

APPLICATION NO.	P16/V0981/O
SITE	Monks Farm, Townsend, Grove, OX12 0AH
PARISH	Grove
PROPOSAL	Application for outline planning permission for up to 400 dwellings, extension to the Grove CE primary school, associated landscaping and infrastructure with all matters except access reserved (as amended and amplified by information received 3 January 2018).
WARD MEMBER(S)	Ben Mabbett Chris McCarthy
APPLICANT	Gallagher Estates and Gleeson
OFFICER	Stuart Walker

RECOMMENDATION

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

- **Completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure contributions towards local infrastructure, the transfer of land for primary school expansion and open space and to secure affordable housing, and the following conditions (or provision in Section 106 as appropriate):**

Standard

1. Reserved matters to be approved.
2. Reserved matters time limit for submission.
3. Time limit for implementation.
4. Approved plans and documents list.
5. Compliance with environmental statement.

Pre-commencement

6. Construction of site access.
7. Construction traffic management plan.
8. Sustainable drainage scheme.
9. On-site foul drainage scheme.
10. Contaminated land risk assessment.
11. Construction environment plan (biodiversity).
12. Habitat restoration method statement for the Letcombe Brook corridor.
13. Letcombe Brook bridge details.
14. Archaeology written scheme of investigation.
15. Archaeology staged programme of investigation.

With reserved matters

16. Biodiversity enhancement plan.
17. Tree protection details.
18. Strategic Housing Market Assessment compliant housing mix.

19. Levels.

20. Noise mitigation.

Pre-occupation

21. Off-site foul drainage.

22. Long-term management plan for the Letcombe Brook corridor.

23. Residential travel plan.

24. Provision of Denchworth Road link prior to 150th dwelling.

25. Provision of A338 signalised junction prior to 150th dwelling.

26. Connection links prior to occupation of final unit.

Compliance

27. Flood risk assessment.

28. Electric charging points for market properties with garages.

Informatives

1. Planning obligation.

2. Oxfordshire County Council rights of way advice notes.

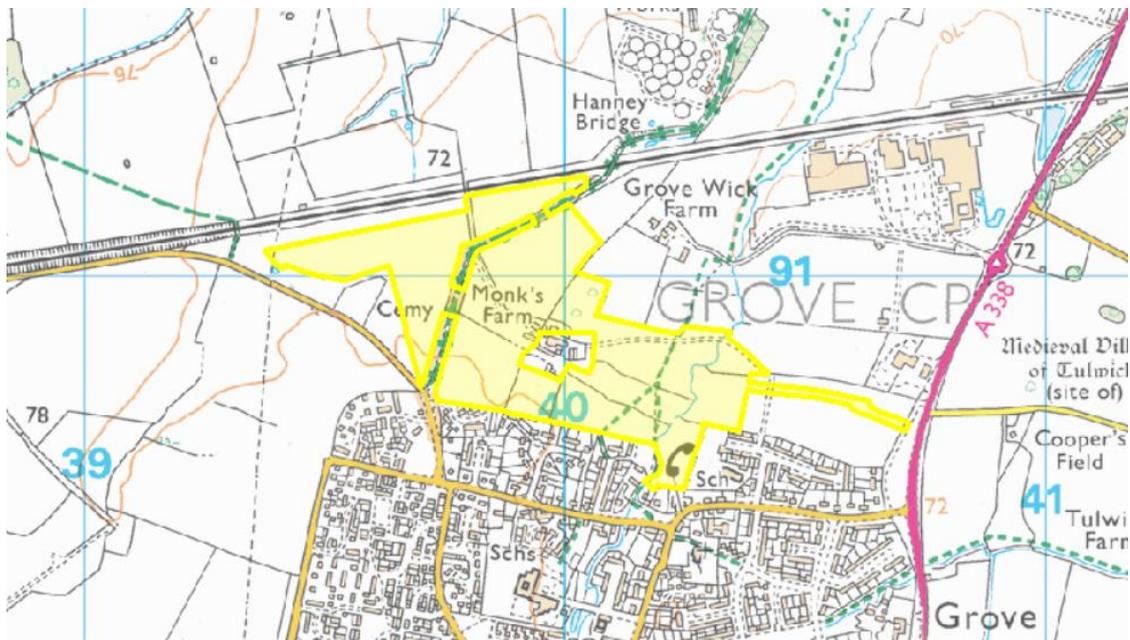
3. Broadband.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

1.1 This application is referred to committee as it is a large scale major application.

1.2 The proposal seeks outline permission for the erection of up to 400 dwellings, an extension to the primary school, associated landscaping and infrastructure. Approval for means of access only is sought at this stage, with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale being reserved for future consideration.

1.3 The site is located within the Lowland Vale landscape and is part of the strategic allocated housing site known as 'Monks Farm, Grove' which is identified in the adopted local plan for up to 885 dwellings. 368 of these dwellings have previously been permitted (see planning history section for details) on land immediately to the east of the application site and the first phase is under construction. A site location plan is below:



1.4 The proposal is supported by parameter plans and an environmental statement. The parameters show a mixture land uses, access points, green infrastructure and development heights 2 to 3 storeys. All plans and supporting technical documents accompanying the application are available to view online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

1.5 The proposal has been amended to take account of comments from the county council and technical officers, resulting in an increase in green infrastructure / ecological mitigation, a secondary road linking the site to Denchworth Road, land to expand the existing primary school, safeguarded land for a potential future rail station and a reduction in overall unit numbers from the original submission (456 dwellings). The latest application plans are **attached** at Appendix 1.

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.

