

### **Employment land provision in towns**

**E3** In the main towns of Banbury, Bicester, Didcot and Witney the provision of land for employment will be made:

- a) to achieve an appropriate balance between the number and type of jobs and the size and skills of the local workforce; and
- b) to provide for the expansion and relocation of existing local firms and to accommodate firms which need to be located in the area, including provision to support the development of science based industries or other important business clusters.

A limited amount of land for employment will be made available in Abingdon, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Faringdon, Henley, Thame, Wallingford, Wantage and Grove. In deciding on the amount of employment land available in the above towns, weight shall be given to the content of action plans that have been carried out following health checks and other processes. Where such plans show the need for additional land to maintain the vibrancy of market towns, then additional employment land shall be released.

Elsewhere the provision of land for employment generating uses will be restrained and limited to activities that do not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic.

### **Small firms and local employment diversity**

**E4** Proposals for small scale premises (up to about 500 square metres) including proposals that encourage farm or rural diversification will normally be permitted in appropriate locations.

### **Tourism and culture**

**E5** Tourism projects which are based on the conservation and enjoyment of the county's inherent qualities and heritage will be encouraged in appropriate locations, particularly where the proposed development is accessible by foot, cycling or public transport.

### **Employment and housing**

**E6** In considering proposals for employment generating development which would generate a demand for housing, account will be taken of the existing or planned housing provision.

## Housing

### The amount and distribution of housing

- H1** Provision will be made for about 37,300 additional dwellings (net) between 1 April 2001 and 31 March 2016. The provision will be distributed as follows:

	2001 - 2016
Cherwell	9,350
Oxford	6,500
South Oxfordshire	7,500
Vale of White Horse	7,150
West Oxfordshire	6,800
Total	37,300

The main locations for new housing will be within Oxford (about 6,500 dwellings), Banbury (about 3,700 dwellings), Bicester (about 3,300 dwellings), Didcot (about 4,500 dwellings), Witney (about 3,000 dwellings), and Grove (about 2,100 dwellings).

Elsewhere, most development should take place in larger settlements where a reasonable range of employment, services and community facilities exist, are planned or can be provided at reasonable cost. Significant additional housing development, including inappropriate infill, should be avoided where this is likely to result largely in commuting by car to urban centres and where travel needs are unlikely to be well served by public transport. In small settlements and villages housing development will be limited to that required to meet local needs and support balanced communities in villages.

Local planning authorities should seek to maximise the proportion of new dwellings built on previously developed land in accordance with national and regional guidance, while maintaining total housing delivery at the levels required to fulfil the provision set out above.

Where appropriate, phasing will be used and the release of large sites managed so that priority is given to the development of previously developed land and buildings within urban areas, and land is released gradually throughout the plan period, and to ensure the provision of necessary supporting infrastructure, services and facilities and other improvements.

## **Upper Heyford**

- H2** a) Land at RAF Upper Heyford will provide for a new settlement of a maximum of about 1000 dwellings and necessary supporting infrastructure, including a primary school and appropriate community, recreational and employment opportunities, as a means of enabling environmental improvements and the heritage interest of the site as a military base with Cold War associations to be conserved, compatible with achieving a satisfactory living environment.
- b) Proposals for development must reflect a revised comprehensive planning brief adopted by the district council and demonstrate that the conservation of heritage resources, landscape, restoration, enhancement of biodiversity and other environmental improvements will be achieved across the whole of the former air base in association with the provision of the new settlement.
- c) The new settlement should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport rather than travel by private car. Improvements to bus and rail facilities and measures to minimise the impact of traffic generated by the development on the surrounding road network will be required.

## **Design, quality and density of housing development**

- H3** Housing development should be at a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. Higher densities will be sought on sites within urban areas, close to town centres or where there is a good range of existing or planned services and facilities. Densities of at least 50 dwellings per hectare will be required in locations which are or can be well served by public transport. New housing development should:
- a) be designed to a high quality, taking into account the character of the site and surroundings; and
- b) include a variety of dwelling types and sizes to help create balanced communities and to meet the needs of all sections of the community, including small households.

Major urban extensions should be planned as mixed communities and should provide the services and facilities needed to support them and create safe and attractive places to live.

## **Affordable housing**

- H4** Provision shall be made in local plans or development frameworks and through the determination of applications for planning permission, for affordable housing including housing for key workers, at a level commensurate with the identified need for such housing in each District. The amount and size of site where provision will be sought will be determined by local planning authorities based on assessments of local need. Provision will normally be made on site and be subject to permanent and enforceable arrangements to ensure the benefits will be passed on to subsequent occupiers.

## **Town centres**

### **The principal locations for development**

**TC1** Development in Oxford city centre will be permitted where it maintains and enhances the sub-regional role and diversity of the centre.

Apart from Oxford city centre, the other main locations for the development of retail and other facilities will be the town centres of Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Witney and Wantage.

Development in other town and district centres will be encouraged to sustain and enhance their vitality and viability.

