

APPLICATION NO.	P17/V0050/O
SITE	Land north of Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive, Abingdon
PARISHES	SUNNINGWELL and RADLEY
PROPOSAL	Outline application (with all matters reserved except for principal means of access to the highway) for residential development of <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 900 dwellings• 50 retirement homes (use class C3)• Local centre• 2.2HA site for a 1.5 form entry primary school• Community hub• Care home comprising up to 80 beds• Children's nursery• Public house/restaurant, retail and other services (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C2, D1 and D2)• Public open space• Recreation areas and sports pitches (including sports pavilion and multi-use games area)• Play areas• Acoustic bund with fencing• Associated infrastructure including roads, sewers and attenuation ponds (As amended by drawings and information accompanying agent's letter dated 2 May 2017)
WARD MEMBERS	Debby Hallett Emily Smith Edward Blagrove Bob Johnston
APPLICANT OFFICERS	CEG Land Promotions II Limited Peter Brampton and Sally Appleyard

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning subject to:

1: A S106 agreement being entered into in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing, and;

2: Conditions as follows:

Approved plans, commencement, reserved matters & site wide documents

1. Approved plans and document list.
2. Approved land uses.
3. Commencement – Whichever is earlier of i) three years from outline

- permission or ii) two years from final approval of first reserved matters application.
4. First reserved matters application submitted within two years.
 5. All reserved matters application submitted within eight years of first commencement.
 6. Site-wide development delivery strategy to be agreed.
 7. Housing delivery document to be agreed.
 8. Contents of reserved matters application as specified.
 9. No more than 950 dwellings on the site.
 10. No more than 150 dwellings occupied prior to written confirmation of central government funding for Lodge Hill slip roads. No more than 400 dwellings occupied prior to Highway Authority letting contract for Lodge Hill slip road construction works.
 11. Development in accordance with mitigation measures within the environmental statement dated December 2016 (appendices, strategies and addendum).
 12. Market housing as specified.
 13. Site wide phasing plan to be agreed.
 14. Construction environmental management plan to be agreed.
 15. Construction traffic management plan to be agreed.

Pre-commencement conditions

16. Energy delivery strategy to be agreed.
17. Hard and soft landscaping to be agreed.
18. Tree protection to be agreed.
19. Landscape management and maintenance to be agreed.
20. Woodland management plan to be agreed.
21. Noise impact assessment to be agreed.
22. Noise mitigation scheme for local centre to be agreed.
23. Biodiversity enhancement plan to be agreed.
24. Landscape and ecology management plan to be agreed.
25. Written scheme of archaeological investigation to be agreed.
26. Staged programme of archaeological mitigation to be agreed.
27. Lighting scheme to be agreed.
28. Waste management and minimisation strategy to be agreed.
29. Surface water drainage scheme to be agreed.
30. On and off site drainage works (surface and foul water) to be agreed.
31. Sample materials to be agreed.
32. Accesses and visibility splays onto highway network to be agreed.
33. Bus stops on Oxford Road to be agreed.
34. Site accesses to be agreed.
35. Broadband provision to be agreed.
36. Community employment plan to be agreed.
37. Air quality and dust mitigation measures to be agreed.

Pre-occupation conditions

38. Assessment of ground conditions for sport pitches to be agreed.
39. Sports pitches, MUGA and pavilion to be agreed.
40. Management and maintenance scheme for sports facilities to be agreed.
41. Community use scheme for playing fields to be agreed.

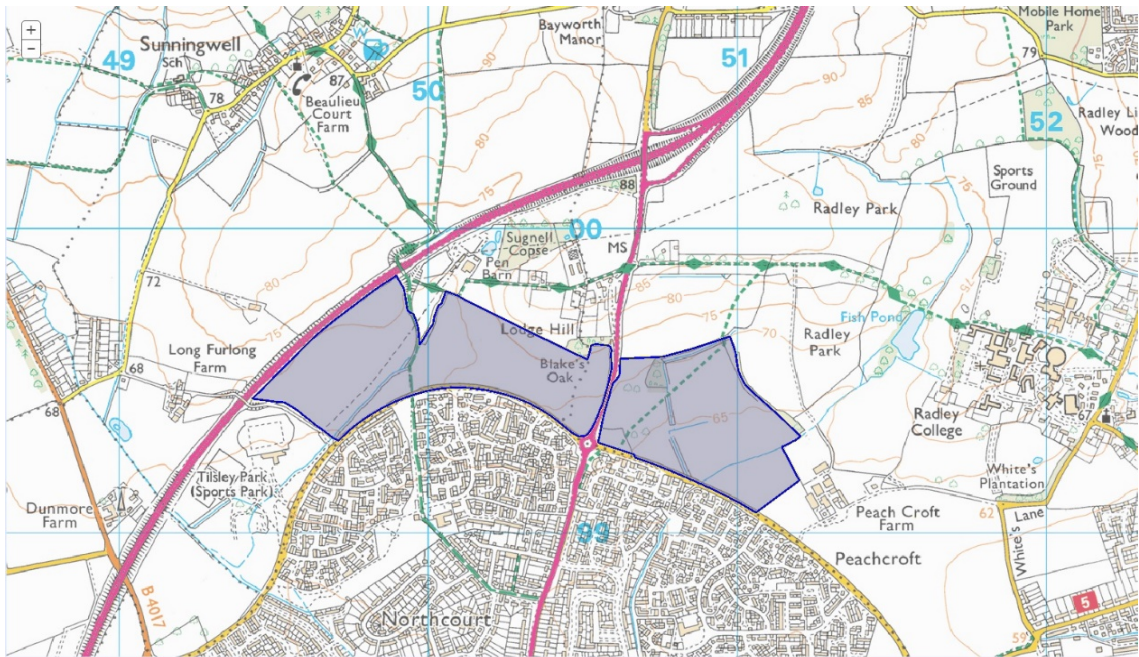
42. Hours of operation for non-residential uses to be agreed.
43. Roads, footways and street lighting to be agreed.
44. Access, parking and turning to be agreed.
45. Connections to on and off-site roads and footpaths to be agreed.
46. Cycle parking to be agreed.
47. Residential travel plan and travel information pack to be agreed.

Compliance conditions

48. Noise mitigation and insulation to be implemented as agreed.
49. Bin storage to be demonstrated within each reserved matters application.
50. Approved boundary treatments to be provided prior to occupation of dwelling to which they relate.
51. Vehicular access, driveways, parking and turning to be completed as approved prior to use.
52. Garage accommodation to be retained.
53. All garages to include provision for electric vehicle recharging.
54. No road or footway intended for adoption to be constructed prior to legal agreement with the Highways Authority.
55. No materials to be deposited on any public right of way (PRoW).
56. No construction vehicles to use any PRoW.
57. No residential or commercial access along any PRoW.
58. No gate access to open onto any PRoW.
59. All non-residential buildings to achieve BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) “Very Good” certification.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application is referred to planning committee due to the size of the development.
- 1.2 The application relates to a site of approximately 54 hectares of agricultural land on the northern edge of Abingdon. The site broadly consists of three parcels of land running in a broad arc from the western boundary with Tilsley Park to Radley Park and Peachcroft Farm to the east. The site abuts the A34 to the northwest of the western parcel, Lodge Hill sits to the north with the easternmost parcel being divided from the central parcel by the A4183/Oxford Road.
- 1.3 The Location Plan over the page shows the site in its local context:



- 1.4 Existing trees largely define the site boundaries, with a small area of Ancient Woodland copse to the north at Lodge Hill. A number of established hedgerows define the field boundaries within the site. A watercourse runs east-west in the western parcel of the site, meaning a small portion of this parcel falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The remainder of the site falls within Flood Zone 1. Two public rights of way cross the site. Bridleway 372/13 runs north-south through the central parcel, whilst Footpath 326/5 runs diagonally across the eastern parcel, accessible from Twelve Acre Drive.
- 1.5 Although clearly related to Abingdon, the application site actually falls within the parishes of Sunningwell and Radley. Broadly, the western and central parcels fall within Sunningwell parish, whilst the eastern parcel falls within Radley parish.
- 1.6 The eastern and western parcels are relatively flat. The central parcel has around a ten metre fall from its northern to southern boundary.
- 1.7 With the exception of field accesses, there is no existing vehicular access to the site.
- 1.8 This application seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved other than the principal means of access to the site. The application proposes the following:
- Up to 900 dwellings
 - 50 retirement homes (restricted to 65 years+);
 - Public open space, recreation areas and sports pitches (including sports pavilion and Multi-Use Games Area);
 - Acoustic bund with fencing along the boundary with the A34;
 - Local Centre comprising –
 1. 15 of the total proposed dwellings
 2. A 1.5 form entry primary school on a 2.22 hectare site

3. Community hub (400 square metres)
 4. Up to 80-bed care home
 5. Children's nursery (600 square metres)
 6. Public house/restaurant (700 square metres)
 7. A1 food retail unit (300 square metres)
 8. Non-food retail (300 square metres)
 9. Commercial services (300 square metres)
 - Associated infrastructure including roads, sewers and attenuation ponds.
- 1.9 The applicants propose a varied approach to residential densities across the site. On the countryside edges of the development, densities will not exceed 25 dwellings to the hectare, whilst closer to the Local Centre, densities will increase to around 40 dwellings to the hectare. If the development were built out as above, the average density across the site would be 33.9 dwellings to the hectare, providing a range of dwelling types and sizes.
- 1.10 The Local Centre is within the central part of the site, close to one of the main accesses onto Dunmore Road, and will provide a range of complementary facilities in a mixed-use hub around a focal public open space.
- 1.11 The site provides a policy compliant level of public open space, NEAPs and LEAPs and sports pitches (including a pavilion and MUGA) in the southeastern corner of the site.
- 1.12 Acoustic bunding is proposed along the northwestern edge of the development adjacent to the A34. This bund will be an earth mound, incorporating native planting to soften its appearance. A number of SuDS attenuation ponds are required, being proposed along the Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive frontages as the low point of the site.
- 1.13 In terms of vehicular access, four main T-junctions are proposed. One on the western parcel onto Dunmore, a second from the central parcel onto Dunmore Road close to the Local Centre, and two onto Twelve Acre Drive from the eastern parcel. No vehicular access is proposed onto Oxford Road.
- 1.14 A number of pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed across the site, whilst Footpath 326/5 referenced in Para 1.4 will need to be diverted to integrate into the layout for the eastern parcel.
- 1.15 Extracts from the current application parameter plans are **attached** as Appendix One. All forms, plans and documentation submitted in support of the application are available to view at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.
- 2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**
- 2.1 Below is a summary of the responses received to both the original plans and the amendments. A full copy of all the comments made can be viewed online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

2.2

Consultee	Comments
Sunningwell Parish Council	<p>No objections. The following concerns have been raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic implications without the development of the south facing slip roads at Lodge Hill • Light pollution from the development • Impact of floodlighting school playing fields • Impact on flood zone
Radley Parish Council	<p>Holding Objection to original proposal.</p> <p>Comments on amended plans have not yet been received and an update will be offered to planning committee</p> <p>Main concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of buffer planting at east end of site • Housing Mix – Proposals to take account of the results of Radley Parish Council’s survey of housing requirements; and to provide for a proportion of larger units (3+ bedroom) which is no greater than the SHMA guideline. • Provision of cycle/pedestrian access to Radley Station from the east of the site to White’s Lane along the line of the former public road across land in the ownership of the development site owners. • S106 contributions sought towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed new cycleway to Radley Station - Additional secure bike storage at Radley Station and other station enhancements. - Radley Parish Councils Radley Lakes Strategy. • Proposals to take account of relevant policies in the draft Radley Neighbourhood Plan: Radley Lakes Strategy, cycling and walking and improve cycle access to Radley Station, improve facilities at Radley station.
Abingdon Town Council	<p>No objections, raise the following concerns:</p> <p>Traffic and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the south facing slip roads at Lodge Hill • Traffic implications without the slip roads • Consider that the slip roads should be delivered before any development commences • Transport statement is invalid if the slip roads are not delivered • Concerns regarding Highways England response

