WODC Local Plan 2043 – A summary for ENCON

Introduction

This document has been written by Paul North to support discussions within ENCON about the proposed local plan for West Oxfordshire. As such it currently reflects my thoughts and conclusions. Hopefully it will prove helpful in structing any discussions and bringing some focus to the potential issues, priorities and actions ENCON may want to incorporate into future plans, campaigns or engagement with WODC, our supporters, local parishes and residents.

As such it does no look to summarise the whole plan, that runs to 456 pages. Much of the plan is focused on a spatial strategy and how to meet the target of 18,318 new houses delivered by 2043, in the context of the spatial strategy. Nearly all this development will be outside the ENCON coverage area, and so we do not, currently face a material threat of large-scale housing developments in our area. The plan also addresses many other material issues, in particular climate change, supporting economic growth, our local waterways and environment, sustainable transport, our historic environment and nature recovery. These priorities are material within the ENCON area so are given some focus in this paper.

The plan sets out:

- Ten core policies.
- Several specific area strategies, for example the Burford area strategy
- Six rural area strategies, including one for Enstone airfield
- 31 development management policies that are the detailed criteria against which planning applications will be assessed, ensuring that development is sustainable, well-designed, and appropriate to its context.

Within this document, six core policies, the rural area strategy for Enstone airfield and nine development management policies are summarised. These have been chosen on the basis that these seem the most material to the objectives of ENCON and the parishes within the ENCON area. This does not exclude the inclusion of other policies from any future discussion. What is also included in this document is a summary of the ENCON area, seeking to set out what is unique about the area and something of the heritage and environments within the area. Whilst this document is not 456 pages long, it is not short. Sorry.

Summary

The Plan makes some stark statements about the status of the environment in our district:

- Climate change is one of the most significant long-term challenges facing West Oxfordshire. Rising global temperatures, more frequent and intense weather events, and ongoing biodiversity loss present risks to communities, businesses, infrastructure and the natural environment.
- West Oxfordshire is located in a serious water stressed area where the current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective infall which is available to meet demand. Based on the forecasts in Thames Water's latest Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) there could be shortfalls in water supply up to 2041 and beyond.
- Nature is degraded and has declined significantly in recent decades, including our rivers and streams, woodlands and hedgerows, for example, through pollution, direct loss and inappropriate management. It is therefore necessary to restore and recover nature to build resilience to climate change.

The Plan seeks to address these challenges and at the time deliver over 18,318 new homes. This is ambitious and there is an equally ambitious vision for the next 18 years, some key points being that:

- In 2043, West Oxfordshire stands as a beacon of sustainable development and community well-being. Our District has embraced a transformative vision, shaping a future that balances environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social equity.
- The district is powered entirely by renewable energy sources and innovative green technologies. Energy-efficient buildings, both residential and commercial have become the norm, with retrofitted historic structures showcasing advanced insulation and energy systems.
- Our natural landscapes and historic buildings are meticulously preserved and enhanced. Conservation efforts ensure that biodiversity is restored, protected and thrives in rural and urban areas.

It is clear a huge amount of work has gone into this plan, it contains a lot of detail, particularly around the delivery of housing, economic development and detailed planning and development policies. Given this focus it is not surprising that there seems to be lack of focus on rural issues and challenges.

There are many policies related to climate change, environmental concerns, heritage and nature recovery. These are clearly welcome and will hopefully help realise the ambitious vision set out in the Plan and will bring material benefits to rural areas. For the ENCON area the Plan raises the following questions:

- How to balance to focus given to tourism with its impact on local heritage, communities and the green infrastructure?
- The future potential re-development of Enstone Airfield
- How can nature recovery really be delivered without local active stewardship, including monitoring and reporting of progress?
- How can the net zero ambitions be delivered in rural areas and old buildings?

The issues are considered further in the conclusions to this document.

ENCON Coverage Area

Parish	Pop.	No. of Households	Area km2	Density people / km2
Enstone	1240	529	24	52
Glympton	187	35	5.1	37
Great Tew	163	64	12.2	13
Heythrop	373	43	7	54
Kiddington with Asterleigh	161	43	8.9	18
Little Tew	321	71	9.5	34
Sandford St. Martin	209	96	9.2	23
Steeple Barton	1546	636	11.1	131
Swerford	136	64	4.6	30
Westcot Barton	241	61	4.2	57
Worton (West Oxfordshire)	216	33	5.5	39

What is unique about this area?

- The ENCON coverage area can be defined by the boundaries of 11 connected parishes within west Oxfordshire.
- These parishes have the lowest population density in the south-east of England. They:
  - Cover an area of 101km^2, or about 14% of West Oxfordshire and 4% of Oxfordshire
  - Have a population of about 4,800 people, about 1700 households and population of density of 44.4 people per km2.
  - This is the lowest population density in Oxfordshire and one of the lowest of the South East of England.
  - For comparison, Eden in Cumbria has the lowest population density in England with about 26 people per km2. The parish of Great Tew has a population density of 13 people per km2.
  - Northumberland, often cited as the quietest county in England, has about 63 people per KM2
  - This low level of population density is a product of heritage, large privately held estates, a focus on farming and other rural activities and more recently recognition of the conservation value of the area.

- The ENCON area includes a rich range of conservation assets and efforts, including:
  - Six conservation areas, 11.8% of the conservation areas in West Oxfordshire and 2.4% of the areas in Oxfordshire.
  - Over 500 listed assets, 7% of all listed assets in West Oxfordshire and 4.2% of listed assets in Oxfordshire.
  - Parts of the Glyme valley statutory nature reserve
  - Four statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest, SSSIs.
  - Over twenty ancient forests
  - Parts of the Glyme and Dorn Valley Conservation Target Area
  - Fourteen local wildlife sites
  - Four historic parks and gardens
- The ENCON area includes a rich mosaic of habitats, including
  - Limestone grasslands found along the banks of the Glyme and Dorn
  - Fen, swamp and reedbed habitats
  - Parklands are found at Glympton, Kiddington, Heythrop, Middle Barton and Sandford St Martin.
  - Farmland and pasture.
  - Woodland including many ancient woodlands.
- The area includes a number of important water courses including
  - The source of the river Dorn, that feeds into the river Glyme, and parts of the Dorn catchment area
  - The source of Cockley Brook and feeds in the river Glyme
  - The source of Tyte Brook that feeds in to Sandford Park and the Dorn.
  - The source of the Swere river that feeds into the Cherwell
  - Parts of the river Glyme catchment area.
  - Parts of the Deddington Brook catchment area.
- The area supports a wide and diverse range of flora and fauna. For example:
  - The Dorn supports a population of native, white-clawed crayfish in its upper reaches — one of England's most endangered freshwater species.
  - The wider Dorn catchment also supports water voles, rare plant species including fen violet and downy woundwort, and a range of butterfly species including marbled white, common blue and orange-tip at the BBOWT Glyme Valley reserve.
  - The Glyme valley supports populations of limestone grassland plants (orchids, bluebells), calcareous grassland butterflies, farmland birds (yellowhammer, skylark, linnet, corn bunting), fen/reedbed birds and invertebrates, water voles, woodland bats and deadwood species (stag beetle), freshwater species such as brook lamprey and bullhead.

In summary, the ENCON area remains one of the last areas of low density, rural landscapes in Oxfordshire and the south-east of England. The Glyme and Dorn valleys represent some of Oxfordshire's most ecologically significant river valley systems, some of the most ambitious conservation and landscape recovery work are focused in the area and it contains a large number of historic assets, landscape and habitats.

Key elements of the 2043 plan

Spatial Strategy

All Local Plans must promote a sustainable pattern of development, aligning development needs and infrastructure with environmental considerations including climate change. To achieve a balance between development, environment and climate change the Plan sets out five spatial policies that make up the overall 'spatial strategy'. These policies are intended to provide a plan as to where, what, and how development will occur in the area to 2043.

