



# Development Strategy Topic Paper

'Our Community... Our Plan'

Document:

WNDP 12

Watlington Parish Council

October 2017

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## Maps

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# 1. Development strategy

This paper lays out a strategy for how the town of Watlington will grow and change over the period of the Plan to 2033. The development strategy aims to permit appropriate development while retaining the essential character of Watlington in its distinctive setting at the door of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and escarpment. The Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan Forum Development Sites Group has been responsible for preparing development proposals. Minutes of the meetings of the Group are on the WNDP website ([www.watlingtonnp.org.uk](http://www.watlingtonnp.org.uk))

## 1.1 Guiding Principles

We have adopted these guiding principles, following extensive consultation, to inform the development strategy of the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP):

- a. Accept new development in a way which delivers environmental gain, through better green corridors and wildlife habitats, and from a new alternative road route which provides some relief to the town centre and reduces air pollution
- b. Encourage a strong retail and commercial sector, including home-based businesses, and small workshops
- c. Deliver sufficient amount of new housing to deliver confirmed local housing needs, environmental benefits and a stronger economy, while ensuring development is both proportionate to and conserves the historic centre of the town and its setting in the natural environment.

## 1.2 Development Potential

Watlington is a spring-line settlement at the foot of the Chilterns, at the junction of the B4009 Chinnor to Benson road and the B480 Nettlebed to Cowley road. It is a historic town with many listed buildings and a designated Conservation Area. It is close to the Grade 1 listed Shirburn Castle and Park, and includes within the Parish a prominent and popular part of the Chilterns AONB known as Watlington Hill which features the historic 'White Mark'.

The town's location, and its appearance when viewed from the top of the Chiltern escarpment, are important determinants of the Development Strategy. Two of the sites which the Plan is proposing could meet specific and specialist housing requirements but, in general, the main sustainable sites identified for development run in an arc around Watlington to the north and west. These sites, when considered together, can perform five functions:

1. Provide sufficient land for Watlington's foreseeable housing needs under current Government and SODC policies and forecasts
2. Integrate a previously built but isolated extension of the town along Cuxham Road - the Marlbrook estate - into a more harmonious new built form

3. Generate the route, and associated funding, for a road which both serves the new housing developments but also creates an appropriate 'rural road' re-alignment of the B4009, relieving the current traffic bottleneck and air quality issues in the Town Centre.
4. Enhance pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre, surrounding villages and the wider countryside.
5. Provide new green spaces and enhanced recreation and play facilities for the community, while supporting biodiversity and ecological initiatives, and mitigating some potential flood risks.

### 1.3 The Approach and Process Used in Assessing Potential Development Sites

#### 1.3.1 Identification of potential development sites

In July 2013 the South Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA Appendix 15: Watlington) report identified 12 potential sites that might be suitable for development in and around Watlington. Two additional sites were subsequently put forward to SODC (making a total of 14 sites).

Two of the SHLAA sites identified by SODC and allocated to Watlington are not within the parish boundary (or the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan Area). They are within Pyrton parish and are hatched on the plan in figure 1.

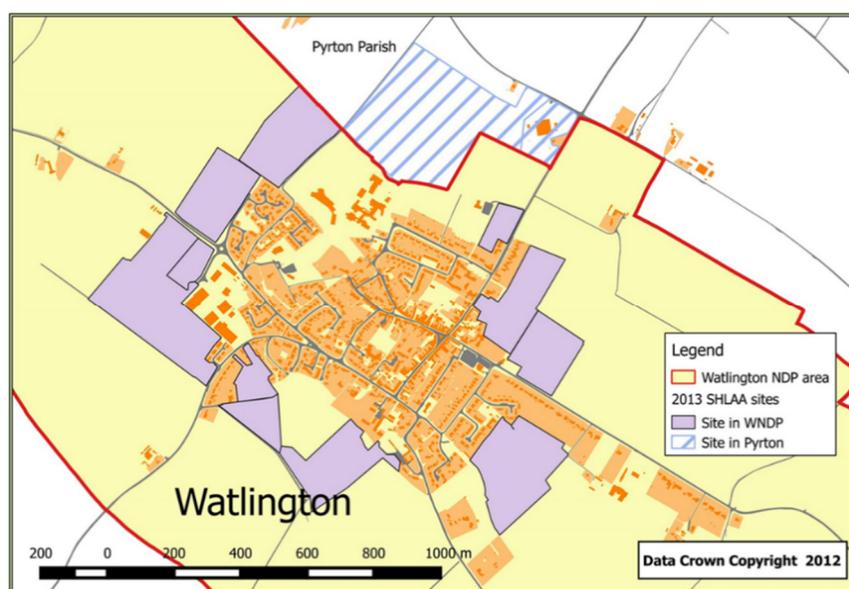


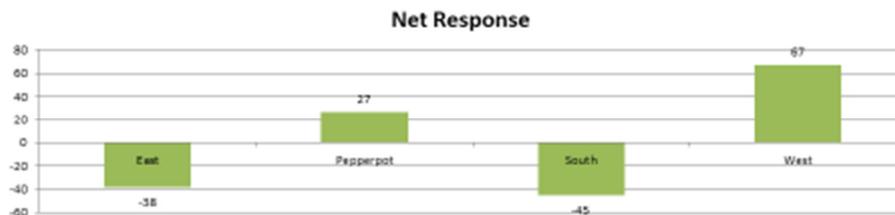
Figure 1 : SHLAA Sites

In 2014-2015 the Parish Council approached local landowners and their agents to understand what additional sites might be considered for assessment. Some sites were proposed as a result of local knowledge.

### 1.3.2 Development Options

Options for development were consulted on in January 2015 (Consultation 2). The outcome showed a net support for expansion of the town to the west.

## Options Analysis Net Responses



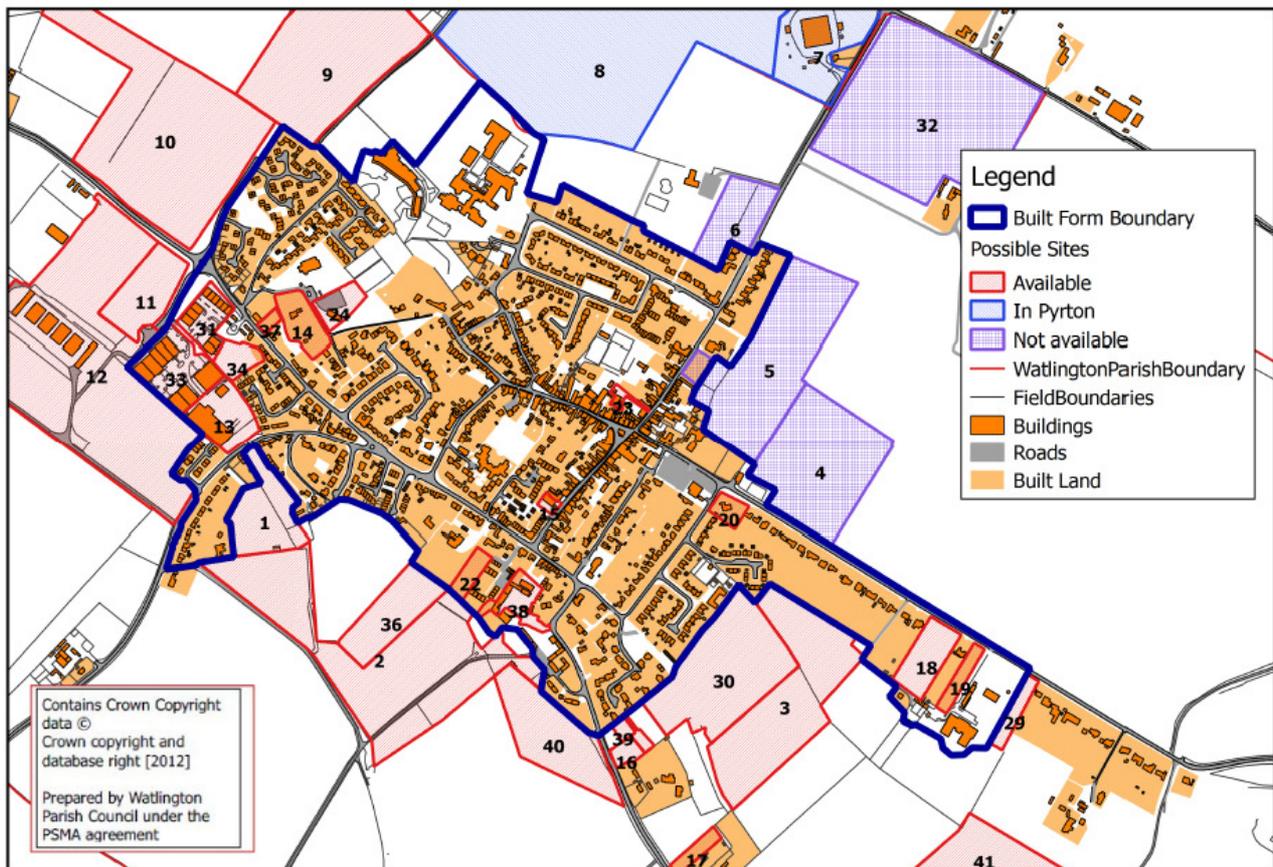
- When looking at the Net responses between the Most and Least Appropriate Options the Western Expansion Option has the Highest Net Positive score (67), the Pepperpot Expansion Option is the only other Net Positive Score with 27.
- Both the Eastern and Southern Expansion Options have strong negative scores (-38 and -45) respectively

