

## 5 Social and community effects

### Introduction

- 5.1 Socio-economic impacts result from the interaction of the characteristics of a project or development and the characteristics of the 'host' community, for instance the existing population, facilities and services. The effect of a development on the local community is an important part of an EIA. The associated issues are examined in detail in this chapter, which reviews the 2006 ES, provides updated baseline data and examines the effects of the proposed additional 100 units, both alone and cumulatively with the consented development assessed in the 2006 ES and with a further 46 dwellings consented in July 2011.
- 5.2 Terence O'Rourke Ltd has undertaken the social and community effects assessment. The sources of information used in the preparation of this chapter are listed in table 5.1.

Cherwell District Council website: <a href="http://www.cherwell.gov.uk">www.cherwell.gov.uk</a>
Cherwell District Council, 2012, Cherwell Housing Strategy 2012-2017
Cherwell District Council, 2012, The Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft
Indices of multiple deprivation website: <a href="http://www.imd.communities.gov.uk">www.imd.communities.gov.uk</a>
Neighbourhood Statistics website: <a href="http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk">www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk</a>
NHS website: <a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
NOMIS website: <a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk">www.nomisweb.co.uk</a>
Office for National Statistics website: <a href="http://www.ons.gov.uk">www.ons.gov.uk</a>
Oxfordshire County Council website: <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Oxfordshire County Council, 2008, Oxfordshire Population to 2026
Oxfordshire County Council, 2011, Pupil Place Plan 2011-2017
Oxfordshire Economic Partnership, 2006, Economic Development Strategy Oxfordshire 2006-2016
Oxfordshire Observatory website: <a href="http://www.oxfordshireobservatory.info">www.oxfordshireobservatory.info</a>
Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust website: <a href="http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk">www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk</a>
South West Bicester Amended Environmental Statement, October 2006

**Table 5.1: References and data sources**

### Legislation and policy

#### *National policy*

- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2012) sets out a number of relevant policy statements. These include:
- Paragraphs 6-10 (achieving sustainable development), including the need for a strong economy and vibrant communities

- Paragraphs 18-22 (building a strong, competitive economy), including planning proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Paragraphs 47-55 (delivering a wide choice of high quality homes), including significantly boosting the supply of housing, delivering a wide choice of high quality homes and creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities
- Paragraphs 69-78 (promoting healthy communities), including delivering the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs and ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities

### ***Local policy***

5.4 Current local policy guidance is provided by saved policies from the Cherwell Local Plan, which was adopted in 1996, and a non-statutory Local Plan, which was approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes in 2011. These documents set out planning controls to limit the potential for adverse community, social and economic effects from new developments. The relevant policies are:

- 1996 policy H5 / 2011 policy H7: where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, the district council will negotiate with developers to secure an element of affordable housing in substantial new residential developments
- 2011 policy H4: the district council will seek a variety of dwellings in terms of their size, type and affordability in order to meet the housing requirements of the whole community. Large areas of housing of similar characteristics will not be acceptable
- 1996 policy R12 / 2011 policy R8: the district council will normally require in connection with all housing developments the minimum provision of 2.43 ha of public open space per 1,000 population
- 2011 policy R9: the district council will seek in connection with all new residential development of 10 or more dwellings the provision of new amenity areas
- 2011 policy R10a: where new development will increase the need for provision of built sport and recreation facilities, the council will seek increased provision or enhancement of existing facilities through the use of planning obligations

## **Methodology**

### ***Baseline conditions***

- 5.5 To examine the effects of the proposed development on the existing community and social baseline, the 2006 ES considered the following issues:
- Demography – existing and future trends
  - Housing – existing supply and demand
  - Economic – existing and future trends of employment and the economic environment
  - Socio-cultural factors
  - Community facilities – including education, health services, social services, retail outlets, local amenities, recreation and leisure and other services
- 5.6 A review of the 2006 baseline has been undertaken and updated information obtained through a desk study. The updated information set out below replicates the scope of the information provided in the 2006 ES as far as possible. The references and data sources used are set out in table 5.1.

### ***Future baseline conditions***

- 5.7 In the absence of the development, there will be changes to the baseline environment. A future baseline section has been included in this chapter to address the potential trends associated with the demographic, housing and economic environment.

### ***Assessment of potential effects***

- 5.8 The 2006 ES examined the following scenarios:
- Activities associated with the construction of up to 1,585 dwellings and associated development from 2007 to 2014
  - The occupation of the proposed development
- 5.9 In addition, Strutt and Parker assessed the agricultural viability of the revised Whitelands Farm landholding in November 2005. Consideration was given to the proposed reduction of the landholding associated with the development and the potential impact on the farm business.
- 5.10 This assessment reviews the findings of the 2006 ES and examines how the addition of a further 100 proposed dwellings may affect the results. It considers the potential effect of the 100 dwellings alone and the potential cumulative effect of the 100 dwellings in addition to the 1,631 consented dwellings.

### *Assessment of significance*

- 5.11 The significance of potential effects has been determined using criteria developed from best practice techniques and expert knowledge. Significance has been derived from measures of the sensitivity of the receptor affected and the magnitude / scale of the change, as shown in figures 5.1 and 5.2 respectively.
- 5.12 There are no known published ‘standard’ criteria for determining the significance of effects on social and community interests. In determining whether an effect on a receptor is significant, reference has been made to a wide range of criteria relating to the sensitivity of the area of interest and the magnitude of change. Feeding the two sets of criteria into the potential significance matrix generates standard definitions of potential effects. The significance matrix and the definition of potential effects are set out in figure 5.3.

