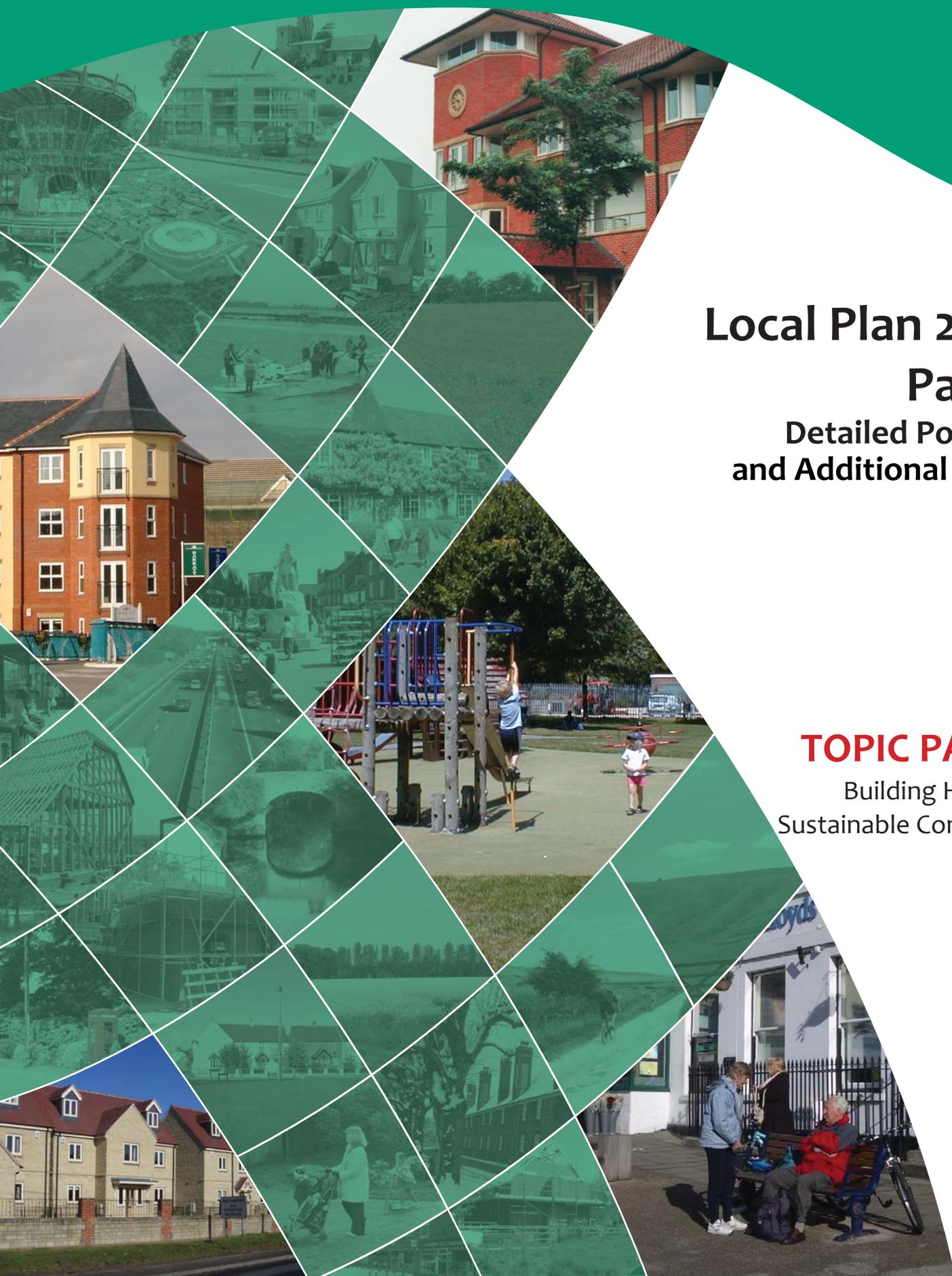




**Vale  
of White Horse**  
District Council

Consultation Draft  
March 2017



**Local Plan 2031**  
**Part 2**  
Detailed Policies  
and Additional Sites

**TOPIC PAPER 3**  
Building Health and  
Sustainable Communities

This paper is one of 6 topic papers, listed below, which form part of the evidence base in support of the draft Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

These topic papers have been produced to present a coordinated view of the evidence that has been considered in drafting the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. It is hoped that this will make it easier to understand how we have reached our conclusions.

The Topic papers will be revised following the 'preferred options' consultation to inform the next stage of plan preparation, which is known as the 'publication' stage. Final versions of the Topic Papers will be published alongside this final stage, which is timetabled for publication in the autumn of 2017.

