

# **Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document**



## **Consultation Report**

**A report on the following consultation undertaken by the council in preparation of the Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document:**

**Public Consultation (21 August – 25 September 2015)**

**OCTOBER 2015**

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# Summary

This document provides a summary of the consultation carried out in relation to the preparation of the Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), including stakeholder engagement during the preparation of the draft SPD and the period of consultation held between 21 August and 25 September 2015 on the draft SPD.

The consultations sought the views of organisations, local communities and individuals on draft content and design principles contained within the document.

The council advertised the consultation through statutory press releases in the local newspapers which included The Oxford Mail, The Herald and the Oxfordshire Guardian, on the Council's website and in a vacant shopping unit in the West Way Centre. Further to this, the consultation was advertised through the Botley and North Hinksey Community newsletter "the Sprout" covering North Hinksey, Dean Court, Cumnor Hill, Harcourt Hill and Botley. West Way Community Concern also promoted the consultation through social media and word of mouth.

Respondents could comment online using our 'Objective' consultation system or in writing. During the consultations we also ran two public exhibitions held at a vacant unit in the West Way shopping centre, Botley. These were well attended by key stakeholders, interest groups and members of the public. A number of events targeted at different age groups were also held.

A total of 357 different participants submitted representations to the consultation, approximately 3 per cent of the population of Botley of 11,341 as at 2011. Feedback on the consultation indicates that a significant majority of those who provided feedback were in the older age categories (circa 50 per cent were aged 60 years or older). Those aged 60 years or older account for approximately 27 per cent (3,065) of the population (Census, 2011) and therefore were over represented in the consultation response. This was identified as a potential issue at the early consultation events and a concerted effort was made to engage with younger age groups through targeted events.

Whilst the additional events and exhibitions that the Council arranged to reach out to the younger aged groups were a success and their views were informally captured in reports of the events (see **Feedback from Events**), formal written responses from age categories 16 – 29 years represent a small proportion of the total responses. This is evidenced in Figure 1 of this document where just over 1 per cent of the total respondents were represented in this age category. Compared to the Census 2011 which indicates that 16 per cent of the local population in Botley are between the ages of 16 – 29.

In summary the views expressed in the analysis of the questionnaires in the main represent the voices of a vocal minority of older residents. The views of those under 40 are best captured in the reports of the various events held.

66 per cent of the 223 respondents supported the overall vision of the Botley Centre SPD. Some also provided general comments and issues on the SPD which have been incorporated into this document.

A summary of the key issues are set out below, however of the 3 per cent of those who responded to the consultation, 250 commented on land uses. Of this 250, approximately 200 were opposed to the provision of student accommodation, a hotel and a cinema. The Council considers that there is sufficient evidence to justify these uses as acceptable in principle and are evidenced in the Joint Hotel Needs Assessment, the Retail and Town Centre Study Update 2013, as well as Saved Policies in the Local Plan 2011 and emerging policies in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies. Justification of these issues is further expressed in paragraphs 72 - 74 of this document.

There were also concerns over building heights and the impact on the local character of Botley. The impact of building heights for the specific scheme will be tested at the planning application stage to ensure it does not harm the immediate residential amenity of surrounding areas. The Council acknowledges that development should not cause material impact on the local character of Botley, but as a previously developed "brownfield" site notes that it presents an opportunity for the effective re-use of previously developed land within an existing settlement that is highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Such an opportunity is rare in the council's administrative area.

Key messages arising from the consultation are:

There was overall support for most aspects of the SPD, including:

- some form of redevelopment of the site
- community buildings and library, and for open space where people can meet and socialise
- the vision and objectives for Botley, although views were expressed that the SPD could have gone further to facilitate its delivery
- retaining the character of Botley, including support for retaining Elms Parade
- a local service centre to serve local people, including a range of retail, cafés and restaurants, community uses, offices and residential
- the policies on access, linkages and accessibility
- the policies on public space and streetscape
- the policies on design quality and character
- the policies on parking and servicing

The main aspects of the SPD that respondents that expressed a preference on the subject disagreed with were:

- the inclusion of Vale House, Field House, St. Peter and St. Paul Church and Vicarage in the study area
- a cinema (particularly a large multiplex)
- student accommodation
- a hotel
- tall buildings, including a new landmark to the north eastern corner of the site

As a result the revisions to the SPD have in the main focused on improving the clarity of the document, again in response to various comments asking for greater explanation of the terminology used.

# **Introduction**

## **PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION STATEMENT**

1. This document provides a summary of the consultation carried out in relation to the preparation of the Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), including stakeholder engagement during the preparation of the draft SPD and the period of consultation held between 21 August and 25 September 2015 on the draft SPD.

## **STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

2. The document is structured in a way that informs the approach taken from the questionnaire for the consultation. A brief background of the Botley Centre and the Botley Centre SPD and its relationship to the Local Plan 2011 and emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 1 is set out below. The document reiterates the key vision, principles and objectives of the SPD. Following the background, the document sets out the Council's approach to the consultation outlining consultation events with key stakeholders and the community as set out in the Council's SCI adopted 2009.
3. Results from the processing of consultation responses have been undertaken and statistical data obtained from the Council's on-line consultation system have been presented as visual representations such as graphs and pie charts. A further summary of the key issues have been carried out to present qualitative data based on the data obtained from general comments set out in the questionnaire/response form.
4. A summary of key issues from focus groups with Matthew Arnold Sixth Form, toddler and baby groups at Elms Road Children Centre and an interactive exercise with members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group and attendees of the Botley and North Hinksey Youth Club have been incorporated into the document.
5. The summary of comments and quantitative analysis have informed whether a change is required to the final SPD and are justified within the Council's evidence base and national and local planning policy.

# Background

6. The Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2011 identified the need for change in the centre of Botley, stating a need for 'refurbishment to fulfil its potential as a local service centre'.
7. The submission version of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One also supports the redevelopment of Botley through Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area.
8. A planning application for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Botley Centre was submitted and was refused at committee in December 2014.
9. It is intended that the Botley Centre SPD will become supplementary to the Local Plan 2011 and will be a material consideration in determination of future planning applications on this site.
10. The SPD sets out a vision, objectives and a development framework to guide development and covers several themes. These include:
  - The role of Botley
  - Access, linkages and legibility
  - Public space and streetscape
  - Density, scale and massing
  - Design quality and character
  - Parking and servicing
11. The SPD has been informed by a number of community stakeholder events prior to formal public consultation taking place, these events are noted in page four of the SPD.
12. Formal public consultation on the draft SPD took place between 21 August and 25 September 2015. It was agreed that as the start of the public consultation took place at the very end of the summer holiday period, the total length of the consultation would be extended from the more usual period of four weeks to a total of five weeks, in line with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
13. The intention is to adopt the Botley Centre SPD by the end of October 2015 in order to inform an anticipated planning application. The final draft SPD will be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee before being recommended to Cabinet for adoption.

## VALE'S APPROACH TO CONSULTATION

14. The Vale of White Horse District Council is committed to working collaboratively with organisations, local communities and individuals to ensure that its planning policies reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the area. Our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) provides further information on our commitment<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement of Community Involvement, Vale of White Horse District Council, December 2009

# Early engagement

15. The council and the consultants acting on its behalf engaged with local stakeholders during the preparation phase of the SPD, including the following:

- Individual meetings with local stakeholders, including West Way Community Concern, North Hinksey Parish Council, Cumnor Parish Council, Botley Baptist Church, St Peter and St Paul Church and landowners.
- Presentation to North Hinksey Parish Council
- Workshop with local organisations, including ward councillors, to develop vision and design principles
- Presentation to West Way Community Concern event
- Workshop with local organisations on viability
- Review of information prepared by West Way Community Concern, including the West Way Development Survey, their Vision for Botley and West Way and their Botley Character Statement.

# Consultation on the draft SPD

## INTRODUCTION

16. The consultation process has consisted of a wide range of events with a variety of different organisations. The Council have undertaken an extensive consultation programme which has included both public exhibitions and workshops with the community, as well as targeted events aimed at the younger age groups including a focus group with students from Matthew Arnold Sixth Form, an interactive exercise with 18 members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group aged 10 – 14 years old and a toddler and babies group at the Elms Road Children Centre.

17. In accordance with the Council's SCI, we publicised the consultation through a variety of means including press releases, leaflets and newsletters. Further evidence of the Council's approach to the consultation is set out in **Appendix 2** of this report.

## HOW WE CONSULTED

18. The council consulted with the wider public to gather feedback on and help us improve draft design principles and other content contained within the draft Botley Centre SPD. We approached a wide range of stakeholders, including both statutory and non-statutory consultees. A full list of the statutory organisations (as identified from our Statement of Community Involvement) that we consulted with is shown in **Appendix 1**. This includes a short summary from those statutory organisations that responded.

19. To raise awareness of the consultations and increase the opportunities to comment, we used a range of publicity methods which are detailed in **Appendix 2**.



20. Interested persons and organisations were able to provide responses verbally at events, by post, email or through the consultation portal:

<https://consult.southandvale.gov.uk/portal>

21. The website allowed participants to download copies of the consultation document and respond to questions relating to the document. The system also provided respondents the opportunity to submit general comments based on the various sections of the document, and provided further flexibility to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal and other evidence base document which accompanied the SPD. This included paragraphs, policies, figures etc.

22. Respondents were encouraged to submit their comments on the standard questionnaire, but responses in the form of letters or emails were also accepted. These were processed alongside the online responses and incorporated into the online system.

## **ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES**

23. The online consultation and accompanying questionnaire followed a systematic approach whereby the structure was set out as in the draft Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by the following themes:

- The role of Botley
- Access, linkages and legibility
- Public space and streetscape
- Density, scale and massing
- Design quality and character
- Parking and servicing

24. The analysis of consultation responses and the presentation of key issues in this report have also followed the same approach to ensure consistency and that the consultation followed a transparent process from preparation to subsequent publication of the SPD.

25. The questionnaire posed specific questions which required respondents to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither disagreed nor agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed. There was also the opportunity for respondents to provide further detail in a comments box.

26. In analysing the consultation responses, where people submitted comments to a question in the response form, the council has attributed the individual comment to the correct point or question on the response form so as to ensure consistency when analysing the consultation responses to inform any changes to the SPD. Where this change has occurred, the representation in its entirety can still be viewed on the Council's on-line consultation system.

27. We have also received a number of constructive comments in suggesting improvements to the document, particularly in relating to clarity and wording of the

SPD. These responses, where necessary, have helped to inform changes to the SPD.

28. The structure for the remainder of this section of the report follows that of the questionnaire, summarizing the responses to each question in turn.
29. In total, 357 participants submitted representations on the Botley Centre SPD through the formal consultation process. Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the number of responses and participants by source.

**Table 1: Summary of how participants responded to the consultation**

Consultation Portal	176
Via email	70
Via post	111
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>357</b>

30. With these 357 participants, a total of 396 individual responses were logged onto the consultation portal. The discrepancy between the 357 participants and 396 individual responses are attributed to the following:
- 8 were empty responses (made by participants who also provided full responses)
  - 5 were duplicate entries
  - 26 required amalgamation (e.g. one respondent provided twelve individual responses, one for each section of the questionnaire)
31. For clarity, all of the figures supplied in this report represent the total number of respondents (i.e. 357).

## **AGE RANGE OF RESPONDENTS**

32. The figure below shows that a significant level of responses were received by those aged forty years and over, and in particular those over the age of 60, where almost half of those who completed this section of the survey said they fell into this age bracket. Compared to the Census 2011 data for the local area and its surroundings this does not represent the age profile of the total population where only 27 per cent of the population is aged 60 years and over. Figure 1 also shows that of the 214 respondents only 1.4 per cent were between the ages of 16 – 29, however this is a disproportionately low figure compared to the census 2011 figure where 16 per cent of the population of Botley is between the ages of 16 – 29.

