



# West Oxfordshire Garden Village

## Expression of Interest



## Contents

|    |  |    |
|----|--|----|
| 1  | Introduction .....   | 3  |
| 2  | Strategic context.....   | 4  |
| 3  | The site.....  | 8  |
| 4  | The proposal – our vision.....                                 | 10 |
| 5  | Quality and design.....  | 12 |
| 6  | Housing delivery, mix and tenure .....                         | 14 |
| 7  | Business .....   | 18 |
| 8  | Supporting infrastructure/ uses .....                          | 20 |
| 9  | Viability and deliverability.....                              | 22 |
| 10 | Community involvement.....                                     | 23 |
| 11 | Other stakeholder support .....                                | 24 |
| 12 | The 'ask' - what support is being sought from Government?..... | 24 |
| 13 | Delivery .....   | 26 |
| 14 | Key points of contact and sources of further information.....  | 30 |
| 15 | Appendix I: Budget breakdown .....                             | 31 |

## I Introduction

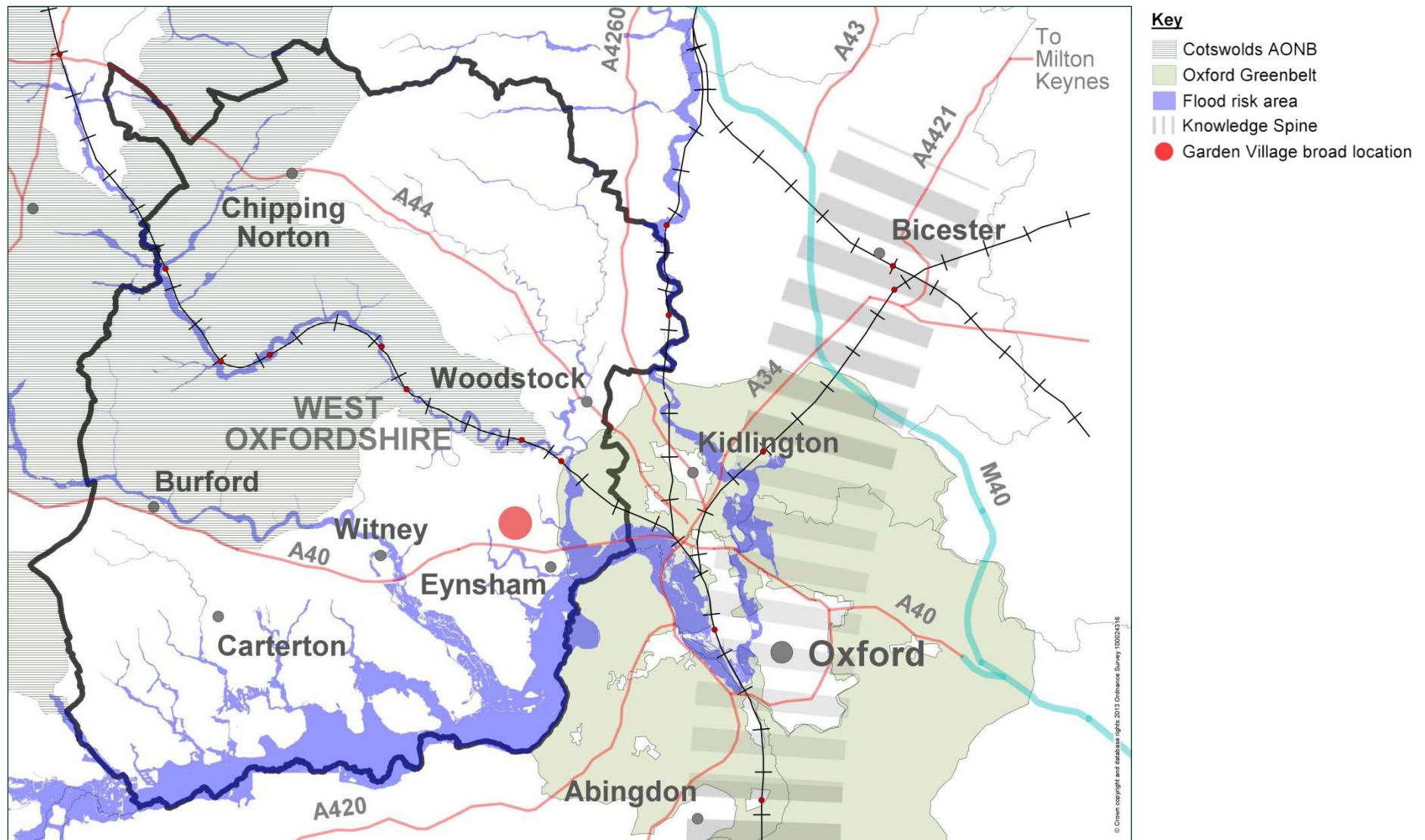
- 1.1 West Oxfordshire District Council is delighted to submit an expression of interest in response to the Government's Locally-Led Garden Village initiative. We are excited by the opportunity to facilitate a new sustainable community meeting garden city principles in this area of high housing demand.
- 1.2 The programme is extremely timely as the Council seeks to positively respond to meeting an increase in its own housing requirement, provide for strategic housing requirements by delivering unmet additional housing need from Oxford City, and deliver a wider range of high quality housing opportunities and choice including self-build, key worker and starter homes.
- 1.3 The Garden Village will provide a range of high quality housing, business and community space in a strategically important and sustainable location. It will deliver at least 2,200 additional new dwellings by 2031, although there is longer term potential for significantly more. It will also deliver an estimated 40 hectares of science parks/ business parks building on the strength of the Oxford economy.
- 1.4 The Garden Village will create new integrated housing and employment hubs next to a planned and funded transport hub, the Eynsham Park and Ride site which is part of the Science Transit 2 Project funded through the Growth Deal for Oxfordshire. It takes advantage of existing committed public investment.
- 1.5 The location is only six miles from the centre of Oxford, just off the A40, and to the north of Eynsham. It is only three miles from the planned new strategic employment area at Oxford Northern Gateway.
- 1.6 Whilst relating closely to nearby Eynsham and Oxford, the Garden Village will be a distinct new settlement in its own right and will make a major contribution to meeting identified strategic housing and economic needs through an ambitious, accelerated programme of delivery.
- 1.7 Importantly the area has been identified as a preferred location for strategic growth by the Oxfordshire Growth Board (OGB) as part of a joint process to consider how the unmet housing needs of Oxford City can best be accommodated within the four neighbouring authorities.
- 1.8 The site presents a genuine and timely opportunity to deliver an exemplar development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century drawing on well-planned, designed and sustainable garden city principles and we would welcome the opportunity to work with DCLG, the HCA and other key partners to bring this exciting project forward.

