

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2015
WEST OXFORDSHIRE PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT LOCAL PLAN
REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (DEVELOPMENT)
(Contact: Andrew Tucker, Tel: (01993) 861721)

**Please note that Appendices 1 & 2 relating to this report have been circulated with the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 18 February 2015 to avoid duplication and unnecessary additional printing and postage.
Members are requested to bring their copy of that agenda to this meeting.**

(The recommendations of Cabinet are as per the published agenda given that this Council agenda is published prior to the Cabinet meeting. Any alterations will be reported via the minutes to Council)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the proposed pre-submission draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan and also the Council's position in relation to 5-year housing land supply.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the Council be recommended to approve the pre-submission draft Local Plan attached at Appendix 1 for the purposes of formal publication for a statutory period of 6-weeks in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; and
- (b) That the Council be recommended to authorise the Cabinet Member for Planning and Strategic Housing to make any minor factual/typographical amendments to the pre-submission draft Local Plan in conjunction with Officers, prior to formal publication; and
- (c) That the Council be recommended to agree that subject to there being no significant issues raised during the statutory 6-week period, the pre-submission draft Local Plan be formally submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 including any minor modifications; and
- (d) That the Council be recommended to agree that the updated 5-year housing land supply position statement attached at Appendix 2 is published and utilised for the purposes of development management.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Members will be aware that the current Local Plan for West Oxfordshire was adopted in 2006 and had an end date of 2011. Whilst the majority of policies have been formally saved under transitional arrangements, there is a need to introduce an up-to-date replacement Local Plan as soon as possible.

- 3.2. Consultation on a new Local Plan has been ongoing for some time with a previous draft Local Plan published in November 2012. It had been anticipated that the final draft version of the plan would be formally published and submitted in 2013 however this was deferred pending the outcome of a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire.
- 3.3. The SHMA was subsequently published in April 2014 and in response, the Council published a Local Plan Housing Consultation Paper in August 2014 setting out a proposed housing target and the strategy and sites to deliver it.
- 3.4. The consultation attracted a good level of response with comments received from over 500 individuals and organisations. Since the consultation period closed, Officers have been analysing the comments and have prepared and commissioned a range of supporting technical evidence.
- 3.5. The comments received and the additional evidence prepared has been taken into account together with the responses received during earlier consultation stages as well as changes to national policy and guidance.
- 3.6. These have been incorporated into the final pre-submission draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan which is attached at Appendix I.

4. OVERVIEW

- 4.1. Set out below for ease of reference is a brief overview of the content of the pre-submission draft Local Plan with reference to supporting background evidence as appropriate.

Plan Period

- 4.2. The draft Local Plan published in 2012 covered the 18-year period 2011 – 2029. The SHMA and other Local Plans in preparation in Oxfordshire cover the 20-year period 2011 – 2031. Furthermore, national policy requires Local Plans to cover a period of 15 years from the anticipated date of adoption.
- 4.3. Given the anticipated date of adoption of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan is spring 2016, the plan has been extended to cover the period 2011 – 2031. This also has the advantage of consistency with the other Oxfordshire authorities.

Vision and Objectives

- 4.4. The plan includes a profile of West Oxfordshire in 2015 and from this identifies a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges to be addressed in the period up to 2031. These include issues such as flood risk, housing affordability, transport congestion and infrastructure capacity.
- 4.5. Having regard to these issues, the plan sets out a vision of West Oxfordshire in 2031 and a series of core objectives intended to guide the delivery of the vision.
- 4.6. The vision itself has been amended since the 2012 draft Local Plan to take account of comments received, to bring it up to date and to ensure it more fully reflects the key issues facing the District over the plan period. Reference has been added to tackling A40 congestion, delivering economic growth, meeting identified housing needs and ensuring that infrastructure is provided in a timely manner.

- 4.7. The core objectives remain similar to those published in 2012 but have been subject to a number of amendments including a clearer priority towards the delivery of sustainable economic growth.