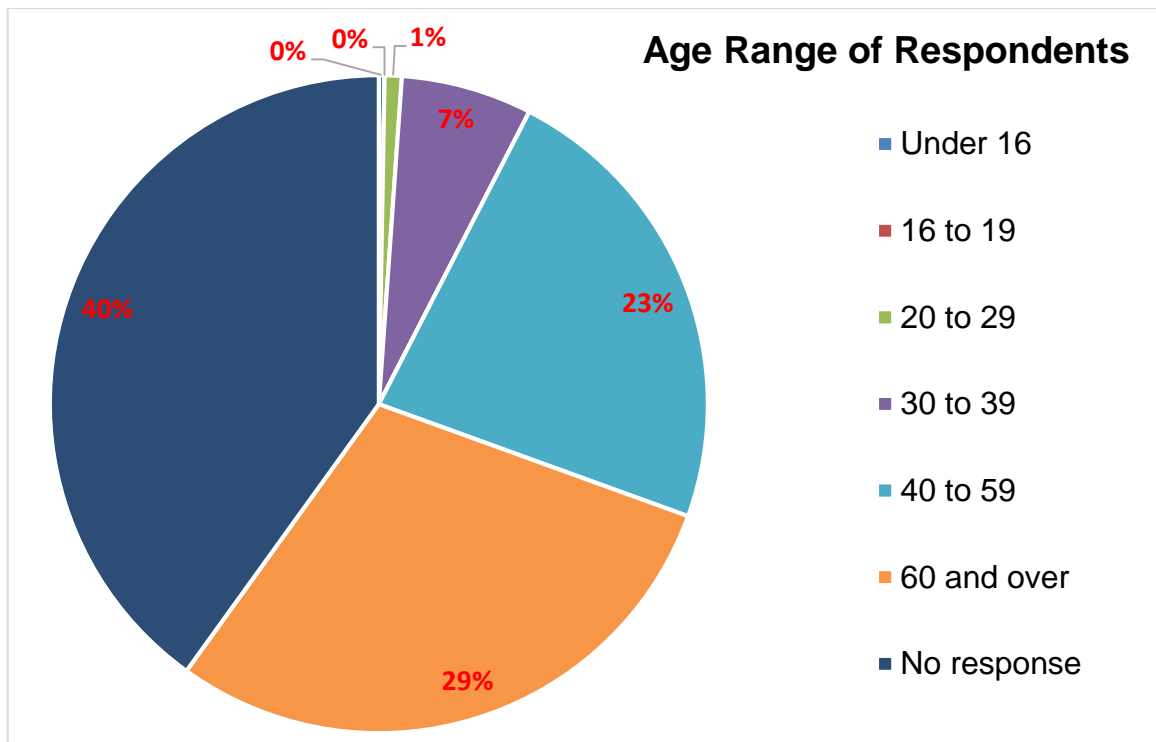


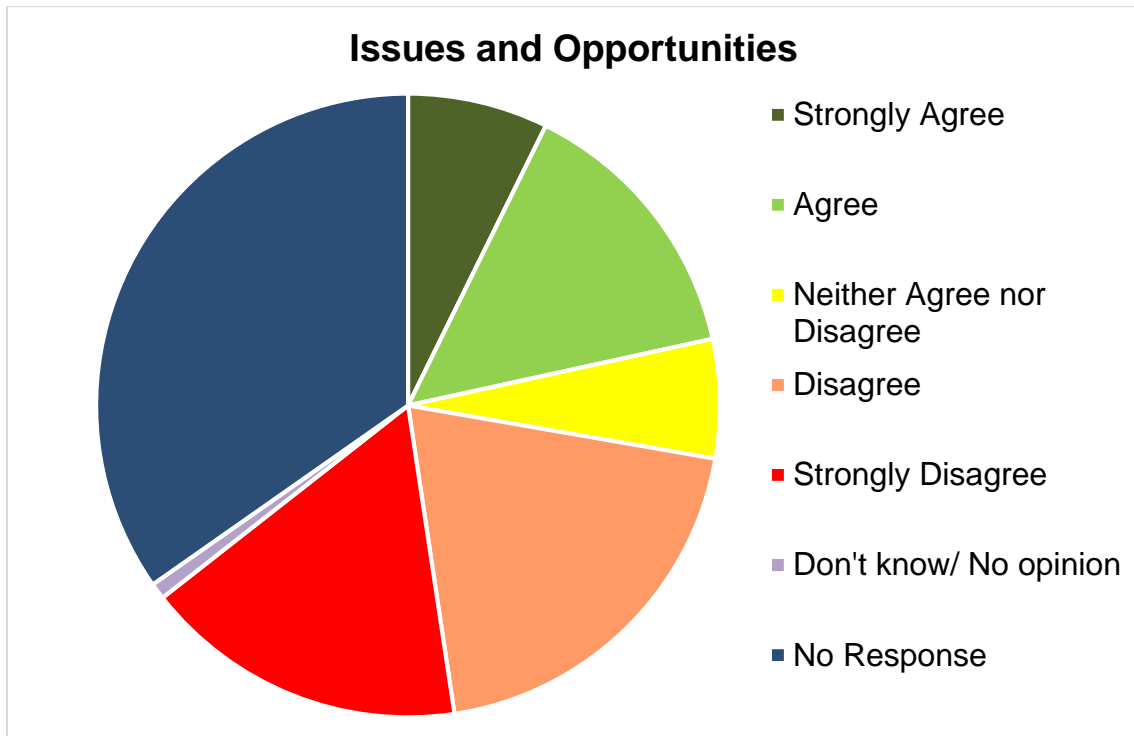
Figure 1

## SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Issues and Opportunities identified?**

33. Just over 260 participants responded to this section in total. 233 provided feedback on whether they agreed/disagreed with the contents of this section, and while the results are mixed, the majority of those who responded disagreed with some or all of the issues and opportunities identified for Botley, as demonstrated in Figure 2 below. However, as can be seen from the summary of the comments below many people used this section to provide general comments rather than making specific comments on the reasons as to why they disagreed or agreed with the issues and opportunities set out in the document.



**Figure 2**

34. The main issues raised in the comments are summarized as follows:

### **Summary of comments relating to issues and opportunities**

35. A number of the comments referred to the document lacking clarity and explanation. Phrases such as 'increased building heights' and 'human scaled buildings' are considered vague and open to interpretation. Many believe the SPD should provide strict design guidance in the SPD, to provide for regeneration and development.

36. Many of those who commented believe Botley Centre already has enough existing facilities to support the local community. However, there is a division of opinion on the best approach, either significant regeneration of the Botley Centre, or refurbishment to enhance the aesthetics of the existing structures, especially Elms Parade, which is widely considered to be an important part of Botley and should be retained for its identity and architectural merit.

37. The introduction of student accommodation, and the multiplex cinema, received a high number of objections from consultees. A number of respondents are concerned the evening economy will damage the image and existing tranquillity of Botley as a local service centre, and also pointed to the close proximity of existing amenities within Oxford

38. Most agree that Botley does need rejuvenating, either through regeneration or refurbishment. It is felt clearer guidance on development is needed to understand the proposals that are being brought forward. It is preferred any proposed development of Botley Centre should be in keeping with the local character and supported by small

retail units, which will help protect the existing facilities and support the local populace.

### How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?

- 39. A number of changes have been made to improve the document to provide further clarity on some of the issues raised with respect to technical planning terms.
- 40. The Design Guide SPD sets general principles for good urban design and should be sufficient to inform details in any future planning application.

## THE VISION FOR BOTLEY

### Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the vision for the Botley centre?

- 41. 223 respondents provided feedback to the questionnaire. Figure 3 below demonstrates that there is significant support for the vision as currently written, whereby 33 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with the vision for the Botley centre as set out in page 22 of the draft Botley Centre SPD. Of the 223 respondents who answered this question, 26 per cent disagreed with the vision. This shows recognition for the need for change in the centre of Botley and support for the overall vision and objectives set out in the SPD which have consequently been informed by the community aspirations reflected by West Way Community Concern.
- 42. It is clear that the respondent cohort support the overall vision, with the exception of the following three land uses: student accommodation, a hotel and a cinema. Responses to these uses are discussed further in paras 59, 62 and 66 of this document.

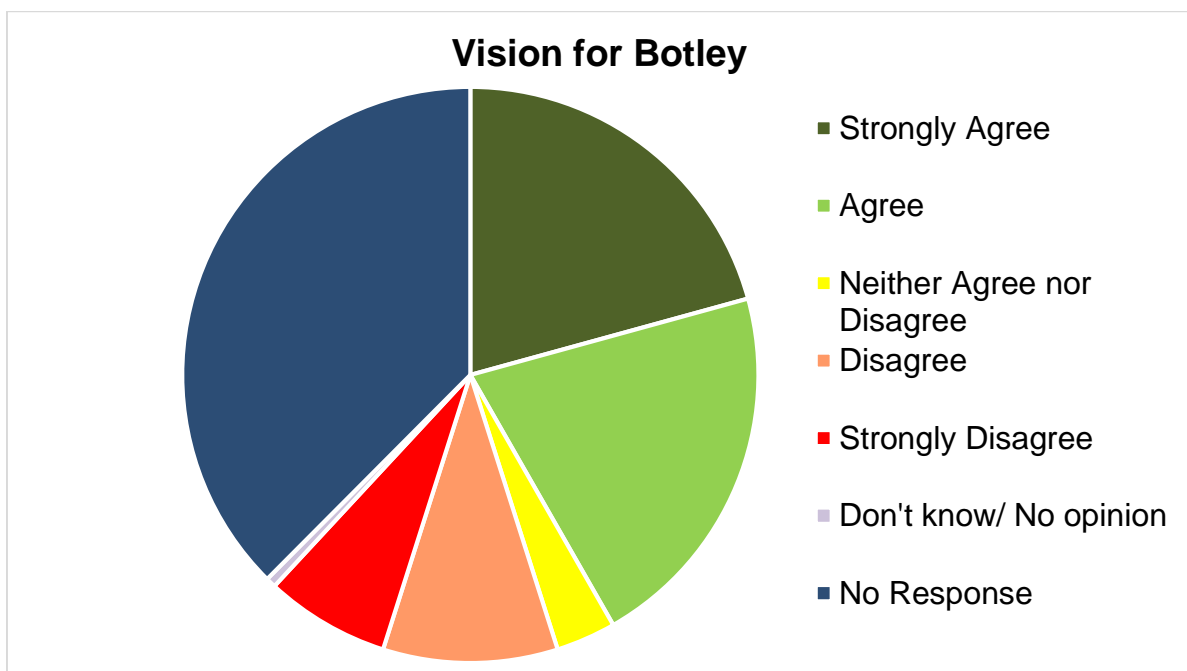


Figure 3

43. Approximately 190 respondents provided comments on this section. A summary of responses to this section are provided below.

## **Summary of comments on the vision of Botley**

### **SPECIFIC AREAS OF SUPPORT**

- agreement that more places to socialise should be incorporated
- inclusion of a community hub.

### **SPECIFIC AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT**

- high rise buildings, specifically above 4 storey.
- Concern the SPD will result in over development.
- Inclusion of a cinema
- Inclusion of student accommodation
- Creation of a distinctive landmark
- Botley has enough facilities already, it just needs refurbishing.

### **COMMENTS SUGGESTING CHANGES**

- Be more specific about on how the vision will be achieved.
- Explain terms more clearly, e.g. 'human scale' to communicate more clearly what is being proposed in terms of building heights, massing, architecture and design details.
- Encouragement for development to be in keeping with the existing area and building, namely the 1930's housing.

