

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2

Statement of Common Ground

Between

Vale of White Horse District Council;

and

Thames Water

February 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Vale of White Horse District Council (“VoWH”), and Thames Water Utilities Ltd (“Thames Water”), hereafter referred to as “the parties”. This SoCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 2 and supporting documents to assist the Inspector during the Examination of the Local Plan.
- 1.2 This SoCG particularly relates to the current position and matters of agreement regarding water resources and supply, and wastewater treatment and collection.
- 1.3 This statement is provided without prejudice to other matters or detail that the parties may wish to raise during the examination.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 VoWH has made every effort throughout the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to ensure the Plan provides a robust, strategic framework for the effective delivery of sustainable development. Throughout this process the Council has continuously engaged with Thames Water including joint working on policy, additional allocations and specific evidence base studies, ensuring the Plan implements national policy appropriately.
- 2.2 The parties have worked with the Environment Agency on key evidence base documents for the Local Plan, principally the Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. These studies reflect the most up to date position and consensus of these matters.

Matters relating to Local Plan 2031 Part 2

Duty to Cooperate / Collaborative Working

- 2.3 Vale of White Horse District Council has continuously engaged with the Thames Water through the evolution of the Local Plan 2031: Part 2. More information and details of this engagement can be found in Topic Paper 1: Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.4 All parties agree that Vale of White Horse District Council has discharged its duty to cooperate.

Water Cycle Study Addendum (February 2018)

- 2.5 The parties agree the updated Water Cycle Study Addendum (February 2018) provides a robust up-to-date evidence base assessing the environmental and physical demands of the proposed growth on water resources and supply and wastewater collection and treatment. It identifies opportunities for sustainable planning and improvements so proposals do not exceed the existing water cycle capacity.
- 2.6 The housing requirement proposed within the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 meets the apportionment of Oxford's unmet need to be allocated within the Vale. The parties agree the level of housing proposed can be accommodated within the district in relation to water infrastructure for the plan period, as assessed within the Water Cycle Study.
- 2.7 The parties agree the Water Cycle Study has satisfactorily demonstrated that, subject to the planning and delivery of necessary infrastructure upgrades, there are no factors in relation to water infrastructure that would prevent the delivery of the overarching strategy.
- 2.8 The parties agree that additional modifications to the Site Development Templates as set out in **Appendix A** of this Statement reflect the most up-to-date position on water/wastewater infrastructure for the proposed additional allocations in Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (February 2018)

- 2.9 The parties agree the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (February 2018) provides a sound, robust, up to date evidence base which ensures flood risk has been fully considered and thus informed the proposed allocations in Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

Upper Thames Strategic Storage Reservoir

- 2.10 Thames Water is examining the means by which sufficient water can be provided to meet the future needs of the region. Thames Water's Draft Water Resource Management Plan 19 (WRMP19) was submitted to DEFRA at the end of 2017. The Draft WRMP19 will be subject to public consultation from February 2018 to 29 April 2018. Thames Water plan to hold a number of Local Engagement Forums covering WRMP19 and these are due to take place during February and March 2018.
- 2.11 It is anticipated that the final WRMP19 will be submitted for approval during the second half of 2018, before the Secretary of State decides whether or not to hold a Public Inquiry.
- 2.12 Thames Water has produced a range of evidence studies to inform the WRMP19 looking at options to maintain water resources in the short, medium and long term. These include a number of feasibility and screening reports which consider a range of options including the effective re-use of water, desalination plants, the provision of a new reservoir, and water transfer from the River Severn¹.
- 2.13 The Reservoir Feasibility Report (September 2016)² prepared by Thames Water contains conceptual designs³ for an Upper Thames Reservoir which range in scale from 30Mm³ up to 150Mm³. The reservoir is proposed on land between the villages of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon.
- 2.14 The most recent Screening Report prepared by Thames Water (April 2017)⁴ has identified that the Upper Thames Reservoir remains one of its preferred options, if a large storage reservoir solution is found to be necessary. The Report also concludes that the site to the north of Longworth is no longer being considered as viable option.
- 2.15 The Parties agree the WRMP19 will set out how Thames Water intend to maintain the balance between water supply and demand in the long term, including what infrastructure is required to meet this demand.

¹ Technical evidence informing the emerging draft Water Resource Management Plan 2019 is available to view online at: <https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/About-us/Our-strategies-and-plans/Water-resources/Document-library/Thames-Water-reports>

² Thames Water WRMP19 Resource Options: Reservoir Feasibility Report (Sept 2016) is available to view and download online at: <https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Corporate/Media/Thames-Water-Reports-Page/Reservoir---Technical-Report.pdf>

³ See Appendix F of the Reservoir Feasibility Report (Sept 2016)

⁴ Thames Water WRMP19 Resource Options: Fine Screening Report Update (April 2017) is available to view and download online at: <https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Thames-Water/Corporate/AboutUs/Our-strategies-and-plans/Water-resources/Document-library/Water-reports/Phase-2-Fine-Screening-Report-Update---April-2017.pdf>

- 2.16 Local Plan 2031 Part 1 safeguards land for an Upper Thames Strategic Storage Reservoir through Core Policy 14. Local Plan 2031 Part 2 seeks to update the land to be safeguarded between the settlements of Drayton, East Hanney and Steventon to reflect the most up to date evidence prepared by Thames Water relating to the construction of a 150Mm³ reservoir. The land is required for the footprint of the reservoir and land that is required to facilitate the construction of the reservoir including mitigation, such as flood compensation and landscaping bunds.
- 2.17 The parties agree that Core Policy 14a: Upper Thames Strategic Storage Reservoir provides an appropriate update regarding the land to be safeguarded from development which could prejudice the delivery of a future reservoir on this site. This includes the deletion of the safeguarded land for a reservoir to the north of Longworth, as Thames Water has since confirmed that this land no longer remains an option.

Conclusion

- 2.18 Thames Water agree that Local Plan 2031 Part 2 meets the test of soundness and is supported by a robust evidence base for water supply, quality and flood risk.
- 2.19 The parties are committed to continuous working on water supply and quality related matters.

Signatures

Signed on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council



Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning

23/02/2018

Signed on behalf of Thames Water



Name	David Wilson	19/02/2018
Job Title	Associate Director, Savills (Thames Water's Planning Consultant)	

Appendix 1: Additional Modifications which add clarity to the Site Development Templates (Appendix A of Local Plan 2031 Part 2)

Harwell Campus Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

North-West of Grove Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

Dalton Barracks Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor (within the parish of Fyfield and Tubney) Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

South-East of Marcham Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

North of East Hanney Site Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”

North-East of East Hanney Development Template:

Under the section entitled “Utilities”, amend the following bullet point:

“ • Upgrade**S TO** the sewer network **MAY BE REQUIRED AHEAD OF OCCUPATION**”