

## Summary of Comments Relating to Housing in Wantage & Grove

### General

**SEERA:** Due to issues with car travel caused by the absence of the rail station, concerns over deliverability and overall impact of the sizeable increase on a relatively modest settlement further development above that earmarked for Wantage/Grove would need to be fully investigated and back by credible evidence. The ability of other settlements and villages to support their social and economic well-being and the effects of any housing/jobs imbalance needs to be fully considered

**Oxfordshire County Council:** Locating housing at Wantage/Grove is in conformity with the South East Plan however the Council needs to be satisfied that this increase in the indicative number stated is sustainable. The Wantage site is better located than Abingdon to the employment sites of Harwell and Milton Park. The impacts on transport and other infrastructure and service providers are important factors that will need to be considered when the work has been done. Sites A and B (north east and west of Wantage) adhere closer to Policy SP3 (in the south East Plan) in that they are closer to the town centre than Sites C and D. There are words missing at the bottom of Appendix 3b.

### Housing at Wantage or Abingdon

**Oxfordshire County Council:** Transport and highway implications need to be assessed and necessary mitigating measures identified, costed, with the phasing, funding sources and potential shortfalls identified. The outcome of the traffic modeling undertaken by Halcrow will need to be understood by OCC before a preference can be stated. The essential supporting highways and transport infrastructure also need to be identified for the site specific preferred options at the selected growth locations and its delivery planned through the preparation of a detailed action plan.

Development NE of Wantage would be in line with the aims of the SCOTS project of integrating development with the transport network to encourage people to live and work in the area.

Problems with the A417 reaching capacity may limit the attraction eastwards from the housing site but this site would meet the containment objectives for this area.

### Consider Wantage is a better location for housing than Abingdon

**Highways Agency:** North east Wantage is preferable to Abingdon due to the congestion at Marcham Interchange and on the A34 The planned expansion of Milton Park and HSIC make Wantage more sustainable and less likely to impact the surrounding road network. Wantage would however generate trips to Oxford which will impact the Botley Interchange; there should be reference to a detailed transport assessment including one for Milton, Botley and Chilton Interchanges.

**East Hendred Parish Council** – New housing in Wantage could help the vitality of the town and increase occupancy rates in the shops.

**J Barlow, Grove Parish Council, Abingdon Labour Party, Crown Technology, Lockinge Estate, Grove 2000 plc, Williams F1, R Lamplough, Webb Paton Chartered Surveyors, Thames Water, Chilton Parish Council, Kingsgrove Farm, Crab Hill Consortium, Harwell SIC, Messrs Hosier, Newton and Gashe, Highways Agency, Natural England, East Hendred Parish Council, Persimmon Homes (Wessex), A Butcher, Clare, A Dangerfield, Wantage and District Chamber of Commerce, Shrivenham Parish Council, D Smith, SAFE, B Webb, D Smith.** Wantage and Grove are listed under Policy CO1 of the South East Plan as being one of the main locations for development. The spatial strategy sets out that the main axis for development should run east-west between Wantage & Grove and Didcot; Site A is included within this.

The increased population is needed to maintain services, infrastructure and viability of the town. Abingdon already has the necessary population.

The sequential test would mean that Wantage should be favoured over Abingdon.

Abingdon is more severely constrained than the Wantage site.

The Wantage site will benefit from the opening of Grove railway station and reduce the need for commuter car journeys.

A417 is unusual in not passing through the villages of Rowstock and Wantage and is therefore amenable to upgrading.

Supports housing however it is vital that the development is tied to improvements in the local infrastructure.

The development should take place in Wantage and not Grove so as to maintain Wantage as the central shopping and business town.

### Disagree that Wantage is a better location for housing than Abingdon

**Grove Parish Council** Can recognise the potential advantages of housing being built north of Charlton Village but feel it should rather be built in SW Abingdon.

**Wantage Town Council:** The development should be allocated at SW Abingdon

**Charlton residents (See annex for list):** This proposal would lead to a population increase of 30% whereas in Abingdon it would only be 10%. Public services and youth provision which will already be stretched after the development at Grove and would not be able to cope with the increased demand. The site at Abingdon has links to the strategic road network already, significant local shopping in place with Tesco's and the retail park, and local industry to help the Council reduce the need for commuting. The site at Abingdon is far less likely to attract complaints over noise and light pollution and would not affect the sky line. It will reduce the gap between Wantage and Grove and destroy the historic character of Charlton. Development will increase traffic flow from the new development through to the existing estate roads of Truelocks Way and Aldworth Avenue

**Wantage exhibition, Grove exhibition** The allocation should be at Abingdon as the job opportunities, school, doctors, dentists, services, facilities, roads and public transport are far better in there and in Didcot as opposed to Wantage.