### **Baseline**

#### *Study area*

- 5.13 The site is located immediately to the south of the residential area of Bicester, adjacent to Middleton Stoney Road and the A41 Oxford Road. There are three main urban centres in Cherwell district (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) and over 60 villages. Bicester is the second largest town after Banbury, and these urban centres provide for many of the service needs of the communities located in the district.
- 5.14 Construction of the consented development has commenced and approximately 60 dwellings are occupied to date. However, this will change over time and the majority of the consented dwellings are yet to be constructed. It is therefore considered that the consented development has not yet significantly altered the social and community baseline. Therefore, for the purposes of this assessment, and in order to ensure that the assessment considers a robust and realistic scenario, it has been assumed that none of the consented dwellings are occupied.

### *Demography*

#### *Population size and trends*

- 5.15 In Cherwell district, the population grew by 8% between the 2001 and 2011 Census. The total population in 2011 in Cherwell was 141,900, of which 70,100 (49%) were male and 71,800 (51%) were female. Of the people living in Cherwell district, 35,100 (25%) are under 20 years old, 85,100 (60%) are aged between 20 and 64, and 21,700 (15%) are aged 65 or above.
- 5.16 At a smaller scale, there were an estimated 29,829 people in the five wards that comprise the town of Bicester (Bicester East, Bicester North, Bicester South, Bicester Town and Bicester West) in 2011. The site lies in the adjacent

Ambrosden and Chesterton ward, which had an estimated population of 3,370 in 2011.

### ***Housing***

#### *Existing stock and demand*

- 5.17 In Cherwell, there were 58,617 households in 2011/2012, which was an increase of 10% since 2001. The average household size in Cherwell is estimated to have decreased from 2.4 in 2001 to 2.3 in 2011 (Oxfordshire County Council, 2008). The Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft (2012) identifies a target for 670 new dwellings per year in the district to 2031.

#### *Affordable housing*

- 5.18 The Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft (2012), considered by the council's Executive Committee on 28 May 2012, estimates local affordable housing needs at 831 affordable homes per year. Approximately 186 households of this total are estimated to require social rented housing, with the remainder either requiring affordable rent or an intermediate solution. These estimates are additional need on top of the average existing supply of 102 dwellings per year.

### ***Economy***

- 5.19 The NOMIS website provides information on the economic activity levels of all people within Cherwell district aged between 16 and 64. The proportion of those people who are economically active is 82%, which includes those people who are employed either full time or part time, self employed or unemployed. The remainder of people aged between 16 and 64 (18%) are economically inactive as students, retired, looking after family or the home, or sick.
- 5.20 Table 5.2 shows the occupational group of all people aged between 16 and 64 in employment. The largest group is professional occupations (18.8%), followed by skilled trades occupations (14.8%) and associated professional and technical occupations (12.6%).

<b>Occupational group</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Managers and senior officials	7,200	10.0%
Professional occupations	13,500	18.8%
Associated professional and technical occupations	9,100	12.6%
Administrative and secretarial occupations	6,600	9.2%
Skilled trades occupations	10,700	14.8%
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	6,400	8.9%
Sales and customer service occupations	7,300	10.1%
Process, plant and machine operatives	No data	No data
Elementary occupations	8,800	12.2%

**Table 5.2: The occupational group of all people aged between 16 and 64 in employment (NOMIS, 2012)**

*Unemployment*

- 5.21 The level of unemployment in Cherwell from April 2011 to March 2012 is calculated as 4.8% of all people aged between 16 and 64. The average for Great Britain over the same period was 8.1% (NOMIS, 2012).

***Socio-cultural indicators***

*Crime*

- 5.22 Table 5.3 shows the breakdown of statistics for a range of categories of crimes between April 2010 and March 2011. The highest number of offences occurred in the ‘violence against the person’ category, followed by criminal damage.
- 5.23 The offences per 1,000 population for Cherwell district were generally below the average for England as a whole, except in the cases of harassment and common assault. Overall, the recorded level of crime per 1,000 people in Cherwell district is below the average for England.

Offence	Total number of offences in Cherwell	Offences per 1,000 population	
		Cherwell	England
Violence against the person	2,063	14.5	14.7
Wounding or other act endangering life	23	0.2	0.4
Other wounding	689	4.9	6.3
Harassment, including penalty notices for disorder	627	4.4	3.3
Common assault	571	4.0	3.8
Robbery	53	0.4	1.4
Theft from the person	134	0.9	1.6
Criminal damage, including arson	1,495	10.5	12.5
Burglary in a dwelling	256	1.8	4.8
Burglary other than a dwelling	494	3.5	4.8
Theft of a motor vehicle	113	0.8	1.9
Theft from a motor vehicle	383	2.7	5.7

**Table 5.3: Crime statistics for Cherwell district (April 2010 to March 2011; Office for National Statistics, 2012)**

*Quality of life*

- 5.24 According to the indices of multiple deprivation survey of 2010, Oxfordshire has relatively low levels of deprivation, coming 135<sup>th</sup> out of 149 counties (where first is the most deprived). In the local authority index of deprivation rankings, Cherwell is ranked 240<sup>th</sup> out of 326. The results for Oxfordshire are shown in table 5.4.

Local authority	Ranking
Cherwell	240
Oxford	111
South Oxfordshire	307
Vale of White Horse	306
West Oxfordshire	317

**Table 5.4: Index of multiple deprivation rankings for local authorities in Oxfordshire**

5.25 The lower super output areas (geographical areas smaller than wards) that make up Bicester are ranked between 12,122 and 32,204 out of 32,482 lower super output areas in the country, indicating that deprivation levels in the town are relatively low. The site falls within the lower super output area ranked at 23,045.

