Appendix 1:

Representations to West Oxfordshire Local Plan Housing Consultation

September 2014
Land south west of Hanborough Station, Long Hanborough

West Oxfordshire Local Plan Housing Consultation Representations

on behalf of Commercial Estates Group

September 2014
Land south west of Hanborough Station, Long Hanborough
West Oxfordshire Local Plan Housing Consultation
on behalf of CEG
September 2014
Contents

1.0 Introduction......................................................................................................................... 5
2.0 Plan Period ......................................................................................................................... 6
3.0 Proposed Housing Target ................................................................................................. 8
4.0 Long Hanborough – A Sustainable Settlement for Growth .............................................. 14
6.0 Conclusions and Recommended Way Forward ................................................................. 20

Appendix 1: Broad location of land to the south west of Hanborough railway station
Appendix 2: East Devon Inspectors letter dated 31 March 2014
Appendix 3: Brighton and Hove Inspectors letter dated 13 December 2013
Appendix 4: RPS Viscography TRACC mapping
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Nexus Planning, on behalf of Commercial Estates Group (CEG) are submitting representations to the West Oxfordshire Local Plan – Housing Consultation (July 2014) consultation, in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

1.2 CEG is promoting land to the south west of Hanborough railway station. The land abuts the railway line to the east, Main Road (A4095) to the north and Pinsley Wood to the south west. The land is within an easy 15 to 20 minute walk and 5 to 10 minute cycle of all key existing social and community facilities within Long Hanborough. The land is also within 350 metre of Hanborough railway station and 500 metres of a key local employment site – Hanborough Business Park. A plan illustrating the broad location of this land is included in Appendix 1.

1.3 These representations relate principally to:

Question 1: Plan Period;
Question 2: Proposed Housing Target;
Question 3: Proposed Spatial Strategy; and
Questions 17 and 18: Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area.

1.4 Although the Council has increased its draft housing requirement from 365 dwellings per annum to 525 dwellings per annum, it is still significantly too low, and will not meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in West Oxfordshire and the wider housing market area.

1.5 Furthermore, despite the housing requirement being too low, as opposed to proactively meeting it’s identified housing needs up to 2031 the Council is not proposing to amend the Local Plan time horizon from 2029 to 2031 to meet its identified need in full.

1.6 Accordingly, a Local Plan with a time horizon of less that 15-years and based on a housing requirement of 525 dwellings per annum would be contrary to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”). The Local Plan would be neither robust, credible not sound.
2.0 Plan Period

Consultation Question 1: Do you agree that the period 2011-2029 is a reasonable period of time for the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan to cover? No

2.1 The NPPF outlines in paragraph 157 that:

"Critically, Local Plans should be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date."

2.2 However, the Council is proposing a Plan covering the period 2011 to 2029, which, as it states within paragraph 3.1 of its Consultation document, would result in the Local Plan, at best, having 'just less than 14-years' from adoption.

2.3 The same plan-period issue arose as part of the East Devon Local Plan examination, where from adoption the local plan would only have a life of 12-years. Within the Inspector's letter, dated 31 March 2014 (See Appendix 2) which concluded the local plan was unsound, the Inspector highlighted that although the NPPF advises that plans should 'preferably have a life of 15 years' (paragraph 157) that a longer plan period [i.e. 15-years plus] would give developers, landowners and the council greater confidence in long-term delivery. The Inspector also highlights that a shorter plan period [i.e. of less than 15-years] increases the risk of being unable to react in time to changing circumstances.

2.4 The East Devon Inspector concluded that where the Council's evidence base covered the longer term, in this case the 20-year period between 2011 and 2031, it would be reasonable to expect the Local Plan to also cover this period.

2.5 As the Council acknowledges within its Consultation document, its housing evidence base covers the period 2011 to 2031. It would therefore be wholly reasonable to expect the Local Plan, if it was positively prepared as required by paragraph 182 of the NPPF, to also cover this period. Where the Council's other supporting evidence base does not cover the final two years (2029/30 and 2030/31) the Council's should proactively update this evidence base according prior to publishing the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan.

2.6 While it is acknowledged that the Council refers, within paragraph 3.4 of the Housing Consultation document, to potentially committing to an early review of the Local Plan in order to address unmet housing needs within the wider housing market area, given the Local Plan has not reached the advanced Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan stage, it is
considered wholly appropriate that issues such as unmet housing needs within the housing market area should be proactively and positively addressed via the duty to cooperate before the Local Plan progresses to the Pre-Submission consultation stage. It is noted that the Cherwell Local Plan examination has been put on hold due to concerns regarding its alignment with the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment and unmet needs within the wider housing market area, in particular Oxford City.

2.7 A Local Plan based on a time horizon which falls short of the period covered by its housing evidence base, which identifies housing need up to 2031, would be unsound as it would result in a Local Plan that is not positively prepared, justified or consistent with national policy.

