

Wantage and Grove Campaign Group



What's the Future for OX12?

Meeting held on 25th May 2022 in Wantage Methodist Hall following the Campaign Group AGM

From 2011 to 2031

Population	2011	2019	2031
Vale of White Horse	121,891	136,007	<i>184,000</i>
OX12 (based on parishes)	27,123	29,307	<i>45,000</i>

Households	2011	2021	2031
Vale of White Horse	49,781	57,181	75,140
OX12 (calculated)	<i>11,077</i>	<i>13,540</i>	<i>18,500</i>

As you can see from these figures (*all figures in red italics are estimates*), given the number of homes included in the current Local Plan, the number of households in OX12 will grow by 67% in the 20 years from 2011 to 2031.

Estimated population (2020)...



Vale of White Horse South Oxfordshire

Total population projections to 2030...



There are 3 Garden Communities in South and Vale...

DIDCOT
BERINSFIELD
DALTON
BARRACKS

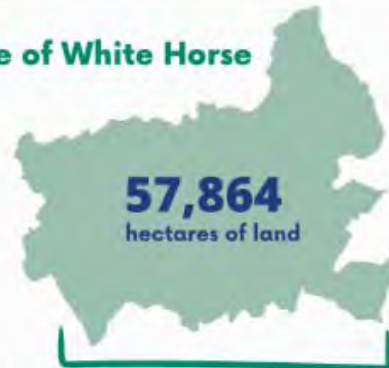


Garden communities provide new housing, infrastructure, jobs and services in sustainable settlements.

Population projections to 2030 by age...



Vale of White Horse



Overall totals for both districts...

Total land: 125,712 hectares

Land within the Green Belt: 22,577 hectares

Land within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): 42,046 hectares

South Oxfordshire



This is an extract from Joint Local Plan Consultation May 2022 which shows the growth in the Vale and South Oxfordshire to 2030. Please note that although South Oxfordshire is larger than the Vale there is more land available for development in the Vale, because less land is protected as Green belt or AONB

So what have we been promised?

- At least 7,500 more homes in OX12 by 2031
- 4 new schools (3 primary and 1 secondary school)
- Leisure facilities? (at least football pitches, tennis courts and MUGA's – Multi User Games Areas)
- 1 extension to the Health Centre – Each practice will grow from 12 to 21 consulting rooms
- Better bus services
- Wantage Eastern Link Road
- Grove Northern Relief Road
- More public open space
- Small community centres on Crab Hill and Grove Airfield
- More care homes
- Grove Station??

The promised Leisure Centre has been cancelled because of lack of funding.

