

**West Oxfordshire Local Plan
Housing Consultation Paper**

July 2014

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. Plan Period**
- 4. Overall number of homes to be provided**
- 5. Spatial Strategy**
- 6. Housing Distribution and Sites**
- 7. Future business land requirements**
- 8. Affordable Housing**
- 9. Housing Mix**
- 10. Meeting the needs of specific groups**
- 11. Next Steps**

Appendices

Appendix 1 Consultation Questions

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The District Council is preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing Local Plan adopted in 2006.
- 1.2 A consultation draft was published in November 2012 and the Council had planned to submit the final version to Government in summer 2013.
- 1.3 However in May 2013, a team of consultants were commissioned by the Oxfordshire planning authorities to prepare an assessment of future housing needs. The report, known as the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in April 2014 and now forms an important part of each Council's Local Plan evidence base.
- 1.4 For West Oxfordshire, the SHMA suggests a significant increase in new housing is needed compared to that which was identified in the draft Local Plan (2012).
- 1.5 The purpose of this consultation document is to set out the Council's response to the findings of the SHMA and other relevant evidence and explain how the Local Plan will be taken forward.
- 1.6 The consultation document addresses the following issues:
 - The plan period;
 - The overall number of homes to be provided;
 - The proposed spatial (locational) strategy;
 - How the overall housing requirement will be met including which sites are expected to be developed;
 - Future business land requirements; and
 - The type and mix of housing needed including affordable housing.
- 1.7 The consultation paper is supported by a range of technical evidence including an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 1.8 The consultation period is likely to run from **28th July - 8th September 2014**.
- 1.9 All comments received will be taken into account by the Council in preparing the final pre-submission draft Local Plan which will be formally published in October/November 2014.

2. Background

- 2.1 All local authorities are required to produce a Local Plan. Local Plans set out a vision and framework for the future development of an area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design.
- 2.2 The Local Plan should make clear what is intended to happen in the area over the life of the plan, where and when this will occur and how it will be delivered.
- 2.3 Importantly, planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.4 A crucially important issue for all Local Plans to address is the number of new homes to be provided.
- 2.5 The consultation draft Local Plan published in 2012 included a housing target of at least 5,500 new homes to be delivered in the period 2011 - 2029 (306 homes per year). The target was based primarily on the South East Plan (2006) extended on a pro-rata basis.
- 2.6 However, the South East Plan was revoked in March 2013 meaning that it no longer has any statutory weight in planning terms.
- 2.7 Since then there have also been a number of legal cases (e.g. St. Alban's – December 2013) in which the continued use of regional plan housing numbers has been called into question.
- 2.8 As such and in light of the more recent evidence contained in the Oxfordshire SHMA, the Council accepts that it is no longer appropriate to base its housing requirement on the South East Plan.
- 2.9 The remainder of this consultation paper sets out how the Council intends to take the Local Plan forward in light of the SHMA and other relevant evidence including the number and type of new homes to be planned for as well as where and when they are expected to come forward.

3. Plan Period

- 3.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Plans should be drawn up over an appropriate timescale, preferably a 15-year time horizon (from the date of adoption).
- 3.2 The Council's current timetable envisages adoption of the new Local Plan by July 2015. The end date of the draft Local Plan (2012) is 31st March 2029. This means that upon adoption it will cover a period of just less than 14 years.
- 3.3 Whilst the Oxfordshire SHMA covers the period 2011 - 2031, much of the Council's other supporting evidence runs to 2029 and the Council considers that this remains an appropriate timescale for the plan to cover.
- 3.4 It is also relevant to note that in light of the high level of housing need identified for Oxford City within the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) there may need to be an early, focused review of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan, in order to help address any 'unmet' housing need that cannot be delivered within the City's boundaries.
- 3.5 A process of joint working has been agreed and all of the Oxfordshire planning authorities have signed up to a statement of co-operation in accordance with the duty to co-operate. This work will involve detailed consideration of various different options for meeting Oxford City's unmet housing need across Oxfordshire.
- 3.6 As part of this process, potential site options within West Oxfordshire will need to be considered. If any of these are taken forward as preferred options, the West Oxfordshire Local Plan may need to be subject to an early review which would provide the opportunity to extend the plan period to 2031. However, at the present time, it is considered appropriate for the Local Plan period to remain at 2011 – 2029.

Plan Period

Consultation Question 1) Do you agree that the period 2011 – 2029 is a reasonable period of time for the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan to cover? If not, what period should the plan cover and why?

4. Overall number of homes to be provided

- 4.1 In this section we set out how many new homes are proposed and explain the reasoning behind the target.
- 4.2 Identifying the number of new homes to be planned for is not an exact science. There is no single, right answer rather it is a case of pulling together a range of relevant factors and forming a balanced view.
- 4.3 Table 4.1 sets out the main factors, some but not all of which have been addressed in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014).

Table 4.1 – Relevant Factors in Determining a Local Housing Target

Relevant Factors in Determining a Local Housing Target	Addressed in Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)?
Demographic projections (future increase in population and number of households)	Yes
Economic forecasts (future change in job numbers)	Yes
Affordable housing need (people unable to rent or buy on the open market)	Yes
Market signals (land values, house prices etc.)	Yes
Past rates of housing delivery	Yes – in part
Market capacity	No
Housing land availability	No
Environmental considerations (Green Belt, AONB etc.)	No
Infrastructure capacity (roads, schools etc.)	No
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	No

- 4.4 We consider these factors below to explain how we have arrived at the proposed housing target.

Demographic Projections

- 4.5 Demographic projections provide a starting point for considering how many new homes might be needed in the future. There are two key variables; future population (the number and mix of people that are likely to reside in an area) and household formation (how likely those people are to form new households and therefore require housing).
- 4.6 Importantly, population and household projections are ‘trend-based’ and identify what would happen if past-trends were to continue. As such, they must be treated with caution to ensure they are not affected by any particular ‘one-off’ events such as a large housing development, or closure of a major employer.

4.7 The latest Government household projections¹ for Oxfordshire are set out in Table 4.2 below:

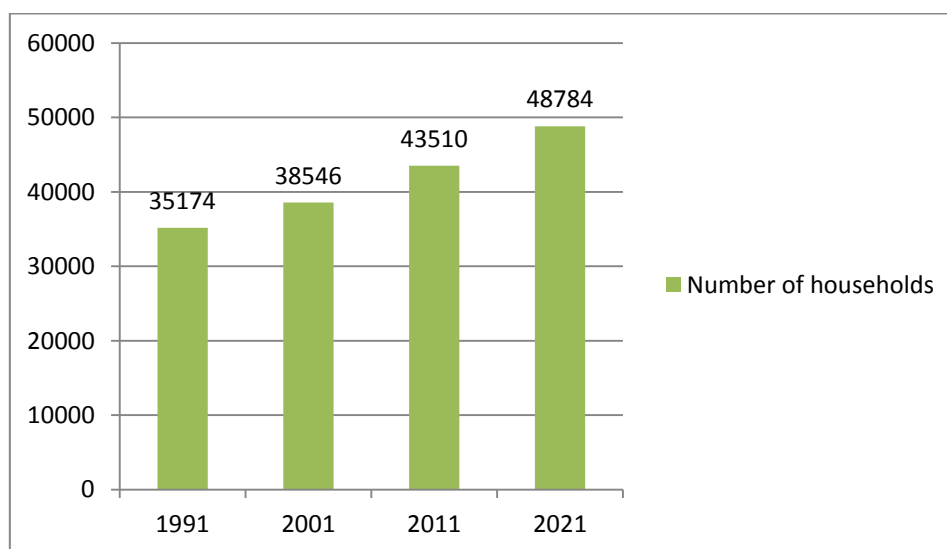
Table 4.2 – Interim Household Projections for Oxfordshire 2011 - 2021

Area	Households 2011	Households 2021	Change in households	% change from 2011
Cherwell	56,881	63,765	6,884	12.1%
Oxford	54,997	53,613	-1,384	-2.5%
South Oxfordshire	54,387	57,989	3,602	6.6%
Vale	49,781	53,656	3,875	7.8%
West Oxfordshire	43,510	48,784	5,274	12.1%
Oxfordshire	259,556	277,807	18,251	7.0%

Source: DCLG

4.8 In West Oxfordshire the number of households is projected to increase by 5,274 over the 10-year period 2011 – 2021 (527 per annum). It is important to consider whether this is a realistic scenario or not. The graph below shows how the projection compares with actual household numbers in previous years.

Figure 4.1 – Number of Households in West Oxfordshire 1991 - 2021



4.9 It is evident that:

- Between 1991 and 2001 the number of households in West Oxfordshire increased by 3,372 (337 per annum)
- Between 2001 and 2011, the number of households increased by 4,964 (496 per annum)
- Over the 20-year period 1991 – 2011 the number of households increased by 8,336 (417 per annum)

4.10 The latest household projection to 2021 is therefore higher than any of these previous trends and the reasons for this must be carefully considered.

¹ DCLG Interim Household Projections 2011 – 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/household-projections>

- 4.11 It is also important to consider how the projections for West Oxfordshire compare with other areas. Notably, in percentage terms, West Oxfordshire’s projected increase in households to 2021 (12.1%) is much higher than the county average (7.0%) and is also above the regional (10.8%) and national (10.0%) averages.
- 4.12 It is also significantly higher than neighbouring Cotswold District, which has a projected increase of just 2,583 households by 2021 (258 per annum) a 7.1% increase, despite the similar characteristics to West Oxfordshire.
- 4.13 The key question is whether the household projections for West Oxfordshire are a reasonable basis upon which to identify a Local Plan housing target.
- 4.14 As part of the SHMA process, the consultants have sought to interrogate the official DCLG household projections and have prepared two alternative projections.
- 4.15 The first projection² uses the official DCLG figures and extends them to 2031. Table 4.3 sets out the results for each authority.

Table 4.3 – SHMA Projection 1 Results for Oxfordshire

Authority	Population increase per annum	Population increase total (2011 – 2031)	Housing numbers per annum	Housing numbers total (2011 – 2031)
Cherwell	1,191	23,827	656	13,126
Oxford City	149	2,980	-2	-34
South Oxon	687	13,733	366	7,318
Vale	791	15,828	367	7,335
West Oxon	1,021	20,396	512	10,246

Source: Tables 33 – 42 Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

- 4.16 For West Oxfordshire the number of homes needed under this projection is 512 per year.
- 4.17 The second demographic projection³ extends the DCLG projection to 2031 and also updates some data anomalies relating to migration. These changes mainly affect Oxford City but also have an effect on the other Oxfordshire authorities. The results are set out in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 – SHMA Projection 2 Results for Oxfordshire

Authority	Population increase per annum	Population increase total (2011 – 2031)	Housing numbers per annum	Housing numbers total (2011 – 2031)
Cherwell	918	18,369	641	12,830
Oxford City	1,840	36,792	755	15,105
South Oxon	821	16,417	482	9,634
Vale	873	17,453	468	9,365
West Oxon	922	18,432	541	10,815

Source: Tables 33 – 42 Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

² Referred to as ‘Proj 1’ in the SHMA

³ Referred to as ‘Proj 2’ in the SHMA

4.18 Under this projection the number of homes needed increases in all areas with the exception of Cherwell. For West Oxfordshire, it increases to 541 homes per year. The SHMA suggests that this second projection represents the starting point for identifying overall housing need.

4.19 Importantly, Government practice guidance⁴ emphasises that the weight to be afforded to household projections should take account of the fact that they have not been tested or moderated against relevant constraints. It states that:

‘Because household projections are based on past trends, if a Council has robust evidence that past high delivery rates that inform the projections are no longer realistic – for example they relied on a particular set of circumstances that could not be expected to occur again – they can adjust their projections down accordingly’.

4.20 Notably, the SHMA acknowledges that the household projections for West Oxfordshire (and Cherwell) are above the national and regional averages. It states that in West Oxfordshire in particular, this appears to have been influenced by stronger relative past housing delivery⁵.

4.21 It goes on to state that:

‘West Oxfordshire stands out as having delivered significantly higher housing provision relative to its South East Plan targets over the 2006-11 period. It delivered almost 1,400 additional homes over and above its housing target. This level of growth was a result of several urban extensions coming forward at the same time, resulting in high levels of in-migration which have influenced household projections moving forward. As such, the District Council may wish to further consider this in light of the Planning Practice Guidance which highlights the need to consider previous over-supply as well as under-supply. No adjustment to figures has been made at the SHMA, but there is potentially a good basis for doing so with reference to previous household projections and needs’ assessments alongside the South East Plan targets’.

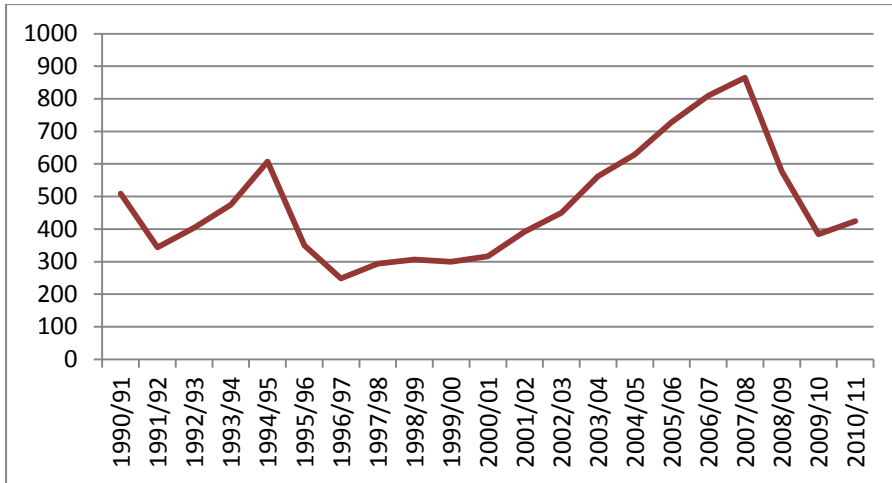
4.22 The high rate of house building in West Oxfordshire during the period 2006 – 2011 is illustrated on the graph below.

Figure 4.2 – Housing completions in West Oxfordshire 1991 - 2011

⁴ DCLG Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (March 2014)

⁵ SHMA (2014) paragraph 5.9

⁶ SHMA (2014) paragraph 9.17



4.23 This was essentially a consequence of several large housing schemes coming forward at the same time including:

- Shilton Park, Carterton (greenfield urban extension)
- Madley Park, Witney (greenfield urban extension)
- Early's Mill, Witney (previously developed, urban site)
- Bridge Street Mill, Witney (previously developed, urban site)
- Former Parker Knoll factory, Chipping Norton (previously developed, urban site)

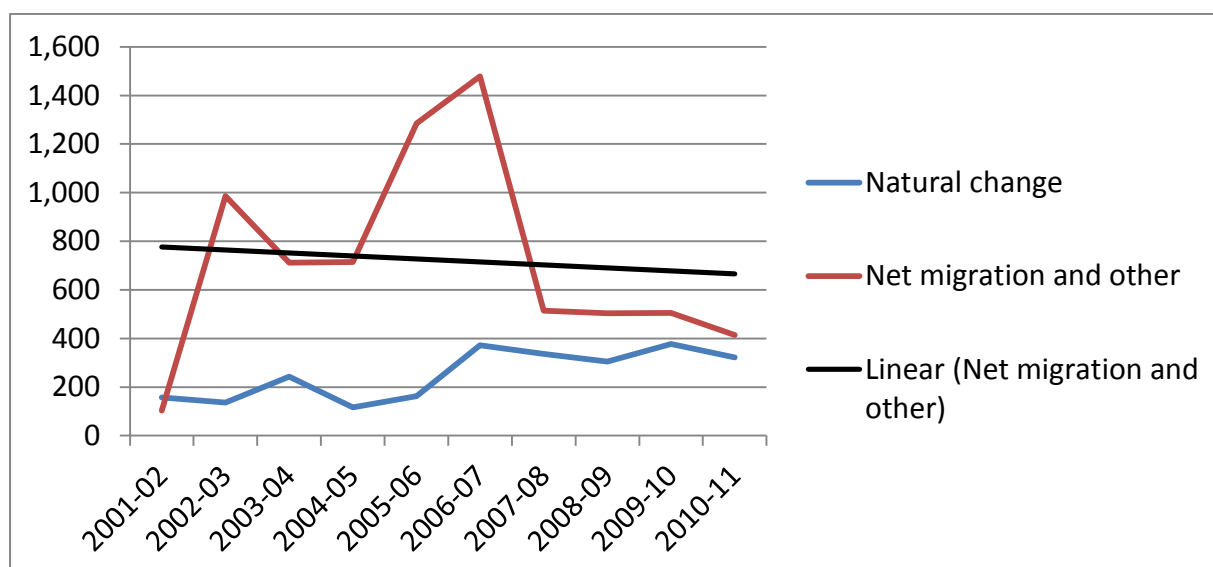
4.24 In light of the SHMA recommendation and the Government's practice guidance, the Council has commissioned a separate report⁷ which considers a range of different issues including the extent to which the previously high rates of house building in West Oxfordshire have influenced the Government's future population and household projections.

4.25 The Woodhead report identifies that there has been a particular 'spike' in net migration into West Oxfordshire caused in part by the large number of homes built in the District since 2001. These past trends are very important because they form the basis of future population projections.

4.26 The increase in migration is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

⁷ An Analysis of West Oxfordshire's Future Housing Requirement (2011 – 2029) Keith Woodhead (June 2014)

Figure 4.3 Components of Population Change in West Oxfordshire 2001 - 2011



- 4.27 It is relevant to note that between 2001 and 2011, 5,800 new homes were built in West Oxfordshire (580 per year) and the population increased by 9,741 people. This was caused primarily by net migration⁸ of around 7,750 people (775 per annum)⁹ with natural change⁹ accounting for an increase of just 2,500 people (250 per annum)¹⁰.
- 4.28 In the previous decade 1991 – 2001, only 3,640 homes were built (360 per year) and the population increased by just 4,700 people, the majority of which (3,100 or 310 per annum) was a result of natural change with net migration accounting for just 1,600 (160 per annum).
- 4.29 It is logical to conclude therefore that in the period 2001 – 2011 the large number of homes built led to a large increase in population, primarily as a result of people moving into the District from elsewhere.
- 4.30 This is important because it is this more recent period that informs the current population and household projections that form the basis of the SHMA (2014).
- 4.31 The population projections used in the SHMA¹¹ for example assume that in the period 2011 to 2021 the population of West Oxfordshire will increase by 11,300 people of which 4,100 will be through natural change (420 per annum) and 7,200 through net migration (720 per annum).
- 4.32 It is evident that the high rate of in-migration experienced in West Oxfordshire during the period 2001 – 2011 (775 per annum) is being reflected in future projections (720 per annum).

⁸ i.e. more people moving into the District than out

⁹ i.e. number of births exceeding the number of deaths

¹⁰ 'Other changes' account for the loss of -538 people

¹¹ 2011 based interim sub-national population projections (ONS)

- 4.33 The Woodhead report demonstrates that when a longer-term average migration rate of 455 per annum is used, the projected increase in population and households is lower than suggested in the SHMA and would result in a dwelling requirement of around 484 homes per annum over the period 2011 – 2029 (8,712 homes in total).
- 4.34 It is also relevant to note that since the SHMA was published in April 2014, more up to date population projections have been released¹² which suggest that the population of West Oxfordshire in 2021 will be around 1,400 less than the previous forecasts used to inform the SHMA.
- 4.35 The new 2012-based population projections have been modelled in the Woodhead report using several different assumptions regarding household formation. The report concludes that on the basis of these new projections, in the period 2011 – 2029 the number of new homes needed ranges from 8,254 to 9,917 the midpoint of which is 9,086 homes.

Economic Forecasts

- 4.36 Of direct relevance to the number of homes needed is the number of new jobs that are likely to be created. Balancing the provision of new housing and jobs can help to avoid unsustainable patterns of commuting.
- 4.37 The SHMA has been informed by a separate report which considers future economic prospects within Oxfordshire in the period 2011 – 2031¹³. The report considers three scenarios:
1. A baseline projection using a standard forecasting model (based on 15-year past trends);
 2. An alternative population projection (similar to the baseline projection but using a different population input to take account of migration data anomalies); and
 3. A planned economic growth projection to take account of new jobs arising from initiatives such as City Deal and the Science Vale Enterprise Zone.
- 4.38 The baseline projection suggests that an additional 5,200 jobs will be created in West Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2031. The alternative population projection suggests a potential increase of 6,100 jobs and the planned economic growth projection, a potential increase of 7,900 jobs.
- 4.39 As part of the SHMA process, the consultants have considered how many homes would be needed to meet the labour demand associated with these new jobs. The results are set out in Table 4.5.

¹² 2012 based sub national population projections (ONS)

¹³ Oxfordshire Economic Forecasting Report; Cambridge Econometrics/SQW (February 2014).

Table 4.5 – West Oxfordshire Indicative Dwelling Requirement (Economic Projections)

Scenario	Dwelling requirement (per annum)	Total dwellings 2011 – 2031
Scenario 1 – Baseline economic forecast	Not modelled	Not modelled
Scenario 2 – Alternative population projection	590	11,800
Scenario 3 – Planned economic growth projection	661	13,220

Source: SHMA (2014)

- 4.40 It can be seen that under the two economic scenarios modelled, the dwelling requirement for West Oxfordshire ranges from 590 – 661 homes per annum. There are however several key issues to note.
- 4.41 Predicting future job numbers is not an exact science and forecasts can regularly change. For example, an earlier forecast from October 2012 by Cambridge Econometrics¹⁴ (one of the authors of the report used to inform the SHMA) suggested that the number of new jobs likely to be created in West Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2031 was 2,770, considerably lower than any of the scenarios outlined above.
- 4.42 Furthermore, the type of model used in the SHMA to translate jobs into homes (referred to as a jobs-led model or JLM) has a number of limitations. The Woodhead report explores these in detail and concludes that the SHMA projections are reliant on a methodology that is not particularly appropriate for an area such as West Oxfordshire and in exaggerating the effects of population ageing on the local labour market the projections tend to over-estimate the housing requirement.
- 4.43 The potential job increases modelled in the SHMA are also based on population projections to 2031, which for the reasons explained in paragraphs above have been affected by previously high levels of housing delivery in West Oxfordshire during the period 2005 – 2010. As such the Council’s argument about the ‘inflationary’ effects of house building from 2005 – 2010, are considered to apply to the economic projections as well the demographic projections. This is recognised in the SHMA at paragraph 9.62 which states that:
- ‘Strong past housing provision is likely to have influenced both the demographic projections and the economic forecasts, to some degree, as these take account of population trends in projecting employment growth in sectors where the population base influences demand’.***
- 4.44 It is also important to note that the number of jobs identified under the ‘planned economic growth’ projection in particular is very ambitious and whilst not unprecedented, there is no guarantee that these will actually be delivered.

¹⁴ Cambridge Econometrics ‘Economic Prospects for the Nations and Regions of the UK (October 2012)

- 4.45 Even if these new jobs are successfully created, the number of homes provided for must be realistic and deliverable. Across Oxfordshire as a whole, the level of housing needed to meet the planned economic growth projection (85,600 homes) represents a 40% uplift on the demographic analysis (57,740 homes) and an uplift of over 70% compared to previous annual delivery rates of new housing across Oxfordshire.
- 4.46 In summary, the Council accepts that some uplift in overall housing numbers is necessary to meet future employment needs but not to the extent identified within the SHMA for the reasons set out above.

Affordable housing need

- 4.47 Affordable housing is for those with a housing need who are unable to rent or buy suitable accommodation on the open market. The need for affordable housing is often most acute in areas with high property prices and/or low wages.
- 4.48 Meeting the identified need for affordable housing is a key consideration in setting a housing target. Local authorities should aim to meet the full, objectively assessed need for affordable housing as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the NPPF.
- 4.49 The Oxfordshire SHMA identifies a need for 274 affordable homes per year in West Oxfordshire over the period 2013 – 2031. To meet this need in full, 685 homes per year would need to be built¹⁵. However, there are a number of issues to consider.
- 4.50 Firstly, the figure of 274 affordable homes per year does not take account of affordable housing already in the development ‘pipeline’ (i.e. with planning consent). Taking account of such committed schemes, the requirement falls to 257 affordable homes per annum.
- 4.51 Secondly, the level of affordable need identified in the SHMA is higher than the Council’s previous evidence from 2011¹⁶ which suggested a net need of 220 affordable units per annum. Assuming 40% delivery of affordable housing on all market-led schemes, to meet this need in full a total of 550 homes per year would be needed.
- 4.52 Thirdly, as explained in the SHMA itself, expressed over a 20-year period, the affordable housing need figures are likely to over-estimate the levels of housing provision necessary. It goes on to state that, ‘the affordable housing needs model is based on evidence of need and supply of affordable housing at a point in time and is not designed to (or necessarily suitable) for considering overall housing need’¹⁷.
- 4.53 Fourthly, the overall level of housing provision needs to be realistic and achievable. In relation to Oxford City for example, to meet the identified affordable need in full, a total of 2,058 homes per annum would be needed compared to 400 homes per annum identified in the Council’s adopted Core Strategy. This is clearly not a realistic proposition.

