

**North Hinksey Parish  
Neighbourhood Plan 2031:**

**Supplementary Document on  
Provision of Leisure Facilities.**

**January 2018**

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## **1. Introduction:**

1.1. It is important to start by identifying exactly what is meant by 'Leisure' in this context. Whilst leisure activities can include a wide range of possibilities from walking and cycling, to watching a film at a cinema, or joining a bridge club, none of these types of activity are under consideration here. Within a planning context this document refers primarily to land use allocated for sports and recreational activities which has facilities built on it to allow those activities to take place. Further clarification appears in section 2 of this document, which details specific identified issues and objectives relevant to leisure, and also highlights potential overlap with other areas of the Neighbourhood Plan such as Green Space & Natural Environment.

1.2. Leisure facilities are impacted on currently by a wide range of legislative documents including the Local Plan 2031 part 1, some saved policies from the Local Plan 2011 and several other documents relating to leisure strategy and infrastructure strategy. Several of these documents will be superseded by elements of the Local Plan 2031 part 2, which is likely to be adopted shortly. Details of current relevant legislation appears in section 3 of this document.

1.3. Provision of leisure facilities within North Hinksey Parish is primarily the responsibility of the Vale of White Horse District Council (VOWHDC) in combination with North Hinksey Parish Council, however in reality a large proportion of current facilities for parishioners are provided by a combination of commercial organisations and educational establishments hiring out their facilities to the general public. It should be noted that leisure facilities provided by schools solely for use by their pupils (e.g. the playing fields at the two primary schools) are not being considered in this report which only deals with leisure facilities available for use by the general public.

1.4. The strategic importance of facilities at Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus (also known as Brookes Sport Botley) in terms of variety and quantity should not be underestimated. Details of current provision can be found in section 4 of this document, with additional information about usage of the Brookes facilities in section 5, and other strategically important sites are also identified in section 6. Provision shortfalls based on current facilities and population levels are highlighted in section 7.

1.5. By considering all of the above areas potential opportunities have been identified for overcoming identified shortfalls, protecting strategically important current facilities and dealing with any other related issues, as detailed in section 8 of this document. This section also includes community feedback on these options. These lead directly to policies and community actions for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan, with overall conclusions appearing in section 9.

1.6. An initial version of this document was produced in October 2016, however this has now been updated in January 2018 to take account of progress on the VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 and other recent changes.

## 2. Issues and Objectives, and overlaps with other Working Groups

2.1 The November 2014 NHPC Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire identified one issue relevant to leisure facilities which was the following:

- Availability of general leisure and recreational facilities.

Subsequently two relevant objectives were identified by the Social Infrastructure Working Group, which were:

- Identify an appropriate/desirable level of leisure facilities for all age groups (NB see NHPC questionnaire results), per head of population and the types of facilities that should encourage maximum participation and more healthy lifestyles for parishioners.
- Identify appropriate timing for the introduction/availability of school, medical and leisure facilities within the planning process to cover requirements arising from significantly large, new developments/increases in population size.

2.2 In the Introduction to this document reference was made to Leisure in this context relating primarily to land use allocated for sports and recreational activities which has facilities built on it to allow those activities to take place. In wider planning documents such as the VOWHDC Local Plan this would include the category of general Sports Halls, which are normally multi-functional and used for sports such as badminton, basketball, volleyball and 5-a-side football. Within this document a further category of Village / Community Halls will also be considered. These are not to the same scale as Sports Halls (usually having lower ceilings and less floor space), making them unsuitable for the sports listed above, but still suitable for a number of smaller scale sports and recreational activities such as table tennis, or in some cases, outdoor sports and leisure activities on adjoining land.

2.3 There are potential overlaps with the Working Group on Green Spaces and the Natural Environment, for example in the identified issue 'retention of, and expansion of Parish Council owned land', however that issue is 'owned' by the other Working Group as they are dealing with ownership and protection of the recreational land itself, whilst the Social Infrastructure Working Group deals with leisure facilities built or placed on that type of land. Other issues arising from any proposed action of building leisure facilities on green land (e.g. reduction in biodiversity) would require close liaison between the two Working Groups.

2.4 Serious conflicts could occur with Working Groups covering Housing, Economy & Employment, and Transport should any of those Groups recommend housing, commercial or road expansion (e.g. the A34) that would remove land currently used for major leisure facilities.

2.5 There could be overlaps with the Working Group covering Economy and Employment issues on matters such as the inclusion of leisure facilities within commercial sites, and the impact on current commercial sports organisations of competition from any proposed new leisure facilities. A further minor overlap is the provision of leisure facilities in appropriate locations for use by workers in the main commercial sites during lunch breaks.

2.6 The strategic importance of facilities at Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus (Brookes Sport Botley) has already been mentioned. This will require liaison with the Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Working Group.

2.7 Other matters to bear in mind include the work being carried out by the North Hinksey Parish Council in their Leisure Working Group, and uses of Parish Council owned recreational land. This includes the development in 2018 of a masterplan to for rejuvenation of the facilities at the Louie Memorial Playing Fields including the replacement or major renovation of the Pavilion and adjacent Scouts Hut sited there, and improvements to the sports facilities as a whole. Also appropriate ways to encourage parishioners to take more exercise should be considered, along with the promotion of sustainable transport through more walking and cycling (which impacts on the Transport Working Group).

### 3 Planning Legislation

3.1 The National Government's primary planning document, the National Planning Policy Framework, mentions very little specifically about leisure, however sections 73 and 74 do highlight the need to assess requirements for sports and recreational facilities and make good any shortfall, with a requirement to protect current facilities. These sections are included in Appendix A1 of this document.

3.2 The VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 part 1 also says very little specifically about leisure under section 10 beyond pointing out other documents that are relevant. This is primarily because further policies on leisure are included in the emerging Local Plan 2031 part 2 which is expected to be adopted in late 2018, and following its adoption those will replace any earlier documents. Section 4 of the Local Plan 2031 part 1 does include some items of relevance regarding the implementation of infrastructure strategy. Although this is not specific to leisure, Core Policy 7 should be noted. Also Core Policy 9 on Harcourt Hill Campus needs to be noted given the strategic importance of Brookes Sport Botley for local provision of sports facilities. Relevant excerpts from the Local Plan 2031 part 1 are included in Appendix A2 of this document.

Support documents to the Local Plan 2031 part 1 on infrastructure strategy are not of direct relevance as none of the identified large-scale leisure infrastructure will be built within North Hinksey Parish.

3.3 The emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 includes the following sections and Development Policies that are relevant to leisure facilities:

- Paragraphs 3.44 to 3.54 plus Development Policy 8 Community Services and Facilities.
- Paragraphs 3.279 to 3.291 plus Development Policies 33 Open Space and 34 Leisure and Sports Facilities.
- Appendix K Leisure and Open Space Standards.

All of the above sections have been included in Appendix A3 of this document. Relevant support documents to the emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 are also listed below.

3.4 Saved Policies from the Local Plan 2011 relevant to leisure within North Hinksey Parish are:

- L1 and L7, relating to protection of current leisure facilities.
- H23, relating to provision of public open space for outdoor play and informal recreation within new housing developments.
- DC8, relating to provision of necessary social and physical infrastructure to cater for new developments.

3.5 All of the above saved policies, together with relevant excerpts from the Local Plan 2011 can be found in Appendix A4 of this document.

It should be noted that a number of policies within the Local Plan 2011 that relate to specific sports and recreational activities are not saved policies and have no replacement policies within the Local Plan 2031 part 1 or the emerging Local Plan 2031 part 2. These former policies will therefore not be considered in this document. Examples of these include policy L16 on golf courses, and policy L19 on noisy sports (e.g. motorsports, shooting and war games).

3.6 Other supporting documents to the Local Plan 2031, and Local Plan 2011 include:

- SPD on Open Space, Sport & Recreation Future Provision 2008 (downloadable at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/supplementary-> )
- Kit Campbell Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision Strategy Background Report (January 2009). Copy of draft report 2007 available under 'Draft Strategy' at <http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=7651>
- Leisure & Sports Facility Strategy 2012-29, adopted in 2013 (downloadable as the 'main report' at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/core-strateg-8> ).
- Leisure and Sports Facilities Study 2013-31 (November 2014).
- Support documents for the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, consisting of a Local Leisure Facilities Study (June 2016), an Open Spaces Report (November 2016), and a Playing Pitches Study (October 2015). All of these documents are downloadable from the the VOWHDC website at: [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=789122099&CODE=81AB38798A97E6B6FBA1D25AB00E842C&NAME=14.+Leisure+Strategy&REF=Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Publication Version Publicity Period](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=789122099&CODE=81AB38798A97E6B6FBA1D25AB00E842C&NAME=14.+Leisure+Strategy&REF=Local+Plan+2031+Part+2:+Publication+Version+Publicity+Period)

3.7 The VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 refers to the first and third document listed in section 3.6. above, and the Kit Campbell Strategy was widely used in the production of both of those documents as well as the Local Plan 2011. The Leisure and Sports Facilities Study 2013-31 is an updated version of the 2012-29 Strategy document and is referred to in the emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2. The emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 also refers to the three support documents listed under the fifth bullet point in section 3.6. above. None of these support documents are included in Appendix A of this document because of their length, however, descriptions of the main elements contained within them follow here.

3.8 The 2008 SPD combined with the associated 2009 report contain useful guidelines on management and maintenance of recreational areas, including appropriate payments by developers to Councils taking over responsibility for managing recreational land included within their development. The main information of relevance here, however, is the detailed listing of provision standards by type of facility relating to access distances, expected area per head of population and minimum size for the facility. Categories include a number of types of general open space which are not relevant here (e.g. amenity green space, natural green space, parks and gardens, allotments and community gardens), however those categories of relevance include the following:

- Grass sports pitches & Artificial turf pitches
- Indoor sports halls
- Swimming pools
- Multi-sports courts (e.g. MUGAs)
- Tennis courts
- Bowling greens
- Formal play provision
- Youth facilities

This document did not identify current provision at the time or any plans for future provision.

3.9 Similarly the Kit Campbell report contained no site specific recommendations for future provision of facilities, instead focussing on a five year Delivery Plan for major identified issues including:

- Identification of the quantity and quality of current provision
- Accessibility and inclusiveness (e.g. affordability)
- Usage and promotion of sports facilities
- Funding of new facilities

It is not clear how much, if any, of this Delivery Plan was actually implemented in the intended period from 2008-13.