Overall Strategy

- 4.8. The overall strategy is similar to that which formed the basis of the 2012 draft Local Plan. It is based on five key principles which underpin all forms of development. These include a presumption in favour of sustainable development (in line with national policy) ensuring that all development is located in the right places, ensuring the prudent use of natural resources, achieving high quality design and ensuring that new development is supported by appropriate investment in infrastructure.
- 4.9. These five key principles apply to all development regardless of location and form the basis of the whole Local Plan.
- 4.10. In terms of the location of development, the district has been sub-divided into 5 separate sub-areas including:
- Witney sub-area
 - Carterton sub-area
 - Chipping Norton sub-area
 - Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area
 - Burford – Charlbury sub-area
- 4.11. Underpinning these five sub-areas is a settlement hierarchy which includes three main service centres (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton) six rural service centres (Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock) and a number of larger villages. All settlements not listed in the hierarchy will be classified as small villages, hamlets and open countryside.
- 4.12. In accordance with previous consultation responses and Sustainability Appraisal, the plan seeks to focus the majority of new development into the Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton sub-areas with a particular focus on the three main towns themselves as main service centres.

Amount and Distribution of Housing

- 4.13. A key issue for the Local Plan is the number of new homes to be provided and where they will be built.
- 4.14. In terms of the quantum of housing to be planned for, Members will recall that the previous draft Local Plan (2012) included a requirement of 5,500 homes in the period 2011 – 2029 (306 per year). This was based primarily on the previous South East Regional Plan which has now been revoked.
- 4.15. The Oxfordshire SHMA published in April 2014 identified a need for between 635 – 685 homes per year in West Oxfordshire in the period 2011 – 2031, the mid-point of which is 660 per year, equating to 13,200 homes in total.
- 4.16. However, the Council has concerns about the findings of the SHMA including the extent to which it is based on demographic projections that have been affected by an abnormally high period of house building in the District.

- 4.17. It is also relevant to note that the approach taken towards job-led growth in the SHMA appears to conflict with advice on identifying housing needs published by the Planning Advisory Service in June 2014 and also some recent case law which establishes that an objective assessment of housing need should be ‘policy neutral’ and not based on forecast job growth linked to local enterprise partnerships and other initiatives.
- 4.18. In light of the Council’s concerns relating to the SHMA, two separate analyses have been prepared since the SHMA was published. The first report which was published last year alongside the focused Local Plan housing consultation considers two different approaches, one based on longer-term migration trends, the other based on more recent population projections that post-date the SHMA. Having regard to long-term migration trends, the report identifies a need for 484 homes per year and having regard to the most recent population projections, it concludes that a range of between 459 – 551 homes is needed, the mid-point of which is 506 homes per year.
- 4.19. The second report which will be published as part of the pre-submission Local Plan consultation, considers a number of aspects of the SHMA and taking account of the inflationary effect of past trends concludes that the housing need for West Oxfordshire ranges from 520 to 596 per annum, the mid-point of which is 558 homes per year.
- 4.20. Having regard to these two independent analyses, and the limitations of the job-led model used in the SHMA (as highlighted in advice published by the Planning Advisory Service) Officers consider that the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) for West Oxfordshire should be adjusted downwards from 660 homes per year to 525 per year.
- 4.21. Over the period of the Local Plan (2011 – 2031) this equates to an overall requirement for 10,500 homes.
- 4.22. In terms of the distribution of housing, in accordance with the overall strategy, the plan seeks to accommodate most of this requirement in the Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton sub-areas. The proposed distribution is summarised in the table below.

	Witney sub-area	Carterton sub-area	Chipping Norton sub-area	Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area	Burford – Charlbury sub-area
Number of homes	3,700	2,600	1,800	1,600	800

Housing Delivery

- 4.23. In terms of housing delivery, it is anticipated that the overall requirement (10,500 new homes) will be provided through a combination of homes already completed, existing commitments, four allocated Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) sites identified as being suitable and deliverable in the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and ‘windfall’ development.
- 4.24. Policy H2 outlines the Council’s approach towards the delivery of these new homes setting out the criteria against which residential development proposals will be considered. In accordance with the overall strategy, the policy is more permissive in relation to development within or adjoining the main service centres, rural service centres and villages, subject to a number of specific criteria being met. Development in the small villages, hamlets and open countryside will be more strictly controlled.

