

Housing Sites in Wantage

8.32 Policy H6 below identifies three sites for housing in Wantage, all of which are on previously developed land within the town. Two of the sites had planning permission at April 2005. These sites will be expected to provide high quality developments at densities appropriate to their location close to the town centre. The reorganisation of the secondary school could lead to additional brownfield sites being made available for development in the longer term.

POLICY H6

THE FOLLOWING SITES IN WANTAGE (AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) ARE IDENTIFIED FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

<i>Site Ref</i>	<i>Estimated Number of Dwellings 2011</i>
i) C OF E INFANTS SCHOOL, CHURCH STREET*	20
ii) GARSTON LANE SCHOOL *	65
iii) NORTH OF LIMBOROUGH ROAD*	24

* *Sites with planning permission for ten or more dwellings at 1 April 2005*

Major Development West of Didcot

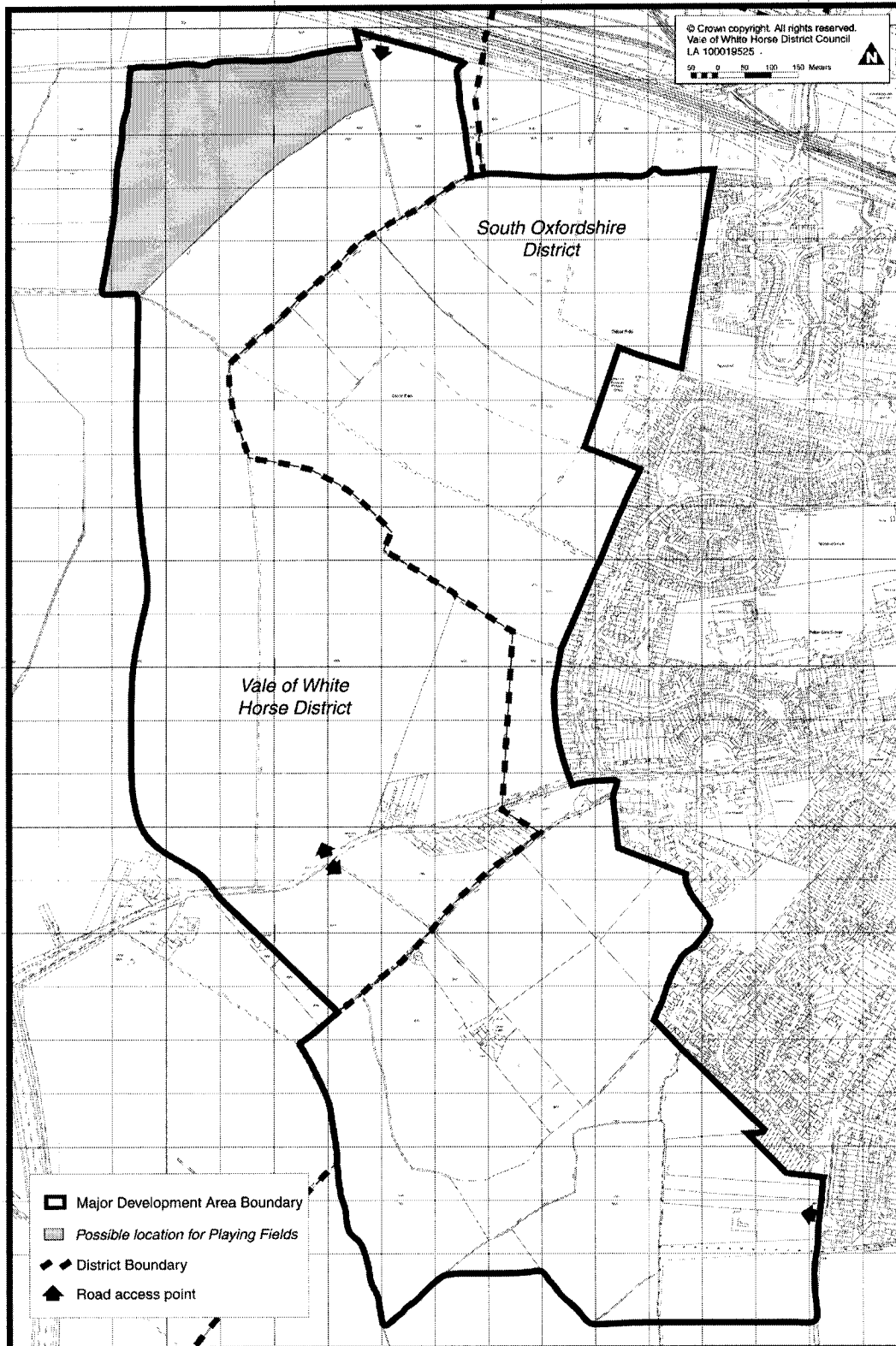
8.33 The Oxfordshire Structure Plan proposes major housing development at Didcot adjoining the western edge of the town and extending north and south of the Wantage Road (B4493). Although Didcot is in South Oxfordshire, the administrative boundary between the two districts is close to the western edge of the town. In recognition of this, the Structure Plan requires some 500 dwellings of the western expansion of the town to be built in the Vale. In preparing their local plans the two councils are working together to determine the optimum form and layout of the development. The proposals map shows the land allocated for that part of the area which lies within the Vale. Map 8.1 shows the whole extent of the area including that part which is allocated in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. It includes a 12 hectare field in the north western corner which is to be considered as a reserve allocation, solely for the purpose of accommodating playing fields, if such a facility cannot be located elsewhere within the area.

