

HAR/17774-X and HAR/17774/1-X

George Wimpey UK Ltd and Taylor Woodrow Homes Ltd

Mixed-use urban extension of approximately 3,200 new dwellings together with associated local shops and services, leisure, open spaces and community facilities, and transport, drainage and utility infrastructure

Land west of Didcot between the A4130 and Park Road, to both the north and south of the B4493 Wantage Road

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Four duplicate applications for outline planning permission for development at Great Western Park (GWP) were submitted in October 2002: two to this Council and two to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). The proposed development straddles the boundary of the two local authorities and is within the parishes of Didcot, Harwell, West Hagbourne and East Hagbourne. The site and parish boundaries are shown on Plan A of **Appendix 1**. The proposal is presented as one development and the development could not be carried out unless both District Councils grant planning permission. SODC's Planning Committee will have met to consider the proposal on 19 July 2006.
- 1.2 In November 2004 an appeal was lodged against the non-determination of the duplicate applications (HAR/17774/1-X). The Public Inquiry is now scheduled to start on 7 November 2006, having been deferred twice. The scheme has been amended twice - in June 2004 and December 2005. The applicants and local planning authorities are agreed that the current application scheme would be substituted at the appeal, however the Planning Inspector will have to agree to this. It is this latest scheme that is presented below.
- 1.3 Following consultation with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), there is no longer a requirement for a third primary school on the site. In addition, consideration must be given to ways of making the scheme viable to ensure delivery of the housing in line with the Structure Plan and Regional Guidance. The third school site has given an opportunity to provide additional housing on the site, thereby improving viability without increasing the site area or affecting the concepts and principles of the Masterplan. In terms of the description of the development, the term "approximately" has been taken by Planning Inspectors to mean a 10% variation in other developments of a comparable nature. The site could accommodate an extra 100 dwellings, which represents just over 3% of the total and is not significant in respect of the proposals, and it offers a solution in dealing with a pocket of potentially undeveloped land within the site and improving the viability of the proposed development.
- 1.4 The Masterplan, therefore, has been amended to reflect the development of the third school site with housing and so permit up to 3,300 dwellings. Approximately 2,600 dwellings would be within SODC and 700 within the Vale District (i.e. Harwell Parish). The amendments will be subject to consultation under Regulation 19 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 1999. Committee, therefore, is asked to delegate the determination of the applications, subject to the outcome of the Regulation 19 consultation and the completion of the S106 agreement. A resolution is needed on both the appeal and 'live' applications in view of the timing of the appeal, which allows only limited time for Officers to prepare for the appeal in the event of the Public Inquiry going ahead.
- 1.5 The application site is greenfield land adjoining the western area of Didcot. Proposals to develop any greenfield land for housing which relate to a site of 5 hectares or more (or which comprise 150 dwellings or more) and which the Local Planning Authority resolves to approve, need to be notified to the Secretary of State (The Town and Country Planning (Residential Development on Greenfield Land) (England) Direction 2000 before planning permission can be granted.
- 1.6 The remainder of this report is set out under the following headings:

2. Site Description
3. Policy Background
4. Relevant Planning History
5. The Application
6. Consultations and Representations
7. Policy and Guidance
8. Planning Considerations
9. Conclusions
10. Recommendations

1.7 There are 7 Appendices attached:

1. Plans: Plan A – Application Site and Parish Boundaries; Plan B - Development Framework and Policy Boundary
2. Adopted Local Plan Policy H7
3. Schedule of site planning history
4. Draft Heads of Terms for the S106 Agreement
5. Summary of Consultations and Representations
6. Supplementary Statement relating to Environmental Matters (July 2006)
7. Glossary

2.0 **Site Description**

- 2.1 The location plan at **Appendix 1** shows the application site and the area within the Vale and SODC, plus the parish boundaries. The site covers an area of 180 hectares (144 acres). Its current use is mainly agricultural and it is divided into fields by mature hedgerows, fences and ditches. The eastern boundary of the site is adjacent to the built-up edge of Didcot. To the north of site are the A4130 and Didcot Power Station. The site is divided by Wantage Road (B4493), and Park Road forms the south-east boundary of the site.
- 2.2 Between the A4130 and the B4493 the site comprises an open plateau which extends into the existing urban area of Didcot. To the north and north-west the ground falls away steeply. South of the B4493 the land slopes more gently and is characterised by smaller fields with mature hedgerow and trees. There are no statutory landscape designations or sites of nature conservation importance. There are, however, several individual and groups of trees which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order, served in June 2006.
- 2.3 There are two Grade II listed buildings affected by the development, Down Farmhouse and a listed milestone. Down Farmhouse lies south of Wantage Road and is surrounded by but not within the application site. The listed milestone lies on the north side of Wantage Road. Along Wantage Road there are 16 residential properties adjoining the application site. Residential properties to the east adjoin the site along the following roads: Brendon Close, Mendip Heights, Quantock View, Freeman Road, Slade Road, Elbourne, Barleyfields, Wheatfields, Portway and Park Road.
- 2.4 There are three public footpaths (D5, D21 and D19) which cross the site and 14 claimed rights of way. One of these claimed routes links to Bridleway H1 (Cow Lane) between the A4130 and Harwell, to the west of the site.
- 2.5 The A4130 is a single carriageway road connecting Didcot to the A34 at Milton Interchange. The B4493 Wantage Road links Didcot to Harwell, and Park Road leads to West Hagbourne.

3.0 **Policy Background**

Local Plan, Structure Plan and Regional Plan Policies

- 3.1 The location of the major development area (MDA) to meet housing need has been the subject of policy deliberations dating back many years. Didcot was identified for further growth in 1998 when the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011 was published. The Examination in Public (EIP) debated the direction of growth and recommended that development should go north (Oxfordshire Structure Plan EIP panel report dated December 2000). However, the County Council chose the western option (Alteration to the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2001 dated 2 April 2001) on the basis that this general location has the best opportunities for an integrated extension to the town and encouraging sustainable modes of transport.
- 3.2 A Local Plan Inquiry (LPI) held jointly with SODC in November – December 2004 heard objections into the Local Plans' policies for Didcot. The Inspectors stated that the purpose of the LPI was not to reassess the strategic decision process but whether the decision should be reviewed, having regard to any material change in circumstances. The Inspectors stated that the two most important issues were still:
- sustainability of the respective locations in terms of their accessibility by sustainable modes of transport / integration with the existing town; and
 - protection of best and most versatile agricultural land.
- The Inspectors concluded that the decision to select land to the west of Didcot remains sound.

RPG 9 / South-East Plan

- 3.3 The current regional planning document is RPG9. It sets out policies which cover topics including housing, transport and the environment. For Oxfordshire, there is a target of an average annual build rate of 2,430 dwellings and this has informed the Oxfordshire Structure Plan (OSP) allocations.
- 3.4 The South East Plan will replace RPG9. The Draft Plan sets out a vision for the region from 2006-2026, focusing on housing, transport, economy and the environment. The largest growth area in Oxfordshire is Didcot; the Plan allows for about 7,300 new homes at Didcot between 2006-2026, including GWP. The consultation period finished in June 2006, and an Examination in Public will commence in November 2006. Proposed modifications to the Plan are expected to be published in September 2007, and the Government is expected to publish the final version of the Plan in February 2008. Although in draft form, the South-East Plan is a material consideration to be taken into account when deciding current applications.

Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 (adopted October 2005)

- 3.5 The adopted Structure Plan covers the period up until 2016. Policy H1 allocates about 4,500 dwellings at Didcot. The Explanatory Memorandum confirms in paragraph 7.4 that this amount of development includes the 3,200 dwellings to the west of the town (GWP) planned under the previous Structure Plan. The housing figures provide for about 4,000 to be built within SODC and about 500 within the Vale. Within these general parameters the precise amount, location and boundaries of new development in and around the town are matters for the District Councils to determine.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (adopted 14 July 2006)

- 3.6 Policy H7 of the adopted Local Plan identifies land west of Didcot for housing development – see **Appendix 2**. Proposals need to be planned comprehensively and all necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure and service requirements need to be met. The Policy makes it clear that the development as a whole will provide for approximately 3,200 dwellings, of which about 500 will be located in the Vale District (i.e. Harwell Parish).

South Oxfordshire Local Plan (adopted January 2005)

- 3.7 Policies DID1 and DID2 of SODC's adopted Local Plan similarly identify land for housing development to the west of Didcot between the A4130 and Park Road, and to the north and

south of Wantage Road. Again, the development must provide all necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure and service requirements.

4.0 **Relevant Planning History**

4.1 Between 1956 and 1997 a series of proposals for residential development on parts of the site were refused on the grounds that the sites were within the open countryside and not in an area identified for future growth. A schedule of these planning applications is attached at **Appendix 3**. Since 2001 (the publication of the Alteration to the Structure Plan), the principle of locating future residential development in this location has been recognised - Section 3 above explains the policy background to the allocation of the site for an urban extension.

4.2 In March 2005, planning permission was granted by this Council for water vole mitigation works alongside the A4130. This development is directly related to the GWP proposal as the provision of the mitigation works is a pre-requisite to constructing the proposed access to the site. Planning permission was granted to enable the mitigation works to be carried out early and so avoid delaying the substantive development, should planning permission be forthcoming.

5.0 **The Application**

5.1 The applications are in outline with only the principal accesses to be determined at this stage. Details relating to siting, design, external appearance, landscaping and secondary accesses will need to be approved as part of later reserved matters applications. Following the receipt of the applications in October 2002, the Councils issued an Article 3 (2) Direction in October 2002 requiring further information under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1995. The revised submission in June 2004 was not sufficiently detailed and discussions continued with the applicants and their agents. In November 2004, the applicants lodged an appeal against the non-determination of the duplicate applications (HAR/17774/1-X). Following the deferral of two earlier dates for the Public Inquiry, it is now set for 7 November 2006.

5.2 In February 2005, Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design Ltd were appointed by the Councils to advise on urban design issues and the Masterplan, and the applicants engaged PRP Architects. Work continued on the design issues and resulted in the revised submission on 5 December 2005.