	<p>regarding impact of proposal on the A34</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• County Council response to be incorporated into any planning permission• Improvements required to local road network to mitigate impact on additional traffic• Speed limit on Dunmore Road to be reduced to 30mph• The site to also be access from Oxford Road <p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The air quality assessment has assumed the south facing slip roads to be in place and in use by 2020• Without the slip roads, there would be significant air quality impacts on the local road system and air quality in Abingdon <p>Cycle access to Radley Station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed route in application for cyclists to go between the proposed development to the station is neither safe or convenient• Support the construction of a new cycle route as proposed in the Radley draft Neighbourhood Plan• Provision of this proposed cycle route to be secured by condition <p>Wootton Road Roundabout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns regarding the design of the roundabout and impact this has on the safety of cyclists when crossing the roundabout <p>Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns that there are no proposals for a new health centre• Long Furlong Medical Centre is not in a position to take on additional patients and there is no room to expand• Health care facilities have not been adequately provided within the proposals• Health centre to be provided within the local centre and secured by condition <p>Flood Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns regarding the EA response with regards to impact on flood risk• EA to be fully satisfied with the arrangements in place to mitigate flood risk
--	---

	<p>Waste Water and Water Supply Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about Thames Water response regarding insufficient capacity of existing waste water infrastructure and existing water supply infrastructure • Conditions recommended by Thames Water to be part of any planning permission
<p>Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) One Voice</p>	<p>Overall – No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport – No objection subject to S106 contributions, a S278 agreement and conditions <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lodge Hill slips considered necessary to mitigate the traffic impacts of the proposal - Application assumes Lodge Hill slips will be delivered, diverting a large proportion of trips heading south to the new junction – this is necessary to ensure capacity in the highway network - Supportive of proposed pedestrian and cycle links within and from site, and crossings on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive - Need for direct walking/cycling route from site towards Radley Station – existing route substandard - Detailed application will need to show parking in line with County Council standards and tracking for larger vehicles - Trip generation rates are acceptable - Contribution to 35 bus route extension requested - Travel Plan and Travel Information Pack to be provided to all new residents <p>Section 278 to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dunmore Road/Oxford Road/Twelve Acre Drive roundabout - Dunmore Road/Wootton Road/Copenhagen Drive - Footway/cycleway towards Radley Station (if within public highway land) - Footway/cycleway in all locations on submitted plans - Road crossings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cycle parking- Associated works <p>Conditions requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Access details- Foul and Surface Water Drainage- Construction Method Statement- Construction Traffic Management Plan- Occupancy restriction until Lodge Hill slips funded/delivery contract let- Travel Plan and Travel Information Pack- Countryside Access conditions – obstructions/alterations/vehicle access/gates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Archaeology</u> - No objection, subject to conditions Summary: The applicant has submitted an archaeological desk based assessment and a geophysical survey of the application area. A condition should be imposed requiring a staged programme of archaeological investigation and recording in advance of development following the approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation.• <u>Economy and Skills</u> - No objection subject to condition requiring a community employment plan.• <u>Education</u> - No objection subject to conditions and Section 106 contributions Summary: This site is estimated on a policy compliant mix to generate sufficient primary pupils to fill a 1FE school. However, to meet the needs of this development and the other Local Plan strategic site at North West Abingdon-on-Thames, a 1.5 FE school will be required on a 2.22 ha site. <u>School site and design</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Detailed plans will need to show three accesses onto the school site.• <u>Property</u> – No objection, subject to conditions and Section 106 contributions Summary: Contributions towards library, waste management and adult day care facilities.• <u>Waste Management</u> – No objection Summary: The statements in the Planning Statement and Sustainability Statement that specific provision will be made for recycling storage and ample segregated waste storage space is
--	---

	<p>supported, and proposals for achieving this should be fully developed and set out in the detailed planning application.</p>
<p>Highways England</p>	<p>No objection in principle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It needs to be demonstrated there would not be a detrimental impact to the safe and efficient operation of the A34 from an improved junction. • No objection in principle to the development set out in the application, however without consideration of a scenario without south facing slips at A34 Lodge Hill, it is unclear if the impacts to the A34 and local roads has been assessed and therefore a deliverable transport mitigation package identified. • An assessment of the impact to the A34 and its junctions as a result of proposals is required • Consideration will need to be given to the cumulative impact of already planned growth • Concerned that currently there is insufficient detail available to understand the level of infrastructure required to facilitate the potential level of car based trips, particularly during peak periods. The level of development trips from a proposal of this size could potentially have an adverse impact to the A34 without consideration of a package of targeted mitigation measures.
<p>Environmental Health – Air Quality</p>	<p>Holding Objection until Lodge Hill slip road project secured</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that development as proposed will introduce a number of extra junctions and pedestrian crossings which could impede traffic flow along the northern relief road and reduce the desire to use this route in favour of alternative routes which could include the town centre where there is an Air Quality Management Area and where congestion is a problem. • Proximity of the development site to the road system which serves the centre of Abingdon where there is an AQMA - Major concerns that there will be severe impacts on congestion, particularly along Colwell Drive and Marcham Road/Ock St, where congestion is already an issue and nitrogen dioxide levels are close to the objective. Whilst this area is not part of the AQMA, monitoring indicates that nitrogen dioxide levels in this area are close to the objective and any significant increase in emissions in this area could

	<p>result in the objective being exceeded and the need to extend the AQMA to include Marcham Road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling of air quality impacts indicated that the predicted increases in emissions associated with the development will be acceptable. The modelling has been based on traffic data provided by transport consultants. This transport assessment has identified junctions considered most likely to experience a material impact. Significantly the Colwell Drive/Marcham Road junction has been omitted from this list of junctions to be assessed. It has also not been included in the air quality assessment. This is a fundamental omission, which fails to take into consideration that this junction is the point where the northern relief route (which includes Dunmore Road) meets the A415 and carries significant traffic accessing the A34, where there is access to/from southbound slips. At peak times this junction results in significant congestion in and around Colwell Drive/Marcham Road/ Drayton Road and Ock St and the town centre. Any significant additional traffic on Colwell Drive is only likely to exacerbate the congestion on Marcham Road/Ock St and associated emissions to air in this area. This could impact negatively on the AQMA and possibly require the extension of the AQMA to include Marcham Road if the air quality objective is exceeded. • The transport and air quality assessments are based on the assumption that the south facing slips at Lodge Hill will be in place and in use by 2020. With south facing slips at Lodge Hill in place this proposed development could be feasible, without there will be significant air quality impacts on the local road system and air quality in Abingdon and this would be unacceptable. • If outline permission is granted that this will be subject to a condition requiring a scheme to mitigate the dust/air quality impacts of the development on the local area and beyond, and include provision for electric vehicle recharging points at each property with a garage.
<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>Holding Objection to original proposal.</p> <p>Comments on amended plans have not yet been received and an update will be offered to planning</p>

	<p>committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate assessment of the existing flood risk, and risk arising from the proposed development, including an allowance for climate change. - Assessment of any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual probability flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change, and mitigation provided. • Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate buffer zone to the on-site watercourses and ponds
Drainage Engineer	<p>No objections, subject to conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On and off site drainage works to be agreed • Surface water drainage scheme to be agreed
Thames Water	<p>No objections, subject to conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foul Water Drainage works to be agreed
Countryside Officer Vale	<p>No objections, subject to conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEMP (Biodiversity) prior to commencement of each phase • Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) • Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) prior to occupation of each phase
Landscape Architect Vale	<p>No objection, subject to conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Design Code and mitigation contained within the LVIA are applied to the detailed design of the site • Full details of soft and hard landscaping proposals along with a Maintenance and management Plan
Sport England	<p>No objection, subject to conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and layout of playing fields, MUGA and Pavilion • Assessment of ground conditions • Management and maintenance scheme for the facilities • Community use scheme.
Environmental Health - Environmental Protection Team	<p>No objection, subject to condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the accompanying acoustic report (including the proposed acoustic barrier)

<p>Leisure</p>	<p>No objection, subject to financial contributions being secured</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play provision to be arranged as 1x NEAP, 3x LEAPs and 4x (100sqm) LAPs, all meeting Fields in Trust standards, including for accessibility. • Ideally, football and cricket pitches should not be overlaid.
<p>Waste Management Officer Vale</p>	<p>No objections, contribution to wheeled bins for each house required.</p>
<p>Conservation Officer Vale</p>	<p>No objection, subject to the details at full application stage for materials, heights, planting mitigation strategies to protect settings of heritage assets.</p>
<p>Urban Design Officer</p>	<p>No objection overall. Concerns raised to original submission however not all concerns have been addressed within the amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lanes/ shared private drives – These should be connected to provide a greater choice of routes and therefore increasing permeability throughout. The illustrative masterplan and the tree constraints plan/ illustrative plan drawing do not tally with each other. The latter connects the private lanes and would be the preferred option. There are also differences in street trees and soft landscaping between the two. • It would be useful to refer the principles of the Vale Design Guide 2015 throughout the code. • ‘Other considerations’ – should become mandatory principles (e.g. walls and courtyards, refuse and waste collection, utilities and storage). It is important to ensure that these items are considered from the outset and do not become an afterthought. • Check meaning of first key principle for walls on page 146 of the code. • The code should specify the quality and key principles of materials chosen for specific locations in the development. Not addressed. • Consider accessibility issues regarding street furniture (e.g. arm rest/ back rest) • It is important to show how the new development would link with Tilsey Park. • The code should explain how the retail units will be serviced. These should be conveniently located at

	<p>the back.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street lighting and utilities should also be considered to ensure an integrated street design. To be picked up at reserved matters stage. Covered partially under other considerations within the code.
Oxford City Council (Planning)	<p>No objections. Raised the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clarity about the extent to which the proposal is seeking to address unmet housing need from Oxford. The City Council would welcome a clarification of which housing needs this proposal is seeking to address. If any part of the proposal is seeking to address Oxford unmet housing needs then it will be critical to understand how the sustainable travel links to Oxford (particularly public transport and cycling links to the key employment areas) will be secured and delivered via Section 106 and CIL.
Equalities Officer Vale	<p>No objection overall; Concerns raised regarding access for people with disabilities; comments regarding detailed design for any subsequent reserved matters or detailed applications.</p>
Forestry Team	<p>No objection; comments regarding detailed design for any subsequent reserved matters or detailed applications.</p>
SGN Plant protection team	<p>No objections. Informative regarding gas pipes in the area and safe digging practices.</p>
Environmental Health – Contaminated land	<p>No objection</p>
Natural England	<p>No objection</p>
Historic England	<p>No comments</p>
Local Residents Representations	<p>A total of 186 objections or comments raising concerns have been lodged to the application by local residents (including from Abingdon, Sunningwell, Radley, Marcham, Drayton and Oxford);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 155 were received to the original consultation in January 2017

- 31 were received to the second consultation in May 2017

These objections and concerns are summarised as follows:

Highways and traffic

- Unacceptable level of additional traffic on A34 and local roads;
- Roads are at capacity and cannot cope with additional traffic from a development of this size;
- Funding and delivery of Lodge Hill south facing slip roads;
- No assessment of the impact of the development if the Lodge Hill south facing slip roads are not in place;
- Minimal improvements proposed to local roads elsewhere in Abingdon;
- Turning right onto Dunmore Road is already challenging;
- Existing junctions along Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive to be improved;
- Access for residents of Lodge Hill will be difficult and dangerous;
- Development to be accessed from Oxford Road rather than Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive;
- Additional access to be provided on Oxford Road;
- Mini roundabouts to be considered on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive;
- Speed limits to be reduced to enhance safety and reduce noise;
- Concerned when traffic modelling was undertaken and whether this fully represents the current situation;
- Location and design of new access proposed off of Dunmore Road and impact on existing residential dwellings in terms of light pollution;
- Impact of construction traffic on traffic flows;
- No suitable mitigation measures for increase in vehicular traffic;
- Insufficient protection of expansion of A34;
- Re-surfacing of A34 required to reduce noise impacts;
- Parking provision at new sports facilities is inadequate;
- Inadequate contribution of the developers to the infrastructure costs of the expansion of Abingdon.

Infrastructure

- Development will result in additional pressure on GPs and schools;
- New medical and dentist facilities are required;
- Insufficient capacity at Long Furlong Medical Centre;
- Delivery of primary school;
- Lack of provision for secondary school expansion;
- Additional demand on Abingdon Library;
- Inappropriate location of football pitches and impact on safety due to proximity to the road;
- Management and maintenance of new community and sports facilities;
- Retirement homes in community hub is unsustainable due to noise;
- Queries regarding the viability of a pub/restaurant given that several others in Abingdon have closed down and viability of commercial premises.

