

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved). (as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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Strategic Comments

Overall view of Oxfordshire County Council:

Objection

Comments:

This application is a partial amendment of the original which the County Council objected to in May 2015. A revised Transport Assessment is expected in the future, which will necessitate a further consultation and comments.

The site is included as a draft allocation in the Submitted Vale of White Horse Local Plan. In that Plan it is identified as a site for 2,550 homes, a number which is understood to have been derived on the basis of likely deliverability by the end of the Plan period to 2031. 2,550 homes on this site plus other developments in the District were modelled and assessed when the District and the County agreed an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) in November 2014.

The number of houses now being applied for on this site (1,704 more than in the Submitted Local Plan), together with other developments, is of concern to the County Council. The increased number will result in additional pressure on the transport network beyond that assessed to date. The application does not limit the delivery to only 2,550 homes by 2031, but instead allows for more to be built. The suite of proposed strategic mitigations for the District outlined in the November 2014 ETI is not in place and many schemes have yet to be fully designed or funded. In addition, it may be that further schemes are necessary. As the phasing of the development has not been made clear, it is difficult to identify what transport infrastructure will need to be delivered by what year. The County Council will not be in a position to finalise its comments until such time as it has considered the revised Transport Assessment and considered potential mitigation measures.

Despite this concern about the scale of development, the County Council is generally supportive of development in this location as it can provide much needed new schools and housing. The County Council appreciates the efforts that have been made by the applicants to address many of the comments that have been made.

Detailed comments can be found in the annexes, the headlines are:

Objection

- The County Council remains yet to be convinced about whether the surrounding road network will be able to cope with this scale of development, having regard to other planned developments in the vicinity. The results of transport modelling and funding towards planned strategic improvements, together with additional mitigation measures to be proposed by the applicant, will need to be considered.
- The design of the two accesses onto the A4130, the access onto the B4493 and the access mid-way onto the proposed Harwell Link Road, need to be assessed once the revised Transport Assessment is received. It may be that changes to the design and masterplan will be required.
- The additional work now available indicates that the applicant's preferred design for the access to the Science Bridge may be inappropriate in relation to the ecological importance of the grassland and stream in this area. The ecology chapter of the Environmental Statement needs to be revised following assessment of this latest proposal and alternatives should be considered.

Changes that are supported

- The County Council supports the identification of a potential Southern Didcot Relief Road, and the proposed roads through to Great Western Park and the future North West Valley Park.
- The proposed setting aside of 25m to provide for A4130 widening is accepted.
- The provision of additional cycle routes, and more detail on cycling facilities, is supported.

Queries

- A design code which is based on the ideas presented for the spine road is accepted in principle. However, there are a number of points of detail regarding the spine road which remain to be agreed as set out in the annexes e.g. the design of traffic calming, hybrid cycle lanes, bus stops and the quantum of direct vehicle parking on private property. The spine road is of particular importance to the County Council as it will be part of a high frequency bus route (as set out in the Local Transport Plan 4) as well as a key corridor for Valley Park's residents.
- The connections to Public Rights of Way will need to be clarified to ensure that these are used as appropriate both for commuter and leisure trips. Where possible, routes should be available for cyclists rather than being footpaths only.

Matters for Agreement

- A package in accordance with Sections 106 and 278 will need to be agreed should approval be granted.
- The location of the three school sites as set out on the Parameter Plan is generally acceptable. Additional information will be required to ensure that these sites meet the County Council's requirements, for example in relation to noise, the provision of safe access points, and the location of drop off parking.

- The applicant has undertaken the required pre-determination archaeological evaluation. A condition should be imposed requiring a staged programme of archaeological investigation and recording in advance of development.
- Provision of at least 60 Extra Care housing apartments.
- A condition should be imposed requiring an Employment and Skills Plan.

S106 Contributions (please note this is advisory only at this stage and does not include direct delivery S278/S38 costs, further detail can be found in the annexes):

	Towards	Cost Basis	Units	Total
Transport (index linked as identified in this document)	Science Bridge	£2,737 per dwelling	904	£2,474,248
	A4130 widening	£2,737 per dwelling	2,712	£7,422,744
	Harwell Link Road	£2,737 per dwelling	638	£1,746,206
	Public Transport bus services	-	-	£3,600,000
	Bus stop infrastructure	To be agreed		To be agreed
	Public Rights of Way	-		£250,000
	Alterations to Rights of Way	To be agreed		To be agreed
	Framework Master Travel Plan monitoring	-		£7,800
	Supplementary travel plans for schools and local centres	To be agreed at later stages		To be agreed
Education (index linked from 3 rd Quarter 2012)	Two new primary schools on site	The full cost of 2 x 2 form entry primary school @ £8,068,000. Developer delivery of these schools would be an acceptable alternative.	840 (805 places currently assessed)	£16,136,000
	Secondary school capacity at Great Western Park	£21,586 per pupil	714	£15,412,404
	Provision of SEN school capacity on site	£109,000 per pupil	17	£1,853,000
	Land for schools	The provision of 1 x 3.1ha site for a 2FE primary school capable of expansion to 3FE; 1 x 2.2ha site for a 2FE primary school; 1 x 1.6ha site for a SEN school.		To be agreed
Property and Waste (index linked as identified in this document)	Didcot Library	£85 per new resident	9,685	£823,225
	Central Library	£17.15 per new resident	9,685	£166,097.75
	Adult Day Care	£1,100 per new resident aged 65+	1,204	£1,324,400
	Administration and monitoring for property	-		£21,700.56
	Household waste recycling centres	£64 per new resident	9,685	£619,840
			Total	£51,857,664+

Officer's Name: Lynette Hughes
Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer
Date: 28 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

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Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

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Transport

Recommendation:

Objection

The submitted transport assessment to date fails to appraise appropriately the traffic impact of the development and as such fails to demonstrate the residual cumulative effects of the development would not be severe and fails to promote the sustainable transport aspirations of the County Council as Local Highway Authority.

Key issues:

- Traffic Impact
- Highway Safety
- Strategic Transport Infrastructure Delivery

Legal agreement required to secure:

Although the application is currently incomplete pending a revised transport assessment, and the County Council is objecting, advice is given on the likely obligations that will be required under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act, and Sections 38 and 278 of the Highways Act should consent be granted at a later stage. This advice is subject to change once the revised transport assessment is received.

Local Mitigation

Revised traffic impact analysis is awaited along with the applicant's proposed mitigation. The proposed mitigation will need to be approved by the County Council, as Local Highway Authority, along with the means of delivery.

Strategic Transport Infrastructure

£2,737 [Q3 2011 prices, index linked] per dwelling has been established for contributions to improved strategic transport infrastructure in Science Vale, required because of the cumulative impact of growth as set out in the County Council's Local Transport Plan 4. The figure is currently being reviewed, but is unlikely to be revised in time for consideration of this

application. In this instance contributions will be secured towards Science Bridge, A4130 widening and the Harwell Link Road. The amount to be secured to each of these will be determined having regard to the amended Transport Assessment, when received. An indication is given below. The proportion of contribution to each element of strategic infrastructure is indicative and will be determined after receipt of the amended Transport Assessment.

Science Bridge	£2,737 per dwelling	904	£2,474,248
A4130 widening	£2,737 per dwelling	2,712	£7,422,744
Harwell Link Road	£2,737 per dwelling	638	£1,746,206

As per Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 and the Vale of White Horse's draft Local Plan, the development is required to incorporate the following proposed highway access improvements:

- A4130 widening
- Access to Science Bridge
- Harwell Link Road
- A spine road suitable of accommodating an inter-urban bus route
- The Southern Didcot Road safeguarding

Public Transport

£3,600,000 is required to fund additional bus services on a pump-priming basis.

Bus shelters, real-time information displays and pole/flag/information units at bus stops must be provided and a sum provided for maintenance. Bus shelters can possibly be directly delivered by the developer but the costs of the real-time displays, poles and flags will be included in either a s106 or s38 agreement as they need to be sourced from County Council contracts. An indicative cost per stop is £11,000.

Bus stop infrastructure for all bus stops required on site will need to be provided, such as any bus stop cages on the carriageway, hardstandings, connecting footpaths and pedestrian crossing arrangements as appropriate.

Public Rights of Way

£250,000 will be required towards off-site access mitigation measures on public rights of way in the vicinity - principally routes to Harwell and Didcot, including the eastern section of the Driftway. This will fund surface, drainage, furniture and other access infrastructure.

Provision will need to be made for Non-Motorised User connections at Cow Lane over the A34 and the 'community link' route around the western end of GWP.

Travel Plan

£7,800 will be required for the Framework Master Travel Plan which will act as an umbrella travel plan for the whole site. Additional travel plans and associated monitoring fees will be required for any other elements that make up the proposed development and are over the travel plan thresholds.

Conditions:

If the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning permission then imposition of conditions relating to the following matters is recommended:-

- Access. Detailed plans will be required for approval. The application proposes two accesses to the A4130 (one a roundabout); a roundabout between the Harwell Link Road and the spine road on the B4493; a future access mid-way onto the Harwell Link Road; and accesses linking to Great Western Park and the future North West Valley Park. These accesses will need to be designed to meet county council standards having regard to a revised transport assessment.
- No building to be occupied until access to the highway has been constructed.
- Drainage
- Travel Plan
- Construction Traffic Management Plan (which will require the consideration of whether separate haul roads are provided for construction traffic).

Informatives:

Please note the Advance Payments Code (APC), Sections 219 -225 of the Highways Act, is in force in the county to ensure financial security from the developer to off-set the frontage owners' liability for private street works, typically in the form of a cash deposit or bond. Should a developer wish for a street or estate to remain private then to secure exemption from the APC procedure a 'Private Road Agreement' must be entered into with the County Council to protect the interests of prospective frontage owners.

There shall be no diversion or obstruction of public rights of way, nor shall any public right of way be used for vehicular access without the prior permission of Oxfordshire County Council.

Detailed comments:

The submitted amended application does not include a revised transport assessment (TA) and therefore fails to consider appropriately the highway and transport related impact of the development. As submitted, the development would result in severe harm to the safety and convenience of highway users and, furthermore, would not support the sustainable transport aspirations of the County Council as Local Highway Authority.

Whilst not reported in the application documents, the applicant has been in discussion with the County Council and has undertaken considerable modelling and analysis of the highway network. The County Council is awaiting details of this analysis, identification of traffic impact, and the proposed mitigation. The analysis will inform both off-site works and the design of the access arrangements and its integration with the existing highway network and future network with identified strategic improvements. As advised in our previous comments, relevant strategic improvements in the vicinity include the current funded works at the Milton Interchange; the proposed Science Bridge (not yet fully designed nor funded); the Harwell Link Road (consented to in March 2015 - R3.0133/14 – for which the majority of funding has been secured but a portion is outstanding); and the A4130 widening (not yet fully designed nor funded).

This application follows a previous submission earlier and a number of amendments are welcomed, including:-

- Provision for A4130 widening
- Provision for the Harwell Link Road
- Identification of a potential Southern Didcot Relief Road

- Improved permeability, links to Great Western Park and North West Valley Park
- Further consideration of non-motorised highway users and public transport

Accesses and Connection with the Local Highway Network

The County Council has a preference for a 'double roundabout' option for the Science Bridge and access to the A4130. The applicant's proposal is for a single roundabout and this meets design considerations regarding speed and camber. The County Council is open to other design configurations, such as a hamburger type roundabout, to accommodate the predicted traffic flows. The final decision on what sort of access is required in this location on the A4130 has not been agreed and will be informed by the updated TA yet to be submitted and other matters such as ecology. In addition consideration must be given to cyclists, given the A4130 cycle path would be severed by the new access junction.

The western access onto the A4130 is proposed as a signalised junction. Consideration of this awaits the updated TA.

A 5arm roundabout on the B4493, spine road, HLR and a new road into the southern part of the development, has been agreed in principle but the layout has not been agreed as there are still concerns regarding pedestrian/cycle/equestrian access. The detailed design will be informed by the TA and will be subject to an appropriate road safety audit.

The County Council has a preference for a roundabout mid-way on the Harwell Link Road (HLR). Whilst provision is made for a future roundabout in this location, the applicant's proposal is for a form of T-junction. Consideration of this awaits the updated TA.

The Harwell Link Road will connect with the A417 at a roundabout which is just outside of this development site.

Layout

The internal road layout is not necessarily a matter for consideration at this stage; however the following comments are provided to advise future detailed plans.

The layout should provide appropriately for sustainable modes of transport, walking, cycling and public transport. Speed restraint will be required throughout the site to provide a safer and more pleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition to Great Western Park routes and Didcot Town Centre due consideration must be given to routes to major employment areas such as Milton Park and Harwell Campus, which are well within a reasonable cycling distance.

The spine road and primary routes will play a key role in accommodating essential bus services, linking the development with education, employment and other amenities. To support a viable and practical level of service the design of bus routes must ensure that buses are not unduly delayed. On-street parking should be minimised; traffic calming agreed with OCC so as not to preclude the effective operation of public transport; and the quantum of direct frontage vehicular access should be minimised.

The following informal comments are provided with regard to the submitted Design and Access statement:

N-S Main Street

'Hybrid cycle lanes' should be referred to rather than 'online cycle lanes'. It is important to distinguish between painted cycle lanes on the carriageway and hybrid lanes that are segregated from general traffic and pedestrians on footways.

Vignettes

The layouts on pages 59 to 61 of the D&A statement clearly show 1.5m cycle lanes on both sides in addition to the carriageway width. This is appropriate in terms of space for cycling on the carriageway. As the design allows sufficient space for cyclists and other users, there should be a means of separation where appropriate, through a hybrid design where there is some form of physical infrastructure to help protect cycle space from vehicle encroachment (and parking), such as kerbing (the separation of one of the cycle lanes along Donnington Bridge Road in Oxford is an old example of this idea). Alternatively, this can be achieved by raising the height of the cycle lanes to above carriageway but below pavement.

Wherever parking is agreed and provided on the main streets a buffer zone should be provided to protect cyclists from car doors opening.

At the Gateway area it is important that there is a safe, continuous and convenient transfer to connect hybrid cycle lanes to the off-carriageway cycle paths on the A4130.

Bus stops should be 'online' and not in lay-bys. 'Floating bus stops' should be incorporated to enable hybrid cycle lanes to run around the back of bus stops. This minimises the conflict between cyclists, buses and general traffic but also the conflict between bus patrons and cyclists at bus stops.

Cycle parking should be located at bus stops to provide people with options for reaching the premium bus routes from all areas of the development.

Cow Lane bridleway

Much is made of converting this into a green corridor. It's stated that it will be available for all weather use (p 73), which is good, but care is needed that it doesn't become an overgrown wild area of wasteland. It should be lit.