¹⁵ Assuming 40% affordable housing delivery on market-led housing schemes

¹⁶ 2011 – Housing Needs Assessment for West Oxfordshire David Coultie Associates

¹⁷ Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) paragraph 9.43

- 4.54 It is also important to remember that there are other mechanisms to deliver affordable housing not just as a by-product of market led housing schemes for example subsidised access to private renting or private market purchase, adapting existing homes and better utilisation of the existing affordable housing stock to meet identified needs.
- 4.55 The SHMA analysis also takes no account of the role of the private rented sector in meeting affordable housing needs. The accommodation options provided by the private rented sector are in reality likely to reduce the level of affordable housing need identified.¹⁸
- 4.56 Finally, it is important to recognise that the ability to deliver affordable housing is influenced by funding mechanisms and other factors which support affordable housing delivery. Figures therefore need to be treated with caution in terms of setting a target for the provision of affordable housing over a 15-20 year timeframe, recognising that there are a range of factors which could influence the affordability of market housing and mechanisms for delivery of affordable housing over this period¹⁹.
- 4.57 To summarise, the Council accepts that some uplift in overall housing numbers is needed to help meet the affordable housing need identified in the SHMA but does not accept that this need can necessarily be met in full (or indeed should be planned for given the limitations of the model used).

Market Signals

- 4.58 The Government's practice guidance suggests that household projections (discussed earlier) should be adjusted to reflect appropriate market signals and other market indicators. Considerations include:
- Land prices
 - House prices
 - Rents
 - Affordability
 - Rates of development
 - Overcrowding
- 4.59 In some instances, an upward adjustment to housing numbers may be needed to address a worsening trend in such signals.
- 4.60 The SHMA concludes that the market signals in Oxfordshire point towards a need for an upward adjustment to housing provision at the countywide level but not for all Districts. The strongest demand pressures are identified in Oxford City.
- 4.61 Notably, it concludes that there is less market pressure in West Oxfordshire and consequently makes no upward adjustment.

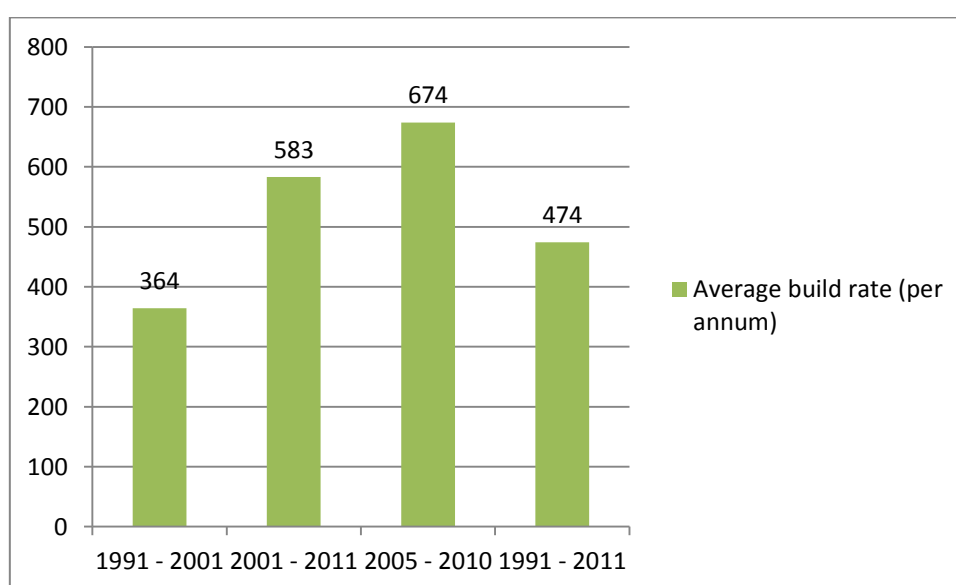
¹⁸ Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) paragraphs 9.43 – 9.45

¹⁹ Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) paragraph 9.46

Past Rates of Housing Delivery and Market Capacity

- 4.62 We have already described how high build rates in the period 2005 - 2010 have influenced the population and household projections for West Oxfordshire – a point which is acknowledged in the SHMA.
- 4.63 It is also useful to consider longer-term build rates in order to ‘sense-check’ any future potential housing target. Consideration of what has actually been achieved ‘on the ground’ historically in West Oxfordshire, provides an indication of what the market is likely to be able to deliver in the future.
- 4.64 The graph below sets out average build rates over several different periods since 1991.

Figure 4.4 – Average residential completion rates in West Oxfordshire (per annum)



- 4.65 It is evident that:
- There was a significant peak in build rates from 2005 – 2010 (the period used to inform the Government’s population and household projections);
 - In the 10-year period 1991 – 2001 build rates were much lower at an average of 364 homes;
 - Between 2001 – 2011 build rates increased to an average of 583 per annum; and
 - Over the long term 20-year period 1991 – 2011, the average completion rate was 474 homes per annum.
- 4.66 The 20-year average (474 homes per annum) provides a good indication of likely deliverability and market capacity over several periods of recession and growth.

Housing Land Availability

- 4.67 The SHMA takes no account of housing land availability rather it provides a theoretical assessment of potential housing need. A key consideration for the Council in determining an appropriate local housing target is the amount of suitable and deliverable housing land that is likely to be available over the period of the Local Plan.
- 4.68 The Council is required to prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which identifies sites that are potentially suitable for housing and whether and when they are likely to come forward.
- 4.69 The Council's previous SHLAA was published in 2011 and has been updated in support of this consultation. The updated 2014 SHLAA is available separately²⁰ and demonstrates that there is capacity for the provision of around 8,200 homes taking account of previous completions (2011 – 2014) existing commitments and other potentially suitable and deliverable housing sites.
- 4.70 This does not take account of potential windfall development (i.e. unidentified sites) but even when a windfall allowance is included the overall level of capacity is evidently lower than the full level of housing need identified in the SHMA. The findings of the SHLAA are clearly material to the determination of an appropriate local housing target.

Infrastructure Capacity

- 4.71 A further important consideration in determining the number of new homes that should be planned for is the capacity of local infrastructure to absorb growth (roads, schools, health care etc.) and whether the impact can be successfully mitigated either by improving existing facilities (e.g. school expansion) or through the provision of new infrastructure (e.g. new road link). This issue has not been explored through the SHMA.
- 4.72 We know from previous consultation responses that residents and businesses in West Oxfordshire are particularly concerned about the impact of more housing on the A40 with congestion already a significant problem. More housing will increase pressure on the A40 and other key routes and will also add pressure on local schools, health care, emergency services and so on.
- 4.73 It is vital that the number of homes planned for takes full account of such issues. The capacity of infrastructure in West Oxfordshire to absorb growth was a key factor influencing the target set for the District in the South East Plan of 365 homes per annum in the period 2006 – 2026.
- 4.74 In support of the draft Local Plan (2012) the Council published a Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sought to quantify the infrastructure requirements associated with the previous housing target of 5,500 homes. The IDP has been updated to take account of higher levels of growth and has been published as a background paper to this consultation.

²⁰ <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/local-plan-evidence-base/>

Environmental Considerations

- 4.75 The SHMA takes no account of environmental constraints which is a critically important issue for West Oxfordshire and was a key factor in setting the South East Plan target of 365 homes per annum in the period 2006 – 2026.
- 4.76 It is highly relevant that 34% of the District falls within the Cotwolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that:
- ‘Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest’***
- 4.77 The ability to deliver a very high housing target in a District that is one third AONB is obviously significantly reduced. Other important environmental considerations relevant to West Oxfordshire include:
- Significant areas of flood risk (around 11% of the District falls within either Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) or Flood Zone 3 (high risk))
 - Significant parts of the south of the District fall within a defined Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA)
 - Green Belt designation in the eastern part of the District (part of the Oxford Green Belt)
 - Numerous heritage assets including 16 parks and gardens, 3,200 listed buildings, 50 Conservation Areas and the Blenheim Palace World Heritage site
 - Numerous sites of nature conservation importance including SSSIs, local wildlife sites, ancient woodland and part of a European Special Area of Conservation (Oxford Meadows SAC)
- 4.78 Whilst such factors do not completely preclude development, they have a tangible impact on the ability to deliver a very large number of new homes in a sustainable manner.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 4.79 The SHMA does not take account of the potential economic, social and environmental impact of new housing development. To help inform our judgement on these issues and the setting of the new housing target, the Council has commissioned an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) from independent consultants²¹.
- 4.80 The SA report (available separately) considers a range of different housing targets ranging from 500-800 homes per annum. It concludes that whilst the higher housing numbers tested would have positive benefits in terms of certain objectives (i.e. those relating to housing and the economy) they are likely to have a negative impact in terms of other objectives including those relating to landscape and heritage and the efficient use of land due to the additional greenfield land likely to be needed.

²¹ SA report of West Oxfordshire Focused Housing Consultation (Enfusion – June 2014)

Drawing the evidence together

4.81 The analysis outlined above has sought to consider a range of issues that have an influence on the number of new homes that should be planned for. To summarise:

- The Government's 2011 household projections suggest an increase of 527 households per annum in West Oxfordshire (2011 – 2021) which represents 12.1% growth, higher than the county average (7.1%) the regional average (10.8%) and the national average (10.0%) and higher than neighbouring Cotswold District (7.1%);
- As part of the SHMA, the 2011 projections have been extended to 2031 and adjusted through two alternative projections. Taking account of vacancies and second home ownership the first projection identifies a need for **512 homes** per year in West Oxfordshire and the second projection a need for **541 homes** per year;
- The SHMA acknowledges however that the demographic and economic projections for West Oxfordshire have been influenced by an above average rate of house building in the period 2005 – 2010 and suggests that there is potentially a good basis for adjusting them in line with national practice guidance which highlights the need to consider previous over-supply as well as previous under-supply of housing;
- A separate analysis has been prepared which suggests that when long-term migration trends are considered, the number of homes likely to be needed in the period 2011 – 2029 is around 8,712 (**484 homes** per year)
- Modelling of the most recent 2012 based population projections published since the SHMA, suggests that the number of homes needed in the period 2011 – 2029 ranges from 8,254 (**459 homes** per year) to 9,917 (**551 homes** per year) depending on the household formation assumptions used. The midpoint of the range is 9,086 or **506 homes** per year.
- The most recent economic forecasts used to inform the SHMA suggest the number of new jobs that could be created in West Oxfordshire in the period 2011 – 2031 ranges from between 5,200 – 7,900 jobs. This is much higher than an earlier forecast provided by the same consultant in 2012 which suggested an increase of 2,700 jobs over the same period. This highlights the volatility and unreliability of economic forecasting as a way of determining future housing requirements;
- The SHMA suggests that to support 6,100 jobs, the annual dwelling requirement would be **590 homes** per year and to support 7,900 jobs, the requirement would increase to **661 homes** per year. However, those calculations are informed by the same population projections used in the household projection which, as explained previously, has been inflated by above average rate of house building in the period 2005 – 2010. There are also limitations surrounding the type of jobs-led model (JLM) used in the SHMA;

- The SHMA suggests a net need for 274 new affordable homes per annum although this falls to 257 per annum when affordable housing already in the development pipeline is taken into account. Both of these estimates are higher than the Council's previous 2011 assessment which identified a need for 220 affordable homes per annum. To deliver 274 affordable units, assuming 40% delivery on market-led housing schemes the overall housing requirement would be **685 homes** per annum, to deliver 257 homes the overall requirement would be **643 homes** per annum and to deliver 220 homes **550 homes** per annum;
- The SHMA acknowledges however that the affordable housing model used is not designed to or necessarily suitable for considering overall housing need and that expressed over a 20-year period, it is likely to over-estimate the levels of housing provision necessary;
- There is less market pressure in West Oxfordshire (and Cherwell) compared to the other Oxfordshire authorities and the SHMA makes no upward adjustment to housing numbers in this regard;
- Long-term rates of house building show that in the 20-year period 1991 – 2011, the average completion rate in West Oxfordshire was **474 homes** per year. This provides a good indication of likely deliverability and market capacity over several periods of recession and growth;
- In terms of housing land availability the SHLAA update identifies potential capacity of around 8,200 homes (excluding windfalls) in the period to 2029
- Infrastructure capacity is an important consideration in terms of the District's ability to absorb additional growth;
- West Oxfordshire is a predominantly rural area and is heavily constrained in environmental terms by a number of factors including the fact that one third of the District is designated as AONB. These constraints have a tangible impact on the potential delivery of very high levels of house building in the District. The South East Plan recognised these constraints and set a target of 365 homes per annum, purposefully lower than the 2004 household projections in place at that time; and
- An independent Sustainability Appraisal concludes that although higher levels of housing delivery would fulfil certain housing and economic objectives they would have negative impacts in terms of environmental and heritage considerations.

4.82 On the basis of the analysis above, the conclusion reached is that the level of new housing that should be planned for is at least **525 homes per annum**, a minimum of 9,450 homes over the Local Plan period 2011 - 2029.

- 4.83 This quantum of housing represents a significant increase over and above the previous target derived from the South East Plan and is much higher than the long-term average completion rate 1991 – 2011 (474 homes per year). It will therefore achieve the ‘significant boost’ in housing supply required by the NPPF.
- 4.84 The proposed target has regard to current demographic and economic projections in line with guidance but recognises the fact that these projections have been affected by abnormally high rates of house building and in-migration from 2005 – 2010.
- 4.85 The proposed target will allow significant headway to be made towards meeting identified affordable housing and economic needs whilst recognising the environmental and infrastructure constraints facing the District.

Proposed Housing Target

Consultation Question 2) Do you support the proposed Local Plan housing target of at least 9,450 homes to be provided in West Oxfordshire over the period 2011 – 2029 (525 per annum)?

If you do not agree with the proposed target, please explain why and identify which alternative target you consider should be used.

5. Spatial Strategy

5.1 Having determined the number of homes to be provided, we need to consider where they are going to be built. In this section we focus on the overall spatial strategy before moving on to consider specific development sites in Section 6.0.

5.2 The existing adopted Local Plan strategy to 2011 is summarised in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 – Existing Local Plan Strategy to 2011

Location	Key Element of Strategy
Three main 'Group C' service centres (Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton)	Significant new housing and employment development including use of fringe greenfield sites
Other 'Group C' service centres (Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock)	Some new housing and employment development with more limited use of fringe greenfield sites where appropriate/necessary
'Group B' medium-sized villages (all with population over 1,000)	Development more limited and generally confined to within existing built-up areas only
'Group A' smaller villages	Small-scale housing development only
Small villages and hamlets	Generally no new housing or employment development (other than through re-use of existing, suitable buildings)

5.3 The logic behind the strategy is that because the larger settlements offer the greatest range of services and facilities (shops, pubs, schools etc.) they should accommodate the majority of future housing and employment development.

5.4 The table below shows the location of new homes completed in West Oxfordshire between 2006 and 2013.

Table 5.2 – Location of new homes built in West Oxfordshire (2006 – 2013)

Location	Number of homes built (2006 – 2013)
Witney	1,410
Carterton	830
Chipping Norton	277
Woodstock	156
Bampton	44
Burford	49
Charlbury	47
Eynsham	196
Long Hanborough	59
Other	848
Total	3,916

- 5.5 It can be seen that in accordance with the adopted strategy, most new homes have been provided in Witney and Carterton and to a lesser extent Chipping Norton, Woodstock and Eynsham.
- 5.6 The key issue is whether focusing most growth at the District’s service centres remains the most appropriate and sustainable strategy for the new Local Plan in light of the increased housing requirement of 9,450 homes.
- 5.7 During early consultation on the new Local Plan three main strategy options were suggested:
- Concentrate development at Witney
 - Concentrate development at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton
 - More dispersed development amongst a variety of towns and villages but still including development in Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton
- 5.8 These options were consulted upon and also tested through a process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 5.9 The most well-supported option through consultation (and also the best performing option in SA terms) is to concentrate development at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton (referred to as the ‘three-town’ approach).
- 5.10 Two more options were identified but not taken forward or tested through SA because the Council did not consider them appropriate or consistent with national and regional policy. These two options were:
- A new village; and
 - Concentration along main transport corridors (A40, A44 and/or Cotswold Railway line) including expansion of existing settlements and/or new villages
- 5.11 In accordance with the SA report and previous consultation responses, the draft Local Plan (2012) seeks to focus most future growth at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. These towns have the widest range of services and facilities, have suitable and deliverable development sites available, are accessible by a choice of transport modes and offer the greatest range of job opportunities.
- 5.12 The plan recognises however that not all growth can or indeed should go to the three main towns and that there is a need for development elsewhere in order to spread the potential benefits of growth and sustain the more rural parts of the District.
- 5.13 To ensure the proposed strategy remains the most appropriate and sustainable way forward for West Oxfordshire, it has been re-assessed through an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report²².

²² SA report of West Oxfordshire Focused Housing Consultation (Enfusion – June 2014)

- 5.14 Importantly, the SA report concludes that, notwithstanding the increased housing requirement outlined in Section 4.0, the ‘three town’ approach of accommodating most new growth at Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, remains the most appropriate and sustainable strategy for West Oxfordshire.
- 5.15 The new Local Plan will therefore continue to focus most new development at the three main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.
- 5.16 Outside of those three main towns, the focus of development will be the six rural service centres of Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock which will accommodate development of an appropriate scale and type that would help to reinforce their service centre role.
- 5.17 Beyond the rural service centres, some development will be supported in the villages but this will be limited to that which respects the village character and local distinctiveness and would help maintain the vitality of the local community.
- 5.18 In the small villages, hamlets and open countryside, new development will be limited to that which requires and is appropriate for a rural location and which respects the intrinsic character of the area.
- 5.19 In accordance with national policy, isolated new homes in the countryside will be avoided unless there are special circumstances.

Proposed Spatial Strategy

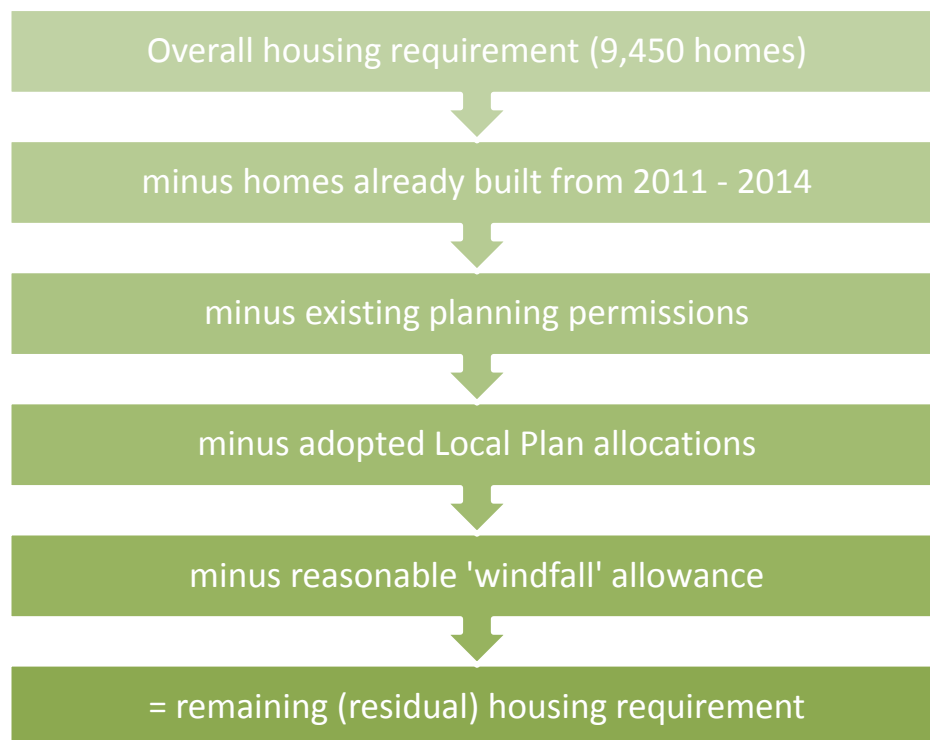
Consultation Question 3) Do you agree with proposed spatial strategy outlined in paragraphs 5.15 – 5.19?

If not, which alternative strategy do you think should form the basis of the new Local Plan?

6. Housing Distribution and Sites

- 6.1 Having considered the overall spatial strategy, in this section we explain in more detail how the new housing that is proposed will be distributed across the District including the specific sites that are expected to come forward.
- 6.2 It is important to remember that of the overall requirement (9,450 homes) around 4,150 homes (44%) are already accounted for. This includes homes that have already been built (823) sites with planning permission (3,244 at 1st June 2014) and sites already allocated in the adopted Local Plan (80).
- 6.3 The Council is also able to make an allowance for windfall development²³ over the Local Plan period provided there is robust evidence that such sites have consistently become available and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.
- 6.4 The remaining 'residual' requirement will be provided on specific sites identified by the Council either through the Local Plan²⁴ and/or within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)²⁵. Figure 6.1 below summarises the process.

Figure 6.1 – West Oxfordshire Residual Housing Requirement 2011 - 2029



²³ Windfall development is when new housing is proposed speculatively on a site that is not specifically allocated for housing in the local plan. By their very nature they cannot be planned for but an allowance can be made provided there is robust evidence.

²⁴ Local Plan Part 1 and 2

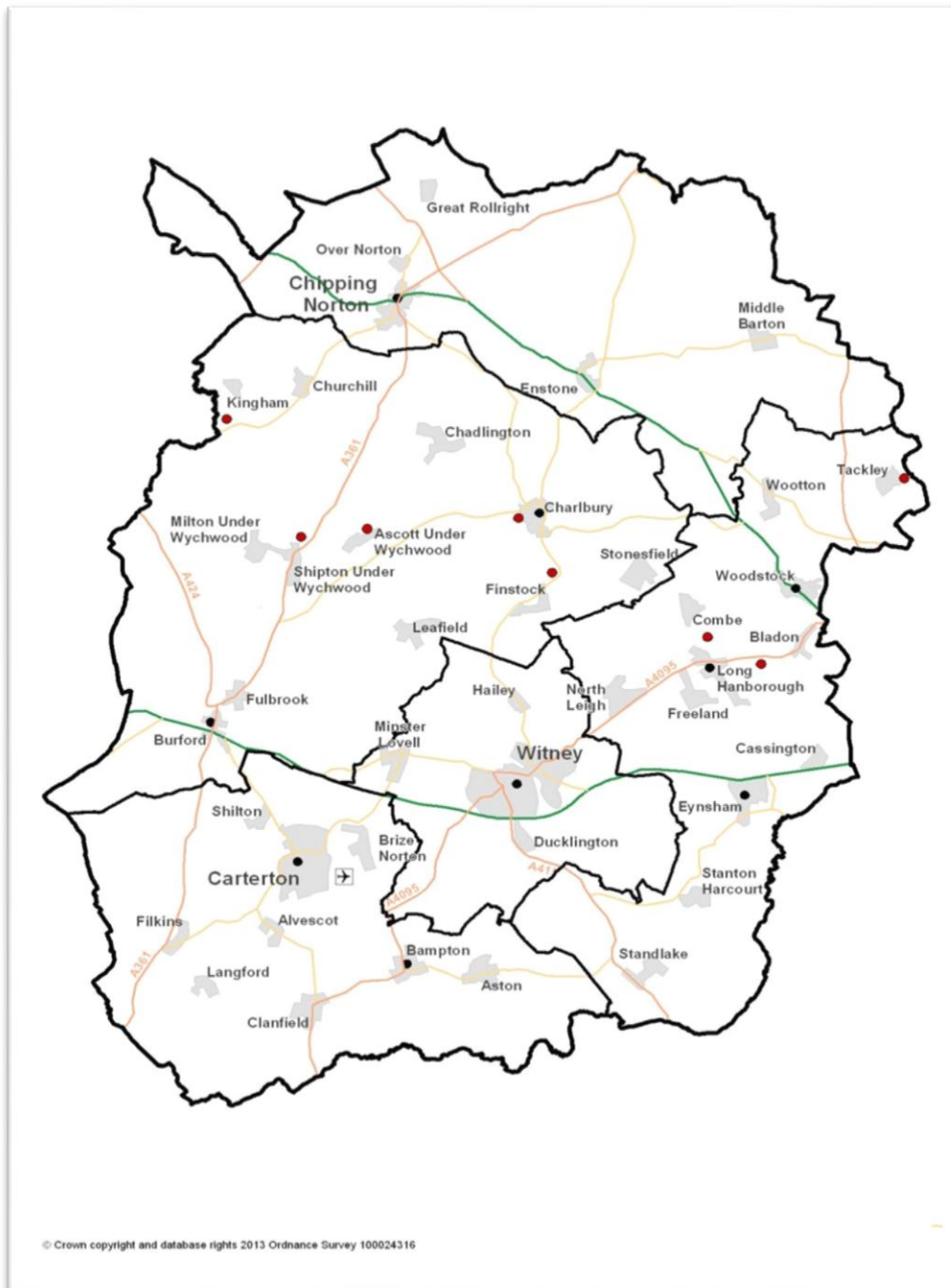
²⁵ [http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/local-plan-evidence-base/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment-\(shlaa\)/](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/local-plan-evidence-base/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment-(shlaa)/)

6.5 In the remainder of this section we set out in detail how the overall housing requirement will be met.

6.6 The draft Local Plan (2012) divides the District into five sub-areas:

- Witney Sub-Area
- Carterton Sub-Area
- Chipping Norton Sub-Area
- Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area
- Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area

Figure 6.2 – West Oxfordshire Local Plan Sub-Areas



- 6.7 In accordance with the proposed spatial strategy, the new Local Plan seeks to focus the majority of new development (including housing) at the District's three main towns of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, although recognises that new housing is needed across the District, to be focused primarily at the larger towns and villages which enjoy better access to services and facilities.
- 6.8 Table 6.1 sets out the proposed distribution of housing by sub-area, taking account of homes already built, existing commitments²⁶ and sites that have been identified as potentially suitable, available and deliverable through the Council's updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)²⁷.