The spatial policies categorise settlements, within a settlement hierarchy, based on their role and function, identify the principal areas for future housing, employment growth and transport infrastructure and define clear principles to guide development. The settlement hierarchy for West Oxfordshire is as follows:

- Tier 1 – Principal Towns Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton
- Tier 2 – Service Centres Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Woodstock, Salt Cross Garden Village
- Tier 3 – Large Villages Aston, Brize Norton, Ducklington, Enstone, Freeland, Hailey, Middle Barton, Milton under Wychwood, Minster Lovell (South of Burford Road), North Leigh, Shipton under Wychwood, Standlake, Stanton Harcourt, Stonesfield, Tackley
- Tier 4 – Medium Villages Alvescot, Ascott-under-Wychwood, Bladon, Cassington, Chadlington, Churchill, Clanfield, Combe, Curbridge, Filkins and Broughton Poggs, Finstock, Fulbrook, Great Rollright, Kingham, Langford, Leafield, Over Norton, Wootton
- Tier 5 - Small Villages, Hamlets and Open Countryside

Based on this hierarchy the Plan sets out the approach to meeting the housing target of 18,318 new homes:

- Carterton and Witney will be the primary focus for new development.
- Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock will provide for a proportionate level of development which is appropriate to the size of each settlement.
- In large villages development will be supported in locations that are consistent with the settlement's role, character, and infrastructure capacity, taking account of recent development and planned growth.
- In medium villages development will be more limited in scale reflecting the relative sustainability and infrastructure capacity of these settlements.
- In small villages, hamlets and open countryside development will be limited solely to uses that require a rural location or support the rural economy and local community.

The ENCON area includes Enstone and Middle Barton as large villages. In October 2025 WODC approved plans for 80 new homes off Colliers Crescent, that is included in the Plan. Recently an application to develop 100 houses on Cox's Lane in Enstone has been submitted. This is not recognised in the plan and as such is not a necessary development to meet in the housing target and would seem to be inconsistent with the Plan, on the basis that 100 new homes would represent 20% increase in houses in the village.

Core Policy 1 - Climate Change

The plan sets out the climate change is one of the most significant long-term challenges facing West Oxfordshire. West Oxfordshire District Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and has committed to supporting the transition to a net zero carbon future. Tackling climate change and accelerating nature recovery are key priorities for the Council and are reflected throughout this Plan. The principal sources of greenhouse gas emissions within West Oxfordshire are associated with transport, buildings and energy use. The district's natural environment has a critical role to play in climate adaptation. However, habitats are often fragmented, and ecological networks can lack resilience to environmental change. Healthy, connected ecosystems provide a wide range of benefits, including carbon sequestration, flood attenuation, cooling and shading, improved water quality and enhanced biodiversity. Nature-based solutions and green infrastructure therefore form an important part of the district's response to climate change.

In response to climate emergency Core Principle 1 sets out that Development proposals will be expected to address the following requirements where relevant and proportionate;

1. Greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by;

   a. Achieving net zero operational carbon in new buildings in accordance with Policy DM9 and ensuring the development is fossil fuel free.

   b. Minimising embodied carbon, with unavoidable, residual emissions to be offset through financial contributions to the West Oxfordshire Climate Offsetting Fund.

   c. Maximising opportunities for renewable energy generation on site.

   d. Responding to landform and site-specific environmental conditions by optimising building orientation, massing, and landscaping to minimise energy use and risk of overheating, maximise efficiency, and enhance microclimate benefits.

   e. Locating and designing development to reduce reliance on private car use and promote walking, cycling and public transport through prioritising sustainable infrastructure and connectivity in accordance with Policy CP8.

2. Development proposals must demonstrate they are resilient to the impacts of climate change by;

   a. Minimising flood risk in accordance with national policy and Policy CP5.

   b. Maximising water efficiency in accordance with Policy CP5.

   c. Incorporating sustainable drainage systems and natural flood management in accordance with Policy CP5, through the application of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, to address overheating, water management, and biodiversity decline.

   d. Minimising risk of overheating through passive design measures and avoiding reliance on mechanical cooling.

   e. Strengthening environmental resilience, particularly within areas of known environmental sensitivity including those identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, locations with a history of flooding and the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) in accordance with Policy SP4.

Core Policy 2 – Delivering New Homes

The total housing requirement set out within the local plan is for 18,318 new homes to be delivered over the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2043. The planned level of supply will be met through a combination of past completions, existing commitments, site allocations and windfall as follows:

• Past completions 2025/26	582
• Large existing commitments (>10 dwellings) as at 1st April 2026	665
• Small existing commitments (<10 dwellings) as at 1st April 2026	307
• Extant site allocations (Local Plan 2031)	4,375
• New site allocations (Local Plan 2043)	915
• New Strategic Locations for Growth - SLG (Local Plan 2043)	8,350
• Windfall allowance	2,100
• Total	19,294

So, the local plan has could deliver more that the target, creating some contingency in the plan and removing immediate pressure to find locations for more homes. Hopefully this will be reflecting in future planning decisions and that more speculative developments that do fit within the spatial strategy and do not have strong local support will be refused.

Core Policy 3 - Supporting Economic Growth and Local Prosperity

Economic activity rates in the district are high, deprivation low and the population well educated. The manufacturing sector is the largest employment sector in West Oxfordshire, and the district shows strong growth in the business administration and support services and professional, scientific and technical sectors in terms of job numbers. Conversely, the motor trades, and mining quarrying and utilities sectors show decline in terms of job numbers across the district. The predominant land use in West Oxfordshire is agricultural, and the district has a distinct rural nature. Within the policy it state that the following key sectors will be supported subject to compliance with Policies DM27 – DM31;

Advanced manufacturing and engineering

- Defence and aerospace
- Digital technology and data-driven industries
- Life sciences
- Logistics and distribution
- The rural economy including agriculture and food networks
- Sustainable tourism, arts and culture supporting the visitor economy
- The green economy

In this context the plan identifies Enstone Airfield as an Area of Redevelopment Opportunity – See Rural Area Policy 2 below.

Core Policy 5 – Water Environment.

West Oxfordshire is located in a serious water stressed area where the current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective infall which is available to meet demand. Based on the forecasts in Thames Water's latest Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) there could be shortfalls in water supply up to 2041 and beyond. The total number of dwellings forecast to come forward in West Oxfordshire is higher than those used in Thames Water's WRMP which is likely to exacerbate shortfalls.

In terms of environmental capacity, the Environment Agency's catchment data explorer shows that most of the watercourses in the district have declining or poor ecological status and fail with regard to chemical status. This suggests that overall, they are likely to be vulnerable to future growth. West Oxfordshire contains several protected sites and designated habitats that depend on the quality and quantity of water within the wider catchment. Watercourses also form an integral part of the priority nature recovery network identified in the Oxfordshire LNRS. This reinforces the need for an integrated approach to water management that considers water resources, wastewater, water quality, flood risk, ecological impacts value and nature recovery opportunities.

West Oxfordshire is covered by three river catchments, the Evenlode, Windrush and Upper Thames catchments. Catchment Partnerships have developed Plans for these areas, to restore the rivers to "good ecological status", recover nature and enhance biodiversity, manage flood risk through natural processes, build climate resilience and strengthen community wellbeing. The Evenlode Landscape Recovery project is a 20-year, farmer-led environmental initiative spanning 3,100 hectares across the Evenlode, Glyme, and Dorn river catchments. Backed by Defra and local land managers, the project integrates sustainable food production with large-scale habitat restoration, natural flood management, and water quality improvements.

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of flood events and place additional pressure on water resources and wastewater infrastructure.

Core Policy 8 – Sustainable and Integrated Transport.

Policy CP8 establishes a transport hierarchy which prioritises walking, wheeling and cycling first, followed by public transport, shared and low-emission vehicles, and finally private motor vehicles. Development proposals will be expected to reflect this hierarchy in a manner that is proportionate to their scale, nature and location. However, the focus is on urban areas with only a nod to rural areas, that have their own challenges and are harder plan for a fund. The policy state that "In rural areas, development will not be required to meet the same modal expectations where genuine sustainable transport choices cannot reasonably be achieved but must demonstrate that opportunities have been maximised." The definition of reasonable is not defined, creating the risk that no material effort will be invested in addressing minimising the use of cars in rural areas and that the growth of tourist related traffic will go un-checked.