<p>Grove Parish Council</p>	<p><u>Amended plans</u> No objection, but has the following comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council disagrees with the figures provided by the applicant in relation to Cemetery usage. • The Council believes that the Southern end of the BOAT (from its junction with the Northern Link Road (NLR) to the point where it meets the Denchworth Road (West of The Maples) should be downgraded to a bridleway. <p><u>Original plans</u> Objection for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed route of the Northern Link Road (NLR) is in the wrong place and should be more northerly. NLR does not seem wide enough and resembles a residential street rather than a link road. • Potential for flooding around the area of Grove Parish Cemetery. • There is no room for the expansion of the current Cemetery. Expansion is needed due to high number of new dwellings in the parish and is part of the Grove Airfield Development conditions/s106. • Allotments are in the wrong place and should be integrated around the housing. • Isolated from the rest of the village with no apparent through roads linking development to village. • Grove Parish Council fully support those comments from the Letcombe Brook Project Officer. • No formal open spaces laid out for sports within the development area. Current sports amenities for Grove
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	<p>are described as inadequate by District Council's own consultants (Nortoft)</p>
<p>Local residents</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> Two letters of objection have been received. The objections are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing is not needed with the recent granting of permission on the airfield site. • Impact on wildlife. • Masterplan is not agreed with other landowners. • The share of community facilities had not been agreed with other landowners. • Access to other land interests remains to be clarified. • Future station location needs to be considered. • Application is premature and prejudicial to other landowners. <p>One letter of comment has been received querying the possibility of more parking provision for the primary school.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> Seven letters of objection have been received. The objections are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of infrastructure. • Traffic. • Flood risk. • Land contamination. • Railway noise impact. • Lack of pedestrian crossings on the proposed link road. • Impact on Cemetery. • Impact on Cow Lane BOAT – development should not go west of the lane.
<p>Oxfordshire County Council</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> <i>Highways</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection, subject to conditions and contributions. <p><i>Archaeology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection, subject to conditions to require and implement a written scheme of investigation. <p><i>Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection, subject to contributions for secondary and special education needs and transfer of land for primary school. <p><i>Property</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No objection, subject to contributions towards library book stock at Grove library and Wantage Day Centre. (<i>Officer response: these are not justified</i>) <p>The full response is available to view online.</p>

	<p><u>Original Plans</u></p> <p>Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OCC have an objection on Archaeology grounds. We would recommend that a predetermination archaeological field evaluation is undertaken, prior to the determination of the application by the planning authority, to establish whether archaeological features are located within the application area and to provide a suitable level of information upon which an appropriate mitigation strategy, and appropriate conditions, can be established. This is in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policy. <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This application is for 456 additional houses at Monks Farm following earlier applications for 368 houses: P15/V0783/O (133); P14/V0576/O (75); P15/V1722/O (160). This will bring a total of 824 houses on this site which, according to the Vale of White Horse Local Plan, is proposed for 885 houses. There are additional areas of land not included in the current or past applications, which is likely to bring the total in excess of 885 houses.• The County is concerned about the quantum of development given that the entire development is shown to be accessed from the A338. Although the development masterplan shows a spine road (Grove Northern Link Road) connecting through to Denchworth Road, there is a risk that the spine road will never be completed as a through route. Either this road, or an alternative link through to Denchworth Road is sought as a condition to be provided before the development creates unacceptable effects (a timeframe of by 150 dwellings is proposed).• Work is ongoing to determine the proposed location of Grove Railway Station, following the original proposed location to the west of the A338 being affected by the relocation of the A338 bridge over the railway. It is possible that in the future it could be in the vicinity of this site.• It is recognised that there are three public rights of way through the site. Detailed comments about these are contained in the transport comments. Comments are also made about the need to improve provision for cycling.• A site for a new primary school is included with the application. The suitability of this site has not been considered in detail and further work on this is required prior to determining the application. Discussions have been ongoing about provision of primary school capacity. An alternative option to that proposed is expansion of the existing Grove CE
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	<p>Primary School as set out in the Education comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various conditions are required as set out in the technical officer comments, together with s106 contributions. <p>The full response is available to view online.</p>
<p>County Councillor Zoe Patrick</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further response received.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have concerns regarding the current cemetery in Grove being surrounded by housing. This is a quiet and peaceful area, and indeed, I think that the spaces for burial will be full in a few years and there will be no space to expand. • There is also an increased danger of houses being positioned too close to the railway line where trespassers on the track could be a real hazard. There is also the impact of noise and disturbance to housing near the line. • I understand from the OCC Local Transport Plan 4, that the proposal for a station in Grove by the side of the A338 by the Volunteer Inn will now not be possible due to re-alignment of the bridge. I would hope that as a result the new station site would be to the east further along from the current site for which planning permission was originally granted, not to the north of Grove where this site is located. Putting extra traffic and car parking for a new station would not be a viable option on this housing site, and needs further investigation. I hope this can be resolved in the very near future. • This development should not go west of Cow Lane, which is a public right of way, and there should certainly be no crossing across this BOAT at all. The boundary for this development should stop crossing Cow Lane, and all the above problems will be solved.
<p>Network Rail</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> Objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no provision within the amended documents to mitigate any impact of the development on the nearby level crossings. • Network Rail cannot countenance increasing public use of level crossings on a high speed 4-track railway. • If permission is granted, Network Rail seeks a commitment from the developer to divert the public bridleway and footpath in question to alternative,

	<p>grade separated railway crossings already in existence in the locality; and/or a significant contribution from the developer towards the costs of constructing bridges at the current level crossing sites. (<i>Officer response: contributions are not justified</i>)</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> Objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have three level crossings in the area which will be impacted upon by the development should it go ahead, the crossings are Wantage Road Footpath Level Crossing, Grove Footpath/Bridleway Level Crossing and Denchworth Footpath Level Crossing, which will have safety implications due to the envisaged increase in the usage. • The increased use of the crossings cannot be looked upon favourably by Network Rail and some form of mitigation will be required to reduce any safety concerns. • All these crossings are on a 4-track railway with a line speed in this location of 125mph and a very frequent train service. The line speed is likely to increase when the railway is electrified. • Due to the impact upon the crossing, mitigation will be required which may potentially include footbridges at Wantage Road and Denchworth footpath crossings and a diversion over the road bridge or foot bridge at Grove, although a further safety appraisal of the level crossing would need to be completed before concluding a footbridge is required. <p>Their full correspondence is available to view online.</p>
Office of Road and Rail	Objection in support of Network Rail. The full response is available to view online.
Southern Gas Network	<p>Comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw attention to the location of off-site gas network infrastructure in locality.
Thames Water	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further response received.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified an inability of the existing waste water infrastructure to accommodate the development. Propose a Grampian condition requiring a drainage strategy to be approved detailing any on and/or offsite drainage works prior to development commencing.

