



Appendix 2: Site Assessment

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1 Introduction

The following table (Figure 1.1) summarises the process whereby the WNP Committee assessed the sites in Wheatley and Holton for potential development.

1.		The task of site assessment was delegated to the Housing sub-committee, subsequently renamed the Land Use sub-committee.
2.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 SODC SHELAA reports, including updates which were published during the NP process 2 Local knowledge of the village 3 Maps and Google Earth 4 Brownfield sites were considered which could be created by the relocation of existing inappropriate development 5 OCC calls for sites 	This process generated an initial list of 27 sites (subsequently extended to 34) and was reviewed by the Steering Group.
3.		A site can only be allocated in a Neighbourhood Plan if it can be demonstrated that it is available for development, i.e the landowner is willing to sell or develop the site. Committee members were tasked to determine ownership and find out if the owner was likely to permit development. This exercise resulted in the subdivision of some sites into sub-sites in different ownerships.
4.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Feedback from the Straw poll, open days, and consultation meetings was analysed 2 One member analysed nine published NP's and tabulated selection criteria used by them into a spreadsheet which resulted in just over 100 Criteria. 3 We considered preparing a site matrix based on 50 criteria with each given a numerical weighting. We considered that scoring from 1 to 3 was too crude, and that 1 to 10 would allow a more nuanced result. However we realised that it was not practical for our committee to consider nearly 1500 relative values. 	
5.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Mindful of the national planning practice guidance which requires sites proposed for allocation to be suitable, available and viable for the development proposed, the Steering Committee suggested that crude filters be applied to reduce the number of sites under consideration to enable a workable final selection process. Some sites were eliminated from further consideration if: 2 Ownership or willingness to develop could not be established 3 Outside the NP area 4 Located in the flood plain 5 In the Green Belt fulfilling the majority of the purposes of the Green belt, with particular reference to the setting and history of the village 	Access was clearly unsuitable This process generated a short list of 9 sites.
6.		The short list was considered by the Land Use sub-committee and scores were given to a set of key criteria and preferred and potential sites emerged.
7.		This exercise was then reviewed in one of the Workshops. The site selections were tested against the NP Vision and the developing policies. Brainstorming used fewer criteria and a cruder system of scoring to produce a provisional site selection.
8.		The joint Chairs of Land Use felt that the Workshop process needed to be improved and that their committee should review the methodology because initially they had set up the selection process. Using the Workshop spreadsheet, they refined the scoring system and produced a similar result that they could now support. This was fed back to the Workshop and the selected sites and associated policy were incorporated in the NP to meet ascertained housing needs. This process generated a list of 6 sites.
9.		At the recommendation of SODC all the sites were subjected to further assessment and selection using a spreadsheet analysis process provided by SODC (see Figure 2.4). This process was reviewed by an independent planning group (AECOM Ltd.) to ensure conformity and rigour of the whole assessment and selection procedure.

Figure 1.1 Assessment process

Using this process the WNP Committee was able to evaluate the sites for potential development that would address the housing needs and also offer enhancement for the villages of Wheatley and Holton. This process will now be described in greater detail in the following sections.

2 Land availability assessment for future development

2.1 In considering potential land use in Wheatley and Holton the initial selection process was based on suitability, unrestricted nature and availability for development followed by a more rigorous process based on key strategy issues and land demands factors. This process was continued and used to develop and plan policies for implementation within the WNP.

