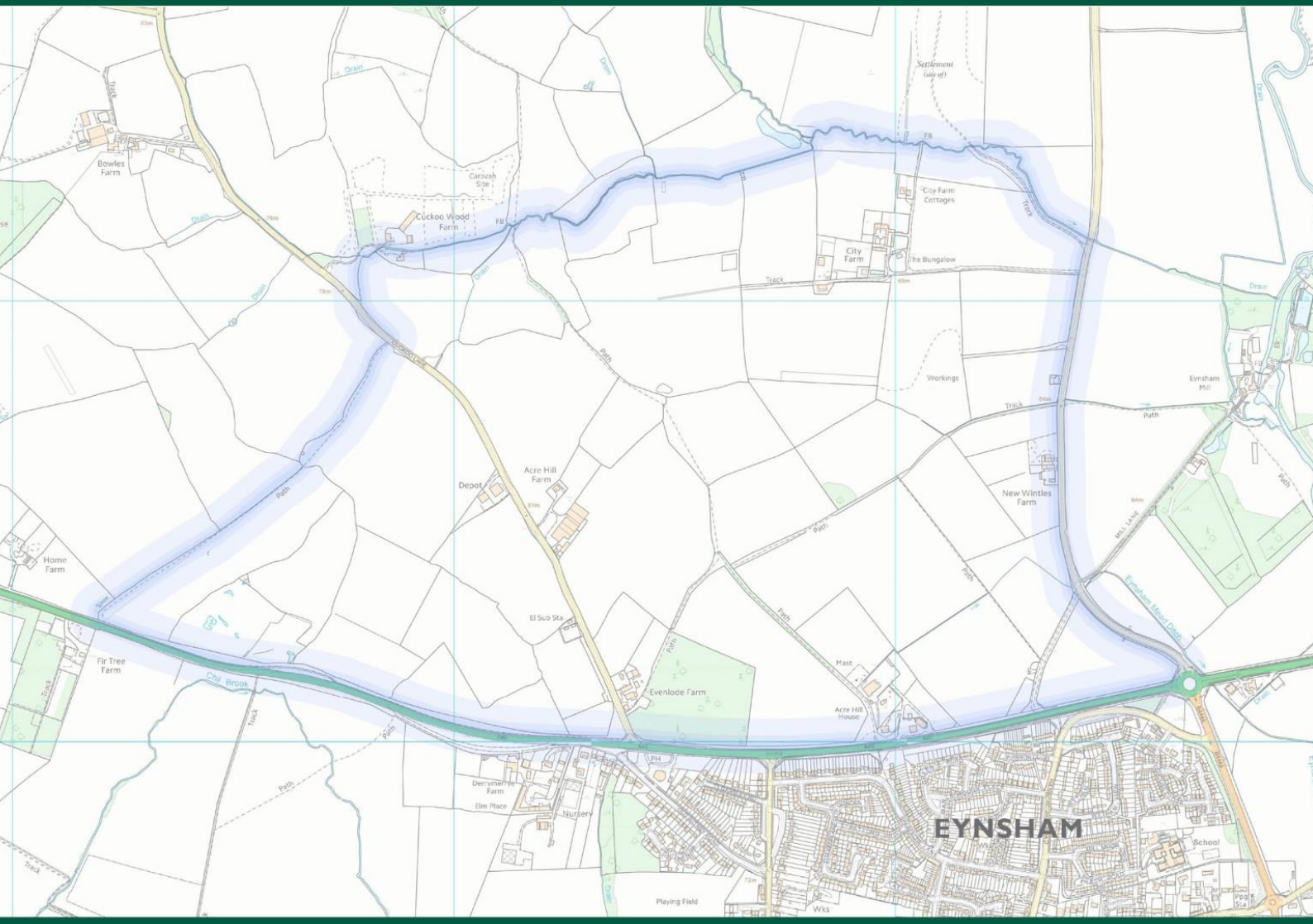
WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village

Area Action Plan (AAP) – Preferred Options

July 2019



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Part 1 – Introduction and background

1. Introduction

1.1 Land to the north of the A40 near Eynsham is allocated for development in the form of a new garden village of about 2,200 new homes together with business space, a new park and ride and other supporting services and facilities.

1.2 Establishing a new garden village is an exciting first for West Oxfordshire and to help guide the process, the Council is preparing a new planning document known as an 'Area Action Plan' (AAP).

1.3 The AAP will establish an agreed vision for the garden village together with an overall framework for development and a series of objectives and policies against which any future planning applications will be judged.

1.4 This will help to ensure the delivery of a high quality, sustainable development consistent with established garden village principles.

1.5 As a first step in the process, the Council published an issues paper in summer 2018[1] seeking initial thoughts on how the site should be taken forward. A positive response was received with comments from over 200 individuals and organisations raising a wide variety of issues including transport, climate change, air quality, open space and biodiversity. The comments are available to view online in full[2] and also in summary form[3].

1.6 Since then, the Council has commissioned a range of technical evidence relating to landscape, heritage, infrastructure, ecology, flood risk, housing and transport. Further community engagement has also taken place through the garden village community forum and most recently, a three-day design workshop in May 2019.

1.7 The purpose of this 'preferred options' paper is essentially to set out and seek feedback on the Council's current thinking on the development of the site which takes account of the key issues raised through consultation as well as supporting technical evidence.

1.8 This includes a draft vision and objectives, together with a series of 'preferred policy approaches'. At this stage, these are not worded as 'draft policies' as such, but rather in the form of an overview of the anticipated policy aims and objectives.

1.9 Subject to feedback and any further evidence that is prepared, these will be worked up into draft policies and proposals and included in the final draft AAP which will then be published for consultation later in the year and subsequently submitted for independent examination.

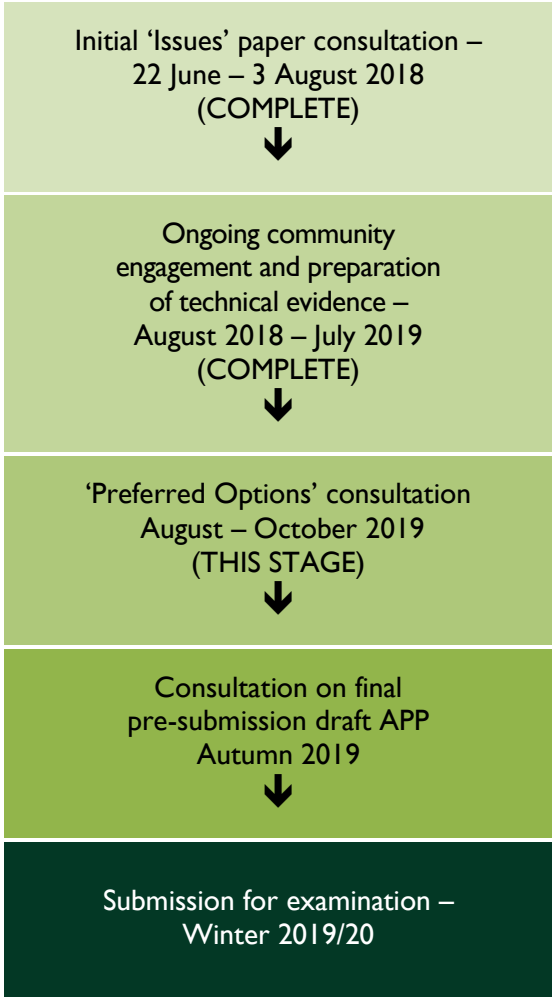
1.10 Once adopted, the AAP will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and will be used as the basis for determining any future planning application/s for the garden village site.

[1] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1859622/Garden-Village-Issues-Paper-June-2018.pdf

[2] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1883063/List-of-respondents.pdf

[3] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1923576/Oxfordshire-Cotswolds-Garden-Village-AAP-CONSULTATION-REPORT_Final-Nov18.pdf

1.11 The AAP process and timeline is summarised below.



1.12 You can respond to this preferred options consultation paper in the following ways:

- Online: at www.westoxon.gov.uk/gardenvillage
- Email: planning.policy@westoxon.gov.uk
- Write to: Planning Policy
  West Oxfordshire District Council
  New Yatt Road
  Witney OX28 1PB

1.13 All comments received will be taken into account in preparing the final draft AAP which will be published for a further, final round of consultation later in the year before being submitted for independent examination.

2. Background context

2.1 In this section we briefly set out some relevant background information to set the garden village proposal in context. In particular, we consider:

- What a garden village is
- How and why the garden village site was identified
- The role and status of the Area Action Plan (AAP); and
- Key influences on the AAP

What is a garden village?

2.2 The concept of garden villages is not new, indeed Britain has a long history of smaller planned communities which may be associated with the term 'garden village' including the model villages developed by philanthropic industrialists and social reformers in the 19th century such as New Lanark, Saltaire, Bournville and Port Sunlight.

2.3 These were small, self-contained new communities linked to, but separate from, larger towns and cities including Glasgow, Liverpool and Birmingham, the aim being to alleviate poverty through the provision of good quality housing, access to green space and fresh air and the provision of community activities and facilities. Importantly, they influenced the subsequent garden city movement pioneered by Ebeneezer Howard, Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin, albeit taken forward in a more radical and ambitious manner.

2.4 In recent years, there has been increased interest in the concept of garden communities (towns and villages) and how they can play a role in delivering growth in a sustainable, healthy and inclusive way.

2.5 The TCPA[4] has published a definition of a garden city together with a number of key principles which can be applied to garden villages at a smaller-scale. These are set out below but should not be taken as a blueprint or rigid set of rules; rather they are intended as an overall framework for good place-making, delivery and management, which should be applied at the local level in the context of individual sites and locations.

Figure 2.1 – TCPA Garden City Definition and Principles

A Garden City is a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. The Garden City Principles are an indivisible and interlocking framework for their delivery, and include:

- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.
- A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

[4] Town and Country Planning Association

2.6 Further advice is set out in the Government's 'Garden Communities' prospectus published in August 2018[5] which identifies a number of key qualities that new garden communities are expected to meet and embed. These include:

a. Clear identity – a distinctive local identity as a new garden community, including at its heart an attractive and functioning centre and public realm.
b. Sustainable scale – built at a scale which supports the necessary infrastructure to allow the community to function self-sufficiently on a day to day basis, with the capacity for future growth to meet the evolving housing and economic needs of the local area.
c. Well-designed places – with vibrant mixed use communities that support a range of local employment types and premises, retail opportunities, recreational and community facilities.
d. Great homes – offer a wide range of high quality, distinctive homes. This includes affordable housing and a mix of tenures for all stages of life.
e. Strong local vision and engagement – designed and executed with the engagement and involvement of the existing local community, and future residents and businesses. This should include consideration of how the natural and historic environment of the local area is reflected and respected.
f. Transport –integrated, forward looking and accessible transport options that support economic prosperity and wellbeing for residents. This should include promotion of public transport, walking, and cycling so that settlements are easy to navigate, and facilitate simple and sustainable access to jobs, education, and services.
g. Healthy places – designed to provide the choices and chances for all to live a healthy life, through taking a whole systems approach to key local health & wellbeing priorities and strategies.
h. Green space – generous, accessible, and good quality green and blue infrastructure that promotes health, wellbeing, and quality of life, and considers opportunities to deliver environmental gains such as biodiversity net gain and enhancements to natural capital.
i. Legacy and stewardship arrangements – should be in place for the care of community assets, infrastructure and public realm, for the benefit of the whole community.
j. Future proofed – designed to be resilient places that allow for changing demographics, future growth, and the impacts of climate change including flood risk and water availability, with durable landscape and building design planned for generations to come. This should include anticipation of the opportunities presented by technological change such as driverless cars and renewable energy measures.

2.7 The role of the AAP is to reflect and interpret these overall objectives at the local level taking particular account of the characteristics, constraints and opportunities presented by the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village site.

[5] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805688/Garden_Communities_Prospectus.pdf

How and why was the garden village site identified?

2.8 The site was first identified as a potential development opportunity in 2016 during the preparation of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

2.9 At that time, the overall housing requirement increased from 10,500 homes to 15,950 homes and in response, the Council undertook an assessment of potential development options across the District. The land to the north of Eynsham was identified as a suitable and sustainable location for delivering new homes and employment largely as a result of its proximity to Oxford and its location on the A40 – a key transport corridor.

2.10 The merits of the proposal were considered through an independent examination in 2017/2018. In August 2018, the Local Plan Inspector published his report concluding in respect of the garden village proposal that the site is soundly-based as a location for growth, subject to comprehensive development led by an Area Action Plan (AAP).

2.11 Policy EW1 applies and allocates the land to the north of Eynsham for a 'free-standing exemplar Garden Village'. A copy of the policy is attached in full at Appendix 1.

2.12 Independently of the Local Plan process, in January 2017 the Government announced that the District Council's expression of interest in garden village status had been successful and that the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village was one of 14 new garden communities given backing under the locally-led garden villages, towns and cities programme[6].

The Role and Status of the Area Action Plan (AAP)

2.13 The purpose of the AAP is essentially to guide the planning, development and delivery of the garden village. Whilst the Local Plan provides a certain steer and sets some high-level principles and requirements, more detail is needed to help inform and determine future planning applications that come forward for the site.

2.14 There is no set format for an Area Action Plan, but we envisage it following a logical structure based around an agreed vision, core objectives and an overall strategy set out on a thematic basis.

2.15 Following this current preferred options consultation, a final draft version of the AAP will be prepared and published for a formal 6-week period of public consultation in accordance with planning regulations[7].

2.16 After that it will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination together with any comments received and relevant supporting evidence.

2.17 Following any examination hearing sessions, the appointed Planning Inspector will issue a report and subject to the recommendations contained therein, the AAP should at that point be formally adopted by the Council. It would then form part of the 'statutory development plan' alongside the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

[6] Now superseded by the Garden Communities Programme (August 2018) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805688/Garden_Communities_Prospectus.pdf

[7] Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Key influences on the AAP

2.18 There are a number of considerations that are directly relevant to the preparation of the AAP. These are briefly outlined below.

National Level

2.19 When considered at examination, one of the key issues that the appointed Inspector will be looking at is whether the AAP is consistent with national policy – in particular the Government's **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF)[8]. The NPPF provides an overall framework within which locally prepared plans such as the AAP can be produced.

2.20 Also of relevance are national strategies and programmes such as the Government's **25 Year Environment Plan**[9], the **UK Industrial Strategy10** and the **Clean Growth Strategy**[11], with the garden village presenting an opportunity to contribute to the broader aims and objectives set out therein.

County Level

2.21 At the countywide level, relevant considerations for the AAP include the **Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal** which is a partnership between the Oxfordshire local authorities and Government to deliver 100,000 new homes by 2031 through an injection of £215m of funding for infrastructure and affordable housing.

2.22 Also of relevance is the County Council's **Local Transport Plan (LTP4)** which is currently in the process of being refreshed, the emerging **Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)** as well as the draft **Oxfordshire Energy Strategy**[12] which aims to ensure that Oxfordshire is at the forefront of energy innovation to foster clean growth.

Local Level

2.23 At the local level, the AAP must sit within the context of the **West Oxfordshire Local Plan**[13] which sets out our overall vision and development strategy for the District in the period up to 2031. The AAP provides an opportunity to interpret and reflect the policies and aims of the Local Plan at a more site-specific level and set out how they will be delivered 'on the ground' to ensure the garden village becomes a place to be proud of.

2.24 At the time of writing, the **Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan** has been approved by an independent examiner subject to a number of modifications. The plan includes a number of objectives and policies of relevance to the garden village and will be reflected in the AAP accordingly.

[8] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

[9] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

[10] https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/the-uks-industrial-strategy

[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy

[12] http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s44917/Oxfordshire%20Energy%20Strategy%20DRAFT%20FINAL%20November%202018.pdf

[13] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1936509/Local-Plan-BOOK-WEB.pdf

3. The garden village site

3.1 In this section we provide a brief overview of the garden village site to provide some context for the vision, objectives and strategy that follow.

3.2 In particular we cover:

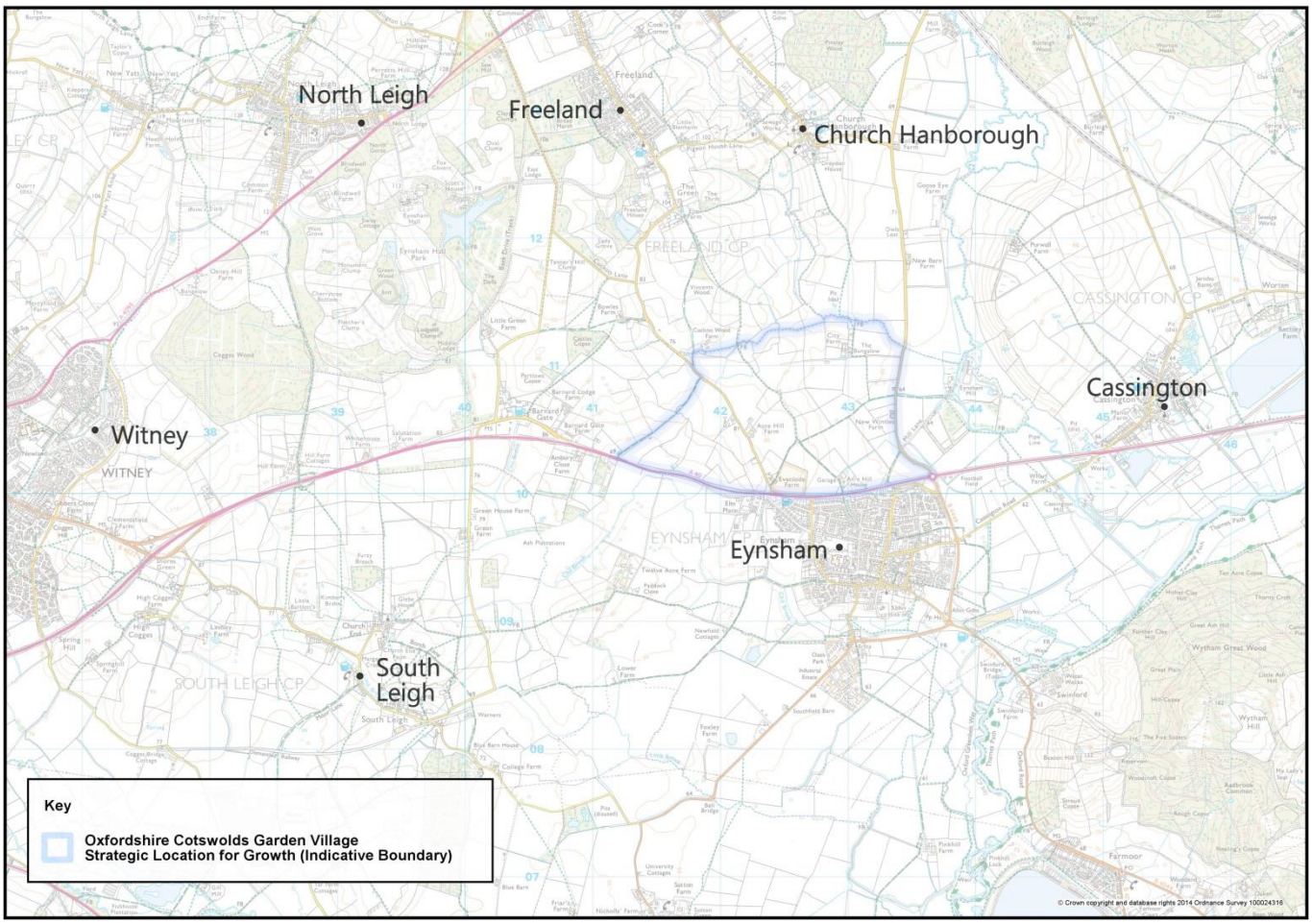
- The location of the site
- The site boundary
- Site description
- Key considerations for any future development proposals

The location of the site

3.3 The garden village site is located immediately to the north of the A40, near Eynsham – around half way between Witney and Oxford as shown on the plan below. Other nearby settlements include Cassington, Church Hanborough, Long Hanborough, Freeland and North Leigh.

3.4 The site falls within Eynsham Parish which plays an important economic role and also enjoys a rich heritage with Eynsham itself having been originally settled as a consequence of its proximity to the River Thames and the crossing at Swinford.

Figure 3.1 – Site Location Plan



3.5 Today, Eynsham is a large and vibrant village with a population of over 5,000 people. It has a compact, walkable form, a strong sense of community and offers an excellent range of services and facilities.

3.6 Key characteristics of the local area include; high property prices, an economically active and generally older population, good levels of skills and qualifications, high levels of out-commuting (around 30% of workers travelling to Oxford) a low crime rate, generally good health and well-being, good air quality and good availability of public transport including bus and rail with Hanborough Station offering fast services to Oxford and London Paddington

The site boundary

3.7 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan includes an 'indicative' site boundary for the garden village, the intention being that the precise boundary will be firmed up through the AAP process. As part of the landscape evidence commissioned by the Council in support of the AAP, the Council has therefore sought specific advice on the site boundary.

3.8 The advice received is that the indicative boundary as proposed is logical along the eastern, southern and western boundaries but that the northern boundary could be pushed further north to ensure that the environmentally sensitive area north of City Farm can be properly protected and enhanced through the development of the garden village site.

3.9 We would welcome your thoughts on the principle of extending the northern boundary as part of this consultation.

Site description

3.10 The site comprises an area of generally open countryside, the majority of which is in agricultural use. It is characterised by a patchwork of fields, defined by well-established hedgerows, treelines, watercourses and public rights of way. There is some evidence of previous mineral working in parts of the site.

3.11 The landform is relatively generally flat but rises gently with subtle ridges and valleys from the eastern edge of the site, where it is 64m above sea level, to a high point of 85m in the vicinity of Acre Hill Farm in the western part of the site.

3.12 The high points are distinctive for their expansive panoramas, affording views, in particular, to the south east of the Thames Valley and Wytham Hill and Wood. St Peter and Paul's church tower can be seen from various vantage points across the site. Apart from this key landmark, views and visual connections to Eynsham are generally limited and tend to be in the immediate area of the A40.

3.13 Within the site there are a number of small parcels of development with a sporadic scattering of buildings mainly associated with farming (City Farm, Acre Hill Farm, New Wintles Farm and Evenlode Farm). In the eastern part of the site close to Lower Road, is a waste management site formerly occupied by David Einig operating an aggregate recycling business (now closed).

3.14 In the southern part of the site is an area of commercial development along the A40 including petrol station, convenience retail, car sales, hire and restoration. Nearby to the west and also adjoining the A40 is an area of community woodland (the Millennium Wood) which is owned by the Woodland Trust.

3.15 To the west of Cuckoo Lane is a small commercial depot and an electricity sub-station from which are overhead electricity cables serving the surrounding area. There are also telecommunication masts within the site. In the northern part of the site there are a number of residential properties at City Farm within a complex of Grade II listed buildings and structures.

3.16 Immediately adjoining the site to the north-west is Cuckoo Wood Farm, part of which is an established Travelling Showperson's site with 8 plots occupied (and planning permission for a further 6 plots).

3.17 Current access to and within the site is mainly through a network of existing public rights of way: the main routes run north-south, joining Eynsham with Freeland/Church Hanborough; a generally north-east/south-west route runs through the centre of the site. The various farmsteads through the area are served by vehicular access.

3.18 As it is predominantly undeveloped and Greenfield in nature, the site has a variety of intrinsic values, including for its biodiversity. Although there are no specific national designated sites of importance for biodiversity within the site, the existing woodland, trees and hedgerows provide valuable habitats and wildlife corridors, as does the farmland itself, especially for farmland birds, bats and badgers.

3.19 In the northern part of the site there is a brook which flows eastwards, joining the River Evenlode at Eynsham Mill. The brook and adjoining ponds and flood zone provides a wetland habitat. There are existing records of protected and notable species within the site.

3.20 City Farm is an organically managed farm and has been identified as being of European Importance for arable plants by Plantlife. While the most valuable areas lie to the north, outside the site boundary, there are threatened plant species within the site too. Also to the north of the site are a number of Local Wildlife Sites, identified as special for their lowland meadow habitat and arable fields, with nesting lapwing and skylark.

3.21 The present character and features of the site have been influenced by historic and archaeological processes. A preliminary desk-top study of the historic designations, and archaeological and cultural heritage information, shows that there are existing known archaeological and cultural heritage within and adjoining the site, as well as likely unknown resources of potential significance.

3.22 The wider site context is one of semi-enclosed, rolling farmland with occasional blocks and belts of woodland. This part of West Oxfordshire was once within the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood, and there are various patches of ancient woodland in the vicinity. The area now lies within the Wychwood Project Area (a project that aims to restore the Royal Hunting Forest's landscape character and mix of habitats). Some of the most significant change in the local landscape has largely been associated with the expansion of neighbouring villages during the 20th century and the realignment of local highways.

3.23 Travelling west from Oxford to Witney the character of the area through which the A40 passes is rural in nature, with the villages of Cassington and Eynsham and the hamlet of Barnard Gate being the main built-form seen. East of Cassington there is evidence of sand and gravel extraction and close to Barnard Gate is a solar farm but the predominant land use in the area is agriculture, with arable fields and some permanent pasture.

3.24 Eynsham, Church Hanborough and Cassington each have designated Conservation Areas. There are no Scheduled Monuments in close proximity to the site, the closest lying on the southern side of Eynsham. There are, however, listed buildings both within the area – at City Farm – and close by at Eynsham Mill to the east and Twelve Acre Farm (south of the A40), in addition to high concentrations of listed buildings in Eynsham, Church Hanborough and Cassington. Eynsham Hall Historic Park and Garden lies approximately a mile to the west of the site.

Key considerations for any future development proposals

3.25 Consultation and evidence gathering to date has highlighted a number of key considerations which need to be addressed through the AAP and any subsequent planning applications that come forward for the garden village.

3.26 These are briefly outlined below and expanded upon in later sections.

The A40

3.27 The traffic congestion problems associated with the A40 are well known and a key concern for many is the extent to which the garden village will suffer from and potentially exacerbate those problems. Linked to this issue are concerns about air quality.

3.28 The AAP therefore has an important role to play in setting out a clear and concise transport strategy building on Oxfordshire County Council's proposed short and long-term improvements to the A40 as well as proposed improvements to Hanborough Station.

Relationship to, and potential impact of the development on, Eynsham

3.29 The scale of development proposed at the garden village is seen by some as a threat to the character and community of nearby Eynsham. In particular there are concerns about the additional strain that will be put on local services and facilities and also more generally in terms of the relationship between the garden village and Eynsham, with many people wanting the garden village to play a 'complementary' rather than 'competing' role.

3.30 The AAP has an important role in terms of the amount, mix and distribution of different uses, the identification and timing of delivery of necessary supporting infrastructure and also how the two villages physically connect.

The importance of wildlife and plants

3.31 The garden village site is seen by many as being particularly precious in terms of wildlife and plantlife. City Farm is of particular importance for arable plants and land to the north of the garden village boundary is designated as a Local Wildlife Site. There are other local wildlife sites nearby along with some areas of ancient woodland. There are records of protected species within and near the site, and recent survey work has identified the presence of a medium-sized population of great crested newts.

3.32 Planning positively for biodiversity gain is a key aspect of garden community principles and the AAP has an important role to play in setting out how this will be achieved and any particular targets that will be applied.

Protecting mature trees and hedgerows

3.33 A striking feature of the garden village is the abundance of mature trees and hedgerows that exist within the site. These not only create biodiversity value but are an important part of the site's cultural heritage with many of the mature trees and hedgerows lining key routes and connections through the site such as the 'Salt Way' which runs broadly north-south from Eynsham to Freeland.

3.34 There is a keen local desire to protect and incorporate these established field boundaries and key routes and connections into the design and layout of the garden village wherever possible.

The need to protect good quality agricultural land

3.35 We know from survey work undertaken by the site promoter that there are pockets of high grade agricultural land within the garden village site. National policy requires consideration to be given to the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land and the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (as proposed to be modified by the examiner) states that development should seek to protect it unless demonstrably impractical.

3.36 In influencing the broad layout of development the AAP has a role to play in steering the more developed parts of the garden village towards agricultural land that is of lower quality and retaining where possible those parts of the site which are of the highest quality for example as open space.

Provision of green space

3.37 A key aspect of garden communities is the provision of green space and consultation to date has revealed widespread support for generous green space provision within the garden village as well as the need for good connections into the wider countryside.

3.38 We know that Eynsham doesn't have a great deal of open space and the garden village provides an opportunity to address that. The role of the AAP and supporting evidence base is to identify what types of green space are needed and work best in this location and where and how they should be delivered and maintained.

Opportunities for growing food locally

3.39 On a related note, there has been strong support to date for ensuring that development of the garden village provides opportunities for people to grow their own food. Nearby Eynsham has allotments but these are understood to be at capacity with a need for additional space. There is also a strong local movement promoting the concept of edible streets and spaces.

3.40 A number of groups at the design event held in May 2019 identified the potential for some sort of community farm within the garden village potentially linked with education opportunities.

Making sure the development is not at risk of flooding or increases the risk of flooding elsewhere

3.41 Whilst the vast majority of the site is outside of the floodplain and falls within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) a large number of people have expressed concerns about the potential impact of development on surface water run-off and also regarding the height of the water table with groundwater being close to the surface in some parts of the site.

3.42 It is vital that all possible sources of flooding are addressed including the potential consequences of climate change and drawing on supporting evidence, the AAP has a role to play in steering development to the lowest risk areas as well as identifying appropriate water management measures such as sustainable drainage systems.

The importance of climate change

3.43 The issue of climate change has long been discussed and debated but is now taking centre stage politically with the Government having recently committed to achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gases by 2050.

3.44 Many respondents have highlighted how important they feel it is for the garden village to effectively address the issue of climate change both in terms of mitigation and adaptation with many calling for zero carbon development and the use of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. The issue of climate change also relates to flood risk as outlined above.

3.45 The AAP has a key role to play in setting the standards required of developers at the garden village and the types of measures they will be expected to deploy in seeking to minimise the 'carbon footprint' of the development.

The topography of the site and landscape/visual impact

3.46 The garden village site is not flat, indeed it has a gently undulating topography which rises to a high point around Acre Hill Farm before falling away to the east and west with the flattest part of the site being along Lower Road.

3.47 High ground doesn't necessarily mean no development but it does require careful consideration in terms of the potential impact on long-distance views in particular. We have obtained specialist landscape advice and it will be for the AAP to stipulate the key parameters within which we would expect development to come forward; minimising the landscape and visual impact and maximising any opportunities for positive enhancements (e.g. the framing of key views).

Safeguarding heritage assets

3.48 This is an historically important site with a number of listed buildings at City Farm and in the north-west corner of the site, the suspected site of a deserted former medieval village known as 'Tilgarsley'. A number of the routes through the site such as the 'Salt Way' also have some historic and cultural importance.

3.49 We know from consultation to date that there is a keen local desire not only to protect these heritage assets but to enhance them where possible. For example, relatively little is currently known about Tilgarsley and development presents the opportunity to address this, both by discovering more about the site and then educating people about it and what would have been there when it was first settled.

3.50 Key routes across the site can be incorporated into the early concept and masterplanning of the development so that their value is maximised. The AAP can also ensure that the listed buildings at City Farm and their 'setting' are properly safeguarded e.g. through the separation of more 'intensive' forms of development to provide an appropriate buffer.

Housing affordability

3.51 West Oxfordshire is an expensive place to live and the Eynsham area has some of the highest property prices in the District. A recurring theme raised by respondents to date has been the need to provide 'genuinely affordable' housing to buy and rent. This is a key objective of the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan.

3.52 It is imperative that the AAP achieves a broad mix of property types and sizes at the garden village with a particular emphasis on affordability. The Local Plan stipulates a requirement for 50% of the homes to be affordable (subject to viability) but the AAP provides the opportunity to determine in more detail the types of affordable housing that should be provided.

Distinctive high quality design

3.53 West Oxfordshire District Council has a strong tradition of securing high quality design in new development and has for many years had in place a well-respected and well-used residential design guide.

3.54 A key issue raised through consultation so far is the need for imaginative, high-quality design at the garden village to achieve a standard of development that other schemes will aspire to. The AAP has a key role to play in setting the overall design standards/principles under which any subsequent and more detailed design code will need to come forward.

Social vibrancy and interaction

3.55 Another important issue raised to date has been the need to create places of interest within the garden village – not just having separate areas of housing and jobs but instead, interactive buildings and spaces that bring different people of different ages together at different times of the day.

3.56 Many recognise that high-density, mixed use development offers the potential to achieve this whilst ensuring generous green space across the site as a whole. We explore this concept further later on.

Community engagement, ownership and stewardship

3.57 Many people recognise that the garden village is a long-term project and that effective and ongoing community involvement is needed to achieve 'buy-in' with appropriate maintenance and stewardship arrangements also needing to be put in place to ensure the garden village is self-sustaining on a long-term basis with some ability to generate revenue income streams such as through the hiring out of community space and facilities.

3.58 Whilst it is not necessarily the role of the AAP to stipulate the nature of any such arrangements in detail, it can as a matter of principle, require appropriate arrangements to be put in place for the benefit of the local community – something that can then ultimately be secured via a legal agreement.

The inter-relationship with the West Eynsham SDA

3.59 A number of respondents have highlighted the importance of a co-ordinated approach to development at the garden village with the land west of Eynsham which is allocated for the development of around 1,000 homes.

3.60 Concerns have been raised about the cumulative effect of development on Eynsham and there is a desire to see the two areas planned and delivered in an integrated manner to minimise the disruption caused and to maximise the potential benefits.

3.61 The AAP and supporting evidence base – in particular the Eynsham Area Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) have a key role to play in respect of the timing of development, the supporting infrastructure requirements and the physical connections between the two sites and the surrounding area.

Part 2 – Vision and objectives – What will be achieved by 2031

4. Vision, core themes and objectives

Our Vision

4.1 Developing a new community from scratch is a first for West Oxfordshire and in taking the garden village forward, it is vital that we develop a shared vision of the sort of place we want it to be; how we want it to look, feel and function.

Draft Vision:

'By 2031, the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village will be established as a thriving and inclusive community, epitomising all that is good about West Oxfordshire but with its own strong and distinctive character, form and identity.

The Garden Village will be known for its emphasis on the environment, quality and innovation and will tackle the challenges presented by climate change 'head-on', providing a model example of how to plan a new community for the 21st century in a logical, organic and sustainable way. The perfect setting for wildlife and people to flourish together.

Those who live there will enjoy a healthy, high quality of life, with affordable, attractive and energy efficient homes set within leafy, walkable village neighbourhoods closely integrated with extensive green space including a new countryside park and supported by a range of facilities including schools, community space, leisure and recreation and local shopping opportunities.

Those who work there will be drawn by a broad range of exciting employment and training opportunities with high quality business space in an attractive rural setting, reliable and integrated public transport choices and 'future proofed' infrastructure including digital connectivity to enable and encourage high rates of home and remote working.