Problems of road infrastructure would make the NE Wantage site unsound and therefore SW Abingdon is preferred as a site.

Abingdon is closer to Milton and Harwell and would benefit more from the proposed road and bypass.

**J Cook, Grove Green Flood Group, N & T Eastwood, J Robertson, Letcombe Parish Council, Z Patrick, J Cottis, P Corr, S Austin, Brig Thompson, D Croft, Trueman, T Drury, West Hendred Parish Council, J Churchman-Davies, W Hainge, S Ellis, Walker, H Falkner, N Ashman, Price, Persimmon Homes (Wessex), M Hallam, J Loudon, J Long, S Church, Wantage and District Chamber of Commerce, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council, B Rowlands, Radley College, University of Oxford, Croudace Strategic Ltd, : S Cobham, E Belcher, Walsh, Garrod and Turner, Wantage exhibition, Grove exhibition.**

Abingdon as a better location than Wantage

#### **Factors affecting the location of development**

**Wantage Workshop response** - Attendees were asked to indicate which of the factors provided they felt were important considerations when assessing where development should be located in Wantage and Grove and explain their reasons, the factors were

- Protection of open space between Wantage and Grove
- Restoration of the Wilts and Berks canal
- Improvement of the natural character of the Letcombe Brook
- Protection of the historic character of Wantage
- Protection of the old village of Grove and Charlton
- The impact on the local community
- Traffic and demands on infrastructure
- Noise pollution
- Local factors
- Need to support and improve shops
- Lack of employment
- reservoir

**Wantage Exhibition Response** any new housing must have the appropriate infrastructure first i.e. roads, schools, arts and youth facilities.

**Grove workshop response - Attendees** were shown a list of considerations which the Vale would take into account in assessing where development should be located. These were

- Protection of the open gap between Wantage and Grove
- Restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal
- Improvements to the Letcombe Brook
- Protection of the historic character of Wantage and the villages of Grove and Charlton

All the groups agreed that the considerations were important. Letcombe Brook should not be left to deteriorate and the capacity of the drains in the area should be maintained. It was a bit late to protect the character of Wantage and the old villages.

**Thames Water:** Sites A and B are further from the sewer network however are favoured over C and D due to their close proximity to the treatment works and therefore potential issue on the amenity of future residents.

#### **Comments on the Grove airfield allocation**

**The Wasbrough Family** is committed to delivering the Council's proposals for the Airfield. Note that work is still needed on flood risk, leisure arrangements, highways, issues relating to the northern link road and the question of the 'Taunton Case'. They would like the Council's advice on the Taunton Case with particular reference to timing and delivery of the northern link road. They would like to know if the Council would favourably receive a planning application for the first 1500 houses and country park and an agreed package of other facilities relating to recreation and education subject to a reasonable assessment of viability.

### **Disagree/Comments**

**Gleeson Homes Ltd and Gallagher Estates** - Grove Airfield accounts for 2500 dwellings allocated in the Adopted Local plan. Development of the Airfield was to be phased and a new road would be required once 1500 homes had been built. The road is to pass through land owned by them and is to be funded by the developer of the Airfield. As yet no planning permission exists and it is likely that delivery will be delayed by up to five years. This will have a drag on the house building in Central Oxfordshire and delay funding of necessary infrastructure in Wantage and Grove. If the site north of Grove between the Letcombe Brook and the A338 was allocated it would ensure early construction of the road and accelerate delivery of the airfield. Allocation of land to the north east of Wantage will not ensure the Airfield is deliverable and available in order to address emerging shortfalls. Northeast Wantage has no preparatory investigation work done and is in part dependant on funding from the Airfield for the road. The Airfield developers' priority will be securing the construction of the northern link road as it will allow continuity of production on their site which will otherwise stall at 1500 dwellings. To accelerate development on the airfield and to bring forward new land to meet a shortfall in housing it would be more appropriate to allocate land at Monks Farm rather than at north east Wantage or at Abingdon. It would ensure the early construction of the northern link road and reduce the scale of its cost to the airfield developers who would then be able to contribute more to the eastern relief road.

