

Council will seek to work with landowners to realise such opportunities where possible avoiding the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

5.26 The policy therefore requires that all development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. The Policy Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network, for example in complementing existing biodiversity value through the design of the landscape scheme. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

5.27 The Network will become more valuable over time, and although the majority of these features are physically attached to enable habitat connectivity, some features of the Network are not. This does not devalue their integral biodiversity or recreational value and at some point in the future an opportunity may arise to achieve similar connectivity. The Neighbourhood Plan also signals to the Responsible Authority that it should consider the role of this Network in the future Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the area which is now a requirement of the Environment Bill.

Policy CUL8: Sustainable Travel

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Sustainable Travel Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of supporting active travel in the Parish.***
- B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should sustain, and where practicable, enhance the functionality of the Network by virtue of their layout, means of access and landscape treatment.***
- C. Proposals that will harm the functioning or connectivity of the Network will not be supported.***
- D. The comprehensive masterplan for the strategic allocation STRAT9 Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre will be expected to demonstrate that the masterplan layout enables safe and secure access to the required social infrastructure for the existing village of Culham through new, and improvement to, existing cycleways, footpaths, and bus services.***

5.28 The policy seeks to encourage safe, accessible and convenient means of walking and cycling in the parish. It refines Policy TRANS2 by providing a local element to its provisions. The policy implements elements of the Culham Community Led Plan in 2014 which identified cycle safety as being important especially between Culham and Abingdon. At the time the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy was interested in improving arrangements for their cycling employees. Ideas that came from the consultation were:

- 1) A cycle path from Waggon and Horses to Abingdon

- 2) Cyclists able to use the Causeway with pedestrians
- 3) Road to Abingdon is too dangerous – use the causeway
- 4) Purchase land to the south of A415 for a new pavement/cycle path
- 5) Improve cycling to Sutton Courtenay
- 6) Footbridge from Culham to Abingdon marina
- 7) Cycle path alongside the railway to Oxford via Radley joining Sustrans Cycle Route 5 including a river crossing

5.29 The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

5.30 The extension of existing paths has been identified as opportunities to improve the Network and these are shown on the Policies Map at the end of this document. There are also a number of permissive paths which landowners have allowed the local community to use to enjoy the surrounding countryside and improve local connectivity and the Parish Council will continue to work with local landowners in this respect. The policy also signals that connectivity of the existing village to the strategic allocation STRAT9 Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre will be important to ensure that the existing community can benefit from the provisions in the new development. The crossing at the traffic lights on the A419 Abingdon Road is already problematic making very little provision for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling access. 8) Improvements to this crossing and the existing shared pedestrian and cycleway on the A419 Abingdon Road will be expected to form part of the provision of sustainable transport facilities required by Policy STRAT9.