







## Foreword

Lechlade-on-Thames has a rich history due to its location as the highest navigable point on the Thames. The river and tourism remain central to the town's prosperity.

Like many Cotswold Towns it faces a number of changes and challenges in the next 20 years. These changes are already happening and will have an inevitable effect on its residents.

These changes, and the opportunity for investment they create, will only be worthwhile if it makes a real difference to the lives of the local people and the future of the community. The Lechlade-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan, being led by the Town Council, started back in August 2013 proceeded to a draft report in October 2014 and submission version in October 2015.

The Lechlade-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the area that reflects the thoughts and feelings of local people with a real interest in the community.

The Town Council is committed to developing and strengthening the contacts and groups that have evolved as a result of the neighbourhood plan process. We believe that by working together to implement the plan we can make Lechlade an even better place in which to live, work and to enjoy.

## Acknowledgments

The Town Council would like to thank the following groups and organisations for their help and support in producing this plan.

*Chair of Neighbourhood Planning Group Councillor Alan Russell*

*Mayor and Sub Group Co-ordinator Councillor Steve Trotter*

*Chair of Town Centre Sub-Group and Deputy Mayor Councillor Jaime Maskell, Keith Salway and members of the Sub-Group*

*Chair of the Economy and Employment Sub-Group Councillor Ian Thomas and members of the Sub-Group*

*Chair of the Housing Sub-Group Councillor David Potter, Tony Roberts and members of the Sub-Group*

*Chair of the Tourist Sub-Group Councillor Sue Coakley and members of the Sub-Group*

*Chair of the Services and Facilities Sub-Group Councillor Kevin North and members of the Sub-Group*

*Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) for their extensive support throughout the production of the Plan*

*Community Development Foundation for their financial support*

*Cotswold District Council Councillor Sue Coakley and Joseph Walker for their support*

*The Localism Network and Jeff Bishop for their support*

*Hidden Britain for their report on the development of tourism in Lechlade-on-Thames.*

*The business community, societies and residents of Lechlade for their support and contribution to the consultation process.*

## Introduction

*The Lechlade-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) is a new type of planning document. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the 'Localism Act' that came into force in April 2012.*

*The Plan provides a vision for the future of the town, and sets out clear planning policies and projects to realise this vision. The policies accord with higher level planning policy, as required by the Localism Act.*

*The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the people of Lechlade-on-Thames and others with an interest in the town. Details of the consultation and evidence gathering have been recorded as supporting documentation, available on the Town Councils website.*

*The Plan builds on the 2003 Lechlade-on-Thames Healthcheck 'A vision for the future' and the town 2012 survey 'Shaping the future of Lechlade'.*

*A Consultation Statement provides an overview of the consultation, demonstrating that it fully accords with the requirements of the Localism Act and meeting the requirements of Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Plan has been amended where appropriate in response to the consultation comments.*

*A full Consultation weekend was held on 15th-16th March 2014 attended by over 220 residents and 122 survey responses were received and analysed.*

*A further consultation was held on the 13th September 2014 covering the town's green spaces and a presentation by Ben Hamilton-Baillie on shared space and its potential to ease Lechlade traffic issues.*

*This document is the final version edited to incorporate comments and recommendations by the Examiner Graham Self in February 2016.*

*The Neighbourhood Plan is a result of significant local engagement and input.*

### **August 2013**

*Obtained Funding from CDF (Community Development Foundation) and engaged GRCC/Localism Network*

### **September 2013**

*Designation of Neighbourhood Plan area by CDC and set up Sub-Groups with Councillors and local residents*

### **October 2013 – March 2014**

*Research and consultation by sub-groups*

### **March 2014**

*Public Consultation Weekend*

### **March 2014**

*Housing Needs Survey by GRCC*

### **April 2014**

*Report/Feedback from Public Consultations*

### **May – August 2014**

*Preparation of Draft Neighbourhood Plan*

### **September - October 2014**

*Public Consultation and Town Centre Report and revisions to draft Plan*

### **November 2014 - February 2015**

*Screening by Cotswold District Council and Statutory Consultees*

### **February - March 2015**

*Preparation of pre-submission document and appendices*

### **March - April 2015**

*Public consultation on pre-submission document*

### **May - June 2015**

*Preparation of submission document*

### **July 2015**

*Submission of document to Cotswold District Council*

### **August - October 2015**

*NPIERS 'Health Check' by independent examiner on behalf of Cotswold District Council. Plan revisions and submission to CDC.*

### **November 2015 - January 2016**

*Public Consultation by Cotswold District Council*

### **January - February 2016**

*Independent examination*

### **April - May 2016**

*Final document agreed with Cotswold District Council*



## How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns, the Localism Act sets out some important laws. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local policy, in particular the saved policies of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2001 - 2011) referred to in this document as "adopted Local Plan". The Plan should also align with the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-2031) referred to in this document as "emerging Local Plan" otherwise it will be rapidly superseded with the adoption of the Local Plan in the near future. The Lechlade Plan takes its housing numbers from this emerging plan. The emerging Local Plan Development Strategy has indicated that Lechlade-on-Thames should provide between April 2011 and April 2031 an overall total of 114 dwellings including housing built to date and outstanding permissions.

Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. Following screening of this document by AECOM on behalf of CDC in December 2014/January 2015 we have been advised that a Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) is not required - see Appendix 10.

The Plan has given local people the power to influence where new housing and employment should go, how the town centre should be revitalised, and how tourism and local services should be developed.

## What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?

Although responding to the emerging Local Plan is an important part of the Plan, it is about much more than this. The Plan is a plan for the town as a whole including setting out policies and projects to support the overall vision and to take control, as far as possible, over the future development of Lechlade.

It looks at a wide range of issues including:

- Achieving a thriving town centre
- Finding a proper balance between traffic and pedestrians
- Making the most of the river and marina and their connection with the town
- Increasing the range of employment opportunities
- Housing to meet our future needs
- Services and Facilities for our community
- Opportunities to promote tourism and improve tourist accommodation
- Green Spaces, open spaces and nature conservation areas
- Maintaining the Town's character

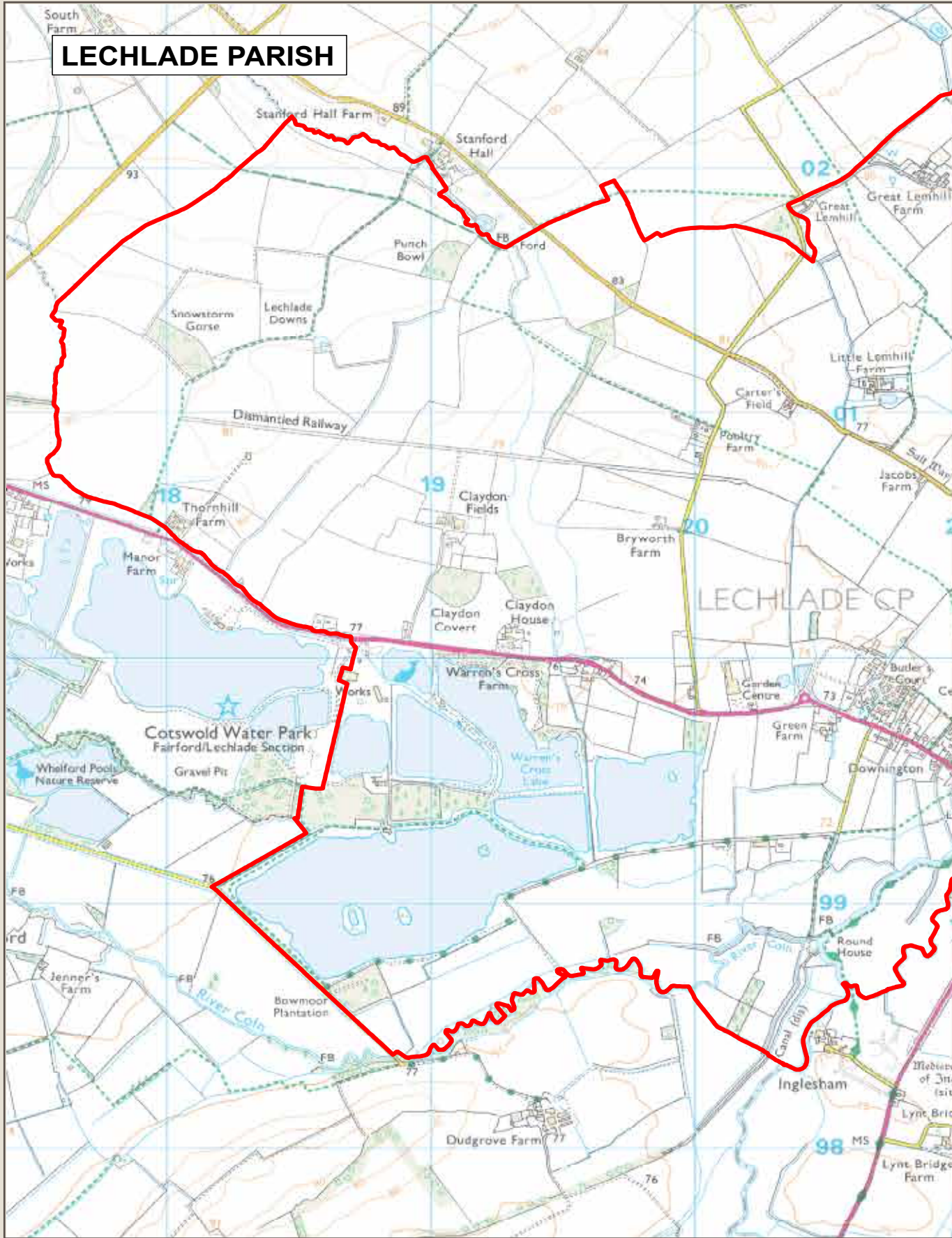
The Plan has been produced by identifying the current issues facing the town and policies and objectives to address them through sub-groups, public consultation and surveys and is set out as follows:



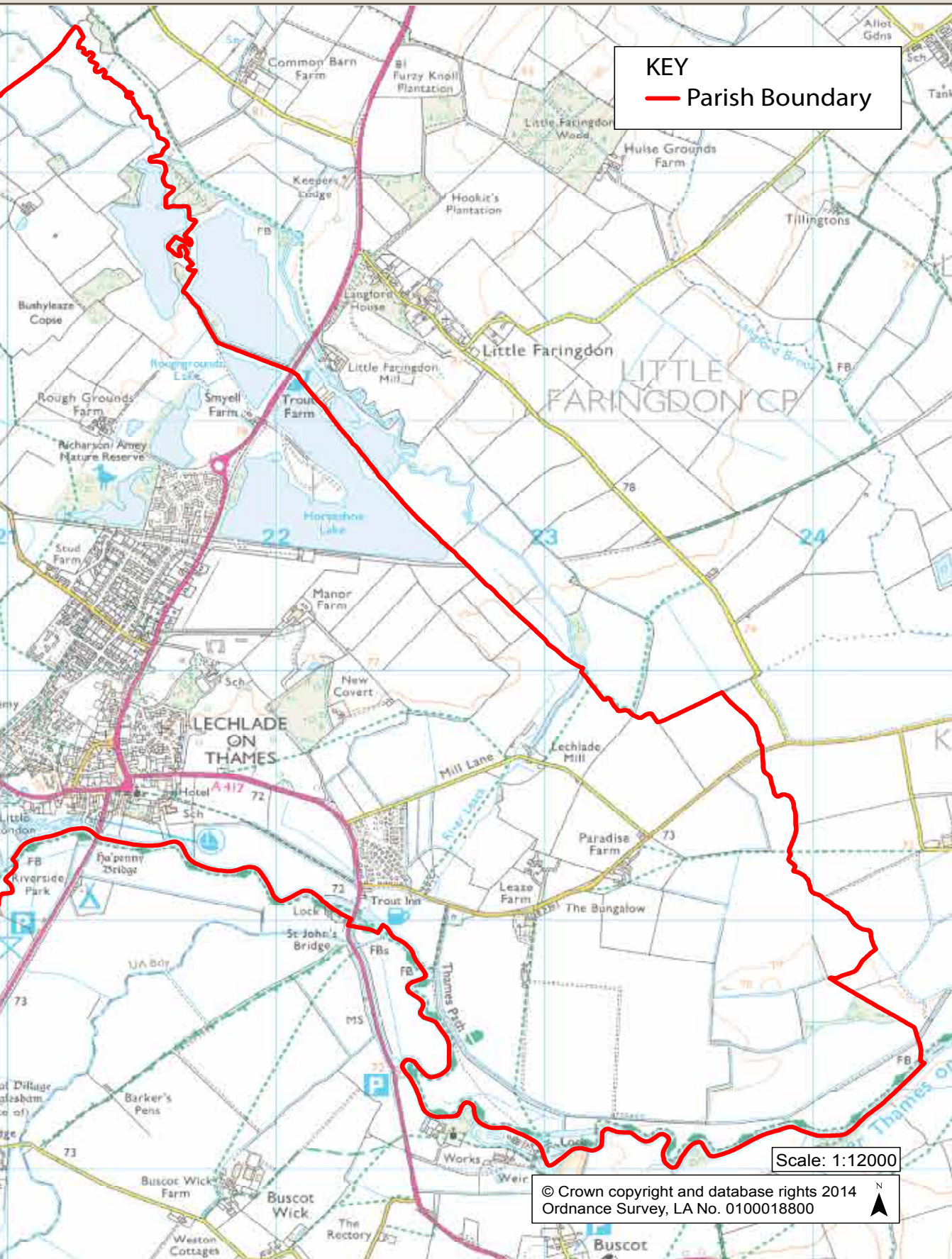
The map on page 6-7 shows the designated Neighbourhood Plan area which matches the Parish Boundary of Lechlade-on-Thames. The plan duration is 2011-2031 which matches the duration of the emerging Local Plan.

Projects are not part of the Neighbourhood Plan for statutory planning purposes but are included in the document so as to set out statements of intended community actions. The Policies are set out in Section 2 of the Plan and the Projects are set out in Section 3 of the Plan.

# LECHLADE PARISH







**KEY**  
— Parish Boundary

Scale: 1:12000

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## Section 1 A Vision for Lechlade-on-Thames



## 1.1 About Lechlade-on-Thames

*Understanding Lechlade-on-Thames is the starting point for producing a good Neighbourhood Plan. This is because the Lechlade Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity to plan the town's future.*

*What are the problems that the Plan could address?*

*What are the opportunities the Plan could make the most of?*

### **A short history of Lechlade-on-Thames**

*Lechlade gets its name from the River Leach which joins the Thames just south of the town. From the earliest days it was an ideal location for a settlement as the rivers were a source of food and an easy way to travel. There is evidence of settlements dating back to 2500BC. By the Iron Age there was a large settlement with grain stores.*

*Lechlade is the important point where the ancient Welsh Way of the drovers and the Salt Way from Droitwich, major trade routes since prehistoric times, reach the Thames. During Roman times there was a substantial presence around Lechlade. Nearby Corinium (Cirencester) was second in importance only to London and there was a Roman villa to the north of Lechlade and, later, a Saxon burial ground to the West.*

*Lechlade is mentioned in the Domesday Book when William the Conqueror gifted the manor of Lechlade to Henry de Ferrers. Isabel de Mortimer founded St John's nunnery near the river. This became a priory which was dissolved in 1472.*

*In 1210 King John granted a market Charter to the town and it thrived due to its location at the head of the Thames and as an inland wool port.*

*The Church of St Lawrence was completed in 1476. Its distinctive spire is a local landmark. Catherine of Aragon took over the manor of Lechlade in 1501.*

*Over the next 200 years, trade through Lechlade increased as it was an important part of the trade route between London and Bristol.*

*In 1789 the Thames and Severn Canal was completed linking London and Bristol by*

*barge. Halfpenny Bridge was built in 1792. The bridge is still in use and carries the A361 across the river Thames.*

*Since WW2, Lechlade has become a convenient place to live for civilians working at the nearby airbases of Fairford and Brize Norton and later for commuters to Swindon and Oxford. It is a popular place to retire to with its idyllic setting and village ethos.*

*Today, the population of Lechlade is just over 3000. There is a healthy tourist trade, particularly in the summer when the Thames is busy with cruisers, narrowboats and small craft. There is good fishing in the local rivers and lakes, country walks in the beautiful Cotswolds countryside and various nature reserves in the area. The town is a good staging post for visitors to the Cotswolds and the historic towns of Oxford and Cirencester.*

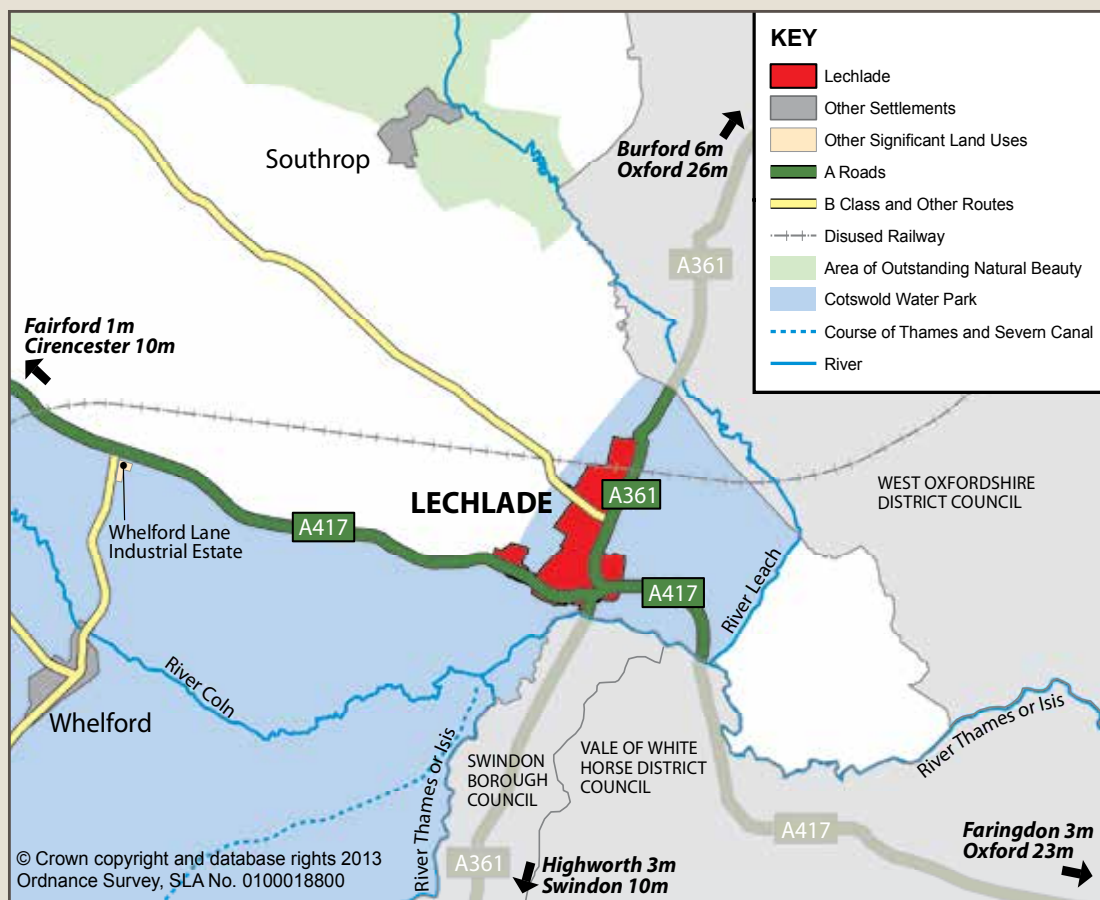
### **Location and Context**

*Lechlade lies in the south – eastern corner of the Cotswold District at the junction of the A361 (North – South) and the A417 (East – West) constrained by the River Thames to the South and River Leach to the East. It sits at a key crossing point over the River Thames and within the Cotswold Water Park. There are environmental constraints on development due to surrounding flood plains, nature reserves including SSSI's (sites of special scientific interest) and sites containing scheduled ancient monuments. (see map page 16-17)*

*It is bounded by the West Oxfordshire District Council to the North East and Swindon Borough Council / Vale of White Horse District to the South. Although one of the Cotswold's larger settlements, the town has limited employment opportunities.*

*The range and standard of public facilities is good, with a highly regarded community library, primary school, medical centre and community hall, There are also public and club tennis courts, all weather pitch sports facilities, adventure playground, cricket club and football club pitches. The town lacks a secondary school (at nearby Fairford), leisure centre and hospital. Overall Lechlade ranks 9th in the Cotswold District in terms of its existing facilities, social and economic sustainability (emerging Local Plan - Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation Development Strategy and Site Allocations January 2015).*





### Lechlade-on-Thames Today

A wide range of issues have been considered in producing the Plan. These were grouped under five themes:

- Housing to meet our future needs whilst maintaining the town's character
- Achieving a thriving town centre and managing traffic
- The local economy, working and shopping
- Services and facilities for the community
- Developing tourism

Residents of Lechlade include all residents who live in the Parish i.e. those who live in the town and those who live outside the built up area but share local amenities and contribute to the vitality of the town.

The needs of all these people must be addressed when considering traffic, employment and community facilities.

### Sub-groups and Public Consultation

Sub-groups were set up for each theme, examining the issues and producing recommendations which are incorporated in Section 2 Policies and Section 3 Projects. They also contain the feedback from local people at the consultation events and from surveys.



### 1.1.1 Housing to meet our future needs whilst maintaining the town's character

The town of Lechlade has a population of about 3000 people and 1320 households. A review of available housing data and the 2014 Housing Needs Survey shows that:

- 79% live in a house
- 82% are owner occupiers
- 37% have lived in Lechlade 20+ years
- 72% have 3 or more bedrooms
- 71% have 1 or 2 person households
- 18% work from home
- There is a demand for more home working facilities (10% of survey respondents)
- 2% live in sheltered housing
- The average sold property value (2012 – 2013) in Lechlade is £323,000 compared with the average of £173,000 in Gloucestershire.

The HNS indicated 42 households in need of affordable housing representing 3.2% of the total number of households in Lechlade. This figure falls in the middle of the regional average of 2-4%. Current planning consents/applications could supply 46 affordable dwellings.

The allocation of future development land in Lechlade is constrained by the Thames to the South, the River Leach to the East and lakes/flood plain to the North. The land to the West is also subject to flooding leaving limited sites for development. The emerging Local Plan (Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation Development Strategy and Site Allocations January 2015) indicates that completions and outstanding planning permissions, as at 30th September 2014, are expected to deliver 96 dwellings.