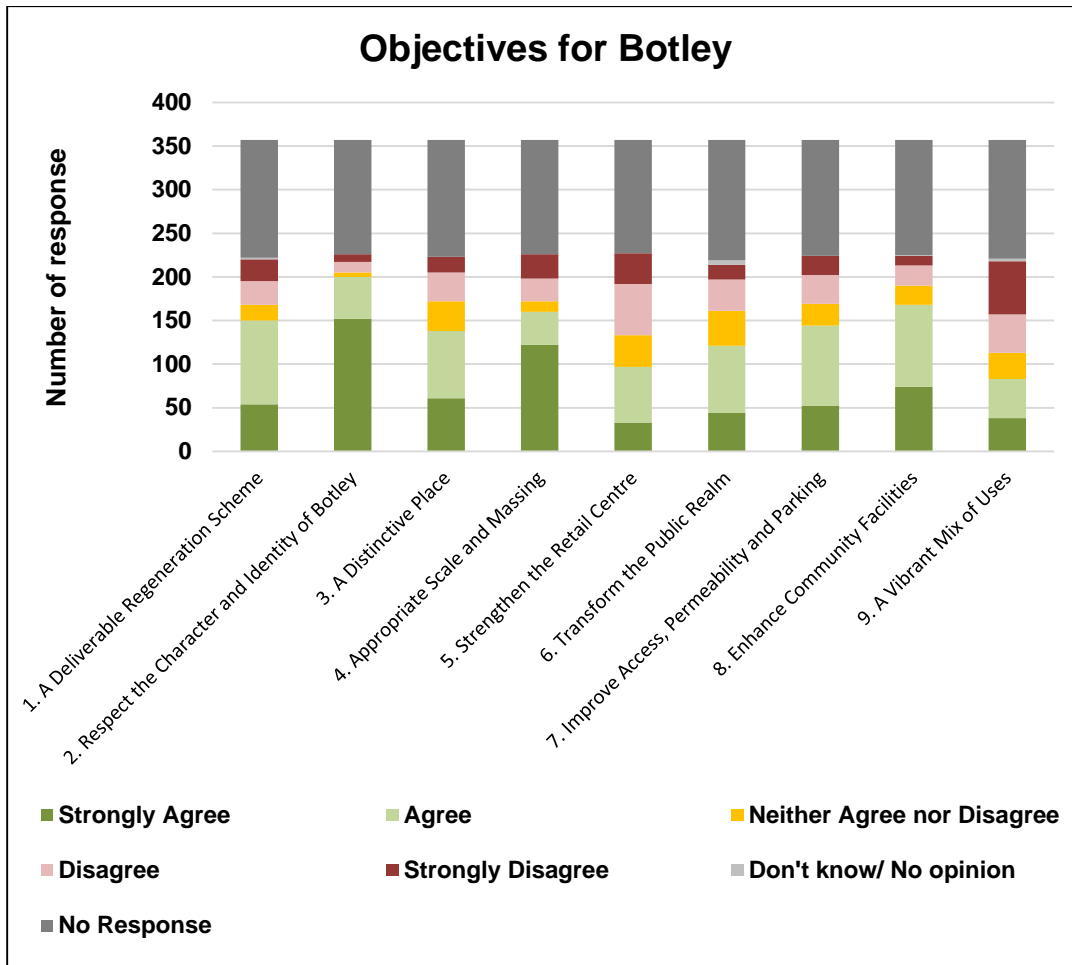
## **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

44. Due to the significant level of support for and relatively low level of disagreement with this section as demonstrated in the feedback supplied, it is considered that no major changes are required to be made specifically to this section. A number of minor typographical changes have been made to improve clarity.

## **THE OBJECTIVES FOR BOTLEY**

45. Around 245 respondents provided feedback on this section. Respondents were asked to provide feedback on each of the nine specific objectives:

46. The results of these are provided in Figure 4 below:



**Figure 4**

47. There is strong support for seven of the nine objectives contained in the SPD. More mixed opinions exist for two specific objectives, notably Objective Five, “*Strengthen the Retail Centre*” and Objective Nine, “*A Vibrant Mix of Uses*”.

48. Objective Five is very evenly balanced in terms of agreement and disagreement, while slightly more people disagree with Objective Nine than support it. 10 per cent more people strongly disagree with Objective Nine than strongly agree with it.

49. 180 people provided more general feedback on this section. The responses have been summarised as follows and provide more detail on the concerns raised by the respondent cohort:

#### SPECIFIC AREAS OF SUPPORT

- Limited mix of uses small local units and shops.

#### SPECIFIC AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

- Appropriate scale and massing: Objectives could result in excessive massing, and tall buildings
- Vibrant uses: should not include cinema or student accommodation
- Vibrant uses: too greater mix being proposed

## COMMENTS SUGGESTING CHANGES

- The main body of the report should contain more detail to ensure all the objectives recognised in the SPD can be achieved.
- The SPD objectives need to be clearer and offer decisive definitions on the proposed developments and designs.

## How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?

50. It is considered appropriate to retain Objective Nine as once again, there is clear support in the following section for a range and mix of uses for Botley, although it is recognised that there are objections to a small number of specific uses from the respondent cohort. The adopted Design Guide SPD 2015 for the district also promotes a mix of uses for larger proposals in the district, as set out in Section Eight of the document and *Principle DG25: A mix of uses*<sup>2</sup> which states:

*“Larger proposals will require a range of local services and facilities to be incorporated.*

*The viability and vitality of these uses will depend on the existing and proposed catchment.*

*Local services and facilities should be conveniently located along main routes and/or at the junctions of main routes to maximize accessibility.*

*The clustering of facilities should be encouraged to reinforce their role as a focus for the community.*

*The provision of community facilities such as health centres, primary schools or playspaces should also be considered in an integrated way within these locations.*

*This will help to reinforce these hubs and contribute to the viability of local retail uses.*

*For further design advice on mixed-use/local centres refer to Section 8.*

*The location of non-residential uses should be integrated with the public transport provision.”*

51. It is considered that Objective Nine in its current format is closely aligned with Policy DG25 above and therefore does not require any amendments.

## APPROPRIATE USES FOR THE BOTLEY CENTRE

**Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the mix of land uses the site could include?**

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<sup>2</sup> Vale of White Horse Design Guide 2015, available to view at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/VWH005SFS.pdf>



- a. a range of retail units, including food stores
- b. business and office spaces
- c. a hotel
- d. a variety of residential units, including affordable homes
- e. student accommodation
- f. a care home
- g. a nursery
- h. a new community hub
- i. leisure uses, such as a cinema
- j. cafés and restaurants
- k. places of worship

52. There were around 225 views given on each land use. There is clear high level support for a range of uses, including a range of retail units, including food stores; business and office space; a variety of residential units, including affordable housing; a care home; a nursery; a new community hub; cafés and restaurants; and places of worship. A number of people suggested the need for a petrol filling station through the comments

53. A hotel, student accommodation and leisure uses such as a cinema, were less popular with between 170 and 190 people disagreeing with the inclusion of these uses.

54. A quantitative analysis of the results can be found in Figure 5 below.

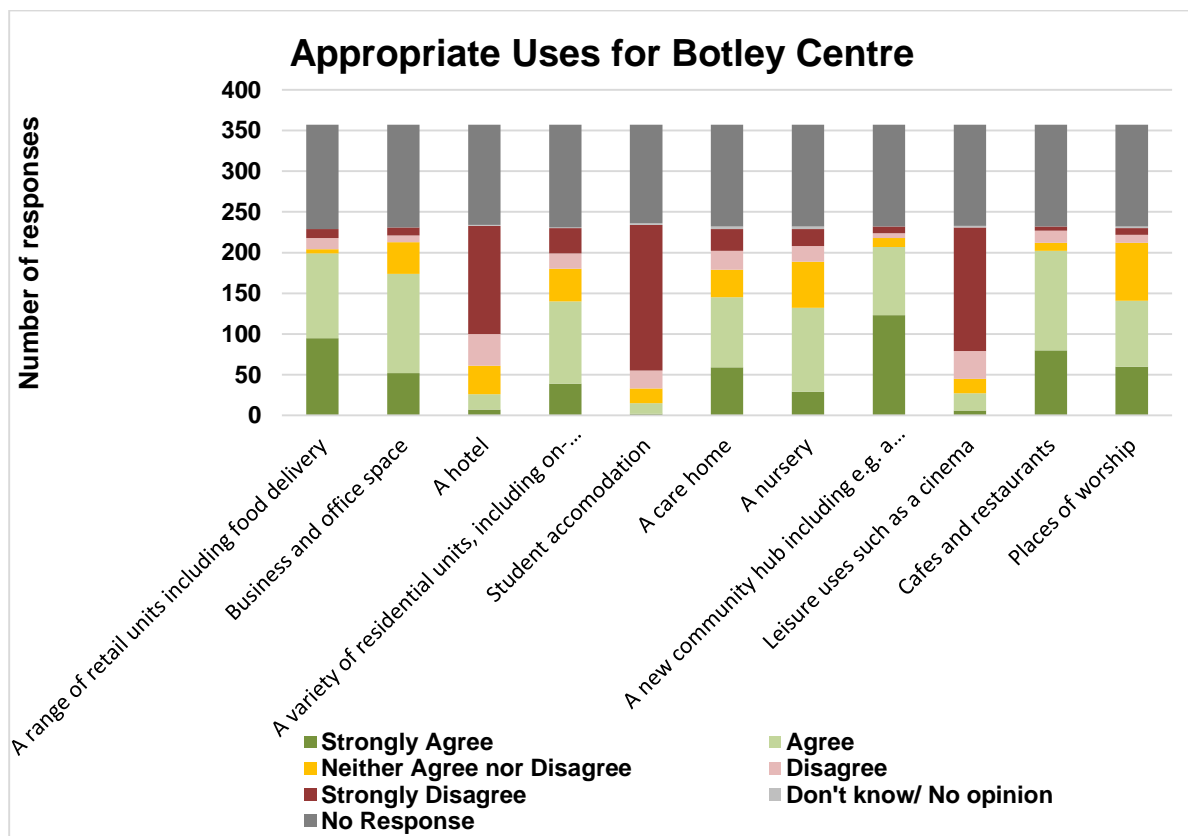


Figure 5

A summary of the comments received on each of the land uses is set out below.

**A range of retail units, including food stores**

55. There is support for a range of retail units and from some respondents, in particular independent shops, and many people gave views on what should be included in that range. These are summarized in the table below, with the number of people making that suggestion included in brackets.

**SUGGESTED RETAIL USES**

post office (4)	Independent shops (59)	banks (3)
opticians (3)	dentist (2)	Deli (1)
hairdressers (2)	farmer’s market (2)	bookshop (1)
shoe shop (1)	hardware shop (1)	fish shop (1)
chip shop (1)	travel agents (1)	stationers (1)
chemist (1)	pop up shops (1)	art shops (1)

56. There were mixed views on supermarkets with some people stating that Botley did not need a supermarket as there were a sufficient number in the surrounding area, some wanted a larger supermarket than the existing ones, and others thought the size of a supermarket should be limited.

**COUNCIL’S RESPONSE ON RETAIL**

57. The existing Botley Centre is focused on the provision of retail units, and appears to be the main reason for most people to visit Elms Parade and West Way. It is best practice that in order for the SPD to support some form of regeneration or redevelopment on the site, the retail centre should form an essential part of the redevelopment proposals. The unit sizes need to vary across the site if they are to accommodate a range of retail occupiers, including national and independent retailers, cafés and restaurants, supermarkets and others. Existing Local Plan 2011, through Policy S1, supports new retail development or change of use within the local shopping centre at Botley and is consistent with the design principles as set out in the final version of the SPD.

**Business and office spaces**

- 58. Figure 5 shows that 225 respondents agreed that the provision of business and office space is an appropriate use for the redevelopment of Botley centre.
- 59. A number of respondents supported the provision of business and office space as it could enhance a multiplier effect for local retail and other local businesses
- 60. A number of respondents were concerned with what would happen to existing local businesses during and after the construction of the redevelopment of the site.

## **A hotel**

61. Comments relating to the provision of a hotel were that it could support economic growth, that a small hotel would be preferable, that it should have dedicated parking.
62. Concerns about the hotel included increased pressure on the environment and that there were more suitable locations for hotel provision nearby, such as Diocesan House in North Hinksey, Seacourt Retail area, east side of A34, Peartree.

## **A variety of residential units, including on-site affordable housing**

63. Overall residential is considered to be an acceptable use on the site, with 15 people commenting in support of affordable housing, recommending a range of tenures, and 3 comments against.

## **Student accommodation**

64. Those opposing student accommodation commented that they did not believe it is required given their view that no interest, evidence or need has been expressed by a University or students for student accommodation. There were five comments in support of student or postgraduate accommodation. A comment was made that there should be a more refined definition of students as they are not a homogenous group and may have different housing requirements – e.g. undergraduates, graduates, post-doctoral and technical assistants.

## **A care home**

65. Support for the retention of Field House and Vale House came out strongly in the comments for both this section and the question on Activity Zones. Reasons for not supporting a care home including there already being adequate provision for elderly people.

## **A nursery**

66. One suggestion made in the comments was that the children's centre could also provide nursery space. Comments were also made about the need for other facilities for children, young adults and families, such as green space/areas to sit, a play area, as well as indoor entertainment.

## **A new community hub including for example a library**

67. There was strong support (28 comments) for a library being part of the community hub, with specific suggestions about ensuring sufficient access and including more computers and space. A medical centre and dentist were also suggested as potential uses for a community hub.

## **Leisure uses such as a cinema**

68. Opposition to a cinema was also reflected in the comments. Those against a cinema felt that a cinema (large/multiplex) is not required, for a variety of reasons including

the number of cinemas in Oxford already, cinema usage dropping due to the streaming of films at home. 17 comments supported a small 1 or 2 screen cinema or the screening of films in a community hall.