Affordable Housing

- 4.25. In relation to affordable housing, the proposed approach accords with recent changes to national policy. As such, small residential schemes of 1-5 units will not be required to make any provision towards affordable housing.
- 4.26. For medium-scale schemes of 6-10 units, where these are located in the Cotswolds AONB (a designated rural area) the Council is entitled to seek financial contributions towards the provision of affordable housing by way of a commuted sum. It is proposed that this will be calculated on the basis of a £per m² charge similar to the operation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The rate will be kept under review although the Council's current evidence suggests a charge of £100 per m² is likely to be viable.
- 4.27. Outside of the AONB, schemes of 6-10 units will not be required to make provision for affordable housing in accordance with national policy.
- 4.28. For larger residential schemes of 11 or more units, the policy requires the provision of on-site affordable housing, the quantum of which will vary by location. In this regard the District has been divided into 3 different 'value' zones and within the high value zone, a requirement of 50% affordable housing will apply, in the medium zone 40% and in the low value zone 35%.
- 4.29. In terms of size and tenure of affordable housing, as a general guide the Council will seek 65% one and two-bedroom homes and 35% three and four bedroom homes. Tenure will typically comprise two thirds affordable rent and one third intermediate housing.

Housing Mix

- 4.30. In terms of housing mix, the plan seeks to ensure the provision of a balanced mix of accommodation to help cater for a broad range of needs. It is proposed that larger residential schemes of 11 or more units provide at least 25% of market and affordable homes as accessible and adaptable housing (formerly lifetime homes) and at least 5% as wheelchair user dwellings.

Custom/Self-Build Housing

- 4.31. Having regard to current central Government initiatives, the plan includes a strong emphasis on the provision of housing for those wishing to self-build their own home. To help deliver additional self-build opportunities, Policy H5 requires all housing schemes of 100 or more dwellings to set aside a proportion (5%) of the plots for the purposes of self-build. This can include the partial completion of units to be made available for 'self-finish'.

Existing Housing

- 4.32. An important consideration for the Local Plan is the existing housing stock and Policy H6 sets out the criteria against which the loss of or alterations to, existing housing will be considered.

Travelling Communities

- 4.33. There is an identified need for additional pitches and plots to meet the needs of travelling communities. It is anticipated that sites will be allocated through the Local Plan at a future point in time and until then, a criteria based approach will apply to deal with any proposals that come forward. These criteria seek to steer development

towards the most appropriate locations including those with good access to local services and facilities.

Sustainable Economic Growth

- 4.34. This section of the plan sets out the proposed approach towards the promotion of sustainable economic growth within the District. A number of separate policies are proposed including policies relating to the provision and protection of employment land, the rural economy, re-use of non-residential buildings for new uses, tourism, retention of local services and facilities and town centres.
- 4.35. In relation to the provision of employment land, the plan seeks to provide 60 hectares of land over the period up to 2031. A proportion of this is already identified including 20 hectares to the West of Witney but not all of this is available. To provide flexibility, and address locally identified requirements, the plan seeks to increase provision at Carterton (an additional 10 hectares) and Chipping Norton (up to an additional 7.3 hectares). Existing employment sites will be safeguarded and non-employment uses only permitted subject to a number of criteria.
- 4.36. With regard to the rural economy, the plan seeks to promote small-scale employment uses in appropriate locations as well as well-conceived farm diversification schemes. The plan also seeks to ensure the provision of access to superfast broadband to promote home working and flexible working practices (e.g. live work units).
- 4.37. In terms of the re-use of non-residential buildings the proposed approach is to seek non-residential uses as a priority (e.g. employment, tourism or community uses). The policy and supporting text set out in the key considerations and criteria against which proposals will be judged both in relation to traditional and more modern buildings.
- 4.38. Tourism is vitally important to West Oxfordshire and this is highlighted in the plan with a policy approach that seeks to support proposals of an appropriate scale and type in suitable locations. Schemes that are likely to generate large numbers of visitors will be steered towards the larger settlements and re-use existing buildings where possible. Proposals in more rural areas will be required to meet a number of criteria.
- 4.39. In terms of the retention of local services and facilities, in the interests of meeting the needs of local communities, the plan seeks to ensure that locally important facilities such as public houses, post offices and shops are retained unless it can be robustly demonstrated that they are no longer viable or that appropriate alternative provision will remain in an equally suitable and accessible location.
- 4.40. With regard to town centres, in accordance with national policy, the plan adopts a 'town centre' first approach, whereby the District's town centres are supported as the main focus for shopping, leisure, community facilities and services. Town Centres are defined for Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton as well as Burford and Woodstock. The loss of shops and other town centre uses will be resisted. The sequential test will be applied and out of centre proposals of more than 500 sq m will need to be supported by an impact assessment.

