



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.

PLANNING

This download is for considering planning issues only. We ask that when you are out on site, 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.

P1. Is there an overall unifying composition (e.g. a certain style or pattern of development) here? Or is there a more organic composition? For example core town built on Roman street pattern then developed out during industrial revolution. *Mark these developments on the map.*

P2. As you walk consider and note down on the map what are the predominant land uses are in the area? Think about the differences between the ground floor and upper floors. For example shops and housing or industrial usage. *Note these areas down on the map.*

P3. Think about the activity at various times of the day, week or year? How busy is it at different times and seasons? When and why is it at its most quiet and most lively? *Note your thoughts below.*

P4. How safe do you think people feel during the day or at night?
Note your thoughts below.

P5. How have land uses changed over time? How do you think they will continue to change over time? *Note your thoughts below.*

P6. As you walk, notice where there are gap sites or boarded-up buildings that could be positively improved by redevelopment. Are there any buildings or areas that are well-used or underused? Consider the state of repair of the buildings and structures throughout the area.
Note these sites on the map.

P7. What sort of land use mix does this area lend itself too? Can a mix of uses (such as living, working and playing) does the mix you observe add to the success of the place? *Note your thoughts down here and indicate reference on the map.*

P8. Can any conflicts and irritations between land uses be eased by management rather than separation? *Note your thoughts down here and indicate reference on the map.*

P9. What are conditions like for visually impaired people, deaf people and other disabilities? *Mark any areas of concern on the map.*

P10. As you walk notice areas that can sustain local economic, social and cultural life e.g. children's play space, a teenage hang-out, markets, eating, entertainment or just sitting out? *Note these areas on the map. Do you think the scale and location of these spaces are suitable?*

P11. Can a mix of uses help create meeting places for all e.g. gender, age etc? Can civic spaces be inclusive for a wide range of uses and activities? *Note on the map places where you think this already happens or could be developed in the future.*

P12. As you walk observe and note down noises and smells. Are these pleasant or unpleasant? How does the land use mix affect this? Can you record any air and water quality issues? *Note down what you observe on the map.*

P13. As you walk, look for evidence of any social or antisocial behaviour, places where people chat or hang out or vandalism and graffiti? Are roads and surfaces well maintained? Is there general evidence of care and maintenance?
Note on the map these spaces and write notes below.

P14. Can there be a comfortable environment? Are there any glare, over-shadowing or over-looking issues? What about right-to-light issues?
Write some notes below

P15. As you walk, can you observe any telecommunications, services and utilities. Where are the cables, masts, antennas and aerials? The water, gas, electricity? Underground and/or above the ground?
Note them on the map.