

East Challow Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2031

Pre-submission draft

Prepared by:

East Challow Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
On behalf of East Challow Parish Council

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction
2.	The East Challow Neighbourhood Plan
i.	Structure of this Report
ii.	How the ECNP fits into the planning system
iii.	Designation
iv.	Community Engagement
v.	Draft Plan creation
vi.	Relationship between Plan objectives and Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives/ Sustainability Appraisal
vii.	Submission, Examination and Adoption
3.	The Parish of East Challow
i.	East Challow Location and Brief History
ii.	Village and landscape character
iii.	Planning and development context
iv.	Our sustainability challenges
4.	The Neighbourhood Plan – vision and objectives
5.	The Neighbourhood Plan – policies
i.	Rural setting
ii.	Environment and biodiversity
iii.	Infrastructure and facilities
iv.	Traffic and roads
6.	Implementation and Monitoring
7.	Appendices
	Appendix 1- Village Landscape and Character Assessment
	Appendix 2- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey Reports
	Appendix 3- SEA Screening Report & Notice
	Appendix 4- Heritage Assets in East Challow
	Appendix 5- Main Roads & Streets in the Village
	Appendix 6- East Challow Village SWOT Analysis
	Appendix 7- Community Infrastructure Project List
	Appendix 8- Strategic Views (Photos)
	Appendix 9- Green Corridors Report
	Appendix 10- Local Green Spaces – Evidence Base
	Appendix 11- Biodiversity Report
	Appendix 12- Parking obstructions along the eastbound A417 (Photos)

1. Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the hierarchy of spatial planning in England giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

East Challow Parish Council is a “qualifying body” and authorised to lead in the preparation of the East Challow Neighbourhood Plan (ECNP). To produce the Plan, the Parish Council appointed the East Challow Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, which includes parish councillors and community volunteers, with support from Community First Oxfordshire (CFO), an independent planning consultant – Andrea Pellegram Ltd, and Vale of the White Horse District Council (VWHDC). Consultants Portus & Whitton were appointed to undertake a village character assessment (Appendix 1).

The ECNP sets out a plan for a sustainable future for the village. It presents objectives and policies that will be used in shaping the future development of the parish. These have been established through extensive public consultation and are underpinned by both statistical information and local knowledge. The aims and objectives of the ECNP relate principally to planning matters but also have relevance to other issues important to the community. The Plan policies are compatible with the Development Plan for the District (currently Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1 and Saved Policies of the Local Plan 2011 (2006).

This document is the pre-submission version of the ECNP. East Challow Parish Council is submitting this document for comment to the District Council and other statutory consultees, the community and other interested stakeholders for statutory consultation. The minimum statutory consultation period is six-weeks. However, the Parish Council will extend this period by one-week to give maximum opportunities for consultation responses to be submitted.

Following the pre-submission consultation process, comments will be analysed and used to refine the document. The Parish Council will then submit the final ECNP to the District Council, together with the mandatory supporting documentation: 1- a Basic Conditions Statement, demonstrating how the ECNP meets the statutory requirements set out within the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012) and; 2- a Consultation Statement, setting out who has been consulted, how the consultation has been undertaken and how the representations have informed the ECNP.

2. The East Challow Neighbourhood Plan

Structure of this Report

The ECNP vision, objectives and summary policies are set out in chapter 4. Detailed policies, together with justification and evidence for these, are in chapter 5. Several appendices set out supporting evidence. The purpose of publishing this pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan is to present the Plan to residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees for their comments prior to the final Plan being submitted to Vale of the White Horse District Council for independent examination.

Supporting documents track the Plan process and evidence in detail:

- **The Basic Conditions Statement** – *to come at final submission stage*

The core basic conditions for Neighbourhood Plans, as set out within the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 are as follows:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in the National Planning Practice Guidance;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations;
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan

- **The Consultation Statement** – *to come at final submission stage*

Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Section 15(2) states that a Consultation Statement should:

- Contain details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- Explain how they were consulted;
- Summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- Describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

How the ECNP fits in to the Planning System

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act sets out some important laws. Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other national planning advice.

The ECNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area. VHWDC is preparing a new Local Plan referred to as the Local Plan 2031. Part 1 of the 2031 had been adopted by the District, with work ongoing on Part 2. Currently, the development plan in Vale of the White Horse consists of:

- Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1
- Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 2
- Saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 (2006)

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act sets out some important laws. Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other national planning advice.

The ECNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area. VHWDC is preparing a new Local Plan referred to as the Local Plan 2031. Part 1 of the 2031 had been adopted by the District, with work ongoing on Part 2. Currently, the development plan in Vale of the White Horse consists of:

- Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1
- Saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 (2006)

Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations.

Designation

In accordance with regulations, Vale of the White Horse District Council publicised the Neighbourhood Plan application from East Challow Parish Council submitted on 13 September 2016. The Head of Planning at Vale agreed the designated area (see map, overleaf) as the East Challow Neighbourhood Area on 11 November 2016.

Community engagement

From March 2017, when the community was first consulted about the ECNP, until this pre-submission stage, the Steering Committee followed a community consultation strategy and encouraged community involvement through open meetings, via newsletters, the website, and a comprehensive community survey (Appendix 2), together with a special youth survey, which assessed housing need and other key issues for the village. A special presentation was made to the local primary school. At each stage in the Plan process, elements such as the Plan Objectives, Vision and draft Policies have been refined in response to feedback from residents. The extensive community consultation process is comprehensively documented in the Community Survey Report, August 2017, and the Community Youth Survey Report, August 2017.

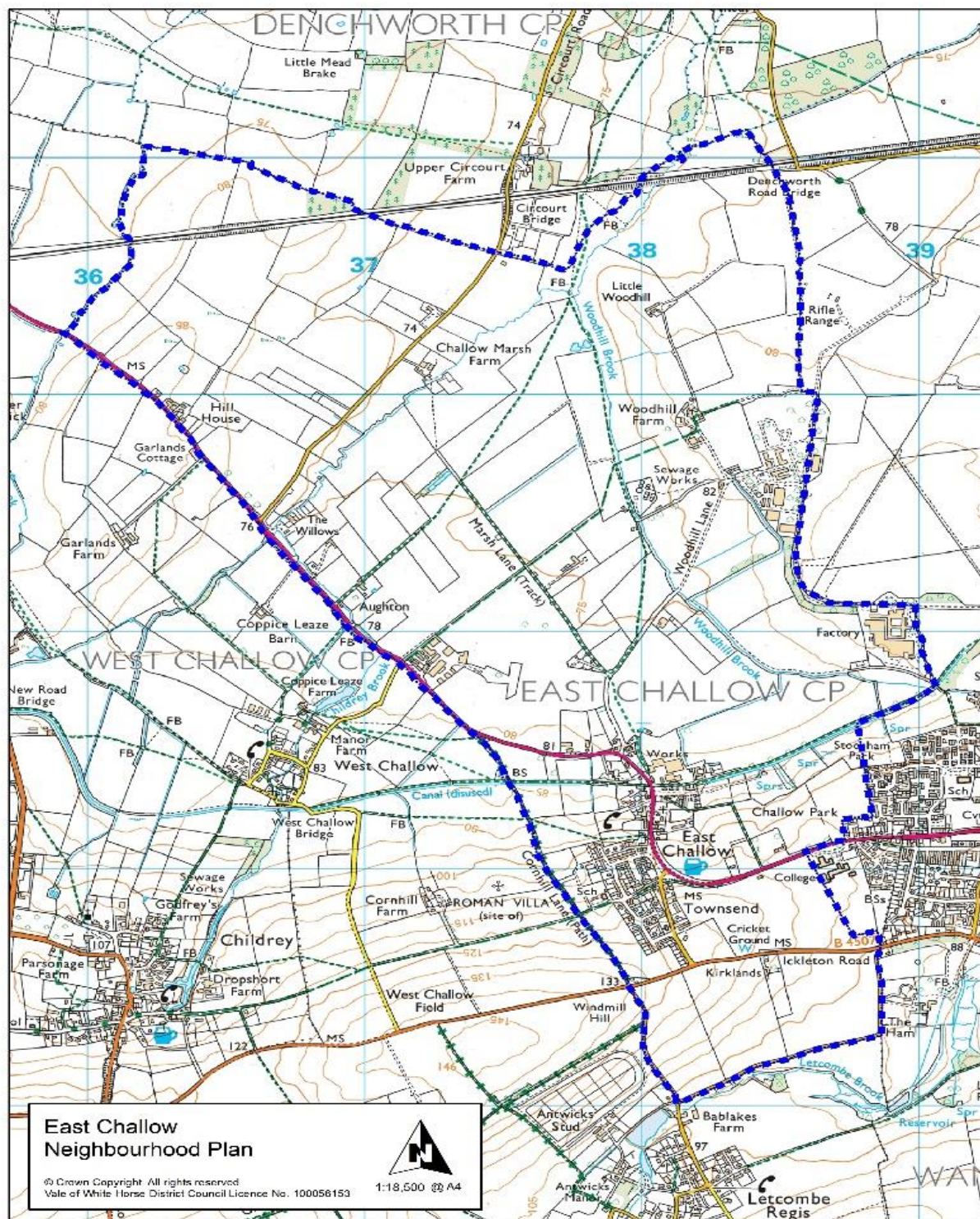
Draft Plan Creation

The Steering Committee (SC) drafted policies to meet the ECNP objectives. In this task, the SC had input from Community First Oxfordshire, the District Council and an independent planning advisor.

The draft policies were presented to the public at an open meeting on 23 April 2018 and published in advance on the Parish website. Feedback was received and the policies subsequently refined. The planning

justification and evidence and local support underpinning each of the ECNP policies is set out in this document.

East Challow Neighbourhood Plan – designated area



Relationship between Plan objectives and Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives/ Sustainability Appraisal

East Challow Parish Council requested a screening opinion from VWHDC in respect of the need for the ECNP to have a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under EU Directive 42/2001 and the 2004 Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations.

On <DATE> the SEA screening opinion was delivered by the Vale of the White Horse District Council and stated:

<DETAIL TO BE ADDED>

For more details on the SEA opinion, please refer to “East Challow SEA Screening Report Final” and “East Challow SEA Notice” documents in Appendix 3.

Submission, Examination and Referendum

This document is the pre-submission version of the ECNP. East Challow Parish Council is submitting this for comment to the District Council and other statutory consultees, the community and other interested stakeholders for statutory consultation. As noted above, the minimum statutory consultation period is six-weeks. However, the Parish Council will extend this period by one-week to give maximum opportunities for consultation responses to be submitted.

Following the pre-submission consultation process, comments will be analysed and used to refine the document. We will then submit the final ECNP to the District Council, together with all the supporting

documentation, including a Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement setting out who has been consulted, how the consultation has been undertaken and how the representations have informed the Plan.