### ***Local amenities / services***

#### *Education services*

5.26 Bicester has nine primary schools, with a further five located in the surrounding villages. The primary schools are:

- Brookside Primary School
- Bure Park Primary School
- Glory Farm Primary School and Nursery
- King's Meadow School
- Chesterton CE Controlled Primary School
- Dr Radcliffe's Church of England School
- Five Acres Primary School
- Fringford CE Primary School
- Langford Village Community School
- Launton Church of England Primary School
- Southwold County Primary School
- St Edburg's Church of England (VA) School
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- Longfields Primary and Nursery School

5.27 There are two secondary schools in Bicester: Bicester Community College and The Cooper School, at which new secondary school provision opened in September 2011.

5.28 Oxfordshire County Council's Pupil Place Plan 2011 to 2017 (published December 2011) provides forecasts of surplus or insufficient capacity, which take into account housing developments that have planning permission. Table 5.5 shows that six of the 14 primary schools were at or over capacity in 2011. Seven of the primary schools are predicted to be at or over capacity in 2017, based on population projections and new housing developments that currently have planning permission. However, it should be noted that this includes the consented 1,585 dwellings at South West Bicester and that some of the forecasts are distorted by developments that will actually include a school (see

notes in table 5.5). Both secondary schools currently have spare capacity, although The Cooper School is predicted to be over capacity by 2017.

School	Surplus spaces			Notes
	2011	2012/13	2017/18	
Brookside Primary School	75	62	11	Increased to 1.5 form entry in 2008 ahead of major housing developments
Bure Park Primary School	-2	-29	-14	Forecast distorted by North West Bicester Eco-town
Glory Farm Primary School and Nursery	40	46	50	-
King's Meadow School	89	59	-25	Distorted by projected growth at South West Bicester
Chesterton CE Controlled Primary School	-4	-9	-4	-
Dr Radcliffe's Church of England School	7	-5	-53	Distorted by projected growth at Heyford Park, which will have a new school
Five Acres Primary School	-11	-25	-46	Affected by recent troop movements into the area
Fringford CE Primary School	-1	1	8	-
Langford Village Community School	-35	-50	-117	Distorted by projected growth at Gavray Drive, which will have a new school
Launton Church of England Primary School	-3	-7	26	-
Southwold County Primary School	82	72	37	-
St Edburg's Church of England (VA) School	46	43	23	Proposed to expand to two forms of entry and relocate to SW Bicester to be the catchment school for the first phase of development
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	55	52	48	-
Longfields Primary and Nursery School	28	3	-80	Distorted by projected growth at SW Bicester, which will have a new school
Bicester Community College	437	393	240	Forecasts not yet affected by development at SW Bicester
The Cooper School	171	23	-198	Affected by overall housing growth in the area

**Table 5.5: Local school forecasts of capacity**

### *Health services*

- 5.29 Key health services in Bicester include GP surgeries, dental surgeries, opticians, pharmacies and the community hospital.
- 5.30 The five GP surgeries in Bicester are Montgomery House Surgery, The Health Centre, Victoria House Surgery, Langford Medical Practice and North Bicester Surgery. All five surgeries are accepting new patients.
- 5.31 There are five dentists in Bicester town: Oxfordshire Priority Dental Clinic, Causeway Dental Practice, Market Square Dental Surgery, Greytown Dental



Practice and Bicester Dental Care. Only one of these dental practices is currently registering new NHS patients.

- 5.32 There are seven opticians in Bicester: Specsavers, Boots, Vision Express, Dr A.S.B. Brooks, Robert Stanley Opticians, B.J. Conway and Scrivens, and seven pharmacies: Boots, Lloyds (two), Superdrug, Co-op Pharmacy, Ahmeys Pharmacy and Jardine's Pharmacy.
- 5.33 The site is located in close proximity to the Bicester Community Hospital. The Oxfordshire National Health Service Primary Care Trust is proposing to modernise and enhance the services available for the people of Bicester, Kidlington and the surrounding area. The development will replace the current hospital and ensure that 12 intermediate or rehabilitation beds are available in Bicester. Construction is due to commence in January 2013, with services transferring to the new building in January 2014.

*Social services*

- 5.34 Cherwell District Council provides a range of services to meet the needs of children, older people and disabled people. Information is provided on the council's website for public access. Services are also available to help reduce crime and to address domestic violence. With regards to mental health, the council provides information on the services available through partnerships with the council, other agencies and voluntary organisations.

*Retail outlets*

- 5.35 There are two main retail areas in the town. Bicester town centre is focused around Sheep Street, and includes the Crown Walk Shopping Centre. The Bicester Village Outlet Shopping Area is located south of the town centre, immediately north of the A41.
- 5.36 Bicester town centre provides local services and amenities, including banks and building societies (including Lloyds, HSBC, Santander, Halifax and Nationwide), bakeries, grocery stores, butchers, estate agents, travel agents, pharmacies, hairdressers, card shops (Clinton Cards) and a post office. There is a small Tesco store, a Co-operative and a Marks and Spencer Simply Food. Other high street chains that have stores in the town centre include WHSmith, H. Samuel, Argos, New Look and Dorothy Perkins. There are also a number of pubs, restaurants and fast food establishments. There are limited clothing stores in the town centre and no department stores or any of the larger chain stores such as Next, River Island or Topshop.
- 5.37 Planning consent was granted in 2009 for an expansion of the town centre and construction work started in 2012. The redevelopment will include a Sainsbury's supermarket, 25 new non-food retail outlets, restaurants, a cinema, a civic centre and a library.
- 5.38 Bicester Village Outlet Shopping Area has around 130 retail stores and eight restaurants. It offers top quality merchandise from end of lines and previous seasons' stock. The shops include designer names such as Valentino, as well as high street names such as Coast and manufacturers such as Samsonite.

*Hotels*

5.39 There are three hotels in Bicester (the Kings Arms Hotel, The Littlebury and The Almond Tree Hotel) and a further five in the surrounding area (Bignell Park Hotel and Bicester Hotel, Golf and Spa in Chesterton, Jersey Arms Hotel in Middleton Stoney, Weston Manor Hotel in Weston-on-the-Green and Travelodge Bicester Cherwell Valley at the Moto Services area on the M40).