- 8.34 The Councils intend to deliver a high quality, sustainable, mixed-use development and they consider that this is best achieved through the preparation of a comprehensive planning and development brief and more detailed design statements for the area. This will necessitate landowners and/or developers with a legal interest in the land to work together. Ideally this would be as a single body – 'the Master Developer' or 'Promoter' – that would assume responsibility for all stages of the planning, design and implementation of the site. This is the approach advocated by the Urban Villages Forum as best able to achieve sustainable, high quality development. If the site was developed piecemeal by a number of landowners and developers sharing no common purpose then it would be difficult for the Councils to ensure the delivery of quality, sustainability and services when needed by the new resident population. The Councils will seek a planning obligation that would establish a single body to act as Master Developer.
- 8.35 The comprehensive planning and development brief should contain information on the following: the identity of the Master Developer; a site appraisal; the creation of walkable neighbourhoods; the disposition, function and design of all built development, public buildings, public urban space and public green space networks; a transport strategy; the definition of character areas; energy conservation and resource management; surface water drainage; protecting the historic environment; protecting and enhancing the ecology of the area; and the phased implementation of the development, delivery and management of infrastructure and services. Further details on the requirements of the planning and development brief and design statements are contained in Appendix 5 to this Local Plan. These requirements are identical to those set out in South Oxfordshire's first deposit Local Plan.
- 8.36 It is essential that the Master Developer works with the Councils when the planning and development brief is being prepared and takes into account the Councils' views during the preparation. The draft planning and development brief will be the subject of public consultation and the views of consultees will be taken into account before the brief is finalised and adopted as supplementary planning guidance. The planning and development brief should be adopted prior to the submission of any planning applications. In determining planning applications the Councils will have regard to the requirements of the brief and may refuse permission for proposals that do not comply with it. The Councils will impose planning conditions and secure planning obligations to ensure that the site is developed in accordance with the development brief and design statements.
- 8.37 Design statements (see also Appendix 5 to this Plan) should be submitted with applications for full planning permission or the approval of reserved matters. The Master Developer should also have a design statement approved for land that will be transferred to another body. This is to ensure that intending developers have a clear idea of the high quality development sought by the Councils before contract terms are agreed. The Council may refuse planning permission in cases where the

plans and drawings submitted indicate that the development would not achieve the quality to which the design statement aspires.

