



HEADINGTON  
NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM  
([headingtonplan.org.uk](http://headingtonplan.org.uk))

DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
2016 – 2031

**FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

## DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

HNF Document Control Sheet	
Document Title	Headington Neighbourhood Forum – Draft Neighbourhood Plan
Draft Number	v.3
Task Group and Authors	Project Manager
Date of Version	27. May 2015
Status	Consultation Draft
Date of Public Issue	
Visibility	Public
File Type	Word Document
File Name	HNF – Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Draft

## CONTENTS

Welcome to the Draft Headington Neighbourhood Plan

1. Introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031
2. The Headington Neighbourhood Forum
3. The Neighbourhood Plan Area
4. Why Consult on a Neighbourhood Plan?
5. The Consultation Process
6. Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan for Headington?
7. How the Plan was Prepared
8. The Plan Process
9. Headington Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives
10. Delivering the Plan
11. Headington Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policies
  - A. Green Spaces and Amenity
  - B. Business and Retail
  - C. Character and Identity
  - D. Education
  - E. Housing
  - F. Transport

## **Annexes and Additional Information**

*Annex 1 - Headington Neighbourhood Forum and Plan Structure*

*Annex 2 - Headington Neighbourhood Plan Process*

*Website - Business and Retail Consultation Report*

*Website - Issues and Options Consultation Report*

*Website - Character Assessment Report*

*Website - Community Engagement Strategy*

## **Welcome to the Draft Headington Neighbourhood Plan**

“What are the right things to do for Headington? Our quarter of Oxford is a busy place. It is home to thousands; a diverse community, many who've lived here all their lives but also a sizeable number who've moved here to retire, work or study. It is a place of work for thousands; in world-leading research institutes but also in a range of small and medium sized businesses. It is a place of education for thousands; the schools and universities in Headington are equipping people for life in the 21st century.

Because Headington is busy, many people have been concerned that the right balance hasn't always been struck. We think this is in part because the various strategies and plans of City and County don't focus on Headington or connect with those who live, work or study here. In proposing this plan, we are seeking to strike that balance - policies to make Headington a better place. We don't have a big single issue as a community; our work in preparing this plan has confirmed that. What we have is a range of issues. We have tried to tackle these in some depth, preparing policies in six areas, but they interlink. Some of our policies will impact on the way that planning of development happens, but many are designed to spark activities or to work with existing schemes.

The plan describes our processes, the ways that we have sought to find out what matters to people and to think about what we should do. What's clear is that none of this would have happened without the hard work of a range of people who've joined the Forum, thought about a policy area or helped on the steering committee. The process has been, and will continue to be, open to all those who want to help plan for the things that will make Headington a better place.”



***Mike Ratcliffe – Headington Neighbourhood Forum Chair***



## **1. Introduction to the Headington Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2031**

Headington Neighbourhood Forum (HNF) is the designated body for developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Headington (the Plan). It was designated by Oxford City Council in September 2014.

The aim of HNF is to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for Headington which is intended to give the local community more of a say in the development of their local area.

The ability to create Neighbourhood Plans was created by the Localism Act 2011. They are used to decide the future of the places where people live and work, giving opportunities to:

- choose where people want new homes, shops and offices to be built;
- have a say on what new buildings should look like; and
- grant planning permission for the new buildings you want to see go ahead.

The Headington Neighbourhood Plan aims to provide this opportunity, and has been drafted to provide a framework for these opportunities from 2016, when it is hoped that it will be adopted by the Headington community, up to 2031.

Consulting on this Draft Plan is a statutory requirement of the neighbourhood planning process, and the consultation period must be open for at least 6 weeks. However, opportunities to make representations to HNF are open throughout the Plan preparation process.

## **2. The Headington Neighbourhood Forum**

The Headington Neighbourhood Forum has been established as an organisation whose purpose is to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of Headington.

The Forum's membership represents a full cross-section of the local community including those who live and work in Headington. The Forum has in excess of 100 members including elected members of Oxford City and Oxfordshire County Councils.

All local groups operating in the area and owners of land within the area but not resident or working in the area have been invited to be represented. Presentations have been made to representative groups including Headington Action, Headington Forward and Oxford Brookes Students Union. Open meetings of the Forum have been publicised online and in the local media and membership sought through these means.

The process of developing the Plan, and of approving the Plan through a referendum lies with HNF. However, it is important that HNF acts as a conduit for the views and expectations of the

wider Headington Community. This includes those who live, work, study or travel through Headington. HNF also has a responsibility to be mindful of the impacts of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan on the neighbouring parishes, city areas, and other neighbourhood forums.

