



# Design Guide I

## Introduction

# Design Guide I: Introduction

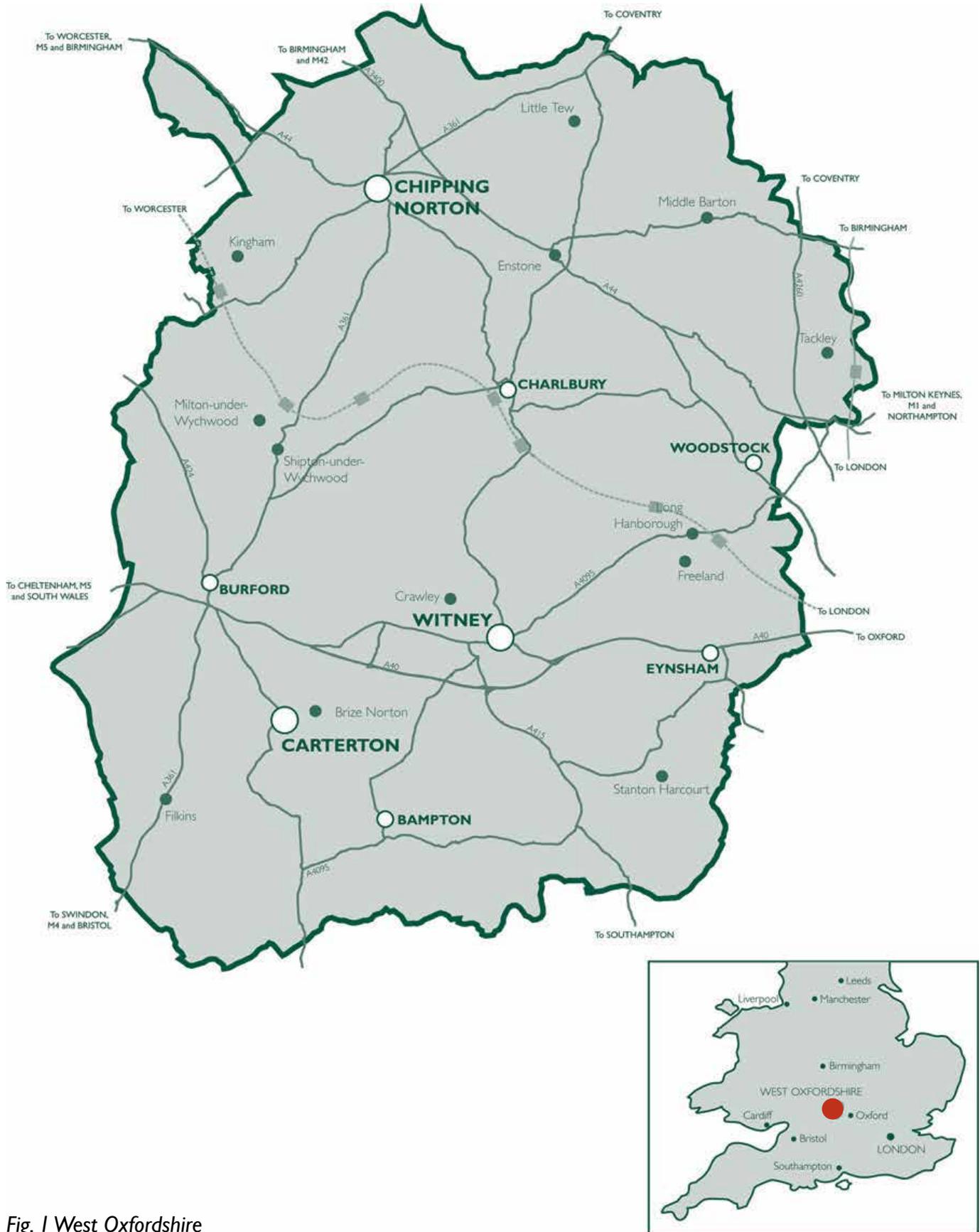


Fig. 1 West Oxfordshire

© Crown copyright and database rights 2012 Ordnance Survey 100024316

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide is to describe the qualities and characteristics that make West Oxfordshire special – its landscapes, settlements and buildings – and to describe ways in which good design can protect and enrich the character of the District.

Design is central to a wide range of issues, from the colour of a front door to the layout of a new housing area. Whatever the context, being ‘fit for purpose’ should never be enough. Outstanding design makes places special, is life-affirming, and forms a material legacy by which future generations will know and judge us. For these reasons outstanding design should be the aim of all those involved in the change or management of West Oxfordshire’s built and natural environment.

The Design Guide provides advice and information which builds upon national and local planning policies contained primarily in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and in the *West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031*.

See also: DESIGN GUIDE 2: Planning Policy.

The Design Guide has been subject to public consultation and has Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) status, making it a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## 1.2 STRUCTURE AND SCOPE

The Design Guide is intended to encourage a high standard of design, and to promote new development which respects and fits in with the character of West Oxfordshire. The Guide sets out the characteristics which make West Oxfordshire unique and which can be used to influence new design that reflects and enhances local character.

The Design Guide is intended to provide information to a wide range of potential users, including communities, home- and business-owners, developers and agents, planning officers and local Members; indeed, to all those involved with potential change to the landscapes, settlements and buildings of the District.

The central theme linking all parts of the Design Guide is the belief that good design can only result from a comprehensive understanding of – and meaningful response to – local context in all its forms; that each context is unique, and merits an individually tailored design response.

The Design Guide is divided into twenty parts. Parts 1-10 deal in detail with existing context, setting out the qualities and characteristics that make West Oxfordshire distinctive. These parts focus both on broad, District-wide themes, such as landscape and settlement character, together with narrower design-related issues, such as designated heritage assets and building details.

Parts 11-20 are concerned with future change, and cover key themes relating to new development, including sustainable design, extensions and alterations, changes to traditional buildings, and shop front design.

Unlike its predecessor, the updated Design Guide is intended primarily a web-based document, any part of which may be viewed on screen or printed off.