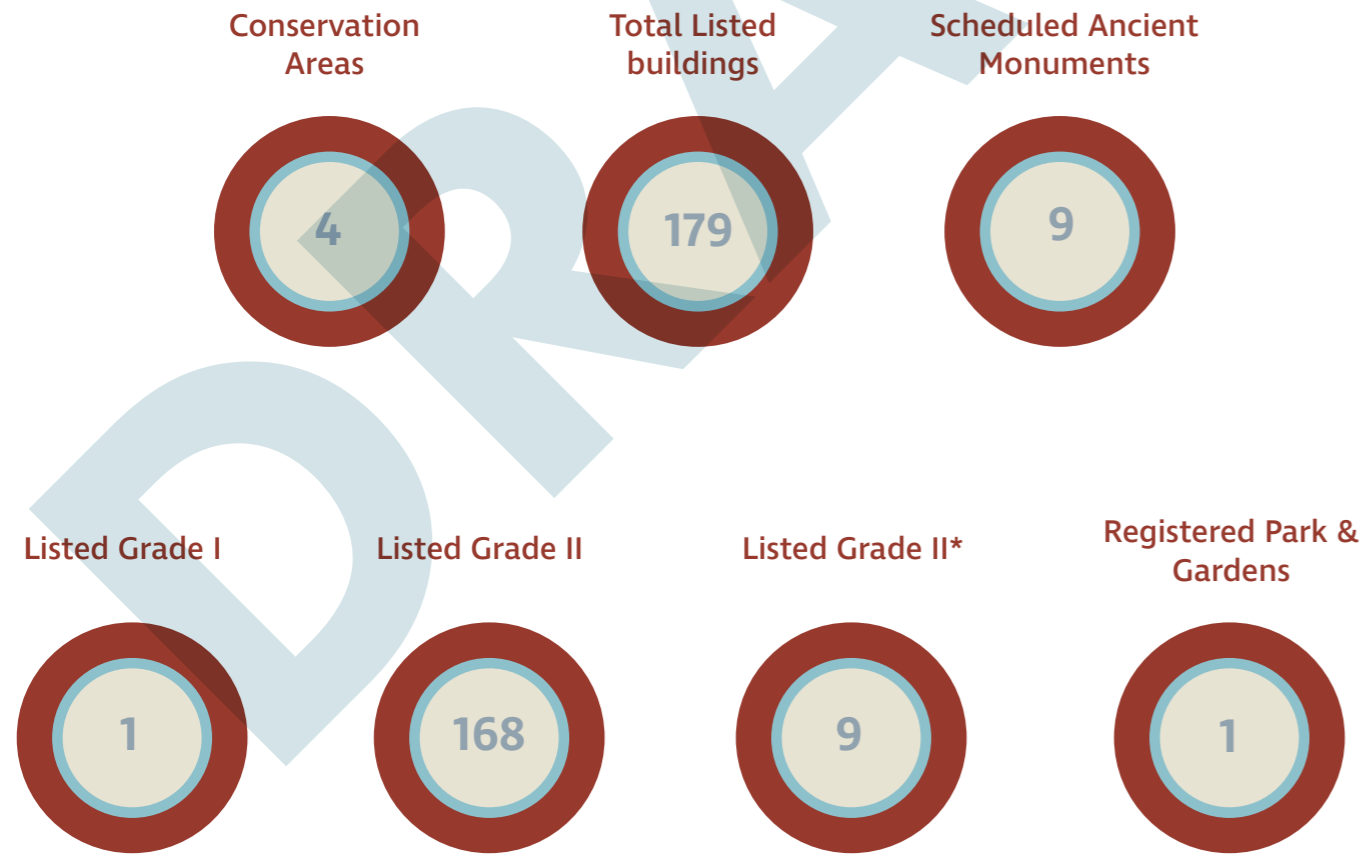
PLAN OF PRESENT-DAY CIRENCESTER WITH ROMAN ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE OVERLAID

- Indicative study boundary
- Remaining parts of Roman wall
- Roman Amphitheatre
- Roman street
- Alignment of Roman wall
- ⊙ Roman gate

HERITAGE

Heritage is one of Cirencester's key assets, recognised through the large grouping of Listed buildings and the designation of the Town Centre Conservation Area. Cirencester is the largest town in the Cotswolds, dating back to its importance as a Roman settlement.

Page 174



Church of St John the Baptist



Sculpture in Woolmarket



Cirencester Park, part of the Bathurst Estate

Church of St. John the Baptist

The church is Grade I listed and is one of the largest Parish Churches in the UK. It forms a grand background to Market Place. Given the church's size and location at the heart of the town it is highly visible, and acts as a key landmark along most streets. The current Cotswold stone building is medieval, with construction commencing in the 12th century. However, the site was home to an earlier Anglo-Saxon building.

Amphitheatre

Cirencester's Amphitheatre is the second largest in the UK, indicating the significance of Cirencester (Corinium Dobunorum) in Roman times. The earthworks show evidence of tiered wooden seats for around 8000 people placed upon terraces made of stone.

Roman Walls

The 3rd century 6m high Roman defences were constructed in stone, with a walkway at the top protected by a parapet. These walls were later incorporated into the medieval town walls that encircled Cirencester. Only two short sections remain today, 1) a short section within the Abbey Grounds and 2) a short turf-covered length in Watermoor, off Beeches Road, where a footpath runs along the top of the wall by City Bank Playing Field.

Cirencester Park & Country House

Developed by the Bathurst Estate, this includes the Grade I listed gardens with associated structures and the Grade II* listed main house.

The main house sits on the edge of the town centre and is a significant landmark due to the large semi-circular Yew tree hedge. At 140m long and 10m wide, it is believed to be the largest yew hedge in the UK.

The park was originally laid out in the 1700s as a deer park and is currently a 3,000-acre woodland and pasture park that is open to the public during daylight hours.

Conservation Areas

Cirencester has four Conservation Areas. These are the Cirencester Park, Gloucester Street & River Walk, Cirencester Town Centre (encircling the majority of what was the medieval town), and Cirencester South.

Scheduled Monuments

Cirencester is recognised as being a place rich in archaeological remains of both Roman and Medieval predecessors. The Cirencester Excavation committee undertook a number of significant excavations in the 1960's and 1970's, which led to scheduled monuments being designated.



MAP OF CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE WITH KEY HERITAGE ASSETS IDENTIFIED

- Indicative study boundary
- Identified site allocations
- Grade I listings
- Grade II * listings
- Grade II listings
- Local listings
- Scheduled monument*
- Conservation Area
- Roman Amphitheatre
- Remaining wall

*largely protecting underground areas

- 1 Section of Roman Wall within Abbey Grounds
- 2 Section of Roman Wall in Watermoor

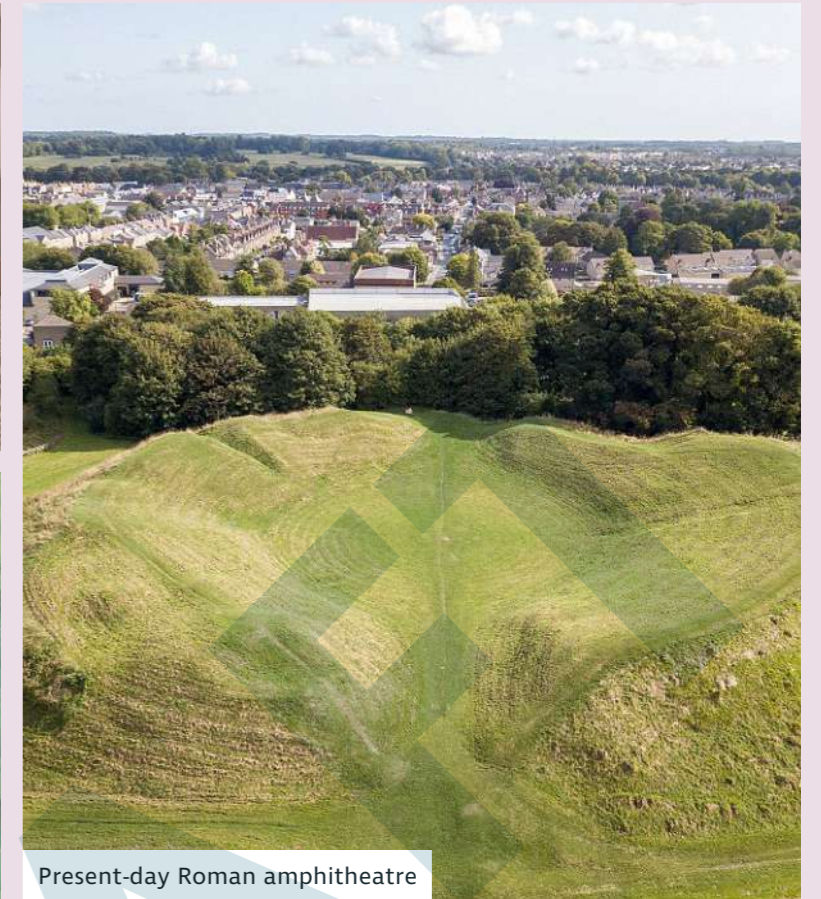
Cirencester's rich and diverse heritage is a key strength and gives the Town its distinct and unique character. It is imperative that this heritage is preserved and celebrated as the Town Centre evolves. Whilst the focus of the majority of the main streets within the Town Centre will be preservation and enhancement, there is an opportunity to introduce new layers of townscape within the designated opportunity sites. The aspiration should be that this development is reflective of its time, whilst also responding sensitively in terms of design, scale and materiality.

CULTURE AND VISITOR ECONOMY

Cirencester's uniqueness also comes from its wealth of cultural destinations and attractions, recognised with its designations. There is the opportunity to build upon this and strengthen Cirencester's cultural and visitor economy.



The Corinium Museum



Present-day Roman amphitheatre



Illustration of Roman Cirencester



Performance at The Barn Theatre



The Barn Theatre

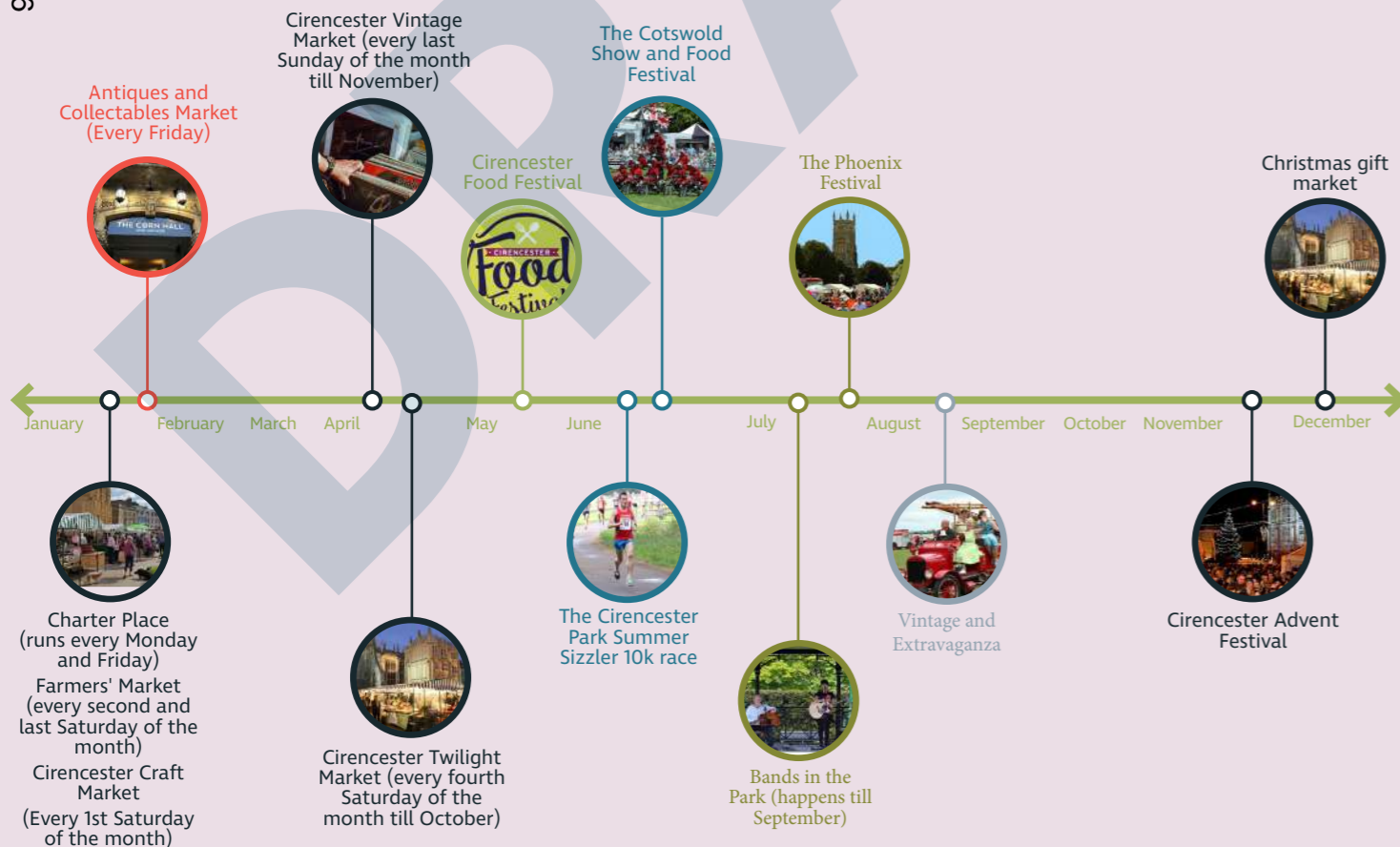


Cirencester open air swimming pool



The Corn Hall indoor market

Page 176



New Brewery Arts

New Brewery Arts is a converted brewery that now consists of art galleries, artists' studios and workshops, a cafe and shop, as well as guest accommodation. It is an independent, not for profit charity that offers a variety of workshops for children and adults, some at very little or no cost. It offers opportunities for local people to learn new skills, meet new people and buy directly from local, independent artists.

The Barn Theatre

Formerly a 1940s Nissen hut, The Barn Theatre was initially set up as a charity in 2018 with a vision of building a bold legacy in the arts for the community of Cirencester and the Cotswolds. The Theatre itself consists of a 200 seat auditorium, offering high-quality performances to South Gloucestershire without having to travel to London's West End. The Barn Theatre also hosts many social events, offers guest accommodation, and has an award-winning bar and restaurant, making it a cherished landmark within Cirencester's Town Centre.

Corinium Museum

The Corinium Museum houses a collection of highly significant Roman finds. The majority of found objects were found in and around the locality, reinforcing the importance of Cirencester's heritage and the significance of Cirencester's Roman and medieval history.

In addition to the galleries, the museum also offers a flexible space to hire for evening events, talks, dinners, drinks receptions, product launches, and film screenings.

The Churn Project

The Churn Project is a Cirencester charity that works with local older people, vulnerable families and unemployed people. Working alongside other local companies, the Churn Project runs a variety of low-cost activities for the more vulnerable people of the community from antenatal classes, to work clubs, to memory clubs. The Churn Project provides a valuable resource for the community, helping to improve the wellbeing and feeling of isolation of people who may struggle with their mental health.

The key assets within the town centre, including the town's unique architectural heritage and cultural offer, could be represented more positively through enhancing the public realm and spaces, and more appropriate consideration of wayfinding and permeability.

Some of the key attractors could be further enhanced by improving the appearance of key buildings, improving their visibility (through scale, massing, wayfinding) and undertaking physical improvements to the public realm. This includes creating greater opportunity to dwell and for people to want to spend time in key spaces and squares.

The amphitheatre has been isolated from the Town Centre by the imposition of the A429. Even the visual connection along Lewis Lane/ Querns Lane has been further broken by the employment land around Phoenix Way. Opportunities should be explored to better link it with the Town Centre.



