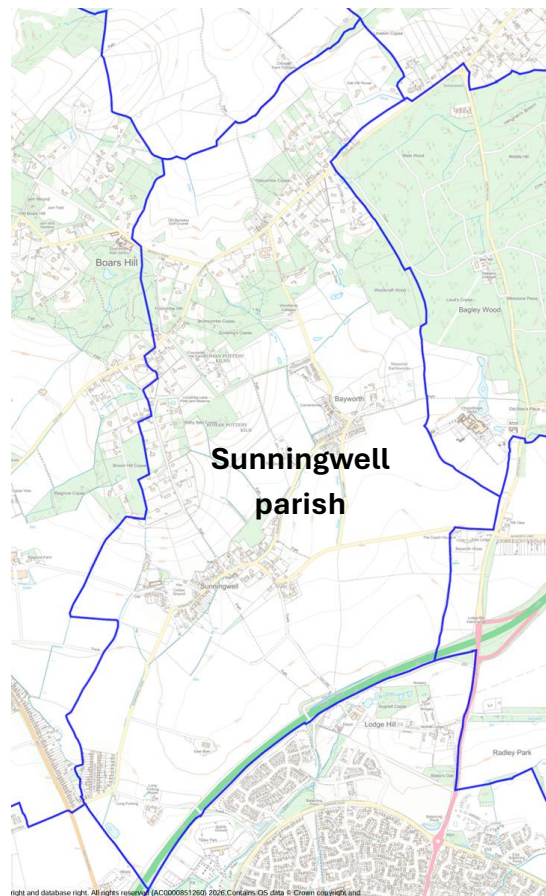




Neighbourhood Plan

Planning Working Group

Working Group Report – March 2026



Disclaimer:- This report has been prepared in good faith to be an accurate and unbiased summary of what is known within the topic area. However, the authors cannot guarantee the accuracy or the completeness of the information provided, and the report may be subject to revision and correction.

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Aims, scope and membership

WG Name	Planning
Aims	To identify the qualities of the area that are valued by residents and visitors and seek the best way of protecting and enhancing them through planning policies which allow the parish to evolve and thrive in the context of developments across the wider area.
Scope	Specifically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the qualities of the area that are valued by residents and visitors • To understand what about these qualities is valued • To determine how best to sustain, enhance and supplement these valued qualities through planning policies and other means • To understand the nature and magnitude of adjacent future developments • To plan and act in advance of these to maximise benefits and minimize the issues that they will bring
Members	Liz Browne, Liz Delacave, Dan Heelas, Karen Laister, James Weeks, John Whittle

Executive Summary

Sunningwell parish comprises the villages of Sunningwell, Bayworth, part of Boars Hill, and other small areas of habitation including Long Furlong. It is rural in nature, with its small centres of population separated by green fields and woodland. This rural aspect is enjoyed both by residents and the many visitors from adjacent urban areas, using the many footpaths and bridlepaths for exercise, dog walking and other activities.

Although the villages themselves have not experienced larger scale developments in recent years, some 1,800 new homes have been built on land previously in Sunningwell parish since the 1980s. The vast majority of these are on land which Sunningwell has ceded to the town of Abingdon.

Plans are in preparation for development on Dalton Barracks to add thousands more houses on the border of the parish over the coming decades: 5,250 was the number on the Defence Infrastructure Organisation leaflet that was delivered to every address in the parish.

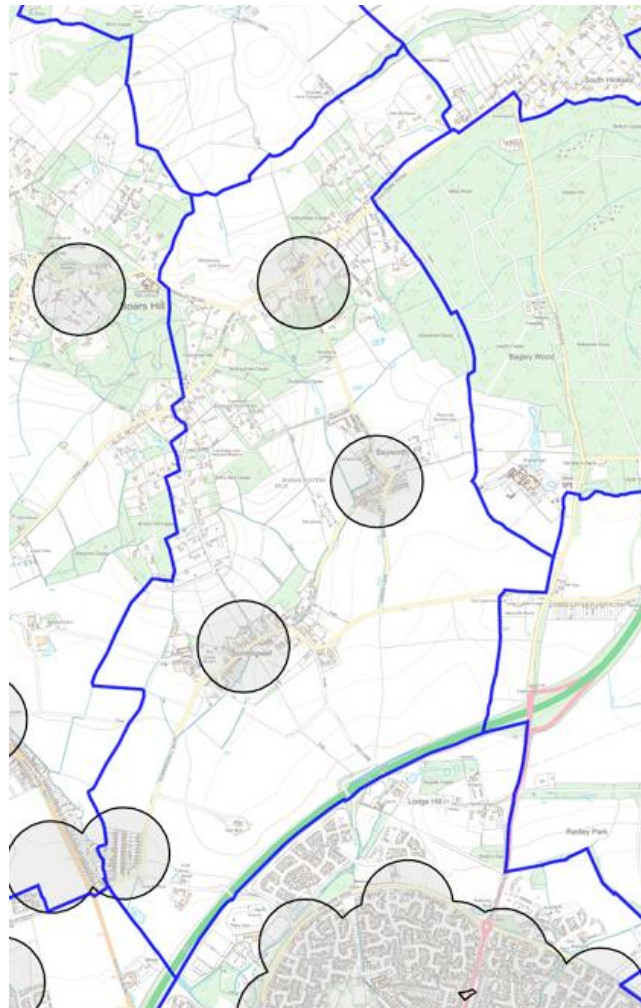
These developments will put increasing pressure on the valued character of the parish, and planning should consider how that character can be maintained as demand for both its countryside access, and the facilities not available locally elsewhere increases substantially.

Increased traffic is of particular concern. The facilities in central Sunningwell are a short drive (less than ten minutes) from north Abingdon and Dalton Barracks, but a 40-minute walk. Cycling is credible in terms of time, but sharing narrow lanes with 60mph traffic is neither appealing nor safe.

Lying in a direct line between Dalton Barracks and the city of Oxford, there is also concern about through-traffic using the essentially single-track lanes of the parish, exacerbated by the improved Lodge Hill interchange, as well as the Lodge Hill Park & Ride that has been mooted.

1. Sunningwell parish: introduction

The first documentary evidence of the Sunningwell parish can be found in the charters of Abingdon Abbey, dated 956AD. It has four distinct population centres of Bayworth, Boars Hill, Long Furlong and Sunningwell village. It is a distinctive and treasured characteristic of the parish that the four distinct populated areas within it remain separated by open fields.

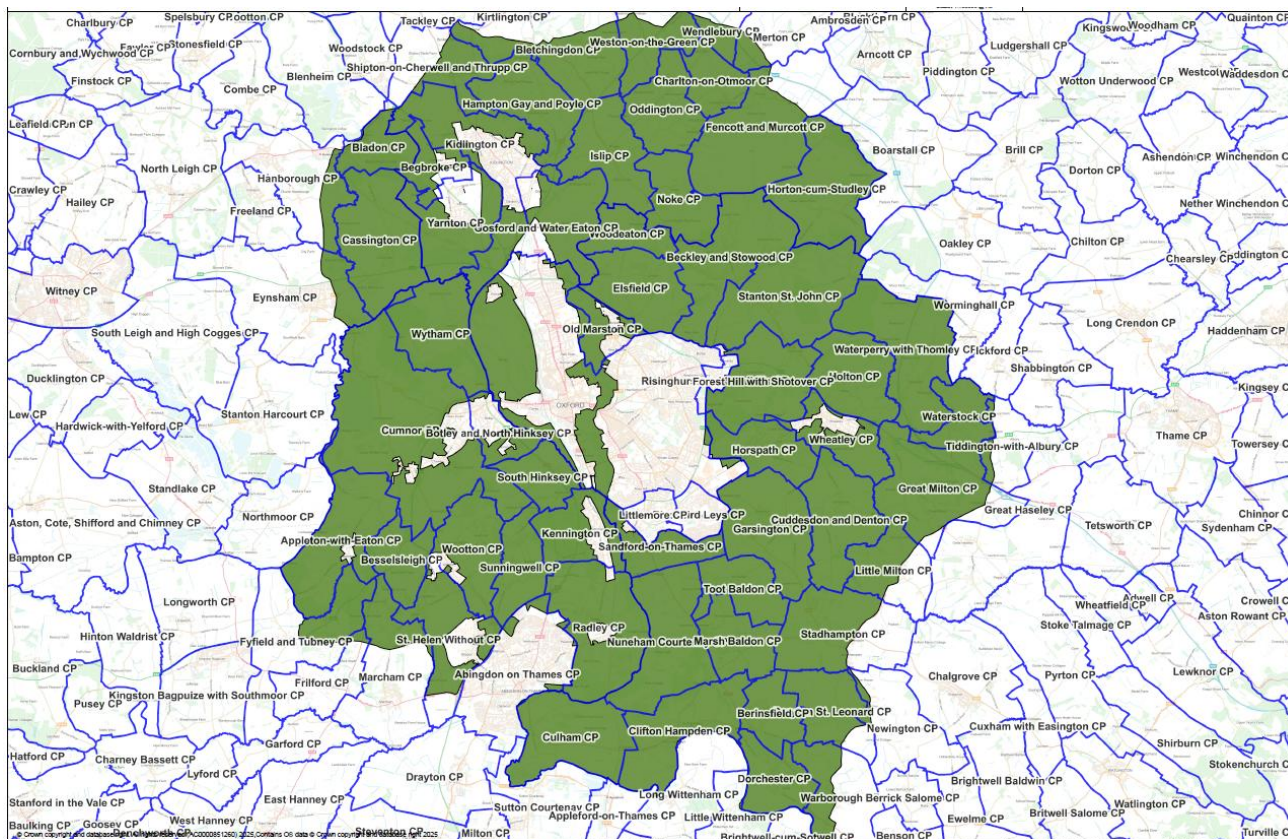


Bayworth and Sunningwell appear in the Domesday Book of 1086, with Bayworth being worth 'ten hides' and Sunningwell 'five hides'. Sunningwell village retains many houses from the 19th century and earlier, and houses on Boars Hill are also from a wide range of eras. The majority of historic Bayworth properties have given way to post-war houses, and the houses in Long Furlong date from the 20th century.

The parish retains its rural character, and is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, providing a valued 'lung' for surrounding, increasingly built-up areas.

1.1 Oxford Green Belt

Sunningwell parish lies entirely within the Oxford Green Belt, as shown below.



Sunningwell shown in Oxford Green Belt

The idea of the Oxford Green Belt was first presented by Thomas Sharpe in 1948, with the first policies being implemented in 1958. Following public enquiries in 1961 and 1975, the Oxford Green Belt was approved and the outer boundary fixed. The inner boundary was interim at this stage, pending the outcome of the county-wide Structure Plan, and district level local plans. These occurred in 1979 and 1987, with the Secretary of State giving final approval on 15 April 1987.

The Oxford Green Belt Study prepared by land use consultants for Oxfordshire County Council in October 2015 states the four purposes of the Green Belt as:

- Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of larger built-up areas
- Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another
- Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

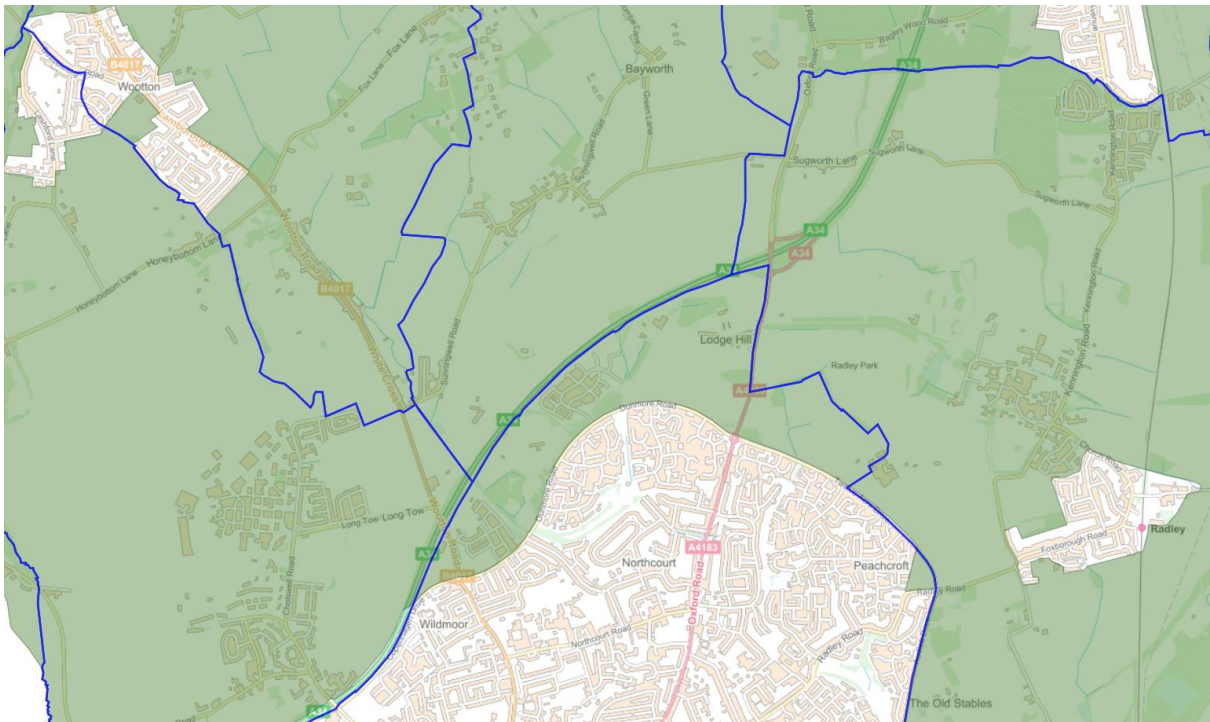
To the north, west and east, Sunningwell borders other Green Belt parishes.

However, the southern border of Sunningwell is with Abingdon town which is not Green Belt. It is of relevance to Sunningwell that while Oxford has been considered a 'larger built-up area' in

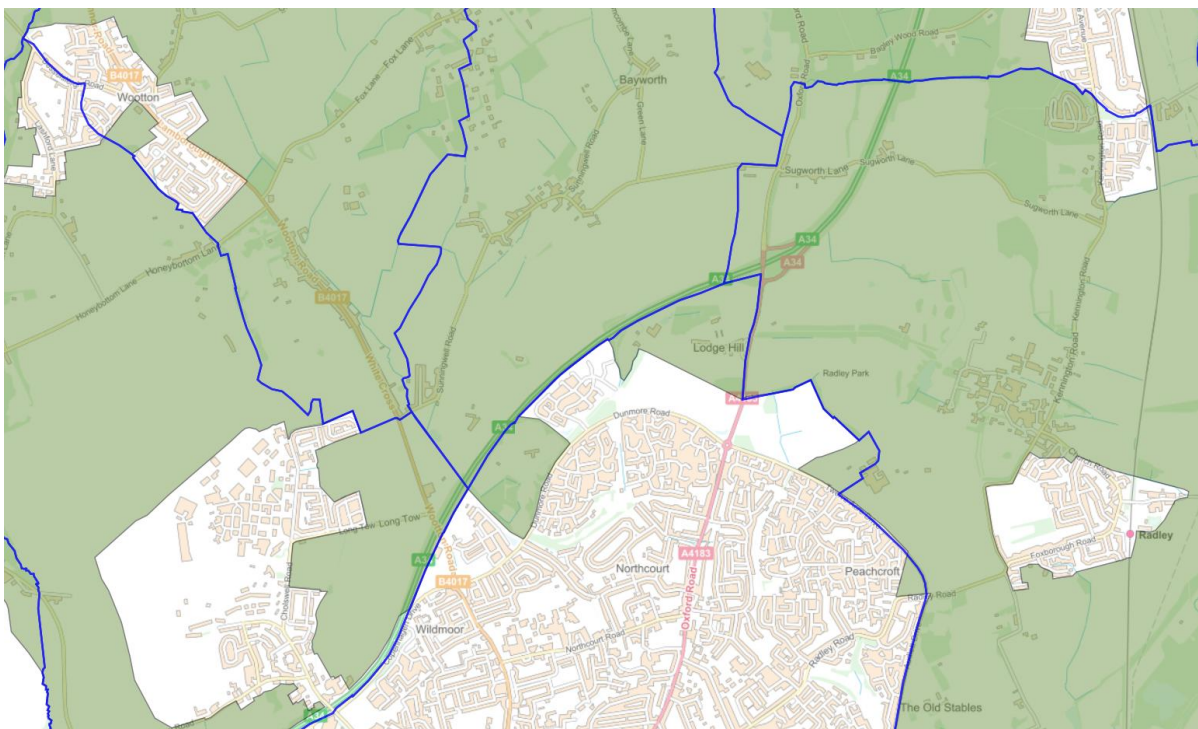
Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

the context of Purpose 1, Abingdon has not, meaning that expansion of Abingdon into the Green Belt has not been considered to be in violation of Purpose 1.

The images below show the growth of Abingdon into the Green Belt between 2015 and 2025.



Oxford Green Belt – 2015



Oxford Green Belt – 2025

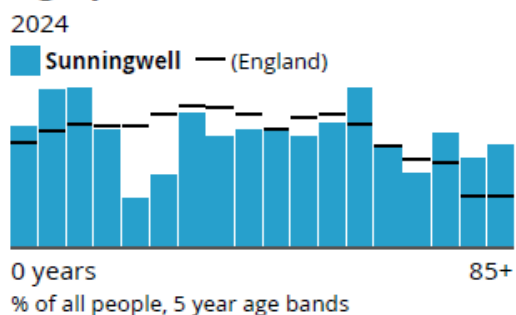
2. Sunningwell parish: census data

Based on 2021 census data, the mid-2022 population of the parish of Sunningwell was 902 people in 359 households. This aligns with the data from the most recent parish council election in May 2023 which showed 704 voters in 348 dwellings.

Area map



Age profile



Source: ONS - Mid-year estimates

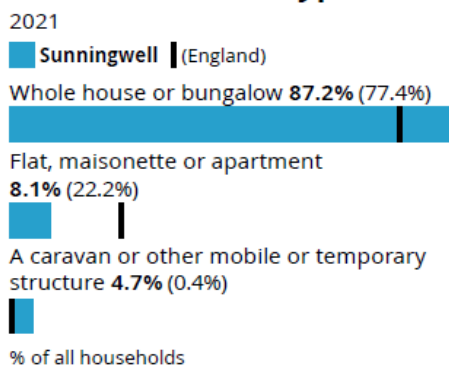
Small area: Output area

Age profiles show that there are approximately twice the number of people in the over-75 age bands compared to the national average.

There is also a marked shortage of people in the 20-30 age band, being less than half the national average.

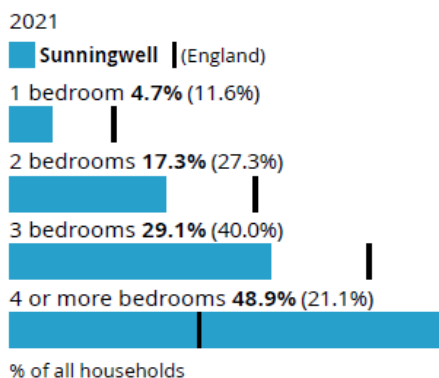
The parish has an unusually wide demographic range across its 359 dwellings, with the number of 4-bed and larger houses being more than twice the national average, combined with the number of caravan, mobile or temporary homes being ten times the national average.

Accommodation type



Source: ONS - Census 2021

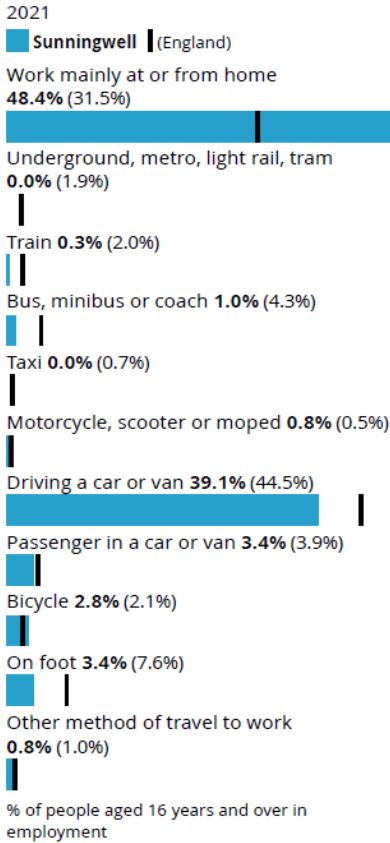
Number of bedrooms



Source: ONS - Census 2021

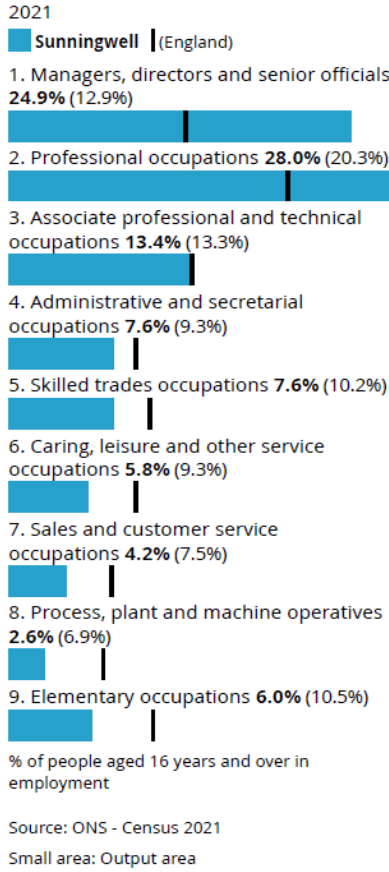
Census data also shows a higher than average socio-economic population and occupations at manager, director and professional levels, together with a higher than average proportion of people working from home.