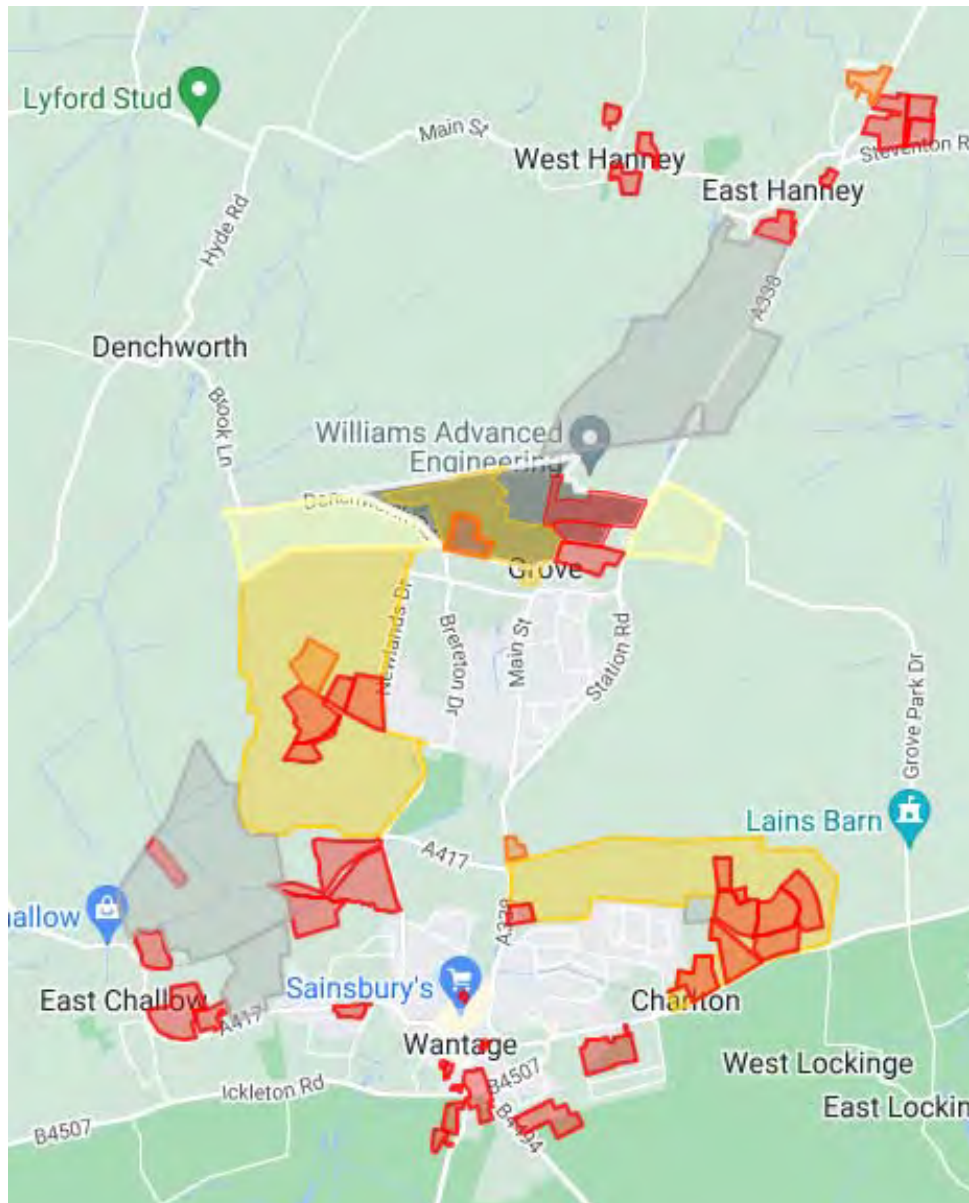
According to Councillor Hannaby speaking at the meeting, Grove Parish Council has requested £5 million for sport in the parish and Wantage Town Council will spend £1.5 million on water based facilities in the existing Leisure Centre. No money has been requested by the Town Council for other sports facilities in Wantage.

What has been delivered?

- About 2,500 homes
- 1 primary school
- A MUGA
- Planning permission for the extension to the Health Centre
- Changed bus services
- Some public open space
- Work on the Wantage Eastern Link Road
- Part of the Grove Northern Relief Road
- No community centres or community hubs
- 2 care homes
- No Station??

The primary school (on Crab Hill) opened in September 2020 and is growing at the rate of one year group each year so will not be full until 2026.