Five arm roundabout

The impact of placing such a potentially busy roundabout along the B4493 on cyclists should not be underestimated. The county council has an aspiration to improve conditions along the B4493 and create a strategic cycling route along it in line with our Science Vale cycling strategy. This roundabout risks undermining improvements elsewhere along the route. A large amount of effort seems to have been put into dealing with the bridleway at the roundabout, despite it only existing for historical reasons rather than because of any significant demand for the east > south movement it provides. There's likely to be a far greater amount of cyclists travelling east > west and north > south (and vice-versa) at this point and little consideration seems to have been given to this. Grade separation (like Kennington junction in Oxford) should be considered.

Reduction in car use

Throughout the Design and Access statement, cycling is scarcely mentioned. Even the statement about reducing car use on page 81 confines cycling's contribution to a couple of sentences. Much more could be made about the positive contribution higher levels of cycling can have on the urban environment, liveable neighbourhoods and health.

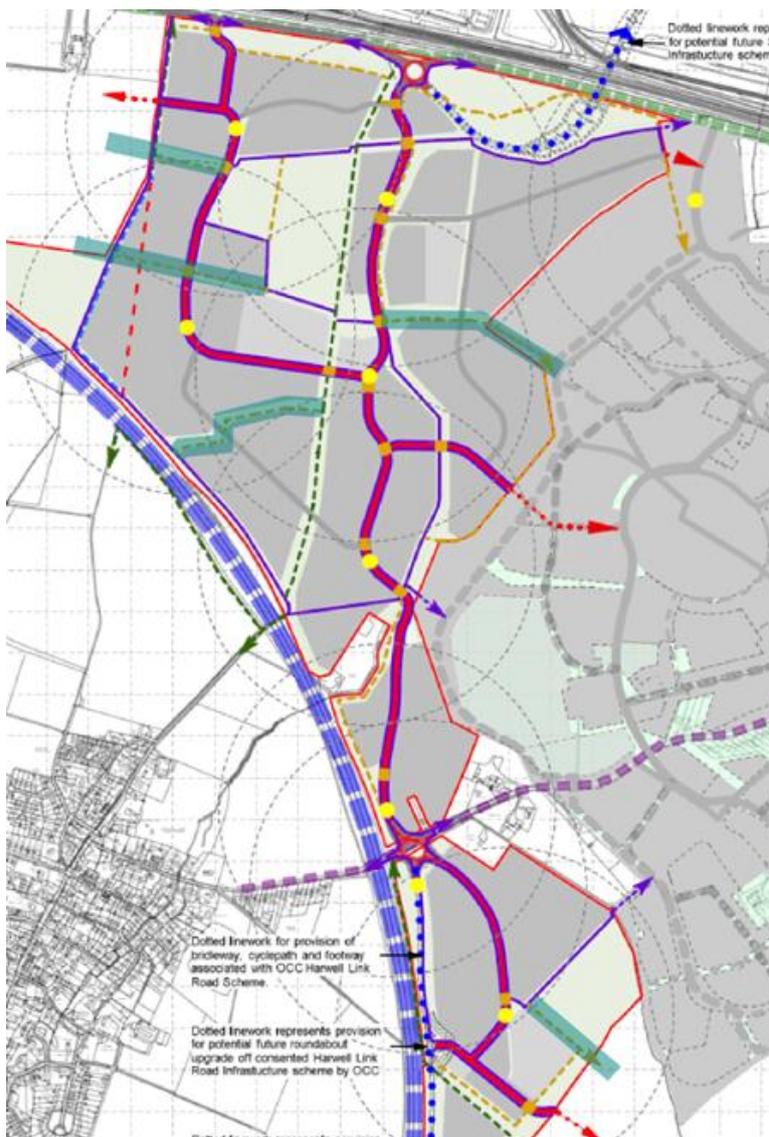
Off-carriageway cycle paths

In general there are good off-road cycle links shown complementing the road network. When it comes to detailed design it's important both are integrated properly

and not considered two separate stand-alone networks. For busier off-road paths, the aim should be for segregation (along the lines of the Marston Ferry Road cycle path in Oxford), for quieter routes in terms of footfall and cyclists, shared-use is fine.

The revised route of the path from the Cow Lane A34 crossing to a point suitable for access into Great Western Park is as previously requested and should enable a good direct route from Didcot through Great Western Park and Valley Park and on to Harwell.

Some paths are shown on the movement plan as being footpaths only. In general, these routes should be available for cyclists as well unless there's a parallel or more convenient alternative and, in reality, cyclists will use them anyway. It's particularly important that all footpaths into Great Western Park, North West Valley Park and Cow Lane are available for cyclists (turquoise highlights on map below).

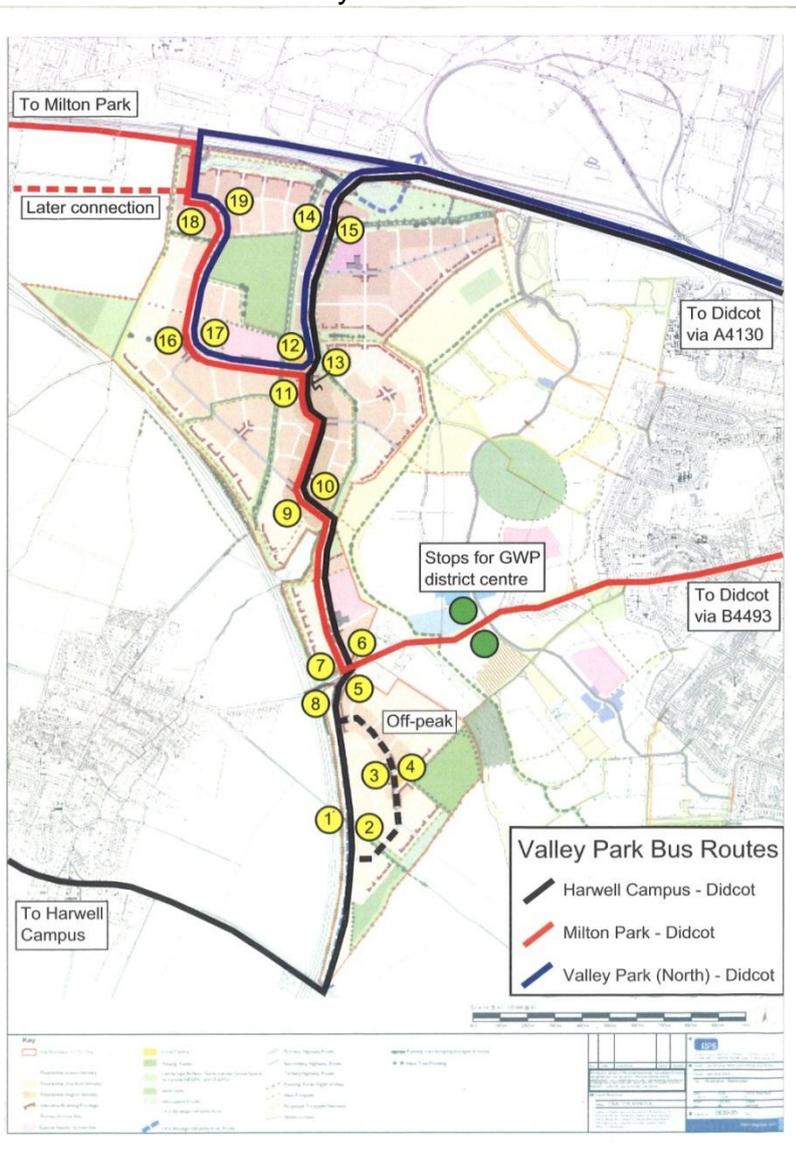


With regard to detailed design specification and highway adoption it is recommended the applicant continues discussion with the County Council's Road Agreements Team.

Public Transport

There is recognition in the Vision contained in the Design and Access Statement of the intention to make the development attractive for long term viable bus routes as follows: 'Public transport will help to create a sustainable, connected and accessible neighbourhood, with extensive opportunities for public transport operators to run viable bus routes through the site. The main internal strategic route has provision for a high frequency bus route running between the A4130 and A417, and will utilise the proposed Harwell Strategic Link Road through the south of the site. Equally important is the provision of opportunities for east-west movement between Great Western Park/Didcot town and North West Valley Park. The highest density development will be along the bus routes, ensuring the largest number of people can access these services, and also assisting with their viability.'

There is some inconsistency later with some drawings (e.g. the Proposed Bus Connections Plan) not showing a bus route through the Harwell Link Road. We consider that utilisation of the spine road and the HLR will ensure the most direct and fastest bus route between Didcot and Harwell Campus and therefore envisage its use. The following is a map of possible bus routes advised in our May 2015 comment:



The alignment and design of the spine road is of fundamental importance to the delivery of bus services to this large development. The proposal for a 6.75m wide carriageway for the

spine road, widened on bends to accommodate buses, should be sufficient to cater for this bus route. It is absolutely essential that buses can proceed along the spine road at a reasonable speed, as appropriate for an 'inter-urban' bus service. The location of Valley Park, between Harwell Campus and Didcot, means that designers must create a road suitable for inter-urban bus operation. An attractive route for bus operation will eventually result in more buses being operated on a commercial basis, probably offering residents with direct connection to Oxford, for example.

At Reserved Matters stages, or in the proposed Design Code, it is expected that the needs of schools will be further considered, so parental cars do not impede the flow of buses. The locations of bus stops can also be formalised at these later stages.

Bus services must become commercially viable after a period of pump-priming financial support. Bus services will only become commercially viable if they are attractive to future residents, or to people travelling to this site. The fundamentals of an attractive bus service include directness (as perceived), frequency, comfort and reasonable fares.

Considerable financial support will be required to pump-prime the initial bus services to and from this development. It is currently envisaged that five additional vehicles will be required in the local bus network, and these require pump-priming towards commercial viability at an estimated cost to the developer of £3.6 million [2015 prices]. The procurement method for these buses is to be agreed during the negotiation of the S106, prior to the release of any planning permission.

A detailed bus service specification will require agreement, as will the means of procurement. Agreement will need to be reached over the most appropriate method of procurement, given uncertainties over speed of housing delivery, uncertainty over availability of dates of opening of the spine road and HLR, and indeed, inherent uncertainty over delivery of other infrastructure schemes in the Science Vale area.

Bus shelters will be required for the bus stops. The shelters themselves can be procured directly by the developer but real-time information display units and the poles and flags must be sourced through the County Council. The developer should confirm with Harwell Parish Council regarding future maintenance arrangements for bus shelters. Given the size of the development, the promoter may wish to consider an advertising-shelter arrangement, which would ensure maintenance and cleaning of the shelters at no cost to the developer or Parish Council. The number of bus stops will be identified in the detailed design. Some 18 new bus stops are envisaged in the diagram above and the estimated cost for shelters and stop units (poles with flags) at all of these stops is some £183,000 or £10,200 per stop. Real-time information displays at 3 stops works out to an additional £15,000 or £5,000 per stop. The total in this scenario is therefore estimated to be in the order of £198,000 or £11,000 per stop and includes a commuted maintenance sum.

The work done to prepare vignettes at this stage to indicate the likely design of the spine road and the east-west main street is appreciated. In respect of bus services it is noted that ramps may not be appropriate if they serve to delay buses or make the bus ride uncomfortable but it is accepted that the vignettes say that this is to be agreed with OCC. There is also a concern that direct access to on-curtilage car parking may inappropriately interfere with the bus route, and therefore this should be minimised.

Public Rights of Way

No changes to any public right of way direction, width, surface, signing or structures shall be made without appropriate legal procedure, including prior consultation.

The development will affect existing Rights of Way on the site and in the surrounding area due to the amount and frequency of increased use and the impacts of increased vehicular traffic. Public rights of way through the site should be integrated with the development and improved to meet the pressures caused by the development whilst retaining their character where appropriate. The number of vehicular access roads that cut across the public rights of way should be limited and controlled crossings should be provided on any internal road which cut across public rights of way where necessary.

Routes within the site should be easy to use and the area should be permeable for walkers and cyclists to maximise journeys without cars. This could include upgrading some of the Great Western Park routes that provide onward connections so that more users are able to benefit. There needs to be a strategic network out and through the site for equestrian users, especially for routes linking to the Driftway. The network of routes inside the development do not have to be public rights of way – they could just be tracks designated and maintained as part of permanent public open space provision.

Financial contributions and derived improvements would be focused on PRow measures for walkers, cyclists and equestrians, not used for commuting or transport measures, as PRow are generally lower cost and lower spec. Contributions include a period of bedding in and future maintenance. £250,000 is sought for off-site access mitigation measures to public rights of way, to fund surface, drainage, furniture and other public rights of way access infrastructure; on connecting routes and key countryside access assets including the Thames Path and Ridgeway National Trails.

The following comments relate to specific proposals in the amended application:

Five arm roundabout B4493

The submitted illustrative masterplan appears to show excessively complicated provision for walkers, cyclists and equestrians to travel east/west between Harwell and Didcot and travel to and from the Driftway. The 3 or 4 arm version for the OCC scheme alongside the Pegasus controlled crossing of the B4493 east of the roundabout provided a reasonable compromise. Grade separation for north and south sides of the B4493 and for the crossing points of the roundabout to enable north/south and east/west safe passage would be welcomed.

Cow Lane

Cow Lane needs integrating with the development as a vehicle traffic free green route with good passive surveillance. It may need lighting if the proposed use is for year round use by families and commuters.

The Driftway

The Driftway also needs integrating with the development and may need lighting. Any road crossings need to have appropriate controlled crossing facility (e.g. a Pegasus crossing) and be kept to a minimum in order to preserve the route's integrity. The development should provide the additional financial means to enable provision for any altered route of the Driftway when the HLR is constructed. This may include crossing points, surfaces and linking routes etc.

Travel Plan

The location of the Valley Park site next to GWP is a considerable distance from some of the facilities that residents will need to access in Didcot. Good links for all modes of travel will be key to making the development as permeable as possible. The Framework Master Travel Plan should include details of how the site will link with the existing walking and cycling networks as well as any new provision that will be created. The plan should include a masterplan showing walking and cycling links across the development along with details of sustainable travel initiatives such as car clubs, electric car charging points, bus routes and forthcoming improvements, cycle parking locations and bike purchase schemes

The Framework Master Travel Plan will need to be submitted and approved by the Travel Plan Team at Oxfordshire County Council before first occupation. A travel information pack will also need to be developed for every dwelling. This will also be submitted for approval by the Travel Plan Team before first occupation.

The Oxfordshire County Council Guidance document, *Transport for New Developments: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans* (March 2014) sets out travel plan requirements. Travel plan monitoring fees of £7,800 are required for the Framework Master Travel Plan which will act as an umbrella travel plan for the whole site. In addition to this, additional travel plans / travel plan statements and associated monitoring fees will be required for any of the other elements that make up the proposed development and are over the travel plan thresholds. Further monitoring fees may be required to cater for extended monitoring over a long period given the scale of this development.

Drainage

Before the commencement of the development, a fully designed scheme utilising a sustainable drainage system for the surface water drainage of the development must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and once approved the scheme must be implemented prior to the occupation of any dwelling to which the scheme relates. This is to ensure the effective and sustainable drainage of the site and to avoid flooding.