### 1.3.3 Additional Sites

Following the establishment by the Parish Council of a Forum of local residents to develop the WNDP a Development Sites Working Group was formed. This group reviewed all the work on sites carried out in Phase 1 of the WNDP and identified additional sites for consideration. In 2016 there was a further call for sites and as a result the list of potential development sites was expanded to 42.

### 1.3.4 The Built Form of Watlington

The number of new homes indicated by SODC for development for Watlington relate to the main settlement. The definition of the built form of the town was discussed and agreed by the Development Sites Group and was used as a simple guide to assess the proximity of sites to the existing settlement, its services and facilities. This provided some evidence of the way the site may integrate into the town and to the availability of existing access routes for walkers and cyclists.



**Figure 2: Built Form of Watlington**

### 1.3.5 Brownfield Sites

Four of the sites considered as part of the site selection process were previously developed and were considered to be ‘brownfield’ sites. These sites are within the built form of the town.

1. Three are parts of the Watlington Industrial Estate. One of these sites had been put forward to SODC in response to its call for sites in 2013. Investigations by the WNDP team established that none of these sites were available for development and that there were no existing plans to put them forward during the period of the Plan.
2. The fourth was part of the land at Watcombe Manor and comprised barns which had been used by local auctioneers as a saleroom and store. Planning permission exists on this site for the conversion of the barns to dwellings and for additional dwellings on the site. The site has not been developed but the number of dwellings approved has been included in the SODC estimate of the number of new homes Watlington is expected to provide to 2033.

### **1.3.6 Information on each site:**

A pack of information was developed for each site. This included a description of each site with information on site location, a record of any planning constraints, including flood zones, and details of existing access into the town centre (Appendix B). Land ownership was investigated and, where this was unknown, searches were made at the Land Registry. It was not possible to establish contact with every land owner or agent and some sites remained 'unknown' with regard to their availability for development. In line with the NPPF these sites were not considered further as they were established to be unavailable for development and, therefore, not likely to be deliverable during the period of the Plan.

### **1.3.7 Assessment criteria**

To determine which of these sites would be most likely to meet the objectives of Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan we needed to establish common and objective criteria against which each potential development site could be assessed and compared.

We had to ensure that the criteria selected take into account national and local policies and guidelines, including the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), National Planning Practice Guidance, South Oxfordshire District Council Core Strategy (December 2012) and the emerging SODC Local Plan (2017-2033).

We needed also to reflect other key factors that could and should influence development decisions, including the proximity of the Chilterns AONB, areas affected by flood risk (as determined by the Environment Agency), and the location of the Watlington, Pyrton and Shirburn Conservation Areas and Historic Assets including listed buildings.

Above all, we believed that it was important that Assessment Criteria reflect local opinion as expressed in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations and surveys, the '*Vision, Objectives and Options*' paper (December 2014) produced as consultation document for Consultation Two, and the '*What Watlington Wants*' Core Objectives document published in June 2016.

This resulted in the WNDP team agreeing a site selection process including a list of 16 questions and criteria to be used in the initial assessment of identified sites. The proposed process received strong support in feedback from the Roadshows in June 2016.

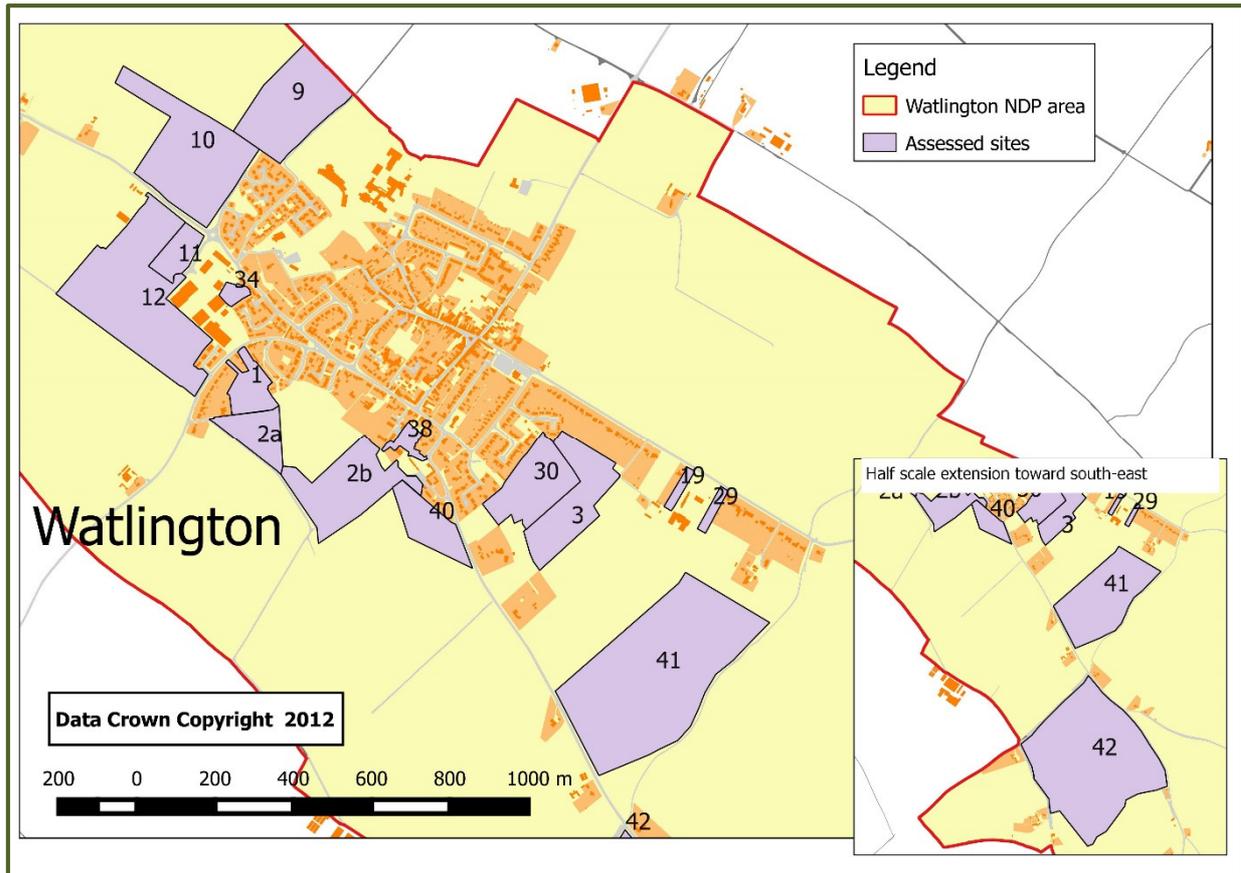
These documents are all available on the website [www.watlingtonnp.org.uk](http://www.watlingtonnp.org.uk).