**Rev J Robertson, Town and Parish Councils, Brigadier Thompson** - The site becomes water logged and insufficient consideration to the drainage on land that frequently floods and the effect on Denchworth and other villages. Evidence/information about flood risk at the Grove development site appears inaccurate, or has been discarded by the planners

**Grove Workshop** opportunity should be taken to reduce the amount of development on the airfield where drainage problems need to be solved first by building on Sites A, B and D.

**Hillary Coldwell** – Is concerned about the increase in traffic from the development at Grove. As most jobs will be at Swindon. It will attract traffic onto substandard roads.

### **North East of Wantage - Strategic site A**

#### **Agree**

**Wantage Town Council:** The Council did not consider there were any other areas of Wantage which could be considered for development for housing. If the allocation occurs at Wantage the proposed boundary review for 2011 should be brought forward in order that contributions will be available for improved facilities in Wantage. The essential infrastructure including the eastern and western relief road should be completed prior to new development being built.

**Natural England:** Site A is better than site B as it is not within the AONB. More information is needed as to whether there would be any visual impact on the AONB on the eastern part.

**Crab Hill Consortium (Rep. 266):** Land at Crab Hill (Site A) could be extended to 84.22 Ha to accommodate forestry landscaping to mitigate visual impact. Suggest this extension to the site to be included in the SHLAA. Support the identification of land NE Wantage which could be developed before the airfield. This would bring forward the delivery of the road and other services. The phasing of the housing in para 5.6 is not supported and there are no reasonable grounds for this approach.

**J Barlow, Grove Parish Council, Abingdon Labour Party, Crown Technology, Lockinge Estate, Grove 2000 plc, Williams F1, R Lamplough, Webb Paton Chartered Surveyors, Thames Water, Chilton Parish Council, Kingsgrove Farm, Crab Hill Consortium, Harwell SIC, Messrs Hosier, Newton and Gashe, Highways Agency, Natural England, East Hendred Parish Council, Persimmon Homes (Wessex), A Butcher, Clare, A Dangerfield, Wantage and District Chamber of Commerce, Shrivenham Parish Council, D Smith, SAFE, B Webb, D Smith.** Major housing should be allocated to Wantage/Grove but only some, and not all, should be located in Site A.

If the development is to be allocated in Wantage Site A is the best site.

Wantage has a good range of services and facilities and the site could be planned as a highly sustainable urban extension.

Site A is within the PPG13 required 2 km from town centre and has an existing frequent public transport.

Site A would deliver the eastern relief road; for integration purposes highlighted in Manual for Streets, the relief road should run through the core of the site.

There is plenty more agricultural land around Wantage & Grove.

Telecoms mast and electricity sub station are easily mitigated against

The site should be allocated in conjunction with Elms Farm for employment.

**Grove Workshop** Site A is a good location however drainage and flooding issues, including on the A338 and the allotments, must be controlled.

**Crab Hill Consortium** – in light of their ongoing work the Consortium consider the Council should take a flexible approach to the policy and infrastructure requirements until the technical work has been completed.

**Thames Valley Police** In addition to referring to tangible facilities such as schools and sports pitched reference should be made to new development funding the emergency services.

**Disagree/Concerns:**

**Webbpaton Chartered Surveyors**

- the number of houses suggested in the area is too high
- the viability of development of this size is questionable
- question if site can be delivered by 2026

**Wantage workshop:** The development was strongly opposed Concerns raised included flooding, the impact on wildlife and the environment, as well as impact on the landscape of the town and the gap between Wantage and Grove. The impact of increased housing on surrounding roads and traffic levels as well as the unoccupied housing already available was also raised.

**Grove Parish Council:** If housing is built in NE Wantage – site A is the most suitable however runoff into the Letcombe Brook needs investigating. Agree with additional jobs needed in Wantage and Grove irrespective of housing site and improvements needed in public transport and would add that improvements are required to the A338 through to A420.