Land Use	Objectives for new housing in Wheatley and Holton
Housing for first time buyers and key workers	Proximity to schools
Housing for elderly	Central location or near to bus stop
Housing for the general public	Broad mix of housing options (not more than 60%)
Housing mix	Affordable housing (not less than 40%, sites with > 8)
General housing needs	In fill linear development should not be precluded to meet housing needs
Business	Relocate non-retail business out of residential areas Concentrate non-retail business on limited serviced sites Encourage mixed use on OBU site
Leisure (physical)	Playing fields and recreational facilities No net loss of sports facilities Close to good access Walking pathways
Leisure (social)	No loss of social amenities (pubs, restaurants, clubs). Bigger community hall close to core village population
Parking	Additional space near centre and/or bus stops
Burial space	A dignified setting Suitable ground conditions
Change of Use	Provides village enhancement and improves the environment

Figure 2.1 Criteria for prioritising land use

2.2 It became clear that the key issues for considering land use were as follows:-

- a. There is sufficient land within the WNP designated area that is available and unrestricted to provide housing for “at least 300 homes” (SODC Local Plan 2011 - 2033 [1]) when the built form of the OBU site is developed

- b. Land availability in the centre of Wheatley is limited and must be strictly prioritised
- c. There are specific sites at the east/west extremities of Wheatley that, subject to Green Belt review by SODC, could be made available
- d. Any site under consideration must be weighted according to its ability to maximise the WNP vision and objectives and also to minimise any negative impact on infrastructure.

2.3 On the basis of these considerations criteria were established for prioritising land use as shown in Figure 2.1

2.4 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a process whereby SODC fulfils its statutory requirement to monitor whether there is an adequate supply of deliverable land for housing. To complement the SHLAA process the WNP Committee has reviewed local sites and compiled a comprehensive list of sites related to the WNP including those already identified by SHLAA. All the sites identified are shown in Figure 2.2 and described in Figure 2.3.

2.5 All the sites were assessed in compliance with the National Policy, within the framework recommended by SODC and with regard to community sentiment. From this lengthy process two sites emerged for housing development: WHE18A ('The Railway Site') and WHE25 ('The OBU Site'). Furthermore, in view of the proposals outlined in the Local Plan 2011 - 2033 [1] for Green Belt release there were also opportunities for future development and village enhancement. A total of 6 sites emerged from the selection process.

2.6 The WHE18A site is approximately 0.53ha and is located on Station Road. Given its size and proximity to the village centre the site would be suitable for housing for the elderly and ideally for some car parking for the community. During the period when the WNP Committee was carrying out the site assessments WHE18A was sold and planning permission approved for residential accommodation (16 homes) for people aged over 55 years of age. As a result of these decisions the WNP Committee discontinued any further assessment of this site. The development is now under construction and will add to the range of accommodation available within Wheatley.

2.7 The brownfield part of the WHE25 site is approximately 12.11ha and if all the WNP aspirations are to be fulfilled will need to support mixed use, include all types of housing, allow commercial relocation/use and make provision for burial land and leisure/playing fields. The whole of OBU Wheatley campus lies within the Green Belt. That part within the WNP area is designated a brownfield site. The remainder of the OBU campus that lies outside the WNP area is in the Green Belt and the WNP would expect that this part of the site would be retained as Green Belt to maintain separation between the settlements of Wheatley and Holton. In the SODC Local Plan 2011 -2033 [1] this site has been identified as a strategic site (STRAT10) and therefore the assessment and evaluation of land use and development will be decided by SODC. It should be noted that in view of the present educational commitments undertaken by OBU there is unlikely to be any development on this site until 2022 at the earliest. With respect to this site the WNP will restrict its brief to delivering policies that aim to mitigate the impact of the development on the villages of Wheatley and Holton yet ensure that the new development is well connected and integrated into the local community.