*Recreation*

5.40 A range of recreational and leisure facilities are available for residents in Cherwell district. This includes sport, nature conservation, countryside walks and rides and arts activities, as well as interests offered by the museum, tourist information centres and multimedia arts venue. As discussed above, the town centre redevelopment will include a cinema.

5.41 To support the leisure services provided by the council there are also three leisure centres in the Bicester area that are available to the public. These are the Bicester Leisure Centre, The Cooper School and the Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre. There is a current shortfall in formal sports provision in Bicester and scope for improving the town's recreational facilities in this respect.

***Future baseline***

*Population*

5.42 The Office for National Statistics' sub-national population projections provide information on predicted population trends (table 5.6). The population of Oxfordshire as a whole is predicted to increase by 60,800 people, or 9.4%, from 2011 to 2026. All the districts in the county are predicted to grow in population, with West Oxfordshire expected to experience the highest growth (14.2%) and Oxford City the lowest (5.8%).

Area	2011	2026	Growth	Change
Oxfordshire	648,300	709,100	+60,800	9.4%
Cherwell	141,800	157,600	+15,800	11.1%

**Table 5.6: Forecast population change, 2011 to 2026**

5.43 Ward level forecasts are only available to 2016. The total population of the five Bicester wards is predicted to increase by 1,850 (6.2%) between 2011 and 2016 (table 5.7). This is higher than the predicted change for the district as a whole over the same period. It should be noted that the consented development at South West Bicester is included in these population growth forecasts.

Area	2011	2016	Growth	Change
Cherwell	141,800	147,000	5,200	3.7%
Combined Bicester wards	29,830	31,680	1,850	6.2%

**Table 5.7: Forecast population change, 2011 to 2016**

- 5.44 The wards in Cherwell district that are predicted to undergo the greatest percentage increases in population from 2011 to 2016 are shown in table 5.8. It should be noted that much of the increase in Ambrosden and Chesterton is likely to be due to the consented South West Bicester development.

Ward	Population increase
Caversfield	+41%
Ambrosden and Chesterton	+34%
The Astons and Heyfords	+32%
Bicester Town	+27%

**Table 5.8: Cherwell district – wards with the highest percentage growth, 2011-2016**

- 5.45 The increase in population is predominantly in the older age groups (table 5.9), particularly those over 65.

Age	2011	2026	Total change	Percentage change
0-9 years	77,100	80,800	3,700	4.8%
10-14 years	37,300	39,800	2,500	6.7%
15-24 years	90,100	92,600	2,500	2.8%
25-44 years	182,100	179,000	-3,100	-1.7%
45-64 years	163,500	170,300	6,800	4.2%
65+ years	103,900	146,400	42,500	40.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>653,800</b>	<b>709,100</b>	<b>55,300</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

**Table 5.9: Oxfordshire population change by broad age band, 2011-2026**

### *Housing*

- 5.46 The Cherwell Housing Strategy (2012-2017) sets out the objectives and priorities of Cherwell District Council for housing delivery. Housing delivery is important in meeting housing needs and helping to maintain a buoyant economy. Key issues for consideration by the strategy are the housing supply to 2017 and the need for more affordable housing. The Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft seeks qualifying housing schemes to achieve the provision of 30% affordable dwellings.

- 5.47 The strategy sets out strategic priorities to be addressed, including:

- Increase the supply and access to housing
- Develop financially inclusive, sustainable communities
- House the most vulnerable residents
- Ensure homes are safe, warm and well managed
- Prevent homelessness
- Maximise resources and be an investment-ready district

### *Economy*

- 5.48 The Economic Development Strategy Oxfordshire 2006-2016 sets out the strategy for economic development in the county. The strategy deals with four main issues: the international environment, the business environment, skills development and infrastructure. In addition, Cherwell District Council has set up an economic development unit for north Oxfordshire to provide information and local term assistance to business. By establishing and

sustaining a healthy local economy in association with local partners, the unit has helped to create employment and wealth in the district. Economic development is undertaken on the basis of a strategy involving key business groups and there has been a large growth of business activity in the area. Much of this is due to the council's determination to work with the business community to expand and encourage sustainable business growth.

- 5.49 The unit operates through the Cherwell-M40 investment partnership, which is a public / private sector initiative that promotes a high quality image for Cherwell, attracting investment and enquiries from companies all over the world. In addition, to encourage enterprise, the economic development unit sponsors the local enterprise agency, Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, and works with a range of agencies to help create a more diverse and successful local economy.

#### *Future developments*

- 5.50 Cherwell District Council has appointed consultants to prepare a master plan for Bicester to look at the town and its future needs over the next 20 years. It will:

- Provide a clear spatial vision for the town
- Set a framework for the development and integration of new developments with the rest of the town
- Ensure opportunities are taken and any growth for securing a stronger economy and a larger community is properly planned for and integrated with the existing town
- Look at areas such as transport, retail, green infrastructure and education needs and aspirations over the next 20 years
- Help ensure that the eco-town development is fully integrated into the existing town, as well as establishing a new green edge to the town, setting a limit to growth

#### *Assessment of sensitivity*

- 5.51 With reference to figure 5.1, it is considered that, in general, the existing community and social environment in Bicester is of low to negligible sensitivity. There is relatively low unemployment in the area and a low crime rate. There is a range of local shops, accommodation and services and these can accommodate an increase in demand.
- 5.52 There are a few areas of the community and social environment where sensitivity is slightly greater, including housing, recreation and provision of dental services. There is demand in the local area for additional market and affordable housing. The local area is therefore considered to be of medium sensitivity. There is a shortfall of formal sports provision in Bicester and the town is considered to be of medium sensitivity in this respect. There are restrictions on the registration of patients at dental surgeries in Bicester and this health service is considered to be of medium sensitivity.