2.8 Notwithstanding our fundamental concerns that the Councils’ proposed housing requirement of 525 dwellings per annum is significantly too low, there is developable land, such as the land to the west of Hanborough railway station that could be allocated to bridge the housing land supply shortfall between 2029 and 2031 – 1,050 dwellings (525 x 2). The Council should revise the Plan period to ensure it covers the period 2011 to 2031 and increase the level of housing proposed at Long Hanborough within the Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area to take account of the sustainable and deliverable land to the west of Hanborough railway station.
3.0 Proposed Housing Target

Consultation Question 2: Do you support the proposed Local Plan housing target of at least 9,450 homes to be provided in West Oxfordshire over the period 2011-2029 (525 per annum)? No

3.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 14 that at the heart of the planning system is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a 'golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking'. For plan-making this means:

"local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their areas;

Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole;
  or
- specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted."

3.2 Specifically in relation to housing, paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that:

"To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period."

3.3 To ensure a Local Plan is sound against the requirements of the NPPF, the Gallagher Homes Ltd v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council judgement (30 April 2014) EWHC 1285 ("the Solihull judgement") has made it very clear that in plan-making local councils should firstly undertake an objective assessment of its full housing needs in full.

3.4 The Council’s most-up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment is the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, April 2014 ("SHMA 2014"). The SHMA 2014 confirms within Table 89 that West Oxfordshire’s objective assessment of housing need in full over the period 2011 to 2031 is 885 dwellings per annum (13,700 dwellings over the period). A
housing requirement based on delivering 685 dwellings per annum should, as a minimum, be the starting point for the West Oxfordshire Local Plan plan-making process.

3.5 The Solihull judgement then confirmed that local councils should objectively assess, against the policies set out within the NPPF, the extent to which the objective assessment of housing need in full can be delivered. Under the duty to cooperate, the Council should also assess the extent to which any unmet housing need within the housing market area could also be met within West Oxfordshire. It is noted within Table 89 of the SHMA 2014 that there is a significant identified housing need within the HMA - 5,625 dwellings per annum.

3.6 The Housing Consultation document acknowledges within paragraph 4.83 that the proposed housing requirement of 525 dwellings per annum does not meet the Council’s identified affordable housing and economic needs in full. The Council’s justification for a housing requirement lower that its objective assessment of housing needs appears to focus around unfounded assertions regarding environmental and infrastructure capacity; housing delivery and the robustness of job-led projections. Further consideration on these matters is provided below:

Job-led Projections

3.7 The NPPF emphasises in paragraphs 18 to 20 that one of the Government’s top priorities is to achieve and secure economic growth. The NPPF states in paragraph 19:

"The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system."

3.8 The Housing Consultation document outlines within paragraph 4.39 that the job-led housing projection to meet the Council’s planned economic growth requires a housing requirement of 661 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031.

3.9 While it is accepted that due to the volatility of economic projections a housing requirement purely derived from a job-led housing projections is also susceptible to the same volatility, they do provide a very useful benchmark against which to test the extent to which a demographic-led housing requirement would also support planned and projected economic growth needs over the same time horizon.
3.10 The difference between the Council’s proposed housing requirement (525 dwellings per annum) and that indicated by its job-led housing projection (661 dwellings per annum) is 136 dwellings per annum. There is therefore a significant difference between the level of planned housing growth and that required to support the Council’s planned economic growth aspirations. Importantly, the Council’s objective assessment of housing needs requirement figure of 685 dwellings per annum closely aligns with the Council’s job-led housing requirement – a difference of only 24 dwellings per annum. Delivery of the Council’s objective assessment of housing needs in full would broadly support its planned economic growth aspirations.

3.11 The Council’s proposed housing requirement of 525 dwellings per annum is significantly too low to support the Council’s planned and sustainable economic growth needs. To support the Council’s planned economic growth aspirations the Local Plan should contain a housing requirement of at least 661 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031.

Environmental and Infrastructure Capacity

3.12 A review of the Council’s existing draft Local Plan, July 2014, evidence base and its recently updated housing evidence base demonstrates there are no absolute, infrastructure, or environmental constraints that would constrain or prevent the Council from accommodating as required by the NPPF, its objective assessment of housing needs in full - 685 dwellings per annum.

3.13 Central to the Council’s assertion over the environmental capacity of the District is that 34% of the District falls within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, given the District is approximately 2,605 km² there is 169,300 ha of land outside the AONB – by no means an insignificant land area (5 million homes as gross density of 30 dwellings per hectare). Although this is an overly simple calculation, it does highlight the Council’s AONB capacity constraint assertion is wholly unjustified.

Housing Delivery and Market Capacity

3.14 The Council’s historical monitoring data shows that housing delivery in excess of 525 dwellings per annum is deliverable within the District. The Council’s previous Local Plan housing requirement, derived from the Oxfordshire Structure Plan constrained planned housing supply to only 450 dwellings per annum. However, against this requirement, delivery in excess of this was still achieved in numerous monitoring years – as highlighted within Figure 4.4 of the Housing Consultation document, between the period 2005 to 2010 the Council averaged housing completions at 674 dwellings per annum.
3.15 Historically the Council’s growth strategy has focused on a few large strategic housing allocations delivering the majority of the Council’s housing requirement over the Plan period. Although this approach can deliver the level of housing required, local planning authorities across the South East and nationally who have relied heavily on this approach have generally experienced persistent housing delivery issues due to key strategic allocations lead times and development stalling for unforeseen reasons.