Development

- The increase in houses over the local plan is unjustified and unnecessary;
- The density is too high and results in a cramped layout with houses too close to the A34;
- Cumulative impact should be assessed;
- Little provision of affordable housing;
- Consideration to be given to brownfield sites (e.g. Dalton Barracks) before developing Green Belt land;
- The position of the playing fields;
- Question the need for further sports pitches next to Tilsley Park;
- Concerns regarding viability of local amenities proposed;
- Building heights to be limited to 2.5 storeys to reduce visual impact on Dunmore Road and to prevent overlooking;
- The proposal is detrimental to amenities of existing residents;
- Not a sustainable location;
- The development does not integrate well with Abingdon and will appear isolated;
- Size of development is not acceptable;
- Mix of housing is not acceptable;

Environmental

- Encroachment into Green Belt is unjustified;
- Harmful impact on ecology and wildlife on the site;
- Noise impacts;
- Impact of the noise bund on residents to the north of the A34 at Sunningwell

- Air pollution impacts;
- Increased traffic emissions on Abingdon Air Quality management Area;
- An assessment of the cumulative air quality impact of all the local developments is required;
- To ensure the development is consistent with the local air quality action plan;
- It would increase flood risk;
- Insufficient capacity for waste water and water supply infrastructure;
- The current drainage, sewerage and water supply system is unable to accommodate the proposed development;
- Large water mains and natural gas mains passing under the land have been ignored;
- Harmful impact on existing watercourses;
- Loss of trees along north side of Twelve Acre Drive to facilitate new access;
- Floodlighting of sports pitches would be harmful to residents;
- Noise and light pollution from sports pitches would be harmful to existing and new residents;
- Loss of views;
- Location of school next to A34 and impact on health and safety of children;
- Would create a poor environment for residents so close to the A34;
- Suitable protection should be made so as not to disturb the ecosystems that exist close to Blake's Oak Ancient Woodland;
- Quality of life reduced for neighbouring existing residents and new residents.

Landscaping

- Existing mature tree planting along Twelve Acre Drive to be retained.
- Harmful impact on landscape;
- Insufficient landscaping mitigation resulting in intrusive views of the development from the Green Belt;
- Hedgerows should be retained and protected;

Connections

- Additional demand placed on existing public transport services;
- Provision of improved cycle and foot access to Radley Station is required;
- New bus routes required moving east and west;
- Cycle path provision to be improved;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle lanes to be separate from pedestrian routes; • Crossing at lodge hill is dangerous. An underpass/overpass is required to ensure safety for pedestrians and cyclists; • Bridleway between Abingdon and Sunningwell to be retained; • Current bus services inadequate; • Cycle access to Oxford to be provided; • Reduction of bus services on Radley Road from 3 to 2 is not acceptable and has already been reduced; • Bus stops required along Twelve Acre Drive; • Rights of way to be retained or re-routed; • No easy options to reach the Abingdon Business Park or Science Park; • Concerns regarding feasibility of the proposed bus services and how they will be sustained when developer subsidy ceases; • Secure cycle parking to be provided at all bus stops. <p>Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors and inconsistencies within Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement and Archaeological Desk Based Assessment; • Environmental Assessment is incorrect in its presentation on hydrology and flood risk; • Inaccuracies within the LVIA; • Contradiction on building heights and supporting documentation.
<p>North Abingdon Local Planning Group</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be a limit on the total number of dwellings and spaces and that this should not exceed 1,030; • Roundabouts would be a better solution at existing and new junctions; • An underpass would be better on Oxford Road; • A direct footpath and cycle path to Radley Station required; • Support the plan to increase lanes from Dunmore Road onto the Wootton Road roundabout; • Clarification on building heights required; • The noise bund plus fence and planting to cover the full length of the site boundary with the A34; • More information required about the area, numbers of dwellings and density for each of the 12 coloured blocks on the map; • Speed limits on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive to be reduced to 30mph to increase safety, facilitate access and produce a smoother overall

	<p>flow of traffic;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The speed limit on Oxford Road, north of the Peachcroft roundabout, should be reduced;• Lack of bus laybys for buses travelling westwards;• A 15m buffer zone for Blake’s Oak should be shown on the tree map and integrated into the plans for the Primary School;• Delivery and funding of south facing slip roads at Lodge Hill;• Traffic implications if slip roads were not available;• Do not think that the effect of adding 39% more vehicles (263) in the morning peak hour to the A34 going North has been considered and do not think that the A34 has this capacity;• Difficulties of turning right are not confined to the rush hour hours and will get worse as a result of the development;• The local centre to be designed so it does not retain pollution;• Air pollution to be continually monitored in central Abingdon and effective measures to reduce it are put in place;• The site to be designed and built to reduce noise pollution;• The community hub should support some provision for General Practitioners and a Church presence;• The loss of a clear Northern rural boundary to the town, development spreading up Lodge Hill and the loss of Green Belt will have a significant effect on the area;• The Local Plan has not clearly demonstrated that there will be a need for over 1,000 houses per year in the Vale;• Concerned about the impacts of more traffic on the A34;• Concerned that the South facing slip roads needed to cope with traffic from this and other nearby development will open the way for a sequence of other major developments around Lodge Hill (e.g. Park and Ride and lorry park);• Electric vehicle charging points to be installed at any of the new houses and charging points to be provided at the local centre;• Support a car club that uses an electric vehicle;• Electric/online indicators to be provided to show when buses will arrive;• Superfast broadband to be provided for all houses;• A better footpath and cycleway to Radley Station should be developed.
--	--

<p>Sunningwell Environmental Group</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmful impact on ecology and protection of the environment; • Corridors and edge lands to be retained and enhanced; • Retention of hedges, watercourses and woodland that have habitat value and species richness; • Existing rights of way to be protected; • No justification for footpath diversion; • Noise and light pollution impacts; • Existing Tilsley Park lighting is intrusive and harmful to Sunningwell; • Pollution levels to be monitored; • Maintenance and upkeep of open spaces to be confirmed.
<p>Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field walking the site would be desirable as other nearby sites have proved to be rich in archaeological terms. • Further work required on the historic boundary between parishes of Radley and Sunningwell which passes through the site.
<p>Local Churches (Sunningwell Parish Church, Christ Church Northcourt Road and Long Furlong, Peachcroft Christian Centre, and Radley Parish Church)</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The churches would like to consult with the new residents to see what community activities are needed and use the new community centre to put on these events/groups. • The group would like the planning conditions to firm up that the churches would be able to use the community hub to host events and that there will be a dedicated office space. • As well as a large hall, there could also be a smaller room that would enable smaller sized community events/courses to happen.
<p>Councillor Emily Smith (Botley and Sunningwell)</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the development not supported by the Local Plan 2031 part 1. The increase in the number of homes will put additional strain on roads, health and education infrastructure; • The traffic modelling assumes the Lodge Hill slip roads to be delivered. The traffic impacts without the slip roads would be unacceptable; • Turing right onto Dunmore Road is already difficult; • Impact of development on the AQMA;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TA does not give enough attention to the impact of the development on surrounding villages, as more congestion may mean more traffic going through Sunningwell, Radley and Shippon; • Concerns regarding safety of cyclists and pedestrians as a result of changes to the Wootton Road roundabout; • Cycle routes from North Abingdon to Radley Station to be provided in accordance with Radley neighbourhood Plan; • Speed limits on Dunmore Road to be reduced; • Monitoring and enforcement of Travel Plan; • Waste and water infrastructure and capacity to be able to accommodate development of this size; • The design code could include more about renewable energy and sustainable building techniques • Concerns regarding proximity of homes closest to A34; • More ambitious plans to provide housing that is truly affordable and greater proportion of social housing; • More two bed homes required; • The primary school should be two-form entry at the outset; • Lack of secondary school places for new residents; • Additional pressure on health services.
<p>Councillor Debby Hallett (Botley and Sunningwell)</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of south facing slip roads at Lodge Hill • Traffic impacts without slip roads • Number of units higher than stated within the Local Plan 2031 part 1 • Other Local Plan conditions for the site must be met
<p>Town Councillor Andrew Todd (Dunmore Ward)</p>	<p>Summary comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased congestion along Dunmore Road; • Concerned that there is no access onto Oxford Road; • Funding and delivery of Lodge Hill south facing slip roads.

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 None

3.2 **Pre-application History**

[P16/V2637/PEJ](#) - Erection of approximately 900 dwellings

Advice offered on:

- Principle of development
- Likely Section 106 requirements
- Content of Design Code
- Specification for primary school
- Cycle link provision
- Trees
- Relevant policies of newly adopted Local Plan

3.3 **Screening/Scoping Opinion requests**

Given the size of the proposal, it was agreed at an early stage that an Environmental Statement would be required so no formal Screening Opinion request was necessary.

[P15/V2771/SCO](#) – Scoping Opinion issued (23/12/2015)

The applicant submitted a formal Scoping Opinion request in late 2015 that informed the completed Environmental Statement accompanying this application.

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The application is supported by an Environmental Statement that can be viewed on our website (www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk). The Environmental Statement is considered comprehensive, with the main issues discussed where relevant in this report. The Statement includes the following assessments::

1. Chapter One – Introduction
2. Chapter Two – Methodology
3. Chapter Three – The Existing Site
4. Chapter Four – Site Alternatives
5. Chapter Five – The Proposed Development
6. Chapter Six – Planning Policy
7. Chapter Seven – Socioeconomic
8. Chapter Eight – Transport
9. Chapter Nine – Air Quality
10. Chapter Ten – Noise
11. Chapter Eleven – Hydrology and Flood Risk
12. Chapter Twelve – Ecology
13. Chapter Thirteen – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
14. Chapter Fourteen – Summary of Impacts
15. Non-Technical Summary
16. Appendices

5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

The main issues in assessing this application are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Highways – Vehicular traffic
- Highways – Pedestrian, cycling and public transport
- Design and Layout
- Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
- Residential Amenity
- Landscape and Visual Impact

- Flood Risk and drainage
- Biodiversity
- Trees
- Air Quality
- Heritage
- Education
- Section 106 and financial contributions

5.1 **Principle of Development**

In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, this application has been assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan. The Development Plan for the Vale of White Horse consists of the Local Plan 2031 Part One and the Saved Policies of the Local Plan 2011. The Local Plan 2031 Part Two remains at a relatively early stage of adoption and has only limited weight in officers' assessment.

5.2 The Local Plan 2031 Part One identifies the need to deliver 20,560 houses across the district in the plan period to meet housing needs. Core Policy 4 outlines the council's spatial strategy for delivering this housing and includes a number of strategic allocations. One of these allocations is this application site, known as "North Abingdon". This allocation is for approximately 800 houses. All allocations in the Local Plan 2031 Part One are subject to masterplanning. Part Two of the Plan will seek to address the matter of Oxford's unmet housing need.

5.3 As part of the evidence base to support the Local Plan 2031, the council undertook a Green Belt review. This review recommended the removal of this site from the Oxford Green Belt. The council has done so to facilitate the delivery of housing.

5.4 Accompanying all of the strategic allocations in the Local Plan is a Site Development Template that outlines how the council expects the site to be developed to ensure a high quality, sustainable development. The Site Development Template for this site is **attached** as Appendix Two for members' information. However, the most relevant requirements are listed below:

- 5.5
- Prepare a Green Infrastructure strategy for the entirety of the site. This should link to Radley Park and the Sports Centre and link the Sport Centre Grounds to Lodge Hill along the line of the stream
 - Include links from the east to the west of the site, from the site to the ring road and beyond into development to the south of the ring road. A pedestrian crossing will need to be provided along this route to connect development north and south of the ring road
 - Create a sense of place around the River Stert
 - Houses will need to front onto the ring road
 - Affordable housing should be evenly distributed across the site
 - Upgrade the sewer network

- Contribute financially towards the south facing slips onto A34 at Lodge Hill
- Western portion of site to be accessed from Dunmore Road with access for eastern portion to be investigated
- Make financial contributions towards improved bus services in Abingdon
- Provide a new 1.5 form entry primary school on a 2.2 hectare site
- Contribute towards expanding secondary school capacity in Abingdon
- Investigate potential noise and air pollution impacts from the A34, A4183, Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive
- Limit development to those parts of the site identified in the Landscape Capacity Study (2014) and east of Oxford Road LVIA as being suitable For development
- Retain existing trees and hedgerows and plant additional trees along the A34, the ring road and along Twelve Acre Drive
- Ensure that any development within the Oxford Green Belt only consists of compatible uses
- Incorporate an appropriate buffer along either side of the River Stert into the overall development.

5.6 The allocation of the site for residential development in the recently adopted Local Plan Part One establishes the principle of the proposed development. Officers are satisfied, subject to consideration of the above detailed points, that the principle of this development is acceptable. All allocations within the Local Plan Part One are “*subject to masterplanning*”. As explained in this report, the applicant has undertaken a detailed masterplanning exercise that has led to this proposal to increase the overall number of houses from the 800 allocated to the 950 now proposed. This is acceptable in principle, subject to detailed assessment of the impacts of this proposal, which are considered in later sections of this report.