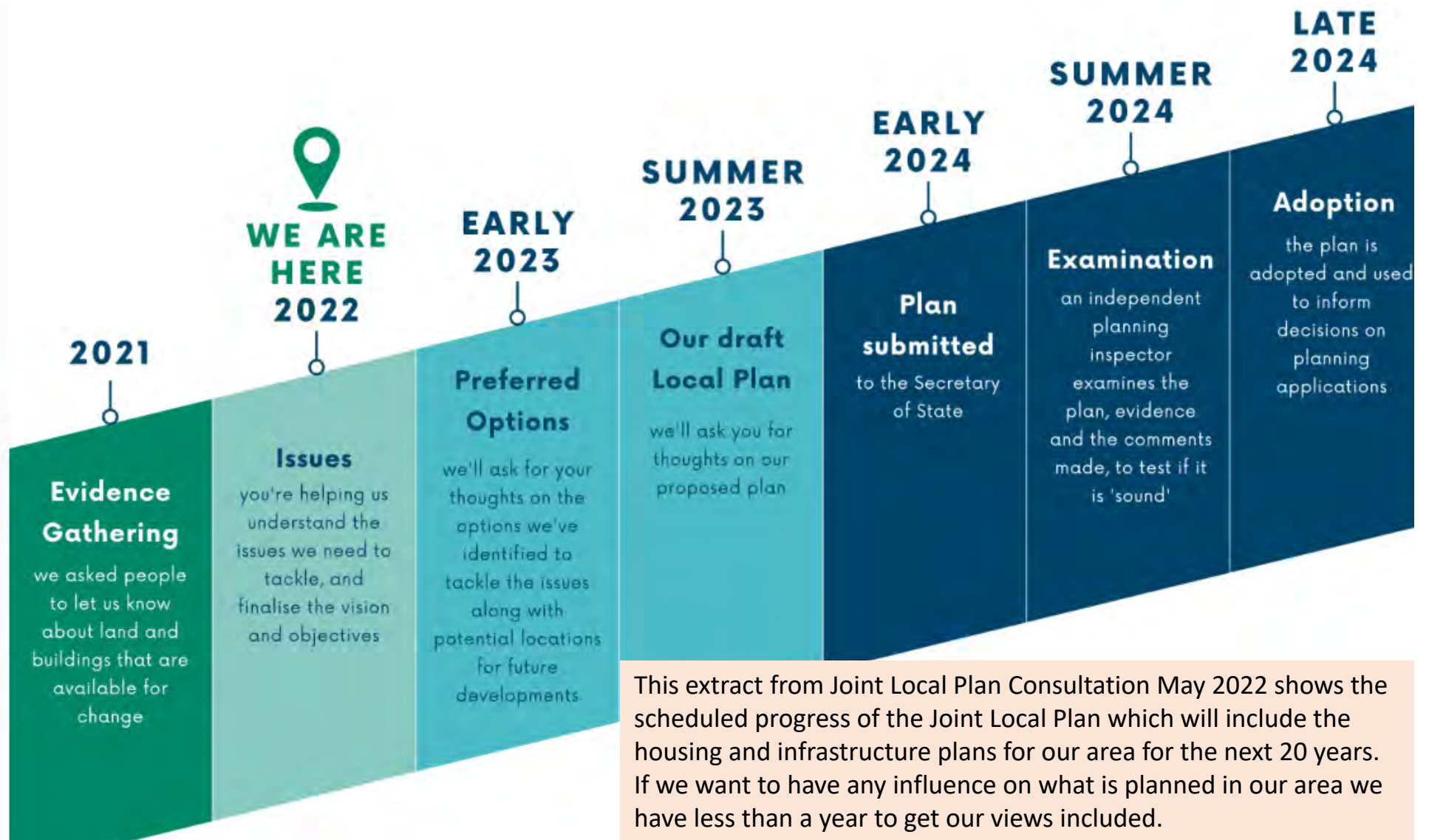
Also note that not all open space is public – Grove Parish Council have a policy of taking on all open space in the parish and managing it for the entire community. Wantage Town Council do not do this and the open spaces on the new developments are owned and managed by the management companies on each development.