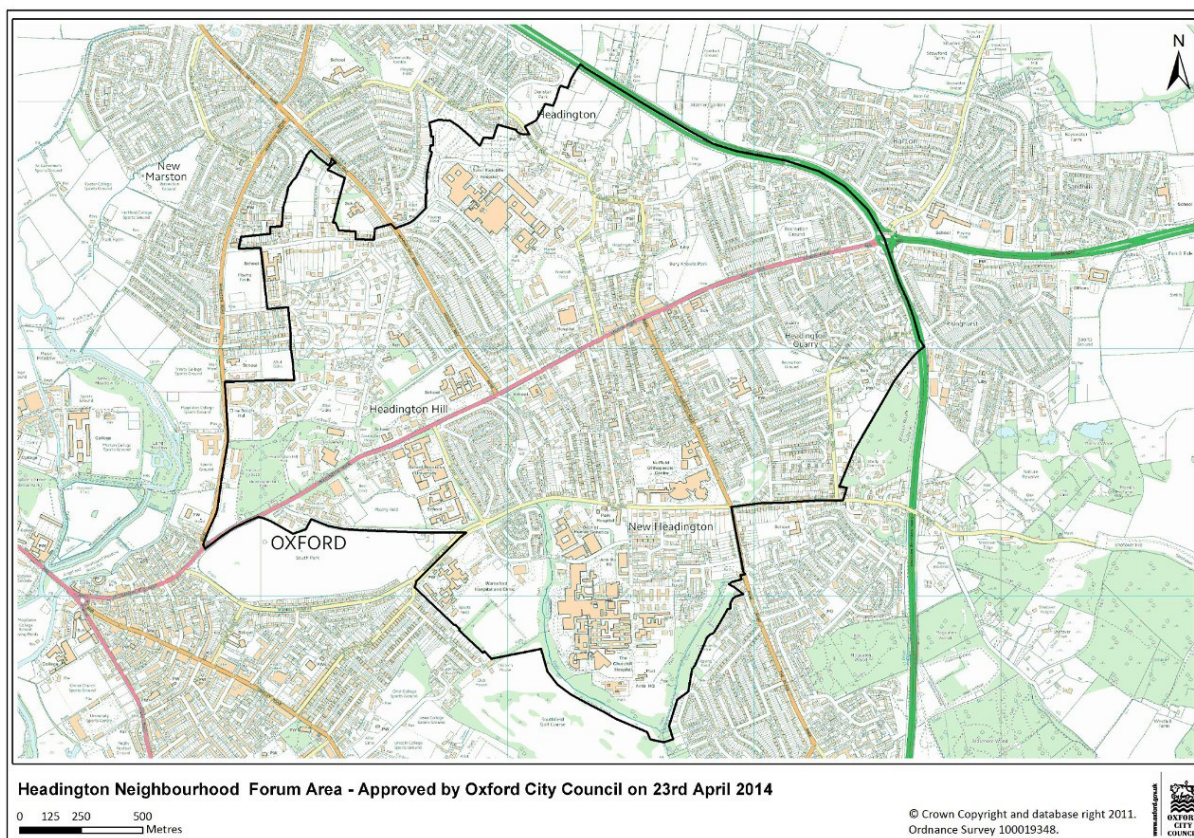
The Plan which HNF is producing is a spatial plan which has planning policies which determine how planning applications are determined, and community policies and projects which aim to help the community in Headington deliver the desired changes. Given that HNF is not the only statutory body responsible for spatial planning in Headington (Oxford City Council is the Local Planning Authority), the Plan must be in general conformance with Oxford City Council's strategic planning policies within its Local Plan.





### 3. The Neighbourhood Plan Area

The map below indicates the area which is covered by the Plan. This area was designated as the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area by Oxford City Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014.



#### **4. Why consult on a Neighbourhood Plan?**

Neighbourhood plans allow local people to get the right type of development for their community, but the plans must still meet the needs of the wider area. This means that neighbourhood plans have to take into account the local council's assessment of housing and other development needs in the area.

However, it goes beyond traditional 'land-use' planning activity, which tends to focus on regulation and control of development. Neighbourhood planning allows greater scope for plan makers, acting with the community, relevant agencies and service providers to promote and manage change in an area.

As with all plan-making, the project requires leadership. Where Town and Parish Councils do not cover an area, the Localism Act (2011) has given that leadership role to Neighbourhood Forums. Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

This carries significant responsibility in terms of producing a plan that is representative of the community. The way in which the process is led and implemented will need to secure confidence from the community in the Headington area and those organisations and businesses that serve our needs. Confidence in the process and support for the outcomes will be more certain by starting this process in a demonstrably transparent way and continuing in that way through all stages of plan preparation. We will do this by:

- showing a willingness to openly encourage opinions and suggestions from all individuals and organisations within the community whether or not these present potentially conflicting, challenging or critical views of the Plan or the process;
- presenting a reasonable, realistic, evidence based and cogently argued case to support the Plan at each stage of its preparation;
- making every effort to understand all views expressed from all individuals and groups and respond clearly on all matters raised in a timely manner; and
- demonstrating, in a form that is readily accessible and easily understood by the whole community, how the Plan reflects the views and opinions expressed during each stage of engagement and, where those views cannot legitimately be taken into account, explaining why that is the case.



## 5. The Consultation Process

The consultation phase of the project includes one informal and two formal legally required processes to **consult** the community, and an ongoing informal engagement and consultation process.

During the first informal process, which took place in September and October 2014, we produced a draft vision and aims of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan. We also identified, following on from the 'informing' process carried out through the policy groups, the issues and options in the Headington Neighbourhood Plan Area. This document, the Issues and Options Consultation, which was delivered to around 6,500 households, helped us gather views about what should be included in the plan.

Following this consultation we have identified and evaluated all the available evidence in order to produce this Draft Headington Neighbourhood Plan. This Draft Plan is scheduled for launching on the weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The formal consultation period is programmed to last for a further period of 6 weeks, until 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The additional comments and information provided by the community during this consultation will be used to finalise the Draft Plan.