## **Potential effects**

### ***During construction***

- 5.53 The 2006 ES assumed that construction of the consented development would run from 2007 to 2014. The revised target for completion of the development is 2019. Development of the consented scheme will occur in phases, with different areas and facilities being developed at different times. The 46 dwellings consented in July 2011 will be constructed on the 2006 reserve school site. The additional 100 dwellings will be dispersed across the site, rather than being located in one single area.
- 5.54 The 2006 ES assumed that approximately 270 workers would be employed across the site on the various elements of the development, with approximately 200 of these working on the residential element. The construction of the 46 dwellings consented in July 2011 is likely to be incorporated within the 270 workers, as the second primary school will no longer be constructed. The construction of an additional 100 dwellings is unlikely to increase the number of workers constructing the residential element.
- 5.55 It is therefore considered that the construction of the 100 additional units alone would lead to a negligible increase in employment that would not be significant. The construction of the additional 100 units together with the consented development will lead to a medium to large increase in employment, which will be a temporary beneficial effect of moderate significance, as predicted in the 2006 ES.
- 5.56 As discussed in the 2006 ES, it is likely that the majority of the construction workers will be from the local area, for example Bicester or Oxford, although some specialists may be recruited from a wider area. These construction workers may require temporary accommodation in the town. However, Bicester is very accessible from surrounding towns by road and rail, so it is unlikely that many workers would need temporary accommodation. Therefore, the magnitude of change is predicted to be negligible for both the 100 additional units and the cumulative impact with the consented development. No significant effects are predicted on accommodation in Bicester.
- 5.57 Some existing residents will experience disturbance during construction that could affect quality of life. The nearest local residents are those living immediately north of Middleton Stoney Road. There may be some initial disturbance as the houses adjacent to Pingle Brook are developed. However, as construction work will generally take place in a north to south direction, the new homes will form a buffer and therefore significantly reduce the level of disturbance experienced by existing residents in the long term. Middleton Stoney Road will also act as a buffer, minimising disturbance. The 2006 ES therefore concluded that there would be no significant effects on the quality of life of local residents from disturbance. As discussed above, the additional 100 dwellings will be spread across the site, so the construction of these dwellings will be indistinguishable from the construction of the consented development, although the overall construction period may be slightly extended.

*Whitelands Farm*

- 5.58 As discussed in the 2006 ES, the consented development will lead to the loss of a large area of agricultural land that forms part of the Whitelands Farm holding. The farmhouse is now not used and farming operations (tenant farmer) are based on another farm complex. The farm will continue to operate, using the remainder of the farm holding's agricultural land to the west of the farm, south of the perimeter road and land to the north of the perimeter road. It was considered that, as the farm would continue to operate, the change to the business would be small and the effect on operations would be of slight significance. As the additional 100 dwellings will be spread across the site, there will be no additional loss of farmland as a result of these dwellings. The effect will remain of slight significance.

***Post-construction***

- 5.59 The 2006 ES assumed that the consented development of 1,585 dwellings would lead to an increase in population of 3,804 people, based on the average household size for Cherwell district in 2001 of 2.4 people. Using the same assumption<sup>(1)</sup>, the 46 dwellings consented in July 2011 will be occupied by 110 people and the additional 100 dwellings will be occupied by a further 240 people.

*Population*

- 5.60 The baseline studies showed that the population of Bicester in 2011 was 29,829. The additional 100 dwellings alone would increase the population of the town by 0.8%, while the cumulative increase arising from the consented development and the additional 100 dwellings will be 13.9%. This may result in a change to the population profile of the town or to the quality of life of existing residents.
- 5.61 As discussed in the 2006 ES, a wide mix of housing is proposed and this will encourage a cross section of the population profile to move into the area. This will also be the case for the additional 100 units, which will be spread across the site. It is unlikely that the population of the new residents will be significantly different from that of Bicester or the wider Cherwell district. Therefore, in terms of a potential change to the population profile, the magnitude of change is likely to be negligible for both the 100 additional dwellings alone and cumulatively with the consented development. No significant effects are predicted.

*Quality of life*

- 5.62 Consideration has also been given to the quality of life of the existing residents of Bicester, and whether the new housing and new residents have the potential to change the status quo. The 2006 ES concluded that the consented development would not significantly affect the levels of deprivation in Bicester. Given this, the additional 100 units are also not predicted to lead to

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<sup>1</sup> The current estimated average household size for Cherwell district is 2.3 people. However, as this is an estimate, while the figure of 2.4 people was drawn from the 2001 Census, and for consistency with the 2006 ES, this assessment has been based on a household size of 2.4 people.

significant effects on deprivation, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development.

- 5.63 However, there may be other changes to the quality of life of local residents, for example through an increase in the number of people using the town and its facilities. The additional demand for these facilities may cause annoyance, but alternatively it may lead to further services being provided as a result of the greater demand. The new residents will also help to support the redevelopment of Bicester town centre.
- 5.64 As set out in the 2006 ES, a wide range of issues were taken into account in drawing up the development proposals, including many that relate to the quality of life of existing and future residents. These design principles will help to ensure a high quality of life for new residents and will also ensure that the quality of life of existing residents will not be adversely affected. The 2006 ES concluded that some changes will be experienced by existing residents in the short term, but that it is likely that any negative effects will be offset by benefits arising from the services provided, and no significant effects were predicted. It is considered that this will also apply to the 100 additional dwellings, so no significant effects are predicted as a result of these dwellings, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development.