- 8.38 The criteria in policy H7 below set out the requirements for the development of the area. The average net housing density specified in criteria (i) is justified having regard to the need to make efficient use of the land and to the large proportion of small dwellings required in the area by criterion (ii). It is also justified by the intended delivery of very good accessibility to a wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the site by all modes of transport.
- 8.39 The proportion of small dwellings in the general market housing sector required by criterion (ii) is justified by the local need for this type and category of dwellings as shown in the Councils' *Housing Needs Assessments*. The Council will seek about 10% 1 bedroom units, 40% 2 bedroom units, 30% 3 bedroom units and 20% 4 bedroom units and larger. As far as the mix of affordable housing is concerned the Councils will seek to ensure that the type and size of housing provided meets the need. The Council will also consider a mix of tenures depending on the identified needs and together with South Oxfordshire District Council will prepare supplementary planning guidance to clarify the detailed requirements for different categories of affordable housing to be provided on the site. This mix may change as the development progresses and the position alters. The Councils will require the affordable housing required by criterion (iii) to be distributed evenly throughout the area in order to encourage the development of a mixed and balanced community as advocated in PPG3.
- 8.40 There will be three new neighbourhoods in the development area with the district centre being the focal point of the central neighbourhood as well as being the focal point of the development as a whole. Neighbourhood centres will be the focal points of the other two neighbourhoods. These centres will enjoy good accessibility by all modes of transport and as such they are the appropriate locations for local services that generate many trips from new homes. The centres and the main movement corridors linking them are also the preferred locations for higher-density development containing large numbers of small dwellings in accordance with criterion (ii).
- 8.41 The requirement for the provision of new schools is based on information received from the County Council, acting as local education authority, and from the Learning and Skills Council. The school buildings should be focal points and key buildings in the townscape and should not be located away from street frontages in open campus settings where they would not fulfil these urban design functions.

Fig 8.1 The Major Development Area West of Didcot



- 8.42 The justification for the provision of three community centres on the site is based on the identified accommodation requirements of those voluntary and local authority bodies that intend to provide valued services to the new community. In planning the three community centres the Master Developer should have regard to the outline planning briefs that these bodies have supplied to South Oxfordshire District Council setting out their accommodation needs. The Councils, however, will seek to ensure by means of planning obligations that accommodation to be provided in all three community centres is not used exclusively by particular bodies. As with schools, the Councils will require the community centre buildings to act as focal points and key buildings in the townscape of the district and neighbourhood centres.
- 8.43 In planning the provision of indoor and outdoor community sports facilities the Councils will require the planning development brief to have regard to the background paper entitled *Didcot West Development: Sport and Recreation Facilities Planning Brief*, published by South Oxfordshire District Council. This recommends that all the community sports facilities be located at and adjacent to the new secondary school. This location will enable the provision of a dual-use sports facility maximising the benefits that can be obtained by both the school and the community in terms of the quality of the facilities to be provided and in terms of engaging young people in sports activity.
- 8.44 In accordance with PPS6, the Councils are proposing the establishment of convenience shops and other service uses in the district centre and two neighbourhood centres to meet people's day-to-day needs for convenience goods and services. The limitations on the number of such shop and service uses and the amount of floorspace to be provided are justified having regard to the position of the district and neighbourhood centres in the local hierarchy of centres. These local centres should be small in scale and the trade generated in them should not be such as to undermine the vitality and viability of Didcot town centre.
- 8.45 In order to enhance their vitality, the Councils will require the provision in the district centre and two neighbourhood centres of a number of two and three storey buildings with a mix of land uses in individual buildings. As a guideline, the Councils suggest the provision of about ten such individual buildings in mixed use in the district centre and three such buildings in each of the two neighbourhood centres. The reason for the limitation on the number and size of commercial uses is explained in paragraph 8.44 above. A proportion of these mixed use buildings will be 'live-work units' where the commercial use at street level would be linked internally to a dwelling at upper floor level. As a guideline, the Councils suggest that 50% of these mixed-use buildings should comprise 'live-work units'. Narrow-fronted buildings (5 to 8 metres wide) are required to create active frontages and a rich variety of buildings in the three centres.