3.16 The Housing Consultation document highlights within Figure 4.2 and paragraph 4.23 that higher levels of completions in the mid 2000’s were a consequence of several large housing schemes coming forward at the same time. Prior to this, between 1995/96 and 2000/01 – the lead in time period for these strategic sites - the Council experienced low levels of housing delivery. Figure 4.4 outlines that between the period 1991 and 2011 the Council experience delivery of only 364 dwellings per annum.

3.17 Conversely, local planning authorities who have taken forward a wide mix of small, medium and large strategic allocations within development plans generally experience consistently high levels of housing delivery, principally as the implications for overall housing delivery associated with long lead in times, or a single site stalling are significantly lower. Furthermore, large strategic housing sites have a limited local housing market within which to operate so become saturated more quickly compared to a number of dispersed housing sites across a wider area which have multiple local housing market areas.

3.18 Historic housing growth rates over the longer term have therefore been constrained not by the market, but by the Council’s repeatedly low housing requirements and growth strategies set out within previous local plans.

3.19 The NPPF is clear at paragraph 154 that Local Plans should be aspirational but realistic. In considering aspects of housing delivery rates, the Council’s starting point within the Housing Consultation document is placing too much emphasis on unfounded perceptions of the development industry and fails to properly take into consideration the weaknesses and limitations of delivery associated with a repeated planning strategy which relies too heavily on a few strategic allocations to meet identified growth needs and demand. A housing requirement based on delivering 685 dwellings per annum is therefore considered to be justified and aspirational, but also wholly realistic.

3.20 The Council should therefore fundamentally review its spatial strategy towards a more dispersed growth strategy focusing on all of the Group C service centres. The Council should identify a diverse mix of small, medium and large sites to deliver its identified housing needs. As demonstrated within Section 4 of these representations the level of growth proposed at
Long Hanborough is disproportionality low given the settlements sustainability. Additional housing growth should therefore been planned at and around Long Hanborough, in particular around Hanborough station.

**Land Availability**

3.21 The Council updated its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in June 2014 ("SHLAA 2014"). The SHLAA 2014 concludes that between the period 2014 and 2029 there is identified developable and developable land supply of around 8,200 dwellings. This equates to capacity to deliver 547 dwellings per annum between 2014 and 2029.

3.22 However, the SHLAA 2014 confirms within paragraph 2.15 and 2.16 that the Council’s search for sites and assessment of sites only considered sites in or adjacent to an existing SHLAA settlement boundary. Sites or land in sustainable locations, but not currently abutting an existing settlement boundary, has been automatically discounted by the Council without due consideration or assessment.

3.23 As demonstrated within Section 4 of these Representations, land to the south west of Hanborough railway station which currently does not abut the existing settlement boundary of Long Hanborough is wholly sustainable when considered against the NPPF, taken as a whole. This land should therefore be identified as developable land for housing led-development. The Council’s SHLAA 2014 is therefore likely to fundamentally underestimate the land available for development within the District.

**Objectively Assessed Housing Requirement**

3.24 When proactively assessing the extent to which it can meet its own identified housing requirement, as highlighted within the Brighton and Hove Council Local Plan Inspector’s letter, dated 13 December 2013 (Appendix 3 to these representations), the Council ‘must leave no stone unturned in seeking to meet as much of this need as possible’.

3.25 On the basis that there are no identifiable absolute constraints to delivering the Council’s objective assessment of housing needs in full, the starting point for the emerging Local Plan housing requirement should be meeting the Council’s objective assessment of housing needs in full – 685 dwellings per annum. However, given the unconstrained nature of the District, particularly the eastern half of the District around Oxford, the Council, through the duty to cooperate, should also look to assess the extent to which it can also proactively deliver any unmet housing needs within the wider housing market area, in particular Oxford City.
3.26 Through the duty to cooperate, the Council should look to help meet Oxford’s housing needs at unconstrained settlements within the District. As Section 4 of these Representations will demonstrate, Long Hanborough is one such suitable and appropriate settlement as it is largely unconstrained; it is in close proximity to Oxford; and already has good community and social facilities and public transport services that could be further enhanced through additional growth.
4.0 Long Hanborough – A Sustainable Settlement for Growth

Consultation Question 3: Do you agree with proposed spatial strategy outlines in paragraph 5.15-5.19? No

Consultation Question 17: Do you support the overall level of housing provision identified for the Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area (1,350 new homes)? No

Consultation Question 18: Are there other sites not identified that you think should be identified within the Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area to help meet the overall housing requirement? Yes

4.1 The Housing Consultation document identifies within Table 5.1 that Long Hanborough is one of the six 'Other Group C Service Centres' below Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton. The Housing Consultation document outlines that the strategy for the Other Group C Service Centres is for them to accommodate some new housing and employment development with more limited use of fringe greenfield sites where appropriate/ necessary. The Council is principally focusing growth at the three main Group C Service Centres - Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton.

4.2 However, as Section 3 of these representations demonstrated, the proposed housing requirement is significantly too low to meet the Council's objectively assessed housing needs in full. As a result the Council should fundamentally review its proposed housing requirement and spatial strategy. As the remainder of these representations will demonstrate, to help meet the Council’s housing needs in full, additional growth should be focused at and around Long Hanborough. Particularly given the level of growth proposed by the Council at Long Hanborough, 75 dwellings per annum between 2011 to 2029, is currently disproportionality low, given the settlement is relatively unconstrained and sustainable.