<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further response received.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p>
<p>Drainage Engineer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p>
<p>Historic England</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No comments.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection.</p>
<p>Conservation Officer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of the heritage assets of Grovewick Farm and Monks Farm- the landscape plan shows both sites to be enclosed by a combination of existing and proposed tree/hedged boundaries and this is broadly acceptable. • Whilst accepting that the rural setting of both sites will be affected by the development, it is important that views to and from the farms are retained - main views are shown retained which is acceptable. • I am concerned however by the heights plan which shows heights of 2.5 to 3 storeys to the north and north east of Monks Farm. Given the vernacular scale and form of Monks Farmhouse my view is that housing to the north should be no more than 2 storeys height to avoid overdominance and to preserve the setting of the listed buildings and to preserve views. I would be pleased to see a revised plan to show this. (<i>Officer Response: a revised parameter plan has been submitted to address this point</i>). <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care needs to be taken that the scale, form and massing of development respects designated heritage assets- for example 3 storey housing would generally be inappropriate in close juxtaposition to listed buildings but may be more acceptable at a distance from them. Clear contextual analysis needs to be demonstrated at RM stage to show such

	<p>relationships and mitigation strategies introduced to counter adverse impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation strategies to protect the significance of historic routes, in this case of the Cow Lane Byway, are required. • Views to and from heritage assets need to be protected and clearly demonstrated at RM stage. • It would greatly assist if a comprehensive development strategy was adopted by all land owners to ensure a successful integration of the development within the site outline and bordering developments.
<p>Natural England</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> Previous comments apply.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory note provided regarding the Common Land Act 2006 and the potential impact of the development on Cow Lane through the associated access works. • Comments provided regarding the loss of agricultural land and priority habitat resulting from the development and draw attention to the potential impact on the North Wessex Downs AONB.
<p>Letcombe Brook Project</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions and contributions.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> Holding Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of adequate information to assess the impact on Letcombe Brook.
<p>Countryside Officer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Letcombe Brook Outline Habitat Restoration and Management Strategy which has been submitted provides outline details of the proposals for the restoration of the Letcombe Brook Corridor as shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan (Drawing UD52). This plan provides sufficient information on the objectives for the Letcombe Brook Corridor and a framework from which a detailed habitat restoration plan and long-term management plan can be developed. Planning conditions can be used to require the production of these documents at Reserved Matters stage. • The restoration of the Letcombe Brook Corridor, including any Suds or flood attenuation works would all need to happen at the same time and be linked to a specific phase of the development to minimise the impacts on the habitats and wildlife. I recommend

	<p>that the restoration of the corridor is required at the same time as the creation of the bridge over the Letcombe Brook to avoid unnecessary and prolonged disturbance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will result in a net loss of biodiversity, a contribution for offsite mitigation is therefore required. • The layout of the development has been amended to provide a habitat link between the habitats within Monks Farm and the Letcombe Brook corridor, this is principally to provide a habitat corridor for bats and badgers. It disappointing to see that the hedgerow corridor linking to the Letcombe Brook is severed by the proposed Suds basin although, it may be possible to adjust this with the detailed designs at reserved matters stage. <p><u>Original Plans</u> Holding objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is required on the restoration of Letcombe Brook and the surrounding corridor and the proposals for long term management of the Letcombe Brook corridor. • Information to determine if the proposals would lead to a net loss in biodiversity terms. • Amended plans to include a semi natural habitat corridor linking into suitable badger and bat foraging habitat.
<p>Tree Officer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application is supported by a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment prepared by HDA (ref 2070.59 Issue 2 and dated November 2017) that provides a conditional assessment of the vegetation and consideration of the impacts on the trees from the proposed development. The layout has broadly followed the guidance given previously in respect of the preferred retention of specific trees and hedges but there are numerous areas that give rise to concern at this stage. • The truncation of the hedge that runs east/west in the lower portion of the site is disappointing given that the parallel hedge to the north was agreed to be shortened on the basis that the southerly one would be retained (and augmented) along its length. The significance of the historic field boundary and the importance of maintaining an east west corridor would be diminished if the surface water attenuation basin cuts through the hedge. Consideration should be given to reducing the size or amending the shape of the basin to accommodate the hedge (sections G43, G44, T32, G45 and H5). Whilst I acknowledge

	<p>that some of this hedge consists of Elm (which has a limited life expectancy) the value of the existing hedge includes the soil and rootstock at the base. I note that the survey records the constituent Elm elements of G44 and G45 are affected by Dutch Elm disease but both groups include additional species that make up the whole. <i>(Officer response: The impact from the attenuation basin is reduced as its western edge has been remodelled, retaining more of the hedge).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The submitted layout (albeit indicative) shows road and footpath construction in very close proximity to the southern end of the Cow Lane byway. The arboricultural impact assessment defers judgement on the impact on these trees and hedges at this stage, noting that the implications of altering the ground levels and constructing hard surfaces within their root protection areas should be assessed when the layout is known. I accept the premise of insufficient detail but the importance of retaining the trees and hedges shown as such on the submitted plans will need to be translated into the final layout and the arboricultural data used to inform the layout design. The development should be laid out to safeguard W1, G75, T67, T56, G77, T71, T41, G150, T48, T54, G147, G146, G24, T10 and G20 as these are the trees that have RPAs shown particularly close to development. <i>(Officer response: this will be addressed at the reserved matters stage).</i> <p><u>Original Plans</u> Holding objection, requesting further information.</p>
<p>Landscape Officer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amended drawings have generally taken into account my holding objection comments with regards to relationship between the residential area and the play areas, Monks Farm and the existing green features. I do have a couple of comments on the amended application. • It may be better to locate the proposed NEAP in the northern area of POS associated with the proposed MUGU, with the proposed LEAP located in the southern area of the site. This positions the NEAP in a more central location with regards to the whole of the site area. • The parking area associated with Grove Church of England Primary does not contain the level of planting that is expected. Green infrastructure planting, predominately in the form of trees is

