

Wokingham Borough Council

Sonning Neighbourhood Development Plan Decision Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Wokingham Borough Council (the Council) has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and orders and to take plans through a process of examination and referendum. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6 chapter 3) sets out the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under Neighbourhood Planning.
- 1.2 This statement confirms that, following an independent examination, the Council accepts the Examiner's proposed modifications and now confirms that the 'Sonning Neighbourhood Plan' (hereafter 'the Plan') will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum.
- 1.3 This Decision Statement and the Examination Report can be viewed on the Council's website. Hard copies of these documents can be inspected at the following locations:

Wokingham Borough Council Shute End Wokingham Berkshire RG40 1BN	Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm
Wokingham Library Carnival Hub Wellington Road Wokingham RG40 2AF	Mondays: 9.30am to 5pm Tuesdays: 9.30am to 5pm Wednesdays: 9.30am to 4pm Thursdays: 9.30am to 7pm Fridays: 9.30am to 5pm Saturdays: 9.30am to 4pm Sundays: Closed

2. Background

- 2.1 On 24 October 2019, the Council designated the area of Sonning Parish for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Part Two of the Town and Country Planning (England), Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 Following the submission of the Plan to the Council, it was publicised and representations were invited for a 6 week period in accordance with the regulations. The publicity period ended on Monday 16 March 2026.
- 2.3 Wokingham Borough Council appointed an independent examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft MRTPI in March 2026 to review whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and to make recommendations regarding whether the Plan should proceed to referendum.

- 2.4 The Examiner's Report concludes that, subject to making the modifications recommended therein, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum. It concludes that the boundary for the purposes of the referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Area¹.

3. Decision and Reasons

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 requires the local planning authority to outline what action to take in response to the recommendations of an examiner made in a report under paragraph 10 of Schedule 4A to the 1990 Act (as applied by Section 38A of the 2004 Act) in relation to a neighbourhood development plan.
- 3.2 Having considered each of the recommendations made by the Examiner of the submission Plan, and the reasons for them, the Council in consultation with Sonning Parish Council has decided to accept the recommended modifications. Table 1 below outlines the alterations made to the submission Plan under paragraph 12(6) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by Section 38A of 2004 Act) in response to each of the Examiner's recommendations, each having its own Modification Number (MN). **Bold, and underline** has been used to show added text and ~~striketrough~~ to show removed text. The reasons set out have in some cases been paraphrased from the report of the examination for conciseness. The recommendations have been set out in the order they appear within the examination report. This statement should be read alongside that report.
- 3.3 In addition to the modifications recommended by the Examiner, the local planning authority is authorised to correct minor errors that may have been missed so far [Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Schedule 4B section 12(6)]. Minor typographical corrections or factual updates are set out in Table 2.
- 3.4 If a local planning authority is satisfied that, subject to the modifications being made, the neighbourhood plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions then it can proceed to referendum. The Council has considered whether to extend the area in which the referendum is to take place. Like the Examiner, the Council has decided that there is no reason to extend the Neighbourhood Plan Area for the purpose of holding the referendum.
- 3.5 To meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 a referendum which poses the question '*Do you want Wokingham Borough Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Sonning parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?*' will be held in the parish of Sonning.
- 3.6 The Council's Executive agreed on 24 September 2026 that the Sonning Neighbourhood Plan should proceed through referendum to take place on 12 November 2026.

¹ Details of the area can be found on the Council website here: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/emerging-plans-and-guidance/neighbourhood-development-plans>

