

# WOLVERCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN, covering Wolvercote Ward DRAFT OUTLINE v.5

## KEY ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

in order of priority established at public meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013

- 1. Traffic and parking, alternative transport:** Road layouts should be able to cope with the volume of traffic and, where that cannot be achieved, new development should be restricted. Changes to road layouts should not take place simply to accommodate development to the detriment of conditions for existing residents. New developments need to be planned with adequate parking provision. Public transport provision needs to be enhanced. Existing roads and bridges need to be repaired and reinforced to cope with bus and emergency services and refuse collection, with contributions towards this work where appropriate from developers. Alternative means of transport (cycling and walking) need to be encouraged, through provision of safer routes.
- 2. Drains and infrastructure:** The Plan will seek more rigorous checking of plans for forthcoming developments, based on measured evidence to ensure that the existing drains and roads in particular have sufficient capacity to support those developments. There is currently concern about the inadequacy of the sewerage system in Lower Wolvercote.
- 3. Risk of flooding:** The Plan will seek a more rigorous approach to the provision of flood defences where these are needed. There should be careful checking of all plans for new developments to ensure that they do not add to the risk of flooding in the area and will employ appropriate techniques to attenuate surface water run-off from buildings and paving. In low-lying areas there must be a clear understanding by landowners and agencies of the causes of flooding (e.g. where existing ditch networks are blocked) and clear and (where possible) enforceable lines of responsibility for the maintenance and management of banks, ditches and weirs.
- 4. Noise and air pollution:** The Plan will require effective steps to protect residents (both new and existing) from noise and air pollution from identified polluting sources (particularly major roads). Evidence to support proposals must be based on data obtained from actual measurements, not models. This is an issue for developers but also for the Highway Authority since the pollution levels at the Wolvercote Roundabout and almost certainly at the Cutteslowe Roundabout already exceed air quality standards. Consideration should be given to the prevention of rat running.
- 5. Schooling:** The community should support the provision of local schools. Sufficient capacity must be made available in local schools to accommodate any increases in population, especially from large developments. Consideration needs to be given to safe travel routes to schools.
- 6. Green spaces and biodiversity:** While acknowledging the outstanding facilities provided by Cutteslowe Park, Wolvercote Common, Wolvercote Green and Port Meadow, the Plan will

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support the work of local authorities, agencies, charities and local community groups in protecting and enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity of the area. It will strive to make more green space accessible to the public, while, at the same time, supporting measures to protect rare plant species and habitats. Public areas in new developments should be stocked with native tree, plant and grass species. All developments, especially large developments, should contain green spaces offering a range of character. The potential for traffic calming by creating chicanes and parking bays, using trees or shrubs in planters, could be explored.

- 7. Building scale, density and design:** It is important to attend to the scale of buildings and the density of development to ensure that any new building is appropriate in design, scale and character to its immediate neighbours. Areas for development within the Ward should be designated to ensure that the variations in scale and density accompanying different use categories are appropriately sited (for instance, housing compared with employment use). Furthermore, there should be a strict limit on the practice of infilling and the replacement of single dwellings by multiple properties to control density and car ownership. New developments should have dedicated spaces to accommodate waste disposal (wheelie bins), to keep shared spaces, including pavements, clear.
- 8. Principle of community:** The Wolvercote Ward already contains several thriving communities, some of which have better facilities than others. All of them need communal facilities that will maintain and enhance social interaction. Where there is growth in population, more facilities should be provided. Research is needed to establish if there are sufficient local facilities in some areas of the Ward (e.g. between Woodstock Road and Banbury Road and to the north of Sunderland Avenue). Facilities (social, sports, worship etc) are needed for all age groups from the young to the elderly and should be maintained and enhanced regularly as a matter of course. Wherever new development takes place the design of the layout should be in sympathy with the needs of the existing community in scale and should provide both communal facilities and public open space, which is welcoming and free of cars, where people can freely and safely interact. Public open space needs also to be secure and well maintained.
- 9. Mix of housing:** Any new developments must be planned to avoid ghettos and gated communities. New housing should include “affordable” housing both for purchase and for rent. The rental sector should be responsibly managed, with consideration and respect for all residents. There should be firm implementation of the City’s policy on Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). Land should be made available for specialized types of housing, such as sheltered and extra care housing.
- 10. Local employment:** A growing number of people want to work close to their homes. This might reduce traffic and pollution. Appropriate business development contributes to a balanced community, and may provide scope for local employment. However, the infrastructure needs to be developed accordingly. Where there are larger volumes of traffic because some employees and goods have to come from outside the area, it will be

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necessary to ensure that roads are in good repair and able to cope. At the same time measures should be introduced to encourage the reduction of car dependence.

11. **Local retail:** Local shops have an important function in any neighbourhood, not least because they cut down on the need for travel. They should be protected by planning policy.
12. **Heritage:** New developments must respect nearby buildings or groups of buildings of historical significance, whether listed buildings and/or within conservation areas or not. This does not mean copying historical styles but re-interpreting the scale and grain of existing places in a contemporary way.
13. **Energy and resource conservation:** Every effort should be made to promote the conservation of resources, reduce air pollution and bring down fuel bills. In terms of buildings this will be achieved by the use of efficient and selective construction methods, the elimination of waste material, and the employment of advanced technology (including district heating). In terms of transport it will be achieved through the development of public transportation, encouragement of cycling, walking etc.
14. **Renewable energy:** The Plan should encourage the exploitation of the potential for renewable energy in existing housing and commercial building stock, and especially in new developments, including energy from natural features, such as rivers.
15. **Sustainability and building standards:** All new developments must be planned to be sustainable in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). To meet this requirement, new building should be highly energy efficient and meet the highest standards for sustainable design. Also improved space standards should be introduced for all new dwellings, and these standards should be made mandatory (as, for example, the standards used in public housing before 1980).