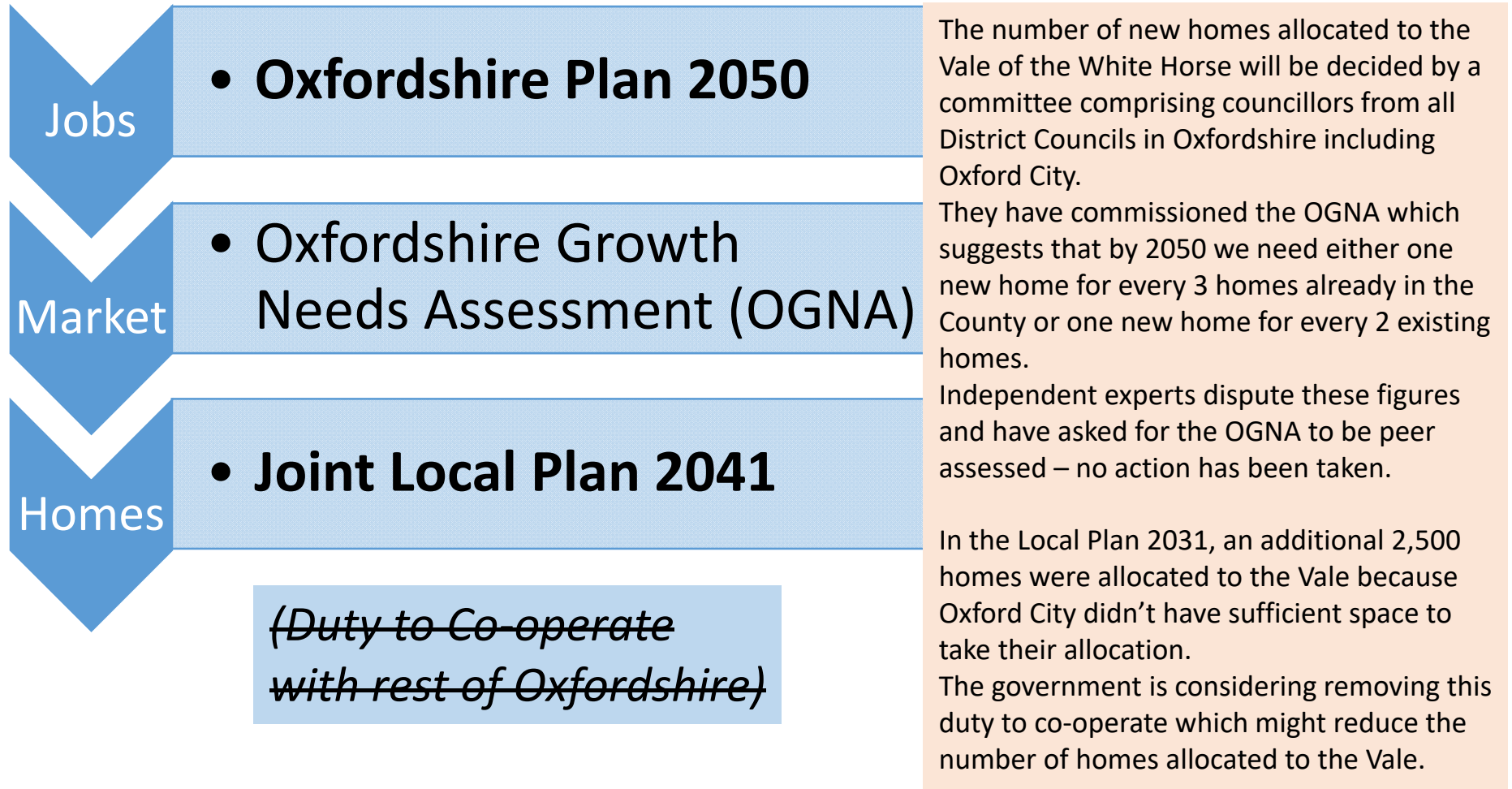
As you can see from this map the older areas of OX12 are being overwhelmed by the scale of development. Even though planning permission for 300 homes has been applied for on the land to the East of the A338 in Grove, this is not in the Local Plan. None of the grey areas are in the Local Plan at the current time but have been discussed by developers. We believe that there are large areas of additional land which landowners would like to sell for development in addition to those shown. At the meeting, Councillor Crawford suggested that we were being too pessimistic and that because we have accepted so much development so far, the growth will be less in the new plan.



- Red Shading = Full planning permission granted
- Orange Shading = Full planning permission applied for
- Light Orange Shading = Outline planning permission granted
- Yellow Shading = Outline permission recommended for approval
- Cream Shading = Outline planning permission applied for
- White Shading = Site Allocated for development in the Local Plan
- Grey Shading = Not in local plan but in the mind of a developer



Where will the housing numbers come from?



What will be in the 2041 plan?

- More homes - definitely
- Grove Station?
- Wantage Western Relief Road?
- More schools?
- Finally the new leisure centre?
- More shops?
- The reservoir?
- A Development Framework?

There will be additional land allocated for development in OX12 in the new plan – Government policy is still to build 300,000 homes each year and there are developers who are willing to build here who will go to appeal if their plans are not included.

According to Councillor Hannaby, the County Council has allocated £250,000 to develop a business justification for a new station at Grove.