	<p>proposed along the link road but there is no space accommodated in the parking layout to allow a line of trees to be planted between the parking area and the link road to break up the mass of the parking from the road, especially due to its location adjacent to the Letcombe Brook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the SUDS scheme is worked up, it should be broken up into smaller sections allowing additional lengths of existing hedgerow to be retained and aiding movement from the housing area to the existing footpaths. • If the application is granted planning permission, full details of soft and hard landscape proposals will be required along with a Maintenance and Management Plan covering the open space and play areas to ensure the proposed concept is implemented and maintained along with the management of the existing vegetation of site. <p><u>Original Plans</u> Holding objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No overall Landscape objection but holding objection in relation to the Parameter Plans regarding the proposed distribution of the POS in relationship to the Housing and Employment land. I also have concerns about the partial assessment of the Strategic site. • The proposed development would not cause unacceptable landscape and visual harm on the Lowland Vale. The main impacts relate to additional built form, with the extension of Grove to the north. This will result in an impact on the existing landscape character and with visual impact on predominately restricted to the local area, between the north side of Grove and to the south of railway line.
<p>Urban Design Officer</p>	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design and access statement addendum provides sufficient mitigation of the original concerns made. • The addendum provides illustrative work for each of the character areas within the formation of the scheme and articulates the defining spatial principals of each character area to a sufficient level, this will enable the outline application to give a greater enough understanding of how each character area will perform in relation to one another. As a result, the design process of future applications should be informed in such a way that the development of house types and their configuration within parcels

	<p>(the settlement pattern) can be achieved in a positive way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised masterplan shows clearer principles for the formation of the scheme. <p><u>Original Plans</u> Holding Objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an insufficient demonstration and description of character areas that are going to be established within the structure of the scheme. • The illustrative masterplan is felt to be too indicative regarding the lack of presented settlement typologies, and does not present a transfer of its analysis from the design and access statement into parameters to configure the built form for the proposed development parcels. <p>Full comments are available to view online.</p>
Leisure Team	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further response received.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to contributions.</p>
Thames Valley Police	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further response received.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek contributions towards increased policing for the area. <i>(Officer response: these are not justified)</i>
Housing Development Team	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to the revised tenure mix as part viability assessment. <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection.</p>
Environmental Health – Protection Team	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No objection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ES has identified mitigation options which could address noise impacts on the proposed development. The detail of these measures can be addressed when the layout has been finalised at the reserved matters stage and demonstrated in a detailed noise mitigation proposal should be submitted with the reserved matters application for approval.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation of construction site noise as outlined in the ES, should form part of the Construction Site Management Plan. <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to conditions.</p>
Environmental Health – Contaminated Land	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further comment.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to contaminated land investigation condition.</p>
Waste Management Team	<p><u>Amended Plans</u> No further comment.</p> <p><u>Original Plans</u> No objection, subject to contributions for provision of new bins for each property.</p>

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 [P15/V1722/O](#) - Approved (24/08/2016)

Residential development for up to 160 dwellings (use class C3) together with direct access off Station Road (A338); landscaping and public open space; drainage infrastructure inclusive of flood compensation works; and biodiversity enhancements (as amended by submitted documentation 9 November 2015)

[P15/V0978/RM](#) - Approved (21/01/2016)

Application for reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, scale, layout) for the development approved under planning permission P12/V1545/O.(as amended by drawings accompanying letters from agent dated 2 December 2015 and by plans received 12 January 2016)

[P15/V0783/O](#) - Approved (13/08/2015)

Outline planning consent for residential development of up to 133 dwellings with associated access (resubmission of P12/V1545/O to extend time limit)

[P14/V2499/RM](#) - Other Outcome (24/06/2015)

Application for Reserved matters to secure the layout of the internal access roads only.

[P14/V0576/O](#) - Approved (02/04/2015)

Residential development comprising the erection of up to 75 dwellings including access (as amplified by Drainage Strategy, Flood Risk Assessment & Illustrative Layout received 22 August 2014)

[P12/V1545/O](#) - Approved (11/02/2014)

Outline application for residential development of up to 133 dwellings with associated access.

3.2 **Pre-application History**

None for this application.

[P16/V0322/PEJ](#) – (16/03/2016)

Advice on Layout and street scene for phase 1B (75 dwellings to the east).

3.3 **Screening Opinion requests**

None for this application.

[P12/V0024/SCO](#) – Negative opinion (09/02/2012)

Development of land at Monks Farm (phase 1A)

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The application is considered EIA development by the applicant and is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) and an addendum update statement, and the following areas of potential impact were addressed: transport and access, air quality, noise, water resources - drainage and flood risk, biodiversity and nature conservation, landscape and visual effects, heritage, archaeology, socio-economic effects, mitigation and residual effects.

5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The relevant material planning considerations in relation to the determination of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Traffic and Highways
- Public Footpaths
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Design and Layout
- Residential Amenity
- Housing Mix
- Grove Cemetery
- Landscaping, open space and trees
- Flood risk and drainage
- Air Quality
- Contamination
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Heritage assets
- Archaeology
- Affordable housing and viability of development
- CIL and S106

5.2 **Principle of Development**

The application site is part of a wider site allocation in the adopted local plan that is aiming to deliver around 885 dwellings. As such the proposal is acceptable in principle unless any adverse impacts can be identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of meeting this objective.

5.3 **Traffic and highways**

Access is the only matter for consideration at this outline stage. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which considers the impacts of the

proposed development upon the local highway network together with the means of safe and suitable site access.

5.4 *Vehicle access / traffic generation*

The development is proposed to be served by two vehicle access points, one off the A338 (the Northern Link Road - NLR), and a secondary access link onto Denchworth Road (at The Maples junction). These access points are acceptable subject to the comments below.

5.5 Highways raise no objection on highway safety or traffic generation grounds on the wider network, subject to conditions and contributions to strategic highway improvements, but do raise concern over the capacity of the existing A338 junction into the site. This is based on a short section at the Denchworth Road end of the NLR not being part of this application, resulting in a risk that the road is never completed as a through route.

5.6 To mitigate this concern the applicant proposes the secondary access onto Denchworth Road at the junction of The Maples. Highways advise this will need to be provided prior to occupation of the 150th dwelling. This can be secured by condition.

5.7 Subject to relevant conditions and those contributions sought for strategic highway improvements, the proposal accords with policy DC5 and the NPPF in respect of traffic and highways.

5.8 **Public Footpaths**

The County Rights of Way team has no objection to the proposal, subject to contributions to improve access to the footpath network. The parish council has requested part of Cow Lane (BOAT) is downgraded. This is supported by the county council in principle but is a process outside of this planning application that will be undertaken at a future date.

5.9 Network Rail raise an objection to the application in relation to the potential increase in pedestrian traffic using two level crossings on the Great Western mainline to the north of the site (known as 'Grove' and 'Wantage Road'). Network Rail further recommend refusal unless mitigation (either diversion or contributions towards footbridges) is provided by the developer and cite a recent appeal in Mid Sussex to support their position. In response officers have sought further information from both the applicant and Network Rail.