The papers are available to view and access from the council website:

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2)

#### Topic Papers

1. Duty to cooperate
2. Site selection
3. Housing and community facilities
4. Supporting economic prosperity
5. Transport and accessibility
6. Built, historic and natural environment

# Contents

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.0 HOUSING .....</b>	<b>5</b>
National Policy Context .....	5
Local Policy Context .....	8
Evidence .....	9
Informal Consultation Outcomes.....	12
Key Issues.....	12
Recommendations.....	13
<b>3.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
National Policy Context .....	14
Local Policy Context .....	15
Evidence .....	16
Informal Consultation Outcomes.....	17
Key Issues.....	17
Recommendations.....	17
<b>APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 HOUSING POLICIES ..</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES POLICIES.....</b>	<b>20</b>

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This topic paper sets out the process undertaken and evidence considered by the Council to inform the policies in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (LPP2) in relation to 'Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities'.
- 1.2 The Local Plan 2031 Part 2 will sit alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1) which was adopted in December 2016<sup>1</sup>. Local Plan Part 1 sets the strategic priorities for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the period up to 2031. It also identifies a number of district wide policies which provide strategic guidance on a number of topics.
- 1.3 Local Plan Part 2 will identify new site allocations to meet the Vale's apportionment of Oxford City's Unmet Need, any remaining development needs not accounted for in Local Plan Part 1, and includes policies in relation to Didcot Garden Town. It will also identify development management policies to assist in determining applications that relate to detailed planning matters not covered by LPP1.
- 1.4 This topic paper explains how the Council has considered and formulated the detailed development management policies, set out in the Preferred Options Local Plan 2031 Part 2. It is one of a series of topic papers that reflect the four thematic areas central to the Local Plan 2031. These themes are as follows:
- Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities
  - Supporting Economic Prosperity
  - Supporting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
  - Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change
- 1.5 This topic paper explains how the Council has formulated its policies in relation to the Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities theme. This includes housing and community facilities.
- 1.6 The structure of each topic paper reflects the following:
- **National Policy Context:** a brief summary of relevant national policies e.g. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and relevant legislation.
  - **Local Policy Context:** outlines relevant Core Policies in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and provides a review and assessment of similarly relevant saved policies in the Local Plan 2011.
  - **Evidence:** summarises key evidence and its outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-local-plan-2031-part-1-strategic-sites>

- **Informal Consultation Outcomes:** summarises key issues identified through informal consultation.
- **Key Issues:** summarises the key issues considered when formulating LPP2 policies.
- **Recommendations:** identifies the key recommendations for policies that are included in the Preferred Options for Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

## 2.0 HOUSING

- 2.1 This section sets out the key issues to be taken into consideration when formulating housing policies in Local Plan Part 2 including; self-build, space standards, annexes, and residential development in the open countryside.

### **National Policy Context**

#### *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at Section 6 sets out the Government's policies on 'Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes'. Key aims of the NPPF are to widen the choice of high quality homes (paragraph 9) and boost significantly the supply of housing (paragraph 47). Local planning authorities are required to ensure their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.
- 2.3 To ensure a wide choice of high quality homes is delivered, local planning authorities also need to (paragraph 50);
- Plan for a mix of housing based on the current and future demographic needs of different groups in the community (including families with children, older people, people with disabilities, and people wishing to build their own home);
  - Identify the size, type and tenure and range of housing that is required reflecting local demand
- 2.4 The NPPF, (paragraph 55), aims to promote sustainable development in rural areas with housing being located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. However the NPPF is clear that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances, such as; the essential need for a rural worker, development would represent optimal viable use of a heritage asset or secure the future of the asset; would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to enhancement to immediate setting; or if what is proposed is of exceptional quality or innovative design.
- 2.5 In regards to the quality of development, the NPPF, (paragraphs 57 and 58), emphasises the importance of inclusive design for all development, creating safe and accessible environment.
- 2.6 The NPPF (at paragraph 159) is clear that all local planning authorities are expected to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities. The SHMA needs to identify the scale, range of tenures and mix of housing required to meet needs and address the need for all types of housing including the needs of different groups in the community, including older people, people with disabilities and people wishing to build their own homes.

- 2.7 The NPPF (at paragraph 174) is also clear that any local standards that are set out in Local Plans, such as those for affordable housing, car parking, public and private space etc. will need to be assessed to identify their likely cumulative impact on development. This is to ensure the implementation of the Local Plan is deliverable and development is viable.