Table 1 – Examiner’s recommended modifications to the plan

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
MN1	Front cover	Insert “ 2023 to 2040 ” after ‘Sonning Neighbourhood Plan’.	To make clear the period the plan covers.	Recommendation approved.
MN2	Page 4, paragraph 2.3.1	Amend paragraph 2.3.1 to read: Consideration had been given by SPC and SSES for several years to the need for Sonning to develop its own Neighbourhood Plan. Planning documents such as the Sonning Parish Design Statement (2004) and the Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal (2017) have helped to define the character of the village and establish standards for future development, they are guidance documents whereas a neighbourhood plan has statutory status. It is for this reason that SPC and SSES decided in 2019 to proceed with drafting the SNP. A formal application was submitted by SPC requesting permission to proceed and approval was granted by WBC on 24th October 2019 for SPC to develop a NP covering the whole Parish of Sonning, the boundaries of which are shown in the designated on mMap 1 below. The Plan period is 2023 to 2040 to coincide with the Plan period for the Local Plan Update.	To make clear the period the plan covers.	Recommendation approved.
MN3	Policy SNP/HOU1: Delivering Genuinely Affordable Homes	Amend policy SNP/HOU1 as follows: A. The social benefits of providing a 100% affordable housing scheme on the Bull Close site, as shown on the Policies Map (Chapter 11), should carry significant weight in the planning balance. B. The residential scheme at the Bull Close site, as shown on the Policies Map (Chapter 11), could include Development proposals for the residential development of the	To remove wording that provides a statement rather than land use policy and wording that attempts to apportion weight when this is a matter for the decision maker on a case by case basis.	Recommendation approved.

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		<u>land at Sonning Farm site which provide Almshouses as part of an appropriate mix of affordable housing tenures will be supported.</u> C. The Neighbourhood Plan also encourages any future All residential schemes in the neighbourhood area to give full consideration to delivering some or all of the affordable housing element as <u>development proposals should provide a mix of affordable tenures including social rent, affordable rent (including Almshouses), and affordable home ownership to support a range of housing needs and a balanced community.</u>		
MN4	Page 22, parts 1, 2 and 3 of supporting text to Policy SNP/HOU1	Amend the supporting text to Policy SNP/HOU1 parts 1, 2, and 3 (including combining parts 2 and 3) as follows: 1. The policy <u>Policy HOU1 comments generally about the delivery of affordable housing. It also sets out the Plan's approach towards the development of affordable housing on the Sonning Farm site. That site was allocated as a reserve site via policy 'SAL03: Allocated reserve housing sites' in the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) adopted in 2014 for 25 dwellings. The site continues to be proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan Update (LPU) for 25 dwellings (reference SS14.17). Policy HOU1</u> seeks to encourage the delivery of a 100% affordable housing scheme on the Bull Close site <u>land at Sonning Farm</u>. In discussions <u>This has been discussed</u> with the landowner, it became clear that there is a possibility that a 100% affordable housing scheme could be delivered on site. The Neighbourhood <u>The Plan is supportive of would support</u> such a proposal and makes it clear that the affordable housing thresholds set out in strategic policy are minimum, not maximum thresholds. The social benefits of helping to address the insufficient supply of affordable homes in the village should therefore	To provide clarity reflecting changes to the policy text.	Recommendation approved.

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		would be given significant weight in the planning balance if a 100% affordable housing scheme is submitted. 2. The Robert Palmer's Almshouse Charity already manages Almshouses within the village and as a charity for the benefit of qualifying residents in the village. The policy therefore encourages the Bull Close landowner owner of Sonning Farm and its future development partner to give full appropriate consideration to the strong desire of the local community to see a proportion, or all, of the new homes on this site to be managed by an Almshouse charity. established specifically for the new development. This cannot be mandated, but can be encouraged through policy, and the landowner was keen to support the initiative during earlier consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan. The policy also encourages developers of all future residential schemes to engage with the Charity. 3. The approach of this policy is supported by the Government's decision to change the definition of 'affordable housing for rent'. The intention of such a change is to make it easier for organisations such as Almshouses to develop affordable homes.		
MN5	Policy SNP/HOU2: Housing Mix	Amend policy SNP/HOU2 as follows: In general terms - Development proposals for new housing should provide affordable housing based on a starting point of 50/50 split between affordable rent to ownership, as recommended in the having regard to the recommendations of the latest the Sonning Housing Needs Assessment. The precise tenure mix of affordable housing will be determined on a site-by-site basis and following discussions with stakeholders.	For greater flexibility and to avoid potential unintended consequences.	Recommendation agreed in principle but a minor alteration of the wording to 'recommendations of the latest the Sonning...' is required to delete the additional 'the'