5.3 As explained in para. 1.3 above, OCC has advised that there is not a need for the northern primary school site and the Masterplan has recently been amended to reflect the development of this land for housing. A Supplementary Statement to the Environmental Statement has been submitted to address any significant environmental effects that may arise as a result of this amendment (see **Appendix 6**).

Application Documents

5.4 The following documents comprise the application:

(1) Application Drawings:

- Site Location Plan
- Masterplan Drawings: Development Framework, Landscape Strategy, Movement Network Strategy.
- Detailed Junction Drawings for Milton Interchange, Manor Bridge Roundabout, Power Station Roundabout, Rowstock Roundabout.

(2) Supporting Statement plus Appendices:

- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Energy Conservation and Resource Management Strategy

- Drainage Proposals: Surface Water (as amended)
- Facilities Study (June 2004)

(3) Environmental Statement (ES): Text, Figures, Appendices, Non-Technical Summary, and Supplementary Statement on Environmental Matters

The ES covers the following topics:

- The Description of the Development
- EIA approach and Methodology
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology
- Soils and Agriculture
- Hydrology and Hydrogeology
- Cultural Heritage
- Population
- Traffic
- Noise
- Air Quality and Climate
- Natural Resources

(4) Design Statement – accompanies the Masterplan drawings but is illustrative only. The Design Statement identifies the key principles and design influences that have led to the Masterplan. It establishes a Development Framework which consists of the following key elements: a Landscape Strategy, a Land Use and Density Strategy, and a Movement and Access Network. The general design principles relate to sustainability, landscape and open space design, public realm design and built form.

(5) Environmental Management Brief – outlines the management principles for ecological and archaeological features and proposals on the site.

Development Proposals

5.5 Plan B at **Appendix 1** shows the development framework for the site. The built development is interspersed with green corridors, and open space is proposed around the perimeter of the development. The district and neighbourhood centres will be focal points in the development and will contain facilities and services for local residents. Dwellings will be built across the site at an average net density of 40 dwellings per hectare. The majority of the extra 100 dwellings will be in Didcot on the site formerly required for a third primary school. Others would be included within the northern neighbourhood centre or the district centre. It is estimated that each parish would accommodate the following numbers of dwellings:

Parish	Approximate numbers (3,300)
Didcot	1,4000
Harwell	700
West Hagbourne	1,000
East Hagbourne	200

S106 Agreement

5.6 Over the last year, detailed discussions have been held with the applicants regarding affordable housing provision and the required package of financial contributions to mitigate the impact of the development. Circulars 6/98 and 05/05 and the Council's policy state that the economics of the proposed development need to be taken into account, including whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives which need to be given priority. The applicants claimed that the Council's aspiration of 40% affordable housing (75% of which is to be social rented) would render the development unviable. As a result, an impasse was reached over the viability of the affordable housing provision, whilst negotiations

continued on the impact mitigation package. With the support of ATLAS (Advisory Team for Large Applications), independent advice on the viability of the development was sought. Following receipt of this advice, further negotiations have resulted in agreement being reached on the Section 106 package. Officers are satisfied that the impacts of the scheme will be fully mitigated and the affordable housing provision, whilst less than the aspirations of the policy, is justified in terms of the economic circumstances pertaining to this proposal.

5.7 The agreed package, including affordable housing and the provision of facilities and services, is listed below, and further details on the affordable housing provision are set out in Section 8 of this report. The Draft Heads of Terms of the S106 agreement are attached at Appendix 4. The substantive items identified in the Draft Heads of Terms are:

a) Affordable Housing. 30% of the units are to be affordable housing of which almost 27% (264 units) are to be social rented. This proportion is guaranteed and is not dependent on Housing Corporation grant or other public subsidy. The applicants have agreed to be bound to seek grant in the future and so increase the proportion of social rented housing up to 75% of the total affordable housing provision. The equity stake in the remaining shared ownership housing will be an average of 50%. A proportion of the social rented housing will be for supported needs and will be built to accommodate wheelchairs.

b) Off-site infrastructure works:

- Improvements to Milton Interchange
- Change Rowstock Roundabout to a signal-controlled junction
- Improvements to Manor Bridge Roundabout
- Improvements to Power Station Roundabout
- Improvements to the north-facing A34 slip roads

c) Public Transport:

- Three bus services to serve the town centre via the railway station, Harwell IBC and Milton Park
- Bus stops within 400m of the new dwellings
- Contributions towards the proposed railway station forecourt interchange

d) Contributions to other off-site transport schemes, including:

- Harwell bypass
- Foxhall Bridge roundabout
- Northern Perimeter Road
- Works to A417
- A4130/B4016 junctions
- A4130/DMH2 roundabout
- Traffic calming schemes in Harwell, West Hagbourne and East Hagbourne (subject to local consultations)

e) Highway improvements to encourage walking and cycling:

- Off-road cycle route from the site access on Wantage Road to Foxhall Road junction with the Broadway
- Toucan crossing between Wantage Road and Oxford Crescent to replace the existing zebra crossing
- Crossing of Foxhall Road near the Wantage Road junction
- Traffic calming on Slade Road and Brasenose Road
- Controlled crossing on the A4130 at Manor Bridge Roundabout
- Crossing of Station Road near Foxhall Road Roundabout
- Improvements to Manor Bridge(west) for cyclists and pedestrians linking to Milton Road
- Shared off-road route and crossing of Park Road/Edwin Road
- Improved GWP link to Cow Lane
- Traffic calming measures, subject to local consultation
- Further routes for cyclists and pedestrians in consultation with the County Council

f) Education:

- Two primary schools
- An extension to Stephen Freeman Primary School
- A contribution towards land and buildings for a secondary school

g) Open space of 62 hectares to incorporate:

- informal open space and structural landscaping
- sports pavilion and cricket, soccer and rugby playing fields plus non-pitch space and multi-use games areas (MUGAs)
- a central park and local parks
- play areas and facilities
- wildlife and nature conservation spaces
- two allotment sites of 1 hectare

h) A network of urban public spaces of 8 hectares, including civic space within the district centre.

i) Community facilities. Provision of two community centres with land for a possible third reserved, depending on need.

j) Health. Land and an undertaking to support the costs of funding a 4 GP health centre.

k) Off-site leisure and sport. Contributions towards the provision of an all-weather sports pitch at Edmonds Park and towards the costs of extended facilities at Didcot Wave for a sports hall and a swimming pool.

l) Library provision. A contribution towards the improvement of library facilities in Didcot.

m) A Contribution towards the improvements of Didcot Civic Hall.

n) Public art. A contribution towards the provision of public art to be managed in accordance with an agreed strategy.

o) Waste management. Provision of bottle banks, composters, and a contribution towards improvements to Drayton waste management site.

p) Social services. A site for high dependency units, contributions for supported housing, and a minibus to serve the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities and special needs.

6.0 **Consultations and Representations**

6.1 The applications have been advertised in the Herald newspapers (Didcot, Wallingford, Abingdon and Thame), and eleven site notices were displayed in various locations around the site. The applications have also been available to view at the District Councils' offices, Didcot library and on both Councils' websites. A briefing with parishes and local Members was held on 17 September 2004, and again on 15 July 2005 when the applicants' agents presented the proposed revisions to the Masterplan for discussion. Officers met with the local parishes on 15 November 2005, 18 May 2006 (Harwell parish) and 25 May 2006 (SODC parishes) to provide up-dates on progress with the applications. Extra time for people to comment was given on the revised submissions and, in line with normal practice, late representations are considered prior to the determination of the application.

6.2 The Supplementary Statement on environmental matters (see **Appendix 6**) will be advertised under Regulation 19 for a period of 21 days. Officers will consider any comments received and, if the amendments result in any additional significant effects, these will be reported to Committee.

Local Residents Groups

6.3 The total number of representations received is 879, which comprises 734 (October 2002), 113 (June 2004), 32 (December 2005). A brief summary of the main issues is presented below and a more detailed summary is attached at **Appendix 5**. The majority of the objections are from individuals, but they also include local campaign groups Keep Harwell Rural and Campaign for a Sustainable Didcot. The principal issues which concern residents and local groups are:

- Increase in traffic and traffic disruption
- Effect on walking and cycling
- Public transport
- Extent of the development to the west and south of the site
- Housing density
- Housing mix
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of amenity
- Possibility of air pollution
- Possibility of flooding
- Location of green space in the development
- Location and size of schools and other community facilities, including allotments
- Provision of infrastructure (e.g. water, sewerage and roads)
- Procedural objections relating to the timing of the application submission, public consultation, and the length of time given for consultation

These matters are addressed under the topic areas in Section 8, Planning Considerations.

Parish / Town Councils

6.4 The positions of the local parish councils are summarised briefly below and a more detailed summary is at **Appendix 5**. The full details can be viewed via the Council's website link to SODC's website under the reference to Didcot Great Western Park.

6.5 All the parishes having administrative areas within the site object. These are Didcot Town Council and Harwell, East Hagbourne and West Hagbourne Parish Councils. The overriding concerns relate to traffic and transport impacts and proposed mitigation measures, drainage and flooding, the boundaries of the site, and the provision and management of open spaces and community facilities.

6.6 The following parishes also object to the increases in traffic and the method by which the potential impacts have been assessed: Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Chilton, Drayton, Long Wittenham, Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Upton.

Other consultees

6.7 A brief summary of representations from other consultees is given below and a more detailed summary is at **Appendix 5**. Full details can be viewed via the Council's website link to SODC's website under the reference to Didcot Great Western Park.