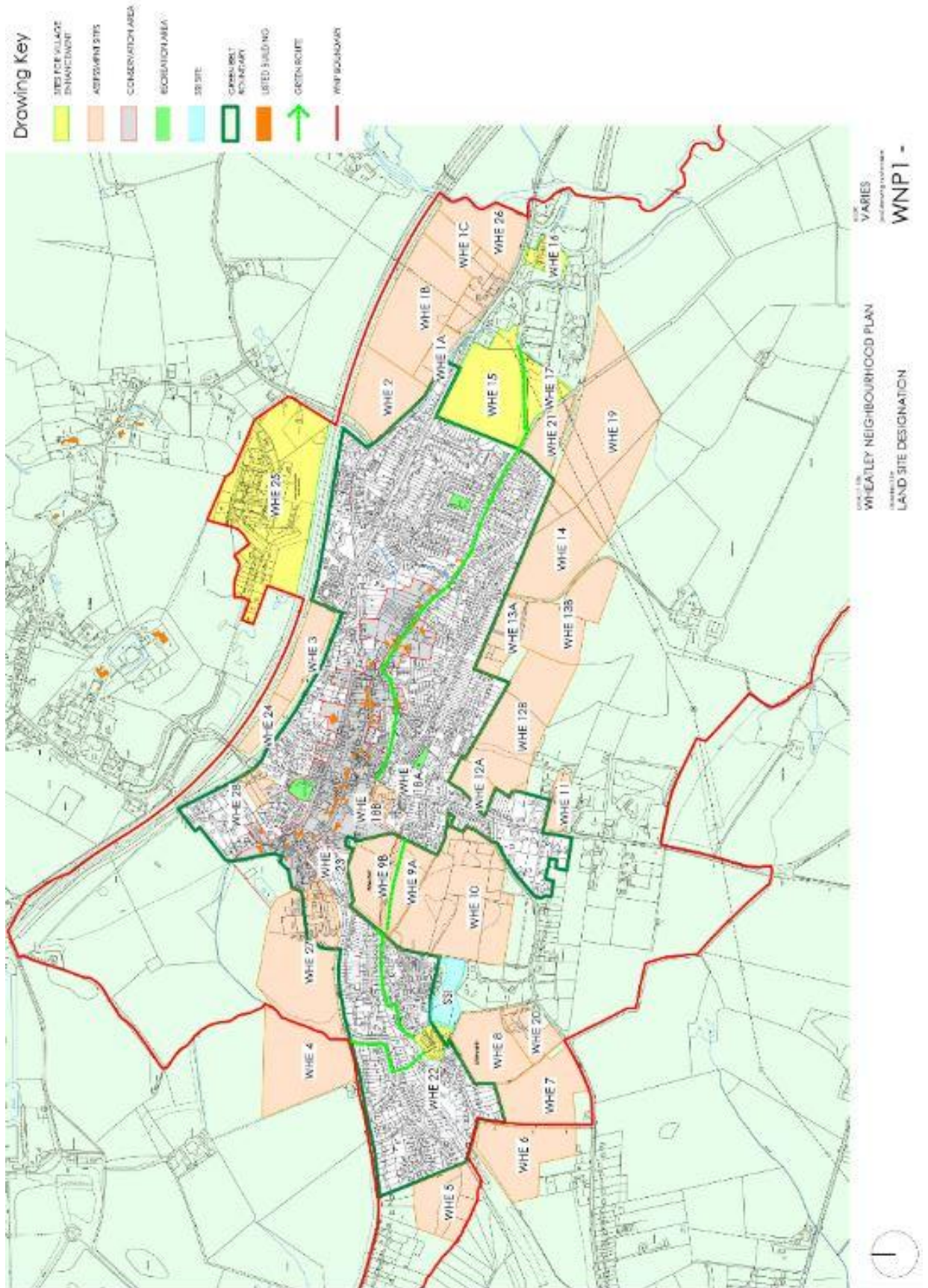


Figure 2.2 Land site designation (WHEnn)