Vale of the White Horse District Council will then consult for a further minimum period of six weeks, before the plan is subjected to an Examination by an Independent Examiner. Subject to the examiner confirming whether any further amendments need to be made to the Plan for it to meet the 'basic conditions', it will be put to a local referendum. If the plan is supported by a majority vote at the referendum the Plan will be 'made' by the District Council. This means that the policies of the ECNP will have full material weight (like the policies of the District-wide Local Plan) when Vale of the White Horse District Council determines planning applications in the NP area.

3. The Parish of East Challow

East Challow Location and Brief History

East Challow lies on a spring line at the foot of the Berkshire and Wessex Downs, on the southern edge of the Vale of the White Horse. It lies just over one mile from the centre of Wantage (to the east) and about eight miles from Faringdon (to the west). Its separation from Wantage is still a critical part of the village's history and character.

The older village was centred around the church and what is now the village green opposite, just south of the route of the Wilts & Berks canal which bisects the village along an east-west axis. The A417 road approximately bisects the village along a north-south axis.

Historically East and West Challow were part of Letcombe Regis, but in 1852 they split out as one separate parish. Later, East and West Challow divided into two separate civil parishes. All three were part of Berkshire until the boundary changes of 1974 transferred them to Oxfordshire.

People have been living in and around East Challow for many thousands of years. The Berkshire and Wessex Downs immediately to the south were the site of a huge number of settlements from before the Bronze Age (c. 2500 BC) right up to the Roman conquest. A few Bronze Age artefacts are reported to have been found and it is reasonable to picture the landscape in the late Iron Age, around the time of the Roman invasion of Britain in 45 BC, being dotted with the thatched roofed round huts of the Celtic tribespeople of the period. Possible prehistoric or Roman trackways, boundaries, pits and parts of enclosures are still visible in the little remaining open land between Wantage and East Challow. In these fields a published map of 1761 marks an "obelisk", providing circumstantial evidence that East Challow was once the home of a prehistoric monument of an age to rank with other more famous landmarks.

The site of Cornhill Villa, a Roman building in one of the fields immediately adjoining East Challow to the west of the current primary school, was originally noted in 1876 and a selection of Roman artefacts have been found in and around the area. It is probable that Saxon people were living in Challow from between 450 and 500 AD. A Saxon charter from King Eadred in 947 gives rise to the first recorded appearance of the burial mound of a Saxon named Ceawa near Challow, and the name changed variously over the years to Cewehlewe in the time of King Henry I, and Chaulawe in 1241. East Challow first occurs as Es Challowe in 1284. The present Anglican church in the centre of the old village was built sometime in the mid-12th century.

The manorial system started in the Saxon period and grew and was adapted after the Norman conquest. The earliest historical record from this system relating to East Challow was in 1655. East Challow itself did not have a manor and was managed from a manor at Letcombe Regis. The names of many of the village people from the seventeenth century onwards are known from the church registers.

It is almost certain that from the beginning of the village the majority of inhabitants got their living by working the land. The people of the village would each have farmed a number of strips scattered throughout the fields. Documents in the Berkshire Record Office dealing with the buying and selling of land through the years 1571 and 1679 give the names of fields and of smaller areas within the fields. In many of the fields around the village the undulations, or ridges and furrows, left by strip farming can still be clearly seen. As time went on, strips were exchanged or bought and sold which led to any one individual having strips concentrated in a few areas rather than scattered over the fields. From the mid-1700s "Inclosure Acts" brought to Parliament enabled all parts of the open fields of East Challow to be enclosed and allotted to individual people.

The Wilts & Berks Canal was built as far as East Challow in 1807 and opened in 1810. The coming of the Great Western Railway, fully open in 1841, which passed two and a half miles to the north of the village, started the canal's decline, but not before significant industrial development adjacent to the canal which later, in the 1860s, became the Nalder Agricultural Engineering Works. For many years Nalders were by far the largest employers in the village and East Challow was consequently more prosperous than some of the nearby villages. Traffic on the canal had virtually ceased by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1903 Nalders' works covered four acres and employed 150 men. The works eventually closed in the mid-1900s.

Not many of the present buildings are earlier than the late 1800s although some had earlier houses on the site and a few have parts built in the 1700s and earlier. A published map of East Challow in 1801 shows the relatively small number of buildings existing at that time. In 1867 there were 67 cottages in the village; two earlier large houses in the vicinity of what is now Park Farm and Main Street no longer existed at this time. East Challow now has 367 existing dwellings (July 2017, EC Parish Council data), including developments of about 70 on the Nalder estate built around 2014, 60 in the Windmill Place area in the 1950s and 80 in the Hedge Hill Road area in the 1960s.

A detailed summary of the village's heritage assets is presented in Appendix 4.

Maps showing the main roads and streets in the village are presented in Appendix 5.

Most of the foregoing summary is taken from information in "Ceawa's Burial Mound" by Hazel & Clive Brown, pub. 2007.

Village & Landscape Character

A significant element of the evidence base for the ECNP is provided by a village and landscape character assessment carried out for the steering group by Portus and Whitton Landscape Architects. The Landscape Character Assessment study undertaken as part of evidencing for Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 has also been considered.

The character assessment is reproduced in Appendix 1 and readers are recommended to review the maps, figures and photographs contained therein at an early stage. The assessment identifies nine Character Areas in the village and five separate land parcels within and around the village. It includes the following summary statements:

- ***‘Two recent planning applications in Parcel B have been approved which have considerably undermined the purpose of policy NE10 in the Local Plan 2031 and combine to further erode the rural setting of East Challow. These approvals will cause the setting of the village to change considerably over the next few years.’***
- ***‘While it is proven that the village has been the subject of considerable pressure from numerous proposed residential developments in recent years, it is also evident that this is likely to continue to be the case in the foreseeable future.’***
- ***‘In conclusion, it is acknowledged that the village setting and the adjacent rural landscape is of significant visual and recreational importance to both residents and visitors.’***

Planning and Development Context

Planning Context

As well as being consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, the ECNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area, as required by the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

East Challow parish lies within the Vale of White Horse District in the County of Oxfordshire. Currently, the development plan in Vale of the White Horse consists of:

- Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1. Work is ongoing on Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites
- Saved policies of the Local Plan 2011 (2006)

Neighbourhood Plans must also be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and not breach, and be otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2011

The VWHLP was adopted by VWHDC in 2006 and many of its policies have been saved for continuing development management purposes, if they are in conformity with the NPPF. Most of the saved policies are consistent with the NPPF apart from those relating to housing land supply.

The most relevant policies to the VWHLP are listed below:

- **Policy GS7 and GS8**- sets out requirements for development outside the built-up area
- **Policy NE10** – states that in open gaps between settlements development or changes of use which would harm their essentially open or rural character will not be permitted.
- **Policy CF2** – sets out support for the provision of new services and facilities for the social well-being of local communities

Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1

East Challow falls within the Western Vale Sub-Area, where it is identified as a Larger Village. The most relevant policies to the NP are listed below:

- **Core Policy 3**- as a larger village, unallocated development in East Challow will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities.
- **Core Policy 4**- sets out district strategy for meeting district housing needs. In relation to East Challow: 'There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area of Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages in accordance with Core Policy 1. Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031.'
- **Core Policy 7**- sets out requirements for new development to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal
 - **Core Policy 17**- Local Plan 2031 Part 1 safeguards land to deliver a West Wantage Link Road (WWLR), connecting the A417 from Mably Way in Wantage to East Challow. In Core Policy 17: Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area, all development within the South-East Vale Sub-Area will be required to contribute towards infrastructure including the West Wantage relief road.
- **Core Policy 20**- Spatial Strategy for the Western Vale has no strategic housing allocation for East Challow.
- **Core Policy 37**- sets out a series of key design principles for development in the District, which will be informed by the proposed Vale of White Horse Design Guide.
- **Core Policy 39**- recognises and supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment in the district such as conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.
- **Core Policy 44**- sets out the key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District's landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced.

Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (emerging)

Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Detailed Policies and Additional Sites (Publication Version October 2017) is sufficiently advanced to bear some material weight in support of the ECNP. Core Policy 20a, *Housing Supply for Western Vale*, allocates no additional housing development sites in the parish of East Challow.

Development Context

East Challow now has 367 existing dwellings (July 2017, EC Parish Council data), including developments of about 70 on the Nalder estate built around 2014, 60 in the Windmill Place area in the 1950s, and 80 in the Hedge Hill Road area in the 1960s.

There is planning approval for new developments of 128 dwellings on the fields opposite the old Goodlake Arms pub and the old council yard towards Wantage, and development started in late 2018. A further large development (750 homes) is proposed by developers Dandara in the Woodhill Lane area on land currently not allocated in the VWHDC Local Plan. Thus, new housing will have a major impact on the village character in the next decade and there is no intention to make any housing allocation in this Plan.

The East Challow NP Steering Group decided against identifying or allocating potential sites for future development in the ECNP for the following reasons:

- there is no expectation or requirement in the adopted or emerging Local Plan to allocate additional housing
- there has been and is likely to continue to be adequate development within the village through limited infill to meet local needs

Proposals for limited infill development will be supported where they are in keeping with local character and are proportionate in scale and meet local housing needs, and/or provide employment, services and facilities. In addition, while the Parish Council recognises the difficulties of the recent planning context in Vale of the White Horse - specifically the lack of a five-year land supply- it has little faith in the efficacy of Core Policy 3 of Local Plan 2031 which states that in larger villages unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities in the local community.

Furthermore, East Challow is classed as a larger village in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1. While the policies of the ECNP are in general conformity with the Local Plan, the Parish Council is of the strong opinion that the village has been wrongly classified and should be re-categorised as a smaller village in any review of the Local Plan. It is felt that the village's infrastructure and facilities (see Our Sustainability Challenges below) is not commensurate with its current classification. The settlement hierarchy set out in Core Policy 3 defines a Larger Village as a settlement with a limited range of employment, services and facilities, where unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities. Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

Our Sustainability Challenges

In March 2017, more than seventy villagers took part in an exercise to examine the strengths, weaknesses of the village, and the threats and opportunities facing it in the future; the results are summarised in Appendix 3. In June 2017 a Community Survey Questionnaire was distributed to every household in the village, and a special youth survey completed by primary school pupils. Completed questionnaires were returned by the end of July and reports published in August 2017 (Appendix 2). These exercises together provide most of the evidence on which this Neighbourhood Plan is based. Highlighted below are a few of the main challenges faced by our village.

The Village Character

A formal Landscape Character Assessment and Village Scape Assessment has been prepared and is reproduced in Appendix 1.