## Assessment criteria and questions

1.	Has the site been developed previously?
2.	Is the site within the Built Form of Watlington? If No, is it directly adjacent to the Built Form? If Yes, what % of the whole site boundary is adjacent to the existing Built Form?
3.	Is the site in the Watlington Conservation Area? Would development of the site have an impact on the Conservation Area and/or other heritage assets (e.g., listed buildings, listed parks/gardens)?
4.	Does the site contain existing 'Green Spaces' – e.g., spaces for informal or formal recreational use or other amenity value?
5.	Is the site within Flood Zones 2 and/or 3 and, if so, what % is within these zones
6.	Has the site been affected by flooding from groundwater in the last 5 years, and/or is there a watercourse, spring or pond on or adjacent to the site?
7.	Is the site within the Chilterns AONB and/or would development of the site have an impact on the AONB (including views of and from the AONB), or would development of the site have an impact on the landscape setting of Watlington?
8.	Are there any biodiversity designations or features of biodiversity value on or adjacent to the site?
9.	Is the site available for development?
10.	Is the site in agricultural use? If Yes, what grade is it?
11.	Are there neighbouring activities which may have an adverse impact on the site? If so, what are they?
12.	Are there existing Public Rights of Way or informal public paths on or adjacent to the site and, if so, would development put these paths at risk?
13.	Are there existing pedestrian routes from the site to the town centre, local services and facilities?
14.	Is the site connected to local cycling routes?
15.	Is there existing highway access to the site? If No, is the site adjacent to a highway?
16.	Are waste water services and water supplies to a site adequate?



**Figure 3: Outcomes of roadshows 2016**



**Figure 4: Sites Available for Development**

### **1.3.8 Determination of sites likely to best meet Watlington's objectives**

During the period April-July 2016 we tested the site assessment process.

We then split these sites into 3 categories: Available, Not Available and Unknown (with the focus being placed on Available sites to reflect NPPF guidelines on sites considered to be both 'deliverable' and 'developable').

From the initial list of 42 potential sites, 23 sites were confirmed as being 'Available' and, therefore, to be considered for further assessment and possible inclusion in the WNDP. Subsequently one of these 23 sites was confirmed as being Unavailable at this stage.

Of the 22 sites, 2 sites are located in Pyrton Parish, while 4 are categorised as small sites (offering 5 or less housing units).

After discussion with South Oxfordshire District Council officers it was agreed that the two Pyrton sites would be considered against the criteria as they would be dependent on Watlington for all services but could

not be allocated or included in the WNDP. The 4 smaller sites (all within the 'Built Form' of Watlington) would be determined by the normal planning process, and treated as 'windfall' sites.

We then reviewed the remaining 16 sites again to assess their best fit with the WNDP's objectives shared locally during the June 2016 'roadshows', using a 'traffic light/Red-Yellow-Green' approach. This approach and the assessment by site against each of the criteria was reviewed and agreed by the WNDP Forum Co-ordination Group and Development Sites Group (including members both of the Parish Council NDP Steering Committee and the Development Sites Group) in two workshops held on 27th August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2016. The traffic light judgements were intended to be broadly indicative in order to guide the next phase of site assessment. They were not definitive and were not intended to be used for a simple calculation of the total number of reds, ambers or greens given to each site. It was recognised that several judgements were subjective and open to interpretation.

In assessing all sites against the assessment criteria we recognised that, where issues or problems were identified, mitigation may well be possible. In addition, we acknowledged that some sites which are categorised currently as being 'Unavailable' or 'Unknown' – and thus have not been assessed for potential inclusion in the WNDP – may well change status and become available during the WNDP period. Under such circumstances we confirmed that such sites would then come into future consideration and be assessed accordingly against the same agreed criteria. The WNDP will reflect this in future monitoring of development against the policies.

The available sites were assessed again on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016 to confirm outcomes (Figure 5).

## Assessment of available sites against the site selection criteria

Workshop summary master sheet v5.0, 17th October 2016 (Update 2017)		Rear of Britwell Rd	SW of West Meadow	Rear, Watcombe Man	Chiltern Farm	E of Chiltern Gard's	Land W of Pyrton Lanet	Land W of Willow Close	Land S of Cuxham Rd	Land adj. Windmill Close	Hill Rd, strip NW Surgery	Hill Road, SE of Surgery	Land adj. Industrial Estate	Watcombe Manor	S of Watcombe Manor	Rear/Hill Rd, D Alice Farm	Dame Alice Farm
		1	2a	2b	3	30	9	10	11	12	19	29	34	38	40	41	42
Sites																	
Q1	Site previously developed?																
Q2	Site within Built Form (BF)?																
Q2a	Site adjacent to BF?																
Q2b	% of site boundary adj. to BF (Est.)																
Q3	Site in Wat. Conservation area?																
Q3a	Impact on CA & heritage assets																
Q4	Contain Green Space/comm'ty facilities																
Q5	Is the site within flood zone 2 & 3?																
Q5a	If yes, % of site within these flood zones																
Q6	Site affected by groundwater flooding																
Q6a	Site adj. to pond, spring, w'course																
Q7	Is site in Chilterns AONB																
Q7a	Impact on AONB landscape designat'n																
Q7b	Impact on Wat. landscape setting/views																
Q9	Is site available for development																
Q10	What grade of agricultural land on site																
Q11	Neighbouring activity that may impact																
Q12	Existing PROW or informal paths																
Q12a	Would development put paths at risk																
Q13	Existing pedestrian access to town centre																
Q14	Is site connecte d to local cycling routes																
Q15	Is there existing highway access to site																
Q15a	If, is site adjacent to highway																

Figure 5 : Assessment of available sites against the Site Selection Criteria



## 2. Development choices

### 2.1 Development decisions

Following these workshops, and using the evidence of the assessments together with the comments and data from the August 2015 'Landscape Capacity Assessment for Sites on the Edge of the Larger Villages in South Oxfordshire' (subsequently referred to as 'the Kirkham report'), the Neighbourhood Development Plan team drew up a provisional list of preferred sites for consideration.

For each site we developed a consistent 'Site Pack' (Appendix B). These packs include a location map, summary of site details and description, extracts (and photographs where available) from the July 2013 'South Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Land Assessment', the August 2015 Kirkham report, and Environment Agency fluvial and groundwater maps.

The WNDP Development Sites Group used these site packs, together with spreadsheets summarising the site assessments against the 16 selection criteria and sustainability objectives, to provide indicative rankings of preferred sites in November 2016.

These indicative rankings were generated following discussions in Neighbourhood Development Plan workshops and represent a consensus after review of all criteria and related information. The process followed was to allocate 'points' in a range of 1-4 with 4 being the most suitable for development and 1 being the least suitable. As there were 11 people in the group, the maximum points each site could be given were 44 and the least 11.

While judgements on some criteria were, inevitably, subjective there was a high level of consensus in the group which made the assessments. When compared with the outcomes of the Summer Roadshows in June 2016 where local residents indicated their own site preferences, the outcomes were very similar.

The sites were ranked against the following:

- Site Selection Criteria (figure 4)
- Sustainability objectives (figure 5)
- WNDP Core Objectives ( WNDP 1)
- Housing target numbers and affordable housing requirements (illustrated by the 2016 Watlington Housing Needs Survey WNDP 6 and the emerging SODC Local Plan 2033)
- Public Consultation Outcomes

Taking all this evidence into account we were able to draw up a short list of potential development sites from which to make a final allocation in the WNDP.