#### *Housing*

- 5.65 The development will provide a wide range of dwellings for the residents of Bicester and other people moving into the area. The housing mix will reflect need in the local area and will ensure that a broad cross-section of the population will benefit from the development. The 2006 ES concluded that the provision of 1,585 dwellings would be a beneficial change of medium magnitude and substantial significance. Given this conclusion, the provision of an additional 100 dwellings is considered to be a change of negligible magnitude that will not be significant. The cumulative change with the consented development (including the additional 46 dwellings consented in July 2011) will therefore remain of medium magnitude and substantial significance.
- 5.66 Thirty percent of the housing will be affordable. The 2006 ES concluded that this would be a change of medium magnitude and a beneficial effect of substantial significance. Given this conclusion, the provision of an additional 30 affordable dwellings (30% of 100) is considered to be a change of negligible magnitude that will not be significant. The cumulative change with the consented development (including the additional dwellings consented in July 2011) will therefore remain of medium magnitude and substantial significance.
- 5.67 The scale of the development may have an influence on house prices in the area, as the supply of housing will be increased. However, there is demand for this housing. The housing will be designed to a high standard and will be complemented by a range of consented facilities and services. As a result, the 2006 ES concluded that the consented development would be unlikely to significantly affect house prices in the area, and suggested that national and

regional trends and fluctuations in the economic market are likely to have a greater influence. Given this conclusion, the 100 additional dwellings are not predicted to lead to a significant effect on house prices, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development.

#### *Education*

- 5.68 There is currently spare capacity at eight of the primary schools in Bicester and the surrounding area and it is predicted that there will still be capacity at seven schools in 2017/18, based on population forecasts and permitted housing developments (including the consented development at South West Bicester). The 2006 ES identified that the 1,585 consented dwellings would be occupied by 476 children. Using the same assumption (0.3 children per dwelling), the 46 dwellings consented in July 2011 will be occupied by 14 children and the additional 100 dwellings will be occupied by a further 30 children.
- 5.69 The consented development includes a new two-form entry primary school and a new secondary school. It originally also included land for a second primary school, but Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council confirmed that this second primary school was no longer required when the outline application was considered and approved. The 2006 ES concluded that the consented schools will adequately serve the additional demand created by the consented residential units, and no significant adverse effects were predicted. Given that the councils confirmed that only one primary school was required for the consented development, and that the additional 100 units will only lead to an estimated additional 30 children of all ages, it is considered that the additional 100 dwellings will not significantly increase demand for existing school places, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development. However, it is envisaged that a financial contribution towards further school provision in the area will be required as part of any permission granted, to accommodate the additional pupil generation.
- 5.70 As set out in the 2006 ES, the new primary and secondary schools will benefit the wider population. The 2006 ES concluded that this would be a beneficial change of medium magnitude and moderate significance. Now that only one primary school will be built, it is considered that this is reduced to a small magnitude of change and an effect of slight significance. The additional 100 dwellings will not affect this conclusion.

#### *The local centre*

- 5.71 As discussed in the 2006 ES, the consented local centre will be located centrally within the development, so that most houses will be within 400 m walking distance, and will include retail units with dwellings and / or offices above, a community centre and the possible provision of a pub or a children's day nursery. The local centre will be linked to the areas of housing and recreation and leisure facilities by a network of footpaths, cycleways and internal roads. This network will ensure that all the facilities on site are easily accessible from all residential areas. The additional 100 dwellings will be spread across the site, so will also have easy access to the local centre.



- 5.72 The 2006 ES concluded that the local centre will not compete with the neighbourhood centres located north of Middleton Stoney Road. The new facilities will be accessible to the existing residents of Bicester and may improve quality of life in terms of ease of access and choice, although the facilities will primarily serve the new development. The additional 100 units will provide further custom for the consented local centre, so the effect will remain negligible and not significant.

*Recreational facilities and open space*

- 5.73 The consented proposals include 17.29 ha of formal sports provision, a clubhouse and changing facilities, children's play space and informal open space. The facilities will complement existing provision in the local area and will be available to all local residents.
- 5.74 The 2006 ES concluded that the recreation requirements of the 1,585 consented residential units would be served by 6 ha of the 17.29 ha. Based on this ratio, the 46 dwellings consented in July 2011 would require 0.2 ha of open space and the additional 100 units would require 0.4 ha. These additional requirements can be accommodated by the consented recreation space and will not significantly reduce remaining area (now 10.69 ha) available to make up for the shortfall of recreation space in the town. It is therefore considered that this additional provision will remain a medium magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of substantial significance, as set out in the 2006 ES.
- 5.75 The development will potentially increase demand for local recreation and leisure facilities in the area, such as the three local leisure centres. The 2006 ES highlighted that the consented development will provide a range of facilities that will potentially limit this increase in demand, and concluded that the increase would not be significant. The additional 100 dwellings will have access to the on site facilities, so no significant increase in demand is predicted to arise from these dwellings, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development.

*Hotel*

- 5.76 The consented development includes a new hotel that will add to the range of accommodation in and near to the town. Permission was recently granted for a new hotel and pub / restaurant on this site (application 12/00063/REM) and this is currently under construction. The 2006 ES concluded that this will be a benefit to potential visitors in terms of level and provision of choice, although the effect was predicted to be negligible and not significant. The additional 100 dwellings will not affect this assessment.

*Employment opportunities*

- 5.77 The 2006 ES predicted that permanent employment opportunities will be generated from the consented 2 ha of employment land and 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> employment area in the local centre, schools, retail units, pub, hotel, nursing home and health development. The effect was predicted to be of medium magnitude and moderate significance. The additional 100 dwellings will not create any further permanent employment and so will not affect this assessment.