The results of the Community Survey show that the top two most valued things in East Challow are the village's rural setting and access to the countryside. The top two major issues threatening the village are traffic on the A417 and future housing development changing the existing nature of the village. The potential improvements with greatest support are seen as the proposed Western Relief Road and improved traffic management.

Community Facilities

The village school, St Nicholas CofE Primary School, featured highly in the issues and opportunities identified in the community survey; the school is highly valued and increased school capacity is deemed very important.

There is neither a general store selling food and drink, nor a pub, in the village; not surprisingly there is considerable support for both these facilities if they could be justified commercially. The recreation ground, the allotments, the canal, the church and village hall are all valued and used regularly, and the Challow & Childrey Cricket Club and the British Legion provide important social venues and sports facilities. Public transport in the village is very limited.

Villagers would welcome better provision of broadband.

Traffic & Transport

Traffic speeds and the impact of heavy lorries are of great concern to villagers, primarily on the A417 and Letcombe Hill/ Vicarage Road. When or if the Western Relief Road is built this will have a major impact on the village. Traffic on the A417 would undoubtedly reduce but there are concerns about the influence on traffic patterns elsewhere in the village.

The availability of suitable car parking is viewed as a major concern throughout the village because of the difficulty of finding a parking place, and the risk of accidents associated with the current level of on-street parking, especially on the A417. The impact of future provision for electric cars and robotic vehicles must be considered.

Coalescence with Wantage

Villagers want to retain the identity of East Challow as a rural village with its own village identity and to continue to enjoy the emotional response when crossing the gap between neighbouring settlements and their village. In addition, there are significant and beautiful long-distance views from within the village and from the footpath along the A417, to both the Wessex Downs to the south, and the Vale of the White Horse to the north. Coalescence with Wantage is threatened by the approved developments to the east of the village and villagers wish to protect the important landscape (i.e. the remaining fields) that forms the gap between Wantage and East Challow. This issue is further discussed in the Policy on Green Gap in Section 5 and the scale of recent and planned local development in relation to the Local Plan is also discussed in the sub-section on development earlier in this section.

Biodiversity

East Challow is situated in a rural setting, affording easy access to the natural environment for residents. This access comprises public rights of way and associated existing green corridors which allow movement of wildlife and people through the landscape. The majority of existing properties in the village are adjacent to agri-

cultural land or green space, enabling these existing wildlife corridors that enhance local green infrastructure.

Housing and Housing Need

The response to the community survey shows little desire for additional housing, including affordable housing, in the village but a small number of villagers have expressed interest in smaller properties specifically in East Challow. It is important that a balanced mix of houses continues to be achieved and that new development does not skew the housing balance of the village away from smaller houses suitable for both young adults or older people down-sizing and towards larger houses which are currently a little over-represented in the village.

Nearly 40% of respondents would accept further significant development if it could mean improved village facilities and/ or infrastructure.

4. The Neighbourhood Plan – Vision and Objectives

The East Challow Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Objectives and policies have evolved and been refined throughout the NP process through extensive community consultation. This included a village meeting in March 2017 to examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) pertinent to the village (reproduced in Appendix 6), and the distribution and analysis of a Community Questionnaire in August 2017. An initial vision and set of objectives was formulated in November 2016 and refined following the results of the Community Questionnaire.

Draft policies were also presented to the community for feedback at a public event in April 2018. The full extent of the consultation and community engagement process for the ECNP will be documented in the Consultation Statement (to come at final submission).

Vision (November 2016)

Our vision is that in 2031 the community of East Challow will still sit in a rural setting, adjacent to but separate from the urban developments of Wantage and Grove, as a smaller rural village with a strong heritage, a critical environmental awareness and a lively community spirit. There will be some building development to address the current and future needs of all sections of our community. The local economy will have optimised opportunities for local employment. The facilities, services and infrastructure will have been properly maintained, and upgraded where possible, to a standard fit for 2031.

Objectives (November 2016)

1. Provide for changing housing needs, have a say in where housing is sited, in what type of housing is developed, and in the style of development
2. Preserve the rural character of the village and focus new development in locations that preserve the heart of the village.
3. Avoid coalescence with Wantage
4. Encourage sustainable development if it can contribute to the development of the Western Relief Road and reduce the current traffic flow on the A417
5. See increased employment opportunities in the vicinity
6. Encourage more housing and facilities for the elderly and for young families
7. Address transport issues
8. Preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of the village within the open landscape of the lowland Vale area and protect the valued neighbouring green spaces

In the light of responses to the village Community Survey, Objectives 5 and 6 above are no longer considered necessary. The other original objectives remain valid. However, in the light of our findings as work on the NP has progressed, these objectives have been modified to the following:

Revised Objectives

1. To prevent the coalescence of the Wantage and East Challow settlements
2. To preserve and enhance the open countryside around the village as a recreational resource and for its intrinsic beauty and tranquility
3. To retain the character of the village by proposing a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by designation as Local Green Spaces
4. To acknowledge the climate emergency facing the planet and wishes to play an enabling, proactive role in assisting the low carbon transition.
5. To maintain and enhance the existing green corridors and their relationship with the natural environment
6. To secure the long-term benefit of a range of facilities that are important to the local community
7. To prioritise use of any funding from development for specific costed, feasible community projects
8. To improve and make safer the parking situation in the village
9. To offer locally-contextualised support for the proposed Western Relief Road policy in the Local Plan
10. To improve and expand existing footways and/ or upgrade to cycle routes
11. To reduce the negative amenity impact of HGV traffic through the village

5. The Neighbourhood Plan - Policies

The following policies have been developed following the village consultation, steering group discussions, and discussions with Community First Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse District Council.

Policies have been grouped under themes:

Theme	Policy	Related Revised Objectives
Rural Setting	Green Gap	1
	Protection of the open countryside	2
	Local Green Space	3
Environment and Biodiversity	Carbon Footprint	4
	Biodiversity and Green Corridors	5
Infrastructure and Facilities	Community infrastructure	6 + 7
Traffic and Roads	Parking	8
	Western Relief Road	9

Housing Mix

A separate policy relating to Housing Mix was considered. However, there is a strong housing mix policy in the VWH Local Plan based on sound planning evidence, and local evidence from the community survey, and the methodology and sample size, is too small to warrant changes to the Local Plan policy.

Core Policy 22 states that ‘a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households will be required on all new residential developments.’ This should be in accordance with the Council’s current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate through the Housing Register or where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints.

The SHMA (2014) proposed the following housing mix for the Vale of White Horse housing market area:

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Market	5%	25%	45%	25%
Affordable	25-30%	30-35%	30-35%	5-10%
All dwellings	15%	30%	40%	15%

Traffic Speeding

A separate policy relating to Traffic Speeding was considered. However, traffic speed is a highways matter not a planning matter, and the issue is therefore addressed in the list of CIL projects contained in Appendix 6.

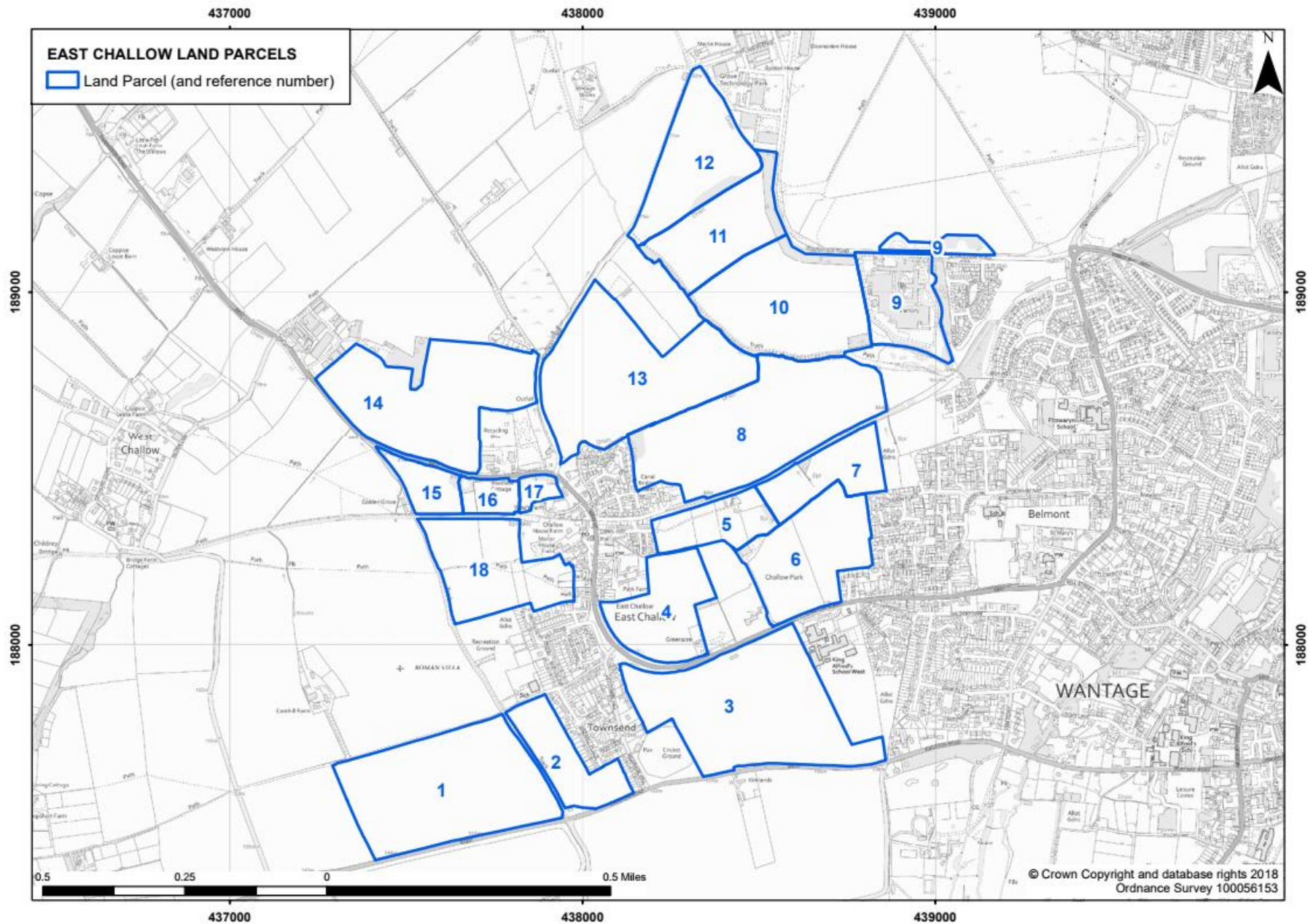
HGV Traffic

A separate policy relating to HGV traffic in the village was considered but it was concluded that there is insufficient evidence for a separate policy, i.e. the existing VWHDC policy provides sufficient protection.