## 2 Strategic context

- 2.1 The Oxfordshire councils have agreed to work together on devolution to discuss areas of common ground, assess potential options and establish a way forward. The aim is to seek investment in housing and transport infrastructure; to improve skills training and develop the local economy. Investment is needed if Oxfordshire is to reach its potential as part of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford: growth corridor.
- 2.2 Oxfordshire is home to some of the United Kingdom's principal resources for high quality, knowledge-based, economic growth. It generates output to the value of about £20.5bn (ONS, 2014) from around 400,000 jobs in 30,000 enterprises. Oxfordshire performs well on key metrics of productivity and is consistently in the upper echelons of league tables relating to the UK's economic performance. Key sectors for inward investment are advanced engineering and life sciences. In 2014, GVA per hour worked in Oxfordshire was an estimated £32.70 - compared to a UK average of £31.00. Both activity and employment rates are higher than the regional average, and substantially higher than the national average. The rate of unemployment is very low and Oxfordshire is currently approaching full employment.
- 2.3 The affordability of housing across the county is a major concern. The challenges are particularly acute for younger people those in less well-paid jobs and those key to the economy: especially in the sectors for which the area is best known to the world. The problem is especially marked in Oxford. A recent study of house prices to earnings ratios (by Oxford University's Professor Dorling, February 2016) showed that in January 2015, the ratio of average house prices to incomes in Oxford was over 15, compared to 14 in London. The London-based Centre for Cities think tank has found that Oxford's housing is now the least affordable of any City in the country.
- 2.4 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (April 2014) has identified a high level of future housing need in the county, 5,000 dwellings a year are needed up to 2031. A significant proportion of this need is in Oxford City, and yet tight administrative boundaries mean that growth potential within the City is limited. The Oxfordshire Growth Board's working assumption is that 15,000 dwellings need to be provided to address this unmet housing need. The Growth Board is leading a collective process to determine the apportionment of the unmet housing need between the various Council areas. The emerging findings show that West Oxfordshire will need to provide for a significant amount of this need (2,750 dwellings). The area around Eynsham has been identified as the most promising area within West Oxfordshire to meet this need given the close proximity to Oxford.

- 2.5 Eynsham is the fourth largest settlement in West Oxfordshire with a current population of around 4,700. It is located in the eastern part of the District lying just outside the Oxford Green Belt. It has well connected but currently constrained transport links with a range of public transport facilities including high-frequency bus services, and rail access to Oxford and London from nearby Hanborough Station. Witney, which is 5 miles away, is another important destination providing shopping and leisure services, with access by bus, cycle and car. Proposed improvements to the Shore's Green junction in Witney will enhance access from the Eynsham area.
- 2.6 Through the Local Growth Fund, funding of £35m has already been secured towards a new Park and Ride facility at Eynsham together with a new eastbound bus priority lane along the A40 towards Oxford to alleviate peak time congestion on this key county route. Oxfordshire County Council has also recently identified further long-term improvements to the A40 including additional dualling between Witney and Eynsham, and a west bound bus lane returning from Oxford. These planned infrastructure improvements will facilitate greatly improved public transport connectivity into central Oxford and to the important employment locations in eastern Oxford, and will create an important transport hub on the A40 close to Eynsham.
- 2.7 Funding from the Local Growth Fund has also been agreed for a package of measures to improve transport in North Oxford and enable the Northern Gateway development which will provide business and research space and new homes at this strategic location. Through the City Deal a new road linking the A40 to the A44, bypassing Oxford's Wolvercote roundabout, has been agreed. This will provide better connectivity to the A34 and M40 from the Garden Village and from wider West Oxfordshire. The District Council would like to see further improvements to the A40 in the longer term to dual from Eynsham to Oxford.
- 2.8 The location of Eynsham close to Oxford and on the edge of the Oxfordshire 'knowledge spine' means that demand for additional modern business space in the area is significant. This part of West Oxfordshire is a key economic 'hotspot' with significant economic growth potential. There are already a number of important local employers such as Siemens and Polar Technology and there is potential to attract more.
- 2.9 Locally in Eynsham work is underway on a new neighbourhood plan and the Council is working closely with the lead representatives to take the plan forward. Importantly, there is recognition within the neighbourhood plan team that the Eynsham area is likely to accommodate significant additional housing and employment growth over the next 10 to 15 years.

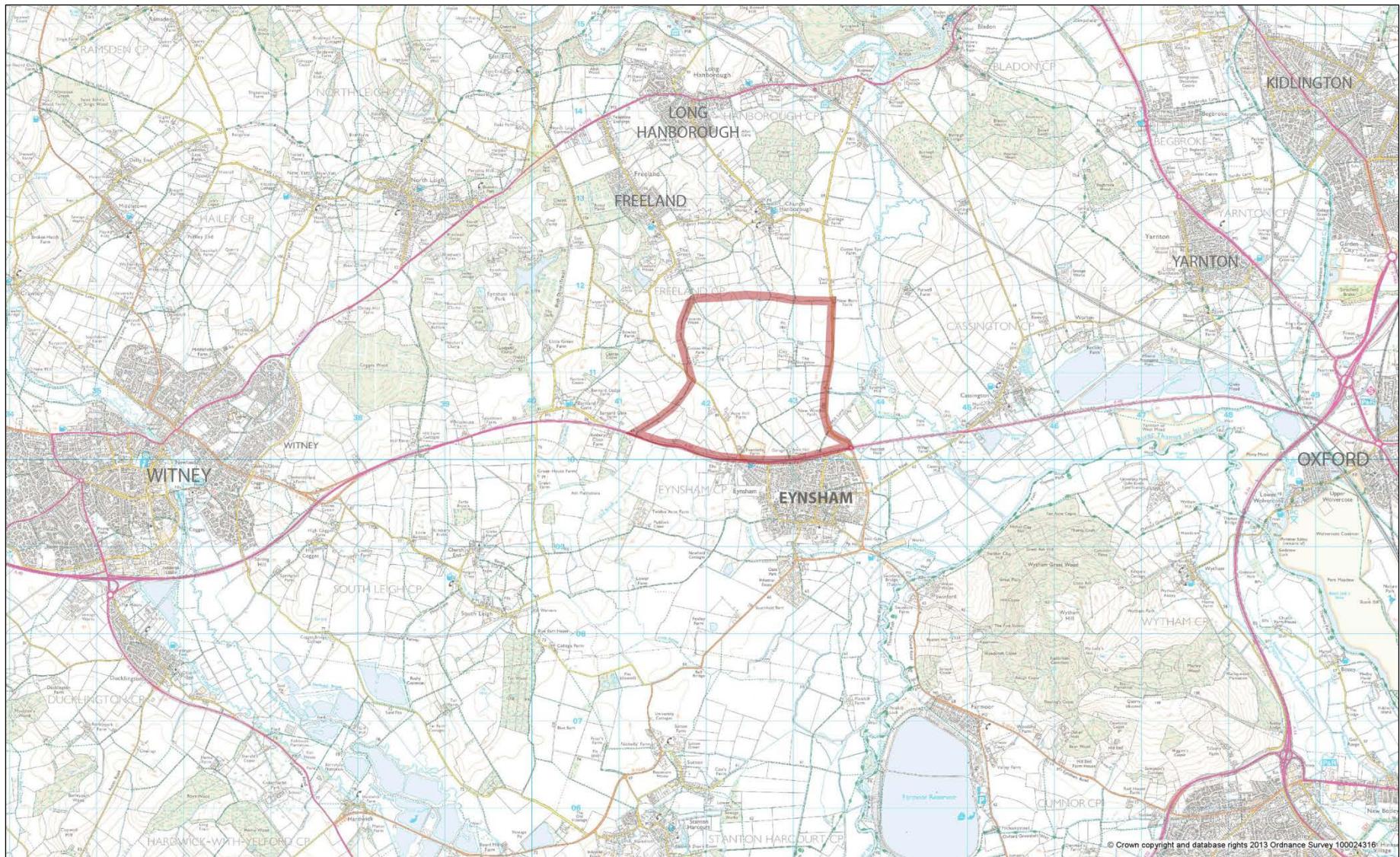
### Strategic context map:





### 3 The site

3.1 The indicative location of the West Oxfordshire Garden Village is shown on the plan below. It covers a total area of around 320 hectares.



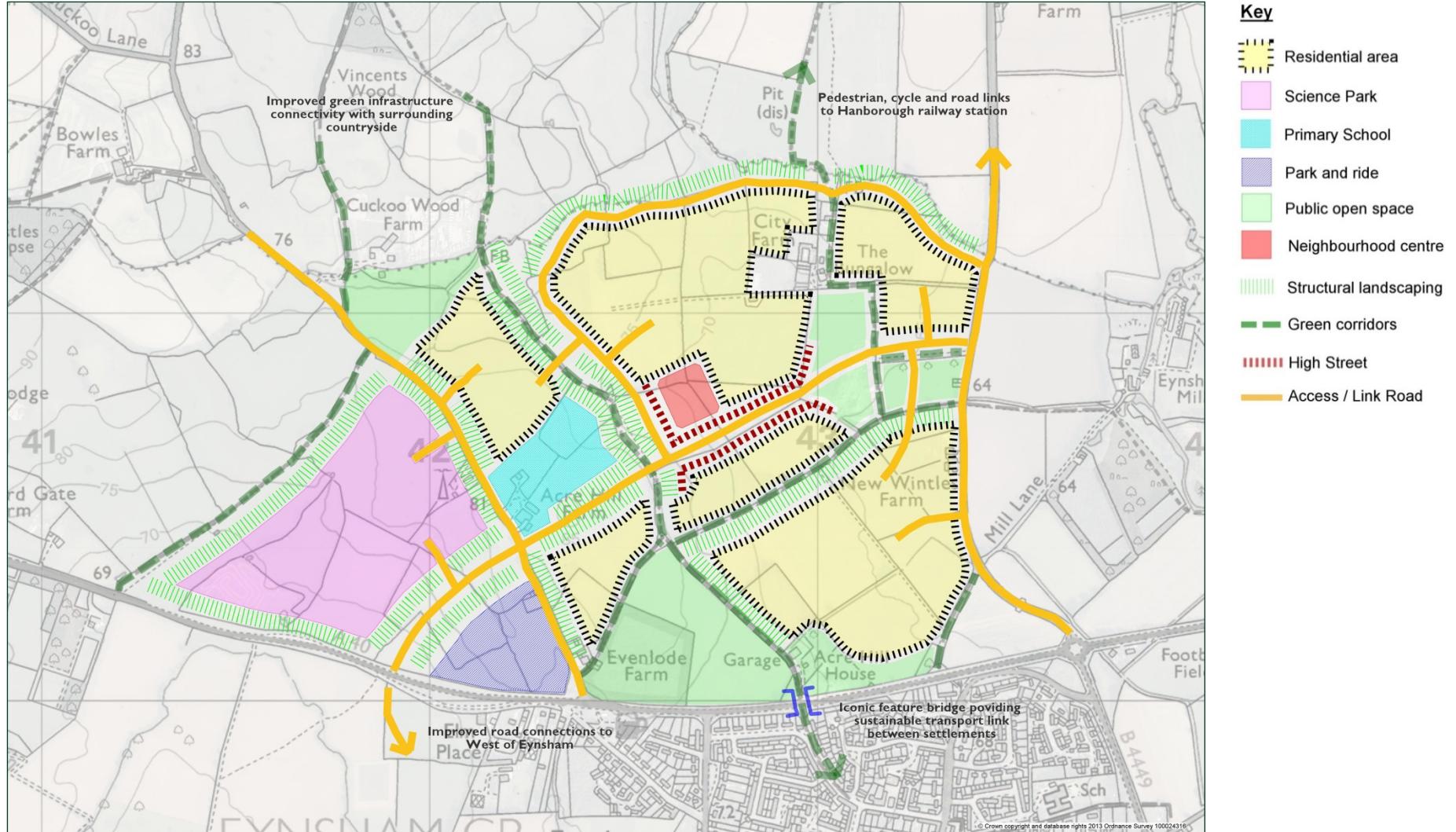
- 3.2 The site is primarily greenfield with the vast majority of it currently being used for agriculture. The A40 forms a strong physical barrier between the site and Eynsham. There is a small area of community woodland owned by the Woodland Trust as well as some existing commercial uses including a petrol filling station and services on the southern part of the site adjoining the A40.
- 3.3 This part of West Oxfordshire was once within the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood, and there are various patches of ancient woodland in the vicinity. There are significant opportunities for landscape enhancement and restoration around the Garden Village.
- 3.4 Importantly the site has no major constraints to development. It is relatively flat, located outside of the AONB and Oxford Green Belt, development can be contained within Flood Zone I (low risk), and it has no significant ecological or heritage interest.
- 3.5 The Council believes that with the right support and resources made available, the site can be brought forward rapidly, particularly given the strong level of landowner and developer interest already known from representations made to the Council.
- 3.6 The site has no formal planning status as yet, but it is the Council's intention to identify the land as part of the main local plan changes it proposes to publish for consultation in October 2016. The area has been identified as a preferred location for strategic growth by the Oxfordshire Growth Board (OGB) as part of the joint process to address the unmet housing needs of Oxford City. The Growth Board's technical evaluation assessed a range of options against sustainability and infrastructure criteria and demonstrates that this is a highly sustainable location. The site and various component parts have also been promoted to the Council for consideration through its Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).
- 3.7 Access can be achieved from a number of points including direct from the A40 to the south, from Cuckoo Lane to the west and from Lower Road to the east. Importantly, the site allows for convenient and close access to Long Hanborough Station, which is only 2.5 miles away, providing fast and frequent services to Oxford and London Paddington to the East, and Worcester to the West.
- 3.8 The site is in multiple land ownerships including a mixture of public and private interests. Oxfordshire County Council owns a significant proportion of land and Savills, acting on behalf of a number of the landowners involved, including Corpus Christi College, a leading proponent of developing the area, have recently sought to engage with the other landowners with a view to jointly appointing a development partner.
- 3.9 At the present time discussions remain on-going although it is anticipated that the potential identification of the site through the Garden Village initiative will accelerate the bringing forward of a coordinated approach to development.