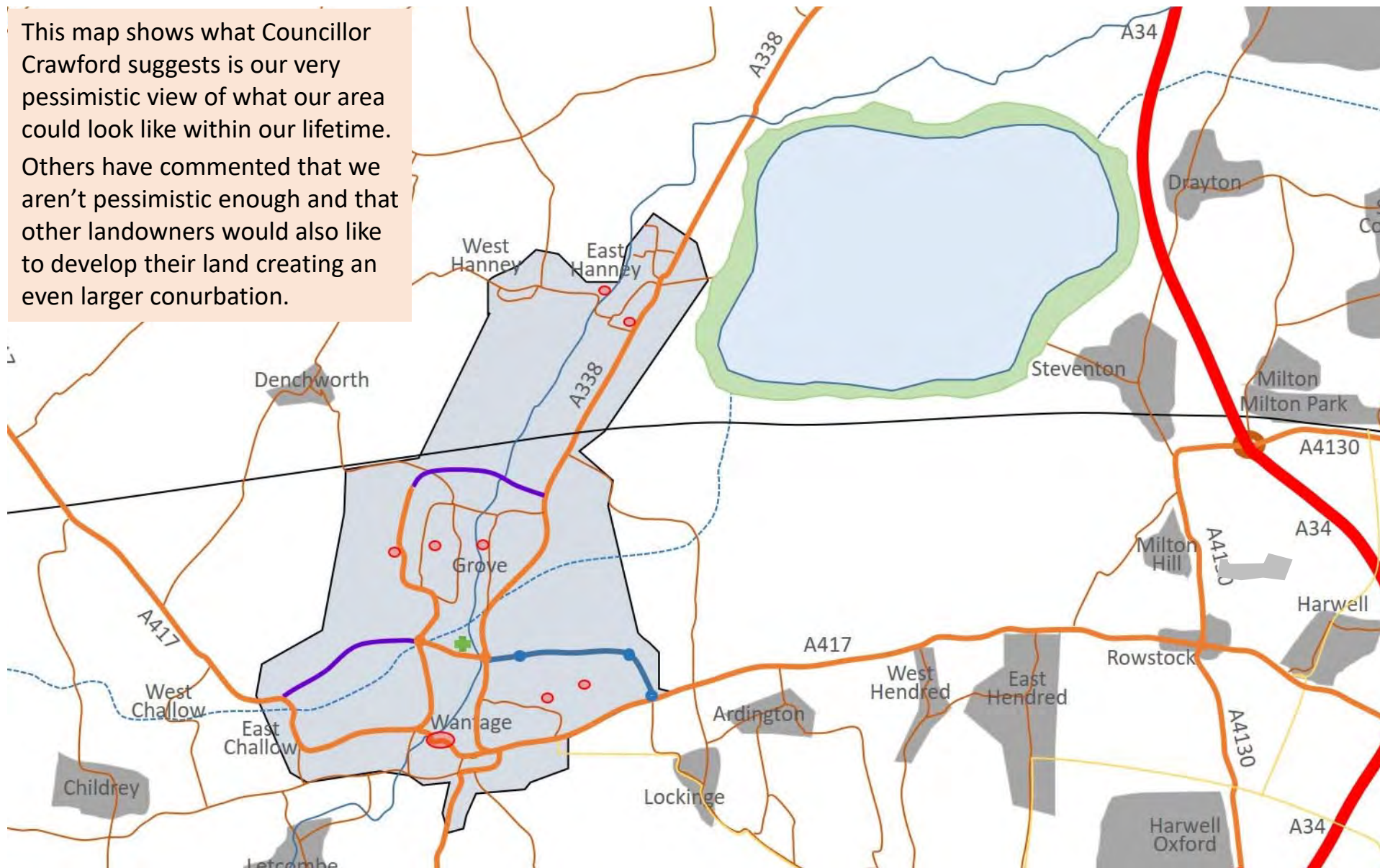
The Wantage Western Relief Road won't be built without funding from developers – given that it has taken contributions for the 1,500 homes on Crab Hill and other developments in Wantage (together with a £7 million Government grant) to pay for the Eastern Link Road, it will require many more homes to be built.

We do not believe there will be funding for a new leisure centre but might be a business case for more shops.