### Site selection: Indicative preferred sites

(Indicative ranking: 7/11/2016)

Site No.	Description	Criteria*	Rank
WAT 10	Land W of Willow Close	44	1=
WAT 20	The Rectory	44	1=
WAT 38	Watcombe Manor (planning permission granted)	44	1=
WAT11/12	Land to S and W of Industrial Estate	43	4
WAT 9	Land to W of Pyrton Lane	40	5=
WAT 1	Land to rear of Britwell Road	40	5=
WAT 19	Land NW of Hill Road Care Home	33	7
WAT 37	Land on Cuxham Road	33	8
WAT 29	Land N and E of Hill Road Surgery	31	9
WAT 40	Land S of Howe Rd and Watcombe Manor	24	10=
WAT 22	Ingham House, Brook Street	24	10=
WAT 24	Church Hall	23	12
WAT 34	Land adjacent to Industrial Estate	22	13
WAT 30	Land E of Chiltern Gardens	21	14
WAT 2a	Land SW of West Meadow	15	15
WAT 2b	Land at rear of Watcombe Manor	12	16
WAT 3	Land at Chiltern Farm	11	17=
WAT 41	Land off Howe Rd abutting Icknield Way	11	17=
WAT 42	Dame Lys Farm abutting Icknield Way	11	17=
WAT 7	Green Goddess garage	31	N/A
WAT 8	Land S and W of Pyrton Lane	17	N/A

Small sites      Pyrton sites

Figure 7: Table of Indicative Preferred Sites

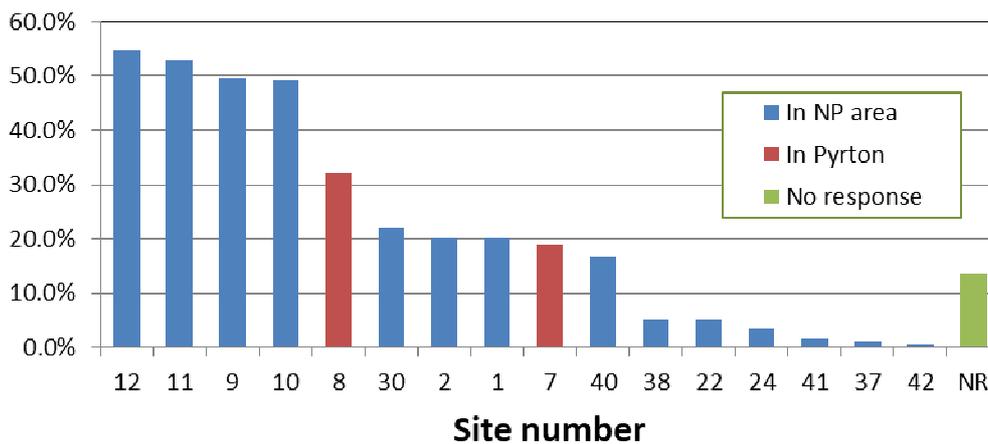


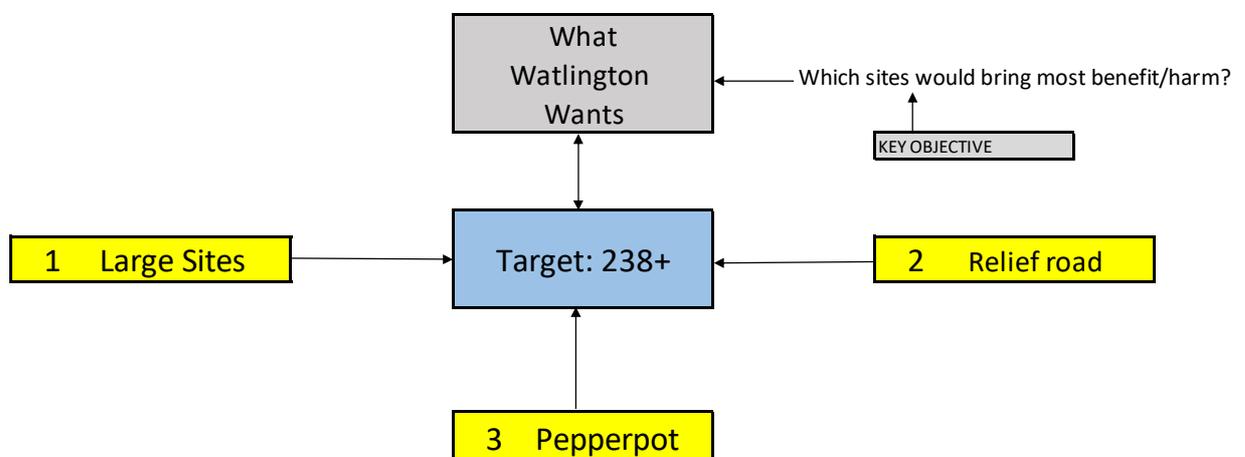
Figure 8: Percentage of respondents who preferred each site (Summer Roadshows June 2016)

## 2.2 Review of Options

From earlier consultation exercises on housing development in the town, including the *'Vision, Objectives and Options'* paper, we recognised that there was support for three options:

- Option 1) focus any new housing on a small number of sites
- Option 2) guide the location of development sites to create and fund an alternative road route to avoid the town centre
- Option 3) avoid any large scale developments through using only small sites distributed throughout the town.

### Vision, Objectives and Options: meeting the SODC target



To many people Option 3 was an attractive option, which potentially gave the best protection to the character and appearance of Watlington while enabling easy and quick integration of new developments and new residents into the community. Looking at the availability of suitable sites it became clear that, as Watlington's allocated housing target had risen during 2016 from 79 dwellings to 200 plus (and, following the 2017 publication of the emerging SODC Local Plan 2033, to the higher number of 238 plus), this Option was not going to be feasible. The smaller sites available distributed around the town could not, in total, meet this increased target. In addition, this Option would not match one of the key priorities emerging from *'Vision, Objectives and Options'*, namely to mitigate the impact of through traffic.

The feedback we received from this latter paper, roadshows and surveys indicated that one the most important priorities for the Community in developing the WNDP was to tackle road traffic issues in and around the town. Our residents perceived very clearly that decisions on the location of new developments – both in Watlington and in surrounding villages and towns - could have a direct impact on traffic flows and issues.

Indeed, we shared with them traffic surveys undertaken over the last few years that indicated that the overwhelming majority - 80% - of traffic passing through Watlington travels between sources and destinations that are outside of the town and, most probably, also outside the parish.

We looked also at projections of increased ‘out-of-town’ traffic travelling through Watlington as a result of significant new housing developments planned in Chinnor, Benson and Wallingford; and the possibility of major housing developments on the Chalgrove Airfield site which – in lieu of alternative infrastructure proposals – would appear certain to increase traffic entering and transiting Watlington along the B480 and B4009 roads during the period of the WNDP. Indeed, discussions with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) confirm that a re-aligned B4009 is a key component of infrastructure requirements for major housing development at Chalgrove Airfield. In looking at the 3 options supported by the Community we concluded therefore that Option 1 was unlikely to deliver a viable or coherent solution to current or future traffic issues so has not been taken forward.

As a result, WNDP has adopted Option 2 as its strategic approach to development, and allocated the 3 most suitable sites that best met the criteria during the assessment and site evaluation work.



**Figure 9: Indicative Route for Re-aligned B4009**

These 3 sites will:

- Provide sufficient new homes to meet the requirements of the SODC Local Plan and housing requirements identified by the WNDP
- Allow growth proportionate to the capacity, services and facilities of the town
- Meet the overall policies and objectives of the WNDP
- Provide development which contributes positively to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the town
- Have a minimum impact on the Chilterns AONB and the town centre Conservation Area
- Generate a neutral or positive impact on areas designated as being within Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Provide land for a safeguarded route for a realigned B4009 which will benefit Watlington by reducing the volume of traffic in the town centre, leading to an improvement in air quality
- Future proof Watlington town centre and the WNDP against increased through traffic from current and future B4009 'corridor' housing growth and potential large scale housing development at Chalgrove Airfield.

### **2.3 Requirements and characteristics of the preferred strategy**

Adoption of Option 2 and associated site selection and housing developments should aim at providing a well-integrated extension of the town westward, with a similar approach to design of the housing and the access points to the new developments and provision of new amenities and environmental features. The possibility of a chain of mismatched developments along the route must be avoided.

In setting out this preference it is understood that details of the proposed re-aligned B4009 will need to be determined by SODC and OCC. The WNDP makes provision for land to be safeguarded for the route on the allocated development sites. It is hoped that housing construction will not be started on the allocated sites unless the construction of the alternative route has been commenced to a timetable agreed by SODC and OCC. Watlington Parish Council will help facilitate the co-operation and consultation needed between land owners, agents, developers and builders.