Core Policy 9 – Historic Environment

The local plan acknowledges that "West Oxfordshire has a rich and distinctive historic environment that shapes the identity, character, and sense of place of its towns, villages, and landscapes." It states that "The historic environment is an irreplaceable resource, and its conservation is a key component of achieving sustainable development. National planning policy recognises the importance of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed by current and future generations. It also recognises that well-managed change can help to sustain and enhance the historic environment, support economic vitality and secure the long-term future of heritage assets."

Specific aspects of the policy that are perhaps most relevant to the ENCON area include:

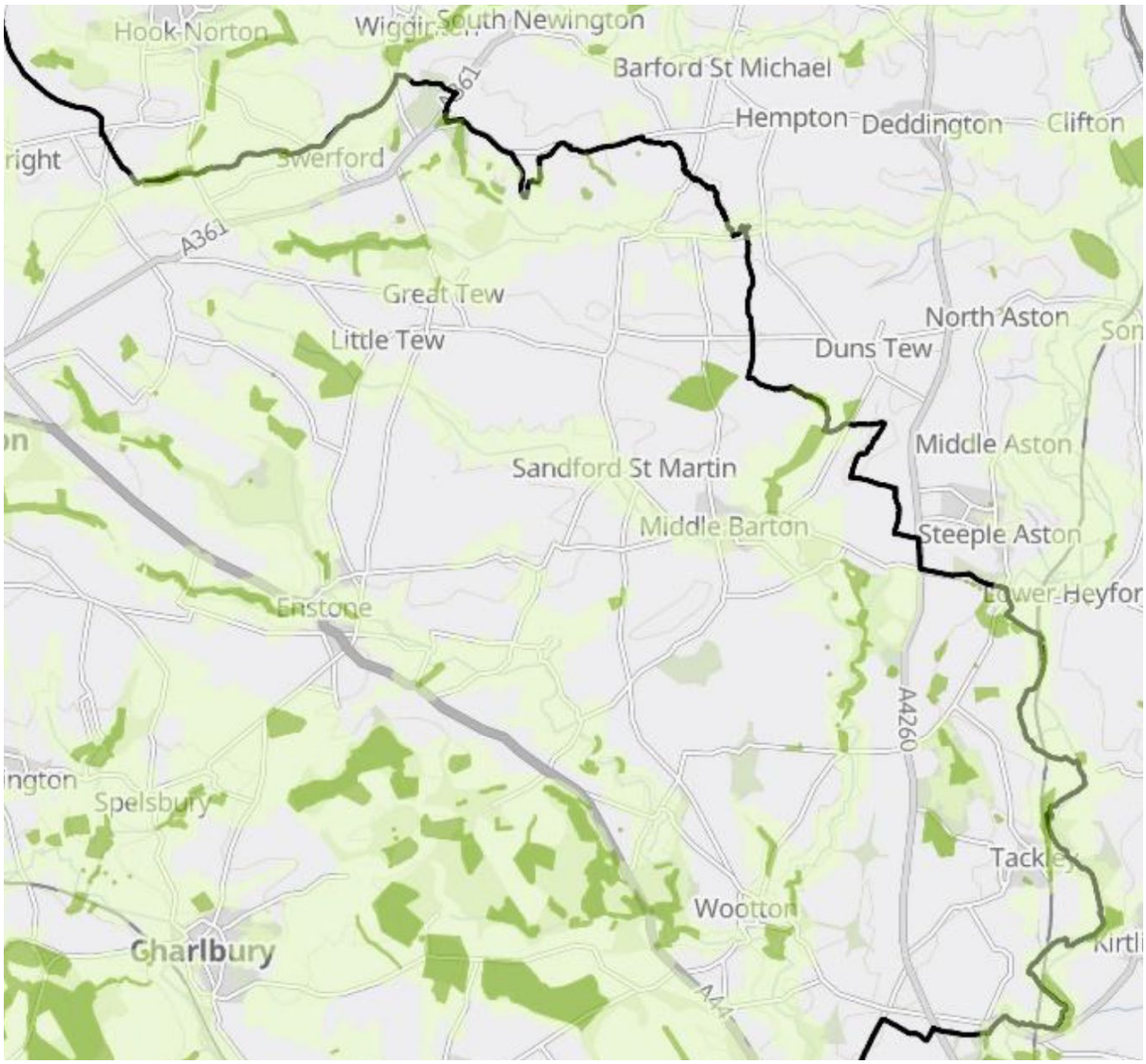
- All development proposals in West Oxfordshire must conserve and / or enhance the significance of the district's historic environment, landscape, buildings and structures and their settings.
- In determining planning applications, substantial weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the significance of designated heritage assets. This includes the character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, considering the contribution of their surroundings to their historical and visual significance having regard to any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Core Policy 10 – Nature Recovery

The diagram below sets out areas in the ENCON area that of particular importance to biodiversity (dark green) and areas that could be of important to biodiversity (light green). Within the ENCON area much of areas are along water-courses of the Glyme river, Dorn river and Deddington brook and are ancient woodlands. The policy sets several requirements, some key ones being that developments must:

- Make a positive contribution toward the protection, enhancement and recovery of the natural environment including priority habitats and species.
- Demonstrate how wider environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, natural flood management, recreation and food production etc. will be provided as part of an integrated and holistic design process for Green Infrastructure provision.
- Ensure sustainable management practices such as ongoing maintenance, monitoring, and adaptive management, to ensure long-term benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem health are secured.

- Demonstrate how wider environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, natural flood management, recreation and food production etc.



Rural Area Policy 2 - Enstone Airfield Area of Regeneration Opportunity (ARO)

8.11.28 - Enstone Airfield is an important rural economic asset located in the north of West Oxfordshire. The site accommodates a diverse range of activities including an active aerodrome, flying club and flight training school, business park, animal feed manufacture and a variety of light industrial and commercial uses.

8.11.31 The site also sits within a wider area of economic activity and investment, including the nearby Alpine Formula One facility, Soho Farmhouse, Heythrop Park and the consented museum development on part of the airfield. Together these assets contribute to the area's growing importance as a focus for employment, tourism, hospitality, engineering and innovation.

8.11. 32 - The Enstone Airfield Area of Redevelopment Opportunity (ARO) recognises the long-term potential of the site to support economic growth, skills development, aviation activities and investment. The ARO does not allocate the site for a specific form, scale or quantum of development. Instead, it establishes a positive policy framework to support future redevelopment, regeneration and intensification proposals where these are consistent with the operational requirements of the airfield, infrastructure capacity and the principles of sustainable development.