Method of travel to workplace

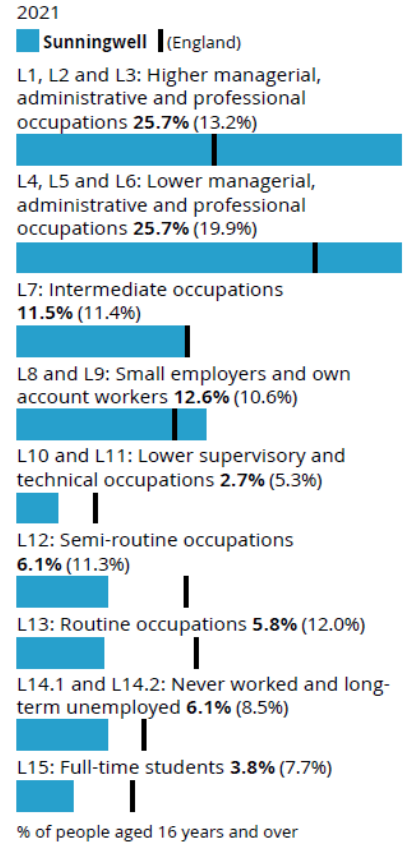


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Occupation

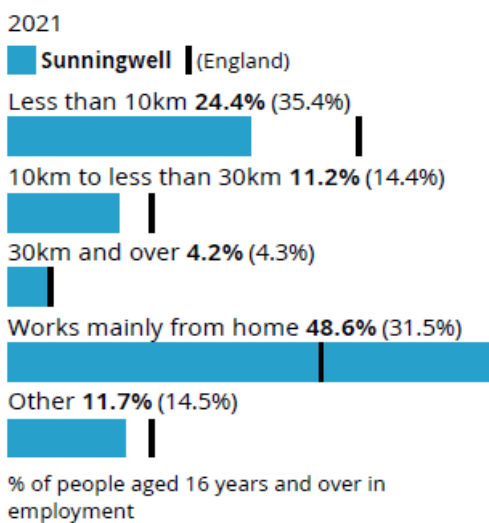


Socio-economic Classification (NS-Sec)



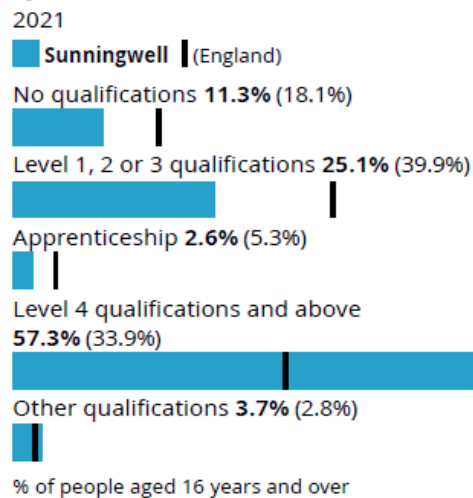
Source: ONS - Census 2021

Distance travelled to work



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Highest level of qualification



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Qualification levels are higher than the national average.

Levels of health and disability align closely with the national average, as shown below.

General health

2021

Sunningwell (England)

Very good health **49.7%** (48.5%)

Good health **34.3%** (33.7%)

Fair health **10.8%** (12.7%)

Bad health **3.7%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **1.4%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Source: ONS - Census 2021

Disability

2021

Sunningwell (England)

Disabled under the Equality Act **17.7%** (17.3%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **82.3%** (82.7%)

% of all people

Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Provision of unpaid care

2021

Sunningwell (England)

Provides no unpaid care **90.9%** (91.2%)

Provides 19 hours or less unpaid care a week **5.4%** (4.3%)

Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week **1.7%** (1.8%)

Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week **2.0%** (2.6%)

% of people aged five years and over

Source: ONS - Census 2021

2.1 Census data by region

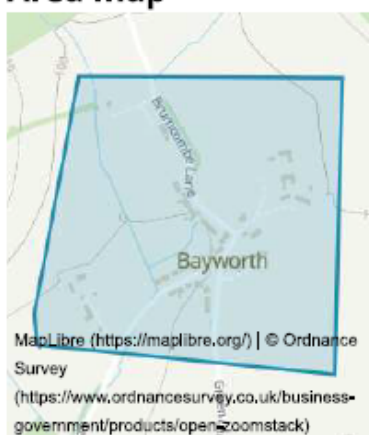
Sunningwell parish comprises four distinct population centres: Bayworth hamlet, Sunningwell village, the Long Furlong area and the eastern part of Boars Hill.

The census data for each area highlights some of the marked differences between them.

2.1.1 Bayworth hamlet

Bayworth hamlet has 202 residents in 89 households, equating to 22% of the population of the parish. The population density is relatively high, approaching 50 people per hectare.

Area map



Population

2024

202

people

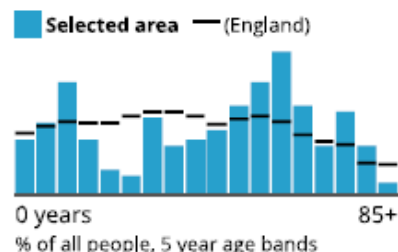
58,620,101 people in England

Source: ONS – Mid-year estimates

Small area: Output area

Age profile

2024



Source: ONS – Mid-year estimates

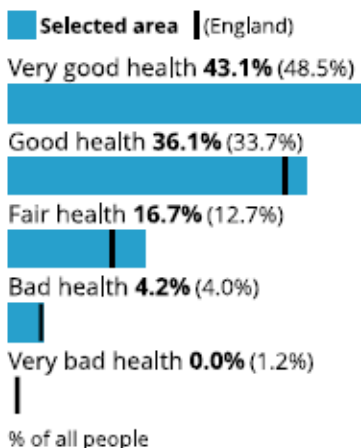
Small area: Output area

For Bayworth, the deficit of young adults is particularly marked, and extends across all working ages.

The general health is below the national average, and the levels of disability and the quantity of unpaid care are higher.

General health

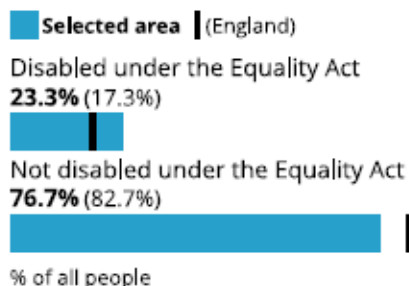
2021



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Disability

2021

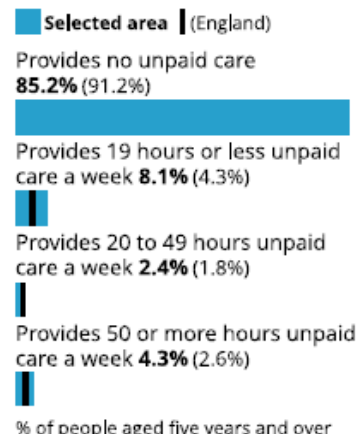


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Provision of unpaid care

2021

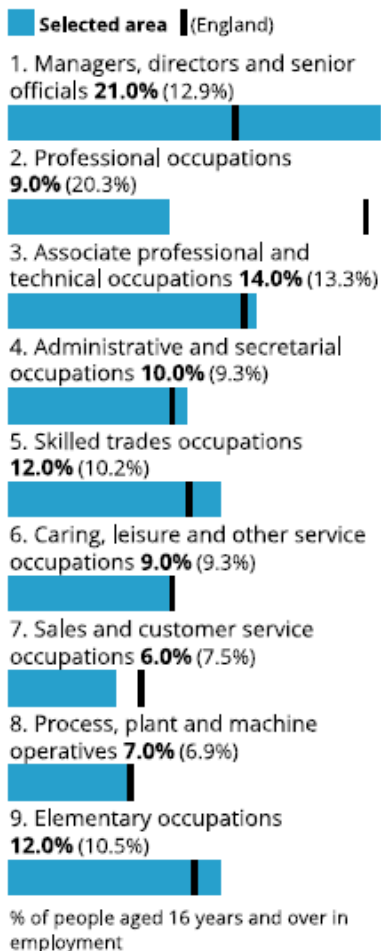


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Qualification levels are below the national average and there are fewer professionals, although a higher than average number of senior managers and directors.

Occupation

2021

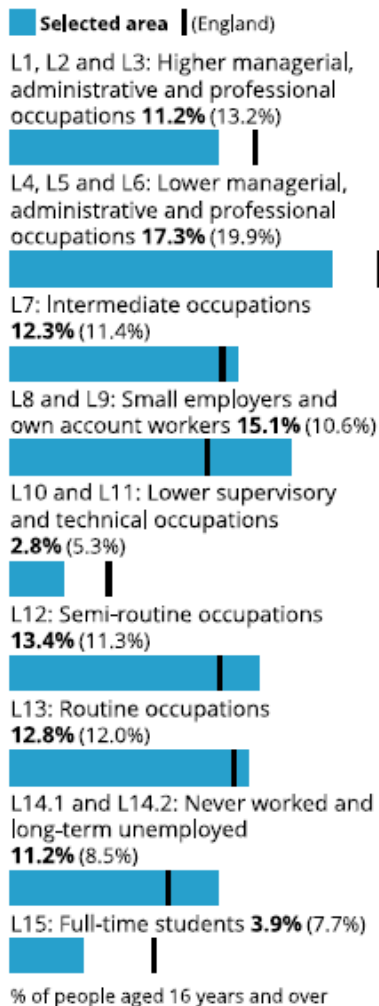


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

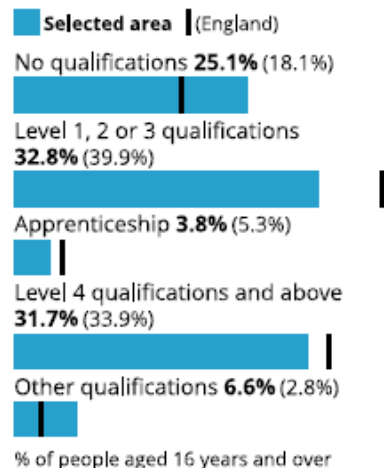
Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)

2021



Highest level of qualification

2021

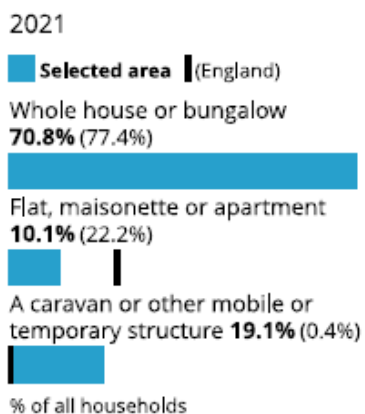


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

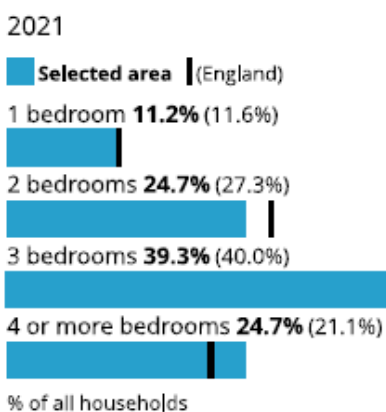
Bayworth is home to the majority of the parish's temporary homes, although it still has above the national average of four or more bedroom dwellings

Accommodation type



Source: ONS - Census 2021

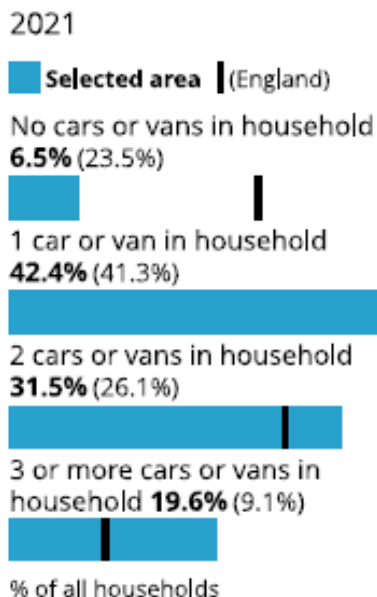
Number of bedrooms



Source: ONS - Census 2021

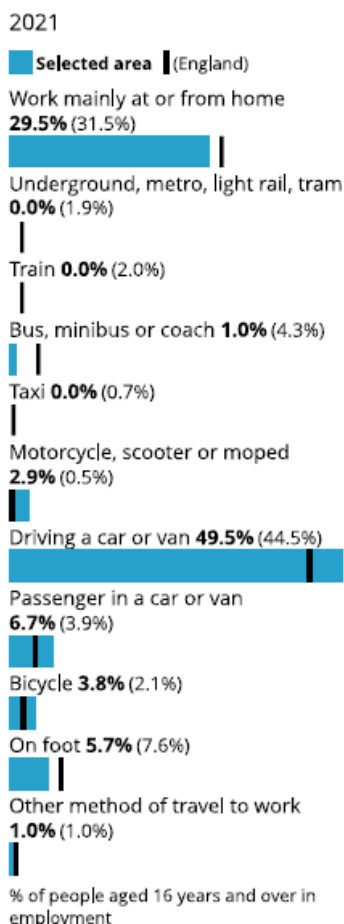
The reliance on car-based transport is reflected in the fact that few households have no cars, with more than average having more than one

Number of cars or vans

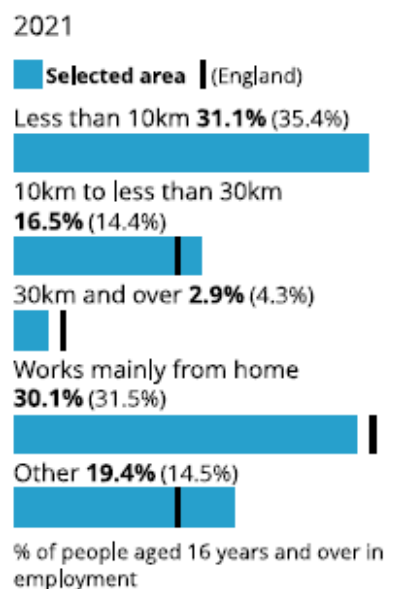


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Method of travel to workplace



Distance travelled to work



Source: ONS - Census 2021

2.1.2 Boars Hill – eastern section in Sunningwell parish

The Boars Hill area includes 336 residents in 114 dwellings, amounting to 37% of the parish population. The population is thinly spread, at approximately 5 people per hectare.

Area map



Population

2024

336

people

58,620,101 people in England

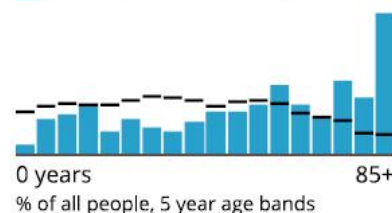
Source: ONS – Mid-year estimates

Small area: Output area

Age profile

2024

Selected area (England)



Source: ONS – Mid-year estimates

Small area: Output area

This region shows a large proportion of the population above 75 years, with all groups below 55 years being below average.

This is partly due to the presence of a residential care home in the region, which may also explain the larger than average proportion of people in the 'very bad health' category, although the overall level of people in good or very good health remains high.

General health

2021

Selected area (England)

Very good health **52.0%** (48.5%)

Good health **30.4%** (33.7%)

Fair health **9.1%** (12.7%)

Bad health **5.0%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **3.4%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Disability

2021

Selected area (England)

Disabled under the Equality Act **19.9%** (17.3%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **80.1%** (82.7%)

% of all people

Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Provision of unpaid care

2021

Selected area (England)

Provides no unpaid care **93.7%** (91.2%)

Provides 19 hours or less unpaid care a week **3.8%** (4.3%)

Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week **1.9%** (1.8%)

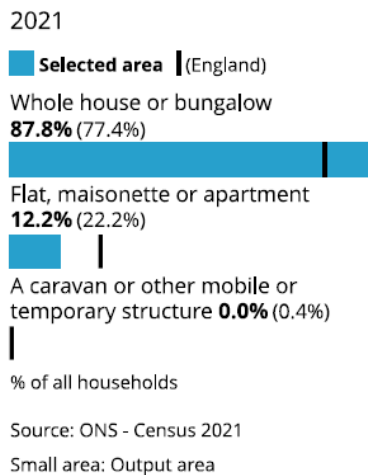
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week **0.6%** (2.6%)

% of people aged five years and over

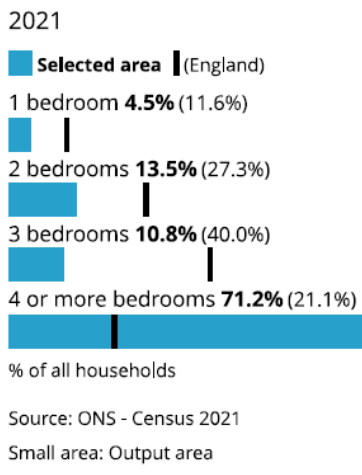
More than 71% of houses in Boars Hill have four or more bedrooms, more than three times the national average. It also has a very high proportion of people who primarily work from home at 64%, more than twice the national average.

Levels of occupation, socio-economic classification and qualifications are also high, with percentages in the highest section of each category being more than twice the national average.

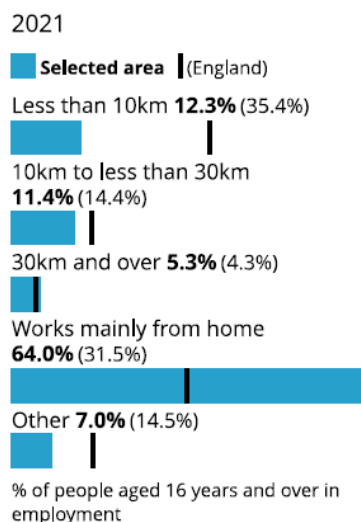
Accommodation type



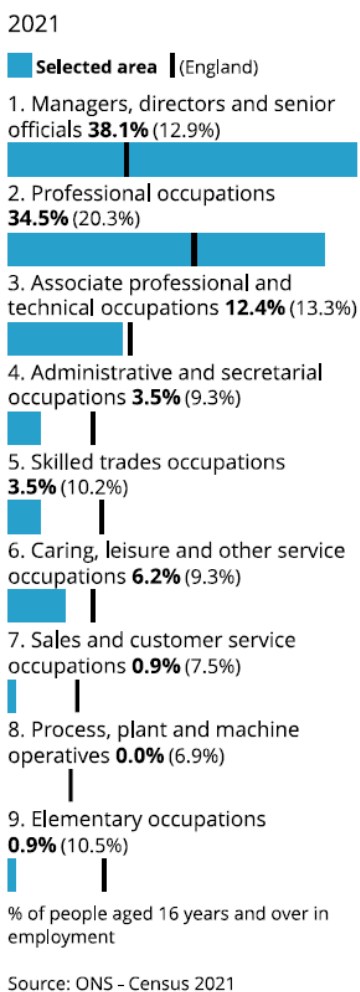
Number of bedrooms



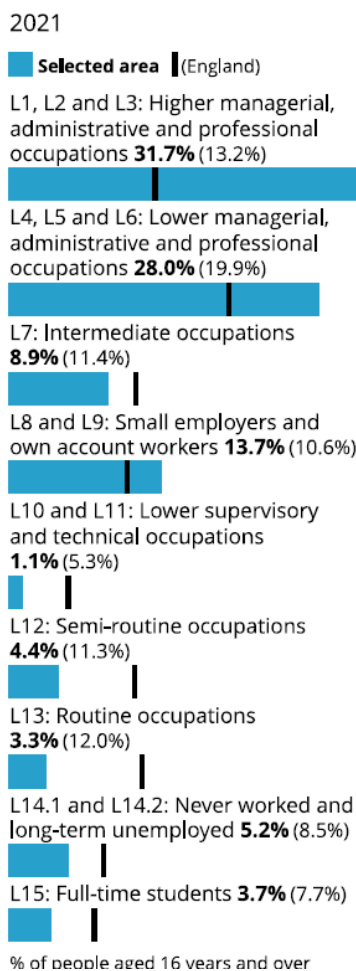
Distance travelled to work



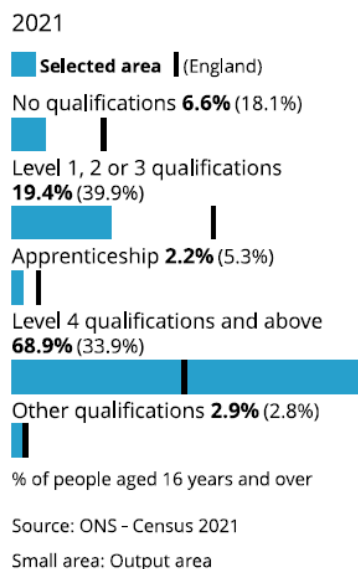
Occupation



Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)



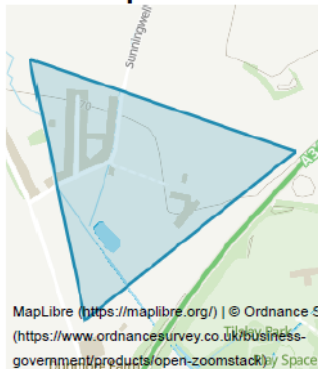
Highest level of qualification



2.1.3 Long Furlong

Long Furlong is home to 104 people in 46 dwellings, being 12% of the parish population, at a density of about 30 people per hectare.