4.3 As the remainder of this section demonstrates, against the fundamental economic, social and environmental elements of the NPPF, it is clear that focusing additional housing growth at and around Long Hanborough would positively contribute towards achieving sustainable development:

An Economic Role

4.4 The Council's SHLAA 2014 outlines that 'there is a substantial employment area to the east of the village and next to the Hanborough railway station'. The Hanborough Business Park is within 500 metres of the land to the south west of Hanborough station and provides not only employment for existing local residents but also attracts high levels of commuting from the
wider area. To assist settlement containment, additional housing growth should therefore be allocated at and around Long Hanborough. The most appropriate location for this would be on land to the south west of Hanborough station given its proximity to the Business Park and to existing facilities within Long Hanborough.

4.5 Furthermore, as illustrated within Table 4.1 below, Hanborough station is on the First Great Western line between London Paddington and Worcester, connecting local destinations including Oxford, Reading and Didcot Parkway. The settlements good rail service is acknowledged within paragraph 9.93 of the draft Local Plan, October 2012.

**Table 4.1: Hanborough Rail Service Information provided by RPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Weekday Frequency</th>
<th>Weekend Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First Service</td>
<td>Last Service</td>
<td>AM Peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanborough - Oxford - Didcot Parkway - Reading - London Paddington</td>
<td>First Great Western</td>
<td>06:14</td>
<td>22:15</td>
<td>1 service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanborough - Cheltenham - Kingham - Moreton-in-Marsh - Honeybourne - Evesham - Pershore - Worcester</td>
<td></td>
<td>07:03</td>
<td>23:03</td>
<td>1 service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RPS via National Rail website (September 2014)

4.6 Analysis undertaken by RPS transport consultants, using the GIS accessibility software Visography TRACC to assess travel times via all public transport modes, identified that by public transport land to the south west of Hanborough station is within a 15 to 20 minutes of Oxford City, which provides a range of employment, secondary and higher education and retail and leisure opportunities. The average rail journey time to Oxford City from Hanborough station is only 10 minutes. Copies of the RPS TRACC mapping is included in Appendix 4.

4.7 As shown within Table 4.2 below, in addition to good rail accessibility the land to the south west of Hanborough station is also within approximately 200 metres of existing bus services to key settlements within the District, as well of Oxford City.
Table 4.2: RPS existing bus service analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route Number</th>
<th>Operator and Route</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Weekday Frequency</th>
<th>Weekend Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Inter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Peak</td>
<td>Peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Witney – North Leigh – Freeland – Long Hanborough – Eynsham - Oxford</td>
<td>06:40</td>
<td>1 Service</td>
<td>Hourly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td>Burford – Witney – Long Hanborough – Bladon – Woodstock</td>
<td>06:43</td>
<td>1 service</td>
<td>Hourly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>242</td>
<td>Witney – North Leigh – Long Hanborough – Bladon – Woodstock</td>
<td>06:25</td>
<td>1 service</td>
<td>Hourly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 Given the significant unmet housing need within Oxford, through the duty to cooperate, additional planned housing growth focused around Hanborough station would assist in supporting the wider housing needs within both the wider functional economic market area and housing market area.

A Social Role

4.9 The Council’s SHLAA 2014 summarises there are a wide range of existing social and community facilities within Long Hanborough. The settlement has: a nursery/ playgroup, a primary school, community buildings, shops, a post office, library, GP practice, petrol filling station, public houses, churches and playing fields. The RPS Viscography TRACC mapping (Appendix 4) and Table 4.3 below, show that these key existing local community facilities and services are within an easy 15 to 20 minute walk or a 5 to 10 minute cycle of the land to the south west of Hanborough station. There is continuous footway provision in the form of a wide shared footway/cycleway between Hanborough station and Long Hanborough. This route also has street lighting.
### Table 4.3: RPS Proximity to community services and facilities analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Distance (m)</th>
<th>Journey Times (minutes)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School: Hanborough Manor C of E Primary School</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary &amp; Sixth Form: The Marlborough C of E School, Woodstock</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist: Long Hanborough Dental Practice</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy: Hanborough Pharmacy</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors: Long Hanborough Surgery</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Area:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Hanborough village centre</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodstock town centre</td>
<td>4910</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanborough Business Park</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery: Daffodil Nursery</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public House: George and Dragon</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office: Long Hanborough Post Office</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church: Long Hanborough Methodist Church</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shopping/Retail</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Centre: Woodstock</td>
<td>4910</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Centre: Long Hanborough</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarket: The Co-operative</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding school: Pigeon House Equestrian</td>
<td>2900</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum: Oxford Bus Museum</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karate Club: Long Hanborough Karate Club</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Centre: Dancemania</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Club: North Leigh Football Club</td>
<td>3900</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor Recreation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park: Blenheim Palace</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Route: Wychwood Way National Trail</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Assumed walking speed of 1.33m/sec and cycling speed of 4.44m/sec
4.10 The West Oxfordshire Settlement Sustainability Report, Revised November 2010 also confirms that the Long Hanborough ranks as the 8th most sustainable settlement out of the Districts 42 settlements. It is also noted that Long Hanborough is only one of two Group C settlements that has a railway station; and more importantly is the only Group C settlement outside the AONB that has a railway station.