**J Cook, Grove Green Flood Group, N & T Eastwood, J Robertson, Letcombe Parish Council, Z Patrick, J Cottis, P Corr, S Austin, Brig Thompson, D Croft, Trueman, T Drury, West Hendred Parish Council, J Churchman-Davies, W Hainge, S Ellis, Walker, H Falkner, N Ashman, Price, Persimmon Homes (Wessex), M Hallam, J Loudon, J Long, S Church, Wantage and District Chamber of Commerce, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council, B Rowlands, Radley College, University of Oxford, Croudace Strategic Ltd, : S Cobham, E Belcher, Walsh, Garrod and Turner, exhibition, Grove exhibition, Crown Technology, Lockinge Estate, Grove 2000 plc, Williams F1, R Lamplough, Ms Gunies, Wantage residents reps 376-522**

**Effect on Charlton Village**

The character and separate identity of Charlton Village will be destroyed and the site would link Wantage and Grove rather than keep them separate.

Charlton Village is a conservation area with a number of listed buildings, developing this site would contravene policy.

**Effect on Character of Wantage**

Wantage is a small market town and this disproportionate amount of housing would alter its character more so than in the case of Abingdon.

Although housing is needed for the expanding Harwell site; Wantage wouldn't be able to cope with them.

The proposed development is far too dense in this green belt.

**Wildlife**

There is an abundance of wildlife in Site A not present in the alternative sites that will be at risk and the Council has a legal duty to conserve.

**Landscape**

The site is on top of a hill and will therefore have a negative impact on the landscape, the approach to the town and increase noise, air and light pollution over south and east Wantage.

Developments should be within the existing town centres and not encroach into the surrounding countryside.

**Archaeology**

English Heritage accept that there are no known nationally important heritage features within the development site. However, there are possibly medieval remains in the area and there is a nearby conservation area and the potential for impacts from the development should be considered.

**Green space, allotments and agricultural land**

The Charlton Village area has a relatively low proportion of green space and Site A would ruin a very well used amenity space.

The Grove Road allotments are currently present on the site.

The site is agricultural land that should be preserved.

The density should not be too high and there needs to be enough open space.

**Drainage/flooding**

The site suffers from surface water run off and floods after prolonged rain and causes the A338 to flood – more

development would increase this risk as evident after the development of Mably Way Medical Centre, Old Dairy and Sainsburys. Still some concern over flooding at Grove airfield. Using the precautionary principle a more detailed flood risk assessment needs to be carried out. Sewage and drainage needs to be planned and catered for first in any new development. A high percentage of the site drains into the Letcombe Brook which is already struggling to cope when there is high rainfall.

The risk of flooding downstream of C is less than A

Why doesn't the Council say it will work closely to reduce flooding here as it does for Abingdon?

### **Services, facilities and employment**

It will have a negative impact on the smaller local shops and facilities.

King Alfred's east site and Grove C of E Primary school have been mentioned as possible housing sites yet it is stated that there is no spare capacity at schools to accommodate the possible site.

There has been no mention of providing extra services and facilities to accompany the houses.

The leisure centre is very small and difficult to reach on the outskirts of town.

The Limborough Road retail development is already overused and the possible housing development would put further strain on it.

Placing development in small towns is not sustainable as there won't be enough jobs in the area for the new inhabitants and they will most likely travel far a field for their jobs thereby making Wantage merely a dormitory town with increased traffic jams.

### **Transport infrastructure**

There are enough houses already allocated in Wantage and Grove with the Airfield – need to wait to see whether adequate infrastructure is supplied with it first.

The local transport infrastructure is insufficient to cope with the additional number of inhabitants and vehicles caused by the combined developments of Wantage and Grove airfield. The roads are already at capacity.

The proposed roads will only service the new houses and the town centre. They do not address the problems on the A338 and A417.

The road should run from the A338 south of the railway line at Grove to Milton Heights. Local roads are also already congested due to insufficient parking for the current housing.

If the site is allocated there should be a green transport plan with free cycle hire and electric bus services in the town centre and improvement in the surrounding road network.

The site at Wantage is constrained by potential time delays in delivering the relevant road infrastructure whereas Abingdon is not.

Eastern relief road should be brought closer to the existing development in order to break up site A into 2 smaller sites; this would allow it to be delivered quicker and have less impact on existing residents.

### **Site constraints**

The list of cons outweighs the pros.

Land remediation is likely to be necessary on the land currently occupied by the scrap yard.

The depressed housing market means this will not be built for many years.