KEY

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- Residential
- Retail
- Comparison
- Convenience (large)
- Civic
- Religious
- Education
- Leisure
- Commercial/office
- Accommodation
- Infrastructure
- Vacant

- ① St. John Baptist Church
- ② Roman Ampitheatre
- ③ Corinium Museum
- ④ Abbey Grounds Park
- ⑤ Cirencester Park
- ⑥ Bathhurst Estate
- ⑦ Open Air Pool
- ⑧ Market Place
- ⑨ Barn Theatre
- ⑩ New Brewery Arts
- ⑪ The Woolmarket
- ⑫ Swan Yard
- ⑬ Bishop's Walk Market
- ⑭ Corn Hall Market
- ⑮ Cirencester Antiques Centre

RETAIL AND LEISURE

RETAIL SERVICE

Existing floorspace (2021) Potential floorspace (2041)



+400↑

LEISURE SERVICE

Existing floorspace (2021) Potential floorspace (2041)



+1,200↑

CONVENIENCE

Existing floorspace (2021) Potential floorspace (2041)



+1,300↑

COMPARISON

Existing floorspace (2021) Potential floorspace (2041)



+/-0↕

VACANCY

Existing floorspace (2021) Potential floorspace (2041)



-3,100↓

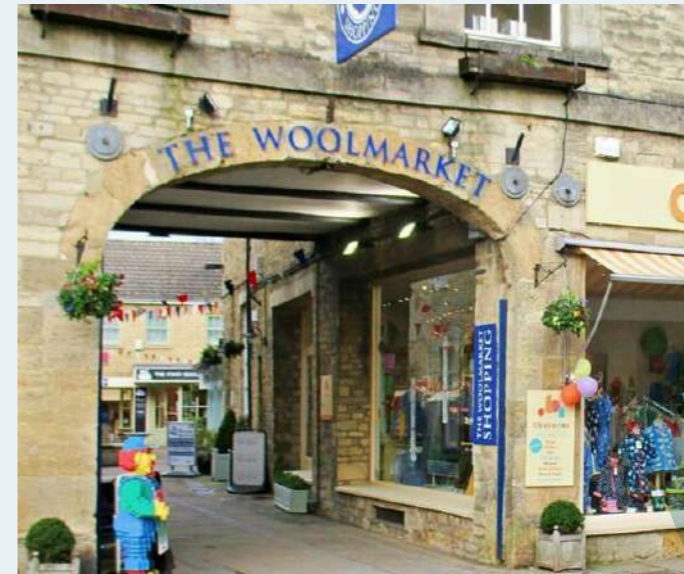
* Reference in the Nexus report



Deli in the Corn Hall indoor market



Christmas market at Market Place



The Woolmarket shopping centre



Deli in the Corn Hall indoor market



Bishops Walk Shopping Arcade

Black Jack Street

Black Jack Street is one of Cirencester's oldest streets and is located opposite the side entrance of the Church of St. John Baptist. This historical street is full of independent retail shops. Several coffee shops can be found, as well as two pedestrian shopping mews: Stable Yard and Templar Mews.

Corn Hall

Built in the 19th century and re-opened in 2014, the Corn Hall provide a number of indoor markets open all year round. These markets are the Indoor Market, the Antiques & Collectables Market, the Cotswold Craft Market, The Vintage & Artisan Fair. The Antiques & Collectables Market is one of the oldest affairs and has been held in the Corn Hall in Cirencester every Friday for more than four decades.

Market Place

Dominated by the impressive Parish Church of St. John Baptist, the Market Place is at the heart of Cirencester town centre. The Market Place hosts a number of community events and regular and speciality markets through the year. The majority of traders are locally based small business enterprises.

Cotswold's Leisure Centre

Cotswold's Leisure provides the local community with facilities that include a hi-tech gym and a programme of group fitness classes. There are also squash, indoor cricket, badminton and basketball courts.

Open air swimming pool

The pool offers a wonderful swimming experience, fed by natural spring water and heated 27°C. There is a children's paddling pool and sunbathing patio.

Bishops Walk Shopping Arcade

Cirencester's only covered shopping centre, having opened in 1990. It hosts a variety of retail stores and acts as a pedestrian link between Brewery Car Park and Cricklade Street.

The Woolmarket

The Woolmarket is a shopping square that sits between the Waterloo and Forum Car Parks and hosts a variety of retail stores, bars and restaurants, fitness spaces, commercial spaces, and medical spaces.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the wider structural changes in shopping habits (e.g. the rise of e-commerce) have affected the comparison goods role of the centre, by reducing its number and substantially leading to an increase of the vacancy rate in UK's town centres. This is compounded by the 'rush' of out-of-town centres in the latter half of the 20th Century and their subsequent decline, locally affecting Gloucester Town Centre and Cheltenham Town Centre. However, Cirencester Town Centre has not been affected as much as other centres around the country and is still considered vital, viable, and of particular importance to Cotswold District and the wider Study Area, responding to the majority of retail and service sector needs.

It is worthy to mention that the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated a number of trends such as the localisation trend and experience retail, as remote working replaced commuting and shopping was largely limited to local high streets.

There is a great opportunity for Cirencester Town Centre to preserve and enhance its distinctive localised retail character in order to meet the growing demand for authenticity and locally sourced products.



- KEY**
- Indicative study boundary
 - - - Identified site allocations
 - Retail
 - Comparison
 - Convenience (large)
 - Leisure
 - Civic
- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| ① Cirencester Park | ⑧ The Woolmarket |
| ② Abbey Grounds | ⑨ Swan Yard |
| ③ St. Michaels Park | ⑩ Bishop's Walk Market |
| ④ Corinium Museum | ⑪ Corn Hall Market |
| ⑤ Open Air Pool | ⑫ Cotswold Leisure - Cirencester |
| ⑥ Market Place | |
| ⑦ New Brewery Arts | |

HOUSING

Like many centres, house prices have increased substantially over past few years, with low-income households being priced out of the market. Increasing the residential offer within the Town Centre, including affordable housing, will help address the affordability issue and draw more people to the centre.

- KEY
- Indicative study boundary
 - - - Identified site allocations
 - Residential
 - Upper-floor housing



Page 180



Upper floor apartments in Market Place



Terraced houses along Coxwell Street



Age exclusive apartments at the Waterloo



Townhouses along Dollar Street



Retirement apartments next to Old Station Car Park

OFFICE & EMPLOYMENT

Cirencester is the Cotswolds destination for retail. It has a highly active independent food and beverage sector which has grown significantly in the last few years, particularly around the outskirts of the town centre.



St. James Place Wealth Management



Black Jack Street independent retailers



Cotswold District Council offices



KEY

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- Commercial/office
- ▨ Other employment land
- Public Sector employment

- ① St James's Place Wealth Management
- ② Phoenix Way
- ③ Cotswold District Council offices
- ④ Cirencester Hospital

The 2021 Nexus Report forecasting change in uses to 2051 estimates that Cirencester's financial and business service sector offerings will remain static and will therefore require no change in current employment floorspace in the Town Centre. Employment uses play an important role in Cirencester, providing footfall into the centre from the wider region, enhancing the Town Centre's vibrancy and viability of service industries. It is important that this employment is accessible and supported by modern infrastructure (i.e. improved public transport, electric car charging, ultra-fast broadband and 5G mobile coverage) to create a resilient Town Centre.

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

Cirencester to Gloucester



Cirencester to Kemble



Cirencester to Tetbury



Cirencester to London



Cirencester to Cheltenham



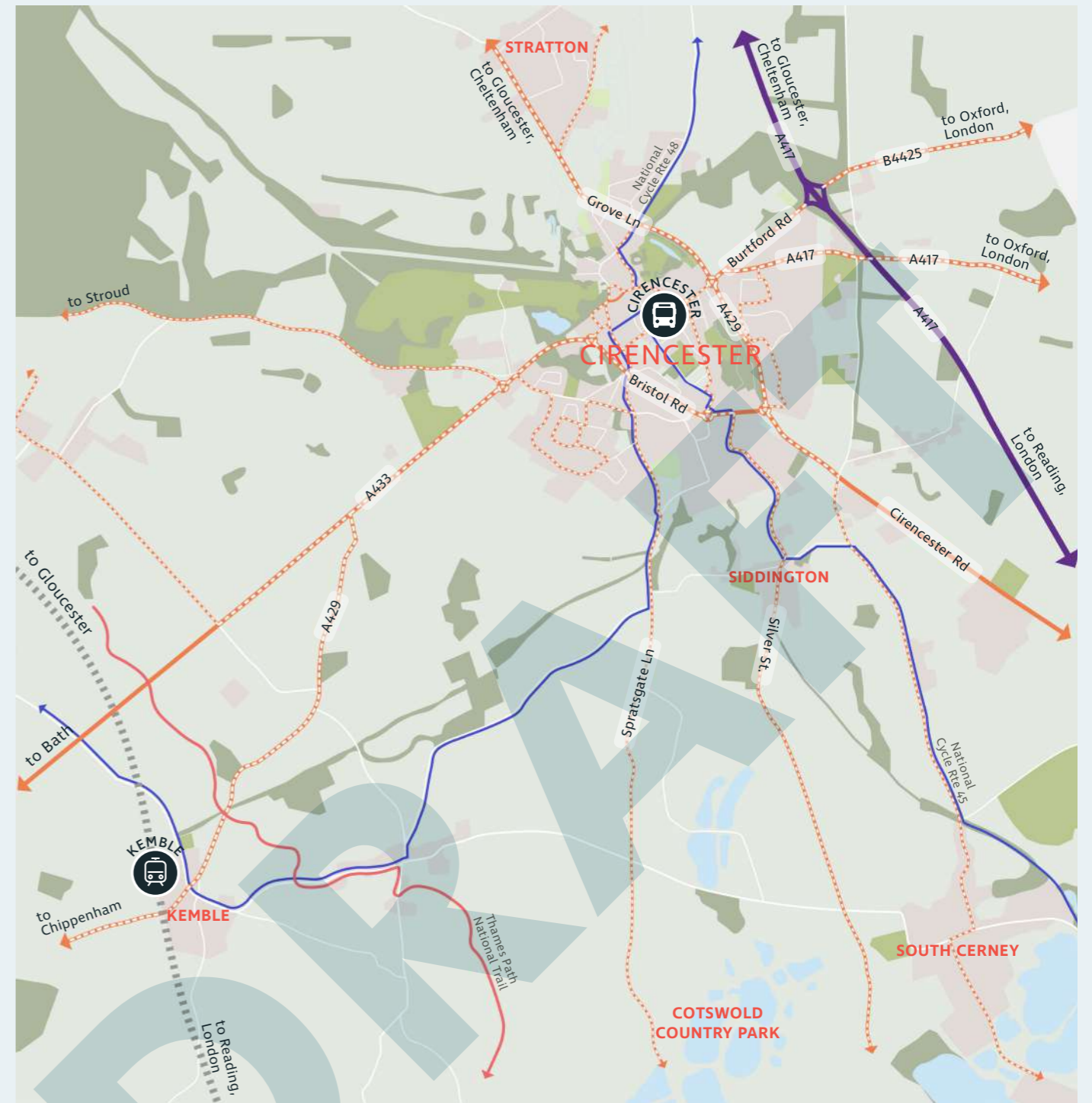
Cirencester to Swindon



Cirencester to Northleach



National Cycle Routes



MAP OF CIRENCESTER'S WIDER CONNECTIVITY

- National cycle route
- Bus and coach routes
- Train tracks
- Thames Path National Trail
- Major Road

Page 182



Bus stop outside the parish church on West Market Place



Grade II Listed former Cirencester Town Station closed in 1964



National Express coach route from Cirencester to London

National Cycling Route

The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 45 runs through the southern part of the town centre – along Sheep Street and Watermoor Road. Route 45 connects the Town Centre with southern neighbourhoods, as well as onwards to Kemble Rail Station (via a series of rural lanes). Further afield, NCN Route 45 provides a long distance cycle route serving a number of settlements including Gloucester, Cirencester and Swindon.

National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 48 runs through the northern part of the town centre – along Dollar Street and Spitalgate Lane. This 74-mile route runs between Cirencester and Northleach, Moreton-in-Marsh and Southam.

Existing Road infrastructure

Cirencester is well connected by both the local and strategic highway networks, including the A417/A419/A429, with direct links provided to Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud, Tetbury, and Swindon.

Parking

Cirencester has a number of centrally located car parks, including long and short stay parking, which are provided by Cotswold District Council.

These car parks are Abbey Grounds, Beeches, Brewery Car Park, Forum Car Park, Leisure Centre, Old Station, Sheep Street, Waterloo.

On Street parking is available in the Market Place and Castle Street.

Public Transport

The nearest train station is Kemble (4.5 miles from Cirencester), from which there are hourly services to a number of destinations including London Paddington, Swindon, Stroud, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

A number of bus services operate and serve both Cirencester and destinations including Swindon, London, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Kemble and Tetbury. Bus services are run by National Express Coaches (London to Gloucester), Stagecoach West, CoachStyle, Cotswold Green, Pulhams Coaches.

Potential transport hubs

A transport study examined potential transport hub locations in the Town Centre. The study examined six locations in the town to provide easy access to public transport, such as buses and coaches, as well as access to active transport, such as bicycles and scooters. The Forum and Brewery car parks scored well in terms of accessibility. The Masterplan will alight on a preferred location for a new transport hub.

A key component of the '20-minute Neighbourhood' is a network of attractive, direct, convenient, connected and safe walking and cycling routes. The team have been looking at the options and have produced this potential network diagram.

The town centre is accessible by both the local and highway network. Even though the town centre core is compact and permeable as a result of a network of corridors and pathways, it lacks connectivity with the wider context. There is an opportunity to establish a better network of walking and cycling routes that connects the surroundings with the town centre.

The town centre is dominated by cars and car parks, which disrupt the pedestrian movement and create an poor quality urban environment. Although in recent years pedestrianisation improvements have been made in the Market Place, proposed strategies should seek to reduce the number and frequency of vehicular movement in the centre and enhance the pedestrian experience. Cirencester have plenty of bus connections, but both the location of the current bus station and National Express stop does not allow a convenient and easy access to the bus services. The potential transport hubs should provide better accessibility.