Table 6.1 – Proposed Local Plan Housing Distribution 2011 – 2029

	Witney Sub-Area	Carterton Sub-Area	Chipping Norton Sub-Area	Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area	Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area	Totals
Indicative requirement	3,550	2,450	1,450	1,350	650	9,450
Homes completed 2011 – 2014	154	135	87	315	132	823
Adopted Local Plan allocations	0	0	80	0	0	80
Existing planning permissions as of 1 st June 2014	1,569	1,049	177	289	160	3,244
Windfall (20 homes per annum 2014 - 2019)	300	300	300	300	300	1,500
Residual requirement	1,527	966	806	446	58	3,803

- 6.9 Below we explain in more detail how the requirement for each sub-area will be met.

²⁶ Extant planning permissions including resolutions to grant subject to S106 plus adopted Local Plan allocations (note: includes use class C2 residential institutional uses – residential care homes, nursing homes etc.)

²⁷ West Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (June 2014)

Witney Sub-Area (3,550 homes)

- 6.10 The Witney sub-area has a population of about 34,000. Most people (c. 28,000) live in Witney itself, a vibrant and historic market town famed for its association with the blanket industry. Witney is the District's largest town and acts as the main service centre, offering a broad range of housing and employment opportunities as well as key services and facilities including retailing, health care, leisure and culture.

Figure 6.3 – Witney Sub-Area



- 6.11 There are a number of villages and hamlets on the fringes of Witney including Crawley, Hailey, Ducklington and Curbridge. Although these places offer some local facilities, they naturally look to Witney for most essential services.
- 6.12 As the largest settlement, most of the existing housing stock in this sub-area is located in Witney which has experienced major growth over the last 30 years, more than doubling its population. Much of this growth has been accommodated through successive urban extensions in the post-war era, to the north, west and east of the town. It is anticipated that the Witney sub-area will deliver the majority of new housing over the period of the Local Plan with a particular focus on Witney itself. Given that Witney is the District's main town and service centre and enjoys good proximity to Oxford and other key destinations, this approach is considered appropriate.

- 6.13 Having regard to the evidence set out in the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) there are a number of opportunities for further housing development within the Witney sub-area to help contribute towards the District’s overall housing requirement.
- 6.14 The overall requirement for the Witney sub-area (3,550 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, allocated sites, sites identified as potentially suitable within the SHLAA and speculative windfall development.

Figure 6.4 – Delivering the housing requirement in the Witney sub-area

Witney Sub-Area	
Provision will be made for at least 3,550 new homes in the Witney Sub-Area in the period 2011 – 2029.	
This will be delivered through the following:	
<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of dwellings</u>
Homes already completed 2011 – 2014	154
Existing planning permissions as of 1 st June 2014:	1,569
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Witney (1,000)* • Coral Springs (185) • Buttercross Works (176)** • Springfield Nursery (36) • Other permissions (172) 	
East Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)	400
North Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)	1,000 (phased)
Other potential SHLAA capacity	155
Windfall allowance (20 per year 2014 – 2029)	300
Total	3,578
* Resolution to grant permission subject to Section 106	
** 176 excludes those units already completed	

Existing permissions, SHLAA sites and windfall

- 6.15 In addition to the 154 homes already completed, just over 1,500 new homes will be delivered on sites that already benefit from planning permission or resolution to grant permission subject to Section 106. The largest of these sites is West Witney (North Curbridge) which was allocated as a reserve site in the adopted Local Plan.

- 6.16 The site now benefits from a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement which is currently under negotiation. The scheme will deliver a number of benefits including a new junction onto the A40 at Down's Road which is seen as a key element of the overall transport strategy for Witney.
- 6.17 The Council's updated SHLAA (June 2014) has identified a number of small sites with some housing potential over the life of the plan. These are assessed in detail in the SHLAA (available separately) but include the following:
- Bus Depot and Garage, Corn Street (potentially developable in the longer term subject to relocation of the bus depot)
 - Scrap Yard, West End (potential longer-term scheme)
 - Welch Way (potential long-term redevelopment opportunity)
 - Thames Water Depot, Dark Lane (subject to flood risk being addressed)
 - Woodford Way car park (potentially developable in the longer term subject to replacement parking provision being made elsewhere)
 - Woolgate Centre (potential mixed-use redevelopment longer term)
- 6.18 It is also considered appropriate to include a 'windfall' allowance to cater for unidentified sites that are likely to come forward for housing over the period of the Local Plan. Based on past evidence, a conservative estimate is that such schemes would provide 20 homes per year within the Witney sub-area over the remaining period of the Local Plan (2014 – 2029) thereby providing an additional 300 new homes.
- 6.19 The remaining requirement will be met through two proposed Local Plan housing allocations: East Witney (400 homes) and North Witney (1,000 homes). Further information about these two sites and the reason for their inclusion as well as the alternative options considered, is set out below. Regard should also be had to other relevant technical evidence made available as part of this and previous consultations.

East Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA) - 400 homes

- 6.20 Land at East Witney was previously considered as a potential site option in early consultation stages of the new Local Plan (then referred to as 'Core Strategy'). It was ruled out at the time on the basis of the 'severance' that would have been created by the proposed Cogges Link Road (CLR) scheme – a new bypass for Witney.
- 6.21 However, when it became apparent that the CLR scheme would not go ahead, the merits of the East Witney site for housing were re-assessed through sustainability appraisal as well as a more detailed site assessment exercise.
- 6.22 The assessments demonstrated that the site represents a sustainable development opportunity. It has no significant environmental or heritage constraints, is well-located in relation to the Town Centre and provided the quantum of development is controlled, is unlikely to have a significant landscape impact. Importantly, development in this location also offers the opportunity to deliver west facing slip roads at the Shores Green junction onto the A40. This will allow traffic using the junction to move in all directions whereas currently they can only head east towards Oxford.

- 6.23 The East Witney site was duly allocated in the draft Local Plan (2012) for the provision of 300 new homes on the part of the site known as ‘Cogges Triangle’. The draft allocation stipulated that a pre-requisite of development is the Shores Green Slip Roads scheme and that this should be completed before any houses are built.
- 6.24 The draft allocation attracted very few objections and those received were of a generally minor nature, capable of being addressed through appropriate mitigation (e.g. surface water run-off).
- 6.25 In response to the draft Local Plan (2012) the landowner submitted representations seeking an increase from 300 homes to 450 homes including limited development on the part of the site west of the Stanton Harcourt Road. The principal argument put forward was that more homes are needed to ensure deliverability given the cost of the Shores Green improvements.
- 6.26 The financial viability of the East Witney scheme was subsequently tested on behalf of the Council by independent consultants in a study published in September 2013²⁸. The assessment demonstrated that although 300 dwellings appears viable, the position is relatively marginal given the high infrastructure costs needed to bring the scheme forward.
- 6.27 In recognition of this position and the increased overall housing requirement, the Council considers it appropriate to increase the number of homes proposed at East Witney from 300 to 400. This will help to ensure the viability of the scheme as well as helping to meet the increased housing requirement. The proposed allocation is shown below (note: the extent of the developable area shown is indicative only).

Figure 6.5 – East Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)



²⁸ Aspinall Verdi Local Plan and CIL Viability Study (September 2013)

- 6.28 The intention is to provide a very limited amount of housing (c. 30 homes) on the land west of the Stanton Harcourt Road. This would be subject to the developer being able to satisfy the Council in relation to landscape impact and flood risk.
- 6.29 It is anticipated that this small development would be allowed to come forward ahead of the Shores Green improvements in order to help 'pump-prime' the necessary funding. The inclusion of this land within the allocation will also help to facilitate the provision of links to the Town Centre across the Lower Windrush Valley thereby increasing the integration of the overall development with the existing built area.
- 6.30 The remaining homes (c. 370) will be provided on the Cogges Triangle site, subject to delivery of the Shores Green junction improvements which would need to be completed before the housing is built. The proposed quantum of development would be subject to the developer being able to satisfy the Council in relation to landscape impact, surface water run-off and traffic impact. A mix of housing including affordable housing will be sought together with the provision of any necessary infrastructure improvements (e.g. primary school capacity increase).

Draft Policy - East Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Land to the east of Witney to accommodate a sustainable, integrated community that forms a positive addition to Witney, including:

- a) about 400 homes with a mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people. This will include c.30 homes on land adjacent to Stanton Harcourt Road (subject to landscape impact and flood risk) and c.370 homes on land at Cogges Triangle (subject to landscape impact and surface water run-off)
- b) development to be phased in accordance with the timing of provision of supporting infrastructure and facilities with the necessary improvements to the Shore's Green junction onto the A40 to be delivered prior to the completion of any housing on the Cogges Triangle part of the site;
- c) the provision of other supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, and incorporating a comprehensive network for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with links to adjoining areas, including a particular emphasis on improving the linkages across the Windrush Valley into the town centre;
- d) the provision of appropriate landscape improvements to mitigate the potential impact of development;
- e) the provision of appropriate financial contributions towards primary and secondary education capacity enhancements;
- f) biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance;
- g) provision of appropriate greenspace including allotments;
- h) appropriate measures to mitigate traffic noise
- i) appropriate measures to mitigate flood risk (including surface water run-off)
- j) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- k) the developer will be encouraged to set aside a proportion of the proposed development site for those wishing to undertake 'self-build' projects

North Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA) - 1,000 homes

- 6.31 Land at North Witney has a long planning history and has been considered for housing through a number of previous Local Plan Inquiries. The land lies between the Hailey Road and Woodstock Roads and is divided into the western part (49ha) and eastern part (7ha) by New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road.
- 6.32 Following the most recent Public Inquiry in 2004/2005, the Inspector concluded that the North Witney proposals (800 dwellings at that time) taken in the round and subject to the provision of the West End Link enabling the introduction of a new town bus service, would represent a sustainable urban extension.
- 6.33 He also regarded the proposals as acceptable in landscape terms and highlighted the advantages offered by the site in terms of fulfilling certain sustainability criteria as well as the opportunity to phase development. The site was not however allocated, with the Inspector preferring land at North Curbridge (now an existing commitment of 1,000 homes).
- 6.34 Given its past history, North Witney was identified as a potential option in early consultation stages of the Local Plan including the Preferred Approach (February 2010). The Preferred Approach consultation paper stated that:
- ‘Land to the north of Witney has the potential to deliver additional housing in the longer term. This large area of farmland could accommodate a mix of uses including community facilities and is relatively accessible to the town centre’.***
- 6.35 The document highlighted the potentially unacceptable traffic impact of development in the absence of the Cogges Link Road and/or the West End Link and also the need for any development in this area to address severe flooding problems with the potential to deliver a flood attenuation scheme to reduce flood risk in the Hailey Road corridor.
- 6.36 It also stated that:
- ‘The site is an area of high landscape quality and forms part of the physical gap between Witney and Hailey, but is less prominent in wider views compared to land to the east. This more localised landscape impact would need to be addressed through provision of a positive landscape framework to create a new town edge’.***
- 6.37 Following a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report prepared in support of the draft Core Strategy (2011) the site was not allocated for development. The SA concluded that whilst the land at North Witney would have some positive impacts, it has more negative impacts than land to the west of Witney (which was subsequently allocated).
- 6.38 Land to the north of Witney was considered through a further Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and more detailed site assessment exercise prepared in support of the draft Local Plan (2012).²⁹

²⁹ http://planningconsultation.westoxon.gov.uk/consult.ti/Draft_Local_Plan_2012

6.39 The SA highlighted a number of positives including the opportunity to provide a comprehensive mixed-use development, the potential benefits of a new river crossing for Witney (the West End Link) provision of a new primary school and the fact that the site is reasonably well-related to existing services and facilities (although not the town's main employment areas). Concerns were raised in relation to potential biodiversity and landscape impact with some uncertainty in relation to flood risk, employment provision and water resources.

6.40 The site assessment exercise highlighted the following issues:

Positives

- Satisfactory access arrangements can be achieved (subject to extensive off-site infrastructure)
- The site is reasonably well-related to existing services and facilities
- Development offers the potential for flood alleviation measures supported in principle by the Environment Agency (EA)
- No significant impact in terms of heritage assets
- Provision of the West End Link (a second river crossing for Witney)
- Developer commitment to sustainable development

Negatives

- Risk and complexity associated with delivery including multiple land ownerships
- Not well-related to Witney's main employment areas to the south and west of the town
- Parts of the site are in the floodplain therefore sequentially less preferable to other options
- Potential for significant landscape impact unless quantum of development reduced
- Limited scope for future growth or reconfiguration
- Viability potentially an issue if quantum of growth reduced to address landscape impact

6.41 Having regard to the proposed housing target at that time (5,500 homes) and the potential negatives highlighted above, the site was not allocated in the draft Local Plan (2012) although the route of the West End Link was safeguarded on the Policies Map.

6.42 In light of the increased housing requirement (9,450 homes) it has been necessary to re-appraise the merits of North Witney as a potential housing allocation including a fresh sustainability appraisal (SA) prepared by independent consultants³⁰.

6.43 Although the SA has highlighted a number of potential concerns including landscape impact, biodiversity and water resources, it has also highlights a number of positives including the provision of new housing, provision of supporting infrastructure and the provision of additional employment opportunities.

³⁰ Sustainability Appraisal Report (June 2014) - Enfusion

6.44 The key issues in relation to North Witney are considered to be as follows:

- Traffic and transport
- Landscape impact
- Biodiversity and ecology
- Flood risk
- Deliverability and viability

6.45 These issues are briefly addressed below. Reference should also be made to the updated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and site assessment matrix (available separately).

Traffic and transport

6.46 Like all major development proposals, the development of land at North Witney has the potential to have a significant impact in terms of traffic. This is a key consideration for further development in Witney given the existing congestion problems in and around the central core including Bridge Street.

6.47 The onus will therefore be on the developer to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County Council as highway authority that the development (including any associated highway infrastructure improvements) is acceptable in transport terms, particularly if the smaller part of the site between New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road is to come forward prior to the West End Link and Northern Distributor Road (see below).

6.48 An essential pre-requisite of any strategic scale development at North Witney will be the delivery of the West End Link linking the A4095 (Mill Street) and the B4022 (West End/Hailey Road). This would provide a second river crossing and alternative to Bridge Street. The West End Link will need to be supported by a new northern distributor road linking the B4022 Hailey Road with the A4095 Woodstock Road, via New Yatt Road.

6.49 The Witney transport report prepared in support of the draft Local Plan (2012)³¹ demonstrated that both the West End Link and Northern Distributor Road would demonstrate some benefit in reducing traffic levels passing some of the more sensitive approaches to the Bridge Street/West End junction and also provide an alternate traffic route for trips to and from the surrounding area. These two schemes were however considered to offer a lesser degree of wider benefits when compared to the Shores Green slip road scheme.

6.50 The report duly recommended that the alignment of the West End Link should be protected to cater for longer-term growth envisaging that three strategic sites were unlikely to be promoted in the lifetime of the Local Plan.

³¹ Witney – Summary of Development and Strategic Modelling Technical Note (October 2012)

Landscape Impact

- 6.51 Any large-scale development on the edge of a settlement is likely to have a significant impact in terms of landscape. The larger part of the north Witney site between Hailey Road and New Yatt Road is sensitive in landscape terms being typical of the more enclosed small scale wolds with farmland and farmsteads carved out of the old Wychwood Forest. The Witney Landscape Assessment (2007) identifies this area as having high landscape sensitivity and high local and district importance.
- 6.52 The smaller parcel of land between New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road is less sensitive falling within a flat area of simple character. The 2007 assessment identifies this area as being of low-sensitivity with low to moderate local and district importance.
- 6.53 In support of the draft Local Plan (2012) a further landscape report was prepared to assess the various site options under consideration at Witney and Carterton³². The report considers the potential for up to 1,500 homes on land at North Witney.
- 6.54 It identifies that the North Witney site contributes to the rural landscape setting of Witney and that of the historic villages of Hailey and Poffley End and also to the visual separation of these settlements from Witney.
- 6.55 However, the existing northern edge of Witney is exposed with the built form detracting from the quality of the rural landscape and the townscape character of Witney and an acceptable form of development on this site has the potential to provide substantive improvements to the settlement pattern in North Witney and to the interface between the rural landscape and the town as well as delivering some of the landscape and visual objectives identified in the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998) and the Witney Landscape Assessment (2007).
- 6.56 In relation to the smaller parcel of land between New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road, the report concludes that development would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms subject to a number of landscape design objectives.
- 6.57 With regard to the larger parcel of land between Hailey Road and New Yatt Road, the report states that the development as proposed (1,500 homes) would damage the landscape and visual separation of the historic settlements of Hailey and Poffley End from Witney and have a significant adverse impact on the settled ancient pastures with scattered farmsteads within a landscape pattern of woodland, hedgerows and small fields within Hailey Parish.
- 6.58 However, the report also identifies that the built form on the northern edge of Witney has a negative impact on both the rural landscape quality and the townscape character and although the local field pattern is largely intact, the immediate landscape and visual setting of Witney has been eroded.

³² Landscape and Visual Review of Submissions for Carterton and Witney Strategic Development Options (October 2012)

- 6.59 As such the report concludes that provided a substantive landscape transition zone is retained next to Hailey/Poffley End, the larger parcel of land at North Witney could be developed on a smaller scale (to that being promoted) as an extension to the existing built form and without harm to the wider landscape. Estimated housing capacity across the whole site from a landscape perspective is identified at 750 – 850 homes.
- 6.60 The onus will therefore be on the developer to demonstrate that in landscape terms the site is capable of accommodating the 1,000 homes suggested in this consultation paper. The quantum of development is intended to strike a balance between the landscape sensitivities of the site and the cost associated with the extensive infrastructure needed to bring the site forward.

Biodiversity and Ecology

- 6.61 Biodiversity and ecology is an important consideration for the development of land at North Witney. Land immediately to the north of the site, both to the west and east of New Yatt Road, lies within the Wychwood and Evenlode Conservation Target Area.
- 6.62 Within the site itself, the hedgerows in the northern part are considered to be of local ecological importance; those in the south are poorer. The whole site is located within the Wychwood Project Area.
- 6.63 The route of the proposed West End Link Road passes through an ecologically rich area; it lies within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area, containing Biodiversity Action Plan habitat; is within the Upper Windrush Meadow Ecological Alert Site (ecologically important, including for water voles) and the Windrush in Witney Project Area and trees within the southern section of the route are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 6.64 The onus will therefore be on the developer to demonstrate that the potential impacts on biodiversity and ecology are minimised and that net gains are achieved where possible.

Flood Risk

- 6.65 The vast majority of the North Witney site is in Flood Zone 1 (low risk). A very small proportion of the site, close to Eastfield Road falls within Zone 2 (medium risk) and Zone 3 (high risk) and there is a flood warning area in the 'central valley' with a risk of surface water flooding. The North Witney site also forms part of the catchment area for the Hailey Road drain which has a history of significant flooding in the area.
- 6.66 The bulk of the route of the West End Link lies within Flood Zone 3 (high risk) with the remaining area in Flood Zone 2 (medium risk). Large areas are also at risk from surface water flooding.
- 6.67 In light of the issues outlined above, the developer will be required to demonstrate that a satisfactory solution can be found to address issues of surface-water run-off and other potential sources of flood risk.

- 6.68 Importantly the development of this site presents the opportunity not only to mitigate the impact of the development itself but also to address the existing flooding problems affecting the Hailey Road area. The Environment Agency has previously expressed support in principle for proposals to provide flood risk reduction through the development of land at North Witney subject to further discussions regarding the measures to achieve this.
- 6.69 In relation to the West End Link the EA has highlighted the need for more detailed flood risk assessment as well as avoiding an increase to the risk of flooding elsewhere.

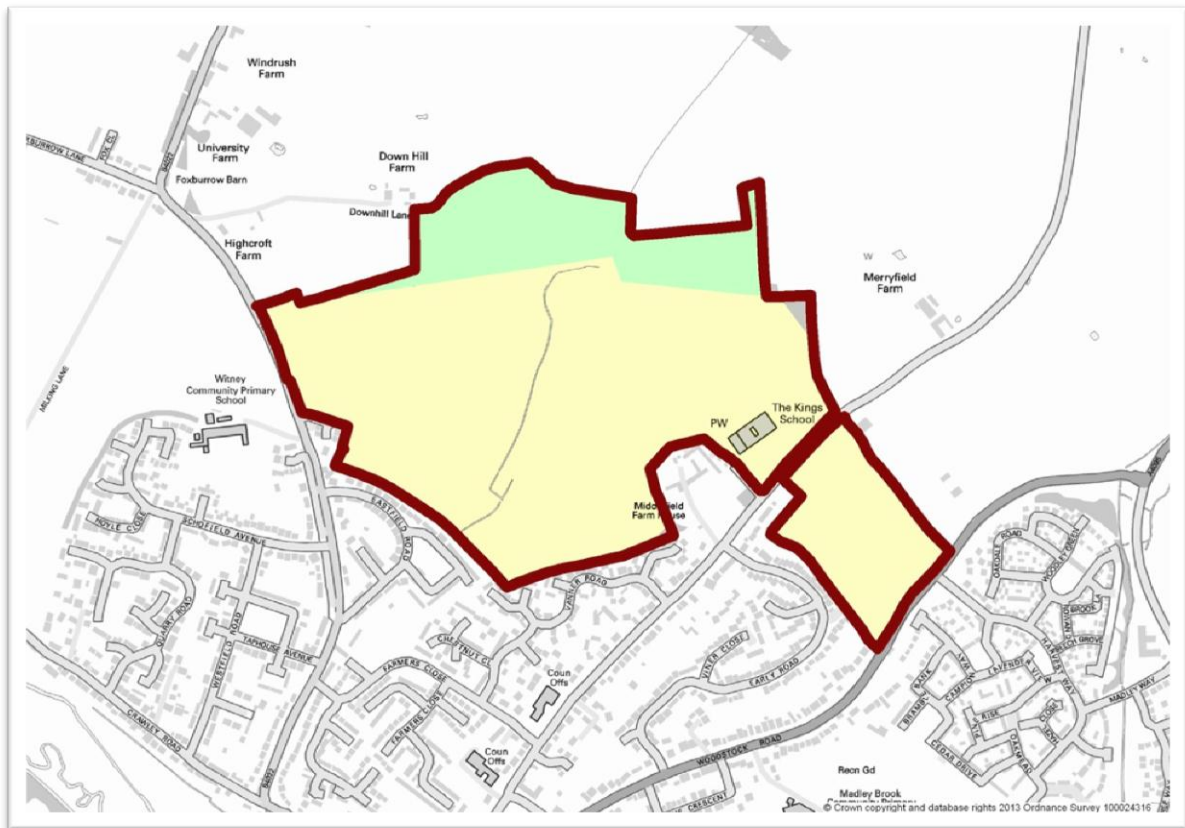
Deliverability and Viability

- 6.70 The North Witney site is in multiple ownerships and given the extensive nature of the off-site infrastructure needed to bring the scheme forward (e.g. highways and flood mitigation) deliverability and viability are key considerations.
- 6.71 The proposed quantum of development at 1,000 homes is intended to strike a reasonable balance between the need to minimise the landscape impact of development and the need to ensure sufficient return to the developer in order to fund the infrastructure needed to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
- 6.72 The onus will be on the developer consortium to demonstrate that all necessary parts of the site (including that needed for the West End Link) are under their control and that the development is able to fund the infrastructure improvements that are identified as being necessary to support the development including highways, education, affordable housing, green infrastructure and so on. A robust delivery framework will be sought.