3.10 The 2012-29 Strategy document followed public consultation in late 2012 where only 34 individuals and 16 organisations responded. This document was primarily about identifying shortfalls for major sports facilities throughout the Vale and the strategy for remedying this in terms of planned future provision. The categories of facilities it considered included the following:

- Grass sports pitches
- Artificial turf pitches
- Sports halls
- Swimming pools
- MUGAs
- Outdoor tennis
- Indoor tennis
- Indoor bowls
- Athletics tracks
- Health & fitness facilities (e.g. fitness stations in a gym)
- Squash

Although there are strong similarities between the categories used in the 2008 SPD / 2009 report and the 2012-29 Strategy document the main differences are that the later document didn't cover any general green spaces or Formal Play Provision and Youth Facilities, whereas it did add in further sports such as squash, athletics and general health and fitness facilities. Provision standards stated in the 2008 SPD were also amended in a number of cases.

The 2012-29 Strategy document took into account various socio-economic and population growth assumptions along with participation level trends and used several modelling techniques to estimate future demand for facilities. This was compared with current provision, both within the Vale and in surrounding areas to identify any shortfalls in provision.

The overall conclusion was that there was no shortfall in many categories, and where any serious shortfall was identified requiring increased future provision this only related to a limited number of areas (primarily Wantage / Grove). These were locations where major future housing developments were planned, which would lead to significant population growth beyond the average within the Vale during the period covered. As a result no additional provision of major sports and recreational facilities by the VOWHDC is currently planned for North Hinksey Parish or surrounding areas.

3.11 The 2013-31 Study, which is an updated version of the 2012-29 Strategy document contains the latest revised versions of some standards, current provision etc., however the overall conclusions and levels of planned additional provision of facilities remain the same.

3.12 Being the most recent documents the three support documents for the VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 contain the most up to date planning provision standards, which are the ones used in Appendix C to identify local provision shortfall. The three documents cover different topics as follows:

- The Local Leisure Facilities Report (June 2016) covers Community / Village Halls, outdoor bowls, and outdoor tennis. The first of these categories is particularly important as it had not been covered in previous recent studies, and this report highlighted some important local issues. In addition new or revised standards were produced for all three categories.
- The Open Spaces Report (November 2016) included four further categories, namely Children's Play / Youth Provision, Parks and Gardens, Amenity Green Space, and Allotments. Of these categories only the first is of relevance to leisure facilities. Again revised planning provision standards were introduced.
- The Playing Pitch Study (October 2015) covered Artificial Grass Pitches, and Grass Pitches with separate planning standards provided for Football, Cricket and Rugby usage.

3.13 Section 5 of this document on Identified Shortfalls contains a more detailed view from a local perspective and points out any areas of dispute or potential opportunities not highlighted in these VOWHDC documents.

## 4 Current Provision

4.1 The main sources used for identifying current levels of provision were:

- The VOWHDC Leisure & Sports Facility Strategy 2012-29 and the updated 2013-2031 Study, plus the support documents for the VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (the Leisure Facilities, Open Spaces, and Playing Pitch Reports from 2015 to 2016) as listed in section 3.6. above.
- The Botley & North Hinksey Community website 'Sports facilities, Playgrounds and Recreation Grounds' page at <http://botleyhinksey.org.uk/clubs-leisure-activities/sports-facilities-playgrounds-recreation-grounds/>
- Websites of identified commercial organisations and educational establishments identified as providing facilities for use by the general public.
- A Leisure Facilities and Activities Listing produced by North Hinksey Parish Council in 2014 in the early stages of a Leisure review. N.B. Many of the activities listed are not considered in detail here as they relate to activities requiring a venue but not any significant level of equipment. When considering at a later date possible indoor sports that could be catered for in any new venues this listing should be referred to in order to establish any obvious lack of provision vs. demand.

4.2 The detailed listings appear in Appendix B.2 / B.3 of this document, and are split both by category of activity and by location (also indicating where they are within North Hinksey Parish or nearby in surrounding areas). Where known the size / number of facilities is detailed (e.g. approximate area, or number of courts / pitches).

4.3 Also included in Appendix B.1 is a map showing the locations of these facilities. It should be noted that there are some accessibility issues arising from these locations as many are either on the edges of the parish or outside it, plus several (e.g. Louie Memorial Field and Malcolm Arnold School) are at the top of a relatively steep hill. Many potential users of these facilities would therefore be reliant upon driving or public transport to gain access, with access by cycling or walking not being a practical option for some less physically robust parishioners.

## 5 Brookes Sport Botley; facilities, usage, and future plans

5.1 The strategic importance of sports facilities at Brookes Sport Botley (also referred to as Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill) has already been highlighted earlier in this document. Not only do they have a wide range of facilities, a number of which are not replicated elsewhere locally, but they also have the capacity for a large number of users.

5.2 As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 they had 2992 registered fee paying Members paying on either an annual or monthly basis. On top of that are a large number of users registering free for usage of facilities as 'Pay as you Go' Members, making up over one third of total users. Levels of traffic entering and leaving the site specifically to use these facilities are not considered an issue.

5.3 The facilities are highly reliant on members of the general public for financial viability, with the majority of users being general public from within 15 minutes' drive of the site. Students and staff at Brookes make up less than 10% of total users and are the second smallest of five identified user groups.

5.4 The two key facilities within Brookes Sport Botley are the gym (which attracts c47% of users), and the swimming pool (which attracts a slightly smaller number, but still over 40% of users). Given this high level of usage and a lack of similar facilities nearby it is critical that these two elements remain available to parishioners in the long term and they are the key strategically important elements of the leisure facilities on this site.

5.5 Other activities attracting a few percent of users each are the steam room, fitness classes and football. Finally a range of other activities have relatively few users (well under 10% in total) including squash, tennis, rugby, table tennis, golf, badminton, karate and fencing. Several of these should be viewed as less essential where alternative facilities of a similar type are available nearby at a similar cost to users and it would be acceptable to replace them with different types of leisure facilities, however it should be noted that some activities such as squash do not have alternative venues available locally.

5.6 Brookes have been trialling activities for under 20s in recent years, with the highest take up being amongst 10 to 15 year olds. This has been particularly highlighted in terms of summer use, with children's sports and activity camps being prevalent. Increased facility investment to aid these types of activities appears likely in the future. Low cost activities such as 'Parkour' could be introduced in the short term, but other opportunities are also under review and one recent major addition to the facilities is a large MUGA, which opened to the public in 2016 and will probably prove to be a significant addition to leisure facilities on site.

5.7 Given the major changes likely to occur as part of Brookes Master Plan for expansion, the impact on sports facility provision in the long term needs to be considered in detail as further information is made public. Currently these expansion plans are mentioned in the Local Plan 2031 part 1, but no details have been finalised – the relevant Core Policy 9 is included in Appendix A2 of this document.

5.8 Currently there are no plans to close the swimming pool, but considerable repairs will be necessary to keep it open. It is hoped that funds will be found to enable this work to occur. In the medium to longer term future (over 3 years from now) it is likely that a complete rebuild might be necessary for the swimming pool however this will depend partially on the overall shape of the redevelopment plans for the campus as a whole.

5.9 There is also a significant need for investment throughout the other existing facilities, with Brookes looking to partner with external funding bodies, local councils, National Governing Bodies of sport etc. to help address this need. Brookes also has an ongoing need to service its own academic needs for sporting facilities, and is committed to enhancing the general health and wellbeing of its students and staff, as well as the local community.

N.B. This section has been produced in conjunction with staff at Brookes Harcourt Hill, and all usage figures above have been provided by Brookes Sports Botley.

## 6 Other Strategically Important Leisure Facilities

6.1 Other sites within North Hinksey Parish considered as containing strategically important leisure facilities include:

- Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club (outdoor tennis courts)
- Oxford Rugby Football Club (grass rugby pitches)
- Louie Memorial Playing Fields (Pavilion and Scouts Hut, grass football pitch, MUGA, Trim Trail & children's playground)

These sites have been identified as strategically important because the facilities they offer are well used, and to a great extent not replicated elsewhere locally. The first two are commercially run ventures, but Louie Memorial Fields and the facilities on them are owned and operated by North Hinksey Parish Council.

6.2 In particular it should be noted that all of the current provision of both grass playing pitches and outdoor tennis courts within North Hinksey Parish is located within the four strategically important sites. Also there are plans currently being developed for improvements and additional facilities to be located at the Rugby Club, making it an even more important site. These plans include the possible conversion of one pitch to artificial turf, which would be a major asset given the lack of similar facilities elsewhere in the vicinity.

6.3 Currently no other sites within North Hinksey Parish are considered as strategically important, however this should be kept under review and further sites should potentially be recorded as strategically important where large new facilities are built.

6.4 In order to ensure the continued availability of all strategically important facilities for parishioners in the long term (assuming ongoing commercial viability where relevant) it would seem prudent to protect them from:

(a) Planning applications which include the allocation of land elsewhere within the parish for competing commercial ventures offering similar facilities where this would be likely to threaten the viability of the pre-existing facilities (i.e. where there is no clearly indicated demand for additional capacity which would support the provision of further facilities of that type).

(b) The direct loss of those facilities by reallocation of the land they are built on for other purposes (e.g. as part of a planning application for housing or commercial developments or for expansion of the road network such as the potential A34 widening).

## **7 Identified Shortfalls versus Provision Standards**

### **7.1 Shortfall in facility provision identified by VOWHDC:**

Provision standards have been identified by the VOWHDC in a number of reports as listed in section 3.6 of this document, from the SPD on Open Space, Sport & Recreation Future Provision 2008 through to the support documents for the emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2. The latest version of provision standards are detailed in the summary table in Appendix C of this document.

For many sports it is considered by VOWHDC that no shortfall would exist in the Vale within the lifetime of the Local Plan 2031, and where a shortfall in major facilities has been identified it does not fall within North Hinksey Parish. As a result no additional provision of this type of leisure facility is considered necessary in our area by VOWHDC.

### **7.2 Local comparison of provision vs. requirements - introduction:**

A similar exercise has been carried out here using the most current provision standards, but considered on a more local basis, and the detailed results are shown in Appendix C.

Population levels used in this exercise are based on the 2011 Census for the current population (4,671). A further figure (506) has been added equating to the expected growth from new housing developments recently built off Tilbury Lane and Lime Road, combined with additional growth (336) from non-student housing in the planned redevelopment of the Botley Centre area and other growth from smaller scale developments such as conversion of houses to flats and infill housing (240) to obtain a forecast total figure for 2031 (5753). In reality the current population of the Parish is probably already over 5,000 as the Tilbury Lane and Lime Road developments are now occupied, however there will be no accurate official figures available until after the next census in 2021. Because of this the comparison in Appendix C shows a shortfall of current facilities vs. the 2011 population figure and the forecast 2031 figure as opposed to shortfall vs. the estimated current population.