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		B. Proposals for residential development, which address local need in Sonning, and are based on the most recent up-to-date evidence available produced or endorsed by the Local Planning Authority, will be supported. Development proposals will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to address the nature of local needs and contribute to the objective of creating a mixed and balanced community. To achieve this, schemes of 3 or more dwellings should secure at least two thirds of smaller units (1-3 bedrooms) with larger units (≥4 bedrooms) making up the remainder on any given site. C. Proposals for the provision of new multiple use residential or commercial buildings on sites made available through the demolition of existing residential buildings will be supported where they enhance the character of the area.		which is a typo in the Examiner report.
MN6	Policy SNP/DES1: Design Codes	Amend part A of policy SNP/DES1 as follows: A. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location D development proposals should demonstrate the way in which they have responded positively to: ...	So the policy can be applied in a proportional way.	Recommendation approved.
MN7	Policy SNP/ENV1: Local Gaps	Amend policy SNP/ENV1 as follows: The Neighbourhood Plan defines two Local Gaps, as shown on the Policies Map, in order to prevent the physical, perceived and visual and perceived coalescence of Sonning & Charvil and Sonning & the Thames Valley Park and to protect their setting. Development proposals that lie within the defined Local Gaps must should be located and designed in such a way as to prevent the visual coalescence of the settlements.	To provide clarity by ensuring that physical coalescence is appropriately reflected in the policy.	Recommendation approved.

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
MN8	Policies Map, section 11, page 38	Delete the land to the north of Broadmoor Lane in the Sonning and Charvil Local Gap as shown on the Policies Map.	To reflect the examiner's conclusion that the parcel of land is not appropriate for inclusion in the wider gap.	Recommendation approved.
MN9	Page 27, part 4 of supporting text to Policy SNP/ENV1	Amend the supporting text to Policy SNP/ENV1 part 4 as follows: 4. The Briarwood Local Gap Study confirmed that SPC and WBC have had discussions on the geographic extent of the Sonning-Charvil Local Gap, as delineated in the consultant's brief issued by SPC, met the local gap criteria with out any modifications to the recommended boundaries. Nevertheless, the Steering Group unilaterally decided to reduce the size of the proposed Sonning-Charvil local gap after their meeting with WBC following the Reg 14 consultation on the pre-submission Plan in order to take account of WBC's comment regarding the overall size of the proposed gap. Whilst WBC suggested to reduce the north-western boundary to the alignment of Broadmoor Lane, the Steering Group considered it appropriate to retain the two fields to the north-west of Broadmoor Lane within the proposed local gap as they made a significant contribution to the visual separation of the Sonning and Charvil settlements. This was supported by the Valued View from Milestone Avenue, Fig 16, in the Charvil Reg. 16 Neighbourhood Plan submission. The examination process has resulted in a further refinement of the scale of the Sonning-Charvil Local Gap. The examiner concluded that the land north of Broadmoor Lane has a more limited role in preventing coalescence for the purposes of a land-use Local Gap policy. This outcome does not preclude the area from being recognised through other relevant planning designations or considerations, including its proposed designation as part of a Valued Landscape Area in the	For greater clarity as to how the examination process has evolved the proposed Local Gap	Recommendation agreed in principle but a minor alteration to capitalise two additional references to 'Local Gap' required for consistency; and deletion of the reference to Valued Landscapes to factually reflect that these are no longer proposed in the Local Plan Update following receipt of the Inspectors' Post Hearings Letter (August 2026) which concludes they are unjustified (see amendment in Table 2).