The re-aligned route should reflect the character of the existing B4009 road, and be a maximum of 6.5m in width, with verges on either side. There should be substantial screening in all sections of the route where it traverses or is close to residential areas, with large native trees especially on the countryside-facing sectors of the road and mixed native hedges on either side of the road for the majority of its length.

Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways should be safe and have protected crossing points at regular intervals to encourage and enable safe transit to the town's facilities and access to the wider countryside.

The alternative route would be situated within the current 7.5 tonnes gross weight limit area, and provision should be provided at junctions with the B4009 at Shirburn Road and Britwell Road for non-permitted traffic to reverse their direction. The priorities at each of the junctions should be set to encourage use of the alternative road and discourage all through traffic from entering the town centre or from using the B480 through Cuxham. Traffic calming measures should be installed on the town-side carriageway of the B4009 at Britwell Road and Shirburn Road.

### 3. Meetings with Developers

Meetings with developers, land owners and agents have added to knowledge and understanding of the available development sites. The first meetings were held in May 2016 and have continued throughout the development of the WNDP. Notes of all the meetings are on the neighbourhood plan website. All meetings were held ‘without prejudice’ in relation to future possible planning applications.

Summary of Developer Meetings		Summary of HCA Meetings	
Developer	Date	Developer	Date
Boddingtons Planning	25-05-16	Homes & Communities Agency	02-08-16
Providence Land	26-05-16	Homes & Communities Agency	04-10-16
Archstone	26-05-16	Homes & Communities Agency	13-12-16
West Waddy	20-06-16	Homes & Communities Agency	03-07-17
JC Emmett	25-06-16	Homes & Communities Agency	10-10-17
Queensgate	29-06-16		
JC Emmett	27-09-16		
Archstone	28-09-16		
Providence Land	10-10-16		
Knight Frank	27-10-16		
Archstone	30-01-17		
Perdix	09-03-17		
Providence Land	16-03-17		
Hunter Page	16-03-17		
Archstone	23-05-17		
Hunter Page	17-08-17		
Archstone	25-09-17		
Providence Land	27-09-17		

## 4. Allocated sites

### 4.1 Allocated development sites

The WNDP allocates 3 preferred sites for housing development after reviewing 42 possible development sites (with detailed assessments of 16 of these sites). During this process each of these sites had an associated number with the prefix 'WAT'. Now that the preferred sites have been identified and allocated their nomenclature has been changed for the sake of clarity and ease of identification.

The three allocated sites are:

#### **Site A: Land between Britwell Road and Cuxham Road**

Formerly known as sites WAT 11 & WAT 12, but considered by landowners and agent as one site.

#### **Site B: Land off Cuxham Road and Willow Close**

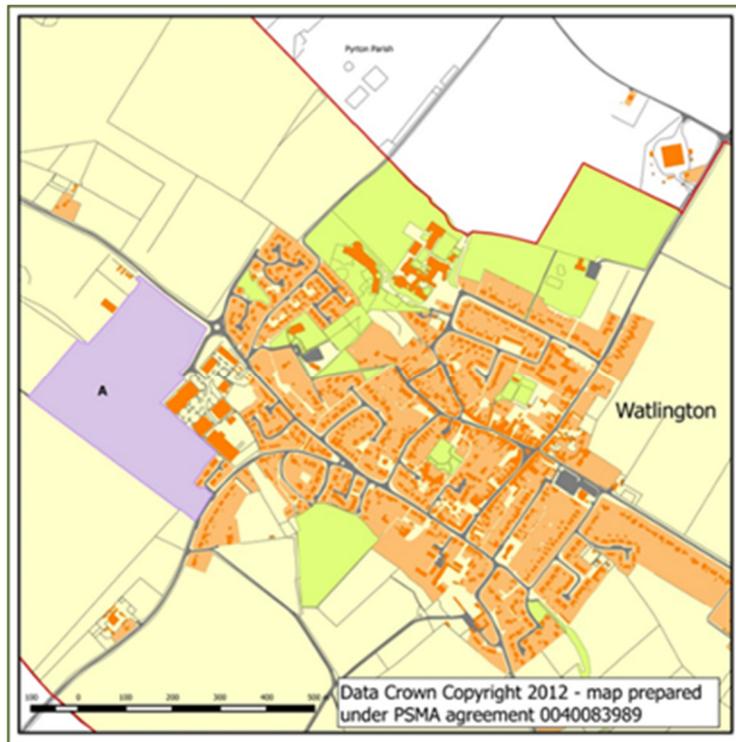
Formerly known as WAT 10

#### **Site C: Land off Pyrton Lane**

Formerly known as WAT 9

### 4.2 Site A

- a) This site (made up of two interconnecting sites) is integral to the development and delivery of the alternative road route around Watlington, connecting the B4009 (Britwell Road) to the B480 (Cuxham Road) delivering the first link in the 'chain'.
- b) It is immediately deliverable and developable.
- c) It is not within the Built Form but between 30-40% of the boundary of the site is adjacent to the Built Form.
- d) It is not within the Conservation Area and would not have any visual impact on the Conservation Area.
- e) It is not within the Chilterns AONB but the site could have an impact on the AONB, and have a visual impact on the landscape setting of the town.
- f) Part of the site is affected by fluvial flooding, and there has been some groundwater flooding. There could be opportunities to manage this in a way that creates a green space of benefit to the town. A level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out.
- g) The combined site is of a size that would also allow for the provision of additional recreation and play facilities.
- h) The removal of the existing pig rearing unit would bring a benefit to the wider Watlington population through removal of a source of noise and smell.
- i) Development of the site would lead to a loss of agricultural land identified as the best and most versatile.
- j) There are no Public Rights of Way on the site but there is an opportunity to create and improve cycle and pedestrian ways both to the town centre and to the countryside.
- k) There is existing highway access to the site from the B480 and the B4009 (albeit a farm access track at present).



**Figure 10: Site A**

Site A represents in total an area of around 9.9ha. The 'Kirkham' report recommended that, on visual and landscape grounds, a much reduced area be used for development allowing for 65 dwellings. A planning application registered by SODC on 26/9/17 is for development of 183 dwellings on approximately 5.14ha of the available space.

Proposals considered for this site:

- WNDP suggests an indicative number of 140 dwellings, of which 56 should be affordable homes
- There should be some provision onsite for workshops and mixed use developments
- Complies with the Watlington Design Guide
- The area at risk of flooding is on the Northern side of the site, adjoining Cuxham Road. This area also includes a valued chalk stream and, therefore, should be set aside and landscaped as a 'green space' for the use of the Community and protection of the stream
- A recreation area sufficient for informal recreation should be provided, together with food growing areas such as allotments and a community orchard, ideally at the Southern end of the site adjacent to Britwell Road (which would also mitigate issues around visibility from and intrusion on the AONB and the approach from Britwell Salome)
- A Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) should be provided in a suitable position onsite
- The design of the development should incorporate land for a safeguarded route for a re-aligned B4009 between Britwell Road and Cuxham Road. Details to be approved by SODC and OCC. At the junction of the Southern access road to Britwell Road, the developer should agree with the Parish Council and OCC Highways on suitable traffic calming measures.

- The development should provide footpaths and cycle ways to optimise access to Watlington facilities, including schools and shops, and a footpath along the B480 verge to Cuxham
- Consideration should be given to ways to allow adequate pavements and cycle lanes to be created on Britwell Road and Cuxham Road to resolve the issues and dangers around existing access.
- Is informed by the findings of a programme of archaeological investigation agreed in writing with the SODC archaeological advisor, and seeking to preserve remains in-situ, giving great weight to the preservation of any remains of National importance.

#### 4.3 Site B

- This site has been proposed as a key link in the realigned B4009 road route, representing the second link leading North of the Cuxham Road.
- The site is not within the Built Form, although it shares a boundary with the Marlbrook Estate.
- It is not within the Conservation Area, although could have an impact on the landscape setting of the town when approaching from the Cuxham direction. It is not within the Chilterns AONB, and would not have any impact on the AONB.
- The site is not affected by fluvial or groundwater flooding, and is not adjacent to any watercourse.
- Development of the site would lead to a loss of agricultural land identified as the best and most versatile.
- There is an informal and well-used footpath on the site, and there could also be ways to improve pedestrian access and provide cycle ways from the countryside to the town centre and to neighbouring villages.
- There is currently farm access to the site and it is adjacent to the highway.