69. Suggestions for other leisure uses included a health spa/gym, theatre, art gallery and concert venue.

### **Cafes and restaurants**

70. There is considerable support for cafés and restaurants per se, though there is also some concern about an evening economy. Specific suggestions included small food units such as coffee shops, cafes or delis and a wine bar.

### **Places of worship**

71. A number of respondents felt that the redevelopment of the Botley centre should retain the existing places of worship e.g. St Peter and St Paul's Church to preserve the local character and identity of Botley.

### **Comments suggesting changes**

- Set floorspace limits for different uses e.g. hotel, supermarket
- Explain sizes and ranges of development more explicitly e.g. cinema screens, rooms in hotel, development near residential areas, scale of accommodation
- Should be explicit about the uses that already exist that should be reprovided in a new scheme e.g. library.
- Potential for leisure uses to be explored beyond just a cinema
- Field House is sheltered housing not a care home

### **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

#### **HOTEL USE**

72. The principle of hotel use on the site is established through the saved tourism policy T1 of Local Plan 2011 which states that new (large scale) tourist related development should be focused at the five main settlements (Botley being one). In 2014 the council prepared a joint hotel needs assessment with South Oxfordshire, which identifies a significant need for additional hotel space in district. It refers to suitable locations being on the edge of Oxford or on strategic corridors (such as the A34), both being applicable to Botley. The council has considered the representations on the potential impact of a hotel, and maintains that it is a suitable use for the site in principle and that the details of its design, location within the site and car parking are matters for the planning application stage.

#### **STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

73. The principle of specialist forms of housing, including students and accommodation for older people is established in policy H19 of the Local Plan 2011. The viability testing identified student accommodation as having a positive impact on the viability

and therefore deliverability of the redevelopment of Botley Centre. In order to support the delivery of community uses and places of worship within the redevelopment there is a need for such uses that are a cost to development to be supported by the inclusion of highly viable uses. The council therefore considers that student accommodation is an appropriate use in principle and that its impact in terms of car parking can be dealt with at the application stage.

**LEISURE USES SUCH AS A CINEMA**

74. There is evidence for a two screen cinema in our district (see Retail and Town Centre Study Update 2013). The advantage that a cinema brings is the viability of other complementary uses desired by the respondent cohort, such as cafés and restaurants. The traffic impact of a cinema is a matter that is appropriate to resolve at the planning application stage, although its normal hours are not likely to impact upon peak traffic periods in the area.

**ACTIVITY ZONES FOR THE BOTLEY CENTRE**

**Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the activity zones on the site?**

75. Approximately 250 participants out of 357 responded to this section. Figure 12 below shows mixed feedback on the activity diagram contained within the SPD, focussing uses of higher activity towards the eastern half of the defined area. It is positive to see that the majority of respondents chose to agree with the diagram. However it is recognised that almost a quarter of respondents to the survey strongly disagreed with it.

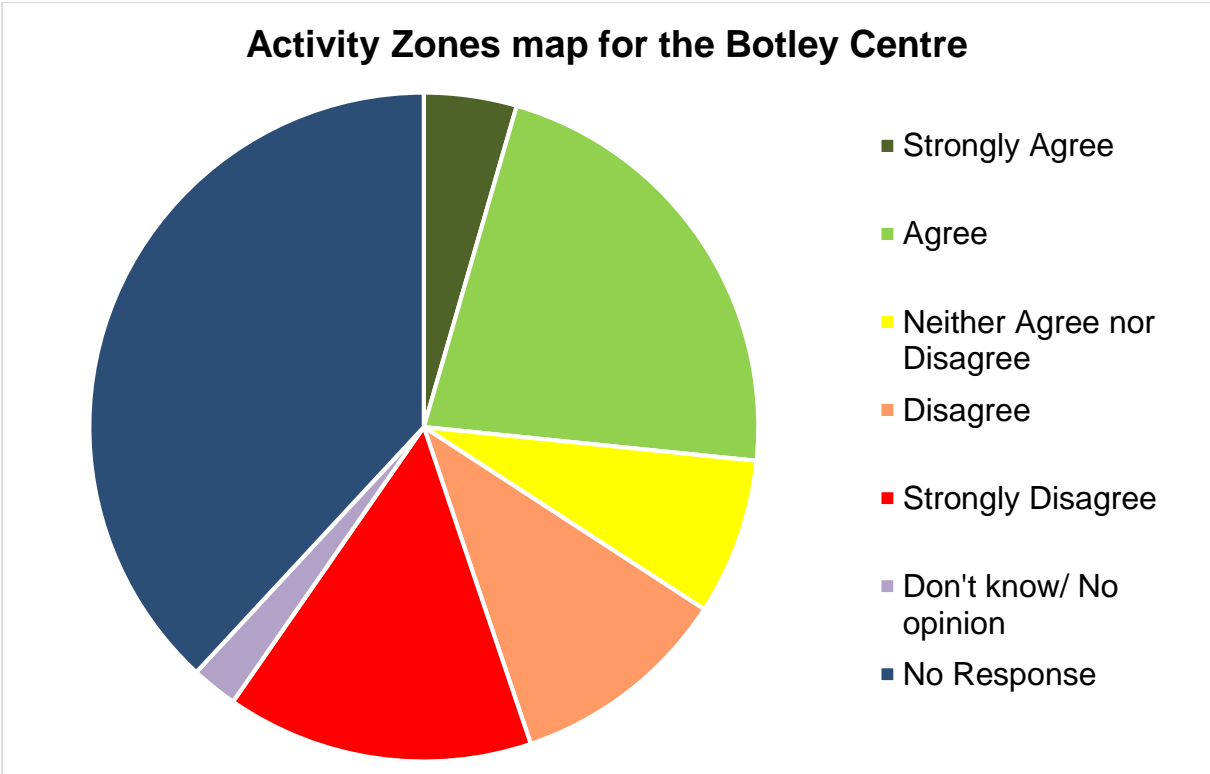


Figure 6

## **Comments on Activity Zones**

76. A lot of people were unclear on the purpose of this map, what “activity” means in the context of any redevelopment. It is considered appropriate to retain a focus for higher activities towards the eastern half of the area. This is consistent with where current higher activity takes place (through West Way, and along Elms Parade).
77. The comments on the activity zones covered a wide range of different issues. However, there seems to be broad agreement with retaining Field House and Vale House and keeping a residential focus to the west of the site, along with the church and its gardens, and having community uses focussed in the centre of site, which is more of a transitional zone.

## **Comments suggesting changes**

- phrases such as ‘active frontage’ need to be defined
- zones / terms were too vague or ambiguous

## **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

78. A change has been made to the SPD supporting text in this section adding clarity and understanding to what ‘activity’ refers to.
79. Changes have been made to the SPD which add greater emphasis on the benefit of the retention of Elms Parade, Field House and St. Peter and St. Paul Church, to ensure clarity on this matter.

## **ACCESS, LINKAGES AND LEGIBILITY**

### **Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Access, Linkages and Parking development principles?**

80. 270 respondents provided feedback on this section. The outcomes of the survey are presented below in Figure 7, and show strong support in general for all aspects of the design principles relating to this section.

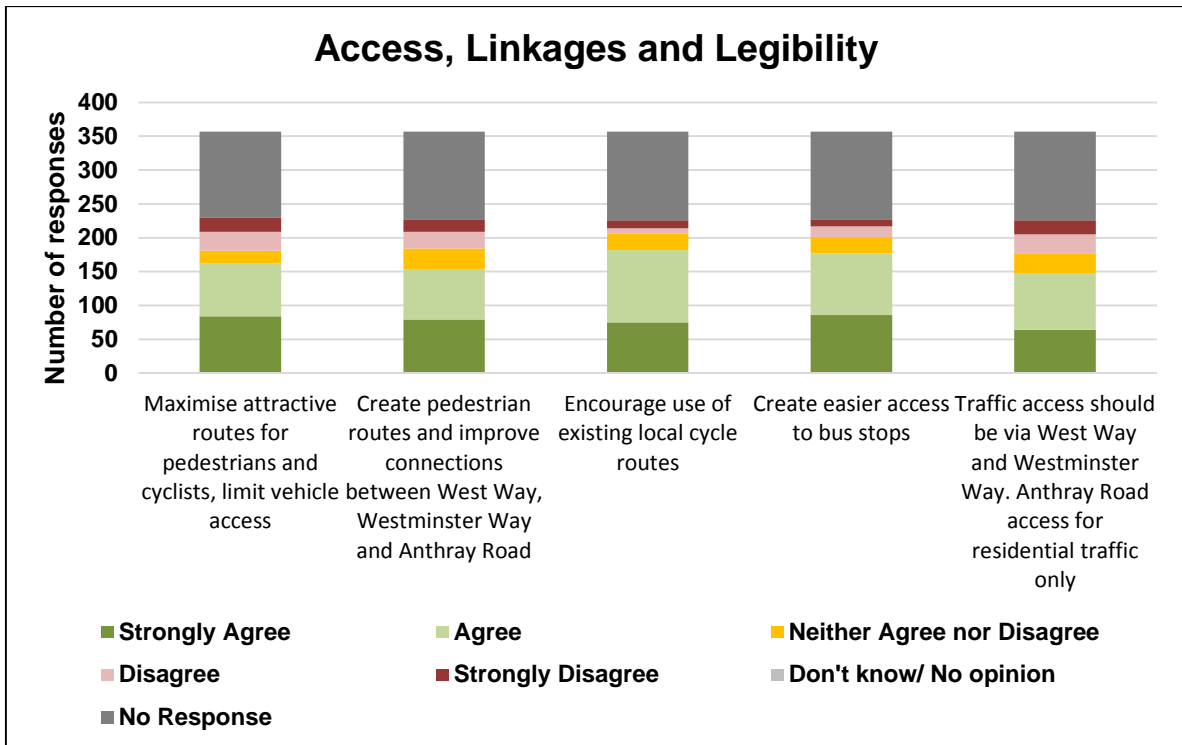


Figure 7

## Pedestrians and cycling

81. The main comments on pedestrian and cycling was the need to prioritise safer routes for schools, children and older people, including improving pedestrian access and crossings.
82. Regarding cycling, respondents felt that there should be new and improved cycle paths as well as recognising the need to encourage more cycling.
83. Suggestions for improving provision for cyclists included a bridge, more secure cycle parking, and showers for workers

## Public transport

84. Regarding public transport it was felt by respondents that there should be improved access to bus stops, shelters and connections to modes of public transport.

## Vehicular access

### WEST WAY

85. The main comments on West Way related to it already being a busy and congested road and that increasing traffic on it through new development would be a problem. A handful of people commented that the existing crossings were fit for purpose (including the 'sheep pen'), while a smaller number wanted access improved for pedestrians and cyclists.
86. Despite the issues people commented that the access to West Way should remain.

## WESTMINSTER WAY

87. Comments included that Westminster Way was considered to be a currently busy road, narrow in places, though considered to be an appropriate access to the site, if perhaps not the main access.
88. Suggested improvements included a pedestrian crossing at the junction with West Way, improving bus access, perhaps through the addition of a layby, widening the junction and dedicating it for residential access only.

## ARTHRAY ROAD

89. There were comments about Arthray Road, particularly restricting access to either residential access only or pedestrians and cyclists only due to concerns about access for lorries and service vehicles.

## CHURCH ROAD

90. There was one comment that Church Road is an important access point.
91. One respondent said small businesses would find it hard to receive deliveries with less access for vehicles

## **Other comments**

### TRAFFIC

92. Respondents felt that there are currently traffic problems in Botley and that these should be addressed in the SPD, and that the encouragement of a night time economy and proposed uses such as a cinema, hotel and student accommodation in Botley will exacerbate this issue.

## **Comments suggesting changes**

93. Five respondents wanted to see a transport plan / transport assessment / traffic modelling / trip or catchment analysis

## **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

94. A change has been made to the SPD, deleting the specific reference to removal of the staggered 'sheep pen'.
95. There has been varied comments with respect to parking and car users for the site, including access. A similar variety of comments relate to the bus stop facilities around the site. It is considered that the design principles related to these matters are well balanced and no changes are required. Some concerns relate to the map identifying a reduced level of parking compared to what is on site at present. The map is only an indicative representation of the preferred location for parking. It does not set the scale or form of parking, which should be determined at the planning application stage.