5.7 **Highways – Vehicular traffic**

The impact of this proposal on the local road network has been one of the key concerns that has led to neighbours objecting to this application. The main concerns raised are:

- Unacceptable increases in traffic on A34 and local roads, which are already at capacity
- Uncertainty over funding of Lodge Hill slips
- Minimal improvements to other local roads
- Turning onto Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive from the south is already difficult – junction improvements needed
- Accuracy of traffic modelling work in Transport Assessment
- Location and design of new junctions onto Dunmore Road

The NPPF (Paragraph 32) requires plans and decisions to take account of whether:

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;

- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.

Paragraph 32 goes on to state: “*Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe*”.

- 5.8 Saved Policy DC5 of the Local Plan 2011 requires safe access for developments and that the surrounding road network can accommodate the traffic arising from the development safely. Core Policy 7 requires developments to make in-kind or financial contributions to a wide range of supporting infrastructure, in accordance with the council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 5.9 How to accommodate the proposed housing on this site without causing significant cumulative harm to highway safety has been a central point of discussion throughout the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part One and the assessment of this application.
- 5.10 The applicant has supported the application with a comprehensive Transport Assessment to allow officers to understand the existing traffic situation in the local and wider area, the likely impact of this proposal and the mitigation necessary to avoid undue harm occurring to highway safety. A detailed explanation of the Highway Modelling work undertaken is **attached** as Appendix Three. OCC has reviewed the methodology and findings of the Transport Assessment and are satisfied with the conclusions.
- 5.11 The modelling shows it is anticipated that two junctions will experience an increase in traffic that will be considered so severe as to warrant further investigation and potential mitigation:
- Oxford Road/ Twelve Acre Drive/ Dunmore Road – Roundabout
 - Dunmore Road / Boulter Drive – Priority ‘T’-Junction
- 5.12 The Oxford Road roundabout will experience an increase in traffic regardless of the impact of this development through the opening of Lodge Hill sips. However, this proposal will also push the level of traffic movements through this junction over an acceptable level, triggering the need for mitigation.
- 5.13 *Mitigation – Lodge Hill slip roads*
It is important to note that all of the modelling work assumes that the Lodge Hill slip roads are delivered at an early stage of the build programme of this site. No detailed modelling work has been provided that shows how the local road network would be affected in the “do something” scenario *without* Lodge Hill slip roads. This approach has been agreed with both the Vale of White Horse and OCC given the paramount importance of the slip roads in delivering the proposed housing allocations in the “Abingdon and Oxford fringe” sub-area of the Local Plan. However, it is important to note that OCC estimate that only 250 houses across the four allocations in the area can be occupied before “severe” residual cumulative harm occurs.

- 5.14 As outlined at Para 5.5, the Site Development Template expects this development, alongside those developing the “North West Abingdon”, “South Kennington” and “North West Radley” allocations, to make a proportionate Section 106 contribution to delivering the Lodge Hill slip roads. However, it has never been anticipated that new development would pay for the total cost of the project, as it is not just new residents that will benefit from it.
- 5.15 Officers are mindful that, even if funding is secured, there remains some outstanding elements to resolve before OCC can deliver the slip roads, including agreeing a detailed design with Highways England, who are the body responsible for maintaining and improving the A34 as it is part of the national strategic road network. Therefore, despite officers’ confidence that the slip roads will be funded and delivered as planned, there is a need to retain control over the rate at which houses are built and occupied on this site. A Grampian condition attached to any permission can achieve this by allowing only for 150 houses to be occupied on the site prior to final confirmation of central government funding for the slips, and not more than 400 houses to be occupied on the site prior to OCC signing a contract with their preferred delivery partner for the slip roads.
- 5.16 The applicant has confirmed that they have identified a parcel of land to the west of the proposed access road to the Local Centre and primary school. This parcel will deliver approximately 150 units and represent the first phase of this development. Delivering this parcel will help forward fund the immediate site infrastructure, including the new access onto Dunmore Road, foul sewer upgrades, utility connections and association infrastructure up to the boundary with the primary school site. The condition has been agreed with the applicant, who has indicated they are keen to market the site as soon as possible to assist in the early delivery of housing on this strategic site.
- 5.17 *Mitigation – Oxford Road/Dunmore Road/Twelve Acre Drive roundabout*
As outlined above, the applicant’s Transport Assessment confirms that this roundabout will be above capacity at peak times relatively early in the build programme for this site. This is in part due to the additional movements through this junction to access Lodge Hill slips from existing as well as new residents.
- 5.18 The applicant proposes a priority left-hand turn lane for those travelling north from Dunmore Road. This requires part of the land within the applicant’s ownership. This will minimise delays for north-bound traffic and, crucially, remove traffic from the remaining arms of the roundabout where the delays would be most keenly felt. The applicants also propose to widen the “flares” leading into the roundabout to allow for additional approach lanes which will also increase capacity and reduce waiting times. Associated improvements include additional road markings and kerb realignment to reduce entry speeds.
- 5.19 The applicant has re-run the junction modelling for this roundabout in the 2020, 2024 and 2028 “Do Something” assessment years, including the

assumed improvements this mitigation will offer, and can demonstrate that the roundabout will operate within capacity. The applicant intends to provide this mitigation in full as part of the Section 278 agreement with OCC for off-site highway works. OCC have confirmed that they support the proposed mitigation offered for this roundabout.

- 5.20 *Mitigation – Wootton Road/Dunmore Road/Copenhagen Drive roundabout*
The Transport Assessment accompanying the application demonstrates that the impact of this scheme on the capacity of the junction is less than the 5% and therefore does not warrant further investigation. However, the applicant has been mindful of the strong concern locally to how this junction operates, due to the presence of single lane approaches and a narrowed circulatory carriageway. These were installed in 2014 alongside improved off-carriageway cycling infrastructure and a controlled Toucan crossing to improve cycling safety.
- 5.21 The applicants contend that the associated delays in congestion and queuing for vehicular traffic has created a more dangerous on-carriageway experience for cycling that could be considered to outweigh the off-carriageway safety benefits the works have offered. Therefore, the applicant proposes kerb re-alignments to reduce vehicle speeds entering and on the roundabout and to widen entry points to two lanes to ease queuing times whilst retaining the principle of the 2014 OCC improvements.
- 5.22 Again, the applicant intends to fully provide the proposed mitigation through the Section 278 process. However, it is important to note that further or alternative mitigation may be necessary for this roundabout as it lies adjacent to the North West Abingdon allocation, which is currently, in part, subject to an application for up to 200 dwellings (Our Ref: P17/V1336/O). Further work on this matter is required. Nonetheless, at the time of writing, officers are satisfied these improvements should be supported as part of the recommendation to approve this application.
- 5.23 *Other proposed mitigation*
As well as the above mitigation, the applicants propose the following improvements on local roads, again all to be fully delivered by the applicant under a Section 278 agreement:
- Revised speed limit on Oxford Road, north of the roundabout, to reduce vehicular speeds approaching Abingdon
 - Various bus, cycle and pedestrian improvements (see next section).
- 5.24 *Assessment*
Officers recognise the level of opposition to this scheme locally on traffic generation grounds. Officers are also fully aware of the difficulties that many existing residents face commuting from the northern parts of Abingdon each day, in particular those who need to turn right onto Dunmore Road or Twelve Acre Drive. It is noteworthy that the additional pedestrian crossings across these roads will create more “gaps” in the traffic for those turning right, while

the introduction of the south facing slip roads at Lodge Hill will also give rise to a redistribution of background traffic, further easing the ability to exit existing side roads. This includes the Dunmore Road/Boulter Drive junction referenced above.

- 5.25 However, officers are satisfied that, subject to the delivery of the mitigation above, and the associated improvements to public transport, pedestrian and cycle links summarised in the next section, overall this development will not cause “severe” residual cumulative impacts in transport terms. This is the test that the NPPF requires officers to apply and the applicants have demonstrated that the harm this proposal will cause cannot reasonably be described as severe.
- 5.26 *On site vehicular traffic considerations - Accesses, visibility splays, internal roads and parking*
The Transport Assessment confirms that, in accordance with the Site Development Template, vehicular access will be taken from Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive, with no vehicular access onto Oxford Road as this arrangement would interrupt traffic flows on this important arterial route.
- 5.27 The applicant has considered the type of access that would be appropriate onto Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive. Whilst officers acknowledge that many local residents would prefer roundabouts linking the new site access with existing junctions on the southern side of these roads (such as Boulter Drive), it is important to note that these roads are primarily relief roads for Abingdon town centre. Roundabouts are only found on principal road corridors such as Oxford Road and Wootton Road.
- 5.28 Given the above, and the results of the modelling of trip generation, the applicant contends that priority “T”-junctions are the most appropriate form of vehicular access for the site, similar to those seen on the southern side of Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive. Due to the site being split into three distinct parcels of land, either side of Oxford Road, four accesses are proposed, of which three include “ghost island” right-turn lanes. Four accesses for this level of housing means that small numbers of dwellings would be served by each access, relative to the situation to the south, and there are no concerns over the capacity of each junction.
- 5.29 The applicant confirms that the accesses are deliverable within the applicant’s land or the public highway. The precise location of the access points have been designed with visibility in mind, with all four accesses providing visibility splays to standard given the 40MPH speed limit. In consultation, OCC have recorded no objections to the proposed access points.
- 5.30 Within the site, a variety of street types are proposed to provide a hierarchy of roads to reflect the purpose of each part of the site. Gateway streets will link the three parcels and encourage the most direct route to the Local Centre, whilst secondary streets, private drives and mews will serve the quieter residential areas.

5.31 The Transport Assessment confirms that vehicular parking will be provided in line with OCC standards.

5.32 **Highways – Pedestrians, cyclists and public transport**

Core Policy 33 of the Local Plan 2031 seeks to promote sustainable transport and accessibility, whilst Core Policy 35 promotes public transport, cycling and walking. Core Policy 35 is particularly relevant to this proposal as it:

- Supports measures that enable a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking in the district
- Ensures new development will be located close to existing public transport routes that can be strengthened to meet new demands
- Encourage walking as the preferred means of transport, within the development and to nearby facilities
- Ensures new development will encourage and enable cycling, both within the site and links to nearby services, employment, schools etc.
- Supports the provision of new cycling routes
- Requires major developments to be supported by Travel Plans
- Provides adequate parking.

More specifically for this application, the Site Development Template highlights the need for good pedestrian and cycle links and the expectation that this development will make financial contributions to local bus services. Meeting these requirements has been an important part of negotiations between the applicant and officers during the pre-application and application stages. The applicant offers the following improvements to enable new residents to travel sustainably:

- Bus laybys with cycle parking on Oxford Road;
- Footway / Cycleway improvements on Oxford Road;
- Bus laybys / bus cage markings on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive;
- Toucan crossings on Dunmore Road, Oxford Road and Twelve Acre Drive;
- Hardsurfacing of foot / cycle path south of Twelve Acre Drive to Carse Close;
- Link to Tilsley Park, to the west of the bridleway;
- Pegasus crossing on Dunmore Road; and
- New pedestrian refuges on Dunmore Road

5.33 Encouraging walking and cycling has been a central theme in designing the different types of streets within the development. The Gateway, Primary and Primary Green streets will include dedicated cycleways and footways on both sides, separate from the main carriageway. Lesser streets will have shared surfaces to encourage lower vehicle speeds.

5.34 Across the site, a full network of these dedicated cycleways and footways will link the key facilities of the site, reducing the need to travel by car. A shared footway/cycleway will be provided to the immediate north of Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive, provided an entirely off-carriageway link to the Local Centre, the primary school and Tilsley Park.

5.35 Looking outside the confines of the site, pedestrian and cycle access is offered to Oxford Road to link with the regular bus services linking Abingdon to Oxford. This includes a Toucan crossing linking the central and eastern parcels of this site. The existing shared foot/cycleway on the eastern side of Oxford Road would be widened from the Oxford Road roundabout to the new Toucan crossing. A new foot/cycle way would run north from the crossing towards Lodge Hill garage. Officers consider it is vital to link the site for pedestrians and cyclists to the premium bus services to Oxford that run along the Oxford Road. Additional, secure, cycle parking at existing bus stops on Oxford Road will be provided and new bus stops close to the Toucan crossing will be provided north of the roundabout.

5.36 In terms of linking the site to Abingdon, a number of signalised and unsignalised crossings are proposed, serving all three parcels. These include a Pegasus crossing, which caters for horse riders as well as pedestrians and cyclists, linking to the existing bridle way. These crossings are located close to existing pedestrian and cycle links on the southern side of Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive to allow easy access to the existing facilities of the town. Tilsley Park, Long Furlong Primary School and Long Furlong Medical Centre are all within a reasonable walking distance from any part of the application site, whilst a wider range of facilities, including Abingdon and Witney College are within a 10 minute cycle ride.

