

Chapter 4: Spatial Strategy

Overview

This chapter sets out our Spatial Strategy for the future shape of development across the Vale, which is called: **‘Building on our strengths’** (see **Figure 4.1**). This shows where new homes will be built, where opportunities to provide new jobs will be created, and where new infrastructure and services (such as new roads, schools, shops and leisure facilities) will be required.

The Spatial Strategy has three main strands. These seek to:

- focus sustainable growth within the Science Vale area
- reinforce the service centre roles of the main settlements across the district, and
- promote thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character.

The Spatial Strategy makes provision for growth of around 23,000 new jobs, 218 hectares of employment land, and at least 20,560 new homes, to be delivered during the plan period from 2011 to 2031.

The Spatial Strategy has been informed by the key challenges and opportunities facing the district outlined in **Chapter 2** and will help us to deliver our vision and objectives outlined in **Chapter 3**.

Significant weight has been attached to ensuring our strategy delivers sustainable development and it has been informed by the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (**Core Policy 1** – see **Chapter 1**).

The Strategy

4.1 A common theme running through the strategy is the need to support the delivery of new housing and jobs to be complemented by new services, facilities and infrastructure – **Figure 4.1**.

4.2 The Spatial Strategy is underpinned by five core policies:

- **Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy** – which classifies the settlements in the Vale according to their role and function.
- **Core Policy 4: Meeting our Housing Need** – which specifies the scale and location of new housing, ensuring development is built in the most appropriate locations.
- **Core Policy 5: Housing Supply Ring Fence** – which identifies a core area within Science Vale where new homes will be provided to achieve sustainable development in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. The area will have a separate housing land supply target from the rest of the district.
- **Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs** – which specifies the scale and location of opportunities for economic growth to ensure that sufficient new jobs are provided across the Vale in appropriate locations, and
- **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services** – to ensure new services and facilities are delivered alongside new housing and employment.

Sub-Area Strategies

4.3 We have also developed three **Sub-Area Strategies**, which give spatial expression to the strategy and ensure that it is locally distinctive and focused on each part of our district. These are set out in **Chapter 5 (See Figure 4.2)**. The three sub-areas are:

- **Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe** – which covers the northern and north eastern part of the Vale, which have strong linkages with the City of Oxford. It contains the Market Town of Abingdon-on-Thames, the Local Service Centre of Botley and several Larger Villages including Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Steventon and Wootton. A large part of this area is located within the Oxford Green Belt.
- **South East Vale** – which includes much of the Science Vale area and contains the Market Town of Wantage, the Local Service

Centre of Grove as well as a number of significant employment sites, including Harwell Campus, Milton Park and Didcot A Power Station. The area also contains a number of Larger Villages including Blewbury, East Hendred, Harwell, Harwell Campus, Milton and Sutton Courtenay.

- **Western Vale** – which is a more rural area stretching from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the River Thames, containing the Market Town of Faringdon and several Larger Villages including East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield.

Science Vale

- 4.4 We are working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council to plan for the Science Vale locality, which spans district boundaries. Additional delivery and implementation details for our proposals across the Science Vale locality will be included within the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. This is discussed more in **Chapter 5**.

District wide policies

- 4.5 We have developed district wide policies set out in **Chapter 6**, which apply across the Vale for specific issues. These policies are needed to complement the Spatial Strategy and Sub-Area Strategies to help ensure the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives can be successfully delivered. They build on, rather than duplicate, national guidance and are important to enable the determination of development proposals in a consistent manner.
- 4.6 We have saved some policies from the Local Plan 2011, as identified in **Appendix G**. These policies remain relevant for planning for the Vale and we will continue to apply these saved policies for Development Management purposes until they are replaced by the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

Figure 4.1: ‘Building on our strengths’- a sustainable strategy for the Vale of White Horse

The strategy will support the delivery of sustainable growth through three key strands:

<p>Focusing sustainable growth within the Science Vale area, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting Science Vale as a world-class location for science and technology-based enterprise and innovation, especially the Enterprise Zone sites at Milton Park and Harwell Campus • allocating appropriate land for strategic housing growth to help improve the self-containment of the area. New homes will be delivered at five key locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grove ○ Harwell and Milton Parishes, east of the A34 ○ Harwell Campus ○ Milton Parish, west of the A34 ○ Wantage • supporting the redevelopment of surplus land at Didcot A Power Station • delivering a comprehensive package of strategic and local infrastructure and services alongside the housing and employment growth, and • working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council to drive forward the delivery of high quality development across Science Vale including the provision of enabling infrastructure 	<p>Reinforcing the service centre roles of the main settlements across the district, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concentrating larger shopping, tourism and community facilities at Abingdon-on-Thames, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage to improve their vitality and ensuring they are widely accessible • focusing housing growth at the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages • allocating strategic housing growth at Abingdon-on-Thames and Faringdon, in addition to the growth within the Science Vale area, to strengthen their service centre roles, and • allocating land for strategic employment growth at Faringdon and Grove to complement the Science Vale sites and to provide jobs close to where people live. 	<p>Promoting thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocating strategic housing growth at our Larger Villages of East Hanney, Harwell, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Radley, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale and Sutton Courtenay to help maintain their vibrant communities • identifying appropriate housing requirements for the rural areas to inform neighbourhood plans or the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 • focusing development within the rural areas to the Larger Villages, thus helping to maintain their vitality and the sustainability of local services, and • supporting appropriate development in the Smaller Villages to help meet the local needs of rural communities.
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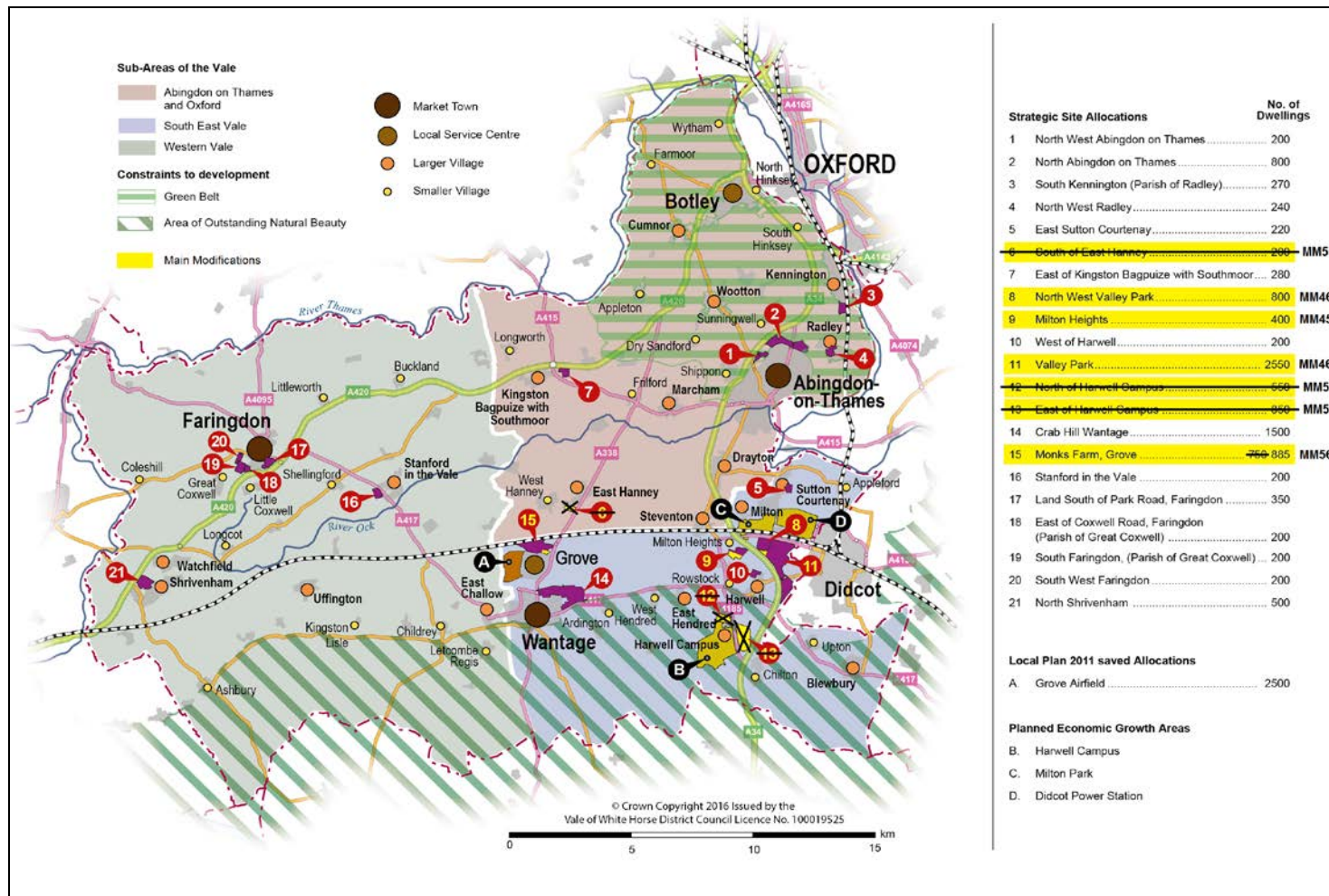


Figure 4.2: Map showing the strategic growth across the three Sub-Areas within the Vale of White Horse District

Settlement Hierarchy

4.7 The Settlement Hierarchy (**Core Policy 3**) defines the settlements across the Vale of White Horse District into four tiers based on an assessment of their facilities, characteristics and functional relationships with their surrounding areas¹. Each tier of settlement has a different strategic role:

- Market Towns
- Local Service Centres
- Larger Villages, and
- Smaller Villages

4.8 The Local Plan 2031 protects and enhances the services and facilities provided by the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and our Larger Villages and ensures that any new facilities, homes and jobs are focused on these settlements. This will help to ensure the delivery of sustainable development because:

- these settlements provide the best range of services and facilities and new development will help to support and enhance them
- locating new homes in the communities with the best services and facilities will enable the residents in the new homes to access them by walking, cycling and public transport, so reducing the need to travel by car
- it will enable more affordable homes to be built where there is most need, and
- the main service providers, including the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the County Council and the emergency services, prefer this approach because it will help them to deliver their services more efficiently.

4.9 The settlement boundaries for Market Towns and Local Service Centres² are shown by the Adopted Policies Map. These boundaries may be reviewed and updated in the future either through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, or neighbourhood plans.