96. Some comments have been made to encouraging cyclists to dismount upon entering the site, or for cyclists and pedestrian routes to be segregated, with many citing that the elderly in the area do not want this. This is noted, but it is considered that this is best addressed at the planning application stage, as the design, uses and layout of the site will ultimately define the most appropriate solution to this issue. No changes are considered necessary to the relevant principles in this section relating to cycling.
97. Section has been strengthened to ensure that traffic and transport impacts of any development proposals will need to be robustly assessed and mitigation reviewed. This work will need to be agreed with Oxfordshire County Council in consultation with Highways England where appropriate.
98. Overall, it is considered that the majority of people were in agreement with the principles set out in this section.

## PUBLIC SPACE AND STREETScape

**Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principles for public space and streetscape?**

99. Around 270 respondents provided feedback in this section. Figure 8 below shows generally very positive feedback with respect to the questions asked through the consultation.

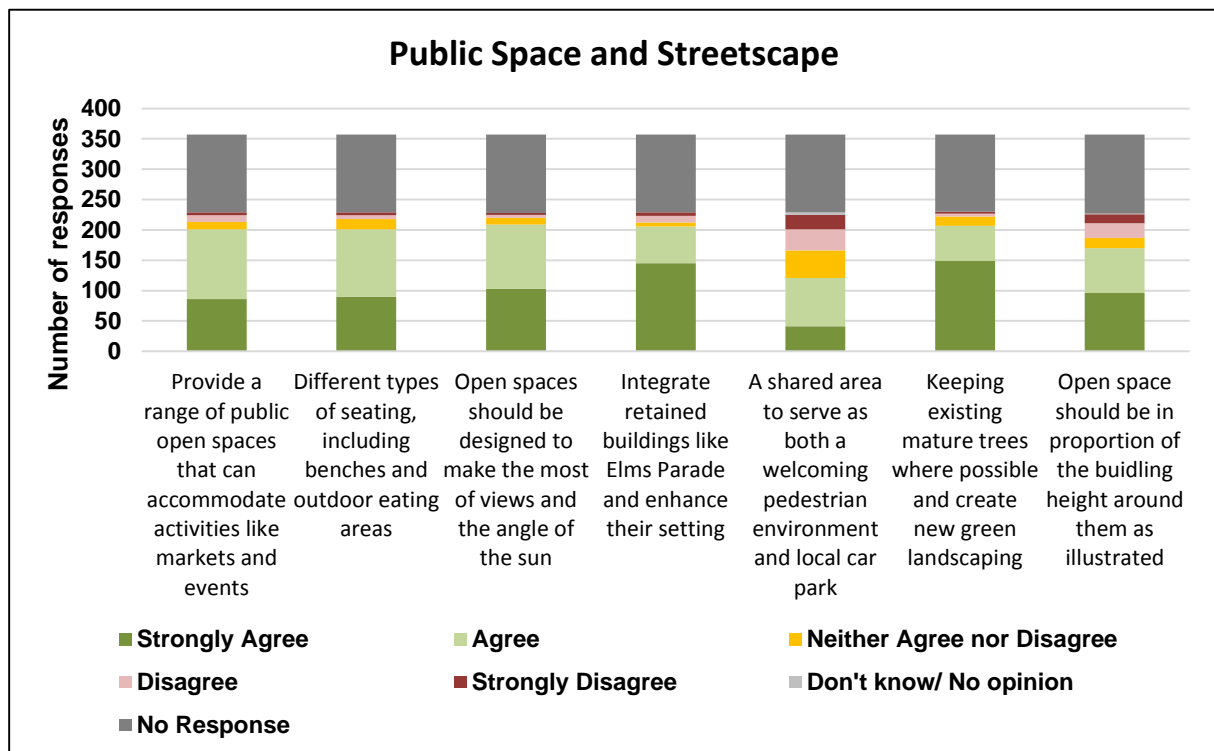


Figure 8

100. Around 155 respondents provided general comments on this section also. These are summarised below.
101. The majority of the respondents were concerned about the potential to create excessively tall buildings and the language of the Botley SPD.
102. A notable number of people objected to a streetscape shared by both pedestrians and vehicles and advocated for their segregation as much as possible.
103. The majority of the respondents wished for the development to be built to a high architectural standard and the inclusion of a large open space would help achieve this goal and increase the attractiveness of West Way shopping centre and Elms Parade for visitors.
104. Support was expressed for natural features to be used alongside well designed buildings to further enhance the aesthetics of any future redevelopment as well as facilities aimed at younger generations.
105. A number of the cohort of respondents agreed the need for the provision of public open spaces to accommodate activities such as markets and events.
106. The cohort of respondents supported the need for different types of seating e.g. benches to be incorporated into a scheme for the redevelopment of the West Way shopping centre.

### **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

107. Despite the strong support to the survey, a number of elements do stand out from the feedback. Concerns are raised with respect to the scale of the public open space. Some consider the open space/enclosure sketch in the SPD as being too small in scale, or that there is no need for two separate squares. This is again an illustration of how open spaces should respond to light and surrounding building form.
108. Some are concerned that the height of surrounding buildings would impact upon the level of sunlight penetration. A design principle in this section already addresses this and no changes are considered necessary.
109. Some comments related to the shared surface area to the front of Elms Parade, stating that it should remain as it is (a car park to serve short term needs). A shared surface can retain this current purpose as mentioned in the SPD, and potentially unlock this area for other uses, such as a farmers market at weekends. The survey above highlighted strong support for the retention and integration of buildings such as Elms Parade, and enhance their surroundings. Based on these results, no changes are considered necessary to the working of this principle.
110. A number of comments relate to the avoidance of a 'wind tunnel' effect through the site and section 4.4 Density, Scale and Massing has been amended to include consideration of effects on wind micro-climate.

## DENSITY, SCALE AND MASSING

111. Around 320 people participated in this section in total. The survey results are set out in Figure 9 as follows:

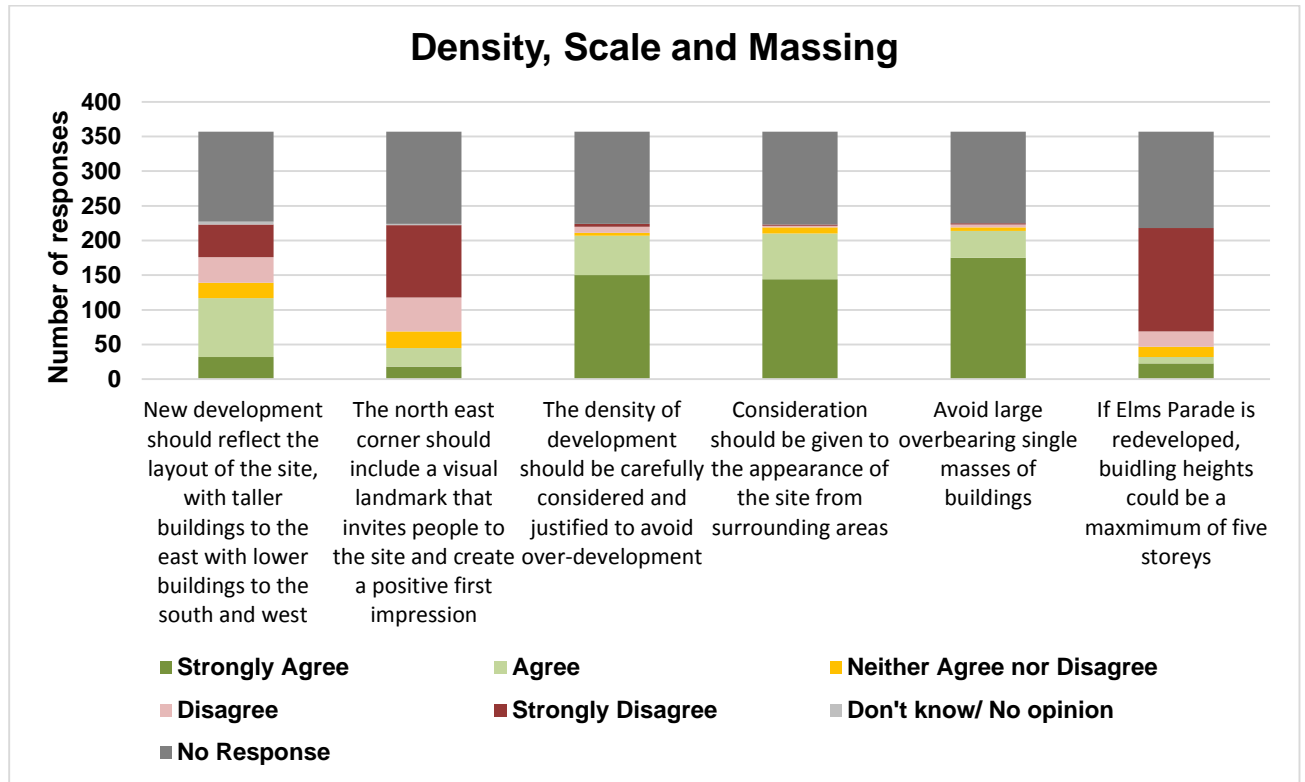


Figure 9

112. Just over 295 people provided comments on this section. These are summarised below.

### Summary of comments on Density, Scale and Massing

113. While a number of principles garnered significant support, a number of them also received significant levels of opposition. These are dealt with in the paragraphs below.

114. By far the biggest proportion of comments, with a 113, was to state the importance of retaining Elms Parade and incorporate the buildings into any proposals, with clear s instilled to ensure Elms Parade is not developed upon in the future.

115. 78 respondents feel the guidelines within the Draft SPD do not complement the Vale of White Horse Design Guide, with the majority of the respondent cohort believing that any new developments should follow the Vale of White Horse Design Guide. especially in relation to building heights, design and density. Circa 40 respondents are opposed to the idea of having building heights above four stories. A tall visual landmark was considered not to be in keeping with the local character of the area by a proportion of the cohort.

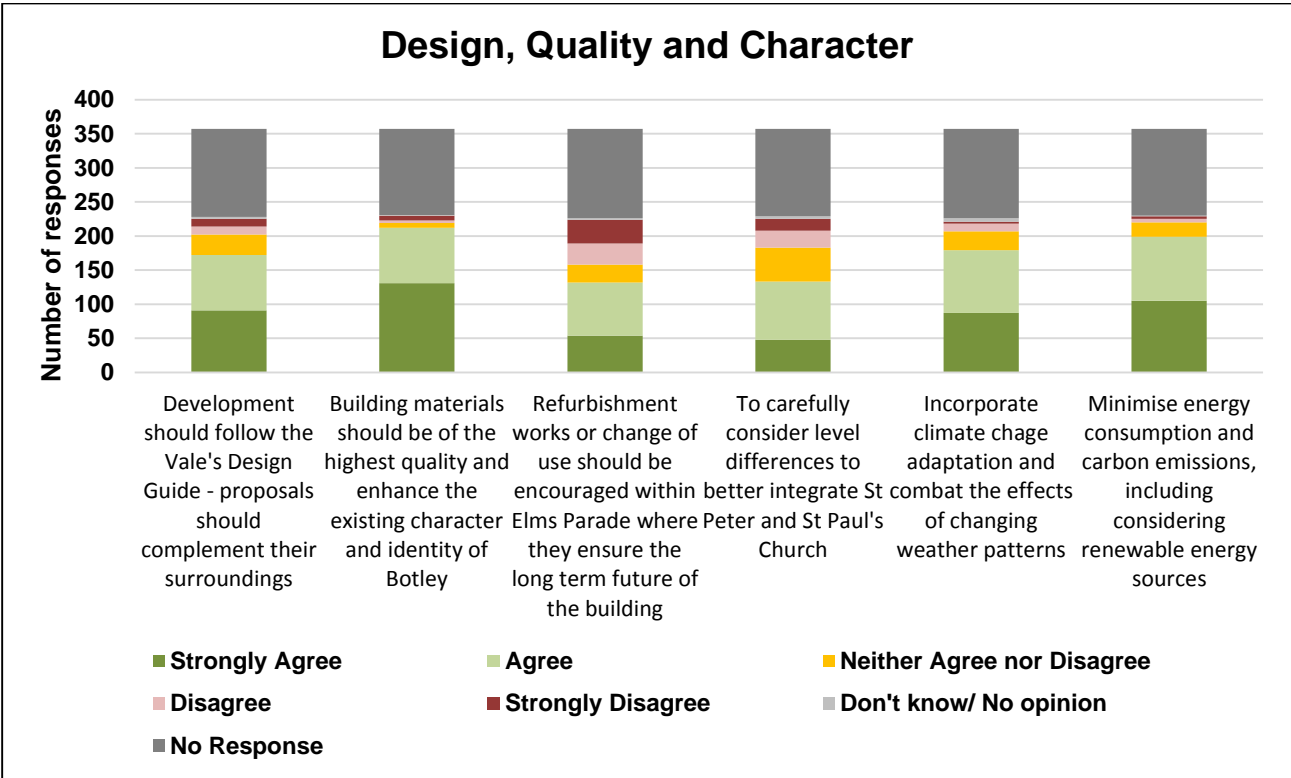
## How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?