5.37 *Cycle link to Radley train station*

Both in their emerging Neighbourhood Plan and their consultation response to this application, Radley Parish Council reference their desire for a new cycle path to link this site and the North West Radley allocation to Radley train station. Officers agree with this general approach, particularly as the only current cycle link runs to the south of Twelve Acre Drive and this requires a number of road crossings for cyclists that will be unacceptable to many commuters. It is also not ideal for the more casual cyclist as it is sub-standard in width at many points along Twelve Acre Drive.

5.38 However, the Parish Council's preferred route for the new cycle path, although logical, requires crossing private land across Peachcroft Farm, which is owned by Radley College. Radley College has confirmed they are unable to offer up this land for a cycle path as it will conflict with the operation of the farm itself. Whilst Radley Parish Council have identified this as a preferred route, the application proposes a new cycle link along the northern side of Twelve Acre Drive and therefore it is this proposal which has to be considered as part of determining this application. The planning process cannot compel third party land owners to provide their land for new infrastructure.

5.39 Accordingly, officers at the Vale and OCC have assessed the solution of a new cycle link from the eastern parcel of the site along the northern side of Twelve Acre Drive either within the existing highway verge or on land to the immediate north of the highway boundary. This will link directly to the existing cycle path on Radley Road without the need for crossing existing roads

multiple times. To accompany this, the applicant's will make a Section 106 financial contribution to additional secure cycle parking at Radley Station to encourage commuters to travel sustainable to the station, which allows easy onward trips to Oxford, Didcot, Reading and London.

5.40 *Bus Services*

Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive are currently not served by any bus services. However, officers of the Vale and OCC, the applicant and the Oxford Bus Company have been in discussions over an extension to the existing "35" bus service. This operates between Oxford and Abingdon via the Radley Road. Officers consider there is potential to extend this service to loop through Abingdon town centre, along Wootton Road and then eastwards past this site.

5.41 The applicant recognises that this bus would offer a service not currently offered by the primary bus routes along Oxford Road. It would also serve the Northwest Abingdon, Northwest Radley and South Kennington housing allocations and officers envisage these developments, as well as this one, will make proportionate financial contributions to "pump-prime" the service until such time as sufficient housing is occupied to make the service commercially viable. The applicant here will also provide new bus stops on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive to serve the new route. Officers welcome this new route, which is in response to the feedback received from local people at the pre-application stage.

5.42 *Conclusion*

Overall, officers are satisfied that this proposal meets the requirements of the Local Plan in terms of encouraging a modal shift to sustainable method of transport. All the facilities within the site are easily accessible by foot or cycle, as are many outside it in the existing northern part of town. A new cycle link to access Radley Station will be provided. Furthermore, access to existing bus services will be improved and a new extension to the 35 bus route will be secured.

5.43 **Design and Layout**

A number of Local Plan policies and guidelines within the adopted Design Guide seek to ensure high quality developments and to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties (Core Policies 37 and 38 and Saved Policies DC6 and DC9.). The Local Plan requires all allocations to adhere to the following Urban Design principles:

- Design should enable a high degree of integration and connectivity between new and existing communities
- Be at a density appropriate for the location
- Make a positive contribution towards local character and distinctiveness

5.44 The Site Development Template for the North Abingdon allocation contains the following main urban design principles:

- Prepare a Green Infrastructure strategy for the entirety of the site
- Include links across the site, into the existing relief roads and into the

development opposite

- Adopt a permeable, perimeter block layout within the site to optimise connectivity
- Create a sense of place around the River Stert
- Front houses onto the existing roads
- Provide a 1.5 form entry primary school on a 2.22 hectare site
- Retain existing trees and hedgerows, plant additional trees along the A34, ring road and Twelve Acre Drive
- Minimise visual impact of the development on the Green Belt
- Ensure development within the Green Belt consists of compatible uses

5.45 The application has been supported by a Design and Access Statement that includes a Design Code, which officers sought from an early stage of the pre-application negotiations. Given the way the site easily divides into three parcels, officers considered it quite likely that multiple house builders will ultimately build the site out. The purpose of the Design Code is to specify, in great detail, every aspect of how the final development will look so that, when reserved matters applications come in for each phase of the estate, a high level of consistency across the site will be secured. This is important in ensuring that the development makes a positive contribution to local character and is distinct in its own right. The Design Code is an approved document listed in condition 1 of the recommendation and officers are satisfied that the council will retain a good level of control over the reserved matters applications.

5.46 *Framework, Layout and Density*

To minimise the impact on the Green Belt, the applicants propose to retain and enhance woodland planting, and leave the uppermost slopes of the site free from housing. The location of the school site allows an offset from the Ancient Woodland to the north. This will help to minimise views of the development from Lodge Hill, Radley Park and Peachcroft Farm. The sports pitches are provided within the retained part of the Green Belt, a compatible use as required by the Development Template.

5.47 Green links are integrated into the site around the existing public rights of way and footpath corridors, such as the footpath leading across the A34 towards Sunningwell. Substantial tree planting is provided along the site boundary with the A34, including an earth bund. On the lower parts of the site, a network of ponds and swales are proposed that will both provide surface water attenuation and wildlife corridors. These link with existing watercourses, hedgerows and woodlands to provide the basis of a green infrastructure strategy for the site.

5.48 From this framework, the layout of the scheme has been developed. The western parcel is entirely housing, whilst the easternmost parcel provides housing and the sports facilities. The central part of the site is perhaps the most crucial, as it provides all of the community facilities and the school.

5.49 The main accesses to the site have already been discussed, one for the western parcel, one for the central parcel and two for the eastern parcel.

Continuous vehicular access along a central spine road through the western and central parcels, whilst the Toucan crossing on Oxford Road allows pedestrian and cycle access across the entirety of the site. From the central spine road leads a number of secondary and tertiary streets that allow the creation of the perimeter block structure required by the Local Plan. This hierarchy of streets is a fundamental design principle with the Design Guide. The Design Code takes this further by specifying the widths of each street, the foot and cycle provision and the planting requirements. Officers consider ensuring this consistency across the site essential to delivering the overall appearance of the estate.

- 5.50 The layout allows for housing fronting onto Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive. The treatment of the central and eastern parcels are particularly important in this regard and these are discussed later in the report.
- 5.51 Officers strongly support positioning the Local Centre at the heart of the site, providing a number of complementary facilities together in close proximity. This includes the new school that will be positioned on the highest part of the site, but will be cut into the slope to limit its visual prominence.
- 5.52 The applicant proposes a varied approach to density across the site. On the rural edges, closest to the Green Belt, in the eastern parcel, density will not exceed 30 dwellings to the hectare. Similarly, the density in the western parcel will be between 25-35 dwellings to the hectare. Only in the central parcel of the site, closest to the Local Centre, will density exceed 35 dwellings to the hectare, to a maximum of 40. The Local Plan requires a net density of at least 30 dwellings to the hectare, subject to character considerations. Officers are supportive of the approach to density proposed. Clearly, how that density is articulated is important, and this will come through the more detailed applications at a later stage.
- 5.53 Saved Policy H23 of the Local Plan 2011 requires new housing developments to provide public open space for outdoor play and informal recreation. The policy indicates that at least 15% of the residential area should be laid out as public open space. The framework plans submitted in support of the application show a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) close to the school and two Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP). There are informal areas of play incorporated into the landscape buffers and green corridors around the site. The sports pitch provision is also an important part of the open space strategy for the site. Officers are satisfied that a good amount of open space, and a good range of facilities, will be provided in line with the requirements of Policy H23.
- 5.54 Officers are satisfied that the submitted parameter plans demonstrate a high quality layout can be achieved on this site, allowing the 900 dwellings and local centre to be provided, whilst still meeting the requirements of the Development Site Template.
- 5.55 *Appearance, scale and landscaping*
Although matters of appearance and scale are reserved matters (alongside the layout and landscaping), officers have worked with the applicant to

produce a comprehensive approach to these aspects of the scheme, enshrined within the Design Code. The Design Code includes a “Regulatory Plan” that sets the placemaking elements for the entire scheme, including:

- The different streets making up the road network – from Gateway streets, through primary and secondary streets onto mews and private drive
- The “edges” of the development
- Where the “special places” will be located
- Where “key buildings” will be located

- 5.56 In terms of scale, this follows a similar approach to density, in that the tallest buildings will be located at the more densely developed parts of the site, including the local centre. Here, buildings up to three storeys in height are proposed, with the exception of the school, which is to be cut into the slope at the highest part of the site at a maximum height of 10 metres. On the edges of the site building heights are reduced to 10 metres (2-storey). This is a sensitive response to the surrounding landscape. Officers are comfortable with the approach taken in respect of the scale of the development. The Design Code identifies a number of locations where “key buildings” will be placed, to aid legibility and add character to the development.
- 5.57 The Local Centre is one of the “special places” within the development and is a good example of the level of detail that the Design Code contains. The Design Code starts by setting out a number of “mandatory” landscape and built form principles for this area. These include using taller 2 ½ - 3 storey buildings to define a public square, placing key buildings like the school in locations where they act as local landmarks, landscaping the square to encourage pedestrian priority and providing a green corridor to link the Local Centre into the NEAP to the north.
- 5.58 The Design Code goes on to include specifications for the Local Centre that include the species of street trees, the unit types appropriate for the use in the area, the surfacing materials, boundary treatments, car parking, street furniture and lighting.
- 5.59 The remaining “Special Places” are “St Helens Park” which is centrally located in the eastern parcel of the site and “Lodge Hill Park” which is the heart of the western parcel of the site. Again, the Design Code specifies in detail the various elements of these areas that will combine to give them a distinctive character.
- 5.60 A similarly detailed approach is taken to the “edges” of the development, with the use of mandatory landscape and built form principles designed to give these parts of the site their own distinctive character. This includes the “Greenway” edge that outlines the important interface between Dunmore Road and the site. This outlines how housing will front onto, but be set back from Dunmore Road. Along this edge, there will be an increase in height to up to 3 storeys (12 metres) to provide a stronger presence on Dunmore Road than is often seen in the existing estate to the south. Differing materials (buff brick) and boundary treatments (metal railings and brick walls) will give a

unique character to this part of the site. Between Dunmore Road and this housing is a landscape corridor that includes swales and ponds as part of the SuDS attenuation and an off-road cycleway that links to the Local Centre and key amenities.

- 5.61 The other “edges” are the “western” edge, which is the part of the site facing the A34, where extensive planting proposals are necessary to help soften the appearance of the noise attenuation bund. Accordingly, the Design Code proposes a lower density along this edge with a more loose-knit layout and traditional materials and boundary treatments. The “woodland” edge and “countryside” edge also react to their surroundings, providing low-key development and access to green corridors appropriate to the sensitive nature of these areas.
- 5.62 The Design Code then moves onto the “streets” of the development, which are discussed above at Para 5.38. Again, each street is designed to have its own character, with the type of dwelling on it, the width of the carriageway, the surfacing materials and the landscaping all specified. Whilst the “gateway” street is over 20 metres wide, the “private lane” will be less than 15 metres, reflecting their purpose and which mode of transport is dominant.
- 5.63 The public open space areas and the sports pitch area are also treated in a similarly detailed way, with surfacing materials and the street furniture a particular focus in giving each area its own distinct character.
- 5.64 The above represents a relatively high-level summary of the comprehensive detail that the Design Code includes when it considers the appearance, scale and landscaping of this proposal. Council officers, including the Urban Design Officer and the Landscape Architect, have offered regular feedback on the Design Code. Officers are satisfied that the Design Code offers a sound basis for delivering a high quality development across the site that will have its own distinctive character. Condition 8 of the recommendation will tie future reserved matters applications into the Design Code and ensure a consistency of approach. Officer are satisfied this proposal meets the requirements of the Development Site Template.
- 5.65 **Affordable Housing and Housing Mix**
In line with Core Policy 24 of the Local Plan 2031 Part One, the council will seek 35% of the units as affordable housing. For 950 units on this site this will result in the provision of 332.5 units. This will be provided through 332 units on the site, on a 75% rent, 25% shared ownership basis and a commuted sum equivalent to 0.5 of a unit.
- 5.66 Core Policy 22 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part One requires a mix of dwelling sizes to be provided on new housing schemes in line with the most recent evidence. Currently, the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) is the most recent assessment of housing and estimates the open market dwelling requirement by number of bedrooms (2011 to 2031) for the District that will be required. The applicant has proposed a different mix and the two are compared below:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
SHMA %	5.9%	21.7%	42.6%	29.8%	100%
Market	2.5%	12.5%	47.5%	37.5%	100%
Retirement	40%	60%	0%	0%	100%
Combined market and retirement	5.5%	16.3%	43.7%	34.5%	100%