¹ Town and Village Facilities Study (2014), available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence .

² There is no settlement boundary defined for Botley as the Oxford Green Belt provides a policy limit on development around the settlement.

Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy

Market Towns

Market Towns are defined as settlements that have the ability to support the most sustainable patterns of living within the Vale through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities.

Market Towns have the greatest long-term potential for development to provide the jobs and homes to help sustain, and where appropriate, enhance their services and facilities to support viable and sustainable communities in a proportionate manner.

Local Service Centres

Local Service Centres are defined as larger villages or neighbourhoods to larger settlements with a level of facilities and services and local employment to provide the next best opportunities for sustainable development outside the Market Towns.

Larger Villages

Larger Villages are defined as settlements with a more limited range of employment, services and facilities. Unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities.

Smaller Villages

The Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

The Settlement Classifications are:

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area:

Market Town:	Abingdon-on-Thames
Local Service Centre:	Botley
Larger Villages:	Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Sutton Courtenay , Steventon and Wootton
Smaller Villages:	Appleford, Appleton, Dry Sanford, Farmoor, Frilford, Longworth, North Hinksey, Shippon, South Hinksey, Sunningwell, West Hanney and Wytham

South East Vale Sub-Area:

Market Town:	Wantage
Local Service Centre:	Grove
Larger Villages:	Blewbury, East Hendred, Harwell, Harwell Campus* SUTTON COURTENAY and Milton
Smaller Villages:	Ardington, Chilton, Milton Heights**, Rowstock, Upton and West Hendred

Western Vale Sub-Area:

Market Town:	Faringdon
Local Service Centre:	East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield
LARGER VILLAGES	
Smaller Villages:	Ashbury, Buckland, Childrey, Coleshill, Great Coxwell, Kingston Lisle, Little Coxwell, Littleworth, Longcot, Letcombe Regis and Shellingford

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Those villages not included within the categories described above are considered to form part of the open countryside, where development will not be appropriate, unless consistent with the exceptions policies set out in the Local Plan.

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*Harwell Campus has facilities and services equivalent to a Larger Village.

**Milton Heights has facilities and services within a short walk that are equivalent to those offered by a Larger Village.

Meeting our housing needs

4.10 The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 makes provision for 20,560 new homes to be delivered during the plan period (2011/12 to 2030/31; **Core Policy 4**). This reflects the Objectively Assessed Need for Vale of White Horse District Council as identified by the up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire.

4.11 If or when required, any needs arising elsewhere in the Housing Market Area, will be addressed by timely and effective cooperative working in accordance with **Core Policy 2** (see **Chapter 1**).

Sources of housing supply

4.12 A number of sources of housing supply will ensure a continuous supply of housing delivery across the plan period. These sources include:

- strategic allocations made within this plan
- retained Local Plan (2011) allocations
- existing planning commitments
- additional sites to be identified through neighbourhood plans, or identified through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, and
- sites not yet identified that will come forward through the development management process in accordance with the policies set out in the Local Plan 2031. These are sometimes known as 'windfalls'.

4.13 The strategic allocations (listed in **Core Policy 4** and outlined in more detail within the Sub-Area Strategies) are central to the delivery of the Local Plan 2031 and the Strategic Objectives for the Vale.

4.14 To identify the strategic allocations, we have followed a comprehensive selection process, which began with an assessment of land surrounding each of our most sustainable settlements and key business parks. This helped to identify the broad locations that offered the most suitable locations for development, which were then comprehensively tested, including by the Sustainability Appraisal, Evaluation of Transport Impacts

Study, Viability Study, Landscape Study and review of responses to earlier stages of consultation³.

- 4.15 The scale of development on these strategic sites will enable infrastructure to be provided that offers wider benefits to their local areas.

Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Needs

The housing target for the Vale of White Horse District is for at least 20,560 homes to be delivered in the plan period between 2011 and 2031^a. 12,495 dwellings will be delivered through strategic allocations. 1,840 dwellings remain to be identified and will be allocated through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or Neighbourhood Development Plans or through the Development Management process. The contribution of all sources of housing supply are shown by the following table:

Category		Number of Dwellings
Housing requirement for the full plan period (Apr 2011 to Mar 2031)		20,560 ^a
Housing Completions (Apr 2011 to Mar 2016)		3,065
Housing Supply (Apr 2016 to Mar 2031)	Known Commitments	4,468
	Local Plan 2031 Part 1 allocations	12,495
	Local Plan 2031 Part 2 allocations	1,000 ^b
	Windfalls	840

^a This target addresses needs arising in the Vale of White Horse. If or when required, needs arising elsewhere in the Housing Market Area, will be addressed by timely and effective cooperative working in accordance with Core Policy 2.

^b The Local Plan Part 2 allocation will be reduced where dwellings are allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans or come forward through the Development Management Process.