Once the final Draft Headington Neighbourhood Plan is produced, which is programmed for September 2015, Oxford City Council are required to consult on it for a further 6 weeks. They will publicise the document, inviting comments on the content of the document.

Throughout this process, we will continue to informally **consult** the community using a range of appropriate techniques:

- **community profiling:** creating a shared picture with the community of the physical, human, social, economic and community characteristics, assets and issues found in an area.
- **organised discussion groups:** such as focus groups which allow small group discussions that give in-depth consideration to relevant local issues surrounding specific topics.
- **surveys:** such as resident opinion polls and questionnaire based surveys where responses to questions about specific issues are gathered in writing. These can take the form of door-to-door or street interviews; postal questionnaires; web-based, electronic and social media hosted surveys; and telephone interviews.

## **6. Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan for Headington?**

In the past all statutory spatial plans have been prepared by the local planning authority, Oxford City Council. These plans are collectively known in legal terms as ‘the Local Plan’ and will remain in place. These plans were prepared *in consultation with* the local community, however they did not necessarily reflect the ‘will’ of the community. Headington Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared **by** the community, **for** the community.

Through the Localism Act we now have the opportunity to actually prepare the plan that shapes how the Headington area looks. We can say what type of development we wish to encourage, how much development should take place (subject to generally conforming with higher level strategic plans), where and when that development should take place, and what we want to see protected in the long term.

We can do this by establishing what the community says it most expects the area to look like over the coming years. We can then look to establish how relevant delivery organisations in the private, public, community and voluntary sector are able to meet those expectations.

Provided certain steps are taken during the preparation of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan, it will have a clear legal status and be used to make decisions on all planning matters coming forward in Headington and its adjoining areas (in relation to development proposals that may have a potential impact upon the Headington area and its community).

Given the range of issues that the Headington community faces, having a Neighbourhood Plan provides a fantastic opportunity to try to resolve them through the planning system. HNF will also use the Plan to work with a range of community stakeholders to deliver local solutions and projects for Headington.

## **7. How was the Plan Prepared**

This Draft Plan has been prepared by local residents from Headington. These local residents have organised themselves into a series of Policy Working Groups (PWGs) which report back to a main Steering Committee (SC), which reports regularly back to the Forum (see Annex 1).

The Forum sets out the Vision for the Plan. The SC sets out the Objectives and Aims of the Plan. The PWGs set out the Policies and Action Plans for the Plan. There is also a Community Engagement Working Group.

Each of the six PWG concentrates on a particular policy area. These are:

- Amenities and Green Spaces
- Business and Retail
- Character and Identity
- Education
- Housing
- Transport

## **8. The Plan Process**

The process which neighbourhood plans need to follow is set down in statute by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012). These regulations specify a series of consultations and tests to ensure the validity and conformance of the neighbourhood plan. The process that HNF have followed in developing the Headington Neighbourhood Plan is set out in Annex 2.

## **9. Headington Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives**

HNF has developed a vision for the Plan:

***“Headington Neighbourhood Plan celebrates the diversity and identity of Headington. Working with our partners and neighbours, we plan to balance the opportunities in Headington in order to provide a healthy, positive and vibrant environment for people to live, work and study in.”***

The Steering Committee has developed three Objectives for the Plan:

***“The Plan has three overarching objectives which guide policy making throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process. These are:***

- ***Improving the quality of life for residents, workers and students.***
- ***Establishing and promoting an identity which embraces the diverse nature of Headington.***
- ***Fostering beneficial development.”***

## 10. Delivering the Plan

Delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will take place through two distinct elements:

Firstly, the Spatial Planning Policies, as set out in section 12 below, if approved at Referendum, will become part of the Statutory Local Planning documents which determine planning applications in the Headington Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Secondly, HNF has also identified a number of Community Policies and Projects, which are also set out in section 12 below. These Policies and Projects cannot be delivered through development (i.e. when planning applications are made) and therefore will need to be delivered directly by HNF, or by HNF working with partners/stakeholders. HNF will seek to deliver these through working with external organizations, or accessing funding.

## 11. Headington Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policies

The Policies which HNF has developed have been labeled according to the Policy Area (i.e. TR for Transport, HG for Housing, etc.) Those policies that relate to the control of development (Spatial Planning Policies) have also been labeled as 'P' (i.e. TRP is a Transport Spatial Planning Policy). Those policies which relate to the delivery of change within Headington (Community) have been labelled as 'C' (i.e. HGC is a Housing Community Policy).



## ***A. Green Spaces (GS) and Amenity (AM)***

The aim of the Amenity and Green Spaces Group is firstly, the greening of Headington through policies designed to protect and enhance green space and biodiversity, and secondly, to improve and extend the facilities for culture, sports and other community uses through policies designed to protect existing facilities and provide new facilities through the extension of public access.

### ***GREEN SPACES (GS) AND AMENITY (AM) SPATIAL (P) POLICIES***

#### ***GSP1: Retaining Public Access Green Space***

***All current publicly accessible green space in the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area will be retained as publicly accessible green space. There will be a strong presumption against the development of and building on publicly accessible green space.***

Oxford Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS21 seeks to maintain an overall average of 5.75 hectares (ha) of publicly accessible green space per 1000 population. Applied to Headington this would require an additional 60ha of publicly accessible green space currently, and 115ha by 2030. This policy seeks to maintain the existing total area of publicly accessible green spaces and where possible increase that area.