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		<u>emerging Local Plan and the presence of flood risk across part of the neighbourhood area.</u>		
MN10	Policy SNP/ENV2: Local Green Spaces	Amend Policy SNP/ENV2 as follows: A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policies Map (section 11) and as fully detailed in Appendix 1: i. King George V Field ii. The Wharf iii. Ali's Pond and Sonning Field B. Proposals for development in a Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances	To remove land which benefits from an extant planning permission which would conflict with the purpose of designating the land, consistent with WBC's proposed modification through the emerging LPU process.	Recommendation approved.
MN11	Policies Map, section 11, page 38	Delete the western part of proposed LGS.03 (Sonning Field) from the Policies Map.	Consequential change to reflect the Examiner's conclusion that the extant planning permission would conflict with the purposes of designating the parcel of land.	Recommendation approved.
MN12	Policy SNP/TRA1: Traffic Calming	Amend the first paragraph of policy SNP/TRA1 as follows: Development proposals should maintain, and preferably enhance, road safety for all users and maximise opportunities to alleviate traffic congestion. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, Development development proposals should deliver or contribute towards measures to mitigate the impact on the highway network, such as through traffic calming measures and active travel improvements.	So the policy can be applied in a proportional way.	Recommendation approved.

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
MN13	Policy SNP/TRA2: Active Travel	Amend the parts A and B of policy SNP/TRA2 as follows: A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Active Travel Network, as shown on the Policies Map (Chapter 11), for the purposes of supporting healthy and safe active travel opportunities in the Parish. <u>This should be read in conjunction with proposed active travel routes in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (or any successor document).</u> B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the network <u>shown on the Policies Map or in the LCWIP (or any successor document)</u> should sustain, and where practicable, enhance the functionality of the network by virtue of their layout and means of access and landscape treatment.	To align the policy more closely with WBC's adopted Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and to help future proof the plan.	Recommendation approved.
MN14	Page 37, Monitoring and Evaluation section	Insert a new paragraph at the end of the section as follows: <u>The Parish Council notes that the Borough Council is now well-advanced in the preparation of the Local Plan Update (LPU), and acknowledges the importance of the emerging strategic planning context for the Borough. It is anticipated that the LPU will be adopted early in 2027. The Parish Council will also assess the need or otherwise for a full or partial review of the Plan within six months of the adoption of the emerging LPU.</u>	To reflect the timing of the emerging Local Plan and highlight its importance.	Recommendation approved.
MN15	Page 2, Introduction, fourth paragraph	Amend the fourth paragraph of the introduction to factually reflect the progress of the LPU consistent with WBC's representation. WBC's representation stated the following: <i>"The fourth paragraph of the introduction at page 2 of the plan refers to the emerging Local Plan Update (LPU) being prepared by Wokingham</i>	Factual updates to reflect the latest position.	Recommendation agreed in principle but given the passage of time since WBC's reps, a further factual

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		<i>Borough Council (WBC) and states that this has been issued for consultation. For added clarity, this paragraph should be updated to reflect the latest progress with the emerging LPU. Namely that, having been submitted in February 2025, Part 1 hearings were undertaken in November 2025 and a Post Hearing Letter was received from the Inspectors on 17 December 2025 confirming that the LPU can progress to Part 2 hearings which are now programmed between March and June 2026. This would ensure consistency with the third paragraph of page 3 which is more up to date.”</i>		update as set out in Table 2 is proposed.
MN16	Page 3, Section 2.1, final paragraph	Amend the final paragraph of section 2.1 to factually reflect the change in Local Housing Need since publication of the plan in accordance with WBC’s representation. WBC’s representation stated the following: <i>“The SNP has been drafted in compliance with the December 2024 version of the NPPF. This version includes several far-reaching changes to the planning system, the most pertinent to Sonning being those relating to increased housing requirements for WBC overall. Under the previous method for calculating housing requirements, WBC was expected to deliver 748 homes per year. Under the new standard method, this number has initially increased by 79% to 1,336. <u>The latest calculated figure is 1,316, an increase of 76% over the previous 748 figure. This figure will continue change periodically as new data underpinning the standard methodology is published.</u> It is currently too early for WBC to provide any certainty around the kind of level of growth Sonning is expected to accommodate.”</i>	Factual updates to reflect the latest position.	Recommendation agreed in principle but given the passage of time since WBC’s reps, a further factual update as set out in Table 2 is proposed, to modestly update the LHN figure from 1,316 to 1,317.
MN17	Page 5, Section 2.3.5, second paragraph	Amend the second paragraph of section 2.3.5 so the date reads 2025 rather than 2024, in accordance with in accordance with WBC’s representation. For completeness, the paragraph would read:	Factual update to reflect when the formal Regulation 14 plan	Recommendation approved.