Area map



Population

2024

104

people

58,620,101 people in England

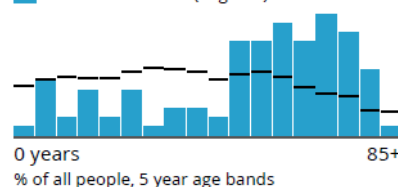
Source: ONS - Mid-year estimates

Small area: Output area

Age profile

2024

Selected area (England)



Source: ONS - Mid-year estimates

Small area: Output area

The vast majority of the population is over 50 years old.

Health and disability levels are broadly in-line with the national average.

General health

2021

Selected area (England)

Very good health **51.9%** (48.5%)

Good health **33.0%** (33.7%)

Fair health **11.3%** (12.7%)

Bad health **2.8%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **0.9%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Disability

2021

Selected area (England)

Disabled under the Equality Act **19.8%** (17.3%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **80.2%** (82.7%)

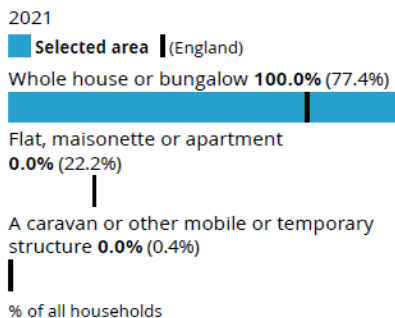
% of all people

Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

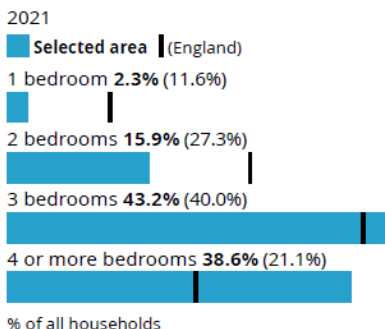
Accommodation is exclusively in houses, with the majority having three, or four or more bedrooms.

Accommodation type



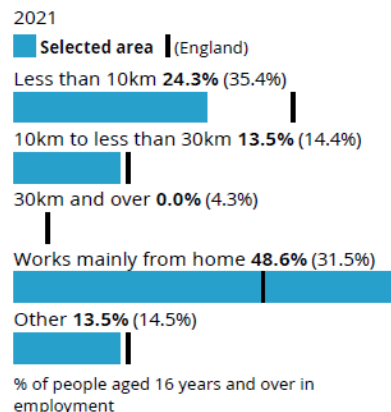
Source: ONS - Census 2021
Small area: Output area

Number of bedrooms



Source: ONS - Census 2021
Small area: Output area

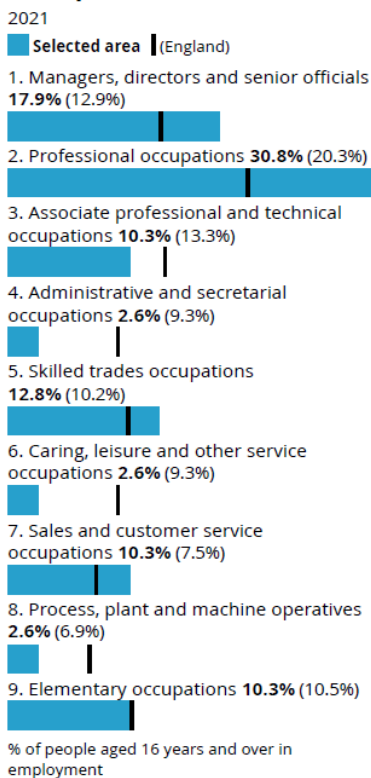
Distance travelled to work



Significantly more than average work from home.

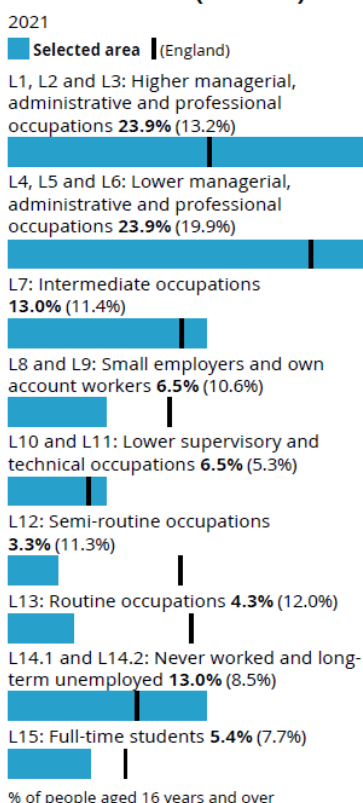
Levels of occupation, socio-economic classification and qualifications are also higher than the national average.

Occupation

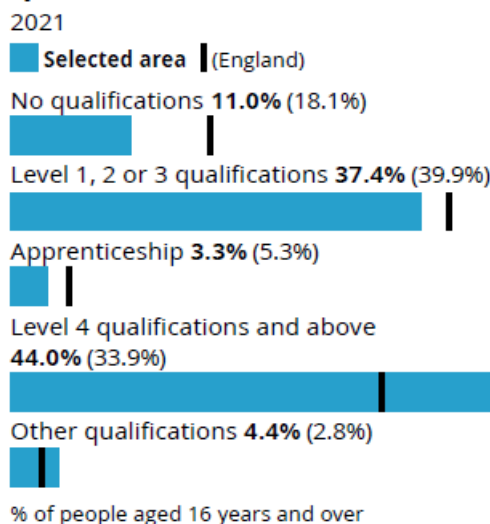


Source: ONS - Census 2021

Socio-economic Classification (NS-Sec)



Highest level of qualification

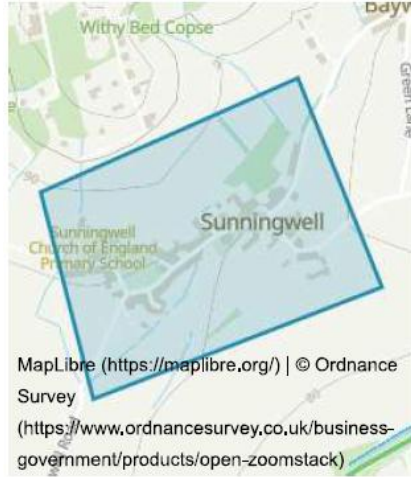


Source: ONS - Census 2021

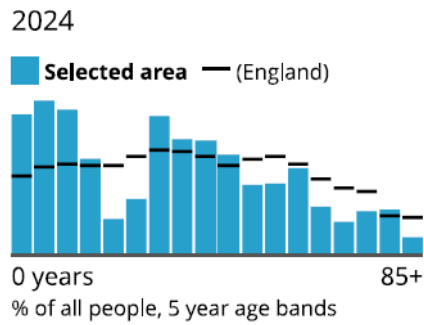
2.1.4 Sunningwell village

Sunningwell village is home to 260 residents in 112 households, equating to 29% of the population of the parish and distributed at about 20 people per hectare.

Area map



Age profile

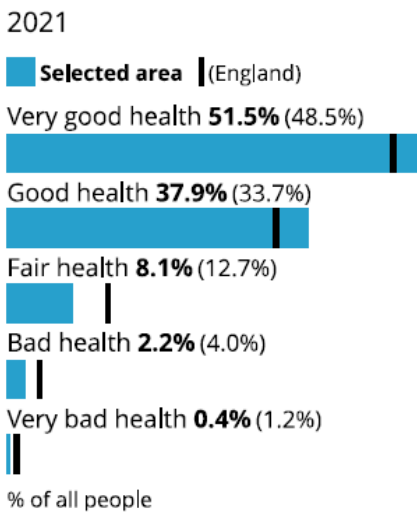


Source: ONS – Mid-year estimates
Small area: Output area

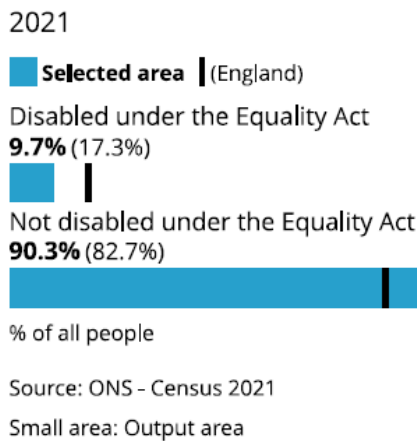
Sunningwell village, home to the only primary school in the parish, has a higher than average population under the age of 15, although the deficit in the 20-30 age group remains.

Health and disability compare favourably with the national average.

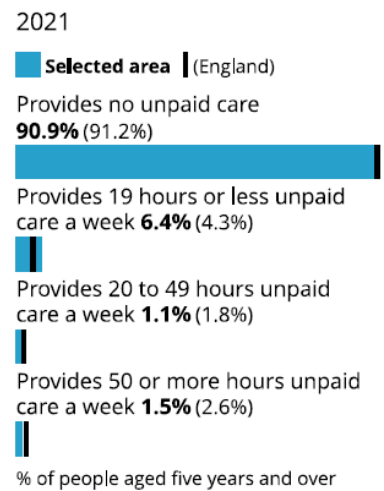
General health



Disability



Provision of unpaid care

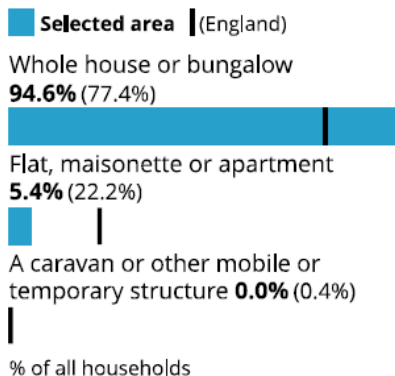


Accommodation is predominantly houses, with 50% having four or more bedrooms, more than twice the national average.

The number of people working from home is also significantly higher than the national average.

Accommodation type

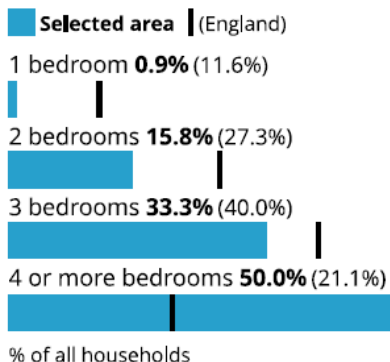
2021



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Number of bedrooms

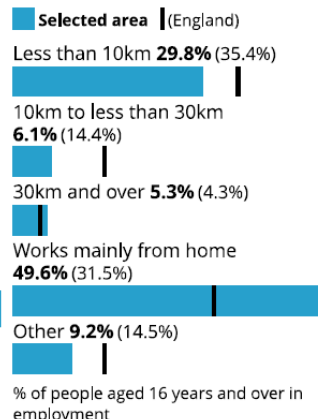
2021



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Distance travelled to work

2021

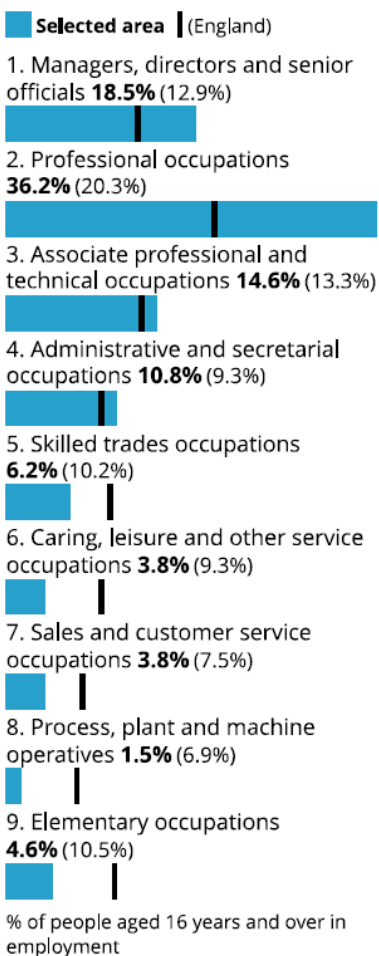


% of people aged 16 years and over in employment

Levels of occupation, socio-economic classification and qualifications are also higher than the national average.

Occupation

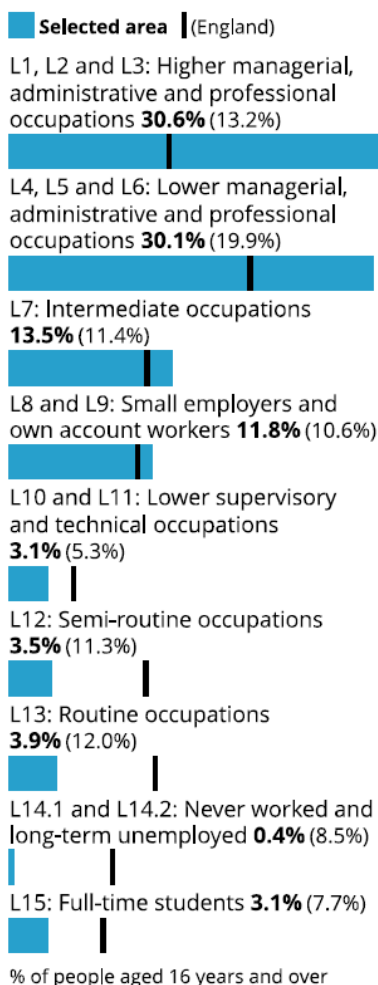
2021



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)

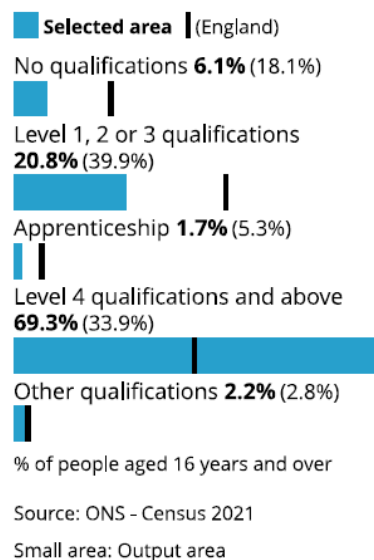
2021



% of people aged 16 years and over

Highest level of qualification

2021



Source: ONS - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

3. Sunningwell parish boundary history and new housing

The main boundary of Sunningwell parish can be traced back to the Enclosure Act of 1723 and beyond, although the earliest known detailed map is the Sunningwell Tithe map of 1838. This is reproduced below from Radley History Club's 2014 publication 'The Changing Boundaries of Radley & Sunningwell Parishes'

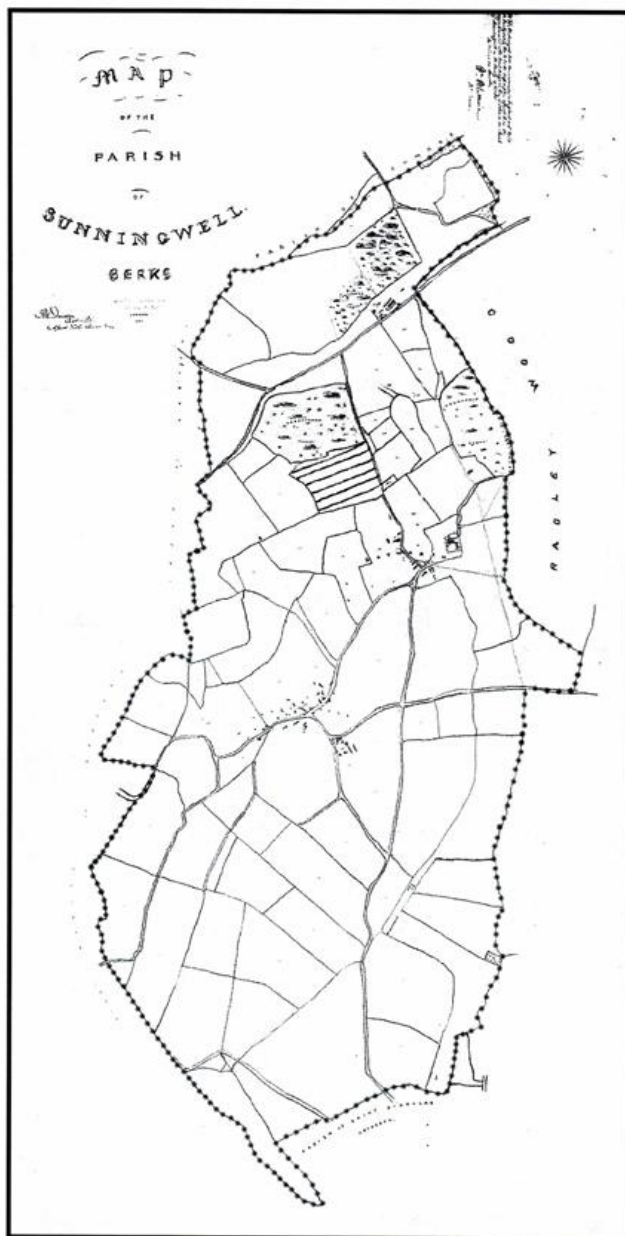


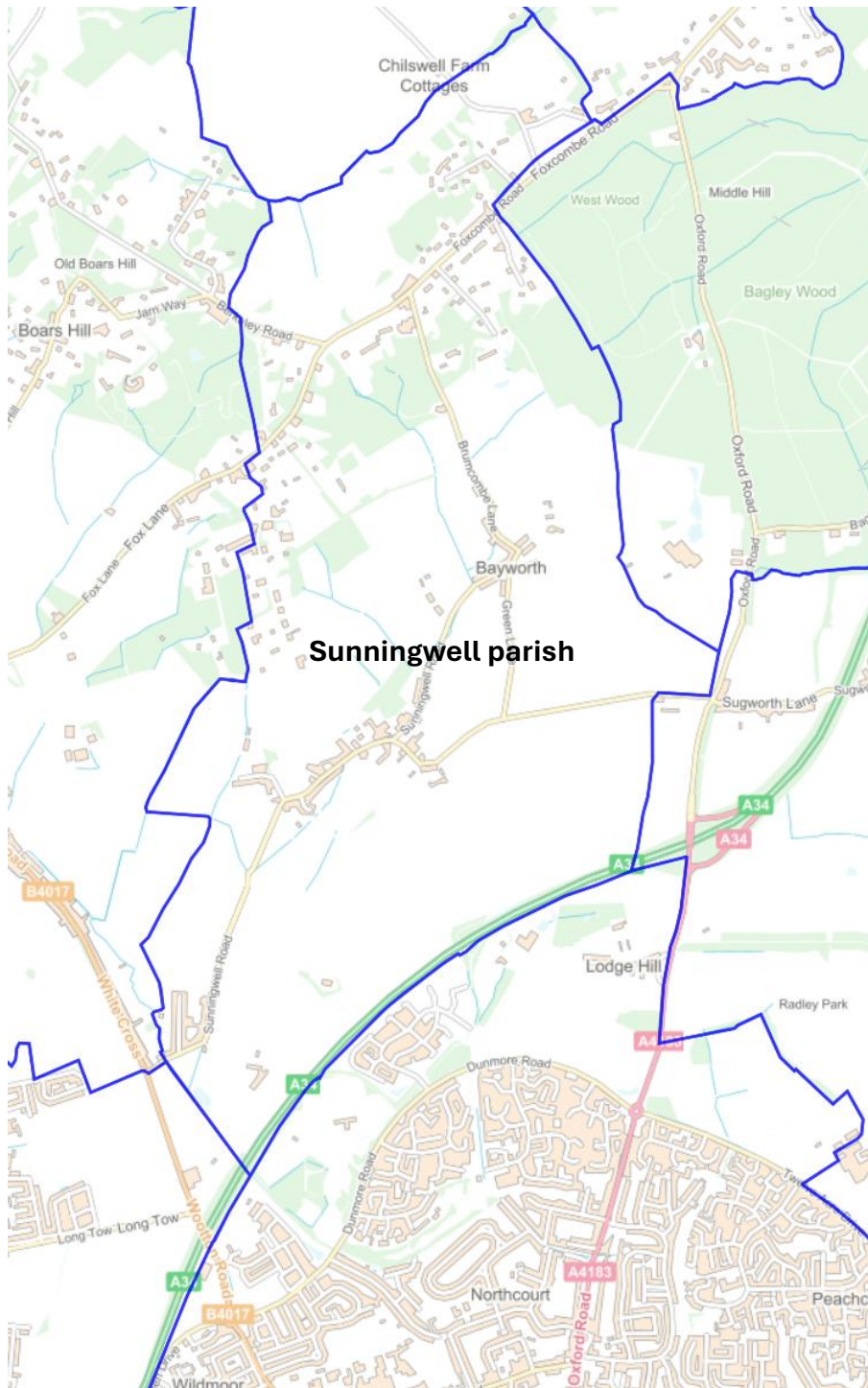
Figure 4.4. Enhanced copy of the Sunningwell tithe map 1838 on a reduced scale. The parish boundary has been marked with a string of dots. We have hatched the detached portion of the parish of St. Nicholas, Abingdon.

The Changing Boundaries of Radley & Sunningwell Parishes - © Radley History Club

This boundary persisted until the 1980's, although the encircled area of the Parish of St Nicolas was transferred to Sunningwell in 1883.