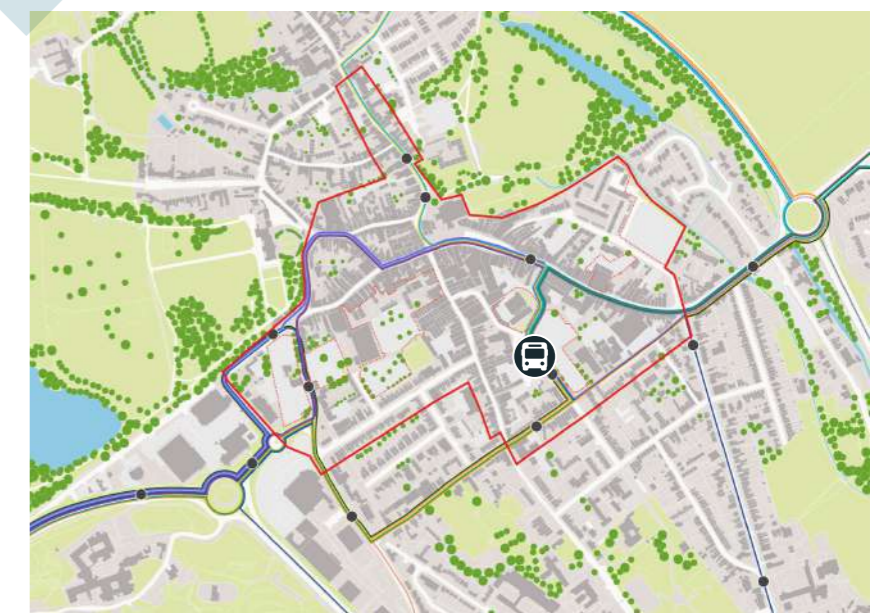


CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE VEHICULAR MOVEMENT MAP

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- Arterial street
- Main street
- Local/residential street
- P Places
- Gateway
- Parking court
- P Car park

KEY

- Bus station
- Bus stop
- Local bus routes
- 50 c50 51
- c51 54 54A
- X54 58 c65
- c67 77 78
- 93 94 128
- 882 855 444



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE BUS ROUTES



National Cycle Route



Rentable bicycles



Public courtyards offering quiet places to eat and drink



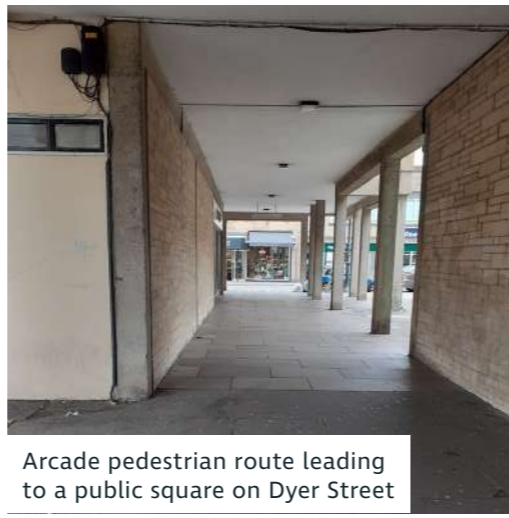
Pedestrian route through the urban block leading to a small courtyard



Pedestrian route through the urban block leading to a small courtyard



Pedestrian route through the urban block



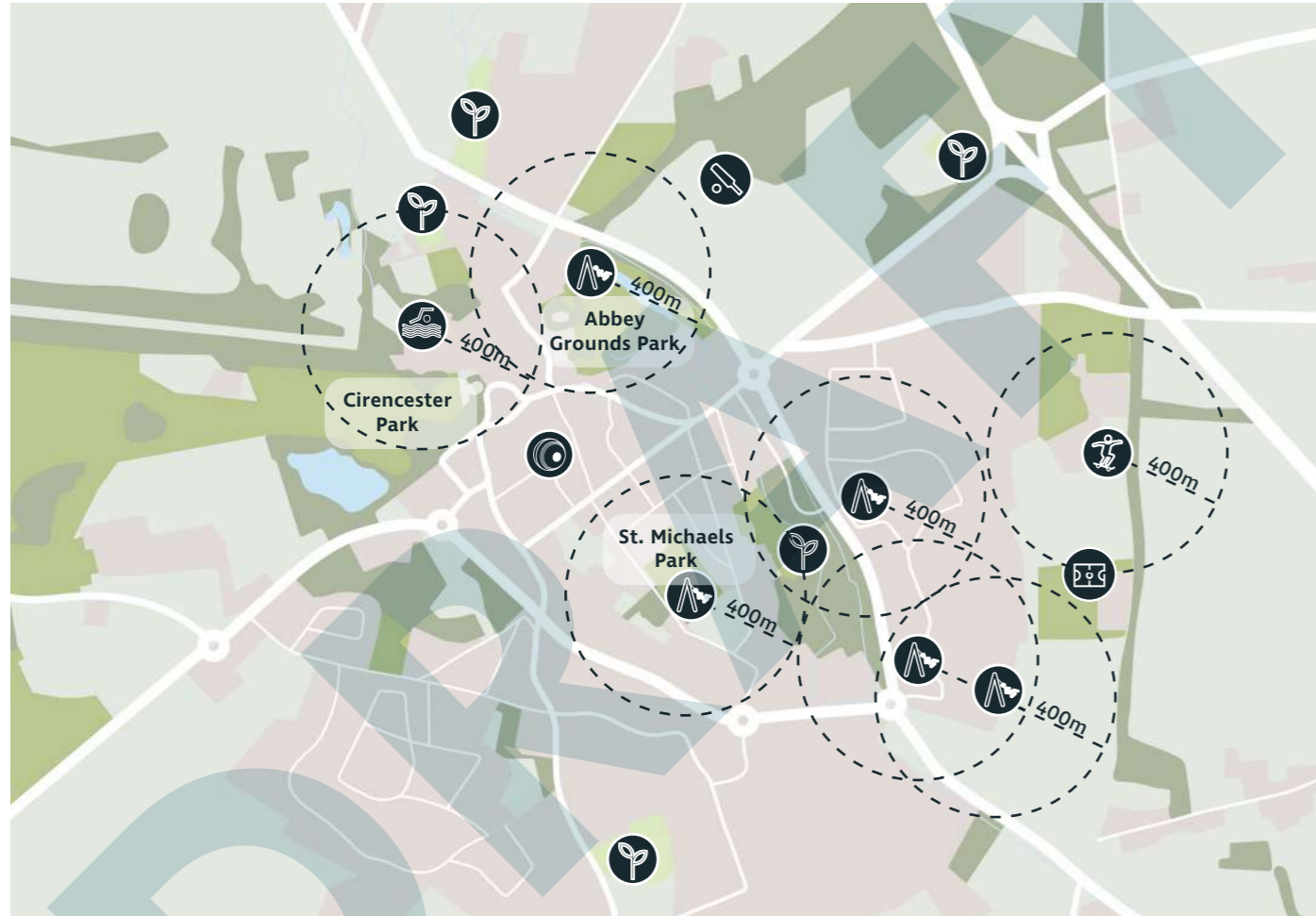
Arcade pedestrian route leading to a public square on Dyer Street



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT MAP

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- - - Pedestrian route
- - - National Cycle Route
- Squares and courtyards

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACE & PLAY



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES

-  Playground
-  Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool
-  Kings Hill Skatepark
-  Cirencester Bowls Club
-  Tarbarrow Cricket Club
-  Cirencester Town Football Club
-  Allotment



Cirencester Park



St. Michael's Park



Abbey Grounds



St. Michael's Park



New Brewery Arts



Kings Hill Skatepark

The Town Centre is surrounded by a significant amount of Open Space, in particular the Abbey Grounds and Cirencester Park. However, there is a perceived lack of open space. This could be attributable to two issues. Firstly, there is a lack of wayfinding and no obvious visual links from the Town Centre to either of the key open spaces. However, the fact that the open spaces aren't immediately revealed and leave themselves to be discovered is part of Cirencester's charm and character.

Secondly, there are minimal green or soft spaces directly within the Town Centre in which to pause and relax. Whilst the quality of the public realm is exquisite, there is a lack of street trees and planting along the Town's main streets and yards.

The key Open Spaces in and around the Town Centre are described briefly below.

Abbey Grounds

The Abbey Grounds is concealed from Market Place by the Parish Church and built form to the south and west. The Abbey is long since demolished and the only remaining buildings are the Norman Arch and a portion of ancient Roman wall.

The open grounds, lake, wildfowl, trees and greenery form an impressive pastoral respite away from the Town Centre. A bandstand was introduced as a millennium project and performances take place throughout the summer months on Sunday afternoons.

Market Place

Market Place sits at the heart of the Town Centre with principal streets radiating out from it in all directions. Market Place is the towns main open urban space and provides for markets and community events throughout the year.

Cirencester Park

Accessed from gates at the end of street, Cirencester Park was originally laid out in the 1700s as a deer park by the first Earl Bathurst. The park is currently open to the members of public although access is controlled by the Bathurst Estate and there is a concern that ongoing access to the public isn't guaranteed.

St. Michael's Park

To the south of the Town Centre, St. Michael's Park has been recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme and provides a variety of formal and informal sports and recreation facilities, as well as large open lawns. The main facilities include BBQ Hire, boules, Crazy Golf, cricket net, croquet, Pitch and Putt, a playground and adventure play, refreshments, table tennis and tennis courts.

Kings Hill Skate Park

Designed in consultation with local skateboarders, Kings Hill Skatepark is state of the art and caters for skateboards, scooters, bikes and roller blades. Youth events and activities are held during school holidays.

Cirencester Bowls Club

Adjacent to the Brewery Car Park is the Cirencester Bowls Club. This was founded in 1930 and is owned and maintained by the Club Members. There is an outdoor bowling green and an indoor bowls section to enable people to play all year round.



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND PLAY

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- Park and garden
- Abbey grounds
- Green space
- Allotment and orchard
- Squares and courtyard
- Orchard
- Cirencester Bowls Club
- Playground
- Allotment
- Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool

There is an opportunity to strengthen connections between the Town Centre and the existing open spaces that surround it, whilst being mindful of Cirencester's medieval character of intrigue and reveal.

As well as strengthening connections and improving way finding with existing open space, there is also an opportunity to introduce smaller pocket parks as soft oasis of green space. These spaces could be activated and overlooked by a new program of uses including residential, retail or leisure. Such an intervention also provides an opportunity to introduce play space for a range of ages within the town centre, widening exclusivity and broadening the Town's appeal to children.

VISUAL ANALYSIS



Visible service areas detract from the charm of the town



Fine, intricate street grain within the Town Centre

Cirencester's town centre benefits from a hierarchy of landmark buildings which are located legibly and create nodes of interest. The majority of these are listed buildings, whose scale and architectural grandeur provide a prominent reminder of Cirencester's heritage.

The majority of the frontage in Cirencester's town centre is positive, with the car park sites relatively undefined and blank.

The town centre however has a relatively fine grain, with good permeability which largely follows the historic street network.

Overall, there is a positive arrival experience into the Town Centre with the opportunity to strengthen certain gateways and arrival points including Hammock Way between Waitrose and St James's Place and the eastern arrival point to the centre on the crossroads of London Road and Victoria Road.

There is a dominance of 'visible' service areas which detracts from the overall look, feel and ambience within the town centre, which are not overlooked and are of poor quality. This includes areas around Tesco, Brewery Car Park, Waterloo Car Park and Forum Car Park.



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY ANALYSIS

- Indicative study boundary
- Green edge
- Active frontage
- Listed building
- Negative building
- - - Identified site allocations
- Positive building
- Positive frontage
- Poor quality edges condition

The town centre benefits from brownfield land and potential opportunity sites for redevelopment, including those at key gateways. Positively, a number are also within Council ownership and control, which will assist with coordinating development. There is an opportunity for development and creating more positive public spaces that people want to spend time in.

Views and Vistas

The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist and in particular its tower is the major landmark of the Town. It is especially important within the Town Centre Conservation Area where there are few directions from which a view of the tower is not possible.

Views of importance of the Parish Church are the following:

1. The long view from St. Michael's Park aligned with Tower Street and South Way to the Church tower, a route which happens to follow a principal road of the Roman Grid, and passes the west of the Roman Basilica and the crossroads of the Fosse Way and Ermin Street;
2. From Black Jack Street, views east are dominated by the Church tower;
3. Views across Abbey Grounds towards the Church.

There are 3 views of the Church that could be vulnerable to development of the Forum area and the redundant House of Fraser building:

1. The long view from St. Michael's Park aligned with Tower Street and South Way to the Church tower. It is considered that the Police Station building, with its horizontal emphasis, currently adds a visually unsettling element to its important view and is subject to redevelopment;
2. The view rear of House of Fraser building from Cirencester Library;
3. The view across Forum Car Park towards the magistrates court.

There are also views of local points within and outside the Conservation Area. Several buildings provide focal points within the Town Centre Conservation Area, most of them located at crossroads or arrival points.



Tower Street towards police station



Rear of House of Fraser approach from library



Looking across forum car park towards Magistrates Court



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE VIEWS AND VISTAS ANALYSIS

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- The Parish Church of St John Baptist
- Focal point
- ← Views to Church
- ▽ Panoramic view
- 1** St. Michael's Park
- 2** Tower Street
- 3** South Way
- 4** Black Jack Street
- 5** Abbey Grounds
- 6** House of Fraser building
- 7** Magistrates Court
- 8** Amphitheatre viewing point
- 9** Old Tetbury Road
- 10** Dollar Street

* Reference in Cirencester Conservation Appraisal

OVERALL CONSTRAINTS

Barriers to views

The town-centre is dominated by views towards the tower of St.John the Baptist with shorter views towards focal points. However, poorly proportioned, mostly identified as large-scale, bulk-massing and uneven roof-scape, create visual disruption towards the Church. In particular, the Tesco superstore and the adjacent development fronting Castle Street, the Police Station building, undermine the quality of these views.

This environment undermines the quality and visual continuation of the view corridors as well as the vertical emphasis of the townscape.

Poor quality buildings and edge conditions

As mentioned above, there are a number of late twentieth-century buildings, most of them are poorly proportioned and contradict with the high historic building quality in the Town Centre. The majority of these are located around the Forum Park area and fronting Castle Street.

Backland sites with exposed edges is a common issue, undermining the sense of enclosure and attractiveness. An example is the Brewery Yard where the space is defined on its northern side by the rear Service Areas of commercial properties facing Cricklade Street.

Another issue is the pathways between buildings with no active frontages that appear both oppressive and unsafe. A characteristic example is the pathway, adjacent to Argos store, that connects Dyer Street with the Waterloo Car Park, giving the impression of a poor sense of arrival to the Town Centre.

The lack of evening economy is another concern, as it leaves many frontages closed after 6pm. If the leisure and commercial activities were further diversified, it would help to revitalise

the Town Centre, enabling streets to feel safe during both the day and night through natural surveillance.

Movement & connectivity

There is currently an abundance of car parking and vehicles in the Town Centre, most notably in the Market Place, the Forum Car Park, and Brewery Car Park. There are a considerable number of parking courts in the southern half of the Town Centre. These spaces provide minimal levels of enclosure and do not contribute to the pedestrian experience nor general quality of place, although do have a function.

One of the main issues is the accessibility to the centre. The bus station is located far from the centre and the closest railway station is in Kemble. Public transport seems not to be preferred by locals. This is also demonstrated by the generous number of parking courts in the centre.

The centre has very good permeability allowing for a good level of pedestrian movement as a result of a network of active streets and pathways. However, some of these pathways can be very narrow - i.e. some areas of Cricklade Street, Castle Street, Black Jack Street and some areas close to Market Place, such as Silver Street. This compromises the safety and comfort of a large proportion of the population - i.e. people with buggies, people with disabilities and elderly people.

Flooding

Part of the town-centre, in particular the Eastern edge including the Abbey Grounds, the Waterloo parking area and the housing development belong to flood risk zones. None of the other identified site allocations belong to Flood Zone 3b or 3a, which are of high (or 1 in 100 year) probability.



CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

- Indicative study boundary
- - - Identified site allocations
- The Parish Church of St John Baptist
- Scheduled monument
- Visual barrier
- Views to Church
- Barrier to movement
- Poor quality edges condition
- Negative building
- Roman Amphitheatre
- Flood Zone 3b
- Flood Zone 3a
- Flood Zone 2
- Brewery Yard
- Cricklade Street
- Castle Street
- Black Jack Street
- Silver Street

- Car dominated central space
- Bus station far located from centre
- Poor quality edges condition
- Poor connections to the river
- Lack of access to key Roman sites
- Lack of arrival from west
- Bound by concrete collar
- Town centre sites dominated by parking



OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

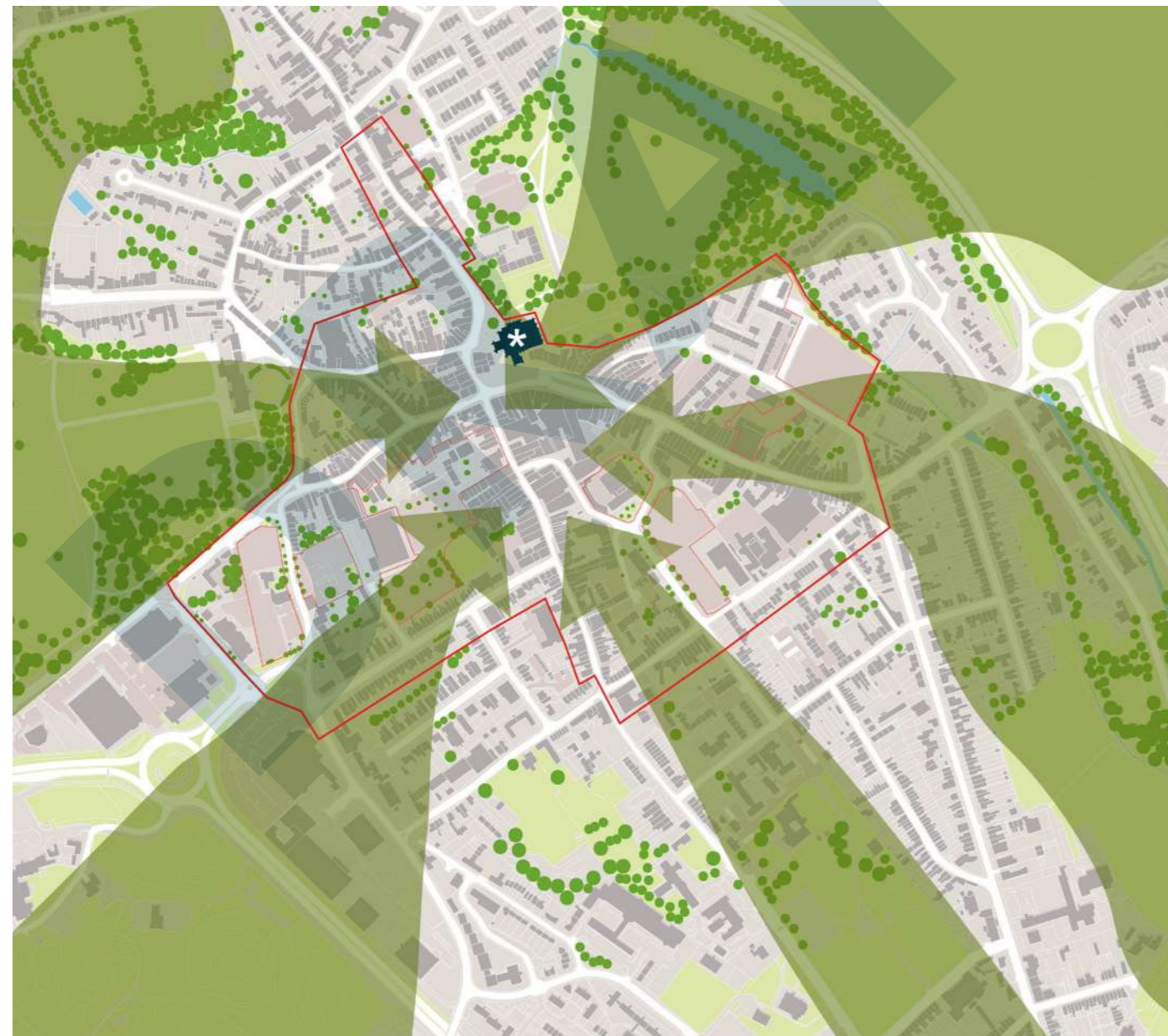
Principle 1

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

More multi-functional green and blue infrastructure

The Cirencester town centre health check identified a lack of greenspace/green infrastructure within the Town Centre. This is key to deliver biodiversity net gains and better connect the wider ecological network. The masterplan should therefore seek to draw green infrastructure in to the historic core of the town

to cool and provide shade, thereby attracting more visitors, which in turn will help to sustain the Town Centre.

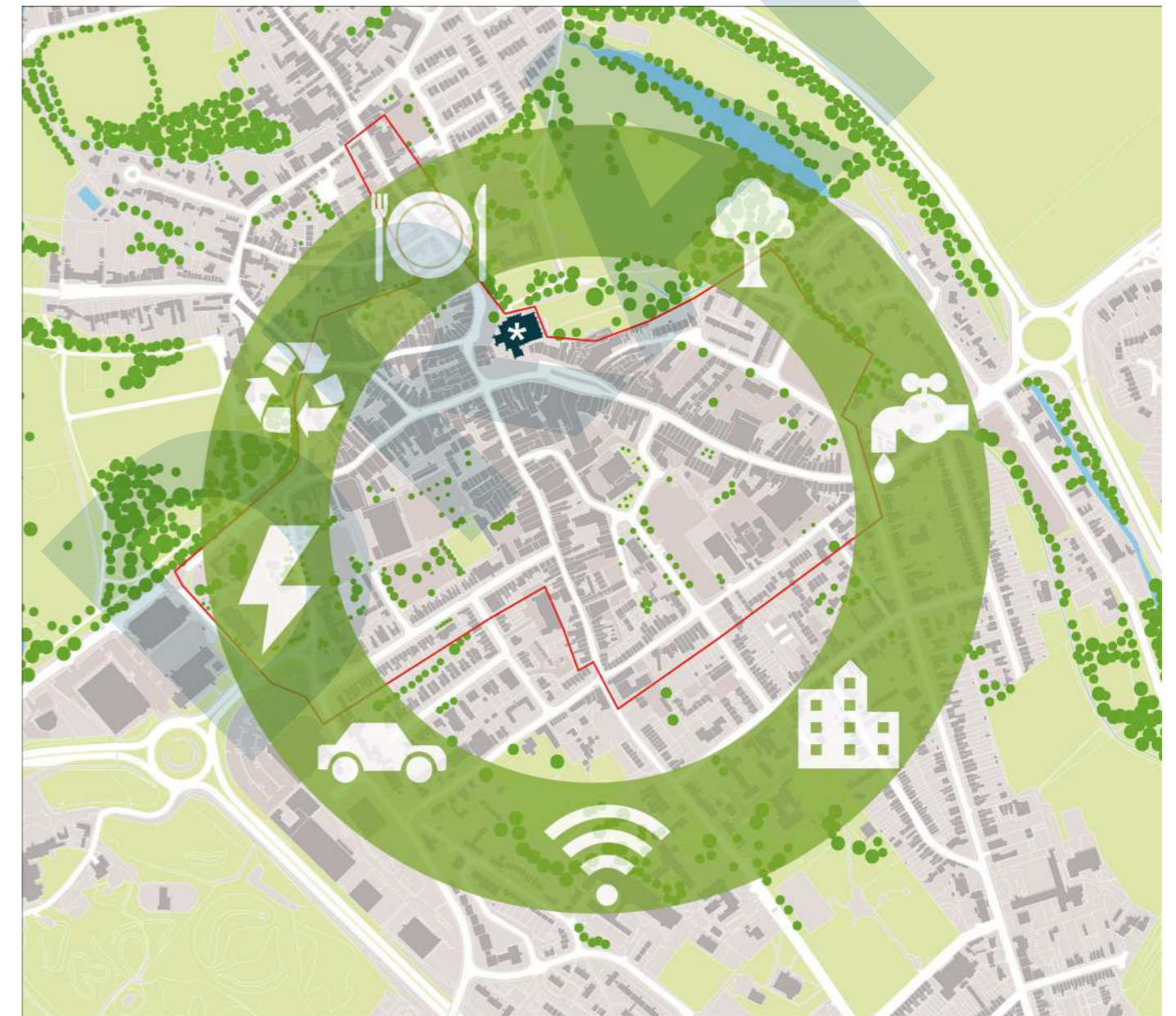


Principle 2

DEVELOPMENT = NET ZERO CARBON

The Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency and is committed to making its Local Plan "Green to the Core", on top of the legal and moral duty to address climate change.

Sustainability must be considered in all aspects of future development, from its conception through to its occupancy, including EV charging, addressing modal shift, and sustainable energy harvesting.



Principle 3

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Better connecting people with Cirencester's past

The framework masterplan should seek to build upon Cirencester's charming character of streets and lanes to introduce new routes, places and spaces. The Masterplan should seek to reintroduce historic street patterns and strengthen former historic gateways into the town, enhancing the arrival experience.

There is the opportunity to create a strong east-west route, encompassing the pivotal crossing of Fosse Way and Ermine Street, linking the Town Centre to the Roman amphitheatre, potentially via a bridge link across Bristol Road (A429).

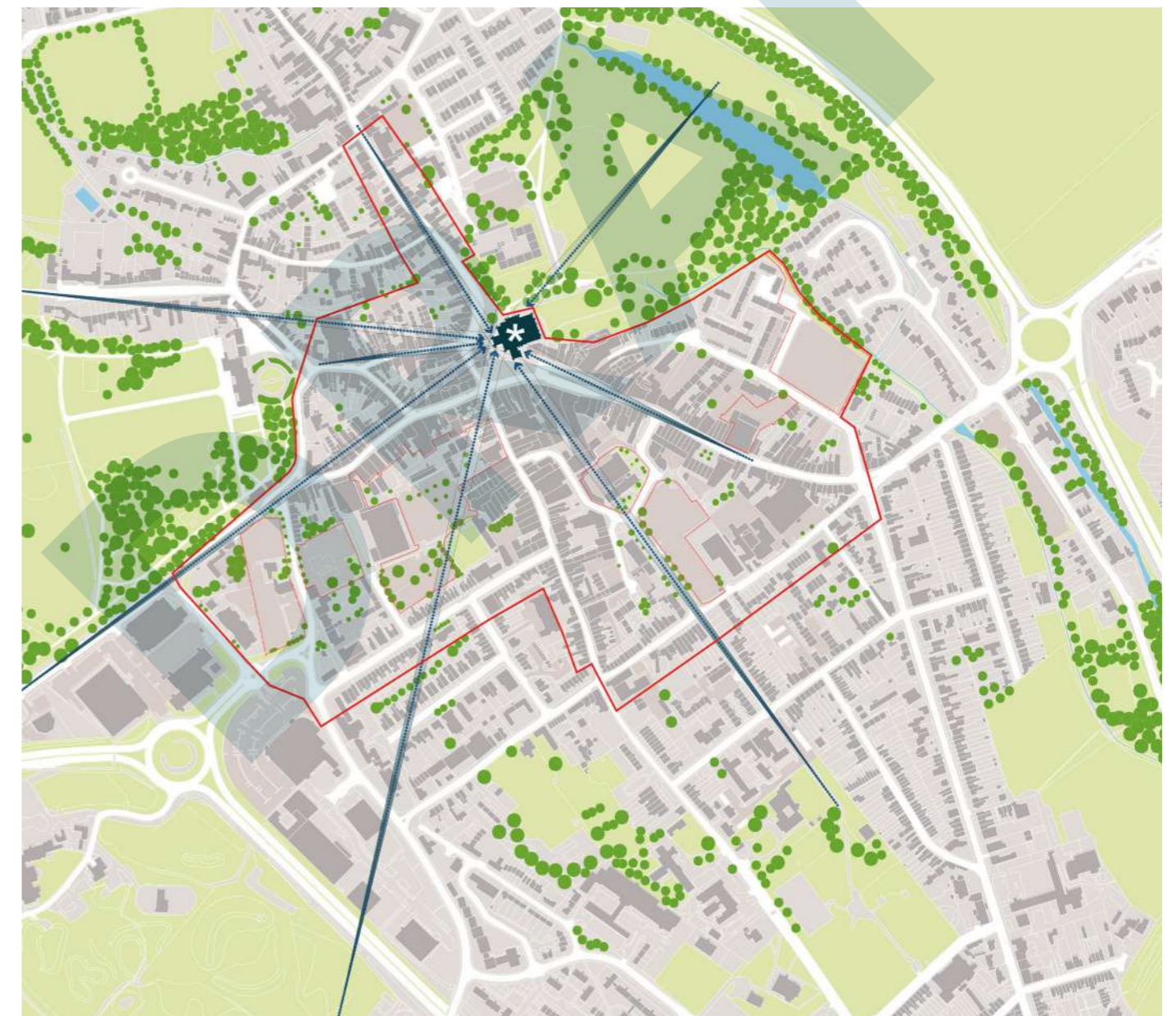


Principle 4

TOWNSCAPE & ENHANCED VIEWS

The Masterplan must ensure that existing important views are not obscured by redevelopment and that, where possible, new or better views to key town landmarks can be revealed, enhanced or maintained.

This particularly includes maintaining or re-establishing positive vistas towards the key landmark of Cirencester - the tower of St John Baptist Church on Market Place, which will contribute to a renewed sense of place in the Town Centre.



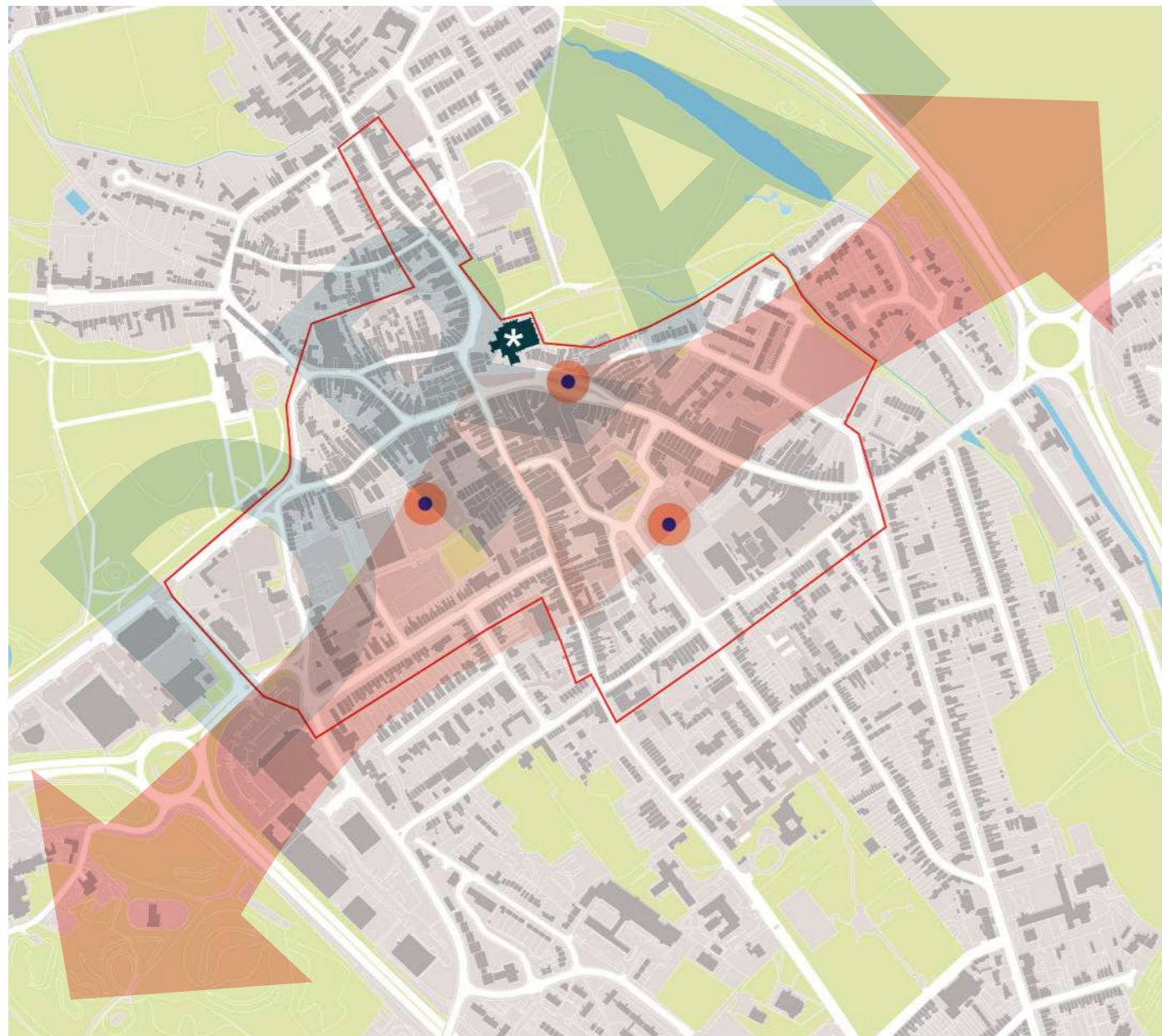
Principle 5

TRANSPORT

21st century mobility

Being able to move freely and safely through the town centre offers a wide range of community, health and wellbeing, environmental, business and tourism benefits. Therefore, consideration should be given to creating a new or enhanced mobility hub and increasing active travel measures to supplement and, where possible, offset the demand for parking in the Town

Centre. Parking will still need to be a feature of the town centre but consideration should be given to relocating car parking on the periphery and/or in facilities such as Park and Ride/Stride, to reuse space in the Town Centre to create a thriving urban community with placemaking and sustainability at its heart.