5.10 The Grove crossing is a public bridleway and Wantage Road is a public footpath, with both leading north into the open countryside towards East Hanney. On the evidence available, officers consider their use is primarily for leisure purposes (rather than commuting for e.g.).

5.11 Network Rail state almost 160 trains a day pass over the Level Crossings with passenger trains passing at 125 miles per hour. Network Rail confirms both crossings meet current safety standards and there have been no reported injuries or fatalities. The crossings have also been risk assessed by Network Rail in 2016 using the 'All Level Crossing Risk Module' (ALCRM). This is a 'live' risk assessment computer model which predicts the theoretical likelihood of an event or accident based on inputs, such as number and category of path users,

number and speed of trains, minimum required vs actual sighting distance and user traverse time. The assessment is updated approximately every three years and individual and collective risks are indicated.

- 5.12 Individual risks represent a measure of the risk of fatality to the individual user per year expressed as an individual risk letter A (highest) through to M (lowest). The collective risk is a measure of the total harm expressed in terms of Fatalities and Weighted Injuries (FWI) per year ranked from 1 (highest risk) through to 13 (nil risk). The current live assessment gives Grove crossing a score of C9 (the 179th riskiest on the Great Western mainline out of 359 crossings) and Wantage Road crossing a score of C5 (the 54th riskiest).
- 5.13 The applicant has undertaken surveys of the crossings which indicate current usage is around 2 to 3 persons per day for each crossing. Further surveys by Network Rail in February 2018 (half term), show use varies between 2 to 10 persons a day and they confirm current use is low. The latest ALCRM assessments assumed 2 pedestrians per day plus occasional weekly equestrian use for Grove and 10 pedestrians per day for Wantage Road. The 2011 census shows Grove parish has a population of 7,178 persons.
- 5.14 To estimate the level of use which the new development would generate, officers calculate approximately 1 crossing occurs for 718 persons (based on Network Rail's 10 persons a day and the parish population). The population increase from this application is expected to be 956 persons (housing multiplier of 2.39), and it is anticipated the uplift in pedestrians per crossing will increase by 1 person per day.
- 5.15 Notwithstanding, Network Rail consider the development is likely to generate a proportionately higher increase in the number of vulnerable users such as children and persons encumbered with pushchairs / bikes.
- 5.16 From the evidence available, both crossings appear to be used for leisure use. In between these two crossings, lies Cow Lane (BOAT) which has a bridge over the railway, providing alternative leisure access to the countryside beyond. As such, officers consider an increase in crossing use arising from the proposal would not unacceptably increase the risk of incident to warrant refusal of the application, given the good safety record of both crossings and where an alternative route is available. The applicant proposes directional signage to Cow Lane which the County Rights of Way team confirm "*should go some way towards directing people to the bridge crossing point*".
- 5.17 Officers also consider any increase in use does not justify a contribution towards footbridges. Network Rail has provided no detailed costings other than an approximate cost of £3 million per bridge and it is considered such mitigation is disproportionate when assessed against the "*fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development*" CIL test. Network Rail also has the right to close the crossings should they deem the safety risk too great from any increased use following completion of development.
- 5.18 Overall, officers consider the proposal accords with policy DC5 in respect of public footpaths and pedestrian safety.

5.19 **Landscape and Visual Impact**

Policy NE9 of the adopted local plan designates the site as part of the wider Lowland Vale which is a distinctive landscape and valued for its own quality. Paragraphs 7.67 and 7.68 of the adopted local plan 2011 explains that *“the long views over the patchwork quilt of fields, farms and villages in the Vale are an essential part of the landscape quality of the District”* and that *“insensitively located or designed proposals could have an adverse impact on these open vistas and on the intrinsic qualities of the Lowland Vale”*.

5.20 The applicant has produced a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. It considers the landscape sensitivity of the site to be medium to low and states *“the site is extremely well contained from the wider rural landscape”*. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the character of the area or affect the long open views across the Lowland Vale or upon the North Wessex Downs AONB landscape.

5.21 The comments from the landscape officer are noted, and officers consider an acceptable landscape scheme addressing these points can be achieved within the site at the reserved matters stage. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies NE6 and NE9.

5.22 **Design and Layout**

The details of layout, scale and external appearance of dwellings and landscaping are reserved matters. It is therefore not intended to address design and layout in any detail in this report. The application is supported by an illustrative masterplan, a Design and Access Statement (DAS) and parameter plans which will be used to guide Reserved Matters applications. These have been updated to reflect comments from the urban design officer.

5.23 The revised masterplan shows clear principles for the formation of the scheme. The urban design officer also confirms the DAS addendum provides a sufficient level of information for each of the character areas and articulates the defining spatial principles of each character area to give enough understanding at this outline stage of how each area relate to one another. As a result, the design process of future applications can be informed in such a way that the development of house types and their configuration within parcels (the settlement pattern) can be achieved in a positive way to accord with policies CP37 and CP38 of the adopted local plan. Overall, the details for outline stage are acceptable in design terms.

5.24 There is some local concern that, through this application, the site allocation is being brought forward in a piecemeal fashion. One of the areas of concern relates to a lack of clarity to demonstrate the application proposal does not prejudice the delivery of the wider site.

5.25 Following negotiation by officers since the application was submitted in 2016, the applicant has been working to coordinate a joined up approach (with other landowners) to the delivery of the wider site allocation within which a sustainable planning and delivery strategy can be established. This has resulted in the preparation of a Development Framework Plan. Despite the

objections received from the adjoining land owner, in the context of this application, the Framework Plan shows that residential development on the application site would not prejudice the future delivery of the wider proposed allocation to the west and north, including a future railway station. As such, officers consider no substantive planning harm would be caused by the release of the application site in respect of master planning the wider allocated site.

5.26 **Residential Amenity**

It is not possible to consider the amenity impact of the proposal in detail at this stage as no firm details on layout or house types accompany this outline application. Should outline permission be granted, it would be more appropriate to assess amenity when considering any reserved matters applications.

5.27 *Neighbouring uses*

The site is located adjacent the Great Western Mainline where noise could potentially affect residents of the proposed development. The applicant has provided an acoustic report within the Environmental Statement which recommends mitigation and the environmental health protection team raise no objection to the proposal, subject to the full implementation of the mitigation. It is considered this can be secured by condition. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of residential amenity of future occupiers and complies with policy DC9.