#### Scale of Housing

It is clear from census data (2011) and more recent surveys that Lechlade has a large commuter population and low employment provision. As an attractive Cotswold town it is also attractive to affluent new comers wishing to retire or live here but work elsewhere. The limited

commercial and retail facilities provide for residents' basic needs. Major retail and services are available in Swindon, Cirencester or Witney. Young residents and lower income households find it difficult to find affordable market or social rented property of the right type. Older residents wishing to down size existing property also identify that there is a lack of 2 bed properties available to meet their needs.

Migration into the town is primarily from commuters and retirees able to afford the premium on house prices in the town. The attractiveness of Lechlade to market led housing growth needs to be managed carefully to avoid unsustainable growth and demands on local services that add costs not benefits to the town.

The provision of housing for the town is a delicate balance between meeting local needs and catering for market demand. The emerging Local Plan, January 2015, proposes a total of 114 dwellings for Lechlade over the period April 2011-March 2031, including housing built to date and outstanding permissions.

New housing has the potential to support existing services, facilities and infrastructure as well as addressing the deficiencies identified. However, the scale and type of provision needs to be carefully considered. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore sets out a number of policies to address need and manage the location and type of future development.

#### Current Issues And Concerns

From the research undertaken by the Town Council, its Housing Sub Group and in response to public consultation, the Town Council has identified the following considerations for future development:

- Is within the appropriate level of overall provision
- Does not add to flooding problems
- Provides for local needs
- Makes best use of previously developed land and buildings
- Is in character with the town
- Provides an appropriate mix of housing types to meet local needs



- Provides adequate parking
- Provides for home working and flexible living space
- Provides appropriate infrastructure including community infrastructure
- Adds value to existing infrastructure including community infrastructure
- Supports local employment and does not add to out-commuting

### 1.1.2 Achieving a thriving town centre

#### Current Issues And Concerns

Situated at the crossing of two major roads and with very little impediment to passing HGV's seeking short cuts, Lechlade has become dominated by its traffic, to the detriment of both residents and visitors. At differing times of day congestion, pollution and speeding traffic all add their burden.

The historic Market Place, ringed with buildings of great character, has been lost as a centre and focus for the town and is consigned instead to short term parking; nevertheless there is persistent criticism from some that parking is insufficient.

Fundamental to supporting the town's future economic viability is an ability to encourage more visitors to spend more time enjoying the town. Lechlade needs to give more direct attention to its presentation as a historic and lovely Cotswold town, always shown at its best.

#### Managing Traffic In And Around The Town Centre

##### Traffic pollution and speeding

The entrance points to the town on its four principal approach roads are not clearly defined which can contribute to the high traffic speeds entering and leaving the town. There is a large volume of HGV's, trucks and cars, all have a very negative and polluting effect on the town and cause pedestrians and cyclists to feel unsafe. Although the old Halfpenny Bridge over the Thames has a 13m vehicle length limitation, prohibiting its use by articulated lorries, this is rarely enforced. The queuing traffic in Thames Street causes high local pollution according to surveys.

##### Parking and the Market Place

Improving the parking available for trade in the town is a key issue and any proposals for reclaiming the historic Market Place for public space must take this into account. The Market Place contains an exceptional range of characterful listed buildings but Public consultation tells us that the standard of presentation of the town centre area has fallen below what is required. Commercial waste is stored in public view, which is unacceptable. Some current signage (including retail signage) is inappropriate to the conservation area.

##### Public Transport and walking

Public transport from Lechlade to Swindon and Fairford/Cirencester is limited and under economic threat. What remains must be defended. There are many local footpaths offering great pleasure to walkers. Unfortunately they are generally not well maintained or signposted.



### 1.1.3 Economy, working & shopping

#### Current Issues And Concerns

Lechlade is a town of about 3000 residents with over 1300 economically active residents travelling to the larger nearby towns to work, the average distance of travel being 10-20km.

135 residents work from home (6.7% compared with the national average of 3.5%) and there are 66 businesses registered to residential addresses in Lechlade, suggesting there is a potential demand for small office space in the town.

Lechlade has half the national unemployment average (residents claiming unemployment benefit / jobseekers allowance).

Over 28% of the residents are over 65 (compared with the national average of 16%)

Lechlade has a retail (36 units) based town centre which is supported by local demand and tourism and comprises of:

- 2 small supermarkets
- good quality restaurants and cafes
- bank and post office
- several public houses/restaurants
- several antique shops
- a unique Christmas Shop
- quality independent butcher, florist, wine and sweet shops
- a variety of independent niche shops
- several charity shops

Over recent years the town centre retail shops have struggled as footfall has not been sufficient to sustain them. Charity shops, who do not bear the full burden of business rates, have moved in to fill the empty premises. There is a strongly held view by many local residents that this preponderance of charity shops will deter independent retailers from investing in the town.

The town centre does not encourage increased footfall to levels that would attract more niche independent shops as the centre is currently filled with parked cars and this, coupled with heavy daytime traffic, prevents residents and tourists from spending quality time in the centre.

Market rents are an issue for the viability of local businesses.

The River Thames (Riverside Park to the south of the river) provides a strong draw to tourists in the summer months, many of whom come as day trippers. Access to the town centre from the riverside car park, however, needs to be improved to encourage more of these day trippers to visit the town.

There is a lack of good quality accommodation to encourage tourists (who are not day trippers) to spend more time in the town and use it as a base to explore the Cotswolds.



Lechlade is fortunate to have a large marina but unfortunate that it has fallen into disrepair, is unsightly and consequently a big embarrassment to the town. Turning this privately owned marina around and developing it into a high quality one (such as exists on other parts of the Thames) could create one of the biggest contributors to Lechlade's employment and economy.

The re-opening of the Cotswold Canal (linking the Severn and the Thames) is due for completion in 2025 but will mean that narrow boat traffic can travel right across the country making Lechlade a 'stop off' instead of an end destination as the highest navigable point on the Thames. The marina needs to be able and ready to welcome the extra traffic and tourists when this happens. A potential employment site at Butlers Court has been identified in the emerging Local Plan.





#### 1.1.4 Developing tourism

*The existing situation - Lechlade enjoys some success as a tourist attraction with visitors arriving from Easter through to the Autumn. They are mostly day visitors although there are some weekend and longer stays. Public transport is poor so most visitors come by car or boat.*

*Nationally, tourism is worth an estimated £97 billion to the UK economy. It also supports direct and indirect jobs and makes a significant contribution to the retention of services and viability of businesses thus keeping communities vibrant and attractive places to live. But this is a crowded marketplace so we need to have a proactive, coordinated, realistic and well planned approach to put Lechlade on the map and keep it there.*

#### **Summary Of The Results And Recommendations Of The Hidden Britain Survey**

*(Hidden Britain is a charity set up to promote rural tourism)*

*Lechlade has easy access to the Cotswold countryside, The Cotswold Water Park, Oxford, Cheltenham and Bath. It enjoys a picturesque riverside setting offering boating on the Thames, tranquil walks, fishing and good local pubs. The town centre is vibrant with good restaurant and retail offers as well as a beautiful church and many historic buildings.*

*Lechlade is the “Gateway to the Cotswolds“ offering a convenient base for touring*

*There are regular events such as the Music and Food Festivals, the Duck Race, Fairford RAIT Airshow and numerous community events.*

*The survey indicated that there are weaknesses to overcome, as follows:*

- *Promotion – communicating our offer to key visitor groups*
- *Signage – poor signage and interpretation for visitors*
- *Parking and seating issues – traffic congestion, no provision for coaches, inadequate seating.*
- *To link the town to the river – the river and town are too separate and need to be connected.*

*Product weakness – e.g. marina facilities and hotel accommodation*

*Priorities for Lechlade tourism:*

- *Better promotion/awareness*
- *Presentation signage and interpretation*
- *Joining up and packaging the visitor offer*
- *Investment in the marina facilities and hotel accommodation*

#### 1.1.5 Community services and facilities

*The existing situation - Lechlade is well served with excellent medical facilities, primary school, playgroups, community buildings and infrastructure. Whilst it has good sports facilities these need to be improved to keep pace with increasing demand.*

*The library is no longer managed by the Gloucestershire County Council. It is now a Community Library run by volunteers and flourishes.*

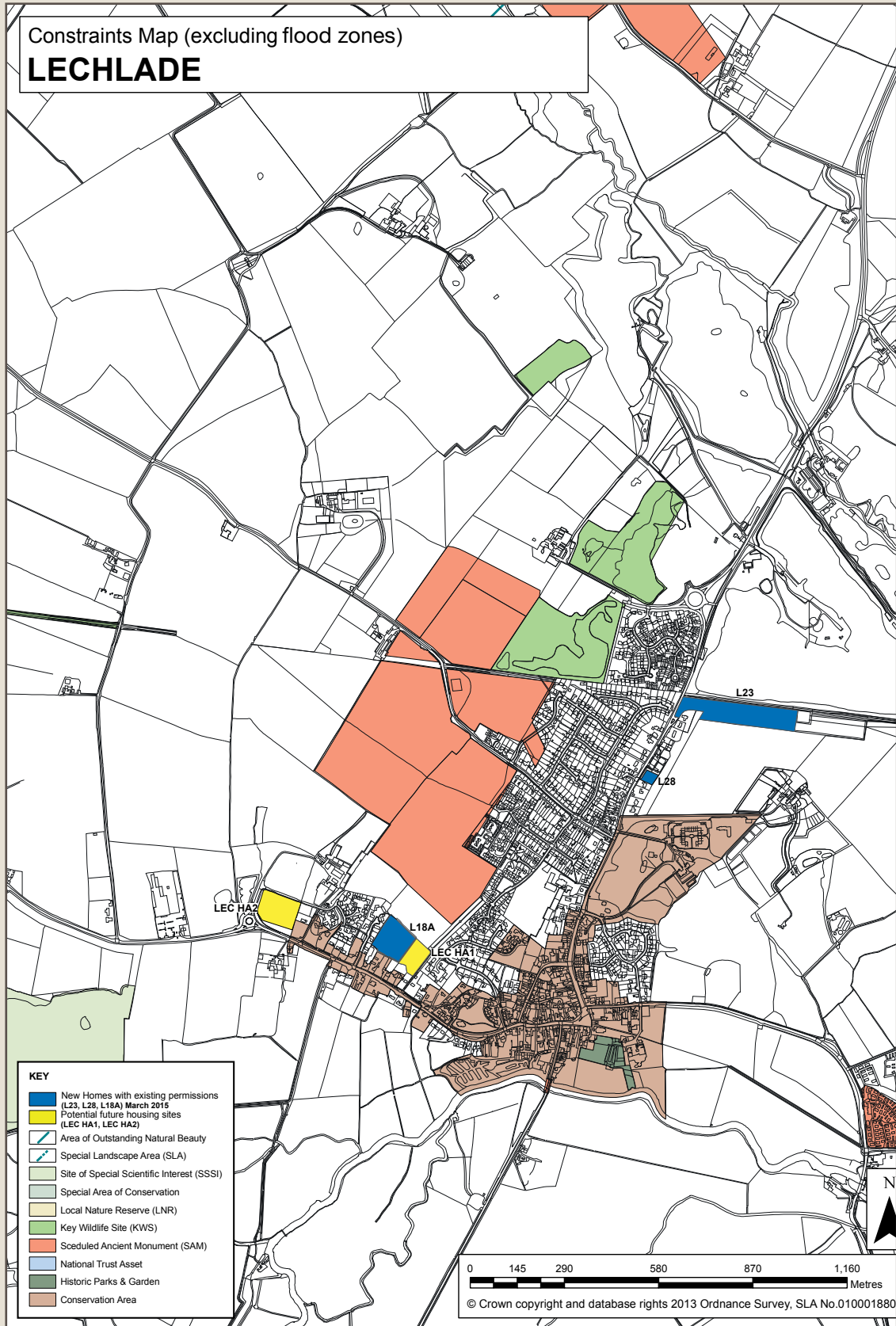
*An important principle that underlines the acceptance of any further residential, retail, workshop or tourist development is the need for all types of supporting infrastructure to keep pace with the increased demand and the projected growth in population.*