- 5.67 Radley Parish Council object to the housing mix based on survey data they have compiled as part of their emerging Neighbourhood Plan. However, this site does not fall within the designated area of that Neighbourhood Plan and the Radley Neighbourhood Plan does not currently carry any weight. Officers consider that the SHMA remains the appropriate guide for housing mix.
- 5.68 As an aside, the applicant has confirmed that the affordable mix will meet the suggested mix in the SHMA for social housing and this will be enshrined in the Section 106 agreement accompanying any planning permission for this site.
- 5.69 Core Policy 26 of the Local Plan adopts a permissive approach to the provision of specialist accommodation for the elderly within the allocated sites. Officers are satisfied that the 50 retirement dwellings should be included in the overall consideration of market housing mix. Accordingly, officers consider that the relatively small deviations in the proposed mix for one bedroom units (- 0.4% or 2.5 units) and three bedroom units (+1.1% or 7 units) are not sufficient to warrant serious objection. However, given the scale of the deviation in respect of two bedroom units (-5.4% or 33 units) and 4+ bedroom units (+4.7% or 29 units), officers consider that the applicant’s justification requires some scrutiny.
- 5.70 Firstly, it is important to note that the SHMA figures summarised above are “*estimates*” and Para 7.35 of the SHMA states, “...*we do not strongly believe that such prescriptive figures should be included in the plan making process and that the “market” is to some degree a better judge of what is the most appropriate profile of homes to deliver at any point in time.*”
- 5.71 Through the masterplanning process, the applicants have been able to demonstrate that 900 dwellings can be achieved on this site and this level of development is actually necessary to achieve a net density of 30 dwellings to the hectare in line with the Local Plan. The applicant then applied the SHMA mix for market and affordable housing to a more detailed layout (using standard house sizes) and found that this gave a “site coverage” of around 13,300 square foot per acre. The applicant has advised that this is an exceptionally low site coverage, with most house builders requiring at least 15,000 square foot per acre. The options for increasing site coverage to at least 15,000 square foot per acre were to either increase unit numbers further (above 900 units), or to introduce some larger units. The applicant feels the latter was preferable, helping to facilitate a density appropriate to the edge of town location. In essence, the applicant’s position is that a SHMA compliant

mix for the 900 dwellings would result in an inefficient use of land that would be commercially unattractive.

- 5.72 This argument was presented to the council at pre-application stage and negotiations have resulted in the introduction of the 50 retirement buildings. As well as being in accordance with the Local Plan, this has allowed some of the smaller “general” housing to be released to the market and reduce the deviation from the SHMA.
- 5.73 It is noted that limited evidence has been provided to support the notion that house builders require site coverage of 15,000 square foot per acre. Nor is the concept of site coverage enshrined in local or national planning policy.
- 5.74 Officers also note that the Monitoring and Implementation Framework for Core Policy 22 of the Local Plan sets the following target, *“To ensure the cumulative delivery of planning permissions for housing developments provides an average density that accords with the policy.”* The applicant contends that, as this application represents the first scheme looking to develop one of the allocations within the Oxford Fringe and Abingdon sub-area, there is opportunity to address the deviation proposed here across future applications to ensure the mix of housing delivered in the area overall accords with the SHMA. Whilst officers recognise this could be the case, limited weight is attached to this argument.
- 5.75 However, on balance, officers do not consider that the market housing mix proposed warrants serious objection. This is primarily due to the fact that the SHMA mix is clearly presented as an estimate, not a precise calculation to be applied slavishly in all circumstances. Furthermore, given this development will provide over 600 market houses, the deviation in terms of unit numbers is relatively minor. The harm that can be attached to the proposed housing mix in the planning balance does not, in officers’ opinion, outweigh the many benefits of bringing forward this allocated site for development.
- 5.76 **Residential Amenity**
Saved Policy DC9 of the Local Plan 2011 confirms that development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, daylight, sunlight or outlook, or through noise disturbance.
- 5.77 Layout, scale and appearance are all reserved matters and therefore at this stage, the detailed impacts of the proposed dwellings on existing neighbouring properties cannot be assessed. However, the indicative masterplan shows that across the site back to back and back to side distances between houses accord with the recommendations of the Design Guide (21 and 12 metres respectively). It will be for the detailed reserved matters applications to maintain these relationships. Similarly, reserved matters applications will need to provide garden sizes in line with the Design Guide (1-bed: 35 square metres, 2-bed: 50 square metres, 3+bed: 100 square metres)

- 5.78 There are no residential properties on the northern side of Dunmore Road or Twelve Acre Drive close enough to the site to be materially affected by the proposals. Distances to properties on the southern side of these roads are well in excess of at least 40 metres. There are no concerns the proposals, even allowing for the increased land levels, will have a significant impact on the privacy, sunlight, daylight or outlook experienced by these properties.
- 5.79 Officers have received some objections from neighbours who are concerned that the position of the proposed accesses and pedestrian crossings will cause additional disturbance to them, through idling traffic or car headlights. Officers acknowledge these concerns but the applicant has provided evidence that car headlights will not shine into people's gardens from the proposed access points. Furthermore, it would be difficult to demonstrate material harm to resident amenity from idling traffic. The crossings will be signal controlled and so their usage will vary throughout the day. Whilst some properties will experience changes as a result of the new access points, it is not considered harmful.
- 5.80 Saved Policy DC10 confirms that development will not be permitted if it is likely to be adversely affected by existing sources of noise or vibration. The western parcel of this site is going to be affected by traffic noise from the A34, particularly given the comparatively similar land levels between the road and the site. Traffic noise from Dunmore Road, Oxford Road and Twelve Acre Drive is also a constraint for the southern parts of the middle and eastern parcel. The application is supported by a full Noise Assessment, which has monitored the likely noise levels within the site from a number of different locations, including the above.
- 5.81 British Standard 8233 (2014) "*Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings*" recommends that internal noise levels in housing or school classrooms should be no more than 35 decibels (db). The noise assessment records noise levels well in excess of this given the traffic using the roads surrounding the site. Those houses facing the A34 and Dunmore Road would experience noise in excess of 60 db. However, bespoke glazing for windows facing these road will reduce internal noise levels to less than 35db, during daytime and night-time.
- 5.82 These results assume the windows are closed, which is not realistic, so the applicant have proposed further mitigation to allow residents to be able to open their windows. The most noteworthy proposal is the introduction of a five metre high barrier fronting the A34, taking the form of a landscaped bund and acoustic fence. The Noise Assessment estimates this will reduce noise levels from over 60db to 55db (daytime) or 52db (night-time). This, combined with the bespoke glazing, will reduce internal noise levels to 22db (daytime) or 19db (night-time). The applicant proposes the use of air brick ventilation and/or trickle vents for the bespoke glazing units for properties fronting the A34, Dunmore Road, Oxford Road and Twelve Acre Drive. These will help ventilate the rooms when the windows are closed, reducing the need to open them for ventilation purposes.

- 5.83 In terms of noise experienced in gardens, the applicant confirms that the bunding onto the A34, the setback from Dunmore Road, Oxford Road and Twelve Acre, and the intervening swales, will ensure a noise environment close to the recommended 55db. The manner in which houses face the roads and the positioning of garages and boundary walls will work to reduce the impact on the private rear gardens behind. Amended plans have also introduced a new acoustic fence to the rear of the school playing field to maintain an external noise level below 50db.
- 5.84 During pre-application discussions, residents of Sunningwell raised concerns that the bund facing the A34 would reflect noise back towards the village, increasing the noise levels they already experience from the road. The Noise Assessment has monitored this at the nearest residential location on the northern side of the A34 and found the likely increase in noise to be 0.3db, which will be imperceptible against the existing noise levels.
- 5.85 The Council's Environmental Health officer has reviewed the methodology and findings of the Noise Assessment and has no objection to the proposal, subject to the proposed mitigation being incorporated into the construction of the affected housing. The recommended condition will secure this.
- 5.86 **Landscape, Visual Impact and Trees**
Core Policy 44 of the Local Plan states, "*The key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale...landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced...*" The policy lists six key aspects to the landscape:
- Trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and water bodies
 - Landscape setting of settlements
 - Topography
 - Features of cultural and historic value
 - Important views and visually sensitive skylines
 - Tranquillity, protection from light pollution, noise and motion
- 5.87 The policy goes on to confirm that where development is acceptable in principle, proposals will be expected to:
- Incorporate appropriate landscape proposals that reflect the character of the area
 - Preserve and promote local distinctiveness
- 5.88 The Site Development Template for this site specifies the following main additional points:
- Limit development to those parts of the site identified in the council's landscape evidence base as being suitable for development
 - Retain existing trees and hedgerows
 - Plant additional trees along the A34, Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive
 - Further woodland planting south of Lodge Hill
 - Consider potential impacts on the North Vale Corallian Ridge

- Minimise visual impact on the Oxford Green Belt.

The application site itself does not fall within any designated landscape areas (the Oxford Green Belt is a land use designation and, following adoption of the Local Plan, the majority of the site was removed from the Green Belt). The site does fall within the local landscape designation of the North Vale Corallian Ridge. Saved Policy NE7 of the Local Plan states, “*Development which would harm the prevailing character and appearance of the North Vale Corallian Ridge...will not be permitted unless there is an overriding need for the development and all steps will be taken to minimise the impact on the landscape.*”

- 5.89 As part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, the Vale instructed a district wide Landscape Capacity Study that covered this site. This concluded that the westernmost parcel had a “medium” capacity to accept housing, the central parcel and part of the easternmost parcel had a “medium/low” capacity. A more detailed assessment of the easternmost parcel was instructed later and concluded that there was some capacity for housing on this part of the site, subject to the introduction of screen planting to infill existing gaps in the boundary planting.
- 5.90 *Landscape Character*
The application is supported by a full Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVIA). The LVIA first seeks to establish the existing character of the site and considers it can be broken down into three distinct Landscape Character Types based on the categorisation of the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS).
- 5.91 The westernmost parcel is part of a “Rolling Farmland” character area, including Abingdon Airfield on the northern side of the A34. This part of the site is generally flat, with tree lined streams and the airfield buildings and floodlights at Tilsley Park visible.
- 5.92 The centre part of the site and the countryside to the north is part of a “Wooded Estateland” character area. Here the topography is rolling slopes, with large blocks of ancient woodland and a regularly shaped field pattern being the key characteristics.
- 5.93 The easternmost parcel is largely part of a “Terraced Farmland” character area, which is particularly associated with the parkland around Radley village, and has a large scale, regularly shaped field pattern. As per the evidence base for the Local Plan, this parcel is the most sensitive to landscape change due to the loss of the separation between Abingdon and Radley and the loss of the setting of Radley College. This has led to the limiting of housing to the western parts of this parcel, with the sports pitches located closest to Radley and the College.
- 5.94 Having considered the key characteristics of each part of the site, the LVIA concludes that the overall sensitivity of the site’s landscape character to housing development to be “medium”. This is largely consistent with the

findings of the council's own studies which led to this site being allocated in the Local Plan. In consultation, the council's Landscape Architect has reviewed the methodology and conclusions within the LVIA assessment of landscape character and found them to be sound.

5.95 Overall, officers recognise the development of this site for housing will have a marked impact on the landscape character of the area. However, both the council's own evidence and the LVIA conclude that there is capacity for housing on the site. Through the allocation of the site, the council has accepted this change to the character, given the benefits of housing in this sustainable location.

5.96 *Visibility*

As part of the LVIA submitted, a zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) was included to show potential areas surrounding the site from where the development might be visible. Various photomontage viewpoints have also been provided of the site from key vantage points to inform assessment of how the development would be seen within the landscape. The ZTV takes a four kilometre radius from the central part of the site as its study zone.

5.97 The ZTV shows that a two-storey development on this site, "*would not be visible from a significant amount of the study area, because of the lie of the land or the screening effects of intervening woodland or buildings.*" The ZTV shows that the clearest, and most sensitive views, are localised around the site. The views from the footpath passing through the easternmost parcel and from the Bridleway are classified as the most sensitive to change ("high"), given their status and recreational use. Views from the Oxford Green Belt Way, which crossed Lodge Hill to the north of the site and from Sunningwell are also classified as having a high sensitivity due to the expectations of views from these elevated points. Views from Radley College and the bridleway are classified as "medium-high". By comparison, views from Oxford Road by road users are considered to have only a "low" sensitivity to change.