### *Health*

- 5.78 The 2006 ES identified that the increase in population associated with the consented development would create more demand for local health services such as GP surgeries, hospitals etc. The consented development includes provision for a nursing home and land reserved for a health village. The format of the health village has not yet been determined. It could include a branch GP surgery and a medical centre. Although it is unlikely to include a Primary Care Trust community hospital, as the existing hospital in Bicester is being redeveloped on its current site, it may well still provide for other hospital or healthcare facilities. As a result, if required, the health village can be designed to ensure there will be no significant effects on existing healthcare services in Bicester as a result of the consented development or the additional 100 units.
- 5.79 The 2006 ES concluded that the provision of a nursing home and health village would be a beneficial effect of the consented development of slight to moderate significance. The additional 100 units will not change this conclusion.
- 5.80 There are restrictions at several of the existing dentists in Bicester on registering NHS patients, as there were at the time of the 2006 ES, which concluded that the consented development would lead to an adverse effect of small magnitude and moderate significance. Given this conclusion, the addition of a further 100 dwellings alone is considered to be a change of negligible magnitude that will not be significant. The cumulative change with the consented development (including the additional dwellings consented in July 2011) will therefore remain of small magnitude and moderate significance.
- 5.81 The proposals will increase the population of Bicester, which will potentially impact on local ambulance and fire services in Cherwell district and Oxfordshire. The 2006 ES noted that there would be an increase in revenue for local services associated with the additional council tax from the new development, which would allow funding issues to be addressed and ensure there would be no significant effects as a result of increased demand. It is considered that the same principle applies to the additional 100 dwellings, so no significant effects are predicted on the emergency services.

### *Safety*

- 5.82 The safety of new residents was considered through the design of the consented master plan. As a safety precaution, the new housing will overlook the areas of open space, footpaths and cycleways where possible. The 2006 ES stated that consideration will be given to installing CCTV around the local centre if necessary. It concluded that these measures will help to prevent crime and minimise the potential demand on the services of the local constabulary. No significant effects were predicted with regards to health and safety. As the additional 100 dwellings will be distributed across the site, no additional health and safety risks are predicted.

*Library services*

- 5.83 The increase in population associated with the consented development and the additional 100 dwellings will potentially increase demand for local facilities, such as libraries. There is currently a library in Old Place Yard, near St Edburg's Church, and the consented town centre redevelopment includes a new public library for the town, which will enhance local facilities. The 2006 ES concluded that the increase in demand for library facilities would be negligible. Given this conclusion, the 100 additional dwellings alone are not predicted to lead to a significant increase in demand for library services. As a new library is to be provided in the town centre, it is considered that the cumulative effect of the consented development and the 100 additional dwellings on demand for library services will be negligible and not significant.

*Indirect effect on the economy*

- 5.84 The increase in population associated with the new housing will have an indirect effect on the local economy. It is likely that there will be an increase in spending in Bicester as a result of the new residents. The consented local centre will provide some retail facilities on site, but will be deliberately sized so as not to compete with the shops and services already in the town centre. As a result, it is possible that new shops, services and facilities will move into the general area due to an increase in demand.
- 5.85 It is considered that the construction of the 100 additional units alone would lead to a negligible increase in spending in Bicester that would not be significant. The construction of the additional 100 units together with the consented development will lead to a medium increase in spending, which will be a beneficial effect of moderate significance, as predicted in the 2006 ES.

*Period of overlap*

- 5.86 There will be a period when some of the housing will be finished and occupied, but some of the consented facilities (e.g. the buildings in the local centre) may still be under construction. During this period, there may be some additional pressure on existing services in the town. The 2006 ES highlighted that this would be a short term effect, as only a small number of residents would have moved into the housing, and concluded the effect would not be significant. As the additional 100 dwellings will be spread across the site, the construction of these dwellings will be indistinguishable from the construction of the consented development.

**Mitigation**

- 5.87 The 2006 ES identified one mitigation requirement, which related to effects on demand for dental services. It stated that if there are still capacity issues at the detailed, reserved matters stage, there is scope for a dental surgery to be included in the consented local centre as mitigation, ensuring that no significant effects will result.

5.88 As no other significant adverse effects are predicted as a result of the proposed additional 100 dwellings, either alone or cumulatively with the consented development, no additional mitigation is required.

### Residual effects

5.89 There would be no significant residual effects as a result of the construction of the 100 additional dwellings alone.

5.90 The significant residual cumulative effects with the consented development are set out in table 5.10. It should be noted that these are the same as the residual effects identified in the 2006 ES (with the exception of the provision of education facilities, as discussed in paragraph 5.69). The 100 additional dwellings will not change the findings of the 2006 ES and the significant residual cumulative effects all arise as a result of the consented development.

Topic	Residual effects	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Duration	Nature	Significance	Level of certainty
Social and community effects	Increase in employment during construction	Low	Medium to large	Short term	Beneficial	Moderate	Reasonable
	Change to the operational area of Whitelands Farm	Low	Small	Long term	Adverse	Slight	Reasonable
	Increase in market housing	Medium	Medium	Long term	Beneficial	Substantial	Absolute
	Increase in affordable housing	Medium	Medium	Long term	Beneficial	Substantial	Absolute
	Provision of education facilities	Low	Small	Long term	Beneficial	Slight	Absolute
	Provision of a nursing home and health village	Low	Small to medium	Long term	Beneficial	Slight to moderate	Reasonable
	Increase in formal sports provision	Medium	Medium	Long term	Beneficial	Substantial	Absolute
	Increase in employment post-construction	Low	Medium	Long term	Beneficial	Moderate	Reasonable
	Increase in spending in the local economy	Low	Medium	Long term	Beneficial	Moderate	Reasonable

**Table 5.10: Social and community residual cumulative effects**

### Cumulative effects

5.91 This section examines the potential for cumulative effects with the mixed use developments at North West Bicester and Graven Hill (see chapter 1 for details).