Development proposals that safeguard and/or provide opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of publicly accessible green space through appropriate restoration, extension, expansion or diversification in a scale and setting compatible with their location will be welcomed.

#### ***GSP2: Provision of Green Space within Residential Developments***

***Residential developments of ten or more residential units and significant non-residential developments will provide at least 20% of the total site area as publicly accessible green space. They will also include biodiversity enhancement plans setting out measures to increase the biodiversity of the site. These plans will indicate arrangements for their maintenance.***

The Oxford Local Plan Sites and Housing Plan requires residential developments of 20 or more dwellings to provide at least 10% of total site area for publicly accessible green space. In view of the current shortfall this policy sets a higher standard for development.

The Oxford Local Plan requires larger developments to provide on-site green space where this will enhance the range of green space already available in an area or to make a financial contribution. In Headington the provision of space rather than a financial contribution is considered to be more appropriate to deal with the current shortfall in publicly accessible green space.

### **GSP3: Protecting Green Spaces**

***Development or change of use will not be supported on: (a) land which has a significant wildlife or ecological value; and (b) existing allotment land. Development will not be supported where development may result in harm, both directly or indirectly, on local wildlife or ecology beyond the proposed development.***

Local authorities have a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act to conserve biodiversity. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to maintain networks of natural habitats. The Oxfordshire Biodiversity and Action Plan highlight the benefits of a natural environment with a rich biodiversity in terms of health and well-being.

Policy GSP3 aims to increase provision of allotments so that at least 90% of residents live within 750 metres of an allotment site. Current Oxford City Council policy is for provision of 1 allotment plot per 125 people. Evidence suggests that for the present population of 18,000 residents 144 allotment plots are required. By 2030, the population is projected to rise to 20,000 residents when 160 allotment plots will be required. There is currently a provision of 96 allotment plots within the Headington Neighbourhood Plan Area, meaning a shortfall of 48 allotment plots. This shortfall is projected to rise to 64 plots by 2030.

### **GSP4: Protecting Tree Cover**

***All mature trees will be conserved. Where the removal of mature trees is unavoidable as a result of development, the developer will cover the cost of planting an equal number of trees at a designated site within the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area.***



There will be a list of designated sites drawn up following the confirmation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Designated sites will not include sites for which the planting of trees is the responsibility of a local authority.

#### **GSP5: Protection of Green Setting**

*The protection of the external green setting of Headington will be taken fully into account when considering any proposals for development either within or outside Headington. The development of green space which has a significant visual amenity value will be discouraged. The visual impact of proposed developments on green spaces will be taken into consideration at the planning stage.*

Headington's green setting makes a very significant contribution to its character as a place surrounded by green space and to its status as an urban village. Oxford City Council's Green Spaces Study refers to "visually valuable sites" and recognises the importance of retaining the green setting. Policy GSP5 aims to protect this setting. Proposals for development either within Headington or its surrounding area will need to take account of any impacts on the green setting of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Any potential impacts of development on the green setting of Headington will be assessed through the application of the visual cones methodology which is currently used to protect the setting of Oxford City.

Policy GSP5 applies to both non – publicly accessible green space and public access green space. It also applies to street trees and verges, informal green spaces, green spaces around significant buildings, churches and the like and which makes an important contribution to Headington's setting as an urban village.

#### **GSP6: Drainage**

*All proposed developments will be required to demonstrate that they do not decrease rain water infiltration. Those proposals that can demonstrate that they increase rain water infiltration will be encouraged. ALL run-off water should be infiltrated into the ground with permeable surfaces (SuDS) so that the quantity of road run-off is substantially decreased.*

A regular maintenance obligation should be in place to ensure these SuDS features function into the future. This is to reduce erosion of the Lye Valley SSSI and the likelihood of flooding in Florence Park and Cowley.

#### **AMP1: Protecting and Enhancing Sports, Leisure and Community Facilities**

*Existing sports, leisure and community facilities will be protected and opportunities for enhancement will be sought. New development will be required to provide developer contribution for the enhancement of existing facilities, or where this is not appropriate, the provision of new community facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Where the loss of a facility is unavoidable as a result of development, alternative facilities will be provided within the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area. Alternative facilities should be provided as near to the existing facilities as possible.*

The aim of Policy AMP1 is to protect existing facilities in the face of development pressure within Headington, and increase the range and quality of facilities within Headington. This policy reinforces the Oxford Local Plan Core Strategy Policies CS21 and CS17. The provision of facilities not already available in Headington will be encouraged.

#### **AMP2: Provision of Public Access to Sports and Leisure Facilities**

*Planning permissions for new developments at the major commercial, health and educational sites in the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area will include conditions for the provision of public access to on-site private sports and leisure facilities.*

This policy reinforces Core Strategy Policy CS21 and seeks to increase the range of facilities available to Headington residents.

### **GREEN SPACES (GS) AND AMENITY (AM) COMMUNITY (C) POLICIES**

#### **GSC1: Enhancing Headington's Street Setting**

*Headington's street setting will be enhanced by implementing the following actions:*

- *on-street trees will be conserved and increased and, when necessary, replaced by wildlife friendly varieties rich in pollen, nectar, seeds, berries and fruits;*
- *all small informal green spaces and verges will be protected and maintained;*
- *the provision and retention of green front gardens will be encouraged; and*
- *the rural character of Headington's footpaths and bridleways will be conserved and enhanced as appropriate.*

Front gardens make an important attractive contribution to the Headington street scene and encourage biodiversity by providing flowers, shrubs and trees rich in pollen, nectar and berries or fruits which feed birds and other wildlife in winter.

