



Basic Conditions Statement

DRAFT

Our Community

Our Plan

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

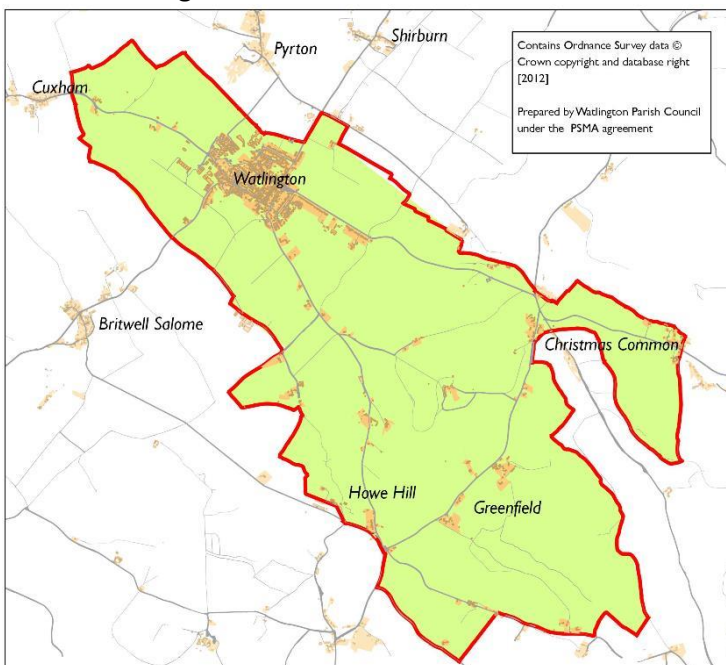
APRIL 2017

QUALIFYING STATEMENT

1 Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) is submitted by Watlington Parish Council which is a body qualified to do so. The plan has been prepared by the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan Forum, a community group established under the auspices of the Parish Council and overseen by a Steering Group of the Parish Council as Accountable Body. WNDP covers the period 2017 to 2033. The period has been chosen to align with the dates of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

2. Designated Neighbourhood Area. In October 2013 SODC approved all land within the parish boundary as the Designated Area for the WNDP. This followed a year-long discussion between the Parish Council, SODC officers, SODC councillors and the Parish Councils (or Meetings) of Pyrton, Cuxham and Britwell Salome. The issue was whether WNDP should include parts of adjacent parishes in order to provide some protection against communities being merged into each other. In addition, two sites included in the SODC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013 (Appendix 15: Watlington) are located in Pyrton parish. Ultimately, the three smaller parishes decided not to be included in WNDP and Watlington Parish Council proceeded with an application for Watlington civil parish alone. Pyrton Parish Council decided subsequently to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for their parish.

NDP Area Designated 2013



3. In 2015 Watlington Parish Council (WPC) submitted a new application for the (re)designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan area in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The area specified includes the whole parish, as amended by parish boundary changes in April 2015. WPC made the application as a result of the parish boundaries review in order to maintain the conformity of the emerging policies and proposals within WNDP with the area indicated.

4. The Parish of Watlington was formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area through an application made under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and approved by South Oxfordshire District Council on 15 October 2015.

5. The WNDP designated area includes the settlement of Watlington itself, and the three outlying settlements of Christmas Common, Greenfield, Howe Hill, and parts of Northland and Pishill. The outlying settlements contain about 15% of the Neighbourhood Area population. Where appropriate, policies in WNDP relate to these settlements.

NDP Designated Area November 2015



6. WNDP does not deal with minerals or waste disposal matters which are the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC); nor does it deal with nationally significant infrastructure. Some policies in the Plan, however, have implications for OCC as Highways Authority because of the importance to Watlington of actions to control traffic, and their interaction with the development of sites.