### **7.3 Sports identified as having no significant shortfall vs. provision standards:**

When combined with knowledge regarding the relatively good quality of the relevant local facilities, the results in Appendix C show that the following categories listed below either:

- (a) appear to be adequately catered for within North Hinksey Parish or in locations very near to the parish, or
- (b) the shortfall in provision equates to less than (and often only a small proportion of) the minimum size for that type of facility and it is catered for in locations further afield but still within a reasonable distance, meaning that providing it locally could not reasonably be justified, or
- (c) there is no provision standard for that category of activity and no particular significant demand for extra provision has been identified within the parish:

- Grass football and rugby pitches
- Artificial turf pitches
- Outdoor and indoor tennis courts
- Outdoor bowling greens
- Indoor bowls
- Swimming pools

- Squash courts
- Health & fitness facilities (e.g. fitness stations in a gym)
- Athletics tracks
- Golf

In all of the above cases the VOWHDC conclusion that further provision would be unnecessary or unjustifiable in North Hinksey Parish appears a reasonable position to take, although there could be the potential for catering for casual indoor bowls within a Community Hall at a low cost (see section 7.4.4 below).

Also it should be noted that although there is adequate provision of grass pitches for football and rugby this level of provision will only just be adequate by 2031. All of these pitches are within the identified strategically important sites, reinforcing the importance of protecting those sites. The VOWHDC Playing Pitches Study (October 2015) notes in sections 5.83 and 5.86 the importance of retaining and improving all existing grass pitches within the whole District.

## **7.4 Sports and facilities identified as having potential significant shortfall vs. provision standards:**

### **7.4.1 Youth facilities and MUGAs:**

The VOWHDC 2008 SDP described Youth Facilities as:

“Provision for young people and designed to allow them to “hang out” and practise various sports or movement skills such as basketball, inline skating or skateboarding. Most teenage facilities include a mix of skateboard ramps, outdoor basketball hoops, shelters and other more informal areas. Ideally, they should be located close to a multi-court.”

The description ‘multi-court’ used here is equivalent to MUGA, and in the latest reworkings of provision standards detailed in the VOWHDC Open Spaces Report (November 2016) MUGAs have been combined with other Youth Facilities, rather than being treated separately.

Current provision of MUGAs is 2 within the Parish, located on the Louie Memorial Playing Fields and on the Oxford Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus. There is also a further MUGA in Cumnor Parish at St Andrew’s Church.

There are, however, no other youth facilities at all within North Hinksey Parish. This is a serious shortfall in facilities now, let alone following further growth in the population size, and resolving this situation should be considered a priority.

It should be noted that this is not a new situation, and the lack of suitable youth facilities has been recognised locally for many years. A petition for a skatepark in the Louie Memorial Upper Playing Field put forward by several hundred North Hinksey Parishioners together with several hundred other individuals from neighbouring areas in 2012 resulted in a Skatepark report being drawn up by North Hinksey Parish Council, which can be downloaded on their website at [http://www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/Core/North-Hinksey-PC/Pages/ReportsSurveys\\_2.aspx](http://www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/Core/North-Hinksey-PC/Pages/ReportsSurveys_2.aspx). This report recommended that the Louie Memorial Playing Field (the only Parish Council owned recreational land of sufficient size for such a facility) was not a suitable location for a skatepark, and following a lengthy debate this view was endorsed by the Parish Council at their meeting in January

2013. At the time some of the supporting evidence was questioned, and significant levels of additional or updated information are now available.

Alternative Youth Facilities to a skatepark, (including a shelter / informal area and adventure playground equipment) have been investigated recently by the Parish Council through its Leisure Working Group, alongside the skatepark option. This has resulted in the appointment of Nortoft as a consultant with a remit to produce a masterplan for the rejuvenation of leisure facilities on the Louie Memoria Playing Fields in 2018, a significant part of which will be the extension / upgrading of youth facilities.

#### **7.4.2 Children's Play Provision for Under 12s:**

Current provision within North Hinksey Parish stands at c.430 sq. m, in the form of the children's play area within the Lower Louie Memorial Playing Field. There are also several further playgrounds offering a range of facilities for younger children nearby in Dean Court totalling c.2150 sq. m in size. In addition play areas will be provided on the new housing developments at Tilbury Fields, and Harcourt Place off Lime Road. Currently the full details of sizes and facilities planned for these sites are not known, and the situation should be reviewed again after they have been installed.

In addition the masterplan for the rejuvenation of all the facilities at the Louie Memorial Playing Fields mentioned in section 7.4.3 above is likely to include some facilities suitable for use by younger children.

#### **7.4.3 Cricket Pitches:**

Although there are currently no cricket pitches within North Hinksey Parish the facilities available at Cumnor Cricket Club are within easy reach. The VOWHDC has noted in support documents to the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 that there is an urgent need to increase facilities in Cumnor to cater for future increased usage across the wider Cumnor / Botley area and the possibility of a second pitch is being investigated. Given the lack of availability of suitable land for this purpose within North Hinksey Parish it would be sensible to support the provision of this second pitch in Cumnor rather than attempting to provide alternative facilities within North Hinksey Parish.

#### **7.4.4 Sports Halls and Community / Village Halls:**

The category of Sports Halls benefits from more detailed consideration. On the face of it there appears to be a reasonable provision given the three locations within a short driving distance and other facilities available in Oxford City, Radley and Abingdon within the stated maximum of 20 minutes driving time. When taking into account the periods when they are available (e.g. Malcolm Arnold facilities only available for 18 hours per week) and the total population potentially using the relevant facilities, a minor shortfall in comparison to other areas of the Vale is apparent. This was highlighted in the VOWHDC 2013-31 Study where it states that "residents of Wantage, Grove and Botley have the least good access to Sports Halls". As the forecasted shortfall is not major, however, it would be hard to justify building a major Sports Hall (4 courts) within North Hinksey Parish.

The role of Community or Village Halls in comparison to Sports Halls is important to understand. The former tend to be on a smaller scale (including lower ceilings, compared to the 7.5m required in a Sports Hall), making them unsuitable for sports such as badminton, indoor 5-a-side football, gymnastics, basketball or netball (five of the top ten uses for Sports Halls), however they are often suitable for indoor activities such as keep fit/aerobics/yoga, martial arts, carpet/mat/short bowls, table tennis and dance (the other five top uses for Sports Halls).

The VOWHDC 2013-31 Leisure and Sports Facilities Study (November 2014) states that “improving the opportunities and facilities at village halls and community centres should be a high priority for the future.”

The VOWHDC Local Leisure Facilities Study (June 2016) includes the following sections which further highlight the importance of this type of facility:

“2.1 Village, church and community halls and similar venues provide essential space for many locally organised activities such as pilates, martial arts, short mat bowls and circuit training. This level of facility is particularly important for people without a car or those who do not wish to travel to a main sports centre to participate. They are also an important community resource for wider uses such as community celebrations, dance and drama, and consultation events.”

“2.2 The value of such facilities in their local communities cannot be underestimated as they create an important hub for local people to gather, make friendships, and provide cohesion on estates and in villages where there may be limited other venues to meet. These facilities are particularly important where there is limited access to services generally, or where there are higher levels of multiple deprivation.”

“2.3 In principle, existing village and community halls should therefore be protected and enhanced, or where they are not suitable for retention, replaced within the locality by improved facilities.”

In North Hinksey Parish there is currently good provision of Community Halls in terms of quantity with Seacourt Hall, the Botley Baptist Church Hall, Saint Peter and Saint Paul Church Hall, the Botley W.I. Hall, the Louie Memorial Pavilion and the 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scouts Hut all providing facilities for a wide range of leisure pursuits. In terms of quality, however, there are currently serious shortcomings, including in the provision of changing rooms at the Louie Memorial Pavilion.

In terms of general Community Halls there will be considerable improvements to both the quality and scale of facilities being offered by both Seacourt Hall and the Botley Baptist Church Hall when they are rebuilt as part of the planned Botley Centre redevelopment. Although these new structures should enable additional activities to take place there will also be a necessity for the Parish Council / Seacourt Hall Management Committee and the Botley Baptist Church respectively to provide appropriate equipment and plan the internal fitting out of these buildings carefully to maximise their potential for indoor sports usage.

As noted within the VOWHDC Local Leisure Facilities Report (June 2016), significant improvements or a complete rebuild are urgently required for the NHPC Pavilion at Louie Memorial Playing Fields, possibly in the form of a joint replacement building for that structure and the adjacent Scouts Hut. A masterplan is currently being drawn up for rejuvenation of all the facilities at the Louie Memorial Playing Fields which will hopefully resolve this shortfall, however this will require significant funding (probably in the region of £1.2 million) to be achieved in full.

## 8 Conclusions

### 8.1 Introduction:

There are a number of issues that the North Hinksey Parish Neighbourhood Plan needs to address beyond simply identifying the shortfall in specific sports and recreational facilities versus stated current provision standards based on current population levels, and any likely future increase in population or change in demographics.

These issues include:

- Ensuring that an appropriate level of protection is in place for current sports and recreational facilities and clarifying the role of commercial and educational organisations in provision of sports and recreational facilities (N.B. especially strategically important sites such as Brookes Sport Botley and others identified in section 6 of this document). Safeguards should be included to cover both the risk of land currently being used for leisure facilities being reallocated within a planning application for other purposes, and the risk of undesirable levels of replicated facilities via new commercial developments causing the loss of current facilities through overcapacity and the levels of competition arising from that situation.
- Ensuring that shortfalls versus provision standards are reviewed in detail following either the loss of any current major sports facilities or the addition of any further major housing developments not included in the Local Plan 2031. Where these are connected to a planning application this review must result in an appropriate level of additional infrastructure being agreed and planned for introduction in a timely manner (involving funding of such infrastructure through S106 or CIL funds) prior to approval of the application by VOWHDC.
- Potential for North Hinksey Parish Council (NHPC) or the Vale of White Horse District Council (VOWHDC) to acquire additional recreational land on which facilities could be built or placed (N.B. this overlaps with issues being handled by the Green Spaces and Natural Environment Working Group).
- Identifying appropriate levels of involvement and support from both NHPC and VOWHDC in terms of identifying appropriate facilities, providing facilities, gaining funding for them, and promoting facilities and participation in sport and exercise in general (i.e. the health and well-being, sustainable transport and social cohesion aspects). Additional involvement of local media (The Sprout and Botley & North Hinksey Community website) to provide additional methods of promoting facilities / events and participation.
- Prioritising planned improvements to facilities to take into account the relative levels of shortfall versus demand, the additional benefits of introducing specific facilities, and urgency in relation to any major new housing or commercial developments).

Each of the above issues is considered in more detail below.

### 8.2 Protection of current sports and recreational facilities:

Current protection from 2011 saved policies (see Appendix A4 of this document) – saved Policy L1 protects outdoor playing space and saved Policy L7 protects Leisure Facilities in general from new development resulting in the removal of these amenities in order to allocate the land for another purpose such as housing.