Transport and Movement

- 4.41. Transport is a critically important issue for West Oxfordshire and has been a key, recurring theme throughout consultation on the Local Plan to date. Particular concerns have been raised about traffic congestion both within towns and on key transport routes including the A40 and A44.

- 4.42. In recognition of the importance of this issue, transport has now been given greater prominence within the plan with a number of measures proposed to improve the situation in West Oxfordshire.
- 4.43. In general terms the plan seeks to ensure that the location and design of new development helps to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car. Proposals for new developments that have significant transport implications either in themselves or in combination with other proposals will be required to include a Transport Assessment (TA), and where necessary a travel plan, in accordance with County Council requirements.
- 4.44. Mixed-use developments will be supported in principle in appropriate locations given the potential benefits they present in terms of linked trips. Provision of access to superfast broadband will promote home working and help to further reduce car use.
- 4.45. Importantly, the plan identifies a number of strategic highway improvements that will help to support the planned quantum and distribution of growth. This includes improvements to the A40 between Eynsham and Oxford being progressed by the County Council in response to the recent award of £35m funding through the Local Growth Fund with Eynsham identified as the potential location for a new park and ride site.
- 4.46. At Witney, a package of strategic highway improvements are identified, building on the success of the County Council's recent improvements around Ducklington Lane. This includes the Down's Road/A40 junction, Shore's Green Slip Roads, the West End Link and a Northern Distributor Road. These will each be delivered by strategic development sites (see below).
- 4.47. At Carterton, the provision of A-road access along the B4477 is highlighted as a key priority accompanied by the provision of new slip roads at the junction of the B4477 and A40 to allow travel both east and west.
- 4.48. The plan sets out a positive approach towards public transport in line with national policy and takes account of the emerging content of the County Council's fourth local transport plan and other relevant strategies for bus and rail. A number of potential improvements are identified to the range and frequency of bus services available in the District and improvements that could be made to promote rail travel including the provision of sufficient car parking capacity and redoubling of the Cotswold line between Charlbury and Wolvercote.
- 4.49. The plan also highlights the importance of provision for active forms of travel including walking and cycling. There is a general expectation that all development will be located and designed so as to maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- 4.50. In terms of parking provision, the plan highlights the availability of public parking in a number of locations across the District as a key issue and seeks to ensure that sufficient provision is made. Where appropriate, new developments will be expected to make provision for increased parking capacity either directly or through a financial contribution.

Environmental and Heritage Assets

- 4.51. This section of the plan covers a broad range of topics including landscape character, biodiversity, public realm and green infrastructure, sport and recreation, renewable

energy, flood risk, environmental protection and the historic environment. No significant changes have been made to the plan since the 2012 draft Local Plan was published although amendments have been made to take account of consultation responses received, recent planning practice guidance and other relevant matters.

- 4.52. In terms of landscape character, new development will be expected to respect and where possible enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive natural and man-made features of the local landscape. For proposals within or affecting the AONB, great weight will be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. Special attention and protection will be given to the landscape and biodiversity of the Lower Windrush Valley Project, the Windrush in Witney Project Area and the Wychwood Project Area.
- 4.53. With regard to biodiversity, as a general principle, the plan seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity to achieve an overall net gain. Policy EH2 sets out a number of ways in which this will be achieved including by giving the highest level of protection to sites and species of international nature conservation importance and nationally important sites of special scientific interest.
- 4.54. In terms of public realm and green infrastructure, the plan seeks to protect and enhance the existing areas of public space and green infrastructure assets of West Oxfordshire with new multi-functional areas of space to be sought and created as appropriate. New development should not result in the loss of open space, sports and recreational buildings and land unless up to date assessment shows the asset is surplus to requirements or the need for and benefits of the alternative land use clearly outweigh the loss and equivalent replacement provision is made.
- 4.55. The plan sets out a clear approach towards the provision of proposals for decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy. The general principle of such development is supported but the policy sets out a number of criteria against which such proposals will be judged. This includes ensuring that they do not have a harmful landscape and visual impact, are designed and located to as to minimise impact and that opportunities for environmental enhancements are considered.
- 4.56. With regard to flood risk, the plan essentially follows national policy in seeking to apply the sequential approach and steer new development towards areas at low risk of flooding. All sources of flooding will need to be addressed and appropriate measures will need to be incorporated into developments including the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- 4.57. The plan also sets out an approach towards environmental protection including air quality, contaminated land, soil, hazardous substances, light pollution, noise, water resources and waste. In essence, proposals which are likely to cause pollution or likely to result in exposure to sources of pollution or risk to safety, will only be permitted if measures can be implemented to minimise pollution and risk to a level that provides a high standard of protection for health, environmental quality and amenity.
- 4.58. A key consideration for the Local Plan is the historic environment and this section sets out a clear policy approach which has been amended since the 2012 draft Local Plan to take account of national guidance and case law. In essence, all development proposals will be expected to conserve or enhance the special character and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire's historic environment, and preserve or enhance the District's heritage assets, and their significance and settings.