Footpaths and bridleways are important wildlife corridors essential to ensure populations do not become isolated and thereby die out. Several of Headington's footpaths/bridleways have a distinctly 'rural' feel with important populations of native species, for example Stoke Place. The National Pollinator Strategy will inform this policy.

### **GSC2: Protecting Green Spaces**

*In order to conserve and enhance Headington's green spaces:*

- *where appropriate green spaces will be designated to the highest possible level of statutory protection to ensure their long term protection;*
- *parks in Headington will be developed and managed in accordance with their particular individual character; and*
- *the major institutions in Headington will be encouraged to increase the level of public access to their green spaces and to make land available for allotments for the benefit of their staff and of Headington residents.*

The Neighbourhood Plan Issues and Options Consultation highlighted particular concern about the protection of the Rock Edge Local Nature Reserve. Policy GSC2 aims to move key green spaces up the hierarchy of statutory protection through the process of designation or re-designation and seeks to increase the provision of publicly accessible green space in the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area.

It is important that each park retains its special character to provide a variety of environments for enjoyment by the public and for wildlife and biodiversity. Opportunities for enhancement will be sought. For example Bury Knowle Park has the character of the garden of a mansion while Headington Hill Park has the character of an arboretum.

### **GSC3: Community Stewardship**

*Community stewardship of green spaces in Headington will be encouraged.*

The aim is to develop Friends groups as advocates for all public green spaces. Policy GSC3 reinforces the policies within the Oxford Green Spaces Strategy.

#### **GSC4: Headington Biodiversity Plan**

***The Headington Biodiversity Plan will be developed and implemented.<sup>1</sup> Existing wildlife corridors and biodiversity will be conserved and enhanced, and opportunities will be sought for new wildlife corridors where appropriate.***

Wildlife corridors encourage movement of wildlife for foraging and mating and increasing territory. They prevent populations from becoming isolated and dying out. It is therefore important that these corridors are protected. Policy GSC4 aims to support the Oxford Biodiversity Plan currently in preparation.

#### **AMC1: Enhancing Accessibility to Leisure and Community Facilities**

***The major commercial health and educational and religious institutions will be encouraged to provide public access to their on-site sports, leisure and community facilities.***

Policy AMC1 supports the intentions of Core Strategy CS21 to increase the range of facilities available to Headington residents.



<sup>1</sup> This will include a pollinator management plan and a wild flower plan.

## ***B. Business and Retail (BR)***

The Business and Retail Group has been meeting since February 2014 and has carried out a number of engagement exercises with local businesses as part of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan preparation process.

The Group has not produced any specific spatial planning policies, but, through consultation with local businesses, has identified a number of policies to help meet the vision and objectives of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

### **BUSINESS AND RETAIL (BR) COMMUNITY (C) POLICIES**

The Business and Retail PWG supports the improvement of traffic flow in Headington to enhance the experience of potential customers in the area's main shopping and business area on London Road and Windmill Road. To this end it proposes that:

#### **BRC1: Changes to Car Parking Charges**

*The car parks on St Leonard's Road and Old High Street should provide free parking for 30 minutes followed by stepped parking charges.*

Parking was identified as the most important issue when the Business and Retail PWG met with representatives of the Headington business and retail community.

#### **BRC2: Creating a Headington Business Association**

*Support the aspiration of members of the Headington retail and business community to create an association to act as a forum for:*

- *improving communications between members over issues such as security*
- *discussing and acting on issues of common interest; and*
- *joint actions to promote and enhance Headington's potential a place to do business.*

Having a local business organisation was also identified by the representatives of the Headington business and retail community as an important element of improving Headington. It was noted that previous attempts to have a retail association had failed, but that such an organization would be a positive step for the area's business community.

### ***C. Character and Identity (CI)***

The Character and Identity Group has been working to develop policies which aim to ensure that development protects, enhances and promotes the special qualities, character and local distinctiveness of Headington in order to help maintain its identity and sense of place.

In developing the Draft Neighbourhood Plan Policies set out below, a Character Assessment (see [headingtonplan.org.uk](http://headingtonplan.org.uk)) was undertaken by local residents who divided the plan area into 20 distinct character areas (*See map of character areas – [headingtonplan.org.uk](http://headingtonplan.org.uk).*)

The Character Assessment has built an understanding of the whole area and, within each of the Character Studies, how the character varies from place to place. This has included identifying significant features that make the greatest positive contribution towards its special quality.

These descriptions of local character and design guidance have provided a high level of detail for each of the areas concerned. Reference should be made to each of these statements to inform the preparation or assessment of proposals for change that would have an impact on local character and distinctiveness. Omission of a building, feature or space from these character assessments should not be taken to imply it is of no interest.