When the emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 is adopted these will be replaced by Development Policy 34 Leisure and Sports Facilities (see Appendix A3.5 of this document), which will restrict development of leisure and sports facilities sites.

Given the planned Brookes expansion at Harcourt Hill it will be necessary to identify specific plans for their sports facilities. Also as Brookes Sport Botley is a strategically important provider of sports facilities in North Hinksey Parish the inclusion of a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan identifying this and protecting those specific facilities (particularly the well-used gym and swimming pool where no similar alternative facilities exist locally) and those of the other strategically important sites identified in Section 6 of this document would be beneficial.

Another aspect of protection is the possible introduction of new commercial sporting facilities that would directly compete with current strategic sites where local demand for an increase in capacity has not been clearly identified. Although an increase in facilities would normally be viewed as beneficial to the local community, serious levels of over-capacity could lead to financial problems and the subsequent potential closure of either the original facility or the new facility (or in extreme cases both facilities) and that should be avoided where possible.

### **8.3 Impact of additional major housing developments / increases in population:**

The only additional facilities / infrastructure resulting from major housing developments at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road will be two formal children's play areas, with the size of these currently unknown. Population growth figures resulting from those specific developments have been estimated at c.506 people in c.211 new housing units, which is a significant increase on the current population of the Parish (over 10%).

There is also the expected impact of a considerable number of additional housing units as part of the Botley Centre retail site redevelopment as noted in section 7 of this document. Although this should result in better small-scale leisure facilities becoming available within a larger, new community hall, other opportunities for increased provision of leisure facilities through developer funding of infrastructure should also be investigated fully.

### **8.4 Parish or District Councils acquiring additional recreational land:**

The two most recent major housing developments at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road have not to date resulted in the transfer of any additional recreational land to either the VOWHDC or NHPC, and unfortunately look unlikely to do so because of an unwillingness on the part of the developers. Other opportunities for acquiring additional recreational land should be investigated in the future should the possibility arise, however it is likely that these will be limited.

### **8.5 Involvement of Parish and District Councils in leisure facilities provision and promotion:**

There are a number of ways in which NHPC has been strongly involved in identification of leisure facility requirements and the provision of those leisure facilities beyond acquiring additional recreational land (as above), negotiating an appropriate replacement for the current community hall suitable for a range of leisure pursuits as part of the Botley Centre redevelopment, and close association with the development of the North Hinksey Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

In 2015 NHPC Councillors carried out a survey to help identify current leisure activities participated in by parishioners, and also local wishes relating to leisure facilities. This resulted in a Leisure Survey

Report which can be downloaded at [http://www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/Core/North-Hinksey-PC/Pages/R and A ReportsSurveys 2.aspx](http://www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/Core/North-Hinksey-PC/Pages/R_and_A_ReportsSurveys_2.aspx)

This has subsequently resulted in the formation of a Leisure Working Group working in conjunction with these Neighbourhood Plan investigations to identify the optimal method for dealing with major shortfalls (see section 8.6. below).

It is also hoped that NHPC will become more actively involved in the long term in large scale promotion of leisure facilities and activities throughout the parish. This would probably involve communication channels such as the NHPC website, facebook page and printed newsletters plus any additional channels introduced by the NHPC Communications Committee. In addition a comprehensive promotion programme could include use of the Botley & North Hinksey Community website, local monthly parish magazine The Sprout and publicity distributed by the various facility providers being featured, especially the larger strategically important commercial sites. One element of this promotion could be the highlighting of health benefits derived from physical activities.

### **8.6 Resolving shortfalls in provision vs. current standards, and prioritising actions:**

Priorities identified by the NHPC Leisure Working Group in conjunction with this Neighbourhood Plan include much-needed improvements to youth facilities, elderly facilities, and indoor sports associated with a replacement Community Hall within the Botley Centre redevelopment site. It is essential that any replacement hall offers appropriate facilities to allow multiple functionality including specific identified sports and recreational activities.

The major plan of action impacting on leisure facilities provided by North Hinksey Parish Council is the masterplan being drawn up by Norcroft during 2018 for the rejuvenation of facilities on the Louie Memorial Playing Fields.

## **Appendix A: Planning Legislation relevant to Leisure**

### **A1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) excerpts**

#### **A1.1 NPPF section 73:**

Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.

#### **A1.2 NPPF section 74:**

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements;
- or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location;
- or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

## **A2. VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (excerpts including Core Policies 7 and 9), now fully adopted as of December 2016.**

### **A2.1 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sections 4.40 to 4.48 Spatial Strategy**

Providing supporting infrastructure and services

4.40. Successful infrastructure delivery is important to ensure the wider aims of this strategy can be met. These include delivering sustainable growth across the Vale.

4.41. Infrastructure can cover a range of services and facilities. These can include:

- physical and transport infrastructure such as roads, bus services, water, drainage, waste management, sewage treatment and utility services
- social infrastructure such as education, health facilities, social services, emergency services and other community facilities such as libraries and cemeteries, and
- Green Infrastructure such as parks, allotments, footpaths, play areas and natural and amenity green space.

4.42. Any new development increases the use of, or demand for, existing services and facilities. Where new homes or jobs are developed and there is insufficient capacity to meet additional demand it is essential that new facilities and infrastructure are provided to meet the demand created.

4.43. Infrastructure delivery is important to ensure new development is sustainable and this is particularly important across the Science Vale area. This is where around 70% of our projected jobs and 75% of our strategic housing is directed. Essential strategic highway infrastructure has been identified to support the identified growth across Science Vale and this is discussed further within the South East Vale Sub-Area.

4.44. New services and facilities should be planned to meet the demand created by new development and be delivered at appropriate timescales. This will ensure that the needs of both the existing community and future residents are provided for. We will therefore only grant planning permission for new development once the delivery of infrastructure within appropriate timescales has been secured.

4.45. Infrastructure has been traditionally provided or funded by developers through legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in the Planning Act 2008 and defined in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). CIL provides a tariff that local authorities can levy on new development, thus providing more certainty over development costs. The Vale of White Horse District Council is preparing a CIL charging schedule alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The Council's approach to infrastructure is also set out in more detail in the Delivering Infrastructure Strategy<sup>43</sup>.

4.46. One of the steps in the process of introducing CIL is to identify the infrastructure that is needed to support future growth and how much it is likely to cost. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been prepared in support of the Local Plan 2031 Part 144.

4.47. The requirement to provide new or enhanced infrastructure must not be so onerous as to render development unviable, taking into account other policy requirements such as affordable

housing provision. For this reason an independent viability study has been carried out to inform this strategy and the draft IDP45.

4.48. Effective partnership working is essential between public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure infrastructure is efficiently provided and maintained. The Council continues to work closely with a range of stakeholders, including: the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership (LEP), Thames Water and Town and Parish Councils.

## **A2.2 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services**

All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and /or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. In ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure requirements, development proposals must demonstrate that full regard has been paid to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and all other relevant policies of this plan.

If infrastructure requirements could render the development unviable, proposals for major development should be supported by an independent viability assessment on terms agreed by the relevant parties including the Council and County Council, and funded by the developer. This will involve an open book approach. Where viability constraints are demonstrated by evidence, the Council will:

- i. prioritise the developer contributions sought with regard to the IDP (i.e. first priority to Essential Infrastructure and second priority to Place Shaping Infrastructure), and/ or
- ii. use an appropriate mechanism to defer part of the developer contributions requirement to a later date, and/ or
- iii. as a last resort, refuse planning permission if the development would be unsustainable without inclusion of the unfunded infrastructure requirements.

The Council's Delivering Infrastructure Strategy will include both a CIL Charging Schedule and a Supplementary Planning Document for Section 106 and Section 278 legal agreements that will provide more detail about its approach to securing developer contributions.

Upon adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule, CIL will be used to pool developer contributions towards a wide range of new and improved infrastructure necessary to deliver new development.

Where not covered by the CIL Charging Schedule, infrastructure and services, including provision for their maintenance, should be delivered directly by the developer through the development management process and in accordance with The Regulation 122 Tests\*.

Planning conditions and planning obligations will be sought to mitigate the direct impact(s) of development, secure its implementation, control phasing where necessary, and secure contributions towards the delivery of the necessary infrastructure.

### **A2.3 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Core Policy 9: Harcourt Hill Campus**

The Council will work proactively with Oxford Brookes University, Oxfordshire County Council, local residents and other appropriate stakeholders to help the university to develop a masterplan for the Harcourt Hill Campus site that meets the university's longer term business needs for predominantly educational uses and in a manner that respects its Green Belt setting and urban-rural fringe context.

Proposals for the upgrading or redevelopment of the Harcourt Hill Campus will be supported where brought forward through a site-wide masterplan that sets a clear vision for the future use of the site. The masterplan should be prepared to a standard suitable for submission as an outline planning application, clearly identifying and addressing key site issues including but not limited to the following matters:

- i. the scale of development proposed and intended uses
- ii. the integration of built form into the landscape including a comprehensive landscape, tree and planting strategy
- iii. sustainable site access including by public transport, and the effective management of car trips and car parking demand to a level that can safely be accommodated on the local road network, and
- iv. the safeguarding of long distance views of the site from Oxford, to ensure that new development does not detract from views of the existing spires by reason of its height or form.

### **A2.4 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sections 6.125 and 6.126 Leisure**

6.125. In planning for development, regard must be had to the Council's Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy 114 and the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Future Provision SPD115. In doing so, development will be expected to make appropriate provision for open space and recreational facilities as outlined in these documents in accordance with Core Policy 7 and in line with the Council's up-to-date Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will ensure that communities have access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation, which makes an important contribution to their health and well-being. These documents will be reviewed and updated when appropriate.

6.126. Existing leisure facilities will be protected in line with saved policies in the Local Plan 2011, until such time as they are replaced by Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Existing leisure facilities includes Public Rights of Way, as shown on the Oxfordshire County Council definitive map<sup>116</sup>, and long-distance recreational paths such as The Ridgeway, the Thames Path and the d'Arcy Dalton Way.

### **A3. Emerging VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (excerpts from the Publication Version October 2017 including Development Policies 8, 33 and 34, and Appendix K).**

#### **A3.1 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 sections 3.44 to 3.54 Community Facilities Policies Community Services and Facilities**

3.44. Community services and facilities play a key role in creating and sustaining healthy and inclusive communities. The quality and accessibility of community services, such as schools, places of worship, village and community halls and libraries is important as part of maintaining sustainable and viable places.

3.45. The NPPF78 refers to the importance of retaining and developing local services and community facilities, which include public houses, local shops and places of worship, to help support economic growth within rural areas. Furthermore, paragraph 70 of the NPPF sets out the need to plan positively for the provision of community facilities and to protect against their unnecessary loss.