Public Rights of Way

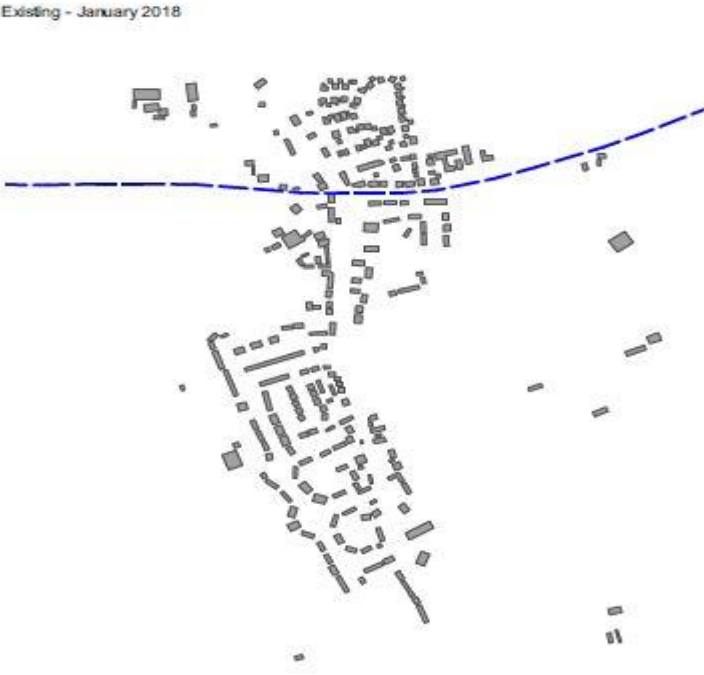
A separate policy relating to Public Rights of Way was considered but it was concluded that this issue is best addressed in the list of CIL projects contained in Appendix 7.

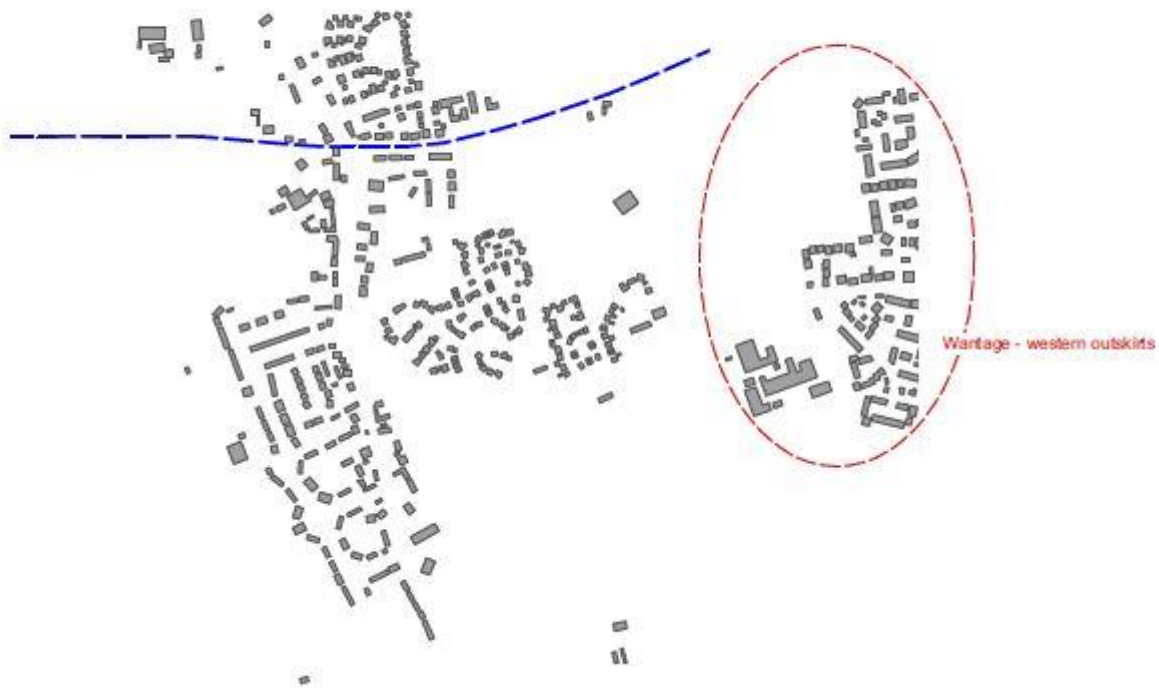
In the above-referred policies, numbered land parcels within and close to the village are referenced. The location of these land parcels (referred to hereafter as L1, L2 etc) is shown in the map overleaf.



East Challow
Numbered Land
Parcels Plan

Rural Setting

POLICY TITLE	
Green Gap	
ISSUE	
<p>The purpose of this policy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To prevent the coalescence of the Wantage and East Challow settlements• To retain the historical character of East Challow as a separate settlement <p>Our NP Vision states that “in 2031 the community of East Challow will still sit in a rural setting, adjacent to but separate from the urban developments of Wantage and Grove, as a smaller, rural village...” Our NP Objectives include “...focus new development in locations that preserve the heart of the village.” In order to meet and safeguard the Vision, it is necessary to prevent development of selected land parcels to prevent coalescence with the town of Wantage (L3, L6, L5).</p> <p>Historically, the village of East Challow has been an established and separate settlement for centuries, the name first recorded as “Es Challowe” in 1284. A brief history of development of the village is given elsewhere in this document. Of special importance in this regard are Land Parcels L3 (the location of prehistoric records) and L18 (visual evidence of ridge and furrow farming from the middle ages).</p> <p>The gap between our settlement and Wantage has been slowly eroded over the years to the extent that Wantage housing developments, and one of the Wantage school sites, now extend to the south-east boundary of the parish, as shown on the Land Parcels Plan. Recent planning approval for Park Farm and Challow Park have pushed the eastern extent of the village further toward the south-east parish boundary, as evidence by the Village Grain maps (below, taken from the Village and Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 1), undertaken as part of NP evidencing.</p> <p>Existing - January 2018</p> 	



The Village and Landscape Character Assessment further defines and supports the importance of preventing coalescence.

Indeed, the Assessment describes the land to the north of the A417, in the following terms; ‘feels quiet and peaceful’ and is a ‘relatively attractive landscape’, and confirms this area as continuing ‘to be covered in the Local Plan 2031 by the policy NE10 - Important Open Land- ‘to prevent coalescence of Wantage and East Challow’.

To the south of the A417 the Assessment describes the land separating Wantage and East Challow in the following terms:

‘The elevated nature... and relationship with the North Wessex Downs AONB suggest a high visual sensitivity of this site to any form of development. It is an attractive area of countryside on the edge of the AONB. Its function as a buffer between East Challow and Wantage, however, indicates that local residents may accredit a higher value to this particular parcel than one may assign to ordinary agricultural land. This particular area is also covered by the policies NE9 Lowland Vale and NE10 Important Open Land of the Local Plan 2031, both aimed to protect the character of the local landscape and prevent coalescence of the two settlements.’

EVIDENCE

It is demonstrably apparent that villagers want to retain the identity of East Challow as a smaller rural village and to continue to enjoy the emotional response when crossing the gap between neighbouring settlements and their village.

In the Character Assessment (Appendix 1) the value of L3 (referred to as Parcel C in Appendix 1) and of L5

and L6 (referred to as Parcel B in Appendix 1) is described and substantiated.

From the results of the NP Community Survey, in relation to green space and the natural environment, 88% of responses identified Green Areas, Rural Setting and Access to Countryside, and Wildlife/Nature as very important.

In addition, there are significant and beautiful long-distance views from the footpath along the A417, to both the Wessex Downs to the south, and the Vale of the White Horse to the north, which will be lost if Land Parcels L3 and L6 are ever developed. These views are shown on Photos 2 and 3 in Appendix 8)

The issue of coalescence is also addressed in the Village and Landscape Character Assessment. In particular, in the summary:

‘As discussed in paras 4.21 and 4.22, two recent planning applications in Parcel B have been approved which have considerably undermined the purpose of policy NE10 in the Local Plan 2031 and combine to further erode the rural setting of East Challow. These approvals will cause the setting of the village to change considerably over the next few years.’

POLICY CONTEXT

In the context of the Development Pattern, LPP1 Core Policy 44 requires that the key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District’s landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced, in particular (inter alia) important landscape settings of settlements (and) important views and visually sensitive skylines.

Emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 2, Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps, states that ‘development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlement’s character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements’ and ‘will only be permitted provided that the physical and visual separation between two separate settlements is not diminished.’

The Adopted Policies Map (December 2016) for the Western Vale Sub Area identified land to the east of the village as “Important Open Land.” This related to saved policy NE10 Urban fringes and countryside gaps in LPP1.

In addition, the Landscape Character Assessment (part of the evidence base for Vale of the White Horse Local Plan Part 2) notes that the ‘[East Challow to East Hanney Lower Vale Farmland] Character Area also contributes to the gap between Wantage and East Challow.’

DISCUSSION

The VWH Local Plan 2031 Adopted Policies Map, December 2016, identified the open space between East Challow and Wantage (Land Parcels L3, L4, L5, L6) as ‘Important Open Land’, based on saved Local Plan policy NE10 in LPP1.

Notwithstanding this, planning was approved on part of this same land (Park Farm (P17/V2031/RM) (88 houses - L4) and Challow Park (P16/V1714/O) (38 houses - L6) in October 2016. The Council advised the PC that, at the time of granting the application on L4, it did not have a five-year housing land supply and the current local plan was only in draft form with limited weight given to it. Hence, the development was permitted on what was ‘Important Open Land’. The wording of Saved Policy NE10 does therefore not provide the necessary protection, and an additional policy is needed to add weight to existing adopted

and emerging policy now because, in the gap between Wantage and EC, there is a need to prevent further unallocated development.