*Historically, the town has seen significant development without the infrastructure to match. Future developments must provide for the increased infrastructure, services, facilities and green spaces to meet the demand they are creating.*

*Thames Water has advised that based on anticipated growth in the Neighbourhood Plan area, upgrades to Thames Water’s existing water supply and sewage treatment facilities are likely to be needed.*

*The emerging Local Plan has retained policies LEC3 and LEC 4 from the adopted Local Plan for an allocation for a public car park at land off Wharf Lane and for an extension to the existing cemetery.*



## 1.2 Constraints Map





# Lechlade Floodzones

## KEY

-  Floodzone 2 - Medium Probability - Land having between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding
-  Floodzone 3 High Probability - Land having 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding



Scale: 1:10000

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## 1.3 Vision Statement and Core Objectives

The Vision Statement and Core Objectives were developed with the local community at a series of community workshops and community events. They form the foundation of the Lechlade Neighbourhood Plan.

### The Vision Statement

## “The Town That Thinks It’s A Village”

1.3.1 The overwhelming view from local people is that Lechlade has a close friendly community, more like a ‘village’ than a large town. The Plan’s overall vision must therefore be to maintain this character.

### *By 2031 the vision is that...*

*Lechlade has retained and even enhanced its strong feeling of being a ‘compact’ town with no damaging ribbon development along its main access roads. It has also managed to retain, and again enhance, its historic, charming (yet locally distinctive) character. It has achieved this in part by managing a far better balance in the town centre between traffic, parking and pedestrians and in part by improving the condition of existing buildings, whilst adding new homes designed in character with, and integrated into, the town.*

*New housing has focused on providing accommodation for younger residents and families and for elderly residents to downsize.*

*By regaining control of the town centre from the traffic and creating better links with the river, tourism has increased. This has benefited the local economy and created investment in retail, local services and facilities and the historic town centre.*

*Improved pedestrian access over the Thames from the south riverside into the*

*town has increased visitors to Lechlade and encouraged the creation of more local pathways for cycling and pedestrians.*

*A multi-use path between Lechlade and Fairford has been created and continues to be heavily used.*

*The opening of the Severn – Thames Canal link has made the town a destination of choice and stopping off place for river users, The marina has received substantial investment and is a thriving location for boats, shops, cafes and attractive residential units. A small development of good quality small business workspaces has been completed and created additional local employment.*

*The opening of a new hotel to cater for the increased tourism has encouraged visitors to stay longer in the town which has also helped to establish thriving individual shops and a café culture with popular pubs and restaurants.*

*Lechlade has maintained and developed its thriving arts, music and leisure culture whilst regular town centre markets in the redesigned square have helped to strengthen its market town identity. With the completion of flood protection work in 2016 the flood risk has reduced.*

*The designation of Local Green Spaces has protected them from unsuitable development.*

*Lechlade has developed economically and socially and has become a focus for the surrounding area, continuing to provide a range of public services and facilities, including the library and visitor centre, bank, medical centre, chemist, dental practices, post office and primary school. Access and transport links have improved with good parking, public transport, walking and cycling routes.*

*Most importantly, Lechlade has maintained and enhanced its close friendly community, with flourishing clubs and societies, feeling more like a village than a town.*



## Core Objectives

1.3.2 The Core Objectives are grouped under 5 headings:

***Housing to meet our future needs whilst maintaining the town's character***

***Achieving a thriving town centre***

***Economy, working and shopping***

***Developing Tourism***

***Community Services and Facilities***



Public consultation March 2014

*For each heading a sub-group was formed composed of residents and town councillors who collected evidence and produced a series of themes to develop. During the public consultation and the analysis of the feedback forms the following issues and concerns were identified which allow Core Objectives to be developed.*

*Traffic management is a common theme throughout these objectives.*

## Housing to meet our future needs whilst maintaining the town's character.

*Main comments raised and feedback from local people during the consultation and surveys include:*

*The majority of residents favoured a growth rate of 114 new homes in the next 20 years, in keeping with the emerging Local Plan.*

*The need for a mix of house size and tenure was supported, with particular emphasis on 2 bedroom homes and many of the comments made related to future needs for homes for older people and appropriate sized homes to allow young people to afford to buy in Lechlade.*

*The majority of respondents supported provision of affordable housing in Lechlade and the Housing Needs survey has identified that need within the community.*

*Comments identifying the characteristics of 'good development' related to restricting the number of homes in developments, good sized gardens and green spaces, avoiding bland uniformity, design and materials reflecting the Cotswold vernacular, ensuring sufficient car parking and quality of build.*

*There is concern about any proposed building on flood prone areas and outside the town boundary.*

*These descriptors reflect a countryside setting where greenery in the form of open frontages, trees and hedgerows merge with the buildings to create a sense of openness right into the heart of the town. This sense of greenery and openness is as fundamental a part of the Lechlade character as the natural materials used in the buildings and the town's countryside setting.*

## Housing

**Objective 1** To ensure that new housing development is within an appropriate level of overall provision set by the Local Plan

**Objective 2** To ensure that new housing development does not add to flooding problems

**Objective 3** To ensure that new housing development provides for local needs

**Objective 4** To ensure that new housing development makes best use of previously developed land and existing buildings

**Objective 5** To ensure that new housing development is in character with the town

**Objective 6** To ensure that new housing development provides appropriate mix of housing and local needs

**Objective 7** To ensure that new housing provides adequate parking

**Objective 8** To ensure that new housing development provides for home working and flexible living space, supports local employment and does not add to out commuting

**Objective 9** To ensure that new housing development provides appropriate infrastructure including community facilities

Each objective is supported by a policy or project as identified in the following table:

Housing	Policy
Objective 1	Local objective to support the Local Plan
Objective 2	Local objective to support the Local Plan
Objective 3	<b>H1</b>
Objective 4	<b>H2, H3</b>
Objective 5	<b>D1</b>
Objective 6	<b>H5</b>
Objective 7	<b>H6</b>
Objective 8	<b>H7</b>
Objective 9	<b>H8</b>

## Achieving a thriving town centre

There was overwhelming support for the key steps which lie behind the proposals. The main comments raised and feedback from local people during the consultation include:

- 86% supported achieving a 20mph speed of traffic in the conservation area
- 72% supported restricting the speed and movement of HGV by narrowing defined road widths
- 63% would welcome more parking convenient to the shops
- 54% wished to retain the 'echelon' parking
- 72% wished to see a significant part of the Market Place restored as public space for all, provided sufficient convenient parking can be found elsewhere.
- 59% agreed / strongly agreed that 'shared space' road planning should be used to develop the above.
- 98% and 96% respectively thought that the issues of parking and traffic congestion were important in seeking to attract more tourists to Lechlade and 90% thought the town needed 'opportunities to sit and watch the world go by'.

## Town Centre

**Objective 1** To ensure greater priority for pedestrians over vehicles and improve the streetscape.

Develop with professional advice a 'shared space' masterplan for the Lechlade conservation area and each of the town's approach roads.

Develop a master plan to create more convenient and greater parking provision Reclaim the Market Place for public use.

Promote markets and the position of the town as a district centre.

Working with GCC as local highways authority and the police establish a scheme to reduce HGV traffic through the town centre.



Establish a programme for minimal, restrained and appropriate vernacular signage.

**Objective 2** To ensure that the historic town centre conservation area is maintained to a good standard.

**Objective 3** To ensure that public transport is supported and cycling and walking are encouraged.

Traders will be encouraged, in their own commercial interests, to park away from the town centre, thus leaving spaces free for the use of their customers.

### Economy, working and shopping

Main comments raised and feedback from local people during the consultation include:

- Over 90% of respondents agreed that local employment should be encouraged in Lechlade
- An environment should be created that encourages the business community to invest in more niche and individual shops in Lechlade
- Over 80% of respondents agreed that a link should be created between the town centre and the Riverside Park car park.
- Around 90% of respondents agreed that a welcoming front to the Marina should be created with ideas such as mixed usage and boardwalks, shops and cafés being the most supported ideas for regenerating the Marina.
- The majority of respondents supported provision for small business workspace and live/work units.

### Economy

**Objective 1** To ensure that we maintain the retail mix in the town centre and specific types of employment development.

**Objective 2** To ensure new employment development respects the character of its surroundings.

**Objective 3** To encourage development to create employment by identifying possible sites for good quality small business workspaces

**Objective 4** To encourage investment in the town

**Objective 5** To create the environment to attract investment

**Objective 6** To ensure that the potential of the Marina is fully realised through appropriate development.

Each objective is supported by a policy or project as identified in the following table:

Employment	Policy
Objective 1	E1
Objective 2	E1 D1
Objective 3	Local objective to support the Local Plan
Objective 4	E2
Objective 5	D1
Objective 6	E3

### Developing Tourism

The main comments raised and feedback from local people during the consultation include:

- We need to attract more visitors.  
67% said this was very important  
30% said it was quite important

The following factors were issues that needed to be resolved if we were to attract more visitors:

- Parking  
80% said this was a very important issue and problem to be resolved
- Traffic congestion  
71% said this was very important
- Opportunities to sit  
61% said this was very important
- Activities such as walks/fishing  
66% said this was very important

NOTE: Traffic, Parking and Seating are all included in the Town Centre 'proposals

Options to attract more tourists were:

- Promotional leaflet  
45% said this was very important
- Improved website  
62% said this was very important
- Guidebook  
44% said this was very important

- Town map/business boards  
57% said this was very important
- Visitor Centre in Community Library was strongly supported with 83% saying it was quite important or very important

### Marina

The potential for the Marina is addressed in the Employment Section. There is a significant physical issue in the access to the river that needs to be addressed. Currently the Cotswold Water Park Trust, who lease Riverside Park, are planning to replace the existing steps from the bridge to the riverside with a ramp and build a walkway across the flood plain between the car park and the riverside.

### Signage

There is a clear desire for better signage in the town, but consultation is required to identify and agree a consistent style for any signage.