3.46. The Part 1 plan supports the provision and retention of community services and facilities and seeks to enhance their vitality and sustainability wherever possible. Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy, as set out in the Part 1 plan, classifies the settlements in the Vale according to their role and function based on an assessment of their local services and facilities<sup>79</sup>.

3.47. Alongside Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy, the Part 1 plan also seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable locations, namely the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages (Core Policy 4: Meeting our Housing Needs). Directing appropriate levels of development to our most sustainable settlements helps to protect and support the viability of our important community services and facilities.

3.48. The Council will continue to support the protection of existing community services and facilities. Development Policy 8: Community Services and Facilities sets out criteria to inform proposals that would involve new provision, or the loss of an existing facility. Proposals involving the loss of an existing facility will need to provide evidence to demonstrate how the facility is no longer economically viable and / or no longer meets a local need. Proposals involving the change of use of local shops and / or other Class A uses will be assessed in accordance with Development Policy 12: Change of Use of Retail Units.

3.49. Proposals that are likely to involve the loss of a public house will be assessed in accordance with Development Policy 9: Public Houses.

3.50. Proposals for redeveloping services or facilities that either lead to an improvement in the provision or would result in alternative provision will be supported provided the alternative provision is an improvement to or is equivalent to the facility lost, and is conveniently located to serve the community.

3.51. Village and community halls are recognised as essential community facilities. They are often used to host a variety of community events and activities, as well as contributing towards developing community cohesion within new and existing developments.

3.52. The Council will support proposals that involve the provision of new village and community halls that are well located to serve the local community. Proposals for the loss of existing village and

community halls will only be supported where developers are able to demonstrate that the criteria in Development Policy 8: Community Services and Facilities are adequately met.

3.53. A local standard has been developed (Appendix K) to ensure proposals for new village halls and community centres meet appropriate quality and accessibility measures. Developers should take this standard into account, along with the Council's Local Leisure Facilities Report (2016)<sup>80</sup>, when preparing their proposals.

3.54. The local standards for village halls and community centres will also be expected to guide proposals for major development<sup>81</sup>. New provision or improvements to existing facilities will be met through either the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or Section 106 planning obligations in accordance with Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services.

### **A3.2 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Development Policy 8: Community Services and Facilities**

a. Development proposals for the provision of new or extended community facilities and services, including village and community halls will be supported, particularly where:

- i. they are located within or adjacent to the built-up area of an existing settlement
- ii. they would clearly meet an identified local need\*,
- and iii. they are accessible for all members of the community and promote social inclusion.

b. Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing community facilities and services, including village and community halls, will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- iv. it would lead to the significant improvement of an existing facility, or the replacement of an existing facility equally convenient to the local community it serves and with equivalent or improved facilities
- v. the facility is no longer economically viable for the established use, or there is a suitable and sustainable alternative that is located nearby,
- and vi. the facility is no longer required.

\* a local standard is applied to village and community halls. This is set out in Appendix F.

### **A3.1 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 sections 3.279 to 3.291 Open Space, Leisure and Sports Facilities Open Space**

3.279 Open space can be defined as primarily open land, whether green or hard surfaced, that offers important opportunities for sport and recreation, as well as providing visual amenity. Open space can include, but is not limited to: areas of public open space that have a recreational function (e.g. parks, gardens and amenity green space); children's play and youth provision (e.g. designated equipped playing space); and allotments. Full definitions of the types of open space provision within the Vale are contained within Appendix K.

3.280 Parks and gardens form part of public open space and are defined as formal green spaces that include: urban parks; country parks; forest parks; and formal gardens. They provide accessible, high quality usable public open space for informal and formal recreational activities that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors of the Vale alike.

3.281 Amenity green space also forms part of public open space and this is recognised as informal recreational spaces, communal green spaces in and around housing developments, and village

greens. Their primary purpose is to improve and enhance the appearance of the local environment and to enhance the well-being of residents.

3.282 There is a good level of access to a range of open spaces across the district, although the provision of open space does vary within individual settlements. The Vale of White Horse Open Spaces Report<sup>132</sup> highlights where any shortfalls in open space provision exist across the district and provides an assessment of the quantity, quality, and accessibility of open spaces, and identifies any future requirements.

3.283 A combined standard for amenity green space, parks and gardens will apply for new developments to ensure multifunctional green space is incorporated and designed appropriately.

3.284 In order to ensure that adequate new provision is made and existing deficiencies are not exacerbated, the Council will require the provision of open space in association with new development in line with Development Policy 33: Open Space.

3.285 Major development proposals will need to provide or contribute towards public open space that is safe, accessible and of high quality, in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix L. 15% of the proposed residential area should be provided as public open space.

3.286 The Council will continue to protect existing open spaces in accordance with Development Policy 33: Open Space. Development proposals that result in the loss of open space will need to demonstrate that the proposal would either provide a community benefit or that alternative provision of equal or better value will be provided. Leisure and Sports Facilities

3.287 Access to both indoor and outdoor leisure and sports facilities is important to allow local communities and residents to participate in sporting activities and contribute towards their health and well-being. Outdoor sports facilities can include: natural or artificial playing pitches; bowling greens; and tennis courts. Indoor sports facilities can include: sports halls; swimming pools; athletics tracks; and gyms. Full definitions of the types of sports and leisure facilities within the Vale are provided in Appendix K.

3.288 The Vale has a good level of provision and access to a range of leisure and sports facilities. The Vale of White Horse Playing Pitch Study<sup>133</sup> and the Vale of White Horse Leisure Facilities Study<sup>134</sup> provide an up to-date assessment of the quality, quantity, and accessibility of each type of leisure and sport facility in the district. The most recent and up-to-date studies should be utilised by applicants to inform their proposals.

3.289 The provision of leisure and sports facilities will be determined in accordance with Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities and the application of the local standards contained in Appendix L.

3.290 Developers will be expected to refer to the Council's Priority Action Plan<sup>135</sup>, which identifies the specific projects and future priorities for sport and leisure facilities in the Vale.

3.291 Where more than one development is taking place on adjoining sites, the Council will expect developers to consider how the provision of sports and leisure facilities can be coordinated locally.

#### **A3.4 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Development Policy 33: Open Space**

a. Proposals for major\* residential developments will be required to provide or contribute towards safe, attractive and accessible open space in accordance with the open space standards as set out in

Appendix K including:

- i. children's play and youth provision
- ii. public open space (15% of the residential area), and
- iii. allotments.

b. Development of open space will only be permitted provided that:

- i. when assessed against the Open Spaces Report, it is clearly shown that the open space is surplus to requirements; or
- ii. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of scale, quantity and quality in a suitable and accessible location; or
- iii. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss; or
- iv. the proposed development is ancillary to the main use of the site and strengthens its public open space function.

\*As defined by Development Management Procedure Order 2010.

### **A3.5 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities**

a. New housing developments will be required to provide or contribute towards indoor and outdoor leisure and sports facilities in accordance with the local standards as set out in Appendix K. On sites of major development\* financial contributions towards providing or improving off-site provision will be required.

b. Development of existing leisure and sports facilities will only be permitted provided that:

- i. when assessed against the Leisure Facilities Study, Local Leisure Facilities Study and / or Playing Pitch Study, it is clearly shown that the leisure and / sport facility is surplus to requirements; or
- ii. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of scale, quantity and quality in a suitable and accessible location; or
- iii. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss; or
- iv. the proposed development is ancillary to the main use of the site and strengthens its function.

\*As defined by Development Management Procedure Order 2010.

### **A3.6 VOWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Appendix K: Leisure and Open Space Standards**

#### **Open Space Standards**

The standards for open space supports Development Policy 33 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2. They are also detailed in the Open Spaces Report (2016) that assesses the quantity, quality and accessibility of all public open space in the District.

#### **Quantity standards for open space**

Category of Open Space Definition Requirement Children's Play and Youth Provision Designated Equipped Playing Space (NEAPs and LEAPs), MUGAs, skateboard parks and similar facilities. 0.25ha per 1,000 of Designated Equipped Play Space 0.3ha per 1,000 for Youth/MUGA provision Public Open Space All areas of public open space that have a recreational function but do not fall in the above categories e.g. parks and gardens and amenity green space. 15% of the residential area

Allotments An area containing allotment plots, which the occupier, for the purposes of producing fruit or vegetables for consumption by individuals and family, wholly or mainly cultivates. 0.23ha per 1,000 in Market Towns

0.4ha per 1,000 elsewhere

### **Quality standards for open space**

Category of Open Space Quality standards Children's Play and Youth Provision LEAPs and NEAPs to meet Fields in Trust standard Public Open Space Green Flag Standard Allotments Local Standard

### **Accessibility standards for open space**

Category of Open Space Accessibility Children's Play and Youth Provision

LEAP: 400m walk NEAP:1000m walk Youth/MUGA provision: 1000m walk

Public open space: 5,625m drive 480m walk

Allotments: 1000m walk

### **Leisure and Sports Facilities Standards**

The standards for leisure and sport facilities support Development Policy 34 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2. They are also detailed in the following studies:

- Leisure and Sports Facilities Study (2014)
- Playing Pitch Study (2015)
- Local Leisure Facilities Study (2016)

These studies assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of all leisure and sports facilities in the District.

### **Quantity standards for leisure and sports facilities**

Categories of Leisure Definition Requirement Outdoor Sports Facilities Includes all outdoor sports facilities whether naturally or artificially surfaced e.g. playing pitches (football, rugby union, hockey and cricket), bowling greens and tennis courts.

Artificial grass playing pitches: 0.03 large size 3G AGPs per 1,000

Grass playing pitches: 1.16ha per 1000

Bowling Greens: 0.049 rinks per 1,000

Tennis Courts: 0.39 courts per 1,000

Categories of Leisure Definition Requirement Indoor Sports Facilities Includes all indoor facilities e.g. sports halls, swimming pools, athletics tracks, health and fitness, indoor bowls, and squash. Sports Halls:

0.29 courts per 1000

Swimming Pools: 11.36 sq m water space per 1000

Health and Fitness Centres: 5.64 stations per 1000

Bowling Greens: 0.08 rinks per 1000

Squash: 0.1 courts per 1000

## **Quality standards for leisure and sports facilities**

Categories of Leisure Quality standards Outdoor Sports Facilities Reflect best practice including design guidance from Sport England and the National Governing Body

Indoor Sports Facilities

### **Accessibility standards for leisure and sports facilities**

Categories of Leisure Accessibility standards Outdoor Sports Facilities

Artificial grass playing pitches: 20 minute drive

Grass playing 15 minute drive for football and cricket pitches: 20 minute drive for rugby

Bowling Greens: 15 minute drive

Tennis Courts: 10 minute drive time from a club site

Categories of Leisure Accessibility standards Indoor Sports Facilities

Sports Halls; Swimming Pools; Squash 20 minute drive

Health and Fitness Centres: 15 minute drive

Bowling Greens: Vale wide

### **Community and Village Halls Standards**

The standard for community and village halls support Development Policy 8: Community Services and Facilities in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2. They are also set out in the Local Leisure Facilities Study (2016) that assesses the quality, quantity and accessibility of all local leisure facilities within the District, including village and community halls.