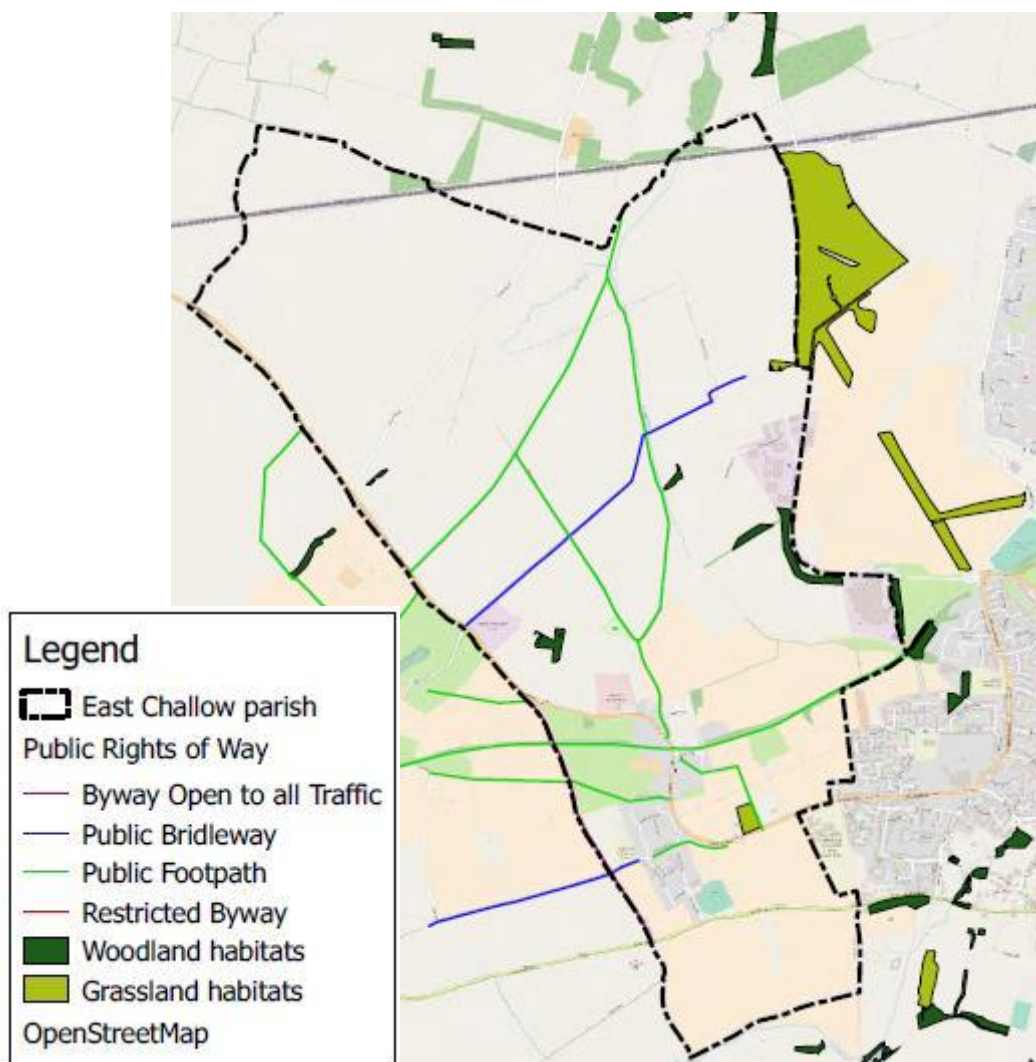
To summarise, the reasons for a specific policy to prevent coalescence with Wantage are the following:

1. Recent planning permissions have demonstrated that the existing policy is not given sufficient weight to prevent development in the gap.
2. It appears that the main reasons for granting recent applications for development on land between the village and Wantage are that there was no five-year housing land supply at the time, and the current local plan was only in draft form with limited weight given to it. This leaves little confidence that future development applications in the gap will be resisted.
3. Core policy 3 states that in larger villages, unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities in the local community.
4. Development under recent applications in land between East Challow and Wantage will have a negative impact on EC's character as a separate settlement.

POLICY

Unallocated development will not be permitted on Land Parcels L3, L6, L5 in order to preserve East Challow's historic character as a separate settlement.

POLICY TITLE	
Protection of the Open Countryside	
ISSUE	
<p>The purpose of this policy is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To preserve and enhance the open countryside around the village as a recreational resource and for its intrinsic beauty and tranquillity. 2. To preserve long distance views from the countryside to the village in recognition of the historic character of EC as a separate settlement. 3. To allow better access to the countryside from the village by foot, cycle and canal to increase opportunities for passive recreation <p>The community of East Challow values its rural setting and the surrounding farmland, experienced as views from footpaths and Public Rights of Way (PROWs), and wishes to ensure that this historic setting is preserved. The term 'rural' is suggestive of countryside, and the Village and Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 1) includes abundant reference to the rural nature of the village, stating in summary (5.5) that '...the village setting and adjacent rural landscape is of significant visual and recreational importance to both residents and visitors'.</p> <p>In further support of the importance of protecting the open countryside immediately surrounding the village, Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) has identified a network of green corridors in East Challow. These corridors, shown on the map included in our policy on Biodiversity & Green Corridors included later in this section, and in the TVERC report included in Appendix 10, are based on modelled habitat networks and PROWs and facilitate the movement of wildlife and people through the landscape.</p> <p>The NP Vision and Objectives include specific statements supporting the requirement to maintain a rural setting. The Vision states that 'in 2031 the community of East Challow will still sit in a rural setting... East Challow will be a smaller, rural village, with a strong heritage, a critical environmental awareness', while a NP objective is to 'preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of the village within the open landscape of the lowland Vale area...'</p>	
EVIDENCE	
<p>The Village and Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 1) discusses the intrinsic value of the countryside and farmland surrounding the village. It identifies five land parcels and includes important countryside views within and from each parcel, and from associated footpaths and PROWs.</p> <p>A map showing PROWs and footways around the village from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre Green Corridors Report (Appendix 10) undertaken for NP evidencing is reproduced below.</p>	



There are four important views from popular paths which, to a great extent, define the character of the village setting. Photographs of these views are presented in the Strategic Views Report (Appendix 8):

- Photo 1 - Northwards from the recreation ground and PROW 196/6 across Land Parcel E (L15,L16,L17,L18) also Photo E7 - Village LCA
- Photo 2 - Northwards across Land Parcel B from the A417 footpath (L06)
- Photo 3 - Southwards from the A417 footpath across Land Parcel C (L3) also Photo C1 – Village LCA
- Photo 4 - Northwards and westwards from the cricket ground across Land Parcel C (L3) also Photo C2 – Village LCA

From the results of the Community Survey, in relation to green space and the natural environment, 88% of responses identified Green Areas, Rural Setting and Access to Countryside, and Wildlife/Nature as very important (section 3.1). The Youth survey August 2017 also stated: ‘we like that [the village] is small, quiet and peaceful and that we are near the countryside.’

Note: to avoid confusion footpaths are renamed ‘footways’ in order to differentiate them from public footpaths recorded as Public Rights of Way (PROWs).

This policy offers additional local detail to protections set out at local and national level:

- ⑩ NPPF 97 (planning policies to be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities et al)
- ⑩ NPPF 99 (planning policies to protect and enhance public rights of way and access et al)
- ⑩ NPPF 168 (planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes)
- ⑩ NPPF 178 (planning policies and decisions to (inter alia) aim to identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason)

Locally, Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Core Policy 44 states that ‘the key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District’s landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced, including... areas or features of cultural and historic value [and] important views and visually sensitive skylines.’

The aspiration to preserve the unique qualities and features of the open countryside around East Challow (both for its own sake and to preserve and enhance recreational opportunities and aesthetic appreciation) is also supported by Core Policy 45 of Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, which resists a loss of green infrastructure, and Core Policy 46, which seeks the conservation and improvement of biodiversity.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 also notes the importance of building healthy and sustainable communities (p. 22), for example by promoting public transport, cycling and walking - Core Policy 35. Improvements to the footpath network and the importance of to health and well-being of providing and enhancing recreational opportunities is also supported by the Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan, 2015-2025.

DISCUSSION

New development in the Parish should meet the policy objectives set out above and address the issues raised in the Character Assessment. As new development takes place and additional pressures are put on the valuable countryside around the village, steps should be taken to preserve and if possible enhance the existing assets so that they can continue to serve their function for the community and its visitors.

There are many ways that this can be achieved, and applicants are encouraged to speak directly with the Parish Council as they design their schemes to find ways to improve access to the countryside, as well as strengthen linkages from the village to the countryside, and to build and improve our local network of footways and PROWs, or unblocking important views. Innovative methods of doing this will be supported, for instance working with the Parish Council to encourage local community groups, schools and volunteers to assist. Any improvements to the countryside in the parish should also make provision for maintenance and upkeep so that the benefits endure. The Parish Council will work with applicants to determine how their developments will impact upon the existing green and countryside infrastructure and how to fairly make a contribution to its upkeep and improvement.

POLICY

New development will be supported where:

1. No strategic views are blocked or adversely impacted (see above).
2. A proportionate contribution is made by developers to improve access to the countryside and safeguard and enhance the green corridors, such as improvement to the footpath network, reinstatement of views, improvements to feeling of tranquillity, etc.

3. It does not introduce urban features, noise, or additional traffic such that the intrinsic value of the countryside is diminished or to the detriment of feelings of openness and tranquillity from footpaths.

POLICY TITLE	
Local Green Space	
ISSUE	
<p>The purpose of this policy is to retain the character of the village by proposing four important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by designation as Local Green Spaces. In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the village character and are therefore regarded as special to the local community. Maps showing the above-referred green spaces are included in Appendix 10.</p> <p>This policy is supported by evidence from the Local Green Spaces Evidence Base (Appendix 10), the Village Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 1), and the TVERC report on Green Corridors in East Challow (Appendix 10).</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan vision states that: ‘In 2031 the community of East Challow will still sit in a rural setting... [and] East Challow will be a smaller, rural village, with a strong heritage, (and) a critical environmental awareness...’ The Neighbourhood Plan objectives aim to: ‘Preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of the village within the open landscape of the lowland Vale area and protect the valued neighbouring green spaces.’</p> <p>The character of the village is a rural village with very many green spaces of diverse use and type. There are five small parcels of land which, combined, make up the village green opposite St Nicholas Church. This is classified as common land (CL98). There is an additional strip of land which runs parallel to the A417 road from the entrance to Wises Farm which also has common land status (CL99).</p> <p>One of the characters of the village is the wide grass verges which run alongside the A417. The Wilts and Berks Canal runs through the village with a canal path which is used by the villagers. The Wilts and Berks Canal Trust hold a long-term lease on the majority of the canal paths through the village. The Trust maintains the canal paths.</p> <p>The recreation ground land was bequeathed to East Challow Parish Council in 1963. There is evidence that the land was transferred to the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan group are seeking legal advice to confirm this. The group will then consider requesting a transfer to common land if the Parish Council agrees.</p>	
EVIDENCE	
<p>The Local Green Spaces Evidence Base (Appendix 10) sets out the case for each site to be designated. Once designated, the policy will resist all proposals for development unless it can be clearly demonstrated they are minor or they are required utilities development.</p> <p>The Village and Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 1) discusses the intrinsic value of the countryside and farmland surrounding the village. It identifies five land parcels and includes important countryside views within and from each parcel, and from associated footpaths and PROWs. The TVERC Green Corridors report (Appendix 9) includes detailed information about the green corridors in the village which facilitate the movement of wildlife and people through the landscape.</p> <p>The Community Survey analysis states that these factors are of high importance and valuable to the village:</p>	

1. East Challow's setting in a rural landscape including the long open views around the village and out to the surrounding countryside;
2. The ability to access the countryside surrounding the village easily on foot/bicycle;
3. Public parks and open green areas within the village. The Youth survey August 2017 analysis also stated: 'we like that [the village] is small, quiet and peaceful and that we are near the countryside.'