Officer's Name: Geoffrey Arnold

Officer's Title: Principal Engineer

Date: 28 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

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Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Archaeology

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

The applicant has undertaken the archaeological evaluation that we requested and we are now in receipt of a brief interim report of the results.

The evaluation targeted the anomalies identified by a geophysical survey. Three definite archaeological sites have been identified within an extensive agricultural field system.

We would recommend that should consent be granted that conditions are attached that will require a staged programme of archaeological investigation and recording in advance of development.

Legal agreement required to secure:

None

Conditions:

1. Prior to any demolition and the commencement of the development a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application site area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - To safeguard the recording of archaeological matters within the site in accordance with the NPPF (2012)

2. Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 1, and prior to any demolition on the site and the commencement of the development (other than in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation), a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation shall be carried out by the

commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The programme of work shall include all processing, research and analysis necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason – To safeguard the identification, recording, analysis and archiving of heritage assets before they are lost and to advance understanding of the heritage assets in their wider context through publication and dissemination of the evidence in accordance with the NPPF (2012).

Informatives:

None

Detailed comments:

The applicant has undertaken the archaeological evaluation that we requested and we are now in receipt of a brief interim report of the results.

The archaeological evaluation has targeted anomalies that were identified by a geophysical survey of the application area. Three archaeological sites were identified. A substantial polygonal double ditched enclosure was revealed. Within this was a ring ditch, circular enclosures, postholes and pits. The dating suggests a relatively long period of occupation and activity from the Later Bronze Age to the second century AD.

Two Romano British sites were also revealed. One appears to be a small settlement site that includes ditches, pits and post holes within a boundary ditch. The presence of tile confirms structures were present. The site appears to be predominantly of first and second century date. A second Romano British site was also identified. This comprised of a rectangular enclosure with internal features and external ditches. A second possible enclosure was also found. These appear to date from the second to the fourth centuries AD.

Trenching was also undertaken across the entire application area. A large proportion of the trenches revealed linear ditches predominantly on north-east/south-west and north-west/southeast alignments. Most of them contain Roman pottery and appear to form part of an extensive field system supporting small settlements of farmsteads.

Some trenching within the current application area was undertaken as part of the previous Great Western Park evaluation phase. This revealed some archaeological features, including ring ditches. No further trenching of was undertaken but further investigation of them will form part of the overall mitigation for this development.

We would, therefore, recommend that, should planning permission be granted, the applicant should be responsible for ensuring the implementation of a staged programme of archaeological investigation to be undertaken in advance of development. This can be ensured through the attachment of suitable negative conditions.

Officer's Name: Hugh Coddington

Officer's Title: Archaeology Team Leader

Date: 27 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Economy and Skills

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

- The construction of the proposed development will create a significant number of new construction jobs
- The level of employment generated on this strategic development site will require the developers to prepare and implement an Employment & Skills Plan

Conditions:

- The developers will be required to prepare and implement, with local agencies and providers, an Employment & Skills Plan (ESP) that will ensure, as far as possible, that local people have access to training (including apprenticeships) and employment opportunities available at the construction phase of this proposed development.

Detailed Comments:

Recent policy initiatives relating to skills development are contained in:

- The Oxfordshire City Deal
- Oxfordshire European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy
- Strategic Economic Plan

The recently launched Oxfordshire Skills Strategy has five strategic priorities:

- SP1: To meet the needs of local employers through a more integrated and responsive approach to education and training: developed in partnership with our provider network, to encourage more training provision in priority sectors - both current and projected - to meet the needs of employers or to train future entrepreneurs, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

- SP2: Creating the 'skills continuum' to support young people through their learning journey: the ambition is to develop integrated, seamless services that support young people through school and on into training, further education, employment or business, where they understand the full breadth of career options, including local demand, and the training path to succeed in that career.
- SP3: Up-skilling and improving the chances of young people and adults marginalised or disadvantaged from work, based on moving them closer to the labour market.
- SP4: To increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities, particularly those offered by small to medium sized businesses.
- SP5: To explore how we can better retain graduates within Oxfordshire to meet the demand for the higher level skills our businesses need.

Employment and skills planning justification

A better, appropriately skilled local workforce can provide a pool of talent to both developers and end occupiers. This will reduce the need to import skills, and in doing so reduce congestion and unsustainable travel to work modes, reduce carbon emissions and the pressure on the local housing infrastructure.

Seeking skills and training planning obligations or conditions to maximise the potential of the existing population to compete for the jobs being created, whether during the construction phase or end user phase, through improving their skills levels, is necessary to ensure that future development is economically and socially sustainable, and that barriers to employment for those marginalised from the workforce are removed.

Developers often identify projected training and employment outcomes as part of the justification for development. It is important therefore that the impacts of economic development are mitigated and the economic benefits of new development in terms of improved local skills and employment outcomes are realised.

Not only is it clear that skills levels are a key determinant of a sustainable local economy, but they also have an impact on employment opportunities and thus an individual's economic prosperity. Up-skilling the area's labour force will be key to maintaining economic competitiveness.. Securing obligations for skills development and employment of local people will be necessary to enhance social inclusion by reducing the potential for economic and social disparity, another key policy driver at the local level.

Officer's Name: Dawn Pettis

Officer's Title: Economic Development Strategy Officer

Date: 21 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Education

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

Dialogue is continuing with the applicants over the details of school provision, but subject to the satisfactory conclusion of these negotiations, Education does not object to this application.

Based on the information available at this time, it is assessed that this development will generate 805 primary (mainstream schools) pupils (aged 4-10), 714 secondary (mainstream schools) pupils and 17.0 SEN pupils. It will also generate over 200 2- and 3-year olds, and early years education provision will need to be made for these.

Education provision for this development will be through:

- New primary schools, within the site. These will include early years provision.
- New secondary schools, off-site.
- A new Special School, on-site.

Legal Agreement required to secure:

Sites and full costs of the necessary number and scale of new primary schools, to include early years education provision. This is currently assessed to be two, 2 form entry schools, at £8,068,000 each, totalling £16,136,000 (index linked from 3rd Quarter 2012 using PUBSEC Tender Price Index).

Contributions towards the cost of building new secondary schools to serve Didcot. A 1200 place school, at 3Q12 prices, is assessed to cost £25,902,803, or £21,586 per pupil. For the currently estimated generation of 714 mainstream secondary pupils, this would therefore require a contribution of £15,412,404 (index linked from 3rd Quarter 2012 using PUBSEC Tender Price Index).

A site for a new SEN school, and contributions towards the cost of construction. The cost of a 100 pupil SEN school is estimated by Turner & Townsend at £10.9m (based on 2Q10 figures). This excludes land costs, zero carbon supplement and project management cost. For the currently estimated generation of 17.0 SEN pupils, this would therefore require a contribution of £1,853,000.

In each case, contributions are subject to change based on the level of affordable housing, confirmed housing mix and planned build rate.

Conditions:

Planning permission to be dependent on a satisfactory agreement to secure the resources required for the necessary expansion of education provision. This is in order for Oxfordshire County Council to meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficient school and early education places.

Detailed Comments:

The technical requirements for the school sites are covered in the Property section of this report. Sufficient information would need to be provided to the OCC property consultants to allow a judgement to be made on the suitability of the proposed school site and surrounding layout of the development. Sites would need to be provided fully serviced and at no cost to the county council.

Primary education

Based on the information currently available, this development will need to provide 2 new primary schools, each of which would be 2 form entry, which in total would provide 840 places for the 4-10 age range, plus early years provision. Each would need a site of 2.22ha.

Changes to the proposed mix or build rate would affect this calculation. Given the inevitable uncertainty over precise generation, it is necessary to protect the ability of the Valley Park primary schools to provide more than four forms of entry between them, at least for peak years and possibly permanently. It is therefore required that one of the schools has a site area of 3.1ha to allow it to grow to up to 3 forms of entry, either through permanent or temporary accommodation, as appropriate. This would provide a total of up to 950 primary school places (Reception-Key Stage 2) plus nursery places. It could be acceptable for the Masterplan to be designed such that the additional 0.9ha of school site area be made available for other uses (e.g. public play area or open space) if/when it becomes no longer necessary for school provision. Of the school sites identified on the indicative master-plan, it is suggested that the northern school would be more suitable to be the 3 form entry site.

The development would be expected to fully fund the number and scale of primary schools related to its generation. At 3Q12 costs, the required contributions per 2 form entry school are £8,068,000.

In each case these schools will include provision for early years education, and no further county council contributions towards early years education would be required. However, as much of early years education is provided by the private, voluntary & independent sector, the development may want to consider also including provision for additional early years education, for example accommodation for a private nursery school.

As an alternative to financial contributions, the developer may choose to directly deliver the school buildings, in line with OCC's specification and standards.

Secondary education

The scale of planned and proposed housing growth in the Didcot area requires significant strategic growth in secondary school capacity. One new school is due to open on the Great Western Park development in 2017, co-located with a University Technical College which opened in 2015. This development is expected to contribute towards the cost of this new school in a manner proportionate to its pupil generation.

SEN education

The number on roll in special schools has risen over recent years from 795 in 2007 to 998 in 2015. The special school population is expected to continue to grow as new housing is built and the already rising birth rate feeds through, and may also be affected by reforms to special educational needs government policy. The existing SEN schools have already identified a growing pressure on available capacity. Expansions are planned at a number of schools, but there is no existing SEN school in the Didcot area, and the scale of population growth planned for this area will require a new SEN school, which has been included within the boundaries of this proposed development. This is planned to serve the full age range, with a capacity of 100 pupils.

For the purposes of developer contributions, the SEN calculation is based on 1.11% of children being expected to require SEN provision, this percentage in turn being based on pupil census data for Oxfordshire.

Officer's Name: Barbara Chillman

Officer's Title: Pupil Place Planning Manager

Date: 09 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Property

Recommendation:

No objection subject to conditions

Key issues:

Education sites

- The education sites must be free from encumbrances and delivered in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council requirements. Guidance on the County Council's requirements is provided in the attached *26395 Educational Requirements for Residential Developments*.
- The education sites to be conveyed freehold to the County Council at no cost to the County Council.
- Oxfordshire Property and Facilities must gain access to visit the proposed education site.
- Any joint use of the education facilities can only be agreed following discussion and agreement with the County Council and its consultants as required.
- Any area designated as a site for a school shall be cleared of all existing underground and overground services/drainage.
- All guidance in the attached developer guidance *26395 Educational Requirements for Residential Developments* must be satisfied.

The applicant must engage and consult Oxfordshire Property and Facilities to ensure these requirements are met.

Information will be required to enable proper evaluation of the proposed education sites in consultation with Oxfordshire Property & Facilities including the following:

- Topographical survey, with the sites clearly defined in DGW format
- Existing and anticipated noise levels across the site
- Geo environmental desk top study

Without the appropriate level of information it is not possible to take a view on the sites suitability for education use.

Indicative location of buildings on school sites

Locations of buildings on school sites have been indicatively shown within the Design and Access Statement. However, the actual layout of school sites will be determined by the County Council and must be such that buildings are not constrained due to their proximity to other buildings or to the boundary. The location of school buildings will be established through consideration of the best value solutions that meet the schools' educational, safeguarding and management requirements.

Special Educational Needs school site

It is noted that the SEN school site has been relocated from the previous master plan. This should reduce the noise on the school site but the County Council will still require existing and anticipated noise levels across all the school sites. The SEN site will also need to comply with our requirements as previously issued particularly the 150 m frontage with the two front entrances for pupil drop off.

Primary and Special school drop-off

To mitigate congestion the Developer shall show through a Transport Assessment (TA) the expected number of pupils to be driven to the schools and identify parking spaces either on the adopted highway or other fully maintained areas to the satisfaction of the highway authority once the land for the school has been agreed and prior to the implementation of the development.

Extra Care Housing

Provision for Extra Care Housing and other housing designed for older people in accordance with details to be agreed.

General

- The County Council considers that the impacts of the development proposal (if permitted) will place additional strain on its existing community infrastructure.
- The following housing development mix has been used:

570 x One Bed Dwellings
1123 x Two Bed Dwellings
1678 x Three Bed Dwellings
883 x Four Bed Dwellings
35% affordable housing
buildout over 20 years

- It is calculated that this development would generate a net increase of:

9685 additional residents including:

1204 resident/s aged 65+
7140 residents aged 20+
934 resident/s ages 13-19
517 resident/s ages 0-4

Legal Agreement required to secure contributions towards:

• Library	£823,225.00
• Central Library	£166,097.75
• Waste Management	£619,840.00 (subject to review)
• Adult Day Care	£1,324,400.00
Total*	<u>£1,741,562.75</u>

*Total to be Index-linked see detailed comments

• Administration & Monitoring	£21,700.56
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The County Council's legal fees in drawing up and/or completing a legal agreement will need to be secured.

Conditions:

- The County Council as Fire Authority has a duty to ensure that an adequate supply of water is available for fire-fighting purposes. There will probably be a requirement to affix fire hydrants within the development site. Exact numbers and locations cannot be given until detailed consultation plans are provided showing highway, water main layout and size. We would therefore ask you to add the requirement for provision of hydrants in accordance with the requirements of the Fire & Rescue Service as a condition to the grant of any planning permission

Informatives:

- Fire & Rescue Service recommends that new dwellings should be constructed with sprinkler systems

Detailed comments:

Local Library

This development is served by Didcot Library. This provision is significantly under-size in relation to its catchment population and this development will therefore place additional pressures on the library service. Costs for improvements are based upon the costs of extending a library.

The costs of extending a library is £2,370 per m² at 1st Quarter 2012 price base; this equates to £65 (£2,370 x 27.5 / 1,000) per resident.

This calculation is based on Oxfordshire County Council adopted standard for publicly available library floor space of 23 m² per 1,000 head of population, and a further 19.5% space is required for support areas (staff workroom, etc.), totalling 27.5 m² per 1,000 head of population.

The development proposal would also generate the need to increase the core book stock held by 2 volumes per additional resident. The price per volume is £10.00 at 1st Quarter 2012 price base; this equates to £20 per resident.

- The contribution for the provision of library infrastructure and supplementary core book stock in respect of this application would therefore be based on the following formula:

$$\mathbf{£85 \times 9685 \text{ (the forecast number of new residents)} = \mathbf{£823,225.00}}$$

Central Library

Central Library in Oxford serves the whole county and requires remodelling to support service delivery that includes provision of library resources across the county.

Remodelling of the library at 3rd Quarter 2013 base prices leaves a funding requirement still to be secured is £4,100,000. 60% of this funding is collected from development in the Oxford area. The remainder 40% is spread across the four other Districts. 40% of 4.1M = £1,604,000.