Categories of Leisure Definition Requirement Community and Village Halls An area that provides an important local resource for a range of sport and active recreation activities, including pilates, short mat bowls, dance and yoga. Most halls are used on a regular basis for these activities and they are used both during the day time and evenings. 120 sqm per 1000 for the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages

225sqm per 1000 elsewhere

### **Quality Standards for Community and Village Halls**

Categories of Leisure Quality standards Community and Village Halls Meet the standards for Health & Safety, Disability Discrimination Act, energy efficiency etc.

Where possible they should be 'stand alone' buildings and located close to playing fields. Sufficient car parking is to be provided. Specification to be agreed with the Town or Parish or equivalent.

### **Accessibility Standards for Community and Village Halls**

Categories of Leisure Accessibility standards Community and Village Halls 10 minute walk (800m) distance for Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages

10 minute drive time elsewhere

## **A4. VOWHDC Local Plan 2011 (excerpts including relevant saved policies, to be superseded by the Local Plan 2031 Parts 1 and 2 once fully adopted)**

### **A4.1 VOWHDC Local Plan 2011 Saved Policies relevant to leisure facilities in North Hinksey Parish:**

L1, L7, H23, and DC8.

### **A4.2 VOWHDC Local Plan 2011 Chapter 10 LEISURE (including Policies L1 and L7)**

#### INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

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10.1 This section of the Local Plan is concerned with the use and release of land and buildings for leisure and with the control of recreational development in the interests of the community and the wider environment. It sets out the policies against which planning applications for leisure proposals will be assessed by the Council. 10.2 Leisure is vital to the quality of life, health and well-being of the local community; nevertheless planning for future provision and assessing new proposals can be difficult. Leisure activities are diverse, ranging from organised sports such as football and cricket to informal pursuits such as walking, fishing and boating. The need for particular facilities can vary over time as tastes and interests change. Furthermore, many organisations are involved in the provision and running of facilities. They include the County Council, mainly through its education and arts service, town and parish councils, private clubs and companies and voluntary groups and societies. Sport England also provide advice on planning and improving leisure facilities. 10.3 In the countryside changes in farming have increased demand for diversification of farmland, which can involve new leisure activities ranging from large-scale proposals such as golf courses, to smaller informal uses such as riding stables and picnic sites. Much of the western part of the Vale is included within the area designated for the Great Western Community Forest within which a range of new opportunities for informal recreation are likely to emerge. The Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership are actively restoring the former canal which crosses the Vale, opening up new areas of the countryside for public access. Within the towns there is continued demand for built leisure facilities from both the public and private sectors, reflecting peoples changing expectations and the growing awareness of the benefits of sport and exercise. 10.4 The Council is alert to these pressures and wishes to ensure an appropriate planning policy framework is in place which will safeguard existing recreational facilities and allow new proposals to come forward. Aim 4 of this Plan is 'to maintain and improve the quality of life of all members of the local community'. The aim includes specific acknowledgement of the need to: maintain and improve the range of facilities available for leisure and recreation; protect rights of way and promote access to the countryside; and safeguard green open spaces within settlements. The policies set out later in this chapter seek to fulfil these aims within the context provided by planning guidance from the government and the policies of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan as described briefly below.

Planning Guidance from Central Government 10.5 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 Sport, Open Space and Recreation published in July 2002 (PPG 17) provides a clear statement of the Government's intention to protect existing sport, open space and recreation facilities and create new ones. It states at para 1 Local Authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities. Para 4 goes

on to say Assessments and audits will allow Local Authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their areas. They form the starting point for establishing an effective strategy at the local level, and for effective planning through the development of appropriate policies in plans. The guidance makes it clear that the Government believes that open space standards are best set locally and included in development plans. 10.6 In PPG3: Housing the government emphasises the need for local plans to have clear policies for the protection and creation of open space and playing fields. New housing development should incorporate sufficient provision where such spaces are not already adequately provided within easy access of the new housing. Developing more housing within urban areas should not mean building on urban green spaces. 10.7 PPS6: Planning for Town Centres contains advice on the location of commercial leisure facilities. The advice confirms that some leisure uses, such as theatres and pubs, are best located in local centres whilst others need to attract customers from a wider area. Where appropriate sites can be found in or on the edge of town centres, these should be considered for major leisure uses such as small multiscreen cinemas and ten pin bowling. Where this is not possible they should be located where they are highly accessible by public transport.

The Oxfordshire Structure Plan 10.8 The Oxfordshire Structure Plan has a range of strategic policies covering recreation issues. These policies seek the optimum use of existing resources and give support to new provision in appropriate locations, especially in association with new development or where there are existing deficiencies. The policies also seek to protect the existing rights of way network in the county and to safeguard the character and environment of the River Thames, whilst at the same time encouraging wider access to the countryside.

The District Councils Cultural Strategy 10.9 The District Council has a dual role in planning for leisure; as local planning authority it has a remit to deal with planning applications for leisure use in the light of policies in the Local Plan, but it is also a major provider of leisure facilities and services. To assist in this latter role the District Council published in July 2000 Our Cultural Vision Leisure 20002005. The vision sets out leisure priorities in the district for the period 20002005, covering the arts, sport, play, informal recreation, parks, open space and landscape, leisure community development, leisure facilities management, horticulture, arboriculture and recreational grants. The vision concludes with a list of 27 actions, most of which relate to the promotion and management of leisure services. Two actions relate specifically to the use of land or buildings; action 4 refers to addressing the identified playing field shortage in the Vale and action 12 seeks to ensure leisure involvement in the preparation of this Local Plan.

## **POLICIES AND PROPOSALS**

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**Provision for Leisure in Association with New Development** 10.10 Government advice as referred to above makes it clear that local plans provide the appropriate context in which to assess local needs for recreational facilities and to ensure that provision is properly co-ordinated with other forms of development and other land use policies. The advice stresses that local plan policies should offer 'reasonable certainty to developers, landowners and residents about the weight to be given to sport, recreation and open space needs'. Sport and recreation facilities and open space can form important components of housing and major commercial developments and such developments in themselves can generate demand for new facilities or place existing facilities under greater pressure. 10.11 The Council wishes to ensure that local residents recreational needs continue to be adequately provided for and, in accordance with aim 4 of this Local Plan, it will seek the provision of open space

and other sporting and leisure facilities as appropriate, in association with new development. Government advice indicates that local authorities may enter into legal agreements with developers to secure such facilities. Policy DC8 confirms the Councils intention to use this mechanism as necessary, where a need for additional or improved recreation facilities can be directly related to a proposed development. In the case of small new developments, which in themselves do not justify provision of new leisure facilities, legal agreements may be sought to secure a contribution to existing or proposed provision nearby. Other specific policies in this Plan, in particular policies H5 and H7, demonstrate the Councils commitment to securing provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities in association with proposals for new development. The requirement and standard for open space provision within new housing development is set out in policy H23. 10.12 It is the Councils intention to undertake an audit of existing recreational facilities, establish local provision standards and develop a programme designed to achieve those standards. This work will be used to inform and guide the preparation of future legal agreements and when completed will be published separately as a Supplementary Planning Document. 10.13 Open spaces within or adjoining settlements are an important resource for the local community. The Government attaches great importance to the retention of open space and stresses the need for people, particularly children and the elderly, to have access to such space close to where they live.

**Protecting Open Space Within Settlements** 10.14 Open space within the Vales settlements has a variety of forms and functions. Playing space is land recognised as being suitable for play and includes playing pitches for formal sports, play areas and other space suitable for play, to which the public have access. There are other areas of undeveloped land, which may not be suitable for play but which have important local amenity value. Such areas can include formal gardens, woods, water areas or even large highway verges. In addition, within Abingdon, Grove and Wantage, there are valuable linear spaces and green corridors adjacent to the rivers Stert, Ock, Thames and Letcombe Brook. The public has access to much of this land but some is in private ownership. The following sections of the Local Plan consider these types of space in more detail and set out the Councils policies for their protection.

**Playing Space** 10.15 Nationally recommended standards for the availability of playing space have been established by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA). These standards suggest that a total of 2.4 hectares (6 acres) of playing space should be provided for every 1000 population. The Council is committed to ensuring these minimum standards are achieved in the district and to this end has carried out a quantitative study of formal playing space provision in the Vales five main settlements. (A summary of the study is included in a background paper published separately to this Local Plan). The survey has been restricted to the main settlements of Abingdon, Botley (including all of North Hinksey and Cumnor parishes), Faringdon, Grove and Wantage, acknowledging that in accordance with the Local Plan strategy, this is where most new development is likely to take place. It is hoped that a more detailed and comprehensive survey of existing leisure facilities (including playing space) can be undertaken for the whole district, from which a strategy will be formulated and a programme of future provision developed.

10.16 The results of the 2002 playing space survey are set out in the table below.

| Survey of Playing Space 2002 – summary of findings |                                      |                   |  |                   |                   |                   |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Population<br>(2001)                               | Sports Pitches<br>1.6–1.8ha per 1000 |                   | Outdoor Play Space<br>0.6–0.8ha per 1000 |                   | Total<br>Hectares |                   |
|  | NPFA                                 | Provision<br>(02) | NPFA                                     | Provision<br>(02) | NPFA              | Provision<br>(02) |
| Abingdon<br>32,526                                 | 52.04–58.55                          | 49.25             | 19.5–26.0                                | 45.60             | 71.54–84.55       | 94.85             |
| Wantage<br>9,442                                   | 15.11–17.00                          | 11.59             | 5.7– 7.5                                 | 10.18             | 20.81–24.5        | 21.77             |
| Grove<br>8,212                                     | 13.14–14.78                          | 10.54             | 4.93–6.6                                 | 7.74              | 18.03–21.38       | 18.28             |
| Faringdon<br>6,053                                 | 9.7 –10.9                            | 8.28              | 3.63–4.8                                 | 3.21              | 13.31–15.7        | 11.49             |
| Botley<br>8,967                                    | 14.35–16.1                           | 17.73             | 5.4– 7.2                                 | 4.96              | 19.75–23.3        | 22.69             |

10.18 It is difficult to provide new playing space within existing built-up areas and yet this is where demand is concentrated. For this reason the Council will protect existing space with recreational value. The policy set out below will apply to proposals for development of non-recreation uses on both private and public playing space (including school playing fields, school playgrounds and existing and previous playspace). It will be applied throughout the district. (Policies to secure provision of new playing and other forms of open space in association with new development are set out elsewhere, including policy DC8 and the housing chapter of the Plan). 10.19 Departures from the policy will be permitted only rarely, for example where an alternative use can be demonstrated to be the best way of retaining or enhancing a facility or where a replacement of equivalent or greater benefit to the community is proposed. Alternative provision will need to be secured by a planning condition or by a legal agreement.