Summary

- 6.73 In light of the increased overall housing requirement, land at North Witney has been re-appraised and is considered to represent a sustainable development opportunity that should be included in the Local Plan on a phased basis (see below). The site offers a number of advantages including the fact it is reasonably well-related to existing services and facilities, would have no significant impact in terms of heritage assets and offers the potential to provide substantive improvements to the settlement pattern in North Witney and to the interface between the rural landscape and the town.
- 6.74 The development of this land also offers the potential to bring forward flood alleviation measures to improve the current situation for local residents in and around Hailey Road as well as the potential to deliver a second river crossing for Witney in the form of the West End Link, which as part of a package of transport improvements within the town (including the A40/Downs' Road junction and Shores Green Slip Roads) will provide benefits in terms of taking traffic away from the congested core around Bridge Street.
- 6.75 The site has a number of particular sensitivities that need to be addressed including flood risk, biodiversity and ecology but in overall terms is considered to warrant inclusion in the Local Plan to help meet the increased housing requirement. The proposed allocation is shown below (note: the extent of the developable area is indicative only).

Figure 6.6 – North Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)



- 6.76 It is anticipated that the development will be phased with the smaller parcel of land between New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road able to come forward in the short term (subject to traffic impact). The site has few constraints and the delivery of 180 - 200 homes in the short-term would significantly boost the Council’s 5-year housing land supply. It would also help to ‘pump-prime’ the funding needed to deliver the rest of the North Witney scheme.
- 6.77 The larger parcel of land between Hailey Road and New Yatt Road is expected to deliver 800 – 820 new homes (subject to landscape and traffic impact) but would be phased to come forward later in the plan period after 2021.
- 6.78 This phased approach will:
- help to ensure that housing delivery is provided evenly across the whole of the Local Plan period;
 - allow time for the West and East Witney schemes (and associated infrastructure improvements) to come forward in advance (and thereby avoid market saturation in the Witney area); and
 - allow time for the West End Link element of the scheme to be phased in ahead of the majority of development coming forward

Draft Policy - North Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Land to the north of Witney to accommodate a sustainable, integrated community that forms a positive addition to Witney, including:

- a) about 1,000 homes with a mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people. This will include c.180-200 homes on land between New Yatt Road and Woodstock Road and c.800 – 820 homes on land between Hailey Road and New Yatt Road
- b) development on the larger part of the site between New Yatt Road and Hailey Road to be phased to come forward in the period post-2021 in accordance with the timing of provision of supporting infrastructure and facilities including delivery of the West End Link and Northern Distributor Road;
- c) the provision of other supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, and incorporating a comprehensive network for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with links to adjoining areas including the town centre and other key destinations;
- d) the provision of a new primary school on-site (1.5FE (including foundation stage) with 2FE core facilities to enable future expansion of the school together with financial contributions towards secondary school capacity as appropriate;
- e) the provision of appropriate landscape improvements to mitigate the potential impact of development including a positive landscape framework to create a new town edge;
- f) biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance;
- g) provision of appropriate greenspace including allotments;
- h) appropriate measures to mitigate flood risk (including surface water run-off)
- i) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- j) the developer will be encouraged to set aside a proportion of the proposed development site for those wishing to undertake 'self-build' projects

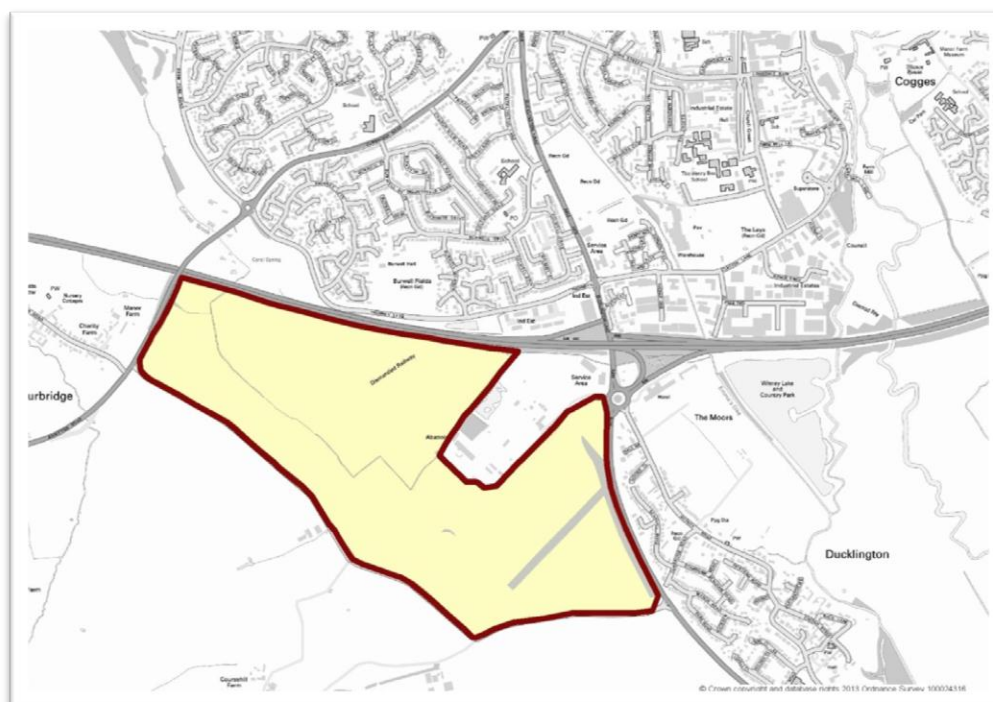
Alternative Options

- 6.79 There are two main alternative options for the expansion of Witney considered to date including land to the north east of Witney (north of Oxford Hill and east of Jubilee Way) and land to the south of Witney. These two options have been re-assessed through Sustainability Appraisal (SA) as well as the updated SHLAA (2014) and are not considered to represent suitable opportunities for new housing development.

Land South of Witney

- 6.80 Land to the south of Witney was identified as a potential option during early consultation stages of the Local Plan (then Core Strategy) including the preferred approach (2010). A site of some 107 hectares was put forward by the landowners to include 1,750 dwellings, a primary school, community facilities and employment development. The site is shown on the plan below.

Figure 6.7 – South Witney Alternative Option



- 6.81 The preferred approach consultation was supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which highlighted a number of positive impacts including the potential for large-scale development including a mix of uses, a flat landscape with views generally screened by existing vegetation, reasonable access to major employment areas, potential to be served by a local bus service and the opportunity to provide significant new business space.
- 6.82 The SA also highlighted a number of negative impacts including the fact that the site is separated by the A40 and likely to result in unsustainable urban sprawl poorly integrated with existing communities, development would encourage car use rather than more sustainable means of transport, would add to congestion at the Ducklington Lane/A40

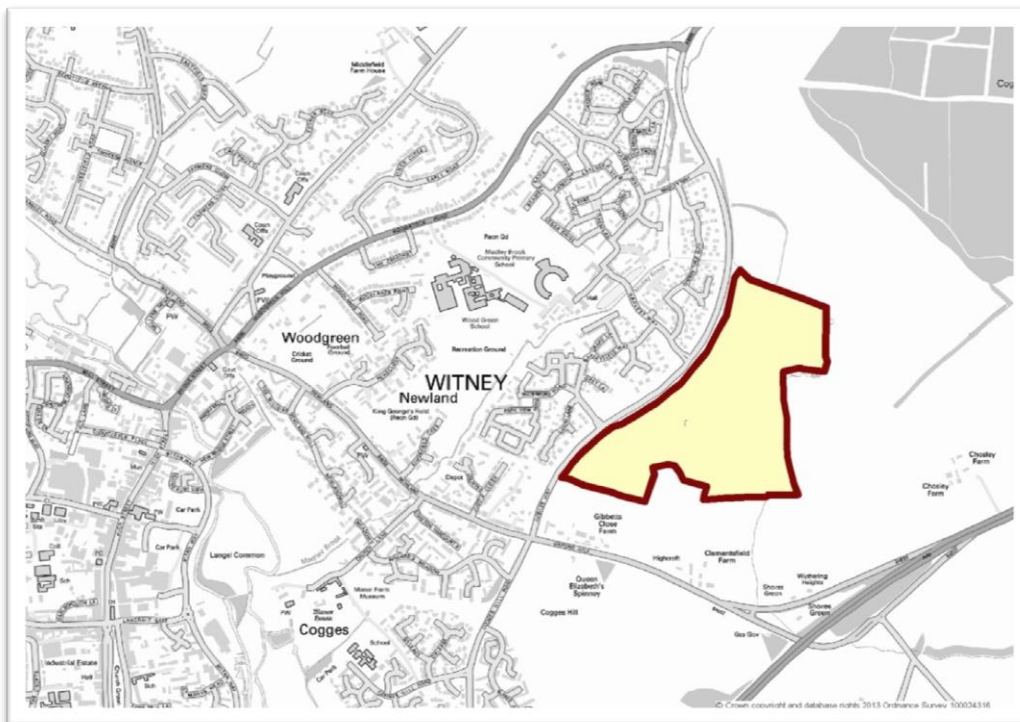
junction, could lead to coalescence of Witney, Curbridge and Ducklington, amenity concerns relating to the proximity of the sewage treatment works and abattoir, A40 traffic noise and the potential to encourage long-distance commuting by virtue of proximity to the A40 junction.

- 6.83 The site was subjected to further assessment through the SA report published in support of the draft Core Strategy (2011) which reaffirmed the findings of the 2010 assessment. The site was not identified in the draft Core Strategy (2011) or subsequent draft Local Plan (2012).
- 6.84 In light of the increased housing requirement land south of the A40 has been re-assessed through an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) published as part of this consultation. The SA report identifies a number of potentially positive and negative impacts.
- 6.85 On balance, the Council does not consider that the land should be allocated for development to meet the increased housing requirement. Particular concerns relate to the segregation of the site and the rest of Witney caused by the A40 which would act as a barrier to integration for new development in this location. There are also likely to be significant amenity impacts associated with some of the existing uses in this location.

Land to the North East of Witney

- 6.86 Land to the north east of Witney was identified as a potential option at the preferred approach stage (2010). The site is around 23 hectares in size and currently in agricultural use. The site is shown on the plan below.

Figure 6.8 – North East Witney Alternative Option



- 6.87 The preferred approach consultation was supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which highlighted a number of positive impacts including potentially good pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre, well located to existing schools, would make use of existing and proposed infrastructure on this side of the town and potential to be served by an extended local bus service.
- 6.88 A large number of negative impacts were however identified including severe landscape impact, development undermining the new edge of the town designed as part of Madley Park, encroaching onto the setting of Cogges Wood (ancient woodland) and being in close proximity to the Wychwood biodiversity target area. Furthermore, the site is isolated and separated by Jubilee Way and would be difficult to integrate new housing with the existing built area. It does not enjoy easy access to main bus routes, there is a relatively limited area available for development thereby limiting the potential for new community facilities and would be unlikely to attract new employment opportunities.
- 6.89 The site was subjected to further assessment through the SA report published in support of the draft Core Strategy (2011) which reaffirmed the findings of the 2010 assessment. The site was not identified in the draft Core Strategy (2011) or subsequent draft Local Plan (2012).
- 6.90 In light of the increased housing requirement land to the north east of Witney has been re-assessed through an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) published as part of this consultation. The SA report identifies a number of potentially positive and negative impacts.
- 6.91 On balance, the Council does not consider that the land should be allocated for development to meet the increased housing requirement. Particular concerns relate to the significant landscape impact that development in this location would have and the difficulty of achieving successful integration with the existing built area due to the separation caused by Jubilee Way.

Witney Sub-Area

Consultation Question 4) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Witney Sub-Area (3,550 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 5) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at East Witney for the provision of 400 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 6) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at North Witney for the provision of 1,000 homes with the majority (c.800) phased to come forward after 2021? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 7) Do you agree with the exclusion of the alternative site options to the south and north east of Witney? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 8) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Witney sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Carterton Sub-Area (2,450 homes)

6.92 The Carterton sub-area has a population of about 25,000. Most people live in Carterton itself (16,000) a relatively modern town which during the last 100 years has grown from an area of small holdings to become the second largest town in West Oxfordshire, offering a good range of services and facilities including a country park, leisure centre, employment, housing and retail. Part of Carterton's rapid growth has been associated with the nearby airfield, now the country's main RAF transport base (RAF Brize Norton) and an integral part of the local community employing up to 6,000 personnel of which approximately 2,000 live on the base.

Figure 6.9 – Carterton Sub-Area



6.93 There are a scattering of villages outside of Carterton, the largest being Bampton (2,500) which despite its relatively small size enjoys a good range of community activities and available services and is a designated rural service centre.

6.94 Most of the existing housing within this sub-area is located in Carterton. Military housing was built in the town after the Second World War, followed by extensive areas of private housing from the 1980s to recent times. Housing was primarily built within the low density structure of the original settlement until this century when the North East Carterton Development Area (Shilton Park) extended the town onto adjoining agricultural land providing around 1,500 new homes. The low density nature of the older housing in Carterton and the relatively large plot sizes has led to pressure for infill development in recent years.

- 6.95 Although many service personnel live on the base, there are several areas of MOD housing within Carterton including the areas around Stanmore Crescent (REEMA Central) and Northwood Crescent (REEMA North).
- 6.96 Having regard to the evidence set out in the Council’s strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) there are a number of opportunities for further housing development within the Carterton sub-area to help contribute towards the District’s overall housing requirement.
- 6.97 The overall requirement for the Carterton sub-area (2,450 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, allocated sites, sites identified as potentially suitable within the SHLAA and speculative windfall development. In accordance with the overall strategy, Carterton will be the main focus of growth but at a lesser scale than Witney given the locational advantages offered by the latter.

Figure 6.10 – Delivering the housing requirement in the Carterton sub-area

Carterton Sub-Area	
Provision will be made for at least 2,450 new homes in the Carterton Sub-Area in the period 2011 – 2029.	
This will be delivered through the following:	
<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of dwellings</u>
Homes already completed 2011 – 2014	135
Existing planning permissions including:	1,049
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REEMA North (200) • Milestone Road (263*) • Carterton Petrol Station (42) • New Road, Bampton (160) • North West Carterton (250) • Saxel Close, Aston (38) • Other permissions (96) 	
East Carterton Strategic Development Area (SDA)	700
REEMA Central Strategic Development Area (SDA)	200**
Other potential SHLAA capacity	90
Windfall allowance	300
Total	2,474
* Includes ‘C2’ care home element	
** The 200 units represent the net uplift over and above the existing dwellings on the site	

Existing permissions, SHLAA sites and windfall

- 6.98 In addition to the 135 homes already completed, almost 1,050 new homes will be delivered on sites that already benefit from planning permission or resolution to grant permission subject to Section 106.
- 6.99 This includes several large sites which will each deliver more than 150 new homes. The REEMA North site will provide 200 homes for service families linked to RAF Brize Norton and when complete (expected 2016) will mean the adjoining REEMA Central site is released to the open market for development (see below).
- 6.100 Other than those sites listed above the Council's SHLAA update has identified relatively limited capacity within the Carterton sub-area (90 homes). These include:
- North west of Carterton (potential expansion of existing Local Plan allocation)
 - Pear Tree Farm, Filkins and Broughton Poggs (potential redevelopment of modern farm buildings)
 - Land off the Elms, Langford (subject to sewage capacity)
 - Nurseries off Alvescot Road (potential small-scale development)
- 6.101 As before it is appropriate to include a windfall allowance and the same assumption has been applied to this sub-area (i.e. 20 per year or 300 in total from 2014 – 2019).
- 6.102 The remaining requirement will be met through two proposed Local Plan housing allocations; East Carterton (700 homes) and REEMA Central (200 homes). Further information about these two sites and the reason for their inclusion as well as the alternative options considered is set out below. Regard should also be had to other relevant technical evidence made available as part of this and previous consultations.

East Carterton Strategic Development Area (SDA) - 700 homes

- 6.103 Land at East Carterton was identified as a potential option during early consultation stages of the Local Plan (then Core Strategy) including the preferred approach consultation (2010). The consultation was supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report which considered the respective merits of the site alongside a number of other potential options.
- 6.104 The draft Core Strategy (2011) continued to identify land at east Carterton as a potential option alongside land to the west of Carterton and was supported by a further Sustainability Appraisal. The potential redevelopment of MOD housing in the centre of Carterton was also highlighted as an option at that time.
- 6.105 The draft Local Plan (2012) was informed by a further Sustainability Appraisal (SA) as well as a more detailed site assessment exercise. The conclusion reached was that land to the east of Carterton represented the most sustainable opportunity for the expansion of Carterton (subject to the scale of development being reduced from that originally considered) along with the redevelopment of MOD land in the centre of Carterton (see below).

Noise

- 6.109 Concern has been expressed from local people that future occupants of the proposed development would be adversely affected by aircraft noise from RAF Brize Norton (both in-flight and during engine testing on the ground). Whilst it is fully accepted that noise is an important material consideration for the site given the proximity of the airbase, there is no technical evidence to suggest that the noise issue is significant enough to prevent development from coming forward.
- 6.110 Two independent reports prepared in 2012 and 2013³³ by consultants on behalf of the MOD both demonstrate that whilst noise is a consideration, based on typical operational arrangements, the proposed site at East Carterton is not adversely affected by noise to such a degree that new housing development in this location would be inappropriate.
- 6.111 These findings are supported in a more recent noise report published in January 2014³⁴ which identifies a series of noise contours around RAF Brize Norton ranging from 72 decibels to 63 decibels. Notably, the proposed site falls outside the lowest of these noise contours.

Light Pollution

- 6.112 A large number of respondents have objected to the proposal on the basis that future occupants would be adversely affected by light pollution from RAF Brize Norton. Importantly however no technical evidence has been supplied to support this opinion. As part of their application submission, Bloor Homes has commissioned a technical study which demonstrates that the site will not be adversely affected by light pollution from existing sources. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has also raised no objection in this regard.

Air Pollution

- 6.113 A large number of respondents have objected on the basis that residents of the proposed development at East Carterton would be adversely affected by air pollution in the form of aviation fuel linked to activities at RAF Brize Norton. The views of the Council's Environmental Health Officer have been sought and he has raised no concerns in this regard. Importantly there is no empirical evidence to suggest the site or the surrounding area suffer from poor air quality.

Flood Risk including surface-water run-off

- 6.114 Although the site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) objections have been raised on the basis that development could exacerbate flood risk in Brize Norton and Bampton through increased surface water run-off. Officers fully acknowledge that this is a very important issue that must be properly addressed in any development proposal.

³³ C130 EGR Noise Assessment Technical Report AMEC (August 2012) and C130 EGR Noise Exposure and Further Investigations AMEC (October 2013)

³⁴ A Report on an Environmental Noise Survey of Aircraft Activity at RAF Brize Norton (Occupational and Environmental Medicine Wing Noise and Vibration Division).

- 6.115 Importantly the developer is proposing to address the issue of surface water run-off through sustainable drainage which will help to reduce the rate of run-off below that which currently occurs on the site. The Environment Agency is supportive of the proposed surface water drainage arrangements.

Foul Water Disposal

- 6.116 Concerns have also been expressed that waste water from the proposed development will put the existing pumping station at Brize Norton under increased pressure when it already struggles to cope at certain times.
- 6.117 The developer is fully aware of this issue and has been in discussions with Thames Water. As a result of those discussions, the developer is proposing to dispose of foul water directly to Carterton sewage treatment works and will fund the necessary improvements to achieve this. The pumping station at Brize Norton will therefore be unaffected by the development.

Traffic impact

- 6.118 Concerns have been expressed about traffic from the proposed development including the routing of additional vehicles through Brize Norton village. In support of the current application, the developer has prepared a detailed transport assessment which demonstrates that the majority of vehicular traffic will travel northwards towards the A40 along the B4477 Monahan Way. No vehicular access is proposed from the site onto Carterton Road and the number of vehicles expected to travel through Brize Norton village via Station Road is relatively modest.
- 6.119 The developer is also prepared to fund necessary mitigation within the village in the form of traffic calming to further reduce the potential impact. The County Council as highway authority have raised no objection to the proposal and indeed have previously supported the site with regards to its excellent access to public transport and Monahan Way.

Landscape impact and coalescence

- 6.120 A further key issue raised by a number of respondents is the potential landscape impact of large-scale development in this location and the potential ‘merging’ of Carterton and Brize Norton village through the erosion of the gap that currently exists between the two settlements.
- 6.121 The Carterton Landscape Assessment (2009)³⁵ was commissioned in order to update and expand the relevant sections of the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (1998) in order to establish a sound evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.122 The 2009 assessment highlighted the importance of the gap between Carterton and Brize Norton stating that the open agricultural fields are part of the setting of Brize Norton, that there are strong historic links between rural villages and their agricultural hinterland, and the possible replacement of the fields even with a planted buffer would remove that visual and physical linkage.

³⁵ Carterton Landscape Assessment 2009 – Amanda Hopwood Landscape Consultancy

- 6.123 To provide further evidence in support of the emerging Local Plan, additional landscape advice was commissioned from Kirkham Landscape Planning in 2012³⁶. The report was published as part of the draft Local Plan consultation in November 2012.
- 6.124 Unlike the previous 2009 assessment, the Kirkham report is an assessment of a specific development proposal. It considers two options for development to the east of Carterton, a larger scheme of 1,000 homes and a smaller scheme of 750 homes.
- 6.125 The report reaches the following conclusions in relation to the land at east Carterton:
- It is the area that is already most influenced by urban elements
 - The area has fewer important local landscape features
 - The landscape buffer to Brize Norton can be protected
 - It is the area that is most removed from the wider landscape
 - The area is visually exposed
 - Urban elements are already visually intrusive
 - Development would not give rise to significant additional visual impact over and above that already in existence
 - The site relates well to the town
 - The setting of Brize Norton is already affected by the airbase
 - The integrity of Brize Norton can be protected through a well-designed and robust landscape transition zone; and
 - Development presents an opportunity for the creation of major Green Infrastructure
- 6.126 The site was ranked 2nd out of the 4 options considered. Whilst the report acknowledges the importance of the gap between Carterton and Brize Norton, it concludes that the setting of Brize Norton is already affected by the airbase, the area is already influenced by urban elements and most importantly that the integrity of Brize Norton can be protected through a well-designed and robust landscape transition zone. It goes on to state that the landscape character is already influenced by both Carterton and the RAF base and the site could be developed without harm to the wider landscape.
- 6.127 On this basis, subject to the provision of appropriate mitigation including the proposed green buffer which will form an extension to the country park it is not considered that the landscape constraints associated with this site are significant enough to warrant its exclusion from the local plan.

Summary

- 6.128 In summary, the Council has carefully considered the objections raised in response to the draft allocation of the east Carterton site in 2012 as well as those objections raised in response to the current outline planning application. Although there are a number of issues that require careful consideration, none of these are considered to represent a significant constraint to the development of the site.

³⁶ Landscape and Visual Review of Submissions for Carterton and Witney Strategic Development Options (Kirkham Landscape Planning October 2014)

6.129 As such, the Council remains of the opinion that the site should be allocated for housing within the new Local Plan to provide around 700 new homes.