No.	Policy / Plan section	Examiner Recommendation	Reason	Action Taken
		This draft version of the SNP takes account of feedback from residents over the period since February 2020, when the first public meeting took place in Pearson Hall. Most significantly it encapsulates feedback to the questionnaire that was circulated to all residents in the Spring of 2021 and the local consultation which ended in July 2024 2025 .	consultation occurred.	
MN18	Page 3, Section 2.1, third paragraph	Amend the third paragraph of section 2.1 as follows: WBC invited comments on the draft Local Plan Update in November 2021/January 2022. Of the two proposed development sites in Sonning, one is an allocated reserve site in the existing MDD and was included in previous LPU consultations, the other extends a recently approved development site that encroaches on Sonning Golf Course. This site has been consistently opposed by SPC and SSER because we believe it contravenes several policies in the NPPF and current WBC Core Strategy, however outline planning permission was granted by the WBC Planning Committee in August 2023 and it is therefore reluctantly accepted as an approved site. WBC conducted a consultation on its Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Plan from September to November 2024 and submitted the LPU Update 2023 – 2040 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 28th in February 2025.	To remove views in relation to WBC's view on a planning application which are inappropriate within a development plan document.	Recommendation approved.
MN19	Page 16, Section 4.3, Vision	Insert missing word to the 'Overall Vision' for the plan as follows: Sonning will continue to be known by people at all stages of their lives as one of Berkshire's best Parish communities in which to live; ...	To correct a typo.	Recommendation approved.

Table 2 – Minor modifications

Change proposed	Paragraph / section	Reason for change
Amend the Title Page as follows: Sonning Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15 Submission Plan Referendum Version October 2025 November 2026	Title page	Factual update to reflect revised version of the plan.
Update to the footer as follows: Reg 15 Submission Plan – October 2025 Sonning Neighbourhood Plan	Throughout the plan	Consequential factual update to reflect progression of the plan making process.
Amend the title of the contents page as follows: Contents of the DRAFT Plan	Contents page	Factual update to reflect plan progress.
Amend the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the introduction as follows: The SNP articulates policies which deal with the vision and key objectives identified. Through the consultation and study process the main issues that have emerged have been the negative impact of through-traffic, the importance of protecting the environment and the need for new housing, particularly affordable housing and housing for the elderly, in a manner that enhances the quality of life in the village. The SNP recognizes the Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC) emerging Local Plan that has been issued for consultation by the planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), subject to examination in public, having been submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2025. A post hearings letter has been received from the Inspectors in August 2026 which sets out that the plan is capable of being found sound, subject to modifications. in which a limited number of sites have been proposed for allocation in the draft Local Plan Update within the Parish. Some of these sites were strongly opposed by residents, however the SNP accepts the reality of recent	Page 2, Introduction, fourth and fifth paragraphs	Factual updates to reflect progress with the LPU through the examination process (modest deviation from MN15 in Table 1); and to remove wording that is superseded by the neighbourhood plan's progress.

planning approvals. The SNP Steering Group is grateful to the support from consultants AECOM, facilitated by Locality, and ONH Planning for Good adding to the evidence base upon which the SNP is built. Evolving copies of the draft SNP have been shared with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) for feedback. This draft incorporates revisions resulting from comments by WBC and others to date and is now subject to formal consultation in accordance with Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations.		
Amend the final paragraph of section 2.1 as follows: The SNP has been drafted in compliance with the December 2024 version of the NPPF. This version includes several far-reaching changes to the planning system, the most pertinent to Sonning being those relating to increased housing requirements for WBC overall. Under the previous method for calculating housing requirements, WBC was expected to deliver 748 homes per year. Under the new standard method, this number has initially increased by 79% to 1,336. <u>The latest calculated figure is 1,317, an increase of 76% over the previous 748 figure. This figure will continue change periodically as new data underpinning the standard methodology is published.</u> It is currently too early for WBC to provide any certainty around the kind of level of growth Sonning is expected to accommodate.	Page 3, 'Planning' chapter, Section 2.1, final paragraph.	Factual update to reflect the latest Local Housing Need calculation (modest deviation from MN16 in Table 1).
Realignment of the document images within the table at section 2.3.4	Page 5	To correct a formatting error that obscured some of the text.
Amend the 2nd paragraph at section 2.3.5 and the paragraph at 2.3.6 as follows: This draft version of the SNP takes account of feedback from residents over the period since February 2020, when the first public meeting took place in Pearson Hall. Most significantly it encapsulates feedback to the questionnaire that was circulated to all residents in the Spring of 2021 and the local consultation which	Page 5	Minor factual update to reflect the relevant document was finalised.