Consultee	Comments
SEERA (South East Regional Assembly)	No objection subject to the timing of the release of the site and a flood risk assessment being carried out.
OCC Structure Plan Authority	No objection to the principle of residential development, but raises a holding objection until

	adequate infrastructure has been secured through the S106. (<i>Following agreement on the S106 Heads of Terms, an update on OCC's position will be reported at the Meeting</i>).
OCC Highways Authority	Broadly satisfied that the impact of the development will be adequately mitigated by the provision of or funding for works and services in accordance with the S106 package of mitigation measures.
Highways Agency	Supports the Travel Plan and has no objection subject to a condition requiring improvements to the A34 slip roads at Milton Interchange.
Monson (Drainage Consultants for SODC)	No objection to the drainage strategy subject to conditions.
National Grid	No objection – there are no overhead power lines or underground cables on the site.
Environment Agency	No objection subject to conditions and a comprehensive maintenance plan for the attenuation areas.
English Nature	The surveys undertaken in respect of protected species and the consequent recommendations are acceptable.
Thames Valley Police	No objection subject to the development achieving Secured by Design.
Thames Water	No objection subject to conditions regarding the phasing of sewerage infrastructure provision.
South-West Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust	No objection subject to the provision of a suitable doctors surgery.
Sport England	No objection to principle of the development, but concerns are raised regarding the amount, type and shape of the proposed sports pitch space and the maintenance arrangements.
Sustrans	Supports the overall concepts presented, but would like to see more usage of existing routes to increase cycling and walking.
Didcot Chamber of Commerce	Concern regarding the shops within the new development, the distribution of houses, the secondary school and traffic issues.
Countryside Agency	No formal representations to make.

CPRE and Oxford Fieldpaths Society	No objection to most of the proposal, but objects to the proposed diversion of a claimed path along the western edge of Vauxhall Barracks and the proposal to divert sections of the footpath to follow the spine road and parts of Wantage Road.
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)	Concerns about the Masterplan and says the principles of movement and built form could be revisited.

Internal Consultees

6.8 A brief summary of the representations from internal advisors is given below. A more detailed summary of the latest comments is at **Appendix 5**, and the full details can be viewed via the Council's website link to SODC's website under the reference to Didcot Great Western Park.

Consultee	Comments
Landscape Architect	There needs to be a more discernible matrix of planting subdividing the residential areas and augmenting the transport and footpath corridors.
Conservation/Design	The setting of Down Farmhouse needs to be protected.
Countryside Officer	No objection subject to amendments to the Environmental Management Brief.
Forestry Officer	No objection subject to conditions regarding TPO's.
Environmental Health – construction	No objection subject to conditions and compliance with a Code of Construction Practice.
Environmental Health – noise and vibration	Areas of development require noise mitigation, and construction noise needs to be limited by condition.
Environmental Health – air quality	Existing NO ² levels in the Broadway are such that an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) may be necessary and further monitoring is required. The GWP development will adversely affect air quality and, therefore, it is likely that more extensive monitoring will be required. Monitoring would identify the need for any mitigation (e.g. the Travel Plan).
Environmental Health – contaminated land	No objection subject to a desktop study to identify any potential contaminants.
Public Amenities - waste management	No objections subject to conditions to secure community recycling and the management of facilities.

7.0 **Policy Guidance**

7.1 There is a large amount of policy guidance relevant to this development. Relevant national and regional policy guidance and Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies are listed below.

7.2 **National Planning Policy Guidance**

- PPS 1 - Delivering Sustainable Development (Feb 2005)
- PPG 3 - Housing (March 2000)
- PPG 4 - Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms (Nov 1992)
- PPS 6 - Town Centres and Retail Development (March 2005)
- PPS 7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (Aug 2004)
- PPS 9 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (Aug 2005)
- PPS 10 - Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (July 2005)
- PPG 13 - Transport (March 2001)
- PPG 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment (Sept 1994)
- PPG 16 - Archaeology and Planning (Nov 1990)
- PPG 17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (July 2002)
- PPS 22 - Renewable Energy (Aug 2004)
- PPS 23 - Planning and Pollution Control (Nov 2004)
- PPG 24 - Planning and Noise (Sept 1994)
- PPG 25 - Development and Flood Risk (July 2001)

7.3 **Circulars**

- 11/95 - Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions
- 06/98 - Planning and Affordable Housing
- 02/99 - Environmental Impact Assessment
- 08/00 - The Town and Country Planning Direction 2000
- 05/05 - Planning Obligations
- 06/05 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

7.4 **Regional Policy Guidance**

RPG9 - South-East
Draft South-East Plan

7.5 **Oxfordshire Structure Plan Policies (adopted October 2005)**

- G1 General strategy
- G2 Quality of development
- G3 Infrastructure provision
- T1 Sustainable travel
- T3 Public transport
- T5 Pedestrians and cyclists
- EN1 Landscape character
- EN6 Archaeology
- EN9 Surface water drainage
- H1 Housing
- H3 Housing density
- H4 Affordable housing

7.6 Vale of White Horse Local Plan (adopted 14 July 2006)

GS1 and GS10 – General locational strategy - includes development of the land west of Didcot, and minimising the need to travel, especially by car.

H7 – Identifies land west of Didcot as a major development area, and sets out the requirements for the development of the site (see **Appendix 2**).

H15 – Minimum net residential density of 40 dph at GWP.

H16 – Housing mix - seeks 50% of dwellings with only 1 or 2 bedrooms and 10% designed to meet lifetime homes standards.

H17 – Affordable housing - requires 40% of the new housing to be affordable to local people.

H19 – Special needs housing.

H23 – Public open space.

TR2 – Provision of measures to deliver sustainable transport choices.

TR3 – Improvements to Milton Interchange.

TR8 – Provision of improved public transport interchange facilities.

TR9 – Transport Assessments and Travel Plans.

DC1 – The need for a high standard of design.

DC2 – Energy and resource conservation.

DC3 – Design against crime.

DC4 – Seeks the provision of public art.

DC5 – The need for safe and convenient access both within the site and connecting to the existing highway network, and the need for improvements to off-site highway infrastructure, cycleways, footpaths, and the public transport network.

DC6 – Hard and soft landscaping.

DC7 – Waste collection and recycling.

DC8 – Provision of necessary social and physical infrastructure and services.

DC9 – The need to minimise any harmful impact on neighbouring properties.

DC10 – Impact of existing or potential sources of disturbance or pollution on the proposed development.

DC11 – Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land.

DC12 – Impact on water quality and resources.

DC13 and DC14 – Impact on flood risk and the need for appropriate surface water management systems.

HE4 – The need to respect the characteristics of listed buildings and their settings.

HE9 and HE11 – The need for an archaeological field evaluation and excavation.

NE5 – Protection of specially protected species and their habitats.

NE9 – Landscape impact in the Lowland Vale.

L8 – Local leisure facilities.

L10 – Impact on public rights of way.

CF1 – Community facilities.

8.0 **Planning Considerations**

Principle of Development

- 8.1 The principle of the proposal has been fully considered during the Structure Plan and Local Plan preparation processes and, most recently, by the LPI Inspectors at the joint Didcot Inquiry in 2004/5, as explained in Section 3 above. The principle of the proposed development needs to be considered in the light of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Therefore, whilst many of the objections relate to the principle of the proposal, the Development Plan confirms the site's allocation, so the principle of residential development in this location is considered acceptable.

8.2 The policies referred to below relate to this Council's adopted Local Plan policies.

Environmental Statement

- 8.3 The proposal is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 1999. A recent judgement in the European Court of Justice has determined that environmental impacts can be considered at reserved matters stages. However, the local planning authorities need to satisfy themselves that they have sufficient information available on the effects which a proposal may have on the environment before the grant of outline planning permission. The permission should be conditioned by reference to the 'development parameters' or constraints. These constraints will be secured by conditions and need to include reference to the number of dwellings, density, land use budget, layout, design, phasing, materials and building heights.
- 8.4 The Supplementary Statement relating to environmental matters submitted in July 2006 addresses the environmental impacts associated with the possibility of a further 100 dwellings on the site. This is attached at **Appendix 6**. It concludes that there would be no significant or material impacts. This will be subject to consultation under Regulation 19. Officers will consider any comments received and if the amendments result in any additional significant effects, these matters will be reported to Committee.
- 8.5 Revisions to the ES have been made each time the application has been resubmitted. In response to requests for more information, the current ES provides more information and greater clarification, particularly on landscaping and visual effects, traffic, noise and natural resources. Surveys of protected species have also been updated. To review the ES Officers have used an assessment method called Environmental Statement Review Package developed by Oxford Brookes University. The analysis shows that adequate information to satisfy the EIA Regulations has been supplied, however the Regulations do not cover the qualitative interpretation of the information.
- 8.6 In particular, the conclusions on the effects of traffic have been questioned, although it is acknowledged that, despite guidelines for assessing the impacts, the conclusions on the significance of these impacts is subjective. The highway authority and District Council Officers have carefully considered the proposed impacts identified in the ES and, whilst some of the conclusions on significance may not be agreed, the need for measures to mitigate the predicted impacts is agreed.
- 8.7 The ES identifies mitigation measures for a range of impacts generated by the development. For the most part, Officers agree that these measures are appropriate. The ES is not specific on the timing of the proposed mitigation measures (e.g. advance planting). It is crucial to ensure that impacts are mitigated satisfactorily and at appropriate times. In relation to traffic, Officers consider there is a need to continue to monitor the effects, so that further mitigation measures may be implemented if required. The conditions and S106 agreement will ensure the timely delivery of these measures.