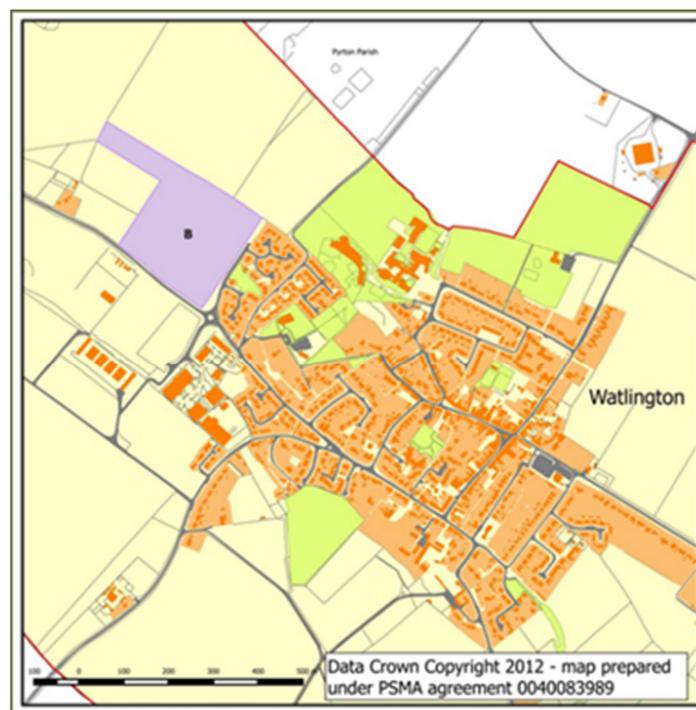


Figure 11: Site B

The 'Kirkham' report recorded the portion of the site included in the SHLAA as 1.9ha and recommended it could take 38 dwellings. However, the whole site is considerably larger than that at an estimated 6.4ha in total.

Proposals considered for this site:

- Between 38-60 dwellings, of which 40% would be affordable homes. This development could be phased towards the end of the plan period between 2026 and 2033.
- Complies with the Watlington Design Guide
- Provides land to safeguard the route for a re-aligned B4009
- Allocate land for green spaces for amenity areas and to facilitate biodiversity.
- Provides space for an informal recreation area
- Creates connectivity with the existing Marlbrook development, town centre and the countryside
- Is informed by the findings of a programme of archaeological investigation agreed in writing with the SODC archaeological advisor, and seeking to preserve remains in-situ, giving great weight to the preservation of any remains of national importance.
- Is designed so that the built edge of the development blends into the landscape to the north and west and mitigates the impact of development on views of the AONB.

#### 4.4 Site C

- a) This site would support the third link of the alternative road route, connecting from Site B.
- b) This site appears to be immediately deliverable and developable.
- c) Development of the site would lead to a loss of agricultural land identified as the best and most versatile.
- d) It is not within the Built Form, but 10% of the boundary is adjacent to the Built Form.
- e) It is not within the Conservation Area and would not have any impact on the Conservation Area but is close to and could impact on the Pyrton Conservation Area that includes Pyrton Manor estate.
- f) The site borders the Parish boundary with Pyrton and would go some way to bridging the green buffer between the Parishes if developed to the full extent of the site.
- g) The site is not affected by fluvial flooding and there has been no groundwater flooding.
- h) It is not adjacent to a watercourse.
- i) The site is not within the Chilterns AONB but could have an impact upon the AONB, and views from Watlington Hill of the landscape setting of Watlington. There are views of the White Mark from this site.
- j) There is an informal, well-used path on the site, and there could be an opportunity to improve pedestrian and cycle ways from the countryside to the town centre and neighbouring villages.
- k) There is no highway access to the site from Pyrton Lane but there is a farm gate. There is a fenced-off spur off Willow Close.
- l) The land is a possible site for the future expansion of Icknield Community College and / or Watlington Primary School.



**Figure 12: Site C**

Proposals considered for this site:

- The site has an area of 4.6ha but the 'Kirkham' report recommended a maximum of 60 dwellings to allow for setting and landscaping.
- The potential developer has not given an indication of expected numbers but there has been mention of between 60 and 90 new dwellings.
- The WNDP suggests 60 dwellings, of which 40% (indicative 24) should be affordable homes
- Complies with the Watlington Design Guide
- Provides land to safeguard the route for a re-aligned B4009
- Provides land to be safeguarded for future expansion of the schools
- Provides a suitable buffer zone between housing development and the Pyrton Manor estate
- Allocates the land for green spaces for recreation and to facilitate biodiversity.
- Provides space for an informal recreation area
- Creates connectivity with the existing Marlbrook development, town centre and the countryside
- Is informed by the findings of a programme of archaeological investigation agreed in writing with the SODC archaeological advisor, and seeking to preserve remains in-situ, giving great weight to the preservation of any remains of National importance.
- Is designed so that the built edge of the development blends into the landscape to the north and west and mitigates the impact of the development on views from the AONB.

## 5. Possible future sites for specialist housing needs

### 5.1 Windfall sites and other opportunities

It is anticipated that 'windfall' development gains will result in a small number of dwellings over the period of this Plan determined by the normal local planning process.

In addition to the sites allocated in WNDP in support of its overall development strategy there are some very specific and specialist housing needs that may need to be met during the timescale of the Plan. Provided that such developments meets with the strategy and policies outlined in the WNDP these may offer additional opportunities to those sites allocated in the WNDP.

Four such opportunities that have been identified during the Consultations undertaken are:

- i) The potential for staff accommodation for Watlington & District Nursing Home, a major employer in the town. Even affordable housing may be out of reach of employees in this vitally important but traditionally low-paid sector. The Community recognise that it is essential to develop and support employment opportunities associated with the Nursing Home. The Parish Council will look favourably on an appropriate development of staff accommodation on the Hospital site (now titled Site E – formerly called WAT 19 and WAT 29) from the Watlington Hospital Charitable Trust, provided that such development is restricted solely for such purpose and is limited by size, scope, design and location.
- ii) Developments in accommodation for older people have indicated both a need and an opportunity for close care/extra care housing. It would seem logical and appropriate to examine further with the Hospital Trustees opportunities for developing such accommodation on the Hospital site adjacent to the existing Nursing Home and Doctors' Surgery. The Parish Council will look favourably on an appropriate development of this type of accommodation on the Hospital site from the Watlington Hospital Charitable Trust, provided that such development is restricted solely for such purpose and is limited by size, scope, design and location.
- iii) During Consultations the value of and need for 'park homes' was raised on a number of occasions. There have been established sites of park homes in Watlington for many years and they are a valuable part of the housing mix. Located adjacent to this existing site is a small development site (Site D – formerly known as WAT 34) that is essentially 'landlocked' and likely to be unsuitable for conventional housing development. If this site were to be released for expansion of the existing park homes site it could provide additional affordable accommodation for local people, both those taking their first-step on the housing ladder and for those downsizing, releasing larger properties to meet existing pent-up demand in the town.

The Parish Council will look favourably on an appropriate development of this type of accommodation on this site, provided that such development is restricted solely for such purpose and is limited by size, scope, design and location.

- iv) Rural exception sites to increase the range of homes available to local people.

In addition: in view of the level of support for self-build homes in the Housing Survey, the WNDP support initiatives for self-build and would like to see provision in line with the Housing White Paper and policy H12 in the emerging SODC Local Plan 2033.

## 6. Pyrton Neighbourhood Development Plan

### 6.1 Sites included in the 'SODC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013, Appendix 15: Watlington'

In this SODC report two potential development sites – referred to as WAT 7 and WAT 8 – were included in the Watlington appendix although they are located in Pyrton Parish. For the sake of completeness and comparison it was agreed (with SODC officers) that the WNDP team should include these two sites in its comprehensive site assessment review as any development on these two sites would be dependent on Watlington for local services. It was recognised however that these sites could not be recognised or included in the WNDP but would be for Pyrton Parish Council and the SODC to decide on any planning proposals (as is currently the case with a planning application regarding WAT 8).