- 4.59. Proposals that will lead to harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset or its setting will be resisted unless a clear and convincing justification can be made to outweigh that harm. Proposals that will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of the significance of a heritage asset or its setting, will be refused, unless the harm is outweighed by substantial, demonstrable public benefits or all four tests set out in the NPPF are met.

Strategy at the Local Level

- 4.60. In order to articulate the overall strategy and topic-based policies at a more local level, the plan includes a strategy for each of the five sub-areas of the Local Plan. For each area, a brief profile is provided highlighting the key features and characteristics in terms of housing, employment, transport, retail and leisure, environment and heritage, infrastructure and the potential for further development.
- 4.61. These are then interpreted into a number of key issues relevant to each sub-area with a proposed strategy for each set out thereafter. The main elements of the sub-area strategies are set out below.

Witney Sub-Area

- 4.62. In terms of housing, it is anticipated that the overall requirement for the Witney sub-area (3,700 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already completed, existing commitments including West Witney (1,000 homes) two proposed Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) to the east and north of the town, identified SHLAA capacity and windfall development.
- 4.63. In terms of strategic development areas, the plan identifies land to the east of Witney for the provision of around 400 new homes, split across two sites, the majority of the development being located on the land known as Cogges Triangle. The site was included in the previous draft Local Plan for 300 homes and subsequently in the Local Plan Housing Consultation in 2014 when the allocation was increased to 400 homes.
- 4.64. The comments received during those consultations have been considered and in summary, Officers consider that the site continues to represent a sustainable development opportunity with no significant constraints to development. There are a number of key issues for consideration including surface water run-off, transport and access, landscape, foul water drainage and flood risk (in relation to the smaller component of the allocation). However, it is considered that these issues are all capable of being satisfactorily addressed through the planning process.
- 4.65. Importantly, the plan includes a requirement for the development to provide the Shores Green Slip Roads scheme to enable movements on the A40 both east and west at this key junction.
- 4.66. The plan also identifies land to the north of Witney for the provision of 1,000 new homes. Members will recall that the site was included in the Local Plan Housing Consultation in 2014 having been identified as a preferred site option to help meet the increased housing requirement.
- 4.67. A large number of responses were received to the proposed allocation of the site focused on a number of key issues including primarily ecology, landscape impact, traffic, flood risk and deliverability/viability.
- 4.68. In light of the various issues raised, a significant body of additional work has been carried out both in-house and by external consultants since the close of the

consultation to help determine whether the issues raised can be satisfactorily addressed. The overall conclusion reached is that they can.