### Tourism

**Objective 1** To encourage tourism by the implementation of the Hidden Britain survey recommendations

**Objective 2** To ensure greater priority for pedestrians over vehicles.

**Objective 3** To encourage tourism by the implementation of proposals to promote tourism through leaflets and the website

**Objective 4** To encourage tourism by defining Heritage Walks and produce leaflets

**Objective 5** To encourage tourism by developing the Community Library as a visitor centre

**Objective 6** To ensure a wider range of tourist accommodation by improving the amount and type of tourist accommodation and identifying a suitable site for a hotel and upgrading of the marina facilities

**Objective 7** To ensure easier access to the river by provision of Town Council financial support for the river access ramp and improving the link between the town and the river/river parking

Each objective is supported by one or more projects

### Community Services and Facilities

Main comments raised and feedback from the local people during the consultation include:

- Respondents felt that the community is well served with meeting rooms, medical facilities, schools and playgroups
- The aspects most commonly listed as not meeting Lechlade's needs were infrastructure, green spaces and sports facilities

### Services and Facilities, Open Space, Green Space

**Objective 1** To encourage local sport and fitness by improving leisure and sports facilities

**Objective 2** To ensure that the services and facilities continue to meet the demands of the growing community  
Establish a long term plan for the expansion of education provision, medical facilities, infrastructure and community spaces

**Objective 3** To ensure the local green spaces are protected and enhanced  
Designate and maintain defined local green spaces.

Services	Policy
Objective 1	G2
Objective 2	Local objective to support the Local Plan
Objective 3	G1





## Section 2 Policies



## Section 2.1 Policies

This section takes the ‘objectives’ from the Core Objectives in sub section 1.3 (page 19) and expands them into Policies, supported by text that explains the proposed Policy and how and why the policy requirements must be met. Projects are shown separately in Section 3.

### 2.1 Design and Character of New Development

#### **Objective 5** To ensure that new development is in character with the town

The Public Consultation identified that maintaining the “character” of Lechlade as a Cotswold Town is important to respondents.

To ensure that the Design and Character objective (Objective 5) is not narrowly confined to new housing it has been given more prominence within this document and the associated policy reshaped to cover all development proposals.

Character and Landscape Assessments have been completed. These are detailed in the background documents and appendices to this Plan and will be updated as required to ensure they remain relevant and provide sufficient detail to assist development decisions. A key aim of the Character Assessments is to provide an informed basis for early discussion with landowners, residents and potential developers. The Character assessments seek to reinforce the sense of Lechlade as very much a small town in a countryside setting. Whilst this might seem obvious to those who know the town well, it is often the obvious that is taken for granted.

A policy on design is considered essential to manage all type of land use whether large or small-scale proposals including the redevelopment of a single house on a large plot into multiple housing. A character assessment of the town and streetscape has been undertaken to inform this policy and is set out as a separate document at Appendix 7. This will be updated as appropriate to include additional detail or to reflect changes in circumstance.

The Neighbourhood Plan places design and character as two of the most important considerations when assessing new development. The setting of the Town within the surrounding countryside and how the countryside extends into the

town is a key feature which needs to be protected and enhanced. In summary, when you approach Lechlade from pretty much any direction the town is hidden from view until you are within 100m or so of the built-up edge. The church steeple can be seen from further away. Coming into the town from Fairford, Burford or Faringdon the approach is flat and open but views are shielded by hedges and trees as you approach the town. Coming from Highworth the approach is very open but still the town is not revealed until very close to the river. The one exception is the approach along Hambidge Lane where the recent development of sheltered housing can be seen from further away and is in a non-traditional style that creates a hard edge to the town. The policies in this Plan are framed to reflect this and all new development will need to address design and character. The Landscape and Character Assessments (see Appendix 7) follow the routes into town along both roads and footpaths. From the assessments, a few common themes can be identified. These are: The town still retains a Cotswold character because of the small scale of the town, type and scale of the buildings, the use of traditional materials and its countryside setting. There is a strong sense of the countryside coming into the town. The parkland around the Manor, the field behind the Co-op and Allcourt Meadow all give a sense of space and openness. Allcourt Meadow is identified as an example of how new development can be integrated and what ‘good’ design looks like. The importance of design principles is reflected in the policy set out below.

#### **Policy D1 Design Principles**

Applications for new development will only be permitted where these:

- a) Respect views into and out of the Town.
- b) Would not adversely affect the character of the town.
- c) Conform to the Cotswold Design Code or its successor document.
- d) Conform to the character of the local area as set out at Appendix 7

The existing shape and character of the Town is defined by the mix of building styles, gardens and spaces between buildings as well as back lanes and the

*open countryside setting. Any new development whether this be large scale or a small infill plot needs to respect this and take its reference from the best examples of the immediate locality. The loss of openness created by landscaped frontages will be resisted where this is typical of the street scene or creates an important space within the street scene. Equally, good design examples such as Allcourt Meadow need to be seen as benchmarks for future design.*

*Understanding the character of the town is important in designing new development. Development proposals within or next to the Conservation Area or listed buildings must make sure that the overall character of the area is enhanced or preserved. Within the overall design approach there will be opportunities for new development to change the character of less positive areas and innovative design will be welcomed in these circumstances.*

*This policy complements saved and emerging Local Plan design policies by emphasising especially important local design principles. These principles are not considered onerous as they simply seek to encourage good design that respects local character. If followed this should avoid objections by the Town Council.*

*The policy is not intended to create a copybook approach to design or limit innovation in the type or range of development. Nonetheless, departures from the traditional approach will need to demonstrate why these should be acceptable within the terms of the policy. Understanding the characteristics of the town is important in designing new development. This includes redevelopment.*

*From every direction there is a sense of countryside merging into the built up area. The countryside is within a 10-15 min walk from most parts of the town. The open frontages, paddock, hedges and trees extend in to the heart of the town. New developments need to reflect this 'open character' particularly on prominent sites. New buildings need not, and should not, be hidden by trees but be an integral part of the landscape of the town. This does not mean the removal of existing trees is sanctioned*

*or will be supported, particularly where a redevelopment of an existing site is proposed. This is not an exclusive list but starts to give a flavour of what the town is like as a place. The Character Assessments have also identified that the approaches from Fairford, Burford, Faringdon and Highworth are all distinct, but have in common a sense of gradual change reflected in a mixture of housing types and materials. This gradual change is important and needs to be respected in any new development by incorporating design features that reinforce a gradual change from rural to urban. Within the built up area the Neighbourhood Plan relies in the main on the Local Plan policies for infill development and design but also requires that the Neighbourhood Plan policies are applied where appropriate. Policy D1 and in particular Appendix 7 applies to infill or redevelopment of plots.*

*Any new development outside Local Plan allocated sites or the built-up area of the town as defined in the Adopted Local Plan or its successor, will be resisted unless it complies with other policies in the relevant Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan. Development proposals outside the built-up area of the town will need to demonstrate what special circumstances exist, such that adopted policies should be set aside.*

*The Town Council is particularly concerned that Outline applications seldom deliver the high quality design and layout set out in accompanying illustrative material. To avoid objections at the reserved matter stage outline proposals for residential development in the town should include a design code or masterplan setting out how the proposed development respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the town, reinforces local distinctiveness and sustains a strong sense of place.*

*The character of the town can be determined by reference to supporting documents to this and the Adopted Local Plan or its successor. In particular, the Cotswold Design Code, Lechlade Conservation Area appraisal and Appendix 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan. In interpreting what is important in terms of the local area and its defining*

character new development should take its references from the immediate as well as the wider area. In particular development should reflect the materials, scale, mass, and architectural rhythm of the immediate area and character of the Town as a whole. In many areas, the character is reinforced through the established building set back and arrangements of front gardens, walls, railings or hedges. New development or redevelopment should reinforce not undermine this including respecting established plot widths within streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm to the architecture in a street. The character of Lechlade is also defined by the use of natural stone for walls and roofing materials. Consequently, new development should reflect this by utilising quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials used within the area. New development or redevelopment proposals that remove soft landscape features that help define this character and replace these with hard landscaping or car parking hardstanding will not be supported.

Because the town occupies a prominent location on the River Thames, there are many opportunities within the town to glimpse the surrounding countryside. This also helps to define its special character. Conversely, the town's edges to the countryside allow views into the urban area that also contribute to its character. Whilst it is not practical for development to avoid closing every such view, it is expected that the layout and building form of proposals will realise opportunities to maintain and frame important views from and to the town from its edge.

The Town Council is concerned about the cumulative effects of flooding in the Town and will support a proposal that adopts the principles of sustainable urban drainage within the overall design. Similarly proposals that actively seek to minimise the likelihood and fear of crime will also be supported.

## 2.2 Housing policies to meet our future needs

**Objective 1** To ensure that new housing development is within an appropriate level of overall provision set by the Local Plan

The overall level of housing to be provided is identified in the emerging Local Plan and supported in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports a figure of 114 new dwellings as evidenced in the emerging Local Plan to be achieved through existing permissions and new allocations.

1. Already Built	14
2. Within existing permission - not started	82
3. To be allocated in the Local Plan	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>

This figure has broad support in the Town as identified through Public Consultation. It is largely committed with 14 dwellings already built and a further 82 dwellings with permission. Two sites identified in the emerging draft Local Plan 2011-2013 at Downington and South of Butlers Court could provide a further 18 dwellings. This provides for 114 dwellings over the Plan period. As the Neighbourhood Plan must be in broad compliance with the Adopted Local Plan but also remain relevant to changing demands or needs it is recognised that circumstances can change and that this figure may also change. However, given the landscape, flooding and other constraints placed on Lechlade the scope to do so is limited. Nonetheless, the Town Council recognises that the allocation to the South of Butlers Court being put forward in the emerging Local Plan has the potential to deliver more than 9 houses depending on design. The objectives of both the adopted and emerging plans are consistent in terms of safeguarding the town's character and role. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the definition of a development boundary within the adopted local plan and the emerging plan as well as the need to comply with the most up to date boundary



and Local Plan. Because the development boundary is defined in the Local Plans and the Neighbourhood Plan sits beneath these as a statutory plan, no policy is included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Objective 2** To ensure that new housing development does not add to flooding problems.

No policy is proposed for flood impact as this is adequately addressed in the Local Plan and through the development control process. However, this is an important local issue and an objective that the community is keen to see in the Lechlade Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council is keen to encourage landowners considering a planning application or applicants to engage with it on flood mitigation and impact.

**Objective 3** To ensure that new housing development provides for local needs.

The Neighbourhood Plan consultation and Housing Needs Survey have identified a need for Affordable Housing and housing to meet the needs of older residents. There is an opportunity for developers to deliver market housing to provide both larger 2 bedroom properties for people wishing to downsize and smaller 2 bed properties for first time buyers. The increase in home working is also considered significant. Provision for homeworking in new developments could help improve the sustainability of new housing development.

The demand for Affordable Housing has been clearly identified in the Housing Needs Survey as 104 households or about 8% of the 1320 existing households in the Town. Of these, 62 households could afford private sector housing (assumes appropriate provision is available e.g. 2 bedroom homes as identified above). This leaves 42 households or 3.2% of the 1320 existing households in need of social or subsidised housing.

Based on the current level of housing provision, the estimated need of 42 Affordable Homes represents a snapshot in time reflecting the need now, not over the Plan period. It does not take into

account of needs outside the town e.g. people wishing to move for employment. Equally this need or demand can only realistically be met from existing permissions or sites delivered in the Plan period. The Cotswold District Council Affordable Housing policy is supported in principle as is the requirement to pepper-pot Affordable Housing within a development. The Housing Needs Survey has identified a need for around 42 additional dwellings. This level of provision is commensurate with current proposals and would facilitate pepper-potting. The Town Council is keen to encourage and support innovative approaches to delivering affordable housing including a mix of social, subsidised and low cost market housing.

For the purposes of neighbourhood plan policies, the term affordable housing refers to dwellings for sale or to let at a price level below the current market rate, and related to the ability to pay of those identified by the planning authority or a registered provider as being in need of housing.