Draft Policy – East Carterton Strategic Development Area (SDA)

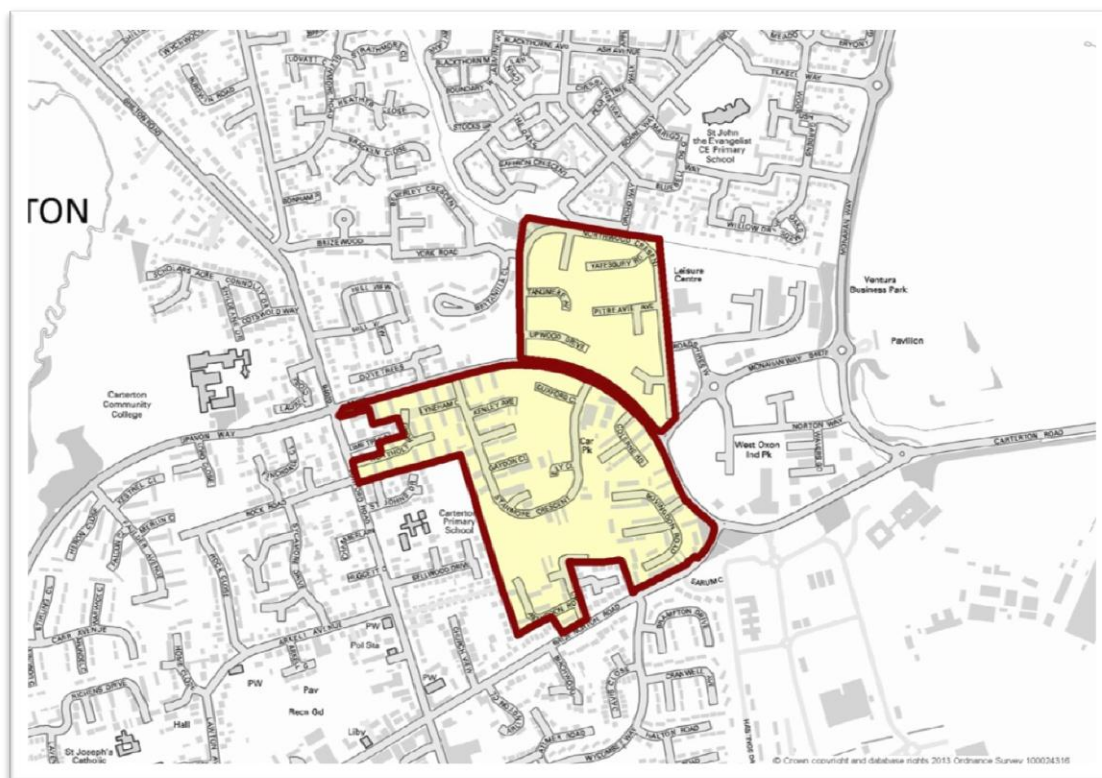
Proposals for development should be consistent with the following:

- a) achievement of a comprehensive, sustainable community which maximises links into the existing built-up area of Carterton and creates a positive addition to the local area
- b) about 700 homes with a range of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people, with at least one Extra Care scheme
- c) provision for additional business floorspace as part of the overall quantum and mix of development
- d) provision of a new primary school on-site (1.5FE (including foundation stage) with 2FE core facilities to enable future expansion of the school)
- e) provision of local shopping, community and leisure facilities through the creation of a local centre
- f) green space and biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance. In particular the development will be required to provide a long-term buffer to Brize Norton Village to form an extension to the Kilkenny Lane Country Park and also to contribute towards the enhancement of the Shill Brook Valley
- g) the provision of appropriate landscape improvements to mitigate the potential impact of development;
- h) provision of allotments, public playing fields and associated changing room facilities
- i) provision of appropriate flood risk mitigation measures
- j) appropriate measures to mitigate the impact of noise upon noise-sensitive uses
- k) contribution towards Carterton Leisure Centre (Phase 2)
- l) supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, and incorporating a comprehensive network for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with links to adjoining areas
- m) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- n) the developer will be encouraged to set aside a proportion of the proposed development site for those wishing to undertake 'self-build' projects

REEMA Central (200 homes)

- 6.130 The potential redevelopment of MOD land in the centre of Carterton has been highlighted as a priority and opportunity throughout the development of the emerging Local Plan. There are two main sites, REEMA North and REEMA Central as shown on the plan below.

Figure 6.12 – REEMA North and REEMA Central



- 6.131 In 2012 the MOD announced that its accommodation requirements for service families linked to RAF Brize Norton had changed and that only the REEMA North site is required for service family accommodation. The site has now been cleared and 200 new homes are expected to be completed in 2016.
- 6.132 The larger REEMA Central site has been partly cleared but still accommodates just over 300 residential properties. The freehold for the majority of the site has now been passed from the MOD to Annington Homes who are currently considering different options.
- 6.133 It is understood that the cost of redeveloping the existing properties on REEMA Central is likely to be prohibitive in terms of viability given their relatively high existing value. A more likely scenario is that the majority of existing properties will be refurbished and new homes will be provided alongside on those parts of the site that are currently undeveloped. There may also be some redevelopment of existing properties.
- 6.134 It is expected that up to 200 new homes could be delivered on the REEMA Central site over and above those already there. Across the two REEMA sites, the total number of new homes provided will therefore be 400.

Draft Policy – REEMA Central Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Proposals for development should be consistent with the following:

- a) achievement of a comprehensive, sustainable community which maximises links into the existing built-up area of Carterton and creates a positive addition to the local area
- b) a net increase of about 200 homes with a range of residential accommodation to meet identified needs including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people
- c) contribution towards education and indoor and outdoor leisure provision in the local area
- d) appropriate provision for greenspace
- e) necessary supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development
- f) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- g) the developer will be encouraged to set aside a proportion of the proposed development site for those wishing to undertake 'self-build' projects

Alternative Options

- 6.135 There are a number of alternative options for the future expansion of option which have not been allocated at this stage. These include land adjacent to Swinbrook Road to the northwest of Carterton, land at Kilkenny Farm to the north of Carterton and land at West Carterton. These alternative options are discussed below.

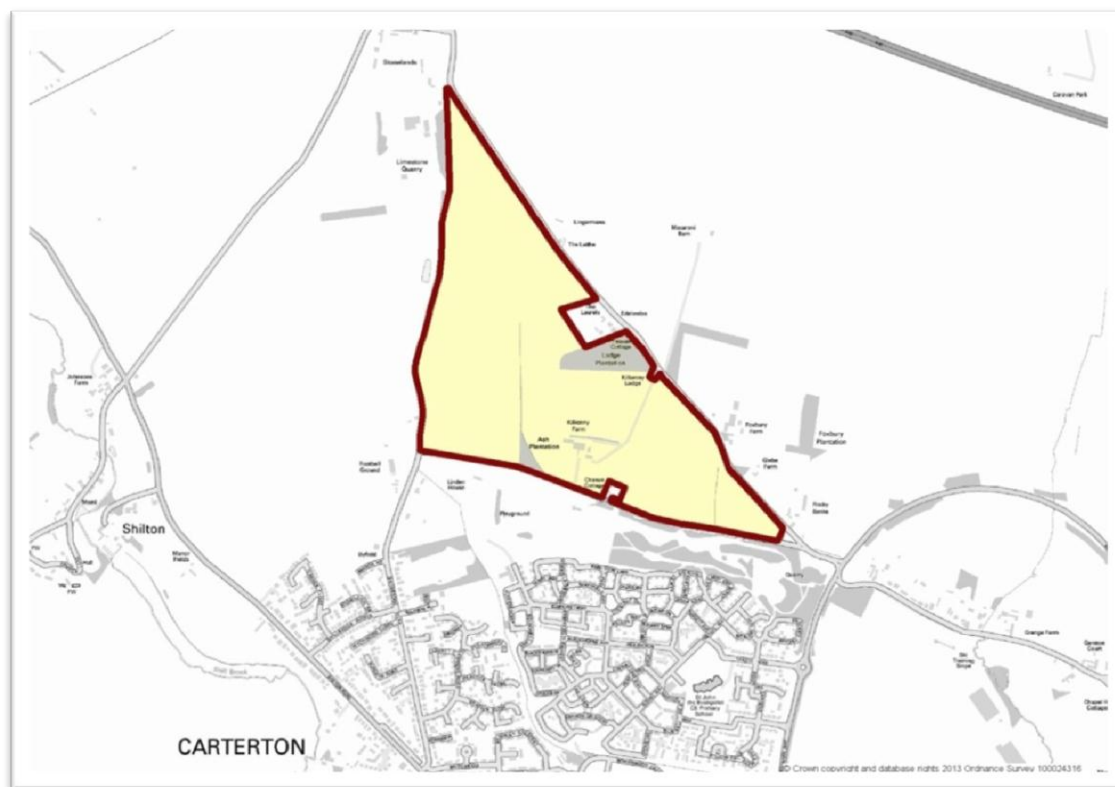
Land adjacent to Swinbrook Road, north west Carterton

- 6.136 Land to the north west of Carterton has previously been considered as a potential option for the expansion of Carterton but was ruled out of the previous draft Local Plan (2012) for a number of reasons. Since then the developer (David Wilson Homes) has secured outline planning permission for a smaller scheme of 250 homes on part of the site which was allocated in the adopted Local Plan (2006) and has submitted a separate application for a further 66 homes on adjoining land.
- 6.137 Total capacity across the two sites is therefore 316 homes and David Wilson Homes have stated that they do not intend to pursue further development in this location.

Land at Kilkenny Farm

- 6.138 Land at Kilkenny Farm is a large triangular parcel of around 100 hectares between Kilkenny Lane and Burford Road to the north of Carterton. It was identified as a potential option in 2010 as part of the 'preferred approach' consultation.

Figure 6.13 – Land at Kilkenny Farm, north of Carterton



- 6.139 The site was assessed through a supporting sustainability appraisal (SA) which concluded that although offering some potential benefits (e.g. large-scale, comprehensive mixed-use development, potential to link into pedestrian and cycle infrastructure in Shilton Park, parts of the site less visually exposed than other options) there are a number of potential negatives (e.g. western parts of the site being prominent in landscape terms, poor access and remote from key services and facilities, Country Park to the south acts a barrier to integration etc.)
- 6.140 The site was re-assessed through the SA of the draft Core Strategy (2011) but at that stage no specific allocations were made at Carterton. The findings of the 2011 SA report largely reiterated those of the earlier 2010 SA report.
- 6.141 The site was further assessed by the Council in preparing the draft Local Plan (2012). This included a further SA report and a more detailed site assessment exercise. The following issues were raised:

Positives

- Good pedestrian and cycle links to the south including Shilton Park
- Low flood risk (Zone 1)
- Potential to reduce surface water run-off
- No significant ecological constraints
- Not constrained by noise
- No records of contamination or land stability issues
- Developer commitment to sustainable development
- Deliverable in terms of land ownership and assembly

Negatives

- Significant improvements needed to Burford Road to enable access
- This in turn would change the character of the area and could make it more attractive to drivers
- Site is not well-related to existing services and facilities
- Access by public transport is poor
- Potentially adverse landscape impact (depending on scale of development)
- Major incursion into open countryside
- Potential impact on the landscape setting of Brize Norton village although likely to be able to be mitigated
- Development would be a satellite, poorly integrated with the built area
- The location of the site would offer little support for the town centre

6.142 Having regard to the issues summarised above and the housing target at that time (5,500 homes) the site was not allocated in the draft Local Plan (2012). The site promoter objected to the omission of the site and has been continuing to promote it in the interim.

6.143 Responding to the Council's landscape evidence (2012) the site promoter has suggested that the scale of development could be reduced from the 1,000 homes previously assessed to a more modest level of development (e.g. 300-500 homes). It has been suggested that this would address the landscape concerns affecting the site and that it could come forward as part of a combined site option together with a reduced scheme at East Carterton (thereby allowing the latter to include a larger element of employment land than currently proposed).

6.144 Further consideration has been given to the potential development of land at Kilkenny Farm in light of the increased Local Plan housing requirement (9,450). This includes an update of the Council's site assessment matrix and an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report which also includes an assessment of a 'multi-site' option at Carterton.

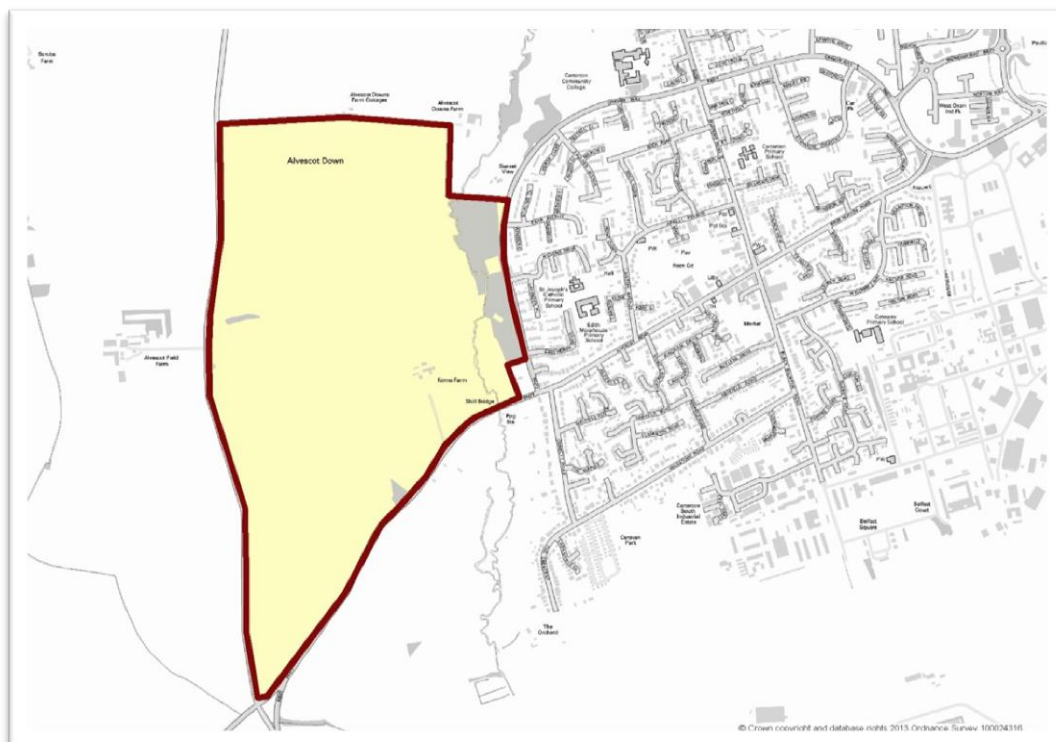
6.145 Having regard to these further assessments, the Council remains of the opinion that land at Kilkenny Farm does not represent a sustainable option for the future expansion of Carterton. Whilst a reduced number of houses and a landscape-led approach to the design and layout of the development could potentially address the landscape concerns identified in 2012, it would not address the other limitations of the site outlined above.

6.146 At this stage the Council does not therefore intend to allocate the site for development within the Local Plan. If however, the housing requirement were to increase (e.g. as a result of the target being independently examined) or West Oxfordshire District were asked to accommodate a proportion of any 'unmet' need arising from Oxford City, the Kilkenny Farm option would need to be re-considered along with other potential site options.

West Carterton

6.147 Land at West Carterton is a large greenfield, agricultural site of around 128 hectares located to the west of Upavon Way and north of the B4477 Alvescot Road. It was first identified as a potential option for the expansion of Carterton at the Preferred Approach stage (2010).

Figure 6.14 – Land at West Carterton



6.148 The site was assessed through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report which concluded that although offering some potential benefits (e.g. potential to deliver a wide choice of housing, large-scale, comprehensive mixed-use development, relatively close to the town centre, potential enhancement to biodiversity value of the Shill Brook valley, potential to create a strong new landscape structure) there are a number of potential negatives (e.g. prominent open landscape, physical separation from Carterton by the Shill Brook valley, biodiversity value of the Shill Brook valley, potential flooding problems from surface water run-off, bounded by rural road network, poor pedestrian/cycle access).

6.149 The site was re-assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report of the draft Core Strategy (2011) which largely reiterated the previous findings but highlighted the potential for development in this location to mitigate flooding in downstream villages.

6.150 The site was further assessed by the Council in preparing the draft Local Plan (2012). This included a further SA report and a more detailed site assessment exercise. The following issues were raised:

Positives

- Close to existing services and facilities including the town centre
- Good public transport accessibility with potential to divert services into the site
- Adequate capacity to absorb the proposed level of development in transport terms
- Environment agency has no objection in principle to development in this location and supports a number of the proposed flood risk mitigation measures
- The development offers a number of wider potential benefits including the proposed ecological park and flood risk mitigation measures and the proposed mix of uses including a local centre and employment land would create additional job opportunities
- The site appears to be deliverable in terms of land ownership and appears to be a financially viable proposition
- Size of site allows for reconfiguration and future expansion subject to capacity of Upavon Way

Negatives

- Access to the site requires significant transport infrastructure across the Shill Brook, an ecologically sensitive area located within the floodplain
- Development has a degree of complexity and risk not shared by other site options
- Not proximate to the Town's main employment sites to the east
- Potential diversion of bus service could have knock-on effects for services in other parts of Carterton
- No current cycle infrastructure and disjointed pedestrian infrastructure available in order to access key destinations
- Further potential growth in the longer term constrained by the capacity of Upavon Way
- Eastern part of the site located in flood zone 3 (high risk)
- Development in this location would represent a major expansion into open countryside of high landscape sensitivity and intervisibility
- Development would also represent a major change to the settlement fabric and its relationship with the Shill Brook valley which clearly marks the edge of the town separating it from the open countryside

6.151 Having regard to the issues summarised above and the housing target at that time (5,500 homes) the site was not allocated in the draft Local Plan (2012). The site promoter objected to the omission of the site and has been continuing to promote it in the interim including the submission of an outline planning application for 1,000 homes.

6.152 Further consideration has been given to the potential development of land at West Carterton in light of the increased Local Plan housing requirement (9,450). This includes an update of the Council's site assessment matrix and an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report.

- 6.153 Having regard to these further assessments, the Council remains of the opinion that land at west Carterton does not represent a sustainable option for the future expansion of Carterton.
- 6.154 The Shill Brook clearly delineates the edge of Carterton and the proposed development would represent a significant incursion into open countryside having a significant landscape impact.
- 6.155 Although relatively proximate to the town centre, the site is not well-related to the existing built up area, being physically separated by the Shill Brook Valley and existing pedestrian and cycle access is relatively poor. Although vehicular access can be achieved, this is only by means of significant built infrastructure across the Shill Brook. Furthermore, the potential benefits offered by the scheme including flood risk mitigation and ecological enhancements to the Shill Brook Valley are capable of being delivered by other means including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) when introduced.
- 6.156 At this stage the Council does not therefore intend to allocate the site for development within the Local Plan. If however, the housing requirement were to increase (e.g. as a result of the target being independently examined) or West Oxfordshire District were asked to accommodate a proportion of any 'unmet' need arising from Oxford City, the West Carterton option would need to be re-considered along with other potential site options.

Carterton Sub-Area

Consultation Question 9) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Carterton Sub-Area (2,450 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 10) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at East Carterton for the provision of 700 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 11) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at REEMA Central for the provision of 200 homes (net)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 12) Do you agree with the exclusion of the alternative site options to the north of Carterton at Kilkenny Farm and to the west of Carterton? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 13) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Carterton sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Chipping Norton Sub-Area (1,450 homes)

6.157 The Chipping Norton sub-area has a population of about 13,000 with half living in the hilltop town of Chipping Norton (or 'Chippy' as it is locally known). Chipping Norton is the third largest town in West Oxfordshire and occupies a prominent hilltop position on the eastern edge of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) within which most of the town is situated. Lying astride the 185m contour, Chipping Norton is one of the highest settlements of its size in southern England and offers extensive views to and from the surrounding countryside.

Figure 6.15 – Chipping Norton Sub-Area



6.158 Outside of Chipping Norton the remaining population within this sub-area live in a scattering of generally small villages and hamlets. Being surrounded by this rural hinterland and being relatively remote from larger towns, Chipping Norton acts as a service centre for residents, workers and visitors although does itself look to Banbury/Cherwell District for some services and facilities.

6.159 Most of the housing within this sub-area is located in Chipping Norton. New areas of Council housing were added in the post-war years on land to the south and west of the centre and private housing estates were built during the 1980s and 1990s. About 1,150 new homes have been added since 1976. Some of this has been through the redevelopment of large previously developed sites such as Parker Knoll and Bliss Mill, the former tweed mill now converted to flats. As with the rest of the District there is a significant need for affordable housing in this area.

- 6.160 Having regard to the evidence set out in the Council’s strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) there are a number of opportunities for further housing development within the Chipping Norton sub-area to help contribute towards the District’s overall housing requirement.
- 6.161 In accordance with the overall strategy, Chipping Norton will be a focus for future housing growth in the District. Originally it was anticipated that the location of future housing development in Chipping Norton would be determined through the Chipping Norton Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) which the Town Council is currently leading on.
- 6.162 However, the Town Council has made it clear that they do not intend to allocate sites as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process and the Local Plan must therefore provide a clear steer about which sites are expected to come forward.
- 6.163 The overall requirement for the Chipping Norton sub-area (1,450 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, an allocated site, sites identified as potentially suitable within the SHLAA and speculative windfall development.

Figure 6.16 – Delivering the housing requirement in the Chipping Norton sub-area

Chipping Norton Sub-Area	
Provision will be made for at least 1,450 new homes in the Chipping Norton Sub-Area in the period 2011 – 2029.	
This will be delivered through the following:	
<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of dwellings</u>
Homes already completed 2011 – 2014	87
Existing commitments including:	257
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cromwell Park (80)* • Rural exception sites (8) • Other permissions (169) 	
East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area (SDA)	500
Other potential SHLAA capacity	310
Windfall allowance	300
Total	1,454
* Adopted Local Plan (2006) allocation	

Existing permissions, SHLAA sites and windfall

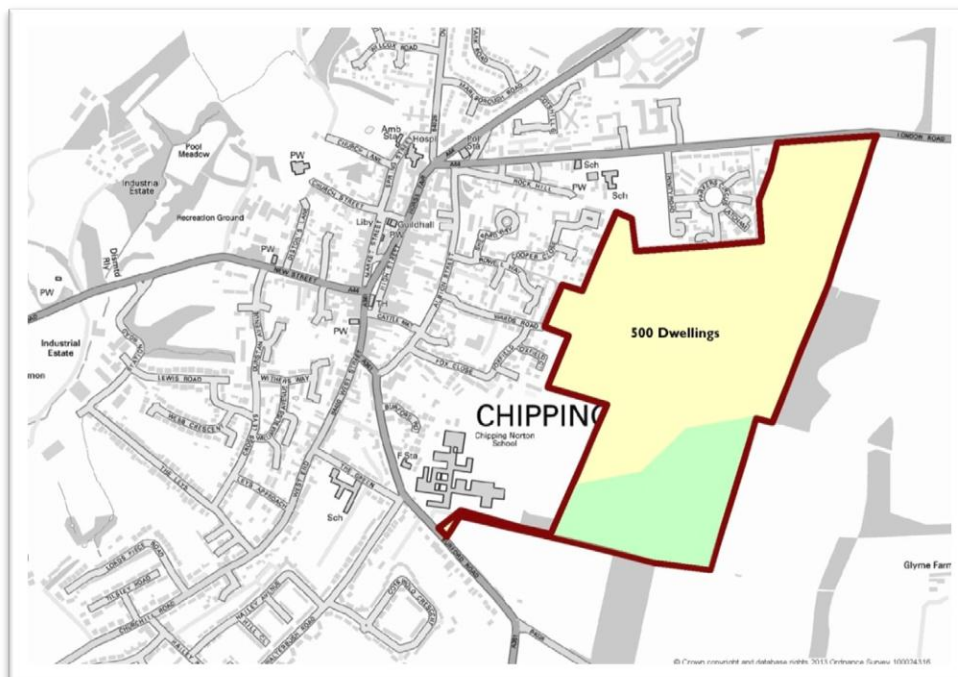
- 6.164 In addition to the 87 homes already completed, just over 175 new homes will be delivered on sites that already benefit from planning permission plus an allocation of 80 homes on land at Cromwell Park which was identified in the adopted Local Plan (2006).
- 6.165 In addition, the Council's SHLAA update has identified a good level of potential capacity within the Chipping Norton sub-area (310 homes). Sites identified as having potential include:
- Land south of Walterbush Road/Cotswold Crescent
 - Former Castle View Care Home and Ambulance Station
 - Former Parker Knoll Site/Rockhill Farm London Road (see below)
 - Land at the Pillars, Banbury Road
- 6.166 The provision of housing on the former Parker Knoll site (which is allocated for employment use) would be dependent on an alternative employment use being found elsewhere. A potential site for employment use exists to the north east at Rockhill Farm on London Road. Alternatively the Rockhill Farm site itself could be used for housing with the former Parker Knoll site retained for employment use.
- 6.167 As before it is considered appropriate to include a windfall allowance and the same assumption has been applied to this sub-area (i.e. 20 per year or 300 in total from 2014 – 2019).