Those who visit will experience a strong sense of place, will be able to easily and safely find their way around, enjoy a broad range of different activities and opportunities and leave wanting to return time and time again'.

4.2 Set out above is a draft vision which we would welcome your feedback on. This has been developed having regard to a number of considerations including garden village principles, stakeholder engagement, technical evidence and relevant national and local policy.

4.3 In particular, we would welcome thoughts on whether it is sufficiently clear and conveys the sort of place you think the garden village should be by 2031[14].

[14] 2031 is the end date of the current adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2011 – 2031).

Core themes and objectives

4.4 In support of the draft vision, we have identified a series of core objectives which convey our main aims for the garden village development – what we are trying to achieve and why.

4.5 These objectives are grouped under seven core themes:

1. Building a strong, vibrant and sustainable community
2. Healthy place shaping
3. Protecting and enhancing environmental assets
4. Meeting current and future housing needs
5. Enterprise, innovation and productivity
6. Transport movement and connectivity
7. Climate change and resilience

4.6 Setting core objectives provides clarity and will also allow for meaningful monitoring of the scheme as it progresses further. It also helps to frame the structure and content of the AAP to ensure it is easily readable and understandable.

Building a strong, vibrant and sustainable community

4.7 As outlined earlier, creating a new community is an exciting first for West Oxfordshire but is not simple or straightforward. Successful and vibrant communities often evolve naturally over a considerable period of time in an organic and evolutionary manner. As such, they often include a broad mixture of different people and uses which helps to engender interest, vitality and inclusivity as well as instilling a good degree of longevity.

4.8 Replicating this through a planned new development is difficult and the AAP has a key role to play in setting the overall framework within which a successful and inclusive new community can be created.

4.9 We need to make sure from the outset that the garden village becomes a successful new community rather than just somewhere to live and work. It needs to be its own place in terms of character and identity but it also needs to 'make sense' in the West Oxfordshire context in terms of its relationship with nearby towns and villages such as Witney, Eynsham, Long Hanborough, Church Hanborough and Freeland.

4.10 It also needs to include an appropriate and broad mix of different uses, activities and occupants so that there is activity and interest throughout the day and so that people's everyday needs can be met without having to jump in a car to travel elsewhere.

4.11 Successful new developments also depend on having the right supporting infrastructure in place and at the right time, with timely provision of community facilities helping to generate an early and strong sense of community.

4.12 Above all, a successful community needs to have longevity and be able to support itself in perpetuity and as such, appropriate arrangements for the management, maintenance and stewardship of key assets such as community facilities and open space are vital.

4.13 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV1	To create a prosperous new rural service centre that forms part of a network of safe, inclusive, vibrant and well-connected market towns and villages.
GV2	To ensure that the planning and delivery of the garden village is informed by strong local vision and meaningful community engagement throughout.
GV3	To embed high quality and innovative design principles at all stages to create a new garden village that draws inspiration from West Oxfordshire's character and cultural heritage but interprets and reflects this through a strong and distinctive character, form and identity of its own.
GV4	To provide a mix of compatible uses, services and facilities at a scale that promotes activity, social interaction and inclusivity and meets people's everyday needs, complementing the role of nearby centres including Eynsham.
GV5	To ensure that the garden village is supported by timely investment in supporting infrastructure to promote social interaction and cohesion, minimise disruption to residents and ensure that existing services and facilities are not put under unreasonable strain.
GV6	To ensure that transparent and robust long-term maintenance and stewardship arrangements are put in place for the lifetime of the garden village in consultation with, and for the benefit of, the whole community.

Healthy place shaping

4.14 No single aspect of people's lives determines their health and wellbeing. Factors as varied as employment status, transport options, quality of housing and access to green space all affect people's health outcomes.

4.15 Healthy place shaping is about working together to create sustainable, well-designed communities where healthy behaviours are the norm and which provide a sense of belonging and safety, a sense of identity and a sense of community. Key elements include:

- Shaping the built environment, so people can easily access green spaces and are enabled to walk and cycle more and, in turn, feel part of a community.
- Working with local people and community groups, schools and businesses to support them in adopting healthier lifestyles.
- Developing local health and care services to deliver good local services.

4.16 The concept of healthy place shaping is entirely consistent with garden village principles which seek to ensure local employment opportunities, opportunities to grow food, well designed homes, walking and cycling, enhancements to the natural environment and vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.

4.17 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV7	To ensure that healthy place shaping principles are embedded into the design and development of the garden village from the outset and throughout its lifetime.
GV8	To promote healthy and active lifestyles through the provision of generous, high quality green space, safe and convenient opportunities for active travel, the provision of sports and recreational facilities and an integrated approach to the location of housing, economic uses and community/cultural facilities and services.
GV9	To adopt an integrated and inclusive approach towards the design, layout and mix of uses to promote social cohesion and address changing trends including increases in obesity, chronic diseases, the elderly population, cases of dementia and other mental health related issues.
GV10	To provide people with the opportunity to make healthier food choices, including growing and consuming their own healthy food locally.
GV11	To achieve a shift towards the 'prevention' of health related problems, whilst ensuring the provision of quality health care infrastructure and capacity to address those issues that cannot be prevented.
GV12	To deliver a healthy, safe and crime free environment with a high standard of amenity for all and bringing together the best of the urban and natural environment.

Protecting and enhancing environmental assets

4.18 The garden village site and its surrounding environs are environmentally valuable both in terms of the natural and historic environment. This has been a key issue raised through consultation to date.

4.19 The Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 2.5km to the east of the garden village site and consideration will therefore need to be given to any likely significant impacts, particularly air pollution and recreational pressure.

4.20 Within the site itself there are some pockets of high grade agricultural land with much of the northern part of the site identified as being of European importance for arable plants. The farmland has been under Higher Level Stewardship since 2010 and has been farmed organically with wildlife conservation as a high priority.

4.21 Two Local Wildlife Sites immediately to the north of the garden village have been designated for their exceptional number and abundance of arable wildflower species. The population size for some of the rare arable wildflowers is of county significance, including tens of thousands of Corn spurry and thousands of Annual knawel. There are also significant numbers of breeding lapwing and skylark.

4.22 The habitats on site comprise woodland, native hedgerows, mature trees, semi-improved grassland, improved grassland, wet grassland, arable field margins, ponds, stream and open mosaic habitats. A notable area of plantation broadleaved woodland is located at the centre of the southern boundary of the site, which is owned and managed by the Woodland Trust. There are also other areas of lowland mixed deciduous woodland priority habitat throughout the site, particularly along the northern boundary in association with the watercourse. All of the native hedgerows on site qualify as priority habitat. The most notable hedgerows are those around the unmanaged grassland areas to the north-western part of the site and those that run alongside the ancient footpath through the centre of the site from north to south. These hedgerows could also qualify as "important" under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

4.23 There are records of a number of protected species within and near the site. Ecological surveys are ongoing to inform a future outline planning application, but a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site has highlighted the potential for farmland birds (including ground-nesting species such as skylark), badgers, great crested newts and other amphibians, hedgehogs, bats, otters, water voles, reptiles, polecats, harvest mouse, brown hares and invertebrates (including black hairstreak butterfly). The farm buildings also have potential for use by roosting bats and nesting birds.

4.24 In terms of heritage assets, there are a number of listed buildings at City Farm and in the north-west corner of the site is the suspected site of the medieval deserted village of Tilgarsley. There are a number of historically important routes through the site, flanked by mature trees and hedgerows. There are also a number of landscape sensitivities in particular in respect of the more elevated parts of the site around Acre Hill and to the west of Cuckoo Lane.

4.25 These sorts of issues are not unusual for a Greenfield site of this scale, but it does not mean they should be glossed over, indeed the whole garden village concept requires the natural and historic environment to be a core consideration in planning and delivery.

4.26 From the outset, it is vital that all heritage and biodiversity sensitivities are identified and protected as much as possible and that positive opportunities for tangible enhancements are considered and brought forward as part of the design, development and delivery of the scheme.

4.27 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV13 To ensure that the natural and historic environment of the local area is reflected, respected and enhanced wherever possible through the design, development and delivery of the garden village.

GV14 To provide measurable net gains for biodiversity and enhancements to natural capital, including through the provision of a comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure.

GV15 To avoid harmful light and noise pollution on local amenity, landscape character and biodiversity conservation.

GV16 To ensure that any flood risk mitigation including surface water drainage is effective, does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and maximises the opportunity to deliver environmental benefits.

GV17 To ensure that development of the garden village seeks to minimise and properly mitigate any potentially harmful impacts on air, soil and water quality.

GV18 To fully address and capitalise on the constraints and opportunities presented by heritage assets including the listed buildings at City Farm and the suspected site of the former medieval village of Tilgarsley.

Meeting current and future housing needs

4.28 The garden village is expected to deliver around 2,200 new homes of which 50% will be affordable[15]. Boosting the supply of new homes is a key component of national and local policy and the AAP provides the opportunity to ensure that the right type and mix of homes are provided to meet identified needs.

4.29 To create a successful and sustainable new community, we need to ensure that there is a good balanced mix of different housing opportunities ranging from 1 and 2-bed properties suitable for smaller households and downsizers to larger 3 and 4+ bed properties for larger households including families.

4.30 We also need to ensure the provision of suitable housing to meet specifically identified needs such as the needs of older people, people with disabilities, local employers and those looking to build their own home.

[15] Subject to viability considerations – refer Policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

4.31 It is through the provision of a properly balanced mix of different housing opportunities that the garden village will succeed as a new community by helping to bring together different people from different backgrounds and at different stages of their lives.

4.32 In addition to the type and mix of new homes we need to think about the affordability and quality of new homes provided. Not only how much they are to buy or rent but also to run on a long-term basis.

4.33 We also need to think about the pace of delivery. One of the District Council's commitments in seeking garden village status was to accelerate the delivery of new homes as far as possible and the AAP provides a mechanism through which this can be achieved. An early 'critical mass' of new residents will also help to support the delivery of supporting infrastructure such as new community space.

4.34 The Garden Village presents opportunity in this area. To accelerate delivery, active promotion from within the Council and engagement with all stakeholders including those involved in the infrastructure would be required from an early stage, potentially pre-application, and with consideration to how the planning process can actively support this.

4.35 Building a successful community is not just about the short-term however and we also need to consider how homes are managed and maintained over the long-term to ensure the garden village remains a place to be proud of in say 100 or even 200 years' time.

4.36 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV19 To provide by 2031 around 2,200 new homes that are durable, attractive and sustainably constructed to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

GV20 To create a balanced and sustainable community through the provision of a diverse mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures, providing housing opportunities for all including those who are unable to rent or buy on the open market.

GV21 To seek to accelerate housing delivery as far as reasonably possible through new models and mechanisms and diversity of delivery partners, having regard to the timing of delivery of supporting infrastructure.

GV22 To ensure that appropriate arrangements are embedded into the development of the garden village in respect of the long-term maintenance and management of the housing stock.

Enterprise, innovation and productivity

4.37 The garden village site falls within the economically important eastern part of the District with a strong spatial relationship with Oxford and the wider Oxfordshire knowledge spine. The area is characterised by higher than average qualifications at degree level or higher, high rates of economic activity and a high proportion of workers in managerial or professional occupations. This is reflected in the presence of a number of key local employers including Siemens Magnet Technology and Polar Technology.

4.38 A priority of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) is to support the design and delivery of innovation districts in suitable locations across the county, comprising mixed use, high density developments providing space for innovative businesses of different sizes, an appropriate mix of housing for the local workforce, supporting facilities and services and a high quality built environment.

4.39 The garden village site is identified as a potential opportunity in this regard and it is also identified in the emerging Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) which highlights the garden village as being a key component of the county's 'innovation ecosystem'. The LIS also highlights the potential role of the garden village in developing new and innovative energy solutions to begin addressing the challenges faced by Oxfordshire's energy network.

4.40 Garden village principles include the provision of a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes as well as utilising the opportunities presented by zero-carbon and energy positive technology to ensure climate resilience.

4.41 The AAP has a key role to play in helping to ensure that the garden village is not a standard development that could be found anywhere, but rather that it pushes the boundaries in terms of what a truly sustainable new settlement built for the 21st century should be looking to achieve in respect of enterprise, innovation and productivity.

4.42 The Garden Village is ideally positioned to realise the potential of creating a significant amount of new business land in the form of a 'campus-style' science park to accommodate unmet demand within the science and technology sector. This is a unique opportunity to enable West Oxfordshire to fully compete within Oxfordshire's globally renowned knowledge economy. The District has historically lacked the supply of sites which are of a scale suitable to attract Science/ Research & Development activity and this science park will allow this trend to be reversed.

4.43 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV23 To make a positive and measurable contribution towards the overall growth, diversification and value of the district, county and sub-regional economies.

GV24 To fully capitalise on the area's economic potential and the strategic location of the garden village on the A40 corridor, through the creation of a campus style science park in line with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

GV25 To provide a balanced range of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of new homes, providing flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.

GV26 To support growth and productivity by enabling a high degree of enterprise and innovation.

GV27 To achieve high rates of home-working and telecommuting by providing the necessary supporting infrastructure and flexibility in building design.

GV28 To provide a range of education and training opportunities for local people to improve skills and 'work-readiness'.

Transport, movement and connectivity

4.44 A key issue raised through consultation to date is the potential impact that the garden village will have on the local transport network, in particular the A40 but also other key routes including the A4095, B4449 and the B4044 with the 'pinch point' that is created by the Swinford Toll Bridge.

4.45 Clearly, development of the scale proposed will create additional traffic, the impact of which will need to be managed and mitigated. Various factors including the amount, type and mix of development, the level of parking provided and the availability of opportunities for public transport and active travel[16] will all affect the number of additional trips being made to and from the site.

4.46 This will need to be considered through appropriate transport modelling and assessment as the proposals are worked up in more detail but the AAP has a key role to play in setting an overall transport strategy for the garden village which seeks to reduce the overall need to travel and in particular reduces the need to travel by car, by making public transport and active travel the more attractive, convenient and healthier alternatives. This is consistent with established garden village principles.

4.47 The site is well-placed to achieve this being in close proximity to Hanborough Station and also including within its boundary, Oxfordshire County Council's proposed Eynsham 'Park and Ride' which will enable convenient and rapid access into Oxford via bus priority measures.

4.48 The garden village site and its local environs also enjoy a comprehensive network of public rights of way including into nearby Eynsham as well as into the open countryside to the north and west. New and improved linkages will enable and encourage people to use active forms of travel, particularly for short journeys where the car might otherwise be used.

4.49 It is also important that we think long-term. Transport habits are already rapidly changing through increased use of technology such as electric vehicles, alternative fuels such as hydrogen, real-time information and the use of smart technology ranging from app-based services on demand to driverless vehicles.

4.50 As the garden village is a long-term project, we need to ensure through the AAP that the design, development and delivery of the scheme is suitably 'future-proofed' so that it is able to adapt and 'flex' as trends and technologies evolve.

[16] Walking, cycling, riding

4.51 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV29 To reduce the overall need to travel by providing a balanced and sustainable mix of uses within the garden village so that the majority of people's everyday needs are met locally.

GV30 To foster an environment in which active and healthy forms of travel (walking, cycling and riding) are the 'norm' based on the concept of 'walkable neighbourhoods' facilitating simple and sustainable access to jobs, education, and services.

GV31 To provide integrated, high quality and convenient public transport choices centred on the proposed Park and Ride, associated improvements to the A40 and future investment at Hanborough Station.

GV32 To provide safe and convenient connections to and across the garden village site and the wider area, in particular to Eynsham, Hanborough Station and the open countryside.

GV33 To make the most effective use of all available transport capacity through innovative management of the network.

GV34 To anticipate, reflect and capitalise on changing travel trends and habits including greater use of home-working and the move towards low carbon technologies as well as shared, connected and autonomous vehicles.

Climate change and resilience

4.52 Climate change is happening and it is incumbent upon us to ensure that new developments respond accordingly. Mitigating our impact on climate change and adapting to it, is a core aspect of national policy, reinforced by the UK Industrial Strategy and subsequent Clean Growth Strategy as well as the Government's recent commitment to achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gases by 2050.

4.53 More locally, the draft Oxfordshire Energy Strategy highlights not only the environmental benefits of 'clean growth' but also the economic benefits, with the potential for the low carbon economy to grow by 11% per year up to 2030 – four times faster than the projected growth of the economy as a whole.

4.54 Work already undertaken by the University of Oxford and the Low Carbon Hub in 2014 shows that, with the right policies in place, Oxfordshire could add a further £1.35 billion annually to the local economy and create over 11,000 new jobs by 2030, and in doing so, deliver emission reduction targets in line with local and national targets.

4.55 One of the core garden village principles is to use zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience. The AAP has a key role to play in helping to ensure that the garden village proposal fully addresses its potential impact on and susceptibility to, climate change. This includes the efficient use of land, energy efficiency, building design and orientation, the use of alternative more sustainable sources of energy, potential energy generation, the adaptability of buildings and measures to address potential increases in flood risk.

4.56 Our core objectives are as follows:

GV35 To embed flexibility, durability and resilience into the design and development of the garden village to allow for changing demographics, future growth and the impacts of climate change.

GV36 To ensure the efficient and prudent use and management of natural resources including the optimal use of land and buildings and the use of materials from sustainable sources.

GV37 To adopt an ambitious approach towards low and zero carbon energy - maximising opportunities to draw energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems.

GV38 To minimise the generation and impact of waste moving towards zero waste wherever possible.

Part 3 – The Strategy

5. Building a strong, vibrant and sustainable community

Core objectives:

GV1	To create a prosperous new rural service centre that forms part of a network of safe, inclusive, vibrant and well-connected market towns and villages.
GV2	To ensure that the planning and delivery of the garden village is informed by strong local vision and meaningful community engagement throughout.
GV3	To embed high quality and innovative design principles at all stages to create a new garden village that draws inspiration from West Oxfordshire's character and cultural heritage but interprets and reflects this through a strong and distinctive character, form and identity of its own.
GV4	To provide a mix of compatible uses, services and facilities at a scale that promotes activity, social interaction and inclusivity and meets people's everyday needs, complementing the role of nearby centres including Eynsham.
GV5	To ensure that the garden village is supported by timely investment in supporting infrastructure to promote social interaction and cohesion, minimise disruption to residents and ensure that existing services and facilities are not put under unreasonable strain.
GV6	To ensure that transparent and robust long-term maintenance and stewardship arrangements are put in place for the lifetime of the garden village in consultation with, and for the benefit of, the whole community.

Introduction

5.1 Fundamentally we want the garden village to become established as a successful, thriving and vibrant place with its own distinctive character and identity. It needs to 'stand on its own two feet' and be a successful community in its own right, playing a complementary, rather than competitive role in relation to nearby Eynsham. This has been a recurring theme raised through consultation to date.

5.2 This means thinking carefully about a number of issues including how people are engaged in the process of taking the site forward, the mix and design of different buildings and spaces and the opportunities they provide for activity and interaction throughout the day.

5.3 We also need to give consideration to the supporting infrastructure that will be needed to meet people's everyday needs such as schooling, health care, community facilities and open space and how those can be effectively managed and maintained in the long-term.

5.4 In this section we focus on some potential key development principles against which proposals at the garden village could be judged, the approach to be taken in respect of the amount, mix and potential distribution of different land uses across the site, the importance of achieving high standards of design, the provision of supporting infrastructure and long-term maintenance and stewardship.

Key Development Principles

5.5 In order to ensure a consistency of approach and to help deliver the garden village vision and objectives, we believe it would be helpful to identify a number of key development principles that any proposed development at the garden village will be expected to meet.

5.6 An example is given below and the intention is to refine this in finalising the AAP, taking account of the supporting evidence base and consultation feedback, seeking to capture in a concise manner, the key 'ingredients' which will ensure the garden village is a strong, vibrant and sustainable community.

Preferred Policy Approach 1 – Key Development Principles

To include within the AAP, a policy which sets out a number of key development principles which all development at the garden village will be expected to comply with.

For example – all development proposals at the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village must:

- **Be consistent with established garden village principles;[17]**
- **Demonstrate a positive and pro-active response to the challenges presented by climate change;**
- **Seek to foster a unique identity and 'sense of place';**
- **Push boundaries and ambitions in terms of the use of innovative and high quality design;**
- **Be forward looking in terms of the opportunities presented by changes in trends and technologies;**
- **Consider the inter-relationship with Eynsham, ensuring a complementary rather than competing role;**
- **Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability to address changing demographic, employment and other trends;**
- **Make the most efficient use of land including through the use of higher-density development in suitable, accessible locations;**
- **Seek to promote social cohesion and inclusivity including for example through the use of shared space and buildings;**
- **Be sustainable over the whole lifetime of the development, not just in the short-term**

Quantum and Mix of Uses

5.7 The Local Plan identifies the garden village as a strategic location for growth (SLG) and identifies an indicative boundary. It adopts a working assumption of about 2,200 homes together with about 40 hectares of business land, the provision of a new park and ride site, the provision of up to two primary schools and supporting transport infrastructure and other supporting facilities including green space and drainage.

5.8 The Local Plan essentially defers to the AAP to determine in more detail the precise quantum and mix of development that should come forward at the garden village. The whole site is around 215 hectares and it is for the AAP to help determine how the different uses across the site should be apportioned.

5.9 To do this, we consider that the AAP should include within it, a policy which essentially sets out the anticipated quantum and mix of different uses across the site. At this stage, discussions remain ongoing on various key factors including the most appropriate solutions for schooling, health care and open space provision. Work also remains ongoing to more fully understand the constraints presented by the site and the transport implications of development.

[17] As defined by the TCPA and also taking account of the key qualities identified in the Government's Garden Communities Prospectus (2018)

5.10 In light of this, at the current time we are unable to be precise about the exact amount of different uses that are likely to come forward at the garden village. It is also important that the AAP retains a degree of flexibility and is not overly prescriptive so as to unreasonably constrain any future planning applications that come forward.

5.11 Notwithstanding this, in terms of two of the main land uses; housing and employment, having regard to the emerging evidence to date, the Council remains of the opinion that the 'working assumption' of about 2,200 homes can be achieved on the site, particularly if higher densities are pursued in appropriate, accessible locations. It also considers that the business land can be delivered, albeit this is a longer-term proposition that will run beyond 2031.

5.12 Further evidence and analysis will help to confirm the level of housing and employment space in more detail together with clarity about the quantum of other supporting uses needed such as education and open space. These will be incorporated into the final submission draft AAP as appropriate.

Preferred Policy Approach 2 – Quantum and Mix of Uses

To include within the AAP, a policy setting out the overall, anticipated quantum and mix of different land uses across the garden village site.

At this stage to retain the working assumption of about 2,200 homes together with the provision of about 40 hectares of business land, recognising that a proportion of the latter will be delivered beyond 2031.

The quantum of other land uses to be confirmed in more detail having regard to further evidence including infrastructure planning and transport modelling.

Spatial Framework

5.13 In addition to helping determine the overall amount and mix of development at the garden village, the AAP has a key role to play in influencing how it is distributed across the site.

5.14 We anticipate that this will be in the form of an overall 'spatial framework' diagram which addresses a number of fundamental issues including for example proposed access and highway arrangements, key connections for pedestrians, cyclists and riders, the main areas of 'undeveloped' 'green' and 'blue' spaces as well as the main areas of 'built' development including housing, employment, education and other related uses.

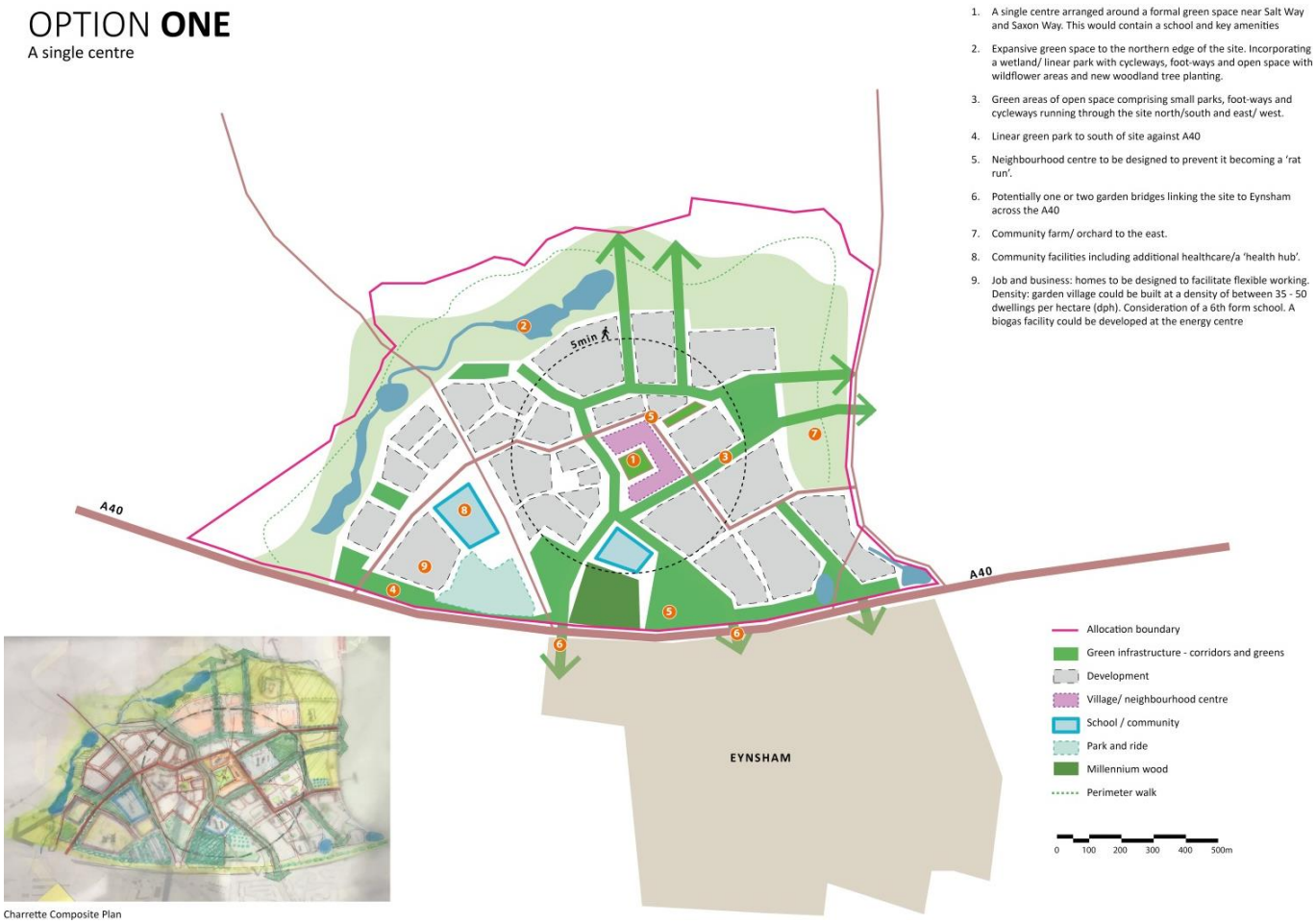
5.15 The intention is that the spatial framework will provide the local community with a degree of certainty and clarity about what is likely to be built and where, but will embed sufficient flexibility so as to not inhibit the more detailed masterplanning process undertaken by the site promoter.

5.16 To help inform the development of the spatial framework, a 3-day design event was held in May 2019 with a large number of different stakeholders taking part. A number of recurring themes were raised through the event including for example; the need to retain and enhance the important 'green corridors' running through the site, the importance of connectivity across the A40, the need to adequately safeguard key heritage assets such as the listed buildings at City Farm, the importance of climate change, the need for green space and access to the countryside, opportunities for growing and consuming food locally such as allotments and a community farm as well as the importance of safe connections to Hanborough Station.

5.17 Various groups undertook different exercises to understand how the disposition of different land uses across the site could help to achieve these and other objectives. A large number of annotated 'concept plans' were produced with a number of exciting ideas generated.

5.18 At the end of the design event, the various plans were brought together with the key elements distilled into three main options. These were fed back to those present and subsequently digitised.

5.19 The three options are shown below together with some supporting commentary.



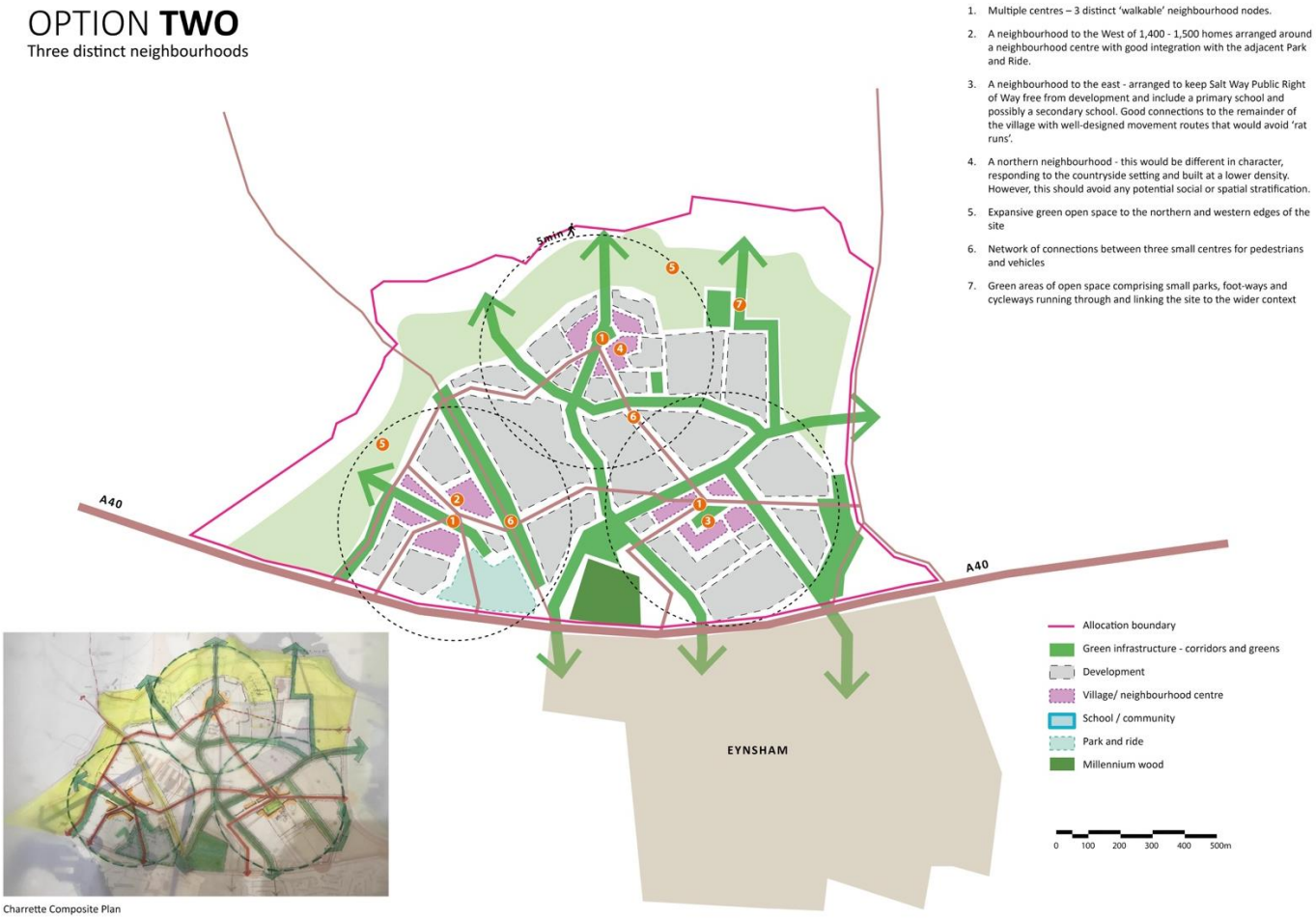
Charrette Composite Plan

Option 1 – A Single Centre

5.20 Option 1 is based around a single 'centre' – often referred to as a neighbourhood, district or local centre – located close to the centre of the site between Cuckoo Lane and Lower Road and including key amenities including a school.

5.21 The option envisages expansive green space along the northern edge of the site incorporating a wetland/linear park with footways and cycleways and open space with wildflower areas and new woodland tree planting. This would be supported by areas of green space running throughout the site including potentially a linear park along the southern edge of the site against the A40.

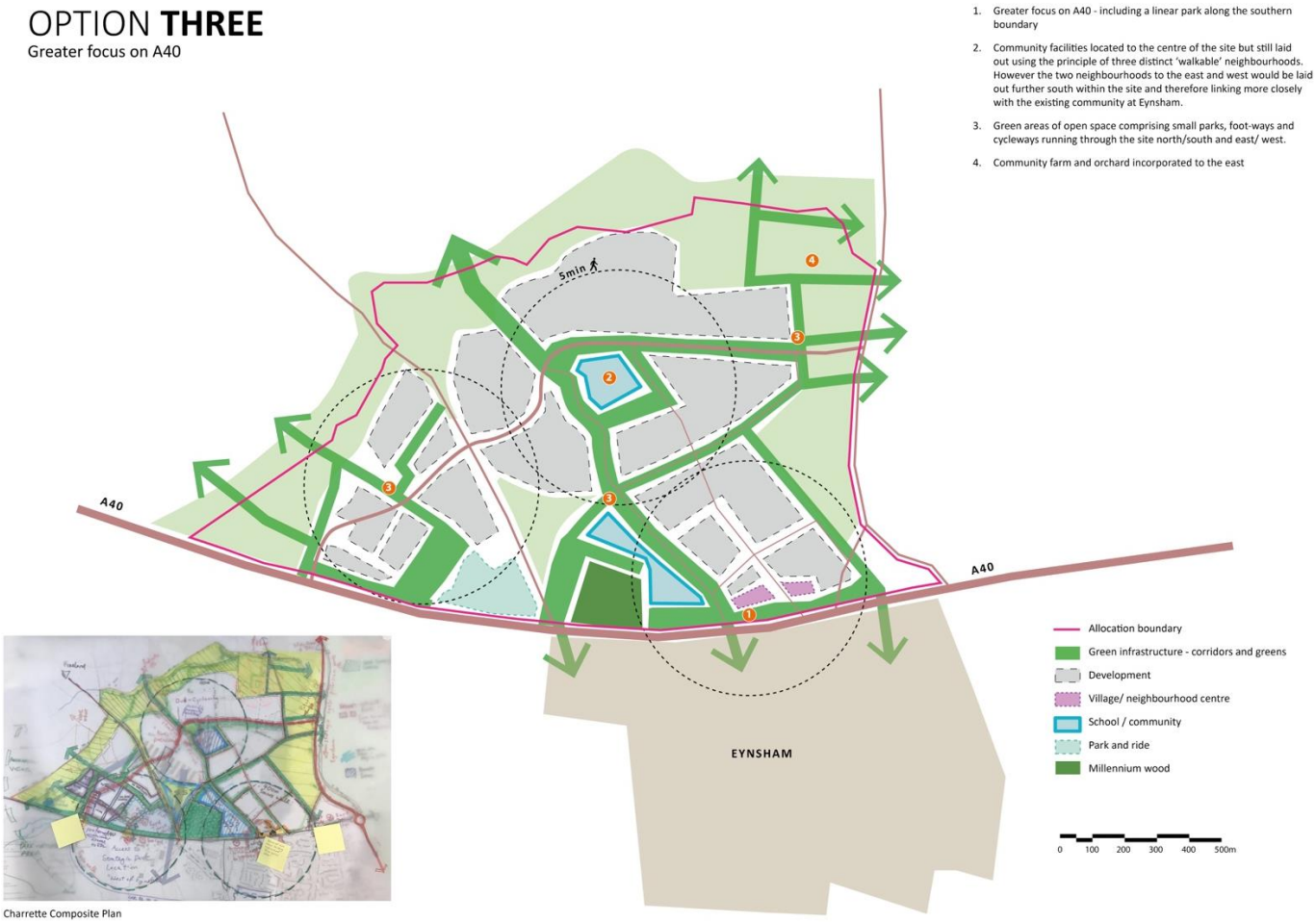
5.22 It also includes a potential community farm/orchard in the eastern part of the site. The principal areas of 'built development,' including residential, business and community space are shown either side of Cuckoo Lane with a primary access road running all the way from the A40 through the site and out onto Lower Road. Connections into Eynsham and into the open countryside are a key feature.