Even though the County and District Councils are against the reservoir, Thames Water want to build it to provide water to London even though there are other ways of providing the water required.

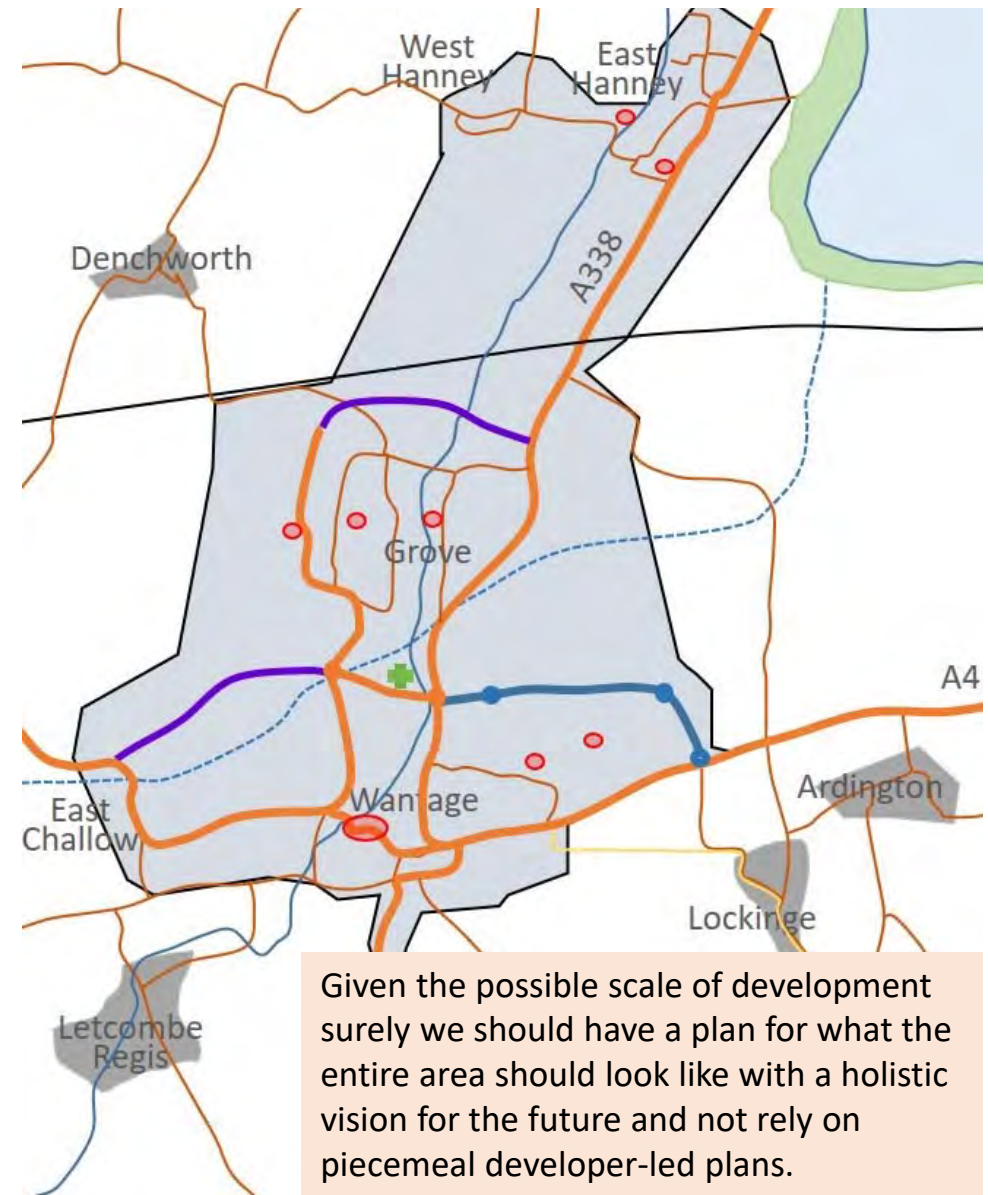
Local Plan 2031 requires a development framework to be produced for Grove – why not for OX12 in total?