An Environmental Role

4.11 There are no international or national environmental or nature conservation designations covering Long Hanborough. The settlement falls outside the Cotswold AONB to the north. Environment Agency flood mapping demonstrates that flood risk is not a significant issue within Long Hanborough or within the wider area to the south, east and west.

4.12 The SHLAA 2014 concludes that development to the north, west and south west of Long Hanborough would be potentially inappropriate to due to impact on landscape and the character and setting of the Millwood End Conservation Area. The SHLAA 2014 outlines that development to the east of Long Hanborough could be appropriate where it is set within a strong landscape structure. In environmental terms the most sustainable direction for future growth at Long Hanborough is to the east and south of Main Road (A4095).

4.13 As demonstrated above, Long Hanborough is a sustainable and relatively unconstructed settlement where additional growth above that proposed by the Council could be accommodated to help deliver a greater proportion of the District’s objectively assessed housing needs and/or unmet needs from the wider housing market area, in particular Oxford.

4.14 Although not currently abutting the defined settlement boundary of Long Hanborough, residential-led development on land to the south west of Hanborough station would represent sustainable development when assessed against the NPPF, particularly in light of the fact that:

- Long Hanborough has a good range of existing local community facilities and services, which are within an easy and safe walking and cycling distance from the land;
- The land has good public transport accessibility via both bus and rail to Oxford City and the key settlements within the District;
- Long Hanborough is the only Group C settlement outside the AONB that has a railway station; and
- The land is adjacent to an existing employment site, which currently relies of significant in commuting.
4.15 The Local Plan should therefore increase the level of growth proposed at Long Hanborough and look to focus this additional growth on land to the south west of the station.
6.0 Conclusions and Recommended Way Forward

6.1 Although the Council has increased its draft housing requirement from 365 dwellings per annum to 525 dwellings per annum, it is still significantly too low, and will not meet the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in West Oxfordshire and the wider housing market. The level of planned housing growth also fails to support the Council’s planned economic growth aspirations.

6.2 Prior to publishing the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan, to address the fundamental soundness concerns raised within these representations, the Council must:

- Amend the Local Plan time-horizon from 2011 to 2029 to 2011 to 2031 to ensure the Plan has at least 15-years from adoption and meets the Council’s identified housing needs. Update any other Local Plan evidence base to cover the two additional years - 2029/30 and 2030/31;

- Fundamentally review the housing requirement and spatial distribution to ensure that it meets, as required by paragraph 47 of the NPPF, the Council’s objective assessment of housing needs in full - 685 dwellings per annum (13,700 dwellings between 2011 and 2031);

- Engage positively and proactively with neighbouring authorities as required by its Duty to Cooperate to ensure an appropriate delivery mechanism is put in place to meet any unmet housing needs from within West Oxfordshire or within the wider housing market area; and

- Increase the level of planned housing growth within the Eynsham – Woodstock Sub-Area, in sustainable locations such as Long Hanborough and the land south west of Hanborough railway station, to meet the Council’s objectively assessed housing needs between 2015 and 2031 (the remaining Plan period from adoption); and unmet housing need from within the wider housing market area, particularly Oxford City.

6.3 We would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Council’s planning policy officers to discuss the development potential of land to the south west of Hanborough station and the extent to which this land can assist in proactively meeting its identified housing needs over the Plan period.
Appendix 2

Examination of the New East Devon Local Plan 2006-26

Mr M Dickins
Planning Policy Manager
East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL
By email only

Inspector: Anthony Thickett BA(Hons) BTP
MRTPI Dip RSA

Programme Officer: Amanda Polley
Tel: 01395 571682
Council Offices
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL
E mail: programmeoffice@eastdevon.gov.uk
31 March 2014

Dear Mr Dickins,

At the last hearing I promised to write to you giving a date for my report or setting out what further work is required. Unfortunately I do not consider that the Local Plan is sound nor at this stage can it be made so by main modifications.

Housing Numbers

1. I do not consider that the 15,000 housing target is justified by the evidence submitted to the examination. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to ensure that Local Plans are based on adequate and up to date evidence and to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs over the plan period. The 2007 SHMA was updated in 2011 and it was accepted by your consultant at the hearing that it was prepared before the most recent guidance was issued. The 2011 update is founded in part on survey work done in 2007 and so its reliability is questionable. Further, it only covers 2011 to 2016 and is criticised by your other consultants, Roger Tym and Partners who produced the 2011 Housing and Employment Study.

2. In any event, it is clear from the hearing that the 15,000 target in Strategy 1 is not based on the SHMA but the low migration scenario figure for East Devon given in Table 6.3 of the Roger Tym report (10,800) plus about 4,000 for overspill from elsewhere (largely Exeter) which has no empirical evidential basis. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advises that the starting point for estimating need should be the latest population and housing projections. I acknowledge that the 2011 projections should be used with caution but Roger Tym’s estimates are based on the 2008 population and household projections. I could question the validity of choosing the low migration model given that the Roger Tym report

---

1 Paragraph 158
2 Paragraph 159
3 CD/Hsg019
4 CD/Hsg020
5 CD/Hsg062, paragraphs 6.29 to 6.33
6 Reference ID: 2a-015-20140306
leans towards a higher figure but there seems little point given the shortcomings in the evidence base overall.