The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges the adopted Local Plan policy of delivering up to 40% affordable housing but considers that this should comprise a mixture of starter homes (including low cost market housing), shared equity homes and homes to rent. In demonstrating how applications for planning permission will satisfy the current or emerging local plan policy the Town Council would encourage engagement with applicants on the mix and type of housing proposed.

Furthermore, to reduce the risk of out-commuting because people from outside Lechlade are allocated properties it is considered appropriate to prioritise the allocation of Affordable Housing to local people or those moving to the town for employment.

The Town Council expects applicants for planning permission for new housing to engage with the Town Council to demonstrate how the policy for Affordable Housing identified in the Adopted or emerging Local Plan for Cotswold District will meet the identified need for Lechlade.

### **Policy H1**

*Where affordable housing is delivered, priority will be given to people in housing need who can demonstrate a local connection on first and subsequent occupation. Normally this will be secured through legal obligations.*

*For the purposes of this policy, affordable housing is defined as per the definition in the National Planning Policy Framework or successor national definition.*

*Legal Obligations are currently defined through section 106 agreements, which articulate the terms and conditions for the provision of affordable housing*

**Objective 4** *To ensure that new housing development makes best use of previously developed land and existing buildings.*

*There are very few available redundant buildings or sites in Lechlade. Also land that may appear derelict or neglected may not be available or appropriate. Equally, buildings and premises that appear to be fully utilised may not be. This includes the upper floors above shops and commercial premises. The potential of such sites and buildings if realised will reduce the demand for greenfield sites and help ensure that the overall level of provision set out in the emerging Local Plan is to be achieved.*

*A Policy for previously developed land and buildings is, therefore, considered appropriate. This is set out below.*

### **Policy H2**

*Proposals for housing development on previously developed land within or immediately adjacent to the development boundary as defined in the Cotswold District Local Plan 2001-2011 (saved policies) or its successor will be supported provided that these are in accord with other policies in this Plan.*

*This policy is intended to encourage re-use of buildings for an appropriate use or to meet a local need. It does not take precedence over other policies in the Plan or imply that assets, including heritage assets, can be redeveloped.*

### **Policy H3**

*Conversion to Residential Use - Where planning permission is required, the conversion of existing buildings from retail or storage use, particularly upper floors, within the built-up area will be supported provided the development would not cause the loss of essential facilities or services or harm the vitality and viability of the town centre.*

*The aim of the policy is to encourage re-use or use of vacant property. However, where this would lead to the loss of a community asset, or core service such as a post office or otherwise change the character of the Town as a service centre this will not be supported. For the purposes of Policy H3, the effect of a development proposal on the vitality and viability of the town centre should be considered both on its own and cumulatively.*

**Objective 6** *To ensure that new housing development provides an appropriate mix of house types to meet local needs.*

*Most areas contain a mix of terraced semi-detached or distinctive buildings that will dictate that new developments reflect this diversity. However, some of the newer suburban areas are not so diverse. The identified need for 2-3 bedroom houses reinforces the need for a mix of house types and sizes. Consequently, where the overall character of the immediate area is predominantly of one type of house it is felt necessary to require greater diversity in new developments. The Housing Needs Survey has identified that there is a shortage of 2-3 bedroom properties. The identified need (HNS) for such properties is twofold. Firstly, to satisfy demand for market housing for households wishing to purchase and secondly for people wishing to downsize (to larger two bed homes) from existing properties. Good design practice also suggests that a mixture of house types adds to the character and liveability of an area. Consequently, it is considered that a balance of house types needs to be achieved and no one site be dominated by a particular size or type of*

housing. Market Housing can be designed to address this latent demand and the Town Council will support this.

### **Policy H5**

*Dwelling Mix - on schemes of more than ten dwellings, proposals for residential development will be required to demonstrate that the mix of dwelling types and sizes is appropriate to meet the needs of current and future households in Lechlade. This should recognise the need for Retirement Housing including specialist provision.*

*The mix of dwellings should be proportionate to the range and mix of housing within the town and district, should not be dominated by one or two market types and should reflect the findings of the Lechlade Housing Needs survey.*

**Objective 7** *To ensure that new housing development provides adequate Parking.*

*The importance of appropriate off road parking provision is an important issue for residents. It helps to improve road safety as well as improve the appearance of the street scene. More successful developments have at least two off road spaces plus a garage. New development also has the potential to alleviate existing parking problems by incorporating off road parking for adjacent properties. Existing developments in the town demonstrate the need for off street spaces.*

### **Policy H6**

*Residential parking - proposals for new residential development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that off-street parking provision is adequate to meet likely future needs.*

*Ensuring that new development adequately caters for the needs of new residents is important. In particular it is important to ensure that on street parking is minimised by making proper provision for cars within a development. The number of cars currently parked on street in Lechlade demonstrates the importance of new developments making adequate provision for off street parking.*

*Government advice to reduce car travel through reducing availability of parking at origin and destination has not worked at origins, therefore vehicle parking standards need to be increased, along with sustainable transport measures. However, the scope to improve sustainable transport measures is limited to improving local linkages eg to the school. By changing the origin car parking standard from a maximum to a minimum it is intended that appropriate parking facilities will be provided.*

*To satisfy Policy H6 it is anticipated that car parking space provision standards will be developed with CDC as a local standard as required by the Emerging Local Plan. In Lechlade it is anticipated that higher car parking requirements will be necessary because of the high levels of car ownership and the inadequate provision of public transport for people travelling to work in surrounding towns. This results in a need for a car for employment, leisure, social and domestic use.*

*Visitor parking is also required to ensure that residential roads are kept free of parked vehicles. Where garages are provided these should be large enough to accommodate a large family car.*

*Recent research by the RAC has identified that 62% of motorists no longer use their garage and that this is used as a store. Of the 38% who still use their garage for the car one in five say there is barely enough room for a car. The policy recognises the importance of meeting occupier and visitor needs both now and in the future. Based on the RAC evidence and developments in the town where there is not a problem it is recommended that two off street spaces should be the base requirement for dwellings with 2+ bedrooms. This should be in addition to a garage, reflecting the tendency to use the garage for alternative uses. Where less than this is proposed, the garage should be large enough to accommodate a large family saloon. Applications for development will need to demonstrate how the parking provision including the garage can provide a practical space for parking. Where the nature of the occupation of a dwelling is restricted*



by design and condition to household types with lower car use (e.g. older or single person households) and relies upon existing parking spaces (e.g. the town centre) then the proposal will be expected to make a financial contribution to improving public car parking and pedestrian access to the town centre in the locality for the direct benefit of the occupants.

**Objective 8** To ensure that new housing development provides for home working and flexible living space, supports local employment and does not add to out-commuting.

Home working in Lechlade has been identified as an issue by 10% of residents. The Housing Needs Survey has also shown that this has increased since the 2011 Census. Home working has the potential to improve the employment base of the town, reduce out commuting.

### **Policy H7**

Proposals that provide space for a home office to facilitate home working will be supported.

This policy is designed to encourage either flexible space in new buildings or direct provision of the infrastructure needed to support home working. Infrastructure may include fibre optic cabling or parking for business visitors.

**Objective 9** To ensure that new housing development provides appropriate infrastructure and adds value to existing infrastructure including community facilities.

Community and essential infrastructure will normally be secured through the Local Plan by Cotswold District Council on behalf of the statutory agencies which will implement this. Community Infrastructure will be secured either through Section 106 of the Planning Act or the Community Infrastructure Levy (when in place). The Neighbourhood Plan has identified a range of infrastructure that is needed in Lechlade. Essential infrastructure required on site or

immediately adjacent to it will be secured through S106. On site provision depends on scale but given the small scale of the allocations is likely only to include maintenance of public open space, drainage, landscaping or other specialist provision. Infrastructure adjacent to the site is likely to include highway and traffic calming that is required to mitigate a development. In the case of development sites this should include contributions to creating a better and safer highway environment including shared space and/or other traffic calming measures. Off-site infrastructure for example, education and community provision, will normally be secured through the Local Plan CIL Policies on behalf of the Statutory Agencies. Where funding is not available through the Statutory Agency such as Early Years Care the Neighbourhood Plan will rely on the District Council to secure this through the Local Plan. Where there is no clear relationship between a development and infrastructure requirement, or where the direct impact would not generate sufficient funding to deliver the infrastructure needed, the Town Council will either seek to deliver the infrastructure in phases or work with the County and District Councils to pool funding received by the County or District Councils from CIL contributions. Under the CIL regulations where a Neighbourhood Plan is in place the Town Council will receive 25% of the CIL funds secured by the District Council.

### **Policy H8**

Proposals for new residential development will need to demonstrate that sufficient infrastructure (including community infrastructure) exists or can be provided to support the development.

The 25% CIL contribution to the Neighbourhood Plan will be allocated to projects or priorities identified in the Neighbourhood Plan but not otherwise funded from S106.

It is likely that any significant increase in the housing level proposed for Lechlade will cross supply/capacity thresholds for water/sewerage/transport/health and other community facilities. In addition, it is likely that any large scale provision

will have wider impacts on the adjacent areas. In this case the Town Council will seek to work with adjacent Parish, Town Councils, the District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and/or a potential developer to deliver enhanced facilities.

This might include the provision of new cycling and walking facilities, town centre traffic management and enhanced sports facilities such as those being promoted by Lechlade Cricket Club. The intention is for the Town Council allocation of the forthcoming Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - of at least 25% of the Levy charged in the NP area - to provide an important source of funding for projects identified in the Plan. Other infrastructure projects in Lechlade may be financed from the remaining element of the CIL that will invest in strategic projects. The list in the NP is not exhaustive but provides the local community with an indication of how the Levy will be invested in local priority projects. Prior to the adoption of the CIL, Section 106 Agreements will remain an important source of infrastructure funding, albeit in a more limited way than in recent years. Once the CIL is adopted, perhaps in 2015, it is expected that Agreements will only be used to manage the delivery of very specific development scheme requirements, e.g. affordable housing.

### 2.3 Policies to develop employment and the local economy

There is an imbalance between housing and employment in Lechlade. The majority of residents commute out of the Town to work and new housing development is likely to increase this imbalance, unless new employment is attracted to the Town. Whilst there has been an increase in home working this is not likely to shift the balance significantly. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the emerging Local Plan in allocating a new Employment site at Lechlade but recognises that employment investment opportunities are low and seeks to deliver a flexible approach to employment. The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that B1 workshops and units may not be viable without grant or other support. Consequently, where it can be demonstrated that employment use is not viable in its own right, the Neighbourhood Plan policies acknowledge that other uses that generate employment or can cross-subsidise employment units should be considered. Given the historic character of Lechlade it is considered that B2 or B8 employment would be inappropriate or require specific justification.



**Objective 1** To ensure that we maintain the retail mix in the town centre and specific types of employment development.

**Policy E1**

Applications for new employment-related development for uses falling within Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended will be permitted provided that the following criteria are met:

- (a) the development would involve small-scale expansion of existing premises, or the change of use of existing commercial premises; and
- (b) the development would not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage businesses uses at an appropriate scale and improve the mix and range of opportunities in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, this should not be at the expense of retail and essential service use in the town centre.

**Objective 2** To ensure new employment development respects the character of its surroundings.

Where new employment development is proposed it should also respect the design principle set out a policy D1 above.