A reliance on major sites as it does not allow for flexibility and changing circumstances.

### **Lack of information**

Increased commuting to Oxford, Milton etc has been mentioned in relation to the Abingdon site but not for Wantage.

There has been no mention of what the expected population increase will be and the ratio of houses to apartments. It is not clear what type of people it is thought will be moving into the area.

The list of off-site facilities does not have any of the costs attached. A decision cannot be made until it is clear who will pay and how much is needed.

There is no mention of employment opportunities for the possible additional housing.

The land to the north of Grove provides a more logical and unconstrained development site.

### **Land North West of Wantage - Strategic Site B**

**Crab Hill Consortium** agree this site should not be allocated because:

- not large enough
- northern eastern relief road needs to be built first
- western part of site is poorly located to provide adequate connections and forms an attractive small valley
- Setting of Wilts & Berks Canal and traditional buildings at Stockham Farm are a constraint
- noise buffer would be required

- site contains TPO trees
- gap between Wantage and Grove would be eroded.

**Persimmon** agrees to the reasons why 4 sites were rejected but have doubts about site B (north west Wantage) which would close the gap between Wantage and Grove and put in doubt the rational of the country park which was intended to enhance the gap. The site also has no significant advantages other than contribute to the western relief road.

**Mr W M Wasbrough and Trustees of W M Wasbrough 1984 and 1992 Children's Settlement** – Would like additional benefits to their site added:

- Development of the site would assist in maintaining a housing supply which is important. If Grove Airfield is delayed which will frustrate the delivery of community facilities and northern link road
- Whilst committed to delivering the southern part of the airfield Site B is available and could be delivered immediately along with southern part of the airfield over a shorter timescale than is currently envisaged for the airfield
- Not clear why the site cannot be delivered until the Wantage eastern relief road is built
- Site has no apparent access problems
- Because of its small size it would be unlikely to generate significant traffic when compared to Site A.
- Part of the site at the western end could be left open as a buffer with the countryside and some light industrial/office space next to the existing employment
- Site could be an alternative proposal to Site A and/or assist in the delivery of the airfield and community objectives.

**Grove Workshop** Site B was considered a good alternative with good access to existing housing.

#### **Comments**

**BBOWT** this site is potentially rich in biodiversity which will need to be protected

#### **Land North of Grove - Strategic Site C**

**English Heritage:** English Heritage comments that Area C includes a number of listed buildings and notes that their settings as well as the buildings require protection.

**R P Walker** Thinks that the preferred site for housing at Wantage and Grove should be site C, as this would fit in with a more visionary solution to build a new service road from north of Grove eastwards along the southern side of the railway to reach the A4130 somewhere near the B4017. Development here would fit in with the airfield development and the proposed rail station and offer good access to the jobs at Harwell and Milton.

**Bob Smith** would like the site allocated for housing. He believes the concerns about flooding are overstated and any planning application would have to address the environmental impact and the effect of run-off. The fact that the land can not be developed until the northern link road has been completed is irrelevant as it will be provided as part of the allocated development. A noise buffer of an embankment and trees could be provided along the railway. The sewage works is some distance away and the prevailing wind is towards the works. Ground contamination can be dealt with. Public transport is not a problem. It is unlikely to put any more traffic onto Denchworth Road than any other development. Monks Farm and Grove Wick Farm and the Letcombe Brook will not be affected.

**Thames Water** would need an amenity impact on sites east of the Letcombe Brook north of Grove due to proximity to sewage works ahead of the site being allocated for development.

**Grove workshop:** Site C was dismissed due to proximity to railway and flooding.

**Comments from workshop** is the site not good agriculture land and where would the drainage go.

#### **Strategic Sites C and D**

**Gleeson Homes Ltd and Gallagher Estate (Rep. 221)** – Would like their site at Monks Farm, north of Grove allocated for 600 dwellings (or 750 with additional land to the north of Grove Farm) and object to the proposal to allocate land north east of Wantage, their site should be allocated first.