Population across Oxfordshire outside of Oxford City District is forecast to grow by 93,529 to year 2026. £1,604,000 ÷ 93,529 people = £17.15 per person

- The contribution for the provision of central library infrastructure in respect of this application would therefore be based on the following formula:

$$\mathbf{£17.15 \times 9685 \text{ (the forecast number of new residents)} = \mathbf{£166,097.75}}$$

Strategic Waste Management

Under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, County Councils, as waste disposal authorities, have a duty to arrange for places to be provided at which resident in its area may deposit their household waste and for the disposal of that waste.

The demand for Oxfordshire's Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC) exceeds capacity and the County Council is currently consulting on how unmet demand and future demand can be mitigated. As this site will add additional pressure at HWRCs a contribution towards the cost of increasing capacity is required and an appropriate contribution will be notified to the District when the consultation has concluded and costings are known.

The current methodology is based on a new site serving 20,000 households, costed in the region of £3,000,000 at 1st Quarter 2012 price base, equating to £64 per resident.

- The contribution for the provision of strategic waste management infrastructure in respect of this application would therefore be based on the following formula:

$$\mathbf{£64 \times 9685 \text{ (the forecast number of new residents)} = \mathbf{£619,840}}$$

Social & Health Care - Day Care Facilities

This development is served by Didcot Day Centre and this development will place additional pressures on this adult day care facility. To meet the additional pressures on day care provision the County Council is looking to reprovide adult day care facility in Didcot Day Centre delivering a new Health and Wellbeing Resource Centre.

Contributions are based upon a new Day Care centre offering 40 places per day (optimum) and open 5 days per week; leading to an equivalent costing of £11,000 per place at 1st Quarter 2012 price base (this in non-revenue). Based on current and predicted usage figures we estimate that 10% of the over 65 population use day care facilities. Therefore the cost per person aged 65 years or older is £1,100.

- The contribution for the provision of adult day care infrastructure in respect of this application would therefore be based on the following formula:

$$\mathbf{\pounds 1,100 \times 1204 \text{ (the forecast number of new residents aged 65+)} = \pounds 1,324,400.00}$$

Integrated Youth Support Service

The Early Intervention Service offers high quality early intervention and specialist services to children, young people and families with additional complex needs, both through county council staff and across partner agencies.

All community partner agencies are actively involved in service delivery to ensure integrated and inclusive solutions to best improve outcomes for children and young people from birth to 19 years (up to 25 years where there are special educational needs).

The Didcot Early Intervention Hub is currently operating at capacity in the delivery of specialist services.

The proposed development and other planned development in and around Didcot will generate further demands on the Early Intervention Service. This proposal is forecast to generate 934 residents aged 13-19.

To adequately address the increased needs, the County Council supports 15sqm of storage for youth kit to be designed into the community hall. This storage space should be able to be accessed internally and externally.

Adult Learning

The Adult Learning Service is now delivered by Abingdon & Witney College. The County Council supports provision of facilities and flexible community space from which to deliver adult learning activities and associated storage requirements.

This proposal is forecast to generate 4605 residents aged 20+.

To adequately address the increased needs, the County Council supports a community hub and brief that can deliver flexible accommodation that is suitable for adult learning and other community group use.

Extra Care Housing

No specific provision is identified in the masterplan for extra care housing for older persons or any other housing for older people. It may be that this has simply been overlooked as the masterplan does not detail many individual uses. The application planning statement refers to the fact that Core Policy 26 requires provision for older persons on strategic sites. The planning statement also indicates that the development is intended to have mixed uses and to be inclusive. The County Council considers there is a need for between 60 and 80 extra

care housing apartments which should be provided in one building on this development on a mixed tenure basis in order to meet demographic growth projections for the retired population. Contact can be made with Nigel Holmes at Oxfordshire County Council to discuss this provision. As the amended application does not show the location of Extra Care Housing nor indicate what other provision will be made for housing for older persons, a condition will need to be imposed requiring provision of at least 60-80 Extra Care Housing units, in association with whatever provision is required by the District Council.

Administration

Oxfordshire County Council requires an administrative payment of £21,700.56 for the purposes of administration and monitoring of the proposed S106 agreement, including elements relating to Education. The admin fee may increase depending on the value of any Transport related monitoring.

Indexation

Financial contributions have to be indexed-linked to maintain the real values of the contributions (so that they can in future years deliver the same level of infrastructure provision currently envisaged). The price bases of the various contributions are covered in the relevant sections above.

General

The contributions requested have been calculated on the basis stated above. The final level of contributions required will be dependent on the final unit mix, the level of affordable housing and the number of years over which the development will be built.

The contributions which are being sought are necessary to protect the existing levels of infrastructure for local residents. They are relevant to planning the incorporation of this major development within the local community, if it is implemented. They are directly related to this proposed development and to the scale and kind of the proposal.

Officer's Name: Oliver Spratley

Officer's Title: Corporate Landlord Officer

Date: 12 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Ecology

Recommendation:

Objection

Key issues:

- The current application shows land within the application site reserved for the route of the new Science Bridge. The Illustrative Masterplan shows a proposed alignment of the road. The area proposed for the road and Meadows Park (the name given in the application to the area of land that the road would enclose) is the area of Valley Park site stated in the Ecology chapter of the Environmental Statement as being the most ecologically valuable. This northern area of the site contains UK Priority Habitat of Unimproved Neutral Lowland Meadow Grassland and a stream, a UK Priority Habitat containing European Protected Species, which acts as a wildlife corridor, along with its associated trees and vegetation.
- The application does not assess the impact of the proposals and the indicative layout in this northern part of the site on ecology. The proposals could result in the loss and fragmentation of the majority or all of these UK Priority Habitats failing to fully assess the impacts on biodiversity and then avoid if possible, or minimise, mitigate and compensate for the impacts, contrary to National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 9, 109 and 118, policies NE1 and NE4 of the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan (2006) and Core Policy 46 of the emerging Local Plan 2031.

Detailed comments:

- I consider that the proposals are contrary to policies NE1 and NE4 of the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan (2006). NE1 states that developments that are likely to affect a UK Priority Habitat must be accompanied by “...an ecological appraisal which enables a proper assessment to be made of the impact of the proposed development on the ecological value of the site” and, in NE4:

“Development likely to harm a site of nature conservation importance not covered in policies NE2 and NE3 will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the reason for the development clearly outweighs the need

to safeguard the nature conservation value of the site and adequate compensatory habitats will be provided.”

- The proposed development also appears contrary to Core Policy 46 of the emerging Local Plan 2031, which is currently at Examination. The policy states that:

“Development likely to result in the loss, deterioration or harm to habitats or species of importance to biodiversity...will not be permitted unless:

 - i. The need for, and benefits of, the development in the proposed location outweighs the adverse effect on the relevant biodiversity interest;*
 - ii. It can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the biodiversity interests; and*
 - iii. Measures can be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate against or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects likely to result from development.*
- Therefore, I object to the current application and recommend that the applicant works with the County Council’s South & Vale Locality Team and their ecological advisors to assess alternative route alignments and construction designs to consider how to avoid or mitigate impacts on these UK Priority Habitats and the species they support.

Loss of UK Priority Habitat

- Unimproved Neutral Grassland cannot be recreated in the short to medium term. Its value is not only the species that form the grassland but the unimproved nature of the site.
- The Illustrative Masterplan (Drawing number 0039-22) shows the stream (a UK Priority Habitat containing protected species) realigned to the immediate south of the Science Bridge road appearing to be in a very narrow corridor and it is unclear whether this realigned corridor would be of sufficient size for its ecological function.
- The alignment of the proposed road shown in the application appears to lead to the direct loss of UK Priority Habitat Unimproved Neutral Grassland and would result in fragmentation of the remaining grassland habitats in that area. The proposals in the Design & Access statement (page 72, Meadows Park) show ponds and tree/shrub planting on the UK Priority Habitat grassland, which would result in further loss and degradation of remaining UK Priority habitats. The area would be subject to disturbance from the proposed public access to the site and there is no reference to appropriate management and maintenance of the grassland linked to the particular requirements of Unimproved Grassland.
- The application does not assess the impact on biodiversity of the proposed road, construction of the road, realignment of the watercourse, or the Meadows Park area, nor does it consider whether alternative designs and alignments, including allowing more land for the road scheme, could avoid or reduce these impacts.
- The Ecology chapter of the Environmental Statement is not based on the current proposals that include the road and the remaining UK Priority Habitat grassland being fragmented by ponds and planting. Therefore, the impact of this has not been assessed within the application. In the Ecology chapter it is recommended that the UK

Priority Habitats are retained and there is no discussion of the impacts of the proposed Science Bridge and its impacts.

- The red line for the application boundary includes the whole northern area of the site and the access arrangements and housing layout (as shown in the Illustrative Masterplan) are designed around the land-take of the proposed road alignment, therefore the impacts of the road should be fully assessed in Ecology Report for the Valley Park application and accurately reflected in the Planning Statement.

Public Open Space

- The Combined Parameters Plan shows part of the grassland to the east of the Science Bridge plus the realigned stream corridor as Public Open Space. Therefore, I assume that this is proposed as counting towards the green space allowance for the residential development. I am concerned about the pressure on areas that should be managed for conservation in the context of the density of development on the Valley Park site.

Residential Development

- In relation to the residential development and associated infrastructure, the District Council should be seeking the advice of their in-house ecologist who can advise them on this application, particularly regarding buffer zones to retained ecological features (such as hedgerows, trees and watercourses) in that part of the site and impact on farmland birds.
- In addition, the following guidance document on Biodiversity & Planning in Oxfordshire combines planning policy with information about wildlife sites, habitats and species to help identify where biodiversity should be protected. The guidance also gives advice on opportunities for enhancing biodiversity:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/planning-and-biodiversity>

Officer's Name: Tamsin Atley

Officer's Title: Ecologist Planner

Date: 28 October 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Fire Service

Recommendation:

No objection

Detailed comments:

Access for Firefighting:

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (OFRS) assumes that access to the proposed sites and to the premises will be in accordance with the guidance in the current edition of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations volumes 1 & 2.

Water Supplies for Fire fighting:

We strongly recommend the provision of adequate and appropriate water supplies (fire hydrants) in accordance with the guidance in the current edition of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations volumes 1 & 2. we would also recommend that the development conforms to British Standards BS 9999:2008 (Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings – Section 23 Water supplies for fire and rescue service use - 23.2 Location and access to external water supply) & BS 9990 (Code of practice for non-automatic fire-fighting systems in buildings – Section 5, Private fire hydrants - 5.2 Provision and Siting)

Automatic Water Suppression Systems:

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service also believe that fitting of Automatic Water Suppression Systems (AWSS) will materially assist in the protection of life, property and fire fighter safety. AWSS such as sprinklers and water mist systems do save lives; therefore OFRS strongly recommend the provision of such systems particularly in new build properties for the proposed sites.

Officer's Name: Mat Carlile

Officer's Title: Area Manager

Date: 30 September 2015

District: Vale of White Horse

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved).(as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

Waste Management

Recommendation:

No objection

Key issues:

Meeting statutory requirements to provide facilities for residents to dispose of waste and maintaining and increasing high rates of recycling and composting in Oxfordshire which are the best in the country.

The proposed development will increase demand for waste management facilities and use of household waste recycling centres. Drayton HWRC, the nearest to the proposed development site, experiences capacity issues and the network of HWRCs in the county is also at capacity.

Contributions towards increasing capacity for re-use, recycling and composting will be required to ensure the additional demand generated by the development can be met and recycling and composting rates are maintained at high levels.

The amendments to the application do not change the implications for waste management and therefore our previous comments are reiterated and updated to reflect the reduction in the number of proposed dwellings from 4,550 to 4,254.

Legal agreement required to secure:

Contributions are sought towards HWRC infrastructure to meet the demand generated by the proposed development. The calculation of contributions is currently being revised and requires approval from OCC's developer funding team. It will be provided separately or through the property response in due course. The justification for contributions is set out in the detailed comments below.

Conditions:

None

Informatives:

It is noted that the environmental statement (Section 2 Project Description) refers to making sufficient space available for indoor/outdoor waste storage and receptacles so the development meets the district council's waste segregation policy. It will be important that this is fully implemented to enable new residents to participate in district council waste and recycling collection arrangements and maintain current recycling and composting rates. It is also recommended that the space provided is sufficient to encourage home composting where the type of dwelling allows for this.

Detailed comments:

1. Oxfordshire County Council, as a Waste Disposal Authority, is required under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 51) to arrange:

“for places to be provided at which persons resident in its area may deposit their household waste and for the disposal of waste so deposited”;

and that

“(a) each place is situated either within the area of the authority or so as to be reasonably accessible to persons resident in its area;

(b) each place is available for the deposit of waste at all reasonable times (including at least one period on the Saturday or following day of each week except a week in which the Saturday is 25th December or 1st January);

(c) each place is available for the deposit of waste free of charge by persons resident in the area;”.

2. Such places are known as Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) provides seven HWRCs throughout the County. This network of sites is no longer fit for purpose and is over capacity.
3. The nearest HWRC to the proposed development site is Drayton HWRC and this site experiences capacity issues particularly at peak times. The size of the site at Drayton HWRC is constrained and increasing capacity there will require either expansion or a new site.
4. Site capacity is assessed by comparing the number of visitors on site at any one time (measured by traffic monitoring) to the available space. As detailed in Table 1, this analysis shows that all sites are currently 'over capacity' (meaning residents need to queue before they are able to deposit materials) at peak times, and many sites are nearing capacity during off peak times. Queuing time is not available, but anecdotal evidence suggests that this can be up to 20 minutes at busy times.

Table 1: Site capacity

Site	April – September Percentage of time the site is over capacity during 11:00-14:00 (all week)	April – September Percentage of time the site is over capacity during 11:00-14:00 (weekend only)	Full year Percentage of time the site is over capacity during 08:00 – 17:00 (all week)	Full year Percentage of time the site is over capacity during 08:00 – 17:00 (Weekend only)
Alkerton	20.76%	49.57%	13.55%	34.95%
Ardley	24.11%	58.12%	14.22%	19.61%
Dix	3.05%	10.68%	0.98%	1.38%
Drayton	27.74%	50.44%	14.32%	19.52%
Oakley	15.10%	38.24%	10.07%	13.58%
Redbridge	25.77%	51.18%	12.13%	17.13%
Stanford	34.22%	59.47%	19.94%	26.06%

5. Congestion on site can reduce recycling as residents who have already queued to enter are less willing to take the time necessary to sort materials into the correct bin. Reduced recycling leads to higher costs and an adverse impact on the environment. As all sites are currently over capacity, population growth linked to new housing developments will increase the pressure on the sites.
6. The Waste Regulations (England and Wales) 2011 require that waste is dealt with according to the waste hierarchy. The County Council provides a large number of appropriate containers and storage areas at HWRCs to maximise the amount of waste reused or recycled that is delivered by local residents. However to manage the waste appropriately this requires more space and infrastructure meaning the pressures of new developments are increasingly felt. Combined with the complex and varied nature of materials delivered to site it will become increasingly difficult over time to maintain performance and a good level of service especially at busy and peak times.
7. The Community Infrastructure Levy requires that contributions are:
 - a. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms: The comprehensive kerbside collections in place in each district are only able to accept smaller, more common types of waste. Larger, ad hoc items like furniture or large electricals need to be taken to an HWRC for management. Households make around 4 visits to an HWRC each year and are regarded by residents as an important service. Without a contribution to HWRCs, the development would have an unacceptable impact on existing facilities. Property Services have estimated that the proposed development will provide housing for approximately 9,685 new residents based on the proposed housing mix. If each household makes four trips per annum the development would result in an additional 17,016 HWRC visits per year.
 - b. Directly related to the development: A contribution towards additional HWRC capacity is needed because of the demand that the development will create (as calculated above). The current network of sites is at capacity and without changes the pressure from increased development will result in a failure of them to adequately serve Oxfordshire residents.