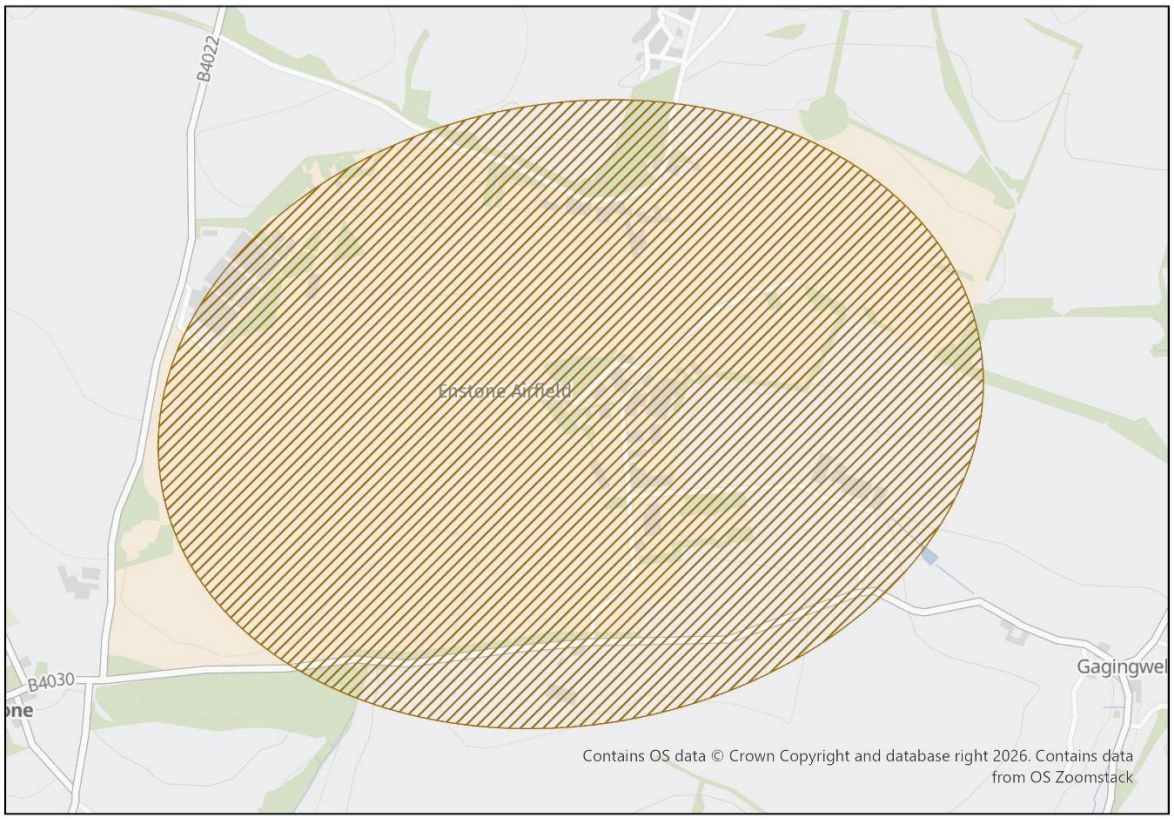
8.11.32 - The site offers significant opportunities to support the Government's economic growth agenda through the delivery of modern employment space, business investment, education and training facilities, and enhanced aviation-related activities. In particular, there is potential to strengthen links between the area's tourism, hospitality, engineering and aviation sectors, supporting skills development, apprenticeships and workforce training.

8.11.34 - At present, the site's future development potential is constrained by a number of factors including fragmented land ownership, the absence of a coordinated long-term development strategy, infrastructure limitations, landscape sensitivities and the capacity of parts of the local highway network. A coordinated approach to future planning and investment will therefore be essential.

8.11.36 - Given the scale, complexity and potential duration of redevelopment and investment opportunities across the site, the Council will support the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan, development framework or other agreed planning mechanism developed in partnership with landowners, airfield operators, Oxfordshire County Council, infrastructure providers and other relevant stakeholders.

8.11.37 - Such a framework should establish a long-term vision for the future evolution of Enstone Airfield, addressing economic development, aviation operations, education and training opportunities, transport and movement, infrastructure requirements, environmental enhancement, landscape mitigation, nature recovery, climate resilience and sustainable energy generation.

8.11.38 - A coordinated framework-led approach will help ensure that redevelopment proposals come forward in a comprehensive manner, make efficient use of previously developed land, safeguard the operational role of the airfield and deliver lasting economic, social and environmental benefits for West Oxfordshire.



Policy RA2 – Enstone Airfield Area of Redevelopment Opportunity (ARO) The Enstone Airfield Area of Redevelopment Opportunity, as identified on the Policies Map, is designated as a location for the enhancement of economic development, aviation activities and education and training provision. The Council will support the comprehensive or phased redevelopment, regeneration, enhancement and intensification of land within the Area of Redevelopment Opportunity where proposals contribute towards the long-term sustainability and economic success of Enstone Airfield and its surrounding area. Proposals within the Area of Redevelopment Opportunity should seek to:

a. Support the long-term enhancement of Enstone Airfield as a focal point for economic development, aviation activities and education and training provision;
b. Facilitate improvements to aviation facilities, including the provision of modern and flexible operational, employment and business accommodation and the co-location of related activities;
c. Provide modern employment space, including office, research, industrial, manufacturing, education, training and other employment-generating uses appropriate to the location;
d. Support the delivery of a high-quality West Oxfordshire Mobility Hub incorporating appropriate provision for bus services, cycling facilities, walking routes, taxi provision, shared mobility services, electric vehicle infrastructure and other sustainable transport measures;
e. Provide enhanced walking and cycling connections to Enstone, Middle Barton and other surrounding settlements where appropriate;

f. Support development that contributes positively towards the viability, delivery and operation of Enstone Airfield and does not prejudice its ongoing operation;

g. Make efficient use of land through high-quality design, place-making and sustainable development principles;

h. Incorporate strategic landscaping, green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancements, ecological networks, sustainable drainage and climate resilience measures;

i. Demonstrate that development would not prejudice the delivery of planned development, infrastructure or operational requirements elsewhere within the Area of Redevelopment Opportunity;

j. Safeguard land, where necessary, for the future delivery and operation of aviation activities and supporting infrastructure.

k. Make provision to meet the needs of the travelling community.

The Council will support the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan, development framework or other agreed planning mechanism to guide the coordinated redevelopment and enhancement of the Area of Redevelopment Opportunity. Any such framework should address economic development, aviation activities, education and training provision, transport and movement, supporting infrastructure, environmental enhancement, landscape mitigation, nature recovery, climate resilience and sustainable energy objectives.

Development Management Policies

"Development Management Policies provide the detailed criteria against which planning applications will be assessed, ensuring that development is sustainable, well-designed, and appropriate to its context. The policies reflect local priorities and evidence and have been prepared having regard to national policy and guidance. They will be used proactively to support sustainable development and to secure high standards in design, environmental performance and place-making."

The notes below include extracts from the Plan, including paragraph references in the document.

Text in italic and grey are commentary added to provide some context to the policy relevant to the local considerations of the ENCON area.

It is not made clear in the document how or where the "local priorities" have been drawn from and how local parishes or residents can engage with the formation, assessment, validation and monitoring of these priorities. Below is a selection of the Development Management Policies that are potential relevant to ENCON in its future work and opportunities.

DM1 – Green Infrastructure

9.9 Policy DM1 seeks to ensure development in West Oxfordshire protects, enhances and extends the green infrastructure network, delivering multiple benefits for climate resilience, nature recovery, health and wellbeing and local character, supporting the creation of sustainable, high-quality places.

9.13 Policy DM1 reflects national planning policy, which emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services, and securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. It also supports the Government's objectives for nature recovery, climate change adaptation and improved public health.

9.16 To ensure that these benefits are realised, the policy requires development to deliver new GI that is multifunctional, serving a range of purposes including recreation, biodiversity, water management and landscape enhancement, while also respecting local character and context. Connectivity is a central principle, ensuring that GI assets within and beyond the site are integrated into a wider network that functions effectively at both local and strategic scales.

9.17 The requirement for a Green Infrastructure Strategy for major development ensures a comprehensive, evidence-based approach. By mapping existing assets, assessing opportunities and setting out delivery and management arrangements, these strategies help secure high-quality outcomes and ensure that GI is effectively integrated into the overall master planning of a site.

9.19 Long-term stewardship is critical to the success of green infrastructure, particularly within new developments. Without appropriate management and maintenance, the quality and functionality of GI can decline over time. The requirement for Landscape Management Plans and clear governance and funding arrangements ensures that GI assets remain safe, functional and attractive for future generations.

It is important that the value of green spaces is recognised in the Plan. This policy looks to protect and enhance green spaces, but its focus is on planning for major developments. Other sections of the plan recognise that the current state of the green infrastructure is deteriorating. Paragraph 7.137 states that "nature is degraded and has declined significantly in recent decades, including our rivers and streams, woodlands and hedgerows, for example, through pollution, direct loss and inappropriate management." Major new development will make little impact to the quantity and quality of the green infrastructure. Stewardship of the existing infrastructure is the most effective way to achieve the objectives of this policy. However, the Plan does not set out any policies or proposals to address this.