## **4 The proposal – our vision**

- 4.1** The West Oxfordshire Garden village will be an exemplar development of the highest possible standards – a place where people genuinely want to live and work. The District Council has an excellent track record of delivering large-scale strategic housing schemes including recent urban extensions to Witney and Carterton and welcomes the opportunity to shape the District's first new settlement whilst helping address the housing needs of neighbouring Oxford City, and supporting the economic growth of West Oxfordshire. Growth at the Garden Village will contribute to the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford: growth corridor.
- 4.2** We anticipate that the West Oxfordshire Garden Village will provide at least 2,200 homes in the period up to 2031 with the potential for further longer-term growth beyond that. A range of house types, sizes and tenures will be sought with a strong emphasis on affordable housing including starter homes and key worker homes, as well as opportunities for individual and community self-build.
- 4.3** All new homes at the West Oxfordshire Garden Village will be expected to achieve the highest benchmark standard of sustainable design and construction with the development acting as an exemplar for other large-scale housing schemes in Oxfordshire and further afield.
- 4.4** A significant amount of high quality employment space will be made available in the form of a new 40 hectare science park. This will be placed in a modern, campus-style setting, capitalising on the site's proximity to the Oxfordshire knowledge spine and opportunities to attract high-tech university 'spin-outs' from Oxford.
- 4.5** In transport terms, the A40 is a known constraint to economic growth in Oxfordshire with commuters facing regular tailbacks from Eynsham onwards towards Oxford. We will therefore use the opportunity presented by major strategic growth in this location to help tackle this problem.
- 4.6** The Garden Village itself will be designed to minimise car travel and maximise walking, cycling and public transport use. This will help encourage a healthy community with a high level of community interaction.
- 4.7** A key element of the proposal will be an integrated transport 'hub' based around a new park and ride facility which will be connected to both Oxford and Hanborough Station by fast and frequent bus services. The transport hub will include a range of complementary uses such as 'click and collect' in order to facilitate linked trips and reduce car use.
- 4.8** Effective sustainable transport links will also be provided to other destinations including improved cycling and pedestrian linkages to Hanborough station in order to facilitate convenient access to a range of frequent rail services.
- 4.9** Much of the site is south facing, hence its overall orientation is ideal for maximising passive solar gain, taking advantage of solar technologies and reducing energy costs.
- 4.10** Recent work undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan for Eynsham has highlighted the importance of green space to local people and the Garden Village development will therefore be underpinned by an extensive and legible network of useable high quality green infrastructure with convenient access across the site, to the open countryside beyond and into Eynsham itself. The highest priority will be given to community open space and healthy activity in accordance with garden city principles.

- 4.11 The size of the development and the need for a strong degree of self-containment will mean that it needs to be supported by a range of community facilities including education and training opportunities. The scale of development is such that two new primary schools and a new additional secondary facility are likely to be provided along with other community facilities based around the Village Centre.

4.12 Our vision for the site is expressed in graphic form on the plan below.



## 5 Quality and design

- 5.1 West Oxfordshire District Council has a strong track record of delivering high quality development of all types. The West Oxfordshire Design Guide which was recently refreshed has been used for many years to deliver a wide range of well-designed and sustainable developments.
- 5.2 The District Council has won a number of awards including from the RTPI in relation to the Marriots Walk and Woolgate Centre shopping schemes in Witney.
- 5.3 Some examples of the type of high quality development achieved in the District are illustrated in the photographs right.
- 5.4 For the West Oxfordshire Garden Village we will work with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive masterplan. We will use robust design codes developed in accordance with best practice to ensure the development is functional, durable, viable, good for people to use, and reflects the importance of local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.5 The use of strong design codes will have a number of advantages including improved design quality, character and sense of place, certainty for developers, improved cohesion between different components or phases of the development and a quicker timescale with less time having to be spent on negotiations.
- 5.6 We will involve the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan group, and other local stakeholders in the development of the masterplan and design codes to ensure that they are reflective of the local aims, objectives and key principles. The existing arrangements and positive relationships established for the Neighbourhood Plan provide useful vehicles for engagement on this proposed new Garden Village.





## 6 Housing delivery, mix and tenure

### Housing delivery

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the West Oxfordshire Garden Village will provide a minimum of 2,200 homes in the period up to 2031 in addition to what has been planned to date, but this could be accelerated with the right support and intervention. There is long term potential for further growth as the new community evolves over time. The scale of this long term potential will be explored through masterplanning.
- 6.2 Strategic sites of this size and nature inevitably have long-lead in times and we are keen to minimise the length of time it takes to bring the site forward to the first stages of groundworks and construction.
- 6.3 There is a pressing need for housing and business space and the Council would utilise any support provided by DCLG and the HCA to accelerate delivery of the site as quickly as can reasonably be expected.
- 6.4 The tables, following, illustrate two scenarios for the delivery of the Garden Village; with and without support through the Garden Village programme.

### Delivery timescales:

| Project stage  | Existing timeframes<br>(without Garden Village designation) | Accelerated timescales<br>(with Garden Village designation) |
|--|---|---|
| Growth Board decision on apportionment of Oxford City's unmet housing need.            | September 2016  | September 2016  |
| Suggested changes to Local Plan identifying Eynsham as area of growth for Oxford needs | October 2016  | October 2016  |
| Local Plan Examination   | February 2017   | February 2017   |
| Local Plan Adopted   | September 2017  | September 2017  |
| Commence work on Area Action Plan for Garden Village                                   | October 2017  | November 2016   |
| Comprehensive Masterplan prepared  | April 2019  | November 2017   |
| Area Action Plan Examination   | September 2019  | March 2018  |
| Outline Planning Application Submitted   | May 2019  | December 2017   |
| Area Action Plan Adopted   | March 2020  | September 2018  |
| Outline Planning Permission Granted  | May 2020  | May 2018  |
| First Housing Completions  | April 2021  | April 2019  |

## Housing delivery:

| Year         | Existing timescale<br>(no intervention) |                     | Accelerated timescale<br>(with intervention) |                     |
|--------------|---|---------------------|--|---------------------|
|              | Housing starts                          | Housing completions | Housing starts                               | Housing completions |
| 2016/17      |   |                     |  |                     |
| 2017/18      |   |                     |  |                     |
| 2018/19      |   |                     | 55   |                     |
| 2019/20      |   |                     | 220  | 220                 |
| 2020/21      | 55                                      |                     | 220  | 220                 |
| Future years | 2,145+                                  | 2,220+              | 1,705+                                       | 1,760+              |
| Total        | 2,200+                                  | 2,200+              | 2,200+                                       | 2,200+              |

6.5 If the appropriate support and resources are made available there is the potential to achieve a quicker start on-site and therefore an earlier contribution to meeting the identified ‘unmet’ housing needs of Oxford City as well as identified economic needs. An accelerated programme would allow the delivery of around 440 dwellings by the end of March 2021. The degree of acceleration could be tailored to resources.