3. I give little weight to the County Council’s work given that it is county wide and is based in part on demand rather than objectively assessed need. I cannot, therefore, conclude that the figure of 15,000 is justified by up to date and appropriate evidence. The absence of an up to date SHMA is a serious failing and makes a full assessment of need difficult. To rectify this, the Council should produce an up to date SHMA to assess the need for housing and affordable housing. If an updated SHMA indicates levels of need greater than provided for by the Plan you should test the impact of higher levels of growth through SA/SEA. Subject to the results of that exercise, you should consider making provision for an increased number of dwellings and/or set out results of discussions with neighbouring authorities in relation to meeting any unmet need in the District.

4. As discussed at the hearing its seems most unlikely to me that parts of West Dorset and East Devon do not fall into the same housing market area. I see that according to the 2007 SHMA and 2011 update the Coastal Towns sub market area includes part of West Dorset and Lyme Regis in particular. However, none of the survey work appears to include any parts of West Dorset. As you know the Inspector examining the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan has indicated that further work needs to be done with regard to assessing housing needs. There would, therefore, seem to be an opportunity to work with West Dorset in preparing evidence.

5 year housing land supply

5. The NPPG states that; 'Local planning authorities should aim to deal with any under-supply within the first five years of the plan period where possible'. That and the aim of the NPPF to significantly boost the supply of housing weighs against the Liverpool approach to meeting your backlog. Turning to the arguments in favour of Liverpool in Topic Paper 1; whilst adopting Sedgefield may result in a marked drop in the rate of provision after 5 years this is an argument that could be repeated many times and the high rate is due to past failures in delivery. To accept a longer period to address the shortfall is counter to the aim of significantly boosting housing supply and would run the risk of leaving households in need for longer.

6. Dangers of overdevelopment, directing development to the best sites and where it is needed, sustainability and matching development to infrastructure should all be addressed through planning i.e. the Local Plan. As you say in the Topic Paper, plan led provision lies at the heart of the NPPF and I see nothing in the Sedgefield approach which would prevent this in East Devon.

7. The ‘5 year land supply update - Sedgefield Approach’ assessment produced by you at my request shows a housing land supply of 4.04 years as of October 2013. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF warns that relevant polices for the supply of housing

---

7 Reference ID: 3-035-20140306
should not be considered up to date if a 5 year supply cannot be demonstrated. The District Council needs to be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply on adoption of the Local Plan and I look forward to hearing how you intend to ensure this will be the case.

Housing Distribution

8. No doubt any work on a new SHMA will consider distribution and I would expect, in accordance with the objective of achieving sustainable development, that new development would be directed to settlements that have the capacity to accommodate and sustain new development. I am aware that the numbers allocated for villages in Strategy 27 are based on consultations with local communities. However, I am concerned that these figures are not based on an assessment of the ability of the small towns and villages to accommodate growth and that the blanket application of a 5% minimum growth is too crude a tool. Further, the post submission changes to Policy 27 strongly imply that the 5% will be treated as a maxima. I suggest, therefore, that you revisit Strategy 27 in light of the Settlement Appraisals which, if applied consistently, do not support some of the figures in Strategy 27.

Plan period

9. The NPPF advises that plans should preferably have a life of 15 years\(^9\). This is not fixed in stone but if adopted in 2014, the plan would only have a life of 12 years. I am aware that provision is made for development beyond the plan period at the West End. However, I consider that this approach offers less certainty and a longer plan period would give developers, landowners and you greater confidence in the long term delivery of the Growth Point. Further, it leaves less time to deliver and react to changes that may threaten delivery in the rest of the District, particularly as it is envisaged that the Villages Development Plan Document and Neighbourhoods Plans are to follow, all of which will take time to produce, examine and adopt before they become effective.

10. The 2011 Housing and Employment Study\(^8\) projects housing and employment requirements to 2031. Should any further work/studies to address my concerns regarding evidence of housing need cover a period beyond 2026 then I would ask that you give serious consideration to extending the plan period.

Gypsies and travellers

11. The last assessment of the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers was carried out in 2006 and only addressed provision up to 2011. I was informed at the hearing that you sought to work with some of your neighbours to produce a new assessment in time to inform the Local Plan but, for reasons outside your control, that did not prove possible. I agree that rather than commission an independent assessment it would be better to pursue a joint approach and I

\(^8\) Paragraph 157
\(^9\) CD/Hsg002
understand that a new assessment has just been commissioned and that it should be completed by this summer of 2014.

12. It is proposed that, should a need be identified, you would then produce a Gypsy and Traveller Plan. This is not ideal and runs counter to the advice in the NPPF which discourages multiple plans. A suspension of the examination to allow you to produce additional housing evidence may provide an opportunity for any need identified through a gypsy and traveller needs assessment to be addressed through the Local Plan rather than a separate plan.