DM2 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Nature Recovery

9.20 Many development types are now subject to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in accordance with national policy and legislation. Beyond this, WODC continue to seek no net loss in biodiversity. Developments that are exempt from delivering statutory BNG must achieve at least no net loss of biodiversity, having regard to the existing (pre-development) biodiversity value of the site, and demonstrate biodiversity enhancement to achieve gains where possible.

9.22 Where no net loss of biodiversity cannot be demonstrated, and where this would not justify refusal of a planning application, appropriate compensation measures will be sought to offset the loss and achieve an overall gain in biodiversity, e.g. by contributing to appropriate local nature recovery projects. Contributions towards local nature recovery projects would need to be quantified to ensure that the provision would result in no net loss of biodiversity and at least a like-for-like compensation approach has been applied.

9.23 The "no net loss of biodiversity" policy applies to all developments, including those that are exempt from the statutory requirement to deliver BNG under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), but excluding householder applications. Development must demonstrate that it will result in no net loss of biodiversity, having regard to the existing biodiversity value of the site (the "baseline").

How is the baseline established? From DEFRA: The statutory (official) biodiversity metric is the way of measuring biodiversity value for the purposes of BNG. It measures all types of habitats, including: grassland, hedgerows, lakes, woodland and watercourses such as rivers and streams. There are toolkits, guidelines and spreadsheets, available from DEFRA that are used to calculate the baseline for a site.

9.27 Local nature recovery projects could be explored through the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE), and the Council would support the use of this external organisation in delivering off-site compensation outside of the statutory BNG process. TOE are a recognised partner organisation for nature recovery and BNG in Oxfordshire and have a long track record of providing funding for environmental projects and setting up BNG habitat banks.

9.38 Development in the district will require adequate open space in order to create habitats to offset ecological impacts and provide BNG, and it is recognised that this cannot always be achieved in a realistic and achievable manner. In most cases, BNG must be integrated with green infrastructure to ensure a holistic approach is taken and can also be stacked with protected species mitigation measures (up to no net loss). However, there are several habitat banks in West Oxfordshire that contribute towards local nature recovery efforts and provide developers with a local option for the purchase of off-site units.

9.39 Where biodiversity units cannot be purchased from local habitat banks within the district in the first instance, evidence must be provided that demonstrates that these units were not available and the units that have been purchased are of higher quality and contribute significantly towards nature recovery in that location.

9.40 Local authorities are required to identify, designate and protect Local Wildlife Sites through the planning system. In Oxfordshire, the identification and designation of LWS is administered by TVERC. A selection panel meets each year and includes representatives from TVERC, the local authorities, Natural England and BBOWT. TVERC maintain a living list of LWS in West Oxfordshire, which is updated annually.

Development likely to result in any direct or indirect loss, deterioration or harm to the following ecological features will be refused unless there is a robust justification for a lack of reasonable alternative sites that would result in less or no harm or there are wholly exceptional reasons justifying the granting of planning permission, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

iv. Local Wildlife Sites and Proposed Local Wildlife Sites
v. Local Nature Reserves
vi. Priority habitats
vii. Priority species
viii. Local Geological Sites
ix. Important and/or ancient hedges and/or hedgerows
x. Ancient woodland and/or ancient and/or veteran trees; and/or
xi. Rivers, streams and tributaries.

Below is a list of Local Wildlife Sites within the ENCON area, and the parish they sit, taken from the list maintained by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, TVERC. These are non-statutory sites defined by the district council.

- *Bank south of Cleveley – Enstone*
- *Bush Ground Flowers – Enstone*
- *Chalford Oaks to Harris's Bottom – Enstone / Heythrop*
- *Church Marsh – Swerford*
- *Enstone Meadow – Enstone*
- *Glyme Valley – Glympton*
- *Gubbins - Enstone*
- *Lidstone Bottom – Enstone*
- *Ovens Gorse – Heythrop*
- *Priory Bottom – Enstone / Heythrop*
- *Swere Bank – Little Tew*

- *Valley near Church Enstone – Enstone*
- *Valley west of Great Tew - Little Tew / Swerford / Great Tew*
- *Whiteway's Quarry – Enstone*
- *Worton Woods – Worton.*
- *Bank at Radford - Kiddington with Asterleigh (Proposed)*
- *Little Bridge Marsh – Swerford (Proposed)*

Parts of the Glyme Valley are listed as a statutory local nature reserve overseen by the Berkshire, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

Within the ENCON area there are also a small number of statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interests:

- *Out Wood – Kiddington with Asterleigh*
- *Little Tew Meadows – Little Tew*
- *Middle Barton Fen – Steeple Barton*
- *Horsehay Quarry – Steeple Barton*

There are no statutory Special Areas of Conservation in the ENCON area. WODC has a list of priority habitats and species and geological sites. There are many ancient woodlands across the ENCON area. The full list can be found at Natural England and Forestry Commission. The Glyme, Dorn, Swere and Deddington Brook are important watercourse in the ENCON area.

DM3 - Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character through New Development

9.59 Policy DM3 seeks to ensure development respects, conserves and enhances the landscape character of West Oxfordshire, reinforcing local distinctiveness and delivering high-quality, well-integrated places that respond positively to their environmental context.

9.60 Landscape character is a defining feature of West Oxfordshire, contributing to its identity, sense of place and environmental quality. The district contains a rich and varied landscape, including large areas within the Cotswolds National Landscape, alongside valued agricultural land, historic parklands, river valleys and rural settlements. These landscapes are not only visually important, but also support biodiversity, cultural heritage, recreation and local distinctiveness.

9.61 National planning policy places great importance on recognising and protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and on achieving well-designed places that respond to local character. National policy also affords great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now National Landscapes), such as the Cotswolds.

9.64 A key objective of DM3 is to protect important views and visual amenity, including both long-range views across the wider landscape and more immediate local views from public spaces, rights of way and settlements. The careful consideration of building height, massing, layout and siting is essential to avoiding visual intrusion and maintaining the integrity of skylines and key landscape features.

9.68 DM3 emphasises not only the design and delivery of landscaping, but also its long-term management and maintenance. Trees, hedgerows and planting schemes require appropriate establishment and ongoing care to ensure they fulfil their intended function. Securing management arrangements, including maintenance plans and responsibilities, is therefore essential to achieving lasting benefits.

Much of what is set out in DM3 focuses on the visual aspects of design for buildings and surrounding the landscape within the curtilage of the development. It does seem to contemplate how new developments impact the immediate neighbourhoods and environments. Nor does it set out any way in which local communities are engaged in the consideration of developments. Perhaps most importantly it does not set out any way of monitoring or reporting if the development has actually conserved or enhanced the landscape character.