WHY WATLINGTON NEEDS A NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

7. A Neighbourhood Development Plan gives residents of Watlington Parish a way of influencing planning decisions which will be needed to steer anticipated growth in the number of homes locally. It can help to develop a shared vision for the town of Watlington, select the sites most suitable for development, define preferences for the mix of housing types, and give protection to the most important amenity and environmental features of the area. Because the Local Planning Authority must have regard for a legally approved Neighbourhood Development Plan, the future of Watlington can, to a considerable extent, be shaped by the wishes of the community. In addition, the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Second Preferred Options 2033 document articulates a District Council wish for new housing sites to be identified primarily through Neighbourhood Plans.

COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

8. WNDP has been developed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) and associated National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). It also conforms to the strategic policies in the South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan (SOLP) 2011 and Core Strategy 2012. The three strands of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic, are fundamental to WNDP and underpin the policies it contains. A Sustainability Appraisal of policies has been made and is included in the Environmental Statement. In view of the location of the WNDP area in an environmentally sensitive location a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has also been carried out. SODC issued a screening opinion on 15th October 2015 that an SEA would be required as the NDP is likely to have significant environmental effects and will allocate preferred sites for development. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Development Plan (2014-2019) has also been taken into account.

COMPLYING WITH ‘THE PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT’ [NPPF 14, 16, 17]

9. WNDP is seeking to meet the development needs of the Neighbourhood Area. These needs have been indicated by the SOLP process, and sites to meet them have been assessed objectively in the light of local circumstances, by studies carried out by or on behalf of WNDP. The Plan supports the guidance in NPPF that plans should

- i enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives
- ii support sustainable economic development
- iii seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for new and existing sites and buildings
- iv take account of the different roles and character of different areas, recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and support thriving communities within it
- v support the transition to a low carbon future in response to a changing climate
- vi contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution
- vii encourage the re-use of previously used (brownfield) land
- viii conserve heritage assets
- ix actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest use of public transport, cycling and walking
- x deliver community facilities to meet local needs

WNDP Policies 1,2,3,4,5

ENSURING THE VITALITY OF TOWN CENTRES [NPPF 23, 40]

10 Watlington is classed as a 'Large Village' in the SODC Settlement Hierarchy but has functioned as a small town since the 17th Century. The town centre not only serves the needs of its own population of nearly 3000, but is the 'central place' for a number of outlying settlements within Watlington Parish and surrounding settlements including Pyrton, Cuxham, Britwell Salome, Shirburn and Swyncombe with a population of over 2,000.

11 WNDP seeks to preserve and enhance the core shopping and services area of the town, contains formal policies to support its viability and vitality, and includes statements of intent by the Parish Council to underpin the policies.

12. WNDP seeks to improve the quality of parking in Watlington, so that it is adequate and convenient for the needs of town centre businesses, local residents and (the increasingly important number of) tourists.
WNDP Policy 5

DELIVERING A WIDE CHOICE OF HIGH QUALITY HOMES [NPPF 47, 50]

13. The town of Watlington has an existing allocation of new homes to be built, from the Adopted SOLP, of 79. The SODC Local Plan 2033 Preferred Options document updates this to a minimum of 200, which had already been foreshadowed in the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for South Oxfordshire. This number has been increased on the basis of a 15% increase in housing stock for 'larger villages' in the SODC Local Plan 2033 Second Preferred Options consultation. WNDP takes the 238 minimum requirement as the base for its policies on housing, supported by a Watlington Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2016. This achieved a response rate of 54% and is thus regarded as a firm base for policy. The distribution of sites for new homes has been decided by a rigorous and objective process of site selection. The location of sites for new homes will facilitate a re-alignment of the B4009 road, which will benefit the town centre and support environmental and economic policies in the Plan.

WNDP Policy 4

GOOD DESIGN [NPPF 56, 58, 60]

14. WNDP supports the importance which NPPF attaches to good design as a key aspect of sustainable development. It has developed a robust Watlington Design Guide, based on the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 and guidance issued by the Chilterns Conservation Board. The Guide highlights those distinctive aspects of the local built environment which it expects the builders of new housing to respect.