Planning Issues

- 8.8 The main issues relevant to this development to be considered under the Development Plan and the EIA Regulations are discussed below.
- (i) Site Boundary
 - (ii) Masterplan and Urban Design
 - (iii) Housing - Affordable Housing, Housing Density and Mix
 - (iv) Transport – Access, On-Site Movement Network, Off-Site Highway Matters, Travel Plan, Environmental Impacts of Traffic
 - (v) Environmental Health and Amenity Issues – Construction, Noise, Air Quality, Land Contamination

- (vi) Landscape, Informal Recreation and Public Rights of Way
- (vii) Ecology
- (viii) Drainage and Flooding
- (ix) Sustainability
- (x) Community Facilities
- (xi) Community Safety and Security
- (xii) Archaeology and Listed Buildings
- (xiii) Phasing

(i) Site Boundary

- 8.9 The Local Plan Inspectors' recommended a change to the draft SODC Local Plan policy to increase the average density to 40 dwellings per hectare (up from 38 dph) to accord with this Council's Local plan policy. This resulted in a reduction of the site area of 4.2 hectares. The Inspectors considered that the two Local Plans should have the same site boundary and recommended that the Vale's boundary, which did not extend so far to the west, would be the most appropriate. Apart from recommending the adoption of the Vale's site boundary, the Inspectors did not give specific reasons for recommending the reduction of the site area along the west boundary, although the impacts on landscape and agricultural land were matters raised by objectors in relation to the site boundary.
- 8.10 Work on the revised Masterplan submitted in December 2005 had considered the Inspectors' recommendations on the site boundary. The planning application boundary is different from the Local Plans' boundaries, as shown on Plan B of Appendix 1. A number of objectors, including Harwell PC and Keep Harwell Rural. Object to the revised Masterplan on these grounds. However, the Inspectors acknowledged that in terms of the planning application, there may be practical difficulties in achieving exactly the Local Plan site boundary.
- 8.11 A substantial amount of development has been pulled back from the western boundary compared to the earlier submissions so that the area outside the Local Plan boundary but within the application site on the western edge now comprises only open space and school playing fields. The latest revisions to the site boundary have incorporated changes to reduce the site area to the west and the north, which is the area most subject to higher levels of noise, and to the south to retain a natural field boundary. Removing more development from the western area would affect the distribution of housing in relation to the district centre and would create an imbalance of the whole layout shown on the Masterplan. Overall, therefore, the changes which have been made to achieve a 4.2 hectare reduction in site area are considered to accord sufficiently with the Inspectors' recommendation.
- 8.12 There are also local objections to the southern boundary, notably from East and West Hagbourne Parish Councils. Although the site extends beyond the southern boundary of the existing built-up area of Didcot, this area will include no built development, in accordance with SODC Policy DID2. SODC advises that this application cannot safeguard the rural gap between Didcot and the Hagbournes, which is a matter for planning policy in SODC's Local Development Framework (LDF).

(ii) Masterplan and Urban Design

- 8.13 Local Plan Policy H7 requires the site to be comprehensively planned and to ensure the necessary on and off-site infrastructure and services are provided. This is to ensure the development has a consistent and high quality design of buildings and spaces, has a sense of place and is properly phased to ensure that the essential facilities and services are in place to serve the new residents.
- 8.14 The current Masterplan and Design Statement evolved over many months of work between the Councils, Tibbalds, the applicants and their agents, RPS and PRP Architects. The work took account of the comments of consultees, and addressed environmental impacts and the need for mitigation. Latterly, CABE has advised that elements of the Masterplan could be revisited.

Whilst some of their comments are useful and could be accommodated at subsequent stages, other comments relate to the Local Plan policies which have been through public consultation and a Public Inquiry leading to adoption. The key policy requirements are embodied within the Masterplan, namely strategic access points, a central spine road through the development, landscaping and open space uses adjacent to the open countryside, green corridors and parks within the site linking to green spaces and public footpaths/cycleways, local centres to include community facilities to serve the development and schools strategically located to serve residents.

- 8.15 The submitted Design Statement is illustrative and generally provides a clear design rationale for the development. However, for the detailed stages it needs to be more prescriptive. It is important that more detailed guidance sets firm and unambiguous principles for the development and shows how the character of the development will vary across the site, particularly in respect to the stated aim of creating three distinct neighbourhoods. The more detailed guidance should provide greater certainty about what to expect, and should do this by drawing on the broad principles set out in the Design Statement.
- 8.16 Given the scale of this development, and the fluidity of the Masterplan and the Design Statement, it is necessary to secure more information and design guidance prior to the submission of the reserved matters applications. The applicants and Officers have agreed that an interim submission in the form of a Development Strategy, which would cover strategic issues and more detailed matters in Framework Plans, can fulfil this function. This is an approach that has been used elsewhere (e.g. Swindon). A detailed Development Strategy and more detailed design guidance (including the use of design codes) will need to be prepared, with participation from the local community. A detailed Phasing Strategy will also be required in conjunction with the Development Strategy - phasing is discussed in more detail below. These elements will be required in the S106 agreement and/or by conditions. Any reserved matters application will need to comply with the Development Strategy and design guidance.
- 8.17 The current Masterplan, therefore, sets a framework for the new development, but it will require re-evaluation and resubmission before the submission of the reserved matters applications. For the purpose of determining this outline application, however, it is considered that the Masterplan meets the policy objectives, whilst leaving sufficient flexibility to accommodate some of the concerns of consultees (e.g. CABE and Sport England) at the more detailed stages. The general concepts of the Masterplan, therefore, are supported.

(iii) Housing - Affordable Housing, Housing Density and Mix

Affordable Housing

- 8.18 Policy H7 says that 40% of the new dwellings need to be affordable housing. The Councils however, need to take into account the economics of the development and whether the provision of the affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority (ie the requirement to secure adequate infrastructure and services). This accords with the advice in Circular 05/2005. The Affordable Housing SPG requires 75% of the provision to be social rented.
- 8.19 Officers have sought the provision of 40% affordable housing and the tenure mix set out in the SPG. However, during negotiations it became clear that the viability of the development would be prejudiced with this level of provision and, as a result, the delivery of the development as required by the Structure Plan and Local Plans would not be achieved. The priority has to be the mitigation of the impact of the development, and Officers are satisfied that this will be achieved with the S106 package that has been secured. The proposed affordable housing provision is the maximum that can be achieved in this case without affecting viability. In total, 30% of the housing across the site will be affordable housing and, with the support of social housing grant (SHG), a tenure mix of 75% social rented and 25% shared equity could be achieved (i.e. 22.5% social rented on the whole development). In the absence of SHG, a minimum of 25% of the affordable housing provision (i.e. 8% of the total housing, or 264 units)

will be social rented. One of the developers has already secured SHG for 84 units which means that, provided the conditions in respect of the grant can be met, the development will provide a minimum of 340 social rented units. Further allocations of SHG will result in additional social rented units being provided. The remaining affordable housing units will be for shared ownership and an average equity stake of 50% will be offered.

- 8.20 The amount of affordable housing should be spread in small clusters throughout the site. On a development of this scale, it is considered that locating up to 15 units together would be appropriate. A Housing Strategy forming part of the Development Strategy will specify the distribution and mix of the affordable housing throughout the site, and will need to be secured by condition.

Housing Density and Mix

- 8.21 Policy H7 requires a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households. To meet these needs, the policy requirement is that 50% of the market housing should be small units (ie 1 and 2 bedrooms).
- 8.22 Increasing the number of larger units on the development increases land coverage and adds value to the development. It is also proposed, therefore, to reduce the number of small dwellings required as part of the development to 30%. This helps the viability of the development and also provides a more balanced mix of units, which should result in a less transient community. Other developments in Didcot are providing smaller units, and GWP will still include a significant number of small units, with more being provided through the affordable housing provision. Overall, it is considered that the development will have a good mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet local needs.
- 8.23 An average of 40 dwellings per hectare is proposed. Building a further 100 dwellings on the site (see paras. 1.3 and 1.4 above) will not affect the overall average density – the primary school in the northern part of the site is no longer required, and the district and neighbourhood mixed-use centres can also accommodate more dwellings. The Masterplan envisages that higher densities will be built in the vicinity of the spine road and the neighbourhood centres, where facilities and bus stops will be, with lower densities in other parts of the site. This will help to provide interest and diversity throughout the development. The outline density proposals are considered acceptable and the Housing Strategy will ensure that an appropriate bedroom mix, density and the requisite number and mix of affordable homes is distributed throughout the site. The reserved matters applications will need to comply with the approved Housing Strategy.

(iv) Transport – Access, On-Site Movement Network, Off-Site Highway Matters, Travel Plan, Environmental Impacts of Traffic

- 8.24 For developments with significant transport implications, a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan need to be prepared (Policy TR7). Development should provide for a safe and convenient access to the highway network and provide safe and convenient routes for cyclists and pedestrians (Policies TR2 and DC5). Development should also be accessible by public transport (Policy TR2) and the roads and footways need to be constructed to adoptable standards.

Access

- 8.25 Access is the only detail to be considered as part of this outline application. Vehicular access to the development will be principally from the A4130 and the B4493 (Wantage Road), with a limited part of the development accessed from Park Road. Secondary access points will also be required from the B4493 to improve accessibility and traffic flows within the site. Indicative secondary access points are shown on the Masterplan, but details of these will need to be approved at the reserved matters stages. The proposed access points into the development are considered to be acceptable from the point of view of highway safety and convenience.

On-Site Movement Network

- 8.26 The Masterplan shows a spine road running through the whole site connecting the neighbourhood centres and providing the main bus route. Private vehicles will not be able to use the spine road between the B4493 and Park Road and Portway to the south as a through route. The development will include a clear hierarchy of roads and a network of pedestrian, cycleway and bridleway routes that will connect to the existing highway network, which will assist the development's integration with Didcot. The streets will be designed to restrain vehicle speeds throughout most of the development to 20 mph. Concerns have been raised regarding footpaths within the site. These concerns can be addressed when the detailed routes are firmed up in the Development Strategy / Framework Plans. Overall, the principles embodied in the on-site movement network are considered acceptable.