Strategic Allocations

Development will be supported at strategic site allocations where it meets the requirements set out within the Site Development Templates shown by **Appendix A** and in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan taken as a whole. The following tables show how the level of housing required through strategic development sites will be distributed:

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³ More information about how we have selected the strategic allocations is set out in our Topic Papers available from the Council website: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/localplanpartone>

Core Policy 4: Housing Delivery - continued from previous page

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area:

Settlement/ Parish	Settlement/ Type	Site Name	Number of Dwellings	
Abingdon-on-Thames	Market Town	North of Abingdon-on-Thames	800	
		North-West of Abingdon-on-Thames	200	
East Hanney	Larger Village	South of East Hanney	200	MM5
Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor		East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor	280	
Radley		North-West of Radley	240	
		South of Kennington	270	
Sub total			1,990 1,790	MM5

South East Vale Sub-Area:

Settlement/ Parish	Settlement/ Type	Site Name	Number of Dwellings	
Wantage	Market Town	Crab Hill ^c (North East Wantage and South East Grove)	1,500	
Grove	Local Service Centre	Grove Airfield ^{c, d}	2,500	MM56
		Monks Farm (North Grove)	750 885	
Harwell and Milton Parishes east of the A34 adjoining Didcot Town	Adjoining Didcot Town	Valley Park ^f	2,550	
		North-West of Valley Park	800	
Harwell Campus	Larger Village	East of Harwell Campus	850	MM5
		North West of Harwell Campus	550	
Harwell		West of Harwell	200	
Milton Parish west of the A34		Milton Heights (Smaller Village)	400	
Sutton Courtenay		East of Sutton Courtenay	220	
Sub total			10,320 9,055	MM5

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Western Vale Sub-Area

Settlement/ Parish	Settlement/ Type	Site Name	Number of Dwellings
Faringdon	Market Town	Land South of Park Road, Faringdon ^c	350
		South-West of Faringdon	200
Great Coxwell Parish	Adjoining Faringdon Market Town	East of Coxwell Road Faringdon ^c	200
		South of Faringdon	200
Shrivenham	Larger Village	North of Shrivenham	500
Stanford-in-the-Vale		West of Stanford-in-the-Vale	200
Sub total			1,650

Development at Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages

There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area of Market Towns^e, Local Service Centres^e and Larger Villages in accordance with Core Policy 1.

Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. This development must be adjacent, or well related, to the existing built area of the settlement or meet exceptional circumstances set out in the other policies of the Development Plan and deliver necessary supporting infrastructure.

Development at Smaller Villages

At the Smaller Villages, limited infill development may be appropriate within the existing built areas of these settlements, or if it is allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. Proposals for **LIMITED INFILL** development will be supported where they are in keeping with local character and are proportionate in scale and meet local housing needs, and/ or provide local employment, services and facilities.

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OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

DEVELOPMENT IN OPEN COUNTRYSIDE WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY SUPPORTED BY OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AS SET OUT IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OR NATIONAL POLICY.

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^c These sites have 'Resolution to Grant' planning permission subject to legal agreement as at Sept 2014

^d Saved Local Plan 2011 Allocation

^e As defined by the Settlement Boundaries shown by the Adopted Policies Map.

^f The allocation at Valley Park has the capacity to deliver more housing subject to further appropriate infrastructure improvements. Housing which is in addition to the 2,550 homes is expected to be delivered after 2031

Housing supply ring-fence

- 4.16 The Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan⁴ identifies Science Vale as one of three key growth areas on the 'Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine', with significant potential to build on the extensive existing research infrastructure and the designated Enterprise Zone. The wider strategy of the Local Economic Partnership includes supporting economic growth to ensure that we maximise the potential of this important area.
- 4.17 Further analysis⁵ of the economic forecasts prepared for the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area⁶ indicates that around 15,850, or almost 70%, of the 23,000 new jobs forecast for the district to 2031 are likely to be located in the Science Vale area. New scientific and research jobs will principally be provided at the two Enterprise Zone sites at Harwell Campus and Milton Park. There will also be significant general business and indirect service sector employment growth that is likely to locate in the surrounding business locations, such as Williams F1 in Grove and the Didcot A site, and in the main town centres including Wantage.
- 4.18 It is the jobs being created in Science Vale that generate the need for a significant proportion of the houses required in the district. The majority (almost 75%) of our strategic housing growth is allocated within close proximity to these key Science Vale business locations. Our plans for significantly enhancing and delivering new infrastructure are also focused on the Science Vale area to enable our growth potential to be realised. This infrastructure cannot currently be delivered without the planned housing.
- 4.19 The Council is therefore adopting a 'ring-fence' approach to housing supply to help ensure that jobs, homes and infrastructure are provided together. This will help to achieve sustainable development by minimising the need to travel and the burden on transport networks. The central planning justification for the ring fence is that it supports the delivery of our Local Plan Spatial Strategy focus on development in Science Vale. The ring fence serves to concentrate housing growth and infrastructure investment in this location and reinforces our commitment to the Spatial Strategy. In doing so it also improves our ability to seek external funding to support infrastructure delivery and accelerate housing growth.
- 4.20 The funding of Science Vale infrastructure will include significant contributions from housing development. Enabling loans to be repaid from future Enterprise Zone business rates will help deliver infrastructure

⁴ Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (2014) *Strategic Economic Plan*-
<http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/>

⁵ GL Hearn (2014) Science Vale Housing and Employment Study draft report, Vale of White Horse District Council (June 2014)

⁶ *Economic Forecasting to Inform the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and Strategic Housing Market, Assessment* (Cambridge Economics February 2014)

earlier than might otherwise be achieved. If housing growth does not take place in the ring fence area, Enterprise Zone and other business growth prospects would be harmed and business rates' contributions to infrastructure provision jeopardised.