### **CHARACTER AND IDENTITY (CI) PLANNING (P) POLICIES**

#### ***CIP1: Development to respect existing local character***

***New development (including additions, alterations, change of use and extensions) must respect and enhance the distinctive local character as identified in the Character Studies. This will include consideration of materials, scale, siting use, layout, form, design and intensity of activity within the built environment and setting of the Neighbourhood Plan area.***

Design should reinforce the local character of each area. Existing elements such as trees, hedges and walls should be retained, particularly where they are important features in the streetscape or characteristic of the area. Planting and landscaping schemes, boundary treatments and surfacing should all be taken into consideration in design of development. The layout and design of new streets and associated infrastructure should also respond to local character and scale, and proportion of historic street patterns.



#### **CIP2: Protecting locally important views**

*Development will need to take account of, and seek to protect important views, landmarks and local points in the area, having regard to other policies in the Plan.*

New development, where possible, should maximise opportunities to create new views. Many views are identified in the Character Assessments.

#### **CIP3: Innovative design**

*High quality development proposals, which are of an innovative and/or contemporary design will be permitted where they:*

- *accord with policies in the Local Plan*
- *respect and take account of local heritage; and*
- *enhance the distinctive identity, character and setting in terms of scale, layout, density, orientation and massing.*

#### **CIP4: Protecting important assets**

*Proposed development of, or immediately adjacent to, important assets must pay special regard to conserving and enhancing their character and setting, and any special architectural or historic features of significance they possess.*

As part of the Character Assessments a list of important assets was compiled. Development proposals that lead to the loss or harm of important assets identified in these Character Assessments, their setting or any features important to their character will not be permitted. These assets are also seen as candidates for inclusion in Oxford's Heritage Asset Register.

## ***D. Education (ED)***

The aim of the Education Group is to allow the expansion or addition of new facilities within the general context of local education provision. Changes will be allowed, but the policy only encourages provision aimed at education for which at least some part is intended for local children.

### ***EDUCATION (ED) PLANNING (P) POLICIES***

#### **EDP1: New Education Provision**

*Proposals for change of use of non-residential premises to educational premises (D1 Non-residential institutions) for early-years or 5-19 education provision, for those who live or work in the Neighbourhood Plan area, will be supported, subject to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.*

This policy encourages provision of education for local children through welcoming changes to expand or add new provision to educational facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan area. That's not to say that international schools, residential schools or education for those over 18 should not be offered, just that this policy is silent on them.



## ***E. Housing (HG)***

The aim of the Housing Group is to improve the supply of affordable housing in Headington for key workers, and also to reduce commuting into Headington of these key workers, many of whom are medical staff.

### ***HOUSING (HG) PLANNING (P) POLICIES***

#### ***Policy HGP1: Affordable Homes for Key Workers from Large Housing Sites***

***Proposals for large residential developments on Large Housing Sites<sup>2</sup> in which all the dwellings are only available to key workers<sup>3</sup> will be supported subject to other policies in the Plan. This policy supersedes the requirement set out in Oxford City Council's Housing Policy HP3 to include proportions of affordable and/or social housing in the development.***

While much of the current Oxford City Housing policy adequately addresses housing-related concerns raised during the consultation processes, there is an urgent need to review the development of housing for key workers.

The very high rents in Oxford make it extremely difficult for key workers to both work in Oxford and live near their work. A large number of low-paid key workers are employed within the HNF Area, predominantly by the NHS, schools and universities.

Currently, for example, if the hospital trusts wish to build key worker accommodation on sites SP8 (Churchill), SP23 (John Radcliffe) or SP59 (Warneford) it would be in addition to the 50% (possibly reduced to 40% or with payments in lieu) of affordable housing required. The proposed policy would increase the viability of any such development and provide much needed housing for NHS key workers. Also, providing accommodation for key workers near their places of work would decrease their need to commute into Oxford.

### ***HOUSING (HG) COMMUNITY (C) POLICIES***

#### ***HGC1: Develop a watch system for reporting suspected unlicensed HMOs.***

Unlicensed HMOs was an area of concern identified by residents during the Issues and Options Consultation.

<sup>2</sup> See definition of Large Sites - Oxford City Housing Policy HP3

<sup>3</sup> See definition of key worker - Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026, §A2.30

**HGC2: Develop a planning application watch system, based on the City Council's notification system.**

Concern that planning applications were being submitted and determined without knowledge and consultation with the local community were expressed during the Issues and Options Consultation.

**HGC3: Encourage Oxford Community Land Trust to become active in Headington.**

A community land trust is a nonprofit corporation that develops and stewards affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other community assets on behalf of a community. Encouraging such an organisation within the Headington Neighbourhood Plan area could bring potential benefits to residents.

**HGC4: Identify houses empty more than six months and derelict houses for homes development.**

Bringing derelict and empty homes back into use will help to deal with the local housing shortage.

**HGC5: Identify empty shops or empty spaces above shops for homes development.**

The Forum would not want to see the loss of shops or related spaces from being available for retail and business purposes, however where these facilities are considered as no longer being necessary through a viability assessment, they should be considered for residential development.

## ***F. Transport (TR)***

The aim of the policies produced by the Transport Group are to reduce traffic congestion and its associated adverse consequences of air and noise pollution and constraint of economic activity, by actively encouraging journeys on foot, by bicycle, public transport or shared car scheme vehicle.

### ***TRANSPORT (TR) PLANNING (P) POLICIES***

#### ***TRP1: Parking Provision at major employment sites***

***Proposals for additional car parking spaces at major employment sites in Headington will only be supported if they can demonstrate strong evidence that Headington's road network has adequate unused capacity at peak times.***

Combating congestion requires that employees should reach their workplaces by sustainable transport methods – buses, walking or cycling. Headington's road network is operating at or beyond its capacity, and should not be expected to accommodate additional commuter traffic.