- 116. The first principle of this section has been expanded upon to add greater clarity with respect to maximum heights as well as appropriate scale and massing. Reference has been made to the appropriate policy in the recently adopted Vale of White Horse Design Guide 2015.
- 117. Greater emphasis is placed on the need for any development proposals to be subject to a Visual Impact Assessment in accordance with current industry guidelines.
- 118. Final principle relating to acceptable heights should Elms Parade be redevelopment, has been remove.

## DESIGN, QUALITY AND CHARACTER

**Question: To what extent do you agree with the principles for the design, quality and character?**

- 119. Over 300 participants responded to this particular section. The results of the survey are provided in Figure 10 below.



**Figure 10**

- 120. It is clear that there is strong support for the principles set out in this section as evidenced in the survey results. There are also agreement by the majority of respondents to a level of refurbishment work and/or change of use of Elms Parade to ensure the long term future of the building. Just over 200 of the total respondents in

this section provided some general comments also. These are summarised as follows:

### **Summary of comments on Design, Quality and Character**

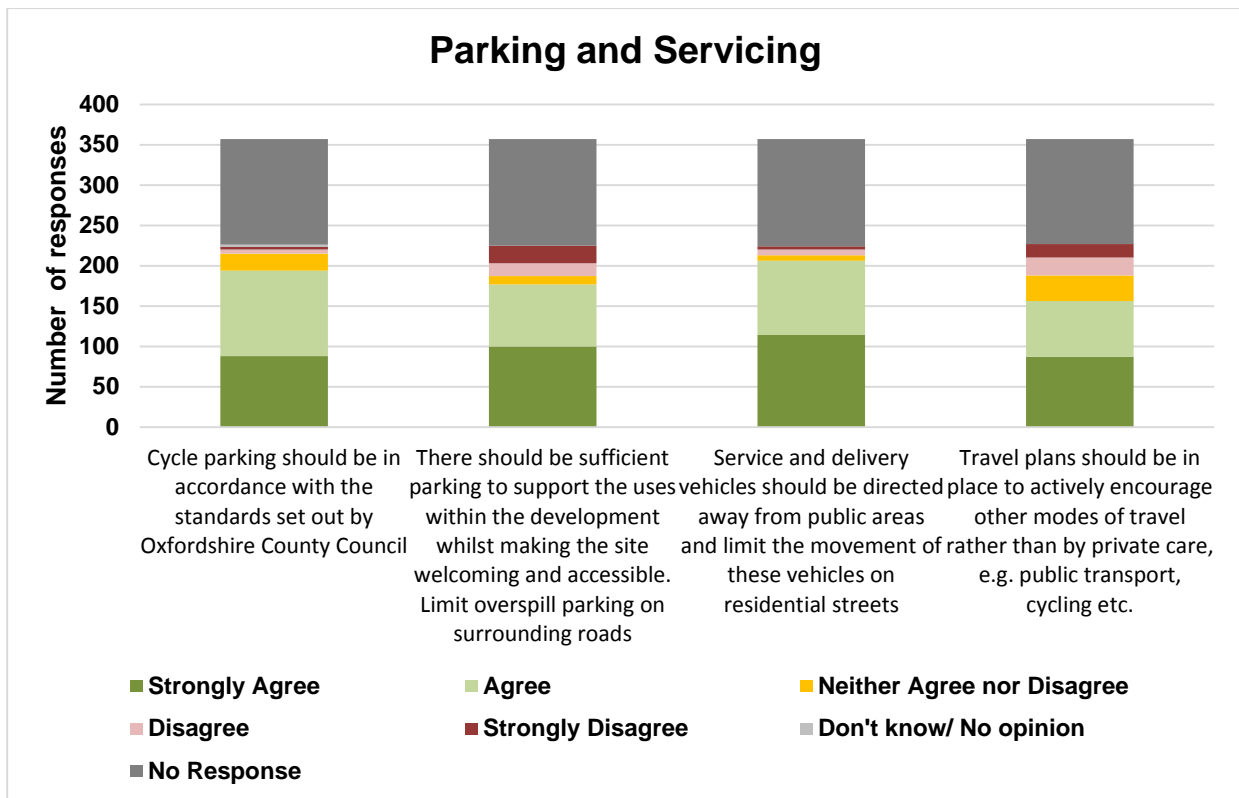
- Retain Elms Parade if it is successful.
- If CPO is not to be used, then should remove reference to Elms Parade
- Do not remove church
- Wording is too vague; will be overridden by developers
- Proposals for gardens are unclear; should be private and not over-looked
- Buildings that define Botley character should be retained and sensitively integrated into new development.
- Building heights should be restricted to three to four storeys in line with the design guide.

### **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

121. One addition to this section in response to the representation made by Environment Agency. Principle 4.5.8 has been enhanced to support developments which seek to incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.
122. There is a level of support from some elements of the consultation of retaining Elms Parade in some form, and where its long term future may be in doubt, to support refurbishment and/or change of use of the building to address this.

### **PARKING AND SERVICING**

123. Around 270 respondents provided feedback on this particular section. The results of the survey are set out in Figure 11 as follows. 170 respondents also provided general comments on parking and servicing. These are summarised below.



**Figure 11**

- 124. Concerns were raised that any further development in Botley should not create additional parking and servicing problems. It was unclear how to safely mix parking provision, pedestrian access and servicing and delivery vehicles in the same area.
- 125. A number of issues were raised specifically to parking that the SPD does not set out adequate parking provision for cars and cyclists.

### Summary of comments on car parking

- 126. Respondents felt that adequate car parking is essential for the scheme in order to avoid overspill of parking on the surrounding streets and to support the uses within the development whilst ensuring that the site is welcoming and accessible for pedestrians. The SPD should quantify the amount of parking spaces to be provided on site in order for this issue to be avoided. A number of respondents felt that in order to fully assess the provision of parking, sufficient information needs to be provided which is not evidenced in the SPD.
- 127. There was confusion over the definition of “sufficient” in regards to car parking
- 128. Regarding the opportunity for uses on site, many believed that parking provision is not adequate for uses such as hotels, cinema and student accommodation. Many also felt that parking should be provided for all users including the disabled and for parents.
- 129. Respondents felt that considering actions to limit overspill, such as Controlled Parking Zones or parking restriction are unpopular with local residents, and will push cars further up the streets. Respondents used examples of the Woolgate Centre, Witney which is suggested as a realistic example for parking and bicycle provision.

130. Suggestions for improving parking included parking on Cumnor Hill, a multi-storey and underground car park, live parking information, parking time limits and free parking.
131. Some respondents were satisfied with the current levels of parking as it is convenient and close to the shops and Elms Parade.

### **Summary of comments on cycle parking**

132. The overall consensus agreed that cycle provision should be improved and that cycle parking should be located on the fringes of the site. Many felt that the standards for cycle parking set by the Oxfordshire County Council are not sufficient enough.
133. Regarding cycle parking distributed through the site, respondents felt that this could potentially conflict with pedestrians, young families and older people. The concept of shared cycle and pedestrian routes was suggested to be currently dangerous and frustrating for all users.

### **Summary of comments on service and delivery vehicles**

134. Some respondents agreed that it was good to explicitly state that deliveries and refuse pick up must not happen with vehicles directly accessing the kerbside on West Way.
135. Many disagreed with service vehicles using Westminster Way as it will block traffic. The present situation of service vehicles sharing the bus lay-by on West Way is unsatisfactory and needs to be addressed.
136. It was suggested that service vehicles should only use one entrance of the site, which is not used for public access to avoid conflict of movements and should not be permitted to use residential streets.
137. Respondents felt that more detail is needed about routes and parking for delivery and service vehicles and that a service plan.

### **Summary of comments on travel plans**

138. Due to the type of neighbourhood existing in Botley whereby the location and surrounding hills will mean people will have to drive, many respondents felt that travel plans would only be partially effective.
139. Respondents strongly felt that those living in rural areas that travel into Botley should not be penalized for using a car where no immediate public transport is available and no other mode of transport is appropriate.
140. A key issue was the promotion of a car-free student development. Many felt this was not appropriate in Botley and is too aspirational. They suggested that it is inaccurate to assume that students will not have cars.

## **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

141. Concerns were also raised that uses associated with the high activity zone would result in increased traffic and problems with respect to delivery goods vehicles. The SPD deals with setting the principles for the site, and does not masterplan the site. These matters can only realistically be assessed through the planning application process, through detailed drawings and design. An amendment to the SPD has been made to encourage the submission of a servicing plan with any planning application.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

142. Around 265 comments were made to this section. Some of the matters and issues raised here relate to other sections contained within this consultation statement, while others are more general and outside of the contents of the SPD. The comments are summarised as follows:

### **General comments on the future of Botley**

- The majority of respondents who expressed a preference want to keep and incorporate Elms Parade into the development.
- There is strong support for the vision of the SPD. However, a large proportion of respondents do not believe the SPD is achievable, because of their view that it lacks clarity and clear guidelines.
- There is quite an even split between redeveloping Botley Centre, and refurbishing the existing buildings.
- Some people feel there is already enough existing facilities for the area, without incorporating anymore.
- The majority of the respondent cohort who expressed a preference do not wish to see a multiplex cinema
- The majority of the respondent cohort who expressed a preference object to development of student accommodation located on the site
- There is significant objection from the respondent cohort to high rise buildings, and a strong view that development should be in keeping with the existing character of the area.
- The majority of respondents object to having an evening economy incorporated into the development.
- There is a large support for the existing pedestrian movement and facilities. Many feel the existing pedestrian outlay works well for the area and the existing facilities.
- There is a general consensus for the lack of public open spaces and community facilities.



## **General comments on the consultation process**

- General feedback indicated that the questions were considered too open ended, and that while a lot of the issues and opportunities were quite satisfactory, it is clear that a number of the bullet points contained in this section were more contentious. This is also evident in the outputs of Figure 1. It should also be noted from Figure 1 above that a third of people either agreed or strongly agreed with the contents of this section, indicating a reasonable level of support from the community.

## **Process**

### *Compliance with procedural requirements for engagement*

- Details of consultation events were not considered to be widely known
- The role of the Council as a landowner was not explained
- Other interested landowners were not consulted e.g. Sovereign
- Do the respondents reflect the local demographic and business profile?
- Why are the responses from statutory consultees and stakeholders to be given greater weight when the document is updated? (1.5.2)

## **Structure of the questionnaire**

- The phrasing of the questions suggests pre-determination
- The form was poorly designed

## **Substance of the document**

### *Structure of the document and its legibility*

- The document is poorly written and structured; the recommendations could be more clearly defined.
- The Planning Context could be clearer, especially the weight to be given to the emerging Local Plan and the NPPF.
- Further details of the construction and phasing are required
- The boundaries need further justification,
- Should it embrace a larger area?
- Is the description of local character adequate?
- The design and maintenance of the public realm could be amplified
- Security for residents and businesses should be given more thought.

## **Key spatial issues highlighted include:**

- The future of specific buildings requires more detail e.g. The Vicarage, Elms Parade, the Church, the care home.
- Existing uses are given limited consideration
- The status of the Centre and its position within the retail hierarchy
- The outcomes should include site specific standards

- The need for a cinema/student accommodation is not supported by evidence from other research.

### **Accompanying documentation**

- Key documents were not available throughout the Consultation e.g. the viability assessment
- The absence of a Transport Assessment or equivalent was unhelpful, especially for pedestrians and cyclists.
- There is a lack of consistency between documents
- The SA does not address mitigation fully.