ended in July 2024. A statement detailing the thorough consultation process that was followed throughout the preparation of the SNP can be found on our web site: Consultation Statement and Appendices. This statement lists the persons and bodies consulted and the manner in which this was done. It also lists the comments received during the consultation process and the ways in which these comments were addressed in the final draft version.		
Amend the first paragraph of section 3.2.2 as follows: Beyond the Conservation Area the Parish boundaries are the river, Milestone Avenue, Garde Road and Sonning Golf Course to the east, the railway to the south and the Thames Valley Park nature reserve to the south-west. Sonning is almost unique in having no private houses and gardens at the rivers' edge thus allowing access to the river throughout the Parish. The Thames Path runs through the Parish up to the bridge and then crosses to the Oxfordshire side, however a public footpath continues on the Berkshire side all the way to the end of the Parish.	Page 10, section 3.2.2 first paragraph	To correct a factual error.
Amend the first bullet point below the penultimate paragraph on page 19 and the final paragraph of page 19 as follows: Pro-Vision, on behalf of Holme Park Farm, submitted 2 sites that met the criteria (The Grange and The Stable Farmyard). They also re-submitted the 16.6 ha site (the Paddock) that had been submitted as part of a wider area in response to the earlier WBC Call for Sites. The Holme Park submission only offered two sites meeting the size criteria, The Grange (0.31ha) potentially capable of accommodating 4 or 5 houses, and The Farmyard (to 0.37ha) which was already occupied by historic farm buildings. The third site, The Paddocks (6ha) was much larger than the specified maximum area of 1ha and was therefore dismissed.	Page 19	Factual corrections which would ensure consistency with the final paragraph of page 19 and typographical correction.

Amend the first paragraph on page 20 as follows: The Reading University Farm submission related to Bull Close (Site 5SO001) which was already included in the emerging Local Plan as a reserved site proposed allocation. The submission showed two alternative layouts, 27 units on the original parcel of land and 32 units if additional land in the northeast of the original site was included.	Page 20	Factual correction to avoid conflating the reserved allocation in the MDD, with the proposed allocation in the emerging LPU (which does not propose reserved sites).
Update the hyperlink in the first sentence of section 5.4.2 so that it opens the Housing Needs Assessment as intended, rather than the SEA/HRA Determination Statement.	Page 21, section 5.4.2, first paragraph	To fix an incorrect hyperlink, required for clarity and effectiveness.
Amend the context sections 1, 5 and 6 to policy SNP/HOU2: Housing Mix as follows: 1. The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) published in the evidence base highlights the problems of affordability for both rented and owned property in Sonning. Median house prices are £737,000 and even lower quartile (entry level) houses are priced at £535,000. With average household incomes of £64,900 per year and household incomes for one or two lower quartile earners of £25,800 and £51,600 respectively, house purchase and commercially rented accommodation is virtually unaffordable for even average income households. The policy recommends a split of 50/50 between affordable rent to affordable housing to be determined on a site-by-site basis. 5. WBC Core Strategy <i>Housing Mix, Density and Affordability</i> This policy area recognises the importance of providing proposals with a mix and balance based on the housing need within Sonning. The proportions requirements set out in policy SNP/HOU2 are in accordance consistent with WBC Core Strategy Policy CP5 and prioritises the need for affordable housing provision in Sonning.	Page 23, supporting text sections 1, 5 (second paragraph) and 6 to policy SNP/HOU2	Consequential modifications for consistency with the modified policy.