- c. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development: The calculation of contributions is currently being updated and will be proportionate to the increased demand placed on HWRCs by this development by breaking down the capital costs associated with providing HWRC infrastructure into a cost per dwelling. As the whole network is currently at capacity and additional development will impact on the service provided contributions are required from all developments.

Officer's Name: Frankie Upton

Officer's Title: Waste Project Manager

Date: 12 October 2015

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Application no: P14/V2873/O – 2

Proposal: Outline application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. Other than access, all design matters are reserved for detailed determination at a later stage (apart from a linear strip of land running parallel with the A34 that could accommodate the southern stretch of the Harwell Strategic Link Road, where all matters are reserved). (as amended by drawings and information accompanying letter from Agent dated 18th September 2015)

Location: Land to the West of Great Western Park (Valley Park) Didcot (in the parishes of Harwell and Milton)

LOCAL MEMBER VIEWS

Cllr: **Stewart Lilly**

Division: **Hendreds and Harwell**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A COPY OF THE COMMENTS MADE IN FEBRUARY 2015 ON THE ORIGINAL APPLICATION. IT IS RECOGNISED THAT SOME FACTS HAVE CHANGED.

Comments:

The first point to emphasise is that this application is entitled 'Land to the west of Gt Western Park Development, Didcot'. This application (P/14 /V2873/0) is in the **Parish of Harwell Village**. It is not in Didcot.

I kindly request that Developers and Officers alike refer to the development as **Valley Park, Harwell**.

EXPANSION

The original allocation for Valley Park was for 2,200 dwellings but was then increased to 2,550 dwellings. It has now been increased to 4,450 dwellings thereby doubling the first allocation. I have yet to see any documentation supporting this huge increase in numbers. I would suggest that this is an over-intensification of development. Despite pressures on the Vale's housing supply figures I believe the development should be limited to a maximum number of 3,300 units (a similar size to Gt Western Park).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Officers at County and District must be alert to the contributions that will now be necessary in order to provide the facilities that are required for this large residential development in the village of Harwell.

1. Medical

- a) A Doctors' Surgery with car-parking. This expanding population will require increased medical facilities at least by 2016. By then the population figures for the area are anticipated to be up towards 30,000.
- b) Local hospital facilities with sufficient car-parking. The hospital should be able to treat minor-injuries therefore reducing the need to travel to Oxford or Abingdon for treatment. The Cottage Hospital at Didcot (21 beds) cannot be expected to accommodate the population explosion of both Gt Western Park (GWP) and Valley Park, together with the existing population, and provide an acceptable service.
- c) Dialogue must be undertaken with appropriate OCC and NHS Departments to ensure provision is available in this area for a type of A & E facility. Frequent delays on the A34 make reaching the John Radcliffe at Headington very unreliable, and the extra workload placed on that hospital would be a strategic problem. Thus more convenient A & E facilities should not be overlooked.

2. Education

Dialogue must be undertaken with the County Council and Academies to ensure that a balance of quality educational places are available in advance of the new houses becoming occupied.

3. Public Transport

The main shopping centre of Didcot is nearly three miles away from the proposed Valley Park Development. Public transport is a key factor in serving this new community. Contributions to local bus services are essential. Connections to Harwell Business Park and Wantage are also essential. The mistakes made by District Councils and the developers of GWP mustn't be repeated.

4. Community Worship

- a) Have developers or the VOWHDC contacted the Berkshire Diocese or any other religious organisation? GWP was described by the developers as a 'village concept', but it has no church, no heart, and nowhere for the community to meet, foster and grow.
- a) A suitable area for a graveyard / cemetery should also be allocated. This was omitted from the GWP scheme and has put additional pressure on Didcot Town Council and Harwell Parish Council who are legally obliged to supply burial spaces.

5. Vehicle Links

- a) Not enough highway or vehicle links exist between GWP and Valley Park.

- b) A highway link between the A4010 and the B4493 (the spine road) should be designed to a specification agreed with County Council Highway Officers. This is to avoid 'rat runs' through the villages. Proper traffic calming measures must be included.
- c) The southern junction between this new link road and the B4493 must be a roundabout in accordance with specifications requested by Oxfordshire County Council and the neighbouring Parish Councils. A 'T' Junction, as proposed, would not be appropriate. A roundabout would allow for access to the land south of the B4493.

6. Elderly Persons

As this application is only an outline planning application what accommodation exists for elderly persons? Bungalows, chalet bungalows, and more suitable accommodation for the increasing elderly population of Oxfordshire should be provided. The over-65's represent 30% of the population of our county. Lifetime homes are needed and not people containers, please.

7. Self-Build

- a) No thought has been given to allocating an area for self-build enterprise homes. Many people wish to build their own homes but local authorities always ignore this desire. This would produce some variety and imaginative designs into this development.
- b) The perceived density does not allow for larger and more prestigious family homes to be included. The development will simply become an estate of 'people containers'. Where, for example, have front gardens gone over the years?

8. Fire and Rescue Service

Contributions will be required for the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (based in Didcot) for up to two additional fire appliances. Contributions will also be required for the expansion of the existing local Fire Station and ancillary facilities, in order to ensure the continued safety of the local community.

9. Ambulance Service

Contributions will be required for the Southern Counties Ambulance Service (based in Didcot) where further extensions and additional emergency vehicles will be needed.

10. Police, Law and Order

Sufficient funding to be sought from the developers to assist with the local policing of this expanding community. A balance of all infrastructure is vital.

11. Sporting and Leisure Facilities

Didcot and its surroundings are seriously short of suitable sporting and leisure facilities. The details of which were outlined in three separate Savills Reports prepared by South and Vale District Council over the last 15 or more years. These Reports identified a shortfall of up to 30 hectares for a town the size of Greater Didcot / Harwell. Are the District Councils planning adequate sporting and leisure provision in their planning discussions?

12. Car-Parking at Valley Park

Special attention must be given to on site car-parking for all dwellings. The proposals submitted by the Planning Consultants, Councils, and Designers for GWP have, in certain areas, been a complete failure! Significant problems have resulted that must not be repeated in Valley Park. County and District Councils must address this aspect efficiently.

13. Services

All services must be fit for purpose and upgraded locally as necessary. This includes foul drainage, storm water drainage, high speed fibre-optic internet connections, gas, water, electricity. Repeating the mistakes that are blighting GWP, especially regarding foul drainage capacity would be unacceptable.

14. Pets

Many new family occupants will have pets, many of which will be dogs. A site should therefore be reserved for a Veterinary Practice. There must be a more than adequate provision of dog bins plus commuted sums for their upkeep and servicing.

15. Library Facilities

The main library facilities in Didcot will not be able to serve a settlement of this size. Suitable land should be made available for a new Library for the whole area. Administration of the Council's Registrars and other Council services should also be included. This is all part of the new infrastructure.

16. Public Open Space

15% of the site should be made available as public open space in addition to the leisure land facility requirement (mentioned in Point 11).

17. Harwell By-Pass / Relief Road and Local Network improvements

- a) All current proposals for traffic flow improvement should be completed prior to the occupation of the first dwelling at Valley Park. Improvements to the A4010 and access to the new development occupied by the former Power Station (Science Bridge) must receive an appropriate financial contribution by virtue of this development.

- b) There must be no points of access from the developable area south of the B4493 onto Harwell Bypass. Access to be from new roundabouts at the B4493 and A417.

Cllr Stewart A G Lilly PPFNAEA (Hon) UKSPT
Chairman of Conservative / Independent Alliance
Member for Villages of: Harwell, Blewbury, Chilton, Upton,
East & West Hendred, Lockinge, Ardington, Steventon

February 2015

Date: 25 February 2015

ATTACHMENT – EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

(Referred to in Property Response)

4. Educational Requirements for Residential Developments

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The following draws upon the experience of past work to help increase the efficiency of the process for potential developers, Oxfordshire County Council and the District / City Councils.

4.1.2 It is intended to help developers of housing sites gain an understanding of Oxfordshire County Council's position arising when Section 106 requirements include provision of a school site. This guide is however indicative only; every project and site has its own unique issues; the passage of time inevitably has effect upon requirements whilst corporate strategies do change and the law evolves so this is simply intended to help ensure developers are informed of the likely issues as early as possible within the process.

4.1.3 The principles set out within this guide will also apply as appropriate to other aspects of County Council service requirements as appropriate and it is recommended that contact is made with the Infrastructure Framework Team to establish the potential implications at an early stage

4.2 Educational Perspective

4.2.1 The Council's Vision

Oxfordshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient primary and secondary school places in the area as well as to ensure provision for 3 and 4 year olds. Other statutory requirements include the requirement to arrange for sufficient numbers of children's centres in the area to meet local need.

In Oxfordshire there is a diverse mix of schools including:

- Community
- Foundation
- Voluntary (divided into Controlled and Aided)
- Academies

The way in which pupil places are provided can be dependent on a number of key factors including:

- The current capacity of the school and the number on roll
- The forecast number of places required including demand from demographic change
- The sufficiency of supporting infrastructure and the ability to accommodate further expansion
- The size of the school site and the availability of playing field provision etc

The County Council will need to ensure appropriate and sustainable infrastructure is provided to meet increased demand. In some cases this could involve a reorganization of existing provision for example utilising S106 funding and other resources to relocate and/or expand an existing school.

In planning school places the County Council will take a strategic approach to ensure that service provision within an area is provided in a way that supports good educational organisation and management principles. This will include providing primary education based

on admission multiples of 15, e.g. 30, 45, 60, to ensure compliance with infant class size regulations. The overriding aim will be to provide high achieving, excellent primary schools in the heart of the community to support the 'Every Child Matters' national approach to provision of services for children and young people. This is stated in the Authority's approved Primary Strategy for Change. The Secondary Strategy for Change is currently under development and will be subject to further consultation. Once approved, it will inform the approach to provision of secondary education places in the future. The provision of new opportunities for study for 14-19 year olds and the raising of participation in education age will be significant factors in the provision of new secondary education facilities.

4.2.2 Locating the school within the development

The location of a school on the site must look toward consideration of the needs of the community. In some instances the site is selected by the master planner in other instances it could be as a consequence of the design code of the planning authority. It should always seek to be located at the heart of community with easy access where the need for car travel is minimised. The County Council will not accept a proposal which simply seeks to offer school sites with the poorest developable potential to the developer.

The site with its adjacencies will reflect the technical requirements set out in Section 4.7

4.3 The initial developer contact

4.3.1 Provision of Information

The County Council must be fully integrated into discussions on developing proposals to ensure that any conflicting requirements between design standards and developer contribution levels are appraised and 'abnormal costs' recognised by the developer before summarising in the Design Code

In order for there to be efficient and effective dialogue a **site visit** must be arranged for the **OCC Infrastructure Framework Team** and they must be provided with information which should include

- the number of dwellings, an indicative mix of house occupancy together with the split of affordable housing / market sector provisions within the development in order to establish the likely size of the school required.
- The projected delivery programme of the development
- A site development plan showing the proposed location of the
 - School buildings and playing fields.
 - Local centre
 - Residential sites
 - Road network

Ideally the following would also be provided at the initial stage:

- School site plan with an exploratory schematic for a new school
- Topographical survey across the School site and adjacent development.
- Acoustic survey across the whole development area
- Hydrological and flood risk assessments.

OCC will take a holistic view of educational infrastructure which could mean changes to neighbouring schools, catchment areas¹ or even relocating existing schools on to new developments to meet the need created from increasing pupil numbers. This will establish the size of site which is required to be provided as part of the section 106 agreement by the developer.

The developer's initial concept, should take full account of the requirements for a school site as set out in this guide.

4.3.2 Communications

OCC will identify a single lead officer for the project within the Infrastructure Framework Team and will endeavour to maintain continuity throughout. Other officers will become involved including:

- Property representation (to review the proposals for the school site)
- Cost consultant (to review the costs of delivering the school on the site)
- Legal representation (to determine the section 106 agreement)
- Directorate representation (to determine the pupil place planning consequences)
- Land Drainage representation (to consider the sustainable drainage proposals)

¹ The Council's ability to alter catchments are restricted due to statutory requirements for consultation and emerging procedures regarding Academy's

- Highways representative (to review the highway design and servicing)

4.4 Process

4.4.1 The key stages in working with the County Council are shown below

Stage	OCC Activity	Planning Activity
1	Indicative requirements	Initial consultation
2	Formal review of proposals	Detailed proposals through draft submissions and consultation
3	Legal drafting	Planning application / Section 106 negotiations

4.4.2 Initial Concepts

Once initial high level developer led discussions regarding a specific development proposal with the planning authority have taken place or the specific school site has been identified in the Local Development Framework it is expected that core information will be submitted by the developer to the County Council's Infrastructure Framework Team.

The County Council's Infrastructure Framework Team, upon receipt of information outlined in 4.3.1 above, will liaise internally to identify the County Council's indicative requirements arising from the potential development based upon perceived numbers and mix of housing. It is expected that the developer will then take these requirements into account and produce conceptual proposals.

4.4.3 Definition of Land and Mix

When the proposer is able to identify the indicative mix / tenure and numbers of residential units OCC's requirements can be established, OCC will look toward determining whether the proposed school site is acceptable and the likely construction costs of provision excluding land costs (nb. Freehold transfer of the school site will be required and land will be expected to be provided by the developer at nil cost). Clearly OCC cannot confirm acceptability until the proposed boundaries of the land have been adequately defined

OCC will assess the suitability of the land parcel initially on the basis of topography, noise levels, size, shape, orientation and location within the development. Indicative sketch layouts will be prepared to show the diagrammatic layout of buildings on site simply to satisfy the appropriate nature of the site to accommodate the school.

4.4.4 Initial funding requirements

Costs of meeting the capital implications of services will then be based upon developer's master plans taking account of data provided by the developer. It is emphasised any costs which cannot be specifically quantified at this stage will affect the extent of 'abnormal costs' (see separate advice upon abnormal costs).