### **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

143. Comments which are addressed in more detail in previous sections have been addressed in their respective sections, including any suggested changes or reasons why no changes have been made. These include all of the key issues raised as part of the consultation process. Other minor changes made to the SPD include the following:
144. Reference to the Oxford Transport Strategy (Oxfordshire County Council) has been included in the SPD. This adds further clarity on expected improvements to public transport corridors and cycleways in the immediate area.
145. Figure 14 of the SPD has been updated to clarify that unit of measurement for the topography is in metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

# Feedback from events

## INTRODUCTION

146. A number of public exhibitions were undertaken with the community on 3 September and 5 September 2015 at a vacant retail unit, Unit 24 at the West Way Shopping Centre. Events were undertaken in preparation of the SPD with key stakeholders and organisations.
147. Table 2 below shows all the events in the preparation of the Botley Centre SPD, as well as events arranged during the consultation.

**Table 2: Timetable of events for the preparation and consultation of the Botley Centre SPD**

Event	Date of event
Presentation to North Hinskey Parish Council	21 May 2015
Workshop with local organisations to develop the vision and design principles	2 June 2015
Presentation to the West way Community Concern	22 June 2015
A workshop with local organisations to discuss the viability analysis for the site	28 July 2015
Staffed public exhibition at Unit 24, West Way Shopping Centre, Chapel Way, Botley	3 September 2015 and 5 September 2015
Focus group with sixth form students from Matthew Arnold School	16 September 2015
Focus group with parents at toddler and babies group at Elms Road Children Centre	16 September 2015 and 23 September 2015
Interactive exercise with attendees of Botley and North Hinksey Youth Club and 4 <sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group	16 September 2015

148. As explained earlier, the council have made a concerted effort to engage with targeted groups for the consultation, such as youth groups. With this in mind additional events were undertaken with students from Matthew Arnold School and parents from a baby and toddlers group at Elms Road Children Centre. A summary of comments from the consultation can be found in the following section below.

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM TARGETED CONSULTATION**

### **Matthew Arnold Sixth Form**

149. A focus group was carried out with ten sixth form students from Matthew Arnold School. Respondents' destination varied from North Hinksey areas to those living in Botley.
150. The majority of the sixth form students felt that currently the West Way shopping centre is now aged and the facilities at the centre were run-down and out-dated.
151. The students strongly supported the notion to retain the frontage of Elms Parade as it is seen as playing a key role in shaping Botley's local identity and character.
152. The ten students broadly agreed with the vision statement set out in the SPD, however they emphasized that this could only be achieved if the correct facilities were included and appropriate access was provided for all users e.g. older people. Suggestions included independent shops and businesses such as a family-run bakery, an improved library and the provision for adequate green space.
153. The students were particularly keen on the need for an upgrade to the library at Botley, including different sections targeted at different target audiences, such as young people and teenagers.
154. Further suggestions were provided including improvements to traffic problems at present and the provision of public open space for socialising.

### **Botley and North Hinksey Youth Club and 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group**

155. Attendees from the youth club and members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group supported the need for a community area with 14 out of 23 respondents agreeing.
156. Participants generally supported the need for restaurants and the provision retail facilities.
157. There was significant support for retaining Elms Parade to ensure the local character of Botley exists in the centre.
158. There was strong agreement to improve the cycle routes from all directions and improve connections to West Way, Westminster Way and Anthray Road.

### **Elms Road Children's Centre Toddler and Babies Groups**

159. A focus group was undertaken with approximately 27 parents of the toddler and babies group at the Elms Road Children's Centre.
160. The parents at the toddler and babies group were supportive of the vision set out in the Botley SPD, but recommended that local facilities and a care home needed to be included in any future proposal. They commented that the vision should embrace

ethnic and cultural diversity and that facilities should be made accessible to the demography of the local area of Botley including older people and families with young children.

161. The parents were particularly concerned with the scale of the buildings so that they are in keeping with the existing local character of Botley.
162. There was general support with the proposed uses but commented that proposed facilities for the redevelopment of Botley West Way centre would need to be multi-functional, such as the cinema and hotel.
163. Regarding design, the parents commented that facilities would need to consider and adapt to the changing demography within the catchment area, especially the number of people deemed moving into Botley as well as the potential for student accommodation on site.
164. Further suggestions were provided including additional childcare facilities, modern supermarkets as well as improvements to parking and traffic problems at present.

# Sustainability Appraisal consultation

## INTRODUCTION

165. Around 91 comments were provided on the Sustainability Appraisal which informed the draft SPD. These are summarised as follows:

### Summary of comments on the Sustainability Appraisal

#### BOTLEY CATCHMENT/ROLE OF BOTLEY

166. Some concern was raised regarding the catchment of the Botley, particularly in relation to whether it extends to Jericho and Osney wards, and whether proposed development at Botley would replace facilities in the wider catchment area.
167. Echoing comments raised on the draft SPD, concern was expressed that the SPD could potentially allow a scale of development that far exceeds local need, which could prove economically, environmentally and socially unsustainable.
168. Oxford City Council considered that the economic role of Botley is overplayed and that is more correctly described as a residential suburb, which is reflected in its higher car ownership levels.
169. Para 3.27 it states that Oxford Meadows is an SSSI. Oxford Meadows is actually the Special Area of Conservation SAC part of which includes Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI (**Natural England**)

#### SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

170. The SPD could have more of an emphasis on sustainability e.g. reusing water, building materials, locally sourced materials etc. and Natural England highlight the opportunity to fit SUDS to both new and existing development within the area. This would help reduce risk of surface flooding in extreme weather conditions by holding back rainwater, improving attractiveness of the local environment, reduce urban island heat effect and beneficial for biodiversity

#### SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

171. Comments on transport relate to the limited scope of development on this site influencing sustainable travel patterns. Particular issues raised are transporting supermarket and bulky goods shopping, limited choice of routes and bus service reductions.
172. Oxford City Council consider that air quality could be an issue. Air quality modelling could be started at key points around the site to monitor whether increase in traffic directly associated with the proposed development of this site could impact on wider environment in terms of air quality.

## SA PROCESS

173. Plan objectives and SA objectives could have been stronger; more linked to addressing existing problems, such as air quality and traffic; and have greater consideration for the site's context.
174. More detailed and/or more options should have been tested e.g. the alternative proposed by West Way Concern or testing alternatives east of the A34

## **How did the consultation comments inform the final Botley SPD?**

175. Osney and Jericho wards were included in the scope of the SA in response to feedback from the community that workers in Jericho and Osney wards use Botley Centre and this is consistent with the WWCC survey. The scope of the SA has therefore not been changed.
176. The council considers that the assessment of alternatives is proportionate to the scope of the SPD, in that alternatives must be compliant with adopted policy and within the spatial area. The council considers it has assessed the reasonable alternatives and therefore no other options have been tested in response to consultation.
177. The council considers that its approach to sustainable construction is consistent with the national planning policy framework and that to impose more stringent standards would impose unreasonable burdens on development.
178. No changes are considered necessary to the wording of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Both are appropriately recognised in the SA and SPD.
179. The council understands that development at Botley will generate additional traffic movements that will have an impact on the wider network. However, the traffic impact and appropriate mitigation is most appropriately dealt with at the application stage.
180. A change has been made to the SA in relation to the monitoring of air quality.
181. Additional statistics on crime have been added to the SA.
182. The SPD has been amended in the Design Quality and Character section to include SUDS in the list of measures that development should seek to incorporate.

## APPENDIX 1 – STATUTORY CONSULTEES AS PER THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Consultee	Response Received
Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council	No
Appleton with Eaton Parish Council	No
Besselsleigh Parish Meeting	No
British Telecom	No
Cherwell District Council	No
Cumnor Parish Council	Yes
Drayton Parish Council	No
East Hanney Parish Council	No
Environment Agency	Yes
Faringdon Town Council	No
Fyfield and Tunbey Parish Council	No
Garford Parish Council	No
Highways England	Yes
Historic England	Yes
Kennington Parish Council	No
Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor Parish Council	No
Longworth Parish Council	No
Lyford Parish Meeting	No
Marcham Parish Council	No
MONO Consultants Ltd for Mobile Operators Association (MOA)	No
Natural England	Yes
North Hinksey Parish Council	Yes
Oxford Brookes University	Yes
Oxford City Council	Yes
Oxfordshire Ambulance NHS Trust	No
Oxfordshire County Council	Yes
Radley Parish Council	No
South Hinksey Parish Council	No
South Oxfordshire District Council	No
St Helen without Parish Council	No
Steventon Parish Council	No
Sunningwell Parish Council	No
Thames Valley Police	No
Wantage Town Council	No
West Hanney Parish Council	No
West Oxfordshire District Council	No
Wootton Parish Council	No
Wytham Parish Council	No



## **SUMMARY OF STATUTORY CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

### **Cumnor Parish Council**

The Parish Council make a number of specific comments. These include:

- Existing public transport services should be maintained and complemented. It is suggested that there should also be a reduction in the current level of vehicles to and from the site.
- Taller buildings could cause a loss of light and privacy to the dwellings on the opposite side of West Way.
- The need for hotel's in Botley is questioned given the existing provision in the area.
- Detailed comments are provided concerning a range of the proposed uses, for example, student accommodation is described as being unpopular locally and neither universities based in Oxford want it, Botley School has sufficient nursery provision, there are already 11 cinema screens in the local area and further provision may not be viable.
- The 2 places of worship within the red line need to be maintained, along with Field House and the Vicarage. Secular community facilities also need to be provided.
- Concern is raised over the traffic impact of the proposal, no transport assessment has been submitted and no acknowledgement of the effect of the A34 exist at Westminster Way has been considered. A number of other comments are made about transport, public transport and provision for cyclist.
- Other comments include concern over the lack of parking for come and go users, the need to retain the existing mature trees and a lack of evidence concerning drainage and flooding.
- It is suggested that any effort to address the difference in levels should not include stairs as this is a prime pedestrian route for the Botley School.
- Concern is raised over air quality and noise issues.

### **Environment Agency**

Environment Agency have identified an issue with how the SPD's effectiveness on improving climate change resilience will be monitored. The SA Report includes the following monitoring measure for SA objective 11, to 'Increase resilience to climate change in End 2 Botley'): 'the number of developments given permission contrary to EA objections (over flood risk'.

As the SPD area is entirely within Flood Zone 1 it is considered a low risk of fluvial (river) flooding and is very unlikely to be consulted on any applications at the site on the basis of flood risk.

Therefore, the proposed measure would not be an effective tool for monitoring the SPD's effectiveness in increasing resilience to climate change.

Environment Agency recommend that Oxfordshire County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority will be a statutory consultee on any major planning applications at the site with regards to surface water management and recommend that LLFA is substituted for EA in the monitoring measure.

### **Highways England**

Highways England describe their role and interest in any development that may have an impact on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in this case, the A34. Highways England wish to be consulted if any mitigation measures are identified relating to access to the A34. It is suggested that due to the size and scale of proposals that paragraph 4.2.8 of the SPD includes reference to potential constraints of the SRN as well as the local road network. Intensification of demand at the A34 Westminster Way junction and the A34 Botley Interchange has the potential to impact the safe and efficient operation of the A34, therefore needs to be robustly assessed, identifying mitigation measures where appropriate.

### **Historic England**

Historic England welcomes the sub-section on historic environment, particularly the recognition of the contribution of Elms Parade, St Peter and St Paul's Church and Seacourt Bridge Public House to the character and identity of Botley. Objectives 02, 03, 04 and 06 are also welcome. Clarification is provided that the importance of the view cone from South Park, is of and over the city centre, not from the centre itself. Any development that introduces tall buildings that stand out as bulky structures in the background to the historic high buildings would result in harm. Historic England would like to see the importance of any tall/ landmark buildings having regard to the very important view from South Park expressed more forcefully in paragraph 4.4.4 and included in section 4.5.

### **Natural England**

Natural England describe their role and in particular the relevant legislation they consider when reviewing planning documentation. Natural England make a specific point in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal, this is to state that Oxford Meadows SSSI is also a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), part of which includes Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI. Natural England identify the opportunity for Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) to be incorporated within the proposed development area to provide a range of benefits, including reducing the risk of flooding.