Option 2 – Three Distinct Neighbourhoods

5.23 The second option is based around three distinct, 'walkable' neighbourhoods including one in the western part of the site focused on a neighbourhood centre and integrated with the proposed park and ride and one in the east, keeping key routes including the salt way free from development and allowing for new education, with good connections to the remainder of the village and well-designed movement routes designed to avoid 'rat-running'. The third centre would be in the northern part of the site, with a different, lower density character, seeking to respond to the countryside setting to the north.

5.24 Again, expansive green space is incorporated including a linear park around the northern and western edges of the site together with areas of green space throughout and a network of connections between the three centres for pedestrians and vehicles. Connections into Eynsham and into the open countryside are a key feature.



Charrette Composite Plan

Option 3 – Greater Focus on the A40

5.25 The third option is similar to option 2 insofar as it is based on three distinct walkable neighbourhoods but it has a greater focus on the A40 including a linear park along the southern boundary. The eastern and western neighbourhoods are laid out further south than under option 2, with the intention that they would link more closely with the existing community at Eynsham.

5.26 As with the other options expansive green space is provided along the western and northern edge and also under this option along the eastern edge to Lower Road potentially incorporating a community farm/orchard. Connections into Eynsham and into the open countryside are a key feature.

<u>Preferred Policy Approach 3 – Spatial Framework</u>

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring development proposals at the garden village to be taken forward in accordance with an agreed spatial framework as set out within the AAP

The three spatial framework options identified at this stage to be further refined as appropriate in light of stakeholder feedback and technical evidence with a view to including one agreed option in the final pre-submission draft AAP.

Achieving High Quality Design

5.27 A recurring theme through consultation to date has been the need to ensure that the garden village is characterised by the highest possible standards of design with a number of people looking for development that draws on local character and identity, but avoids creating an unsatisfactory 'pastiche'.

5.28 West Oxfordshire District has a strong tradition of securing high quality design and has had in place for a number of years, a comprehensive and well-respected design guide to help inform the planning and design of new development ranging from one or two houses to hundreds or even thousands.

5.29 The need for high quality design is embedded in the Local Plan as one of the 5 main strands of the overall strategy and reflected in Policy OS4. The policy requires new development to respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality, contribute to local distinctiveness and, where possible, enhance the character and quality of the surroundings.

5.30 Specifically, development should:

- Demonstrate high quality, inclusive and sustainable design;
- Not harm the use or enjoyment of land and buildings nearby;
- Demonstrate resilience to future climate change;
- Conserve or enhance areas, buildings and features of historic, architectural and environmental significance; and
- Enhance local green infrastructure and biodiversity.

5.31 Building on these general requirements, we propose to work with the site promoter and key stakeholders to agree the most appropriate approach to securing suitably high and innovative standards of design at the garden village.

5.32 It is anticipated that this will include the use of a design review panel throughout all stages of the development including initial potential site layouts and arrangements through to more detailed arrangements of buildings and streets and ultimately through to the use of materials and colour palettes etc.

5.33 Ultimately, the development will be expected to comply with a design code submitted as part of any planning application, drawing on the overall principles set out within the Local Plan, AAP and Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan, as well as advice set out in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and other best practice.

Preferred Policy Approach 4 – High Quality Design

To include within the AAP, a policy which requires development at the garden village to demonstrate a high quality and innovative approach to design consistent with garden village principles and drawing on key references as appropriate including the Local Plan, the AAP, the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan as well as advice set out in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and other best practice.

The evolution of the scheme design from the early concept stage through to detailed consideration of building and street arrangements and materials to be subject to independent scrutiny through an appropriate mechanism such as a design review panel.

Any planning application will need to be supported and informed by a Design Code as appropriate.

The Provision of Supporting Infrastructure

5.34 It is essential that the development and delivery of the garden village is supported by appropriate investment in, and timely provision of, new and improved infrastructure in order to achieve a healthy, vibrant and sociable community. The term 'infrastructure' covers a wide range of services and facilities including roads and other transport facilities, flood defences, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, and open spaces.

5.35 Policy EW1 of the Local Plan has already identified a number of likely infrastructure requirements associated with the garden village including:

- the provision of a new park and ride site with associated bus priority;
- A40 improvements including essential supporting transport infrastructure such as the provision of appropriate public transport (services and infrastructure) serving the site;
- enhancements to Hanborough Station as a transport interchange;
- the provision of up to two primary schools on site together with financial contributions towards secondary school capacity as appropriate;
- provision of a comprehensive network for pedestrians and cyclists with good connectivity provided to the proposed Park & Ride, adjoining areas including Eynsham Village and including a particular emphasis on improving active travel routes to Hanborough Station;
- biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance;
- open space and green infrastructure networks;
- appropriate measures to mitigate flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage methods; and
- connection to the mains sewerage network which includes infrastructure upgrades where required including any necessary phasing arrangements;

5.36 As a matter of general principle, the Local Plan also requires the development of the garden village to be phased in accordance with the timing of provision of supporting infrastructure and facilities to enable a strong unique sense of place apparent from the first phases of development. This approach reflects the vision of the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan which envisages Eynsham and the Garden Village as discrete settlements that are independent of each other but should provide a mutually beneficial range of infrastructure and facilities.

5.37 Whilst a range of infrastructure is identified within the Local Plan 2031 as necessary to support the delivery of the Garden Village, it highlights transport, education and leisure as key areas of infrastructure which need to be considered. Consultation on the AAP to date has identified strong local concerns about the potential impact of planned development at Eynsham on these local services and facilities alongside potential impacts on health care provision.

5.38 We are committed to ensuring through the AAP that appropriate and timely provision of supporting infrastructure is made to support the development of the garden village. This will help to engender community cohesion from an early stage, accelerate the delivery of housing, minimise disruption to local residents and businesses and ensure that existing services and facilities are not put under undue pressure in terms of their available capacity.

5.39 To inform the AAP, the Council has commissioned independent advice in the form of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the Eynsham area. The purpose of the IDP is essentially to identify the infrastructure that is needed to support planned growth together with an understanding of where and when that infrastructure is likely to be required and proposals for co-ordinating and managing future delivery. The IDP will form part of the evidence base and will be considered as part of decision making process on subsequent planning applications.

5.40 The Stage 1 IDP report[18] identifies a defined study area and establishes the planned levels of growth in that area drawing on local plan allocations, planning permissions and potential 'windfall' development. It then considers various different categories of infrastructure including existing availability before using various standards (where available) to establish what the future requirements associated with planned growth might be for each category of infrastructure.

[18] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2007207/eynsham-area-idp-stage-1-report.pdf

5.41 Potential requirements identified include additional community meeting space, cultural/arts provision, outdoor sports provision e.g. pitches, allotments and community gardens and play space.

5.42 Further work is required to progress the IDP which is very much an iterative process. This will include engagement with key stakeholders as well as drawing on other evidence as it emerges – in particular the work being undertaken by consultants Wood on transport matters.

5.43 Issues currently being discussed include education provision and the most appropriate number and size of primary school/s provided at the garden village as well as the most appropriate approach for secondary education e.g. the provision of a satellite facility for Bartholomew School. Other issues being discussed include primary health care and how best to provide additional capacity, e.g. by extending the existing Eynsham medical practice or relocating it to a new site, together with discussions around the amount and type of open space and play space to be provided including the potential shared use of school facilities.

5.44 Because these discussions remain ongoing, at this stage we are unable to be specific about the exact 'infrastructure package' that is needed to support the delivery of the garden village.

5.45 Our proposed approach at this stage is therefore to include within the AAP a policy which requires any planning application submitted for the site to be supported by its own site specific Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) taking account of the requirements identified within the Eynsham Area IDP being prepared on behalf of the Council.

5.46 As further details of the infrastructure requirements associated with the garden village are established, these will be included within the IDP and AAP as appropriate to provide clarity to the local community.

Preferred Policy Approach 5 – Provision of Supporting Infrastructure

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring development at the garden village to be supported by appropriate and timely provision of supporting infrastructure, the details of which to be identified in a site-specific Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) having regard to the overall requirements identified in the Eynsham Area Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

A particular emphasis to be placed on the timing of provision with a view to promoting social interaction and cohesion, minimising disruption to residents and ensuring that existing services and facilities are not put under unreasonable strain.

Long-term maintenance and stewardship

5.47 We are committed to ensuring that the garden village is a place to be proud of and remains so for many years to come. Key to achieving this will be putting in place appropriately robust and transparent maintenance and stewardship arrangements. Stewardship is essentially about ensuring that assets are looked after properly in perpetuity and for the benefit of the community as a whole.

5.48 Consultation on the AAP so far has elicited strong support for putting in place effective maintenance and stewardship arrangements and we are committed to ensuring this is achieved through the AAP. Two particular areas of interest highlighted by respondents are green infrastructure and community facilities.

5.49 There is no single or 'right' solution to stewardship and maintenance and arrangements will vary from place to place and will depend on their function, the asset being managed and the types of financing needed. One of the key challenges of long-term maintenance and stewardship is the ability to support the management and operation of assets through consistent revenue streams.

5.50 There are various examples of stewardship bodies/arrangements including management companies, community land trusts, development trusts, community interest companies, industrial and provident societies, co-operative societies, housing associations/ registered social landlords, energy service companies and multi-utility companies.[19]

5.51 Drawing on examples from elsewhere, a number of potential options are currently being considered for the garden village. To ensure flexibility, these options are considered both individually and in combination.

Option 1 – Utilising existing organisations

5.52 An alternative option would be to utilise an existing local trust or organisation to manage and maintain community assets, typically applying their existing and/or preferred strategy. With an agreement in place, this approach makes use of existing local expertise and a 'tried and tested' plan. For example, in the case of the garden village, the Wychwood Project could potentially include it as part of their existing community led work and deliver and/or manage landscape enhancements and woodland elements across the site. Similarly, the Woodland Trust which manages the Millennium Wood has expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the garden village as it progresses.

5.53 A similar approach has been adopted at West Carclaze garden village where the developers of the site appointed the Wheal Martyn Trust, with its parent charity, South West Lakes Trust, to take the lead in managing the landscape and green space. Working with the community, the Wheal Martyn Trust established an advisory group to help set priorities and ensure delivery and sound management in the short- and long-term, resulting in a dedicated green strategy for the garden village.

Option 2 – Establishing a new Trust or Organisation

5.54 There are a number of examples of other garden communities where new trusts, charities or other organisations have been formed to lead the long-term maintenance and stewardship of community assets. The Bournville Village Trust is one of the longest-established housing associations in the UK and looks after properties in Bournville, a garden village founded in 1879.

5.55 At Tresham Garden Village, guidance requires that assets generated by the development will be managed on behalf of the community in perpetuity by a Tresham Garden Village Trust. The Trust will act as a regulatory body in addition to having a stewardship role with strong community presence made possible via a Trust office based in the village. Early on in the development this will take the form of a temporary space until more permanent premises are developed in the main village centre.

5.56 More locally, in Cotswold District, the Council have worked with the Bathurst Estate to establish a charitable limited company (a trust) in the form of a Community Management Organisation (CMO) to manage the long term stewardship of community assets at the Chesterton strategic housing site (2,500 homes) on the edge of Cirencester. The Council is working in partnership with Bathurst Development Ltd, Cirencester Town Council and others to set up the CMO Board of Trustees and Management Group.

5.57 As various options are still under consideration in relation to the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village, it would be inappropriate for the AAP to specify one particular approach at this stage. Indeed, it may be that a combination of options is the most appropriate way forward and further work is needed to determine how to proceed.

[19] For further information see TCPA guide 9 – https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=6326f215-8260-47d6-998d-f0e76aef09fd

5.58 However, it is considered appropriate at this stage to introduce through the AAP, a general requirement for any planning application relating to the garden village to be supported by a Community Management and Maintenance Plan (CMMP). This would be required to specifically address the long-term maintenance and stewardship of community facilities, key infrastructure, green infrastructure (including areas for biodiversity), public open space and public realm across the whole site.

5.59 An example of this is The Garden Village at Handforth, guidance for which stipulates a requirement to submit a Community Management and Maintenance Plan (CMMP) as part of any planning application, to ensure that an effective management structure is established from the outset and that the highest quality maintenance is applied consistently across the site.

5.60 The CMMP further requires that:

- A local management organisation is included in the overall control and responsibility for the site-wide delivery, on-going management and maintenance of community assets;
- The site-wide CMMP is adequately funded in perpetuity by financial contributions, initially secured through planning obligations; and
- Any freestanding planning applications should be supported by CMMPs and the Council expects they will be aligned with the approved site-wide CMMP (above). If approved, the CMMPs should be implemented in perpetuity.

5.61 A similar model is also used at Welborne's new garden community. In this case, the developer is expected to include a fully costed maintenance schedule and management plan that clearly sets out how and when work is completed, how it will be maintained in perpetuity, and who will ultimately adopt and have responsibility for managing and maintaining different assets.

5.62 Our preferred approach is therefore to include within the AAP, a policy requirement for appropriate stewardship and maintenance arrangements to be put in place including a requirement for any planning application to be supported by a Community Management and Maintenance Plan (CMMP).

Preferred Policy Approach 6 – Long-term maintenance and stewardship

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring robust, cost effective, transparent maintenance and stewardship arrangements to be put in place in respect of key assets within the garden village, including appropriate financing arrangements and management responsibilities in perpetuity.

Suitable options to be fully considered through the submission of a Community Management and Maintenance Plan (CMMP) which will be required in support of any planning application.

To include consideration of appropriate governance arrangements and demonstrate flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances throughout the life of the development phase and beyond.

6. Healthy place shaping

Core objectives:

GV7 To ensure that healthy place shaping principles are embedded into the design and development of the garden village from the outset and throughout its lifetime.

GV8 To promote healthy and active lifestyles through the provision of generous, high quality green space, safe and convenient opportunities for active travel, the provision of sports and recreational facilities and an integrated approach to the location of housing, economic uses and community/cultural facilities and services.

GV9 To adopt an integrated and inclusive approach towards the design, layout and mix of uses to promote social cohesion and address changing trends including increases in obesity, chronic diseases, the elderly population, cases of dementia and other mental health related issues.

GV10 To provide people with the opportunity to make healthier food choices, including growing and consuming their own healthy food locally.

GV11 To achieve a shift towards the 'prevention' of health related problems, whilst ensuring the provision of quality health care infrastructure and capacity to address those issues that cannot be prevented.

GV12 To deliver a healthy, safe and crime free environment with a high standard of amenity for all and bringing together the best of the urban

Introduction

6.1 An important requirement of the garden village is that it creates a beautiful, healthy and sociable community[20]. This is consistent with national policy which emphasises the role of the planning system in achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles[21].

6.2 A lot of the feedback we have received to date has focused on health and wellbeing matters, particularly the importance of having a wide range of community infrastructure, from built facilities through to the provision of community allotments, gardens, orchards and open spaces.

6.3 In this section we focus on the principles of healthy place shaping, social integration and inclusion, healthy active play and leisure, green infrastructure (GI) and enabling healthy food choices.

What is healthy place shaping?

6.4 There is a growing movement in Oxfordshire, particularly through the Growth Deal and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, to embed healthy place shaping in the planning process, especially in light of emerging evidence from local and national experience of Healthy New Towns, including the initiatives at Barton and Bicester Healthy New Towns. These suggest that the built environment, transport and housing have a profound impact on health.

Figure 6.1 – Social determinants of health

[20] https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles

[21] National Policy Planning Framework, Paragraph 91

6.5 Through healthy place-shaping there is the opportunity to create a healthy and thriving sustainable place where well-designed communities empower individuals, communities and organisations to make healthier choices and create a sense of belonging and safety, a sense of identity and a sense of community.

6.6 In summary, healthy place making involves:

- Shaping the built environment, so people can easily access green spaces and are enabled to walk and cycle more.
- Working with local people and community groups, schools and businesses to support them in adopting healthier lifestyles.
- Developing local health and care services to deliver good local services.

6.7 The early provision of health promoting infrastructure, such as community facilities, green spaces and safe and legible walking and cycling routes, has been shown to be important in influencing and establishing positive behaviour and healthier life-style habits.

6.8 Consultation responses to the Issues Paper showed support for such infrastructure to be in place as early as possible, or ideally prior to new residents arriving. One response succinctly explained: 'Once habits are established, newcomers tend to absorb them as cultural norms.'

6.9 As part of the work on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, consideration is being given to devising countywide healthy place shaping standards. Currently, there are existing standards, such as the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit's (HUDU) standards, which could be adopted for Oxfordshire.

6.10 These have the advantage of having already been used at Barton and Bicester and having been endorsed by the NHS. As an alternative and until a final decision has been agreed on the Oxfordshire approach, the ten key healthy place shaping principles associated with (HUDU) could be used to guide the development of the garden village.

6.11 These include:

1. Working with people to co-produce communities which people value because they have character and a local distinctiveness, which are attractive places to live and work, which promote a sense of identity, and where people feel safe and comfortable.
2. Improving health and wellbeing and enable independence, reduce health inequalities and facilitate social interaction where people can meet to create healthy, inclusive and safe communities.
3. Enabling inclusive social, environmental and economic growth which supports local employment and other meaningful activity.
4. Ensuring the protection, enhancement and expansion of the natural, built and historic environment.
5. Mitigating and adapting to climate change and using a catchment based approach to water management.
6. Providing and ensuring access to infrastructure that enables people to be active, which encourages active modes of travel and which does not add to congestion
7. Ensuring easy access to infrastructure, facilities and services to enable people to live and age well and which provide early opportunities for people to meet and connect with one another.
8. Maintaining, enhancing and expanding easy access to green spaces and nature to deliver multiple benefits for people, place and the environment.
9. Minimising energy demand and maximising the use of renewable energy, where viable meeting all demands for heat and power without increasing carbon emissions.
10. Providing diversity in the residential offer that improves accessibility, affordability and promotes inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods.

6.12 An alternative 'ten principles' is emerging from the lessons learnt from the Healthy New Towns Programme[22]. Further guidance is expected later this year. As these are based on the creation of new communities they may be more appropriate for the OCGV.

[22] 'A route to healthy places' NHS: Putting Health into Place, 2018

6.13 These are:

1. Plan ahead collectively;
2. Plan integrated health services that meet local needs;
3. Connect, involve and empower people and communities;
4. Create compact neighbourhoods;
5. Maximise active travel;
6. Inspire and enable healthy eating;
7. Foster health in homes and buildings;
8. Enable healthy play and leisure;
9. Provide health services that help people stay well;
10. Create integrated health centres;

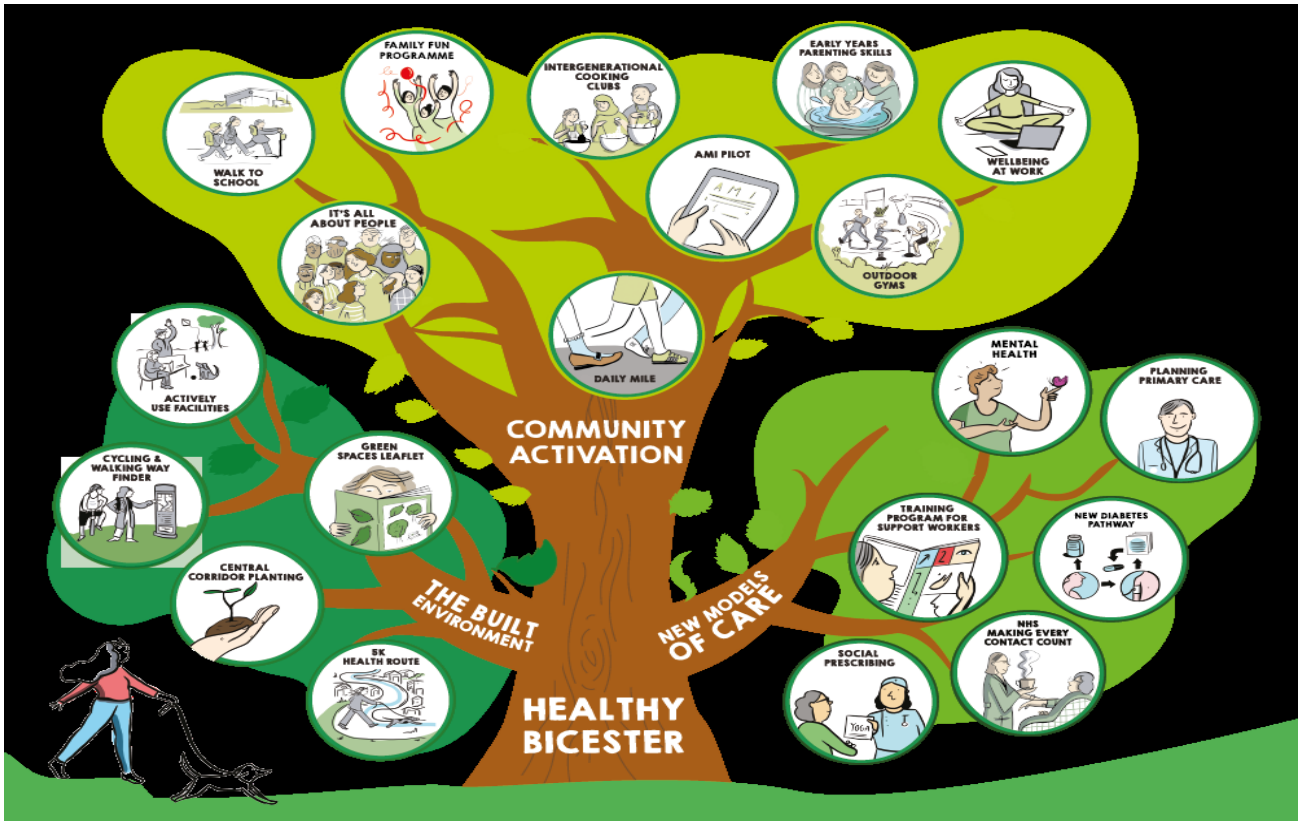
6.14 These ten principles could be integrated with the following checklist of advice which has been provided by Oxfordshire Public Health for new and existing developments:

- Be socially inclusive, welcoming and accessible to all sections of our community.
- Provide safe and welcoming public places where people can meet.
- Encourage physical activity and good access to public transport.
- Incorporate good access to high quality green and blue public spaces e.g. parks and community gardens that people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy.
- Improve access to healthy affordable food.
- Be designed to help reduce crime.
- Provide good quality homes using lifetime home principles and affordable housing.
- Provide good access to employment, retail and community facilities and health services which can ideally be accessed by walking or cycling.
- Minimise the impact of climate change and minimise air, water and noise pollution.
- Foster strong social connections and a sense of belonging and link new and existing communities effectively.

6.15 Each set of principles shows how planning for health is intimately connected with a wide range of other issues and objectives, allowing multiple benefits to be achieved if planned for early in the design and development process.

6.16 A further option would be to devise health place shaping principles and guidelines specifically for the OCGV as part of the AAP, in consultation with and in response to stakeholder and public involvement.

Figure 6.2 – Healthy Bicester



Health Impact Assessment (HIAs)

6.17 HIA is a process that helps evaluate the potential health effects of a plan, project, or policy before it is built or implemented. They are increasingly seen as a useful tool for ensuring that health and wellbeing are properly considered within development proposals. Notably, the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan requires that an HIA is undertaken as part of any masterplan process.

6.18 An HIA will produce a set of evidence-based recommendations, following the systematic consideration of how development can address health impacts and promote good health. An HIA is being undertaken for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

6.19 The consultants commissioned by the Oxfordshire Authorities to produce the HIA are also producing an agreed HIA proforma and methodology to be applied to local plans and major developments in the county so as to ensure a consistent approach. Developers of the Garden Village will be required to submit an HIA with any planning application.

Preferred Policy Approach 7 – Adopting Healthy Place Shaping Principles

To include within the AAP, a requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to embed key principles of healthy place shaping to be agreed in consultation with key stakeholders through the AAP process.

To include a particular focus on creating a health-promoting environment where healthy day-to-day behaviours are encouraged as the 'norm' and local services, facilities and community networks are supported to sustain health, social and cultural wellbeing.

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required to accompany any planning application for major development at the garden village, aligned with the emerging Oxfordshire HIA proforma and methodology.

Social integration and inclusion

6.20 In creating a new place it is essential that those living and working there feel part of a strong, vibrant, connected and inclusive community. We need to deliver an environment that achieves good mental health and wellbeing by reducing social isolation and loneliness and encouraging opportunities for social interaction.

6.21 A Government Study, published in 2018, highlights how important it is to achieve social interaction and inclusion. 'Feeling lonely often is linked to early deaths – on a par with smoking or obesity. It's also linked to increased risk of coronary heart disease and stroke; depression, cognitive decline and an increased risk of Alzheimer's. It's estimated that between 5% and 18% of UK adults feel lonely often or always[23].

6.22 In Oxfordshire, the Public Health team, explain that loneliness can be as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and that lonely individuals are more likely to visit their GP, have higher use of medication, higher incidence of falls and increased risk factors for long term health care.

6.23 It is essential, therefore, that the social connections, sense of belonging and community spirit that already exists in nearby villages are fostered within the garden village. The emphasis must be on 'place-making', i.e. not just developing buildings and spaces but the human interactions within them too. This has been a recurring theme raised by a number of respondents through consultation to date.

6.24 There was unanimous support at the 'issues' stage in 2018 for the provision of shared accessible buildings, spaces and facilities to promote social interaction between different groups and engender community spirit and cohesion.

[23] A connected society - a strategy for tackling loneliness, 2018

6.25 Many of the existing residents of Eynsham, and members of its numerous clubs and organisations, emphasise the experience and expertise they can share with new garden village residents to encourage the formation of a vibrant community. These include ideas on:

- Inclusion of parks with interesting features that encourage social interaction, such as outdoor table tennis, games/puzzles etched into the ground and ample comfortable park benches close to each other so people can talk
- Community notice boards, where people can advertise locally
- Spaces for local classes and clubs that people can join to meet like-minded, as well as baby/toddler groups for new parents to meet each other
- Spaces for home workers to meet and interact

6.26 Many suggestions were also made about the benefit of bringing together different but complementary land uses and activities and different generations to help create healthy communities and mitigate against issues of isolation and loneliness, such as:

- Provision for early years education sited near to residential and extra-care homes for the elderly as communication and joint activity has been shown to be beneficial for both age groups;
- Home workers' meeting space to help local networking and increase the likelihood that these businesses will use each other's services and promote them to others;
- The early delivery of schools to provide not only a key local service but also to act as an important community 'hub' for social inclusion and cohesion;
- A supervised 'workshop' for teenagers with provision for retired 'helpers' to benefit both age groups;

6.27 New communities often appoint community development workers to liaise with new occupants and organise community-based events. Consultation comments support such an approach for the OCGV, giving examples of how community development workers have been shown to improve the integration of new residents to a new community, can assist community development for the new village and also integration with the existing community, and can foster inclusion, particularly of marginalised groups like children and young people.

6.28 NHS England emphasise the need and benefits of achieving more extensive involvement in the community development through empowering and supporting people and communities which can, in turn, lead to an enhanced sense of connection. For example, enabling residents to share information, time and resources in a way that uses people's skills and knowledge to benefit their community can improve quality of life.

6.29 By having an emphasis on mixed-use development, there will be increased interest, diversity and activity which will; attract various people at different times of day and night, contribute to vibrancy and active frontages and help to reduce the need to travel by creating the opportunity for linked-trips.

6.30 This is reflected in Objective ENV 3 of the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan which explains that, *'Eynsham is successful as a community because it is compact and people can access schools, employment and other facilities without the use of a private car. New developments shall maintain this compact and well connected feature of the village.'*

6.31 Connectivity by the creation and promotion of active travel, such as walking and cycling, along safe, clear, convenient and permeable routes and networks, is a key component for creating a healthy community. These need to be augmented with appropriate infrastructure, e.g. clear signposting, seating, cycle-parking and the use of digital technology.

6.32 Similarly, the provision of other components of the public realm, for example, durable high quality public space for a range of civic, cultural and community functions, and well-designed 'healthy streets'/'living streets', all support social interaction[24]. The Royal Town Planning Institute has researched and published valuable guidance on how to create dementia-friendly spaces (Dementia and Town Planning), buildings and communities. Oxfordshire County Council is currently producing a Street Design Guide (which will provide guidance on a range of issues, including, 'movement and place-making', 'promoting sustainable, active travel, 'creating a sense of place' and 'providing high quality streets for all users').

6.33 Ensuring people feel safe in both the public and private realm also contributes to quality of life and community cohesion and crime and the fear of crime need to be considered from the outset. Crime Prevention Design Advisors can help in identifying opportunities for designing out crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Thames Valley Police provides useful advice based around 'Seven attributes of safer places':

- Access and movement
- Structure
- Surveillance
- Ownership
- Physical Protection
- Activity
- Management and maintenance

Preferred Policy Approach 8 – Social Integration and Inclusion

To include within the AAP, a requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to maximise opportunities for social interaction and inclusion.

An emphasis on mixed-use development in appropriate, sustainable locations (e.g. within any neighbourhood centres) with a particular focus on the provision of shared, accessible buildings, spaces and facilities to promote inter-generational activities and interests.

Opportunities to reduce the incidence and fear of crime to be identified and addressed in consultation with key stakeholders including Thames Valley Police.

Early stage development of the garden village to be supported by a Community Development Officer, secured and funded as appropriate through a planning condition or legal agreement.

Providing opportunities for healthy active play and leisure

6.34 Public Health England have an objective to get 'everyone active, every day'. Their findings show that around one in two women and a third of men in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity. In Oxfordshire almost 20% of the adult population are physically inactive (undertaking less than 30 minutes per week) and 79% of children and young people don't meet Chief Medical Officer guidelines of 60 minutes of activity per day.

6.35 In his Annual Report in 2018, the Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire sets out the need to 'get health into planning' and emphasises how exercise makes people feel good both mentally and physically and makes us more resilient to the stresses and strains of life. It also protects against anxiety, depression, heart disease, stroke, cancer and dementia and can reduce the threat of obesity (and thus reduce the demand on healthcare).

6.36 Leisure time and activity are vital to good health and wellbeing and the Garden Village must create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to be active and enjoy leisure time individually and collectively.

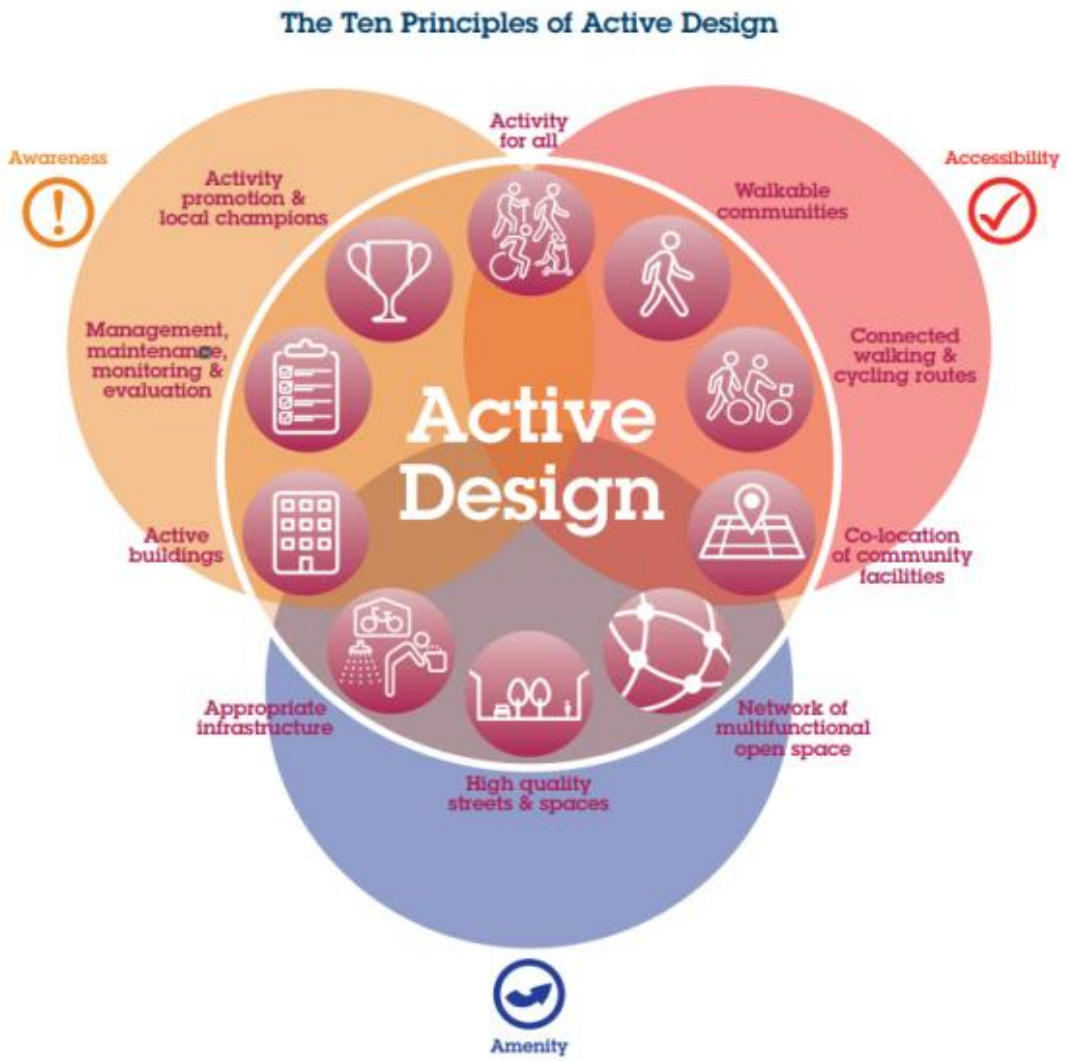
[24] Refer to Local Plan Policy EH4 on public realm and green infrastructure

6.37 Consultation responses to date highlight the importance people give to such issues. Large numbers of suggestions were put forward on the types of social and community infrastructure that should be provided, with many referring to: good quality, multi-functional open space; accessible, safe play space for all ages; flexible, mixed use leisure and recreation facilities for use by the whole community which complement the existing nearby facilities. Policy ENP3 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan on community facilities is also relevant.