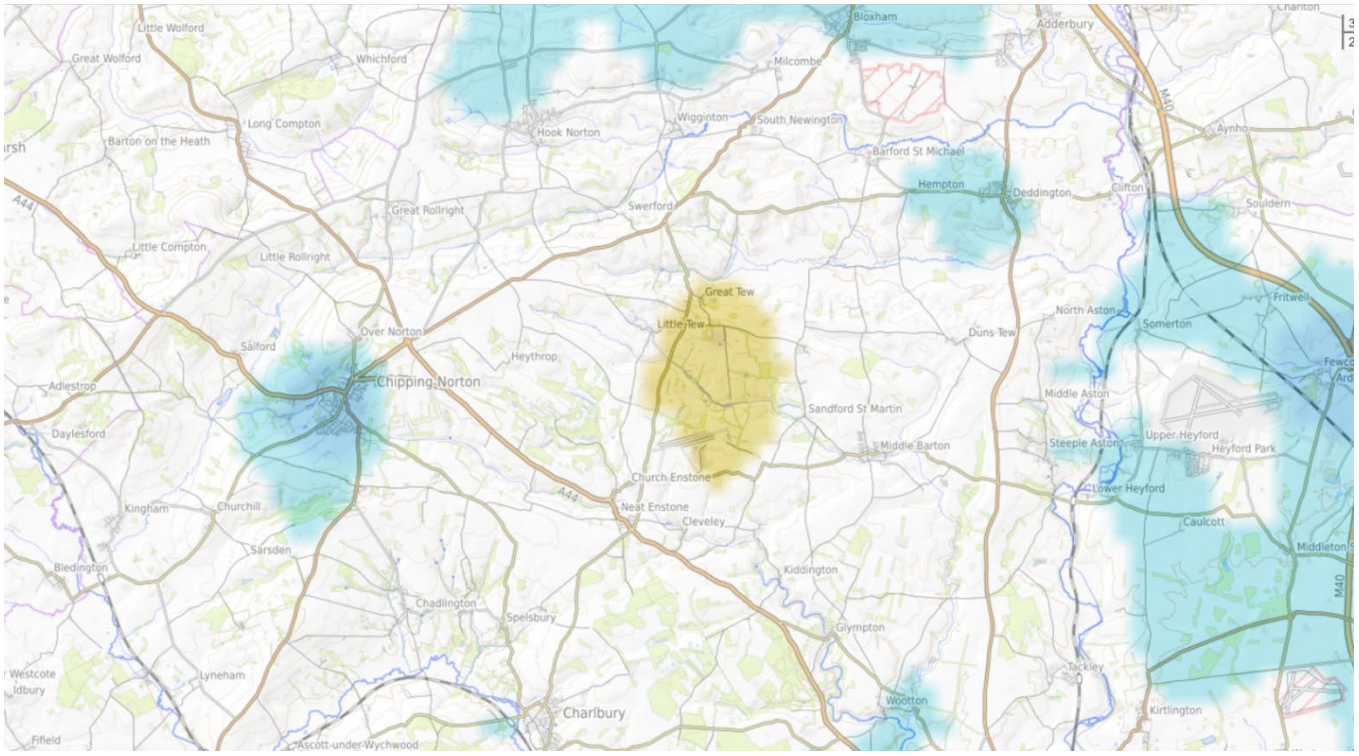
DM4 - Light Pollution and Dark Skies

9.73 Policy DM4 aims to ensure development in West Oxfordshire does not worsen light pollution and where possible enhances dark skies, while providing safe and appropriate levels of illumination. DM4 aims to balance the functional requirements of development with the need to conserve landscape character, biodiversity and residential amenity, in line with national policy.

9.74 Dark skies are a distinctive and valued characteristic of West Oxfordshire's landscape, particularly within its rural areas and the Cotswolds National Landscape. The absence of artificial light contributes to the area's tranquillity, scenic quality and sense of remoteness, as well as supporting biodiversity and ecological networks. Uncontrolled or excessive artificial lighting can erode these qualities, giving rise to light pollution, skyglow and visual intrusion, while also adversely affecting residential amenity and wildlife.

9.75 National planning policy recognises the importance of limiting light pollution. DM4 applies the requirements of national policy, ensuring the need for, and design of, lighting is carefully considered as part of the development process.

As with DM3 the focus of this policy is on new developments and does not consider the cumulative effect of developments in one area or how developments can grow and expand over time. Within the ENCON are the issue for dark skies has probably already been lost through the cumulative effect of developments and small incremental changes to existing developments. For example, the installation of festoon lighting may happen without any consultation with planning and the increasing number of tourists and events aimed at attracting tourists will contribute to light and noise pollution. The diagram below suggest the policies proposed by WODC will not reduce light pollution. This diagram comes from a light pollution atlas, Light Pollution Atlas and shows the trend for light pollution for 2013 – 2024. Yellow means increasing light pollution, blue decreasing light pollution.



DM9 - Net Zero Carbon Development

9.146 Policy DM9 seeks to ensure that all new development contributes towards the transition to a net zero carbon future and supports the achievement of local and national climate change objectives.

9.147 The policy responds to the legally binding national target established under the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It also reflects the objectives of the NPPF, which requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future, take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy generation.

The focus of this policy on making sure building are energy efficient. Whilst important this is not perhaps the most demanding issue in terms of ENCON. The major sources emissions, carbon and other pollutants are:

- *Electricity and Heat Production (25%–34%):*
- *Agriculture, Forestry, and Land Use (21%–24%):*
- *Industry and Manufacturing (21%):*
- *Transportation Systems (14%–16%)*

What we can do locally to make a contribution to reducing carbon emission is insulation in all the old properties, regenerative farming practices and reducing carbon emissions from traffic, that is now predominately traffic from tourists.

DM11 - Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience

9.193 Existing buildings account for a significant proportion of carbon emissions arising from heating, cooling and general energy consumption. As much of the current building stock is expected to remain in use for many decades, retrofit and refurbishment measures are essential to reducing emissions, addressing fuel poverty, and improving resilience to climate change impacts.

9.202 DM11 promotes a positive and supportive approach to retrofitting heritage assets in a way that conserves their significance while improving environmental performance. This approach reflects the objectives of the NPPF in seeking to conserve and enhance the historic environment while supporting sustainable development.

9.203 Retrofitting heritage and traditional buildings requires careful consideration of materials, construction methods, and moisture performance. Inappropriate interventions can inadvertently damage historic fabric, compromise breathability, or harm architectural character. Proposals should therefore be informed by a proportionate understanding of the building's significance, construction, and condition.

9.204 Appropriate measures such as secondary glazing, draught-proofing, natural or breathable insulation materials, and discreet renewable energy technologies can often improve energy performance while maintaining heritage significance. The Council will support well-designed and sensitive retrofit solutions that achieve an appropriate balance between heritage conservation and climate objectives.

Whilst this policy seem supportive to making old building energy efficient experience suggests that planning officer and conservation are not as proactive and supportive of modern solutions. The term "careful" consideration suggest a slow and costly approach to each individual building at the property owners' risk and cost. This is inefficient and delays the delivery of benefits. There are proven solutions and experience on the market. Would it not be more efficient to identify an "approved" suite of solutions that can be implemented more effectively?

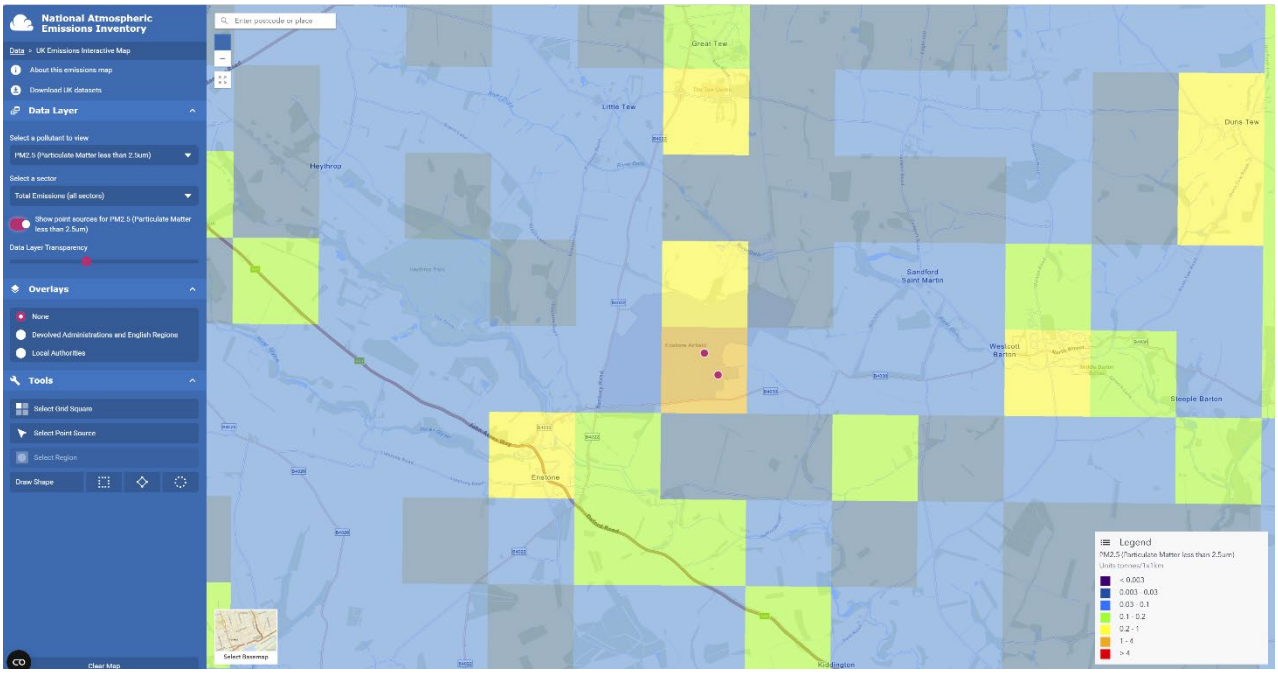
DM13 - Air Quality and Pollution

9.233 Policy DM13 seeks to ensure that new development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts on air quality, human health or environmentally sensitive habitats by requiring development proposals to appropriately assess, avoid, minimise and mitigate emissions arising from both construction and operational phases of development, with particular regard to identified air quality sensitive areas.