Off-Site Highway Matters

- 8.27 A traffic model has been developed by the applicants in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and the Highways Agency to analyse the impact of the development on the local and strategic road networks. OCC has just completed its own traffic model to assess the traffic implications of possible developments in and around Didcot (including GWP) and in places further afield, such as Grove. Work on the results of the OCC model is on-going, but OCC confirms that, in broad terms, the two models correlate reasonably well.
- 8.28 All construction traffic will be required to enter and leave the development site via the A4130. An on-site haul road is planned to enable construction traffic to access the southern parts of the site from the A4130. A Code of Construction Practice, proposed in the ES, will be secured and this will cover, amongst other matters, the routing of construction traffic, both on and off the site.
- 8.29 Once built, GWP is projected to add about 2,600 peak hour trips onto the local road network. The most significant local impacts will be on the A4130 on both sides of Milton Interchange, the B4493 from Didcot and through Harwell, the A417 from Rowstock to West Hagbourne and the A4185 from Rowstock to Harwell IBC. The ES identifies 4 major off-site road improvement works to increase capacity – improvements to Milton Interchange, and to the Power Station, Manor Bridge and Rowstock roundabouts. These works are intended to lessen queueing and ensure the local road network has the capacity for the additional traffic generated by GWP and other major local developments. All 4 schemes are part of the Didcot Integrated Transport Study (DidITS) Phase 2 works, which include other road improvements to address strategic highways issues across the Didcot area.
- 8.30 In addition to carrying out these works, GWP will be required to contribute towards other DidITS Phase 2 works on a pro rata basis. These other Phase 2 works include a Harwell bypass, works to Foxhall Bridge roundabout, the Northern Perimeter Road, and the A417, and off-site improvements to encourage walking and cycling. Traffic calming schemes in Harwell, East Hagbourne and West Hagbourne will also be considered, subject to separate local consultations. A contribution was originally sought for a perimeter road linking the A4130 to the B4493 around the west side of the development, which would link to a bypass for Harwell. The LPI Inspectors considered the need for such a road and concluded that the spine road serving the development could adequately cater for the expected increases in traffic and, therefore, such a perimeter road is not necessary. The indicative results of OCC's traffic model confirm that the case for a perimeter road is weak and, consequently, contributions towards it and the spur roads within the site to link to it are no longer being sought. Nevertheless, land should be secured to ensure such links could be provided if required at a later date should there be further development to the west of GWP in the future.
- 8.31 The Highways Agency has no objection to the development. The applicants will carry out improvements to the A34 northern slip roads at Milton Interchange, to improve stacking on the

slip roads (and so improve the merge of northbound traffic) and to reduce congestion at Milton Interchange. The Highways Agency supports the Travel Plan.

Travel Plan

- 8.32 The aim of the Travel Plan is to reduce the impact of the proposed development by limiting the need to travel and encouraging alternatives to the car. Targets are proposed to encourage a shift of travel modes from the car to walking, cycling and public transport, and this will be achieved by a range of measures proposed in the Travel Plan. Details of these have recently been secured in relation to the S106 Draft Heads of Terms and are listed in para. 5.7 above. The S106 package will require off-site highway works to improve the safety and convenience for walkers and cyclists, the provision of buses to provide services to the town centre, the railway station, Harwell IBC and Milton Park, and an improvement to the long distance bus service (35A) to Oxford via Abingdon. Infrastructure improvements to provide bus priority lanes and a contribution towards a transport interchange at the railway station have also been secured. The proposed measures to encourage alternative transport modes to the car are a considerable component of the overall transport package. The benefits will have to be monitored closely, with arrangements made for the consideration of further or alternative measures if required. A travel plan co-ordinator will be appointed and funded by the applicants for this purpose.

Environmental Impacts of Traffic

- 8.33 The highway infrastructure proposals will ease congestion and the Travel Plan's proposals are hoped to encourage a significant travel mode shift away from the car. However, the increased traffic will still have environmental impacts in terms of noise, vibration, visual effects, severance, driver delay, pedestrian delay, pedestrian amenity, and fear and intimidation. Officers do not agree with the conclusions of the ES that, whilst "minor" and "moderate adverse impacts" will be experienced in some locations, there will be no "major adverse impacts". In Harwell, for example, High Street/Drewitt's Corner will experience a 46% increase (i.e. 260 vehicles) in the 2014 pm peak hour with mitigation in place compared to the situation at that time without GWP being built, and the A417 Reading Road to the east of the village will experience a 62% increase (i.e. 320 vehicles) in the 2014 am peak hour. Future monitoring of traffic flows, secured by the S106, will be necessary once the development has begun to test the predicted impacts and to consider whether further mitigation measures will assist in alleviating the problems associated with the extra traffic. It is considered likely that this future monitoring will emphasise the need for further off-site highway improvement works – i.e. DidITS Phase 2 works and, in particular, a Harwell bypass. OCC will decide the spending priorities of the DidITS funds and, in their consultation response, OCC says:

"There is much local support for a road parallel to the A34 from the A417 to the B4493 which provides a bypass to Harwell village. This would not only relieve the village of traffic but would also provide an effective safety valve for traffic in the area. However, the traffic modelling carried out so far needs further refining to progress the Harwell bypass. The County Council consider that it should remain an ITS scheme and that contributions from all developments in the area should be made towards it.

"Further work will be required to firm up this proposal including identification of a preferred alignment for the bypass and to progress the scheme to feasibility stage.

"The level of funding agreed from GWP would provide only a partial contribution to the full costs of a Harwell bypass, although current priorities do allow the County Council to earmark a significant proportion of the available funds to this scheme. Other funds will need to be sought and secured before a scheme can be progressed. The County Council will continue to review priorities for funding transport measures in the Didcot area as further opportunities arise, especially if additional developer funding is secured."

- 8.34 It is inevitable that a development of this scale will have significant impacts. With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, both the County Council and the Highways Agency raise no objection to GWP from highway safety or capacity points of view. However, there will be adverse environmental effects in some areas. This needs to be considered within the context of the prevailing policy support for new housing development in this location. In addition, it is important to note that the applicants have agreed to mitigate the impact of their development by paying their pro rata contribution towards additional off-site highway works. These additional works, when implemented, will help to alleviate the adverse environmental effects of GWP and other developments in the locality.

(v) Environmental Health and Amenity Issues – Construction, Noise, Air Quality, Land Contamination

- 8.35 Policy DC9 says that development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment in terms of pollution, including noise.

Construction

- 8.36 During the construction period (i.e. until 2016) there could be potential adverse effects on existing and new residents. A Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) will be required by condition and the ES lists the types of impacts that will be addressed (i.e. landscaping protection, noise, dust, water use, waste, handling of topsoil, location of construction compounds, and storage of materials, plant and equipment), and proposes various measures to deal with these. The precise details will be approved in the CoCP. Access for construction vehicles will be from the A4130 only, which will minimise disturbance to existing residents. A haul road through the site will separate construction traffic and residents' vehicles. The Phasing Strategy will need to consider the environmental effects on existing and new residents.

Noise

- 8.37 Parts of the site are affected by road traffic noise from the A4130 and B4493, and also by noise from the railway. Development in the very north of the site and that adjacent to the B4493 will have to incorporate particular design measures to mitigate against noise. Development adjacent to the spine road will also have to consider the effects of noise at the detailed design stages in the reserved matters applications. Increased traffic, principally during peak periods, will also cause increased noise on surrounding roads and nearby villages. However, as existing noise levels are higher during peak periods, this increase in traffic noise will not be as significant as it would be if it occurred at other times. Traffic monitoring will be carried out by the developer to monitor the predicted increases in traffic flows. This will enable the highway authority to consider traffic calming measures, where practicable, to assist with reducing traffic speeds and flows.

Air Quality

- 8.38 Inevitably, traffic from the GWP development will affect air quality. Due to the nature of air quality modelling and the information that has been provided, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which GWP might contribute to this. Existing nitrogen dioxide levels in the Broadway in Didcot are such that an Air Quality Management Area may need to be designated anyway. Officers are concerned that the baseline information does not reflect this situation and further monitoring is required. This will be required irrespective of the GWP development due to the existing situation, and the monitoring that is being sought from the applicants will assess the predicted changes as the development progresses. Monitoring itself, of course, does not provide mitigation, but it does provide information that can be used to assess the need for mitigation measures. The applicants are confident that their information accurately predicts levels of change, but they acknowledge that the baseline levels will change. The monitoring will need to be linked to the required mitigation measures (e.g. through the Travel Plan).

- 8.39 To encourage more sustainable means of travel, and hence prevent potentially higher levels of air pollution, it is important to ensure that attractive travel alternatives are in place early on in the development so that sustainable patterns of travel can be established. A suite of measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport has been proposed by the applicants. These are outlined in paras. 5.7 and 8.32 above, and represent the full package the County Council considers is justified to encourage a shift in travel modes away from car use. At this stage, it is difficult to envisage what further measures may encourage a reduction in car use and so potentially have an influential effect on air quality. The Travel Plan measures will need to be monitored as the development progresses, so it is considered appropriate to consider any possible further mitigation measures through the Travel Plan.

Land Contamination

- 8.40 Environmental Health Officers confirm that radioactivity is not an issue on this site, and there are no overhead power lines or underground cables on the site. Investigations for land contamination will need to be carried out, as the future use of the site will be residential. However, as the historic use of the land is agriculture, it is considered unlikely that it will be contaminated. Potential contamination during construction will be prevented by measures secured in the CoCP.

(vi) Landscape, Informal Recreation and Public Rights of Way

- 8.41 Where development is acceptable in principle it should be integrated into the landscape, protect important landscape features and, where possible, contribute to local distinctiveness. Policy H7 says that a significant proportion of the public green space shall be located around the western and southern edges of the development, and Policy DC6 requires new developments to be effectively landscaped. The new development shall provide outdoor playing space, indoor sports facilities, and public open space for informal recreation (together with appropriate maintenance measures) to meet the needs of the new residents. Public rights of way should be retained and improvements sought where appropriate (Policy L10).
- 8.42 The landscape proposals have a dual function - to provide strategic space and planting to help integrate the development within the wider landscape, and to provide space for amenity purposes. The work on the Masterplan considered views into the site, and it was also considered important to capture key views out of the site to the west and south-west. The park and green space around the edge of the development will provide both valuable amenity space and views out of the development to the countryside beyond. The ES suggests creating a vantage and information point to the north to highlight views of the power station. This approach has merit, as the power station cannot be screened and so will remain a dominant feature.
- 8.43 The ES also identifies the need for advance planting, although it is not specific as to where this will be. The area along the eastern boundary of the site (i.e. adjacent to existing residents) and the more prominent areas in the north and west of the site would benefit most from advance planting. The details of advance planting will need to be agreed as part of the Phasing Strategy.
- 8.44 The movement network has considered all of the existing and claimed rights of way and taken into account existing landscape features. Wherever possible, the rights of way are to be retained and will be aligned through green corridors. Where it is not desirable or possible to keep existing rights of way (e.g. they would be a safety risk due to lack of surveillance, or they would run through school grounds) a diversion is proposed. A separate process needs to be undertaken under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to stop up or divert public footpaths affected by development which has been granted planning permission. There is an amenity route for pedestrians and cyclists around the edge of the development, and the ES identifies the potential to link a claimed route to the wider network of public rights of way via Cow Lane bridleway. This is supported and will be a requirement of the S106. The exact routes of the rights of way will be examined more closely under the Development Strategy and the reserved matters applications.