**Objective 3** To encourage development to create employment by identifying possible sites for good quality small business workspaces.

The emerging draft Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 identifies a site for employment use at Butlers Court. This is supported in the Neighbourhood Plan. Nonetheless, it is recognised that speculative employment may not be viable as evidenced at the former Station Site. Where this is the case the delivery of small scale workshops might be possible through other enabling development

such as housing. The Town Council would be keen to enter into a dialogue on what can be achieved through enabling development.

**Objective 4** To encourage investment in the town

The following types of development will be actively encouraged;

- a) Independent/niche retailers with offers that are complementary to the town's current retail portfolio such as, but not limited to:
  - 1) Bakery
  - 2) Delicatessen
  - 3) Coffee shop
- b) Developers of small start-up/artisan workshops
- c) The development of a serviced small business centre with meeting rooms to support and encourage local businesses.
- d) The development of a small hotel.
- e) Schemes for bringing the Marina up to its full potential

A local Development Order maybe sought.

**Policy E2**

Proposals for small scale A1 retail, A3 restaurant, B1 workshops/offices will be supported provided these do not have an adverse or cumulative impact on the character or vitality of the town.

The town centre comprises a mix of uses from retail to offices and residential. As a small town centre it is under pressure from changes to the way goods and services are delivered but its essential character has remained. Provided further change does not create any dominant use this will be supported. However, there are a number of key uses that draw people to the town centre where their loss could change the vitality of the town. These uses are the post office, bank, food store and chemist and proposals that either directly or indirectly result in their loss will be strongly resisted.



**Objective 5** *To create the environment to attract investment*

*Improving the quality and design of new development helps reinforce the character of the town and creates further opportunity for small scale investment for employment. The character of the town can be determined by reference to D1 and supporting documents on Appendix 7 to this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted Local Plan or its successor. In particular, the Cotswold Design Code, Lechlade Conservation Area appraisal and Appendix 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan. In interpreting what is important in terms of the local area and its defining character new development should take its references from the immediate as well as the wider area. In particular, development should reflect the materials, scale, mass and architectural rhythm of the immediate area and character of the town as a whole.*

**The Marina**

*Lechlade is fortunate to have a large marina but unfortunate that it has fallen into disrepair, is unsightly and consequently a big embarrassment to the town. Turning this privately owned marina around and developing it into a high quality one (such as exists on other parts of the Thames) could create one of the biggest contributors to Lechlade's employment and economy.*



**Objective 6** *To ensure that the potential of the Marina is fully realised through appropriate development.*

*The Marina is a massively under used asset and to realise its potential the Plan seeks to encourage a development that will retain it as a functional marina but also add value to the area and Town.*

*To get the most out of the Marina and achieve the biggest potential impact for the town requires a flexible policy approach that acknowledges that other uses may be needed to make a quality redevelopment viable.*



*The re-opening of the Thames and Severn Canal, a project which is supported in CDC's Local Plan, will bring significant extra narrow boat traffic to Lechlade and the Marina, and help sustain any redevelopment in the longer term. However, in the shorter term a range of uses may be necessary to sustain any redevelopment and to encourage investors, developers and professional management to shape a Marina which maximises the economic potential of the Marina to the benefit of Lechlade. A significant part of securing the wider benefit is securing good links to and through the adjacent areas to the Town. The use of towpaths, board walks and cycleways should be an integral part of any Masterplan or planning application. By looking at similar sized Marinas we are able to determine that exploiting this asset could add 9 direct jobs, support 40 indirect jobs and boost spending in the town by £2.5m (2014 based).*

**Policy E3**

*Proposals for development or redevelopment of the marina will be supported provided that these would:*

- a) complement its role and character as a marina, and not hinder the future improvement of the marina;*
- b) provide links to the town and the adjoining public footpath network, including the Riverside pub and riverside park south of the river.*

## Lechlade Riverside Marina





### 2.1.3 Green Spaces

Existing green spaces are to be protected and new spaces provided to support a good level of provision across the town. A new designation, Local Green Spaces, was introduced in the NPPF Framework in 2012. This is a way of providing special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.

#### **Policy G1**

Proposals for inappropriate development in Local Green Spaces will not be permitted except in very special circumstances:

The following areas and as identified at Appendix 8 are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Eric Richardson, Phyllis Amey Nature Reserve (also known as ERPA Nature Reserve, Amey Richardson Nature Reserve, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Reserve, Lechlade Nature Reserve, The Gravels)



1  
Eric Richardson, Phyllis Amey Nature Reserve (also known as ERPA Nature Reserve, Amey Richardson Nature Reserve, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Reserve, Lechlade Nature Reserve, The Gravels)



2  
Perrinsfield Play Area (also known as Swansfield Play Area, Vennymore Play Area)



3  
Lechlade Recreation ground (also known as Recreation Ground, Memorial Hall Playing Fields, Memorial Hall Play Space)

Trust Reserve, Lechlade Nature Reserve, The Gravels)

2. Perrinsfield Play Area (also known as Swansfield Play Area, Vennymore Play Area)
3. Lechlade Recreation ground (also known as Recreation Ground, Memorial Hall Playing Fields, Memorial Hall Play Space)
4. Space in front of sheltered housing, Gassons Road
5. Allcourt Meadow (also known as Tom Warner's Field)
6. Sherborne Park (also known as Lodersfield Park)

In interpreting this policy the very special circumstances may include a proposal of a limited nature that can be clearly demonstrated to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space ; or a proposal that would result in the development of local community infrastructure.



4  
Space in front of Sheltered Housing bungalows off Gassons Road

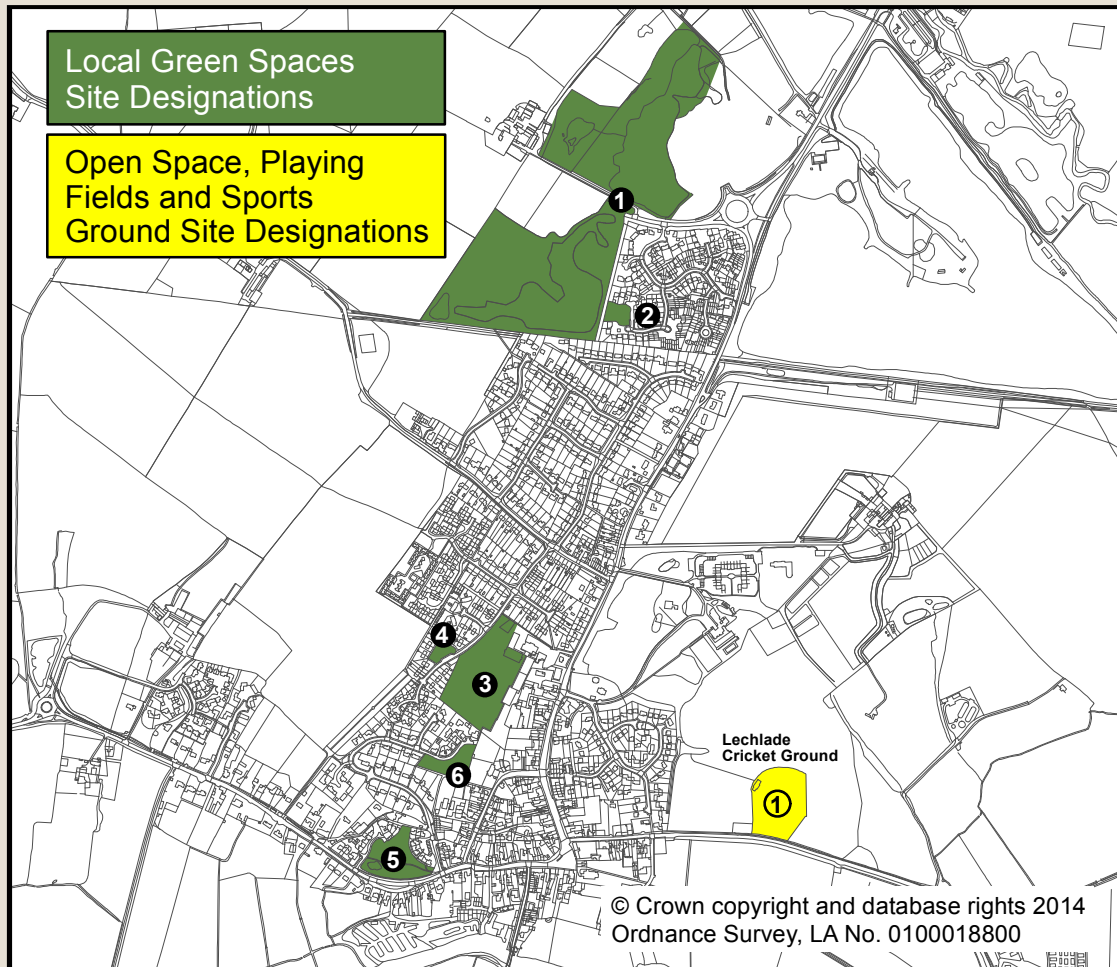


5  
Allcourt Meadow (also known as Tom Warner's Field)



6  
Sherborne Park (also known as Lodersfield Park)





### **Policy G2**

*Lechlade Cricket Ground (see Appendix 8) is designated as open space, playing field and sports ground. Planning permission for development that would result in the loss this area as open space, playing fields or sports ground will not be permitted unless the following criteria are met:*

- (a) the development would result in substantial community benefits which would outweigh the loss of the open space or sports ground;*
- (b) the development would provide enhanced facilities for the use of the land for sport or recreation without reducing the quality or provision of pitches or training areas; or*
- (c) the development would enable any playing area lost as a result of the development to be replaced with a new area of comparable or greater benefit for sport.*

*There is a strong case for this site to be protected as a Local Green Space and included within Policy G1. However, given its setting in the foreground to a Grade II listed building it is considered that the existing constraints on the site are significant and that a Local Green Space designation may inhibit proposals to enhance facilities including relocation to a new site elsewhere in the town. Policy G2 both protects the facility in its own right, allows limited enhancement and enables its replacement elsewhere if this is a better outcome for the town and Lechlade Cricket Club.*



## Section 3: Projects







## Section 3 Projects

In addition to Policies the Town Council feels it is important to take an overall view of the Town's development and the following projects are proposed.

Projects are not part of the Neighbourhood Plan for statutory planning purposes but are included in the document so as to set out statements of intended community actions. Projects will change over time as new projects emerge or circumstances change. This section will be updated on a regular basis to inform priorities and not decisions.

### 3.1 Projects to achieve a thriving town centre and manage traffic

**Objective 1** To achieve a proper balance between the needs of the residents and traffic and improve the streetscape.

To ensure that markets are supported and promoted and the position of the town as a "District Centre" is maintained and improved.

**Project TC1** We will work with GCC as the local highways authority to achieve traffic managed with a sustained and calmed flow in the conservation area by 'shared space' principles according to an overall master plan. Developers will be expected to make a contribution to the costs of progressively implementing the plan. Other funding sources (e.g. PWLB and grants) may be required.

**Project TC2** The Market Place will be substantially reclaimed as a public space worthy of a beautiful Cotswold town and to support the green character of Lechlade, with appropriate street furniture, signage and planting, to encourage community use and to encourage our visitors to extend their stay. Street furniture needs to comply with the GCC enhanced material policy.