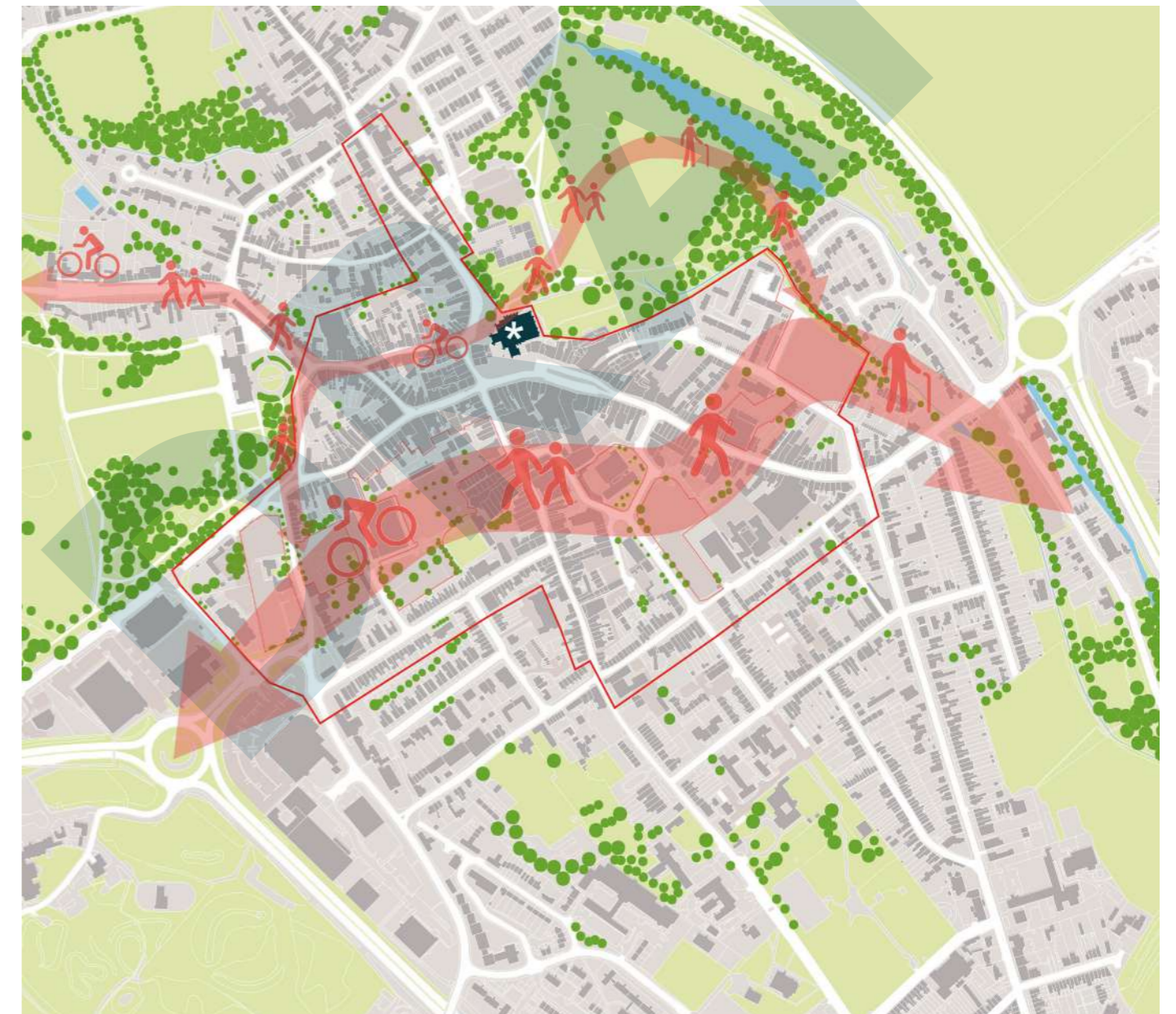
* This is subject to 2023 Transport Study results

Principle 6

PERMEABILITY & BETTER CONNECTIONS

The grain of the Town Centre gives the opportunity for a new east-west pedestrian/cycle route from Old Station car park through to Waterloo car park. This will then be activated through a series of new spaces and uses to form a new animated route, encouraging active travel across the Town Centre.

On top of this, there is the potential for a layer of 21st century townscape that interprets the Roman heritage. This could form a new pedestrian/cycle 'trail' that could be based upon the existing cultural uses in the town, such as heritage, art or sculpture.





FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Walking and cycling

In order to address modal shift and 21st century mobility, active travel must be encouraged in and around the Town Centre. In order to encourage walking and cycling, development proposals should incorporate the following principles:

- Safe, secure walking routes, with good natural surveillance;
- Adequate and appropriate surface-level crossings;
- Dedicated pedestrian footpaths and cycle lanes;
- Improved way-finding and legibility across the Town Centre;
- Strengthening of east-west connection to the Roman amphitheatre;
- Provision of seating and shade in appropriate locations on walking routes to support all abilities;
- The quality of cycling provision should be improved between Kemble Station and Cirencester Town Centre;
- Provision of cycle hub parking at key, strategic locations;
- Provision of public cycle parking with good natural surveillance.

Public transport

It is proposed that a new mobility hub is located within the Framework Masterplan. This would bring together shared transport (i.e. car clubs), public transport (i.e. coaches and buses), and active travel (i.e. bicycles and scooters), in to one central location, improving the public realm and accessibility to the town for everyone.

Inclusive Access

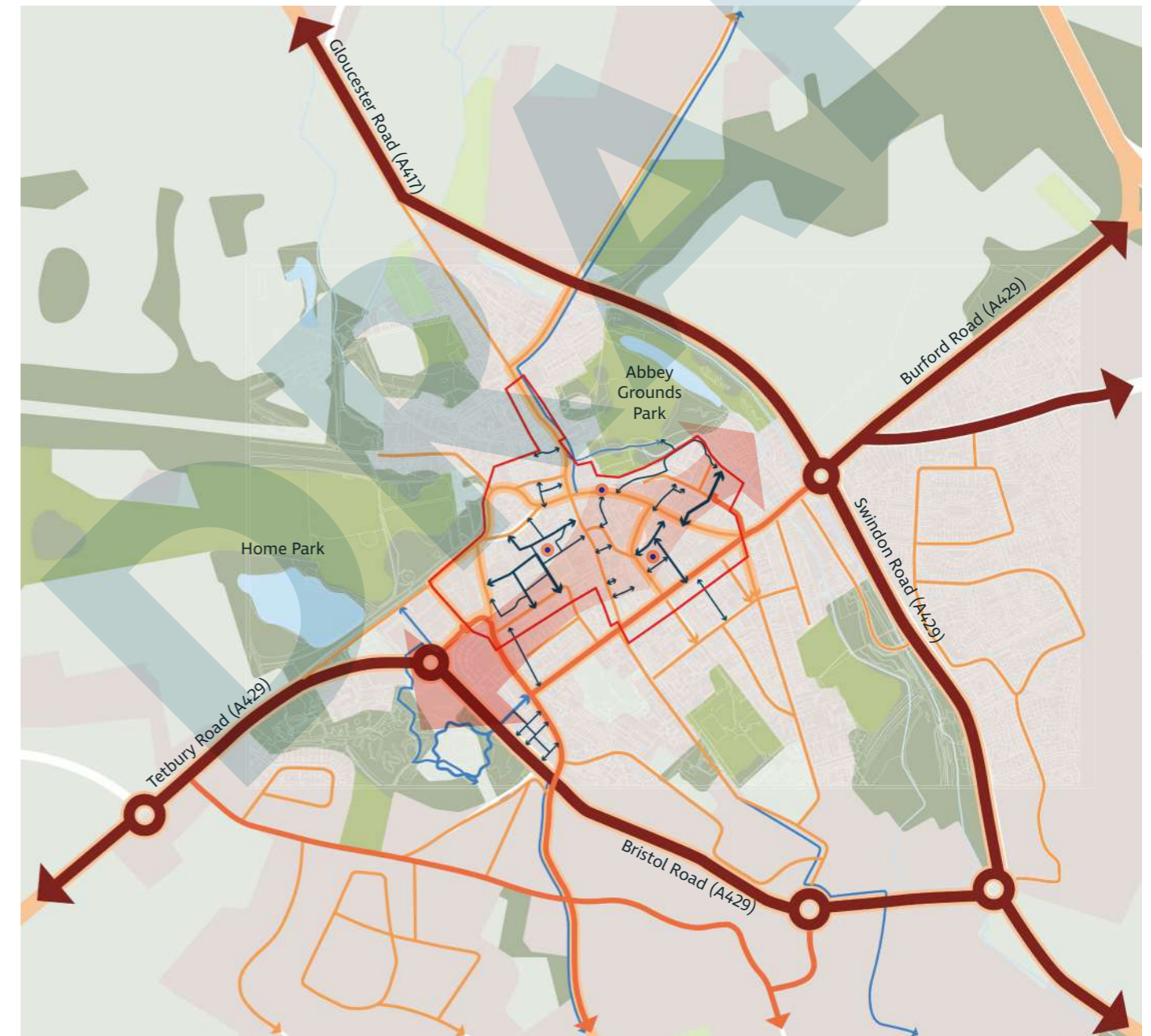
The Town Centre should be accessible for people of all ages and abilities. This includes providing accessible dwellings, commercial space, cultural space and public realm.

Car parking

There are several surface car parks located in key locations through the Town Centre, which vary in levels of occupancy throughout the day and week. This demand for parking must be addressed whilst promoting modal shift to promote the sustainability aspirations of Cirencester.

The Council is in the process of commissioning a study that will assess how people access and move around the town centre, which will ultimately underpin the Framework Masterplan over the next year. This study will examine how many town centre car parking spaces are required now and in the future. It will investigate the issues, risks and benefits of relocating Town Centre parking to the periphery, introducing facilities such as 'Park and Ride' or 'Park and Stride'. It will also investigate opportunities to better connect the suburbs with the town centre through active travel measures.

- Town centre boundary
- 'A' roads
- Secondary roads
- Other roads
- Sustainable transport corridors
- Pedestrian routes
- Pedestrian/cycle routes
- Relocating the car parking
- Preferred mobility hub locations



* This is subject to 2023 Transport Study results

HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Designated and non-designated heritage assets

Designated heritage assets are identified in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as having a degree of significance due to their heritage interest. This can include:

- A World Heritage Site
- Scheduled Monument
- Listed Building
- Protected Wreck Site
- Registered Park and Garden
- Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area

Non-designated heritage assets are other spaces or buildings identified by the local planning authority as having local interest. They may be of archaeological interest; architectural interest; artistic interest; an/or historic interest.

Heritage protection legislation and policy

Most of the Cirencester Town Centre lies within the designated Cirencester (Town Centre) Conservation Area. Therefore, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); The Cotswold District Plan 2011-31; and the Cotswold Design Code, the Framework Masterplan is obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and/or enhancing the character or appearance of the area and of designated heritage assets in an appropriately sustainable manner.

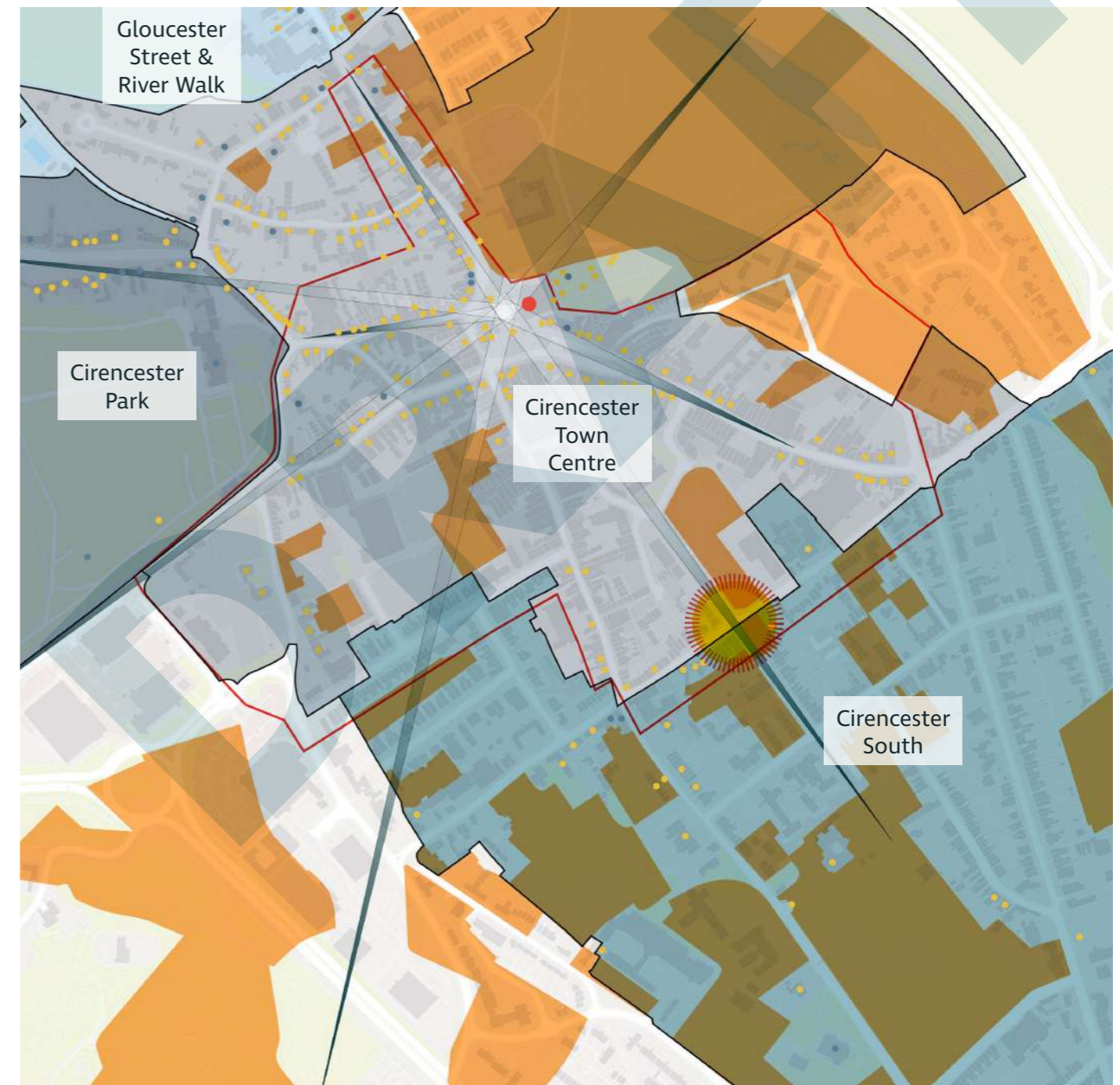
Simultaneously, the Cotswold Design Code states that it is important that the development, whilst respecting local character, develops a sense of place in its own right alongside individuality of design and identity of character either for the whole development or with a larger scheme, also for areas within that development.