5.28 **Housing Mix**

As this is an outline application, the actual number of dwellings and precise mix that might be accommodated on site is not known. Notwithstanding, officers expect any reserved matters applications to comply with the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) mix which is the most recent objective assessment of housing need. This can be secured by condition.

5.29 **Grove Cemetery**

The parish council and county councillor raise concern over the future expansion of the Denchworth Road Cemetery. Cemetery expansion was not identified through the local plan process in allocating the site, but in response officers have requested further information on the cemetery space remaining.

5.30 The parish council confirm the total number of plots for burials within the current cemetery is 481 and the total number of ashes plots is 304. Since 1992, the total number of occupied or reserved plots is 299 which equates to 11.5 burials per year. Since 1993, the total number of occupied ashes plots is 131, which in turn equates to 5.24 interments per year. The parish council therefore estimate the space for burials will run out in 2038 and the space required for ashes interments will run out in 2036.

5.31 It is clear there is sufficient space to meet the needs of the population for the current plan period to 2031. Whilst it may be possible for land within the site allocation to be reserved for future cemetery expansion, officers consider land within this application would not be required. As such officers consider it would be unreasonable to withhold permission on such grounds.

5.32 **Landscaping, Open Space and trees**

Landscaping is a reserved matter. In respect of open space, policy H23 of the adopted local plan requires a minimum of 15% of the site to be laid out as open space. The illustrative plans show the proposal accords with this.

5.33 The application is supported by a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment that provides a conditional assessment of the vegetation and consideration of the impacts on the trees from the proposed development. The illustrative layout has broadly followed guidance from the tree officer in respect of the preferred retention of specific trees and hedges, who raises no objection to the proposal, subject to tree protection measures during construction. This can be secured by condition.

5.34 **Flood Risk and Drainage**

The Environment Agency Flood Map shows the site is largely located within Flood Zone 1 which is the least susceptible to flooding and preferred in flood risk terms for housing development. However, there are small areas adjacent to Letcombe Brook within Flood Zones 2 and 3a which are at risk to fluvial flooding.

5.35 The applicant has submitted a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy. In addition, the development area has been sequentially tested through local policy as part of the allocation procedure.

5.36 The applicant's assessment provides a list of flood risk mitigation and management measures to be implemented. It confirms that flood plain compensation in the form of floodplain rationalisation is required to remove all areas proposed for residential development and land for the primary school expansion into Flood Zone 1 without increasing the risk of flooding from the Letcombe Brook to the site or elsewhere. It is also proposed that surface water runoff from the proposed development will be attenuated on site in three catchment areas via the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with a controlled discharge into the Letcombe Brook, a local ditch and culverted watercourse tributary of Childrey Brook.

5.37 The council's drainage team raise no objection subject to conditions requiring a fully detailed scheme to be submitted and approved. A sustainable drainage scheme can be agreed and secured by planning condition thereby minimising the risks of flooding from this development.

5.38 Thames Water has identified a network capacity issue with the foul sewer network and request a Grampian style condition detailing any on and/or offsite drainage works prior to development commencing. Officers consider this is a reasonable and necessary condition.

5.39 Subject to the suggested drainage conditions, the proposal is acceptable in respect of flood risk and drainage and accords with local plan policy CP42.

5.40 **Air Quality**

The air quality in the area is considered generally good. The impacts of the additional traffic associated with this development are not expected to have

any significant impact on local air quality. It is however suggested that a condition on electric charging points for market housing with garages is imposed in accordance with local plan policy CP33.

5.41 **Contamination**

The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report provided has not identified the presence of any potentially contaminative sources on site that would preclude development. The report does however highlight the requirement for an intrusive investigation to establish conditions on site prior to the commencement of development. This can be secured by condition and Environmental Health has no objections to the proposed development.

5.42 **Ecology and Biodiversity**

The application site has been subject to ecological surveys. The main ecological value on site is the Letcombe Brook and its associated corridor. The brook is a UK Priority Habitat which provides a home for a variety of protected species including otter, water vole, and kingfisher. The remainder of the site is characterised by a network of grass pasture enclosed by hedgerows with limited ecological value as both are species poor. In addition, there are populations of various protected species including a main badger sett and bat roosts at Monks Farm. Additional bat roosts have also been found within the buildings at Grove Wick Farm.

5.43 The key ecological impacts associated with this proposal are:

1. Impacts on the Letcombe Brook associated with the new road crossing and from increased recreational pressure from new residents and their pets.
2. Loss of habitats including grassland and hedgerows.
3. Impacts on badgers and bats caused by loss of foraging habitats and isolation from their territory.

5.44 *Impacts on Letcombe Brook*

The construction of the road bridge has the potential to cause damage to the Brook and associated protected species. The mitigation for these impacts is not yet known and will be dependent on the detailed design of the bridge, detailed up to date surveys for protected species in vicinity of the proposed crossing and a detailed mitigation strategy. This can be secured by condition.

5.45 Furthermore, the brook is neglected and requires restoration and long-term management and the application provides an opportunity to positively manage it in the long term with a management plan. In discussions with the Countryside Officer, the applicant has submitted an outline Habitat Restoration and Management Strategy which provides a framework from which a detailed habitat restoration plan and long-term management plan can be developed. Planning conditions are suggested to require the production of further details / documents at reserved matters stage.

5.46 The Countryside Officer confirms restoration of the Letcombe Brook Corridor, including any Suds or flood attenuation works would all need to happen at the same time and be linked to a specific phase of the development to minimise the impacts on the habitats and wildlife and recommends that restoration is

undertaken at the same time as the creation of the bridge over the Letcombe Brook to avoid unnecessary and prolonged disturbance. This can be secured through conditions, and subject to these, the impact on the brook is acceptable.

5.47 *Loss of Habitats*

Policy CP46 calls for all developments to deliver a net gain in biodiversity if possible but, as a minimum, to avoid a net loss. In this case the proposals do not comply with policy CP46 as the proposal will cause a loss of grassland habitats and the loss or severance of hedgerows which cannot be fully met on site. It would therefore be appropriate in this case to consider offsetting these losses through seeking financial contributions towards offsite biodiversity enhancements to achieve compliance with the policy.