- 8.46 The requirement for the provision of primary health care facilities located in the district centre is based on advice received from the local Primary Care Trust relating to the health care requirements of the new population.
- 8.47 The amount of land to be used for public space is based on the standards contained in the South Oxfordshire design guide and on the particular circumstances of the site. Public urban spaces will comprise focal points in the built-up area. Civic squares will have predominantly paved surfaces providing an open setting for buildings enclosing them. The focal points will also include public gardens with predominantly planted surfaces. The land uses to be accommodated in public greenspace are set out in criterion (vii) and the public realm functions are described in paragraph (iv) of Appendix 5. This requirement is justified particularly having regard to the need to provide generous space for informal recreation in an area containing a high proportion of small dwellings, some of which will lack private gardens. There is also a need to provide wide belts and blocks of woodland around the periphery of the site to screen and soften the landscape impact of buildings on an elevated and prominent site. These open areas will also form a buffer between the new development and nearby villages and the built development on the site will not extend further south than the line of the existing southern built-up limit of Didcot. The Council will seek commuted payments to cover the costs of maintaining the open spaces and other facilities in accordance with policy DC8 and paragraph 4.20. In the case of outdoor playing space this may be required in perpetuity. The boundary of the major development area shown on figure 8.1 includes a field in the north western corner which may be necessary to accommodate playing fields if suitable land cannot be found elsewhere on the site. If it is not required for this purpose the land should not be developed and should remain in agricultural use.
- 8.48 It is important that as residents move into their new homes they are afforded the opportunity for ease of movement by all modes of transport from Didcot and within Didcot. Criterion (xi) will secure this objective by providing appropriate on and off-site transport infrastructure. The highway authority and the Highway Agency will advise on the transport measures required. These measures will be identified through the development of an integrated transport strategy for the Didcot area, having regard to the following objectives:
- To reduce reliance on the use of the private car by improving choices available to meet transport needs within Didcot and between Didcot and the surrounding settlements;
 - To increase accessibility to facilities for those without cars and/or with mobility impairment;
 - To promote the use of public transport (bus and rail);
 - To identify and provide a safe, continuous and high quality network of pedestrian and cycle routes;
 - To promote road safety and reduce the number and severity of road casualties;

- To promote efficient highway management including the identification of transport infrastructure as appropriate, and parking demand and supply;
- To improve provision for interchange between modes of transport; and
- To relieve traffic congestion where it is causing significant amenity or environmental problems.

8.49 The District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council should urgently consider the detailed options for an A4130 to A417 link, to include a Harwell by-pass. For the section between the A4130 and the B4493, this link should not require additional land outside the boundary of the MDA. The Council, together with South Oxfordshire District Council and the County Council, will be seeking the progression of measures identified in phase 2 of the provisional strategy as a matter of urgency. The provisional strategy proposes a range of transport measures which include a Harwell bypass in order to alleviate the impact of traffic arising from developments in the Didcot area. The Council considers that the provision of a Harwell by-pass is a priority.

POLICY H7

LAND WEST OF DIDCOT IS IDENTIFIED FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WHERE DEVELOPMENT CAN START BEFORE 1 APRIL 2006. PROPOSALS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEF AND DESIGN STATEMENTS AND WHERE ALL NECESSARY ON-SITE AND OFF-SITE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS ARE MET. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE WILL INCLUDE:

- i) **PROVISION OF ABOUT 3200 DWELLINGS OF WHICH ABOUT 500 DWELLINGS WILL BE LOCATED IN THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT. THE LAND DEVELOPED FOR HOUSING (ABOUT 80 HECTARES) WILL BE AT 40 DWELLINGS PER HECTARE AVERAGE NET DENSITY;**
- ii) **A MIX OF DWELLING TYPES AND SIZES OF THE GENERAL MARKET HOUSING WITH ABOUT 50% SMALL (1 OR 2 BEDROOM) UNITS;**
- iii) **PROVISION FOR AT LEAST 40% OF DWELLING UNITS TO BE AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH THE UNITS DISTRIBUTED EVENLY THROUGHOUT THE AREA USED FOR HOUSING;**
- iv) **PROVISION OF A DISTRICT CENTRE INCLUDING:**
 - a) **A SECONDARY SCHOOL;**
 - b) **A PRIMARY SCHOOL;**
 - c) **A COMMUNITY CENTRE;**