POLICY CONTEXT

Potential Local Green Space sites must meet the criteria set out in the NPPF Clauses 100, 101 and 102, and further detailed in the National Planning Practice Guidance:

- NPPF Criteria 1: The designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- NPPF Criteria 2: The designation should only be used where the green space is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- NPPF Criteria 3: The designation should only be used where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

In order to provide further certainty, Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) have been used to define the likely size of a suitable Local Green Space and its distance from the local community. This standard is commonly used to help evidence LGS designations for Neighbourhood Plans. Therefore, a Local Green Space should normally be located within 2km (1.25 miles) of the community it serves and a site of 2ha (5 acres) or less should be located within 300m (325 yards) (or a 5-minute walk) of the community it serves. A site of over 20ha (50 acres) would be considered to be 'an extensive tract of land' and therefore not suitable for designation as a Local Green Space.

DISCUSSION

Land Parcel L18 has been examined as part of a 2014 strategic sites evaluation which found only part of this site to be appropriate for development. Further details are in Appendix 10.

POLICY

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as shown in the Local Green Spaces Evidence Base in Appendix 10:

1. Land Parcel L18.
2. Parcel of land between Hedgehill Road and A417 road.
3. Wide grassed verges alongside Goodlake House and opposite side of A417 road.

The above sites should be designated as Local Green Spaces where development will only be allowed under very special circumstances. The landowners have been approached for permission to designate these areas as an LGS.

POLICY TITLE	
The Zero Carbon Transition	
ISSUE	
<p>The Climate Change Act 2008 commits the UK to an 80% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050. This is a challenging target, which requires everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government. With this in mind, it is likely that national and regional policies relating to the reduction of the carbon footprint will impose themselves increasingly on East Challow residents in years to come.</p> <p>The East Challow NP acknowledges the climate emergency facing the planet and wishes to play an enabling, proactive role in assisting the low carbon transition by encouraging the use of electric vehicles and by ensuring that new development allows more local residents to work from and access services from home, thereby reducing the village's carbon footprint.</p> <p>This aspiration is in line with both the 2018 NPPF (para 8c, 'mitigating and adapting to climate change') and the strategic objective in Vale of the White Horse in Local Plan Part 1 to protect the environment and respond to climate change.</p>	
EVIDENCE	
<p>Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) research shows that electric car sales in the UK have risen dramatically over the past few years. While only around 500 electric cars were registered per month during the first half of 2014, this has now risen to an average of almost 4,000 per month during 2017. These trends are forecast to continue to rise, thereby necessitating a parallel increase in infrastructure, particularly charging points.</p> <p>From 1998 to 2014, the number of home workers in the UK increased from 2.9 to 4.2 million. This trend appears to be more pronounced in East Challow. The 2011 Census showed that 7.2% of East Challow residents in employment aged 16-74 worked from home, compared to 3.5% in England as a whole. Therefore, an upwards trend in home-working in an area like East Challow which already has above-average numbers puts a premium on ensuring that technological infrastructure is adequate to service their activities.</p>	
POLICY CONTEXT	
<p>At national and local level, a number of policies support the low carbon transition.</p> <p>NPPF para 110 states that applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations</p> <p>NPPF para 112 states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social wellbeing. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.</p> <p>The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 sets out national policy as regards sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>Likewise, the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2031 contains a number of relevant policies to support a zero carbon transition: Core Policy 33- Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility;</p>	

Core Policy 36- Electronic communications; Core Policy 40- Sustainable design and construction; Core Policy 41- Renewable energy.

In addition, wider research studies also support this NP policy. South Oxfordshire District Council 'Sustainable Transport Study for New Developments Stage 2 Report- Draft Recommendations (2017)' recommends: 'Invest in enhanced connectivity infrastructure. In conjunction with industry partners, support the roll-out of enhanced connectivity infrastructure, including superfast broadband, 5G services, or more localised vehicle-to-infrastructure communications systems.' The Forestry Commission report 'Trees, people and the built environment' (2011) sets out a case for the ecological and climate change benefits regarding the retention and planting of trees.

DISCUSSION

There is overwhelming scientific consensus that climate change is happening. The Paris Agreement sees an unprecedented consensus from 185 countries on the need to take action on climate change.

Locally, this aspiration is reflected by the Vale of the White Horse Strategic Objective in Local Plan Part 1 to protect the environment and respond to climate change.

In turn, therefore, this NP policy is a practical means to help enable a low carbon future by facilitating the uptake of new, greener technologies and enabling more home-working. In addition, the Infrastructure Project list (Appendix 7) will include the development of a meeting place, for example the Village Hall, with high speed broadband, where local residents could carry out their work as part of a community.

The OCC and VWHDC do not cover the impact of future technologies in their plans. East Challow borders on an area designated as the Science Vale. This area is currently developing the electric and autonomous car. As this plan covers the period from the present through to 2031 when these vehicles will appear on our roads, it is important that provision is made in new developments to accommodate them. Also, retrospective installations need to be supported.

Trees planted into urban landscapes such as streets, recreational areas and car parks provide important benefits to urban populations. These include absorption of pollutants, reduction of traffic noise, windbreaks and shelter, as well as reduction of radiation and solar heat gain through shading and evapotranspiration (NUFU, 2005; Hiemstra *et al*, 2008; Forest Research, 2010). Planning policy should therefore encourage the retention of existing trees and the planting of new ones.

In addition, our water resources are under pressure. The threat to the local environment is demonstrated by the impact the new Abingdon Reservoir proposed by Thames Water will have. Consideration must be given to rainwater harvesting, water would otherwise have gone directly into the drainage system or been lost through evaporation and transpiration. Once collected and stored it can be used for non-potable purposes. These include toilet flushing, garden watering and clothes washing. Also, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses should be encouraged.

POLICY

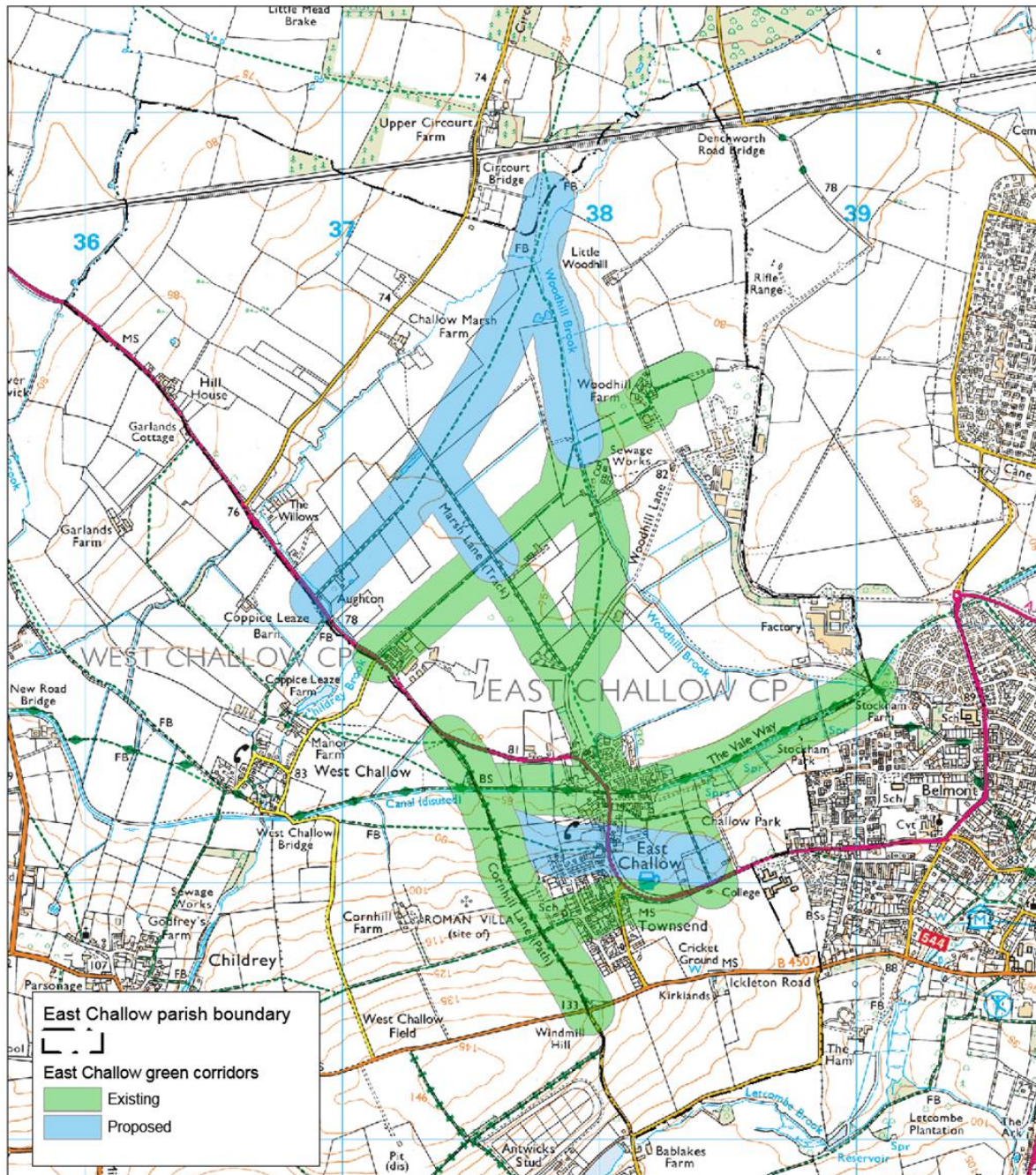
The design and standard of new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero-carbon emissions. This

includes:

- Incorporating on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels.
- Siting and orientation to optimize passive solar gain.
- Installing energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.
- Providing superfast broadband infrastructure and charging points for electric vehicles.
- Retaining existing trees wherever practicable on new development. For each tree removed one new tree should be planted to replace it.
- Incorporating rainwater harvesting and SuDS.
- The retrofit of existing buildings to encourage the reduction of energy demand, the generation of renewable energy and the incorporation of zero carbon technologies will be encouraged and supported.