6. WBC Managing Development Delivery <i>Residential Uses</i> Policy SNP/HOU2 sets out an appropriate housing mix for proposals in Sonning based on current and projected housing need as well as the social mix in the area and sets a minimum for affordable housing provision which is significantly higher than the suggested proportion for Wokingham Borough Council. The basis of this policy is in accordance with WBC Managing Development Delivery Policy TB05 and recognises the need for an appropriate housing mix for new developments in order to best serve the community, both now and in the future.		
Amend the fourth paragraph of page 24 as follows: Much has been written in the SNP about the key elements that make up Sonning's unique character and the importance of maintaining these essential characteristics whilst accommodating the necessary growth envisaged in the plan period and thereafter. The following policy has been drafted written to cater for some of the issues drawn out in previous chapters:	Page 24, 4 th paragraph	Minor factual update to reflect the policy has been finalised post examination.
Amend the context paragraph 1: There are distinctive features of Sonning that shape its character. These features are set out in the Sonning Design Guidelines and Codes Report, <u>a link for which can be found in Appendix 2.</u> The content of the Code forms part of the policy but has been attached as an Appendix purely for practical presentational reasons. The Code encapsulates the key design principles within the Conservation Area, their settings and beyond. The policy places additional local emphasis to the design quality principles of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide and the Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal.	Page 24, context paragraph 1	To ensure the status of the Code is not misrepresented in supporting text for clarity and to ensure there is no inconsistency with the more accurate description at subsequent paragraph 2.
Amend the paragraph 3 and the first sentence of paragraph 5 of supporting text to policy SNP/DES1 as follows:	Page 25, paragraph 3 and 5.	Factual update to remove reference to earlier version of the LPU and correct an error in referencing.

3. The Thameside environment plays a significant role in Sonning's sense of place. The Wokingham Local Plan Revised Growth Strategy's (RGS) policy NE10 notes the 'distinctive character of the water frontage and important views'. The emerging Local Plan Policy FD3 sets out a number of requirements for development proposals to maintain and enhance rivers and watercourses. It specifically references the River Thames, stating that developments within its setting must ensure they 'complement the distinctive character of the water frontage and important views'. It is expected that development proposals will make efforts to respond to the Thameside environment, subject to the location of the site. Policy SNP/D1 DES1 outlines ways in which development will be considered in favour of preserving the landscape and character of Sonning - in line with WBC Man aging Development Delivery Policy TB21.		
Amend the supporting text to policy SNP/ENV1 as follows: The findings and recommendations in the Landscape Character Area Report, summarised above, confirm the importance of nurturing and managing the local environment in order to maintain and enhance Sonning's unique position in the landscape. It is particularly important that Sonning's identity is maintained through the protection of its eastern and western borders and the following policy is drafted written to this effect. 1. The policy seeks to protect the essential countryside character of the area between Sonning & Charvil and Sonning & the Thames Valley Park, in order to prevent physical, visual and perceived coalescence between these separate settlements and to protect their distinctive individual character and setting. 3. To support the designation, Briarwood Landscape Architecture were commissioned to produce a Local Gap Study (published separately in the evidence base). The study undertook a review and appraisal, in respect of landscape and	Page 27, 5th paragraph, context paragraph 1 and 3, to policy SNP/ENV1	Minor factual update to reflect the policy has been finalised post examination; consequential modifications for consistency with the modified policy; and factual updates to accurately reflect the examination process.