WNDP Policy 4

PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES [NPPF 69,70,74]

15. WNDP encourages a healthy, inclusive community in Watlington. Its policies promote safe and accessible development which reduces air pollution in the town centre, contains clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes; and which respects the biodiversity and green infrastructure of Watlington.

16. The Plan supports NPPF guidance that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. Existing green and amenity spaces are not being put forward for development in WNDP and those which make a significant contribution to local amenities are proposed for designation as Local Green Spaces. Additional facilities are suggested, proportionate to the population increase indicated by the housing target.

WNDP Policies 4, 6

CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT [NPPF 110]

17. In preparing WNDP, great emphasis has been placed on environmental issues, reflecting the parish being partly in The Chilterns AONB, and respecting the unique hydrography and biodiversity of the town. Site allocations for new housing have emerged from a rigorous assessment process, in which the natural environment has had a high weighting.

WNDP Policy 3

HOW WATLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18. Sustainability in NPPF has three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. WNDP contributes towards sustainable development in the following ways :

- i. The Plan has been produced to meet local needs within the context of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and SOLP Preferred Options 2033
- ii. WNDP sets out policies for the continued economic health of Watlington
- iii. WNDP allocates sites for new housing and encourages developers to meet local demand as ascertained in the Housing Needs Survey 2016, including affordable housing for local people to buy or rent, homes for older people and those seeking to downsize, homes suitable for people with disabilities , and some provision for self-build projects.
- iv. The Plan addresses Watlington's needs for through traffic to be minimised through the town centre, for new development to have safe routes for cars, pedestrians and cyclists, and for the existing 7.5 tonne weight limit to be retained and more strongly enforced.
- v. WNDP promotes good design, adequate recreational and sports facilities, and good education, medical and social facilities
- vi. WNDP seeks to protect and enhance Watlington's unique network of wildlife and watercourse corridors, to use new development to mitigate flood risks, and respect the town's setting along the spring line of the Chiltern Hills.

GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE CORE STRATEGY, AS MODIFIED BY SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2033 SECOND PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

19. SODC published its SOLP Second Preferred Options on 29 March 2017, for a period of consultation. WNDP is in full conformity with the relevant policies in the Preferred Options Consultation Document, as detailed below.

20. STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy. Supports and enhances the roles of 'Larger Villages' of which Watlington is one.

21. HOUSING POLICIES - H1 Delivering New Homes. Highlights sites allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans as the main mechanism for identifying new housing development.

H4 - Housing in Larger Villages. Assigns Watlington a minimum 238 new dwellings in the Plan period

H11- Affordable Housing- Requires at least 40% affordable housing on all sites where there is a net gain of 11 or more dwellings.

H12 - Exception Sites - sets out the criteria for Rural Exception Sites. WNDP indicates possible future need for a further RES in Watlington.

H13 - Sets out criteria for a good mix of dwelling types and sizes in new developments.

22. ECONOMIC POLICIES

TC1- Retail and town and larger village centres. Confirms that Larger Villages are among the preferred locations for retailing and other town centre uses, including uses complementary to retail, and appropriate mixed-use developments.

EMP11 - Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas. Promotes the retention of local services and community facilities in villages, and the development of sustainable rural tourism

23. TRANSPORT POLICIES

TRANS3 - Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes. This policy, together with the relevant Safeguarding Map, safeguards land along a route intended as a 'bypass for Watlington'.

24. ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

ENV2 Biodiversity - Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species, together with

ENV3 Biodiversity - Non-designated sites, Habitats and Species confirms protection for a variety of natural features mentioned in WNDP for attention and conservation.

ENV4 Watercourses. This policy is particularly relevant to the hydrography of Watlington, as set out in WNDP. In particular, paragraph 8.24 of ENV4 policy references the Chalk Streams on the Chiltern Escarpment.

EP1 Air Quality- Requires new development to be compliant with Air Quality Action Plans (AQAP), one of which has been drawn up for Watlington.

25. DESIGN POLICIES

DES1 Delivering High Quality Development, and

DES2 Enhancing Local Character both confirm the direction of the Design Policies set out in WNDP and the Watlington Design Guide

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