POLICY TITLE	
Biodiversity and green corridors	
ISSUE	
<p>East Challow is situated in a rural setting, affording easy access to the natural environment for residents. This access comprises public rights of way and associated existing green corridors, outlined in work commissioned by the Parish Council from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (Appendix 10). The majority of existing properties in the village are adjacent to agricultural land or green space, enabling these existing wildlife corridors that enhance local green infrastructure.</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance these existing green corridors and relationship with the natural environment • Promote critical environmental awareness within the existing village and among new developments as necessary • Require ‘net gain’ in biodiversity and green infrastructure from new developments, considering existing and proposed green corridors and known protected species <p>Our neighbourhood plan vision states that ‘in 2031... East Challow will sit in a rural setting’ with ‘a critical environmental awareness’. Our Neighbourhood Plan objectives include: 1- have a say where housing is sited; 2- preserve the rural character of the village; and 8- preserve the high quality and accessible countryside setting of the village within the open landscape of the lowland Vale area and protect the valued neighbouring green spaces.</p>	
EVIDENCE	
<p>A Green Corridors report (Appendix 9) was commissioned from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC). The corridors identified in the report ‘are based on modelled habitat networks and Public Rights of Way (PROW) and facilitate the movement of wildlife and people through the landscape’ (report summary).</p> <p>A number of existing corridors were identified (green), and a number of proposed corridors identified that link existing corridors along PROW (blue). The canal forms one of the identified green corridors (The Vale Way) – see map below.</p> <p>East Challow Parish Council also commissioned a Biodiversity report from TVERC (Appendix 11), to identify protected (NERC S41) and notable species present within the parish. This report identifies the presence of badgers, bats and Great Crested Newts, among many other species. The sightings of these species occur throughout the parish, but notably, for example in the case of the protected Great Crested Newts, on land that was recently granted planning permission for development (Land Parcels L4 and L6). This is just one example of planned development impacting existing species and habitats within our parish. Land parcel L6 is also one of the identified priority habitats within the village.</p> <p>The results of our village survey indicate a number of environmental matters that are of significant importance to the village. These include: ability to access countryside easily on foot or bicycle (score 1.2 on a scale of 1-5 where 1= most important) and the village’s ability to sustain wildlife and nature within its’ boundaries through retaining ‘green infrastructure’.</p>	

Green Corridors in East Challow



Map produced by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre in 2018 ©
Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Oxfordshire County Council Licence No 100023343 (2018)

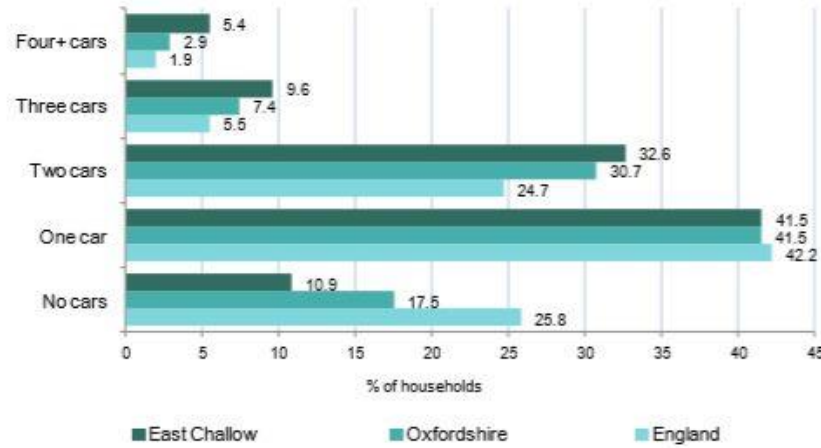
POLICY CONTEXT	
<p>A number of national and local policies support this policy.</p> <p>Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states: ‘To minimize impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should: a) identify and map components of local wildlife-rich habitats, including the hierarchy of designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation; and b) promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.’ The identification and mapping of green corridors by TVERC is therefore in accordance with the NPPF.</p> <p>In addition, NPPF paragraph 168 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment’, while NPPF paragraph 169 adds that ‘plans should: allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and strengthening networks of habitats and green infrastructure.’</p> <p>Locally, Local Plan Part 1 Policy CP45 states that ‘a net gain in Green Infrastructure, including biodiversity, will be sought either through on-site provision or off-site contributions and the targeted use of other funding sources. A net loss of Green Infrastructure, including biodiversity, through development proposals, will be resisted. Policy CP46 states that ‘development that will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district will be permitted.’</p>	
DISCUSSION	
<p>The reasons for a specific policy to promote biodiversity, and protect, maintain and enhance the green corridors within the parish are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recent planning permissions have been granted on land that overlaps with both existing and proposed green corridors (Land Parcels L4 and L6, P17/V0231/RM and P16/V1714/O), without regard for NPPF 169 (allocate land with least environmental... value) or LPP1 CP45 (net gain in green infrastructure), amongst others. This is land where protected and notable species have been observed, and L6 is an area identified as priority habitat within the parish. Existing policy does not give sufficient weight to prevent development on important green corridors within the parish. 2. Village opinion strongly suggested the need for improvement to PRow, existing hedgerows and trenches, and the desire to enhance green infrastructure. PRow should be maintained by Oxfordshire County Council, and various countryside access projects grant funding for improvements to signage etc. for promotion of walks. These aspirations are the subject of a specific Infrastructure project (see Appendix 7). 	
POLICY	
<p>Development proposals should seek to maintain and enhance the connectivity of all existing and proposed green corridors (as identified in evidence section above) wherever possible.</p> <p>Proposals for development on or adjacent to existing and proposed green corridors, must maintain and if possible enhance the function of the corridor. Planning applications for new dwellings must clearly demonstrate how they have incorporated appropriate measures to secure the connectivity of the corridor and the freedom of movement for species on or through the site.</p> <p>Development proposals should seek to enhance biodiversity wherever possible. On sites where protected</p>	

species have been observed/recorded, developments should plan for the protection and, where possible, enhancement of existing habitats, both during and after construction.

POLICY TITLE	
Community Facilities	
ISSUE	
<p>The purpose of this policy is to protect a specific number of community facilities from unnecessary loss, in line with the VWHLPP policies CF1 and CF5 and NPPF para 84 that support the retention of existing community facilities and public houses if their viability can be demonstrated. They comprise a range of buildings and associated land, all of which may be capable of being extended or redeveloped in ways that are suitable to a rural location.</p> <p>The policy also seeks to ensure that new development contributes sufficiently to ensure that new residents have access to the same quality of community infrastructure as present. This is in line with NPPF paras 92 and 93, which seeks to facilitate social interaction and create healthy and sustainable communities and deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities which the community needs. A relatively large number of villagers (about 40% of respondents) work from home and therefore broadband facilities are particularly important.</p> <p>In addition, the policy is intended to secure the long-term benefit of a range of facilities that are important to the local community through engagement with potential developers. In some cases, remaining viable will require investment in updating and/ or increasing the size of the facility to support new uses.</p> <p>East Challow's village life is supported in particular by the following community facilities: Village Hall, Challow Mission, St. Nicholas's Church, Challow and Childrey Cricket Ground, the Royal British Legion and the Recreation Ground and Allotments. However, as set out below, some of these facilities are operating at or near capacity, while some are in need of physical improvement.</p> <p>At present, there are minimal retail facilities within the village, with only a hire centre/ agriculture/ horticultural workshop and store and a hardware/ homeware/ furniture shop located within the village. Elsewhere in the parish there is a fuel station with limited retail facilities and a small industrial estate, but neither can safely be reached on foot.</p> <p>The Vale of White Horse District Council Town and Villages Facilities Study (2014), part of the Local Plan Part 1 Evidence Base, collated information on the services and facilities available in East Challow and gives what could be described as a 'sustainability score.' East Challow's score of 14 was the joint-lowest for larger villages (average was 18).</p>	
EVIDENCE	
<i>Community Facilities</i>	
Village Hall	<p>Located off Canal Way at the bottom of the village</p> <p>Used by many residents, groups and committees and the school for various functions, it also houses key community programmes.</p> <p>Parking is limited due to residents' usage</p>
Challow Mission	Located on Main Street opposite St Nicholas Church

	<p>⑩ Used by residents</p> <p>⑩ No parking facilities</p>	
St Nicholas Church	<p>⑩ Located on Main Street at the bottom of the village next to the Village Hall.</p> <p>⑩ Used by many residents</p> <p>⑩ Parking is limited due to shared use with Village Hall</p>	
Challow & Childrey Cricket Club	<p>⑩ Located on Vicarage Hill at the top of the village</p> <p>· Used by many residents from the village and surrounding villages for cricket and functions with bar facilities</p> <p>⑩ Parking is sufficient</p>	
The Royal British Legion	<p>Located on Vicarage Hill at the top of the Village</p> <p>· Used by many residents for bar facilities and a function room is also available for hire</p> <p>⑩ Parking is sufficient</p>	
Recreation Ground	<p>⑩ Located on Cornhill Lane in the middle of the village</p> <p>⑩ Play area used by many residents</p> <p>· Current sports facilities inc. football pitch/changing rooms/tennis & netball court which unfortunately have no current village team use. Improvement of changing rooms might encourage more use of playing areas.</p> <p>⑩ Allotments are well used and appreciated and there is currently a waiting list</p> <p>⑩ Parking is sufficient</p> <p>⑩ Given the lack of exercise equipment, there is an opportunity to provide outdoor exercise equipment for adults.</p>	
POLICY CONTEXT		
<p>The policy adds local detail to the following national and local policies: NPPF 92 (places for community to meet) and NPPF 93 (social/cultural facilities for community), Core Policy 26 (elderly should be near facilities), saved policy CF1 protection of existing services and facilities and emerging Local Plan part 2 – community and village hall standards (p.60).</p>		
DISCUSSION		
<p>Consultation with the community also highlighted a number of issues of interest and concerns that cannot be the subject of formal policies in a Neighbourhood Plan because they do not directly relate to land use. National guidance recommends that community actions of this nature are included in a separate part of the Plan.</p> <p>A number of projects have been identified through the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process and which would significantly benefit the village and are presented at Appendix 7, Community Infrastructure Project List. The projects relate to local transport, traffic speeding and footways and cycleways. It is proposed that these be financed from Community Infrastructure Levy funding.</p> <p>Projects identified and discussed in Appendix 7 are based on current circumstances and priorities. These may change and the appendix will be reviewed annually and updated as required.</p>		
POLICY		
<p>Proposals should make proportionate provision to improve and enhance existing community infrastructure where new users are likely to be introduced to the community, especially provision for parking.</p>		