### **North Hinksey Parish Council**

North Hinksey raise a number of points in response to the consultation. These include:

- Insufficient public consultation events/ opportunities for local residents to discuss the SPD.
- Unremarkable vision that could apply to anywhere and has little to say about how the proposals will address the vision.
- A lack of commitment to provide high quality facilities for the local community.
- The proposal for more student accommodation in Botley is not supported by demand for such accommodation or a major educational establishment seeking to locate such housing in Botley. The needs of different types of students (undergraduates, graduates, post-doctoral and technical assistants) are different and have not been taken into account.
- It is unclear what transport and movement analysis has informed the proposals, they are not available for comment. For example, will journeys to the proposed centre by car increase and how will this traffic be accommodated? Increased provision for cycling is welcome however, little detail is available for what facilities will be provided.
- Firm guidance is needed on building heights; the effect of five storey buildings (for example over-looking adjacent properties are not considered).
- It is suggested that greater guidance is needed on what is meant by 'over' development on the site.
- Concern is raised over the design proposals and it is suggested that an independent competition may be beneficial. It is also unclear what different architectural character areas are proposed for Areas A and B.
- It is unclear what is being proposed relating to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Experience suggests that little will be achieved.
- No guidance is given about the number of car parking spaces to be provided and no opportunity exists for any overspill parking. Presumably, the provision of parking required will need to relate to the actual uses.
- Opportunities for a Rapid Transit route from East to West across Oxford, as set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP 4) is not mentioned. This could greatly increase ease of access.
- It is suggested that the areas referred to in the plan are inconsistent. What, for example, is meant by the 'Botley Core Area' (Figure 12)? The inhabitants of Wytham, Cumnor and Appleton would not recognise themselves as part of it.
- A detailed response is provided concerning the Sustainability Appraisal Report. A number of issues are raised, particularly relating to public transport use, traffic congestion, air quality and environmental matters

### **Oxford Brookes University**

Oxford Brookes University supports plans which provide opportunities to improve and expand the range of amenities available for local people, if they are worked on with and supported by the local community. Proposals to improve cycling and walking accesses in the area are also welcome.

### **Oxford City**

A number of concerns are raised over the proposals set out in the draft SPD.

The Draft SPD appears to be focused heavily on urban design and its role is essentially a development brief rather than a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that directly relates to a planning policy. In the context of the local plan the SPD appears to be adding to policy in relation to the scale, quantum and mix of uses together with the setting up of a new design framework, but critically provides no details on the amount of development that is being proposed or limits the type of uses envisaged to those serving local need as suggested by its proposed role as a 'Local Service Centre'

Other comments include:

- No quantum of development are provided. Some uses, such as for leisure and potentially a cinema will attract people from a wide sub-regional catchment and would be likely to have significant impacts on traffic generation.
- It is unclear what consideration has been given to planned commitments within Oxford City for a new Cinema (Westgate Shopping Centre) where planning permission has been granted for a new 5 screen cinema. This development is important to the future vitality and viability of Oxford City.
- Similar concerns are raised concerning provision for a new supermarket, which may also attract customers from a wider sub-region and generate significant additional traffic. The SPD should be underpinned by the Vale Retail and Town Centre Study, which acknowledges that Botley functions as a district centre in the Oxford City context.
- Student accommodation at this site would be some distance from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University; as it is outside the city boundaries there would be no direct control from these organisations over students who brings cars to the site, which could generate significant additional traffic. If student accommodation is proposed, it should be for graduates as this would be more likely to coexist with the predominantly residential area.
- The SPD does not make specific reference to the need for a transport assessment to ensure the transport implications of a scheme are fully considered. The road network is often operating close to its capacity and any further major development in the area of this scale needs to be carefully managed.
- The City Council are concerned about the potential impact of tall/ landmark buildings on the views from Oxford out to the surrounding rural landscape and secondly of the views into the city.
- A range of concerns are raised relating to the Sustainability Appraisal. These include: commuting patterns; surface water flooding; air quality; traffic generation

### **Oxfordshire County Council**

The purpose of the SPD (para 1.2) could be strengthened so that the SPD clearly identifies what the District Council would find acceptable on the site. The initial paragraphs of the SPD could clarify that redevelopment will be in the context of Botley as a local service centre as set out in Core Policy 11 of the emerging Local Plan. It would not be appropriate for Botley centre to be redeveloped as a district

centre with facilities that draw in trips from a wide area and potentially duplicate or compete with the new Westgate centre a mile or so down the road.

Other comments include:

- There should be more contextual information, including an analysis of how adjoining land is likely to develop. The links between this site and neighbouring sites should be identified.
- Oxfordshire County Council cannot comment in detail on the infrastructure implications of the SPD as the type and quantum of uses is vague.
- Detailed requirements such as car and cycle parking should be included. Oxfordshire County Council can advise on this.
- The final SPD should have regard to the corridor study on the West Way currently being prepared. In principle the approach to accesses and streetscape is welcomed, but it will be important to ensure the details work with the approach which comes out of this West Way study.
- School capacity is an issue in this area. More certainty on housing numbers and mix would help to forecast future pupil numbers.
- The County Council agrees that the SPD should set out that the library be re-provided on the site.
- The SPD should identify how net gains to biodiversity will be achieved and green infrastructure maintained.

## APPENDIX 2 – VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO THE BOTLEY CENTRE SPD CONSULTATION

SCI key principles	Council's actions
Early involvement	<p>The Council used a variety of methods to involve the community in early engagement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual meetings with local stakeholders including West Way Community Concern, North Hinksey Parish Council, Cumnor Parish Council, Botley Baptist Church, St Peter and St Paul Church and landowners.</li> <li>• Workshops with local organisations including Ward Councillors to develop the vision and design principles</li> <li>• Presentation to West Way Community Concern</li> <li>• Workshop with local organisations on viability</li> <li>• Review of information prepare by West Way Community Concern, including West Way Development Survey, their Vision for Botley and West Way and their Botley Character Assessment</li> </ul>
Recognising the needs of different groups in the community	<p>The Council used a variety of methods to recognise the different needs of the community which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notifying statutory and general consultees of consultation on the SPD via letters and e-mails.</li> <li>• Publishing Botley Centre SPD updates on the Council's website and via social media, e.g. Twitter</li> <li>• Arranging staffed exhibitions on Thursday 3 September 2015 between 6.30pm and 8:30pm and Saturday 5 September 10.00am to Midday at Unit 24 West Way Shopping Centre, Chapel Way, Botley providing details of the SPD and how the community can respond</li> <li>• Arranging unstaffed exhibition displays at Unit 24 West Way Shopping Centre, Chapel Way, Botley which remained available to view through the duration of the consultation</li> <li>• Youth consultation incorporating focus groups and interactive exercises with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sixth Form student from Matthew Arnold School <b>(16 September 2015)</b></li> <li>• Parents at toddler and babies group at Elms Road Children's Centre <b>(16 September 2015 and 23 September 2015)</b></li> <li>• Attendees of the Botley and North Hinksey Youth Club and 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Group <b>(16 September 2015)</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>Providing clear opportunities for involvement</p>	<p>The Council also advertised the consultation through various means including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the Botley and North Hinksey Community newsletter, the Sprout covering North Hinksey, Dean Court, Cumnor Hill, Harcourt Hill and Botley</li> <li>• Statutory press releases in the Oxford Mail, Oxfordshire Guardian and The Herald</li> <li>• Press releases issued to ITV Meridian, BBC, Jack FM and Heart FM</li> <li>• Infocus – the council’s newsletters for Ward Councillors</li> <li>• Announcements published on social media, e.g. Twitter</li> </ul> <p>Respondents could submit representations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding on the Council’s on-line consultation system</li> <li>• Downloading a hard copy representation on Council’s website</li> <li>• Collecting a representation form from Council offices, libraries and deposit points</li> <li>• Completing or taking a form at the Botley Centre SPD public exhibitions</li> </ul>
<p>Ease of access to information</p>	<p>Botley Centre SPD and supporting evidence was made available for public to inspection by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing information on Council’s website</li> <li>• Providing hard copies at local deposit points e.g libraries at Botley, Oxford Central, Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon and the district council offices</li> </ul>
<p>Effective feedback on consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the initial consultations we held previously we recognise that we were unable to reach out to the whole demographic of Botley, therefore an additional two events were undertaken to engage with those aged 16 – 40 years old</li> <li>• Provided additional hard copies of the response form on request to West Way Community Concern to distribute accordingly</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 3 – SAMPLE OF CONSULTATION LEAFLET FROM AUGUST 2015 CONSULTATION

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Two exhibition events will be held to provide an opportunity for the public to talk to members of staff about the Draft SPD. These will be held on:

- 3 September, 6.30 - 8.30 pm
- 5 September, 10.00 am - Midday

Location: Unit 24 West Way Shopping Centre, Chapel Way, Botley (as identified on the diagram below)



### HOW TO COMMENT?

Copies of the Draft SPD are available for viewing at the following locations:

- Vale of White Horse District Council Offices  
135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB  
weekdays from 8.30am to 5.00pm (4.30pm Fridays)
- Vale of White Horse District Council Offices  
Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE  
weekdays from 8.30am until 5.00pm (4.30pm Fridays)
- Public libraries in Botley, Oxford Central, Abingdon, Wantage, and Faringdon.

All the information you need is available to download from:

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/botleyspd](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/botleyspd)

Consultees are invited to make comments on the Draft SPD using our online consultation portal through the following link:

[consult.southandvale.gov.uk](http://consult.southandvale.gov.uk)



The illustrative sketch is an artist's impression of the potential form future development which meets the guidance in the Draft SPD could take. It does not represent a future proposal for development of the site.

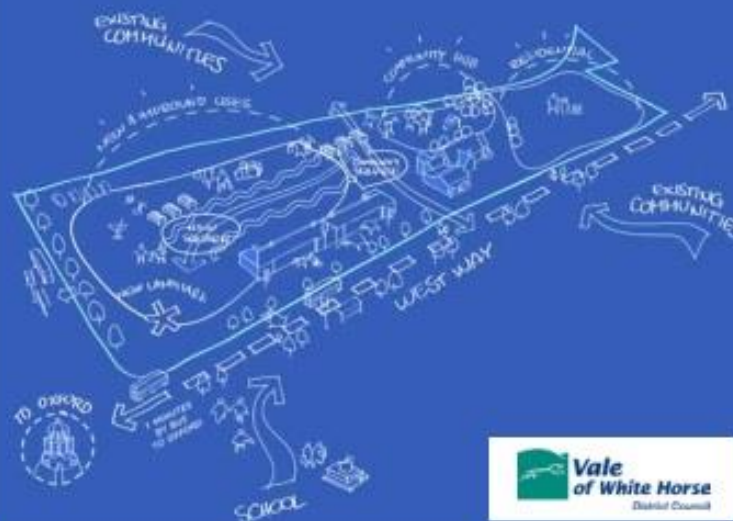
## Botley Centre

### Draft Supplementary Planning Document

The Vale of White Horse District Council has produced the Draft Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide future development of the Botley Centre site. The Council is consulting the public on the draft from 21 August to 25 September.

Botley Centre presents a rare opportunity for the Council to provide a sustainable development with new and improved facilities to meet the existing and future needs of the local community and the Vale.

Once adopted the Botley Centre SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.





## Botley Centre Draft Supplementary Planning Document

The Draft Botley Centre SPD creates a flexible strategy to guide the future development of Botley Centre. The SPD includes:

- An exciting and bold vision to inspire regeneration
- A set of objectives to address issues and capitalise on opportunities
- A clear set of development principles

This page provides an overview of the draft SPD, for full details of the proposals please refer to the Draft Botley Centre SPD.



PRECEDENT IMAGES

### The Vision

*'The redevelopment of Botley will create a thriving and welcoming centre, which is recognisably 'Botley', and responds to the existing local character and surrounding scale. Botley will provide a heart for the existing and future community which includes human scale buildings and spaces that are distinctive, flexible and sustainable. Above all, Botley will be:*

- *A good place to meet.*
- *A good place to do business.*
- *A good place to shop and eat.*
- *A good place to live, grow up and old.*
- *A safe and attractive place.'*

### Development Framework

The development framework sets the overall spatial strategy to guide the design of future development.

### Objectives

01. A Deliverable Regeneration Scheme
02. Respect the Character and Identity Of Botley
03. A Distinctive Place
04. Appropriate Scale & Massing
05. Strengthen the Retail Centre
06. Transforming the Public Realm
07. Improve Access, Permeability and Parking
08. Enhance Community Facilities
09. A Vibrant Mix Of Uses

### Development Principles

- Improve facilities and services to meet the needs of the community.
- Encourage a comprehensive mix of land uses, including community, residential, retail and leisure uses.
- Maximise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the site, and limit vehicular access.
- Provide a series of attractive open spaces and routes supported by active uses.
- Locate taller buildings in the east of the site with lower buildings in the south and the west.
- Locate land uses with lower levels of activity, in the west of the site and land uses with higher levels of activity in the east.