- 4.69. In terms of ecology, a preliminary ecological assessment of the north Witney site and related West End Link has been carried out and has concluded that there are no significant constraints to development. The site itself has very little ecological value other than the important hedgerows and plantation woodland on the site which will be retained as part of the development. The route of the West End Link is a more sensitive location but the report that has been prepared does not identify any significant ecological constraints.
- 4.70. In terms of landscape impact, having regard to earlier work prepared in support of the Local Plan, Officers consider that the north Witney site is capable of accommodating 1,000 new homes without undue adverse impact. The proposed quantum of development has not been increased to ensure this is able to be achieved. Any development of the site would need to be accompanied by a detailed landscape and visual impact assessment with appropriate landscape mitigation measures to be incorporated into the development as appropriate.
- 4.71. In terms of traffic impact, the modelling work undertaken suggests that as part of a strategic package of transport measures at Witney (alongside the Down's Road junction and Shores Green etc.) the provision of the West End Link would mitigate the traffic impact of the north Witney development and would also create a number of benefits including a reduction in traffic movements through the Staple Hall junction and a reduction in rat-running in a number of surrounding locations including Crawley. Whilst the scheme will not eliminate traffic congestion in Bridge Street, it will nonetheless provide some demonstrable benefits.
- 4.72. In terms of flood risk, a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared to provide further advice on this issue. In relation to the north Witney site the report identifies that there is significant scope through appropriate design of the housing development to improve the existing downstream flooding problems through a combination of measures including river attenuation, sustainable drainage and improvements to the existing culvert headwall structure and trash screen.
- 4.73. In relation to the West End Link, the report identifies that there is potential to use the bridge crossing to restrict flows subject to proper design of the highway structures which could potentially alleviate existing flooding problems in Witney
- 4.74. In terms of viability and deliverability, Officers are confident that all necessary land to bring the north Witney scheme forward is in control of the site promoters and that it represents a financially viable proposition.
- 4.75. Having regard to these important considerations, Officers have concluded that the site represents a sustainable development opportunity for Witney and that there are no significant constraints which prevent the site from being included in the pre-submission draft Local Plan.
- 4.76. Alternative options to the south and north-east of Witney have been considered in detail but are not proposed to be allocated. Land to the south of the town is physically segregated by virtue of the A40 and there are concerns regarding noise, odour and landscape impact. Furthermore, unlike the alternative options, the scheme would not deliver any strategic highway improvements for Witney.

- 4.77. Land to the north east of the town is highly sensitive in terms of landscape impact and importantly, in terms of deliverability, there is some uncertainty in relation to the assembly of land needed to provide satisfactory access arrangements onto Jubilee Way.
- 4.78. Other key elements of the Witney sub-area strategy include the provision of additional employment land to the west of the town (20 hectares) a range of strategic transport improvements as set out previously including Down's Road, Shores Green, the West End Link and a new Northern Distributor Road. It is anticipated that this 'package' of strategic highway improvements will help to mitigate the impact of planned housing and business growth in Witney and provide a significant improvement to the flow of vehicles in and around the town.
- 4.79. In terms of retail and leisure, the strategy identifies Witney as the primary focus for new retail and leisure provision. A strong and diverse town centre will be maintained with a good mix of independent and national multiple retailers. Further town centre development will be accommodated through phased and organic extensions. A primary shopping frontage, where the loss of shops will be resisted is defined.
- 4.80. In terms of environment and heritage the strategy highlights the importance of the Witney sub-area and seeks to ensure that all new development has due regard.
- 4.81. With regard to infrastructure the plan identifies a number of requirements to support further development, which are set out in more detail in the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Carterton Sub-Area

- 4.82. In terms of housing, it is anticipated that the overall requirement for the Carterton sub-area (2,600 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already completed, existing commitments, a proposed Strategic Development Areas (SDA) at REEMA Central, identified SHLAA capacity and windfall development.
- 4.83. The REEMA Central site currently accommodates a number of existing MOD properties but has been declared surplus to requirements pending the redevelopment of the adjoining REEMA North site for 200 service family homes. Once that scheme is complete (expected 2016) the REEMA Central site will be made available to the open market. The site is previously developed land and is very close to the town centre. It represents a sustainable development opportunity and its potential redevelopment has been well-supported through previous consultation.
- 4.84. The plan also highlights the possibility of further MOD housing being redeveloped over the period of the Local Plan although at present, none of those properties have been declared surplus to requirements.
- 4.85. Alternative options to the west and north of the town have not been identified. Land to the north is considered to be poorly related to the town, relatively remote from the town centre and segregated by the Kilkeny Lane Country Park. It is poorly served by public transport and development in this location would require significant improvements to the Burford Road. Land to the west is segregated from the town by virtue of the Shill Brook Valley and major development in this location would be poorly related to the town and have a harmful landscape impact.
- 4.86. Employment provision is a key aspect of the strategy for the Carterton sub-area and the plan seeks to deliver an additional 10 hectares of employment land over and above the 5 hectares already identified at West Oxfordshire and Ventura Business Parks. No

specific sites are identified although the potential to use the sports pitches on the corner of Monahan Way and Carterton Road is highlighted as a potential option (subject to suitable relocation and replacement). The Council will work in partnership with the Town Council and landowners to identify additional opportunities.