6.38 Traditionally, when designing new areas of development, the focus has tended to be on providing space and facilities for more formal play and recreation, such as leisure centres, playing fields and children's play space, often through the use of national or local prescribed standards.

6.39 While the provision of such facilities continues to be important[25], the garden village should be designed to encourage 'activity' in its widest sense and into our everyday lives. Sport England, in recognition that sport isn't for everyone, has joined forces with Public Health England to produce guidance on Active Design[26].

6.40 The guidance on Active Design aims to promote sport and active lifestyles and to get more people moving. There are 10 design principles. These could be adopted for use in designing the garden village or could be used to inform more bespoke guidance and principles.



[25] Refer to Local Plan Policy EH5 on sport, recreation and children's play

[26] Active Design, 2015

6.41 The active design principles are:

1. Activity for all

Neighbourhoods, facilities and open spaces should be accessible to all users and should support sport and physical activity across all ages.

Enabling those who want to be active, whilst encouraging those who are inactive to become active.

2. Walkable communities

Homes, schools, shops, community facilities, workplaces, open spaces and sports facilities should be within easy reach of each other.

Creating the conditions for active travel between all locations.

3. Connected walking & cycling routes

All destinations should be connected by a direct, legible and integrated network of walking and cycling routes. Routes must be safe, well lit, overlooked,welcoming, well-maintained, durable and clearly signposted. Active travel (walking and cycling) should be prioritised over other modes of transport.

Prioritising active travel through safe, integrated walking and cycling routes.

4. Co-location of community facilities

The co-location and concentration of retail, community and associated uses to support linked trips should be promoted. A mix of land uses and activities should be promoted that avoid the uniform zoning of large areas to single uses.

Creating multiple reasons to visit a destination, minimising the number and length of trips and increasing the awareness and convenience of opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity.

5. Network of multifunctional open space

A network of multifunctional open space should be created across all communities to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play plus other landscape features including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), woodland, wildlife habitat and productive landscapes (allotments, orchards). Facilities for sport, recreation and play should be of an appropriate scale and positioned in prominent locations.

Providing multifunctional spaces opens up opportunities for sport and physical activity and has numerous wider benefits opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity.

6. High quality streets and spaces

Flexible and durable high quality streets and public spaces should be promoted, employing high quality durable materials, street furniture and signage.

Well-designed streets and spaces support and sustain a broader variety of users and community activities.

7. Appropriate infrastructure

Supporting infrastructure to enable sport and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate all forms of activity.

Providing and facilitating access to facilities and other infrastructure to enable all members of society to take part in sport and physical activity.

8. Active buildings

The internal and external layout, design and use of buildings should promote opportunities for physical activity.

Providing opportunities for activity inside and around buildings.

9. Management, maintenance, monitoring & evaluation

The management, long-term maintenance and viability of sports facilities and public spaces should be considered in their design. Monitoring and evaluation should be used to assess the success of Active Design initiatives and to inform future directions to maximise activity outcomes from design interventions.

A high standard of management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure the long-term desired functionality of all spaces.

10. Activity promotion & local champions

Promoting the importance of participation in sport and physical activity as a means of improving health and wellbeing should be supported. Health promotion measures and local champions should be supported to inspire participation in sport and physical activity across neighbourhoods, workplaces and facilities.

Physical measures need to be matched by community and stakeholder ambition, leadership and engagement.

6.42 Further guidance can be taken from Play England's '10 Play Design Principles'[27] which suggest that successful play spaces:

1. are designed for their site
2. are well-located
3. make use of natural elements
4. provide a wide range of play opportunities
5. are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
6. meet community needs
7. can be used flexibly
8. build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
9. are sustainable and appropriately maintained; and
10. allow for change and evolution

Policy Approach 9 – Providing Opportunities for Healthy Active Play and Leisure

To include within the AAP, a policy requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to maximise opportunities for healthy active play and leisure.

Development to accord with either Sport England's Active Design Principles or bespoke principles devised specifically for the garden village.

Also to include a requirement for development to be supported by a strategy for play based on Play England's 'Design Principles for Successful Play'.

Green Infrastructure

6.43 Green Infrastructure covers a broad network of green spaces and features such as nature reserves, designated sites, recreational grounds, parks and open spaces, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and many other green areas such as woodlands and even street trees. The 'blue infrastructure' network is interwoven within the green infrastructure network and it can include streams, rivers, canals and other water bodies. Green infrastructure is defined within the NPPF as a network of multi-functional green space in both urban and rural settings and it fulfils a wide variety of environmental, social and economic functions.

6.44 Not only does green infrastructure play a critical role in adapting to and mitigating climate change, it is also a vital element in the creation of healthy communities. There is a growing body of evidence that demonstrates the positive and measureable impacts this has on health and wellbeing, both physically and mentally. It also encourages active travel, community cohesion, improved air quality and reduced noise pollution.

[27] http://www.playengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/10-Play-Design-Principles.pdf

6.45 Policy EH4 'public realm and green infrastructure' within the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 requires new developments to (amongst other things) provide networks for walking and cycling within the built up area and connecting these to the countryside, maximise opportunities for urban greening and make improvements to the District's multi-functional network of green infrastructure and open space.

6.46 Green infrastructure is highly relevant to the Garden Village principles, in particular 'development that enhances the natural environment, providing comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy positive technology to ensure climate resilience'.

6.47 The opportunity to improve GI has been recognised within the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (Draft Policy ENP4) which requires new developments to integrate all aspects of design, connectivity and the natural environment with consideration given to the setting of new development and the relationship between village and countryside.

6.48 Eynsham to the south of the Garden Village currently has relatively limited provision of accessible open space, with most concentrated to the south and east, or associated with schools. There is potential to significantly increase the amount and range of accessible open spaces through the development of the garden village with a combination of semi-natural woodland and meadows, green corridors, event space, sports pitches and growing spaces. Good connections between the Garden Village and Eynsham will increase accessible open space benefits to the existing community, providing a range of opportunities for people to take part in active outdoor recreation.

6.49 Consultation responses to date show significant support for green infrastructure provision but there are a variety of opinions on the level of detail that should be included within the AAP. A wide range of issues, aspirations and opportunities have been raised, reflecting the multiple functions that green infrastructure can and should perform. A recurring theme is the importance of green infrastructure in building a community, including achieving integration and meaningful connections (of more than just 'corridors').

Green Infrastructure strategy for the Garden Village

6.50 Given the importance and significance of Green Infrastructure in shaping the Garden Village, LUC have been commissioned to complete a Green Infrastructure Study for the OCGV and West Eynsham SDA. This provides site-specific guidance on the implementation of green infrastructure and also considers wider connections to existing and potential green networks in and around Eynsham. The report makes a number of green infrastructure recommendations in relation to the Garden Village which are summarised below:

- Development should be designed to retain mature hedgerows.
- Woodland creation should be incorporated into the Garden Village to increase habitat diversity, improve walking and cycling routes and provide a buffer to the A40 and aggregate recycling plant.
- Sensitive areas of the site, for example City Farm Brook should be left undeveloped where possible and visually prominent parts of the site should be treated carefully.
- Improved linkages between settlements and services such as Hanborough Station should be created, including to Eynsham Village via a 'green bridge'.

- Accessible open space should be significantly increased with a combination of semi-natural woodland and meadows, green corridors, event space, sports pitches and growing space.
- Ecologically sensitive parts of the site should be conserved and enhanced (including parts of City Farm, the corridor of the City Farm Brook and Eynsham Wood as well as mature hedgerows and trees).
- Effective SuDS will be an essential part of the scheme to manage surface water run-off and there is the potential to create a network of water bodies/courses to support habitats and make the development more resilient to climate change.
- There is the opportunity to conserve and reflect the most historic parts of the site (most notably the listed buildings and City Farm as well as the abandoned medieval village of Tilgarsley) through the masterplanning process and to draw on the history character of Eynsham as well as the wider area.

6.51 Through the incorporation of these key principles into the masterplan for the garden village, GI will play a key role in shaping a settlement that reflects Garden Village principles and that is distinctive and rooted in the environment of West Oxfordshire.

Landscape led approach

6.52 Green infrastructure provides the opportunity to create a distinctive and attractive environment focussed around existing features which will influence the design of the development. The garden village will respond to the character of the wider landscape and of the site itself, creating a strong and locally rooted sense of place.

6.53 Through the utilisation of existing landscape features, there is the opportunity to create new sociable green spaces which are well connected by an interconnected network of green corridors. Spaces should be created that are multi-functional and accessible for a range of uses including recreation and play and these spaces should be accessible and attractive, benefitting from natural surveillance. This will provide opportunities for formal and informal outdoor recreation and encourage people to reconnect with nature.

Green Corridors and Spaces

6.54 A Countryside Park around the periphery of the Garden Village, linking to West Eynsham and creating a 'green corridor' with walking, cycling and riding routes, would further embed the Garden Village sense of place into the rural landscape.

6.55 The green network of corridors will largely integrate with the existing features, including hedgerows and trees, and will be strengthened with additional planting. These networks will be walkable to encourage active travel and healthy lifestyles. Connected networks of footways and cycleways in planted corridors will sensitively shape a distinctive character and unique sense of place. These should provide direct and safe routes to key destinations including the community hubs, public open spaces, the science park, educational sites, the Park & Ride, the wider countryside and Eynsham village.

6.56 In considering wider connections, existing rights of way should form the basis of these connections but there is potential to create an enhanced network of safe, attractive routes through woodlands, open spaces and along stream corridors to connect with the villages of Freeland and Hanborough to the north. Connectivity with Eynsham to the south should be improved through safe crossing points on the A40, potentially taking the form of a green bridge. Existing rights of way, open spaces and habitats should be better connected through an improved network of walking, riding and cycling routes which will also be accessible to the current community of Eynsham.

Biodiversity and environmental opportunities

6.57 Green infrastructure will help to ensure that biodiversity is protected and enhanced across the site and within the surrounding areas. The area to the north of the Garden Village is a sensitive landscape and there is merit in creating a nature reserve within the Country Park with linked water features to create strong wildlife corridor habitats as well as acting as attenuation ponds and attractive recreational areas.

6.58 The provision of GI also provides opportunities to help mitigate the impacts of climate change through flood management and other measures such as the local production of food. Whilst some areas of green space should be focussed on accessibility, other areas should focus on biodiversity such as the areas surrounding City Farm. Through the careful planning of landscape frameworks, the Countryside Park and nature reserves, this will protect and enhance diverse networks of meadow, woodland and wetland habitats, and enable people and wildlife to co-exist.

6.59 Woodland and trees are defining features of the landscape of West Oxfordshire, shaping the many historic designed landscapes. The significance of this area and its inclusion in the Wychwood Project area means that protecting and enhancing woodland, hedgerows and trees in an important element in the creation of the garden village. Improved woodland could provide a visual and noise buffer around the aggregate recycling plant and be integrated into linear parkland adjacent with walking, cycling and riding routes and open spaces adjacent to the A40 corridor. This will help to soften development and help to contribute to biodiversity. New and existing woodlands could be managed to provide a source of low carbon fuel for community buildings. Growing in private gardens, community gardens, orchards and farms will all add to creating a rich biodiverse area for people and wildlife to co-exist, enhancing biodiversity value and providing opportunities to improve health and wellbeing.

6.60 Finally, the setting of the listed buildings at City Farm within the site should be considered carefully when preparing a masterplan and meaningful open space should be incorporated to respect the setting of these listed buildings.

Building with Nature

6.61 Consultation responses to date support the requirement to achieve a recognised benchmark for green infrastructure, particularly one that fully considers the wider multi-functional, 'natural capital'/'ecosystem services' role of green infrastructure.

6.62 It is intended that 'Building with Nature[28]' will be used throughout the planning and implementation of the OCGV, from policy, design, delivery, through to long-term management and maintenance.

6.63 Building with Nature sets a new standard for green infrastructure. It brings together existing guidance and good practice to recognise high quality green infrastructure by providing a framework of principles to overcome the challenge of delivery of quality and maximise multifunctional benefits for end users - delivering 'sustainable development and flourishing communities' with Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife in mind. The standards are applicable to a wide range of the themes and issues addressed in the AAP.

6.64 There are 23 standards in total: Core, Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife.

6.65 The core standards define the green infrastructure approach, encompassing the fundamental requirements that will be expected of green infrastructure at the Garden Village and highlighting how green infrastructure is so much more than the conventional approach of the design and delivery of open and green space.

Principles of core standards:

1. **Multifunctional Network** – Ensures that individual features form and contribute to a multifunctional network of green infrastructure operating at a landscape scale
2. **Contextual** – Ensures that the green infrastructure reflects the character of the local environment and positively contributes to local identity, landscape character and vernacular, and a sense of place.
3. **Policy-Responsive** – Ensures green infrastructure effectively meets local priorities and needs as articulated in local policy or through consultation with local stakeholders.
4. **Climate resilient** – Ensures that green infrastructure effectively is resilient to climate change, and opportunities for shade provision, carbon storage, improved soil and air quality, and reduced noise and light pollution are maximised.
5. **Future-proofed** – Ensures that adequate provision is made for how green infrastructure will be managed and maintained including the responsibility for these activities and their funding.

6.66 The Wellbeing Standards aim to secure the delivery of health and well-being outcomes through the delivery of green infrastructure features. The Water Standards aim to provide green infrastructure to effectively manage water quantity and quality, increase flood resilience and maximise opportunities for amenity. And the Water Standards aim to ensure that green infrastructure allows nature to flourish, both within the boundary of the development, and at a landscape scale.

[28] https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/about

6.67 Given the particular significance of green infrastructure to the garden community movement, the objective will be to achieve the highest level of accreditation through Building with Nature. The development of the OCGV should strive to achieve 'Full Award – Excellent'.

Preferred Policy Approach 10 – Green Infrastructure

To include within the AAP, a policy which sets a requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to be underpinned by a comprehensive approach to and strategy for the provision and maintenance and management of a high quality network of green and blue infrastructure.

The expectation is that this will adopt a landscape led approach, utilising and creating a network of connected green spaces and corridors providing routes to key destinations and supported by opportunities for biodiversity and environmental enhancement.

Building with Nature to be used as the benchmark for development with the garden village expected to achieve 'Full Award – Excellent'.

Enabling Healthy Food Choices

6.68 The British Medical Association has identified that preventable ill health accounts for approximately 50% of all GP appointments, 64% of outpatient appointments and 70% of all inpatient beds. Poor diet, along with physical inactivity and social isolation, are the major causes of avoidable ill-health. In addition, the increasing recognition of the implication of the 'obesity crisis', such as the rise in weight-related cancers, adds further impetus to the government's drive for 'prevention before cure'.

6.69 Ensuring proximity and easy access to the provision/production of affordable healthy food, so enabling people to eat a balanced and healthy diet, is an essential part of the creation of healthy places. In keeping with the original Garden City ideals and having considered the positive consultation responses, we are committed through the AAP to ensuring that a healthy food environment is designed-in to the Garden Village by, for example, allocating land to food-growing uses, encouraging diversity of food outlets, including those selling healthy options, and incorporating edible plants within the public realm.

6.70 As part of the consultation response to the Issues Paper, there was a strong overall support for people to be able to grow their own food, particularly through the provision of new allotments. Home grown produce from an allotment can produce enough food to supplement a family's weekly shop, with fresh fruit and vegetables. Being a plot holder also provides a sense of being part of a community. One local resident explained that *'Eynsham has knowledge and expertise to share with new residents to encourage love for local, healthy and seasonal food'*. Allotments provide a particularly good opportunity to learn from experienced gardeners as well as share knowledge with newcomers.

6.71 Further consideration should be given to the location of such a facility, including whether they should be concentrated or dispersed throughout the new settlement. An assessment of, for example, aspect, layout, soil quality and long-term management needs to be undertaken, as well as design features identified in the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan of on-site water and electricity supply, suitable access, secure gate, deer-proof fencing and a secure communal building. The draft Neighbourhood Plan suggests that new developments should ideally contribute about 1 allotment per 20 new houses.

6.72 The appropriate location and number of allotments will be affected by a variety of factors, including the provision of generous private garden space and other growing space, such as community gardens and orchards.

6.73 There is enthusiasm in consultation responses about the opportunities available at the garden village site for food production, with suggestions for a community farm, smallholdings, community gardens, orchards, forest gardening, permaculture living architecture (green roofs/walls), landscaping to incorporate fruit and/or nut trees and planting in the public realm to include edible plants, herbs and spices. One response highlighted that as much of the soil in the garden village site is good quality and chemical-free and provides, restrictions should be put in place to keep any growing space herbicide- and insecticide-free.

6.74 Other responses emphasise the existing good practice in the area, such as GreenTEA's Edible Eynsham, planting of local Wastie apples, the autumn Apple Festival, community owned Peace Oak Orchard and shared vegetable plots, etc. Groups in Eynsham include the allotment association, a garden club, Oxford organic gardening group, a village show and open gardens. There appears, therefore, to be support in encouraging similar practice in the garden village.

6.75 In addition to opportunities for growing food locally, suggestions have been put forward on how to make it easier for people to make healthier food choices locally. For example, by having an area at the allotments where people can sell food they have grown, having a permanent farmers' market where not only local commercial farm producers could sell their products but also local residents could disperse the excess they have produced themselves and by setting up organic food markets and cafés cooking with the local produce in multi-purpose social and community hubs, run by the community and/or near the schools instead of fast food take-away stalls. Such facilities should be easy to get to by walking, cycling and public transport

6.76 The Issues Paper asked for views on whether restrictions should be imposed to avoid hot food takeaways locating close to schools and sports and recreation facilities. There was limited and a mixed response to this issue.

<u>Preferred Policy Approach 11 – Enabling Healthy Food Choices</u>

To include within the AAP, a policy requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to ensure that provision is made for growing and consuming food locally within the garden village including the potential provision of new allotments, a community farm/orchard and the use of edible plants and flowers within the public realm (e.g. concept of 'edible streets').

School provision to capitalise on any opportunities for co-location e.g. with any community farm/orchard that may be provided.

To also include a requirement for any hot food takeaway (e.g. provided as part of a neighbourhood centre) to not be located near any of the proposed schools.

7. Protecting and enhancing environmental assets

Core Objectives:

GV13 To ensure that the natural and historic environment of the local area is reflected, respected and enhanced wherever possible through the design, development and delivery of the garden village.
GV14 To provide measurable net gains for biodiversity and enhancements to natural capital, including through the provision of a comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure.
GV15 To avoid harmful light and noise pollution on local amenity, landscape character and biodiversity conservation.
GV16 To ensure that any flood risk mitigation including surface water drainage is effective, does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and maximises the opportunity to deliver environmental benefits.
GV17 To ensure that development of the garden village seeks to minimise and properly mitigate any potentially harmful impacts on air, soil and water quality.
GV18 To fully address and capitalise on the constraints and opportunities presented by heritage assets including the listed buildings at City Farm and the suspected site of the former medieval village of Tilgarsley.

Introduction

7.1 The garden village is characterised by a number of environmental sensitivities and it is incumbent upon the AAP to provide a clear and robust framework to ensure that any future development proposals seek to minimise the degree of any potential harm that might be caused and also capitalise on the opportunities to deliver enhancements wherever possible.

7.2 Concerns about the sensitive nature of the garden village site and the surrounding area have been raised throughout the consultation to date and we are committed to ensuring that those concerns are properly taken into account and addressed as fully as possible through the AAP and the planning, design and delivery stages.

7.3 In this section of the AAP we focus on achieving a net gain in biodiversity, the water environment and the protection and enhancement of environmental and heritage assets.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Natural Capital

7.4 At present, many of the hidden environmental costs of development such as biodiversity loss, carbon emissions, unsustainable water use and worsening air quality, are not considered systematically, with no mechanisms to compensate for harm to nature, communities and future generations. The benefits of creating greener developments are also often poorly understood.

7.5 Biodiversity is integral to the places where we live, work and enjoy ourselves. It is fundamental to our health and wellbeing, and it brings intrinsic benefits that span all aspects of sustainable development from clean air and water to the increased value of a dwelling.

7.6 There are many reasons why we should be minimising our impact on the natural environment. Some of this is related to legislation and national policy, including the statutory duty to consider biodiversity conservation and enhancement in all our functions under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the National Planning Policy Framework and the recently adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

7.7 The National Planning Policy Framework specifies the need to protect biodiversity, including designated sites and priority habitats and species. Emphasis is also placed on the need to preserve, restore and recreate ecological networks to ensure that biodiversity is more resilient to current and future pressures, including climate change. Net gain for biodiversity is mentioned three times, specifically in paragraphs 170 (d), 174 (b) and 175 (d).

7.8 There is also the England Biodiversity Strategy (Biodiversity 2020), which aims to halt the overall loss of England's biodiversity and prescribes the inclusion of well-functioning ecosystems and coherent ecological networks to provide better places for nature and people, with an ultimate aim of providing a net gain. This recognises that biodiversity is important not just in its own right, but because it is vital for human survival. It provides goods and services that are vital to human wellbeing and economic prosperity. The National Ecosystem Assessment in the UK concluded that decision-making consistently undervalues nature and that many of the services it provides are in decline.

7.9 The Government's Spring Statement was presented to Parliament on 13th March 2019, and builds on the commitments made in the 25-Year Environment Plan. This includes making biodiversity net gain mandatory for new developments in England in order to ensure that wildlife is not compromised by the delivery of necessary infrastructure and housing, and to deliver an overall increase in biodiversity. A recent DEFRA consultation on achieving net gain[29] stated "*development that adopts a biodiversity net gain approach seeks to make its impact on the environment positive, delivering improvements through habitat creation or enhancement after avoiding and mitigation harm as far as possible*".

7.10 The message at the national level is therefore clear that biodiversity must be taken more seriously and is a key component of sustainable development.

7.11 At the county level, the State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017 report published by Wild Oxfordshire drew together a wealth of expertise from the county's professional and volunteer base in biodiversity conservation. The best information currently available was used to paint a picture of the state of Oxfordshire's natural habitats and species, including long-term trends as well as more recent losses and gains. The key findings of the report were:

- Despite widespread historic loss of species-rich semi-natural grasslands, Oxfordshire still has some of the rarest and finest grasslands in the country;
- Our rivers are much cleaner than they were 30 years ago, and targeted action has helped the recovery of local populations of threatened species, such as water vole and otter;
- Long-term declines in farmland and woodland biodiversity continue with some associated species at serious risk of extinction, such as the turtle dove. However, the area of woodland recorded in the county over the last 30 years has increased; and
- There is continued fragmentation and loss of connectivity across the county's landscapes affecting the future viability of habitats and species.

7.12 Some of the key actions identified in the report, which are considered to be the most relevant to the garden village, are:

- Urgently create larger and more connected areas of high quality habitats;
- Ensure better planning for blue and green infrastructure that benefits nature and people;
- Put sustainable development that invests in nature at the heart of local decision-making; and
- Increase access to green space and volunteering opportunities to keep people in touch with the health and well-being benefits of nature.

[29] https://consult.defra.gov.uk/land-use/net-gain/supporting_documents/netgainconsultationdocument.pdf

7.13 In order to effectively measure biodiversity net gain and in line with the national approach, we will require the use of the locally derived biodiversity metric produced by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) (subject to ensuring its compatibility with the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric Version 2.0, which is due to be released imminently) in order to calculate the amount of biodiversity units present on the site before and after development. This provides the basis for measuring the amount of net gain in biodiversity (i.e. number of units after development minus the number of units before development). The aim of this is to ensure that there is a positive difference in the number of units.

7.14 A standardised approach to biodiversity net gain would deliver measurable inputs by comparing habitat losses and gains and steering mitigation and compensation accordingly.

7.15 We propose that the minimum biodiversity net gain for the OCGV should be set at 25%. This would mean a 25% increase in the number of biodiversity units after development. For example, if the site was valued at 10 biodiversity units before development, then the OCGV would need to ensure it was valued at no less than 12.5 biodiversity units after development.

7.16 Lichfield District Council has set biodiversity net gain at 20% in their supplementary planning document '*Biodiversity and Development*' (2016) and the Berkeley Group Ltd have made a commitment to providing biodiversity net gain in all their developments. There is much debate about the level of net gain and what this means for development at this time, but we consider that the OCGV should be able to demonstrate a 25% increase in biodiversity due to the application of the garden village principles and the provision of extensive areas of green and blue infrastructure.

7.17 The mitigation hierarchy is embedded within the biodiversity net gain approach. This ensures that all measures to avoid and minimise detrimental impacts on biodiversity are applied before compensation is considered.

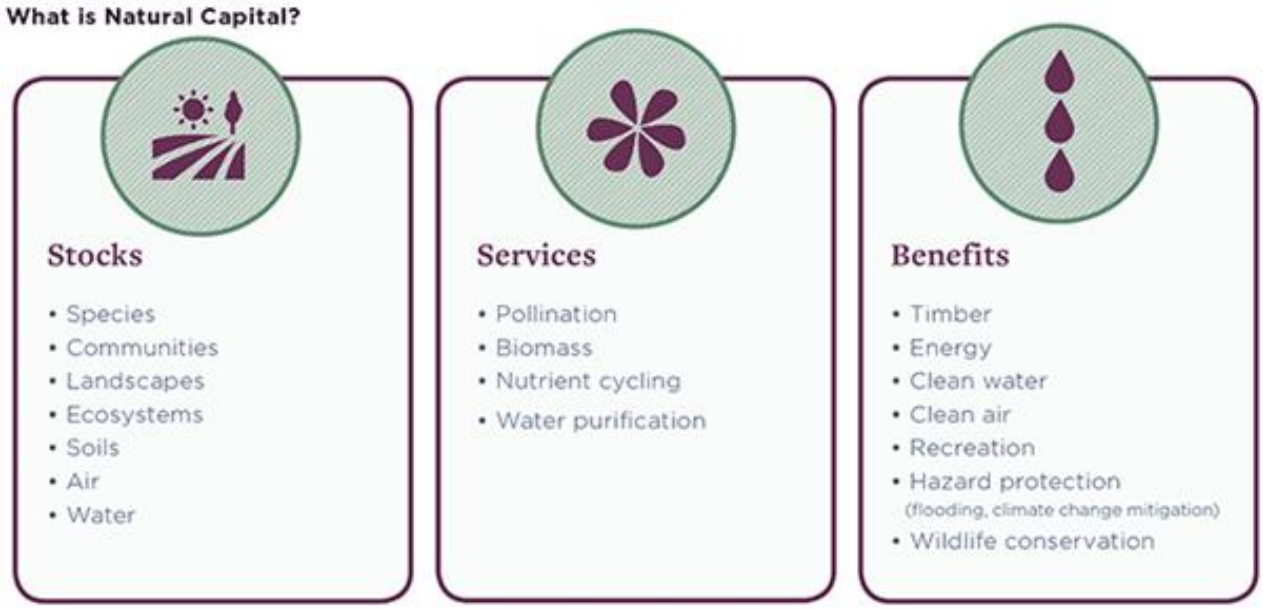
7.18 The biodiversity metric includes multipliers to take account of the time it will take to reach a target condition for a particular habitat are incorporated. For example, it will take a far longer time to create good quality deciduous woodland than it would to create a good quality wildlife pond, so the number of units scored for woodland compensation is reduced to reflect this delay.

7.19 The biodiversity net gain approach therefore focuses first on the development site itself through on-site mitigation, enhancement and compensation, and then it may be necessary to look at off-site compensation to deliver 25% net gain (e.g. creation of new habitats elsewhere). We will seek to ensure that any off-site compensation is secured within the nearest Conservation Target Areas, for the restoration of designated sites, the creation of a Nature Recovery Network, the restoration of priority habitats and species or the creation of new green infrastructure within the local area.

7.20 The delivery of biodiversity net gain as part of the OCGV would have many direct and indirect benefits for the new community, meet national targets for biodiversity, increase climate change resilience and enhance the local landscape setting.

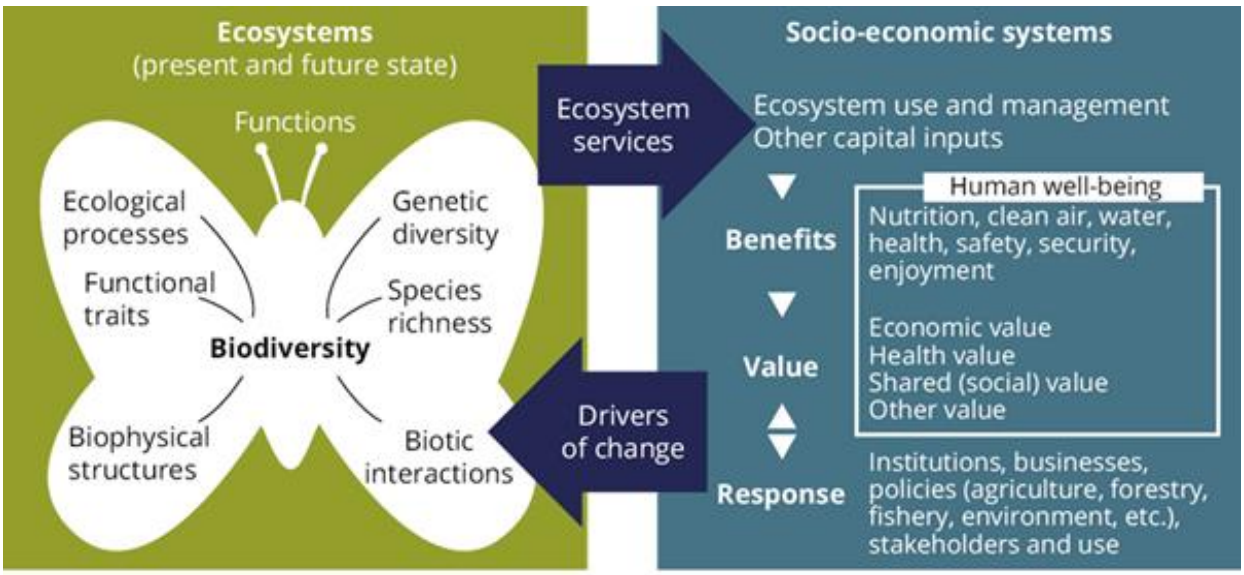
7.21 The long-term monitoring and management of the natural environment, including any biodiversity compensation off-site, is also an important consideration for the council and this is covered in Section 5 'Long Term Maintenance and Stewardship'.

7.22 Biodiversity is just one part of the natural capital of an area. The term 'capital' is generally used by economists to describe a stock of anything that has the capacity to generate a flow (normally of goods and services) that benefits and is valued by people. Natural capital covers the full range of natural resources that provide benefits to people, including air, water and soil. The benefits of natural capital and ecosystem services are specifically mentioned in paragraph 170 (b) of the National Planning Policy Framework and examples are shown in the diagram below[30].



7.23 The 'flow' provided by natural capital comes in the form of ecosystem services. These are the contributions that ecosystems make to human well-being. The main categories are provisioning services (e.g. biomass, water, fibre), regulating or maintenance services (e.g. soil formation, pest and disease control), and cultural services (e.g. the physical, intellectual, spiritual and symbolic interactions with ecosystems, landscapes and seascapes).

7.24 These three types of services are underpinned by supporting services (e.g. nutrient cycling) and are provided at a range of scales from the global (e.g. climate regulation) to the local (e.g. flood protection). The diagram below provides a basic overview of this[31].



[30] Source: https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/268312-0

[31] Source: https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/synthesis/report/3-naturalcapital

7.25 Natural Capital is now being increasingly quantified alongside other forms of capital, including the following examples (source: 'Biodiversity By Design – a guide for sustainable communities', 2004):

- *Carbon sink* – Trees have a significant capacity to absorb carbon dioxide. 1ha of woodland can absorb emissions equivalent to 100 family cars (Trees for Cities, 2003).
- *Pollution control* – vegetation has a significant capacity to attenuate noise and filter air pollution from motor vehicles; urban street trees can remove sulphur dioxide and reduce particulates; noise attenuation can be as much as 30 decibels per 100 metres; and wetland ecosystems are effective in filtering polluted run-off and sewage.
- *Air conditioning* – the heat island effect can increase temperatures relative to open countryside by 5oC and vegetation provides natural air conditioning. A single large tree can be the equivalent of 5 room air conditioners and will supply enough oxygen for 10 people.
- *Microclimate control* – vegetation can improve local microclimate conditions by providing shade in summer. It can also reduce wind effects created by streets and wind load on buildings, potentially reducing heating requirements by up to 25%.
- *Flood prevention* – vegetation can reduce excessive run-off and increase rainfall capture. This reduces the risk of flooding in low lying areas and can also recharge soil moisture and groundwater supplies.
- *Health and wellbeing* – accessible green space creates opportunities for recreation and exercise, and studies have shown that it increases children's creative play, social skills and concentration span. Natural green spaces reduce stress and encourage relaxation, providing a sense of freedom and exhilaration.
- *Social cohesion* – more active use of green spaces, including streets and communal spaces, can contribute towards a lively public realm; participation in the design and stewardship of green space can help strengthen communities; and nature reserves can create a focal point for life-long learning.
- *Positive experience of nature* – Biologist Edward O. Wilson talked about the importance of "biophilia", our intrinsic delight and need to spend time in natural surroundings (1992). Research has shown that children's experiences of nature shape their attitudes in later life. The urban environment should therefore be designed to provide people with a positive day to day experience of nature (English Nature, 2003).
- *Learning from nature* – a positive experience of nature creates informal learning about nature through recreation, discovery and delight; opportunities for formal learning can be achieved through the interpretation of ecologically functional green spaces and nature reserves; it can also be linked to projects that explore natural processes, such as composting; and at a very basic level, signage and information resources; and green spaces and nature reserves can be designed as outdoor classrooms.
- *Property values* – street trees and views of natural landscapes and waterways can increase property values by between 6% and 18%, as well as helping to sustain values over the long-term and improving the image of difficult to develop brownfield sites, as demonstrated by Greenwich Millennium Village's ecology park.
- *Retail and tourism* – shoppers may also be willing to pay up to 10% more to shop in tree-lined streets and visitors to the area to see wildlife and visit the attractive landscape will contribute to the local economy.
- *Management costs* – traditionally, green spaces have been intensively managed, requiring significant and costly inputs of nutrients, herbicides and pesticides. Experience has shown that ecologically self-sustaining landscapes can significantly reduce the need for these inputs.