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

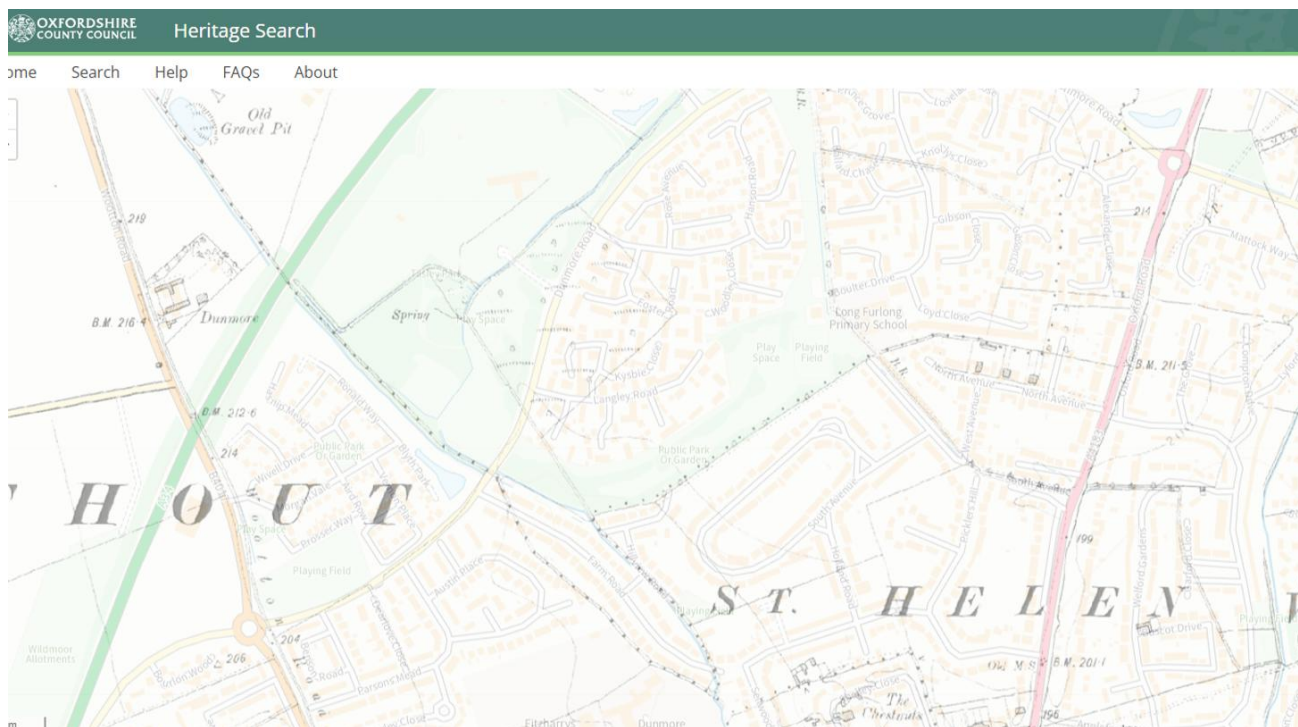
The present boundary of the parish is shown below.



2025 – Present day Sunningwell parish boundary in blue

Currently the southern border of the parish is defined by the A34 trunk road, but prior to 1990 the border was half a kilometre further south, as shown below where the 1982 parish boundary (dotted line) is overlaid on a present day map.

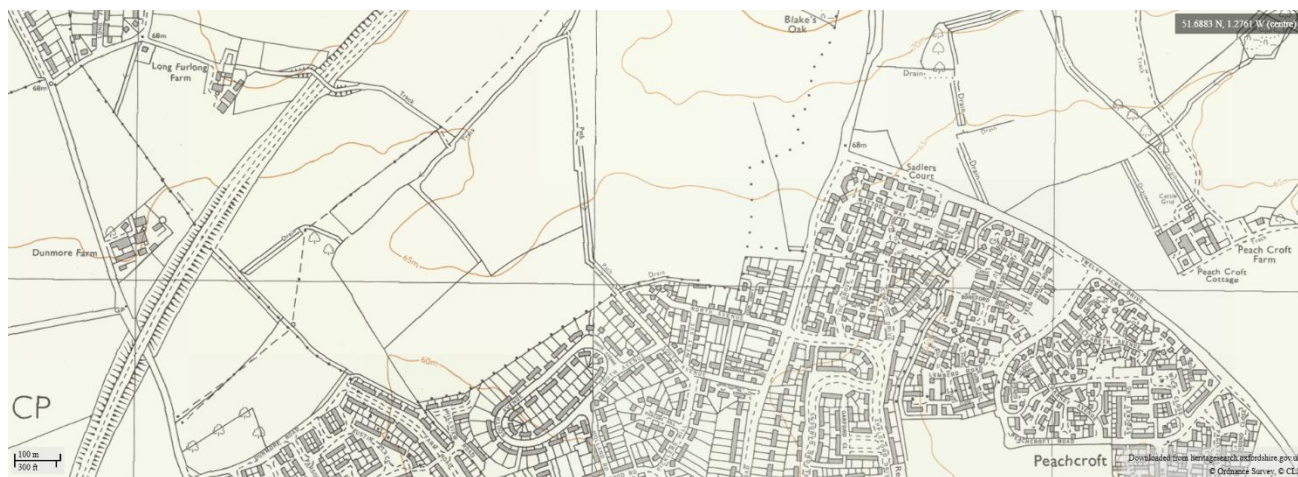
Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan



1982 Sunningwell parish boundary – overlaid on present day map

The southern boundary ran along the end of the gardens of the houses on South Avenue and North Avenue, and there was a 'finger' stretching further south including Farm Road.

By 1990 the Farm Road 'finger' had been ceded to Abingdon, as shown in the 1990 map below.



1990 – Sunningwell parish boundary

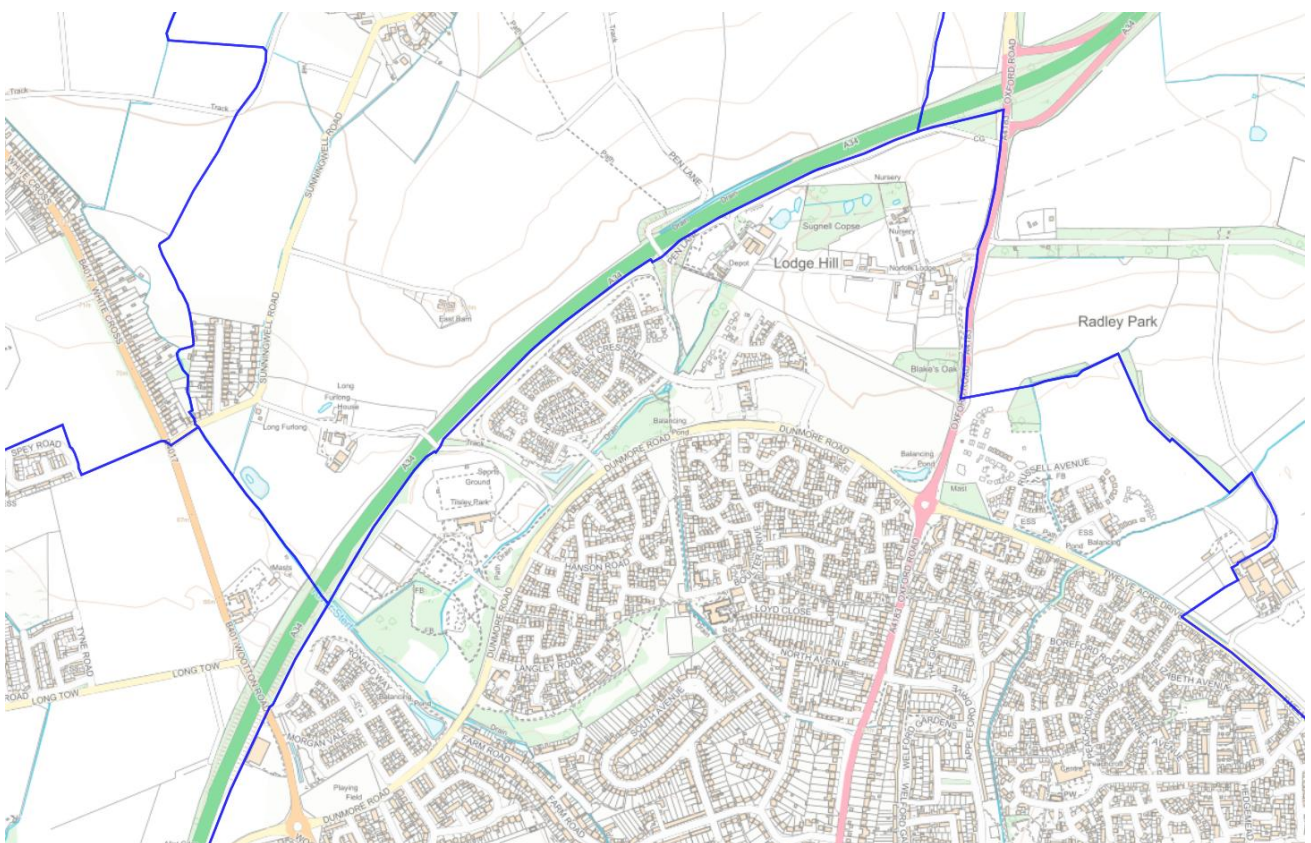
The second major transfer of land occurred in the early 1990s when all land south of the newly constructed Dunmore Road was ceded to Abingdon, as shown in the 1996 map below.

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan



1996 – Sunningwell parish boundary

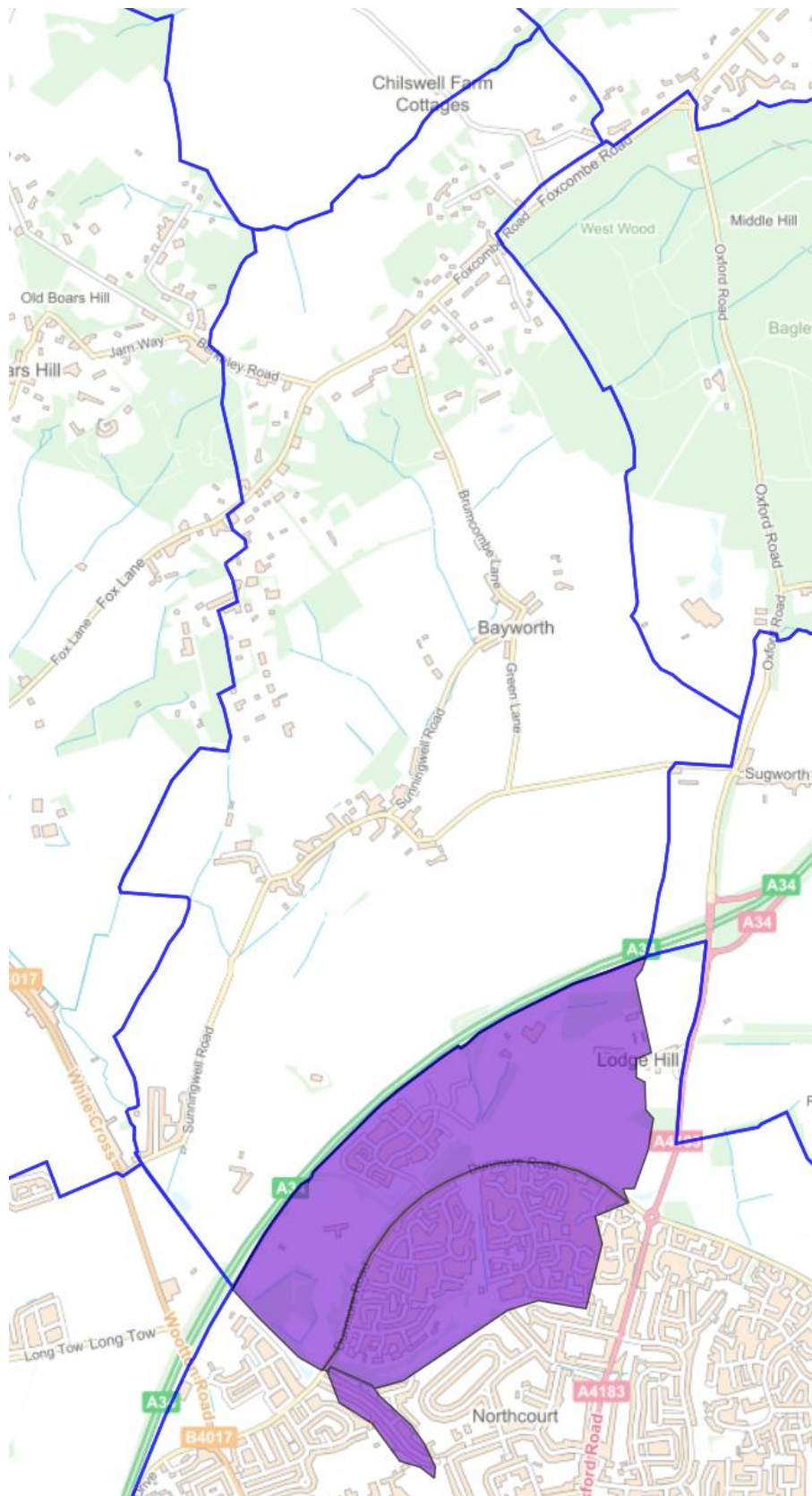
The most recent transfer of land occurred when all land between Dunmore Road and the A34 was transferred to Abingdon, as shown in the present day map below.



2025 – Sunningwell parish boundary

To put the magnitude of these transfers into context, they are shown together with the remaining area of Sunningwell in the map below.

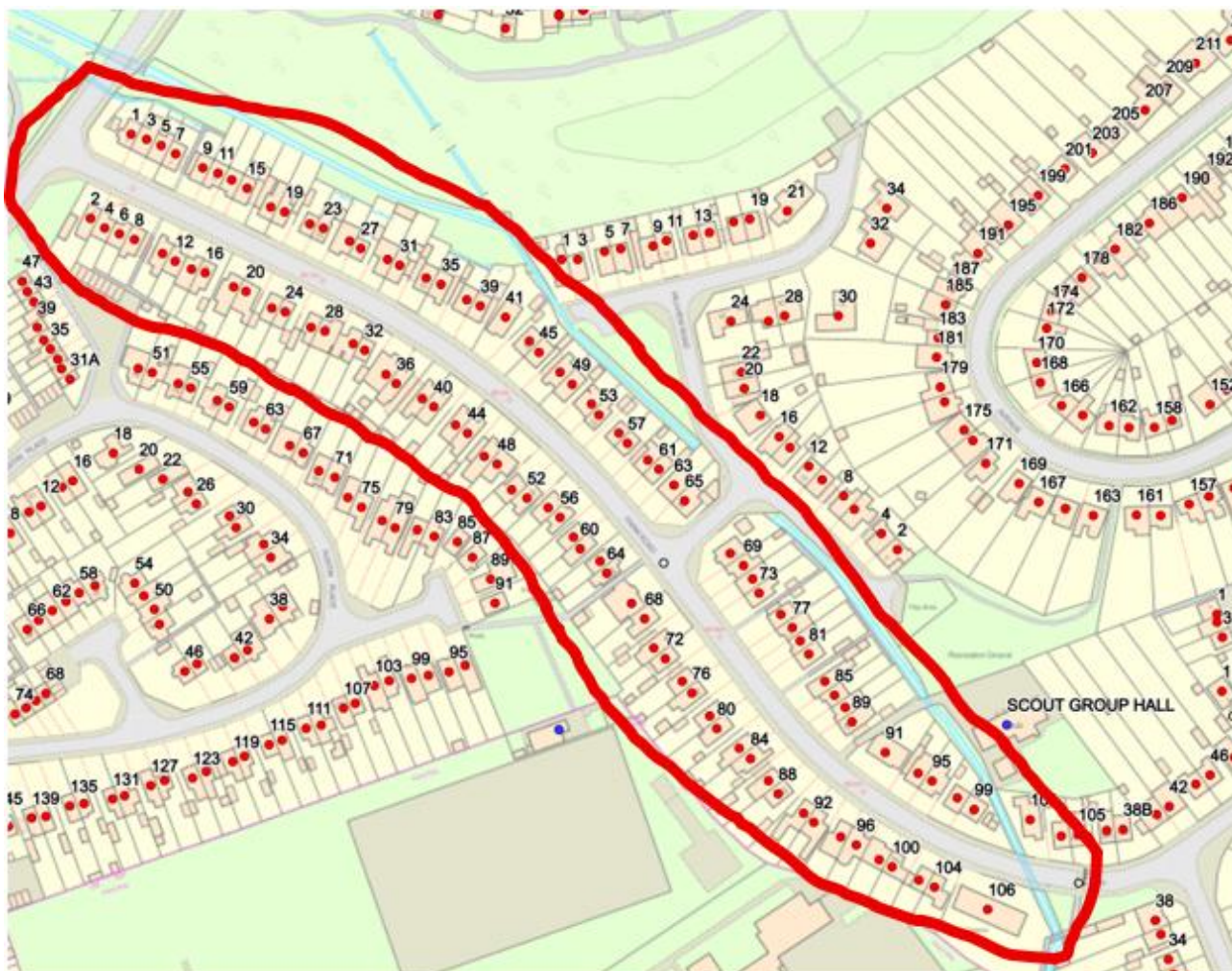
Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan



The three areas ceded from Sunningwell to Abingdon since the 1980s

3.1 New housing

There were no houses on the Farm Road ‘finger’ prior to its transfer, so the 100+ houses that are now there represent new homes.



New homes on Farm Road – 1980s

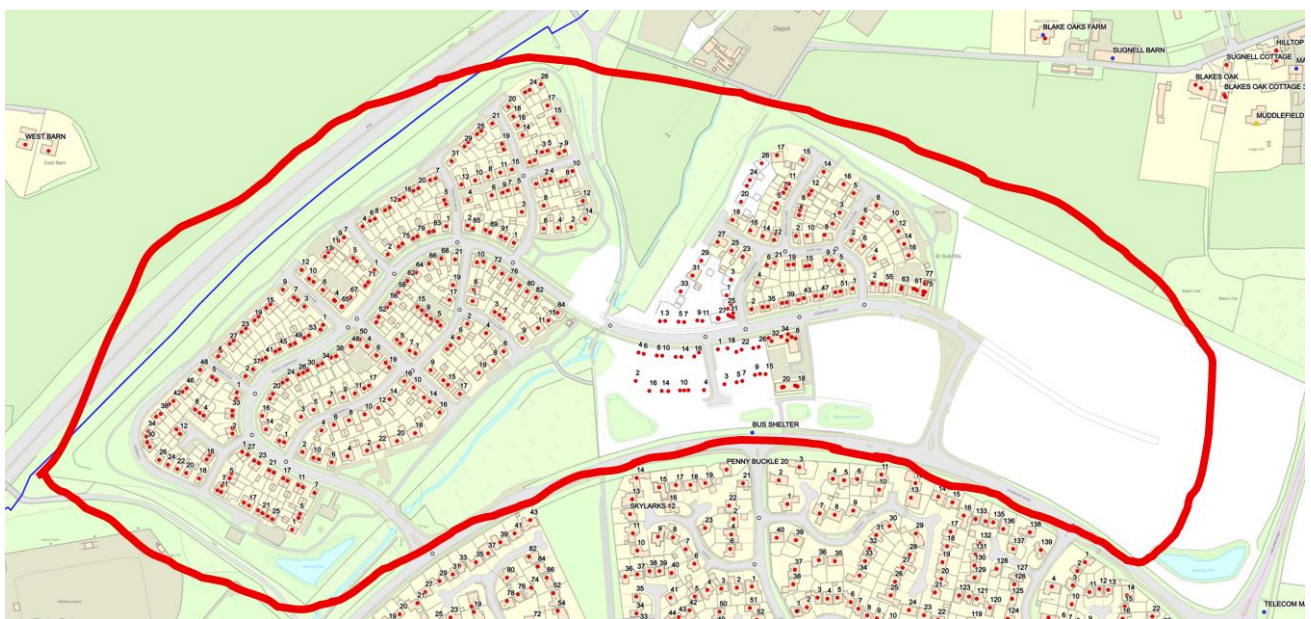
The land South of Dunmore Road was developed to create some 843 new homes within the area ceded by Sunningwell in the 1990s.

The land to the north of Dunmore Road will contain the majority of the 950 new homes that constitute that development.

In summary, some 1,800 new homes have been built on what was Sunningwell parish land in recent years. This dwarfs the number of homes remaining in Sunningwell, which stands at 359.