Ref	Site	Source
WHE1A	N of Old London Road, S of Christmas tree area	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE1B	Christmas tree cultivation area, S of A40, N of Old London / London Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE1C	Farm shop and equestrian area	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE2	N A40, W Waterperry Road, S Old London Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE3	Between A40 and London Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE4	W of Primary School site, part of Shotover Estate	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE5	W of Kelly's Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE6	W of road through Littleworth towards Gidley Way	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE7	E of road through Littleworth, N of Windmill lane	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE8	Between Littleworth and the Windmill	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE9A	S of the old railway line, N of the Howe	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE9B	N of the old railway line, SW of the Manor	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE10	The Howe nature reserve and Allotments	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE11	Earlywood Paddock	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE12	E of Ladder Hill, S of Kelham Hall drive	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE13A	S of Beech Road, W of lane to Castle Hill Farm	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE13B	S of WHE13A	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE14	S of Beech Road, E of lane to Castle Hill Farm	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE15	E of the Avenue, S of London Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013 Excluding area in Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 or 3
WHE16	W of Asda, S of London Road	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013 Excluding area in Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 or 3
WHE17	S of WHE15	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE18A	The Railway Inn	Development started
WHE18B	BT exchange	Local knowledge, not available
WHE19	To the S of line of railway at E end of village	Local knowledge, for completeness and to explore S link road possibility
WHE20A	Immediately N of the Windmill	Local knowledge, encroaching development spoiling setting of the Windmill
WHE20B	Paddock and field including the Windmill	Local knowledge, site is for sale
WHE21	S of Roman Road, N of line of disused railway	SO SHLAA 2011 / 2013
WHE22	Littleworth industrial area	Local knowledge, improvement opportunity
WHE23	E end of Primary School Site	Local knowledge, improvement opportunity
WHE24	Wooded area between A40 and London Road	Local Knowledge, similar to WHE3
WHE25	Oxford Brookes U. - built on area only	Pre-defined by SODC
WHE26	E end of village adjacent to river	Local knowledge, flood plain
WHE27	W end of the Primary School	Local knowledge, improvement opportunity
WHE28	Park Hill	Local knowledge, improvement opportunity

Figure 2.3 Descriptions of sites shown on the map in Figure 2.2

2.8 The vision and objectives set out by the WNP are both exciting and ambitious driven by a desire to revitalise and enhance the village at the same time as delivering its housing needs. WHE22 (the Littleworth industrial area) is an underused, brownfield site that contains a few industrial units accommodated mainly in ageing buildings surrounded by near derelict land that is not well maintained. The site represents an opportunity for a small housing development provided that the existing businesses could be relocated successfully without concomitant loss of any employment. The possibility for relocation has been facilitated by the proposals for Green Belt release published in SODC Local Plan 2011 - 2033 [1] to accommodate “appropriate development”. For Wheatley, these alterations consist of releasing land from the Green Belt at the east end of the village, comprising WHE15, WHE16 and WHE17. These are sites that do not fulfil all the criteria of the Green Belt and therefore the WNP supports these proposals as the potential benefits to Wheatley for enhancement and rationalisation outweigh the disadvantage of loss of a small part of the Green Belt.

2.9 Wheatley has experienced substantial expansion since the early 1960’s which has created a site for light industry towards the eastern parish boundary. One of the initial ideas for this site was to accommodate the relocation of inappropriately sited facilities (the railway station, post-Beeching and centrally located industry in the village) as part of a plan to provide housing near the centre of the Wheatley. Development of this light industrial area has had benefits in terms of employment, location of a supermarket and also in accommodating the village sewage works. Planning however has not been well coordinated to the extent that a small development of 6 bungalows (#’s 148 – 158 London Road (even numbers)) has now become isolated within the area, serviced only by an unadopted road and located next to the sewage works. WHE16 is fragmented and lies almost completely within the light industrial area adjacent to the bungalows. A modest development on WHE16 would provide the opportunity to rationalise the site, provide housing, improve the road infrastructure and landscape the surroundings. Such a development is supported by the local community.

2.10 The designated areas WHE15 and WHE17 lie between the light industrial site and the village proper and prevent unrestricted sprawl of built up areas. The land is visually important, particularly when approaching the village from the east and is a desirable and much needed green space within the parish boundary. However the release of these areas from the Green Belt could have several advantages for Wheatley:-

- a. relocation of the businesses at WHE22 to a modern setting (and thereby enabling housing development at WHE22)
- b. relocation of Wheatley Tyres to less constricted premises
- c. provision of expansion space for businesses located on Wheatley Business Park
- d. enable Cornfield Bakery to amalgamate current dispersed bakeries on to one site (thereby removing need for 3 x HGV deliveries daily to High Street)
- e. improved opportunities for employment
- e. provision of affordable housing development at WHE15 and WHE22
- f. provision of recreational green space accessible to the public (especially children and the elderly)
- g. provision of burial space
- h. facilitation of a soft transition from the built form to the surrounding countryside, especially to the south.