Land East of Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area (SDA) - 500 homes

- 6.168 Land to the east of Chipping Norton was first presented as a potential site option at the Preferred Approach stage (2010) when it was identified as a 'strategic area for development' covering land to the north and south of London Road. The northern parcel was suggested for community health care facilities, specialist housing and employment with the southern parcel suggested for new employment on the former Parker Knoll site plus residential development (around 200 homes) with supporting facilities including a new primary school, open space and structural landscaping.
- 6.169 The site was considered through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report published at that time. The assessment highlighted the fact that options for a significant expansion of the town are limited with land to the north, south and west of the town falling within the Cotswolds AONB where any significant development is likely to be prominent and adversely impact upon existing character.
- 6.170 Land to the east however lies outside the AONB and therefore presents the most obvious opportunity to expand the town. The assessment highlighted a number of key issues including the fact that the capacity of the site is constrained by the character and prominence of the plateau in views from the wider countryside and along the tree-lined avenue of London Road. It also highlighted the issue of whether satisfactory vehicular access can be achieved without adversely impacting upon the avenue of London Road trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

- 6.171 The site was further considered through the Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Core Strategy (2011) and was not included as a site allocation on the basis that consultation and further work indicated that a new school in the town, although desirable, is unlikely to be deliverable. A site specific expansion to the east was, therefore, no longer considered necessary to be included as an essential part of the overall strategy.
- 6.172 In light of the increased housing requirement (9,450 homes) it has been necessary to re-appraise the merits of land to the east of Chipping Norton as a potential housing allocation including an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report.
- 6.173 The site has been assessed using the Council’s site assessment matrix and has also been assessed through an independent landscape assessment³⁷.
- 6.174 The overall conclusion reached is that land to the east of Chipping Norton represents a sustainable development opportunity to help meet the future housing needs of West Oxfordshire. The site is located within comfortable walking and cycling distance of Chipping Norton Town Centre, it lies outside the AONB, is not affected by flooding or heritage assets and there are no significant constraints to the site coming forward. It is owned primarily by Oxfordshire County Council who have expressed a clear interest in promoting it for development.
- 6.175 It is therefore suggested that the site is allocated for the provision of 500 new homes as part of a comprehensive mixed-use development to include additional employment land, a new primary school, local centre and other supporting infrastructure including formal and informal greenspace. The indicative site boundary including green buffer is shown below.

Figure 6.17 – East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area (SDA) – 500 homes



³⁷ Kirkham Associates Landscape and Visual Review of Land East of Chipping Norton (May 2014)

6.176 There are however a number of important considerations that will need to be addressed in order for the site to come forward including:

- Landscape impact
- Access arrangements
- School capacity
- Mix of uses

Landscape impact

6.177 In terms of landscape impact, the Kirkham report (2014) demonstrates that although the site is in a sensitive landscape and visual location and will inevitably lead to an adverse landscape and visual impact on the perception of the eastern edge of the town, a reduced site area and a landscape led approach to the siting, layout and mass and scale of the development, would render development acceptable.

6.178 A comprehensive scheme is considered more likely to deliver the substantive Green Infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of development and the report suggests the quantum of development should be around 500 homes.

6.179 The onus will therefore be on the developer to demonstrate through a detailed landscape and visual impact assessment that this quantum of development can be satisfactorily provided.

Access arrangements

6.180 In terms of access, it is unlikely that a vehicular access can be achieved through the existing residential area to the west or via the track to the south running adjacent to the secondary school. Whilst it may be possible to provide access from Burford Road to the south, this would involve the loss of some of the Town Council allotments adjacent to the site.

6.181 Vehicular access is therefore proposed from two points, via Trinity Road onto London Road and via Fowlers Barn onto London Road. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County Council as highway authority that satisfactory vehicular access can be achieved.

School Capacity

6.182 Discussions have been held with Oxfordshire County Council as education authority and they have confirmed that Chipping Norton secondary school has adequate capacity to absorb additional pupil growth plus the potential to expand if necessary. The provision of an additional 500 homes to the east of the town therefore does not present any difficulties even in combination with other potential developments likely to come forward.

6.183 Primary school capacity at Chipping Norton is however limited and the County Council has advised that the provision of 500 new homes in conjunction with other potential developments in and around the town would be likely to necessitate the provision of a new primary school. It is therefore expected that the development of land to the east of Chipping Norton will provide this as part of the overall mix of development.

Mix of Uses

- 6.184 It is anticipated that the development of this site will be primarily residential however the scale of development presents the opportunity to provide some additional uses as part of a comprehensive mixed-use development. As discussed above, this is likely to include a new primary school but there is also the opportunity to provide a new local centre including community and other facilities.
- 6.185 There is a need for additional employment land in Chipping Norton to attract inward investment and allow existing firms to expand and as such, the development will be expected to include a good proportion of business space. Other facilities will be sought as part of the overall mix of development including open space, play facilities and any other requirements identified as being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Draft Policy – East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Proposals for development should be consistent with the following:

- a) achievement of a comprehensive, sustainable community which maximises links into the existing built-up area of Chipping Norton and creates a positive addition to the local area
- b) about 500 homes with a range of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people, with at least one Extra Care scheme
- c) provision for additional business floorspace as part of the overall quantum and mix of development
- d) the provision of appropriate landscape improvements to mitigate the potential impact of development;
- e) satisfactory access arrangements to be agreed in principle with the highway authority
- f) provision of a new primary school on-site (1.5FE (including foundation stage) with 2FE core facilities to enable future expansion of the school)
- g) provision of local shopping, community and leisure facilities through the creation of a local centre
- h) green space and biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance.
- i) provision of appropriate flood risk mitigation measures (surface-water run-off)
- j) supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, and incorporating a comprehensive network for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with links to adjoining areas
- k) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- l) the developer will be encouraged to set aside a proportion of the proposed development site for those wishing to undertake 'self-build' projects

Chipping Norton Sub-Area

Consultation Question 14) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Chipping Norton Sub-Area (1,450 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

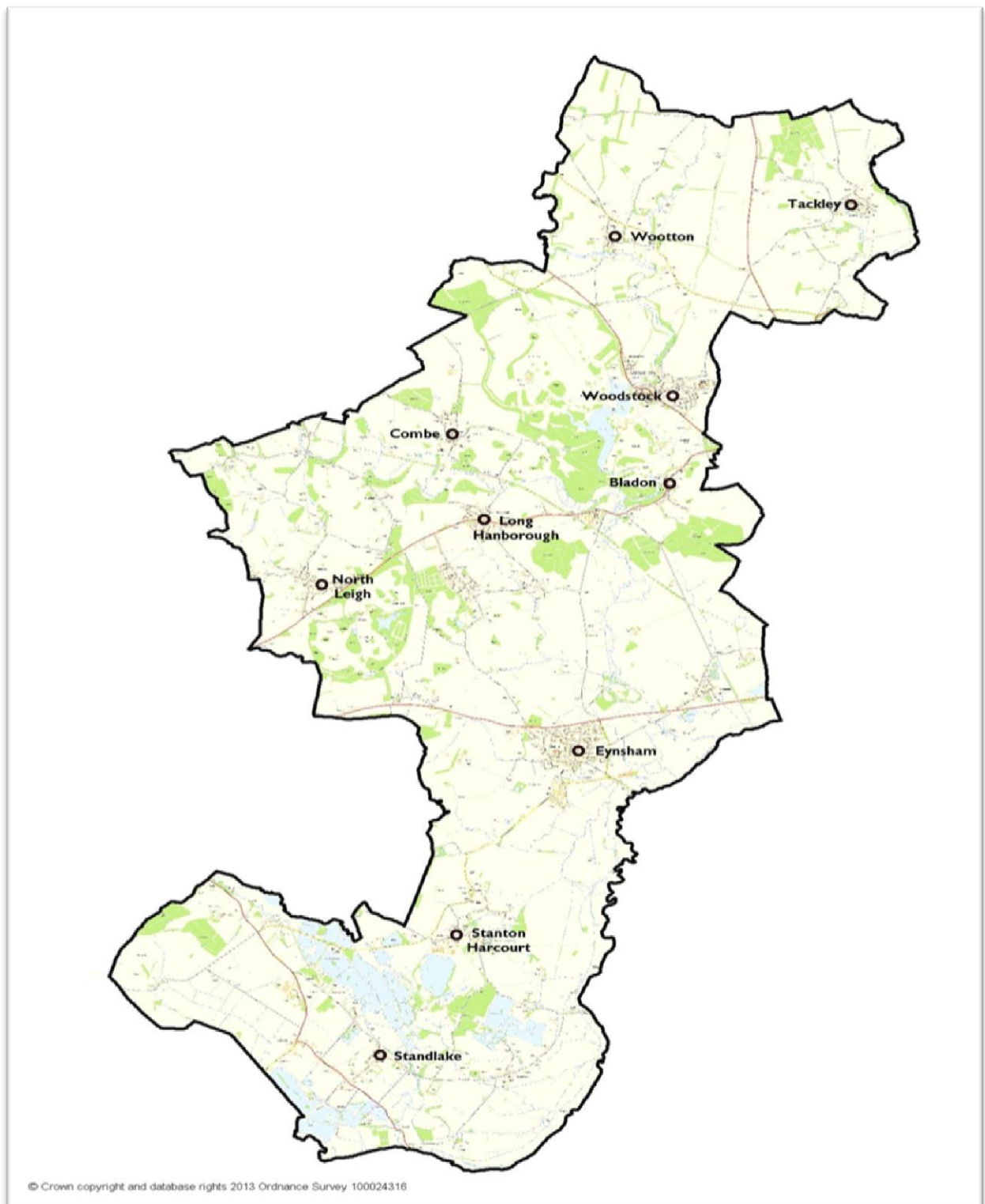
Consultation Question 15) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at East Chipping Norton for the provision of around 500 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 16) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Chipping Norton sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area (1,350 homes)

- 6.186 This sub-area has a population of about 21,000. The three main settlements are Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock. With a population of around 5,000, Eynsham is the fourth largest settlement in West Oxfordshire, located just south of the A40, half-way between Oxford and Witney and just beyond the western edge of the Oxford Green Belt. Eynsham is an important local service centre offering a wide range of facilities and employment. Long Hanborough developed as a linear village along the now A4095 and is one of the smaller service centres with a population of approximately 2,400.

Figure 6.18 – Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area



- 6.187 Woodstock is a historic town of national, if not international, renown. The old part of Woodstock is a well preserved example of a medieval town; a Conservation Area covers much of the central area and almost 200 listed buildings. The Blenheim World Heritage Site abuts the western boundary of the conservation area and extends to the north and south of the town along the A44. The town has a very good range of services and facilities given its size (approximately 3,000 population).
- 6.188 In accordance with the overall strategy, additional housing development in this sub-area will be focused on Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock as rural service centres, with any additional development steered mainly towards the larger villages.
- 6.189 The overall requirement for the Eynsham - Woodstock sub-area (1,350 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, sites identified as potentially suitable within the SHLAA and speculative windfall development.

Figure 6.19 – Delivering the housing requirement in the Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area

Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area	
Provision will be made for at least 1,350 new homes in the Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area in the period 2011 – 2029.	
This will be delivered through the following:	
<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of dwellings</u>
Homes already completed 2011 – 2014	315
Existing commitments including:	289
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land n/o Marlborough School (64) • Rural exception sites (42) • Other permissions (183) 	
Potential SHLAA capacity	500
Windfall allowance	300
Total	1,404

Existing permissions, SHLAA sites and windfall

- 6.190 In addition to the 315 homes already completed, almost 290 new homes will be delivered on sites that already benefit from planning permission including rural exception sites.
- 6.191 The Council's SHLAA update (2014) has also identified a good level of potential capacity within the Eynsham - Woodstock sub-area (500 homes). Sites identified as having potential include:
- Land at Church Road, Long Hanborough (subject to school capacity)
 - Land west of Eynsham (subject to landscape impact and access arrangements)
 - Land east of Woodstock (subject to landscape impact)
- 6.192 As before it is appropriate to include a windfall allowance and the same assumption has been applied to this sub-area (i.e. 20 per year or 300 in total from 2014 – 2019).
- 6.193 The Council does not intend to make any strategic housing allocations within this sub-area through the Local Plan (Part 1) document and will instead make site allocations through a follow up Local Plan (Part 2) document with initial consultation planned for early 2015.

Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area

Consultation Question 17) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area (1,350 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 18) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Eynsham - Woodstock sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area (650 homes)

- 6.194 This is the largest of the sub-areas and has a predominantly rural character, with a population of about 13,000. It includes a network of small and medium sized villages, none larger than 3,000 residents. The majority of the area is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and many of the towns and villages have extensive conservation areas and many listed buildings.

Figure 6.20 – Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area



- 6.195 There are two designated rural service centres within this sub-area; Burford and Charlbury. With a population of 1,300 Burford is the smallest of the District's service centres but has a level of services which belies its size and is one of West Oxfordshire's most popular tourist attractions. With a population of just under 3,000, Charlbury lies in the centre of West Oxfordshire on the Cotswolds rail line.
- 6.196 Other larger settlements in this area include the villages of Milton under Wychwood and Shipton under Wychwood (population of 1,500 and 1,300 respectively). Both villages are within the Cotswolds AONB. Stonesfield has a population of about 1,500.
- 6.197 In accordance with the overall strategy, additional housing development in this sub-area will be focused on Burford and Charlbury as rural service centres although given the relatively limited capacity of these settlements, some development may be necessary in the larger villages.

6.198 The overall requirement for the Burford - Charlbury sub-area (650 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already built, existing commitments, sites identified as potentially suitable within the SHLAA and speculative windfall development.

Figure 6.21 – Delivering the housing requirement in the Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area

Burford - Charlbury Sub-Area	
Provision will be made for at least 650 new homes in the Burford - Charlbury Sub-Area in the period 2011 – 2029.	
This will be delivered through the following:	
<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of dwellings</u>
Homes already completed 2011 – 2014	132
Existing commitments including:	160
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural exception sites (5) • Other permissions (155) 	
Potential SHLAA capacity	55
Windfall allowance	300
Total	647

Existing permissions, SHLAA sites and windfall

6.199 In addition to the 132 homes already completed, 160 new homes will be delivered on sites that already benefit from planning permission including rural exception sites.

6.200 The Council’s SHLAA update has identified limited capacity of just 55 new homes within the Burford – Charlbury sub-area due to heavily constrained nature of the area. Sites identified as having some potential include:

- Montana Cottage, Kingham
- Tanners Lane, Burford
- South of Milton Road, Shipton U Wychwood (subject to access)

6.201 As before it is appropriate to include a windfall allowance and the same assumption has been applied to this sub-area (i.e. 20 per year or 300 in total from 2014 – 2019).

6.202 The Council does not intend to make any strategic housing allocations within this sub-area through the Local Plan (Part 1) document and will instead make site allocations through a follow up Local Plan (Part 2) document with initial consultation planned for early 2015.

Burford - Charlbury Sub-Area

Consultation Question 19) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Burford - Charlbury sub-area (650 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 20) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Burford - Charlbury sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

7. Future Business Land Requirements

- 7.1 In determining the number of new homes to be built, consideration must also be given to future economic needs including the amount of type of business land that needs to be provided through the Local Plan.
- 7.2 A number of different options have formed the basis of consultation to date including:
- Indigenous growth – focus on supporting indigenous growth in order to broadly match new labour supply (40 hectares of business land provision in total)
 - Steady growth – focus on supporting indigenous growth and business start-ups whilst catering for a modest level of inward investment (60 hectares of business land provision in total)
 - Higher growth – support indigenous growth but more active encouragement of inward investment (80 hectares of business land provision in total)
 - Small-scale dispersal
- 7.3 These options have been consulted on through several stages and also tested through Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The draft Core Strategy (2011) and draft Local Plan (2012) were based on a combination of the steady growth and the small-scale dispersal options making overall provision for around 60 hectares of new business land.
- 7.4 Core Policy 11 - Land for Business set out in the draft Local Plan (2012) identifies the following provision:

Witney - 20ha to the west of Witney including 10ha as part of the West Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Carterton - 5ha primarily at West Oxon Business Park and Land at Ventura Park

Chipping Norton - 5ha to the east of the town including, the Former highways depot (1ha), former Parker Knoll factory site (2ha) and potential for a further 2ha of land as part of the previous mixed use local plan allocation north of London Road

Other Towns Villages and Rural Areas – At least 5ha within existing commitments including 2ha at Lakeside Standlake (previous Local Plan allocation)

- 7.5 The intention is that the remaining unallocated requirement (25 hectares) will come forward through small-scale schemes and business expansions on an organic basis with such schemes having historically accounted for around 25% of business land supply in the past.
- 7.6 The key issue is whether the overall level of provision (60 hectares) is sufficient to meet future needs. As discussed earlier, the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) was informed by a separate economic study³⁸ prepared by independent consultants.

³⁸ Economic Forecasting to Inform the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2014)

- 7.7 As part of the study, the consultants assessed whether the planned level of business land provision in each of the Oxfordshire districts is sufficient to meet their future job forecasts. The consultants conclude under their ‘planned economic growth’ scenario that there will be 7,900 new jobs created in West Oxfordshire during the period 2011 – 2031.
- 7.8 Notwithstanding the District Council’s concerns over these economic forecasts (see Section 4) they do provide a guide as to whether the Local Plan has identified a sufficient amount of new business land.
- 7.9 Given that only a proportion of the potential 7,900 new jobs will locate on B-class land³⁹ (around 4,000 jobs) the expected capacity of the 60 hectares identified in the draft Local Plan (around 6,500 jobs) is more than sufficient to meet future economic needs, particularly if those economic forecasts are somewhat optimistic as identified in Section 4.
- 7.10 Although the overall level of business land provision at 60 hectares appears more than sufficient to cater for potential job increases, around 25 hectares is not yet identified and is planned to come forward through organic growth including small-scale schemes and business expansions.
- 7.11 The Council is aware that in Carterton there is a desire locally to increase the amount of business land identified in order to attract additional inward investment and to help combat ‘out-commuting’ to other destinations.
- 7.12 The draft Local Plan (2012) makes provision at Carterton for 5 hectares of business land primarily at West Oxfordshire Business Park and Ventura Park. Some of this spare capacity is already accounted for and the Council considers that it would be useful to identify further land at Carterton for business use, however there are relatively few suitable sites available.
- 7.13 One potential option is for the Council to release the playing fields and sports pavilion located on the corner of Carterton Road and Norton Way for redevelopment to business use, subject to these existing facilities being replaced in a suitable location elsewhere.
- 7.14 This would provide around 4 hectares of additional B-class employment land and would form a logical complement to the two existing business parks opposite (see Figure 7.1).

³⁹ Industrial, light industrial, offices, storage and warehousing

Figure 7.1 – Existing Playing Pitches, Sports Pavilion and Business Parks at Monahan Way



7.15 The existing pitches could be replaced in a location on the edge of Carterton that has sufficient space to increase the level of provision and provide additional facilities as appropriate.

Business Land Provision

Consultation Question 21) Do you agree with the overall level of business land provision identified in the emerging Local Plan (60 hectares)?

Consultation Question 22) Do you agree that there is a need to provide additional business land in Carterton to attract inward investment?

Consultation Question 23) Do you support the potential option of using the District Council’s playing pitches at Monahan Way for business use, subject to their replacement in a suitable location elsewhere? If so, where should the replacement pitches be provided?

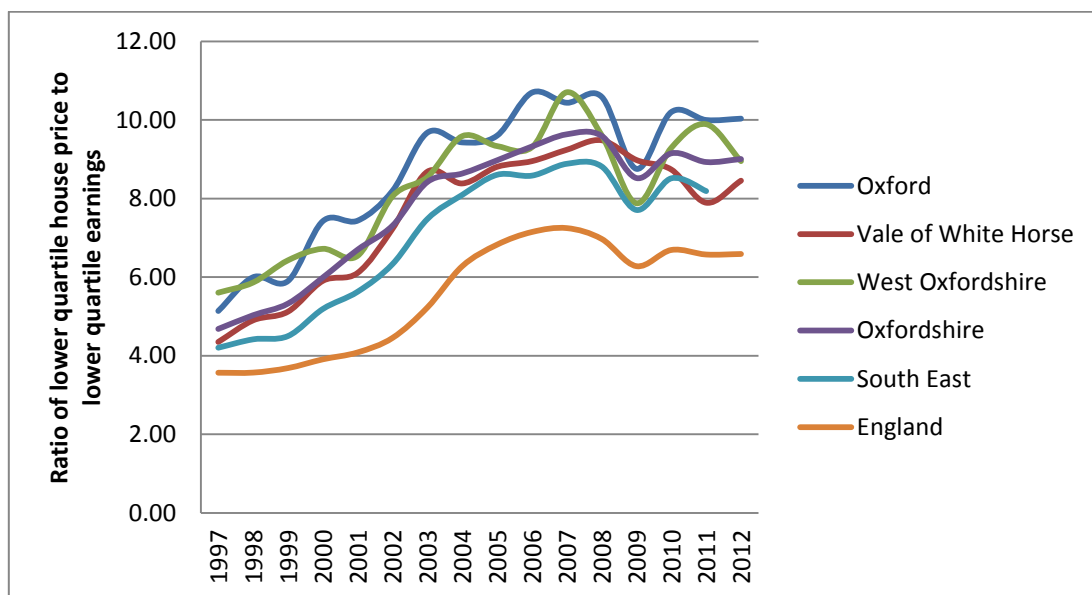
Consultation Question 24) Are there any other sites in or around Carterton that would be suitable for business use?

8. Affordable Housing

8.1 In this section we focus on the Council's approach towards the provision of affordable housing. This is essentially housing provided for those whose needs are not met by the open market.

8.2 Housing affordability is a key issue in West Oxfordshire because of the relationship between property prices and household incomes. Figure 8.1 below taken from the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) shows the relationship between house prices and income in the form of a ratio between lower quartile house prices and lower quartile earnings. This is the Government's preferred indicator of affordability.

Figure 8.1 – Housing Affordability Ratio in Oxfordshire



8.3 In 2011 the ratio for West Oxfordshire was 9.89, higher than both the regional average (8.19) and the national average (6.57) and second only to Oxford City (10.0). This means that even the cheapest properties are almost 10 times the lowest income. The result is that in some parts of the District, even relatively small, modest properties are beyond the reach of most single income households.

8.4 Increasing the number, type and distribution of affordable housing for both rent and subsidised sale is therefore a key priority for the Local Plan. There are two main ways in which new affordable housing is provided through the planning system.

8.5 Firstly, affordable housing can be provided as part of a market housing scheme. Generally this is provided on-site, however in some instances a financial contribution can be made towards the provision of affordable housing elsewhere.

- 8.6 Affordable housing can also be provided through the identification of rural exception sites (RES). These are defined as small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing⁴⁰.
- 8.7 Rural exception sites play a very important role in West Oxfordshire. Since 2006, of the total 824 affordable homes built, nearly one quarter (197) has been provided on rural exception sites.

Current Affordable Housing Policy

- 8.8 The Council’s current approach towards the provision of affordable housing in market housing schemes is set out in Policy H11 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2006). The requirements of the policy are summarised below.