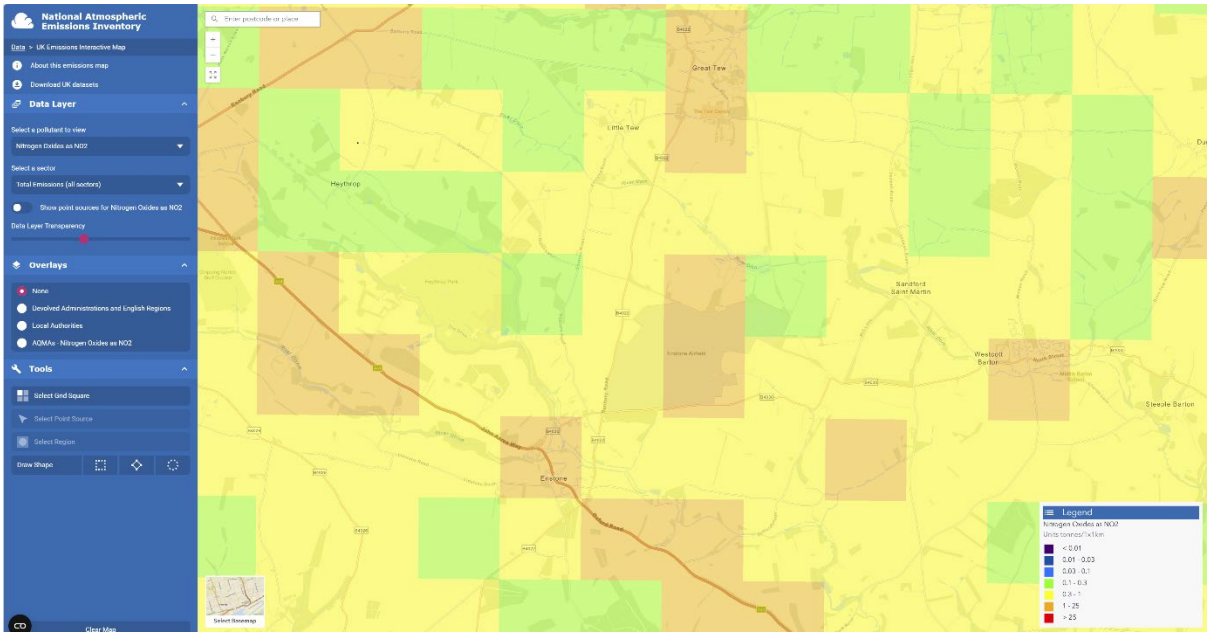
9.234 DM13 also recognises that cumulative impacts can arise where multiple developments individually generate relatively modest increases in emissions but collectively result in significant air quality effects. Consideration of cumulative development impacts is therefore essential to ensuring that air quality objectives and habitat protections are maintained over the plan period.

9.236 Historically, the principal air pollutant of concern within West Oxfordshire has been nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), primarily associated with road traffic emissions, congestion and vehicle idling. Air quality pressures are most acute within locations where traffic flows are concentrated within constrained urban environments.

As with light pollution much of the focus is on new developments and not on monitoring and enforcing existing developments. Again, like light pollution this may already be a battle that is lost, see the map below. This suggest that we have a particular problem around Enstone Airfield and that the air quality is similar to the centre of Chipping Norton. This map reports particulate matter smaller than 2.5 um.



The map below reports on NO2 emissions, the particular concern of this policy. Again, the area around Enstone airfield has a similar level of pollution to the centre of Chipping Norton.



For reference the local areas that are worse than Enstone airfield are the centre of Banbury, around Ardley power station and south of Oxford Airport.

Policy DM16 - Active and Healthy Travel

9.270 Policy DM16 seeks to promote a comprehensive, connected and high-quality active travel network across West Oxfordshire, supporting healthier communities, reducing car dependency and creating more sustainable and attractive places over the plan period.

There is no consideration in the policy focused on rural communities or the impact of tourist traffic on rural roads and communities.

DM30 - Sustainable Tourism

9.447 Policy DM30 seeks to ensure that tourism development supports and strengthens the local economy in a sustainable and balanced way, while safeguarding West Oxfordshire's distinctive environment, heritage and community wellbeing.

9. 450 DM30 supports tourism and leisure proposals that deliver clear economic and social benefits while protecting and, where possible, enhancing the district's landscape, biodiversity and historic environment. Emphasis is placed on high-quality design that reflects local character, ensuring that new development integrates successfully with its surroundings and reinforces local distinctiveness.

9.452 Sustainable travel is also a central consideration. Proposals are expected to encourage low-carbon travel choices and make use of existing public transport and active travel networks wherever possible, helping to reduce reliance on the private car and associated environmental impacts. This reflects wider national objectives to support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

9.455 The policy also addresses the cumulative impacts of tourism, including the proliferation of short-term holiday lets, which in some locations can affect housing availability and community cohesion. By managing concentrations, the policy seeks to maintain balanced and sustainable communities.

Policy DM30 - Sustainable Tourism
1. Tourism and leisure proposals that positively contribute to the local economy and sustainable communities, enhance the distinct character, landscape, and built environment of West Oxfordshire will be supported, particularly where they meet the following criteria and accord with the spatial strategy and other relevant planning policies:

a. Promote year-round tourism to reduce seasonal pressures.

b. Increase dwell time and overnight stays

c. Encourage low-carbon and sustainable forms of travel and accommodation including support for existing public transport networks.

d. Engage local communities and support local supply chains.

e. Conserve and, as far as reasonably practicable, enhance the natural environment, historic assets, and landscape character, particularly within designated areas such as the Cotswolds National Landscape.

f. Prioritise the reuse of previously developed (brownfield) land and existing buildings as far as reasonably practicable.

g. Incorporate high-quality design that reflects local character and vernacular.

h. Avoid proliferations / concentrations of short-term holiday lets within settlements

2. Proposals for tourism and leisure uses such as hotels, conference facilities, and cultural venues, should be located where they support other services and facilities, such as town centre locations, unless strong justification is provided for alternative locations based on functional or locational needs.

3. Proposals for new and expanded tourism and visitor proposals in Tier 5 locations will only be supported where they are appropriate to their rural context, meet one or more of the following criteria and accord with other relevant planning policies:

a. Are functionally linked to a specific rural, historic, or environmental attraction.

b. Are of a type and scale that cannot reasonably be accommodated within the built area of a Tier 1-4 settlements

c. Support the diversification of an existing farm enterprise or rural estate.

d. Involve the sensitive re-use of an existing building that is appropriate in scale, design, and location.

e. avoid adverse impacts on landscape character, biodiversity, and local amenity and deliver clear economic or community benefits.

4. Development / intensification of existing tourist attractions/facilities will be supported where it is demonstrated to the council's satisfaction that they will have a high design standard, minimal landscape impacts and are supported by a Transport Management Plan.