Traffic & Roads

POLICY TITLE																									
Parking																									
ISSUE																									
<p>This policy is included to support the Local Plan policies on residential parking. There is only limited public transport and a shortage of amenities in the village, therefore East Challow residents are dependent on the private car. As a result, car ownership is higher than average (see table below) and new development needs to address local concerns that new housing will not add to the identified congestion in the village. Put simply, where residents have no choice but to own a car this situation needs to be recognised.</p> <p>Parking on the A417 along Main Street, in the historic core of the village, creates a traffic hazard because parked vehicles extend out into the carriageway (see photos in Appendix 12). The same vehicles cause obstructions on the footpath for pedestrians, especially with pushchairs, at school start and finish times. Parking on Hedgehill Road/ Sarajac Avenue makes it difficult for buses and dust carts to pass easily.</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is three-fold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To avoid increase in traffic congestion and traffic hazards in the village due to on street parking• To ensure that pavements and village streets are accessible to pedestrians, particularly the mobility impaired such as parents with prams and the less sure of foot• To remove on-street parking where possible in areas that reinforce the rural character of the village																									
EVIDENCE																									
<p>The Rural Community Profile for East Challow (ACRE, Nov. 2013, p. 35) shows that the number of households with 2, 3, or 4 cars is above the Vale of White Horse and national averages. Parking problems are therefore not surprising.</p> <div><p>Car ownership</p><table><thead><tr><th>Car ownership</th><th>East Challow</th><th>Oxfordshire</th><th>England</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Four+ cars</td><td>5.4</td><td>2.9</td><td>1.9</td></tr><tr><td>Three cars</td><td>9.6</td><td>7.4</td><td>5.5</td></tr><tr><td>Two cars</td><td>32.6</td><td>30.7</td><td>24.7</td></tr><tr><td>One car</td><td>41.5</td><td>41.5</td><td>42.2</td></tr><tr><td>No cars</td><td>10.9</td><td>17.5</td><td>25.8</td></tr></tbody></table></div> <p>The Community Survey (Appendix 2, sections 4.4 & 4.5) details the concerns of the villagers, i.e. a high number of responses (36%) identified parking concerns as very important, particularly along the A417 and along Hedgehill Road/ Sarajac Avenue (see photos in Appendix 8)</p>		Car ownership	East Challow	Oxfordshire	England	Four+ cars	5.4	2.9	1.9	Three cars	9.6	7.4	5.5	Two cars	32.6	30.7	24.7	One car	41.5	41.5	42.2	No cars	10.9	17.5	25.8
Car ownership	East Challow	Oxfordshire	England																						
Four+ cars	5.4	2.9	1.9																						
Three cars	9.6	7.4	5.5																						
Two cars	32.6	30.7	24.7																						
One car	41.5	41.5	42.2																						
No cars	10.9	17.5	25.8																						

The Village Landscape and Character Assessment (Appendix 4) identifies East Challow's historic core. The predominant parking issue along the A417 occurs within this historic core, opposite or nearly opposite the village green, described in the Village Landscape and Character Assessment (3.14) as providing 'a breathing space ...and reinforcing the rural character of East Challow' with associated properties providing 'a visually attractive grouping and... a unique and distinct area within the village'.

POLICY CONTEXT

NPPF 106: parking standards should take into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of development, the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership level.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Core Policy 35 seeks to: vii. ensure adequate parking is delivered on new developments in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's published standards. Appendix C of Oxfordshire County Council 'Transport for new developments: parking standards for new residential developments' sets out parking standards to be applied in East Challow.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Core Policy 33 states requirements to: i. actively seek to ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network are minimized; v. ensure that transport improvements are designed to minimise any effects on the amenities, character and special qualities of the surrounding area, and; vi. promote and support improvements to the transport network that increase safety, improve air quality and/or make our towns and villages more attractive.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Core Policy 37 states: i. design to respond positively to the site and its surroundings, cultural diversity and history, conserve and enhance historic character and reinforce local identity, (xi) ensure a sufficient level of well-integrated car and bicycle parking and external storage.

Oxfordshire Parking Policy 6.9 (parking on footways and verges): The Highway Code says: 'Do not park partially or wholly on the pavement unless signs permit it'. Under section 19 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, Heavy Goods Vehicles are banned from parking on the footway, although... an HGV may be parked on the footway when loading/ unloading is in progress. There is no national legislation prohibiting the parking of all vehicles on footways and verges, due to the wide range of circumstances where [this] occurs.

DISCUSSION

The Barry Side (Hedgehill) development was built in the early to mid-1960's. At that time, it was unusual to find more than two vehicles per dwelling. There is no practical solution to reducing the current volume of on street parking. The village has not been planned for these needs.

The 1998 Transport White Paper saw a change in direction with parking provision, using reduced parking availability as one of the tools to achieve a change in travel behaviour to more sustainable modes such as public transport, cycling and walking. This approach was promoted in Regional Planning Guidance 9 (RPG9) and Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) both issued in March 2001. The new guidance means that required standards are reduced and expressed as a maximum rather than a minimum.

The result of the above means that there is very little scope to improve the situation in East Challow. The embracing of new technologies contained in The Low Carbon Transition policy has the potential in time to reduce the volume of car ownership and address the proliferation of on street parking.

POLICY

Proposals for new residential development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that off-street parking provision is adequate to meet the assessed future needs of the development being proposed.

The provision of additional short-term off-street parking will be welcomed.

Sizeable future developments should include parking provision for villagers generally.

The size of standard parking bays should meet the needs of modern vehicles.

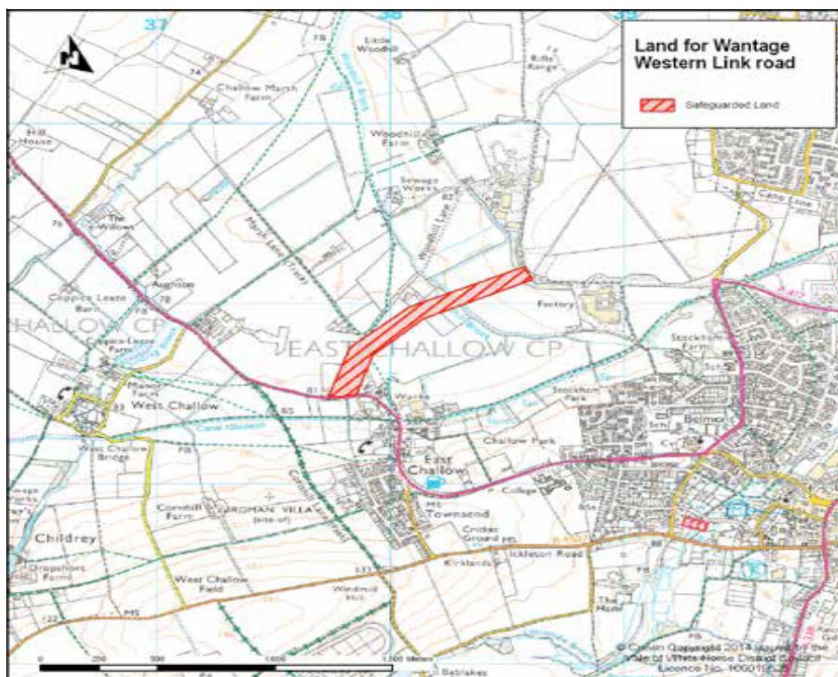
POLICY TITLE

Western Relief Road

ISSUE

The purpose of this policy is to offer locally-contextualised support for the proposed Western Relief Road (see map below- **source:** Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1, Appendix E) policy in the Local Plan.

It is important that a relief road, if built, achieves the objective of not only routing traffic out of the village but also ensures that residential roads in the village, especially Letcombe Hill/ Vicarage Hill, do not receive a greater traffic load from vehicles accessing the new link road. A future traffic plan must remove or reduce the noise, vibration, dust and air pollution from the built-up area, and most particularly reduce NO2 levels.



E10

Our Objectives statement seeks to 'address transport issues' and to 'encourage sustainable development if it can contribute to the development of the Western Relief Road and reduce the current traffic flow on the A417'. The issue of speeding is dealt with in a separate Infrastructure Project proposal (Appendix 7).

EVIDENCE	
<p>A FOI request by the Parish Council to Oxfordshire County Council in 2016 revealed that the A417 is at or over capacity.</p> <p>The volume and speed of traffic on the A417, and on Letcombe Hill/Vicarage Hill, was recorded as the issue of greatest concern to villagers in the Community Survey (2.2). Another significant concern was the potential for a future Western Relief Road to add traffic to other arterial and residential village roads.</p> <p>The Community Survey (4.1, 4.2, 4.3) and specific narrative comments) documents respondents' detailed concerns regarding heavy lorries, heavy traffic generally and speeding.</p> <p>Further details are given in the Infrastructure project on speeding (see Appendix 7).</p>	
POLICY CONTEXT	
<p>Local Plan 2031 Part 1, safeguards land to deliver a West Wantage Link Road (WWLR) connecting the A417 from Mably Way in Wantage to East Challow. In Core Policy 17: Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area, all development within the South-East Vale Sub-Area will be required to contribute towards infrastructure (in accordance with Core Policy 7) including the West Wantage relief road.</p> <p>This NP policy notes and seeks local application of Vale of White Horse Local Plan, Core Policy 33: Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility, which actively seeks to ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network are minimized.</p> <p>A property development company, Dandara, is proposing a new development of 750 houses immediately to the north and east of the village on Land Parcels L8, L10, L11, L12, L13. Dandara claim that their new development will finance the new link road.</p> <p>NPPF paragraph 105 states that local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure.</p>	
POLICY	
<p>Transport Assessments and Statements prepared under Development Plan Policy 17 should fully consider all impact of the Wantage Western Link Road on East Challow in accordance with Core Policy 37.</p> <p>East Challow Parish Council should be formally consulted on the scope of the Transport Assessments and Statements.</p>	

6. Implementation and monitoring

Implementation

Implementation of the ECNP plan will be ongoing. Responsibility for determining planning applications rests with Vale of the White Horse DC.

Monitoring

The Parish Council will monitor the Neighbourhood Plan and the implementation and effectiveness of its policies.

Twelve-month review

ECNP will be reviewed after one year after its adoption at community referendum by the parish council and the reconvened Neighbourhood plan steering committee or their representatives.

The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions.

Five-year review

ECNP will be reviewed every five years thereafter. Review of policies will be led by East Challow Parish council. The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions.

Where significant amendments or additions are needed that cause significant public concern, a public consultation will be undertaken to be sure that 50% or more of respondents to the consultations with residents accept the changes

End of plan review

At least two years prior to the expiry of the ECNP, a full review will be undertaken to gauge the success of the Plan in meeting its objectives and to put in place a succession plan.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1- Village Landscape and Character Assessment
Appendix 2- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey Reports
Appendix 3- SEA Screening Report & Notice
Appendix 4- Heritage Assets in East Challow
Appendix 5- Main Roads & Streets in the Village
Appendix 6- East Challow Village SWOT Analysis
Appendix 7- Community Infrastructure Project List
Appendix 8- Strategic Views (Photos)
Appendix 9- Green Corridors Report
Appendix 10- Local Green Spaces – Evidence Base
Appendix 11- Biodiversity Report
Appendix 12- Parking obstructions along the eastbound A417 (Photos)