To enable an initial assessment of abnormal costs, the following information should be provided:

- The overall site development plan showing the location of the school within the development as a whole with the following information.
 - Topographical survey with site levels across the whole development area based on a 5m grid
 - Existing and anticipated noise levels across the whole development area
 - Initial Search information including evidence that claimed rights of way, easements, wayleaves and the like do not exist upon the proposed site.
 - Drainage Strategy for the development
 - Location and status of all services and drainage runs across the site and within 1 kilometre of the site

- A defined school site shown on a plan and provided in a digital format that can be printed off, to scale on an A3 sheet with the following information
 - Adjacent roads and housing
 - Size of school site
 - Site levels across the school site and adjacent land
 - Existing and anticipated noise levels across the site and surrounding development
 - Location and status of all trees and hedgerows on the site and within 30m of the site.
 - Location and status of all structures and all underground obstructions on the site
 - Proposed vehicular access positions
 - Proposed pedestrian access positions
 - Proposed site service points

- Initial Service enquiries including evidence that existing services are not present upon the proposed site
- A summary of ecological / environmental statements which could have an effect upon development
- Flood risk assessment ramifications which could affect the proposed site

4.4.5 Abnormal Costs

Each building project brings on its own specific 'abnormals'. The developer's responsibility is to provide sufficient funding to provide educational and other facilities which arise out of the development and it is not for OCC to subsidise this provision. As a consequence Section 106 funding must meet actual costs of construction as much as practicably possible.

This does mean that any initial indications of costs are based upon a simple build with no abnormalities. For example foundation costs based upon simple 1 metre deep strip foundations.

As part of the investigative process pre Section 106 Agreement the Council will identify matters which will or may constitute Abnormals in relation to the new school. Where it is possible to identify the Abnormal fully and relevant cost implications prior to completion of the Section 106 Agreement then the costs of the Abnormals shall be added to the Education Contribution payable by the Section 106 Agreement.

However, it is recognised that in many cases it will not be possible to establish whether or not there will be Abnormals or their full extent until further information has been collated and considered. .

Once the data has been received OCC will give an initial view of the likely abnormal issues which may arise but clarity may not be possible until the developers project enters later stages of design development.

An example would be where site levels and adjacent foul sewer inverts are not identified and it is then not possible to confirm gravity drainage is possible to serve the school or whether potential finished floor levels bring demand for imported top soil.

These issues are those which potentially could generate additional developer funding obligations but at early stages abnormal information provided to the developer will be purely indicative and will be subject to further analysis at a later stage of the process once the full set of information has been issued.

4.4.6 Legal Drafting

It is expected that as a consequence of the initial assessments by OCC and subsequent liaison by the developer with the OCC design representative and the District Planning Office that the master plan will develop. This may be due to responding to OCC's concerns and requirements, development of any design code by the District, or site 'discoveries'.

Once the site parameters are frozen OCC will revisit build costs and seek to agree the abnormal where practicable.

Work will commence upon adaptation of the generic terms and conditions to reflect the specific nature of the site and issues.

At this stage there needs to be certainty over how key issues will be resolved either through acceptable 'abnormal' provisions or through detailed data which remove uncertainty. In order to minimise the extent of abnormal provisions it is considered necessary to provide more detailed information around those issues identified under 4.4.4 above. Also provision of additional elements such as the following is preferred. This information / securing this information must be covered within the agreement.

- Topographical surveys
- Geotechnical surveys
- Site Works / Levels
- Remediation
- Site servicing (what, where and when)
- Access arrangements (including fields maintenance)
- Coach laybys
- Parents drop off
- Site Boundary fencing (where proposed)
- Proposals for resolution of any other outstanding areas of uncertainty]

4.5 Location & Design Considerations

4.5.1 Design and Master Planning

The developer's planning application must include any requisite school

The developer will be required to liaise with the district planning authority to establish initial criteria for the location of the school(s) within the development. The County Council will look toward a central location within the community to seek to reduce car journeys to school. (See 4.2.2)

For the purposes of initial planning the developer should look toward Building Bulletins, the Councils Primary and Secondary School Brief and the parameters set out in Section 4.7 'Technical Requirements'.

A Primary schools schematic layout can be made available but it is emphasised that it is purely for initial concept work. The Developer's indicative layouts must be approved by the County Council prior to any detailed discussions with the District Planning Authority.

Clearly the actual layouts will not become defined until the designers have fully assessed the site and produced a design to meet the County Council's requirements. Where critical elements are essential to the planning authority they shall be defined to be the case but must be overarching principles rather than act to constrain the layout and design of the school itself. The School Plan will be prepared as part of the consultation with the County and District to provide key guidance on the principles of development of the school site and summarised in the Design Code and this School Plan will be included in the S106 agreement.

The County Council will wish to integrate opportunities for the co-location of community services adjacent to school sites and in some instances within the school site which can lead to better land use, a reduction in car journeys for residents as well as reducing future revenue costs to the County Council. The developer must ensure that there is early dialogue with the County Council to enable such opportunities to be taken into account.

It is recognised that there may in some instances be opportunity for some joint use of the playing pitch provision provided that appropriate measures can be put in place to ensure satisfactory school management and safeguarding (fencing), health and safety (dog fouling) and maintenance (avoiding use in waterlogged condition). It should be noted that it is unlikely that school provisions for changing would be suitable for joint public use outside school hours.

4.5.2 Primary School Design

The County Council have produced high level design principles for primary and secondary school design (see Section 4.7) which are simply intended to help inform initial developer master planning of the school site. It is emphasised that this is to enable initial proposals to more closely meet the potential educational requirements but detailed assessment will inevitably require further modifications by OCC design representatives once the detailed implications of a specific proposal are reviewed.

4.5.3 Planning Parameters ('the School Plan')

It is the intention that a drawing be produced as part of the master planning exercise to show the planning parameters for the school envisaged at a schematic level. This must be jointly agreed between the District and the County

An example might cover:

- the approximate width of development across the frontage of the site,
- the approximate location of the main entrance,
- the location of the school hall, and kitchen
- the proximity of school buildings to the boundary,
- the location of drop off point for parents (off site)
- the location of coach lay-by (off site)

- the location of the vehicular and any other ancillary entrance
- the type of boundary treatment
- notional location of early years, KS1,KS2 and community use spaces and associated external spaces including pitch layout.
- Appropriate connection point for utilities for the school

Equally it would not be expected to cover:

- the design of buildings
- the layout of the buildings
- the materials for construction
- the detailed location of the external playspaces
- general pedestrian and cycle access

It is emphasised that the creation of external teaching spaces directly accessed from the classrooms, the separation and independent access of foundation, keys stage 1 and Key stage 2 spaces, formation of independent play spaces within the playground, orientation of these spaces etc all play a part in the detailed design decision making for the school. The school plan must not compromise the designers ability to create an optimum design solution for the site at a later stage of design development.

4.5.4 School Site and Building Area

The County Council has its own standards based on Building Bulletins 98 & 99 which provide definition of areas of the expected on projects and are entitled The Primary School Brief and The Secondary School Brief. It should be noted that the Secondary School Brief is still under development.

The County Council has its own Primary and Secondary School briefs which include a schedule of site and build areas for different sizes of school. Where data is not available in the County documentation 'Building Bulletins' will provide data. It should be noted that site areas for secondary schools are required to be at the upper end of the range due to the potential for school specialism in sport.

When calculating the site area it is emphasised that this must relate to the 'developable area' of the site suitable for use. This excludes for example sloping land, site area within the canopy of trees and hedgerows, ditches, land within any 100year plus 30% climate change floodplain, land effected by archaeology, etc.

Should the developer wish to include any such non developable areas within the overall site offered to the County Council they must be acceptable to OCC and be in addition to the defined site area.

4.5.5 Pre-Planning Application

Confirmation of OCC's acceptance of the location of the school site should be obtained from the Infrastructure Framework Team prior to the submission of any planning application. It is essential at this stage that there is a common understanding of the extent and implications of 'abnormals'.

In order for OCC to comment upon whether the proposed site is likely to be appropriate the information as set out in Section 4.4.4 is likely to be required

4.5.6 Agreed Boundaries

It is a requirement that precise boundaries must be agreed prior to completion of the Section 106 agreement. In exceptional circumstances where this is impractical it may be accepted that certain boundaries are frozen with others more flexible subject to the written agreement of OCC with constraints upon minimum dimensions and overall developable site area.

Perimeter fencing is a key issue for any school therefore where the developer intends to erect permanent perimeter fencing details shall be first approved by OCC (timber posts and domestic fence panels are unacceptable). Such Fencing on the boundary is to be in the ownership of the school.

4.5.7 Unencumbered site

The principle of any proposal is that delivery of the capital provision necessary to meet the service needs of a development should be met without any costs being borne by the local authority.

This requires all costs to be identified and funded; where any costs cannot be identified prior to execution of the section 106 agreement the legal agreement will set these out as ‘abnormals’

In order to establish what costs are ‘abnormal’ it is necessary to identify ‘normal costs’

Normal costs are deemed to be the construction of a school building on an ‘ideal’ site where ground conditions, levels, environmental issues etc. are best case.

4.5.8 Site Issues (Abnormals)

The following sets out some aspects where **abnormal costs** may be encountered or an increased site area required and where the most likely resolution scenario will be one of the following through:

1. Locate school site to avoid the issue.
2. Increase the base costs of delivering the school.
3. Increased site area.
4. Developer to deal with the issues prior to site transfer.
5. Developer legal obligation to do so after transfer which may include paying for the increased costs

but clearly each site may bring unique aspects not identified below

Abnormal cost issue	Most likely resolution	action
<p>Power Lines and Services for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overhead high voltage power lines shall not be within 200 metres of the school site, due to social responsibility and parental expectations • mains services shall not be present upon the school site due to the potential for 	1 or 4	Developer will be required to provide service records from the service providers

<p>interruption to the delivery of services and the potential for constraining future development upon the site</p>		
<p>Site Constraints / rights of way for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rights of way across school sites are not acceptable due to the need to maintain full site accessibility and safety of pupils within the site • noise levels upon the site – the maximum noise level at the perimeter of a school site should be <i>50 dBLAeq,30min</i> 	<p>1 or 4</p>	<p>Developer to provide searches and acoustic survey data</p>
<p>Archaeology</p> <p>The developer will be required to carry out suitable desktop studies as may be required the planning authority, undertake any consequential investigations upon the school site which may be forthcoming.</p> <p>Where phased implementation of investigations is accepted by the planning authority the developer shall ensure that the school site investigations are carried out as an integral part of the first phase of investigations to ensure that the delivery programme for the school and its consequential ability to meet the pupils generated by the development is not compromised.</p> <p>Where investigations are not sufficiently addressed by the developer to enable start on site for the school site abnormal costs will arise</p> <p>Where programme delays occur as a consequence and provision of pupil places are effected it may be necessary to provide temporary accommodation which shall be an abnormal cost.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Developer to provide desk top studies and where necessary invasive survey reports</p>
<p>Ground Conditions for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased construction costs arising as a consequence of special foundations (ie those over and above foundations upon an ideal site eg. one metre deep mass concrete footings) 	<p>2</p>	<p>Developer to provide geotechnical reports</p>
<p>Temporary Buildings For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to provide temporary buildings to meet the service needs of residents of 	<p>2</p>	<p>Developer to provide construction programme</p>

the new development prior to the completion of the new school due to the developers speed of development or constraints upon the County Council's ability to construct the new school (which may then also affect the new build construction cost)		
Temporary Access / Haul Roads for construction For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to provide access roads and services to enable construction of the school in advance of the developers development programme due to the overall speed of residential development 	4	Developer to provide phasing drawings
Site levels For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing site levels on the proposed school site do not conform to level site requirement. 	1	Developer to provide topographical data together with detailed proposals in the vicinity of the site (levels and drainage)
Hedgerows and trees For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerow and trees across proposed site have to remain due to ecological status so compromising economical site layout of school and playing team game playing fields. 	3	Developer to carry out ecological surveys and resolve as necessary

4.6 Programme Considerations

4.6.1 Pupil Numbers / school places

The developer's proposed construction programme must consider the potential pupil numbers generated by the completion of dwellings and the availability of school places within existing infrastructure to meet this pressure prior to the construction of the new school. Where needs cannot be met by existing infrastructure the developer may be required to

- fund the provision of temporary facilities or
- to reduce/ hold development at a manageable level within a reasonable period which enables the Council to resolve statutory requirements, design, construct and commence operation of the new school

4.6.2 Timescales for delivery of the school

Time scales for the Council to commence delivery of the new school cannot begin until Outline or Full Planning Consent for the development is granted including provision of the school(s), the Section 106 is signed and any consequential period for judicial review is completed. Some preliminary feasibility work may be undertaken to help inform completion of the S 106 agreement but delivery programmes are unlikely to be accelerated as a consequence.

The County Council will provide indicative programmes for delivery of the school based upon historic data once the location and design considerations are resolved.

Even once S106 is signed it is critical there is ongoing communication with OCC about the timing of house construction as this effects the programme for the school

4.6.3 Determination / statutory procedures: changes to existing schools

Under the terms of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 the local education authority (“LA”) acquired the role of ‘(de-)commissioner of school places’. This involves compliance with specific statutory procedures in particular circumstances. These are shown below.

- Close a school
- Expanding a school (25% or 200 places (secondary) / 30 places (primary) whichever is the lesser) or adding a sixth form.
- Making other changes e.g. change in age range, change of category, closing a site
- Foundation or trust status-4 weeks for representation and Governors decision maker

There are generally five stages to the statutory process.

Stage	Action	Time
1.	Informal consultation – with prescribed stakeholders	Usually six weeks, excluding school holidays
2.	Results of consultation considered by decision maker and approval to publish statutory notice granted	Up to six weeks
3.	Publish statutory notice and invite representations	Either four or six weeks, depending on nature of change proposed, within one year of consultation
4.	Decision maker to determine	Within two months of the publication of a notice
5.	Decision to be implemented	Usually has to be within 3 years

Note; if the development does not proceed within a reasonable timescale it is possible that the process would have to be repeated

It may be possible in the case of proposals not related to the creation of a new school for the first stage of the statutory process (consultation only) to proceed in advance of the signing of the section 106 agreement provided a formal decision has been made by the planning authority to grant consent subject to the section 106 agreement. Where timescales are critical to the developer, representation to OCC should be made following planning determination.

This will however be subject to OCC's view on the certainty regarding the nature of the school to enable consultation process to commence.

These procedures apply to non-academy schools; academies need to submit a business case to the Department for Education to make such significant changes, and will need to have consulted in advance of doing so.

4.6.4 Determination / statutory procedures: new schools

Where new schools are required, the 2011 Education Act says that all new schools are expected to be academies, including special types of academies such as Free Schools, University Technical Colleges (UTCs) and Studio Schools. This means that they are not run by the county council, but by independent academy trusts. These trusts can be set up by a wide range of organisations, including religious groups, educational specialists, employers, charities and community groups. Existing academies can apply to run new schools.

Oxfordshire County Council will not run new schools, but has two roles in their creation.