#### *During construction*

5.92 The construction periods of the three developments are likely to overlap, giving the potential for a temporary cumulative increase in construction employment. Given that South West Bicester is predicted to have a medium to

large increase on its own, and given the scale of the other two developments, the cumulative increase in employment during construction is predicted to be a large magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of moderate significance. The good accessibility of Bicester by rail and road means that it is unlikely that many of the workers will need temporary accommodation. No significant cumulative effects are therefore predicted on accommodation in Bicester.

- 5.93 As the three projects are in different parts of the town, it is considered that there is no potential for a significant cumulative effect on the amenity of local residents or on the Whitelands Farm landholding.

### ***Post-construction***

- 5.94 Based on an average household size of 2.4 people, the three developments will lead to an estimated cumulative increase in the population of Bicester of 9,658 (32.4%). As at South West Bicester, the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments are likely to provide a wide range of dwellings that will encourage a cross section of the population profile to move into the area. It is therefore considered unlikely that the population of the new residents will be significantly different from that of Bicester or the wider Cherwell district and no significant cumulative effects are predicted to the area's population profile.
- 5.95 There is the potential for a cumulative effect on the quality of life of existing residents through an increase in the number of people using the town and its facilities. However, it is likely that the potential for effects on the quality of life of existing and future residents was taken into account in the master planning of the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments in a similar way as at South West Bicester. The North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments will include a range of facilities and no significant cumulative effects on quality of life are predicted.
- 5.96 The three developments will lead to a cumulative increase in housing provision in the town of 4,024 dwellings. As at South West Bicester, the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments are likely to provide a wide range of dwellings that will ensure a broad cross-section of the population will benefit from the developments. Given that South West Bicester on its own is predicted to lead to a medium increase in housing on its own, the cumulative increase in housing provision post-construction is predicted to be a large magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of substantial significance.
- 5.97 Up to 30% of the dwellings on each of the three developments will be affordable housing. Given that South West Bicester is predicted to lead to a medium increase in affordable housing on its own, the cumulative increase in affordable housing provision post-construction is predicted to be a large magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of substantial significance.
- 5.98 There is the potential for a cumulative effect on house prices in the area, as the supply of housing will be increased. However, there is demand for the housing and it will be complemented by a range of facilities and services at all of the

three developments. Therefore, as for South West Bicester alone, it is considered that national and regional trends and fluctuations in the economic market are likely to exert a greater influence on house prices. No significant cumulative effects are predicted.

- 5.99 All three developments will include a new primary school to cater for the increased demand for primary school places associated with the increased population. No significant adverse cumulative effects are predicted on demand for primary school places. While the consented South West Bicester development includes a secondary school, the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments do not include secondary schools. There will therefore be an increase in demand for secondary school places associated with those developments. However, as South West Bicester will not contribute to this increase, there is no potential for cumulative effects with South West Bicester.
- 5.100 All three developments will include local centre facilities that are designed to serve the new development without competing with existing retail facilities. Therefore, no significant adverse cumulative effects are predicted on existing retail facilities.
- 5.101 As at South West Bicester, the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments will include public open space to meet the recreation requirements of the new residents. There is also the potential for some of this space to contribute to a cumulative reduction in the shortfall of recreation space in the town. Overall, this is considered to be a medium magnitude of change and a beneficial cumulative effect of substantial significance.
- 5.102 There is the potential for a cumulative increase in demand for other local recreation and leisure facilities in the area. However, as at South West Bicester, the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments will provide a range of community facilities that will potentially limit this increase in demand. Overall, therefore, no significant adverse cumulative effects are predicted on recreation facilities in the town.
- 5.103 The Graven Hill development includes a hotel. Together with the hotel consented at South West Bicester, this will add to the range of accommodation in the town and benefit potential visitors. Overall, this cumulative effect is predicted to be negligible and not significant.
- 5.104 Both the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments include employment floorspace. Given that South West Bicester is predicted to lead to a medium increase in employment on its own, and given the scale of the other two developments, the cumulative increase in employment post-construction is predicted to be a large magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of moderate significance.
- 5.105 There is the potential for the increase in population associated with the three developments to lead to a corresponding increase in demand for healthcare facilities. However, the consented South West Bicester development includes

land reserved for a health village and the potential for a dentist to be included in the local centre if interest is shown by a provider. The North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments do not specifically include healthcare provision and those developments are likely to lead to an increase in demand for healthcare facilities. However, as South West Bicester will not contribute to this increase, there is no potential for cumulative effects with South West Bicester. As all three developments will generate increased council tax revenue, it is considered that this will offset the potential for any significant cumulative increases in demand for local ambulance and fire services.

- 5.106 It is likely that the safety of new residents has been considered during the master planning of the North West Bicester and Graven Hill developments in a similar way as at South West Bicester. Therefore, no significant cumulative effects are predicted on crime rates or health and safety.
- 5.107 There is the potential for a cumulative increase in demand for facilities such as libraries. However, it is considered that any increase is likely to be catered for by the improved facilities that will be provided as part of the consented town centre redevelopment. Therefore, no significant adverse cumulative effects are predicted.
- 5.108 The cumulative increase in population associated with the three developments is likely to have an indirect effect on the local economy through increased spending in the town. Given that South West Bicester is predicted to lead to a medium increase in spending on its own, the cumulative indirect economic effect is predicted to be a large magnitude of change and a beneficial effect of moderate significance.
- 5.109 It should be noted that the North West Bicester development referred to here (exemplar scheme) is only a small part of a proposed large scale development that may provide 5,000 dwellings and 5,000 jobs (published target). It is very likely that a development of this scale, should it be approved, will have to provide for, or contribute towards the provision of, a large range of social and community infrastructure to mitigate against its wider impacts.