5.98 *Mitigation*

The ZTV results have allowed the applicant to develop the following mitigation strategy, which needs to accord with the requirements of the Site Development Template:

- Retaining all existing blocks of woodland on and around the site
- Retaining all tree belts and hedgerows (except for vehicle access)
- Setting residential areas back from boundaries to allow for deep belts of planting
- Use of public open spaces to break up built form
- Planting up gaps in boundary hedgerows, including planting belts in excess of 15 metres alongside the A34 and the southeastern corner and the northern boundary of the easternmost parcel close to Radley
- Keeping the southeastern corner free from built development
- Retaining the footpath between the western and central parcel on its current alignment and re-routing the footpath through the eastern parcel along proposed green spaces
- Retaining the ditches and streams through the site as open

watercourses

- Introduce a SuDS scheme
- Formation of embankments alongside the A34
- Planting belts of trees along the northern side of Dunmore Road to emulate those along Twelve Acre Drive.

- 5.99 The Design Code includes further mitigation measures, such as street planting and the restriction of building heights on sensitive parts of the site, which have been discussed elsewhere in this report.
- 5.100 The LVIA concludes that the proposed mitigation will mean, 15 years after completion of the site, the impact on the three character areas identified will be “negligible” or “low-adverse”. The LVIA considers that the overall scale of change from this development relative to the scale of Abingdon itself, will be low. Officers are satisfied with this conclusion.
- 5.101 In terms of the viewpoints most sensitive to change, the LVIA accepts that the footpath and bridleway passing through the site will continue to experience a “substantial adverse” change which is unavoidable. However, in contrast, the LVIA contends the proposed mitigation will mean that the impact on the Greenbelt Way will only be “moderate” after 15 years.
- 5.102 The LVIA also considers the cumulative effects of this site with the other planned development in the area. In particular, the North West Radley allocation is of interest as it affects the same sensitive Terraced Farmland character area discussed above. This further erosion of the gap between Radley and Abingdon will be a detractor on this landscape character. However, the LVIA contends that the proposed mitigation, particularly the planting belts, will mean the baseline impact on character will not change significantly.
- 5.103 Officers’ note that Radley Parish Council consider the buffer planting at this sensitive eastern edge of the site should be relocated to follow the course of the stream, rather than around the edge of the sports pitches. However, the LVIA makes clear this planting is needed on the boundary and to relocate it would lessen the mitigation it offers for views from the east looking back towards the site. The planting as proposed also allows for the new houses at the eastern end of the site to overlook the playing fields, providing natural surveillance and therefore a safer environment. The council’s Landscape Architect does not agree with the views of Radley Parish Council on this matter.
- 5.104 In conclusion, the fact that this site has been allocated through the Local Plan process means that the council has already agreed to allow change to the landscape character of this part of the district. However, as per the Site Development Template, the applicant has had to incorporate a range of measures into the design of the scheme so that the changes to the most sensitive parts of the area are moderated as much as possible.
- 5.105 Officers are satisfied that the indicative landscaping scheme, coupled with the landscape principles within the Design Code, will achieve the expectations of

the Local Plan allocation. Clearly, the finer details will be agreed through the Reserved Matters process, but the recommended conditions will ensure this proposal has an acceptable impact on the landscape.

5.106 Flood Risk and drainage

Core Policy 42 of the Local Plan states the risk and impact of flooding will be minimised through:

- Directing new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding
- Effectively managing all sources of flood risk
- Ensuring development does not increase flood risk elsewhere
- Ensuring wider environmental benefits

5.107 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) that shows the vast majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, the area at least risk of flooding. A small part of the western parcel falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The initial application indicated housing within these flood zones, which attracted an objection from the Environment Agency. Through the submission of amended plans, the applicant has removed any built form from the flood zone associated with the stream that passes through this part of the site. The FRA confirms that the site has a low probability of flooding from overland flow, ground water and sewer flooding. Thus, the applicant has ensured all development will be in Flood Zone 1, as required by Core Policy 42.

5.108 A number of local residents have concerns that this proposal will lead to an increased risk of flooding but officers are satisfied that the proposed SuDS scheme will ensure betterment compared to the current situation. The FRA confirms that site specific infiltration testing shows soakaway drainage will not work on this site due to underlying ground conditions. Therefore, the applicant proposes a scheme to control surface water that includes:

- Permeable paving
- Filter strips alongside roads
- Ditches and swales
- Attenuation Basins

5.109 The ditches, swales and basins, being above ground features, will be designed to enhance the biodiversity and landscape character of the site and are included as part of the Design Code and indicative landscape strategy for the site. The proposed basin will be circa 1.8 hectares in size.

5.110 There are a number of catchment areas across all three parcels of the site that will provide adequate storage for a 1 in 100 year event story, whilst making a 30% allowance for climate change. From these catchment areas, water discharge can be controlled to “greenfield” rates.

5.111 Officers, and the council’s Drainage Engineer, are satisfied this proposal will not cause any increased flood risk, subject to the recommended conditions.

5.112 Turning to foul drainage, in consultation Thames Water have identified a lack of capacity in the existing sewer network to accommodate the additional flows

from this development, which is to be expected given the scale of the proposal and the edge of town location.

- 5.113 The applicant has engaged with Thames Water on a Sewer Impact Study which has recommended two potential options to resolve this issue. Both essentially require the applicant to fund new and larger sewer pipes from the development into a specified off-site manhole.
- 5.114 Officers are satisfied, through the imposition of a standard Grampian condition on any outline planning permission, the finer details of a foul drainage strategy will be agreed prior to commencement and implemented prior to occupation.
- 5.115 **Biodiversity**
Core Policy 45 of the Local Plan confirms that a new gain in Green Infrastructure will be sought from all new development. Core Policy 46 requires development to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity. The application has been supported by a number of ecological surveys (bats, birds, dormice, reptiles, badgers and Great Crested newts) and an Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 5.116 The site does not contain any national ecology designations, nor is it particularly close to any Local Wildlife Sites. The Sugworth SSSI is relatively close but will be unaffected by the development. In terms of species, some limited bat activity was recorded, with the woodland and connecting hedgerows providing foraging habitats and commuting routes for bats. No evidence of bat roosts was found. Bird surveys found 20 different species breeding on the site. No reptiles, badgers or dormice were recorded during surveys.
- 5.117 Although the nature of the proposals will have some impact on the habitats across the site, the opportunities for ecological mitigation have been an integral part of the design. The benefits of the proposed landscaping, additional planting and flood attenuation scheme to ecology have been highlighted earlier in this report. The applicant has also committed to providing a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP). The CEMP will protect the important ecological features of the site during construction, whilst the LEMP sets out the long-term management of the landscape and habitats that will be created. In terms of specific species mitigation, the applicant proposes to provide bat and bird boxes and sensitive lighting.
- 5.118 In consultation, the council's Countryside Officer has confirmed no objections to the proposal, considering the methodology for assessing the value of the site, and the associated mitigation proposals to be acceptable. Conditions 1, 14, 26 and 27 of the recommendation will secure the biodiversity enhancement required by the Local Plan as well as the CEMP and LEMP discussed above.
- 5.119 **Trees**

Saved Policy DC6 of the Local Plan 2011 requires all proposals for development to protect and enhance the visual amenities of the site, including existing landscape features. The existing woodland (on and off-site) and the field hedgerows have been discussed in this report and their retention and incorporation into the new development is a requirement of the Site Development Template.

5.120 In consultation, the council's Forestry Officer has assessed the Arboricultural Statement accompanying the application and is in agreement with the conclusions of the tree survey. Consequently, the tree constraints of this site have informed the indicative layout. Generally, it is only where access points are required that tree removal is necessary. The vast majority of trees are retained. The Forestry Officer is also supportive of the proposals to make the woodland accessible and encompass them as part of the public open space of the development.

5.121 Officers consider that a phase by phase arboricultural method statement will be necessary to inform and support the future reserved matters applications for this site. The Forestry Officer has not identified any obvious areas of concern, but the need to ensure that below ground services and flood attenuation are kept away from root protection areas will be for the detailed applications to demonstrate, in accordance with condition 17 of the recommendation.

5.122 **Air Quality**

Core Policy 43 relates to natural resources and references the need for new development to take account of the council's Air Quality Action Plan when a proposal is within, or affects an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Being on the edge of the town, there is no AQMA within nor close to the site. However, there is an AQMA within Abingdon Town Centre.

5.123 The council's Air Quality officer has a holding objection to the proposal due to the increased traffic that would, without the Lodge Hill slip roads, pass through Abingdon town centre, increasing pollution within and close to the AQMA. As discussed, condition 10 of the recommendation limits occupation on this site until such time as the funding for the slips is confirmed and a contract for delivering them has been let by the County Council. As such, the scenario that leads to the holding objection from the Air Quality officer is unlikely to ever occur.

5.124 Dust during construction is a concern for the immediate area surrounding the site and a mitigation scheme can be secured by condition.

5.125 **Historic Environment**

Core Policy 39 of the Local Plan confirms the council will work to ensure that new development conserves and enhances designated and non-designated heritage and their setting. The application is supported by a Heritage Statement. This confirms that there are no designated or non-designated assets present within the site.

5.126 Within the vicinity of the site (1 kilometre) there are 23 heritage assets that

could be potentially affected by the development. These include Grade II* listed buildings at Radley College and Peachcroft Farm barn (Grade II). The majority of these have no visual or functional relationship with the site.

- 5.127 Radley Hall (GII*) is located nearly 500 metres northeast of the site and enjoys a prevailing rural character. Whilst it could be argued that the site forms part of the wider arable landscape that contributes to the wider setting of the Hall, this setting has already been eroded by the extension of Abingdon northwards. The council's Conservation Officer is in agreement that the proposal is not considered to harm the significance of Radley Hall.
- 5.128 Radley College Chapel (GII*) falls within the main campus of Radley College and will be separated from the site by around 500 metres and an agricultural buffer. Existing tree belts outside the application will almost entirely prevent intervisibility between the application site and the chapel.
- 5.129 The setting of Peachcroft Barn (GII) will be affected by these proposals but the Conservation Officer is satisfied that the evidential value of the barn will be retained, particularly as the existing agricultural surroundings will remain to north and east towards Radley and the College.
- 5.130 Overall, there are no concerns about the impact of this proposal on heritage assets. What harm does occur only relates to the setting of heritage assets but this does not materially affect the significance of the asset itself. This harm would constitute less than substantial harm and whilst this carries weight in the planning balance, the NPPF advises that harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Officers are satisfied the benefits far outweigh the limited harm to the setting of listed buildings identified.

5.131 **Education**

Core Policy 7 of the Local Plan states, *"All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be directly delivered by the development and/or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. Where appropriate, developers will be expected to collaborate on the provision of infrastructure which is needed to serve more than one site....development proposals must demonstrate...full regard...to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan..."*

- 5.132 In respect of education, the Site Development template requires the applicant to provide a "one and a half form entry" primary school on a 2.22 hectare site to allow for future growth and to contribution towards expanding secondary school capacity in Abingdon.

5.133 *Primary School*

The County Council calculates that this development alone would generate 206 primary pupils, which is sufficient to require a one form entry primary school on its own. However, there is a need for this site to provide a school

that accommodates the additional primary school children that will be generated from the North West Abingdon allocation site as well. This pushes the overall need to the one and a half form entry school, whilst the 2.22 hectare site will allow for future expansion up to a two form entry school.

5.134 Through the submission of amended plans, the applicants have provided an indicative layout for the school site that is satisfactory to OCC. As outlined above, the school is located within the central portion of the site, on the highest part of the land. It is positioned as part of the community hub at the heart of the site, easily accessible from within the site on foot or by cycle. At the time of writing, discussions are on-going as to whether the applicant will direct deliver the school or provide the land and a financial contribution to allow the OCC to deliver the school. There are also discussions as to when the school will need to be open to receive new students. These aspects will be enshrined within the Section 106 agreement accompanying any outline planning permission for this scheme. If the applicant does deliver the school, the Section 106 agreement for North West Abingdon will include a mechanism for that developer to reimburse the applicant here, in line with the collaborative approach required by Core Policy 7.

5.135 *Secondary School*

OCC anticipates this development will generate approximately 172 secondary school pupils (including 24 sixth form students). This demand will be provided for through the expansion of an existing secondary school, although the County Council reserves its position on the need for a new secondary school in the area. A financial contribution of £3,612,000 has been agreed to the provision of additional secondary school accommodation in the area.

5.136 *Special Educational Needs (SEN)*

OCC anticipates that this development will generate 4.3 pupils who have additional educational needs that will be met by the Kingfisher School on the Radley Road. A financial contribution of £157,741 has been agreed towards the extension of this school on its current site.