**POLICY L1** DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING OUTDOOR PLAYING SPACE (INCLUDING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS, SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS AND PLAY AREAS) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED, IF A DEFICIENCY IN SUCH SPACE WILL NOT BE CREATED, OR ADDED TO. WHERE THERE IS AN EXISTING DEFICIENCY OF PLAYING SPACE OR WHERE A DEFICIENCY WOULD BE CREATED, THE LOSS OF ALL OR PART OF AN EXISTING PLAYING SPACE MAY BE PERMITTED EXCEPTIONALLY IF: i) ALTERNATIVE PROVISION CAN BE SECURED WHICH WILL REPLACE FULLY THE PLAYING SPACE LOST. ii) IN THE CASE OF SPORTS OR PLAYING FIELDS (INCLUDING SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS), REDEVELOPMENT OF A SMALL PART OF THE SITE IS THE BEST WAY OF RETAINING OR ENHANCING THE EXISTING SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND ONLY AFFECTS LAND WHICH IS INCAPABLE OF FORMING A PLAYING PITCH INCLUDING A PITCH OF JUNIOR SIZE. iii) THE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION IS OF EQUAL OR BETTER VALUE IN TERMS OF SCALE, QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY AND IS MADE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. iv) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS FOR AN OUTDOOR OR INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY OF SUFFICIENT BENEFIT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT TO OUTWEIGH THE LOSS OF THE PLAYING SPACE.

10.20 The above policy does not rule out the development of ancillary buildings and facilities such as changing rooms on existing recreational open space. The Council will seek to secure the fullest use of existing playing space by, for example, encouraging the dual or joint use of private or school facilities, or the provision of synthetic all-weather pitches, where this will not harm the environment or amenity of local residents.

10.36 The District Council wishes to protect existing local open space, sport and recreational facilities which are available to the public and to prevent their loss to other uses. Policy L7 below establishes this principle. Proposals for new small scale, open space, sport and recreation facilities designed to serve local communities, or schemes to extend such facilities, will be welcomed, provided they comply with the general policies for development set out in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan in particular policy DC5 which dealt with access and the requirements in policy L8 below:

**POLICY L7** DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF EXISTING LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS: i) THERE IS NO LONGER A NEED FOR THE FACILITY, OR ii) IF THERE IS A NEED FOR THE FACILITY ALTERNATIVE PROVISION IN TERMS OF ITS SIZE, QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

### **A4.3 VOWHDC Local Plan 2011 Open Space in New Housing Development (including Policy H23)**

8.85 The provision of adequate open space is essential for the health and well-being of the community. In order to ensure that adequate new provision is made and existing deficiencies are not exacerbated, the Council will seek the provision of open space in association with new development. The National Playing Fields Association recommends a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares of playing space for every 1000 people. This should be provided in the ratio of: 0.60.8 hectares for children's play space, including equipped playgrounds and informal kick-about areas, which is safely accessible on foot from where they live; and 1.61.8 hectares for outdoor sport. Play spaces should be safe, suitably equipped and landscaped and a commuted sum must be provided for their maintenance. 8.86 In addition to play space, the provision of open space to provide for a wide variety of informal recreation such as walking and picnicking is also important if the community is to achieve a good quality of life. There are no generally accepted standards covering the provision of informal open space and much will depend on the nature and context of the development. Such open spaces, however, are highly valued by local residents and can make a significant contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the development and its environment. Generally the Council will look for 15% of the proposed residential area to be laid out as public open space to provide for childrens play and informal recreation. On large schemes, involving 500 or more dwellings for example, the Council will also look for the provision of outdoor sport on the site. On schemes where outdoor sport cannot be provided on the site, contributions to improving off-site provision will be sought in accordance with policy DC8. Areas of landscaping, to help the development be assimilated in the environment, may also be required on the site which may mean that the proportion of open space is higher. 8.87 It may not always be appropriate to seek uniform standards of open space provision or for it always to be provided on the site. The amount and type of open space needed will depend on the size and type of the development and the availability, quality, quantity and location of the existing provision. Some housing developments such as that for the elderly, for example, are likely to generate relatively small demand for open

space. However, even in these circumstances it will be necessary to provide attractive private sitting areas for communal use by the residents of the schemes. In the towns where high density housing is being proposed, and where there is a good range of easily accessible facilities nearby, the amount of open space required on the site may be reduced. Similarly on small housing sites it may not be appropriate to seek on-site provision of open space. However, cumulatively small developments can generate significant additional demand for outdoor playing space, and in appropriate cases the Council may seek financial contributions from developers to provide or improve off-site open space near to the development.

**POLICY H23** NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND CONVENIENT PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR PLAY AND INFORMAL RECREATION. ALTHOUGH THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF THE PROVISION WILL DEPEND ON THE NATURE AND SCALE OF THE SCHEME, THE NEEDS OF THE PROSPECTIVE OCCUPIERS AND THE AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE EXISTING OFF-SITE PROVISION, DEVELOPERS WILL USUALLY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE: i) 15% OF THE RESIDENTIAL AREA LAID OUT AS PUBLIC OPEN SPACE; AND ii) SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ITS FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE. ON SITES OF LESS THAN 15 DWELLINGS, OR LESS THAN 0.5 OF A HECTARE, OR WHERE ON-SITE PROVISION IS NOT APPROPRIATE, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS PROVIDING OR IMPROVING OFF-SITE PROVISION MAY BE SOUGHT.

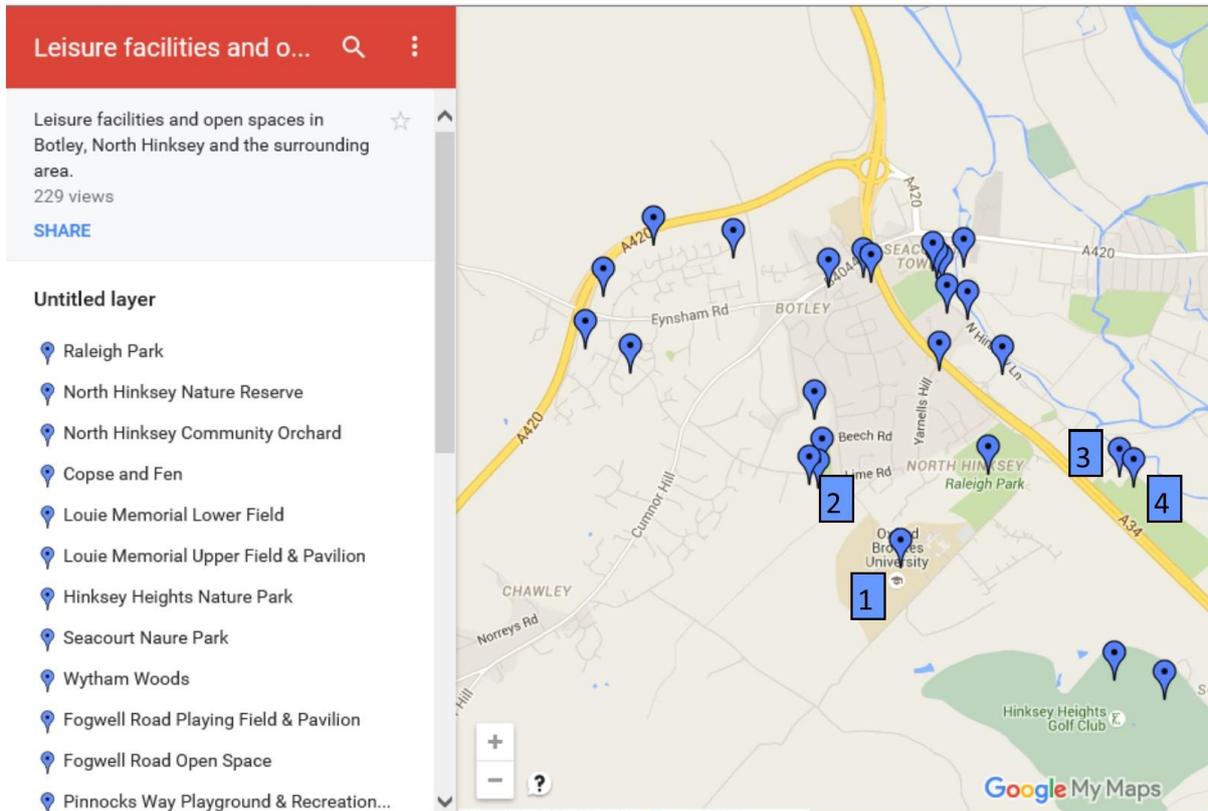
#### **A4.4 VOWHDC Local Plan 2011 The Provision of Infrastructure and Services (including Policy DC8)**

4.20 Government advice in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (PPS12) confirms that one of the purposes of the planning system is to co-ordinate development with the infrastructure required to service it. This can cover a whole range of facilities, which may be provided on or off site, including education, health, recreation, open space, community buildings, transport infrastructure and service support, waste recycling facilities, water supply, land drainage and sewage disposal. The Oxfordshire Structure Plan has a policy (G3) which states that development will not be permitted unless the infrastructure necessary to service the development is available or will be provided and that contributions towards new provision will be sought from developers. The District Council considers it essential to ensure that where the existing infrastructure and services are unable to cope satisfactorily with new development, the developers or landowners must provide the necessary new facilities on or off the site or make a financial contribution to enable existing facilities to be improved. Without this the quality of life of existing residents of the Vale will be gradually eroded. The Council may also seek commuted payments to cover the costs of maintaining the new facilities and services provided for a period of at least 10 years. The Council will normally ask for these payments to be made before development starts, but on large sites phased payments may be appropriate, tied to the commencement of each phase. Improvements to essential infrastructure and services will be secured through planning obligations in accordance with Government guidance, currently given in Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations. This circular advises that the provision for subsequent maintenance of facilities may be required in perpetuity where the facilities are predominantly for the users of the associated development. Further information on the local approach to planning obligations and agreements for development can be found in Infrastructure and Service Needs for New Development published by the County Council.