- 4.21 **THE RING-FENCE AREA ENCOMPASSES THE SCIENCE VALE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA, AS SHOWN ON FIGURE 4.3 AND (TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE FLEXIBILITY IN ITS OPERATION) SITES AND SETTLEMENTS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO IT.** ~~The ring fence area and approach~~ **THIS AREA** complements the Didcot ring-fence in the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, and will support the delivery focus of ~~the emerging joint Science Vale Area Action Plan~~ **GROWTH AT SCIENCE VALE**. Growth in both districts will contribute to the shared strategic infrastructure package set out in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

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~~4.22 The ring fence is a subset of the wider Science Vale geographical area that encompasses the most sustainable locations for development and intentionally excludes its more rural parts. The ring fence covers selected main settlements and villages where growth is proposed in the Local Plan, and land consented or allocated for development around them. The ring fence area comprises the settlement areas of Wantage, Grove, Harwell and Milton and land in the Vale adjoining the Didcot urban area; together with sites for strategic housing and employment growth at Didcot A Power Station, Milton Park, Harwell Campus, Chilton Fields, Milton Heights, Great Western Park and Valley Park (Figure 4.3).~~

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- 4.22 **THE HOUSING SUPPLY CALCULATION WILL BE UNDERTAKEN ON TWO SEPARATE AREAS: THE RING FENCE AREA AS SET OUT IN THIS POLICY AND THE REST OF THE DISTRICT, WITH EACH OF THE AREAS HAVING ITS OWN HOUSING TARGET AND MONITORING APPROACH. THE RESPECTIVE HOUSING TARGETS, RING FENCE 11,850 DWELLINGS AND REST OF DISTRICT 8,710 DWELLINGS EQUATE TO THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE DISTRICT AS IDENTIFIED WITHIN CORE POLICY 4. THE APPROACH TAKEN TO EACH OF THE SUPPLY AREAS, LIVERPOOL* FOR THE RING FENCE AREA AND SEDGEFIELD** FOR THE REST OF DISTRICT AREA, WILL ENSURE THE DELIVERY OF HOUSING WITHIN THE SCIENCE VALE AREA IS ASSESSED OVER A LONGER PERIOD WITH THE ECONOMIC AND HOUSING NEEDS COMING FORWARD IN PARALLEL. THE COUNCIL IS THEREFORE ENSURING THERE IS A BOOST IN HOUSING SUPPLY WHILST A BALANCE IS STRUCK IN THE DELIVERY OF ECONOMIC AND HOUSING NEEDS IN THE SCIENCE VALE AREA. THE TWO SUPPLY CALCULATIONS ARE COMBINED TO PROVIDE A DISTRICT WIDE CALCULATION.**

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***THE LIVERPOOL APPROACH SEEKS TO MEET A BACKLOG OF HOUSING SUPPLY BY SPREADING IT EVENLY OVER THE WHOLE PLAN PERIOD**

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****THE SEDGEFIELD APPROACH SEEKS TO MEET A BACKLOG OF HOUSING SUPPLY WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS**

Core Policy 5: Housing Supply Ring-Fence

The Council will employ a ring-fence approach to housing delivery in **the key development locations within** the Science Vale area as shown by **Figure 4.3** and set out on the Adopted Policies Map.

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For the purposes of the assessment of housing land supply, the ring-fence area will be treated as a separate sub-area with a housing requirement of 11,850 homes in the plan period (593 homes per annum) in support of the 15,850 jobs planned in this sub-area and as a contribution towards the district's housing need set out in **Core Policy 4**.

THE SUPPLY CALCULATIONS FOR THE RING-FENCE AREA AND THE REST OF DISTRICT AREA WILL BE COMBINED TO PROVIDE A DISTRICT WIDE CALCULATION.

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ANY PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE RING FENCE AREA, WHETHER A FIVE YEAR HOUSING SUPPLY IS IN PLACE OR NOT, WILL STILL NEED TO DEMONSTRATE CONFORMITY WITH RELEVANT NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY.