These sites have been considered only because they may contribute to the re-alignment of the B4009, and because any development which may be granted planning permission on them would relate directly to the settlement of Watlington. Any development on these two sites should, therefore, count towards any allocated growth in housing for Watlington (as Pyrton does not have an allocation).

These sites are now referred to in the Pyrton Neighbourhood Development Plan as PYR1 and PYR 2.

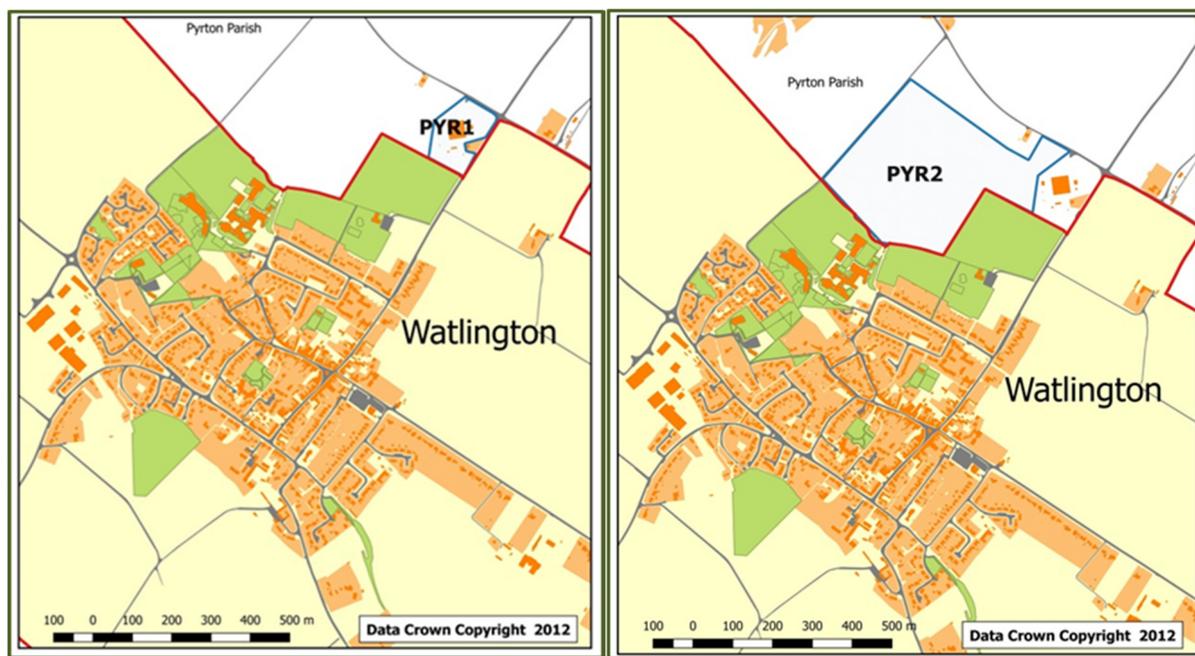
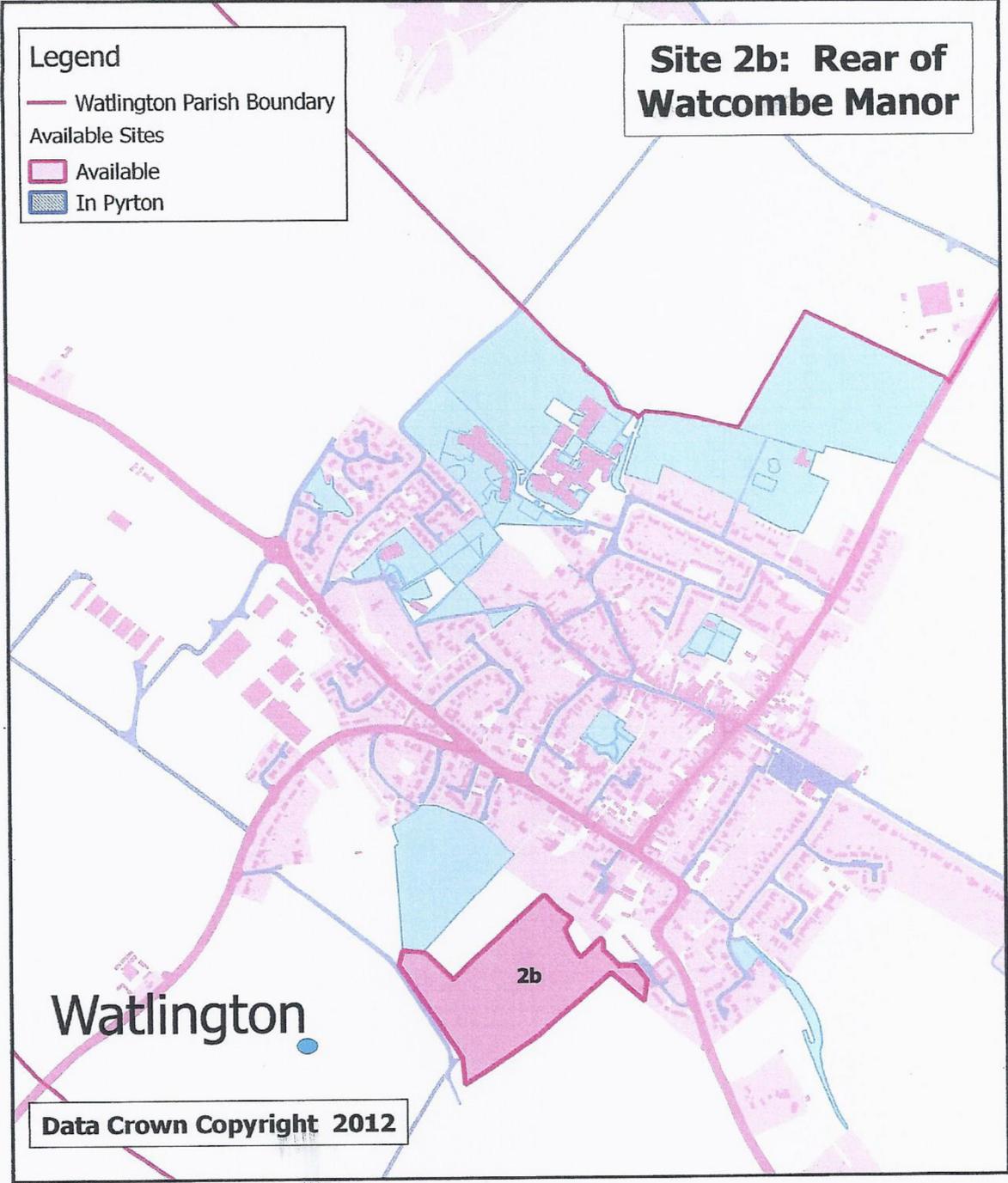


Figure 13: PYR 1 and PYR 2

## Appendix A: Sustainability Objectives

#	Sustainability Objective
SO1	To help to provide a good mix of housing types to meet the identified needs of Watlington residents and to provide the opportunity for people to live in a decent home which is affordable within their means
SO2	The help to create a safe environment through well designed development in which people can live and work and which is attractive and welcoming to visitors
SO3	To enable everyone to contribute to decisions affecting the community and to support community initiatives that will benefit local residents
SO4	To promote people's health and wellbeing by making sure that everyone has good access to local green spaces, to the countryside and to surrounding villages via attractive pedestrian and cycle routes
SO5	To improve accessibility for people of all abilities to local services and facilities and to promote improved opportunities for public transport
SO6	To reduce the negative impact of traffic on the environment caused by noise, vibration, and congestion by promoting effective traffic management strategies
SO7	To support action to improve air quality
SO8	To conserve and enhance biodiversity ,maximising opportunities for biodiversity within all new development, and paying particular attention to habitat linkage and wildlife corridors
SO9	To protect and enhance the town's landscape setting and the countryside around it with special regard to the Chilterns AONB
SO10	To protect the rural character of the parish by minimising light encroachment in order to preserve dark skies
SO11	To protect and enhance the town's historic environment, Conservation Area and heritage features including archaeological sites
SO12	To ensure that new development reflects the distinctiveness of the built form of Watlington by using high quality design and materials
SO13	To ensure that the location and design of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and to mitigate and adapt to climate change by securing sustainable building practices which conserve energy, water resources and materials
SO14	To support energy generation projects from renewable sources
SO15	To protect, enhance and manage the parish's watercourses, springs and ponds. To safeguard their margins and groundwater sources, restoring naturalised sections and creating wetland features where appropriate & improve water quality taking into consideration the requirements of The Water Framework Directive and the Thames River Basin Management Plan
SO16	To reduce the risk of damaging groundwater or fluvial flooding by taking advantage of natural processes in the way flows are managed and ensuring that sustainable drainage systems are used on sites which are developed.
SO17	To support the reduction of waste through recycling, composting and energy recovery
SO18	To improve efficiency in land use through re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings and to protect minerals and other natural resources
SO19	To safeguard and enhance opportunities for local food production by protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, small holdings and allotments and facilitating other initiatives such as community orchards and gardens
SO20	To promote the development of local businesses which are appropriate in scale to the rural context of Watlington and provide increased employment opportunity
SO21	To support provision for home workers together with support networks for small businesses
SO22	To support the growth of Watlington as a thriving commercial hub in maintaining and enhancing the vitality of our settlements within the Parish and other nearby communities