I would now ask you to give careful consideration to the above matters. The production of a new SHMA may take some time and I would appreciate an indication of how long you consider you will need to produce this information in order that we can plan ahead with regard to the length of any suspension and any further hearings that may be required. I will do all I can to help the Council in relation to the way forward, although you will appreciate the restricted nature of my role in this regard and that any advice given is without prejudice.

Yours faithfully

_A Thickett_

Inspector
This letter reflects my initial conclusions on the soundness issues I have identified at this stage in the examination process. I am writing to you now to enable you to consider the best way to address these issues. However, these comments are not intended to be comprehensive, and are made without prejudice to the content of my final report.

**Housing**

*Objectively Assessed Need for Housing*

The Framework requires local authorities to assess their full housing needs, including affordable housing. The Housing Duty to Cooperate Study for the Sussex Coast Housing Market Area, May 2013, identifies that an objective assessment of housing need would fall between 16,000 - 20,000 dwellings for the period to 2030. The study notes that the higher end of the range takes account of the shortfall of affordable housing in the City, and includes the provision of 210 dwellings per annum to contribute to reducing the affordable housing backlog.

At the hearings there was a reasonable degree of consensus that the range of 16,000 – 20,000(as set out in Main Modification MM26) was an accurate reflection of the full, objectively assessed need for housing, although some participants argued that the need could be higher, having regard to the significant need for affordable housing.

Bearing in mind the Framework’s requirements that local authorities should assess their **full** housing needs (my emphasis), including affordable housing, my view is that the Plan should indicate that the full objectively assessed need is the higher end of the range, i.e. 20,000 new dwellings.

**Duty to cooperate.**

I accept that the Council has sought to engage positively with neighbouring authorities in the region. My initial conclusion is that it has met the legal requirement under S.33A of the Act. Unfortunately, the cooperation with neighbouring Councils has not led to a positive outcome, in the sense that none has offered to assist Brighton and Hove by offering
to meet all or part of the objectively assessed needs that cannot be met in Brighton and Hove.

Housing supply.

The Plan proposes a target for the provision of new housing of 11,300. This represents only 56.5% of the full objectively assessed need. Even if the lower end of the range were to be used (which for the reasons given above, I do not accept is the correct approach), the target would meet only 70.6% of the need. These figures represent a significant shortfall and substantial weight must be given to the consequent failure to meet the social dimension of sustainable development.

I recognise that there are significant constraints to providing land for development, and that there are competing priorities for any land which may be available. However, given the significant shortfall in meeting housing needs, it is important that the Council rigorously assesses all opportunities to meet that need. It is my preliminary view that the following sources potentially offer an opportunity to increase the target for the provision of new housing.

Windfall sites.

The Council should investigate whether or not it would be appropriate to make an allowance for windfall sites, bearing in mind the requirements of paragraph 48 of the Framework.

Urban Fringe Sites.

These sites are not subject to nationally recognised designations, which would indicate that development may be restricted. Whilst it may be the Council’s aspiration to designate some of these sites as Local Green Space, this is not being pursued through Part 1 of the Local Plan and I have doubts as to whether some of these areas would meet the requirements of paragraph 77 of the Framework. In my letter of 22 July 2013, I commented that the analysis of the urban fringe sites "identifies perceived constraints, but includes no analysis of whether such constraints could be satisfactorily overcome, and what the residual adverse impacts of developing some of the less constrained sites would be". The revised version of TP002a published in September 2013 includes additional commentary on constraints, but does not provide the further analysis that I referred to in my letter. Having now seen some of the sites and had the opportunity to examine more closely the underlying evidence on which this analysis is based, I am not persuaded that the protection from development implied by Policy SA4 is justified in relation to all urban fringe sites. In coming to this conclusion, I have taken account of paragraphs 73 and 74 of the Framework. However, your own analysis concludes that some of these sites do not make a significant contribution to the provision of useable open space, and have limited potential to do so in the future. No consideration appears to have been given to the possibility of allowing development on these sites, which would enable the provision of good quality public open space, as part of a package of
development. Similarly, no consideration appears to have been given to the extent to which other constraints, such as archaeological significance, should prevent development altogether, or whether adequate mitigation would be possible by, for example, careful consideration of design and layout and the imposition of conditions. The site at Toads Hole Valley, which is proposed for development, suffers from some of the same constraints that are said to affect other sites, including its proximity to the National Park. However, the more positive approach taken towards development on this site contrasts with the negative approach taken to other sites. The overall impression given is that the starting point for analysis of these sites has been the desire to resist development, which is at odds with the Framework’s requirement that the plan should be positively prepared. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) makes general observations that the higher housing targets tested would result in significant losses of employment land and open space, but without a more detailed analysis of the sites concerned, I do not consider that great weight can be placed on the conclusions of the SA.

Main modifications MM21 and MM27 indicate that a review of the built up area boundary will be undertaken in Part 2 of the City Plan. However, Document TP/002a seems to pre-judge that exercise by concluding whether or not the sites have any development potential and if so, how many new dwellings may be provided. The expected yield of new dwellings from this analysis is about 100. In view of the significant shortfall in meeting objectively-assessed needs I consider the Council should undertake a more rigorous analysis of the urban fringe sites, along the lines I have already suggested, to determine whether there is greater potential for the delivery of new housing from this source.

Land currently in employment use.