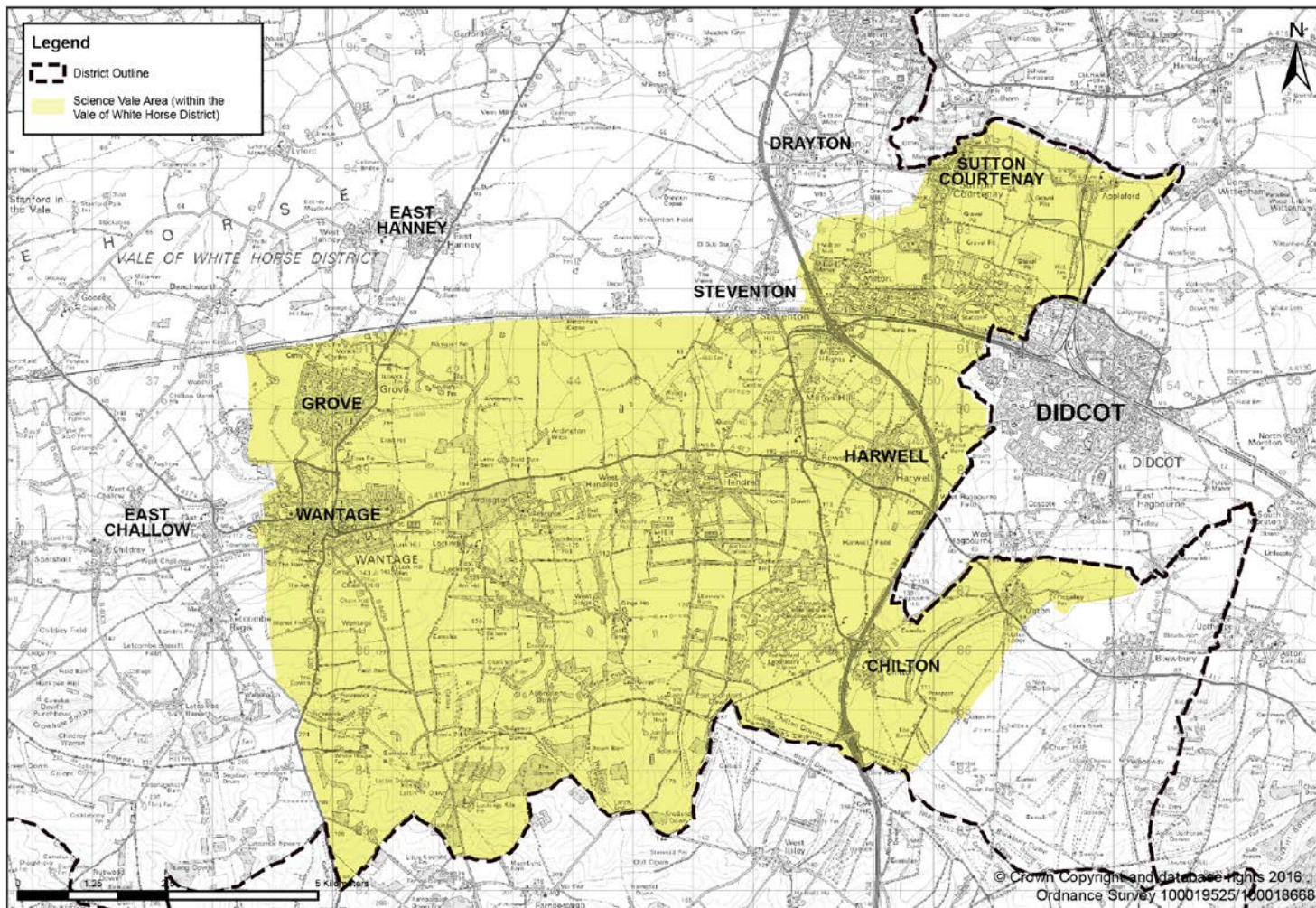


Figure 4.3: Housing supply ring-fence area

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Meeting business and employment needs

4.23 Overall demand for employment land in the Vale is strong due to a combination of local assets, including: excellent quality of environment; high-quality research and science facilities; a large catchment pool of skilled labour; and existing science and business parks with growth aspirations and where the demand for growth is expected to remain buoyant throughout the plan period⁷.

4.24 This strategy makes provision for around 218 hectares of strategic employment land **FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT** in accordance with our assessed needs, set out in our Employment Land Review⁸ and it is anticipated that this will deliver approximately 23,000 jobs between 2011 and 2031. This land will be provided by a combination of different sites including:

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- provision of employment land as part of mixed use urban extensions
- sites covered by the adopted Milton Park Local Development Order, and
- vacant and developable land retained from Vale Local Plan 2011 allocations for employment land.

4.25 Employment provision within the Vale is led by Science Vale, and in particular, the Enterprise Zone sites at Milton Park and Harwell Campus. Milton Park is a large science park and a major regional and national hub for knowledge-intensive industries. Harwell Campus is home to a number of world leading science research facilities including, for example, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and the European Space Agency. Milton Park and Harwell Campus account for 156 hectares of the identified demand for new employment land.

4.26 ~~The joint Science Vale Area Action Plan, to be prepared in collaboration with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council will set out more detail to help inform the master planning of the Harwell Campus site.~~ **ADDITIONAL DETAIL TO ASSIST THE DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF GROWTH ACROSS THE DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN AREA WILL BE SET OUT IN THE LOCAL PLAN 2031 PART 2.**

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4.27 Overall the employment provision within the Science Vale area accounts for around 15,850 projected jobs, which equates to around 70 % of the planned total for the district.

⁷ URS (2012) Vale of White Horse Employment Land Review Update

⁸ URS (2012) Vale of White Horse Employment Land Review Update

- 4.28 There is an adopted Local Development Order (LDO) for Milton Park⁹ that allows for the intensification and expansion of the existing site. The LDO is designed to allow development within the B1, B2 and B8 use classes. It also permits elements of other uses so long as they support the vitality and viability of the park and complement the primary business uses. A map showing the area covered by the LDO and the area covered by saved Policy E5 (which is slightly smaller) is provided in **Appendix C**.
- 4.29 Employment land will also be provided as part of mixed-use strategic sites at Land South of Park Road, Faringdon and Monks Farm, North Grove. This employment land will help to ensure that jobs are available close to people's homes.
- 4.30 The strategy identifies that the Didcot A Power Station site is an appropriate location for employment development to contribute to the 218 hectares to be provided. The size of this site could also provide additional land, and/ or accommodate mixed-use development, over and above the identified requirement, in the latter stages of the plan period. Any development on this site should come forward in accordance with **Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station**.
- 4.31 Policy CSEM2 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy¹⁰ indicates that 6.5 hectares of employment land will be provided at Didcot, within the Vale of White Horse District, in order to help meet the town's needs. This 6.5 hectares is included within the 28 hectares to be provided at Milton Park and contributes towards the identified requirement of 218 hectares for the Vale of White Horse District.