The plan opposite demonstrated the carefully-considered interrelationship with the existing historic built environment, as well as the existing building heights across the Town Centre, which will inform the heights of any proposed new development.

Cirencester - a town of two characters

Cirencester is really a town of two quite different and potentially contradictory characters, both of enormous significance: the Roman settlement, with the characteristic layout of a planned Roman town, and the irregular post-Roman town.

The historical vital crossing of the north-south Ermine Street (Gloucester Road, South Way and Tower Street) and the east-west Fosse Way (Quern's Lane, Lewis Lane) are the reason for Cirencester's existence, with the forum characteristically positioned adjacent to the crossing. There was a post-Roman shift of the Town Centre to the north of this junction. There is therefore the opportunity to allow the Roman town to be better interpreted in areas such as the Forum and the Phoenix Way site, without impacting upon the medieval plan of the post-Roman town.



LAND USES

Mix of uses

A rich mix of uses in the Town Centre will be supported to enhance and build upon the existing successful retail and cultural uses on offer. A diversification of uses in the Town Centre is required to include a wide range of functions and services, including business and employment, education, leisure and entertainment, culture, community and health.

To avoid 'zoning', the blurring of boundaries, particularly through the growth of Town Centre living on upper floors, will play an important role in enhancing the resilience and vitality of the Town Centre. Flexibility in block design will be encouraged to establish greatest flexibility for alternative future uses.

Frontages

At street level, buildings should have a successful human-scale interface, which should be active and engaging. High-quality public realm will be addressed with ground floor active frontages, promoting natural surveillance. Positive frontages will then complete the new urban blocks, defining the hierarchy of streets and spaces across the Town Centre sites.

New residential dwellings will be introduced in the Town Centre, along with associated amenity spaces and new public spaces, making the Town Centre a desirable place to live. This will be important to give an uplift in both the daytime and the evening population, which will help support the viability of all the other uses, particularly evening entertainment.



A RE-IMAGINED EAST-WEST ROUTE

Through many years of change, some historic routes through the Town Centre have become disconnected. This includes the historic Roman route along Querns Lane/Lewis Lane which once connected the Roman amphitheatre with the Town Centre, and is now dissected by Bristol Road (A429).

The intention is to re-imagine this connection with the amphitheatre via a bridge link across the A429, providing a safe, attractive connection to re-instate a version of the Roman east-west route across the Town Centre. This will then be activated through a series of new spaces and uses to form a new animated route, encouraging active travel across the Town Centre.



Hierarchy of spaces

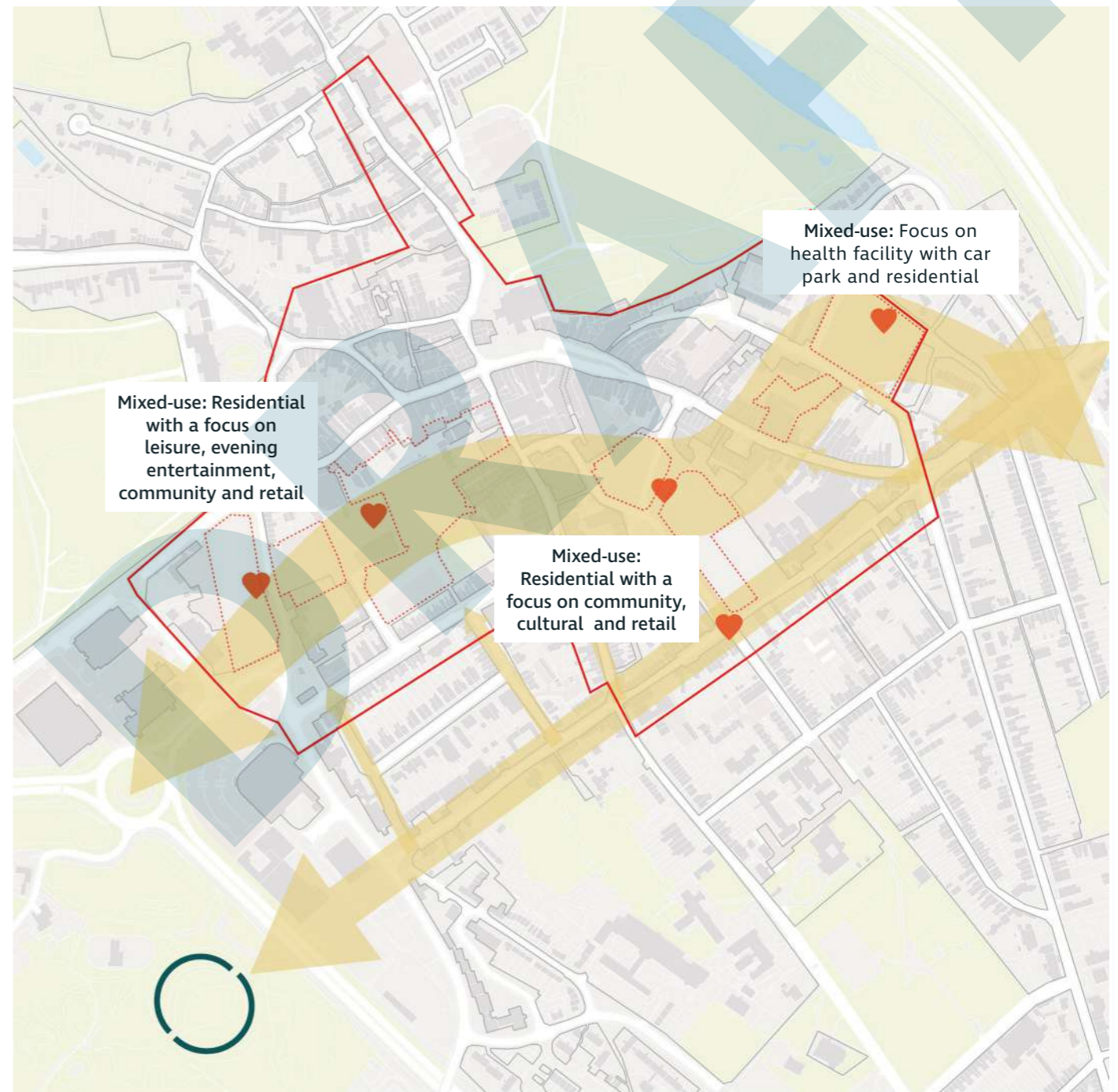
The Town Centre presents opportunities for comprehensive redevelopment, the completion of urban blocks, and public realm interventions to establish greater clarity to the hierarchy of spaces within the Town Centre.

Creating a cohesive network of well-designed public spaces spanning from the western to the eastern parts of the Town Centre will help establish a new and inviting east-west route, promoting active travel through the Town Centre. Augmenting this experience is the potential integration of a trail, such as a heritage, sculpture, or art trail) to captivate and engage visitors.



Cirencester Amphitheatre

-  Special places
-  Pedestrian/cycle routes

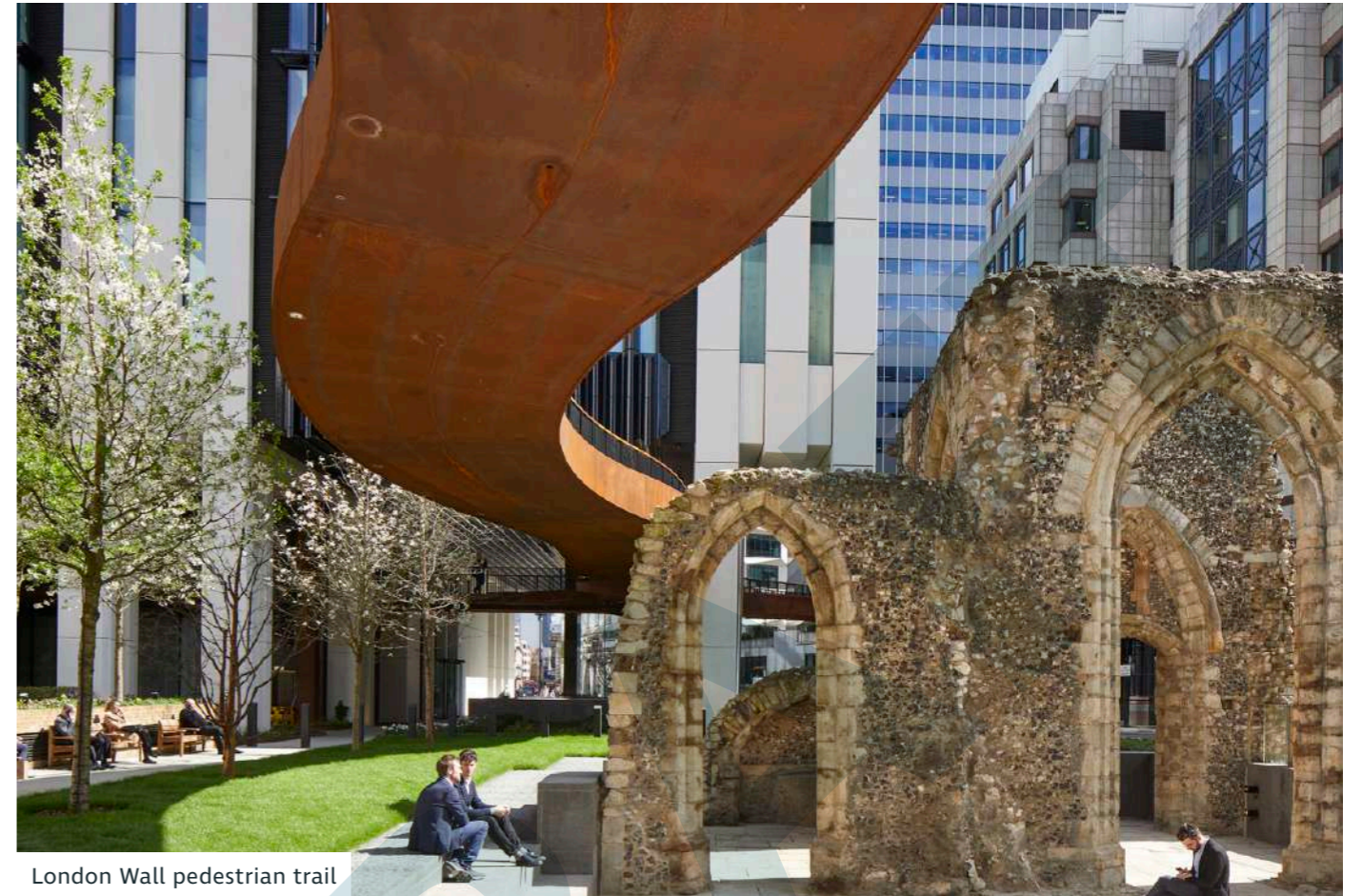


CONNECTING THE ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE

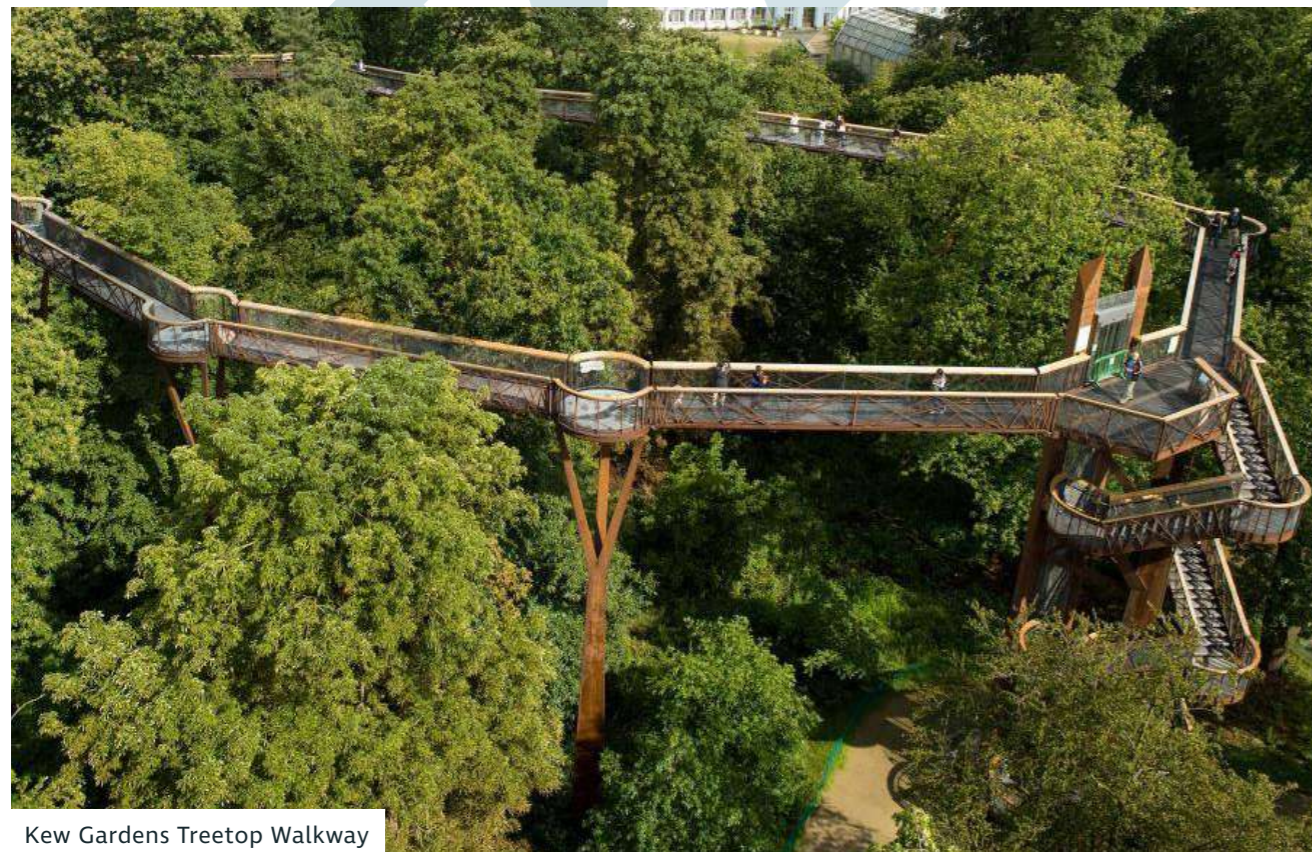
Improving the permeability east-west through the Town Centre to enable pedestrians and cyclists to move freely and safely between the Roman amphitheatre and the Waterloo area will offer a wide range of well-being, environmental and tourism benefits.

There is the opportunity to build on the existing Roman grain of streets in the Town Centre, particularly the strong historic east-west route along Querns Lane/Lewis Lane, which connected the Roman Verulamium Gate to the east and the Roman Bath Gate to the west. To address the severance that currently exists between

the Town Centre and the Roman amphitheatre due to Bristol Road/A429, this route could be continued via a pedestrian and cyclist 'Bridge link'. This would provide a safe, accessible route to the amphitheatre, encouraging sustainable travel, which could form the western portion of the wider east-west heritage/art/sculpture trail, shown in Principle 6.