Conclusions

Water, water quality, flooding and wildlife along waterways

CP1, Climate Change and CP5, Water Environment make clear that water is a one of the biggest issues to addressed over the next decades. There are some stark messages to take on board:

- West Oxfordshire is located in a serious water stressed area where the current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective infall which is available to meet demand. Based on the forecasts in Thames Water's latest Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) there could be shortfalls in water supply up to 2041 and beyond.
- Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of flood events and place additional pressure on water resources and wastewater infrastructure.
- Water quality and flooding are issues across the Dorn, the Glyme and Deddington Brook. As reported by the Evenlode Catchment Partnership the water quality in these rivers is poor and has declined over the past decades. Alongside the decline in water quality there has been a decline in flora and fauna along the water course.

For ENCON there is the opportunity to continue to pursue flood mitigation projects, partner with the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and EarthWatch Europe to support a programme of water quality monitoring and improvement and maybe support their network of citizen scientists both in recording data and reporting to our stakeholders and residents.

In terms of strengthening environmental resilience we could look to the works of other groups such as BBOWT to understand their objectives, work and if ENCON can add some value.

Our historic environment and tourism

Tourism is set out as a major source of economic growth in the area, albeit the economic benefits directly to the ENCON area are unclear and the impacts on our historic environment are not monitored once approvals are given. This tension between tourism and heritage is touched upon in a number of policies:

- CP8 – Sustainable Integrated Transport. "Demonstrate that residual cumulative impacts are not severe and that highway safety is not compromised"
- CP9 – Historic Environment. "All development proposals in West Oxfordshire must conserve and / or enhance the significance of the district's historic environment, landscape, buildings and structures and their settings."
- DM3 - Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character through New Development. "New developments must be designed to conserve and enhance historic landscapes, including agricultural landscapes, parks, gardens, and other cultural landscapes. Development must be designed to respect the heritage value of the landscape and contribute to its continued preservation."

- DM13 – Air Quality and Pollution. "Development proposals that individually or cumulatively lead to a material deterioration in air quality will only be permitted when they can demonstrate how air quality impacts will be mitigated".
- DM16 - Active and Healthy Travel. "Existing active travel routes, including public rights of way, footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths, will be protected from development that harms their connectivity, accessibility, setting or character."
- DM30 - Sustainable Tourism. "Proposals for new and expanded tourism and visitor proposals in Tier 5 locations, small villages and rural locations, must avoid adverse impacts on landscape character, biodiversity, and local amenity and deliver clear economic or community benefits.

The experience from Soho Farmhouse demonstrates that once established tourist attractions seek growth, and this means more tourists, more traffic, more environmental pollution, including noise and air pollution. There are also questions about the impact of tourism on communities and heritage in our area. For example, there a more second homes and Airbnb properties and as a result less support for community events, parish councils and local fund raising to support heritage assets such churches and parish halls.

We cannot overturn existing approvals. However, there needs to be some effort to mitigate the impacts of existing approvals and stop further expansion without due consideration of the policies listed above and other impacts such as the "hollowing out" of rural communities. There is coordinated effort, through citizen scientist, local and regional bodies trying to tackle issues with water in our area. We need similar "citizen scientist" activity to work with the main tourist businesses to address the negative impacts of tourism. Road safety being one key issue we could look to address. This work would benefit both residents and visitors.

Enstone Airfield

Identifying and including this proposed Area of Redevelopment Opportunity "recognises the long-term potential of the site to support economic growth, skills development, aviation activities and investment." There are no specific plans include in the Plan and it does not define any specifics about the potential size or scale of any future developments. Instead, it establishes a positive policy framework to support future redevelopment, regeneration and intensification proposals.

The inclusion of Enstone airfield in the plan maybe a product of discussions and consultations about development of land at the north end of the airfield, discussions led by JPPC together and Charlie Luxton Designs. Whilst these discussions are on-going there is no specific updates available at this time.

The Plan recognises that there are issues to address such as fragmented land ownership, infrastructure limitations, landscape sensitivities and the capacity of parts of the local highway network. So, there is no immediate threat of a major development in the next few years.

Clearly any major plans to redevelop Enstone airfield will have a material impact on parts of the ENCON area and so ENCON should look to monitor this potential development and potentially act as the coordinator of local consultations of any such plans.

Nature Recovery

There are several policies addressing nature recovery:

- CP10 – Nature Recovery. “A strategic, core policy that prioritises the protection, enhancement, and recovery of the district's natural environment is essential”
- DM 1 – Green Infrastructure. “In the context of West Oxfordshire, the quality and connectivity of green infrastructure is essential to maintaining the district’s distinctive character, rural landscapes and ecological value.”
- DM2 – Bio-diversity Net gain (BNG) and Nature Recovery. “The “no net loss of biodiversity” policy applies to all developments, including those that are exempt from the statutory requirement to deliver BNG under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), but excluding householder applications.”
- DM4 – Light Pollution and Dark Skies. “Dark skies are a distinctive and valued characteristic of West Oxfordshire’s landscape, particularly within its rural areas and the Cotswolds National Landscape. The absence of artificial light contributes to the area’s tranquillity, scenic quality and sense of remoteness, as well as supporting biodiversity and ecological networks.”

Across the ENCON area there are a wide range of nature reserves and nature assets that currently support nature recovery. As a group we have patchy knowledge of their objectives, activities, progress, needs for support or funding or how these align to the needs and priorities of our area. In a similar manner we also lack a clear sense of the nature recovery needs, opportunities and priorities across our area and what are the most effective things we could be doing to support nature recovery in the context of the WODC Plan. This also means we have limited ability to engage on issues such as dark skies or to act as network to bring together nature recovery needs with BNG opportunities, local nature reserves and other conservation groups. Developing our knowledge and network of nature recovery in the ENCON area could be a valuable opportunity for the trust.

Net Zero

The vision for West Oxfordshire includes the ambition that, “The district is powered entirely by renewable energy sources and innovative green technologies. Energy-efficient buildings, both residential and commercial have become the norm, with retrofitted historic structures showcasing advanced insulation and energy systems.” This ambition is backed up by some specific policies:

- DM9 - Net Zero Carbon Development. “Reducing emissions from new and existing development is essential in achieving national and local carbon reduction targets.”
- DM 11 - Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience. “Enhancing the performance of existing buildings can help reduce energy consumption and fuel bills, improve occupant comfort and health, increase resilience to climate-related risks, and contribute to local carbon reduction targets”

Until recently it has been challenging for many residents to reduce the carbon footprint of the properties. Solar panels, batteries, charging points, insulation and double glazing can be expensive, requires planning permissions in conservation areas and retrofitting insulation in old or listed buildings can be difficult to specify and expensive to fit. As each home owner has to navigate the complexities of finding options, costing them, obtaining permissions and finding

suppliers there is in-built inertia in the journey to reducing carbon emissions from buildings. Conservation officers have been reluctant to approve scheme in listed buildings and conservation areas, adding to the inertia.

That said there are proven examples of carbon reduction techniques and technologies across our area that could provide templates or "approved" solutions that help reduce the inertia and speed up the transition. For example, finding some "approved" forms of double glazing for old single glazed metal framed windows could speed up installation of double glazing. Other councils have shown that there are ways help people along the journey. For example, Sustainable Charlbury, a community-led organization promoting local sustainability, has worked with CosyHomes Oxfordshire to document and publicise a set of examples of how existing homes in Charlbury have been made more energy efficient. This "catalogue" of solutions helps to demonstrate what solutions are available, the benefits and costs and so help speed up the rate of adoption.

Citizen Scientists

The vision and ambition set out in the WODC Local Plan 2043 is admirable and overtly seeks to tackle many of the challenges we face over the coming decades. We should applaud the effort that has gone into developing the plan and acknowledge how much detail it contains. But as critics will often say, "The devil in the detail." And there are lots of details to be worked through in the implementation of the plan, and its success relies more on on-going monitoring, compliance and adjustment than on planning decisions alone. Decisions that will be increasingly made by remote officers who may not have the resource or bandwidth to support the monitoring, compliance and enforcement of the outcome of their decisions. Experience suggests this will be an under-resourced and challenging aspect of delivering on the Plan.

The work of the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and EarthWatch Europe has shown the getting local people involved in gathering data, identifying issues, reporting and delivering local conservation projects can make a difference. Perhaps this a model that could be extended