6.6 To achieve this earlier start, if resources were to be made available, they would in the first instance be focused on the following key areas:

- Additional staffing and/or consultancy input to accelerate the preparation of an Area Action Plan (AAP) and a comprehensive masterplan for the site, supported by agreed design codes;
- Additional staffing and/or consultancy input to prepare the necessary supporting evidence base including key infrastructure requirements, costs and phasing requirements;
- Accelerated engagement with landowners/promoters;
- Securing early outline and detailed planning approval and delivery, in parallel with Plan preparation, so that, at the point of formal adoption, new allocations will be ready to progress as detailed proposals which the development industry can bring forward in partnership with the public sector;
- A process of ‘consensus building’ with the local community including the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan Group and Parish Council to achieve early ‘buy-in’ to the project as a whole including the development of an effective and transparent ‘communications plan’;
- Consideration given to the potential acquisition of key land, not otherwise made available by the normal commercial route eg. by the HCA to complete land assembly and ensure that key parcels of land are able to be brought forward without unnecessary delay.

## Housing mix and tenure

- 6.7 The Garden Village will be characterised by a range of house types, designs and tenures with a strong emphasis on meeting affordable housing needs.
- 6.8 We will use the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) as a basis for determining an appropriate mix of house sizes and draw on the evidence of significant affordable housing need to deliver a significant number of new affordable homes. Subject to viability, the emerging draft Local Plan requires the provision of up to 50% affordable housing in the Eynsham area which would make a significant contribution towards meeting identified needs.
- 6.9 Affordable housing will include a range of different housing options to buy and rent including starter homes, affordable rent and a range of intermediate tenures including that required for key workers. We expect around 20% of the affordable housing element to be in the form of starter homes capped in value in accordance with national policy.
- 6.10 We will also ensure the delivery of significant opportunities for self-build both individually and through community led schemes. The emerging Local Plan requires all larger housing schemes of 100 or more dwellings to include 5% of residential plots to be serviced and made available for the purpose of self-build. This approach has been supported by the Local Plan Inspector in his preliminary findings published in December 2015. . The Council has a register of those seeking to custom build or self-build their own homes, and to date over 150 households have shown interest. We would like assistance for the delivery of some of these self-build homes via a bid for plot enabling support. The self-build element also presents an opportunity for employment and skills training in small to medium local enterprises through placements for apprentices.
- 6.11 To support local developers, we will also seek to secure a policy mechanism whereby parts of the site will be made available in small parcels with prioritisation given to local building companies based in Oxfordshire.
- 6.12 Consideration will also be given to the need for supported living, including extra-care housing.



## 7 Business

7.1 A key element of our proposal is the development of a high quality, landscaped, campus-style ‘science park’ to be developed over a period of several years and acting as a magnet for inward investment as well as providing expansion opportunities for existing businesses. This would complement the proposal for more intensive employment development at Oxford’s Northern Gateway site which focuses on businesses relevant to the knowledge economy of Oxford.

7.2 Models for the park include Granta Park (see photos right) and Cambourne Business Park, near Cambridge.

7.3 The rationale for this is as follows:

- Oxford is a global centre for science and technology centred on universities;
- Oxfordshire has a number of notable science parks. Harwell, Culham, Milton Park, Begbroke, Oxford Science Park are all well-established;
- Oxford will need further high quality business / science parks in due course if it is to continue to develop and commercialise research and innovation from the universities, and continue to attract high quality inward investment as part of the science / high tech cluster.



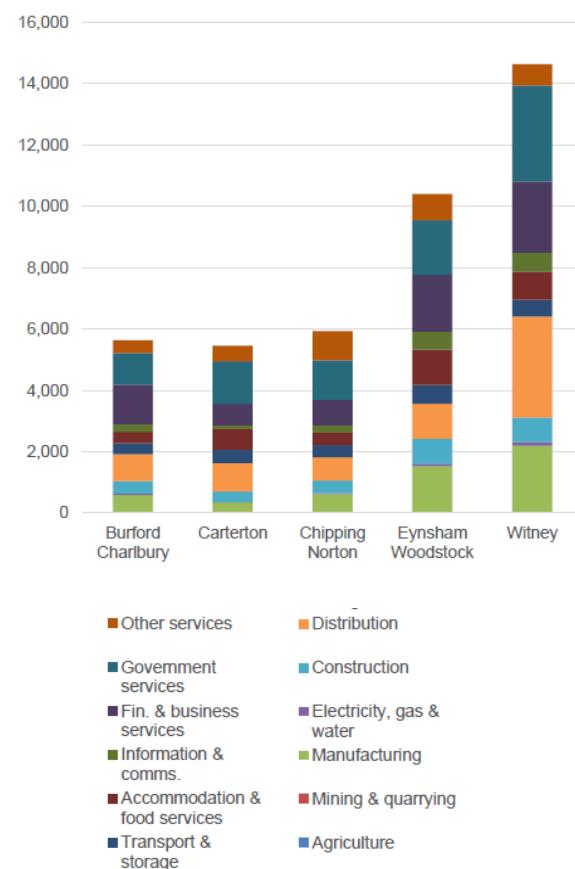
- 7.4 Eynsham is a strategically placed location for a new business park because it is directly linked to the Oxfordshire ‘knowledge spine’ via the A40, it has been identified as a preferred location by Oxfordshire County Council for a new park and ride facility meaning improved accessibility from Oxford for staff and researchers and is also close to Long Hanborough Station providing direct rail links to Oxford, Worcester and Paddington.
- 7.5 Evidence commissioned by the Council in 2014 demonstrates the significant importance of Eynsham to the District and sub-region in economic terms. Whilst the Witney area accommodates the majority of West Oxfordshire’s employment opportunities (35%) the Eynsham and Woodstock sub-area is a close second with around 25%.
- 7.6 Importantly a high proportion (37%) of the workforce in the Eynsham and Woodstock sub-area is either in managerial or professional occupations. This is reflected in close links with Oxford with around 30% of workers living in Eynsham working in Oxford itself.

7.7 Much of the economic activity in and around Eynsham forms part of the wider Oxford City region economy. Siemens for example based at Eynsham employs around 750 people and manufactures magnets for use in MRI scanners. The Council’s evidence confirms that significant potential exists at Eynsham and recommends that the Council identifies additional land for business use there in order to capture growth in the Oxford City region.

7.8 The West Oxfordshire Garden Village provides the opportunity to plan a high quality science park as an integral part of a new, mixed-community with sufficient land made available to give Oxfordshire much needed capacity for the future. The proposal provides the opportunity to enhance West Oxfordshire’s economic development whilst enhancing links to Oxford and making a strong contribution to the Oxfordshire LEP’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for the County.