- 4.87. Transport is a further key issue and as set out above, the plan seeks to secure delivery of upgrades to the B4477 Minster Lovell Road together with new slip roads at the junction of the A40.
- 4.88. A further key issue is the vitality and viability of Carterton Town Centre and the plan sets out a proposed strategy that builds on previous design work undertaken on behalf of the Town Council as well as the emerging Carterton masterplan. The proposed Town Centre strategy seeks to improve the retail offer, improve the movement of vehicles, improve pedestrian and cycle links and capitalise on a number of potential development sites to provide more active frontages and compatible mixed-use developments.

Chipping Norton Sub-Area

- 4.89. In terms of housing, it is anticipated that the overall requirement for the Chipping Norton sub-area (1,800 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already completed, existing commitments, a proposed Strategic Development Areas (SDA) on land to the east of the town at Tank Farm, identified SHLAA capacity and windfall development.
- 4.90. The land at Tank Farm was identified as a potential allocation in the 2014 Local Plan Housing Consultation. The site was identified for the provision of 500 homes as part of a mixed-use development. A number of comments were received during the consultation and these have all been carefully considered. In short, Officers remain confident that the site represents a sustainable development opportunity for the town and should be included in the pre-submission draft Local Plan.
- 4.91. It is located within comfortable walking and cycling distance of Chipping Norton Town Centre, it lies outside the AONB, is not affected by flooding or heritage assets and there are no significant constraints to the site coming forward. It is also owned primarily by Oxfordshire County Council who are actively promoting the site.
- 4.92. In order to help meet the increased housing requirement, it is proposed that the allocation is increased from 500 to 600 homes. It is considered that this quantum of development can be accommodated on the site without undue harm in terms of landscape impact subject to appropriate mitigation.
- 4.93. Employment land provision is another important issue for the Chipping Norton sub-area with an identified need to increase supply. The plan therefore seeks to secure additional provision of at least 4.5 hectares and potentially up to 7.3 hectares on the eastern side of the town.
- 4.94. Other important issues addressed in the Chipping Norton sub-area strategy include Town Centre vitality and viability, seeking to alleviate the impact of HGV movements through the town and meeting future infrastructure requirements, a number of which have emerged through the ongoing Chipping Norton Neighbourhood Plan.

Eynsham - Woodstock Sub-Area

- 4.95. In terms of housing, it is anticipated that the overall requirement for the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area (1,600 homes) will be met through a combination of homes

already completed, existing commitments, identified SHLAA capacity and windfall development. No strategic sites are proposed within this sub-area.

- 4.96. The strategy highlights the importance of this sub-area in terms of employment provision within the District and sets out a general commitment to increasing supply with a particular focus on Eynsham. No specific sites have been identified at this stage however.
- 4.97. Transport is highlighted as a particular issue for this sub-area given the problems experienced on the A40 between Eynsham and Oxford and also on the A4095 through Long Hanborough and Bladon and on the A44 approaches to Oxford.
- 4.98. The plan sets out a commitment to work with Oxfordshire County Council in relation to the A40 improvements that are being progressed in response to the recent £35m Local Growth Fund award and land at Eynsham is identified as a potential option for a new park and ride site. The strategy also sets out a commitment to work in partnership with the County Council to alleviate the problems caused by HGV movements through Woodstock.
- 4.99. In terms of retail, the plan highlights the importance of Woodstock and defines a town centre within which the loss of shops and other town centre uses will be resisted. In terms of leisure, the strategy sets out a commitment to working with partners including the Environment Agency and the River Thames Alliance, to optimise the leisure and tourism potential of the River Thames.
- 4.100. Heritage is a key issue for this sub-area and a new policy has been prepared to provide specific protection to the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (WHS). In short, the policy seeks to ensure that the exceptional cultural significance (Outstanding Universal Value) of the Blenheim World Heritage Site is protected, promoted and conserved for current and future generations.