London Wall pedestrian trail



Kew Gardens Treetop Walkway



National Arboretum Treetop Walkway, Gloucestershire

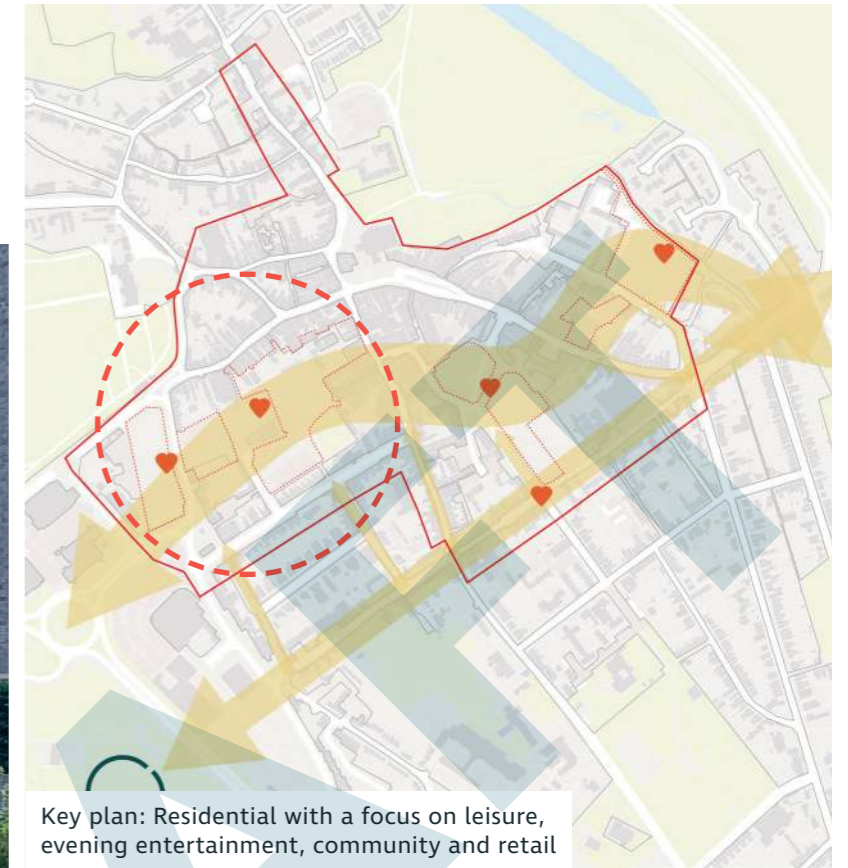
OLD STATION, SHEEP STREET & BREWERY



Bishopsgate Goodyard



Catford Green, Lewisham



Key plan: Residential with a focus on leisure, evening entertainment, community and retail



Parkway, Newbury - active frontages



Altstadtquartier Büchel - uses spill out into public realm

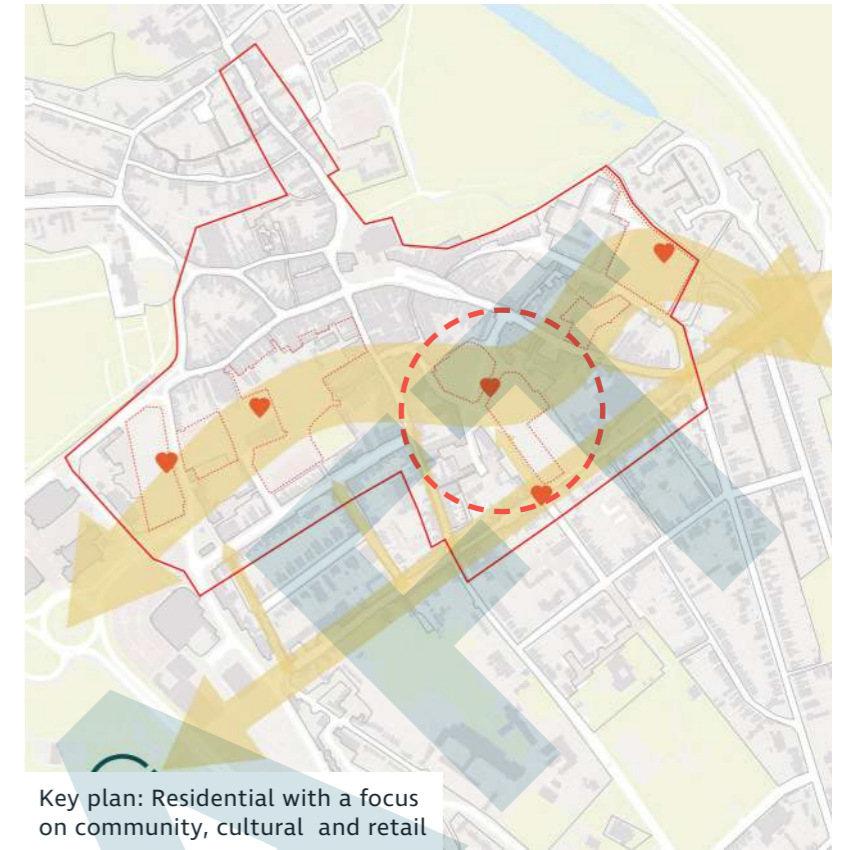
THE FORUM



Plymouth Mobility Hub



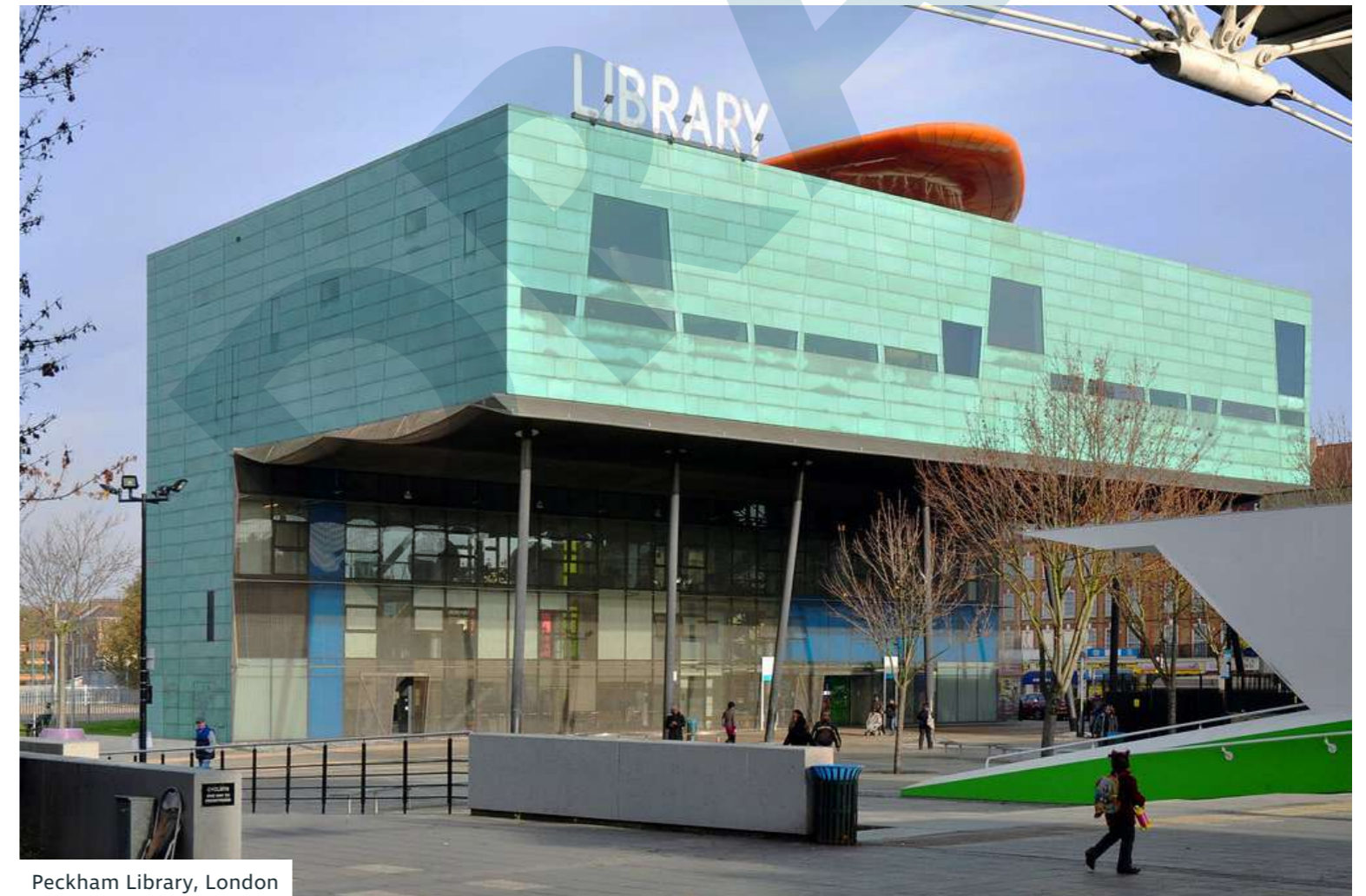
Ebury Edge - affordable spaces for start-up businesses, a community centre and a cafe



Key plan: Residential with a focus on community, cultural and retail



Idea Store, London - a community centre providing a library, dance and health facilities, and continuing education services



Peckham Library, London

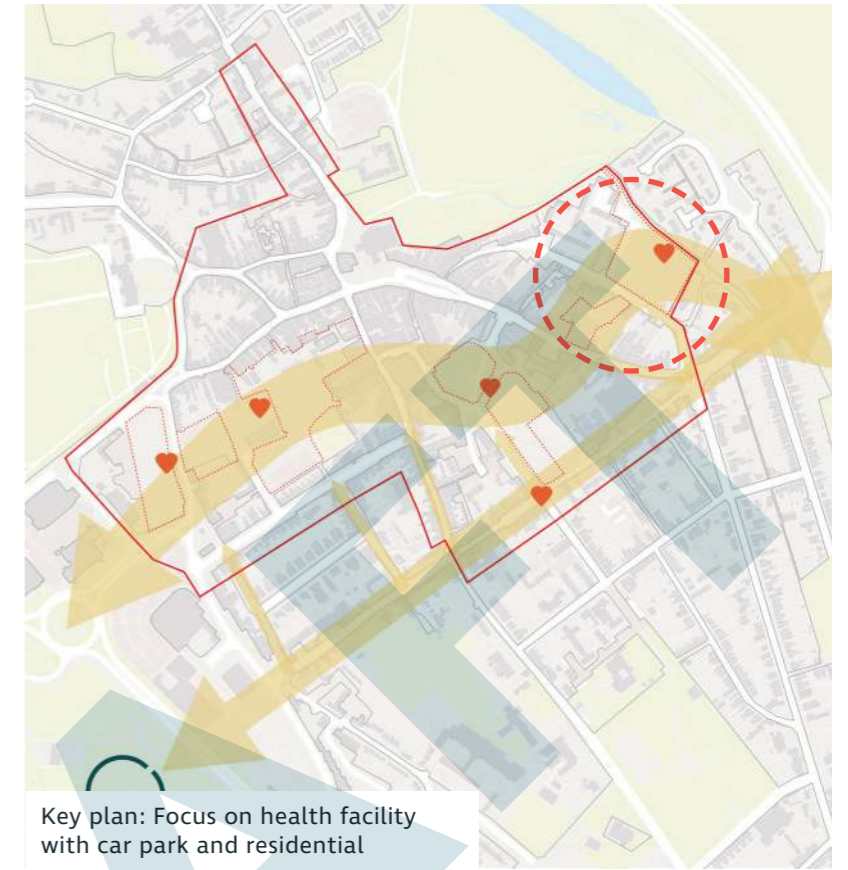
LINKING DYER STREET TO WATERLOO



Marmalade Lane - co-housing project with a car-free community-based central lane



Hofgarten & Cappelaue Landscape Park



Key plan: Focus on health facility with car park and residential



Park n Play Car Park Copenhagen - integrated green facade and an attractive public realm on the roof, including a childrens playground



Car Park in Bordeaux - deck car parking site between ground-floor shops/community/health uses and rooftop housing

DRAFT

December 2023



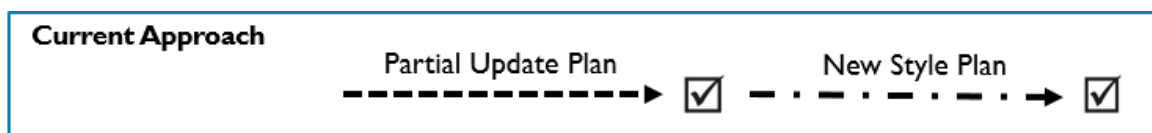
Page 203

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ANNEX G: UPDATING THE ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN – THE SCENARIOS

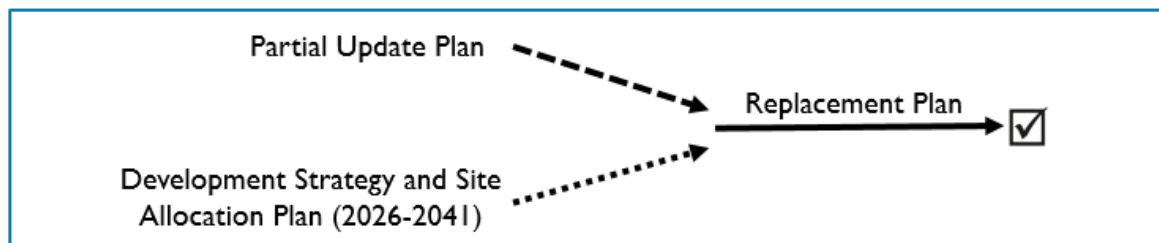
- 1.1. Annex G is to note only and it provides the rationale for preparing two local plans concurrently. It describes and explains the current complexities of navigating the government’s planning reforms and its impact on the council’s plan-making programme of work.
- 1.2. The current programme of work is to update partially the adopted Local Plan and then to carry out a full update in a ‘New Style Plan’.

The Current Scenario.



- 1.3. The government’s planning reforms have advanced in recent months with the Royal Assent of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Action (the Act). This prompts a need to reflect on the plan-making process and the scale of the update to the adopted Local Plan.
- 1.4. Chiefly, there are two main drivers influencing a change to the local plan-making approach.
- i. Opportunity to reduce future spend; and
 - ii. Ensuring the council maintains a five year housing land supply from 2026.
- 1.5. Initial consideration of the available options focussed on continuing with the programmed ‘Partial Update Plan’ followed by a ‘New Style Plan’ (Current Scenario) or to transition to a full ‘Replacement Plan’ now (Scenario 1).

Scenario 1 - Replacement Plan approach.



- 1.6. An assessment of these two options is provided at paragraph 1.19. This explains there are two different rationales at play. If the focus is on the delivery of corporate objectives as soon as possible - to make the plan green to the core - then the bias is towards the Partial Update Plan (current approach). If a long term position is taken on costs and addressing future strategic planning needs then the bias is towards transitioning to a Replacement Plan (Scenario 1).
- 1.7. However, the government has set a deadline for councils to transition to the new plan-making system. Councils have until the 30 June 2025 to submit their emerging plans using extant national planning policies, guidance and regulations.
- 1.8. The risks of failing to meet this hard deadline are potentially severe to the council. If the council fully committed to a Replacement Plan (Scenario 1) but found it was then unable to meet the 30 June 2025 deadline because, for example, progress on the new development strategy and site allocations had not progressed sufficiently far enough, then it would lose its ability to alter development management policies which are central to delivering the council’s ambition to make the adopted Local Plan green to the core. In effect, it risks

significant abortive work spent over the last two years on updating local plan policies. This is because the council would be required to prepare a New Style Plan which restricts a council's ability to prepare local development management policies. Work on the development strategy and site allocations would be largely unaffected owing to the nature of the New Style Plan.