## West Oxfordshire employment by sub-area:

(Source: BRES)



## **8 Supporting infrastructure/ uses**

- 8.1** The location of the Garden Village has been chosen to realise the opportunities created by the current A40 Science Transit 2 Project. This project will deliver a new park and ride facility off the A40 at Eynsham, as well as an eastwards bus lane from the Park and Ride into Oxford. The Park and Ride will act as an important new transport hub, from which the Garden Village will develop.
- 8.2** Through their Local Transport Plan (LTP4), Oxfordshire County Council is looking to enhance bus services along the A40 corridor. This will take advantage of new bus lane infrastructure and provide new connections from the A40 corridor to employment areas in the east of Oxford.
- 8.3** The new Garden Village is close to Hanborough Station, which is on the North Cotswold Line, and has direct hourly services into Oxford and London Paddington. North Cotswold Line stakeholders have a vision to develop this route further and enable faster half-hourly services. There will be new bus connections from the Park and Ride transport hub through the Garden Village to Hanborough Station. Walking and cycling connections to the Station will be developed alongside access improvements and there will be enhanced parking facilities at the Station. The Garden Village is next to the existing well used strategic cycle route linking Witney with Oxford.
- 8.4** Although the Garden Village will be a distinct settlement it will have a close relationship with Eynsham. The highly regarded Bartholomew School in Eynsham, a mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11-18, could be expanded with a new secondary facility within the Garden Village. A high quality walking and cycle route crossing the A40 by way of a landmark bridge will provide connectivity between the two communities.

## 8.5 The Garden Village itself will deliver, or help to deliver, the following infrastructure:

### Transport

- Park and Ride, junction improvements and eastern bus lane, already funded
- A40 dualling improvements, and western bus lane, not yet funded but likely to be scope for CIL contributions from development
- Enhanced access and parking to Hanborough Station, likely to be developer funded
- Safe walking/ cycle connections across the A40 to Eynsham, including new landmark foot/ cycle bridge, likely to be developer funded
- Spine road through Garden Village linking Park and Ride, Cuckoo Lane with Lower Road, likely to be developer funded
- Widening of Lower Road and Cuckoo Lane, likely to be developer funded

### Education

- Primary School(s), two 2 form entry schools, likely to be developer funded
- Additional secondary facility linked to expansion of Bartholomew School in Eynsham, likely to be developer funded

### Community facilities

- Village Centre providing a range of local shops, pub, café's, small scale live work units, community hall, and other community and recreational facilities, commercially funded
- Doctors surgery, commercially funded
- Multi-purpose sports pitches, likely to be developer funded
- Local centre, and click and collect facilities, at the Park and Ride transport hub, commercially funded
- Expansion of Eynsham Library, likely to be developer funded

### Utilities

- Connection to the high voltage power line south of Eynsham, likely to be developer funded
- Connect to Thames Water supply, likely to be developer funded
- Wastewater treatment, likely to be developer funded
- Superfast fibre to the premises broadband, likely to be developer funded

### Green infrastructure

- Allotments, likely to be developer funded
- Village Green, likely to be developer funded
- Community gardens, orchards and woodlands, likely to be developer funded
- Street tree planting along spine road and other key routes, likely to be developer funded
- Enhanced access to the countryside, likely to be developer funded
- Multi-functional SuDS network as part of a biodiverse network of green infrastructure, likely to be developer funded
- Fitness/ cycle trail, likely to be developer funded
- Local parks and playspaces, likely to be developer funded

## 9 Viability and deliverability

9.1 Housing values in West Oxfordshire are relatively high in comparison with the UK as a whole, but there is significant variation across this large rural district. The emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 identifies three housing value zones. The Garden Village falls in the District's high value zone and it benefits from premium sales and rental prices. This reflects the strong influence of Oxford on the housing market in this area.

9.2 The Garden Village area is predominantly agricultural, although there are a small number of other existing uses along the A40 corridor. Existing use values are therefore relatively low, and this allows the scope to fund affordable housing and the necessary site related infrastructure. The Council's Local Plan viability evidence suggests that a large greenfield site such as this, with no exceptional infrastructure costs, will typically be viable. A benchmark land value of £225,000 per acre, as used in the viability evidence, can be achieved whilst meeting the necessary policy and CIL requirements.

9.3 As part of the Oxfordshire Growth Board process there has been a deliverability and viability assessment of the options to help meet Oxford City's unmet housing need. The independent assessment by BBP Regeneration concludes that a development of 2,200 homes in the Garden Village location is likely to be viable. BBP Regeneration also concludes that the site is deliverable as it is likely to be available, and there is a reasonable prospect of the transport infrastructure being delivered. Development at this location is therefore seen as one of the best options for meeting Oxford City's unmet housing needs in terms of deliverability/ viability.

9.4 The proposed Garden Village is well located next to the strategic highways and public transport network. Oxfordshire County Council, as the highways authority is taking forward a programme of transport improvements, including a new Park and Ride facility and eastbound bus lane. The Garden Village will not require significant investment in additional infrastructure before development can start.

## 10 Community involvement

- 10.1 The planning process for the Garden Village is at an early stage. The Garden Village concept has arisen out of the collective duty to cooperate work being carried out in Oxfordshire to address Oxford City Council's unmet housing need. We will develop a comprehensive community engagement strategy early on to guide the development of the Garden Village concept and achieve a strong degree of stakeholder 'buy-in' from the outset.
- 10.2 A Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated in Eynsham. The village has a positive attitude to growth and is looking to manage growth for the benefit of Eynsham. A comprehensive programme of consultation has taken place on this emerging Neighbourhood Plan and this a valuable resource on local views.
- 10.3 There has been an extensive and constructive dialogue between the Eynsham Futures group, Eynsham Parish Council, and West Oxfordshire District Council on the strategic growth issues in Eynsham and on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, including a recent 'visioning' workshop. This provides a strong platform for future cooperation on the Garden Village proposal, and we will look to involve Eynsham Futures and the Parish Council in the design and delivery of the Garden Village.
- 10.4 The Garden Village lies within the Wychwood Project area, an area covering 120 square miles and 41 parishes, mostly in West Oxfordshire. The Wychwood Project is a registered charity that uses the focus of the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood to encourage local people to understand, conserve and restore its rich mosaic of landscapes and wildlife habitats. The Council will explore the opportunities for this existing community led project to be involved in the delivery and/or management of the landscape enhancement and woodland elements of the proposed Garden Village.
- 10.5 The Garden Village will grow into a thriving living community. It will deliver a balanced mix of housing and land uses that are complementary to each other. There is significant scope for community ownership/ involvement in managing new community infrastructure such as allotments, green infrastructure, community energy, community facilities etc. The establishment of a community management company can provide a key vehicle to achieve this.
- 10.6 Links to the existing Eynsham community will be important, particularly in the early years of the development. A new additional secondary facility, within the Garden Village, could operate as part of the existing Bartholomew School.