- 8.45 The Masterplan complies with Policy H7 in that there is a large amount of green space around the edges of the development. However, it is crucial that there is adequate green space within the site as well to provide structural planting, wildlife corridors and amenity space for residents (e.g. local parks). The landscape impact of the proposal has to be considered in the context of the support in principle for the development. The landscape proposals identified in the ES will be developed further through the Development Strategy. However, at this stage, the principles of the landscape proposals are considered acceptable.

(vii) Ecology

- 8.46 Policy NE5 seeks to protect specially protected species and their habitats.
- 8.47 There are no sites or areas of national or local conservation importance affected by the proposed development. Tree Preservation Orders are in force and these are subject to consultation and confirmation within the next 6 months. Surveys on habitat, hedgerow, bat, water vole, badger and great crested newt have been carried out, and the potential effects on the site's ecology has been assessed in the ES. Bats have been detected foraging over the site, but no roosts were found, and limited badger activity has been identified. Water voles were found in a ditch along the northern perimeter of the site (ie alongside the A4130, and mitigation works have been put in place to ensure there will be no significant impact on their habitat. Prior to specific phases of development, to be identified in the Development Strategy, further surveys on mobile species will be carried out and further mitigation measures will be required if necessary – this will be secured by condition.
- 8.48 As the majority of the site is in agricultural use, it currently has limited biodiversity value. However, there is the potential to enhance biodiversity through the management and restoration of existing trees, orchards and hedgerows and through new planting. The drainage attenuation areas will be managed to encourage biodiversity. An Environmental Management Brief (EMB) has been prepared, which outlines proposals for the management of habitats and archaeology. The areas covered by the EMB include wildlife habitats, landscape features, woodland planting, meadow and rough grassland, new and retained hedgerows, a wildlife conservation area (Pil pond), wet meadow areas with planting, and a retained orchard. English Nature is satisfied with the objectives of the EMB, and detailed matters can be dealt with by condition or the S106 agreement.

(viii) Drainage and Flooding

- 8.49 Policy DC14 requires the drainage strategy to be based on sustainable drainage principles and to be an integral part of the development. Measures are required to protect groundwater and to mitigate the adverse effects of surface water run-off and flooding.
- 8.50 The drainage strategy takes into account the site conditions, including the underlying aquifer, flooding history, direction of existing surface water drainage, flow conditions and groundwater levels. Its main features include a number of attenuation ponds in the areas of open space and soakaway systems within the built development. Objections from local residents and East and West Hagbourne Parish Councils raise concerns over the drainage strategy and specifically the size of the attenuation features. The strategy has been revised several times, and the most recent revision has ensured that the attenuation areas are of an adequate size. The drainage areas will also be designed and managed to encourage biodiversity. The revised strategy is supported by both the Environment Agency and Monson (drainage consultants), subject to conditions.

(ix) Sustainability

- 8.51 New development should achieve high standards in the conservation and efficient use of energy, water and materials, and must include adequate provision for the management of waste (Policies DC2 and DC7).
- 8.52 The applicants have produced an Energy Conservation and Resource Management Strategy (ECRM), which proposes that all residential development will be built to the Very Good Ecohomes standard. This scheme is an environmental assessment method for new homes – i.e. the homes version of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method). Credits are awarded for performance levels in relation to seven categories: energy, transport, pollution, materials, water, ecology and land-use, health and well-being. Credits are also awarded for strategic elements, such as access to bus services and for individual home performance. In addition to securing strategic credits, the Councils are requiring that a high performance is achieved in three specific areas – energy, materials and water. This will be secured by the S106 agreement and condition.
- 8.53 Increasingly, building regulations are requiring higher standards and the Government is considering a Code of Sustainable Development which would replace the Ecohomes standards. As standards are increased, the development will need to keep pace and will need to be built to an equivalent Very Good standard. The Councils will also require the new community buildings to be built by the developer to be built to BREEAM standards.
- 8.54 Planning authorities are being encouraged by the Government to require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy sources. The ECRM states that individuals will be able to purchase renewable energy systems (RES) such as solar heating panels, subject to design considerations. However, this is not considered sufficient to ensure there will be an appropriate contribution from RES. The Councils wish to see that at least 10% of the dwellings phased throughout the development are provided with RES. In this way, the systems can be designed integrally and so prevent an ad hoc approach which can have an adverse impact on the street scene. Economies of scale also mean that implementation costs are lower than with a piecemeal approach. Furthermore, if all houses are constructed with boilers that can be adapted for RES, this will facilitate cheaper conversion if required at a later date. Conditions will require the implementation of such facilities.
- 8.55 The ES and ECRM outline proposals for the recycling and composting of household waste, and these can be facilitated by condition. One issue yet to be fully considered is construction waste, which will need to be covered by the required Code of Construction Practice.
- 8.56 To facilitate easy home working, and so reduce the need to travel, the new homes will be provided with ducting to allow fibre/cable technology connections. All homes will be provided with standard broadband connection and access to terrestrial digital television.
- 8.57 Generally, the proposals set out in the ECRM are welcomed and, together with the implementation of RES, will provide an exemplary approach towards sustainable development.

(x) Community Facilities

- 8.58 Policy H7 outlines the particular services and infrastructure that are required to serve the development. Other relevant policies include DC7 (waste management), DC8 (infrastructure and service requirements), DC4 (public art), L8 (local leisure facilities), and CF1 (provision of community facilities). It is important to note that the development cannot be required to make up any existing shortfall of facilities – the proposed provision is to serve the needs generated by this development. These facilities will be secured by the S106 agreement.
- 8.59 The details of the community facilities provision are listed in para. 5.7 above. The proposals have been modified slightly since the submission in December 2005 as work on the S106 has progressed. The main change is in respect of the primary school in the north of the site. OCC has confirmed that this school is no longer required, and that an extension to Stephen Freeman

School can accommodate pupils in this part of the site. Two new primary schools in the centre and south of the site will serve the rest of the development. The applicants have agreed to pay a pro rata contribution towards the cost of the land and buildings for a third secondary school for Didcot on GWP.

- 8.60 The amount of play space and playing fields is based on the National Playing Fields Standards. The actual provision will depend on the outcome of the local needs assessment, required under PPG17, and management practicalities. A level of provision will be secured in the S106, which will permit flexibility if needs change at a later date. The necessary funds have now been secured to enable the long-term management of the on-site sports areas and informal open space, which overcomes Sport England's concerns.
- 8.61 The main district centre will have serviced land supplied for a small supermarket and, within the centre, there will be sufficient space for approximately six other retail units, should there be the necessary commercial interest. The provision of other appropriate retail uses (e.g. a pharmacy, family pub / restaurant, hairdresser) will be encouraged, to provide for the day-to-day needs of residents, and so reduce the need to travel. However, the total retail floorspace will be limited to maintain the hierarchy of centres in Didcot and not to undermine the vitality and viability of Didcot town centre.
- 8.62 The district centre will also accommodate the larger community centre and the health centre. A second community centre will be provided in the south of the site, and land will be reserved in the north of the site should the need arise for a third centre. The community centre provision being sought is justified in relation to the projected GWP population. A site for a residential home for supported needs will also be reserved through the S106, and land will be provided for a dentist and a childcare nursery (the provision of these facilities will depend on their commercial viability).
- 8.63 Contributions have been secured towards the provision off-site community facilities, including an all-weather pitch, improvements and an expansion to Didcot Wave swimming pool (including the provision of a new sports hall), and extensions to Didcot library and Didcot Civic Hall.
- 8.64 Some Parish Councils have objected to the lack of any burial provision within the development. Parish councils are the responsible burial authorities and, of the four parishes that have administrative areas within the application site, only West Hagbourne does not have a burial ground. In accordance with average burial rates, it is estimated that the population of GWP will generate 18 extra burials to 2016. Taken together, the existing parishes have more than sufficient space to meet existing and projected needs - Didcot cemetery alone has adequate space until 2016/17. There will be a need for more burial space after this period, but it is not considered that the development of GWP warrants a new burial ground. Work on SODC's LDF will need to identify a site for a new burial ground for Didcot.
- 8.65 It is considered that the amount, type and distribution of the proposed community facilities comply with Local Plan policies and will provide a firm basis for a sustainable community.

(xi) Community Safety and Security

- 8.66 Policy DC3 requires new developments to be designed and laid out to increase security and deter crime.
- 8.67 The Design Statement accompanying the application refers to urban design principles which encourage informal surveillance of streets and open spaces and enables safer travel. These principles will be expanded upon at the detailed design stages to encourage community safety and security. At the detailed stages the developers will be encouraged to achieve the Secured by Design award from the Police, provided other important design principles are not compromised.

(xii) Archaeology and Listed Buildings

- 8.68 Policy HE9 and HE11 require archaeological investigations to be carried out and that, wherever possible, any finds should be preserved in situ. Policy HE4 says that proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.
- 8.69 A desktop assessment and a programme of archaeological field evaluation have been carried out in liaison with the County Archaeologist. The range of archaeological material found on the site is consistent with similar sites throughout Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Forty-seven sites are identified. There is evidence of a late Roman settlement, further Roman sites, Iron Age sites, a small-scale Bronze Age site, and an early Saxon settlement. There are no archaeological remains of national importance. The identified sites are considered of minor importance due to their fragmentary character, and many of the sites have been adversely affected by ploughing. The finds can be managed either by removal or by being left in site.
- 8.70 The OSP requires the delivery of the new dwellings by 2016. Policy H7 requires that services and facilities are available for use by the new residents. Also, during construction, there should be adequate protection from adverse environmental effects.