5.48 The applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Impact Calculation, which has shown that the proposal will result in a net loss of biodiversity on site when compared to the existing site conditions, resulting in a total contribution of £123,372 towards an offsetting scheme delivered through an offsetting provider. This can be secured through a S106 agreement to ensure the development accords with policy CP46.

5.49 *Impacts of bats / badgers*

The illustrative layout has been amended to accommodate a habitat corridor for bats and badgers between the habitats within Monks Farm and the Letcombe Brook corridor and will be worked up in further detail at reserved matters stage to address the countryside officer's comments.

5.50 Subject to the identified mitigation and management, officers are satisfied the proposal is acceptable regarding ecology and biodiversity.

5.51 **Heritage Assets**

There are several Grade II listed buildings (Steptoe's House, Monk's Farmhouse & barns and Grovewick Farmhouse) close to the site. In addition, a very small part of the application site lies within Grove conservation area.

5.52 *Listed buildings*

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Considerable importance and weight should be given to this requirement. Policy HE4 of the adopted local plan seeks to protect the setting of listed buildings.

5.53 The proposal has been assessed by the conservation officer and the impact on the setting of listed buildings is considered less than substantial. The illustrative landscape master plan shows listed buildings to be enclosed by a combination of existing and proposed tree/hedged boundaries which is broadly acceptable. It is also acknowledged that the rural setting of these buildings will be affected by the development, whereby it will be important that views to and from the farms are retained. The main views are shown as retained which is acceptable. Consequently, the conservation officer raises no objection but seeks careful design at reserved matters stage to respect the heritage assets.

5.54 *Conservation Area*

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this case considerable importance and weight is given to the desirability of protecting or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. Policy HE1 of the adopted local plan seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

5.55 Officers consider the proposal will not have a significant impact on the Grove conservation area. The area of the site in the conservation area is due to be transferred to the county council for educational use and being close to Letcombe Brook is likely to remain unchanged in its appearance and form.

5.56 Overall, the impact on heritage assets is acceptable and officers are confident development could proceed in such a way as not to cause unacceptable loss of significance to the setting of listed buildings. It is also considered that any harm arising is outweighed by the benefits of the development towards planned growth in the district. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policies HE1 and HE4 and the NPPF, subject to further assessment at reserved matters stage.

5.57 **Archaeology**

The applicant has undertaken a programme of archaeological evaluation. This has demonstrated that most of the site, with exception of the northeast corner, has been utilised in some form since the Iron Age. There were numerous ditches and gullies across the site that could be securely dated to the Iron Age, Roman and medieval periods. To the east of the site, was evidence of settlement activity indicating settlement here developed within the Iron Age and then continued through into the later Roman period. Pottery was recovered that dated to the 3rd to 4th centuries AD suggesting that there was a prolonged usage of this area. Along with evidence of domestic activity there were also indications of higher status activity. Within the Roman contexts, many fragments of roof tile and box flue tile, along with Gaulish Samian pottery and a brooch fragment were recovered. To the far east of the site two small wall fragments were partially exposed which also appeared to be of a possible Roman date. Evidence for medieval agricultural activity is also noted, with ditches dating to the mid-11th to 13th century recorded to the south of the site.

5.58 The county archaeologist recommends, should consent be granted, that conditions are attached to require further archaeological investigation and recording in advance of the development. Subject to these conditions, the proposal accords with policy HE10 and the NPPF.

5.59 **Affordable housing & viability of development**

Policy CP24 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan seeks 35% affordable housing on housing sites with a tenure mix of 75% rented and 25% shared ownership housing. Any change to tenure mix or the percentage of affordable housing is required to be supported by a viability assessment.

5.60 To comply with policy CP24 the proposal would require 140 affordable units (105 rented and 35 shared ownership). The applicant proposes 20% provision

of 80 units with a 50% split in tenure mix (40 rent / 40 shared ownership) as an alternative on grounds of viability which is discussed in more detail below.

- 5.61 The NPPF (para 173) states that pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision taking. Plans should be deliverable and sites and scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns and ensure the development is deliverable.
- 5.62 The applicant has produced a viability report to appraise the development proposal. The report is a residual appraisal which assumes present day values and costs, so reflects the viability of the development if it were built out and sold in current market conditions. It identifies the infrastructure costs of this proposal are high and indicates the developer's return will be below competitive benchmark rates. The viability appraisal concludes that the scheme is unable to be delivered if affordable housing is provided in accordance with policy CP24.
- 5.63 The viability is in part driven by the piecemeal approach of the development in relation to the wider site allocation, particularly through the requirement for a secondary access to Denchworth Road. Officers consider an application which covered the wider site allocation would deliver the NLR in its entirety and would negate the need for this secondary access. However, this application must be considered on its own merits.
- 5.64 The viability report has been independently reviewed by an external viability consultant on behalf of the council who confirms the assumptions and inputs used are fair and reasonable and through further investigation with the applicant, confirms the viability case has been robustly made.
- 5.65 As part of negotiations with the applicant, officers have sought an overage clause to capture any uplift in value of the development. This has been rejected by the applicant on grounds of making the site difficult to sell on the open market. Notwithstanding, officers accept the viability case made and consider, on balance, the determination of the application and delivery of this part of the site outweighs the conflict policy CP24.
- 5.66 **CIL & S106 contributions**
Local Plan policy CP7 expects new development to provide the necessary on-site, and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal with them delivered directly by the developer and / or through an appropriate financial contribution. The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all 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.

5.67 The National Planning Guidance provides further advice on how to apply the tests mentioned above and notes the following:

1. Planning obligations assist in mitigating the impact of development which benefits local communities and supports the provision of local infrastructure.
2. Planning obligations should not be sought where they are clearly not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
3. Planning obligations must be fully justified and evidenced. Where affordable housing contributions are being sought, planning obligations should not prevent development from going forward.

5.68 *Community Infrastructure Levy*

This application is not subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Contributions therefore need to be secured through a S106 agreement.

5.69 *S106*

A legal agreement is required to secure affordable housing, the transfer of land for primary school expansion and provision of synthetic turf pitch (STP), contributions towards secondary education, public transport and highways, the transfer of open space and MUGA to the parish council, and contributions towards provision of leisure / sport facilities.