7.26 We are therefore seeking an approach to the natural environment that recognises these contributions to our way of life. We consider that the main ecosystem services of relevance to the garden village site are:

- *Food production* (e.g. allotments, community farm, orchards);
- *Wood production* (e.g. coppice);
- *Water supply* (e.g. rainwater runoff and infiltration, groundwater recharge and surface water flow);
- *Water quality* (e.g. reduction in pollutants, interception of overland flow and trapping pollutants and sediments, breakdown of pollutants into harmless forms);
- *Air quality regulation* (e.g. removal of air pollutants);
- *Carbon storage* (e.g. carbon stored in vegetation and soil, sequestration);
- *Cooling and shading* (e.g. shade, shelter and cooling effect of vegetation and water, especially urban trees close to buildings, green roofs, green walls);
- *Noise reduction* (e.g. attenuation of noise by vegetation);
- *Pollination* (e.g. pollination of crops and wild plants by wild insects (mainly bees and hoverflies);
- *Recreation and leisure* (e.g. provision of green and blue spaces for walking, cycling, running, picnicking, camping, boating, playing or just relaxing);
- *Aesthetic or sensory value* (e.g. attractive views, beautiful surroundings, a pleasing, calming or inspiring sight, the sounds and smells of nature);
- *Interaction with nature* (e.g. provision of opportunities for nature-related activities such as bird watching and identifying flowers, random encounters with wildlife or feeling 'connected to nature');
- *Education and knowledge* (e.g. opportunities for formal education such as school trips, scientific research, local knowledge and informal learning such as interpretation boards or experiences); and
- *Sense of place* (e.g. why a place is considered to be special and distinctive such as locally characteristic species, habitats, landscapes and features, places related to historic or cultural events, spiritual or emotional connections).

7.27 The above ecosystem services should therefore be taken into account when designing the garden village development to ensure that there are opportunities for these to be enhanced. Natural England's 'Ecometric' tool may be a suitable mechanism for comparing before and after changes in ecosystem services once it has been released for general use (it is currently being refined and has not been published). The prerequisite for the ecometric is that all development must be able to demonstrate net gain in biodiversity. We consider that there are lots of opportunities to enhance the above ecosystem services within the garden village site, particularly through the provision of high quality green infrastructure.

7.28 Biodiversity net gain, natural capital and ecosystem services are very closely related to green infrastructure, and the delivery of a high-quality network of multi-functional green spaces is therefore fundamental to the success of the garden village with regard to the natural environment. This why we are promoting the use of the Building With Nature benchmark as a way of measuring success (see Section 6 – Healthy Place Shaping).

7.29 We are considering the need for a 'Biodiversity Mitigation, Monitoring and Management Framework' document to be submitted with the outline planning application to bring together all the relevant biodiversity mitigation, monitoring and management requirements in one place for ease of reference and as a mechanism to ensure future compliance within reserved matters applications. A similar document was required by Cotswold District Council as part of the outline planning application at land south of Chesterton, Cirencester.

Preferred Policy Approach 12 – Achieving 25% Biodiversity Net Gain

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring that the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate and compensate) is applied and setting out an overall requirement for development of the Garden Village to achieve a net gain in biodiversity of at least 25%. This will be measured using the TVERC Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator and will result in wider natural capital and ecosystem service benefits for the new local community.

Water Environment

7.30 Water, and its effective management, is vital to life. It is a precious and finite resource which needs to be protected, not only the sources of water (both surface and underground) and the quality of water, but also the general environment associated with the water system.

7.31 Development in accordance with national and local guidance and policies (such as Local Plan Policies OS3, OS8, EH7 and EH8 and draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies ENP2 and ENP4a, e.g. on environmental protection, green infrastructure, biodiversity and sustainable construction) will assist in achieving the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and actions of the Thames River Basin Management Plan, particularly the requirement to protect and improve the status of water bodies.

7.32 Given the scale of the Garden Village, a sustainable integrated water management approach should be the basis of consideration of water issues, bringing together water supply, wastewater disposal, water usage and recycling, water quality and flood risk management, in order to better manage water and deliver multiple benefits for people and wildlife (as well as ensure compliance with the required regulations).

7.33 The Garden Village should be designed, recognising the relationship between water and development, using water-sensitive urban design to provide integrated solutions especially to flood risk management, sustainable water use and supply and the improvement of water quality in watercourses. Building with Nature (see Section 6 – Healthy Place Shaping) recognises this relationship and includes water as a key theme, with a commitment to improve water quality, on site and in the wider area; reduce the risk of flooding; and manage water naturally for maximum benefit.

7.34 A Water Cycle Study (WCS) was undertaken for the West Oxfordshire Local Plan in 2016 to provide a strategic approach to the management and use of water which ensures that the sustainability of the water environment in the District is not compromised. It also identifies any constraints that may be imposed by the water cycle and how these can be resolved, i.e. by ensuring that appropriate water infrastructure is provided to support the proposed development[32]. In terms of the Garden Village, the WCS raises particular issues in relation to water efficiency, water quality/ wastewater and flood risk. These are considered in further detail below.

Water efficiency

7.35 The need for water management is especially relevant for West Oxfordshire and the Eynsham area, not just associated with the issue of flood risk but equally water scarcity at times of drought. The area lies within an area of serious water stress, where there are limited water resources and yet a high and growing demand for water.

[32] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1572197/ENV11-West-Oxfordshire-Water-Cycle-Study-Phase-1-Scoping-Study-November-2016-.pdf

7.36 Development proposals for the Garden Village will be expected to be ambitious in terms of maximising water efficiency and demonstrate efficient use and recycling of water to minimise water demand. In line with the advice of the West Oxfordshire Water Cycle Study: Phase 1 Scoping (2016), Policy OS3 requires a water efficiency design standard limiting average per capita water consumption to 110 litres per person per day in order to help achieve a more sustainable water usage. The use of measures such as variable flush toilets and reduced flow showers and taps are simple techniques that can be deployed.

7.37 Other water efficiency measures that should be explored, as part of the water-sensitive urban design include: rainwater harvesting; grey water recycling; and reclamation of treated wastewater.

Water quality/wastewater

7.38 The Garden Village lies within the catchment of the River Evenlode. The WCS identifies that the water quality of the Evenlode is currently failing to achieve Good status. Agricultural practices and wastewater treatment discharges are two of the main influences on this quality.

7.39 The WCS shows that development at the Garden Village will result in an increase in the volume of permitted effluent discharges required at Cassington Wastewater Treatment Works. While the majority of the growth should not significantly affect water quality, it is suggested that the treatment works will need to be upgraded.

7.40 Further assessment is needed to determine the necessary upgrade required to the sewerage infrastructure to ensure that development of the Garden Village does not lead to a deterioration of the waterbody status or prevent the achievement of a Good status in the river. Such an assessment should form part of a focused local strategy undertaken to assess the wastewater network capacity and flood risk, including impact on the receiving River Thames, and whether quality conditions need to be tightened.

Flood Risk

7.41 While the vast majority of the Garden Village site is classed as being at low risk of flooding, many people have expressed concerns about flooding within the site and in the area as a whole, including from surface water, with emphasis given in particular to the impact on the Cuckoo Lane and Lower Road areas.

7.42 As the site lies immediately upstream of Eynsham (which was affected by significant flooding during the Summer 2007 flood event), the local concern about flooding is not surprising, particularly with development also taking place to the west of Eynsham. To avoid negative cumulative impacts of development on flood risk within the site, Eynsham and the wider Thames catchment, development will need to achieve a reduction in greenfield run-off rates, in accordance with Local Plan Policy EW1.

7.43 A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken of the site[33] and a Strategic Sustainable Drainage Strategy produced both of which provide guidance to inform the masterplanning of the and policies of the AAP, identifying where and when further assessments are required.

7.44 The SFRA assesses all sources of flooding, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and reservoir, mapping of the functional floodplain and the potential increase in fluvial and surface water flood risk due to climate change. It makes a number of recommendations for making the site safe from flooding and not increasing flood risk downstream:

- Sequential design of the site to avoid areas at high flood risk from all sources and preserve safe access and egress;
- Use of best practice Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) design, aiming to reduce runoff rates to greenfield runoff or lower;
- Existing surface water flow routes must be accommodated within the masterplan;
- The design of SuDS schemes must take into account the seasonally high groundwater table; and

[33] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2006211/2018s1375-WODC-Level-2-SFRA-Summary-Report-v40-May-19-_comb.pdf

- The site design must ensure that flows resulting from rainfall in excess of a 1 in 100-year event are managed via exceedance routes that minimise the risks to people and property.

7.45 The NPPF and Local Plan Policy EH7 set out a sequential, risk-based approach to flooding. Our proposed policy approach for the garden village reinforces this policy approach, emphasising the expectation that development will be taken forward in accordance with the sequential test in respect of fluvial flooding (i.e. development steered towards areas of lower flood risk) and will also need to take full account of other potential sources of flooding.

7.46 As a general principle, given the large size of the site and the significant area available with the lowest risk of flooding (Flood Zone 1), designing the site layout sequentially should mean that all built development will be located within Flood Zone 1. Fluvial flood risk is restricted to the floodplain of the northern Evenlode tributary. Surface water flow paths form in extreme events and groundwater flood risk exists in specific areas of the site.

7.47 Detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) of the site will be required and should involve consultation with Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency (EA) to determine whether detailed modelling of any ordinary watercourses on the site should be carried out, in order to define the Flood Zones and model the effect of climate change in greater detail.

7.48 The SFRA highlights how the Garden Village site offers real opportunities to provide flood betterment alongside sustainable development. Such opportunities will need to be discussed with the LLFA and EA as appropriate at an early planning stage. These include:

- The development should take the opportunity to implement exemplar SuDS design, delivering multiple benefits for the development (water quality, biodiversity, amenity, green infrastructure). There are particular opportunities to deliver SuDS with educational and recreational benefits including potentially in conjunction with the proposed primary school(s) and the business park.
- There are opportunities for developer contributions to support flood mitigation options under consideration by West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Water and the EA, for example, the Natural Flood Management (NFM) initiatives currently being implemented by the River Evenlode Catchment Partnership to help reduce and delay the peak flows.
- Consultation should be undertaken with Thames Water, as sewerage undertaker, and Oxfordshire County Council, as Highway Authority, and opportunities taken to increase the capacity of the sewer network and highway drainage system in Eynsham.
- Improvements to the capacity of the three culverts which pass beneath Lower Road will reduce the residual flood risks to the sites associated with blockages.
- All existing watercourses on the site should remain as open channels; the EA has a presumption against the culverting of watercourses. In addition, any other structures encountered on the site which may restrict flow of water should be removed, to allow better management of flood risk, provide amenity space and improve habitats.
- Any proposed river crossings on the site must ensure they are clear span in design and allow sufficient clearance of flood flows, to prevent future risk of blockage and backing up.
- Opportunities for mitigation of surface water flow routes to improve flood risk on adjoining land – particularly to public buildings.

Exemplar Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

7.49 The NPPF, Local Plan Policies OS3 and EH7 and draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENP2 all refer to the need to incorporate sustainable drainage systems. There has also been widespread support for the use of such systems through consultation to date.

7.50 SuDS are drainage systems that mimic natural patterns to ease surface water run-off, often through storing the water and then releasing it slowly into a watercourse. SUDS techniques include a wide range of potential measures including permeable surfaces (e.g. car parking), swales, basins, attenuation ponds and wetlands. SuDS should be combined with a system to help regulate water flows from roofs to the drainage system and grey water recycling. Installation of green roofs, where soil and plant material are attached to create a living surface, can also reduce water run-off.

7.51 An exemplar sustainable drainage system, integrating water sensitive design, is required for the Garden Village. This will help to deliver a climate resilient development with a low carbon footprint and high environmental credentials, contributing to the delivery of 'Garden Communities Qualities' of, for example, healthy places, high quality green spaces, biodiversity and future-proofing and provide opportunities for the integration of blue and green infrastructure in order to maximise multiple benefits.

7.52 The water sensitive design will be based on the four pillars of SuDS design, each of which has its own criteria, as set out in Part B of the CIRIA SuDS manual.

7.53 This links closely to the design and provision of green infrastructure and the Building with Nature benchmark standards (See Section 6 – Healthy Place Shaping). The Strategic Sustainable Drainage Strategy report provides further information on SuDS, including site specific guidance on interception, infiltration and attenuation techniques. It also advises that a clear strategic surface water management strategy is required for the whole site at the outline application stage, which sets out how the development will be carried out in phases, while meeting the design criteria and ensuring the system works, managing strategic storage with plot scale storage and addressing issues of adoption, construction and maintenance.

<u>Preferred Policy Approach 13 – Water Environment</u>

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring development of the Garden Village to adopt an integrated water management approach when addressing the water environment. An ambitious approach to the water environment is expected.

In terms of flood risk, the OCGV will be taken forward in accordance with the sequential test in respect of fluvial flooding (i.e. development steered towards areas of lower flood risk) and will also need to take full account of other potential sources of flooding including surface water flooding and groundwater flooding.

All major planning applications should be accompanied by: a detailed Flood Risk Assessment; an assessment of opportunities to provide flood betterment; an exemplar sustainable drainage system, where any potential opportunities are exploited e.g. the delivery of biodiversity enhancements; evidence on how a water sensitive design approach is being incorporated.

In terms of water demand, an assessment is required of the impact on water demand. Evidence will be needed on how water efficiency is being maximising

For wastewater and water quality, a focused local strategy should be undertaken to assess the wastewater network capacity and flood risk, including impact on the receiving River Thames, and whether quality conditions need to be tightened. The strategy should set out measures for improving water quality.

Environmental Assets

7.54 The protection and enhancement of the environment is an overriding objective of national and local planning policy and one of the principles underpinning garden communities. In general, West Oxfordshire's environment is of high quality. Air and water quality tends to be good and land contamination limited. In addition, the rural nature of the District means there are still areas of relative tranquillity and low levels of light pollution. These characteristics apply to much of the Garden Village site.

7.55 Development has the potential to affect the quality of land, soil, air and water which, in turn, impact upon amenity, public health, biodiversity and quality of life. Local Plan Policies OS3 and EH8 set out the Council's general approach to environmental protection. This section of the AAP provides further guidance that is particularly relevant to the Garden Village.

7.56 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan sets out 'goals for improving the environment within a generation and leaving it in a better state than we found it.'

Air Quality

7.57 The Government has set out its intention to achieve clean air through, for example, imposing legally binding targets to reduce emissions of specific damaging air pollutants and ending the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans. The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants and opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified.

7.58 There is increasing evidence showing a correlation between poor air quality and respiratory illness, heart disease and asthma.

7.59 In West Oxfordshire, while air quality is generally good, there are specific areas experiencing problems, mainly attributable to road transport. Consultation responses to the Garden Village Issues Paper highlight particular concerns about air quality as a result of traffic on the A40 and call for an assessment to be undertaken and for mitigation measures to be put in place. Addressing air quality issues will, therefore, be complementary to the wider Garden Village and sustainable development aims of reducing the need to travel, achieving a modal shift towards walking, cycling and the use of public transport, a reduction in transport emissions and addressing climate change.

7.60 Local Plan Policies OS3 and EH8 seek to achieve improvements in air quality, in line with National Air Quality Standards. Such standards will apply to the development at the Garden Village. Consideration will need to be given to the impact of development on air quality by both the operational characteristics of the development and the traffic generated by it. The cumulative impact of development will also need to be assessed. An air quality assessment will be required to accompany the outline planning application and subsequent applications for major development proposals.

7.61 In addition to an assessment of air quality issues within and adjoining the site, there will need to be an assessment of wider impacts on air quality, in particular upon the internationally important Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation for which air quality, mainly associated with traffic, has been identified as a significant issue. The AAP and the development of the Garden Village will be assessed in accordance with the Habitat Regulations, in line with Local Plan Policy EH3 and draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENP4a.

Artificial light

7.62 External lighting can perform a wide variety of functions from floodlighting of sports activities, to illuminating important buildings, to improving highway safety. The multiple needs for lighting within the Garden Village should be balanced against any adverse impact lights might have. For example, some concern was expressed in the consultation feedback about the direct and indirect impacts of lighting on the natural environment, especially on designated sites and priority habitats and species (such as bats) which can be especially light-sensitive.

7.63 There is increasing evidence that lighting can have negative effects on human health. Light pollution is, for example, linked to obesity, reduced sleep quality, depression and impaired memory.

7.64 It is important, therefore, that detailed consideration is given to the issue of lighting at each stage of the Garden Village's development, both within the village and within the wider area. Consideration of the impact of lighting needs to include an assessment upon the visual character of the area, the 'night sky', nature conservation, local amenity and the 'environmental credentials' of the lighting (e.g. through use of locally generated energy). Development proposals must seek to minimise and properly mitigate any harmful impacts. (Local Plan Policies OS4, EH2, EH3, EH6 and EH8 are particularly relevant.)

Noise

7.65 Noise can have an adverse effect on the environment and on the health and quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. The proximity of the garden village site to the A40 means that traffic noise is an important consideration. In addition, the former David Einig aggregate recycling facility, has the potential for noise issues. These issues were reinforced through many consultation responses expressing concern about the noise associated with traffic on the A40 and the surrounding country lands, as a result of rat-running, plus the disturbance that will be caused during the construction of the village.

7.66 As a general principle, wherever possible, significant and intrusive sources of noise should be kept away from property and areas sensitive to noise. Where segregation is not possible, noise nuisance can be reduced through mitigation measures such as bunding.

7.67 Consultants, Peter Brett Associates, have undertaken a baseline environmental sound survey of the Garden Village site. Based on the results of the survey, they have made an initial assessment of internal and external noise levels.

7.68 With respect to internal ambient noise levels, their preliminary calculations indicate that:

- Appropriate internal noise levels are likely to be achieved across the majority of the site assuming conventional glazing and ventilation methods;
- Appropriate internal noise levels in dwellings overlooking Cuckoo Lane (up to around 20 m from the road), Lower Road (up to around 30 m from the road) and the A40 (up to around 50 m from the road) are likely to be achieved assuming the use of uprated acoustic glazing and acoustically treated ventilation methods. Depending on setback distances the use of mechanical ventilation may also be required.

7.69 With respect to noise levels in private external amenity spaces, their preliminary calculations indicate that:

- Appropriate noise levels in external amenity areas are likely to be achieved across the majority of the site.
- Along Cuckoo Lane, Lower Road and the A4 noise levels are likely to fall above the proposed noise criterion of 55 dB LAeq,16h without specific mitigation measures but that appropriate noise levels are likely to be achieved assuming private external amenity areas are located behind the dwellings and adopt the recommended set back distances from the respective roads.
- An acoustic barrier along the A40 and/or a setback distance from the road may also be used as an alternative and potentially reduce the set-back.

7.70 In order to control sound levels in external amenity areas associated with dwellings overlooking Cuckoo Lane, Lower Road and the A40 it is recommended that the following measures are considered:

- Locating private external amenity areas behind dwellings so that they are screened from the road by the buildings they serve. Increased levels of screening could be provided through the use of terraced townhouses or semi-detached properties;
- Use of a suitably specified acoustic barrier along the surrounding road traffic sources. However, given the principal noise source is the A40, it is likely that use of barriers could be utilised adjacent to this source;

- Increase the distance between the dwellings and the noise source (i.e. the nearest road). The use of a setback on its own is not usually the most effective method of controlling noise and should be considered only where other measures are not considered to be appropriate.

7.71 With private external amenity areas located behind dwellings, the required setback to meet the upper guideline value is likely to be:

- Approximately 50 m from A40;
- Approximately 15 m from Lower Road; and
- Approximately 10 m from Cuckoo Lane;

7.72 Advice in relation to schools and recreation has also been provided. Survey results show that external noise levels for outdoor teaching are likely to meet the criterion for outdoor teaching and recreation recommended for the acoustic design of schools. In order to keep disruption of neighbours to minimum, it is recommended that outdoor sports facilities as part of the school site and play areas should be located at a minimum distance of 30 metres away from the façade of nearby dwellings. And, in order to keep disruption of neighbours to a minimum, it is recommended that outdoor sports facilities, such as multi use game areas, should be located at a minimum distance of 30 metres away from the façade of nearby dwellings.

7.73 Further detailed noise assessment will need to be undertaken as part of the ongoing acoustic modelling work and consideration then given to the design implications. The assessment will need to include the impact of existing uses, such as the external maintenance of show equipment at Cuckoo Wood Farm, the recycling of aggregate and the businesses around the petrol filling station at the southern edge of the site on the A40, the potential requirement for acoustic barriers, or the equivalent, and the full extent of setback distances.

Contaminated land/Ground conditions

7.74 As West Oxfordshire has not been an area of heavy industry, contamination of land is not a major issue. There are, however, pockets of contamination and these could pose a threat to the health of future users of a site and to the surrounding environment.

7.75 A Phase 1 Ground Condition Report has been prepared by consultants, Peter Brett Associates, to identify the existing ground conditions and environmental setting of the garden village site (using readily available published information and observations made during a site walkover) and to assess how these may influence the opportunities, and present constraints, to future development.

7.76 As the majority of the site comprises open greenfield land in agricultural use, the consultants consider it to be of very low geoenvironmental risk. Overall, the geology of the site is benign but former historic land uses include localised mineral extraction (sand and gravel) in the eastern area which have subsequently been restored by landfilling to agriculture. These landfills may be an issue, as well as the mineral safeguarding designation. Some selected areas may have potential soil/gas contamination present. The degree to which this becomes a development constraint will depend on the nature and extent of the contamination and the nature of the proposed development.

7.77 In terms of geotechnical conditions, the appraisal has identified that the bedrock geology covering the vast majority of the site area will be suitable for use as a founding stratum. However, the localised presence of Made Ground with variable physical properties and the landfill sites with, for example, possible unstable ground conditions, landfill gas and contamination, combined with the other findings of the geoenvironmental conditions, may have implications on the site layout and land uses of the future development.

7.78 The consultants have made a number of suggestions on layout based on their findings, that:

- the more sensitive residential elements of the development should be located on greenfield areas of the site;
- the brownfield areas should be used for less sensitive land uses, such as commercial or open spaces;
- it may be more cost effective to locate structures particularly sensitive to settlement in the greenfield land parcels and those structures which are able to tolerate larger movements in the brownfield areas;

- infrastructure, such as main drainage or major highways, may need to be routed to avoid areas of deep compressible or contaminated infill, particularly the landfills;
- the proximity of neighbouring mineral sites, which may be allocated and come forward for mineral extraction, may represent a constraint in terms of extending development right up to the adjacent boundaries within the site; and
- development, particularly residential, around the aggregate recycling facility may not be desirable due to the potential for noise, dust and visual impacts

7.79 In accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan Policy EH8, the potential sources of contamination within the Garden Village site will need to be investigated, risk assessed and, if necessary, remediated. Ground investigation work will be required to inform the design response. An intrusive investigation will be required in order to clarify the anticipated ground conditions. The consultants recommend that the investigation should focus on areas of particularly uncertain ground conditions, i.e. landfill areas and farms, although baseline conditions within the 'greenfield' areas will also need to be determined.

7.80 They also recommend that 'the landfills are investigated and monitored soon to further assess the landfill gas, contamination and content (bricks, concrete, soil, etc.). Monitoring of landfill gas in particular should continue for at least 6 months to establish, inter alia, if the gas levels are decaying with time (ideally to below key threshold levels). The landfill fringes should also be investigated to determine the extent of landfill gas migration from the landfill area.' Such investigation will assess the real risk from gas and contamination, and likely risk decrease with time and any remediation. A ground investigation strategy will also need to be prepared.

Agricultural land quality/soil

7.81 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan contains the goal of using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently which includes addressing soil management and the use of agricultural land, protecting our best farmland. Local Plan Policy OS3 requires the prudent use of soil resources and draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENP4a states that development should seek to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless demonstrably impractical. A number of the consultation responses received raise the issue of the high agricultural land quality of the Garden Village site.

7.82 A detailed survey of soil and site characteristics has been undertaken (by Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd for Grosvenor Developments Ltd) in order to investigate the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and soil resources of the Garden Village site.

7.83 Agricultural land in England and Wales is graded between 1 and 5, depending on the extent to which physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. Grade 1 land is excellent quality agricultural land with very minor or no limitations to agricultural use, and Grade 5 is very poor quality land, with severe limitations due to adverse soil, relief, climate or a combination of these. Grade 3 land is subdivided into Subgrade 3a (good quality land) and Subgrade 3b (moderate quality land). Land which is classified as Grades 1, 2 and 3a is defined in the NPPF as best and most versatile agricultural land.

7.84 The survey found that the agricultural land quality at the Garden Village site is most affected by soil wetness or droughtiness, with localised areas limited by topsoil stone content. Most of the site is limited to Subgrade 3b (almost 70% of the site), with large areas of Subgrade 3a (12%) and Grade 2 (18%) predominantly in the east.

7.85 The survey results on agricultural land quality and soil information can help to inform the site uses and layout. For example, in order to avoid the loss of high grade land, many of the proposals to provide healthy on-site food choices through local food production (on a community farm, smallholdings , community gardens, allotments and orchards, etc.) could be located on the best and most versatile land within the east of the site, including around City Farm. Similarly, reversible land uses could go in these locations, such as amenity open space and playing fields.

7.86 Information on geology and soil structure is particularly useful in assessing the suitability and design of sustainable drainage systems. It can also influence the species mix in the structural and amenity landscaping.

7.87 Local Plan Policy OS3 draws attention to Defra's Code of Practice on sustainable use of soils which provides advice on the protection of soil resources for the construction sector.

Waste

7.88 The national strategy for waste management is that, in order of preference, waste should be reduced, reused, recycled, recovered and lastly disposed of through landfill.

7.89 Consideration should be given to the waste hierarchy during the design and construction of all new development, for example, waste minimisation and re-use and recycling of waste materials, and when the site is occupied, making space for home-composting and storage of recycling bins (in accordance with Local Plan Policy OS3) and/or the provision of centralised facilities.

7.90 Information should be provided, as part of the outline planning application for the garden village and subsequent reserve matter or full applications for major development, addressing sustainable waste and resources, including setting targets for residual waste, recycling and landfill diversion and providing evidence that consideration has been given to the use of locally generated waste as a fuel source for decentralised energy systems (in accordance with Local Plan Policy EH6).

7.91 At the very least, existing waste targets – including those on landfill, reuse and recycling – should be met but, as this is a garden village, an innovative strategy with ambitious targets will be expected.

Preferred Policy Approach 14 – Environmental Assets

To include within the AAP, a policy which seeks to build upon the more general policy set out in the Local Plan (EH8 – Environmental Protection) setting out requirements in terms of addressing light and noise pollution, and air, soil and water quality.

To include specific reference to the A40 (both in terms of noise pollution and air quality) and Oxford Meadows SAC (in terms of air pollution and HRA).

To also potentially stipulate a requirement for development to avoid any areas of higher grade best and most versatile agricultural land unless demonstrably impractical in line with the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan.

Heritage Assets

7.92 National and local policies highlight the importance of conserving and enhancing our historic environment (see in particular the NPPF Section 16, Local Plan Policy EH9 and draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies ENP2 and 14). An important component of sustainable development is development which avoids/minimises effects to the significance of heritage assets.

7.93 An understanding of a site's history and heritage assets provides opportunities to acknowledge and respect these features within development proposals. In order to better understand the historic environment of the area and so inform the master-planning of the garden village, consultants (LUC) have been commissioned to undertake a strategic historic environment assessment of this site (and West Eynsham). The LUC report provides evidence on:

- the significance of heritage assets within the site, and those with the potential to experience effects as a consequence of setting change;
- the risk of harm to heritage assets from development on site; and,
- options that may be available to avoid or minimise adverse effects and deliver enhancement.

7.94 There are a number of known heritage and cultural assets both within the proposed garden village site and within the immediate area, plus evidence on the historic landscape character. In terms of designated assets within the site, there are four grade II listed buildings, all related to City Farm. Sixteen non-designated assets are identified in the LUC Study, including a number of historic pathways/ tracks/ roads and hedgerows that are 'historically important' and the suggested remains of a deserted medieval village known as Tilgarsley which was purportedly depopulated during the Black Death and abandoned by 1349. The garden village lies within the Wychwood Project Area (a project that aims to restore the landscape character and mix of habitats associated with the ancient Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood).

7.95 The majority of the consultation responses to the Issues Paper in 2018 support the view that the garden village should draw on opportunities to better understand the past and reveal the significance of heritage and cultural assets. The primary assets suggested for protection, conservation and/or enhancement are covered by the LUC Report and specifically include:

- The Deserted Medieval Village of Tilgarsley which provides insights into the mid-14th century and the plague;
- The ancient Salt Way which was used as early as the Roman period;
- Heritage assets at City Farm;
- Potential Bronze Age land uses;
- Church of St Peter and Paul;
- Public rights of way and 'desire lines'

7.96 The LUC Report sets out a number of key issues and presents opportunities, not only on how the heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, but also how the significance can be enhanced or better revealed. Consideration now needs to be given on how this evidence and these opportunities should influence the planning of the garden village.

7.97 LUC's main conclusions are:

- The listed buildings at City Farm would be at risk of physical and setting change. To avoid harm to these assets, it is recommended that the listed buildings and their spatial relationship be retained along with other key elements of their setting that relate to their heritage significance (e.g. the surrounding agricultural land and the network of pathways).
- Very little meaningful setting change is anticipated in relation to other designated assets in the wider area of the Garden Village Site. It should be noted, however, that development within the site should be restricted to a height that ensures it is not visible from Eynsham Park. Additionally, if there were future plans to expand the site towards Eynsham Park and Church Hanborough Conservation Area, very careful consideration would be needed due to the way that their agricultural setting contributes to their heritage significance.
- A number of historic pathways/ tracks/ roads and hedgerows – many of which relate to historical boundaries – have been identified as 'historically important' and it is recommended that these are retained as far as possible within any future development. This would contribute to fostering a sense of place by providing some time depth in the development, and may also be beneficial in terms of ecology and healthy living, by providing walking/ cycling access to green spaces beyond the settlement.
- The site contains a number of non-designated archaeological assets. In the event of development, a programme of archaeological work will therefore be needed to further evaluate the significance of these assets and inform a mitigation strategy. This is likely to include the monitoring of geotechnical works, geophysical survey and trial trenching.

- In terms of mitigation, typically only archaeological assets of high or very high significance require preservation in situ. The possible Tilgarsley medieval deserted village and its hollow way and earthwork remains could potentially be of high value, although not currently designated, and may require preservation in-situ. Assuming that preservation in-situ is required, then the area including this asset could be demarcated as strategic open land, in which no ground intrusive work, vehicular movement, etc. is permitted. During construction the site would need to be cordoned off.
- Remains of lesser value may be 'preserved by record'. Depending on their value this could entail full excavation and recording or an archaeological watching brief. Any programme of work would also be designed to clarify the potential for any hitherto unknown heritage assets and the evidence of the past environments of the site which may be high given the recorded presence of alluvial deposits and river terrace gravels. The Oxfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist has advised that such evaluative field work would be required in advance of the determination of any planning applications.

7.98 Specific opportunities for potential enhancement identified by LUC include:

- The manor and village of Tilgarsley sets a historical precedent for a settlement adjacent to Eynsham and offers a focus that can be used to help create a separate and distinct sense of place. The vernacular historic landscape and features therein can also be used to inform the master planning process to create a sense of place and deliver other benefits.
- There is an opportunity for increasing public understanding of the history of Tilgarsley, and other heritage assets in the east of the site, not just through their further investigation but also via the creation of an outdoor education/heritage facility, heritage trail, open days during any archaeological investigation etc.

7.99 In addition to the advice provided by LUC, numerous heritage/cultural priorities and opportunities have been identified through the consultation feedback so far, including:

- Making the most of opportunities to present and interpret the results of excavations and to increase the appreciation and understanding of, and access to, heritage assets through, for example: the creation of an archaeological trail with information boards and reconstructions such as the Eynsham Abbey Fishponds trail; the creation of an Eynsham Area Museum; supporting intergenerational community learning/activities and spaces around the sites histories; and active engagement with site histories integrated into the local primary and secondary schools in terms of projects and curriculum links.
- Ensuring there is an agricultural setting for the Listed Buildings at City Farm (possibly a 400m/500m buffer) which could be developed as a centre for community food production.
- The heritage of the area should influence the Vision for the Garden Village and help create a sense of place.

7.100 At this stage, as there are no detailed proposals for the site, the LUC Assessment does not draw conclusive statements regarding the significance of the potential impacts, definitive levels of harm, or mitigation. More detailed assessments, including a more detailed characterisation prepared based on the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment, will need to be undertaken as part of any subsequent planning applications and, if necessary, accompanying an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Preferred Policy Approach 15 – Heritage Assets

To include within the AAP, a policy which seeks as a matter of general principle to ensure that the historic environment is conserved and enhanced in line with national and local policy, including a requirement to respect and where possible enhance the setting of the listed buildings at City Farm, the historic routes running through the site (e.g. the salt way) and the suspected deserted medieval village of Tilgarsley in the north-west corner of the site.

To include a requirement for the masterplanning process to draw on heritage and cultural assets as appropriate in order to contribute towards creating a 'sense of place'.

To also include a requirement for development of the site to capitalise on available opportunities to increase public understanding of heritage assets.

8. Meeting current and future housing needs

Core Objectives:

GV19 To provide by 2031 around 2,200 new homes that are durable, attractive and sustainably constructed to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

GV20 To create a balanced and sustainable community through the provision of a diverse mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures, providing housing opportunities for all including those who are unable to rent or buy on the open market.

GV21 To seek to accelerate housing delivery as far as reasonably possible through new models and mechanisms and diversity of delivery partners, having regard to the timing of delivery of supporting infrastructure.

GV22 To ensure that appropriate arrangements are embedded into the development of the garden village in respect of the long-term maintenance and management of the housing stock.

Introduction

8.1 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan is based on a 'working assumption' that the garden village will deliver around 2,200 new homes in the 10-year period 2021 – 2031 (an average of 220 dwellings per year).

8.2 The role of the AAP is to more definitively determine the most appropriate number of new homes as well as guiding the type and mix of property sizes and tenures, the quality of housing, the pace of delivery and long-term management and maintenance of the housing stock.

8.3 In support of the AAP, the Council has commissioned a separate housing strategy from independent consultants ICENI[34]. The policy approaches set out below are drawn largely from the ICENI report but also draw on other evidence and information as appropriate.

Housing Delivery

8.4 As we outlined in Section 5, taking account of the overall size of the garden village site and the various constraints that affect it, we consider that 2,200 homes remains an appropriate figure for the total number of homes to be planned for at the garden village but that this should not be treated in an overly prescriptive manner.