(xiii) Phasing

- 8.71 The OSP requires the delivery of the new dwellings by 2016. Policy H7 requires that services and facilities are available for use by the new residents. Also, during construction, there should be adequate protection from adverse environmental effects.
- 8.72 Draft phasing principles are outlined in the Supporting Statement accompanying the application, and an estimate of the number of completions each year is indicated in both the Supporting Statement and Environmental Statement. Whilst Officers consider that the proposal to build 400 dwellings a year once the development is underway is ambitious, this would meet the Structure Plan requirement of providing all of the dwellings by 2016.
- 8.73 A detailed Phasing Strategy will be required by condition. Phasing needs to be considered in relation to the environmental effects of construction and the needs of new residents as the development progresses. The off-site improvement works to the Milton Interchange and the A34 slip roads will be required to be carried before development on site commences, and the timing of the other off-site works will need to be agreed with the Highway Authority. The dwellings will initially be developed concurrently in the north of the site and on the north side of Wantage Road (B4493), but all construction traffic will take access from the A4130 and will use a haul road through the site. The spine road connecting the A4130 and B4493 is not due to be open until Year 3 of the development programme (i.e. 2010), so residents in the north and the south of the site initially will need to use the accesses from either Wantage Road or the A4130. The amount and timing of development in the north and south of the site between the A4130 and B4493 will need to be considered carefully in relation to the accessibility to existing and proposed facilities, and the timing of the provision of the off-site highway improvement and drainage attenuation works.
- 8.74 The Phasing Strategy will also need to consider site clearance in relation to nesting birds, advance planting, and the location of construction compounds. Generally, parcels of development are expected to proceed from east to west, to create a buffer between existing residents and construction activities.
- 8.75 It is imperative that the new facilities and services are provided in a timely and co-ordinated manner so that new residents have access to adequate facilities and services. This will encourage more sustainable living and a cohesive and integrated community. The draft phasing principles are considered to be acceptable, but an on-going Phasing Strategy will be necessary once locations and phases of development are firmed up. The S106 agreement will ensure the provision of facilities and services in relation to specified numbers of completed dwellings.

9.0 **Conclusions**

- 9.1 The Development Plan supports the development of approximately 3,200 dwellings on this site, and it has now been clarified that the application is for up to 3,300 dwellings. The Council's policies require the provision of infrastructure, facilities and services to mitigate the impacts of the development and to serve the needs of the new residents. The level of affordable housing provision is dependent on the viability of the development. A package for the S106 agreement has been secured, which will fully mitigate the development's impacts, maximise the affordable housing provision, and enable a viable development.
- 9.2 The development will supply much needed housing and the delivery of affordable housing will provide for those most in need. The overall quantum of affordable housing will be 30%, and the terms of the S106 will actively encourage social housing grant to be sought to maximise the quantum of social rented housing up to 22.5% of the total housing provision, with the remainder of the affordable housing to be shared ownership. This will be a considerable benefit to those in most need. All of the new housing will comprise a mix of dwelling types and sizes, to meet a variety of needs and to help create a balanced community. The provision of this housing will achieve a key policy objective of this Council and the Government.
- 9.3 A development of this scale will inevitably have significant environmental impacts. The Environmental Statement identifies a range of impacts and proposes measures for mitigation. The ES meets the requirements of the EIA Regulations. The Masterplan incorporates a mitigation strategy in respect of layout and design, including proposals for landscape, the movement network, ecological enhancement and access to facilities and services. The mitigation measures will need to be secured by the S106 agreement or conditions.
- 9.4 A principal impact, and that of most concern to local people, is the effect of traffic. It is acknowledged that the GWP development will have an adverse environmental impact on the surrounding villages, with Harwell, East Hagbourne and West Hagbourne, in particular, expected to experience considerable increases in traffic. In terms of the effect on the highway, OCC and the Highways Agency raise no objections, subject to the implementation of the off-site infrastructure works, the enhancement of public transport provision, and the measures included in the Travel Plan.
- 9.5 The environmental impacts associated with the increased traffic relate to issues such as noise, visual effects and pedestrian amenity. There will be adverse effects in some village locations and, where practicable, further mitigation measures will be considered in the light of future traffic impact monitoring. However, these adverse impacts are not considered sufficient to warrant refusal of the application, particularly as they need to be balanced against the overriding policy support for the development, the benefits the development will bring, and the fact that the applicants have agreed to mitigate the impact of their development by paying their pro rata contribution towards additional off-site highway works (including a Harwell bypass) which, when implemented, will help to alleviate the adverse environmental effects of GWP and other developments in the locality.
- 9.6 The scheme embodies a high standard of sustainable design. All of the residential development will be built to a Very Good Ecohomes standard, and an equivalent standard will be required for all of the community buildings. The spine road through the middle of the development will link the three neighbourhoods, which will provide facilities for the day-to-day needs of the residents, including schools, community centres, open space, playing fields, children's play areas, a health centre and a supermarket. The movement network includes routes for all highway users, and will encourage walking and cycling within the site and integration with existing areas. The layout and design principles outlined in the application and supporting material provide a strong basis for achieving a sustainable and cohesive community.
- 9.7 The provision of facilities and services for the new residents will be secured by conditions and the S106 agreement. A revised Masterplan will be required to incorporate the requirements of the S106 agreement. Prior to the submission of the reserved matters applications, interim

submissions will need to be approved to provide more detailed guidance on the design, character and appearance of the development.

10.0 **Recommendations**

10.1 **Application No. HAR/17774-X**

That the decision to grant outline planning permission for a mixed-use urban extension of 3,300 dwellings together with associated local shops and services, leisure, open space and community facilities and transport, drainage and utility infrastructure is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Committee Chair and/or Vice-Chair, subject to:-

- a) the Secretary of State raising no objection to the application under the Town and Country Planning (Residential Development on Greenfield Land) (England) Direction 2000;***
- b) the applicants and all relevant parties having an interest in the site completing a Section 106 Agreement in accordance with the Draft Heads of Terms as set out in Appendix 4;***
- c) consultation under Regulation 19 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations raising no additional significant environmental effects that may arise as a result of amending the proposed development from approximately 3,200 dwellings to 3,300 dwellings; and***
- d) conditions, which shall include the following draft list but will be expanded and/or amended as a result of any ongoing discussions with the applicants and to reflect the outcome of the Regulation 19 consultation process :***

General

- 1. All details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where details relate to more than one administrative area, they shall be approved by both Local Planning Authorities.***
- 2. Outline permission with the reserved matters being siting, design, external appearance, landscaping and means of access to all development.***
- 3. First reserved matters application to be submitted within 3 years of the permission. Subsequent reserved matters applications to be submitted within 10 years of the permission.***

Phasing

- 4. Submission of a Phasing Strategy.***

Masterplan and Development Strategy

- 5. Submission of a Masterplan to be generally in accordance with the submitted drawings and to identify sites for the new facilities in accordance with the S106 Heads of Terms.***
- 6. The development shall have a land use budget of:***
 - 82.1 ha. residential development***

- **62 ha. landscape and open space (including playing fields, local parks, play areas, allotments, buffer zones, areas of ecological enhancement)**
- **14.3 ha. schools**
- **8 ha. public urban space**
- **5.1 ha. mixed use district and neighbourhood centres**
- **8.5 ha. allowance for infrastructure**

7. Prior to the submission of the reserved matters applications a Development Strategy Framework shall be submitted and agreed to comprise:

- (i) strategic site-wide strategies for housing, built development, landscaping, movement network, and car parking;**
- (ii) Framework Plans for subsections of the development to include design codes, landscaping, parcels of development, street patterns, local character and identity areas, housing mix and density, location of affordable housing, access and circulation, overall pedestrian, cycleway and bridleway network, highway design, form and layout, car parking, boundary treatments, housing with renewable energy systems, street furniture, design for the prevention of crime, design for permitted development rights;**
- (iii) Detailed Design Briefs for the district and neighbourhood centres, the setting of Down Farmhouse, and other character areas identified in the Framework Plans with drawings at 1:1250 scale.**

8. A Development Strategy to be in accordance with the Phasing Strategy and approved Masterplan and illustrative Design Statement, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authorities.

Housing

9. The number of dwellings shall not exceed 3,300.

10. The housing shall be built at an average net minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare, to be detailed in the Development Strategy.

11. The market housing shall comprise a mix of dwelling types and sizes with about 30% 1 & 2 bedrooms, 35% 3 bedrooms and 35% 4 bedrooms or more.

12. The affordable housing shall be distributed throughout the site in clusters of not more than 15.

13. 10% of the dwellings shall be constructed to standards for lifetime homes and/or to provide access for wheelchairs.

Reserved matters

14. The submission of all reserved matters and the implementation of the development shall be carried out in accordance with approved Masterplan and Development Strategy, and/or in accordance with any approved Framework Plan and Design Code.

Construction

15. Development shall not commence until a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) is approved. All construction activities shall be carried out in accordance with the

approved CoCP. The CoCP shall be in accordance with British Standards (BS4428) and shall include a contractor's working method statement incorporating the following:

- (i) Traffic during construction: access, traffic routes, routes within site kept free from obstruction, hours on local highway network, wheel washing, travel plan for construction workers, vehicle parking and turning areas, scheme for prevention of surface water discharges on to the highway,**
- (ii) location and size of compounds,**
- (iii) construction exclusion zones to prevent soil compaction for large scale planting areas, public and private playing fields and remediation of any soil compaction**
- (iv) a mitigation strategy for the handling and storage of topsoil**
- (v) Protection of trees, hedgerows and ponds**
- (vi) Archaeology protection**
- (vii) Environmental protection from noise, dust, vibration for residents adjoining and within the site**
- (viii) Contamination investigations, reporting and possible remediation**
- (ix) Method statement for the prevention of contamination of soil, groundwater and air pollution and remediation in the event of pollution**
- (x) a management strategy for construction waste**
- (i) sustainable working methods to include reuse of rainwater**
- (xi) ECRM commitments**

16. No construction work shall be undertaken outside the following time periods unless in exceptional circumstances and with the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority: 07:30 – 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 13:00 Saturday, and no working on Sundays, and Bank and Public Holidays.