The benefits of their site are:

- help to meet the requirements in the South East Plan
- site could be extended to the west and to the north of the Airfield (Site C)
- as an alternative an initial phase of the site to the north east of Wantage could be allocated
- assist in the early programming of the northern link road and enable Grove Airfield to be progressed over the plan period to 2027. If a 'first phase' of development on land at Monks Farm was allocated in the core strategy

- If the construction of the northern link road was brought forward it would offer greater certainty to the uninterrupted development of the Airfield. Priority for the airfield is the construction of northern link road rather than the Wantage eastern relief road. Even if the Airfield did not go ahead – it would be appropriate for their site to be allocated as it would secure a meaningful contribution to housing targets.
- Comparisons have been made between the site north of Grove and north east Wantage, which is included in an appendix

Main conclusions are:

- North east Wantage is more valuable agricultural land
- North of Grove is more 'robust' in landscape terms to accommodate development
- Both are urban extensions with access to be achieved via new roads, both afford the opportunity to secure footpath and cycleway
- Residential area that adjoins north east Wantage has a limited range of facilities, primary school Charlton Village Road, Post Office/convenience store Byron Way. Draft policy makes no provision for the creation of a local centre – but the provision of a primary school. There will therefore be an inadequate range of local facilities and a wide range of facilities will be at least 1.6 km away in Wantage Town Centre via a source of unconventional links. Pedestrian and cycle access will be discouraged by the site being 20m above the town centre. North of Grove will enjoy direct and greater access within a 10 minute walk to facilities at Millbrook Square
- Whilst both sites can provide new 'link' roads the Wantage eastern relief road will have a greater impact on the landscape especially close to the A338 and A417. The need for the Wantage eastern is derived in part from the Airfield development which will 'contribute' to its funding. This should be seen as lesser priority than securing the link to the north of Grove which is specifically tied into programmed development of the Airfield. This will have implications for the timing of the eastern relief road suggesting homes on the north east Wantage site will be well into the second half of the plan period. In contrast allocation of land north of Grove offers the opportunity to deliver a necessary element of transport infrastructure with some certainty that it will be in place to allow the airfield to be built as programmed. First phase of development of land at Monks Farm will provide access to the A338 which will be part of the northern link road. Development north of Grove will have access to the bus services from Grove to Didcot and Oxford
- Site north of Grove is convenient to Grove Technology Park and any further employment north east of Grove on the opposite side of the A338 or south of Williams F1. Site north east of Wantage is more distant from Grove Technology Park, nearest employment is Wantage Town Centre, site at Elms Farm and two possible sites adjacent to the new road but outside the revised limits or edge of the urban area further impacting on the landscape
- Councils adequate 5 year housing supply is based on some questionable assumptions:-
  - all the permissions coming forward and being built out by 2014
  - site at Chilton and Botley being granted permission and completed in full
  - Airfield delivers 550 dwellings by 2011
 The slight shortfall in supply will worsen over the next 2/3 years and when strategy is adopted it will be necessary to bring forward land for the 2011-16 period. Delays on the Airfield will further emphasise need to secure deliverable sites. Their site is more deliverable because the site is in the ownership of a housebuilder who would seek early deliverability of homes and northern link road. North east Wantage does not have detailed investigation to inform the evidence base of the strategy
- Development north of Grove is proposed on Flood Zone 1 and surface water drainage attenuation measures will reduce the rate of discharge into the Brook to half therefore benefiting hydrology of the Brook. Site north east of Wantage will also discharge surface water into the Letcombe Brook, therefore concerns about the impact downstream are applicable to both sites
- Para 4.12 of their representation sets out a possible policy for their site if it were to be allocated.

**Persimmon Homes Wessex Limited** – accept that further major housing development should be at Wantage and Grove but it should go north of Grove. If an eastern relief road is required it can be provided without releasing land for housing. There is no logic or transport justification for the line of the eastern link road on fig 5. In comparison the northern link road has a number of fixed points, which means it cannot follow a tight line to the built up area which will create a potential development site between it and Grove. In addition there is

unconstrained land to the north of the existing airfield which would provide a logical development site. The north east Wantage site will:

- close the gap between north east Wantage and Grove
- landscape assessment says development should go to north of Grove

A more robust strategy for Wantage would be to consolidate and enhance Grove Airfield and identify smaller sites around Wantage and Grove. None of the disadvantages on this site are overriding. Content that the work carried on the Airfield deals with any potential flooding problems. Noise and odour can be dealt with, ground contamination did not exist on the main airfield site and is unlikely to be an issue here. Area of Grade 3a land is not significant. Setting of listed buildings and Letcombe Brook flood plain need to be accommodated and public transport links can be included.