These potential developments are all predicated on establishing a practical and financially sustainable overall project that would be able to integrate all of these desired features within the framework of the SODC Local Plan 2011 - 2033 [1].

2.11 Paragraphs 2.7 – 2.10 constitute the basis for a village enhancement plan for Wheatley that can only be realised and supported within the framework of the SODC Local Plan 2011 – 2033[1] since the plan depends on the release of some land within the Green Belt. Within the boundaries of the Green Belt development is restricted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated to outweigh the loss of Green Belt. The very special circumstances embodied in the village enhancement plan mean that through its policies the WNP will only support development that allows all and every aspect of the plan to be delivered as part of the proposed release of the Green Belt. The analysis that has been carried in the site assessment process is shown in the attached spreadsheets (Figure2.4).

Figure 2.4 *****SPREADSHEETS***** not sure how to incorporate these properly into a WORD document

In addition to the likely development at WHE25 the outcome of the site assessment demonstrates that residential, commercial and recreational development at WHE15, WHE16, WHE17 and WHE22 represent the best options as additions to meeting the housing needs of Wheatley.

2.12 In the event that there is increased industrial development at the eastern end of the village this will inevitably lead to an increase in HGV traffic delivering goods and services to the businesses located therein. Under these circumstances there would have to be a review of the OCC Highway regulations governing HGV access to the village from the A40 and also a review of the weight bearing capacity that can be accommodated by the Wheatley Bridge (1809) which is located on the eastern boundary of the designated NP area.

2.13 The WNP committee also identified two further possibilities for future consideration. If WHE23 (land at the east end of the primary school) and/or WHE27 (land at the west end of the primary school) do become available for redevelopment, then priority should be given to education, community/sports facilities and housing for the elderly. If any other sites become available, then they should conform to our land use strategy, with all central sites being used primarily for housing for the elderly and community parking. Ideally, such developments should not incur any net loss of shops, social amenities (pubs, restaurants, clubs) and community/sports facilities.

3 Glossary

Affordable housing: Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Most affordable housing will be provided through a registered social landlord at rates substantially lower than the prevailing market rates. It does not include lower-cost market housing.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with

National Parks, AONB represents the nation's finest landscapes. AONBs are designated by Natural England.

Brownfield site: Previously developed land, which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

Built form: A term used in urban planning to describe a site in terms of the man-made building aspects including the man-made spaces between the buildings

Conservation Area: An area designated by the District Council under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990 [45]) as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are additional controls over demolition, minor developments and the felling of trees. The emphasis will be on careful control, positive management of change and positive enhancement, to enable the area to remain alive and prosperous, but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with the area's special architectural or historic interest. Designation as a Conservation Area puts an onus on prospective developers to produce a very high standard of design which respects or enhances the particular qualities of the area in question.

Flood zones:

- Zone 1 (low probability) comprises land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<1%).
- Zone 2 (medium probability) comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% - 0.1%).
- Zone 3a (high probability) comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%).
- Zone 3b (the functional floodplain) comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green spaces, urban and rural, that is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental benefits for the local communities.

Greenfield site: Land which is usually farmland, which has not previously been developed.

Infill site: An infill site is one on which a building is replaced provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF): The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied
OCC: Oxfordshire County Council

SODC: South Oxfordshire District Council

SHLAA: The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a technical study to inform future planning policy development. It also assists in monitoring whether there is an adequate supply of deliverable housing land

4 References

- 1 SODC Local Plan 2011 – 2033 (2017), www.southoxon.gov

Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee
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