⁹ Milton Park Local Development Order, December 2012, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/milton-park-local-development-order>

¹⁰ South Oxfordshire District Council, South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, December 2012, available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy/adopted-core-strategy>

Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs

218 hectares of land is identified for future employment development on the following strategic sites and saved Vale Local Plan 2011 allocations.

Site Name	Sub-Area	Type of Site	Available Development Land (Hectares)
Milton Park	South East Vale	Saved Local Plan 2011 allocation	28*
Harwell Campus		Saved Local Plan 2011 allocation	93 (Enterprise Zone)
			35 (Outwith EZ)
Monks Farm, North Grove		New mixed use strategic allocation	6
Didcot A		Identified future potential supply	29**
South of Park Road, Faringdon	Western Vale	New mixed use strategic allocation	3
		Other saved Local Plan 2011 allocations	24.2
Total			218

*The 28 hectares to be provided at Milton Park includes sites covered by the Local Development Order (LDO) which are not within the area of the Local Plan 2011 allocation. A map showing the extent of the LDO and the area of the Local Plan 2011 allocation is included at **Appendix C**.

** The Didcot A Power Station site consists of around 47 hectares for potential redevelopment. The Employment Land Review recommends that 29 hectares of this land should be identified for employment development. Development at this site should be considered in accordance with **Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station**.

Employment and business development as part of mixed-use development will be supported at ~~strategic sites~~ **MONKS FARM, GROVE AND SOUTH OF PARK ROAD, FARINGDON** where this meets the requirements set out within the Site Development Templates shown by **Appendix A**, and in accordance with the Sub-Area Strategies.

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The other saved Vale Local Plan 2011 employment allocations are:

Site Name	Sub-Area	Available Development Land (Hectares)
Abingdon Business Park at Wyndyke Furlong	Abingdon/ Oxford Fringe	0.7
Abingdon Science Park at Barton Lane		0.7
Cumnor Hill		0.3
Wootton Business Park		1.5
Milton Hill Business and Technology Park	South East Vale	11.2
Grove Technology Park		5.4
Land adjacent to A420 (4&20 site), Faringdon	Western Vale	4.2
Land north of Park Road (HCA site), Faringdon		0.2
Total		24.2

Proposals for employment related development on **UNALLOCATED** ~~other~~ sites will be supported in accordance with **Core Policy 28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites**. In addition to the sites identified for new employment

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development, a number of existing strategic employment sites have been identified in the Sub-Area Strategies. These sites will be safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with **Core Policy 29: Change of use of existing employment land and premises.**

Addressing the needs for retailing

- 4.32 The focus of Vale's existing retail offering occurs in the three historic Market Towns of Abingdon-on-Thames, Wantage and Faringdon. One of the Strategic Objectives of this Local Plan 2031 is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing centres in these settlements.
- 4.33 It is important that existing centres remain active and vibrant in light of changing trends. The historically and naturally constrained nature of Vale's Market Towns limits the potential for significant retail expansion to accommodate the district's need up to 2031.
- 4.34 It is key that retail development is provided in the most sustainable locations, close to where people live and work. In Abingdon-on-Thames, the redevelopment of the Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter area, phase one of which has been completed, continues to be a priority for the Council and is set out in **Core Policy 10: Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter, Abingdon-on-Thames.**
- 4.35 The Council continues to support the steering committees of both Wantage and Faringdon Neighbourhood Development Plans who seek to expand on their current retail offering in line with the expected need for the plan period.
- 4.36 Vale's strategy identifies a significant level of housing growth to occur in the South East Vale Sub-Area and in particular on land to the west of Didcot, the town centre of which is located in South Oxfordshire. Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils will continue to work together through the 'duty-to-cooperate' to ensure that the cumulative retail need arising for the wider Didcot area from new strategic site allocations can be successfully delivered through the continued expansion of the Orchard Centre in the town centre and through the new district centre at Great Western Park.
- 4.37 Outside of the main towns, Botley is strategically well located on the western edge of Oxford City. The upgrading of its central area is a priority of the Council, and is supported by **Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area.** A new local shopping centre is planned for the strategic site at Grove airfield also to provide for future growth in the area. This will complement the existing centre at Millbrook Square.

4.38 Some of the larger strategic site allocations within the district may be capable of providing some retail provision to predominantly cater for the day-to-day needs of their immediate residents. Such schemes will need to demonstrate that they will not undermine the vitality and viability of the retail provision in the Market Towns and Didcot.

4.39 **Core Policy 32: Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses** provides greater detail on how retail development, along with other main town centre uses are to be provided in the district.

Providing supporting infrastructure and services

4.40 Successful infrastructure delivery is important to ensure the wider aims of this strategy can be met. These include delivering sustainable growth across the Vale.