## **11 Other stakeholder support**

**11.1** We have spoken to a range of important stakeholders about the Garden Village proposal. The following key stakeholders already support an expression of interest for the Garden Village:

- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Savills, on behalf of the leading proponent of development in the area, Corpus Christi College Oxford, and other landowners

**11.2** The Garden Village proposal arises from the collective Growth Board process to meet Oxford City's unmet housing need. Decisions on the apportionment of the unmet need to the various Council areas will be taken by the Growth Board in September 2016. We will take the opportunity to fully explore the concept with other wider stakeholders over the Summer and Autumn.

## **12 The 'ask' - what support is being sought from Government?**

**12.1** In order to bring forward the Garden Village and accelerate its delivery the Council asks for:

### **Revenue support:**

- Project management
- Policy planning input to accelerate Area Action Plan
- Masterplanning
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Governance and delivery advice
- Technical studies
- Additional technical resources for key technical inputs eg. transport/ engineering
- Community engagement strategy
- Setting up of Design Panel
- Additional planning application support (excluding statutory planning fee )

### **Brokerage / support:**

- Homes and Community Agency
- Atlas

### **Affordable housing and self-build housing support, and land assembly if required:**

- Homes and Community Agency

**12.2** Revenue funding sought is shown below:

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| • 2016 / 2017 | £205,000   |
| • 2017 / 2018 | £600,000   |
| • 2018 / 2019 | £325,000   |
| • 2019 / 2020 | £235,000   |
| • 2020 / 2021 | £235,000   |
| • Total:      | £1,600,000 |

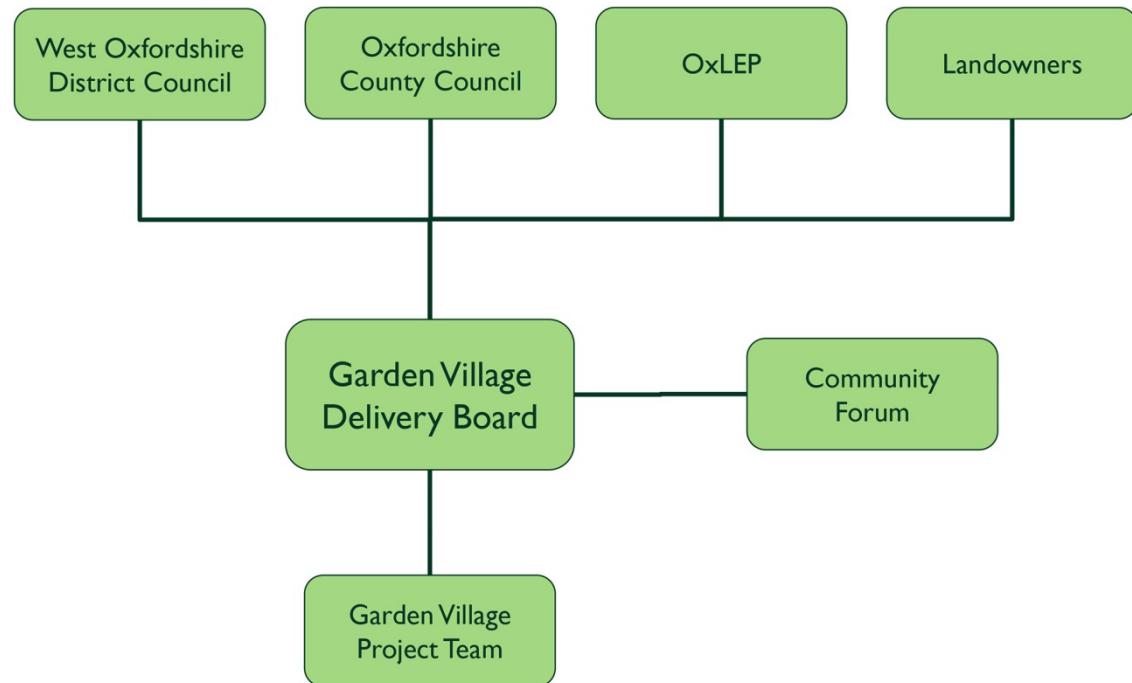


## 13 Delivery

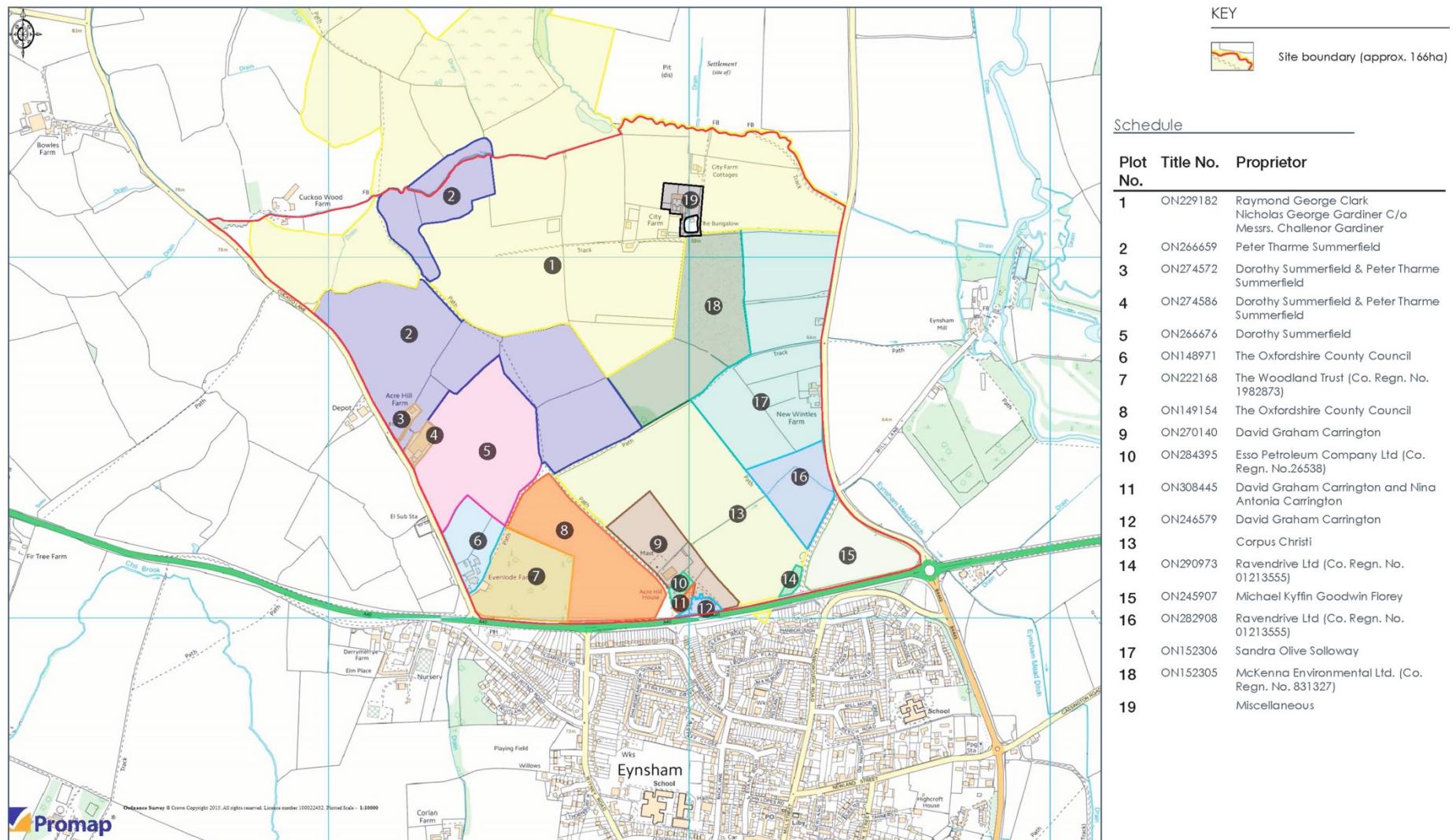
13.1 The planning process for the Garden Village is at an early stage. The Council intends to identify a new settlement in this location as part of a package of suggested changes to the West Oxfordshire Local Plan in October. The Local Plan Inspector in his emerging findings has stated that the Local Plan needs to address the unmet housing needs of Oxford City.