New homes south of Dunmore Road – 1990s

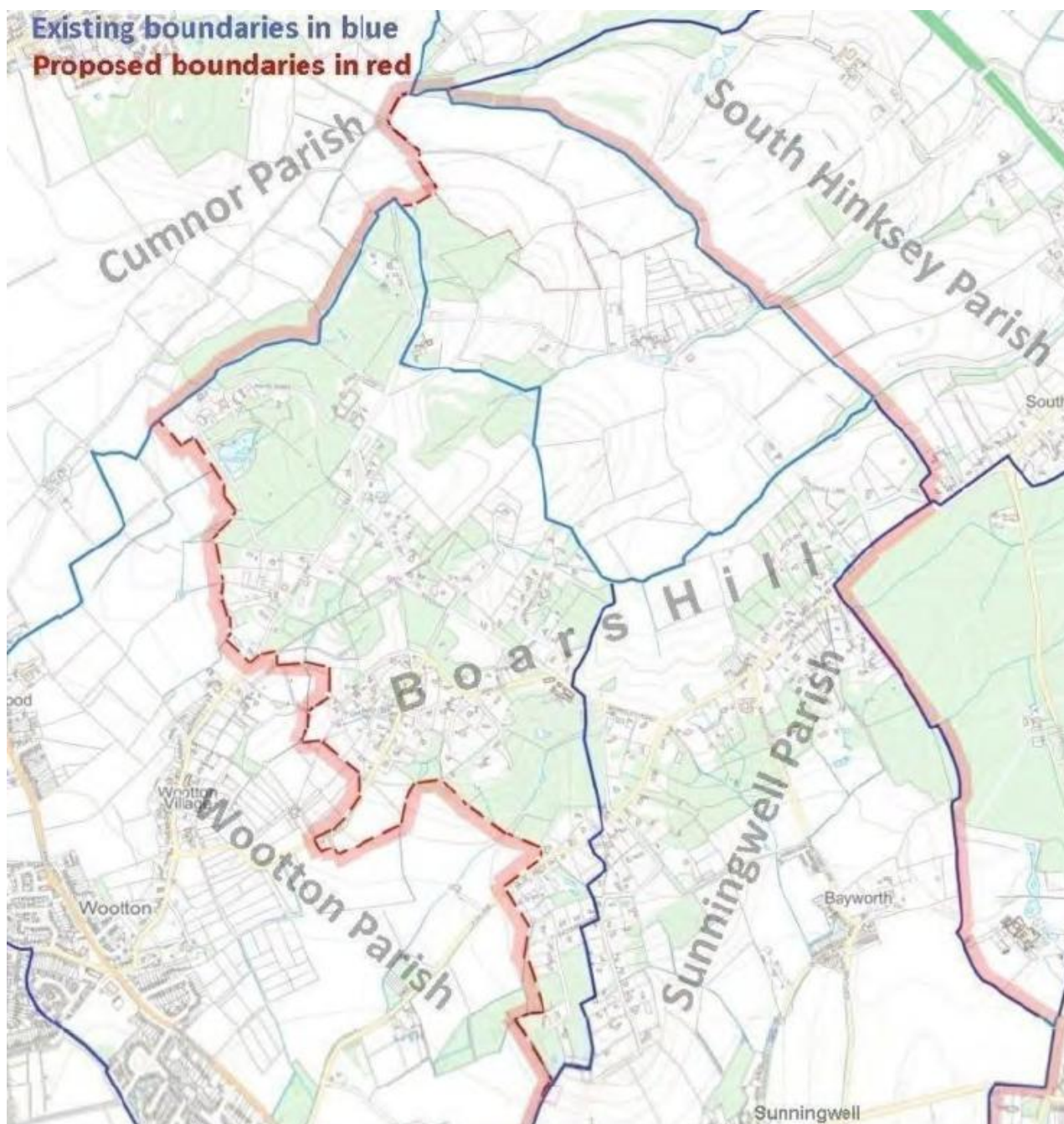


New homes north of Dunmore Road – 2020s

3.2 Proposed realignment of northern parish boundary to include all Boars Hill

At the last periodic review of parish boundaries in 2022 the Boars Hill Association (BHA) submitted a proposal through Sunningwell Parish Council to change parish boundaries such that all of Boars Hill, as defined by the 1974 BHA boundary, would fall within the one parish of Sunningwell, rather than being split between Sunningwell, Wootton and Cumnor parishes.

This would have changed and expanded Sunningwell in the north as shown below.



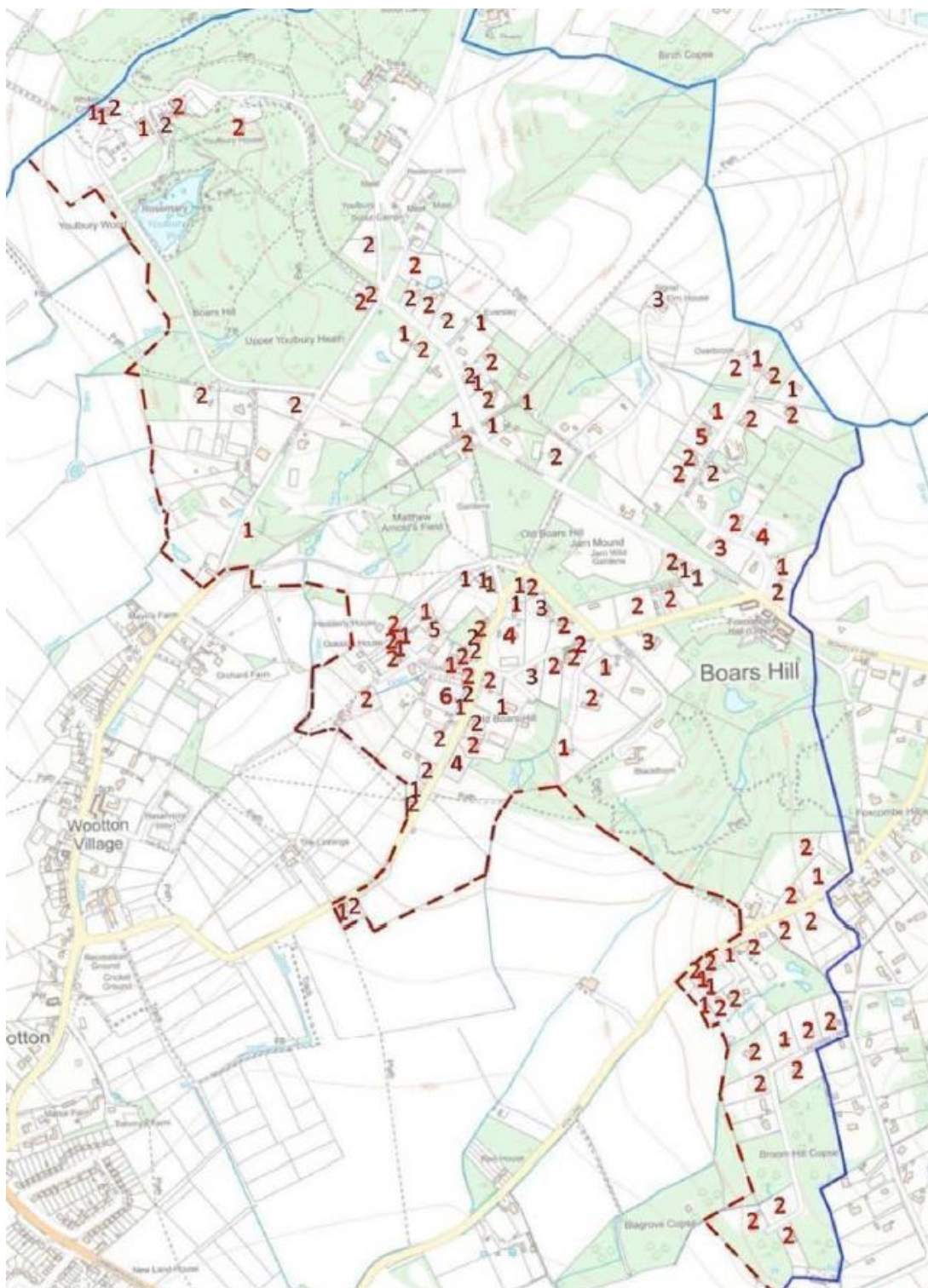
Proposed expansion of Sunningwell to include all Boars Hill – © Boars Hill Association

The main argument for this proposal was the strong sense of community that exists within Boars Hill, and the desire to not split this between civil parishes.

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

It would also have been a step in the direction of equalising the size of parishes as Wootton has a population which is about three times the size of Sunningwell and Cumnor six times.

BHA canvassed door-to-door in the non-Sunningwell areas affected and received backing from over 90% of those contacted. The map below shows responses from the Wootton part of the proposed area.







The number and location of signatories in Wootton in favour of the BHA proposal © BHA

VoWH officials recommended in favour of the Wootton to Sunningwell transfer, but against the Cumnor to Sunningwell transfer.

However, the VoWH Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee decided against both transfers and proposed ‘no change’ to the boundaries.

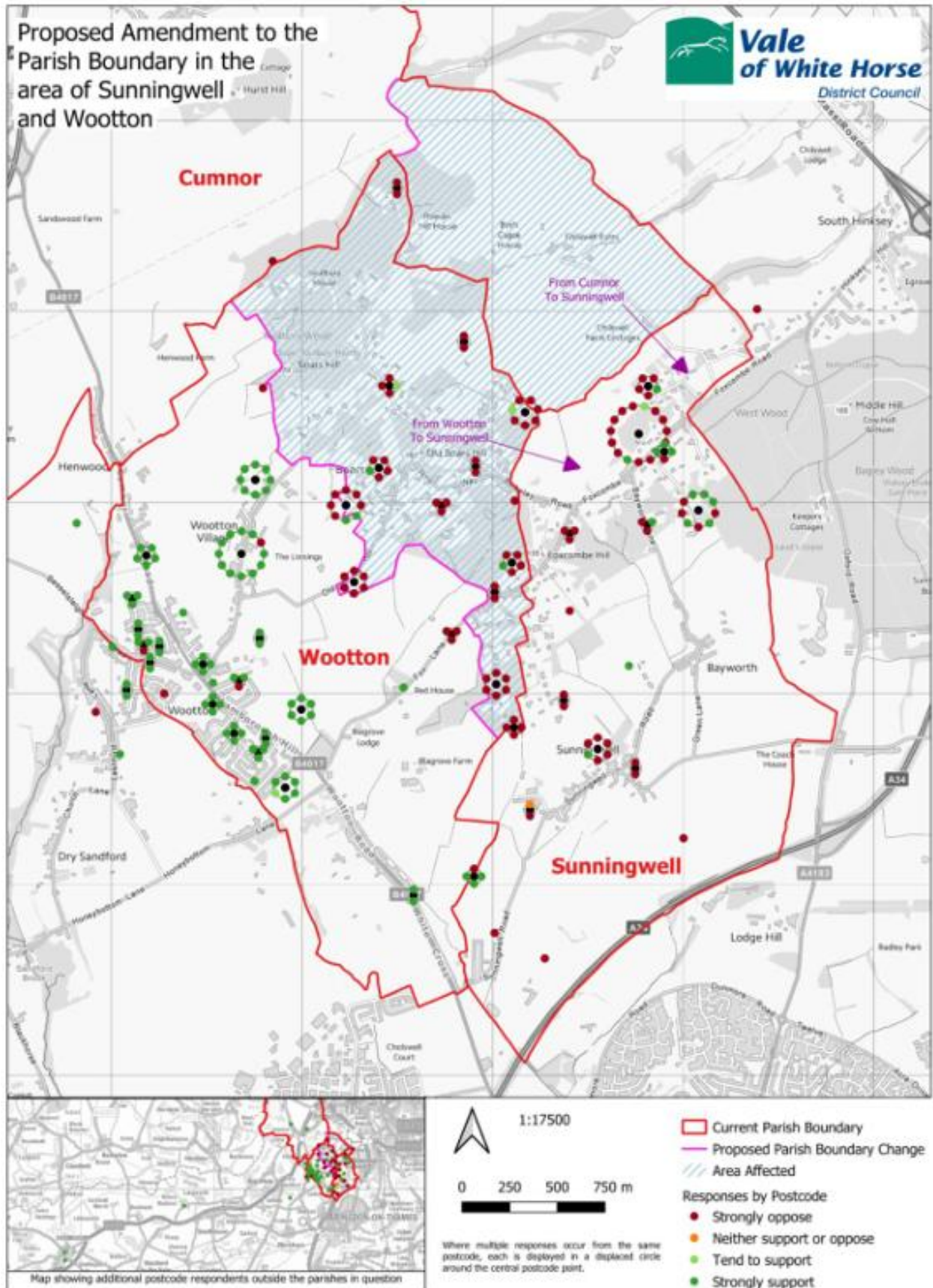
This proposal for ‘no change’ was then put out to consultation, with almost equal votes being recorded both for and against the ‘no change’ as shown below.

5. How far do you support or oppose the proposal to make no change to the boundary between Sunningwell Parish and Wootton and Cumnor parishes?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly support		48.00%	108
2	Tend to support		1.78%	4
3	Neither support or oppose		0.44%	1
4	Tend to oppose		0.00%	0
5	Strongly oppose		49.78%	112

The geographic split of these votes is shown below.

It is apparent from this that almost all of respondents in the part of Boars Hill that would have been transferred to Sunningwell under the original proposal voted to strongly oppose the ‘no change’ (i.e. they voted in favour of the transfer to Sunningwell), as did the vast majority of Sunningwell respondents, but these were matched by an almost equal number of Wootton respondents who strongly supported the ‘no change’.

It appears likely that such a clear geographic split will endure, and the issue will reoccur.



Geographic spread of respondents who opposed or supported the proposal of ‘no change’ to the parish boundary.

4. Local infrastructure

The infrastructure in the parish is inadequate, even for the existing number of dwellings and levels of traffic.

4.1 Highways

There is only one classified road in the parish. All other highways are unclassified rural lanes with widths often well below the 5.5m standard for safe passage of cars, being less than 3.0m in some places.

The nature of these roads, and their 'patched' maintenance, means that they are unsuitable for anything other than low volumes of light traffic.

4.2 Drainage

As noted in the Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Wildlife Working Group report, Sunningwell village has become increasingly prone to flooding from water draining off Boars Hill.

Measures have, and are being, implemented to alleviate this, but extreme flood events are expected to be increasingly frequent due to climate change, and the changes of land usage. Poor maintenance of drainage channels by those responsible has also been a contributory factor, and the financial straits of some of those responsible authorities do not encourage any expectation that this will improve.

4.3 Sewerage

The sewerage system into and through Sunningwell Village is also overstretched leading to overflowing sewers depositing raw sewage on gardens and into the main surface water channels, polluting everything downstream. Post event treatment from Thames Water amounts to collecting 'solids' and spraying with Jeyes Fluid, which is hardly satisfactory in ecological terms.

The repeated comment from Thames Water engineers is that the problem is 'hydraulic overload' and the solution is an additional pumping station. However, the financial straits of the water company are such that this does not seem imminent.

4.4 Gas supply

The infrastructure for delivering gas to the parish is obsolete and unreliable, with many residents having to replace their boilers every two years due to water in the gas supply. This is currently being addressed by the gas distribution company, a job which likely entails closing every road in the parish.

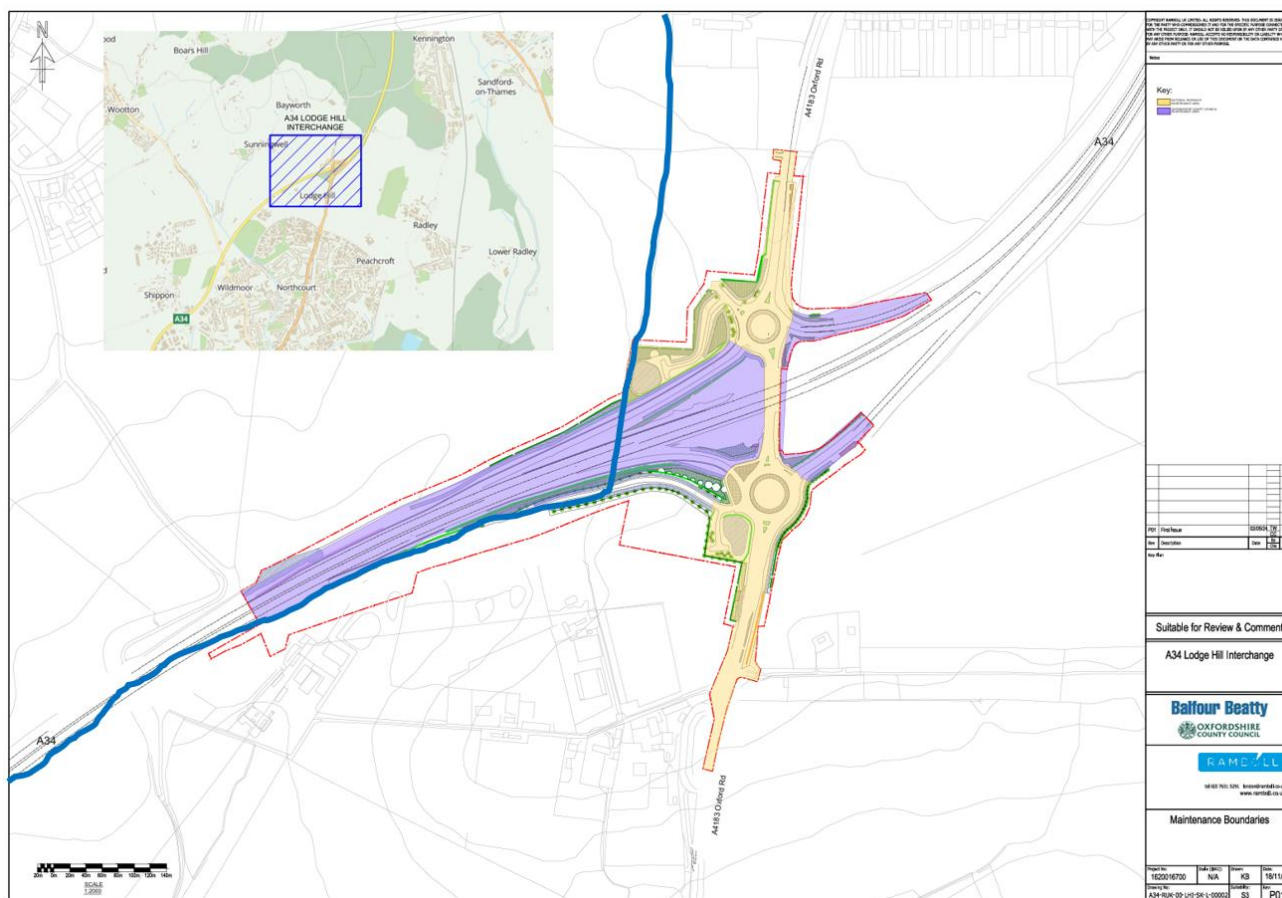
5. Significant adjacent developments

There are several very significant developments adjacent to the parish that have the potential to have a major negative impact on life in the parish.

5.1 Lodge Hill interchange

Description: the development is to add south-facing slip-roads to the A34 at Lodge Hill, just outside the Sunningwell parish boundary as shown below.

Status: the work is approved and in construction, with a completion date of late 2026.



Lodge Hill interchange – parish boundary shown by blue line

Although the interchange is outside of the parish, the traffic modelling carried out on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council predicts that the improved interchange will result in a considerable increase in traffic in Sunningwell parish.

It also has significant visual and audible effects on the parish.

5.1.1 Lodge Hill interchange – traffic

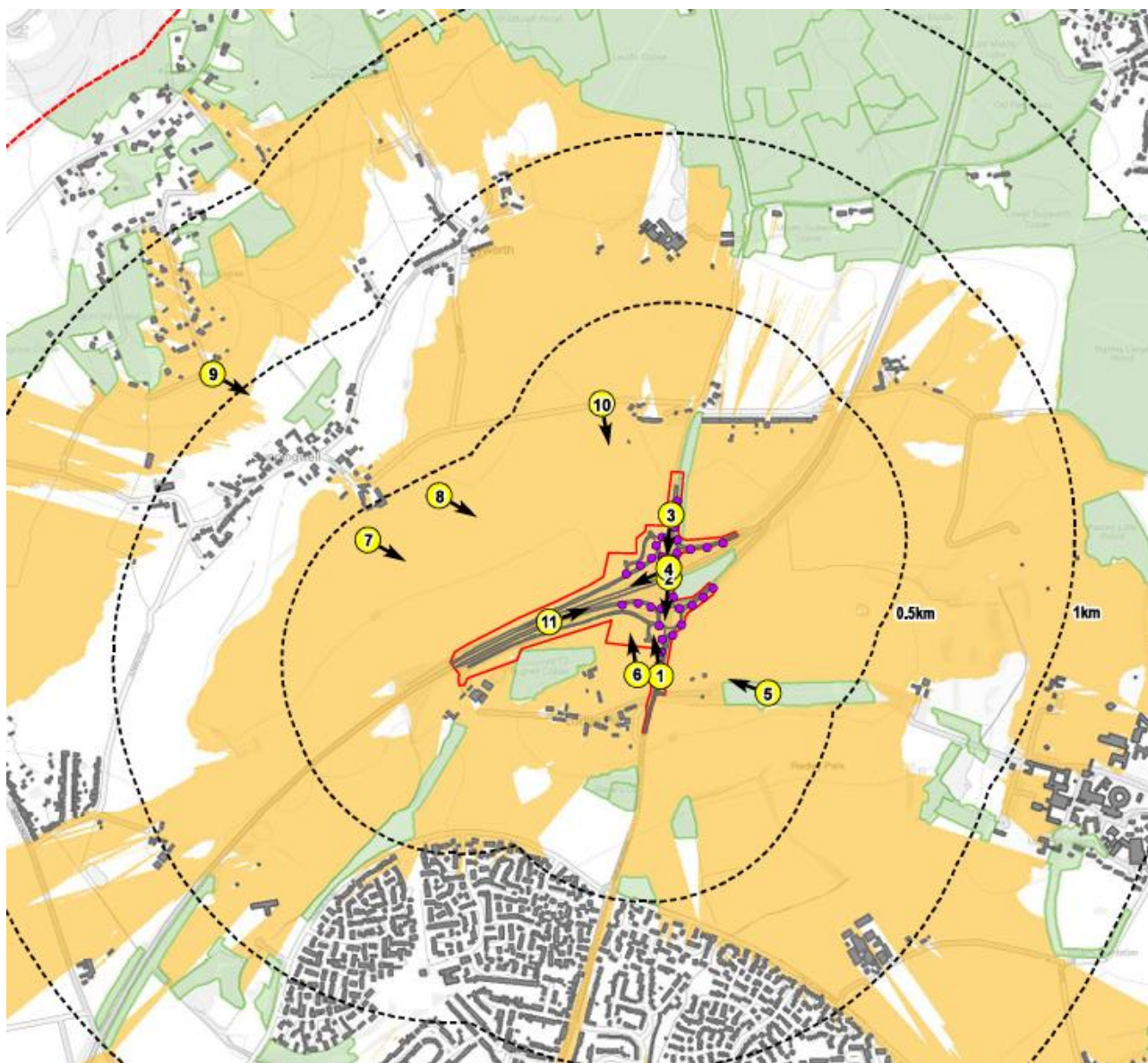
Following completion of the interchange, the traffic through Sunningwell and Bayworth is predicted to increase substantially, according to Oxfordshire County Council’s modelling (ref. ‘A34 Lodge Hill Interchange Transport Assessment v2 and Appendices’ dated September 2022).