4.41 Infrastructure can cover a range of services and facilities. These can include:

- physical and transport infrastructure such as roads, bus services, water, drainage, waste management, sewage treatment and utility services
- social infrastructure such as education, health facilities, social services, emergency services and other community facilities such as libraries and cemeteries, and
- Green Infrastructure such as parks, allotments, footpaths, play areas and natural and amenity green space.

4.42 DELIVERY OF CERTAIN TYPES OF INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE MORE IMPORTANT TO DEVELOPMENT COMING FORWARD THAN OTHERS:

ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS THAT WHICH IS REQUIRED TO MAKE DEVELOPMENT HAPPEN IN A TIMELY AND SUSTAINABLE MANNER. SUCH INFRASTRUCTURE IS THEREFORE NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT ARE MITIGATED AND THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT COMES FORWARD WITH NECESSARY SUPPORTING FACILITIES. NOT INVESTING IN THIS INFRASTRUCTURE MAY WELL RESULT IN DELAYS TO DEVELOPMENT COMING FORWARD. EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENTS ARE ROADS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS, SCHOOLS AND FOUL WATER TREATMENT UPGRADES.

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OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE IS THAT WHICH IS IMPORTANT TO MEET THE OVERALL CUMULATIVE NEEDS OF DEVELOPMENTS, BUT IS NOT SEEN AS LIKELY TO PREVENT AN INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT COMING FORWARD IN THE SHORT-TERM.

- 4.43 Any new development increases the use of, or demand for, existing services and facilities. Where new homes or jobs are developed and there is insufficient capacity to meet additional demand it is critical that essential infrastructure is provided to meet the demand created.
- 4.44 Infrastructure delivery is important to ensure new development is sustainable and this is particularly important across the Science Vale area. This is where around 70 % of our projected jobs and 75 % of our strategic housing is directed. Essential strategic highway infrastructure has been identified to support the identified growth across Science Vale and this is discussed further within the South East Vale Sub-Area.
- 4.45 New services and facilities should be planned to meet the demand created by new development and be delivered at appropriate timescales. This will ensure that the needs of both the existing community and future residents are provided for. We will therefore only grant planning permission for new development once the delivery of infrastructure within appropriate timescales has been secured.
- 4.46 Infrastructure has been traditionally provided or funded by developers through legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in the Planning Act 2008 and defined in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). CIL provides a tariff that local authorities can levy on new development, thus providing more certainty over development costs. The Vale of White Horse District Council is preparing a CIL charging schedule alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The Council's approach to infrastructure is also set out in more detail in the Delivering Infrastructure Strategy¹¹.
- 4.47 One of the steps in the process of introducing CIL is to identify the infrastructure that is needed to support future growth and how much it is likely to cost. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been prepared in support of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1¹².
- 4.48 The requirement to provide new or enhanced infrastructure must not be so onerous as to render development unviable, taking into account other policy requirements such as affordable housing provision. For this reason an independent viability study has been carried out to inform this strategy and the draft IDP¹³.
- 4.49 Effective partnership working is essential between public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure infrastructure is efficiently provided and maintained. The Council continues to work closely with a range of

¹¹ <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/delivering-infrastructure>

¹² A separate IDP will also be prepared to accompany the Science Vale Area Action Plan.

¹³ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

stakeholders, including: the Environment Agency, Highways England, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership (LEP), Thames Water and Town and Parish Councils.

Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services

All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and /or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. **WHERE APPROPRIATE, DEVELOPERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO COLLABORATE ON THE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH IS NEEDED TO SERVE MORE THAN ONE SITE.** In ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure requirements, development proposals must demonstrate that full regard has been paid to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and all other relevant policies of this plan.

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If infrastructure requirements could render the development unviable, proposals for major development should be supported by an independent viability assessment on terms agreed by the relevant parties including the Council and County Council, and funded by the developer. This will involve an open book approach. Where viability constraints are demonstrated by evidence, the Council will:

- i. **PRIORITISE DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL AND THEN OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE IN LINE WITH THE DEFINITIONS AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 4.42 AND THE DETAIL OF REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE IDP, AND/OR** ~~prioritise the developer contributions sought with regard to the IDP (i.e. first priority to Essential Infrastructure and second priority to Place Shaping Infrastructure), and/or~~
- ii. use an appropriate mechanism to defer part of the developer contributions requirement to a later date, or
- iii. as a last resort, refuse planning permission if the development would be unsustainable without inclusion of the unfunded infrastructure requirements taking into account reasonable contributions from elsewhere including CIL

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The Council's Delivering Infrastructure Strategy will include both a CIL Charging Schedule and a Supplementary Planning Document for Section 106 and Section 278 legal agreements that will provide more detail about its approach to securing developer contributions.

Upon adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule, CIL will be used to pool developer contributions towards a wide range of new and improved infrastructure necessary to deliver new development.

Where not covered by the CIL Charging Schedule, infrastructure and services, including provision for their maintenance, should be delivered directly by the developer through the development management process and in accordance with The Regulation 122 Tests*.

Infrastructure and services will be sought through the negotiation of planning obligations, conditions, levy, undertaking and/or other agreement as secured through the planning permission, to mitigate the direct impacts of development and secure its implementation.

* The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.