visual matters, of the potential Local Gaps that had been originally identified by the Steering Group in their brief for the Local Gap study. It concluded that the Sonning-Charvil Local Gap ‘fully meets the criteria by which it can be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters’. The assessment of the Sonning-Thames Valley Park Local Gap recommended a reduced area to be designated ‘to a smaller but more functional area that has well defined and defensible boundaries’. A third potential Local Gap at Sonning-Woodley was assessed but ultimately found to ‘not meet the criteria to enable it to be supported in respect of landscape and visual matters’. The recommendations of this report have been adopted and the proposed boundaries of the Local Gaps have been amended to reflect its finding boundaries of the Local Gaps were informed by the study but were then refined through the examination process.		
Amend part of the Examiner’s recommended modification (see MN9 above) to supporting text to Policy SNP/ENV1 part 4 as follows: The examination process has resulted in a further refinement of the scale of the Sonning-Charvil Local Gap. The examiner concluded that the land north of Broadmoor Lane has a more limited role in preventing coalescence for the purposes of a land-use Local Gap policy. This outcome does not preclude the area from being recognised through other relevant planning designations or considerations, including its proposed designation as part of a Valued Landscape Area in the emerging Local Plan the landscape quality of the area and the presence of flood risk across part of the neighbourhood area.	Page 28, context paragraph 4 to policy SNP/ENV1	Deletion of the specific reference to Valued Landscape designations to factually reflect that these are no longer proposed in the Local Plan Update following receipt of the Inspectors’ Post Hearings Letter (August 2026) which concludes they are unjustified (modest deviation from MN9 in Table 1).
Amend the first bullet point under the second paragraph of section 8.1 as follows dramatically dramatically reduce traffic flows and queues	Page 33, section 8.1, 2nd paragraph, 1st bullet point	To correct a typo.
Amend the first sentence of paragraph 5 of supporting text to policy SNP/TRA1 as follows: By implementing traffic calming measures in identified problem areas, Policy	Page 34, context paragraph 5	To correct an error in referencing.

SNP/ TT1 TRA1 ensures that the existing transport network in Sonning can be improved and more effectively managed. These measures - such as speed bumps, roundabouts, or junction improvements - address specific issues that contribute to congestion and safety concerns.		
Amend paragraph 6 of supporting text to policy SNP/TRA2 as follows: Policy SNP/TT2 TRA2 emphasises the importance of preserving and enhancing the existing environment of Sonning, particularly land within or adjacent to the Active Travel Network. By maintaining and improving these areas, the policy supports the continued functionality and connectivity of the active travel routes, which are essential for promoting sustainable development. This approach not only protects vital routes and pedestrian pathways but also encourages the use of walking and cycling as preferred modes of transport. Such active travel options are recognised as more environmentally friendly compared to other transportation methods that can contribute to air pollution and degrade air quality. By aligning with WBC Core Strategy Policy CP1, which prioritises sustainable transport solutions, SNP/TTA2 TRA2 reinforces the commitment to reducing the environmental impact of travel and supporting a healthier, more eco-conscious community.	Page 35, context paragraph 6	To correct errors in referencing.
Amend Appendix 1, entry LGS.03 as follows: ALI'S POND AND SONNING FIELD (NB: consequential amendment to figure title in Appendix 1 and in Appendix 4 list of maps) Approximately 0.5 0.25 hectares Two A small adjoining Nature Reserve(s) (contiguous with King Georges field), and bounded on the other three sides by Sonning Bluecoat School fields, Sonning Lane, and Private property. Yes. Situated totally within the parish itself, a clearly delineated local green space,	Appendix 1, pages 43 – 44 (Appendix 4 list of maps)	Consequential modifications to reflect the Examiner recommendation to delete part of the proposed local green space area.

specifically designed to provide outdoor recreation, and is not considered to constitute an “extensive tract of land”. It lies within the Sonning Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal recognises that Ali’s Pond is one of four distinct open spaces in the Conservation Area which...’provide a peaceful green area near the centre of the village whilst simultaneously providing a valuable refuge for protected species’ (Page 29 30). <u>There is an A</u>adjoining <u>Ali’s P</u>pond to the west, <u>in</u> Sonning Field, <u>which</u> was created to provide additional habitat for Great Crested Newts, and contains another amphibian breeding pond, log and brushwood piles and new hedgerows with a wide variety of native trees and shrubs. A permissive path enables easy access through from Ali’s Pond and across Sonning Field to a kissing gate on Sonning Lane. There is a small network of footpaths within the two sites, which provide access to adjacent King George’s Field used for wider recreational opportunities.		
Delete Appendix 2 – List of policies	Appendix 2, pages 45 - 46	To remove unnecessary duplication of policies within the body of the plan.
Renumber Appendices 3 – 5	Appendices 3 – 5, pages 47 – 49	Consequential renumbering due to deletion of Appendix 2.