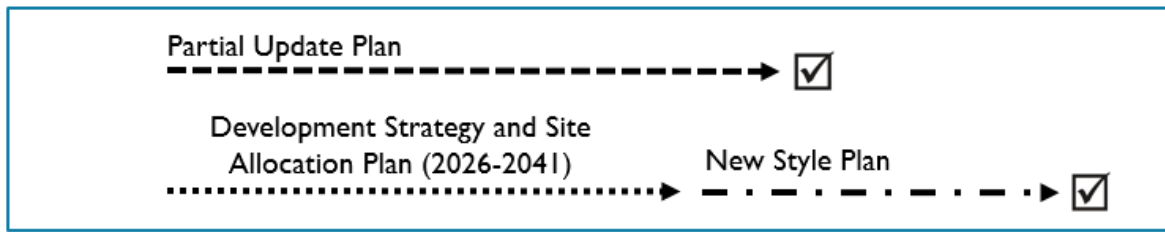
- 1.9. Government reforms are rarely smooth or delivered on time, so it is not difficult to envisage some slippage and changes nearer to that deadline. The recent experience of the new biodiversity net gain policy is a good example. There will also be a General Election that will occur no later than late January 2025, which may affect timetables and the wider planning reforms. Be that as it may, the council has to take the government at its word and assume the deadline is immutable. Therefore, the council needs to find an approach that allows it to progress plan-making but in a way that doesn't invite unnecessary risk.

The advocated approach

- 1.10. Officers recommend pursuing a Replacement Plan approach (i.e. draft policies, a development strategy and new site allocations up to 2041), advocated in Scenario 1. However, the council does not need to formally join the two components of the Replacement Plan together now.
- 1.11. In technical terms, the recommendation requires the council to commit to preparing a Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) alongside the Partial Update Plan (2011-2031). This is because a new development strategy cannot form part of Partial Update Plan, as it would cease being a Partial Update Plan.
- 1.12. If the subsequent conditions are met the 2026-2041 plan would be combined with the Partial Update Plan become the *Replacement Plan*. If the conditions are not met the 2026-2041 plan would become a *New Style Plan*. The Local Development Scheme at Annex D provides further technical details.
- 1.13. The decision to transition to a Replacement Plan would be contingent on the following conditions:
- Sufficient progress has been made on the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) to meet the 30 June 2025 deadline. E.g. traffic modelling, the cost of new infrastructure and other evidence and engagement indicates that the strategy is "aspirational but deliverable"¹; and
 - Clarity on the planning reforms, including the awaited update to the National Planning Policy Framework, proposed new National Development Management Policies and new secondary planning legislation / regulations to add the detail missing from the Act.
- 1.14. If these conditions are not satisfied by December 2024 then the course of action would be to submit the Partial Update Plan for independent examination in public by June 2025. The Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041) would be transitioned to a New Style Plan and submitted for independent examination in public after June 2025. This is illustrated in Scenario 2.

Scenario 2 - Partial Update Plan and New Style Plan.

¹ As required by NPPF (September 2023) paragraph 16



- I.15. By continuing with the ongoing Partial Update Plan and commencing a Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-2041), but not formally joining the two together now, the council can keep its options open and ‘hedge its bets’.
- I.16. This hybrid approach – aiming to achieve Scenario 1 but with a fall back option of Scenario 2 – may deliver future cost savings. Fundamentally, however, it ensures the council’s green to the core ambitions can be submitted for independent examination in public by the government’s 30 June 2025 deadline.
- I.17. In summary, planning reforms are complicating plan-making and they require convoluted approaches to ensure progress can be made without placing the council at risk abortive work costing hundreds of thousands of pounds of investment and which took years to prepare. Although not advocated, it is completely understandable why some councils have paused their plan-making activities until the new system beds in.
- I.18. The advocated approach is to continue with the Partial Update Plan and to begin a new plan with a plan period of 2026 to 2041 that focusses on updating the council’s the development strategy and allocating sites to meet development requirements up to 2041. By December 2024, the council will need to make a judgement call based on whether sufficient work has been made on the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan to merge it with Partial Update Plan to create a Replacement Plan that can be submitted ahead of the 30 June 2025 deadline.

A comparison of current approach vs replacement plan approach

- I.19. A comparison has been made of the current linear approach verses combining the Partial Update Plan with a New Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (Scenario 1) to form a Replacement Plan. Scenario 2 would be a fall-back option to the Replacement Plan approach (Scenario 1) and it is not considered in the table. This is because the benefits and costs would largely mirror the Partial Update then New Style Plan (the current approach).

Table I: Comparison of current approach vs Scenario 1

Considerations	Current Approach: Partial Update then New Style Plan	Scenario 1: Replacement Plan
Timescales – The route to adoption of a new Replacement Plan	The Partial Update Plan would be submitted in early 2025 with adoption in 2025/6. A New Style Plan would then be prepared using the new plan-making regulations and adoption is estimated to be 2028.	The Partial Update Plan and the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan would be combined within a single Replacement Plan, which would be submitted no later than 30 June 2025. Adoption is estimated to be in 2026.

Considerations	Current Approach: Partial Update then New Style Plan	Scenario I: Replacement Plan
Policies updated	The Partial Update Plan has so updated approx. 65 policies. Policies would cover the period to 2031.	To transition to a replacement plan would require approx. 25 additional policies to be updated (a total of 90 policies). Chiefly, development strategy policies and site allocations. Partial Update Plan and Development Strategy and Site Allocations Policies would cover the period to 2041.
Evidence gathered (approx.)	Approx. 35 studies are required to support the justification of updated policies in the Partial Update Plan. Typically evidence has a shelf life of approx. five years, although this can range depending on the topic. Therefore supporting evidence would need to be updated again.	Approx. 45 studies are required to support the justification of updated policies and a new development strategy (including new site allocations).
Costs (approx.)	£1.52M – Costs assume: four formal consultations, two examinations in public, additional evidence to justify the new development strategy and refreshing out-of-date evidence.	£1.1M – Costs assume: two formal consultations, one examination in public, and additional evidence to justify the new development strategy.
Housing Supply	A Partial Update Plan would further secure the council's five year housing land supply in the short term but it would become increasingly less certain from 2026. This option does not allocate land to meet needs arising in the 2030s, which may increase the risk of planning by appeal the nearer to the end of plan period gets before the council updates its plan fully.	This option allocates land to meet needs arising in the 2030s. This would better secure the council's five year housing land supply and would therefore better mitigate speculative applications.

1.20. There are two different rationales at play. If the focus is on the delivery of corporate objectives as soon as possible, i.e. to make the plan green to the core, then the bias is towards the Partial Update Plan. However, if a long term position is taken on costs and

addressing future strategic planning needs then the bias is towards transitioning to a replacement plan.

- 1.21. With respect to the Council's five year housing supply and under a partial update approach, the Council may become increasingly reliant on the government's housing need figures as the basis for measuring its five year housing land supply rather than using its locally derived housing requirement that takes consideration of the constraints and opportunities within the district; and therefore reducing the council's sovereignty.
- 1.22. Whilst a partial update plan can be achieved sooner than a replacement plan – approximately nine months sooner – in practice it is part of a longer-term programme of work. This is because the council will be required to fully update its local plan well before the end of the plan period in 2031. It is also likely that the government will be 'incentivising' authorities to prepare a New Style Plan following the adoption of the Partial Update Plan. Transitioning to a Replacement Plan now would deliver a new 15 year plan approximately two years earlier than current arrangements (i.e. a Partial Update Plan followed by a New Style Plan). It is expected that the transition would be more cost effective in the long-term. Although both options require additional investment.

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN
1 DECEMBER 2023 – 31 MARCH 2024**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Cabinet decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Cabinet to account and in contributing to policy development. The Council has agreed an Executive Scrutiny Protocol to guide how Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will interact with each other.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Cabinet reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In setting and reviewing its work plan, Scrutiny will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and will take advice from officers on prioritisation, which may be informed by the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

Timeliness: Is it timely to consider this issue?

Organisational priority: Is it a Council priority?

Public Interest: Is it of significant public interest?

Influence: Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

Cost: Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

Call in

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of a decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder or the Council should reconsider the decision. (It should be noted that Cabinet does not have to change its decision following the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Item	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Monday 8 January 2024		
Corporate Plan 2024-2028	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Cotswold District Local Plan Update	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Tuesday 30 January 2024		
Review of Leisure and Cultural Services provision	Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Scott Williams, Contracts Business Manager Scott.Williams@publicagroup.uk
2024/25 Budget – Fees and Charges Report	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition Plan	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Recommendations of the Public Conveniences Working Group	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk
Agile working and future tenancies at Trinity Road	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property

Council Offices	Finance - Cllr Mike Every	and Regeneration Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk
Tuesday 27 February 2024		
Climate and Ecological Emergency	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Chris Crookall-Fallon, Head of Climate Action chris.crookall-fallon@cotswold.gov.uk
River Quality/Sewage	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Phil Shaw, Business Manager - Development Management phil.shaw@publicagroup.uk
Q3 Financial Performance Report 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Q3 Performance Report 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Tuesday 2 April 2024		
Community Safety Partnership	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Jacqueline Wright, Community Wellbeing Manager Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Housing	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability
Publica Business Plan	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Jan Britton, Managing Director - Publica jan.britton@publicagroup.uk
Tuesday 7 May 2024		

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION**

Forward Plan – December 2023 – May 2024
Published 1 December 2023

The Forward Plan

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of any matter where it is proposed that the public will be excluded during consideration of the matter.

This Forward Plan incorporates both of these requirements. In the interests of transparency, it also aims to include details of those items to be debated by the Cabinet that relate to either policy/budget formulation, matters which will be subject to a recommendation to the Council, and other matters due to be considered by the Cabinet. This programme covers a period of four months, and will be updated on a monthly basis. The timings of items may be subject to change.

It should be noted that although a date not less than 28 clear days after the date of the notice is given in each case, it is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given provided, in the cases of key decisions and matters to be considered in private, that the 28 day notice has been given. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for Meetings of the Cabinet are made available on the [Council's Web Site](#) – five working days in advance of the Meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for Meetings of the Cabinet will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded.

There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or a matter may be considered in private, even though the 28 clear days' notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the Council's Web Site, and available from the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

Key Decisions

Key Decisions

The Regulations define a key decision as an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority.

In financial terms, the Council has decided that a key decision is any executive decision which requires a budget expenditure of £150,000 or more, or one which generates savings of £150,000 or more.

A key decision may only be made in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules contained within the Council's Constitution.

Matters To Be Considered in Private

The great majority of matters considered by the Council's Cabinet are considered in 'open session' when the public have the right to attend.

However, some matters are considered with the public excluded. The public may only be excluded if a resolution is passed to exclude them. The grounds for exclusion are limited to situations where confidential or exempt information may be disclosed to the public if present and, in most cases involving exempt information, where in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The definitions of these are set out in the Council's Constitution.

Documents and Queries

Formal reports presented relating to any executive decision will be available on the Council's Web Site at least five working days in advance of the Meeting at which the decision is to be made (except insofar as they contain confidential and/or exempt information).

The Decision Notice for each key decision will be published as soon as reasonably practicable after it has been made. We will seek to do this within five working days of the date of the decision. The Decision Notice will be available for public inspection on the Council's Web Site, and at the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

If you have any questions about the Forward Plan, or if you wish to make representations about any of the matters contained within it, please contact the Council's Democratic Services Team. The Democratic Services Team can also, on request, provide copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the Plan and any which subsequently become available (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure).

Contact Details:

Democratic Services, Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1PX

E-mail: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk Telephone: 01285 623000 Website: www.cotswold.gov.uk

Telephone: 01285 623000; Fax: 01285 623907

The Council's Executive Arrangements

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance.

By law, the Cabinet can comprise a Leader of the Council, together with up to nine other Members to be appointed by the Leader (one of whom has

to be appointed as Deputy Leader). The Leader will be elected by the Council, for a four-year term; and the Deputy Leader appointment is also for a four-year term.

The Cabinet at Cotswold District Council currently comprises a Leader, a Deputy Leader, and six other Cabinet Members. The structure is as set out in the table below.

Executive decisions are taken either collectively by the Cabinet or individually by Cabinet Members.

The Cabinet generally meets monthly; whereas decision-making by individual Cabinet Members occurs on an 'as and when needed' basis.

Decisions of the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members are subject to scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Joe Harris	Leader	Coordination of executive functions, Policy framework including the corporate plan, Publica, Council communications, Democratic services, Housing and homelessness, Clean and green campaign and street cleaning, Town and parish council liaison
Mike Evely (Deputy Leader)	Finance	Financial strategy and management, Property and assets, Waste and recycling, Revenues and benefits, Grants, Public toilets, UBICO
Mike McKeown	Climate Change and Sustainability	Climate and biodiversity emergency response, Community energy, Sustainable transport, Retrofit, Council sustainability
Tony Dale	Economy and Council Transformation	Business transformation, Local Enterprise Partnership and county-wide partnerships, Economic development, Car parking operations and strategy, Tourism and visitor information centres, Chamber of Commerce liaison, Customer experience and channel shift
Juliet Layton	Planning and Regulatory Services	Development management, Forward planning and the local plan, Heritage and design management, Environmental and regulatory services, Cotswold Water Park
Paul Hodgkinson	Health, Leisure and Culture	Public health, Mental health, Leisure centres, Museums, Culture , Young people
Lisa Spivey	Communities and Public Safety	Improving social mobility and social isolation, Flooding and sewage, Safeguarding, Domestic abuse, Police liaison and crime, Refugees, Crowdfund Cotswold, Member Development
Claire Bloomer	Cost of Living and Inclusion	Cost of living support, Liaison with 3 rd sector, Diversity and inclusion, Supporting women and minorities

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
7 December 2023 - Cabinet						
Q2 Financial Performance Report	No	Open	Cabinet	28 Nov 2023	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Q2 Performance Report	No	Open	Cabinet	28 Nov 2023	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/2025	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	7 Dec 2023 24 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publicagroup.uk
Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet	28 Nov 2023	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
Increase in Fixed Penalty Notice fines for fly-tipping, duty of care, littering and graffiti.	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Philip Measures philip.measures@publicagroup.uk
Proactive Delivery of	No	Open	Cabinet	28 Nov 2023	Leader of the Council -	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director - Planning and

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Affordable Housing					Cllr Joe Harris	Sustainability charlie.jackson@publicagrou p.uk
11 January 2024 - Cabinet						
Corporate Plan 2024-2027	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	8 Jan 2024 24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.go v.uk
Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.g ov.uk
Review of Parking Charges	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.g ov.uk
2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov .uk
Asset Management Plan	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance -	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
					Cllr Mike Evey	David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
The Green Infrastructure Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Lesley Davies, Planning Policy Officer lesley.davies@cotswold.gov.uk
Cotswold District Local Plan - Partial Update	Yes	Open	Cabinet	8 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
The Old Station and Memorial Cottages - Investment Decision	Yes	Part exempt Containing commercially sensitive information	Cabinet Council	11 Jan 2024 24 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Mark Stedman, Senior Project Manager Mark.Stedman@publicagroup.uk
Agile working and future tenancies at Trinity Road Council Offices	No	Part exempt Annexes will include commercially sensitive information relating to the business model, income and costs for	Cabinet	8 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
		specific tenants				
Recommendations of Public Conveniences Working Group	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk
24 January 2024 - Full Council						
Polling District and Places Review	No	Open	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Community Governance Review - Upper Rissington	No	Open	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Amendments to the Constitution	No	Open	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) Angela.Claridge@Cotswold.gov.uk
1 February 2024 - Cabinet						
2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital	Yes	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance -	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report			Council	21 Feb 2024	Cllr Mike Evely	Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
2024/25 Budget – Fees and Charges Report	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	1 Feb 2024 21 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evely	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Channel Choice and Telephone Access Update	Yes	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident Services jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Publica Transition Plan	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	1 Feb 2024 21 Feb 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
21 February 2024 - Full Council						
7 March 2024 - Cabinet						
Q3 Performance Report 2024	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Q3 Financial Performance Report 2024	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Fixed Penalty Notice Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk
Retail Relief 2024 - Business Rates	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evey	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk
20 March 2024 - Full Council						
4 April 2024 - Cabinet						
9 May 2024 - Cabinet						
15 May 2024 - Full Council						
Key decisions delegated to officers						