This is described in more detail in the Traffic and Transport Working Group Report, where modelling plots such as the one below are discussed.



5.1.2 Lodge Hill interchange – appearance and visibility

Although outside the parish, the interchange is visible from much of the parish, as indicated by the visibility plot below.



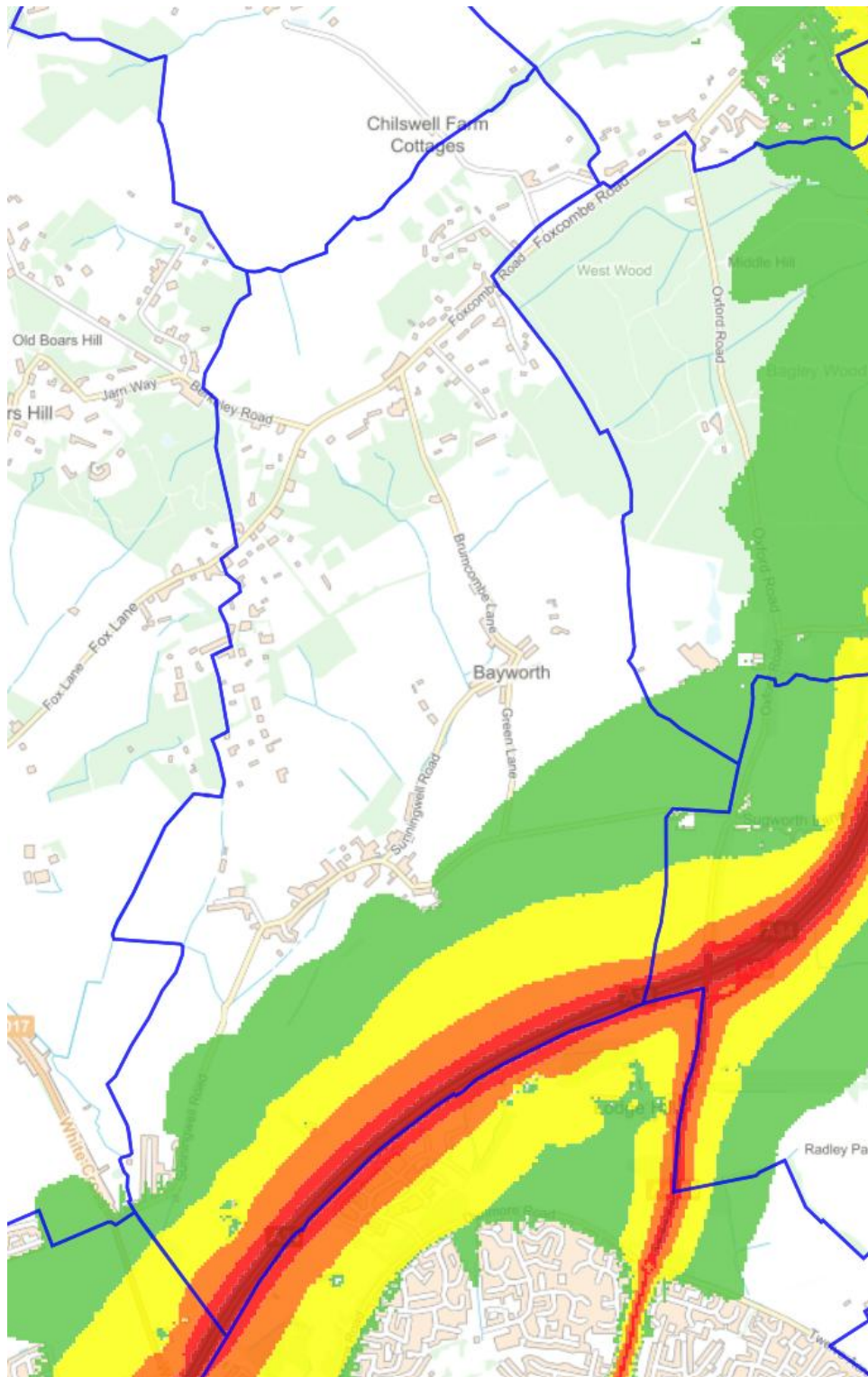
Visibility of Lodge Hill interchange from Sunningwell, Boars Hill and Bayworth

There is a replanting scheme which may go some way to alleviating the visibility and appearance, but it is feared that this will be both insufficient and take many years to come into effect.

It is to be hoped that the replanting will also go some way towards replacing the ecological and environmental loss resulting from the development, although it is understood that some of the net biodiversity gain will be located far from the parish.

5.1.3 Lodge Hill interchange – A34 Noise

The A34 is already the dominant noise source in the parish, as shown in the 24-hour noise plot below.



24-hour noise plot

Sound barriers have been installed to the south of the A34, but these have the effect of reflecting noise north towards Sunningwell, Bayworth and Long Furlong. This, together with the removal of vegetation to the north of the road has resulted in the noise levels in Sunningwell parish increasing substantially.

This is evident from the increased number of complaints to the parish council, but also in quantitative measurements. Individual measurements are affected by wind direction, temperature and humidity, complicating precise like-for-like comparisons. However, current measured levels at Beaulieu Court now reach 70dB, very much higher than the historic average of around 40dB.

In the UK, BS 8233:2014 states that for residential amenity areas (gardens, patios, balconies) noise levels should not exceed about 50dB LAeq,T (equivalent continuous sound level) with 55dB LAeq,T treated as an upper guideline in noisier environments.

These values are used in planning noise assessments for new housing to judge whether the outdoor environment is suitable or whether mitigation (e.g. barriers, layout changes) is needed.

These values are also in line with World Health Organisation recommended noise levels for outdoor noise at home (e.g. in gardens, balconies, or at the building façade) which are that it should be kept below 45–55dB(A) in the day, and less than 40dB(A) in the night.

The World Health organisation notes that:

Noise is an underestimated threat that can cause a number of short- and long-term health problems, such as, for example, sleep disturbance, cardiovascular effects, poorer work and school performance, hearing impairment, etc..

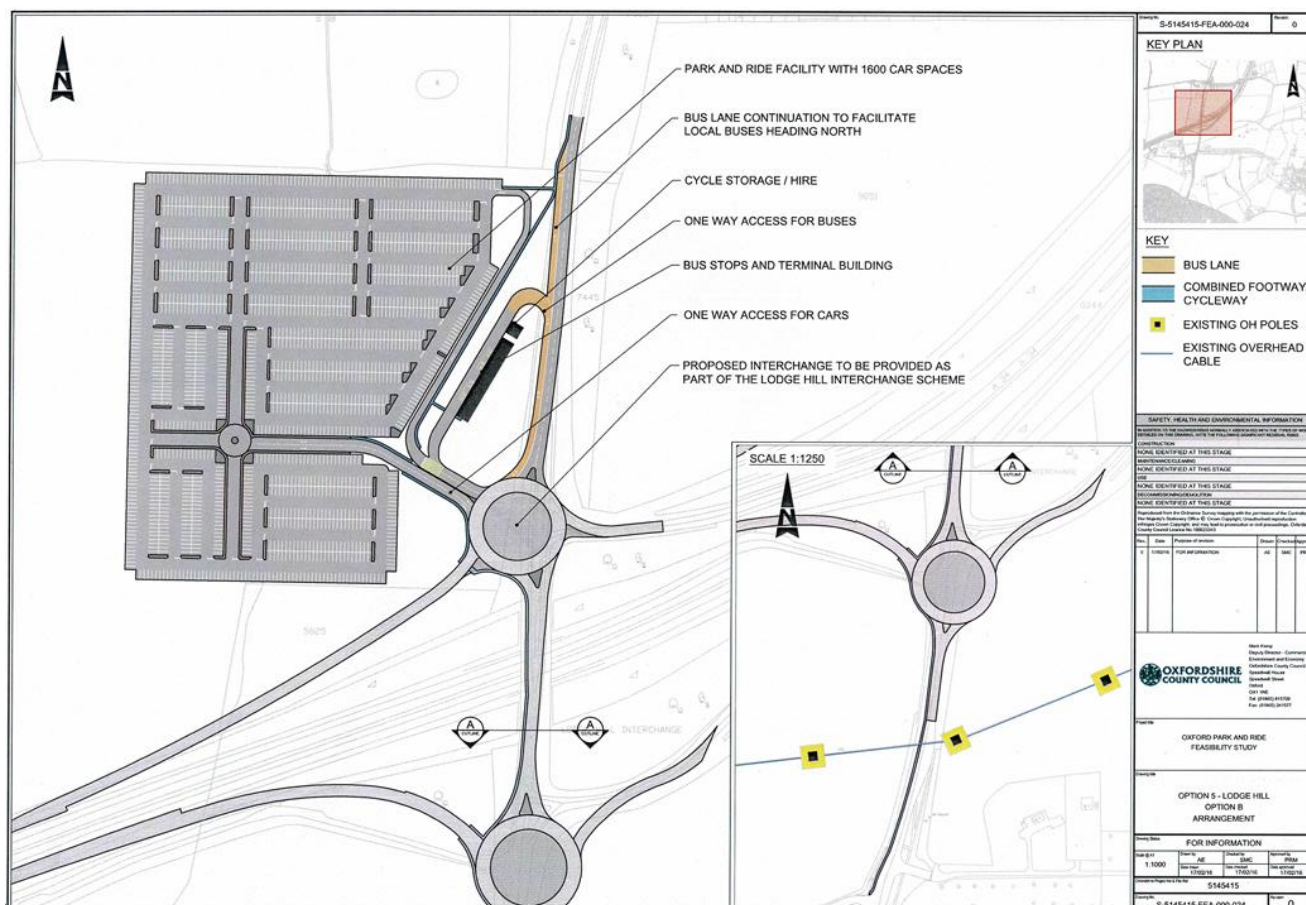
In summary, 70dB noise levels currently being experienced are well in excess of both UK planning and World health Organisation guidelines.

The planned replanting may go some way to reducing noise but it is feared that this will be both insufficient and, as already stated, take many years to come into effect.

5.2 Lodge Hill Park & Ride

Description: The development of a 1600-space Oxford Park & Ride at Lodge Hill.

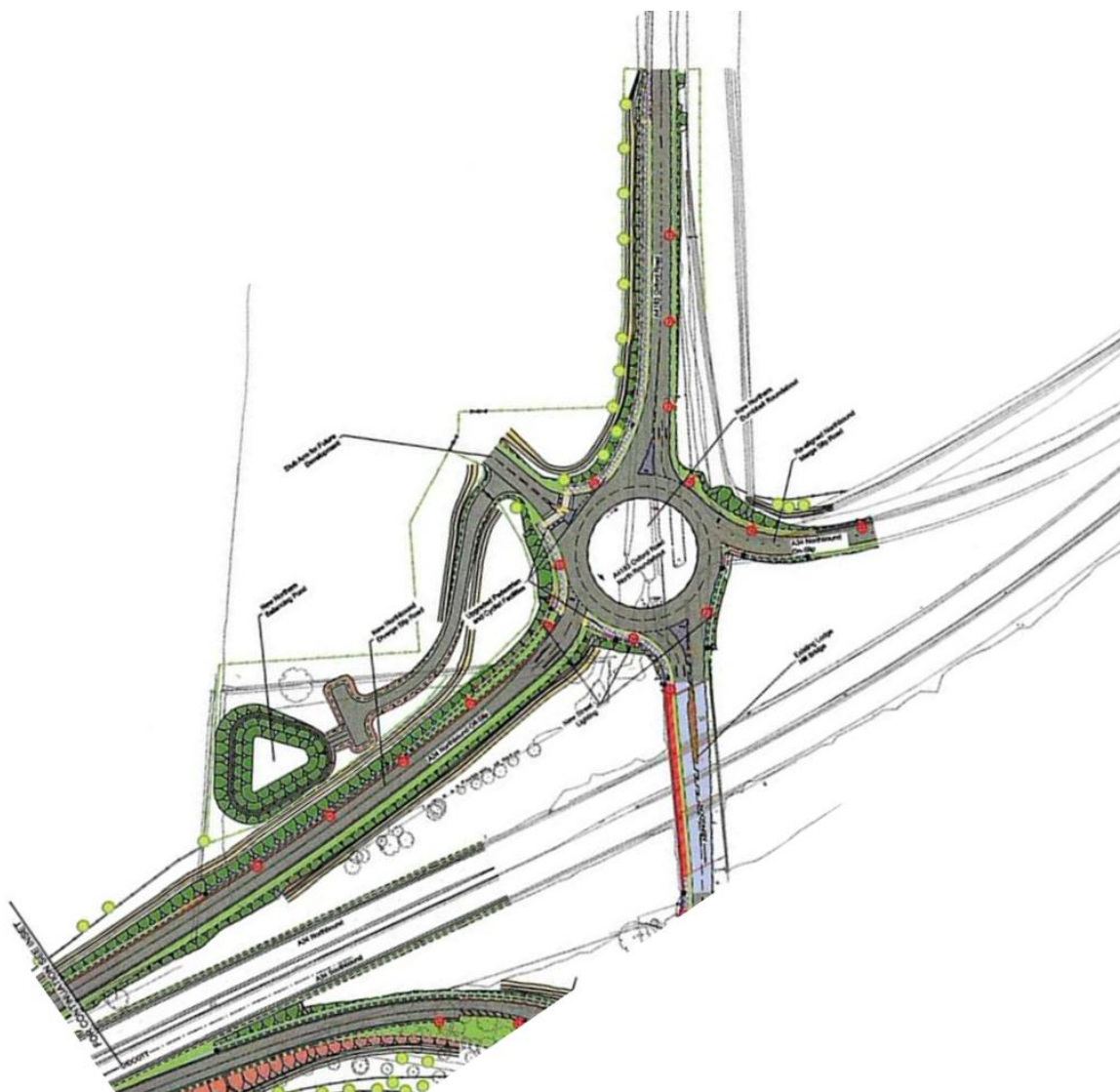
Status: Proposed in 2016. Construction not in the current 2031 Local Plan, nor the proposed 2041 Joint Local Plan, but the land remains safeguarded for highways improvements as shown on page 39.



2016 Proposal for Park & Ride at Lodge Hill

This was proposed in 'Oxford Transport Strategy – Preliminary Investigation into Park & Ride, 9 February 2015' and 'Oxford Park & Ride – Future Strategy Development, 27 May 2016' but has not been progressed since.

A major hurdle to progressing with this plan was the lack of south facing slip roads to the A34. However, these are now being constructed and include a 'Spur for Future Development' shown below which matches very closely the proposed spur to the Park & Ride.



Lodge Hill interchange – spur road

A suggestion to safeguard land for a public transport and cycle connection between Dalton Barracks and Lodge Hill was proposed for the 2031 VoWH Local Plan but was removed at review and not included in the final version of that plan. Nor is it included in the proposed 2041 Joint Local Plan.

5.3 Peking University

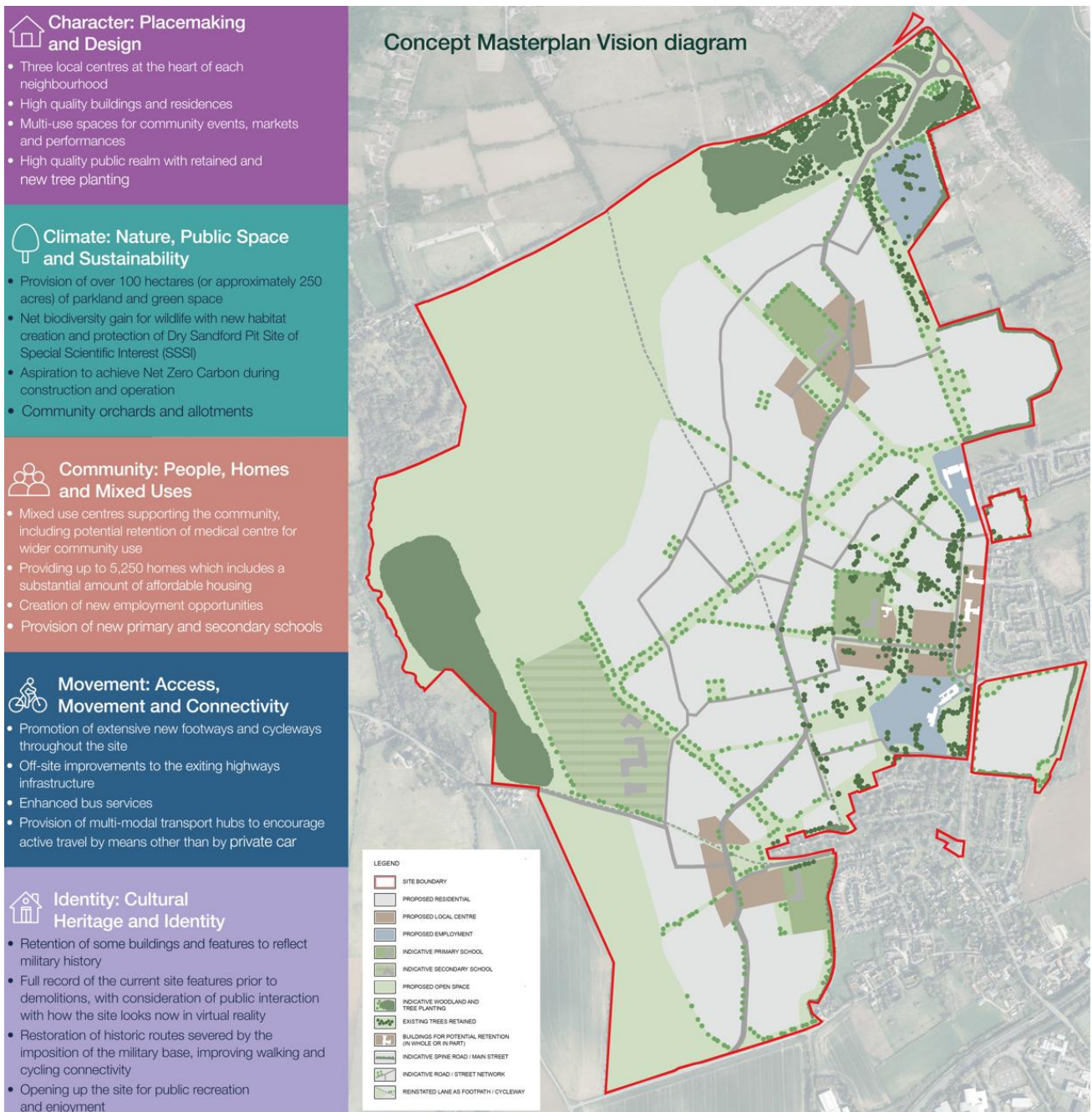
Description: The addition of 60 rooms for residential students.

Status: Planning consent granted by VoWH in September 2022. Construction has not begun and some aspects of consent now out of date.

5.4 Dalton Barracks

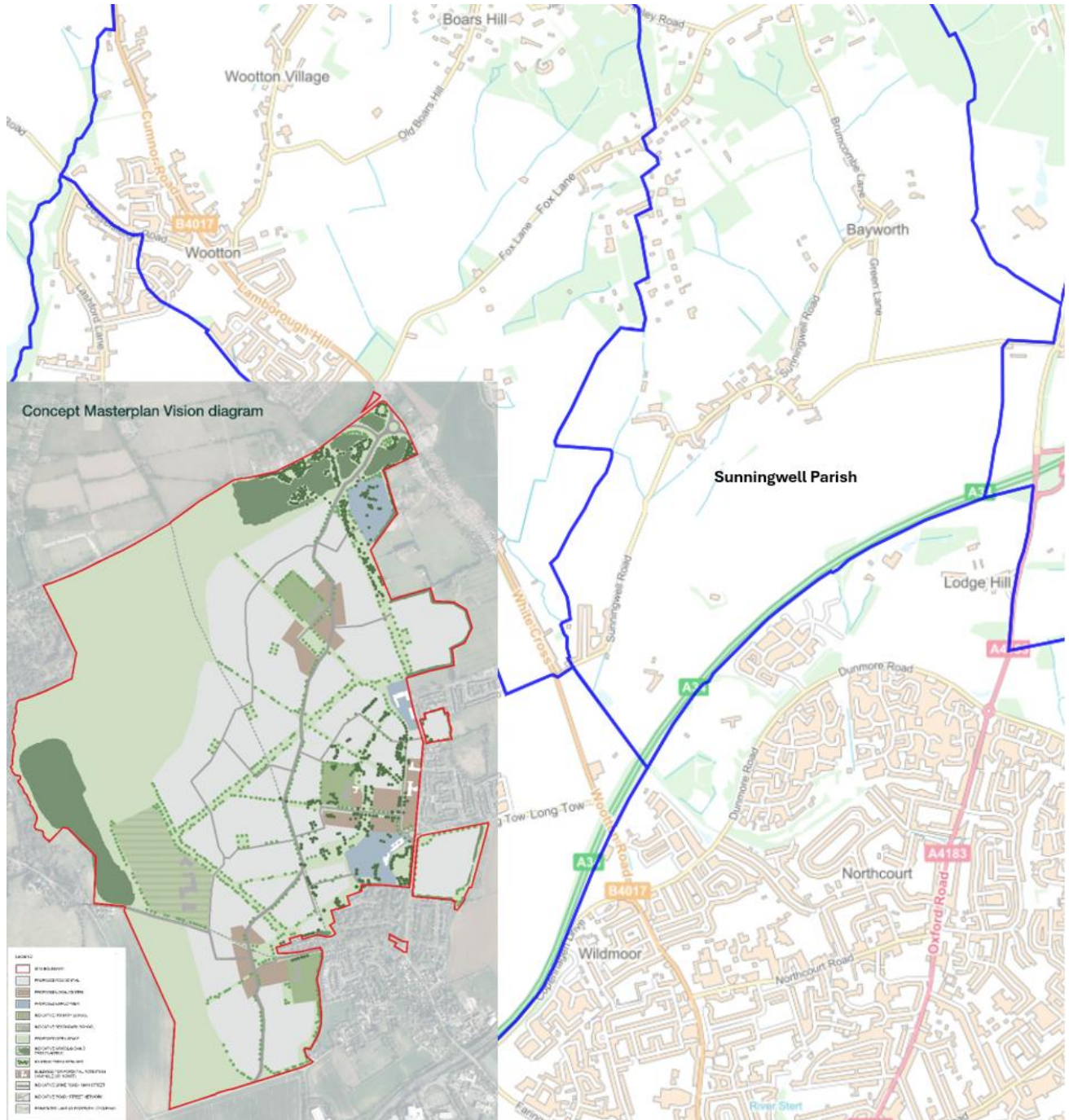
Description: Redevelopment of RAF Abingdon as garden village. ‘Masterplan’ mentions ‘up to 5,250 homes’.