I recognise that the Plan aims to make appropriate provision for land for employment uses to support the local economy. However, doubts have been raised about the ability of some sites to support the kind of employment and/or mixed-use development envisaged in policy CP3. Bearing in mind the shortfall in land to meet new housing needs, I consider the Council should rigorously reassess whether this policy should be modified to allow for the loss of employment land to housing, where an employment or mixed-use development is not viable. The requirement of the Policy that there should be no net loss in employment floor space may inhibit redevelopment for mixed uses, particularly on sites where viability is marginal.

Five-year land supply

I note that the Council achieved a good rate of housing delivery from the mid 1990s through to 2007. The lower rate of delivery in recent years is related to poor market conditions. In the circumstances, I consider there is not a record of persistent under delivery and therefore the appropriate buffer, in accordance with the Framework, is 5%. The most common method of calculating a five-year land supply is to use the annualised housing requirement derived from the overall target. I note the Council’s
approach is to base its calculations on the housing trajectory, which has the effect of reducing the five-year land supply requirements in the early years of the Plan. The Framework is not prescriptive about the method that should be used to determine the five-year supply of land for housing. However, a method of calculation that suppresses housing land supply in the early years of the plan period does not, in my view, accord with the Framework's general intent to boost significantly the supply of new housing. Such an approach could be justified if essential infrastructure requirements are likely to constrain the delivery of new development, but I am not persuaded that the impact of the economic recession is a valid reason for taking this approach. Once you have addressed the issues relating to the overall target for new homes, you will need to demonstrate that a five year supply of housing land based on an annualised dwelling requirement plus 5% will be available at the time the Plan is adopted.

Overall conclusions on housing

The City Plan Part 1 falls well short of meeting the objectively assessed need for new housing, and although I note the Council's continuing commitment to engage with neighbouring authorities, there is no evidence before me to show that any of the unmet need will be met elsewhere. For the reasons given above I am not persuaded that the City Plan Part 1 meets the requirements of paragraph 14 of the Framework which requires local planning authorities to meet objectively assessed needs, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. I recognise the constraints faced by the Council but if I am to find the Plan sound, notwithstanding such a significant shortfall in the provision of new housing, I would need to be satisfied that the Council had left no stone unturned in seeking to meet as much of this need as possible. Furthermore, depending on the scale of unmet need it may be necessary to reduce the plan period in order that the City Plan can be found sound.

Brighton Marina

I have considered the representations made both orally and in writing regarding the Brighton Marina Act. However, it is not part of my examination to consider whether any planning permissions granted by the Council are lawful. There is no evidence before me that extant planning permissions are being challenged through the Courts, and I have seen nothing to persuade me that these permissions cannot be implemented. Bearing in mind the failure to meet objectively assessed housing needs, and the limited opportunities available to meet that need, it is important that the Marina makes as significant a contribution to the provision of new housing as is reasonably possible. At the hearings there was discussion about the criterion in Policy DA2, which requires development not to breach the cliff height, and there is evidence that this restriction threatens the viability of development at the Marina, and would reduce the amount of housing that could be provided. My attention was drawn to an appeal decision relating to a scheme, which would have breached the cliff height.
The appeal was dismissed because of the inadequacy of the accompanying legal agreement. However, neither the Inspector nor the Secretary of State concluded that the breach of the cliff height was a reason to refuse the scheme. Those conclusions were, of course, specific to that scheme and at the examination hearings the Council expressed the opinion that it was the particular qualities of that scheme that had led to those conclusions. Policy DA2 requires a high quality of building design and includes various safeguards for important environmental assets. There is a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Kemp Town Conservation Area. In all the circumstances I consider that the Policy should be modified to remove the cliff height restriction to enable a viable scheme to come forward, which can make a significant contribution to meeting housing needs.

*Brighton Marina Shopping Centre.*

The Council’s own evidence does not support the designation of Brighton Marina as a District Centre. That aspect of Policy CP4 is not justified and the Policy should be modified accordingly. The Council’s aspiration to improve the shopping centre is included in Policy DA2 and if this is successful, it may be appropriate to designate it as a District Centre when a review of the Plan is undertaken.

**Viability**

The Council’s Combined Policy Viability Study, which was unfortunately finalised after the plan was submitted for examination, finds that the combined requirements of the Plan raise serious doubts about the viability of development across the Plan area. The Council seeks to rely on the flexibility clauses in the policies, which it says will enable development to go ahead. It is useful to build in such flexibility to allow for site specific issues to be taken into consideration, but this is not an acceptable substitute for ensuring that the plan facilitates development throughout the economic cycle, as required by the Framework (paragraph 174). I am therefore inviting you to draft modifications to the Plan to ensure that the requirements of the Framework are met in relation to this issue and in accordance with the evidence now available. In particular, you may wish to consider whether the requirements of Policy CP8 can be justified in this context, particularly bearing in mind forthcoming changes to the Building Regulations. Furthermore, the characteristics of the housing stock in Brighton are not dissimilar to those in many established urban areas and I am not convinced that this justifies a local requirement, which is more onerous than the national standards provided by the Building Regulations.

I look forward to receiving your response but it may be of assistance for you to know that I will be working on the Rother Local Plan Examination throughout January 2014.

*Laura Graham*
*Inspector*