It should be noted that the Forum does not seek to place undue obstacles in the way of the important work undertaken at Headington's main employment sites, and provides for the restrictions to be lifted if and when the transport infrastructure can be shown to be adequate.

#### ***TRP2: Parking at Multi-Unit Developments***

***Proposed developments of more than 10 residential units will be encouraged if at least one parking space is reserved for a car share vehicle through a subscription or membership to a recognised car-sharing group (e.g. a car club such as Co-Wheels). Exceptions can be made if there is already access to a shared car within 50 metres of the development.***

Shared cars reduce the number of parked cars clogging up residential streets, and their incorporation into multi-unit developments frees up more space for accommodating people rather than cars.

It is estimated that one shared car can replace between 7 and 19 non-shared cars. (see RAC report "Car Rental 2.0"). Developments in information technology have removed many of the obstacles to car-sharing. The use of shared cars, as well as uncluttering streets, freeing up space for dwellings and saving money for users, also inhibits car use (because the user pays the

average cost of each trip, while the car owner only pays the marginal cost – but is saddled with large fixed costs of depreciation, insurance and maintenance).

### **TRP3: Connectedness**

*All new developments outside the central Headington area should be connected to the central area and to the Headington hospitals, university campuses and other major institutions by easy, direct routes for both walking and cycling. Proposed developments should consider provision of connecting alleyways or other pedestrian and cycle routes with adjacent streets or other sites. These routes should be made Public Rights of Way in accordance with the Oxford Local Plan.*

Headington has a network of alleyways and connecting paths that enable walking routes to be planned that may be shorter than routes on road, and are quieter and safe from traffic. New developments, whether inside or adjacent to the Headington area, should be connected to this network, and the network should be extended whenever possible, to encourage active, sustainable transport. The County Council has produced a map of walking routes in Headington to encourage this, and Oxford Pedestrians Association is currently working with Oxford Brookes University to extend this map to the whole City, and to enable it to be updated as new connections are made.

### **TRP4: Travel Plans**

*All new multi-unit developments, whether institutional or residential, must:*

- *develop travel plans showing how employees and/or residents may minimise car usage; and*
- *provide information for residents and employees on options for active transport to central Headington and to the hospitals and major institutions, together with information on the health and environmental benefits of active transport.*

All single-unit developments should state, in the design and access statement, whether car-free alternatives have been considered and, if parking provision is to be made, why the car-free alternative has been rejected.

It is well recognised that travel habits are established early. This Policy aims to ensure that people are made aware of options for (and benefits of) ‘active transport’ as soon as they locate



to new premises as residents or employees. Travel plans should be provided for both small and large developments along with information on the health benefits of alternative transport to encourage people to adopt healthy (and sustainable) transport habits.

#### **TRP5: Provision for people with disabilities to use active forms of transport**

*All new developments should include active transport provision for people with disabilities<sup>4</sup>, to make journeys easy by active means.*

It is important that there should be no barriers to people with disabilities using active forms (such as wheelchairs and mobility scooters) of transport; otherwise car use can become the norm. Solutions could involve level access within the site (as already required under the Local Plan), but also good, level connections to routes that enable employees or residents to reach central Headington, the Headington hospitals, and other major institutions.

#### **TRP6: Promotion of Cycling and Walking**

*Proposals for new development comprising more than 3 dwellings should include secure bicycle storage for two bicycles per household, or 75% of bed spaces in shared accommodation.*

*Proposals for new employment premises for more than 10 employees should provide secure bicycle storage for 75% of employees, and one internal lockable space where employees who walk and cycle to work can change.*

The Headington Neighbourhood Plan recognizes that active steps need to be taken to encourage alternative, non-congesting and non-polluting ways of travelling. Policy TRP6 aims to ensure that any new development above a certain minimum size plays its part in this objective, and that through continuous improvements in conditions for pedestrians and cyclists a network of safe and pleasant walking and cycling routes can be created.

Any planning application should identify the route(s) which residents, employees and visitors choosing to walk or cycle can be expected to use to connect with the nearest designated cycle route or public transport, and priority shall be given to using any funds which can be made available through CIL or otherwise to bring such routes up to best-practice standard (for example, but not exclusively, by removal of barriers, removal or relocation of street furniture, segregation of cycle and pedestrian paths, re-levelling and regrading of paths, etc.)

---

<sup>4</sup>Including wheelchair users and those with other forms of disability.

## **TRANSPORT (TR) COMMUNITY (C) POLICIES**

### **TRC1: Promoting car Sharing**

*Vehicles which are part of a car club sharing scheme will be exempt from all car parking charges.*

Since one shared car replaces around 8 private cars, promoting car-sharing is the simplest way to relieve pressure on parking spaces, and therefore exempting them from all car parking charges should actually increase the number of parking spaces.

### **TRC2: Improve Cycling Infrastructure and Encourage Cycling**

*Cycle lanes should be upgraded to mandatory by improving their continuity, the clarity of signage, (especially when they meet bus-stops), and improving their maintenance and demarcation. Information on the health benefits of cycling should be provided through schools, libraries and GP practices.*

A number of improvements to cycling infrastructure in London Road has been suggested at <http://bit.ly/1Ge3b9G>.