### ***Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Other Legislation and Guidance***

- 2.8 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional guidance on the national policies identified in the NPPF. With regards to housing, the PPG provides additional guidance on self-build and space standards for housing. Where there are other specific national legislation or guidance on these matters, they are detailed below.
- 2.9 The PPG<sup>2</sup> considers it critical for local planning authorities to set out the needs for providing housing for older people given the projected increase in households aged 65 and over. It is also suggested that local planning authorities need to consider the size and quality of dwellings needed in order to enable older people to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible.
- 2.10 The PPG<sup>3</sup> identifies the important role housing can make in rural areas by supporting the sustainability of villages and smaller settlements and particularly where rural housing is key in helping to retain local services and community facilities. Importantly, the PPG advises that all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas.

### ***Self-Build***

- 2.11 The PPG<sup>4</sup> advises that self-build and custom house build registers provide valuable information on the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding and should form part of the evidence base of demand of this type of housing. In addition to the NPPF and PPG, the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015<sup>5</sup> and Housing and Planning Act 2016<sup>6</sup> provides detailed guidance on planning policies for self-build.
- 2.12 The Act places a duty on local planning authorities to keep a register of individuals and associations that have expressed an interest in acquiring serviced plots and custom self-build. It also places a duty on local planning authorities to have regard to the register when carrying out their planning, housing, land disposal and regeneration functions. The Self Build and Custom

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 2a-021-20160401

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 50-001-20160519

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 57-003-20160401

<sup>5</sup> Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015; available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents/enacted>

<sup>6</sup> Housing and Planning Act 2016; available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted>

Housebuilding (Register) Regulations 2015<sup>7</sup> set out the requirements that local planning authorities must follow in preparing their registers.

- 2.13 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a further duty on local planning authorities to grant suitable development in respect of sufficient serviced plots to match the demand on their self-build and custom build register. Demand is evidenced by the number of entries added during the base period. Local planning authorities need to ensure their local plans provide sufficient opportunity for self-build and custom building in their areas. They also have to ensure appropriate development management policies and/or practices are in place to deal with planning applications that are for or include land for self-build and custom housebuilding.

### ***Space Standards***

- 2.14 The PPG advises that local planning authorities should consider adopting the nationally described space standards and the optional Building Regulations standards (Part M) for accessibility. The PPG also states that local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements which exceed the minimum standards required by the Building Regulations in respect of access and the nationally described space standards. To be able to adopt both additional requirements however, local planning authorities need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area to justify appropriate policies in their Local Plans<sup>8</sup>.
- 2.15 The PPG considers that evidence in the SHMA should be used to determine in part, what is needed to demonstrate the need for people with specific requirements<sup>9</sup>. The SHMA along with any other available datasets will provide the evidence and it is then for the local planning authority to set out how it intends to approach demonstrating the need for Requirement M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and/or M4 (3) (wheelchair user dwellings) of the Building Regulations.
- 2.16 If evidence demonstrates a need for high accessibility or adaptability standards, local planning authorities can only require a higher standard by reference to the optional Building Regulations, M4(2) and M4(3) in local plan policy. Policy should clearly state what proportion of new dwellings should comply with the requirements including taking account of site specific factors, such as flooding, and viability where some sites may be less suitable to provide M4(2) and M4(3) compliant dwellings. In particular where step free access is not viable, neither of the requirements in Part M should be applied<sup>10</sup>.
- 2.17 The PPG is clear that local plan policies can only apply the higher standard for wheelchair accessible homes (M4 (3)) to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that

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<sup>7</sup> The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Register) Regulations 2016, available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/105/contents/made>

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 56-002-20160519

<sup>9</sup> Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 56-006-20150327

<sup>10</sup> Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 56-008-20160519

dwelling<sup>11</sup>. However, as an exception, the PPG is clear that local planning authorities can apply a different standard, outside of the wheelchair accessible standard, provided there is a specific and clearly evidenced accessibility need<sup>12</sup>

- 2.18 The Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards<sup>13</sup> (DCLG, March 15) sets out standards for the internal space of new dwellings and is applicable to all tenures. It identifies requirements for the gross internal (floor) area at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home. The standards require new dwellings to provide at least the gross internal floor area and built in storage areas as set out in Table 1 of the document.
- 2.19 To adopt both standards, local planning authorities must consider the impact on these standards as part of their Local Plan viability assessment. The evidence presented in the ‘Impact Assessment’ issued alongside the Housing Standards Review can be taken account of in such assessments<sup>14</sup>.