- d) AN INDOOR COMMUNITY SPORTS HALL;
 - e) PLAYING FIELDS FOR OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SPORTS AND AN EQUIPPED CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA;
 - f) PREMISES FOR A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PRACTICE;
 - g) LOCAL SHOPS AND RETAIL SERVICES, LIMITED TO USES WITHIN PART A OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER, INCLUDING A SMALL SUPERMARKET (ABOUT 500 SQUARE METRES) AND FURTHER SMALL UNIT PREMISES (ABOUT 1200 SQUARE METRES IN TOTAL);
 - h) NARROW-FRONTED, MIXED-USE BUILDINGS GENERALLY MORE THAN TWO STOREYS IN HEIGHT. THE STREET-LEVEL USES IN THESE BUILDINGS WILL INCLUDE THE USES IN (g) ABOVE. A PROPORTION OF THESE MIXED-USE BUILDINGS WILL BE LIVE-WORK UNITS WITH INTERNAL ACCESS BETWEEN THE WORKSPACE AND A DWELLING AT UPPER FLOOR LEVEL; AND
 - i) BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL USE, WITHIN PART C OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER, GENERALLY NARROW-FRONTED AND MORE THAN TWO STOREYS IN HEIGHT.
- v) TWO NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES WITH EACH CENTRE INCLUDING:
- a) A PRIMARY SCHOOL;
 - b) A COMMUNITY CENTRE;
 - c) LOCAL SHOPS AND RETAIL SERVICES, LIMITED TO USES WITHIN PART A OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER, IN SMALL UNIT PREMISES (ABOUT 500 SQUARE METRES IN TOTAL);
 - d) NARROW-FRONTED MIXED-USE BUILDINGS AS DESCRIBED IN H7 (iv) (h) ABOVE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SMALL SUPERMARKETS; AND
 - e) BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL USE AS DESCRIBED IN (iv)(i) ABOVE;
- vi) PROVISION OF A NETWORK OF PUBLIC URBAN SPACES (NOT LESS THAN 8 HECTARES) INCLUDING A PRIMARY CIVIC SPACE IN THE DISTRICT CENTRE, SECONDARY CIVIC SPACES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES AND OTHER CIVIC SPACES WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREA LOCATED AT KEY JUNCTIONS IN THE MOVEMENT NETWORK;
- vii) PROVISION OF A NETWORK OF PUBLIC GREENSPACES (NOT LESS THAN 62 HECTARES) INCLUDING COMMUNITY OUTDOOR PLAYING SPACE, CHILDREN'S

PLAY AREAS, PUBLIC GARDENS, OPEN GRASSLAND, WOODLAND, HEDGEROWS, WETLAND, PONDS AND WATERCOURSES A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THE PUBLIC GREEN SPACE NETWORK WILL BE LOCATED AROUND THE WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EDGES OF THE BUILT-UP AREAS WITHIN THE SITE;

- viii) PROVISION OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS WITHIN THE LAND DEVELOPED FOR HOUSING;**
- ix) PROVISION OF OFF-SITE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES INCLUDING, WHERE APPROPRIATE , FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS IMPROVING LIBRARY, ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES IN DIDCOT TOWN CENTRE, IMPROVING COMMUNITY SPORTS FACILITIES AT DIDCOT WAVE LEISURE CENTRE, IMPROVEMENTS TO DIDCOT CIVIC HALL AND IMPROVEMENTS TO WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES IN OR NEAR DIDCOT;**
- x) PROVISION OF OFF-SITE SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE WORKS; AND**
- xi) PROVISION OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY TR2 AIMED AT ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRAVEL AND REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL BY CAR INCLUDING:**
 - a) A MOVEMENT NETWORK OF FOOTWAYS, FOOTPATHS, CYCLETRACKS AND ROADS IN THE SITE, CONNECTING TO EXISTING AND PROPOSED NETWORKS AT THE SITE BOUNDARIES. THE INDICATIVE LOCATION OF ROAD NETWORK CONNECTIONS IS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP;**
 - b) FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENABLE THE PROVISION OF OFF-SITE FOOTWAY, FOOTPATH AND CYCLETRACK LINKS, ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES IN DIDCOT AND IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND VILLAGES AROUND DIDCOT AND ON THE A34 TRUNK ROAD MADE NECESSARY BY AND AS A CONSEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEF;**
 - c) FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENABLE THE PROVISION OF BUS SERVICES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO AFFORD RESIDENTS ON THE SITE GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS FROM DIDCOT AND WITHIN DIDCOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEF.**