This map shows what Councillor Crawford suggests is our very pessimistic view of what our area could look like within our lifetime. Others have commented that we aren't pessimistic enough and that other landowners would also like to develop their land creating an even larger conurbation.



What do we want?

- More affordable homes?
- Grove Station?
- Wantage Western Relief Road?
- More schools?
- Better leisure facilities?
- More shops?
- Better walking and cycleways?
- Radical change to health services
- A plan for a holistic conurbation?



How do we make it happen?

The next scheduled district and parish council elections will be held on 4 May 2023

- Parish and Town Councils?
- District Councillors?
- Planning Policy Team at the Vale?
- Public opinion?

Plans are produced for us by the District Council with little input from parish and town councils and as the next council elections are not until May 2023 we must rely on those currently elected to reflect the views of their constituents. Many of our councillors only talk to those they know (or those that share their own views) so it is very important that we all have a coherent view of what we want OX12 to look like in the future.

In 2015 Wantage Town Council performed a survey of what the residents of Wantage and its catchment area wanted in Wantage but no consultation of any kind has taken place since then (except on the pedestrianisation of the Market Place)

Perhaps this Campaign Group will have to take a lead in identifying what people want (within the confines of what planning law allows)?

How do we make it happen?

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- District Councillors?
- Planning Policy Team at the Vale?
- Public opinion?



Councillor
Judy
Roberts

Councillor
Bethia
Thomas

These are all District Councillors. Councillors Roberts and Thomas are Cabinet members with responsibility for the Joint Local Plan 2041. Those at the bottom of the page are all Councillors with responsibility for OX12. They should be representing our views of the future for OX12 and what we want it to be. We have to rely on them to deliver our future.



Councillor
Amos
Duveen

Councillor
Andy
Crawford

Councillor
Ben
Mabbett

Councillor
Janet
Shelley

Councillor
Jenny
Hannaby

Councillor
Patrick
O'Leary

Councillor
Paul
Barrow

Councillor
Ron
Batstone

Councillor
Sally
Povolotsky



What's the Future for OX12?

The future is in your hands, the Campaign Group currently has nearly 1,000 subscribers who want to influence the future of this area. As our aims state:

We are not against any development in Wantage and Grove but:

- *Developments should be proportionate and sustainable*
- *The infrastructure should enhance and improve the quality of life for its residents.*

Let's see what we can do.

Summary:

The Campaign Group started in 2013 when the Vale started to produce Local Plan 2031 to try to ensure that any development which was approved provided infrastructure which enhanced and improved the quality of life for both the existing residents and those on the new developments. We are still working to that end.

Since 2011, at least 2,500 new homes have been built in OX12 and our population has expanded from 27,123 to approximately 33,000 (we can't prove this until the figures from the 2021 Census are released later this year).

In that time the only infrastructure delivered is: 1 primary school with two year groups at the moment – growing with an additional year group each year to 2026; 1 multi-user games area (MUGA); funding and planning consent for an extension to the Health Centre; work on the Wantage Eastern Link Road; a part of the Grove Northern Relief Road; 2 new Care/Extra Care facilities, improvements to the Sustrans Cycle route and changes to the bus services.

Local Plan 2031 means that between 2011 and 2031 there will be at least 7,500 new homes in our area and there are commitments by developers to build 3 more schools - 2 primary and one secondary (11-16). There should also be 'community hubs' for the residents of Crab Hill and Grove Airfield. Both of these developments should have sports pitches on site.

Funding is being allocated by the County Council for a business justification for Grove Station and land is being protected for the station in the Local Plan 2031.

The possible reservoir in OX12 would cover an area larger than that currently occupied by Wantage and Grove and sit behind banks higher than a 5 storey building. It would have a significant impact on the water table and microclimate of the area. It is opposed by the County and District Councils and many campaign groups but supported by Thames Water.

The District Council is now working on a Local Plan to 2041 for the Vale and South Oxfordshire and many landowners are very interested in selling their land for development. Planning law means that it could be difficult to stop them getting permission so we believe that we should have a plan for what the residents of OX12 want the future of this area to be. Surely there should be an holistic vision for the future and not simply piecemeal developer-led plans with little regard for the existing community.