As part of the S106 package, the following contributions have been assessed and are considered fair and proportionate to offset the impact of the development. They have been agreed with the applicant and are included in the viability assessment:

District Council	Amount
Swimming Pools	£187,747
Sports Halls	£170,829
Health & Fitness (studio project)	£81,528
Artificial Grass Pitch	£25,393
MUGA, floodlit	On site - Direct delivery
MUGA maintenance (Grove PC)	£11,600
Indoor bowls	Not justified
Outdoor tennis (4 courts) floodlit	£160,452
Tennis maintenance	£12,836
Cricket pitch and pavilion	£205,879
Public Open Space maintenance (Grove PC)	£1,072,100
Play Maintenance (Grove PC)	£105,600
Public Art (£300 per unit)	£120,000
Waste bins (£170 per unit)	£68,000
Street naming (£134 / 10 units)	£5,360
Dog waste bins (Grove PC)	On site - Direct delivery
Old Mill Hall extension	£41,400

(Grove PC)	
Grove Village Hall new roof (Grove PC)	£13,700
Church Rooms refurbishment (Grove PC)	£13,700
Letcombe Brook Project monitoring	£18,079
Biodiversity offsetting	£123,372

Oxfordshire County Council	Amount
Towards the Wantage Eastern Link Road Phase 3 project	£1,007,280
Towards Public transport services	£359,772
Towards Public transport infrastructure 4 shelters & pole/flag units	£36,885
Rights of Way	£40,000
Travel Plan Monitoring	£2,040
Primary school expansion	£2,577,670
Towards a new secondary school at Grove Airfield	£1,834,951
Towards special educational needs required for the expansion of permanent school capacity at Fitzwaryn School	£80,135
Early years	In Primary school
Primary School STP	Direct Delivery
Primary school STP maintenance	£48,794
Adult day care (Wantage centre)	Not justified
Book Stock - Grove library	Not justified
3rd Party requests	
Thames Valley Police	Not justified
Network Rail	Not justified
TOTALS	
DISTRICT	£2,437,575
OCC	£5,987,527
OVERALL	£8,425,102 (£21,063 per dwelling)

5.70 **Delivery**

To ensure the wider delivery of the site allocation, officers consider it is necessary to ensure access through the site to other land holdings is unencumbered (not ransomed). This can be secured through the legal agreement.

5.71 Officers also draw attention to several legal matters that remain to be resolved in relation to both the NLR crossing of Cow Lane (BOAT) and the secondary access onto Denchworth Road. Both vehicle accesses cross Common Land

and part of the land for the NLR is currently unregistered (and will need to be bound in the S106 agreement to ensure delivery of the road). The applicant has confirmed these matters will be addressed and it is anticipated to be concluded within the next 6 to 12 months.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The application has been assessed on its merits, against the requirements of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1, saved policies of the adopted Local Plan 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework. The application site is part of a strategic housing allocation in the council's adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 to contribute towards the sustainable planned growth of the district.
- 6.2 The application will provide an economic and social role through construction employment, increased investment in the local economy and providing additional market and affordable housing. The application will make contributions towards local infrastructure, provide part of the Northern Link Road together with off-site highway mitigation through a contribution towards the strategic highway infrastructure project of the Wantage Eastern Link Road.
- 6.3 In terms of the environmental role, limited harm has been identified with respects to localised landscape impact and loss of habitats on the site. Mitigation in terms of biodiversity has been agreed to alleviate these impacts. Officers consider that the proposed benefits of the scheme as identified above outweigh the less than substantial harm in this case.
- 6.4 There are no technical objections to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions. Overall in the planning balance, the benefits of the scheme particularly in providing housing towards the district's plan-led need and sustainable growth and provision of contributions towards highways and local infrastructure which will have local and wider benefits, are considered to outweigh the harm that has been identified. As such, it is concluded that the proposal is sustainable development that accords with the development plan. The application is recommended for approval.

The following planning policies have been taken in to account:

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 part 1 policies:

- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
- CP04 - Meeting Our Housing Needs
- CP05 - Housing Supply Ring-Fence
- CP06 - Meeting Business and Employment Needs
- CP07 - Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
- CP15 - Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area
- CP17 - Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South East Vale Sub-Area
- CP18 - Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area
- CP19 - Re-opening of Grove Railway Station
- CP22 - Housing Mix
- CP23 - Housing Density
- CP24 - Affordable Housing
- CP26 - Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population

- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- 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
- CP42 - Flood Risk
- CP43 - Natural Resources
- CP44 - Landscape
- CP45 - Green Infrastructure
- CP46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

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 - The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development
- DC12 - Water Quality and Resources
- DC20 - External Lighting
- TR7 - Rail Services – Grove Station
- HE1 - Preservation and Enhancement: Implications for Development
- HE4 - Development within the Setting of Listed Building
- HE9 - Archaeology
- HE10 - Archaeology
- HE11 - Archaeology
- NE9 - The Lowland Vale
- H23 - Open Space in New Housing Development
- CF2 - Provision of new Community Services and Facilities
- L10 - Safeguard and Improving Public Rights of Way

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 part 2

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031, part 2:

A publication draft of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 has been subject to public consultation, and will be examined in the Summer. Until completion of examination, this Local Plan remains at an early stage of preparation and accordingly its policies have limited weight at present. Notwithstanding, the following policies are material to the consideration of this application:

- CP4a - Meeting Our Housing Needs
- CP15a - Additional Site Allocations for South East Vale Sub-Area
- CP19a - Re-opening of Grove Railway Station
- DP8 - Community Services and Facilities
- DP11 - Community Employment Plans
- DP16 - Access
- DP17 - Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

DP20 - Public Art
DP21 - External Lighting
DP23 - Impact of Development on Amenity
DP24 - Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments
DP25 - Noise Pollution
DP26 - Air Quality
DP27 - Land Affected By Contamination
DP28 - Waste Collection and Recycling
DP30 - Watercourses
DP31 - Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas
DP33 - Open Space
DP34 - Leisure and Sports Facilities
DP36 - Heritage Assets
DP38 – Listed Buildings
DP39 - Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments

Adopted guidance

Vale of White Horse Design Guide SPD – March 2015

Developer Contributions, Delivering Infrastructure to Support Development – June 2017

Neighbourhood Plan

There is currently no neighbourhood plan for Grove.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Other Relevant Legislation

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation
- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
- Provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act (including New Homes Bonus)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

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