



Abingdon-on-Thames
Neighbourhood Plan

PLACE Analysis

for a neighbourhood plan

The purpose of this download is to help you create a map of elements that, when used together, show the character of your place. For this analysis, we are defining PLACE as Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Culture & Engineering.

Through this activity, you can start to establish what makes your place special, the qualities you want to build on and keep and what doesn't work — the things you would like to change. This activity will provide an insight into the way the design of the built environment needs to be considered as part of the neighbourhood plan process. Crucially, your research will inform future choices the steering group make about the focus of the neighbourhood plan.

Your neighbourhood plan potentially represents a once in a generation opportunity to shape the future of the neighbourhood and its surroundings. A question we need to ask ourselves is this: If sites were to come forward for new development, or sites for redevelopment and improvement were to be identified, what would be the right design response? What will your community consider good planning and good design? Only once we can answer this question, can we start to prepare the policies to be included in your plan.

Working in teams of five, each team member will be responsible for either Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Culture or Engineering. Each team of five will undertake a critical analysis of a specific area and its immediate surroundings. As you walk try to remain open-minded. Read through the prompts before you start and think about how to annotate the map. It important to undertake this task without any specific design proposals in mind.

ENGINEERING

This download is for considering engineering and street design issues only. We ask that when you are out on site — either in the real world or online — you focus your observations around the prompts provided for this aspect only. You can make notes directly onto a map and in the spaces provided in this download.

Once the audit for your area is completed, it can be used to produce a complete map that registers the full complexity of the area, allowing, for example, architectural elements to be in conversation with engineering and landscape or culture. This whole picture will inform the neighbourhood plan and enable you to begin a full analysis of the specific issues you want to focus on.

Please record your field notes. There follows some prompts and ideas for you to consider. These prompts are by no means exhaustive. You will no doubt have your own ideas too.

E1. How can your area become better connected, more accessible and more welcoming? *Note down your thoughts here.*

E2. As you walk, assess the network of streets. Note down the network of streets and pathways connecting surrounding areas. Can you identify places where new routes and connections may be needed? *Mark these routes and any new, potential routes, onto your map.*

E3. As you walk observe how the area accessed now? How could it be accessed in future? *Mark down what you notice on the map.*

E4. Are there places where the speed of traffic needs to be reduced to enable other forms of traffic or pedestrian access? *Note your ideas on the map.*

E5. Are there interventions that can allow traffic speeds to be kept under 20mph across the site and into the surroundings? *Note your thoughts below.*

E6. How easy is it to cross the roads and streets on foot? *Note down on the map dangerous crossings and places to cross that feel intuitive or work with the logic and direction of travel.*

E7. Are pedestrian and cycle crossings well-positioned? Do they give priority to these modes of travel? *Note on the map any crossings you see as you walk.*

E8. Try to identify facilities for cycling. Are they useful? Are they safe or unsafe? Are they well-used? *Note down cycle facilities on your map including routes, places to park bikes etc.*

E9. Are pedestrian routes easy to recognise or are they confusing? Well-lit or poorly-lit? Cluttered or uncluttered? Are they easy to use throughout the year? *Note down what you observe on the map.*

E10. As you walk try to become aware of the experience of walking. Are pavements even and dropped kerbs at the right locations? Are there any resting places and handrails where needed? Benches or resting places? *Note your thoughts on the map.*

E11. As you walk identify any walls, fences, guardrails, steep gradients and other barriers to easy movement. *Mark your observations on the map.*

E12. Are bus stops and shelters conveniently sited, safe and well-lit? Are they in good or bad repair? *Mark the location of bus stops on the map and annotate with any observations you make.*

E13. As you walk, mark down on the map any facilities exist for loading and unloading and for the servicing of nearby shops that you spot.

E14. What type of parking is there here? e.g. on-street parking, surface car park, parking on front gardens, parking courts, garages and car ports? Which are the most successful and why? Is informal or illegal parking causing problems? *Mark any parking you see on the map and / or your observation about parking in different areas.*

E15. Is car parking enforced effectively? What conflicts are there caused by problem parking? *Note on the map and make comments below.*

E16. Are there any car club parking spaces and/or electric car charging points in the area? *Mark any that you notice on the map.*