#### **Land North of Grove East of Letcombe Brook - Site D**

**Crab Hill** agree this site should not be allocated for development because:

- site is too small
- concerning about Airfield worsening flooding downstream
- site lies beyond 2 km radius advocated to encourage sustainable modes of transport and facilities within Wantage Town Centre
- noise buffer would be required
- Letcombe Brook corridor would need protecting reducing the potential of the site
- Odour from sewage works could be a problem
- Grove will experience significant growth with the Airfield

**Grove Workshop** Site D was considered a logical site near main road and employment area.

**Comment Box Workshop** . have you seen the effects of snow/rain on site D perhaps the area should be designated flood plain and not built on.

#### **Other Housing sites**

##### **Land at Chain Hill**

**Andrew Burford** – Land at Chain Hill is not desirable for residential development because:

- it is similar quality to and in the AONB
- road access would be difficult
- all developed land in Wantage is on the greensand
- it is open and can be seen from a long distance

#### **Crown Technology (Rep. 215), Lockinge Estate (Rep. 217), Grove 2000 plc (Rep. 218), Williams F1 (Rep. 219), Mr R Lamplough (Rep. 220)**

Would like the airfield de-allocated after 1500 dwellings and smaller strategic sites such as at Crown Technology and land north of Challow Road, eastern extension to Mably Way and land north of Portway allocated because:

- more easily to deliver smaller rather than larger sites as major investment is not needed upfront which has a high risk
- larger sites such as Great Western Park and Grove Airfield are taking too long to build. Target of 500 homes at Grove by 2011 and 2500 by 2021 is unlikely to be met
- Grove Airfield will increase the numbers of households in Grove by over 75% which will create a large risk to developers as predicting the demand and future value of dwellings is difficult.
- return on investment on smaller/medium sites is quicker because development can be built out quicker
- lead to early supply of investment for local infrastructure e.g. eastern relief road and restoration of the canal. If Grove Airfield de-allocated after 1500 dwellings the proposed road north of Grove would not be needed, reducing costs. The road provides no benefit to existing traffic problems
- eastern extension to Mably Way should be adjusted closer to the edge of Wantage in order to break up the mass of housing
- Current downturn is serious and Wantage and Grove should be planned to ensure development comes forward.
- The Crown Technology site could be developed comprehensively along with all or part of Site B and could be integrated with the southern part of Grove Airfield.
- Crown Technology only occupies a part of the site but cannot relieve the rest because of the confidential nature of its business. They would like to relocate to a smaller more cost efficient site but would be unable to generate enough income from its current site.
- a new housing site north of Challow Road is well defined with King Alfreds School to the south, defined with a Berks Canal to the north and the edge of Wantage to the east. Proposal would not significantly reduce the

gap between the school and East Challow. Distance between the boundary of the site and East Challow is 500m bigger than the gap between Wantage and Grove, opportunity could be taken to soften the boundary and separate identities of Wantage and East Challow could be maintained.

#### **Land to West at Manor Road**

**Joshua Hosier, Mr Newton, Mr Gashe** agree that the site to the west of Manor Road should be included as suitable for housing because:-

- South East Plan identifies Wantage and Grove as one of the main locations for development
- the site is in the Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (however the boundary appears anomalous around Wantage as large areas of development are included) which should be protected from major development, South East Plan para 4.18 allows for small scale development if site doesn't have characteristics of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- In his report in 2006 the Planning Inspector stated there would not appear to be any significant technical, environmental or infrastructural constraints precluding the sites use for housing
- Oxfordshire County Council have agreed to a 'T' junction onto Manor Road.
- Site is about 2 ha and is deliverable and will help secure future housing needs and provide jobs when under construction
- Add vitality to the town centre
- Site is highly sustainable
- Challenge that strategic housing in Wantage and Grove is best delivered in a single location. It appears significant strategic sites have been identified because they will best support new road construction. Highway infrastructure can be achieved by developing a range of sites. Small sites offer diversity and flexibility in housing provision. It is important that the housing supply for the District should not depend on very large sites.

#### **Land to East of Chain Hill**

**Crouduce Strategic Homes** welcome the reference to land east of Chain Hill as a possible smaller site for development. Small scale greenfield sites provide a reliable deliverable supply of housing land and can assist with any potential shortfall. Support inclusion of this land in the SHLAA.