**Project TC3** The shared space masterplan will make provision for enhanced parking in the town centre; this will improve the amenity of the town and support the economic viability of its retail trade. We will also support and promote markets in the improved Market Place.

Additional school parking is required in Faringdon Road. Developers will be expected to provide adequate parking, and, in any development close to the town centre, a contribution to the parking needs of the whole community,

**Project TC4** Working with GCC as the local highways authority and other county and police authorities, we will seek enforcement measures to reduce the flow of HGV's which is currently damaging the town; enforcement of the length limit over the Thames on Halfpenny Bridge and a new weight limit; new weight and length limits and one way traffic over the Thames at St John's Bridge,

The advisory routes which should divert long distance HGV's along more suitable major roads far from the town will be emphasised and where possible legally enforced to stop the current 'rat run'.

**Objective 2** To ensure that the historic town centre conservation area is maintained to a high standard

**Project TC5** Owners of all the many listed buildings will be encouraged to maintain high standards of maintenance and appearance; enforcement support will be sought from CDC where needed.

**Project TC6** Signage standards will be enforced which reflect a sensitive vernacular style and colour palette appropriate to the conservation area and will support the town's standing as a major Cotswold market town. Commercial waste will be stored out of public view. We will add more signage to guide visitors to the town's attractions, including the riverside.

**Project TC7** A conservation plan will be implemented for the mature lime trees in Burford Street, which add significant character to the town centre. TPO's will be sought for these assets.

**Objective 3** To ensure that public transport is supported and cycling and walking are encouraged

*Project TC8 Public transport, currently under economic threat, will be supported and if possible, expanded. Cycling and walking routes will be enhanced where possible and the project to complete a multi-use path between Lechlade and Fairford will be supported and funding sought.*

### *3.1. Town Centre*

*Because of the location of Lechlade at the junction of the A361 (North – South) and A417 ( East-West ) the town has become dominated by traffic. In 2014 The Town Council set up a Working Group to develop proposals for traffic management in the town and then appointed as advisers Hamilton-Baillie Associates, one of the leading traffic management consulting firms in the UK.*

*Their Town Centre report in October 2014 (Appendix 2 ) made recommendations and proposals to achieve a sustained traffic flow of 20mph in the central conservation area and in the process reclaim a substantial part of the once beautiful market place , whilst still providing an equivalent amount of convenient central parking to support the retail needs.*

*Various public presentations and consultations were made in 2014 and gained widespread support for the proposals. Supporting work, including a safety audit, directed by traffic engineers Phil Jones Associates, confirmed (November 2015) that the traffic management objectives can be achieved. Initial discussions with Gloucestershire County Council Highways Department have been positive and further meetings are scheduled to progress the feasibility and costing of the proposals, with further public consultation later in 2016. The Hamilton- Baillie Associates “master plan” for the town has about 8 major points of intervention (Appendix 2) on the main routes into Lechlade – with narrowing by way of road markings or other physical features so as to be very clear where driver behaviour needs to change.*

*In the Market Place itself, the plan is for the road to be narrowed and remodelled into a slow bend through the broad central area. Much of the Market Place would then be freed on either side of the road to be laid out as enhanced pedestrian space. Short term and convenient parking (including disabled parking) would be sustained by using the substantial areas made free by road narrowing.*



### *3.2 Rebuild the Memorial Hall*

*The night of Sunday 8th May 2016 will forever remain in the memory of Lechlade residents. That night, the heart of our community, the much loved Memorial Hall was completely destroyed.*

*Following a call at 11.35, the reaction of the fire services based at Fairford was immediate. Despite assistance from crews based at Cirencester, Faringdon, Burford, Stratton St Margaret, Cheltenham and Cricklade, totalling 43 firemen, the fire spread rapidly into the roof space and the building was reduced to a shell.*

*Police are conducting an urgent investigation. They believe that the fire was started deliberately.*

*The Pavilion building adjacent to the Memorial Hall was saved by the professional work of the fire crews.*

*However on the night of the 4th June the Pavilion was subjected to a further arson attack, and this fire has caused serious internal damage.*

*The Town Council and Memorial Hall Trustees would like to thank both the police and fire services for their highly professional response. Both services maintained a site presence until the security fencing was erected by volunteers late Monday afternoon.*

*The Memorial Hall, which opened on 6th May 1996, will need to be demolished down to ground slab level. Temporary buildings are being brought in and the process of organising the rebuilding has begun immediately, working closely with the insurers.*

*The Memorial Hall was a wonderful asset used by the whole community. Many activities took place there involving local clubs, groups and organisations.*



*We are all totally devastated by it's loss, but initial anger must now turn to rebuilding for the future. Offers of help and support have come in from local businesses, the community of Lechlade and many of our neighbouring towns and villages.*

*The Memorial Hall Trustees – who ran the facility – are assisting in arranging alternative venues where possible. We would like to thank everyone for their offers of support. The tragic event has created a tremendous community spirit.*

*The Town Council held an extra-ordinary meeting in the Pavilion on Monday 16th May. This was attended by the Memorial Hall Trustees and 60 residents. It was agreed that a Steering Group would be set up to act as the Client 'for the management of the rebuilding programme.*

*The Steering Group consists of 3 Councillors and 3 Trustees, together with the Town Clerk and advice from Barbara Pond of Gloucester Rural Community Council (GRCC).*

*Outline programme for rebuilding of Memorial Hall:*

#### **June 2016**

*Demolition of fire damaged structure and set up temporary accommodation*

#### **June – July 2016**

*Establish design brief*

#### **August - September 2016**

*Outline Design*

#### **October – December 2016**

*Planning application and approval*

#### **November - December 2016**

*Tender for construction contract.*

*The start of construction will depend on securing of full project funding.*

*Construction will take around 12 months.*





### 3.3 Projects to develop employment and the local economy

**Project E1** Lechlade Town Council will work to make the town more attractive to incoming businesses and investors. The main thrust of these activities will focus on increasing the footfall (number of people who spend time and money) in the town. These activities and projects will include

- a) To develop better links from the Riverside Park to the town centre to encourage day trippers and picnickers to visit and enjoy the town's amenities.
- b) To actively encourage more tourists to visit the town through better marketing and more events (such as the Lechlade Festival, themed markets, Duck race on the river etc).
- c) To create a calmer town centre with a café culture which encourages visitors and residents alike to spend more time there.

### 3.4 Projects to promote Tourism

**Objective 1** To encourage tourism by the implementation of the Hidden Britain survey recommendations

**Project T1** These are set out on page 15 of this report. Many recommendations have already been implemented and the group is working on a programme to complete the outstanding work. (for report see Appendix 5)

**Objective 2** To encourage tourism by ensuring greater priority of pedestrians over vehicles in the town centre

**Project T2** Produce and implement proposals for the improvement of the town centre environment and signage.

**Objective 3 – 5** To encourage tourism by leaflets and the town website, defining 'Heritage Walks' and developing the community Library as a visitor centre.

**Project T3** Much of this work is underway but contributions will be required to support the community run library from future developments. Work to smarten up the town centre will continue such as toilet upgrades, litter picks, signage improvements, flower tubs and a programme to smarten up the streetscape.

**Objective 6** - To ensure a wider range and type of tourist accommodation by improving the amount and type of tourist accommodation and identifying a suitable site for a small hotel and encourage its development and upgrading of the marina facilities.

**Project T4** There is an identified need for improved tourist accommodation in Lechlade by the construction of a small hotel and for the existing accommodation to be upgraded.

**Objective 7** To ensure easier access to the river by consulting on financial support for the river access ramp and improving the link between the town and the river / riverside car park.

**Project T5** There is a need for better access between the town and the south bank of the river Thames. Working with the Riverside Park we will seek to facilitate projects to build an access ramp on the south side of Halfpenny bridge, an access boardwalk through the (often flooded) field between the riverside car park and the bridge, and in the longer term encourage investment in a pedestrian bridge over the Thames linking the Thames Path on the south bank to the town / marina on the north bank.

3.5 *Projects to provide adequate community services and facilities*

**Objective 1** *To encourage local sports and fitness by improving local sports and leisure facilities.*

**Project SF1** *Lechlade already has good sports and leisure facilities such as a playground, tennis courts, football pitches, cricket pitch and an all weather sports pitch. There is a need for more outdoor adult fitness equipment (now completed) and a need to upgrade the cricket club pavilion. Lechlade Town Council will support projects to improve local sports and leisure facilities.*

**Objective 2** *To ensure that the services and facilities continue to meet the demand of the growing community.*

**Project SF2** *Establish a long term plan for the expansion of education facilities, medical facilities infrastructure, parking, community facilities and spaces. Ensuring that core facilities such as the Memorial Hall and Pavilion remain upto date and fit for purpose is essential. This includes any replacement buildings or facilities. Future developments will be required to demonstrate provision of appropriate new facilities on site and provision of, or contribution towards, off site facilities. This will be secured through the use of planning conditions, section 106 agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).*











## Section 4: Supporting Documentation and Evidence

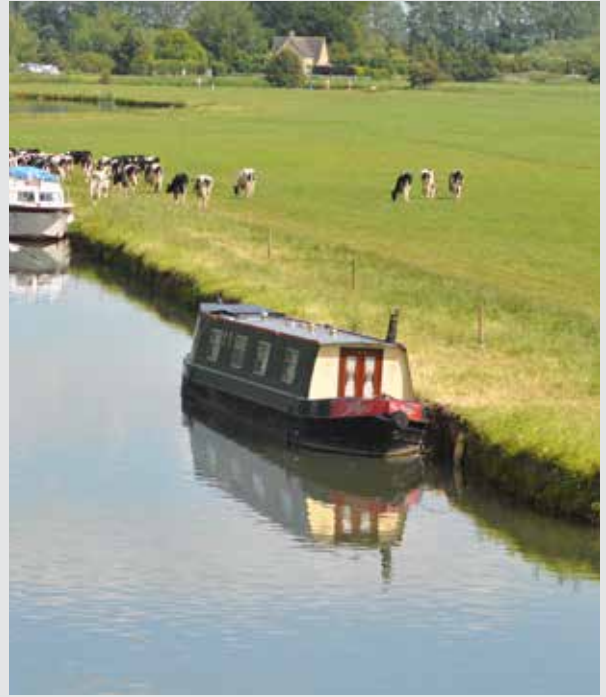
## *Section 4 Supporting Documentation and Evidence*

*All supporting documentation and evidence is available on the Town Council's website:  
[www.lechladeonthames.co.uk](http://www.lechladeonthames.co.uk)*

### **CONTENTS**

- 1       Cotswold District Council emerging Local Plan Development Strategy for Lechlade-on-Thames (2011 - 2031)*
- 2       Town Centre Report by Hamilton-Baillie Associates (October 2014) Summary of Traffic Management Proposals and Map Pedestrian Footways Audit*
- 3       Statement of Conformity (Compliance Statement)*
- 4       Town Housing Needs Survey Report by GRCC (March 2014)*
- 5       Hidden Britain Survey on Tourism (November 2013)*
- 6       Rural Community Profile for Lechlade (July 2013)*
- 7       Town Character Assessments (April 2014)*
- 8       Designation of Green Spaces, Open Space, Playing Fields or Sports Grounds*
- 9       Consultation Statement and Appendices*
- 10      Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement AECOM (January 2015)*
- 11      Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) Health Check - Examiner's Report (September 2015)*
- 12      Report by Examiner, Graham Self (February 2016)*





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