5.137 *Nursery provision*

OCC considers this development will generate the need to accommodate 38 nursery pupils and the applicant proposes to provide a new nursery as part of the Local Centre. This building will need to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and, to be economically viable, will need to be of a size to accommodate 60 children (baby to pre-school). The Section 106 agreement accompanying the application will incorporate a specification for the nursery.

5.138 **Infrastructure and financial contributions**

The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests in paragraph 204:

- I. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;

- II. Directly related to the development; and
- III. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.139 In line with the requirements of the Development Plan, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, this development will provide for a wide range of facilities, through on-site provisions and financial contributions to off-site improvements. At the time of writing, the Section 106 agreement is under negotiation. The following table summarises the current position, illustrating the current costed contributions which are considered fair and proportionate to the development and therefore justified. The table does not include on site provision.

Oxfordshire County Council	<i>Proposed Contributions</i>
Lodge Hill slips	£3,325,000
“35” bus service extension	£454,271
Signalised road crossings	£187,869.64
Cycle storage at Radley Storage	£20,000
Bus shelters on Oxford Road x 2	£14,900 + £14,900 maintenance
Bus shelters on Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive x 6	£24,690 + £24,690 maintenance
Bus information boards on Oxford Road	£2,180
Bus information boards on Dunmore Road and Oxford Road	£4,020
Real time information boards for all bus stops	£60,976
Public right of way network improvements	£130,000
Travel Plan monitoring	£6,560
Primary Education (if no direct delivery)	£5,400,000
Secondary Education	£3,612,000
Special Educational Needs	£157,741
Abingdon library	£224,763
Strategic Waste Management	£176,599.50
Adult Day Care	£47,586
Total	£13,888,746.14
Vale of White Horse District Council	<i>Proposed Contributions</i>
Tennis provision	£70,840
Rugby provision	£71,617
Public Art	£285,000
Wheeled Bin provision	£161,500
Street Naming	£10,241
Total (costed items only)	£599,198

Overall Total	£14,487,944.14
Total per Dwelling	£15,250

5.140 *Highway improvements*

As outlined in some detail above, officers consider the Lodge Hill slips is a vital piece of highway infrastructure that will facilitate the delivery of this development as well as the North West Abingdon, North West Radley and South Kennington housing allocations. Accordingly, all of these allocations will be expected to financially contribute to the delivery of the slip roads at a ratio of £3,500 per dwelling. This levy is based on the funding gap between the total cost of the project and the anticipated funding from Central Government. With 950 dwellings proposed on this site, the total contribution from this application for the Lodge Hill slips will be, indicatively, £3,325,000. This contribution has been agreed by the applicant

5.141 As outlined earlier in this report, the applicant proposes a range of highway improvement works (roundabouts, cycle links, etc.) that will be secured through a Section 278 agreement that will require the applicant to fully deliver the proposals. The Section 106 agreement will also secure a per dwelling contribution of £478.18 to the extension to the “35” bus route discussed above, indicatively a total contribution of £454,271.

5.142 In consultation, the County Council has also requested contributions to the following necessary, related and relevant highway improvements:

- Pedestrian Crossings
- Bus Shelters (and commuted maintenance sums)
- Bus Information Boards
- Real-time Information boards for bus shelters
- Cycle Storage
- Public Rights of Way Improvements
- Travel Plan monitoring

5.143 *County Council property*

OCC is responsible for a range of community facilities and accordingly has sought financial contributions from this development to meet the additional demand that will be placed upon them. This includes contributions to the expansion of Abingdon library at The Charter (£224,763), the creation of a new Strategic Waste Management site (£176,599.50) and to expand the Adult Day Care Centre in Abingdon (£47,586). Officers are satisfied that these contributions pass the test within the NPPF.

5.144 *Sports and play provision*

The council’s emerging Leisure and Sports Facility Study (LSFS) and Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) require the site to provide 2.4 hectares of football pitches and pavilion, 1.454 hectares of cricket pitches and pavilion (can be shared with football) and a MUGA. Accordingly, the precise level of sports pitch provision in the southeastern corner of this site has been a matter of some negotiation during the assessment of this application. The amended plans have increased the overall area for pitches to 2.6 hectares and propose

a U13/U14 football pitch, a U17/U18 football pitch, a cricket square (with the outfield overlapping the two football pitches), a sports pavilion and a multi-use games area (MUGA).

- 5.145 In consultation, the council's Leisure team indicates that, preferably, the cricket pitch should be entirely separate from the football pitches. This is the approach outlined in the PPS. However, officers consider that the amended plans show that the cricket square can be protected within the pitch layout and there are many examples of a cricket outfield overlapping with football pitches given the seasonal nature of the two sports at an amateur level. The Section 106 agreement will include a specification for the pitches to ensure they are both fit for purpose for football and cricket.
- 5.146 The application also provides for a MUGA to standard size and a sports pavilion, the details of which will form part of a subsequent reserved matters application. It is at that stage that the precise footprint, scale and design of the MUGA and pavilion will be finalised. Officers see no reason why that pavilion cannot be designed to be suitable for cricket and football. Overall, officers are satisfied that the amended proposals ensure playing pitch provision in accordance with the LSFS and PPS. The Section 106 agreement accompanying any planning permission will finalise the finer details of the sports pitch provision, including when it will be provided relative to the build out of the site. It is anticipated this will be towards the end of the build programme as the eastern parcel of land will be delivered last.
- 5.147 As well as the on-site provision, the applicant will be expected to make contributions to off-site sport and recreation provision as follows:
- Tennis – Supporting local needs as per the LSFS - £70,840
 - Rugby – 0.35 hectares of a pitch as per the PPS - £71,617
 - Indoor sport – under negotiation with local clubs
- 5.148 The proposed play provision is considered acceptable and the applicant will be responsible for setting up a management company to maintain the play areas, as well as the public open space and sports pitches. This will be secured through the Section 106 agreement.
- 5.149 *Health*
A number of neighbours have raised concerns that this development will place additional pressure on already stretched GP surgeries, in particular Long Furlong. Officers have liaised with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) over options to accommodate the additional demand from this development and the two nearby allocated sites (North West Abingdon and North West Radley). The CCG consider that these three proposals will generate approximately 3,400 additional patients. It has become apparent there is no scope to extend the existing Long Furlong surgery on its current site to meet this additional demand.
- 5.150 Accordingly, officers have negotiated that the Local Centre will include land for a branch surgery. The land passed over to the CCG will accommodate a surgery capable of serving 4,000 patients, allowing room for future population growth over and above that currently planned. The CCG can then seek CIL

or Section 106 receipts to assist in the capital costs of the project and can develop the surgery alongside the other facilities likely to be provided in this part of the site.

5.151 *Other Vale contributions*

As is standard practice for major housing applications such as this, the council will collect financial contributions to public art (£300/dwelling), wheeled bins (£170/dwelling) and street naming (£107.80/10 dwellings)

5.152 *Sunningwell and Radley Parish Council requests*

Radley Parish Council have made the following requests for financial contributions to local projects within their parish. These projects are enshrined in their emerging Neighbourhood Plan:

- Cycleway from this site to Radley village and Station
- Additional secure cycle storage at Radley Station
- Improved disabled access at Radley Station
- Radley Lakes Strategy

5.153 As discussed in Paras 5.37-5.39, officers from both OCC and the Vale are supportive of the cycle link proposal along Twelve Acre Drive to link to the existing cycle link on Radley Road. The draft Neighbourhood Plan suggests an alternative route crossing the private land of Peachcroft Farm, which is not available at this time. However, an alternative solution is feasible and will be delivered by the applicant. As such, a Section 106 contribution is not necessary for this project. The additional cycle storage at Radley Station is also agreed. However, officers do not consider that the improvements to disabled access at the station itself is a reasonable contribution. This is primarily because Network Rail are responsible for maintaining and upgrading their stations and there is no clear indication that they are supportive of the Parish's approach. Thus, there is no guarantees this is a deliverable or realistic project and so cannot be considered necessary to make this application acceptable in planning terms.

5.154 The Radley Lakes Strategy is part of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and is essentially a plan to provide a recreation and nature conservation area accessible to the public and includes:

- A new car park
- A new access road
- New footpaths

5.155 The applicant has resisted this contribution as they considered this application makes appropriate provision for public open space and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Officers agree that it would be difficult to argue that this contribution is "necessary" to make this application acceptable in planning terms when it meets all policy requirements in respect of open space and recreation.

5.156 Officers will continue to liaise with Sunningwell Parish Council as to which projects they would like to see funded through Section 106.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 This application has been assessed on its merits, against the Development Plan and the provisions of the NPPF. The principle of this application can be supported as the site is allocated within the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One and represents sustainable development as defined and required by the NPPF, which outlines the “social”, “economic” and “environmental” aspects to sustainable development.
- 6.2 The application will play a “social” role through the provision of 950 houses on a site allocated for housing within the Local Plan. In line with Council policy, 35% of these houses will be affordable, whilst an acceptable mix of market housing is proposed. This site is in a sustainable location for housing in district, being well located in relation to Abingdon, the A34 and Oxford. Abingdon is one of the most sustainable settlements in the Vale and so is seen as a growth area. It has all the necessary facilities to support an increase in the population and is a town that the Local Plan confirms is needed to accommodate some of the increased housing demands placed on the district.
- 6.3 The proposal will bring forward a Local Centre that will include a new primary school, a branch surgery, a care home and community facilities. The scheme will also offer new sports pitch provision and make financial contributions to a new bus service to serve this part of the town. These are all social benefits that should be afforded positive weight in the planning balancing exercise.
- 6.4 The scheme will have an “economic” role through increased employment through the construction phase and in the community facilities to be built and operated post-completion of the scheme. The residents of the development will provide increased investment in the local economy.
- 6.5 The applicant will make a proportionate financial contribution to the Lodge Hill slip road project and a Grampian condition will restrict occupancy rates on this site until certainty over the slip roads is secured. This, coupled with the proposed improvements to the most severely affected road junctions, public transport, cycle and pedestrian links, means that the development will have an acceptable impact on highway safety.
- 6.6 In terms of the “environmental” role, the application is accompanied by a comprehensive Design Code that will ensure a consistency of approach to buildings, streets, public squares and public open space across all phases of the development to ensure a high quality scheme. The application also includes a comprehensive landscaping scheme that ensures the retention of existing trees, hedgerows and ancient woodland and significant new levels of planting to ensure that the wider visual impact of these proposals are limited, in line with the requirements of the Site Development Template.
- 6.7 Overall, in the planning balance, it is considered that this proposal represents sustainable development and offers clear benefits in terms of delivering one of the largest strategic allocations in the Local Plan 2031 Part One early in the plan period. The proposal offers clear community benefits through the provision of a new school, GP surgery, sports pitches, specialist

accommodation for the elderly and allowing the creation of a new bus route that serves Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive. Conditions are recommended which will help to mitigate the impact of this development and contributions towards infrastructure will be secured by through the S106 agreement.

6.8 This application is recommended for approval.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One Core Policies (CP)

- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP02 - Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
- CP04 - Meeting Our Housing Needs
- CP07 - Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
- CP08 - Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe
- CP22 - Housing Mix
- CP23 - Housing Density
- CP24 - Affordable Housing
- CP26 - Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population
- CP32 - Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses
- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- CP34 - A34 Strategy
- CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
- CP36 - Electronic communications
- CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
- CP38 - Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites
- CP39 - The Historic Environment
- CP40 - Sustainable Design and Construction
- CP41 - Renewable Energy
- CP42 - Flood Risk
- CP43 - Natural Resources
- CP44 - Landscape
- CP45 - Green Infrastructure
- CP46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- CP47 - Delivery and Contingency

Saved Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

- DC3 - Design against crime
- DC4 - Public Art
- DC5 - Access
- DC6 - Landscaping
- DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling
- DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
- DC10 - Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development
- DC12 - Water Quality and Resources
- H23 - Open Space in New Housing Development
- NE7 - The North Vale Corallian Ridge
- TR3 - A34 related development

Neighbourhood Plan

Although Neighbourhood Plans for Sunningwell and Radley are being progressed, the agreed Designated Area for both plans excludes this site. Therefore, the emerging policies in these Plans are not relevant to the assessment of this application.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design Guide – March 2015
- Open space, sport and recreation future provision – July 2008
- Affordable Housing – July 2006
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006
- Planning and Public Art – July 2006

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (PPG)

Human Rights Act

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equalities

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Author: Peter Brampton, Major Applications Officer
Email: peter.brampton@southandvale.gov.uk
Tel: 01235 422600