Status: Included in VoWH Local Plan 2031 (and 2041). Consultation on outline plans carried out in 2025. Traffic data gathering is due to start February/March 2026, with traffic modelling to follow.



Dalton Barracks ‘Concept Masterplan Vision diagram’

The scale of the development, and the proximity to Sunningwell parish, are illustrated below.



Dalton Barracks Masterplan overlaid adjacent to Sunningwell parish

When developed, this will make Abingdon–Wootton a continuous urban area.

6. District level Local Plans 2031 and 2041

6.1 Vale of White Horse Local Plans

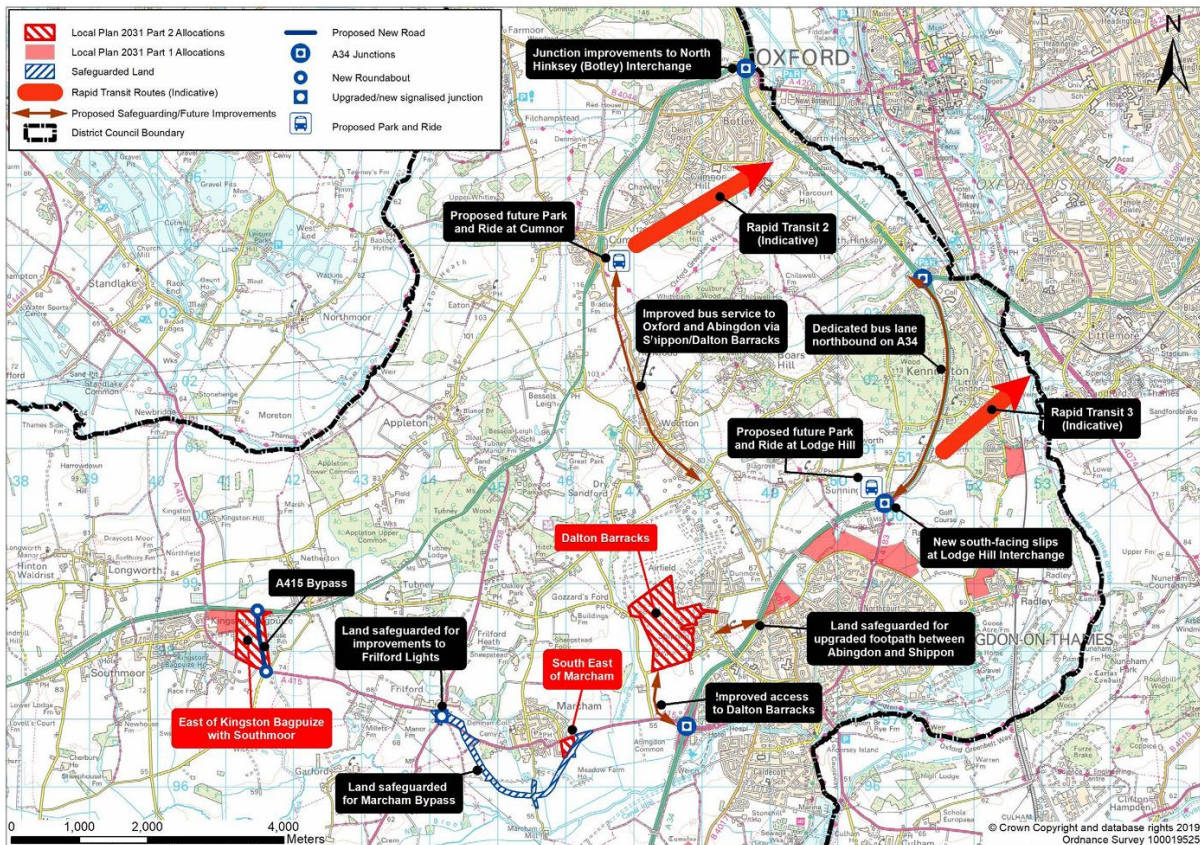
The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 has been prepared and formally submitted and therefore carries some weight.

However, consideration of this plan has been delayed due to inspectors concluding that the district councils failed to satisfy their ‘duty to consult’ with Oxford City Council on the topic of the city’s claimed unmet housing need beyond 2031/36. Recent correspondence appears to say that despite this objection the plan will continue through the inspection process (cf. VoWH Newsletter, December 2025).

As the 2041 plan is not approved, the VoWH Local Plan 2031 remains in force, although as the 2041 plan has reached the inspection stage it too carries some weight.

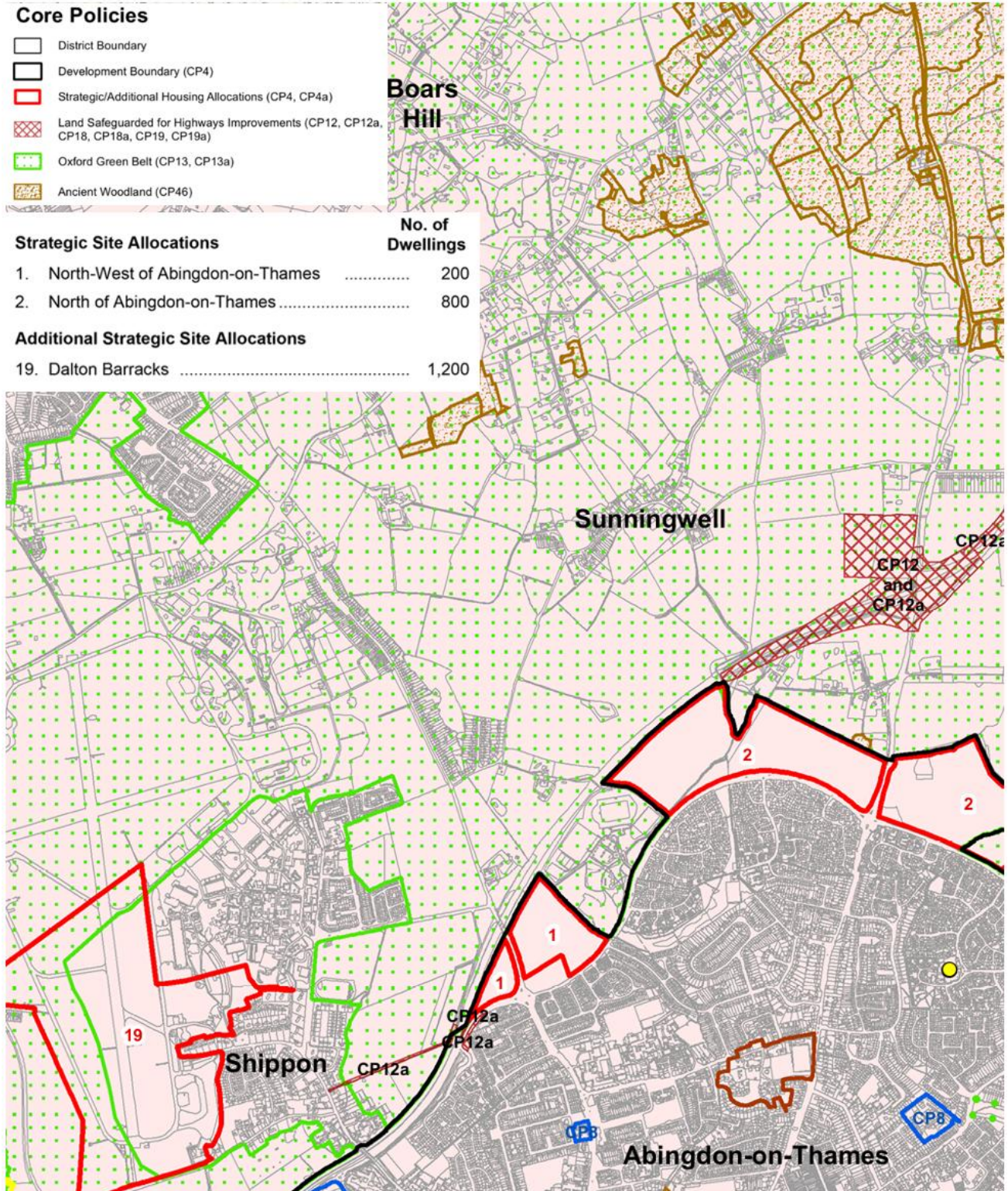
6.2 VoWH Local Plan 2031 – Extracts

Figure 2.4: Proposed opportunities for highway, public transport, walking and cycling improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area



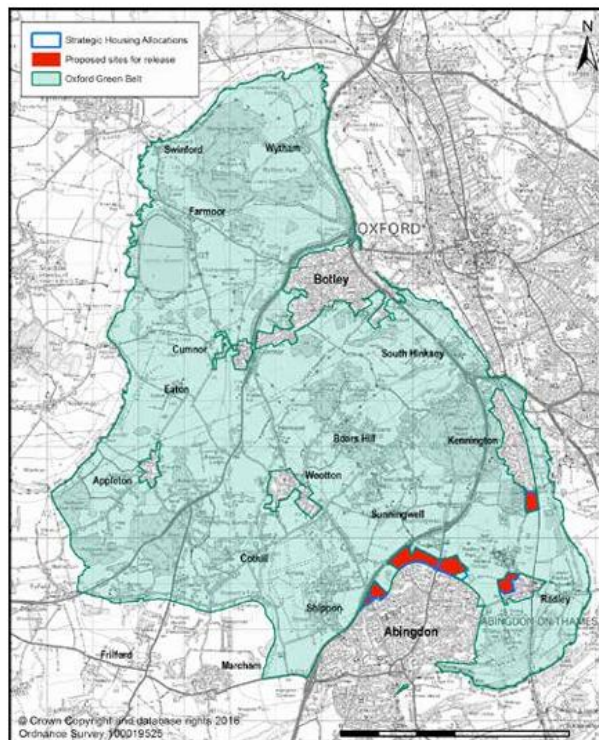
Extract from VoWH Local Plan 2031 – Part 2 Detailed Policies and Additional Sites (page 41)

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan



Extract from VoWH Local Plan 2031 – adopted policies map

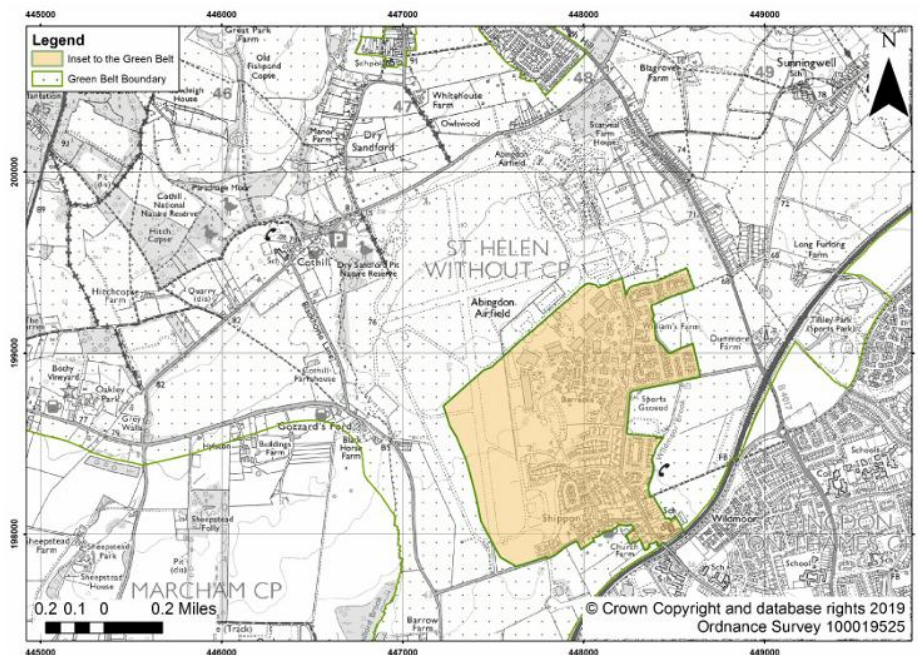
Appendix I: Proposed alterations to the Oxford Green Belt



Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Appendices
December 2016

Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 – Appendices (page 94)

Appendix L: Alterations to the Oxford Green Belt

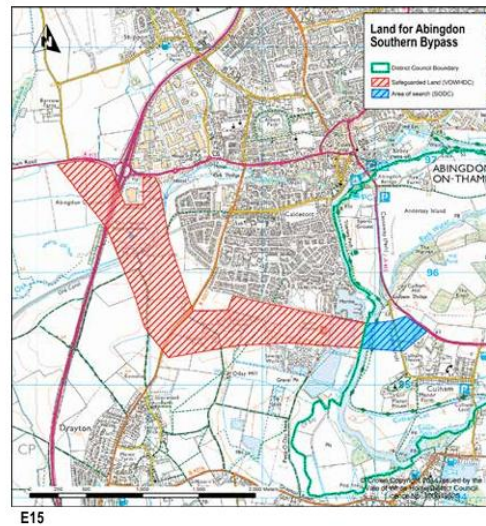


Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 - Strategic Sites and Policies - Appendices (page 62)

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

The 2031 plan shows two somewhat conflicting descriptions of the land safeguarded adjacent to Lodge Hill for the Park & Ride.

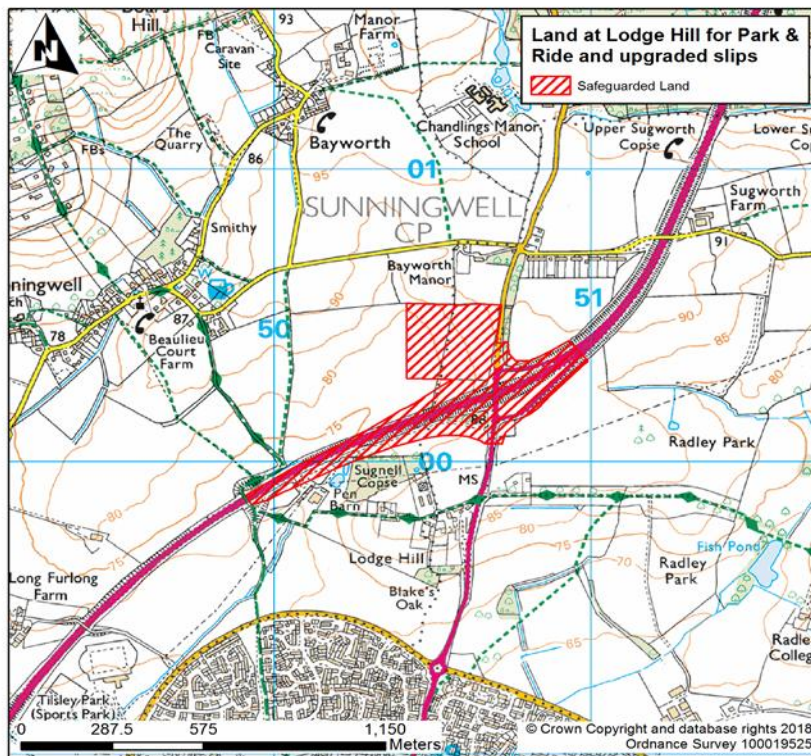
Indicative maps showing safeguarding of land for transport schemes in the Abingdon and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area (Core Policy 12)



Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Appendices
December 2016

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Appendices (page 70)

Land Safeguarded for Lodge Hill Park and Ride and Upgraded Slips



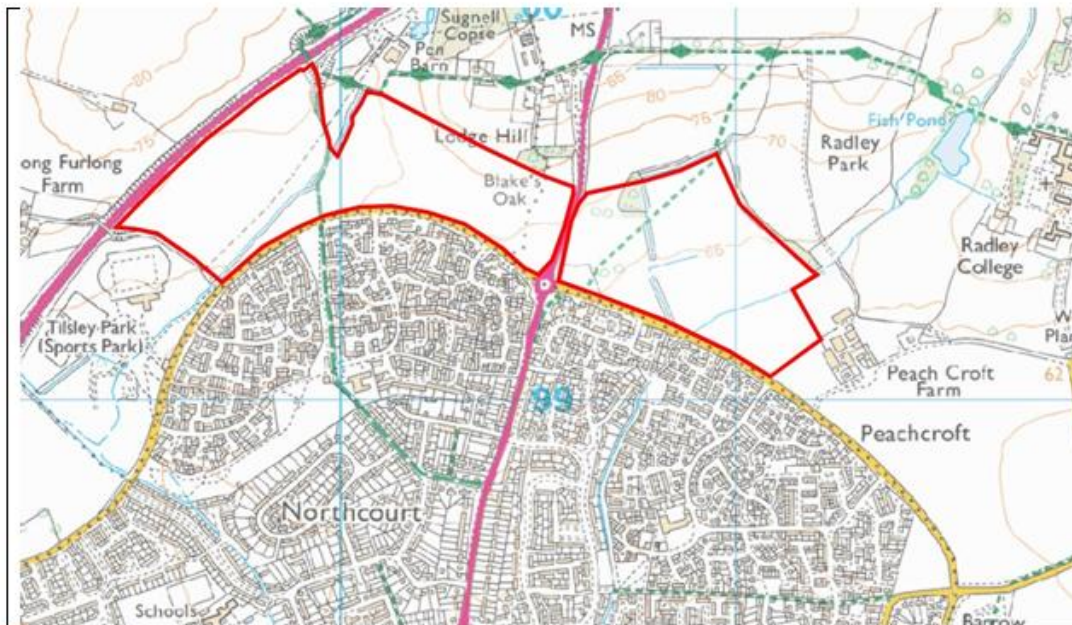
Extract from VoWH Local Plan 2031 Part 2 – Strategic Sites and Policies – Appendices (page 30)

6.3 Proposed joint South Oxfordshire and VoWH Local Plan 2041 – Extracts

North of Abingdon
Reference: 1255

Site name	North of Abingdon
Land supply reference	1255

Total units in 5 year period	545
-------------------------------------	------------



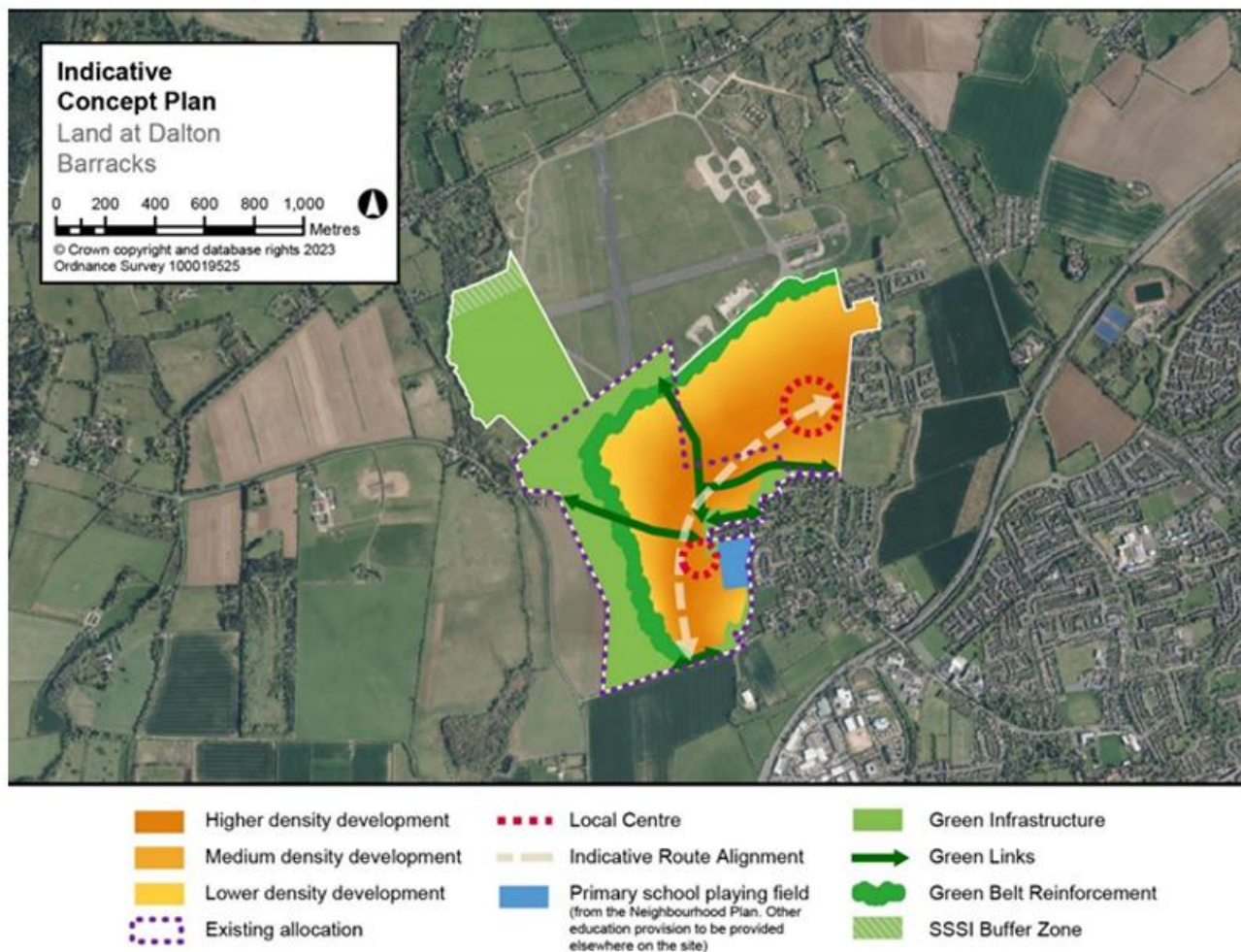
© Vale of White Horse District Council Crown copyright and database rights 2023
Ordnance Survey 100019525