- Planning for and secure sufficient school places: the county council is responsible for negotiating sites and funding for new schools.
- Deciding who will run the schools: the new schools could be run by organisations which already run schools in the area – for example local outstanding academies or the church dioceses – or by organisations new to Oxfordshire. The decision is shared by the county council and central government Department for Education (DfE).

The government has set out a bidding and selection process to choose which organisation(s) will run the new schools. In Oxfordshire, the process for new schools is:

Stage	Action	Time
1.	Undertake a public consultation to identify the academy model to be implemented.	Approx 3 months, including six weeks, excluding school holidays, for consultation
2.	Invite initial expressions of interest in running the school through a DfE website set up for this purpose.	Four weeks
3.	Assess expressions of interest and then invite detailed bids from three or fewer providers to show clear plans of how they will contribute to the raising of education standards, add diversity of choice and which best fits the local requirements and meets the needs of those within groups offered specific protection under s149 Equality Act 2010	Approx 3 months
4.	Assess bids against criteria and rank in order of preference. Agree a preferred option to be approved by Lead Member for Education or Cabinet as appropriate.	Approx two months
5.	Submit report to Secretary of State for decision.	Approx two months expected.

6.	Proposal developed with provider approved by Secretary of State through sharing vision of community, county and sponsor, to secure Funding Agreement from DfE..	Aim for funding agreement to be signed twelve months before the school is due to open, to allow for informed parental decisions in school admissions process.
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Note; if the development does not proceed within a reasonable timescale it is possible that the process would have to be repeated

To allow for due consideration and informed decision-making, it is therefore desirable to commence the consultation stage of this process at least two years before the school is expected to open. An earlier start to the process, where possible, would allow the eventual sponsor greater involvement in shaping the design of the new school buildings. This would suggest an ideal timing such that Stage 6 above occurs before or alongside the design stages of the build programme.

In many cases it is likely that the consultation stage will need to start in advance of the signing of the section 106 agreement. However, the sponsor specification, on which Expression of Interest are based, needs to include information about capital funding for the new school, and it is therefore unlikely that Expressions of Interest can be sought until a Section 106 has been agreed.

Once the academy sponsor funding agreement is signed, the school is committed to opening at a set date, except with authorisation from the Secretary of State. Before Stage 5 above, therefore, and preferably before detailed bids are invited, there needs to be an assured timescale for new school accommodation.

4.6.5 Notional Build Programmes

The following give indicative generic programmes for the briefing, design, construction and occupation of typical school types; it is emphasised that each building project will have unique issues therefore the Developer must gain specific scheme based programme information from the Infrastructure Framework Team.

Time scales for the Council to commence delivery of the new school cannot begin until Outline or Full Planning Consent for the development is granted including provision of the school(s), the Section 106 is signed and any consequential period for judicial review is completed. Some preliminary feasibility work may be undertaken to help inform completion of the S106 agreement but delivery programmes are unlikely to be accelerated as a consequence.

The local authority cannot and should not pre-empt the decision of the planning authority nor unreasonably commit funding 'at risk' in advance of such decision making. The developer may however provide 'at risk funding' and data to enable preparatory work to be carried out.

In circumstances where the developer provides data prior to gaining planning consent such as the detailed location of the school site based upon full topographical surveys with detailed proposals and levels for infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of the school site and geotechnical data, it is possible for preparatory work to commence.

The authority will utilise in-house resources where practicable to enable work upon the project to proceed quickly but the preparation of a detailed feasibility study will rely upon provision of funding to enable the Council's external consultants to be commissioned.

Should the developer be in a position to be able to identify funding to enable earlier detailed development of proposals it may be possible for design development to start once the developer's planning application has been submitted. Any gains in timing which may result however may be compromised by the need to engage the new school organisation in design development

It should be noted that the formal competition process *for* education cannot commence until the section 106 has been signed and planning permission granted

Primary Schools

10 weeks briefing to commissioning
81 weeks commissioning to start on site
64 weeks construction
10 weeks school set up prior to opening

Secondary schools

25 weeks briefing to commissioning
100 weeks commissioning to start on site
100 weeks construction
12 weeks school set up prior to opening

4.6.6 Innovation in procurement

Design expertise and competency levels required to achieve guidelines and regulations set both through government standards and local standards dictate that the County Council must ensure that any design team appointed has the requisite level of expertise and competence. The County Council require that consultants have been selected through a comprehensive procurement and evaluation procedures in accordance with public works procurement law and the councils constitution.

During the course of design work there are significant areas of conflict where site constraints, legislation and guidance all require client (OCC/school) interface to determine the most appropriate end solution. In addition such decision making during the design phase has significant effect upon the whole life costs of the end solution which has direct effect upon the revenue budget position of the Council in future years. As a consequence it is not appropriate to divest best value decision making to a developer. Clearly there are direct conflicts between best value to the council and best value to a developer where maintenance costs and cost in use do not apply.

The county council has produced a providers' manual to give guidance in certain areas regarding process and standards but it is performance based rather than specification based and therefore again the consultant's expertise and the client interface remains crucial.

Under European procurement legislation provision of works by the developer, even applying delegated compliance, may not be lawful and the associated risks will not be borne by the County Council. It is therefore the County Councils current position that it is unlikely to be acceptable for delivery of the school to be devolved to a developer but this is currently under review.

The County Council have however gained experience of partnership working with specialist design and construct contractors and are investigating whether this methodology could be

used to ensure that the interests of the authority are protected whilst bringing programme benefits.

4.6.7 Temporary Buildings

Where the developer's programme brings occupation of dwellings in advance of the completion of construction of the school / secondary school extensions there will be a need to provide temporary buildings.

As an indicator a maximum of 90 pupil intake would be practicably accommodated in temporary accommodation prior to the opening of a new school. Any forecasting by the Council would be subject to the nature of housing, speed of delivery and occupation and type of tenure. The overriding principle is that there shall not be any increase in cost to the authority or an inability to offer appropriate facilities to the residents arising from

- the projected level of residential development prior to construction of the new school, or
- any acceleration of build; or
- any delay in delivering the school arising from a default of the developer.

Where temporary accommodation is required the Council will require the developer to pay the full costs of providing temporary classrooms (hire / purchase) on existing sites (if space is available) including access works, services, foundations, removal and making good etc together with transport costs as applicable.

It should be noted that provision of a two class temporary building is estimated to cost £343,500 (2012) including furniture and equipment. A notional analysis suggests this provision meets the needs of approximately 100 units but this is a very notional guide and is very much subject to the housing mix and tenure of the dwellings.

In order to meet the needs of pupils clearly there are ancillary facilities which are required such as catering, playing fields, staffrooms, administration etc. In practice this means that temporary accommodation is most economically met through locating upon an existing school site.

4.7 Technical Requirements

When considering the location, amenity and shape of a school site within the design of the development, the following factors should be considered

4.7.1 Access

School sites will require separate access to the public highway for vehicles, maintenance access direct to playing fields (ie not via any other entrance), cycles, visitor entrance and separate pupil access (in some instance separated by year groups)

Pedestrian access and circulation routes **must** be kept separate from those used by vehicles

It is also important to consider convenient and safe access requirements for delivery lorries to the catering facilities, waste disposal vehicles to the waste bin compounds and emergency vehicles for dealing with site emergencies.

Primary School Site Access

Each site will require the ability to create two 6m wide site access routes from the highway. They will need to be positioned at opposite ends of the school frontage in order to ensure that maintenance vehicles or construction vehicles do not need to cross from one side of the site to another. This is required to ensure the safety of the pupils and ensure continuity of education during maintenance work to the school buildings, external surfaces and playing fields.

An additional 6m wide access from the highway will be required to the playing field. This is required to ensure the safety of the pupils whilst playing field maintenance is undertaken

Secondary School Access

Each site will require the ability to create up to 6 site access routes from the highway. They will need to be positioned at opposite ends of the school frontage and at various positions around the perimeter of the site. These are required to ensure the safety of the pupils and ensure continuity of education during maintenance work to the school buildings, external surfaces and playing fields

4.7.2 Laybys

All schools will require safe and convenient drop off zones for buses and coaches outside the school site; a Traffic Regulation Order may be required to ensure appropriate restrictions. For secondary schools this shall be provision for 6 coaches; for 10 & 14 class primary schools 2 coaches, for 7 class primary schools 1 coach. The developer's design must ensure that should reversing of coaches be necessary it is designed to occur off the public highway, but outside the developable area of the school site. (A coach is deemed to be a 52 seater coach requiring a 13m layby with additional 3m ingress and 3m egress)

4.7.3 Site frontage

Primary School

- The roads around schools should not be positioned in dead end situations to avoid reversing in close proximity to children
- The frontage of the school (along one side of the site) needs to be not less than 110m long to allow for the facilities below to be positioned appropriately.
- The main entrance should be close to parking facilities both for disabled and staff parking. However the parking should not be positioned in the front of the school.
- Offsite coach drop off/ pick up facilities for up to 2 vehicles will be required adjacent to an entrance to the school.
- The hall, extended schools facilities and therefore the kitchen need to be adjacent to the main entrance for evening use and occasional daytime use.
- The kitchen needs to be next to a vehicular access for service vehicles
- The nursery needs to be at the front of the school to ensure security is maintained during dropping of and picking up during school hours. The Nursery play area therefore needs to be at the front of the school immediately adjacent to the main entrance.
- Safeguarding is an issue that needs to be taken seriously and the layout of the school frontage as set out above is one way of facilitating the school's ability to monitor visitors to the school site.

Secondary School

- The roads around schools should not be positioned in dead end situations to avoid reversing in close proximity to children
- The frontage of the school (along one side of the site) needs to be not less than 200m long to allow for the facilities below to be positioned appropriately. It may need to be longer dependant on the vehicular access positions
- The main entrance should be close to parking facilities both for disabled and staff parking. However the parking should not be positioned in the front of the school to avoid the parking and service area being on general view.
- Coach drop off/ pick up facilities for [6] vehicles will be required adjacent to the major vehicular entrance to the school. Liason should take place at an early stage to establish whether it is acceptable for the facilities to be accommodated on site
- The hall, Sports Hall with changing facilities, potential community facilities and the kitchen need to be adjacent to the main entrance or near to the main frontage of the school for weekend use, evening use and occasional community daytime use.
- The kitchen needs to be next to a vehicular access for service vehicles
- Safeguarding is an issue that needs to be taken seriously and the layout of the school frontage as set out above is one way of facilitating the school's ability to monitor visitors to the school site.

4.7.4 Site Levels

Land offered for school use must be suitable for such a use. It is essential that school buildings should be on a single level and that full wheelchair access is provided throughout. The inclusion of ramps within the building will only be considered in exceptional circumstances (**abnormal cost**). Levels to facilitate flush thresholds will be required along the full external perimeter of the buildings

The maximum fall on all external circulation routes throughout the school site shall be less than 1:20. Should any measures such as external ramps, retaining structures, re-working of levels etc be necessary to make the site fit for use it will create **abnormal costs and a requirement for additional site area** which will have to be met by the developer.

Where changes of level are unavoidable the length of ramps shall ensure that the disabled pupils are not discriminated; the gradients shall therefore be minimal to account for the strength of young people and the length of ramp shall not present risk in descent nor create an inability for a disabled child to maintain connection with his peers in moving across the site

See Section 4.7.6 for levels adjacent to site boundaries

See Section 4.7.8 for levels across the Team Game Playing Fields

4.7.5 Shape of site

The shape of a school site influences how efficiently the building and external teaching areas can be arranged on the site so minimising any potential abnormal costs associated with sites with a random site boundary. Shape of sites would ideally be rectangular with proportions of approximately 2:1

4.7.6 Site Adjacencies

When considering the position of the school site within a development its adjacency with surrounding land and uses needs to be carefully considered.

Levels

Vehicular, maintenance, cycle and pedestrian access points shall be designed to connect from the site level to the public highway at a maximum gradient of 1:20.

If existing levels need to be adjusted (**abnormal costs**) to create acceptable levels within the school site the relationship of levels at the boundary can become critical. This analysis relies upon topographical information for the site being made available and design decisions being taken regarding levels on adjacent land and highways. Where grading of levels becomes necessary at the boundary of the site this must take place outside the school site and therefore accommodated within the developer's design solution.

See section 4.7.4 and 4.7.8 for further technical requirements on levels

Noise

The school and playing fields need to be situated in a quiet part of the development. As a rule of thumb the noise levels on unoccupied playing fields used for teaching sport should not exceed 50 dB LAeq, 30 min at the site perimeter

See section 4.7.17 for further technical requirements on acoustics

Site Frontage

See section 4.7.4

Adjacency to houses

Passive supervision by surrounding houses would be welcomed

4.7.7 Parking

The developer should refer to county policy on parking for schools. School sites shall be 'self contained' i.e. on site designated parking for staff rather than a shared off site facility.

4.7.8 Playing Fields

Along with all external space, the team game playing field are an important teaching resource.

Land identified for playing fields must have suitable falls. Sports pitches shall have a fall of 1:100 (maximum 2.5%) across the width of the pitch and 1:150 (maximum 1.25%) across the length of the pitch. The size of the formal pitch for Primary Schools shall be 82 metres x 45 metres with additional run off margins of 3 metres on both sides and run off margins of 4m at both ends.

The requirement for team game playing fields is a statutory requirement (see School Premises Regulations for required areas). The area as a whole should have a minimum of 250mm free draining topsoil; be level and capable of use for teaching purposes throughout the year. To ensure this continuity of use land drainage maybe required if the ground

conditions are unsuitable. The playing field needs to comply with the recommendations of Natural Turf for Sport - Design Guidance Note published by Sport England. The additional cost of incorporating land drainage using a pipe drainage system with supplementary slit drainage and improving the quality of the topsoil. This will be considered an **abnormal cost**. Normal costs assume that water infiltration rates shall be greater or equal to 5mm/hr to BS7370

For Secondary Schools refer to Sports Council guidance and Building Bulletins.

For potential community facilities such as sports fields/All Weather Pitches consideration will need to be given to the impact of external lighting (**abnormal costs**).

See section 4.7.17 for acoustic requirements

4.7.9 Hard Surfaced play areas

Three dedicated hard surfaced play areas will be required for primary schools, early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 accessed directly from the dedicated class rooms; The key stage 2 area will need to accommodate a full size netball court (overall dimensions of 30.5m x 15.25m) with a minimum clear width of 1.5m tarmac all around the court. The maximum fall across the hard surfaced areas shall be 1:80.

Site orientation will need to consider impact of external learning environment on neighbouring houses

Secondary schools will require external hard surfaces in line with those set out within Building Bulletin 98

See Section 4.7.17 for acoustic requirements

4.7.10 Surface Water / Sustainable Drainage

No run off of surface water from adjoining land will be acceptable other than swales for exceedence flows along the boundaries of the school site where there are playing fields.