Table 8.1 – West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2006) Affordable Housing Requirement

Site type and location	Affordable housing % requirement
Local Plan allocated sites - Witney and Carterton	30%
Local Plan allocated sites - rest of District	up to 50%
Unallocated (windfall) sites of 0.5 ha/15 dwellings or more - Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton and Eynsham	up to 50%
Unallocated (windfall) sites of 2 dwellings or more – rest of District	up to 50%

- 8.9 In order to consider the Council’s future approach towards affordable housing, it is useful to consider the effectiveness of this existing policy approach.
- 8.10 Analysis of housing data over the period 2006/7 – 2012/13 shows that a total of 787 affordable homes were built (an average of 112 per year). The majority of these (78%) were delivered as part of a market housing scheme with the remainder (22%) delivered through rural exception sites.
- 8.11 In terms of the market-led schemes, the majority (85%) were built in the four main towns of Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton and Eynsham with 15% (89 units) delivered across the rest of the District.
- 8.12 Whilst to a large extent this reflects the overall strategy (which focuses development at the four main towns) it does potentially bring into question the effectiveness of the policy in terms of delivering affordable homes in the more rural parts of the District.

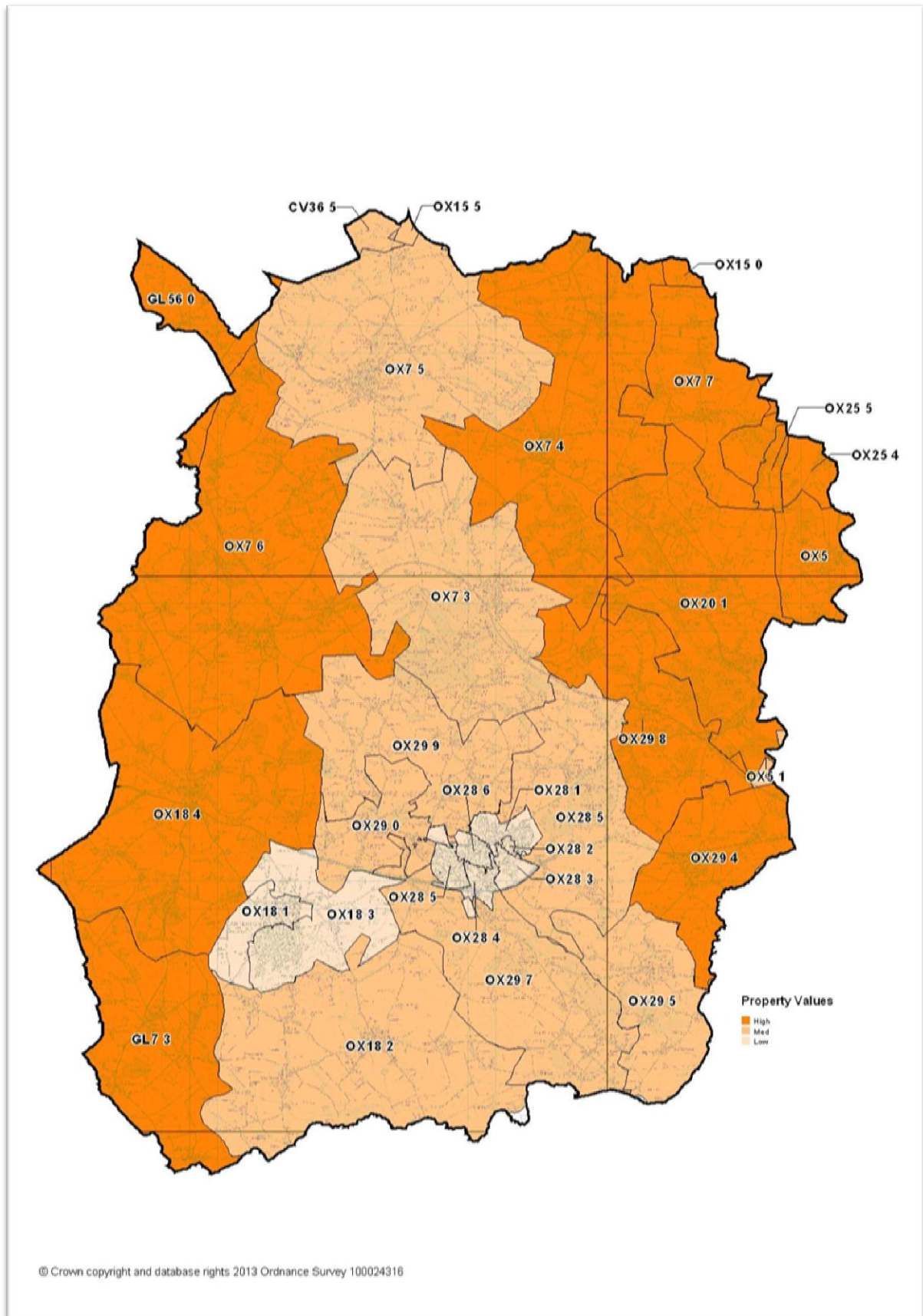
⁴⁰ NPPF (March 2012) Annex 1: Glossary

Emerging Approach

8.13 In preparing the new Local Plan the Council has consulted on various potential approaches towards the provision of affordable housing. The most recent consultation (December 2013) was based on the following:

- A contribution towards the provision of affordable housing to be sought from all residential developments involving a net gain of one or more dwellings
- Small housing developments of 1-5 units would not be expected to provide affordable housing on-site and would instead be required to make a financial contribution to the Council to help deliver affordable housing elsewhere
- Larger housing developments of 6 or more units would be expected to provide affordable housing on-site as part of the overall development mix
- The on-site requirement is proposed to vary from 35% in the proposed 'lower value area' 40% in the medium value area and 50% in the higher value area (see Figure 8.2 below)

Figure 8.2 – Proposed Affordable Housing Higher, Medium and Lower Value Areas



8.14 The main issues raised in response to the consultation can be summarised as follows:

- The current policy has failed to deliver affordable housing in rural areas
- Use of a single dwelling threshold is unreasonable and will affect the delivery of small sites
- The threshold for on-site provision should be raised
- The policy is inconsistent with other Oxfordshire planning authorities
- The 50% affordable housing requirement is too high
- Commuted sum payments should start at 2+ dwellings
- Affordable housing requirements should be balanced with other requirements e.g. CIL
- The percentage target should be expressed as 'up to' rather than as a minimum
- The policy should provide greater flexibility and allow individual site circumstances to be taken into account
- The proposed commuted sums are too high and do not take account of the different size of market homes proposed (e.g. 1-bed flat would pay the same as a 4-bed house)
- The different value zones identified are not reflective of the actual position in West Oxfordshire and are too crudely drawn using postcode data

8.15 It is important that these issues are properly considered before the policy is finalised.

National Policy

8.16 The Government's approach towards the provision of affordable housing is set out in the NPPF (2012). It states that where local authorities have identified that affordable housing is needed, they should set policies for meeting the need on-site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified.

8.17 The Government has however recently consulted on whether small-scale schemes of 10 or less homes should be exempt from having to provide affordable housing⁴¹. The District Council objected but at the time of writing the outcome of the consultation is not yet known.

8.18 The table overleaf sets out previous housing completions in West Oxfordshire by size over the period 2003 – 2012.

⁴¹ DCLG Planning Performance and Planning Contributions: Consultation (March 2014)

Table 8.2 – Housing Completions by Size in West Oxfordshire 2003 – 2012

Year	Total completions	<10 (units)	<10 (%)	>9 (units)	>9 (%)
2003	567	131	23%	436	77%
2004	629	83	13%	546	87%
2005	733	153	21%	580	79%
2006	810	117	14%	693	86%
2007	865	169	20%	696	80%
2008	578	239	41%	339	59%
2009	384	136	35%	248	65%
2010	424	158	37%	266	63%
2011	359	159	44%	200	56%
2012	278	137	49%	141	51%

- 8.19 In the period since 2008 in particular, small scale schemes of less than 10 houses have made up a significant proportion of the overall housing supply. If these schemes were to be exempt, the ability of the Council to deliver new affordable housing would be significantly reduced.
- 8.20 Notwithstanding this, the Council recognises that Local Plan policies should not impact on the viability and deliverability of new housing.

Proposed Way Forward

- 8.21 There is a significant need for more affordable housing in West Oxfordshire. This is confirmed in the Council’s Housing Needs Assessment (2011) and the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) with estimates ranging from 220 - 274 affordable homes needed each year.
- 8.22 Whilst the proposed increase in the overall housing target (from 5,500 to 9,450 homes) will help to boost the supply of affordable housing by virtue of increased housing provision in general, we also need to think about maximising the efficiency of the Council’s policy approach towards securing affordable housing through market-led housing schemes.

Which size of scheme will be expected to contribute?

- 8.23 Previous consultation responses, primarily from the development industry, have raised concerns about the use of a single dwelling threshold on the basis that it is likely to render development unviable.
- 8.24 However, the Council’s viability evidence⁴² suggests that small-scale residential schemes are often as viable as larger schemes due to the fact that they are not required to pay other infrastructure contributions and the completed properties often attract higher sales values than volume house builders are able to achieve.

⁴² Affordable Housing and the Use of a Single Dwelling Threshold – Andrew Golland Associates (2012) and AspinallVerdi – Local Plan and CIL Viability Study (September 2013)

- 8.25 Furthermore, it is anticipated that small-scale residential schemes will continue to come forward and form a significant proportion of overall housing supply over the period of the Local Plan. Completely exempting such schemes from having to provide affordable housing would significantly reduce the ability of the Council to meet affordable housing needs.
- 8.26 It is therefore proposed that with the exception of self-build projects⁴³, all residential schemes that result in a net gain of one or more dwellings will be required to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing either through a financial contribution or through the on-site provision.
- 8.27 This position will however need to be re-considered if the Government introduces a new national threshold as has been suggested.

Threshold for 'on-site' provision

- 8.28 A key consideration is the point at which a developer will be expected to provide new affordable housing on-site as part of the overall development mix. This decision essentially hinges on the viability of the development as the provision of affordable housing on-site has a significant effect on the gross development value of a new housing scheme.
- 8.29 In light of the Council's viability evidence and having regard to the Government's recent affordable housing consultation, there are two options.
- 8.30 Option 1 is to maintain the proposed threshold set out in the Council's most recent consultation (December 2013) whereby any residential scheme of 6 or more dwellings will be expected to provide affordable housing on-site as part of the development. Smaller schemes of 1-5 units (with the exception of self-build) will be required to pay a commuted sum.
- 8.31 Option 2 is to raise the threshold to 11 dwellings (having regard to the Government's recent consultation which suggests schemes of 1-10 dwellings could be exempt. Under this option schemes of 11 or more dwellings will be expected to provide affordable housing on-site as part of the development and smaller schemes of 1-10 (with the exception of self-build) will be required to pay a commuted sum.

On-site affordable housing percentage requirement

- 8.32 In terms of the proportion of affordable housing to be provided, the Council's most recent consultation (December 2013) suggested the following percentages having regard to the Council's viability evidence:
- 50% in the higher value area (see Figure 8.2)
 - 40% in the medium value area (see Figure 8.2)
 - 35% in the lower value area (see Figure 8.2)

⁴³ Self-build will be exempt subject to self-certification

- 8.33 The consultation responses received acknowledged the fact that West Oxfordshire falls into different ‘value areas’ and that a variable approach towards the amount of affordable housing to be provided is reasonable.
- 8.34 Concerns were expressed about the way in which those value areas have been defined using postcode data, however no alternative approaches were put forward and sales values information is only available on a postcode basis. Postcode boundaries also offer the opportunity of being clearly defined and their use will help to avoid any doubt about whether a scheme falls into a high, medium or low value area.
- 8.35 Whilst it would be easier to adopt a flat rate across the District, this would be overly simplistic and would not reflect the fact that the gross development value of residential scheme in say Woodstock or Burford is likely to be significantly higher than a scheme in Carterton, Chipping Norton or Witney.
- 8.36 Having regard to the above, the overall need to boost affordable housing supply and the fact that schemes of more than 6 dwellings generally demonstrate a significant level of viability, it is considered that the on-site requirement outlined above ranging from 35% - 50% is reasonable and appropriate.
- 8.37 To provide flexibility and ensure viability, the Council acknowledges that these requirements should be expressed in the form of ‘...up to X%’.

Affordable Housing Tenure

- 8.38 There are several different forms of affordable housing including social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. The draft Local Plan (2012) suggests that the Council’s preferred tenure split for affordable housing will generally be two thirds (66%) affordable rented housing and one third (33%) intermediate housing.
- 8.39 The proposed tenure split was well-supported in the Council’s recent affordable housing consultation (December 2013) although a number of respondents suggested that the Council should not be too prescriptive and should provide some flexibility. It is proposed that this split is retained as a general guide to the proportions of affordable housing tenures likely to be sought.

Calculation of a commuted sum towards off-site provision of affordable housing

- 8.40 In the Council’s most recent consultation it was suggested that a commuted sum could be calculated having regard to residual land value. The following commuted sums were recommended:

Table 8.3 – Recommended Commuted Sums (December 2013)

Area (see Figure 8.2 above)	Commuted Sum
Higher value	£55,000
Medium value	£27,000
Lower value	£14,000

- 8.41 The suggested commuted sums drew criticism through the consultation on the basis that they do not take account of the size or type of market housing being proposed for example a five-bedroom house in the high value area would attract a commuted sum payment of £55,000 as would a one-bedroom flat in the same area. This is clearly inequitable and the Council accepts that further clarity is required.
- 8.42 It is therefore proposed that the affordable housing commuted sum will be calculated on a £per m² basis in order to take account of the size of the market housing being proposed.
- 8.43 At this stage the amount payable has not been determined and will need to be worked up alongside the Council's proposed CIL⁴⁴ charge. However, views are welcome on the principle of such an approach.
- 8.44 To illustrate, if the proposed affordable housing commuted sum was £100 per m² a single 4-bed house of 100m² would attract a commuted sum payment of £10,000. A scheme of five 4-bed houses of the same size would attract a total commuted sum payment of £50,000.
- 8.45 The advantage of a commuted sum worked out in this manner is that the amount payable will be clearly known so that a developer can factor this in from the outset.
- 8.46 Commuted sum payments for affordable housing would be put into the Council's enabling fund to help deliver new affordable housing throughout the District.

Self-Build Exemption

- 8.47 Because they are not built for profit, and in themselves could be considered a form of affordable housing, it is proposed that anyone wishing to 'self-build' their own home will be exempt from having to make a financial contribution towards affordable housing (subject to self-build certification).
- 8.48 This would be consistent with the Government's approach towards the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which self-build projects are now exempt from having to pay.

⁴⁴ Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Affordable Housing

Consultation Question 25) Do you agree that all schemes resulting in a net gain of one or more dwellings (except self-build) should be required to make provision for affordable housing either on-site or through a commuted sum payment?

Consultation Question 26) Do you agree that self-build housing schemes should be exempt from having to make provision for affordable housing (subject to self-certification)?

Consultation Question 27) Do you consider that the threshold for on-site provision of affordable housing should be set at 6 dwellings, 11 dwellings or at a different level altogether?

Consultation Question 28) Do you agree with the proposals to seek up to 50% in the higher value area, up to 40% in the medium value area and up to 35% in the lower value area (as defined on Figure 8.2)?

Consultation Question 29) Do you agree that in terms of tenure, the Council should generally seek two thirds affordable rented housing and one third intermediate?

Consultation Question 30) Do you agree that the affordable housing commuted sum should be calculated on a £per m² basis to be worked up alongside the Council's CIL draft charging schedule?

9. Housing Mix

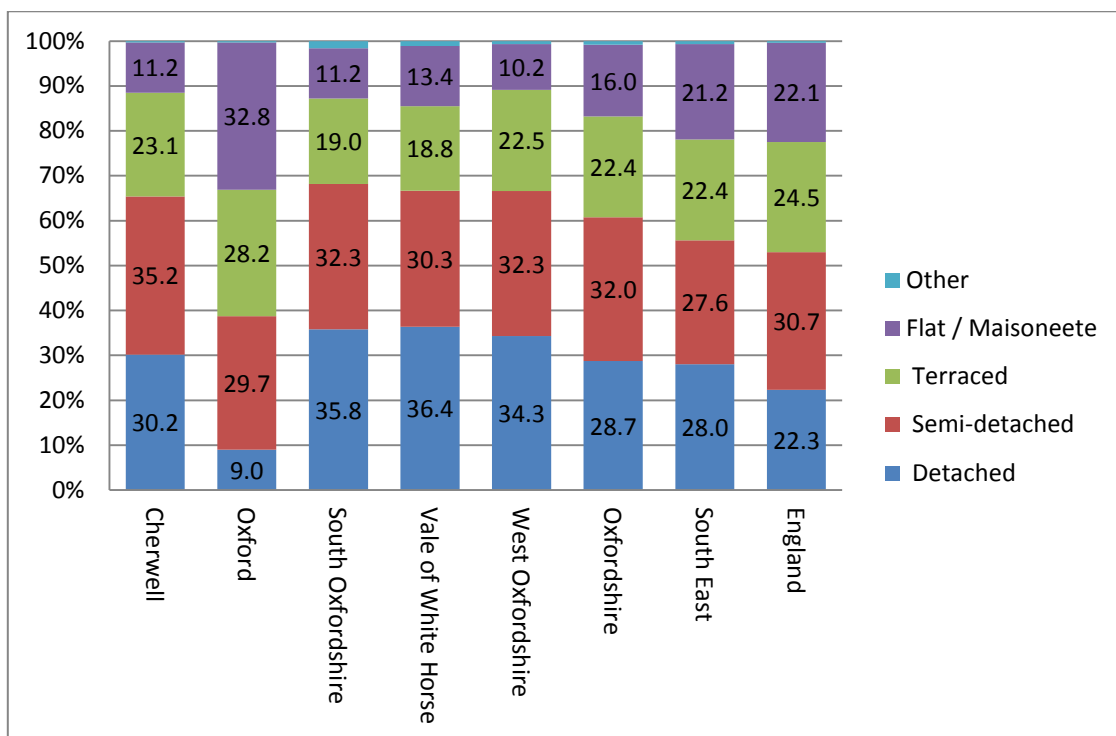
9.1 The Local Plan has an important role to play in influencing the type and size of new homes that are provided. In this way it can help to address any current ‘imbalance’ in the existing housing stock and help to ensure that future needs are properly met.

Market Housing – Existing Stock

9.2 Information on the existing stock of market (private) housing in West Oxfordshire is available from the 2011 Census and is summarised in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014).

9.3 The chart below illustrates the percentage of different house types in West Oxfordshire and across the rest of the County.

Figure 9.1 – Percentage of different house types in West Oxfordshire



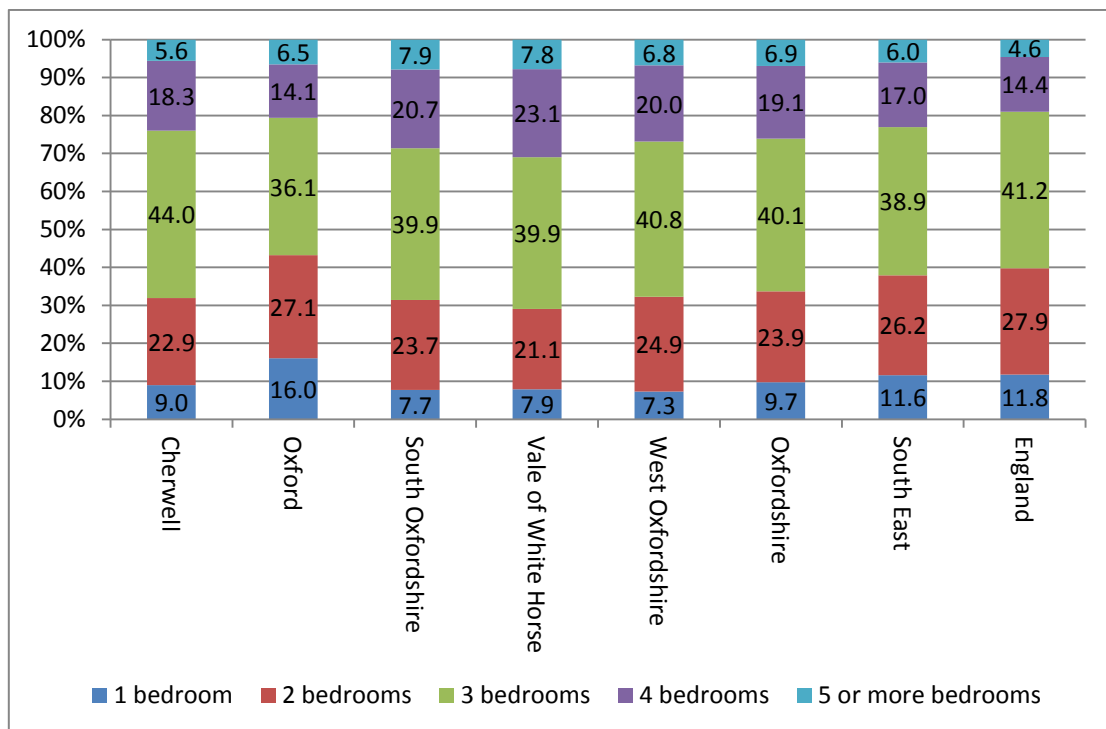
Source: Oxfordshire SHMA and 2011 Census

9.4 It is evident that the existing housing stock in West Oxfordshire, like all Oxfordshire authorities (except Oxford City) is dominated by detached and semi-detached properties, with fewer terraced properties and flats/maisonettes.

9.5 Notably, the percentage of detached and semi-detached properties in West Oxfordshire is higher than the regional and national averages.

9.6 It is also useful to consider information on the size of existing properties. Figure 9.2 below illustrates the percentage of different house sizes in West Oxfordshire compared to the rest of Oxfordshire and the regional and national averages.

Figure 9.2 – House Size in West Oxfordshire as a percentage of all dwellings in 2011



Source: 2011 Census (taken from Oxfordshire SHMA 2014)

- 9.7 It is evident that the current housing stock in West Oxfordshire is dominated by larger properties with 73% of properties having 3 or more bedrooms.
- 9.8 Whilst recent developments at Witney (Madley Park) and Carterton (Shilton Park) have helped to increase the stock of smaller properties available, the overall imbalance of larger properties remains.

Market Housing – Future Requirements by Dwelling Size

- 9.9 The Local Plan provides an opportunity to address the current imbalance in the housing stock outlined above by ensuring that properties of the right type and size are built in the future.
- 9.10 Housing needs evidence published in 2011⁴⁵ suggests in relation to market housing, that to create a more balanced housing stock, future development should be based on a split of 60% 1 and 2-bed properties and 40% 3-bed and 4+ bed properties.
- 9.11 Further advice on future requirements for market housing is contained in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014). The SHMA suggests that the provision of market housing should be more explicitly focused on delivering smaller family housing for younger households. Smaller units are also suitable for meeting the needs of others including older people wishing to downsize.

⁴⁵ West Oxfordshire Housing Needs Assessment Update 2011 – DCA

9.12 The SHMA recommends the following mix of market housing is sought across the Oxfordshire housing market area:

- 5% 1-bed properties
- 25% 2-bed properties
- 45% 3-bed properties
- 25% 4+bed properties

9.13 The SHMA emphasises that this is a general guide only and Local Plans should not be overly prescriptive about the size of property sought as the 'market' is to some degree a better judge of what is the most appropriate profile of homes to deliver at any point in time.

9.14 Table 9.1 below taken from the Oxfordshire SHMA provides a more-specific breakdown by District. Again however this is a general guide only.

Table 9.1 – Estimated dwelling requirement by number of bedrooms (2011 – 2031) – Market Sector

Sub-area	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Cherwell	6.2%	23.1%	46.2%	24.6%
Oxford	10.7%	24.9%	38.9%	25.5%
South Oxfordshire	5.7%	26.7%	43.4%	24.2%
Vale of White Horse	5.9%	21.7%	42.6%	29.8%
West Oxfordshire	4.8%	27.9%	43.4%	23.9%
OXFORDSHIRE	7.0%	24.4%	42.9%	25.7%

Source: Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

9.15 This suggests that the Council should be looking to secure 33% 1-bed and 2-bed properties and 67% 3-bed and 4+bed properties. This represents a noticeable shift from the Council's previous 2011 housing needs assessment which suggested a need for 60% 1-bed and 2-bed and 40% 3-bed and 4+bed properties.

9.16 We will consider this evidence as a starting point in relation to negotiations over housing mix taking into account the need to provide an appropriate balance of dwelling types and for development to be of a character that is appropriate for its location, in the interests of creating sustainable communities.

Affordable Housing – Future Requirements by Dwelling Size

9.17 Information on future potential requirements for affordable housing by property size is set out in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014). Table 9.2 below sets out the suggested proportions of affordable housing to be sought in each District by property size.