8.5 The purpose of the AAP is to provide an overall development framework within which more detailed proposals will come forward. Being too precise about the number of homes at this stage would effectively pre-empt future decisions on certain key issues such as the density of development and the layout and mix of uses and would lack flexibility.

8.6 For this reason, our proposed approach through the AAP at this stage is to continue to refer to about 2,200 homes, rather than specifying an exact number. If more homes are proposed as part of any subsequent planning application, the implications of this would need to be considered having regard to the overall vision and objectives for the site and other relevant policies within the AAP, the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (once adopted).

8.7 In terms of the pace of housing delivery, typically large-strategic sites such as the garden village have long 'lead-in' times to construction starting on-site and the number of homes built each year can depend on various factors including the number of different developers on site and their typical delivery rates (often about 50-60 homes per year for volume house builders).

[34] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/garden-village/

8.8 The Local Plan assumes the provision of 2,200 homes in the 10-year period 2021 – 2031 (i.e. 220 homes per year). The Council recognises that this will be challenging but is committed to accelerating housing delivery through the AAP and will seek to achieve this in a number of ways including process-management, place-making investment and infrastructure delivery, product differentiation and build-out rates, and the use of modern methods of construction.

Process management

- 'Twin-tracking' the AAP with the preparation of an outline planning application by the site promoter – Grosvenor Developments Ltd;
- Entering into a planning performance agreement (PPA) with the site promoter;
- Early and on-going pre-application engagement;

Place-making investment and infrastructure delivery

- Ensuring the timely delivery of social and community infrastructure (which can have a positive effect on the pace of sales/delivery and residential values);
- Co-ordinating the delivery of business land with new homes to attract people looking to move to the area to work and to support the growth of local services;
- Ensuring good quality transport links to Hanborough Station and to Oxford;

Product differentiation and build out rates

- Ensuring a good level of diversity in the housing 'products' on offer at the garden village (e.g. in terms of type, size, style, design and tenure mix) both for the scheme as a whole and where appropriate, by phase;
- Encouraging the provision of several sales outlets at different locations within the site as part of each development phase;
- Integrating affordable housing within development phases (as this is catering for a different market/ target group from the 'for sale' housing);
- Ensuring that different market segments are catered for within the scheme (e.g. self/custom-build, older persons housing, employment linked housing etc.)

Modern methods of construction

- Seeking through the AAP, the use of modern methods of construction[35] (i.e. homes built using a high proportion of components which are produced using modern and technologically driven methods of manufacture, with this production often taking place offsite and the components then assembled onsite)
- Active engagement with key delivery partners to enable this to happen.

8.9 To summarise, our proposed approach in respect of overall housing delivery at the garden village is set out below.

<u>Preferred Policy Approach 16 – Housing Delivery</u>

To include within the AAP, a policy based on the overall provision of around 2,200 homes with any increase above that number needing to be robustly justified having regard to the overall vision and core objectives for the site as well as other relevant policies set out in the AAP, Local Plan and Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan.

To also include a requirement for the delivery of new homes to be phased in accordance with the provision of supporting infrastructure as set out in the Eynsham Area Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Having regard to this, to also include a requirement to demonstrate the acceleration of housing delivery through the use of appropriate mechanisms including for example product diversity and the use of modern methods of construction.

[35] The Government's 2017 Housing White Paper found that homes constructed offsite through 'modern methods of construction' can be built up to 30% quicker than by traditional methods of construction, and with potentially a 25% reduction in costs.

Market Housing

8.10 In addition to the overall number of homes and the timing of delivery, the AAP has a role to play in influencing the type and mix of homes that are provided. In this section we consider market housing i.e. homes that are available to rent or buy on the open market.

8.11 Evidence prepared in support of the AAP suggests that the sales market in Eynsham generally relatively strong, being influenced by the settlement's attractiveness as a place to live – including facilities within the settlement and its schools, proximity and access to Oxford, and local employment opportunities.

8.12 The profile of demand is focused more towards houses than flats, with estate agents describing the greatest relative demand for 3- and 4-bed properties. There is a particular premium for detached properties, which have seen recent strong price growth and in more general terms, the demand profile in the Eynsham area is influenced by the presence of the secondary school, Bartholomew School.

8.13 The rental market in Eynsham is buoyant, driven by young professional and families typically aged 25-45 who are looking for good value accommodation, many of whom work in Oxford. There is demand for a range of types of properties, but with 2-bed homes being the most popular.

8.14 In terms of the overall position in West Oxfordshire, analysis of the housing supply pipeline (i.e. schemes already committed through the planning process) suggests a limited market for 1-bed properties, with these typically accounting for less than 10% of supply. The market profile is focused on two-, three- and four-bed houses, with the greatest proportion of delivery being of 3-bed properties, in line with the District's existing housing profile.

8.15 In Oxford, monitoring information suggests that around three quarters of housing delivery in Oxford over the last 12 years has been of 1-bed and 2-bed properties but that forecast provision suggests an increase in the number of larger homes (3+bed houses) coming forward. Notwithstanding this, there are likely to continue to be households who move out of Oxford City – as happens with other cities – to access family housing.

8.16 Other relevant considerations include future demographic changes and the profile of housing needed to support the local economy with future local job growth likely to be focused on higher-skilled roles, with above average employment in managerial and professional occupations as well as graduates.

8.17 In light of the above, the Council's housing strategy suggests that the AAP provides an overall guide to the mix of market housing to be delivered at the garden village. This will help to inform masterplanning and ensure that a balanced, mixed community is supported which provides housing for a range of households.

8.18 The recommended mix of market housing is as follows:

- 1-bed 5 – 10%
- 2-bed 20 – 25%
- 3-bed 40 – 45%
- 4+bed 25 – 30%

8.19 This is reasonably similar to the profile of homes needed across the District but also takes account of the relatively limited supply of larger family homes expected to be delivered in Oxford.

8.20 It is important to note however that the recommended mix above provides a guide only and is not intended to be used with precision in respect of every phase of development. Clearly in some instances, higher-densities of development will be appropriate (e.g. in and around any neighbourhood centre) which is likely to lead to more of a focus on smaller, flatted properties. Regard will also need to be had to evidence of demand at the time of development.

Affordable housing

8.21 Affordable housing is defined by Government in the NPPF as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers. There are various forms of affordable housing including affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership including shared ownership and rent to buy.

8.22 There is an acute need for more affordable housing in West Oxfordshire and in Oxfordshire as a whole, in particular within Oxford. The delivery of 'genuinely affordable housing' is a core element of garden village principles.

8.23 The starting point is the Local Plan which under Policy H3 requires the provision of 50% affordable housing subject to viability. Assuming the provision of 2,200 homes this equates to 1,100 new affordable homes being provided. The Council's housing strategy identifies a significant level of affordable housing need that substantiates this overall requirement so it remains the Council's starting point.

8.24 As well as the number of affordable homes, we need to consider what type and size of affordable units are needed. The Local Plan assumes as a general guide that two thirds of the affordable housing should be affordable rented housing (defined as being at least 20% below local market rents) with one third intermediate housing, such as shared ownership, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

8.25 However, this is a general guide only with the precise mix to be determined on a case by case basis. Furthermore, 80% of market rent is considered by many to still be very unaffordable for most households. Importantly, the scale of development at the garden village is such that it provides an excellent opportunity to consider the provision of a broad mix of different types of affordable housing.

8.26 In terms of affordable housing to rent, the Council's housing strategy highlights the importance of housing being genuinely affordable and identifies the following 'living rents' for the Eynsham area:

- 1-bed £326 – £400 pcm
- 2-bed £424 – £519 pcm
- 3-bed £521 – £639 pcm

8.27 These are rents that are considered to be genuinely affordable at a local level relative to household incomes. Clearly achieving these sorts of relatively low rents is challenging and is only likely to happen through the delivery of social rented housing[36] and/or affordable rent that is heavily discounted (e.g. 50-60% of the equivalent market rent rather than 80%). One option might be to cap affordable rents to ensure they are no higher than the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) limits for the Oxford area which are as follows:

- 1-bedroom - £689
- 2-bedroom - £834
- 3-bedroom - £997

8.28 Achieving lower rents for affordable housing will however affect the overall value and thus viability of the garden village scheme as a whole and requires careful consideration.

8.29 In relation to affordable home ownership, the Council's housing strategy recommends shared ownership as the most appropriate form of affordable home ownership but recognises that some housing could come forward as other forms of housing including starter homes or discounted market sale.

8.30 The strategy highlights the importance of ensuring that such homes are sold at a price that is genuinely affordable for the intended target group. The table below shows the suggested range (by size) for which affordable home ownership properties could potentially be made available. The ranges are quite large and reflect the sizeable gap in incomes required to just about be able to rent up to nearly being able to afford to buy.

Table 8.1

	Affordable purchase price
1-bedroom	£120,000 – £175,000
2-bedroom	£145,000 – £250,000
3-bedroom	£175,000 – £350,000
4-bedroom	£240,000 – £450,000

[36] Where the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for social rent

8.31 It is also possible to look at shared ownership homes in terms of the level of equity share needed. The table below shows the open market value that would need to be achieved for homes to be affordable based on 25% and 50% equity.

Table 8.2

	25% equity	**50% equity**
1-bedroom	£201,000 – £255,000	£154,000 – £196,000
2-bedroom	£237,000 – £304,000	£182,000 – £234,000
3-bedroom	£288,000 – £370,000	£221,000 – £284,000
4-bedroom	£391,000 – £522,000	£301,000 – £401,000

8.32 The recommendation is that the price brackets set out above are taken into account when determining the cost of any affordable home ownership properties made available at the garden village.

8.33 In terms of the size of affordable housing to be provided, the Council's housing strategy suggests that the following mix of affordable homes should be sought at the garden village with a balance of provision of different sizes of homes but with the greatest provision being 2- and 3-bed properties:

Table 8.3

Tenure type	**1-bed**	**2-bed**	**3-bed**	**4+bed**
Social/Affordable Rented	30 – 35%	30 – 40%	30 – 35%	5%
Affordable Home Ownership	20 – 25%	40%	25 – 30%	5-10%

8.34 A further relevant consideration is the issue of who the affordable homes will be made available to (known as 'nomination rights'). In this respect, and in recognition of the fact that the garden village has been allocated in response to Oxford's unmet housing needs, discussions are ongoing with Oxford City Council to determine an appropriate way forward.

8.35 West Oxfordshire's view is that there should be a balanced mix of affordable housing opportunities for both Oxford and West Oxfordshire residents within the garden village and that it would be inappropriate to restrict occupancy of affordable homes provided solely to one of the local authorities' housing registers.

8.36 To ensure an appropriate balance, the District Council is in discussions with Oxford City Council with a view to ensuring that any new affordable homes provided at the garden village are able to be offered to a mixture of those on the West Oxfordshire housing register and those on the Oxford City Council housing register.

8.37 Having regard to the factors outlined above, our proposed approach in respect of market and affordable housing can be summarised as follows.

Preferred Policy Approach 17 – Housing Mix

In respect of market housing, to include within the AAP, a policy based on the provision of a balanced mix of market housing opportunities guided by the following indicative mix of property sizes:

- **1-bed 5 – 10%**
- **2-bed 20 – 25%**
- **3-bed 40 – 45%**
- **4+bed 25 – 30%**

To recognise that this is a guide only and that the precise mix of market property sizes will be determined by a number of other factors including higher densities of development in parts of the site and evidence of demand at the time of development.

In respect of affordable housing, to include an overall requirement of 50% affordable housing, subject to viability, in accordance with Policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

To also include a requirement for a broad mix of affordable housing types including:

- **Affordable housing to rent with a balanced proportion of social rented properties and affordable rented housing, the latter being capped at no higher than Local Housing Allowance (LHA) limits; and**
- **Affordable home ownership with a particular focus on shared ownership but also allowing for other forms of housing including starter homes and discount market sale, having regard to realistic affordable purchase prices as indicated in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 above.**

The size of affordable housing to be informed by the following indicative mix of property sizes:

Social/Affordable Rent

- **1-bed 30 – 35%**
- **2-bed 30 – 40%**
- **3-bed 30 – 35%**
- **4+bed 5%**

Affordable Home Ownership

- **1-bed 20 – 25%**
- **2-bed 40%**
- **3-bed 25 – 30%**
- **4+bed 5 – 10%**

To recognise that this is a guide only and that the precise mix of affordable property sizes will be determined by a number of other factors including higher densities of development in parts of the site and evidence of demand at the time of development.

Build to Rent

8.38 'Build-to-rent' development is defined in the NPPF as *'purpose-built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership or management control'*.

8.39 The build to rent concept is relatively embryonic with few schemes outside of London and none in Oxford despite the strong rental market. It does however offer a number of benefits including:

- Helping local authorities to meet demand for private rented housing whilst increasing tenants choice;
- Retaining tenants for longer and maximising occupancy levels;
- Helping to increase housing supply, particularly on large, multiple phased sites as it can be built alongside build for sale and affordable housing; and

- Good design and high-quality construction methods are often key components of the Build to Rent model.

8.40 The Council's housing strategy suggests that in West Oxfordshire as a whole, there has been strong growth in the private rented sector and that Oxford City has also experienced substantial growth in the private rented sector. There is a strong rental market particularly in and around Eynsham and a strong relationship between Eynsham and Oxford both for young professionals and families who are residing in Eynsham and commuting to Oxford for work, it being a more affordable location within reasonable commuting distance.

8.41 In light of the above, we consider that there is good potential for the delivery of build to rent properties as part of the garden village proposal. Underpinning this potential is:

- A large and established private rental market in the local area and Oxford;
- The attractiveness of good quality, purpose-build accommodation and longer tenancies; and
- The combination of high quality of life/place together with access to services/ jobs in Oxford.

8.42 Typically the dwelling mix for build to rent is likely to focus on 1, 2 and some 3-bed properties given the occupancy profile associated with private rented accommodation and can be expected to accommodate households typically aged in the 25-40 bracket who are unable to afford to buy a home; but may also include some older households looking for flexibility or whose circumstances have changed (e.g. divorcees).

8.43 There is potential for a proportion of build-to-rent units to be delivered as 'affordable private rent' housing i.e. 20% less than local market rents. In terms of the proportion of build to rent units that should be affordable, the Government's practice guidance suggests that 20% of the overall build to rent scheme is generally a suitable benchmark.

Preferred Policy Approach 18 – Build to Rent

To include within the AAP a policy supporting in principle the provision of a 'build to rent' pilot scheme (the size which to be determined at a later stage) as part of the overall housing mix at the garden village, to be located in an accessible location with strong public transport accessibility.

Build to rent to be defined within the AAP as purpose built housing to rent with tenancy agreements of three years or more and professionally managed stock in single ownership or management control.

To include 20% affordable private rented units (i.e. 80% of local market rents) subject to viability considerations.

Self/Custom Build Housing

8.44 Custom build housing is where a builder is contracted by a home owner to create a 'custom built' home or where a private individual builds their home as a DIY 'self-build' project. This can range from single dwellings built for or by an individual to larger schemes with many homes built as custom or self-build housing.

8.45 The Government is massively supportive of custom build housing which is seen as a more affordable route to home ownership and an opportunity to create bespoke, well-designed and sustainably constructed new homes. It also offers opportunities to smaller builders and contractors, creating local jobs and contributing to the local economy.

8.46 In terms of the demand for self and custom build properties, the Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register shows that there were 98 registered expressions of interest across West Oxfordshire in the period 1st October 2015 to 31st March 2019 and that of these, 31 people have expressed an interest in self- or custom-build development in Eynsham, of which the greatest proportion (68%) are seeking 3-bed homes.

8.47 Broader evidence of demand from Buildstore – the largest national database on the demand and supply of self and custom build properties in the UK – suggests that 506 people are registered as looking to build in West Oxfordshire on their Custom Build Register with a further 879 subscribers to their Plotsearch service which tracks self-build land opportunities. Consultation with local estate agents also confirms that there is demand for serviced plots of land in and around Eynsham.

8.48 The basic starting point for the garden village is that 5% of the residential plots (i.e. around 110) are to be serviced and made available for the purposes of self and custom-build housing. The AAP has a role to play in determining whether the 5% requirement should be exceeded and how it should be addressed in terms of the design, mix and affordability, distribution across the garden village site and potential delivery models.

8.49 In terms of the 5% requirement, given the provision of custom and self-build housing opportunities is so consistent with garden village principles we consider that in respect of the garden village, this should be expressed in the form of at least 5% with the District Council seeking to explore the potential to exceed this with the site promoter as the scheme progresses.

8.50 In terms of the mix of different opportunities, we believe it is important to make provision for a mix of plot types and sizes capable of accommodating a broad mix of property sizes and offering a mix of detached, semi-detached and, potentially, terraced homes, with the proportion of each in a given phase to be guided by the prevailing data on the Council's Right to Build register and other available market demand information.

8.51 With regard to design, in order to drive up design quality and to minimise risk of badly designed development coming forward, we consider that the provision of any custom and self-build housing opportunities within the garden village needs to be governed by a plot-specific design code. This would essentially allow for some freedom of design within a set of high-level 'rules' thereby offering a degree of flexibility, coupled with certainty not only for those wishing to undertake the self/custom build but also the wider community including residents of the garden village.

8.52 In terms of affordability, there are several ways in which custom and self-build can deliver affordable housing. These typically include models requiring some form of discount, subsidy or equity/land ownership being held by a third party and may include:

- Affordable housing whether rented or shared ownership, secured through a Section 106 Agreement or otherwise, usually developed in partnership with a housing association (Registered Provider);
- Community-led projects such as community land trusts, co-housing or co-operative housing groups or associations of individuals who are a community benefit society; and
- Other intermediate discounted products such as Discount Market Sale and Starter Homes.

8.53 There are a number potential development models which may be suitable for achieving the delivery of affordable housing through custom and self-build at the garden village such as land with outline planning permission being sold to a registered provider, a serviced parcel of land being sold to a registered provider, serviced plots sold directly to a customer for discount market sale/starter homes self/custom build and the sale of a custom build 'shell' to a registered provider.

8.54 The Council's basic starting point is that in line with Policy H3 of the Local Plan, 50% of the self/custom build opportunities made available at the garden village will be provided as affordable housing, subject to viability considerations.

8.55 In terms of distribution across the garden village site, custom and self-build housing will by its very nature be more diverse than conventional market housing, so it is important to carefully consider how it is integrated into the overall scheme from the outset.

8.56 The Council's view is that arranging Custom and Self Build housing in clusters (as opposed to pepper-potting throughout each phase) will enable construction traffic and different build outs to be better managed. It will also align with the design aspirations and constraints set down by any Design Code. Clustering of these plots/properties would help to minimise any disruption and would also help in terms of management of sales and marketing and contribute to protecting the anticipated design quality of the OCGV as a whole.

Preferred Policy Approach 19 – Self/Custom Build Housing

To include within the AAP a policy requiring the provision of at least 5% of the total number of homes to be provided as serviced plots for self and custom build housing.

Serviced plots to be included as part of each phase of development across the Garden Village as a whole and set out in a phasing plan.

A range of Custom and Self Build housing delivery models to be supported, including those which can deliver affordable homes and require some form of discount, subsidy or equity/land ownership being held by a third party such as a Registered Provider or a Community Land Trust.

Where such serviced plots are provided as affordable homes they will be required to remain affordable in perpetuity and will count towards the overall affordable housing requirement for the Garden Village.

Proposals for Custom and Self Build housing will be expected to be accompanied by a design code which should allow for high quality, innovative and sustainable designs consistent with the vision and objectives for the garden village as a whole.

Serviced plots will be expected to be provided in clusters of 10 or more homes.

Specialist Housing Needs

8.57 In this section we consider the potential role of the AAP and garden village in meeting the housing requirements of older people, people with disabilities, communal housing, student/graduate housing and employment-linked housing.

Housing for older people and people with disabilities

8.58 Oxfordshire County Council's population projections suggest a 44% increase in the population aged over 65 between 2016 and 2031 in Oxfordshire. 55% growth is expected in those aged over 85 (+9,400 persons) across the County, with an increase of 1,900 persons aged over 85 in West Oxfordshire taking account of levels of planned housing growth influenced in particular by increases in life expectancy.

8.59 The housing needs of older people vary and range from accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to retirement and specialist housing for those with support or care needs.

8.60 Census data shows a greater prevalence of both people, and households which include people, in Eynsham with a long-term health problem or disability than is the case at the District or County level. It is also clear that the prevalence of long-term health problems or disability (LTHPD) is focused in particular towards older households aged 65 and over

8.61 The Council's housing strategy suggests that planned growth at Eynsham is likely to lead to an increase of 1,169 persons with a LTHPD with most of this increase expected to be in age groups aged 65 and over. It also suggests that dementia and mobility problems are expected to increase significantly in the future.

8.62 The basic starting point presented by the Local Plan is that at least 25% of new homes at the garden village should meet accessible and adaptable homes standards with at least 5% being wheelchair adaptable[37].

8.63 Accessible and adaptable homes are those which make reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling and incorporate features that make them potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users. Wheelchair adaptable homes are those that can be easily altered to meet the needs of a wheelchair user.

8.64 It is relevant to note that the Local Plan sets these requirements as 'minimums' and clearly there is the potential to explore through the garden village the extent to which there is scope to exceed this.

8.65 The Council's housing strategy suggests that in light of forecast demographic, health and mobility problems, it would not be unreasonable to consider requiring <u>all</u> new homes at the garden village to be built to accessible and adaptable homes standards, with the cost of meeting this being unlikely to fundamentally alter scheme viability (an additional cost of £520 - £940 per dwelling depending on size and form).

8.66 In addition to the accessibility and adaptability of 'mainstream' dwellings, we need to consider the potential need for specialist housing for older people including specialist retirement housing such as sheltered and extra-care housing and residential care or care home accommodation such as residential homes and nursing homes.

8.67 The Council's housing strategy suggests that given the projected changes in the number of older people living in Eynsham, there is likely to be a requirement for specialist housing options moving forward. The analysis points to a need for 'housing with support' development of around 147 units to 2031, of which 64% is for leasehold accommodation. There is also a need for up to 42 housing with care units and 70 care home bedspaces.

8.68 The strategy suggests that a viable extra-care scheme might have between 60-150 units and that the District Council should consider whether it is appropriate to identify and allocate specific land through the garden village AAP. It also suggests that consideration should be given to the provision of bungalows as part of the overall mix of housing which may assist in encouraging households to downsize.

[37] Where wheelchair adaptable homes are provided they will be counted as contributing towards the 25% accessible and adaptable homes requirement.

Communal housing

8.69 The concept of communal living can be defined as like-minded individuals working together to build and reside in their own housing development. Residents then effectively pool space, time and resources for shared benefit. In housing terms, it offers a new and innovative way to deliver homes and create communities; and they are typically environmentally sustainable.

8.70 Although communal housing has been popular across Europe, there are only 21 completed schemes in the United Kingdom, 10 of which are located in London.

8.71 In policy terms, communal living as a housing product is ultimately very embryonic with no evidence to support the demand for such a housing product. However, there are clear benefits around communal living in housing delivery terms amongst other areas.

8.72 As such, the Council's housing strategy suggests that should a community group come forward with a particular aspiration to deliver a communal living scheme, the Council should look to work with and encourage that group and any associated developer to identify and bring forward a site to address any identified demand.

Student/graduate and employment linked housing

8.73 The Garden Village presents an opportunity to meet the housing needs of essential local workers and junior skilled staff required by high-tech businesses, health and education institutions located in Eynsham, as well as Witney and Oxford. As a result of the proximity to Oxford and its universities, there is also an opportunity to meet the needs of post-graduate students and academic staff.

8.74 The emerging Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy identifies housing affordability as a key issue across Oxfordshire and one which can restrain staff recruitment and economic performance.

8.75 The Council's housing strategy suggests that Eynsham is perhaps not an appropriate location for purpose-built undergraduate student accommodation due to its connectivity, with students principally looking for locations which are close (ideally walking distance) to their place of study.

8.76 However, in terms of other education and employment linked housing there is support for the concept from the garden village site promoter and local estate agents. Oxford University have also indicated that in supporting provision of housing for postgraduates and staff, the University is actively looking at development on a number of sites in the greater Oxford area.

8.77 At present however there is little quantitative evidence on the needs of these groups and as such the Council's housing strategy suggests that whilst the AAP might encourage the provision of graduate or employer-linked housing, it should not necessarily be a policy requirement.

<u>Preferred Policy Approach 20 – Specialist Housing Needs</u>

To include within the AAP a policy requiring consideration to be given to meeting specialist housing needs as part of the overall type and mix of housing opportunities at the garden village.

To include a requirement for all new homes to be designed to meet Building Regulations Requirement M4 (2) – accessible and adaptable dwellings unless it be robustly demonstrated that achieving the standard is not practical (e.g. where level site access cannot be achieved) or viable.

In principle support for the provision of specialist housing accommodation for older people as part of the overall mix of housing at the garden village to be located in an accessible location in terms of available services and facilities including public transport (e.g. as part of the overall mix of uses within a neighbourhood centre).

In principle support for the provision of education and employment-linked housing as part of the overall mix of housing at the garden village to be located in an accessible location in terms of available services and facilities including public transport.

In principle support for the provision of communal housing should a community group come forward with a particular aspiration to deliver a communal living scheme.

9. Enterprise innovation and productivity

Core Objectives:

GV23 To make a positive and measurable contribution towards the overall growth, diversification and value of the district, county and sub-regional economies.
GV24 To fully capitalise on the area's economic potential and the strategic location of the garden village on the A40 corridor, through the creation of a campus style science park in line with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).
GV25 To provide a balanced range of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of new homes, providing flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.
GV26 To support growth and productivity by enabling a high degree of enterprise and innovation.
GV27 To achieve high rates of home-working and telecommuting by providing the necessary supporting infrastructure and flexibility in building design.
GV28 To provide a range of education and training opportunities for local people to improve skills and 'work-readiness'.

Introduction

9.1 Eynsham represents one of West Oxfordshire's most significant business locations and already accommodates a cluster of high tech businesses and supply chain networks with potential for strong levels of future growth.

9.2 The garden village site is just 7 miles from the centre of Oxford, 6 miles from Oxford Airport and 3½ miles from Hanborough station. Its strategic location provides a strong opportunity for new employment provision, with much of the economic activity taking place around Eynsham forming part of the wider Oxford City region economy.

9.3 Economic evidence prepared in support of the Local Plan[38], emphasises the need for additional business land in this area and the proximity of the garden village to Oxford's existing science parks (notably Begbroke) means that it is particularly well placed to act as a 'move on' site for businesses gearing up to commercialisation.

9.4 In accordance with the Garden City/ Village principles, there will be a strong emphasis on the provision of high quality employment opportunities. Developing the garden village is not just about building new homes but also creating business investment opportunities, new jobs and developing skills.

9.5 We anticipate that these opportunities will be delivered through a package of different measures including the provision of new, large-scale business space, other commercial opportunities, enabling home-working/telecommuting and developing employment skills and training opportunities. These four key areas are explored further below.

New business space

9.6 The allocation of the garden village within the Local Plan includes the provision of about 40 hectares of business land[39] in the form of a 'campus style' science park. This proposal also formed a key element of the Council's expression of interest in 2016.

9.7 The supporting text of the local plan explains that whilst the detail will be worked up through the AAP, it is anticipated that the science park will be in a prominent location close to the A40, with the 40 hectares providing long-term capacity up to and beyond 2031.

[38] Economic Snapshot and Outlook (2015 – CAG)

[39] B-class i.e. offices, research and industrial, light industrial, general industrial and storage and distribution

9.8 To help inform the AAP, the Council has commissioned independent consultants Lichfields to advise on the potential employment role that could be played by the garden village. Their report[40] focuses on four key questions. These are set out below together with a brief summary of the conclusions reached.

1) Is this an appropriate, strategic location for the type of new campus style science park envisaged to date?

9.9 The site represents an appropriate location for a number of reasons; Oxfordshire is a proven location for such development, the garden village site benefits from close proximity to the Oxfordshire 'knowledge spine', it already has strong strategic connectivity which will be further enhanced and there is national, regional and local policy support for boosting productivity and high value business growth.

2) To what extent does the supporting evidence justify and support the delivery of a new science park of the type and scale proposed both in the period to 2031 and in the longer-term beyond?

9.10 There is support from a qualitative, supply-side perspective with existing evidence and strategic policy supporting the delivery of a new science park of the type and scale proposed. It represents a key mechanism and spatial opportunity to implement ambitious plans for Oxfordshire to become one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040 (as set out in the emerging Oxfordshire trailblazer LIS[41]). It also offers synergy with the wider architecture of the Oxfordshire 'knowledge spine', with OxLEP[42] specifically identifying the garden village at Eynsham as contributing towards this objective.

3) What evidence is there that the proposed science park is likely to be commercially successful and what would be the most appropriate strategy for bringing the site forward to market and ensuring sustainable rates/levels of occupancy?

9.11 With the right conditions and support in place, there is every chance the proposed science park can be successful but this will to a large extent depend on it providing a clear USP and distinctive offer to prospective occupiers such as 'grow-on' space for university spin-outs. Other key success factors include active linkages with academia, the presence of an anchor institution which provides a distinctive offering, and sufficient scale and size of site to provide both critical mass and opportunities for future expansion.

4) Are there more appropriate, alternative ways of meeting the stated aim of providing additional business land and job opportunities as part of the garden village proposal, for example through a more dispersed approach, flexible living/working space, mixed-use development etc?

9.12 Provision of science park space through a more 'dispersed' approach with smaller employment clusters could prove effective, although scale is an important success factor in allowing a critical mass of complementary research, education and commercial activity to co-locate onsite and a campus style concept would be beneficial in this respect.

9.13 This would ideally be complemented by a range of broader employment opportunities (such as jobs created in local services to serve the new population) that can be accommodated across the wider garden village site including within smaller scale local hubs/centres that are well connected and accessible.

9.14 Having regard to the advice provided by Lichfields, the District Council remains committed to taking the science park concept forward to delivery through the garden village.

9.15 West Oxfordshire's industrial market is comparatively strong but suffers to an extent from congestion and strategic accessibility. There is scope to expand the District's existing sectoral strengths in high value technology, in particular connected to engineering and manufacturing. Across Oxfordshire as a whole, the industrial market is also strong, with science and technology occupiers driving demand as well as businesses operating in the industrial and distribution sectors.

[40] https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1996634/16444-OCGV-Employment-Study-Final-Report-070419.PDF

[41] Local Industrial Strategy

[42] Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

9.16 OxLEP data suggests that latent inward investment demand exists at the Oxfordshire wide level, in particular within the science and technology sector and there are strong opportunities for the garden village to accommodate unmet demand within and outside the District, particularly need arising from Oxford City. To a large extent, historic trends in inward investment reflect availability of land and development opportunities which West Oxfordshire has traditionally lacked.

9.17 The proposal for a new science park at the garden village responds to a range of emerging strategic policy and growth ambitions. At both the national and sub-regional level, strategic policy direction is focused on increasing productivity and fostering innovation.

9.18 At a national level, the UK National Industrial Strategy aims to boost productivity with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure. At the County level, the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) specifically references the new garden village science park as part of the county's growing innovation ecosystem, bringing much needed capacity for the future and complementing the mature science parks that already exist but are near capacity.

9.19 The Oxfordshire LIS includes a vision for Oxfordshire's economy which is:

'To position Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040, building on the region's world-leading science and technology clusters to be a pioneer for the UK for emerging transformative technologies and sectors.'

9.20 The proposed science park will assist in achieving this vison by providing extensive new business and research space. Its role will develop over time as the science park is built out and becomes established. Once established, this will help the County as a whole to remain at the forefront of innovative technologies across a number of leading sectors, contributing to the Oxfordshire knowledge spine.

9.21 This in turn will contribute to the wider growth objectives of the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor which has been identified as a nationally significant location for future housing and employment growth by the Government.

9.22 The development of a science park of the scale proposed is considered to be a unique opportunity for West Oxfordshire to contribute to Oxfordshire's globally renowned knowledge economy. The District has historically lacked the supply of sites which are of a scale suitable to attract science/ R&D activity and the OCGV science park provides an opportunity to reverse this. The science park has the potential to raise the profile of the District and to accommodate unmet demand, particularly amongst science and technology sector occupiers.

9.23 The Lichfields study looks at a number of science park typologies (research institute model, higher education model, commercial model and organic cluster model) and suggests that some form of hybrid is likely to represent the most realistic approach, albeit with a clear economic role to distinguish this from wider provision and competition.

9.24 This could take advantage of opportunities associated with university spin-outs that distinctly operate within science and R&D related sectors and are still growing but no longer require intensive support. The emerging Oxfordshire LIS indicates that there may be opportunities for the creation of living laboratories associated with transformative technologies and other relatively early stage university spin-outs which have out-grown dedicated incubator facilities.

9.25 High quality urban design and good integration of services are essential to making the science park a success including for example the provision of a central 'amenities hub' which will create a sense of place and improve connectivity between the employment element of the garden village and the rest of the site.

9.26 A high quality urban environment which creates an attractive environment with vibrant public spaces will also enhance the market appeal of the science park and create a premium environment to support higher value commercial development. This in turn will result in a more viable and successful commercial development than could otherwise be achieved.

9.27 In terms of delivery, it is recognised that this needs to be carefully structured and phased as part of the overall masterplanning of the garden village. As business and market needs can change quickly and evolve, delivery of the science park will need to build in flexibility. This should be created by establishing, and importantly maintaining, a 'ladder' of premises of different sizes and price points to allow businesses to expand and be retained on the site.

9.28 In addition, it will be critical for the science park to be supported by the right type and level of infrastructure. Some of this will need to be tailored to match the needs of individual tenants and will need to be provided at the right stage in the development process.

9.29 The science park is a long-term proposition and the scale and size of site needed means that it will be phased, with development likely to extend beyond the lifetime of the current Local Plan (2031). As such, the role of the AAP at this stage, is to ensure that sufficient land is safeguarded through masterplanning to allow the science park to be appropriately phased and be able to develop fully over the longer term.

9.30 Reducing the size of the science park could significantly affect its long term success as high tech spin outs will be drawn to other parks which are of a scale and size to attract an anchor institution and also provide opportunities for future expansion. If the scale and size of the employment site at the garden village is eroded significantly, the park is unlikely to be able to provide the critical mass to successfully attract and retain potential occupiers.

Preferred Policy Approach 21 – New Business Space

To include within the AAP, a policy which safeguards land at the garden village for the purposes of 'science, technology and high-tech related' B-class business floorspace.

This should be located in a suitably accessible part of the site and in particular, have a strong relationship with the A40 and transport links more generally including the proposed 'park and ride'.

The quantum of business land to be made available will be the subject of further masterplanning, taking account of the overall site constraints and opportunities and the timing of delivery which is anticipated to run beyond 2031.