Design requirements in such circumstances will include

- the edge of the swale is beyond the run-off area of the playing pitch,
- the site shape can still accommodate the full range of school facilities,
- the gradient of the swale edge does not exceed 1:5
- the width of the swale does not exceed 5 metres
- the total area compromised by the swale does not exceed 5% of the school site
- fencing to the boundary is set beyond the edge of the swale set at the proposed ground level of adjacent land
- the swale provides sufficient capacity for the outfalls arising from the sustainable drainage solution serving the Primary School
- the design does not provide for any drainage to be directed towards the Primary School itself or otherwise adversely affect drainage or use of the Primary School

Any consequential outflows of surface water onto (e.g from school/buildings/hard surfaces) or off the school site (eg. Playing fields) shall be designed to be accommodated by Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. However, in order to provide full flexibility positive drainage solutions shall be provided by the developer 'off the school site' and accommodated within the developers overall drainage design by connections to their surface drainage systems.

The developer shall be required to provide for, any flood alleviation measures and attenuation necessary to meet the needs of the school site as **abnormal costs**.

Where the developer is looking to provide attenuation as part of the overall development capacities such attenuation shall be designed to take account of the school buildings, hard surfaced areas (which may not be resolved through sustainable drainage techniques) as well as surface water drainage to the playing fields where the natural water infiltration rate is inadequate.

Normal costs assume that water infiltration rates shall be greater or equal to 5mm/hr to BS7370. Where this cannot be demonstrated by independent testing executed as part of the geotechnical survey **abnormal costs** of integrating a surface water drainage scheme to the playing fields will be required

The lead local flood authority considers any school property as a 'Vulnerable Target'. Therefore School sites should be kept away from any natural or contrived flood route e.g. road designed as a flood route or stream, ditch or other drainage water channel.

Any off site flood mitigation measures arising from the school site must be included in the Developer's submission to the Environment Agency or lead local flood authority as appropriate at the same time as submission of proposals for the residential scheme. This will be a requirement of the initial planning submission.

4.7.11 Reworking existing levels

Where ground levels are re-worked changing the natural soil formation as a consequence of historic made ground or the developers design '**abnormal costs**' on construction will arise.

Where it is necessary to import soil to make up levels and/or provide an appropriate specification it shall be of a suitable standard to comply with the recommendations of Natural Turf for Sport - Design Guidance Note published by Sport England and compacted at maximum 250mm layers.

Ground bearing capacities shall be provided to ensure the ground bearing capacity is fit for the intended purpose which shall include ground treatment/improvement works as necessary to achieve a net bearing capacity of 100kPa, the maximum total differential settlement of 25mm in any event and with angular distortion limited to length/250 between any 2 points.

Where the school plan has accepted developer intervention such as

- Cut and fill of existing ground
- Creation of swales
- Removal of structures / obstructions upon the site
- Removal and decommissioning of existing services

works shall fully comply with required standards and the levels defined upon an agreed 'intervention plan'

All imported material shall be tested prior to importation

It is expected that hardstanding areas will be laid to falls to aid drainage (typically 1:80) and any settlement should not compromise the drainage of the site.

Reclamation to include any making good arising from archaeological investigations and the like

4.7.12 Top Soil Requirement

A minimum depth of 250mm top soil is required across the whole site to a quality appropriate for use as playing fields which shall comply with BS3882:2007. The material must contain no foreign objects or fragments and shall not contain substances which may prove hazardous to health or the environment all compacted at maximum 250 mm layers to meet the defined bearing capacities

The design and construction are to be carried out in accordance with this guidance to achieve a free draining playing field. Where existing material is inadequate the existing topsoil and subsoil is to be replaced in line with a detailed design to be undertaken by an Independent Sport Surface Consultancy approved by and warranted to Oxfordshire County Council and with a proven track record and experience in this type of work. The works is then to be undertaken by a Landscape Contractor (recommended by the Independent Consultancy) and warranted to OCC, who will also have a proven track record and experience of this type of work

The soil shall provide a ph value of between 5.5 and 7.5 to ISO 10390. A full ground condition survey will be required; both in terms of substructure design, potential contamination and quality of the top soil If existing conditions do not meet this standard **abnormal costs** will apply.

Where new top soil is to be imported onto the site it must be demonstrated to meet the above standard by independent testing arranged and funded by the developer.

Where levels have been re-worked the developer will be required to excavate 6 no. trial pits prior to handover to the Council; pits shall be 300mm x 300mm x 600mm deep to demonstrate compliance with the requirements.

4.7.13 Contamination / site remediation

Should any contaminants be identified any consequential remediation shall be carried out to meet residential development standards with plant uptake end-use and accord with the guidance for the safe development of housing on land effected by contamination R&D:66 2008 volume 1 published jointly by the Environment Agency, NHBC and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

Appropriate ground bearing capacity will need to be achieved to ensure the stability of external works and differential movement between the building and external surfaces.

No tipping or excavation work shall be carried out to the site

All the works must be undertaken with the full knowledge approval and acceptance of all the regulators/ relevant authorities including as applicable the District Council and the Environment Agency

4.7.14 Environmental Impact Assessments

Specific advice upon EIA for the specific school site will be required to be submitted prior to completion of the Section 106 agreement. Any costs arising from the assessment including direct and indirect costs arising from the presence of natural species such as Badgers, Newts, plants, etc shall be abnormal costs. Any mitigation measures shall be carried out by the developer prior to handover of the school site to ensure the site area remains full development area.

4.7.15 Geotechnical Requirements

A detailed geotechnical study will be required to establish the **abnormal costs** for sub-structures. Normal costs will assume simple strip foundations in 1 metre deep trenches.

Appropriate site investigations will be required in accordance with BS10175 accounting for a geotechnical and contaminated land assessment and associated reclamation and remedial strategy with appropriate assessment of risks and design of consequential works in accordance with good industrial standards

The contaminated land assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with The Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination CLR 11 (2008) technical framework and R&D Publication 66 (2008), which provide a structured decision-making process to assess land contamination.

A geo-environmental assessment report shall be required to provide an assessment of both contamination issues (including regulatory waste management issues in respect of excavated material) and development abnormalities

Works shall include, where necessary, physical barrier to prevent long term exposure to humans and the environment, taking account in particular of the end use of the site as a School with landscape, hard and soft play areas and may include the raising of levels of the School Site if required by the RMS in order to accommodate ground water levels and any flood alleviation measures required by the Environment Agency or the lead Local Flood Authority. In such circumstances specific solutions shall take account of proposed construction to avoid abortive works.

Works may include the

Infilling with materials to be approved by the County Council such approval to include (a) approval of the source of the materials with the provision of satisfactory test results (frequency and type to be agreed) for the materials and (b) approval of the method statement for installation of the materials with the provision of approved testing to appropriate standards

raising of levels of the Primary School Site if required by the RMS in order to accommodate ground water levels and any flood alleviation [and/or attenuation] measures required by the Environment Agency or the lead local flood Authority.

Upon completion of the reclamation and or remediation works, a completion report shall submitted to and approved by the EA and EHO and other appropriate Regulatory Authorities

as required prior to submission to OCC. The completion report shall warrant that the remediation has achieved its objectives as evidenced by a verification report and quality assurance certificates. The completion report shall identify whether long-term monitoring and/or maintenance is required.

The report shall detail all works undertaken and the chain of warranty provided for work

4.7.16 Foul Water Drainage

OCC will require the developer's drainage strategy for the development prior to establishing the appropriate drainage requirements for the school. OCC will provide a drawing of indicative connection points based upon conceptual layouts following an agreed freeze of site parameters and receipt of levels and developer's drainage infrastructure strategy. This information will be shown on the School Plan.

Developers will be required to submit detailed proposals which must ensure that the school site is serviced by gravity systems and give 3 months for OCC to review and confirm required invert levels prior to any installation of overall site drainage by the developer.

4.7.17 Acoustics

Acoustic surveys will be required in most circumstances along with anticipated acoustic levels resulting from the proposed development itself

School Buildings

Where noise levels are considered by OCC to be over recommended levels described in Building Bulletins the developer will be required to produce recommendations as to the consequential effect upon the build solution. Where measures are required this will be deemed to be an **abnormal cost**.

External areas

Outdoor ambient noise levels have a significant impact on communication in an environment which is already acoustically less favourable than most classrooms. Ideally, noise levels on unoccupied playing fields used for teaching sport should not exceed 50 dB LAeq,30min.'

If this is not possible due to a lack of suitably quiet sites, acoustic screening should be used to reduce noise levels in these areas. Acoustic screening from bunds, fences, walls or buildings may be used to protect external space from noise. Where screening is required this will be deemed to be an **abnormal cost** and where bunds are used as the most appropriate measure then **additional site area** will be required to accommodate them.

4.7.18 Services

All service capacity data must be provided on a project by project basis but for initial information the following information related to previous project work may be helpful. Clearly its effected by numbers, area, and energy strategy etc.

Secondary schools

The number of pupils and consequent size of the secondary school must be established prior to determining the service requirements.

Specific detail for secondary school can only be indicative and the following provides indicative information

Schedule

Primary Schools

Requirements vary according to primary school size as follows:

School Size	Floor Area m ²	Number of Pupils
7	1738	240
8	1838	270
9	1965	300
10	2192	330
11	2323	360
12	2408	390
13	2540	420
14	2625	450

NB. Refer to current Primary School Brief on the Councils web-site to establish any revisions to areas shown above

Requirements	When – Fully operational prior to	Where ³
<p>Permanent water supply connection from mains Water meter for 7,8,9 and 10 classroom school 20 mm internal diameter water service</p> <p>For 11, 12, 13 and 14 classroom school 25 mm internal diameter water service</p> <p>For both types separate 25 mm internal diameter supply for sprinkler system</p>	4 months prior to contract completion of construction of the school	At entrance to school site as shown on the school plan
<p>Electricity Mains electricity kva requirement 7 classroom 45kva 8 classroom 47kva</p>	4 months after contract let date for construction of the school	At entrance to school site as shown on the school plan

³ Reason for establishing location of service connections points is that when not done in the past they have not been satisfactory and have led to additional costs for the County.

<p>9 classroom 52kva 10 classroom 54kva 11 classroom 56kva 12 classroom 58kva 13 classroom 61kva 14 classroom 63kva</p>		
<p>Mains gas supply with meter Meter supply capacity m3/hr</p> <p>7 classrooms 60.51 8 classrooms 64.38 9 classrooms 70.40 10 classrooms 75.64 11 classrooms 79.27 12 classrooms 63.70 13 classrooms 86.66 14 classrooms 91.32</p>	<p>6 months prior to contract completion of construction of the school</p>	<p>At entrance to school site as shown on the school plan</p> <p>Meter to be located at school buildings as directed by the County Council</p>
<p>Standard Fire Hydrants</p>	<p>4 months prior to contract completion of construction of the school</p>	<p>Provisions to accord with the recommendations of the Fire Service but as a minimum one hydrant must be provided on the highway / prospective public highway near to each of the entrances to the school as shown on the school plan and no more than 150 metres apart</p> <p>Hydrants must be capable of supplying sufficient water at suitable pressures ie a minimum of 1500 litres/min</p>
<p>Drainage spur connections from mains Foul drainage from school buildings (min 150mm diameter)</p> <p>Surface water drainage facilities (min 150mm diameter) to</p>	<p>6 months prior to contract completion of construction of the school</p>	<p>At entrance to school as shown and at various positions to be identified on the school plan</p>

4.8 Documentation

4.8.1 The Section 106 agreement will reflect these requirements

4.8.2 Collateral Warranties will be required for all surveys and works arranged by the developer

4.8.3 Transfer of School Site.

The freehold of the site is to be transferred free from encumbrances (except historic encumbrances which do not impact on educational use e.g. restriction against the sale of liquor). There must be no service easements or rights of way affecting the site.

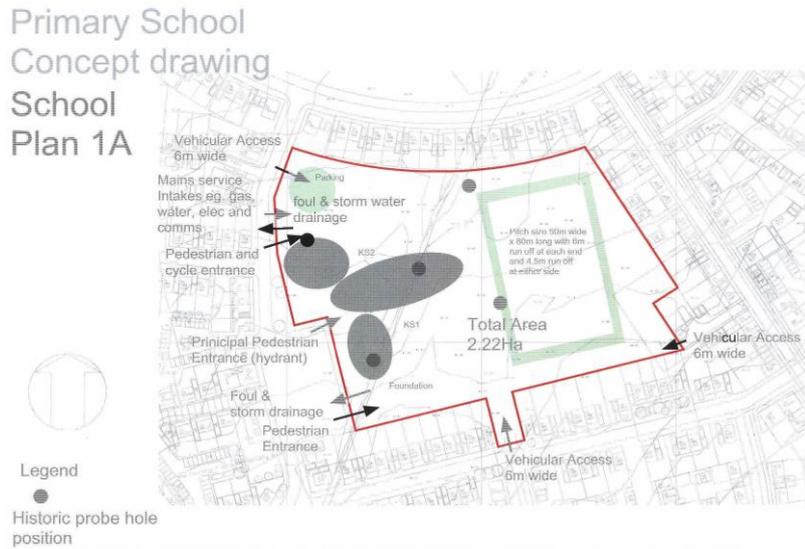
Rights of entry for works, rights of way, services easements and rights of support and where requisite rights of way and services easements are to be granted to the school. However the reservation of permanent service easements, rights of way and entry affecting the school premises are not compatible with school use and pupil safety.

A restrictive covenant as to educational and ancillary use may be agreed for the duration of the construction of the development but otherwise the County Council must not be fettered from future change of use to accommodate the delivery of its statutory functions. Closure of any school maintained by the County Council is governed by the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and regulations entailing public consultation and decision making (see 4.6.3 above)

4.8.4 The developer shall provide draft proposals for the following 2 drawings which are required for the section 106 document

- **A site layout plan (School Plan) in CAD format:**
 - An indicative layout illustrating the zone of potential buildings
 - North point
 - School site boundary marked in red and area stated in line with the area standards defined in the primary school brief / agreed
 - Where joint use areas have been agreed shaded areas of joint use are defined.
 - Ordnance Survey data / grid lines and background survey data to enable the land to be transferred to be identified in relation to existing features.
 - Proposed location/dimensions of sports pitch
 - 2 Vehicular access points clearly identified positioned at opposite sides of the school building for emergency access and to ensure that future maintenance / extension work etc will not compromise operation of the school.
 - Maintenance access point for grass cutting of the playing field etc (may be combined with one vehicular access point where pre-agreed)
 - Pedestrian Access Points – visitors (entrance), foundation (play space), KS1(play space) and KS2 (play space)
 - Details of all existing features including trees
 - Service entry points including Telecom, communications, electricity, gas, and water for school provision only.
 - Service exit points including foul and surface water drainage
 - Hydant to be positioned midway along the schools main frontage
 - Record of the location of any ground investigations carried out

Typical Example



- The site works (Enabling works) drawing (in CAD format) where works are agreed to be carried out in advance of land transfer
 - Definition of existing and proposed levels across the site
 - Definition and specification of any works to be carried out

Typical example