Table 9.2 - Estimated dwelling requirement by number of bedrooms (2011 to 2031) – Affordable Sector

Sub-area	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Cherwell	28.3%	31.0%	36.9%	3.7%
Oxford	29.0%	32.7%	32.2%	6.1%
South Oxfordshire	32.6%	35.5%	29.3%	2.7%
Vale of White Horse	27.3%	35.1%	33.6%	3.9%
West Oxfordshire	23.3%	43.7%	30.4%	2.6%
OXFORDSHIRE	28.4%	34.7%	32.7%	4.3%

Source: Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

9.18 This is consistent with the earlier draft Local Plan (2012) which stated that as a general guide, the Council will seek the following mix of affordable housing:

- 65% 1-bed and 2-bed homes
- 35% 3-bed and 4-bed homes

Housing Mix – Market Housing

Consultation Question 31) The most recent evidence set out in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) suggests that as a general guide, the Council should seek the following proportions of market housing:

- 4.8% 1-bed
- 27.9% 2-bed
- 43.4% 3-bed
- 23.9% 4-bed

Do you agree that this is an appropriate approach in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Mix – Affordable Housing

Consultation Question 32) The most recent evidence suggests that as a general guide, the Council should seek the following proportions of affordable housing:

- 65% - 67% 1-bed and 2-bed
- 33% - 35% 3-bed and 4-bed

Do you agree that this is an appropriate approach in West Oxfordshire?

10. Meeting the needs of specific groups

- 10.1 The NPPF requires local authorities to plan for a mix of housing based on the current and future needs of different groups including older people, families with children, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes.
- 10.2 In this section we focus on how the Local Plan will seek to address the needs of the following groups:
- Older people;
 - Young people;
 - People with disabilities;
 - Black and minority ethnic households;
 - Households with children;
 - Service families;
 - Those wishing to 'self-build' or 'self-finish' their own home; and
 - Travelling communities

Older People

- 10.3 In line with the national position, West Oxfordshire has an ageing population and the Local Plan has an important role to play in ensuring that a suitable type and mix of housing is provided to meet future needs.
- 10.4 There are a number of different types of housing suitable for older people including:
- Sheltered/age exclusive housing
 - Extra-care housing (also known as very-sheltered housing)
 - Close care or assisted living housing
 - Care homes
 - Care homes with nursing (previously known as nursing homes)
- 10.5 Existing properties can also be adapted to meet the needs of older people in order to enable them to stay in their own home.
- 10.6 In 2012 the Council published a detailed evidence paper on older persons housing⁴⁶ and the SHMA (2014) also provides further evidence. Some of the key issues are outlined below.

West Oxfordshire's Ageing Population

- 10.7 Between 1981 and 2011 the population aged 60+ in West Oxfordshire increased by 82% (+11,900). 18% of people are currently aged 65 and over (compared with 16% nationally) and 22,740 people are aged 85 (2.6% of the total population compared to the national average of 2.2%).

⁴⁶ Older Persons Housing Paper (2012) <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/287432/Older-persons-housing-paper.pdf>

10.8 West Oxfordshire has the highest population of people aged 55 and over in Oxfordshire (31%)⁴⁷.

10.9 Importantly, future projections suggest that the proportion of older people will continue to increase across Oxfordshire. The table below illustrates the projected change in the period 2011 - 2031.

Table 10.1 – Projected Change in Population of Older Persons (2011 – 2031)

Age group	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Under 55	21.2%	50.8%	14.3%	38.1%	9.9%	28.7%
55-64	32.4%	27.6%	23.0%	22.9%	21.0%	25.5%
65-74	61.6%	44.3%	41.0%	49.2%	52.3%	49.7%
75-84	76.7%	39.1%	64.7%	67.4%	79.2%	66.4%
85+	142.8%	47.9%	134.6%	142.8%	159.4%	126.8%
Total	31.1%	48.1%	24.0%	41.7%	23.6%	34.3%
Total 55+	58.0%	36.6%	46.0%	49.7%	54.1%	49.3%

Source: Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

10.10 It can be seen that in West Oxfordshire the proportion of people aged 55+ is projected to increase by 54% with a particularly high increase in the proportion of people aged 85+ (160%).

10.11 Reflecting this ageing of the population, across Oxfordshire as a whole there is projected to be a large rise in the number of people with dementia (+98%) along with an 82% increase in the number of people with mobility problems.

10.12 In West Oxfordshire the number of people with dementia is expected to increase by 1,685 to 3,098 (120%). In terms of mobility problems, the number of people affected is expected to increase by 3,582 to 7,197 (99%).

Current Provision of Housing for Older People

10.13 With regard to the existing stock of specialist housing for older people there are around 614 units in West Oxfordshire. The majority of these (523) are in private market schemes with the remainder (91) provided in the affordable sector⁴⁸.

10.14 Relative to the District's population this level of provision represents just 66 units per person aged 75 and over - the lowest of all Oxfordshire local authorities.

10.15 Across Oxfordshire as a whole the current supply is equivalent to 133 units per person aged 75 and over - lower than the national average of about 170 units.

⁴⁷ Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

⁴⁸ Oxfordshire SHMA 2014

Future Requirements

- 10.16 The County Council has published an Extra Care Housing Strategy which aims to deliver 55 units of extra-care housing per 1,000 population aged 75 or over. This rate is to meet an expected demand, across West Oxfordshire of 478 units in 2008, rising to 945 by 2031.
- 10.17 The SHMA provides further advice on meeting the future housing needs of older people. In general terms, it suggests there is a need to provide housing for older people as part of achieving a good mix of housing but recognises that many older people are able to exercise choice and control over their housing options e.g. those with equity in their own homes.
- 10.18 It also highlights falling demand for residential care in some areas and a rise in the average age of people living in sheltered housing requiring higher levels of support as well as the emergence of new models of housing including enhanced and extra-care housing which allow for changing circumstances in situ rather than people having to move (e.g. increased level of care provision).
- 10.19 The SHMA emphasises that there is a need to provide choice, including supporting people to stay in their own homes for example through adaptations to properties and the provision of floating support.
- 10.20 The SHMA also provides an indicative assessment of the number of units of specialist housing for older people that are likely to be needed in the future. The figures should be treated with some caution as they are based on a number of assumptions, however they do provide an indication of future potential requirements.
- 10.21 In order to maintain the current position in West Oxfordshire (133 units per 1,000 people aged 75+) there is a need to increase provision from 614 units to 2,505 units (a net increase of 1,891).
- 10.22 To increase the level of provision in line with the national average (170 units per 1,000 people aged 75+) there is a need to increase overall supply to 3,202 a net need of 2,588 units⁴⁹.
- 10.23 This does not take account of replacement provision of existing accommodation that may no longer be fit for purpose and as such the 'gross' need is expected to be higher.
- 10.24 The SHMA suggests that decisions about the mix and type of housing for older people should be taken at the local level, taking account of specific needs and the current supply of different types of units available. It recommends that decisions on the type and tenure of specialist housing are arrived at through joint working between the County Council, district council and other stakeholders.

⁴⁹ Oxfordshire SHMA (2014)

Proposed Way Forward

- 10.25 It has long been one of the Council's goals to offer support to older residents and to promote the provision of suitable accommodation, particularly in mixed communities. Adopted Local Plan Policy H3 - Range and type of residential accommodation includes advice on the provision of lifetime homes, sheltered accommodation etc. for the elderly and is supported in greater detail, by the West Oxfordshire District Council Strategy for Older People.
- 10.26 In light of the SHMA findings and other available evidence the Council will:
- Seek to enable the provision of sufficient specialist housing provision to meet demand (balanced against other identified needs);
 - Increase specialist provision for all client groups in line with identified needs;
 - Encourage the provision of specialist housing for older people as part of the overall mix of housing on development schemes including in particular the strategic sites identified in the Local Plan;
 - Encourage the delivery of homes in both the affordable and housing market sectors that can be easily adapted to meet the changing needs of occupants as they get older and support people who require aids and adaptations in order to be able to stay in their own home;
 - Support in principle the redevelopment of existing older persons accommodation that may be unsuitable and/or fails to comply with current legislative requirements;
 - Seek to effectively utilise the existing affordable housing stock and will support and encourage those in affordable housing who wish to down-size in order to help release larger affordable homes for younger households;
 - Seek ensure enough subsidised or low cost housing of a decent quality is provided for those who cannot afford market prices;
 - Seek to facilitate the requirements of older owner-occupiers wishing to 'downsize' into non-specialist accommodation (e.g. bungalows); and
 - Work with the County Council, other local authorities and stakeholders in relation to the delivery of specialist housing for older people.

Housing Provision for Older People

Consultation Question 33) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of West Oxfordshire's ageing population?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of older people in West Oxfordshire?

Young People

- 10.27 Providing for the needs of younger person households is an important consideration. The ability to retain young people in an area can assist in providing a more balanced demographic profile as well as providing a vital part of the local workforce.
- 10.28 The SHMA highlights the fact that of those households that are headed by a younger person, very few are owner-occupiers and there is a particular reliance on the private rented sector and to a lesser degree, social rented housing.
- 10.29 It suggests that factors such as a balanced approach to housing in terms of bedroom sizes and property types, along with high standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will help younger households to access housing.
- 10.30 The Council will therefore seek to ensure a good, balanced mix of house types and tenures is provided in all new housing developments. The provision of affordable housing and support for self-build projects will also help to meet the needs of younger people.

Housing Provision for Younger People

Consultation Question 34) In addition to securing a good and balanced mix of house types and tenures, providing more affordable housing and encouraging self-build, are there any other specific measures that the Council should be pursuing through the Local Plan to help meet the future housing needs of younger people in West Oxfordshire?

People with disabilities

- 10.31 The SHMA suggests that across Oxfordshire as a whole, demographic trends are expected to lead to a significant growth in the population and number of households with disabilities over the period to 2031.
- 10.32 PANSI (Projecting Adults Needs & Service Information System) data estimates there will be 40,537 people with a serious and moderate physical disability aged between 18 and 64 in Oxfordshire by 2015. In West Oxfordshire, there will be 6,698 residents (17%) with a serious and moderate physical disability.
- 10.33 There are several options for meeting the needs of people with disabilities, ranging from the provision of wheelchair accessible properties to the delivery of specific supported housing options. The table below taken from the Oxfordshire SHMA provides a summary of estimated specialist housing requirements in the period 2013 – 2020.

Table 10.2 - Specialist Housing Requirements 2013-20 – adult population

Area	Number	%
Cherwell	82	21%
Oxford	102	26%
South Oxon	74	19%
VoWH	70	18%
West Oxon	63	16%
Oxfordshire	391	100%

10.34 The table shows a need for an additional 391 units of accommodation across Oxfordshire (about 56 per annum on average). Of these, around 38% are for people with physical disabilities, 25% for those with learning disabilities and 38% for people with mental health problems.

10.35 In light of the above, the Council will:

- Encourage the provision of wheelchair accessible housing in all new developments that are suitably located and provide reasonable access to local amenities;
- Support the provision of supported housing to move people out of, or prevent moving into residential settings where appropriate and to meet specific client group needs such as Acquired Brain Injury and Learning Disabilities;
- Encourage the provision of adaptable homes to enable people who develop a disability to be able to remain in their own home; and
- Seek to ensure the provision of a choice of suitable housing in a range of tenures

Housing Provision for People with Disabilities

Consultation Question 35) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of people with disabilities in West Oxfordshire?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of those with a disability?

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Households

10.36 West Oxfordshire has a very low percentage of black or minority ethnic households compared to the other Oxfordshire local authorities. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 10.3 – Black and Minority Ethnic Population (2011)

Ethnic Group	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	W Oxon	Oxfordshire	South East	England
White: British/Irish	87.1%	65.2%	91.7%	90.6%	93.2%	84.6%	86.1%	80.7%
White: Other	5.1%	12.4%	4.3%	4.4%	3.6%	6.3%	4.6%	4.7%
Mixed	1.8%	4.0%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	2.0%	1.9%	2.3%
Asian	4.3%	12.4%	1.8%	2.4%	1.4%	4.8%	5.2%	7.8%
Black	1.4%	4.6%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%	1.7%	1.6%	3.5%
Other ethnic group	0.4%	1.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%	0.6%	1.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total population	141,868	151,906	134,257	120,988	104,779	653,798	8,634,750	53,012,456
% non-White (British/Irish)	12.9%	34.8%	8.3%	9.4%	6.8%	15.4%	13.9%	19.3%

Source: Oxfordshire SHMA and 2011 Census

10.37 It is evident that the proportion of non-white (British/Irish) residents at just 6.8% is lower than any other Oxfordshire local authority.

10.38 The SHMA concludes that across Oxfordshire as a whole, BME households appear to be typically younger and less likely to be owner occupiers. There is consequently, a greater reliance on the private rented sector. BME households are also more likely to be overcrowded and less likely to under-occupy dwellings.

10.39 The SHMA suggests that the implications of this are more for housing strategy than planning, and suggest a need to consider particularly how the needs of different groups are met within the local housing market, to explore the reasons for higher levels of overcrowding in BME communities and how this can be addressed. It will also be important to consider the role which the Private Rented Sector plays in meeting needs of new migrant communities and the standards of housing in this sector.

10.40 In light of the above, no specific measures are proposed to be introduced through the Local Plan in order to meet the needs of black and ethnic minority households other than in relation to the overall objective of securing a balanced mix of house types and tenures.

Housing Provision for Black and Ethnic Minority Households

Consultation Question 36) Other than in relation to the overall objective of securing a good, balanced mix of house types and tenures, are there any specific measures the Council should be seeking to introduce through the Local Plan to address the needs of black and ethnic minority households in West Oxfordshire?

Households with children

- 10.41 The SHMA provides some limited commentary on meeting the needs of families (i.e. any household with at least one dependent child). It suggests that across Oxfordshire, the number of children (aged under-15) is expected to increase markedly by around 38,000 in the period 2011 – 2031 (33%).
- 10.42 In West Oxfordshire, according to the 2011 census there were 19,500 people aged 0 – 15 (18.6%) similar to the national and regional averages.
- 10.43 The SHMA highlights the fact that households with children are about four times more likely than other households to be overcrowded and that other than for married couple households, levels of under-occupancy are very low.
- 10.44 It states that households with children should be seen as a priority and that Councils should therefore seek to ensure that the housing offer meets the needs of such households, in particular the need to ensure a reasonable quality of housing in the private rented sector.
- 10.45 The Council will therefore seek to achieve a good, balanced mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures including market and affordable housing in order to ensure households with children are able to access suitable housing.

Housing Provision for Households with Children

Consultation Question 37) Other than in relation to the overall objective of securing a good, balanced mix of house types and tenures including market and affordable housing, are there any specific measures the Council should be seeking to introduce through the Local Plan to address the needs of households with children?

Service families

- 10.46 The SHMA does not consider the needs of service families in detail but with RAF Brize Norton located within the District this is an important consideration for West Oxfordshire. The Council works closely with the Ministry of Defence in order to understand the future needs associated with RAF Brize Norton including future accommodation requirements for service personnel and their families.
- 10.47 In 2012 the MOD announced that they needed fewer homes for service families than originally planned. 200 new homes will be built on the REEMA North site in Carterton and the REEMA Central site which had originally been reserved for service family housing will be released to the open market.
- 10.48 The needs of a number of service families are also met on the open market in rental or owner-occupied properties.
- 10.49 The Council will therefore continue to work closely with the MOD to ensure that the accommodation needs of service families linked to RAF Brize Norton are catered for over the period of the Local Plan.

Those wishing to self-build their own home

- 10.50 Self-build is essentially about wanting to build your own home. There are different types of self-build ranging from a true-self build where someone with the appropriate skills actually builds their own home to self-finish where a professional builds the house for someone to choose the fittings, fixtures and decoration.
- 10.51 Self-build projects can also be community-led with a number of affordable homes being built for the benefit of the local community through a community land trust or similar enterprise.
- 10.52 The SHMA highlights that research into self-build is fairly limited including data about how many schemes are coming forward. It suggests that in policy terms there is some potential to encourage developers of large sites to designate parts of those sites as ‘serviced plots’ which can then be developed as self-build. It does however highlight the financial challenge faced by those wishing to self-build with most self-build schemes commissioned by those with substantial savings rather than borrowings.
- 10.53 The Council is committed to supporting access to both affordable and market housing for local people and will therefore:
- Support people who wish to build or commission their own homes;
 - Encourage developers of large developments to designate a proportion of self-build plots for those who wish to self-build or part-completed houses for those who wish to ‘self-finish’;
 - Work with any self-build groups to help identify suitable and deliverable sites including through the development of Neighbourhood Plans;
 - Consider the use of affordable housing commuted sums to acquire land in order to facilitate the delivery of community self-build schemes in appropriate locations;
 - Support self-build projects by exempting them having to pay a commuted sum towards the provision of affordable housing (subject to self-build certification); and
 - Encourage the re-use of empty properties through self-build projects

Self-Build

Consultation Question 38) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of those wishing to undertake self-build projects in West Oxfordshire?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of those wishing to self-build?

Travelling communities

- 10.54 All Councils are required to make adequate provision to meet the housing needs of gypsies, traveller and travelling showpeople. Councils should undertake an assessment of need and develop effective strategies to meet those needs through the identification of land for sites. They should set 'pitch' targets for gypsies and travellers and 'plot' targets for travelling showpeople. Like mainstream housing, Council's should be able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable sites when measured against those targets.
- 10.55 The SHMA does not address the needs of travelling communities but the Council already has a good idea of how many pitches and plots are needed to meet future needs from a number of previous studies.
- 10.56 In relation to gypsies and travellers the most recent evidence suggests there is a need for around 20 additional pitches in the period up to 2029. For travelling showpeople there is a need for around 27 plots over the same period. Taking into account existing provision there is a shortfall of around 16 pitches for gypsies and travellers and 21 plots for travelling showpeople.
- 10.57 The Council's intention is to identify specific sites for travelling communities through the Local Plan (Part 2) document consultation on which will begin in January 2015. In the interim, a criteria-based policy will be applied to any speculative planning applications that are received.

Travelling Communities

Consultation Question 39) Other than the application of a criteria-based policy to deal with speculative planning applications and specific site allocations for travelling communities to be identified in the Local Plan (Part 2) document, are there any other specific measures that the Council should be seeking to introduce to meet the future housing needs of travelling communities?

11. Next Steps

- 11.1 This focused consultation document will be subject to consultation from **28th July until 8th September 2014**. All responses received will be taken into account by the Council in preparing the pre-submission draft version of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2011-2029).
- 11.2 Subject to the agreement of Cabinet and Council in October 2014, the pre-submission draft Local Plan will be formally published in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 11.3 At that point there will be a 6-week period within which any person may make representations about the Local Plan.
- 11.4 Following the end of the 6-week period all representations will be collated and submitted along with the Local Plan and supporting evidence papers to the Planning Inspectorate who will arrange an independent examination in spring 2015.
- 11.5 For further information:
- Visit: http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/#Local_Plan_Part_1
 - Email: planning.policy@westoxon.gov.uk
 - Telephone: 01993 861667

Consultation Questions

Plan Period

Consultation Question 1) Do you agree that the period 2011 – 2029 is a reasonable period of time for the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan to cover? If not, what period should the plan cover and why?

Proposed Housing Target

Consultation Question 2) Do you support the proposed Local Plan housing target of at least 9,450 homes to be provided in West Oxfordshire over the period 2011 – 2029 (525 per annum)?

If you do not agree with the proposed target, please explain why and identify which alternative target you consider should be used.

Proposed Spatial Strategy

Consultation Question 3) Do you agree with proposed spatial strategy outlined in paragraphs 5.15 – 5.19?

If not, which alternative strategy do you think should form the basis of the new Local Plan?

Witney Sub-Area

Consultation Question 4) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Witney Sub-Area (3,550 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 5) Do you support the draft allocation of land at East Witney for the provision of 400 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 6) Do you support the draft allocation of land at North Witney for the phased provision of 1,000 homes with the majority (c.800) to come forward after 2021? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 7) Do you agree with the exclusion of the alternative site options to the south and north east of Witney? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 8) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Witney sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Carterton Sub-Area

Consultation Question 9) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Carterton Sub-Area (2,450 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 10) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at East Carterton for the provision of 700 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 11) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at REEMA Central for the provision of 200 homes (net)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 12) Do you agree with the exclusion of the alternative site options to the north of Carterton at Kilkenny Farm and to the west of Carterton? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 13) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Carterton sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Chipping Norton Sub-Area

Consultation Question 14) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Chipping Norton Sub-Area (1,450 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 15) Do you support the proposed draft allocation of land at East Chipping Norton for the provision of around 500 homes? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 16) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Chipping Norton sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area

Consultation Question 17) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area (1,350 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 18) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Eynsham - Woodstock sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Burford - Charlbury Sub-Area

Consultation Question 19) Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Burford - Charlbury sub-area (650 new homes)? Please expand as necessary.

Consultation Question 20) Are there any other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Burford - Charlbury sub-area to help meet the overall housing requirement?

Business Land Provision

Consultation Question 21) Do you agree with the overall level of business land provision identified in the emerging Local Plan (60 hectares)?

Consultation Question 22) Do you agree that there is a need to provide additional business land in Carterton to attract inward investment?

Consultation Question 23) Do you support the potential option of using the District Council's playing pitches at Monahan Way for business use, subject to their replacement in a suitable location elsewhere? If so, where should the replacement pitches be provided?

Consultation Question 24) Are there any other sites in or around Carterton that would be suitable for business use?

Affordable Housing

Consultation Question 25) Do you agree that all schemes resulting in a net gain of one or more dwellings (except self-build) should be required to make provision for affordable housing either on-site or through a commuted sum payment?

Consultation Question 26) Do you agree that self-build housing schemes should be exempt from having to make provision for affordable housing (subject to self-certification)?

Consultation Question 27) Do you consider that the threshold for on-site provision of affordable housing should be set at 6 dwellings, 11 dwellings or at a different level altogether?

Consultation Question 28) Do you agree with the proposals to seek up to 50% in the higher value area, up to 40% in the medium value area and up to 35% in the lower value area (as defined on Figure 8.2)?

Consultation Question 29) Do you agree that in terms of tenure, the Council should generally seek two thirds affordable rented housing and one third intermediate?

Consultation Question 30) Do you agree that the affordable housing commuted sum should be calculated on a £per m² basis to be worked up alongside the Council's CIL draft charging schedule?

Housing Mix – Market Housing

Consultation Question 31) The most recent evidence set out in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) suggests that as a general guide, the Council should seek the following proportions of market housing:

- 4.8% 1-bed
- 27.9% 2-bed
- 43.4% 3-bed
- 23.9% 4-bed

Do you agree that this is an appropriate approach in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Mix – Affordable Housing

Consultation Question 32) The most recent evidence suggests that as a general guide, the Council should seek the following proportions of affordable housing:

- 65% - 67% 1-bed and 2-bed
- 33% - 35% 3-bed and 4-bed

Do you agree that this is an appropriate approach in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Provision for Older People

Consultation Question 33) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of West Oxfordshire's ageing population?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of older people in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Provision for Younger People

Consultation Question 34) In addition to securing a good and balanced mix of house types and tenures, providing more affordable housing and encouraging self-build, are there any other specific measures that the Council should be pursuing through the Local Plan to help meet the future housing needs of younger people in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Provision for People with Disabilities

Consultation Question 35) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of people with disabilities in West Oxfordshire?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of those with a disability?

Housing Provision for Black and Ethnic Minority Households

Consultation Question 36) Other than in relation to the overall objective of securing a good, balanced mix of house types and tenures, are there any specific measures the Council should be seeking to introduce through the Local Plan to address the needs of black and ethnic minority households in West Oxfordshire?

Housing Provision for Households with Children

Consultation Question 37) Other than in relation to the overall objective of securing a good, balanced mix of house types and tenures including market and affordable housing, are there any specific measures the Council should be seeking to introduce through the Local Plan to address the needs of households with children?

Self-Build

Consultation Question 38) Do you agree with the measures outlined above and consider they will help to meet the future housing needs of those wishing to undertake self-build projects in West Oxfordshire?

Are there any other specific measures that should be introduced to help meet the future housing needs of those wishing to self-build?

Travelling Communities

Consultation Question 39) Other than the application of a criteria-based policy to deal with speculative planning applications and specific site allocations for travelling communities to be

identified in the Local Plan (Part 2) document are there any other specific measures that the Council should be seeking to introduce to meet the future housing needs of travelling communities?