The primary emphasis will be on achieving a sufficient 'critical mass' of business space of about 40 hectares of land, so as to not undermine or dilute the science park concept and likely future delivery.

Other Commercial Opportunities

9.31 Alongside the science park, it is envisaged that the garden village will provide a broad range of other job opportunities to create a vibrant, diverse and a well-balanced community.

9.32 It is anticipated that within any neighbourhood centre, there will be a mixture of different commercial and other uses including for example childcare, shops, pubs, restaurants, hair and beauty salons, gyms and other services and facilities. These will help to generate a number of local employment opportunities.

9.33 It is also anticipated that the garden village will include some co-working space for people to work away from the home environment or develop their own businesses. This will help to create vibrant 'hubs' or 'clusters' within the development to help to ensure activity throughout the day and good integration of different age groups and interests which is a key element of successful placemaking and fostering community relations.

9.34 The garden village also presents the opportunity for some small clusters of flexible employment floorspace as part of the overall mix of development. This could for example be delivered through courtyards of flexible startup units (B1) that can be easily adapted to a range of purposes including office, workshop, studio or commercial. These units will allow a progression of business growth, encouraging people to keep their businesses in the local area and to grow their workforce from within the garden village.

Preferred Policy Approach 22 – Small-scale commercial opportunities and flexible business space

To include within the AAP, in principle support for the provision of small-scale commercial and flexible business space as part of the overall mix of development at the garden village.

To be focused in appropriate, accessible locations (e.g. as part of any neighbourhood centre) with effective links to other related uses as appropriate (e.g. schools, transport, housing).

Home working/telecommuting

9.35 The benefits of home working (otherwise known as 'telecommuting') are well documented. Whether on a permanent or ad-hoc basis, it helps to reduce the need to travel and can often achieve a better life / work balance which can lead to improved health and wellbeing and increased productivity. Superfast broadband speeds have made this a practical reality for many people.

9.36 We know that a large proportion of people living in the Eynsham and Hanborough area commute out to work in Oxford and other surrounding areas (around 30%). This is a relatively high proportion and to help reduce this 'outflow' we are committed to ensuring through the AAP that the garden village is characterised by a strong emphasis on home-working.

9.37 If people are able to live and work within the garden village or at least travel elsewhere to work less often, this will have a number of benefits including in relation to traffic congestion and health.

9.38 We will therefore require the provision of well-designed homes within the garden village which are accessible and flexible to meet changing demographic trends as well as being designed with home working in mind. Ultrafast Fibre to the Premises (FttP) broadband should be considered as an essential utility and should be able to be delivered to every property within the garden village.

9.39 We will also seek to deliver the provision of flexible workspaces as part of the overall mix of uses within the garden village. 'Drop-in' meeting/workspace which people can use on an ad-hoc basis will provide an alternative to working 'at home' whilst still promoting a strong degree of 'self-containment'.

9.40 Coupled with other measures designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, these initiatives will help to support the economy whilst reducing the impact on the A40 and other key routes.

Preferred Policy Approach 23 – Homeworking/Telecommuting

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring every property at the garden village to be supported by all necessary infrastructure to enable the provision of Ultrafast Fibre to the Premises (FttP) broadband.

To also include a requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to demonstrate other measures which will enable a high proportion of homeworking including the provision of flexible meeting/workspace in suitable, accessible locations (e.g. as part of the overall mix of opportunities within any neighbourhood centre).

Employment skills and training

9.41 The garden village has the potential to create a large number of new jobs which will be of benefit to the West Oxfordshire economy and to Oxfordshire as a whole. There will be direct jobs associated with the construction of the garden village as well as indirect jobs created as a result of 'knock-on' effects through the supply chain (e.g. demand for materials).

9.42 As we outlined earlier, the provision of new business land will create a large number of new, permanent jobs supported by the provision of other commercial opportunities including retail and leisure. We want to ensure through the AAP that the creation of new job opportunities is supported by appropriate investment in skills and training. This will help to ensure that people who perhaps don't currently have a job or wish to change career, are able to progress.

9.43 To achieve this, the Council is proposing that development of the garden village must be supported by the use of a Community Employment Plan (CEP). This is an employer-led initiative which can enable local residents to receive the training and skills needed to access new job-opportunities.

9.44 CEPs are supported by the Oxfordshire LEP and have been used at the Westgate Centre redevelopment in Oxford, Barton Park and Bicester Eco-Town.

9.45 CEP's are likely to include:

- Apprenticeships;
- Employment / training initiatives for all ages, including both work tasters and work experience placements;
- Traineeships for younger people, including those who are not in employment, education or training (NEETS);
- Best endeavours to maximise local labour, including pre-employment training;
- Local procurement agreement – potential for local businesses to be included in tender lists;
- Support for local skills and training events ie. Careers fest, National Apprenticeship week;
- School, College and University engagement initiatives such as site visits, school visits and project support

9.46 The creation of the science park alongside the provision of a secondary school facility which is envisaged on the site also provides potential opportunities for students to gain valuable training and work experience by creating linkages between this educational facility and the businesses operating within the science park site. This could greatly improve skills and 'work-readiness' for the next generation of workers in areas such as engineering related to the science and R&D sectors, raising the profile of the garden village as a great place to work and train.

Preferred Policy Approach 24 – Employment Skills and Training

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring the preparation and submission of a community employment plan (CEP) as part of any planning application for the garden village.

Key stakeholders including OxLEP to be involved in the preparation of the CEP with progress and outputs to be measured, monitored and shared with the District Council on a regular basis.

10. Transport, movement and connectivity

Core Objectives:

GV29 To reduce the overall need to travel by providing a balanced and sustainable mix of uses within the garden village so that the majority of people's everyday needs are met locally.

GV30 To foster an environment in which active and healthy forms of travel (walking, cycling and riding) are the 'norm' based on the concept of 'walkable neighbourhoods' facilitating simple and sustainable access to jobs, education, and services.

GV31 To provide integrated, high quality and convenient public transport choices centred on the proposed Park and Ride, associated improvements to the A40 and future investment at Hanborough Station.

GV32 To provide safe and convenient connections to and across the garden village site and the wider area, in particular to Eynsham, Hanborough Station and the open countryside.

GV33 To make the most effective use of all available transport capacity through innovative management of the network.

GV34 To anticipate, reflect and capitalise on changing travel trends and habits including greater use of home-working and the move towards low carbon technologies as well as shared, connected and autonomous vehicles.

Introduction

10.1 A recurring theme raised through consultation to date has been the need to robustly address the transport implications of the garden village proposal, with many people expressing concerns that the scale of development will make the current situation on the A40 and surrounding road network worse, particularly when planned growth to the west of Eynsham and the wider area is also factored in.

10.2 These concerns are entirely understandable and the Council is therefore committed to ensuring that the AAP is based on a robust transport strategy which:

- Reflects and integrates with Oxfordshire County Council's long-term strategy for the A40 and planned growth to the west of Eynsham through a fully co-ordinated approach;
- Seeks to reduce the overall need to travel and in particular the need to travel by private car, with a focus on reducing short distance, single-occupancy car journeys;
- Embeds active and healthy travel such as walking, cycling and riding as a core concept for the design and layout of the garden village from the outset so that they become the preferred choice for those living and working there;
- Allows for convenient and safe access to a range of integrated public transport options including bus and rail;
- Is flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances and to reflect the needs of people of all ages and demographics; and
- Ensures that necessary improvements (e.g. to highway infrastructure) are delivered in an integrated and phased manner alongside the development so as to maximise effectiveness and minimise disruption to the local community.

10.3 As part of the development of the AAP, independent consultants Wood Group have therefore been appointed to develop the transport evidence base for the Eynsham area. The core aims of their study are to:

- Confirm the current situation on the transport network in and around Eynsham and the wider area (i.e. the baseline situation);
- Set out the potential quantum of future travel demands in Eynsham and the surrounding area brought about by planned development at Eynsham and in the wider area;

- Identify solutions to address future pressures on the transport network; and
- Establish a phasing plan for infrastructure including identification of trigger points for requiring specific transport improvements and infrastructure to be in place.

10.4 To date, the first stage transport baseline report[43] has been published and work is currently ongoing in relation to the remaining elements of the study. Inputs into the Eynsham work have been provided by the County Council in close co-ordination with the transport assessment and strategy work associated with the Eynsham Park & Ride (with bus lanes) planning application. The proposed policy approaches set out below will therefore be updated and refined as appropriate in the final pre-submission draft AAP due to be published later in the year.

Reducing the Overall Need to Travel

10.5 We recognise that large-scale developments like the garden village have the potential to create a significant number of additional vehicle movements and as the local area already suffers from severe traffic congestion, this clearly requires very careful consideration.

10.6 Our basic starting point is to seek to reduce the overall need to travel as much as possible. This means reducing the number and/or length of journeys made and we can help achieve this in a number of ways.

10.7 A key mechanism is the quantum and mix of uses provided within the garden village site. In short, by ensuring a good, balanced mix of different uses, services and facilities, we can help reduce the need for those living and working there to have to travel further afield. Whilst we cannot and should not expect the garden village to be entirely 'self-contained', we can ensure that it includes a wide range of opportunities for people to meet most of their everyday needs 'on-site'.

10.8 Providing good local employment opportunities within the garden village will for example enable some people to be able to live and work in the same place and thereby help to reduce the distance or number of times they need to travel elsewhere. This is a particularly important issue for this part of the District where a significant proportion of out-commuting towards Oxford happens.

10.9 Similarly, the provision of high quality, future-proofed reliable digital infrastructure and the provision of flexible live/work and meeting space will also help to reduce the need to travel for work purposes by helping to contribute towards higher levels of home-working.

10.10 In addition to the availability of employment opportunities, the provision of other key uses will also enable people to meet their everyday needs within the garden village. In particular, people need to be able to easily access essential facilities such as local schools, leisure and recreation, shopping and community uses. We are committed to ensuring that the garden village provides the key services and facilities that are needed and that these are brought forward in a timely manner.

10.11 As well as achieving a good, balanced mix of different uses, we can ensure through the AAP that appropriate and compatible uses are located together, e.g. through clusters of mixed-use developments which will not only help to create interest, vibrancy and inclusivity, but will also increase the opportunity for 'linked trips' whereby people are able to conveniently access different uses within the same part of the site. As outlined earlier in Section 5, the three spatial framework options being considered all include the provision of at least one neighbourhood centre acting as a focal point or 'cluster' of different uses.

10.12 Linked trips can also be encouraged through the use of shared facilities whereby buildings and spaces are available to different users at different times of the day – an example being the 'dual-use' of school facilities by the wider community. Shared facilities also represent an efficient use of land and resources and will therefore be supported as a matter of principle through the AAP.

43 https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/2012410/Transport-Evidence-Baseline-Report_15052019_with-Figures.pdf

Preferred Policy Approach 25 – Reducing the Overall Need to Travel

To include within the AAP a policy requiring as a matter of general principle, robust evidence to demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to reduce the overall need to travel.

To be set out in the form of a transport strategy including consideration of:

- **The overall quantum and mix of different land uses;**
- **The design, layout and integration of different uses including the provision of 'clusters' of complementary mixed-use development;**
- **Potential shared use of key facilities; and**
- **Other reasonable measures which will demonstrably contribute to reducing the overall need to travel within the site and further afield.**

Reducing the use of the private car

10.13 We know that levels of car dependency in West Oxfordshire are high and the Eynsham area is no exception, with around 67% of people driving to work and an additional 5% travelling in a car/van as a passenger. Far fewer people walk, cycle and use public transport to get to work despite the availability of premium bus services and cycle routes along the A40 and rail services nearby at Hanborough Station.

10.14 A particular problem is single occupancy car trips e.g. people travelling to work, as well as short distance car journeys which tend to generate the most pollutants in terms of vehicle emissions.

10.15 We are committed through the AAP to reducing car use as fully as possible. We discuss our approach to active and healthy travel and public transport a little later on and in this section focus on tackling car dependency itself.

10.16 There are a number of 'demand management' measures we are looking to embed within the AAP. These are outlined below and will be refined as appropriate as the supporting transport evidence base progresses.

Car Parking Standards and Strategy

10.17 An obvious way to tackle car use is to restrict the number of parking spaces that are available which can encourage people to either own fewer cars or potentially no car at all. This requires careful consideration however as it can lead to a cars being parked informally 'on-street' if there are no parking controls in place, causing access problems and conflict.

10.18 Current national policy allows for parking standards to be set locally taking into account a number of factors including the accessibility, type, mix and use of development, the availability of public transport opportunities, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

10.19 Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development can be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.

10.20 As a general guide, in larger developments, Oxfordshire County Council typically use the following standards in West Oxfordshire:

Table 10.1 – OCC Parking Standards

Number of bedrooms per dwelling	Number of Allocated Spaces	Number of spaces when two allocated spaces per dwelling are provided		Number of spaces when one allocated space per dwelling is provided		Number of Unallocated Spaces When no Allocated Spaces are Provided
		Allocated spaces	Unallocated spaces	Allocated spaces	Unallocated spaces	
1	1	N/a	N/a	1	0.4	1.2
2	2	2	0.3	1	0.6	1.4
2/3	2	2	0.3	1	0.8	1.6
3	2	2	0.4	1	0.9	1.8
3/4	2	2	0.5	1	1.1	2.1
4+	2	2	0.6	1	1.5	2.4

10.21 This is a guide only and actual levels of parking are generally determined through more detailed assessments such as a transport strategy or transport assessment. In this instance, the AAP provides an opportunity to consider the most appropriate parking standards to be applied and it is likely that lower standards will be applied to reflect the accessibility of the site to excellent public transport, cycle and rail links, and given the anticipated change in future travel habits and available technologies such as autonomation.

10.22 The transport evidence base which is currently being prepared will inform the parking standards to be applied but as a matter of general principle, the District Council considers that the standards should be set at a level which will demonstrably contribute to 'modal shift' away from the car. This is considered appropriate in light of the excellent opportunities for public transport and active and healthy travel that are already available in the locality and that will be further enhanced throughout the development of the garden village.

10.23 In addition to parking standards, the consideration of other demand management measures will be addressed through a car parking strategy, considering issues such as the need for parking restrictions e.g. through controlled parking zones. These would need to be taken forward as a package of measures alongside any agreed parking standards to ensure their effectiveness in contributing to modal shift.

Car Club/Pool Car

10.24 We have received strong support to date in relation to the concept of a 'car club' at the garden village. Car clubs are already successfully operating in a number of areas including Oxford City and provide members with access to hire cars at relatively short notice and for flexible periods of time (i.e. as short as an hour, up to a day, weekend or longer). They provide the convenience of owning a car without the additional problems of servicing, maintenance etc. and in particular can reduce the need for multiple car ownership in households.

10.25 We consider that there is good potential for establishing a successful car club or car clubs at the garden village given the scale of development, the mixture of different uses and the good availability of other 'non-car' options including active and healthy travel and public transport.

Car sharing/Lift buddy schemes

10.26 A key cause of traffic congestion on the A40 and surrounding road network is single occupancy car trips including people driving to work. Most people enjoy their own space and tend to travel to work by car and on their own which of course increases the number of vehicles on the roads.

10.27 To help tackle this, measures can be introduced to encourage people to car share which often works when people live and work in close proximity to each other. If a significant increase in car sharing were to take place, it would make a significant difference to traffic volumes on the A40 and is something that will be sought through the AAP.

Cultural/behavioural change

10.28 Reducing car use is also about cultural / behavioural change. People tend to be wedded to their own car and altering that mindset is not easy to achieve. In addition to the measures outlined above, we can help to encourage this change by creating the right sort of environment within the garden village where cars are the exception rather than the norm, or even where there are no cars at all through 'car free' zones within the site.

10.29 As with the measures above, this issue will be further explored through the transport evidence base which is ongoing. At this stage, the Council considers that as a matter of general principle, the AAP should require appropriate measures to be put in place to help instigate this sort of cultural/behavioural change.

Preferred Policy Approach 26 – Reducing Dependency on the Private Car

To include within the AAP a policy focused on reducing dependency on the private car, with a requirement to demonstrate the use of appropriate demand management measures and controls including but not restricted to:

- **The adoption of robust, 'maximum' parking standards at a level to be determined, but that which would demonstrably contribute towards lower levels of car ownership and modal shift towards active and healthy travel and public transport;**
- **Preparation of a car parking strategy to consider the need for controlled parking zones or 'car-free' locations within the garden village and the provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles;**
- **Establishment of a car club or car clubs at suitably accessible locations within the site with appropriate arrangements put in place for long-term management;**
- **Preparation of a Travel Plan/s to maximise the potential for reduced car dependency e.g. through the promotion of lift sharing schemes or similar;**
- **An appropriate design-led approach that focuses on putting people rather than vehicles first including consideration of the use of shared spaces and car-free locations within the site;**
- **Use of innovation to enable residents and employees to plan their journeys by alternatives to the car-only, or car-heavy journeys.**

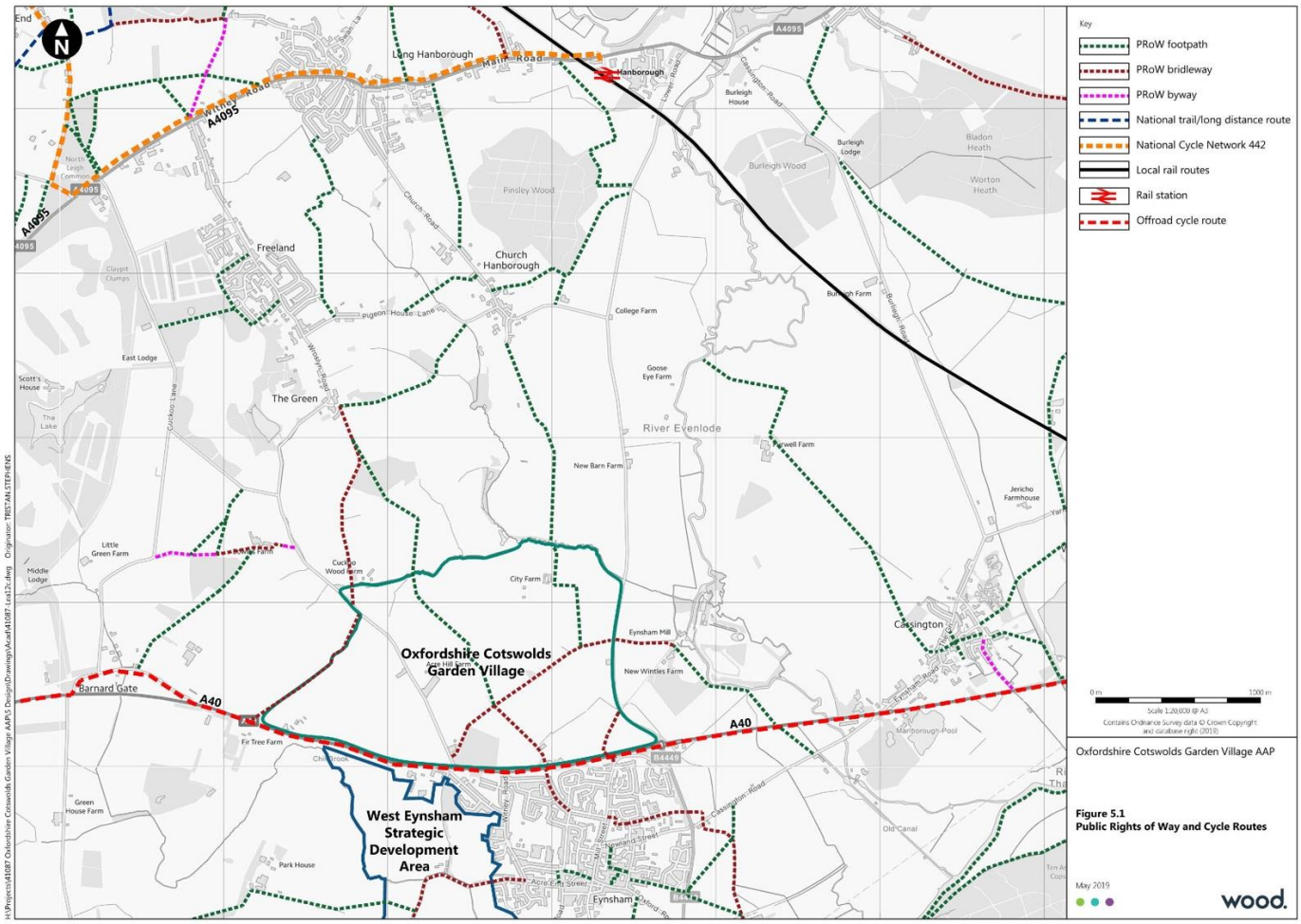
Active and Healthy Travel

10.30 Active and healthy travel is about making journeys by physically active means such as walking, cycling and horse-riding. The benefits of active travel are well-documented and include improvements to physical and mental health, quality of life, the environment and productivity as well as less reliance on vehicular travel.

10.31 A key element of the garden village 'ethos' is that active and healthy travel, along with public transport are designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport. This is also consistent with the overall aims and objectives of national policy, the Local Plan, the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan and the County Council's Local Transport Plan.

10.32 The location and nature of the garden village site is such that it is extremely well-placed to deliver strong 'modal shift' towards active and healthy forms of travel. There are some really exciting opportunities and we are committed to ensuring that these are identified and 'locked down' as part of the AAP process.

10.33 The map below shows the existing network of public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) in the local area as well as various local and national cycle routes. It is evident that there are a number of existing connections into Eynsham across the A40 (albeit crossing points are generally limited) together with routes running through the garden village site and beyond into open countryside to the west, north and east including towards Barnard Gate, Freeland, Church Hanborough, Long Hanborough and Cassington.



10.34 We know from consultation so far that these routes are extremely well-used which is in part, a reflection of the relative lack of open space in nearby Eynsham. People in Eynsham like to get out into the open countryside in all directions with the western side around Chilbridge Road being particularly popular.

10.35 Notwithstanding the degree of 'severance' created by the A40, the network of rights of way within and around the garden village site are also very well used and we know from consultation that a great deal of value is placed locally in the two key routes running up from Spareacre line, north west towards Freeland (the 'saltway') and across from Cuckoo Lane to Lower Road, with the two converging just north of the Millennium Wood.

10.36 The existing cycle route along the A40 is also very well-used including by commuters who choose to use it as a preferable alternative to sitting in traffic.

10.37 Development of the garden village presents an opportunity to both improve existing routes as well as identifying new opportunities to promote active and healthy travel.

10.38 The three framework options we outlined in Section 5.0 each seek to retain the two key routes across the garden village site given their historic importance and local significance. Development presents an opportunity to consider how these and other important routes could potentially be enhanced and made even more valuable and well-used. This could include for example, surfacing and signage.

10.39 The framework options also identify a number of potential opportunities for new routes which would increase the ability of people to use active and healthy forms of travel. As part of the detailed consideration of the layout and design of the site, it will be vital to ensure that walking, cycling and riding are seen as 'integral' rather than an afterthought.

10.40 This is important both in terms of leisure routes and for accessible connections to key services and facilities with safe routes to school being a particularly important consideration as well as the routes available to jobs and other community uses.

10.41 Beyond the site we know there is strong support for the provision of improved links to the wider countryside as well as a dedicated cycle/pedestrian route along Lower Road to enable access to Hanborough Station. This will be key to maximising the opportunities presented by the planned improvements to station facilities and frequency of services.

10.42 The shared pedestrian and cycle path on the northern side of the A4095 is constrained in places by narrowing, in particular at the railway bridge west of the station. Train operator Great Western Railway (GWR) has awarded Hanborough Parish Council funding of £37,000 from its Customer and Communities Improvement Fund for the council to carry out an initial feasibility study into a separate pedestrian and cycle bridge parallel to the existing bridge over the railway.

10.43 There is also strong local support for the B4044 community path to support walking and cycling between Eynsham and Oxford. This originally comprised an element of the A40 Smart Corridor HIF bid but in the final stages of preparing the business case, the County Council took the difficult decision to remove the Community Path from the business case. The design of the scheme is still however being progressed so that it is 'shovel ready' to respond to future funding opportunities as they arise.

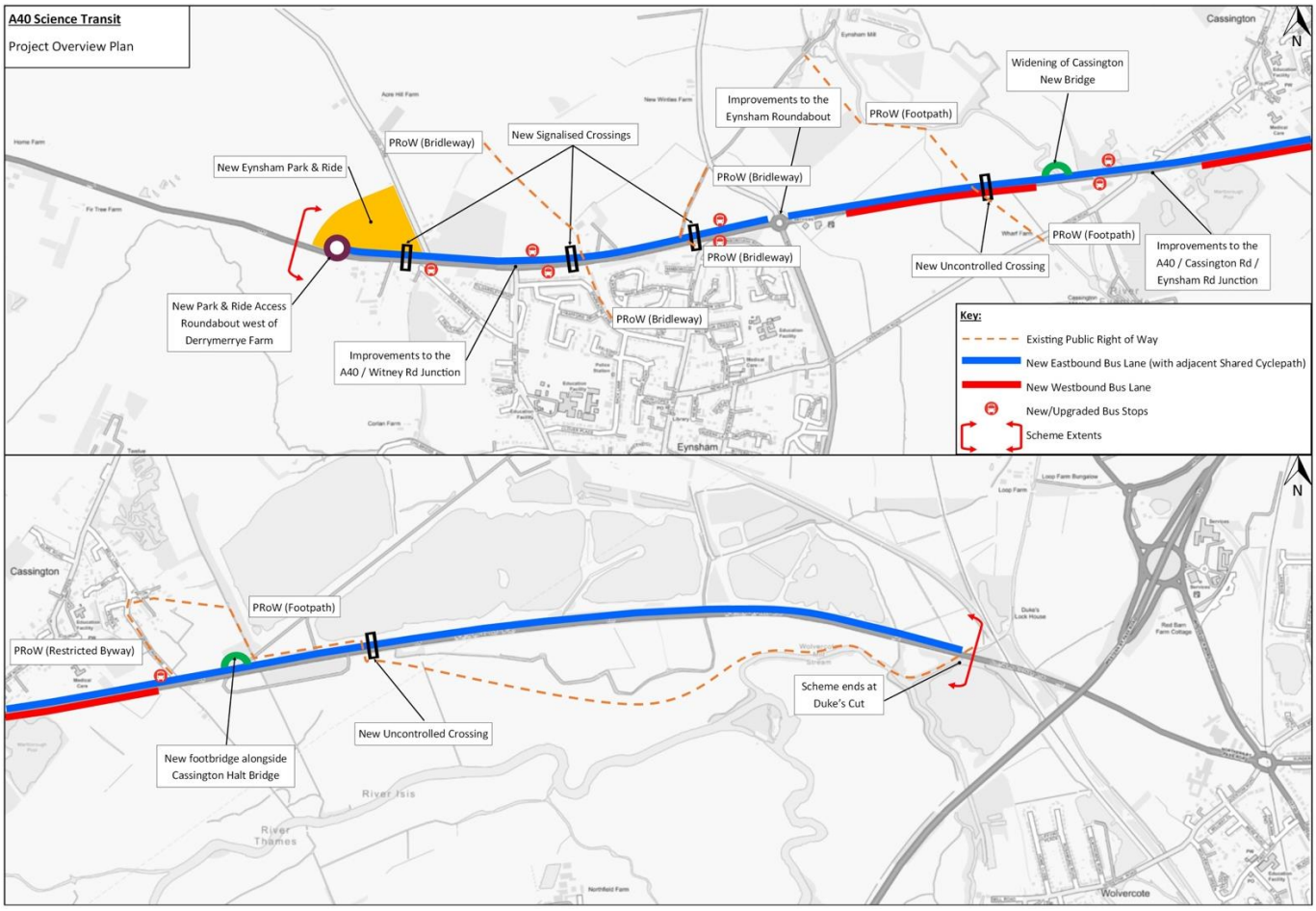
10.44 A key issue for the AAP to address in respect of active and healthy travel is the 'severance' created by the A40. Whilst it is possible for pedestrians and cyclists to get across the A40, it is not particularly welcoming or convenient which acts as something of a 'barrier' to many people.

10.45 This is particularly relevant not only in the context of 'existing' Eynsham but also in respect of the planned Park and Ride and how people will access the site (and bus stops on the A40 along the route of the proposed bus lanes) as well as the West Eynsham SDA which will deliver a further 1,000 homes. Good levels of inter-connectivity between all of these, is vital.

10.46 As part of the transport evidence base being prepared in support of the AAP, consideration is being given to the most appropriate points at which crossings on the A40 should be located and the nature of those crossings e.g. surface level, underpass or bridge. Options for a bridge are relatively limited by virtue of the space restrictions imposed by existing uses south (and in places north) of the A40 but are still being explored.

10.47 Through consultation to date whilst there has been general support for improved links across the A40 there is no consensus view as to the form these should take with many people having differing opinions on the matter. As the transport evidence base evolves, the AAP will be able to provide greater clarity on the number, nature and location of any crossing points along the A40.

10.48 As part of the A40 Science Transit 2 planning application (Park and Ride with bus lanes), Oxfordshire County Council are proposing three new signalised crossings along the A40 in the vicinity of the garden village with two uncontrolled crossings towards and at Cassington as shown on the plan below. Two of the signalised crossings are proposed as 'pegasus' crossings, enabling equestrians to ride their horses across the road alongside pedestrians and providing good connectivity to existing bridleways.



Preferred Policy Approach 27 – Active and Healthy Travel

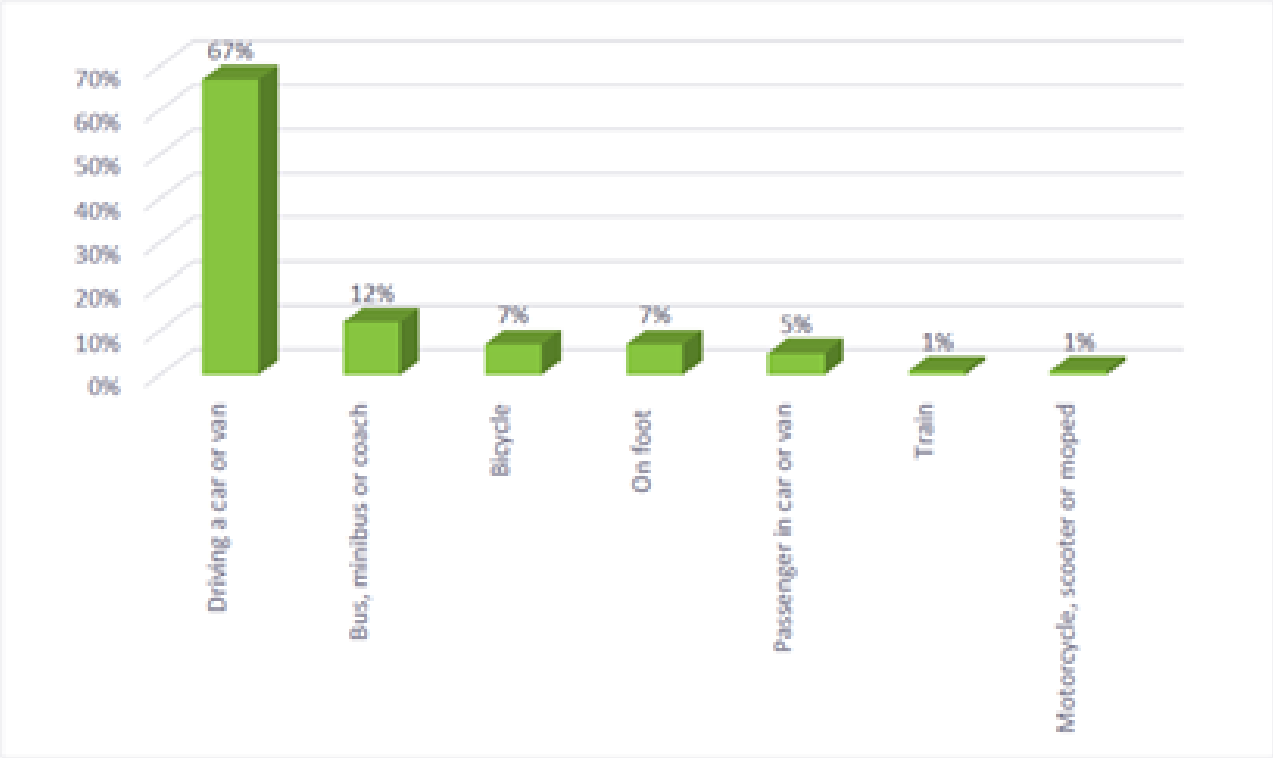
To include within the AAP, a policy requiring the retention, enhancement and provision of effective and comprehensive routes for active and healthy travel within and around the site, enabling strong, safe and convenient connections between the garden village and key services and facilities including the Park and Ride, Eynsham (including the West Eynsham SDA) and other key destinations including Hanborough Station, Oxford and the wider countryside.

Specific proposals to be worked up as part of the supporting transport evidence base but are likely to focus on:

- **The retention and enhancement of key routes both within and in the vicinity of the site;**
- **The creation of new routes as appropriate both within and in the vicinity of the site with a particular emphasis on safe and convenient connections to key facilities including safe routes to school;**
- **Segregated provision for pedestrians and cyclists along Lower Road to Hanborough Station;**
- **Appropriate provision for any additional/amended crossings along the A40;**
- **Potential financial contributions towards wider supporting transport infrastructure as appropriate (e.g. the B4044 community path);**

Public Transport

10.49 The garden village is extremely well-placed to capitalise on current and future public transport opportunities to help encourage greater uptake and less reliance on the private car. Travel to work data from the 2011 Census shows that in the Eynsham area, the vast majority of people use a car or van with far fewer people using public transport, walking and cycling. The low percentage of train users at just 1% is particularly striking but this probably reflects the current limited train service from Hanborough and the lack of any direct public transport to the station.



10.50 A core ingredient of successful garden communities is the provision of integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of transport. We are therefore committed to ensuring through the AAP that all potential opportunities are taken to maximise the use of public transport including bus and rail and that these are fully integrated with opportunities for walking and cycling.

10.51 In terms of existing bus service provision, the garden village site is well-served with a total of 10 bus stops within 400m of the site boundary. All of these are in the form of a simple pole and information flag with most benefitting from bus shelters. There are four main bus services including the S1 (15 minute frequency Carterton to Oxford), S2 (30 minute frequency Carterton to Oxford) S7 (4 services per day Witney to Headington) and the 853 (3 services per day Gloucester to Oxford). In addition, the 233 service (30 minute frequency Burford to Woodstock) routes along the A4095 to the north of the garden village site and includes a stop at the entrance to Hanborough Station.