Site status	Allocation with outline consent Various reserved matters Under construction
--------------------	---

Total units allocated for development	800
Total units with outline consent	1030
Total units with detailed consent	796
Total completions to date	233

Extract from Housing Land Supply Statement – October 2024

Figure 8.10 – Concept Plan for Land at Dalton Barracks Garden Village, Shippon



© Getmapping Plc and Bluesky International Limited [2023]

Joint Local Plan 2041 (Publication Version) 233

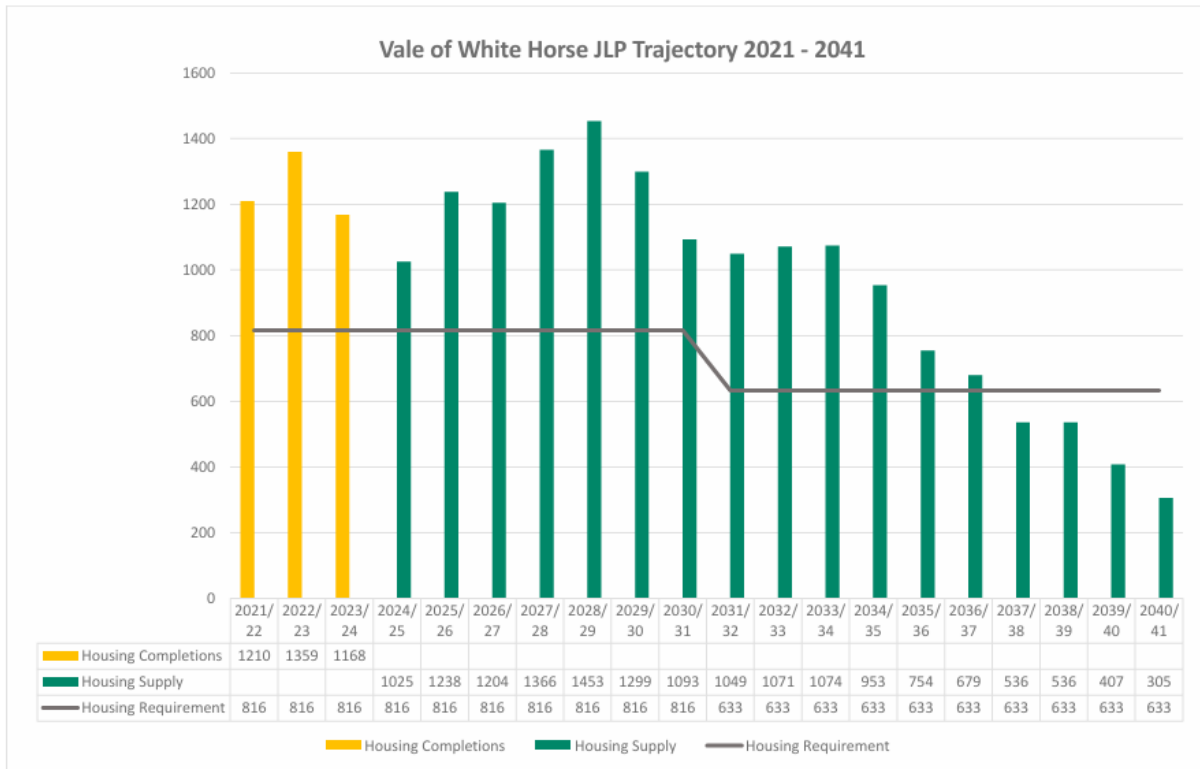
8.71 This allocation is currently a Ministry of Defence site located adjacent to the village of Shippon to the north of Abingdon-on-Thames. Part of the site was originally allocated for 1,200 homes in Part 2 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031. The original allocation has been expanded to incorporate the previously developed areas of Dalton Barracks and Edward Brooks Barracks that are within the Garden Village area (see Policy AS14 (Dalton Barracks Garden Village)) and which was inset from the Green Belt in 2019, through Part 2 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031. This allocation has capacity for 2,750 homes, of which we expect around 912 homes to be built by the end of the plan period up until 2041. These homes will be supported by a range of facilities, services and employment opportunities.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse

Joint Local Plan 2041 (Publication Version) 234

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Vale of White Horse



7. Local government reorganisation

There is uncertainty due to the reorganisation of local government with the abolition of the current two-tier district and county councils, and their replacement by a single-tier unitary authority.

Proposals for options were submitted in November 2025 with the County Council, the District Council, and Oxford City Council all submitted differing options. The Secretary of State is due to decide on what model will be adopted before Summer 2026. It may be one of the submitted options, or it may differ from all of them. The new structure is then planned to come into force on 1 April 2028, after elections in May 2027.

Much of the publicity around this topic has originated from one of the councils – Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, or Oxford City Council – with each promoting the scheme they favour. There is a danger that unless people have seen all options equally they will have received somewhat unbalanced information. The summary of the three options below was prepared by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils and is thought to be impartial.

Option 1: One authority

Oxfordshire County Council is proposing a single unitary authority for the county of Oxfordshire.

Option 2: Two authorities

Five councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire have collaborated on the proposal for two authorities. The proposal would divide the five existing councils into two new authorities: Oxford and Shires Council and Ridgeway Council.

Oxford and Shires Council would include Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. Ridgeway Council would include South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire.

Option 3: Three authorities

Oxford City Council is proposing three unitary authorities be created to cover Oxfordshire and West Berkshire:

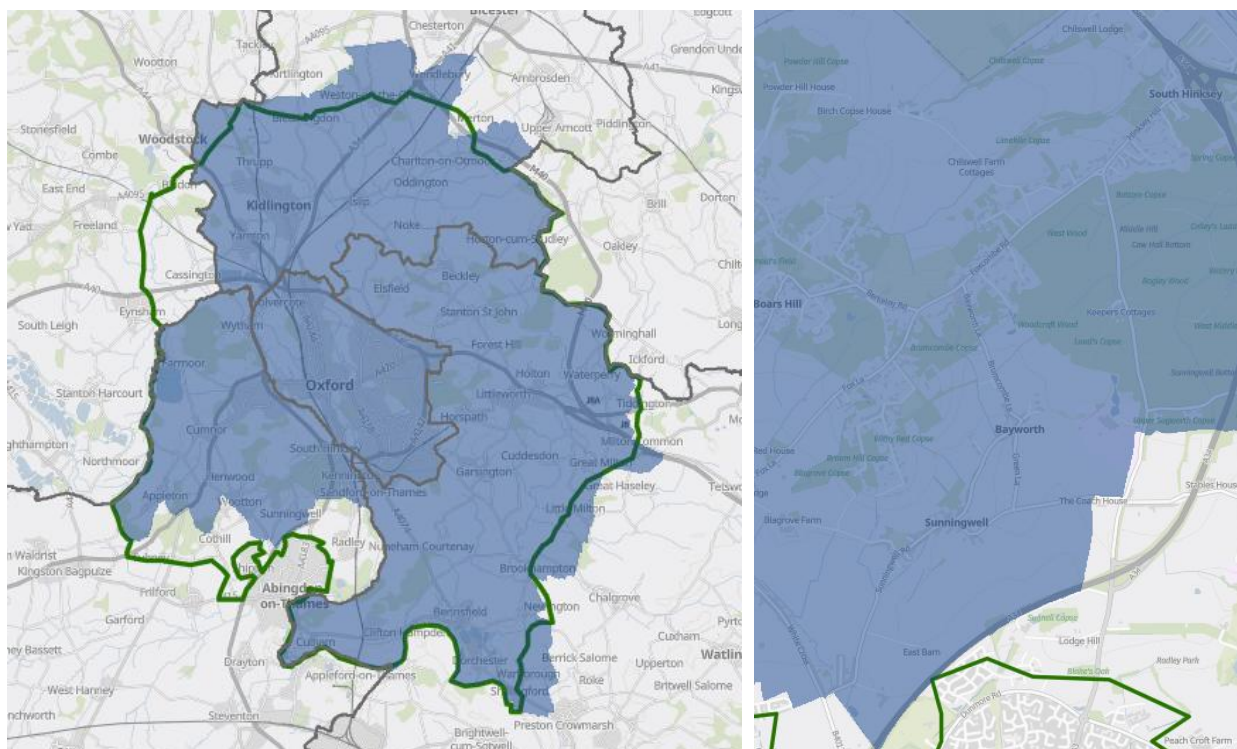
Oxford Council – comprising Oxford on expanded boundaries

Northern Oxfordshire Council – comprising much of the existing West Oxfordshire and Cherwell districts

Ridgeway Council – comprising much of the existing South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts combined with the existing West Berkshire unitary authority.

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Many parishioners have expressed concern to Sunningwell Parish Council about the third of these options, which the City Council have named the 'Greater Oxford'. In this option, the entirety of Sunningwell parish will become subsumed into the region defined as Greater Oxford, as shown in the maps below.



The City Council proposes that over 40,000 new homes will be built within this Greater Oxford area by 2040, with all but a small number being in the regions annexed in the boundary expansion.

Sunningwell Parish Council has formally objected to this option, as have the vast majority of the rural parishes that would be similarly affected.

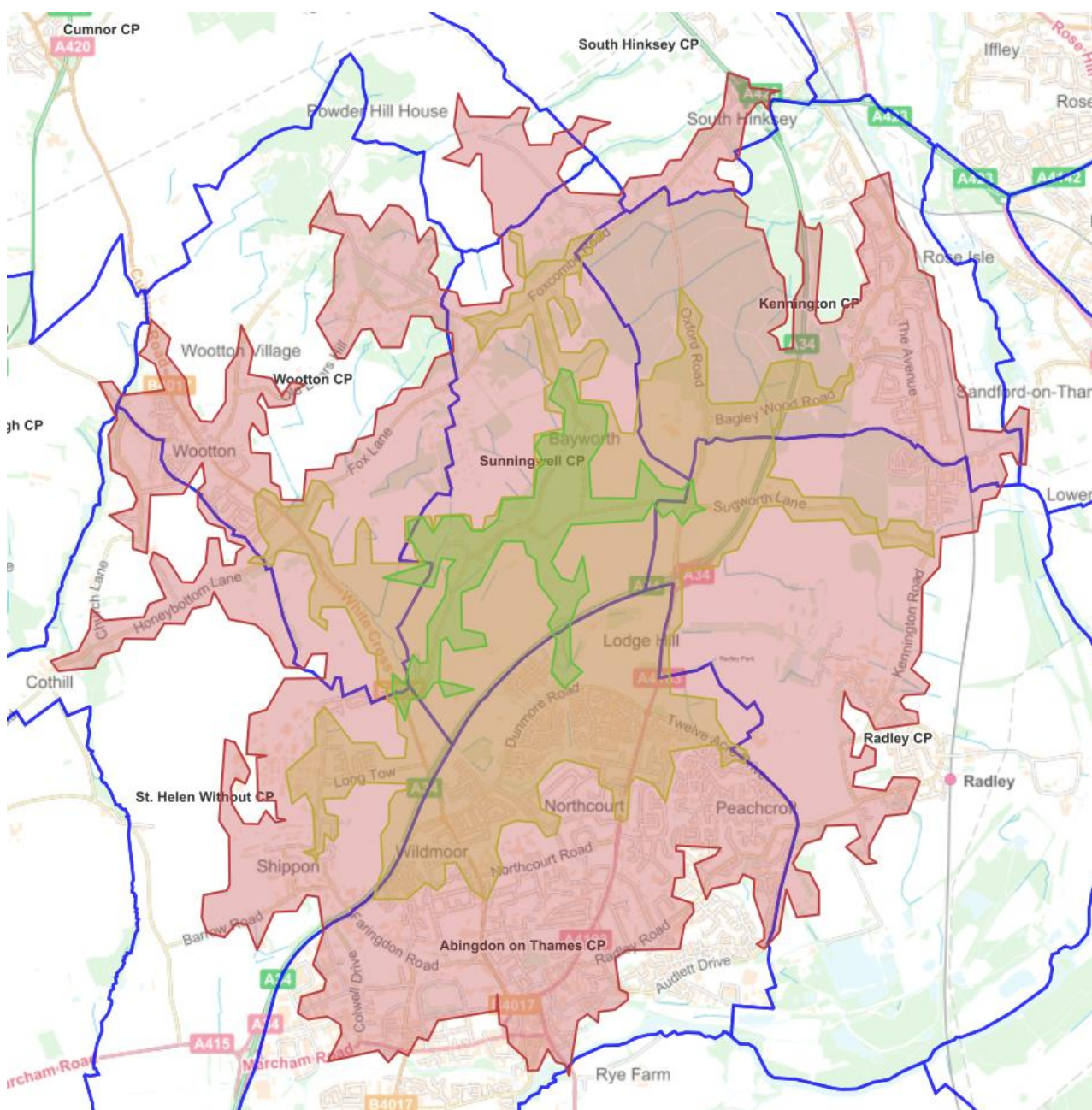
Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Currently the area of the Dalton Barracks development shows as an island being more than ten minutes away, but this is due to the lack of accessible roads in this area. Once roads are in place, this will also be within ten minutes. Kennington is also within ten minutes.

Fifteen minutes brings all of Abingdon, Botley, Hinksey and the southern parts of Oxford City within reach.

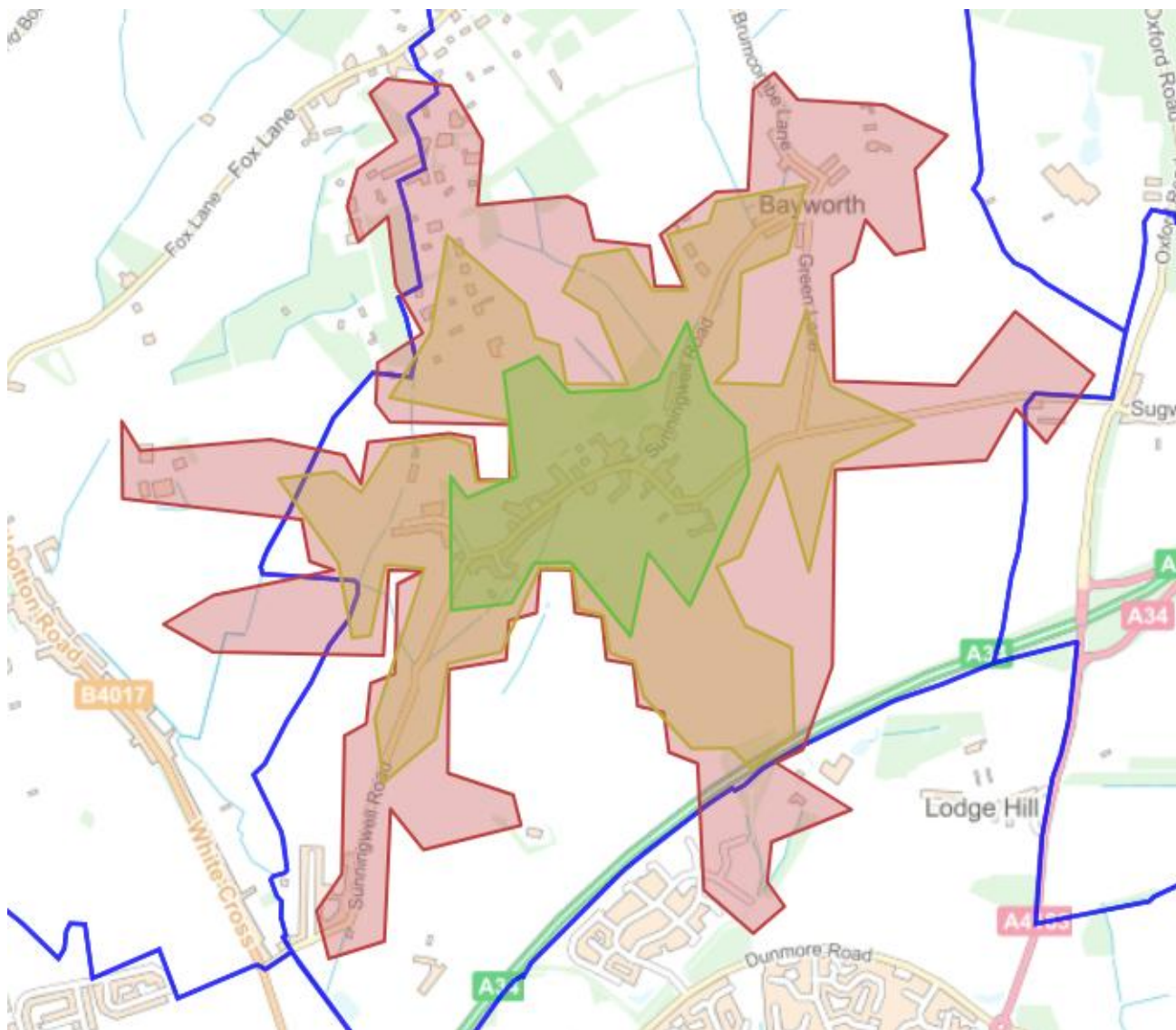
Conversely, due to the limited nature of the roads within the parish, five minutes is barely sufficient to reach the parish borders.

It is also an indication of the lane nature of the roads that 15 minutes of cycling is sufficient to access an area very similar to that which can be reached in ten minutes in a car.



Five, ten and 15 minutes by bicycle from the centre of Sunningwell

Ten minutes of cycling reaches the North Abingdon new developments. These developments can also be reached within 15 minutes of walking. Dalton Barracks is a 40-minute walk.



Five, ten and 15 minutes of walking

For someone in the new development at Dalton Barracks the facilities in Sunningwell will be seen as within easy reach by car (less than ten minutes), but rather too far to walk for most people (40 minutes) unless walking is the purpose.

8.2 Demand for Sunningwell facilities

The increased population in the catchment area of Sunningwell's facilities could drive usage in either direction.

For the amenities within the parish that will not be replicated in the new developments, this will result in an increased usership of Sunningwell's facilities. This might be expected to include

country walks, primary school, woods and farmland, rural views, the school of art, and other amenities more fully listed in the Heritage and Character Working Group Report.

For amenities that will be replicated in the new developments this could result in a decrease in demand for Sunningwell's facilities as others are more conveniently located, leading to decline and closure. Examples might include the primary school.

8.3 Traffic

The one area where an increase in demand is almost certain is traffic. Unless measures are in place increase in both to and from traffic, and through traffic, may be expected.

8.3.1 To and from Sunningwell

As noted in 7.1, the travel time is such that most people from outside the parish will chose to drive to an activity in Sunningwell.

Cycling is a viable alternative in terms of time, but many will feel the roads to and from Sunningwell are not safe for cyclists to share with traffic which may be travelling at 60mph on narrow roads where passing is problematic.

8.3.2 Through traffic

Sunningwell is not well suited to through traffic. However, there is a likelihood that this will increase for at least two reasons:

- The shortest distance route from Dalton Barracks to Oxford passes though the lanes of Sunningwell. Unless other attractive routes are provided this will result in a significant increase in traffic.
- The increase in traffic on the north Abingdon ring road (Dunmore Road) caused by the north Abingdon development; the improved Lodge Hill junction, and traffic from Dalton Barracks may make this route very unfavourable, causing people to seek 'back-route' alternatives, which will likely mean through Sunningwell. The recent experience with the closure of Foxcombe Road for gas works has demonstrated that this will occur, even if signage trying to prevent it is posted.
- A similar situation is expected at the Hinksey Hill interchange with the A34. When this becomes backed-up, traffic will divert down the unsuitable lanes of Bayworth.

The VoWH map reproduced in Section 5.2 appears to indicate a preferred route via the A420 (or A34), but Foxcombe Road through Boars Hill is clearly a more direct route and so is likely to be used by many.