Burford – Charlbury Sub-Area

- 4.101. In terms of housing, it is anticipated that the overall requirement for the Burford – Charlbury area (800 homes) will be met through a combination of homes already completed, existing commitments, identified SHLAA capacity and windfall development. No strategic sites are proposed within this sub-area.
- 4.102. The strategy highlights the environmental sensitivities of this area the majority of which falls within the Cotswolds AONB. Any proposed development within the AONB will be expected to conserve landscape and scenic beauty and major developments will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that they are in the public interest.
- 4.103. Future employment provision is expected to be relatively small-scale through the conversion of existing buildings and through small-scale development within or adjacent to the rural service centres and villages.
- 4.104. In terms of transport, the strategy sets out a commitment to work with the County Council in relation to the issue of HGV movements through Burford. Parking capacity at Burford is identified as another key issue and opportunities to improve the efficient use of available car parking and increase capacity will be taken where appropriate.
- 4.105. In terms of retail, the key focus will be Burford where the loss of shops within the town will be resisted in order to maintain its vitality and viability.

5. FIVE-YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

- 5.1. In accordance with national policy, the Council is required to demonstrate that it has in place a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites plus an appropriate buffer of either 5% or 20% depending on past housing delivery rates.
- 5.2. In light of a number of recent planning decisions, the decision to extend the Local Plan to 2031 and taking account of the Strategic Development Areas identified in the pre-submission draft Local Plan, the Council's previous 5-year housing land supply position statement (September 2014) has been updated and is attached at Appendix 2.
- 5.3. For robustness, two methodologies are included, one based on the 'Sedgefield' approach whereby past under-supply is met within the following 5-year period and the 'Liverpool' approach whereby past under-supply is met over the remaining period of the Local Plan.
- 5.4. Using the Sedgefield methodology, the five year requirement in the period 2015 – 2020 is 3,930 homes and the anticipated supply is 4,418. On this basis, the Council is able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites (5.6 years).
- 5.5. Using the Liverpool methodology, the five year requirement in the period 2015 – 2020 is 3,045 homes and the anticipated supply is 4,418. On this basis, the Council is able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites (7.3 years).

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1. In relation to the Local Plan, subject to the agreement of Cabinet and Council the pre-submission draft Local Plan attached at Appendix 1 will be formally published for a 6-week period within which representations on the soundness and legal compliance of the plan will be invited. This 6-week period is likely to begin in mid-March 2015.
- 6.2. Unless there are any materially significant issues raised during that period, it is anticipated that the pre-submission draft Local Plan including any minor modifications will be formally submitted to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate in May 2015.
- 6.3. The plan will then be subject to an independent examination in autumn 2015.
- 6.4. In relation to the 5-year housing land supply, subject to the agreement of Cabinet and Council the position statement attached at Appendix 2 will be published and utilised for the purposes of development management.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are some cost implications associated with the publication and submission of the pre-submission draft Local Plan and the subsequent examination process. This will be met from the HPDG reserve fund which has been set aside for this purpose.

8. RISKS

- 8.1. There is inevitably a risk of the pre-submission draft Local Plan being challenged and subsequently found unsound. Representations received at the formal Regulation 19 publication stage will be focused on legal compliance and soundness and depending on the issues raised Officers will make an informed judgement as to whether the plan should be formally submitted to the Secretary of State or whether any additional work is needed.

9. REASONS

The Local Plan forms a key part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

Andrew Tucker
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Background Papers:

1. West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot (CAG January 2015)
2. Witney Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Wallingford Hydrosolutions February 2015)
3. Validation of an Objectively Assessed Housing Need (Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research January 2015)
4. Habitat Regulations Assessment Report of West Oxfordshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (URS)
5. Landscape and Visual Review of Two Additional Submissions for Witney Strategic Development Options (Kirkham Landscape Planning January 2015)
6. Local Plan and CIL Update Viability Study (AspinallVerdi February 2015)
7. Technical Note: Witney Development and Infrastructure Strategic Modelling (White Young Green October 2014)
8. West Oxfordshire Assessment of Strategic Site Options Update (February 2015)
9. Sustainability Appraisal of Pre-Submission Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan (Enfusion February 2015)
10. Land north of Witney and West End Link Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Windrush Ecology January 2015)
11. West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update (February 2015)