### **TRC3: Controlling Residential Speeds**

*A universal 20 mph speed limit throughout Headington should be introduced.*

This Policy will aim to enhance road safety, simplify enforcement and also remove the proliferation of signage needed by the frequent changes between 20 and 30 mph limits. Speeding was a key issue raised in the Issues and Options Consultation.

### **TRC4: Pavement and Road Quality**

*Timely and thorough road and pavement maintenance, particularly on through routes should be carried out to improve their quality. Pavements should be maintained to ensure that they are even, level and unobstructed. The drainage of roads should be improved so that pedestrians are not soaked by passing vehicles.*

The lack of road and pavement maintenance was a significant issue raised during the Issues and Options Consultation.

#### **TRC5: Rationalise Bus Services**

*Promote more orbital bus connectivity between Headington and other parts of Oxford such as Summertown and Cowley. Ensure that new rapid transit buses do not add to the total amount of vehicle traffic along the London Road, and consider originating some long-distance bus services from Thornhill Park and Ride, fed by feeder services.*

We propose that the 300, 400 and 500 Park and Ride bus services could serve as feeders to these services from the City centre and other parts of the City, providing through-ticketing to London and airport destinations.

#### **TRC6: Congestion Charging**

*Full consideration should be given to the costs and benefits of a congestion charge for Oxford as a whole.*

Congestion charging, or a Road User Charge Zone, aims to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, and improve air quality. It is also aimed at encouraging 'out-of-hours' use of the area, creating safer and more attractive streets for everyone.

#### **TRC7: Reduce School-time Congestion**

*Schools and parents will be encouraged to try alternatives to car transport the 'school run'.*

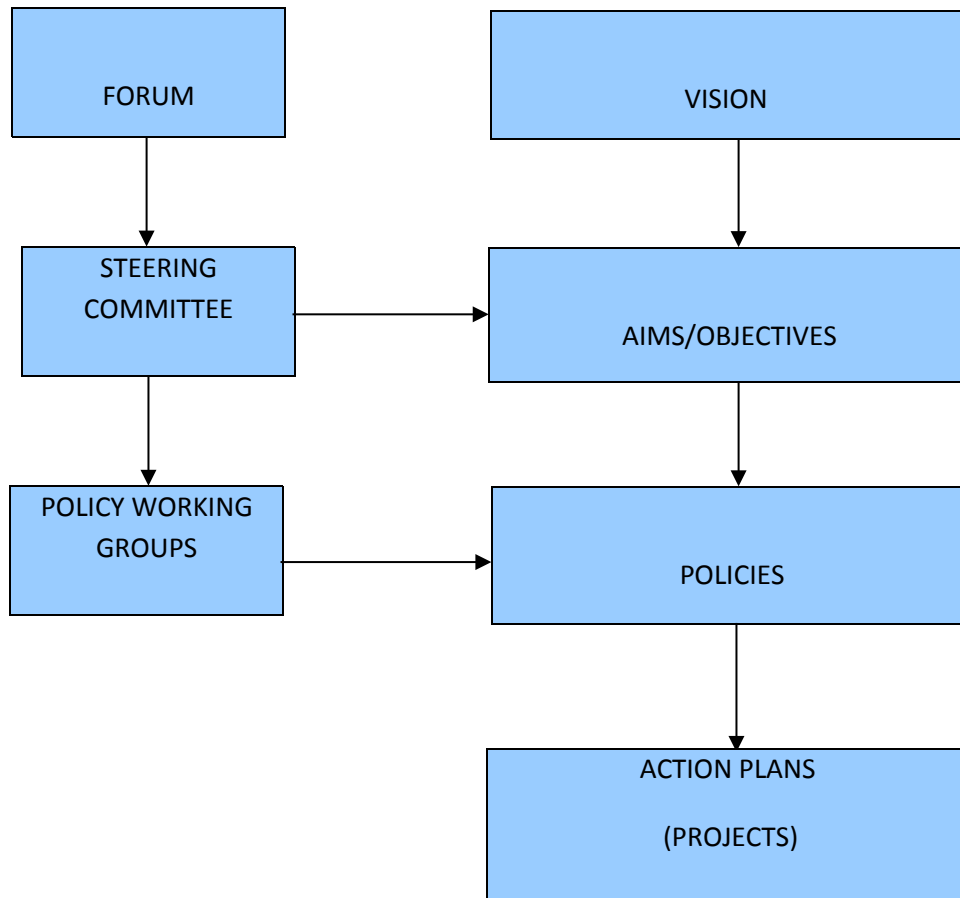
Schools should be incentivised to provide transport alternatives (i.e. [www.walkingschoolbus.org](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org), <http://bit.ly/1m3epGp>) and parents to try alternatives to the 'school run' (<http://bit.ly/1uISf4f>), to reduce congestion and pollution in Headington and make school entrance zones safer.

#### **TRC8: Reduce Commuting by Car**

*Where employers provide parking, they should be encouraged to charge on a per-use basis, rather than through subscription fees payable whether or not the parking space is used.*

Policy TRC8 aims to reduce the incentives that commuters have to travel into work by car by reducing the overall costs of using alternative transport.

## ANNEX 1 - Headington Neighbourhood Forum and Plan Structure



## ANNEX 2 - Headington Neighbourhood Plan Process