# Appendix B: Sample Site Information Pack



## Development site details and description

Site number: WAT 2b

- 1 Site location**  
Part of total site WAT 2 to the rear of Watcombe Manor.
- 2 Site size**  
WAT 2 totals 5.59ha., of which WAT 2b needs assessment (but in the region of 3.6ha.).
- 3 Description/ current use**  
Agricultural land currently used for grazing, crossed by farm track.
- 4 Boundaries (hedging etc)**  
Stream from Willow Ponds along site's West boundary. On other boundaries overgrown hedging with some mature hedgerow trees.
- 5 Surrounding land use**  
Agricultural land currently used for grazing and arable, with permissive path on South-West side.
- 6 Character of surrounding area**  
Flat open farmland below the Chilterns escarpment, visible from AONB key viewpoints. Watcombe Manor to the North-East.
- 7 Planning constraints**  
The site is adjacent to the Chilterns AONB on 2 sides, and adjacent to the Conservation Area (but outside Built Form).  
A substantial part of the site is within Flood Zones 2/3.
- 8 Physical issues or limitations**  
There is no current road access to the site except for a narrow farm track from Britwell Road. The site is some distance from Howe Rd.
- 9 Current accessibility (to key local services/facilities)**  
The site is currently isolated from existing pedestrian routes into town.
- 10 Availability**  
Land is recorded as being available for development.
- 11 Deliverability**  
Unknown at this stage. Landowners/developers have prioritised WAT 11/12.

*Draft Summary – Wat 2b*

This site has not previously been developed and is not within the Built Form of Watlington. Approximately 10% is adjacent to the Built Form. Excepting a very small area the site is not within the Conservation Area but would have some impact upon it. It does not currently contain any green space or community facilities. Approximately 60% of the site is affected by fluvial flooding, there has been some groundwater flooding and it is adjacent to a watercourse. The chalk stream would need to be safeguarded if the site is developed. The site is within the Chilterns AONB and will have an impact upon the landscape setting and views of Watlington. Although the site is available for development, such development of this site will mean the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

There are no known activities on adjoining sites that could adversely impact new residents of this site should it be developed. There are public rights of way along the SW of the site which would need to be safeguarded. It could also be an opportunity to improve pedestrian access and provide cycle ways from the countryside to Watlington Town Centre. There is currently no highway access to the site and it is not adjacent to the highway.

The site is included in SODC SHLAA with site reference: 182 (jointly with Wat 2a)  
 The site has been assessed by the Kirkham Report and this has been taken into account.

**Key Criteria:**

Is site within Built Form?	
Is site within Conservation Area? It will have an impact	
Is site affected by flooding or adjacent to a watercourse?	
Would site have impact upon AONB or landscape setting/views?	
Is the site immediately deliverable?	

Landscape Capacity Assessment for Sites on the Edge of the Larger Villages of South Oxfordshire

Site no.	Settlement	Designations and landscape strategy	Relationship with the wider landscape	Visual prominence	Relationship with settlement pattern	Recommendations – subject to more detailed review	Proceed to Phase 2
320	Sonning Common	Setting of Chilterns AONB Conserve	Typical of LCA, with strong vegetation structure (northern boundary crosses the middle of an open field and is not marked on the ground). Strong links with landscape to south and west.	Not widely visible but may be views from wider countryside including AONB.	Extends beyond the settlement envelope.	Potential for harm to the setting of Sonning Common and the AONB	NO
<b>WATTLINGTON</b>							
<b>WAT 1</b>	Watlington	Setting of Chilterns AONB Restore	Not typical of LCA, being small, partly enclosed by vegetation and not arable	Not visually prominent from within settlement but with possible wider views.	Contained to the north, east and west by settlement. South eastern part extends beyond settlement envelope	Some potential for housing subject to landscape and visual mitigation and protection of adjacent AONB.	YES
<b>WAT 2</b>	Watlington	Setting of Chilterns AONB Restore	Somewhat typical of LCA, though with some enclosure and not arable.	Not visually prominent from within settlement but with views from AONB.	Limited adjacency to the settlement and largely separated by fields, extending well beyond settlement envelope	Potential for harm to the setting of Watlington and the AONB.	NO
<b>WAT 3</b>	Watlington	Setting of Chilterns AONB Repair	Somewhat typical of LCA though smaller scale fields.	Not visually prominent from within settlement but with views from AONB.	Contained by settlement to north western and north eastern sides. Extends beyond main settlement envelope to south.	May be limited potential for housing in the north west subject to landscape and visual mitigation and protection of adjacent AONB.	YES
<b>WAT 4</b>	Watlington	Setting of Chilterns AONB	Somewhat typical of LCA though smaller scale fields.	Visually prominent field and includes views from AONB.	Separated from settlement to west by open field. Low density, linear	Potential for harm to the setting of Watlington and the AONB.	NO

Settlement	Watlington		
Site Ref	WAT2		
Other useful refs	Site Submission: 182		
Site address	Land at rear of Watcombe Manor, Watlington		
Planning history	P61/M0911	Site for dwelling houses with road works	Refused
	P61/M0429	Site for residential dwellings with accesses	No Decision
	P52.M0529	Site for council housing	No Decision
Site size (hectares)	5.5		
Site description and current uses	Grassland of various qualities		
Site boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hedging North East, South East and South West.</li> <li>Various fences to the North West</li> </ul>		
Surrounding land uses and character of surrounding area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential to the North</li> <li>Watcombe Manor and Watcombe Manor Industrial Estate to the North East</li> <li>Agriculture to the South and East</li> </ul>		
<b>Suitability for housing</b>			
Policy restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Triangular section of site is within the Chilterns AONB and rest of site bordering the AONB</li> <li>The proposed site would be on the edge of Watlington. The policies in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan do not allow development which would extend the built-up area of settlements.</li> </ul>		
Physical problems or limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 0.9ha of the North East section of the site is within flood zones 2 and 3.</li> <li>Transport assessment to be completed, if appropriate, through the plan making process</li> </ul>		
Suitability	Site is considered not suitable in principle as it falls partly within the AONB.		
<b>Availability and Achievability</b>			
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intention known for part of site that has been submitted in site 182.</li> </ul>		
Achievability	Unknown		
Overall assessment of the site	Site is available but is considered unsuitable in principle. The development of this site however will also be considered through the plan making process,		
	during which its acceptability will be judged by comparison with other potentially suitable sites.		



## Appendix C: WNDP Forum Development Sites Group Meetings

The minutes of these meetings are all on the website [www.watlingtonnp.org.uk](http://www.watlingtonnp.org.uk)

Meetings	Workshops
<b>2016</b> 15th December 1st December 21st November 9th November 13th October 22nd September 15th September 1st September 4th August 25th July 26th May 17th May 6th April 15th March 2nd March 4th February 21st January 7th January <b>2015</b> 3rd December	<b>2017</b> 12th April 1st April 30th January <b>2016</b> 26th October 17th October