### **Maintaining and enhancing centres**

**TC2** Major new development should be located on city or town centre sites. If there are no suitable town centre sites then edge-of-centre, followed by out-of-centre sites will be considered where the need for the development can be demonstrated, where there are no alternatives and the development would not harm the viability of existing centres or local shops.

Proposals should sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres by:

- (a) extending the range and quality of shops and other central facilities;
- (b) improving the environment, character and quality of a centre;
- (c) encouraging diversity of uses, including residential accommodation; and
- (d) improving accessibility.

## **Recreation and leisure**

### **Countryside recreation**

**R1** The local planning authorities will encourage optimum use to be made of existing countryside recreation facilities and resources. Opportunities to create new outdoor facilities which are appropriate in scale and sensitive to a rural location will be supported.

### **Access to the countryside and rights of way network**

**R2** The local planning authorities will seek to increase and improve access to the countryside.

The existing network of public rights of way, including routes in the towns, will be maintained and improved. Development which would damage the rights of way network will be resisted.

### **The River Thames**

**R3** The character and environment of the River Thames and its immediate valley will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.

Proposals for development which will adversely affect the character of the river and its setting will not be permitted. Development that would restrict public access alongside the river will not be permitted.

## **Other waterways**

- R4** The character and environment of the Oxford Canal will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.

The historic route of the Wilts and Berks Canal and appropriate alternative routes where this is not possible will be safeguarded with a view to its long-term re-establishment as a navigable waterway.

Proposals for development which will adversely affect the character or setting of these canal corridors will not be permitted.

## **Energy**

### **Proposals for renewable energy development**

- EG1** Proposals for renewable energy development will be encouraged to help meet Oxfordshire's contribution to regional targets, and to support the development of a more dispersed and locally based pattern of energy generation and use. Proposals will be permitted subject to consideration of their impact on the environment, local communities and traffic generation and their wider environmental and economic benefits. New renewable energy generating plant should be located as close to the energy source material as possible.

### **Combined heat and power**

- EG2** Wherever practical proposals for new energy generation plant should include combined heat and power or the recovery of waste heat for use in other processes. The use of combined heat and power in proposals for major development, including proposals for district heating, will be encouraged.

### **New generating plant**

- EG3** As far as legislation allows, proposals for new large conventional or other non-renewable power stations will be expected to demonstrate that alternatives to additional generating capacity, including investment in energy conservation measures, have been considered and that the proposal represents the best practicable environmental option.

## Minerals

- M1** Permission will be granted for mineral working at appropriate locations provided it can be demonstrated that any adverse environmental or other impact that the development would be likely to cause is outweighed by the need for the mineral, having regard to:
- a) the need to maintain landbanks of permitted reserves for aggregate minerals in line with national and regional guidance;
  - b) the need to ensure a steady supply of mineral materials for local markets;
  - c) the need to supply material for major construction projects from borrow pits; and
  - d) national and regional needs for non-aggregate minerals.

Mineral working will not be permitted unless there are satisfactory provisions for the land to be progressively restored within a reasonable timescale to an acceptable use that is appropriate to its location. The County Council will seek to secure the restoration and long-term management of appropriate mineral working sites for nature conservation and public access.

- M2** Locations for sand and gravel working will be identified in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. In identifying appropriate locations, the County Council will take account of the distribution of sand and gravel resources; the existing pattern of supply and distribution of workings; proximity to main market areas; accessibility to the main transport routes; risk of birdstrike; restoration and after use potential; and development plan policies, in particular which seek to safeguard:

- important archaeological remains, historic buildings and areas;
- areas and sites of nature conservation importance, especially Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- features of landscape importance, especially Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- best and most versatile agricultural land;
- the water environment;
- land uses which are sensitive to nuisance; and
- the safety and convenience of all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

## Mineral safeguarding

- M3** Mineral resources of potential economic importance will be safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or make significantly more difficult their possible future working will not be permitted.

## Old mineral workings

- M4** The County Council will seek to secure the environmental improvement of mineral working sites that are not being worked and restored, or that have not been restored, to modern standards.



## **Waste management**

**WM1** Provision will be made for the treatment and/or disposal of a quantity of waste equivalent to the total quantity of waste produced in Oxfordshire, except for that waste which requires management at specialised sub-regional, regional or national facilities. Provision will also be made for the reception and treatment and/or disposal of waste from London, provided it is consistent with regional policy and the waste is transported by rail or water for the principal component of its journey.

### **Waste management facilities**

**WM2** Permission will be granted for waste management facilities (for re-use, recycling, composting, resource recovery, treatment, transfer, and landfill) to ensure sufficient capacity for the management of that waste which needs to be managed within Oxfordshire, having due regard to the principle of best practicable environmental option, including the waste hierarchy and the proximity principle. Proposals which move waste management up the hierarchy will be encouraged. Permission will only be granted for landfill required for the disposal of waste which remains after reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery policies have been applied.

**WM3** Permission for landfill (including land raising) will be granted only where it is required for the restoration of active or unrestored mineral workings to appropriate after-uses or where there would be an overall environmental benefit.