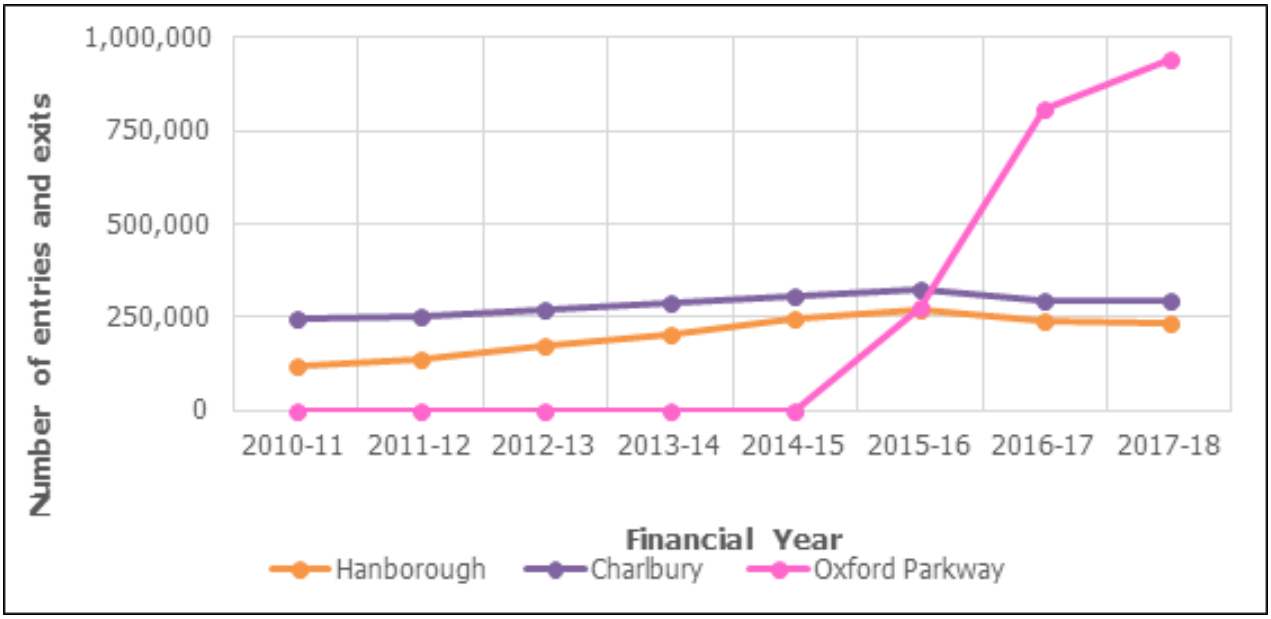
10.52 In terms of rail, the nearest station is Hanborough to the north of the garden village site. Hanborough is located on the North Cotswold Line and is served by trains between London Paddington and Worcester which call at Oxford and Reading, with some of these trains continuing beyond Worcester to Great Malvern or Hereford. The station features a single platform which has recently been lengthened to accommodate more carriages of the new InterCity Express Trains, a ticket machine, two waiting shelters, public address, CCTV and real time train information displays. A new building with a waiting room and toilets has recently opened and is staffed for part of the day similar to other stations on the line.

10.53 The station has car parking for 240 cars, whilst the forecourt provides for pick-up and drop-off by car immediately adjacent to the station platform. There are five disabled parking spaces, along with two cycle storage shelters for up to 24 bicycles.

Source: ITP

10.54 The number of people using the station increased steadily over the past 10 years from 76,580 passengers in 2006/07 to 271,496 in 2015/16 although there has been a downturn since the opening of Oxford Parkway Station, which offers a more frequent train service to London than currently available from Hanborough. This also coincided with increasing unreliability of services on the North Cotswold Line due to (new) train faults, signalling and operational problems. The period of unreliability has passed and services are at a much more reliable level.

Figure 10.1 – Total number of entries and exits by financial year



Source: Office of Rail and Road - available at: https://orr.gov.uk/statistics

10.55 This overall pattern of growth at Hanborough has occurred despite train frequency remaining relatively low, relatively poor access to the station on foot, by bicycle and bus and the limited facilities available. With new trains, faster journey times and improved reliability it is likely we will see passenger numbers start to increase again. The station car park is also frequently full after the morning peak, which also reduces the attractiveness of the station for car users, particularly during the daytime.

10.56 The North Cotswold Line Taskforce was formed in 2017 and includes ten local councils, four Local Enterprise Partnerships, train operating companies, Network Rail and the Cotswold Line Promotion Group. The Taskforce has developed a proposal for future investment in the train service and infrastructure based on a shared vision for an enhanced two trains per hour service between Worcester, Oxford and London in each direction, with a faster journey time and some trains that currently terminate at Worcester extended to provide new links from Droitwich Spa and Kidderminster. The service specification also includes an hourly service at all stations, and at least three trains per hour from Hanborough to Oxford; two of which would continue to London.

Figure 10.2 – Proposed Train Service Specification

10.57 The Taskforce has developed a robust and affordable infrastructure solution to support the enhanced train service which, importantly, does not require full redoubling of the line. The existing single track between Wolvercot Junction and Hanborough station will need moving to enable a second track to be reinstated. It also requires a new platform at Hanborough and associated changes to signalling. Further redoubling is also required between Evesham and Pershore.

10.58 A 'Strategic Outline Business Case' is being prepared for the enhanced train service and the additional infrastructure required, in line with the Department for Transport's 'Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline'. If the proposal is progressed and funded it is likely to be achieved in stages up to 2029.

10.59 Recognising the strategic importance of Hanborough as a key transport and mobility hub, a sub-group of the Taskforce will develop complementary proposals that reflect the changing function of the station. The intention is to develop Supplementary Planning Guidance and a Masterplan to guide future development of the station. The AAP should inform this piece of work and take cognisance of its conclusions.

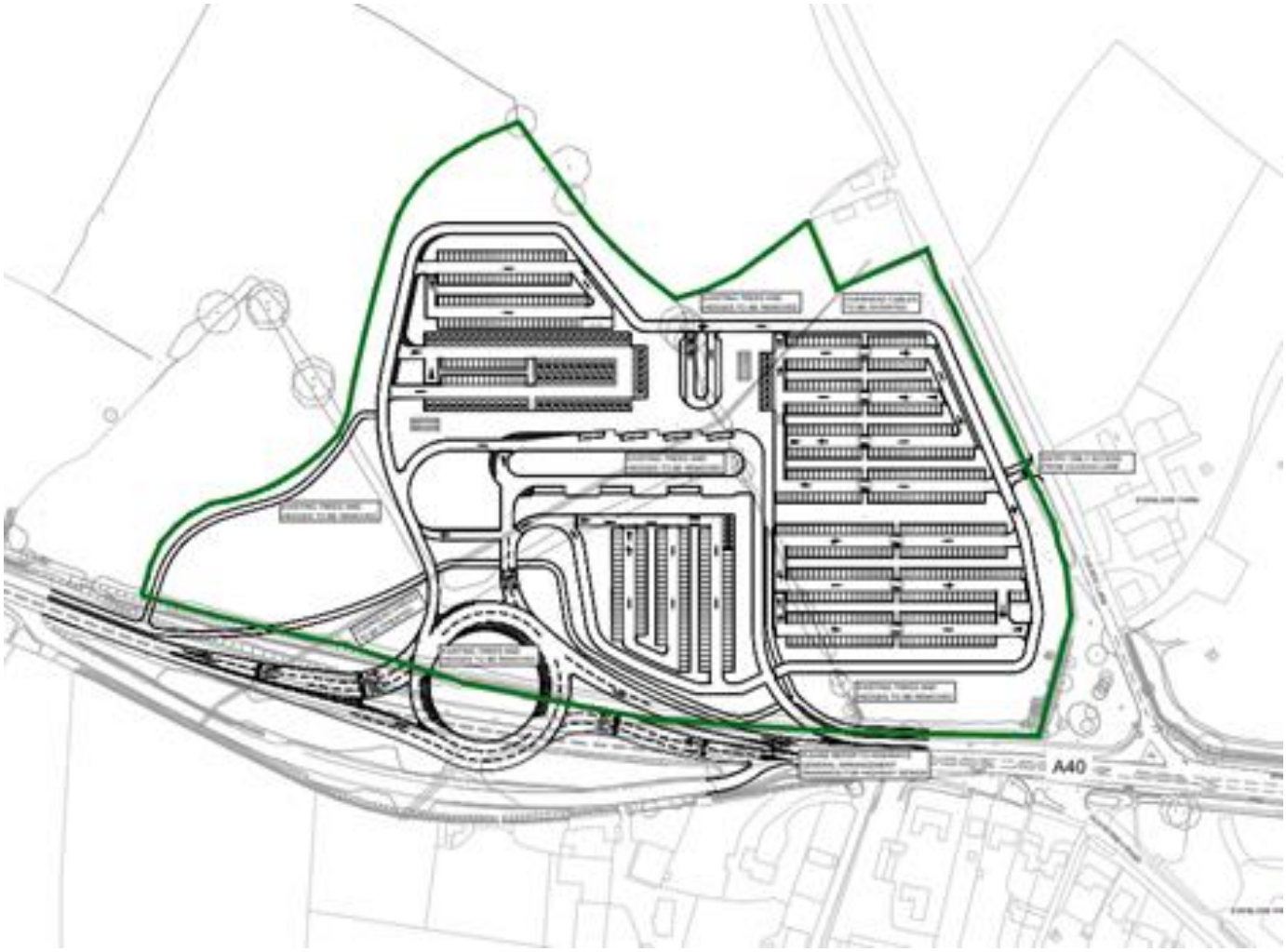
10.60 The sub-group will consider how the station needs to be developed so it can accommodate how people will get to the station in future. For example, by active & healthy travel, such as walking and cycling, local buses, or by innovative technology such as connected autonomous vehicles or 'shared pods' that could in future link the station with the Garden Village and the Eynsham Park & Ride. It will identify essential station facilities, which may include a permanent station building, new southern entrance via Lower Road, a station footbridge, improved bus/rail interchange and increased car and cycle parking. Land has been reserved as part of the residential development south of the railway for this station expansion.

10.61 A key aspect of the AAP is to ensure that the development of the garden village capitalises on the good level of public transport availability that already exists in the local area as well as future planned improvements.

10.62 Oxfordshire County Council are currently progressing plans for a new park and ride site which falls within the boundary of the garden village immediately to the west of Cuckoo Lane. A planning application has recently been submitted for the construction of the car park with provision for 850 spaces, cycle spaces, motorcycle spaces, electric vehicle charging points, bus shelters, landscaping, external lighting, public open space, toilets, seating, fencing, habitat creation and drainage features.

10.63 The proposals also include a new roundabout with access onto A40, a secondary access from Cuckoo Lane, an eastbound bus lane approximately 6.5km in length (with a few breaks on junction approaches) from the park & ride site to the A40 bridge over the Dukes Cut canal, two sections of westbound bus lane (each approximately 500m in length), a new shared use footway/cycleway, widening of Cassington New Bridge, junction improvements, new crossings, a new footbridge alongside Cassington Halt Bridge and associated works.

Figure 10.3 – Park and Ride Proposed Site Layout



10.64 It is essential that the park and ride proposals are integrated as effectively as possible into the design and layout of the garden village, including in particular in terms of access arrangements, connections for pedestrians and cyclists and the inter-relationship with adjoining uses. It will also be vital to consider the routing of bus services and how they can best serve the garden village site more generally; buses will be able to access the garden village directly from the park and ride. These will be key requirements of the AAP drawing on the transport evidence and infrastructure planning work which is currently ongoing and discussions with key stakeholders including Stagecoach and other bus operators.

10.65 In addition to travel by bus, we need to ensure that the AAP maximises the opportunities to encourage people to travel by rail. Hanborough Station, a key asset, is very nearby and we need to determine through the AAP how best to capitalise on its proximity.

10.66 We have for example received strong support to date for the provision of a segregated pedestrian/cycle route along Lower Road, which is currently not perceived to be particularly safe due to the volume and speed of vehicles using it.

10.67 The opportunity also exists to consider potential improvements to the existing network of public rights of way between the garden village site and the station, with connections currently possible through Church Hanborough and potentially able to be further improved.

Preferred Policy Approach 28 – Public Transport

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring any development proposals at the garden village to demonstrate an integrated and innovative approach to public transport so as to enable a high proportion of travel using bus and rail.

To include a particular focus on effective integration with the proposed Eynsham park and ride including pedestrian and cycle connectivity, vehicular access arrangements and the nature of adjoining land uses.

To include a key requirement for improved connections to Hanborough Station including the provision of a segregated pedestrian/cycle route along Lower Road, the use of innovative technology and the consideration of potential improvements to the existing public rights of way network between the garden village site and the station.

Making effective use of the transport network

10.68 Whilst a core theme of the AAP is to reduce the need to travel and push people towards favouring more active and healthy forms of travel and public transport, we need to recognise that a large number of vehicles will remain on our roads for some time to come and in respect of the Eynsham area, where traffic congestion is so evident, it is vital that we look to reduce the impact of planned growth by making the most efficient and effective use of the local transport network.

10.69 A key consideration for the AAP and the garden village more generally is how it fits in with Oxfordshire County Council's A40 Corridor Strategy for the A40. The County Council has previously assessed and consulted upon a range of potential improvements and solutions to address the transport challenges on the A40 and this work has informed the transport strategy for the A40. The Strategy comprises two phases, which are discussed in the following sections:

- **Phase 1:** The A40 Science Transit 2
- **Phase 2:** The A40 Smart Corridor

A40 Science Transit 2

10.70 The A40 Science Transit2 scheme is designed to specifically improve the reliability, frequency and variety of destinations in Oxford served by public transport, thereby encouraging a reduction in car travel to the City by offering an attractive and quicker alternative to the car. The scheme includes a new park and ride site at Eynsham together with an eastbound bus lane from the proposed park and ride towards Oxford and short sections of westbound bus lane, as well as upgraded cycling facilities on the north side of the A40.

10.71 Funding for the scheme has been provisionally allocated from the Department for Transport through the Local Growth Fund and to release the main Local Growth Fund funding, a series of business cases are currently being completed.

10.72 As part of the proposals, three new signalised crossings are proposed on the A40 as described earlier, together with a number of junction improvements including the A40/Cuckoo Lane junction, the A40/Witney Road signalised junction, the Eynsham roundabout and the A40/Cassington Road junction.

A40 Smart Corridor

10.73 The County Council is currently seeking central Government funding to make further long-term improvements to the A40 including addressing the current 'pinch point' at the Dukes Cut canal and railway bridges on the approach to Wolvercote which would provide a continuous eastbound bus route all the way from the Eynsham Park and Ride into Wolvercote together with a high quality 3 metre wide shared cycle path, separated from the general traffic lanes.

10.74 Further sections of the A40 westbound bus lane are also proposed to provide quicker return journeys to Eynsham Park and Ride and other destinations served by the local bus network. The proposals also include additional dualling of the A40 between Witney and the Eynsham park and ride to increase capacity for all modes including improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

10.75 As these various improvements progress further, it will be vital to ensure that the garden village maximises the opportunities they present, including the excellent high frequency bus routes serving a wider range of destinations in Oxford directly. A key requirement will be that the garden village complements the A40 Corridor Strategy elements in relation to the movement of people and vehicles e.g. key crossing points, access arrangements, new highway infrastructure etc. The transport strategy for the garden village will need to ensure that it does not undermine the benefits that the bus lanes and associated infrastructure will bring for those who choose to travel sustainably.

10.76 We have already addressed the importance of providing opportunities for active and healthy travel. With regard to vehicular access and movement, discussions remain ongoing about the most appropriate arrangements for the garden village and this is being considered as part of the transport evidence base currently being prepared.

10.77 In terms of vehicular access to the garden village site, a number of options are currently being considered.

10.78 This includes a new western junction on the A40 which would be shared with the West Eynsham SDA. Also anticipated is an access point along Cuckoo Lane (not necessarily connecting to the A40 at Cuckoo Lane) from which a 'spine road' would run through the site connecting to Lower Road, designed in such as way so as to discourage 'rat-running'. At the current time, the precise locations of any access points on Cuckoo Lane and Lower Road are still to be determined and will require further assessment as the overall framework of the site develops.

10.79 Consideration is also being given to potential access into the garden village site between the Millennium Wood and the Eynsham roundabout although the County Council are unlikely to support this proposal given the potential impact on buses and other vehicles along this section of the A40. The location of the existing commercial uses including the petrol filling station is a key consideration and further assessment is needed to determine the most appropriate location for any such access point.

10.80 The County Council's current position is that they do not consider that a 'shared use' of the new park and ride roundabout (i.e. to serve part of the wider garden village site as well as the park and ride) would be appropriate as it could fetter the operational requirements of buses etc.

10.81 In addition to ensuring that access arrangements and future highway improvements effectively 'knit' in with the County Council's proposed improvements to the A40, there are a number of other ways in which the AAP can ensure effective use of the local transport network.

10.82 We can for example think about the nature and timing of movements that are being made on the network. Delivery and Servicing Plans (DSPs) are of particular relevance to commercial uses and have a number of benefits including the pro-active management of deliveries to reduce the number of delivery and servicing trips and influence the timing of deliveries so as to avoid peak hours.

10.83 Similarly, construction logistics plans (CLPs) focus on construction supply chains and how their impact on the road network can be reduced. The use of such a plan would help to reduce the impact of traffic during the construction phase and would therefore be particularly useful for the garden village which will be built over a number of years.

10.84 Effective travel planning also has a role to play in terms of making the most effective use of the transport network both in terms of achieving modal shift and also potentially the timing of movements on the network e.g. conferences, meetings seeking to avoid peak times, supplemented by increased levels of home working and teleconferencing.

10.85 Our proposed approach is summarised below.

Preferred Policy Approach 29 – Making Effective use of the Transport Network

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring any development proposals at the garden village to demonstrate through a robust transport strategy and assessment that the proposals seek to make the most effective use of the transport network. To include alignment and integration with the proposed improvements to the A40 being taken forward by Oxfordshire County Council through the Science Transit 2 and A40 Smart Corridor projects as well as wider improvements on the transport network more generally including Hanborough Station.

Furthermore, as part of the submission of any planning application for the garden village, a construction logistics plans (CLP) will be required to identify practical ways in which the impact of traffic during the construction phase can be minimised and mitigated for the benefit of the local community.

Any commercial uses proposed will need to be supported by a Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) which proactively identifies opportunities to reduce and mitigate the impact of deliveries and servicing arrangements on the local transport network.

Where appropriate, planning conditions and/or legal agreements will be used to secure the measures that are identified through any CLP or DSP.

Changing transport trends and technologies

10.86 The garden village is a long-term project and transport trends and technologies are changing rapidly. It is therefore vital that the early planning and design of the garden village builds in a suitable degree of 'future-proofing' to be able to adapt to and anticipate those changes.

10.87 New transportation technologies such as electric, connected vehicles and autonomous road and aerial vehicles can help resolve some key challenges such as poor air quality, congestion, noise pollution and road accidents. The integration of these vehicles will require innovative business models and new forms of infrastructure, but the result will be to redefine how we move around in the future.

10.88 The Government's Road to Zero Strategy and accompanying £1.5bn investment strategy supports electric vehicle research, development and infrastructure. This presents opportunities for Oxfordshire to test new and emerging technologies that improve the environmental efficiency and sustainability of conventional transport systems including vehicle to grid management.

10.89 Advances in technology such as the advent of connected autonomous vehicles, the rise of E commerce and the proliferation of the sharing economy are having a profound effect not only on how we live, move and spend our time but also, increasingly on urban form and development itself.

10.90 A core element of garden community principles is to use zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience and also to be forward looking in respect of transport options including anticipation of the opportunities presented by technological change such as driverless cars and renewable energy.

10.91 Many urban areas are beginning to embrace 'smart city' principles using ICT and various physical devices connected to the network to optimise the efficiency of operations and services including traffic and transport through the use of intelligent transport systems (ITS) which integrate different transport modes to promote maximum efficiency.

10.92 We are committed through the AAP to ensuring that the early design and development of the garden village anticipates changing technologies and trends in relation to transport and movement and responds accordingly and positively. Our proposed policy approach is set out below. This includes specific requirements in relation to electric vehicle charging points as well as some more general principles.

Preferred Policy Approach 30 – Changing Transport Trends and Technologies

To include within the AAP a policy requiring the provision of electric vehicle charging points as follows:

- **All new residential properties with an allocated parking space to be equipped with an electric vehicle charging point;**
- **At least 25% of any non-allocated parking spaces to be provided with electric vehicle charging points (with a minimum of 2);**
- **All non-residential development which includes parking to ensure at least 25% of the spaces are provided with electric charging points.**
- **To also include within the policy, a more general requirement for development to demonstrate that all reasonable opportunities have been taken to maximise the opportunities presented by changes in transport trends and technologies including autonomous vehicles and alternative fuel sources including renewable energy.**

11. Climate change and resilience

Core Objectives:

GV35 To embed flexibility, durability and resilience into the design and development of the garden village to allow for changing demographics, future growth and the impacts of climate change.
GV36 To ensure the efficient and prudent use and management of natural resources including the optimal use of land and buildings and the use of materials from sustainable sources.
GV37 To adopt an ambitious approach towards low and zero carbon energy - maximising opportunities to draw energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems.
GV38 To minimise the generation and impact of waste moving towards zero waste wherever possible.

Introduction

11.1 There is a growing recognition that we are facing a climate change crisis and that direct action is needed to address it, with the planning system having a crucial role to play in guiding new development. The NPPF identifies mitigation and adaptation to climate change as a key objective for planning including the move to a low carbon economy.

11.2 It is of particular relevance to the garden village with one of the core TCPA principles being development which '*enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience'*.

11.3 Similarly, one of the key qualities outlined in the Government's garden communities prospectus (2018) is that such places should be '*future proofed – designed to be resilient places that allow for changing demographics, future growth, and the impacts of climate change including flood risk and water availability, with durable landscape and building design planned for generations to come'*.

11.4 This has been reflected in a large number of the consultation responses we received to date many of which have urged the need for built development to achieve zero carbon standards supported by the use of decentralised energy (i.e. off the main grid) renewable and low carbon forms of energy. Some consider that the garden village should be 'energy positive', effectively generating more energy than it consumes.

11.5 There are a number of ways in which the planning, design and delivery of the garden village can address and respond to climate change. We have already addressed discussed the provision of green infrastructure and the substantial contribution it makes towards climate change mitigation and adaptation. We have also discussed the issue of water management. In this section of the AAP we focus on the need for flexibility, durability and adaptability, sustainable construction, decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy and waste.

Flexibility, Durability and Adaptability

11.6 The NPPF emphasises the need for planning to take a pro-active approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. *'Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure' (NPPF para. 149).*

11.7 New development should be planned for in ways that *'avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure' (NPPF para 150*).

11.8 The garden village is a long-term project and we are committed to ensuring through the AAP that it is suitably 'future-proofed'. We have already discussed the provision of accessible and adaptable new homes and the need to take account of changing transport trends and technologies. We have also discussed the need for flexibility in terms of the use of some buildings and spaces.

11.9 We are also committed through the AAP to ensuring that the early stage planning and design of the garden village builds in an appropriate degree of flexibility, durability, and resilience to help respond to changing circumstances, including the impacts of climate change.

11.10 There are a number of ways this will be achieved including through building design and resilience (to facilitate adaptation, conversions and alterations and withstand changing climatic conditions in the future e.g. ventilation and cooling) the location of development (particularly in respect of flooding for example) and the layout of development (which influences heat gain, ventilation, open space etc.).

Preferred Policy Approach 31 - Flexibility, Durability and Adaptability

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring development at the garden village to adopt a robust and positive approach to tackling climate change, which a high degree of flexibility, durability and adaptability embedded in relation to building use, design, siting and orientation and the overall layout of the development taking account of future potential changes in temperature, wind and rainfall.

Sustainable Construction

11.11 The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK to an 80% reduction in CO2 by 2050 however this has been replaced by a more ambitious aim of achieving 'net zero' greenhouse gases by 2050. Scotland has already committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2045.

11.12 Around 18% of the UK's carbon emissions come from buildings – most of them homes – with a further 15% of emissions coming from electricity consumed in buildings. Achieving carbon savings in buildings will therefore be key to hitting the Government's net zero ambition.

11.13 The West Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016) identifies a sustainable building as one that:

- minimises the use of scarce resources such as certain building materials, fossil fuels and water;
- is economic to run over its whole life cycle and fits well with the needs of the local community;
- is energy and carbon efficient, designed to minimise energy consumption, with effective insulation, heating and cooling systems and appliances;
- values and sustains or improves existing site character, topography, vegetation, watercourses and built features;
- minimises the need for unsustainable transport and encourages travel by cycle or on foot;
- minimises the production and costs of waste disposal, and which looks to re-use on-site materials such as waste soil;
- minimises flooding and pollution; and
- is designed to make recycling and composting easy for its occupants.

11.14 A 'zero carbon' homes policy was first announced in 2006 to ensure that new-build homes did not result in the net release of any carbon dioxide into the atmosphere during day-to-day running. This was to be achieved through a combination of reduced energy demand, generation of heat and power from onsite low-carbon energy sources, and abatement measures (such as planting trees) to offset emissions that could not be avoided.

11.15 The commitment was that all new homes would be zero carbon by 2016, however this commitment (along with the associated zero carbon standard for new non-domestic buildings) was abandoned in 2015 to avoid placing a significant regulatory burden on house builders and developers.

11.16 Currently, the energy efficiency of new buildings is dealt with through Part L of building regulations. Optional building regulations can be applied in respect of accessibility, water efficiency and internal space standards but otherwise the default position in respect of energy efficiency is Part L.

11.17 There are however indications that this position is changing. In London, the Mayor has introduced a city-wide zero carbon homes policy and in a speech on science and modern Industrial Strategy in May 2018, the Prime Minister stated that:

'In the clean growth grand challenge, we will use new technologies and modern construction practices to at least halve the energy usage of new buildings by 2030. By making our buildings more energy efficient and embracing smart technologies, we can slash household energy bills, reduce demand for energy, and meet our targets for carbon reduction. By halving the energy use of new buildings – both commercial and residential – we could reduce the energy bills for their occupants by as much as 50 per cent. And we will aim to halve the costs of reaching the same standard in existing buildings too.

Meeting this challenge will drive innovation and higher standards in the construction sector, helping it to meet our ambitious homebuilding targets and providing more jobs and opportunity to millions of workers across the country.

It will be a catalyst for new technologies and more productive methods, which can be exported to a large and growing global market for clean technologies'.

11.18 At a more local level, the emerging Oxfordshire Energy Strategy[44] provides the strategic framework to secure a smart, clean energy system across the county, drive countywide decarbonisation and ensure that Oxfordshire prospers from clean growth. It includes a target to *'Lead nationally and internationally to reduce countywide emissions by 50% compared with 2008 levels by 2030 and set a pathway to achieve zero carbon growth by 2050.*

11.19 Given the current direction of travel in national and local policy, established garden community principles and the strong views raised on climate change through consultation to date, we are committed to exploring through the AAP, the scope to which new buildings are able to achieve zero carbon standards in terms of their energy efficiency, design and construction.

11.20 We could for example require all new buildings to be built to zero carbon standards unless it can be demonstrated that cost-effective energy efficiency technologies are genuinely not an option in which case some form of carbon 'offsetting' can be used whereby the developer pays to save carbon elsewhere in the community, with the amount of carbon offset equal to the amount of remaining emissions from the new building. This approach (known as 'allowable solutions') has been adopted in London in recognition of the fact that it can be difficult to connect homes in small urban development sites to a renewable energy system.

[44] http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s44917/Oxfordshire%20Energy%20Strategy%20DRAFT%20FINAL%20November%202018.pdf

11.21 There are cost implications and practical delivery matters associated with achieving zero carbon standards which we will need to further explore with the site promoter and consider through appropriate viability testing. This is reflected in our proposed approach set out below.

Preferred Policy Approach 32 – Sustainable Construction

To include within the AAP, a policy setting out the sustainable construction requirements that will be applied to residential and non-residential buildings at the garden village.

Subject to further consideration regarding viability and practical delivery, the intention is to achieve zero-carbon standards for both residential and non-residential buildings, whilst allowing for carbon-offsetting where this is demonstrably shown to be impractical.

Decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy

11.22 One of the core objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan is to minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions. The plan is based on the following 3-step hierarchy:

Lean – using less energy, by the use of sustainable design and construction measures

Clean – supplying energy efficiently, giving priority to decentralised energy supply

Green – using renewable energy

11.23 We have already discussed our approach to sustainable design and construction and in this section, we focus on decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy.

11.24 The Local Plan provides a basic starting point with policy EH6 encouraging the use of decentralised energy systems including combined heat and power and district heating in all development and requiring the preparation of an energy feasibility assessment or strategy which assesses viability and practicability for decentralised energy systems on larger developments such as the garden village. The draft Eynsham neighbourhood plan also seeks to ensure that new development maximises the opportunities for the use of renewable and low carbon forms of energy.

11.25 Building on these starting points, we are committed to ensuring through the AAP that an ambitious approach is taken at the garden village in respect of energy generation from sustainable sources. Evidence prepared in support of the Local Plan suggests that in the short term at least, the District has the potential to deliver greater carbon savings through new renewable energy infrastructure than can be achieved through the development of new low carbon buildings. It is essential that the development of the garden village exploits the available opportunities to generate and consume energy derived from sustainable sources.

11.26 Community led initiatives are becoming an increasingly important source of renewable and low carbon energy, with a number of projects emerging across West Oxfordshire including at Southill, Charlbury and Chipping Norton. Eynsham has a very strong track record in community renewables and works closely with Oxfordshire's low carbon hub[45].

11.27 The low carbon hub are one of the key partners in Project Leo (Local Energy Oxfordshire) which is one of just four national demonstrator projects funded by Innovate UK to trial smart local energy systems. The project will directly support delivery of the objectives set out in the emerging Oxfordshire energy strategy by exploring how the growth in local renewables, electric vehicles, battery storage and demand side response can be supported by a flexible electricity grid to match local generation with local demand.

[45] https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/

11.28 There is an opportunity through Project LEO to make use of energy systems modelling to explore options to create an integrated, low carbon energy system for the garden village. This will be further explored with the site promoter.

Preferred Policy Approach 33 – Decentralised, Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

To include within the AAP, a requirement for development of the garden village to be underpinned by an ambitious and pro-active approach to decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy at a range of different scales from site-wide to property specific.

In accordance with the Local Plan, the developer will be required to prepare an energy feasibility assessment or strategy to assess the viability and practicability of a decentralised energy system within the garden village.

To also include a requirement to consider as part of Project LEO, the potential for an integrated, low carbon energy system within the garden village and to maximise linkages with existing or proposed renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in the locality.

Towards 'Zero Waste'

11.29 As a large-scale development, we need to carefully consider the generation of waste associated with the garden village both during the construction phase and throughout its lifetime.

11.30 In accordance with the established 'waste hierarchy' we need to focus on preventing the generation of waste in the first place and when waste is created, we need to ensure priority is given to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, followed by recovery and last of all disposal (e.g. landfill).

11.31 In recognition of the importance of the issue, as part of its Clean Growth Strategy[46], the Government has set out an ambition to work towards zero avoidable waste by 2050, maximising the value extracted from resources, and minimising the negative environmental and carbon impacts associated with their extraction, use and disposal.

11.32 The strategy explains that 'zero avoidable waste equates to eliminating all waste where it is technologically, environmentally and economically practicable to do so and working to support innovation in new materials, products and processes that extend the range of materials covered by this categorisation'.

[46] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700496/clean-growth-strategy-correction-april-2018.pdf

11.33 The garden village is well-placed to address the issue of waste generation in a sustainable manner. Within the site itself there is an aggregate recycling facility (albeit the site is currently vacant) providing potential for the use of recycled construction materials and nearby at Cassington there is an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility run by Agrivert which processes municipal and commercial foodwastes (around 50,000 tonnes per year) generating 2.1MW of electricity and producing bio-fertiliser.

Preferred Policy Approach 34 – Towards Zero Waste

To include within the AAP, a policy requiring development of the garden village to seek to minimise waste moving towards zero waste, wherever possible.

The principles of the waste hierarchy will be applied, with a particular focus on waste prevention both during construction and throughout the lifetime of the development. Priority will then be given to re-use and recycling, followed by recovery and disposal.

Opportunities to create effective linkages with existing waste management infrastructure in the locality should be maximised in order to reduce the need to travel.

Any application will need to be supported by a Waste Minimisation Statement which sets out the positive actions to be taken to move towards zero waste. This will be expected to address both construction and occupation phases.

Appendix 1

Policy EW1 – Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village Strategic Location for Growth (2,200 homes)

Land to the north of the A40, near Eynsham to accommodate a free-standing exemplar Garden Village, the comprehensive development of which will be led by an Area Action Plan (AAP) including:

a) a working assumption of about 2,200 homes with a balanced and appropriate mix of house types and tenures to meet identified needs including affordable housing.
b) development taken forward in accordance with key Garden Village principles.
c) about 40 hectares of business land (B-class) in the form of a 'campus-style' science park.
d) provision of a new park and ride site (1,000 spaces) with associated bus priority lane along the A40.
e) the provision of up to two primary schools on site (2FE including nursery) on 2.22ha sites together with financial contributions towards secondary school capacity as appropriate.
f) The provision of essential supporting transport infrastructure the detail of which will be identified through the AAP process, including mitigating the impact of traffic associated with the development; appropriate consideration of the proposed park and ride, wider A40 improvements and access arrangements for the West Eynsham Strategic Development Area (SDA); the provision of appropriate financial contributions towards LTP4 transport schemes such as the A40 Strategy; provision of appropriate public transport (services and infrastructure) serving the site; and provision of a comprehensive network for pedestrians and cyclists with good connectivity provided to adjoining areas, including a particular emphasis on improving linkages to Hanborough Station, to the proposed Park and Ride and to Eynsham and on enhancing Hanborough Station as a transport interchange.
g) development to be phased in accordance with the timing of provision of essential supporting infrastructure and facilities.
h) the provision of appropriate landscaping measures to mitigate the potential impact of development and associated infrastructure.
i) biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance.
j) masterplanning that takes adequate account of open space and green infrastructure networks and needs, and maximises opportunities to create and strengthen green infrastructure in accordance with the Council's Green Infrastructure Plan (to be prepared).
k) appropriate measures to mitigate traffic noise.
l) the investigation, recording and safeguarding of the known and potential archaeological significance of the Area prior to any development taking place. The results of the investigation and recording should inform the final layout of the development and be deposited in a public archive.
m) appropriate measures to mitigate flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage methods to ensure that post-development surface water run-off rates are attenuated to achieve a reduction in greenfield run-off rates. The sustainable drainage systems should be designed to provide a biodiversity enhancement.
n) connection to the mains sewerage network which includes infrastructure upgrades where required including any necessary phasing arrangements.
o) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings.
p) the developer will be required to set aside 5% of the developable plots for those wishing to undertake custom/self-build.
q) appropriate measures to safeguard and take account of the operational requirements of the existing aggregate recycling facility within the site and also to safeguard sand and gravel deposits where appropriate having regard to the policies of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.