13.2 We will instigate an effective governance structure from the outset of the project bringing together the key stakeholders involved. This governance structure will guide the development of a comprehensive masterplan and an infrastructure delivery plan. It will involve key organisations such as OxLEP and Oxfordshire County Council as well as landowners and community representatives. The diagram below illustrates a possible governance structure. We will take expert advice and seek stakeholder views on the precise arrangements.

**Governance structure diagram:**



- 13.4 The map below shows the key landownerships in the Garden Village area. There is a mix of public and private landownership. Savills, working on behalf of Corpus Christi College, have been working with some of the other land owners in the area in order to develop a joint approach. Homes and Community Agency involvement, through further public land ownership or through a brokerage role, may be helpful to complete this process.



**13.5** We will use any funding awarded to take early professional advice on the options for bringing it forward; addressing any need for residual land assembly, the planning process to construction, and whether a promotion partnership should be established, a development partnership or a full joint public private venture.

- Promotion partnerships are where a promoter partner is procured to manage the planning process and ready the land for development by financing and installing the required site infrastructure before selling on the serviced land to final 3rd party developers in a shovel ready form. This has the advantage of a speedier process using existing commercial arrangements and also opens up access to SME developers.
- Development partnerships are where a development partner is procured to provide skills, finance and share the risk and return. A development partner panel could be used such as those set up by the HCA.
- Full joint venture is a step up from partnerships where a corporate vehicle is set up to hold the land and assets.

**13.6** Public ownership of parts of the Garden Village area creates opportunities for land value capture to maximise community benefit and opportunities for innovative forms of development (eg. self-build).

**13.7** A Garden Village Infrastructure Delivery Plan will identify key infrastructure and include an infrastructure dependencies mapping element to ensure critical timings and relationships are identified and funding is available at the right point in time to ensure new housing is brought forward quickly.

**13.8** We will investigate the use of various mechanisms to ensure that agreed minimum build out rates are achieved. This would include consideration of potential incentives for developers to increase build out rates (eg. financial support or waivers on planning conditions which are conditional on achieving faster build out rates).

**13.9** We will explore the scope for direct commissioning or direct development on public sector land. Direct commissioning being where the public body would appoint contractors to build and sell homes on their own land. This has the advantage of being able to control rate of delivery and a more diverse range of participants can be engaged in the house building process. Direct development is similar but would use in-house teams.

**13.10** We would:

- Actively encourage the use of off-site construction eg. modular buildings and components, to help increase build rates with strong links to locally based companies specialising in this type of manufacturing process such as Stewart Milne based in Witney.
- Look for access to wider funding streams (eg. starter homes fund, affordable housing and home building fund), and work with partners to access other sources (eg. DFE funding) in order to help bring forward growth more quickly.
- Purposefully encourage the release of small parcels to encourage multiple outlets with small and medium sized building firms able to be involved not just volume house builders.
- Seek to support a range of tenures which in itself can help to accelerate delivery with certain forms of development (e.g. extra-care and supported living, student housing and starter homes) acting as 'market absorption boosters' helping to bring in investment and deliver the schemes faster.

**13.11** To ensure that appropriate construction staff are available we will also look to agree skills plans with developers in order to train local people – this is something that Oxfordshire County Council have been actively encouraging the Oxfordshire authorities to instigate.



## **14 Key points of contact and sources of further information**

### **14.1 Key contacts:**

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### **14.2 Key sources of information:**

[West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031](#)  
[www.westoxon.gov.uk/localplan2031](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/localplan2031)

[Oxfordshire Growth Board](#)  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

[Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031](#)  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

[Oxfordshire Growth Deal](#)  
[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

[Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal](#)  
[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

[Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan](#)  
[www.eynsham-pc.gov.uk](http://www.eynsham-pc.gov.uk)

## 15 Appendix I: Budget breakdown

| <b>Year:</b>                  | <b>2016 / 2017</b> | <b>2017 / 2018</b> | <b>2018 / 2019</b> | <b>2019 / 2020</b> | <b>2020 / 2021</b> | <b>Total</b>      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Staffing / consultants</b> |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                   |
| Programme Manager             | £21,000            | £70,000            | £70,000            | £70,000            | £70,000            | £301,000          |
| Policy Planner                | £15,000            | £50,000            | £25,000            |                    |                    | £90,000           |
| DM Planner                    |                    | £10,000            | £50,000            | £50,000            | £50,000            | £160,000          |
| OCC Highways Engineer         | £15,000            | £50,000            | £50,000            | £50,000            | £50,000            | £215,000          |
| Project Support               | £9,000             | £30,000            | £30,000            | £30,000            | £30,000            | £129,000          |
| <b>Project elements</b>       |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                   |
| Delivery/ Programme Support   | £30,000            | £10,000            | £10,000            | £10,000            | £10,000            |                   |
| Masterplan                    | £30,000            | £90,000            |                    |                    |                    | £120,000          |
| Infrastructure Delivery Plan  | £30,000            | £90,000            |                    |                    |                    | £120,000          |
| Design Codes                  |                    | £40,000            | £40,000            |                    |                    | £80,000           |
| SA                            | £15,000            | £45,000            |                    |                    |                    | £60,000           |
| Transport Modelling           | £15,000            | £65,000            |                    |                    |                    | £80,000           |
| Development Viability         |                    | £25,000            | £25,000            |                    |                    | £50,000           |
| Other Technical Studies       | £25,000            | £25,000            | £25,000            | £25,000            | £25,000            | £125,000          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>£205,000</b>    | <b>£600,000</b>    | <b>£325,000</b>    | <b>£235,000</b>    | <b>£235,000</b>    | <b>£1,600,000</b> |



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