**POLICY DC8** DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE NECESSARY SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS OF FUTURE OCCUPIERS AND/OR USERS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ARE: i) AVAILABLE AT A SUITABLE STANDARD; OR ii) WILL BE PROVIDED IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT; OR iii) CAN BE SECURED OR IMPROVED TO A SUITABLE STANDARD THROUGH AN APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FROM THE DEVELOPERS OR LANDOWNERS. SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE MUST BE PROVIDED IN TIME TO ENSURE COORDINATION BETWEEN THEIR PROVISION AND NEEDS ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT. WHERE APPROPRIATE COMMUTED SUMS TO COVER MAINTENANCE WILL ALSO BE SOUGHT FROM DEVELOPERS OR LANDOWNERS.

# Appendix B: Current provision of facilities within North Hinksey Parish and surrounding areas

## B.1 Map of leisure facilities indicating locations of strategically significant sites:



Leisure facilities and o... 🔍 ☰

Leisure facilities and open spaces in Botley, North Hinksey and the surrounding area.  
229 views  
[SHARE](#)

Untitled layer

- 📍 Raleigh Park
- 📍 North Hinksey Nature Reserve
- 📍 North Hinksey Community Orchard
- 📍 Copse and Fen
- 📍 Louie Memorial Lower Field
- 📍 Louie Memorial Upper Field & Pavilion
- 📍 Hinksey Heights Nature Park
- 📍 Seacourt Naure Park
- 📍 Wytham Woods
- 📍 Fogwell Road Playing Field & Pavilion
- 📍 Fogwell Road Open Space
- 📍 Pinnocks Way Playground & Recreation...

- 📍 St Andrew's Church, Hall & MUGA
- 📍 Westminster College Sports Centre
- 📍 Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club
- 📍 Oxford Rugby Club
- 📍 Hinksey Heights Golf Club
- 📍 Old Manor House Riding School
- 📍 Tilbury Lane Allotments
- 📍 North Hinksey Allotments (1)
- 📍 North Hinksey Allotments (2)
- 📍 Seacourt Hall
- 📍 SS Peter & Paul Church & Hall
- 📍 Botley Baptist Church Hall
- 📍 The Rosary Room
- 📍 Botley Women's Institute Hall
- 📍 4th Oxford Scout Hut

Strategic leisure facilities sites as follows are highlighted on the above map:

- 1** Brookes Westminster College Sports
- 2** Louie Memorial Playing Fields
- 3** Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club
- 4** Oxford Rugby Football Club

## B.2 Main facilities by location.

### (a) Within North Hinksey Parish:

| Location                       | Category of facility              | Size / number / other info   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Louie Memorial Playing Fields  | MUGA                              | 1 (c.600 sq. m)              |
|                                | Trim Trail                        | 1 (7 stations)               |
|                                | Children's Playground (under 8s)  | 1 (c. 430 sq. m)             |
|                                | Grass Football Pitch              | 1 (c. 5,000 sq. m)           |
| Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club | All Weather Outdoor Tennis Courts | 8 (6 floodlit)               |
|                                | Mini Outdoor Tennis Courts        | 4                            |
| Oxford Rugby Football Club     | Grass Rugby Pitches               | 4 (3 floodlit)(c.32,600sq.m) |
| Brookes Sport Botley           | Sports Hall                       | 1 (4 courts)                 |
|                                | Swimming Pool                     | 1 x 25m,3 Lane(c.180sq.m)    |
|                                | Gym                               | 60 Fitness Stations          |
|                                | MUGA                              | 1 (c.800 sq. m)              |
|                                | Artificial Grass Pitch            | 1 small (5-a-side)           |
|                                | Grass Pitches                     | 7 (c. 35,000 sq. m)          |
|                                | Squash Courts                     | 2                            |
|                                | Golf Course                       | 1 x 9 hole                   |

### (b) Nearby in surrounding areas:

| Location                          | Category of facility                | Size / number / other info   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cumnor                            | Cricket pitch                       | 1 (c. 10,000 sq. m))         |
| Farmoor Reservoir                 | Various water sports                | n/a                          |
| Fogwell Rd Playground/ Rec. Area  | Children's Playground (u 8s)        | 2 (total c.850 sq. m)        |
|                                   | BMX Bike Course                     | 1 (c. 800 sq. m)             |
|                                   | Exercise Equipment                  | 1 (5 stations)               |
|                                   | Grass Football Pitch                | 2 (c. 10,000 sq. m)          |
| Hinksey Heights Golf Club         | Golf Courses                        | 3 (2 x 18 hole + 1 x 9 hole) |
| Matthew Arnold School             | Sports Hall                         | 1 (4 courts)                 |
| Pinnocks Way Playground/Rec. Area | Children's Playground (u 8s & u12s) | 1 (c. 1,300 sq. m)           |
| St Andrew's Church                | MUGA                                | 1 (c. 500 sq. m)             |
| West Oxford Community Centre      | Sports Hall                         | 1 (4 courts)                 |
|                                   | Bowling Greens                      | 6 outdoor greens/1 indoor    |

### B.3 Main facilities by Category (see section B.2 above for further details on sizes)

| Category of facility                      | Location                          | Number / other info              |             |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| MUGA                                      | Louie Memorial Playing Fields     | 1                                |             |
|   | Brookes Sport Botley              | 1                                |             |
|   | St Andrew's Church                | 1                                |             |
| Health & Fitness - Trim Trail             | Louie Memorial Playing Fields     | 7 stations                       |             |
|   | Gym                               | Louie Memorial Playing Fields    | 60 stations |
|   | Exercise Equip't                  | Fogwell Rd Playground/ Rec. Area | 5 stations  |
| Children's Playground                     | Louie Memorial Playing Fields     | 1                                |             |
|   | Fogwell Rd Playground/ Rec. Area  | 2                                |             |
|   | Pinnocks Way Playground/Rec. Area | 1                                |             |
| Artificial Grass Pitch                    | Brookes Sport Botley              | 1 small (5-a-side)               |             |
| Grass Pitches<br>(football/rugby/cricket) | Louie Memorial Playing Fields     | 1                                |             |
|   | Oxford Rugby Football Club        | 4 (3 floodlit)                   |             |
|   | Brookes Sport Botley              | 7                                |             |
|   | Cumnor Cricket Club               | 1                                |             |
|   | Fogwell Rd Playground/ Rec. Area  | 1                                |             |
| Outdoor Tennis Courts                     | Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club    | 8 (6 floodlit)+4 mini            |             |
|   | Matthew Arnold School             | 6                                |             |
| Sports Hall                               | Brookes Sport Botley              | 1 (4 courts)                     |             |
|   | Matthew Arnold School             | 1 (4 courts)                     |             |
|   | West Oxford Community Centre      | 1 (4 courts)                     |             |
| Swimming Pool                             | Brookes Sport Botley              | 1 x 3 Lane                       |             |
| Squash Courts                             | Brookes Sport Botley              | 2                                |             |
| Golf Course                               | Brookes Sport Botley              | 1 x 9 hole                       |             |
|   | Hinksey Heights Golf Club         | 3 (2x18 + 1x9 hole)              |             |
| BMX Bike Course                           | Fogwell Rd Playground/ Rec. Area  | 1                                |             |
| Bowling Greens                            | West Oxford Community Centre      | 6 outdoor/1 indoor               |             |
| Water sports                              | Farmoor Reservoir                 | n/a                              |             |

# Appendix C: Shortfall Analysis

| Leisure provision shortfall in North Hinkley based on current population and forecast population growth to 2031  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
|--|------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Population in North Hinkley Parish based on 2011 Census figures:   |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Increase in population in North Hinkley Parish from major housing developments at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road:  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Population in North Hinkley Parish in 2031 based on no additional significant growth:  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| * Increase in population over the housing multiplier of 2.4 persons per dwelling in new developments as used by VO WHDC in their 2012-29 strategy document and a total of 211 dwellings on the site.                             |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Category   | Standard   | Standard   | Size of no. (sq m) | Size of no. (sq m)      | Current provision               | Shortfall 2031 | Minimum    | Shortfall                       | Shortfall     |
| Formal play provision  | 0.4        | 1868       | 2071               | 430 (+2150 Cummar)      | 1438 (none)                     | 1641 (none)    | 400        | 1438 (none)                     | 1641 (none)   |
| Youth facilities / MUGA  | 3          | 14013      | 15531              | 1,400 (2,900)           | 12,613 (11,113; 14,131 (12,631) |                |            | 12,613 (11,113; 14,131 (12,631) |               |
| Grass party pitches  | 16         | 74736      | 82832              | 72,100 (+14,000 Cummar) | 2,536 (none)                    | 10,732 (none)  | 8,100      | 2 pitches                       | 10,732 (none) |
| Artificial party pitches   | 0.00003    | 0          | 0                  | 0                       | 0                               | 0              | 0          | 1 pitch                         | 0             |
| Outdoor tennis courts  | 0.0011     | 5          | 6                  | 8                       | 8                               | 6              | 6          | 0                               | 0             |
| Indoor tennis courts   | n/standard | n/standard | 0                  | 0                       | 0                               | 0              | 0          | n/standard                      | 0             |
| Outdoor bowling greens   | 0.1        | 467        | 518                | 0 (+6 WOs)              | 467 (none)                      | 518 (none)     | 1927       | 6 rinks (41x47m)                | 0             |
| Indoor bowls   | n/standard | n/standard | 0                  | 0                       | 0                               | 0              | 0          | n/standard                      | 0             |
| Sports halls   | 0.00029    | 1          | 2                  | 1 (+2 Cummar @ WOs)     | 0                               | 1 (none)       | 0          | 4 badminton courts              | 1 (none)      |
| Swimming pools   | 0.01136    | 53         | 59                 | c.180 sq.m              | 0                               | 0              | c.300 sq.m | 25m x 6 lanes                   | 0             |
| Squash courts  | n/standard | n/standard | 0                  | 0                       | 2                               | 0              | 0          | n/standard                      | 0             |
| Athletics tracks   | n/standard | n/standard | 0                  | 0                       | 0                               | 0              | 0          | n/standard                      | 0             |
| Health & fitness   | 0.00506    | 24         | 26                 | 67 (+5 Cummar)          | 0                               | 0              | 0          | 0                               | 0             |
| <b>Notes:</b>  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Current provision of formal play provision in North Hinkley Parish highlighted in brackets by additional provision nearby in either Cummar Parish or West Oxford.  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Shortfall noted in 2031 based on current population and forecast population growth in North Hinkley Parish highlighted in brackets by shortfall based on all nearby provision including Cummar Parish and West Oxford locations. |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Categories highlighted in green have no provision, standard and significant known demand locally beyond current provision.   |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Categories highlighted in yellow have shortfall over provision, standard taking into account facilities nearby in Cummar Parish or West Oxford.  |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |
| Current provision of formal play provision does not include facilities to be installed at new housing developments off Tilbury Lane and Lime Road.   |            |            |                    |                         |                                 |                |            |                                 |               |