17. Construction site noise arising as a result of this development shall not exceed the following levels during the specified periods when measured 1 metre from the nearest residential façade (or at monitoring locations to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority): Monday to Friday 07:30-18:00 70dB (LAeq (1 hour)), Saturday 08:00-13:00 70dB (LAeq (1 hour)).

Protection of trees, hedgerows and ponds

18. Prior to the commencement of any site works or operations within a phase of development, an arboricultural method statement for the protection of trees, hedgerows, and shrubs to British Standard BS 5837: 2005 shall be submitted and approved in writing for that phase of development and these works shall be implemented as approved.

19. Prior to the commencement of any site works or operations within a relevant phase of development, details of the protection of ponds and the implementation of 5 metre wide buffer zones shall be submitted and approved in writing for that phase of development and these works shall be implemented as approved.

Landscaping and external works

20. That a detailed scheme of landscaping and external works shall be submitted and approved in writing for each phase of the development prior to the commencement of any part of that phase of development. The schemes shall generally accord with the strategic landscaping schemes approved in the Masterplan / Framework Plans.

Landscaping Implementation

21. All planting, soft and hard works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved schemes on a rolling programme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, but all works shall be completed within the first planting season relative to the phase of development under consideration.

Landscape Works, Maintenance and Management

22. No development shall commence until the landscape design proposals have a maintenance programme and a long-term management plan for the soft landscape works which have been submitted and approved in writing. These works shall be implemented as approved.

23. Other than for privately owned domestic gardens, all landscape areas shall incorporate detailed objectives linked to annual maintenance schedules and longer-term (5, 10 and 15 years) management proposals. These shall be elaborated with method statements and programmes of work.

Noise

24. Before the development of noise sensitive premises commences the buildings and amenity areas shall be designed and/or insulated so as to provide attenuation against externally-generated noise in accordance with an approved noise mitigation scheme and BS 8233:1999 and wherever practicable internal ambient noise levels shall fall within the design range identified by BS 8233:1999 as 'good'. The approved scheme shall be implemented and retained thereafter.

25. Prior to the construction of non-residential development which has the potential to produce noise directly or indirectly that may be audible at the nearest dwelling, a noise survey and mitigation report shall be submitted and approved in writing and the agreed attenuation measures shall be implemented and retained thereafter.

26. Details of the hours of use of the non-residential buildings shall be submitted and approved in writing prior to the first use of that building.

Land Contamination

27. No development shall take place within a development parcel until site investigations in accordance with BS 10175 have been carried out and if contamination is found a remediation scheme has been approved and implemented.

Lighting

28. Before the first use of any non-residential development, details of the external lighting of that development shall be submitted and approved in writing, and shall be implemented as approved.

Species Protection

29. No development shall take place until updated surveys for protected species have been completed. Surveys shall take place in an appropriate season for that species and a minimum of one month prior to the commencement of each phase of the development.

Details of appropriate mitigation measures should a protected species be found should be submitted and approved in writing and shall be implemented prior to development commencing within that phase.

Archaeology and Creation and Enhancement of Habitats

30. No development shall take place until an Environmental Management Plan to be generally in accordance with the submitted Environmental Management Brief has been approved. The EMP shall include plans for (i) habitat creation and restoration (ii) management of drainage attenuation areas, and (ii) the retention of archaeological sites and deposits that can be preserved in situ.

31. No development shall take place within a phase of development until the details contained in the Environmental Management Plan have been implemented.

32. A mitigation strategy shall be submitted and approved in writing relating to the processing, research and analysis of archaeological finds and shall include an accessible and useable archive and report(s) for publication.

33. Archaeological Watching Brief.

Drainage

34. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the surface water drainage strategy ref.135002-3, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

35. Development should not commence until details of the foul and surface water drainage works serving that development have been submitted and approved in writing. No works shall commence on site which would result in the discharge of foul or surface water until the required foul and surface water works have been completed.

36. Development shall not commence within any phase of development until details of the surface and foul water drainage works for that phase of development have been submitted and approved in writing. No development shall be occupied until the approved drainage works have been implemented.

37. A management plan of all watercourses and water features, including a 10 metre wide buffer zone for each watercourse, shall be submitted and approved in writing. The plan shall be implemented as approved.

38. No soakaways shall be constructed more than 2 metres below existing ground level, shall not penetrate the water table and shall not be provided on contaminated ground.

39. Long-term measurements of the flows of watercourses in and around the site together with monitoring of groundwater levels shall be carried out and reports submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

1. The maintenance of the drainage attenuation areas shall be approved as part of the Environmental Management Plan.

Section 278 works

41. No development shall commence until the master developer enters into a Section 278 Agreement with the Highway Authority to carry out works to the Milton Interchange, Rowstock Roundabout, Power Station Roundabout and Manor Bridge Roundabout, plus off-site walking and cycling infrastructure and facilities.

42. No development shall commence until the phasing of the Section 278 works has been submitted approved in writing. Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved phasing.

43. No works within a construction phase shall commence until a traffic management plan for that phase has been submitted and approved in writing. The works shall be implemented as approved.

44. The improvements to Milton Interchange shall be carried out in accordance with approved S278 works prior to the commencement of any works on site.

Transport

45. No part of the development shall be occupied until the works (A34 slip roads) shown on drawings 95017/2005/LDE/250 Rev P2,/251 Rev P3 and /252 Rev P3 at Milton Interchange have been completed and brought into use.

46. No development shall commence on site until the means of access onto the A4130 and B4493 and all ancillary works have been constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Authority.

47. All means of access between the site and the public highway shall be formed, laid out, constructed and drained, and shall provide a vision splay in accordance with details that shall be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of construction of that access.

48. Before any of the dwellings in a phase of the development are first occupied, all of the estate roads and footpaths shall be constructed in accordance with details to be submitted approved and approved in writing and shall comply with the Highway Authority's standards.

49. Before any of the dwellings are first occupied, the proposed vehicular accesses, driveways and turning areas shall be constructed in accordance with approved details.

50. Prior to the commencement of development within the district and neighbourhood centres, details of infrastructure works, including parking and manoeuvring areas, shall be submitted and approved in writing and no development shall be occupied until those works have been constructed and completed in accordance with the approved details.

51. No part of the development shall be occupied until details of bus services to serve the development, including timetables and routes, have been submitted and approved in writing. The bus services shall be provided in accordance with the approved details.

52. No part of the development shall be occupied until turning areas for buses have been provided.

Travel Plan

53. No part of the development shall be occupied until a Travel Plan has been submitted and approved in writing and the measures have been implemented as approved.

54. The approved Travel Plan shall be monitored by a Travel Plan co-ordinator - details of appointment and role of the Travel Plan co-ordinator shall be submitted with the Travel Plan.

Sustainable development

55. All dwellings on the site shall achieve Ecohomes "Very Good" certification, or such equivalent standard that shall operate at the time of construction of that phase of development. Each dwelling shall achieve 75% of credits in relation to the categories of materials and energy and 60% in relation to the category of water.

56. All non-residential buildings shall be constructed in accordance with a specification to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that shall include a commitment to build to a BREEAM "Very Good" certification, or such equivalent standard that shall operate at the time of construction of that building.

57. All buildings greater in scale than single dwellings shall incorporate a rainwater harvesting system, in accordance with the best practice advice of the Environment Agency.

58. All homes with private gardens shall have a water butt of approximately 200 litres installed to maximise rainwater collection.

59. All dwellings shall be installed with boilers that can function with renewable energy systems.

60. Communal bottle banks shall be provided and distributed throughout the site on a ratio of 1 per 500 dwellings, on sites that shall include landscaping and parking / dropping-off areas and shall be implemented in accordance with approved details.

61. At least 10% of all dwellings shall be designed to incorporate renewable energy systems (RES). Such RES shall be implemented so that the first 100 of those dwellings are implemented within 3 years of the commencement of development.

62. The use of recycled material in the construction of on-site highways shall be maximised and details specifying the proportion, type and source of the recycled material to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

63. All dwellings with a garden shall be provided with a home composter.

64. Dwellings shall incorporate internal and/or external space for the storage of recyclable materials.

65. All buildings and/or curtilages shall incorporate space for the storage of bicycles.

66. All dwellings shall be provided with ducting that shall enable the connection of optic cable fibres or similar technologies.

67. Fire hydrants shall be provided within the development in accordance with a detailed scheme which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

NB. All reserved matters applications must be accompanied by a statement addressing all environmental impacts in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

10.2 Application No. HAR/17774/1-X

That, had an appeal not been lodged under S78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the decision to grant outline planning permission for a mixed-use urban extension of 3,300 dwellings together with associated local shops and services, leisure, open space and community facilities and transport, drainage and utility infrastructure would have been delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Committee Chair and/or Vice-Chair, subject to:-

- a) the Secretary of State raising no objection to the application under the Town and Country Planning (Residential Development on Greenfield Land) (England) Direction 2000;***
- b) the applicants and all relevant parties having an interest in the site completing a Section 106 Agreement in accordance with the Draft Heads of Terms as set out in Appendix 4;***
- c) consultation under Regulation 19 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations raising no additional significant environmental effects that may arise as a result of amending the proposed development from approximately 3,200 dwellings to 3,300 dwellings; and***
- d) the summarised draft conditions listed above, which shall be expanded and/or amended as a result of any ongoing discussions with the applicants and to reflect the outcome of the Regulation 19 consultation process.***