## Local Policy Context

### ***Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (LPP1), Adopted December 2016***

- 2.20 LPP1 identifies the number of new homes and allocates strategic development sites to help meet this need. Strategic Objectives 1-3 of the Local Plan identify the key objectives for housing. This includes the need to provide for a range of homes, to cater for existing and future residents’ needs, including the needs of different groups in the community and provision for a growing older population and direct growth to the most sustainable locations in the district.
- 2.21 The following LPP1 policies are of key relevance:
- **Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy** and **Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Needs** sets out the spatial strategy and housing target for the District;
  - **Core Policy 22: Housing Mix** ensures the right mix of housing sizes, types and tenures are provided; and
  - **Core Policy 26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of an Ageing Population** sets out measures to encourage the provision of housing to meet the needs of the ageing population.
- 2.22 LPP1, (paragraph 6.21), states the Council will consider the case for setting out higher accessibility, adaptability and wheelchair housing standards in Local Plan Part 2, taking account of the advice set out within the PPG.

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<sup>11</sup> Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327

<sup>12</sup> Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 56-011-20150327

<sup>13</sup> CLG (2015) Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

<sup>14</sup> Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 56-003-20150327

### ***Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011***

- 2.23 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of LPP1, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced however some saved policies have been carried forward.
- 2.24 The saved policies relating to housing that have been reviewed as part of this process, are as follows:
- GS6 Redevelopment of buildings outside settlements
  - GS7 Re-use of vernacular buildings outside settlements
  - GS8 Re-use of non-vernacular buildings outside settlements
  - H14 The sub-division of dwellings
  - H20 Accommodation for dependant relatives
  - H25 Garden extensions
- 2.25 An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to ascertain if any of them should be included in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or if they should no longer be replaced. **Appendix 1** shows the outcome of this process. In summary, 5 of the 6 saved policies are carried forward into LPP2 with 1 saved policy not being replaced. It is considered that there is no purpose in taking forward the 'Garden Extensions' policy as it duplicates other policies.

## **Evidence**

### ***Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014)***

- 2.26 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (SHMA) was published in April 2014<sup>15</sup>. The SHMA sets out the objectively assessed housing need for each of the districts in the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. The outcome of the SHMA is reflected in LPP1, in Core Policy 4: Meeting our Housing Needs. The key findings from the SHMA, are as follows:
- The older person population of Oxfordshire is projected to increase significantly up until 2031.
  - The growing older population will result in growth in households with specialist housing needs. Some of these households will require specialist housing such as sheltered or extra care provision.
  - The indicative net need for specialist housing for older people in the Vale is 1635-2371 additional units 2011- 2031.
  - Currently 22% of households contain someone with a long-term health problem or disability. Demographic trends also show significant growth in the population and number of households with disabilities up to 2031.
  - An analysis of younger person households shows a high reliance on rented housing.
  - There is a need to provide for an element of smaller housing units.

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<sup>15</sup> Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014

- 2.27 The findings of the SHMA demonstrate a need for Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to provide additional policies and detail on the provision of housing for specialist and older population needs. It also demonstrates a need to consider policies that support the provision of smaller dwellings.

***Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Needs Analysis for Older People in Oxfordshire (2016)***

- 2.28 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)<sup>16</sup> provides information about Oxfordshire’s population and the factors affecting health, wellbeing and social care needs. The ‘Needs Analysis for Older People in Oxfordshire’ was published in 2016<sup>17</sup> and complements the Oxfordshire JSNA.
- 2.29 The Report has concluded that Oxfordshire’s older population has grown quicker than the regional and national averages. Coupled with a slower rise in disability-free life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, the report suggests that more people are likely to be living into older age with long term conditions.
- 2.30 The assessment suggests that issues affecting older residents in Oxfordshire are likely to centre on affordability and suitability for older people’s needs.

***Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Housing Strategy***

- 2.31 The Council, in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council have commissioned Wessex Economics to produce a joint Housing Strategy for the Councils<sup>18</sup>. This Strategy draws on the information contained within the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and has considered relevant evidence contained in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to identify the needs of vulnerable groups. The Strategy is yet to be concluded, however there are a number of emerging key findings in the Strategy which LPP2 needs to take into account. These are as follows:

- The need for housing to meet specialist and older population needs.
- As the majority of older people will continue to live in mainstream housing in the future, the need for mainstream housing stock to be adaptable and flexible to meet the changing needs of households.
- Demographic and disability data suggests there is a case for building up a stock of accessible and adaptable buildings in line with Category M of Building Regulations.
- A key barrier to building to Category 2 in the market sector is the impact on build costs and thus viability. The case for affordable homes to be built to Category 2 is more clear cut.
- The Strategy suggests the following standards:

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<sup>16</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, available at: <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

<sup>17</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2016) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Needs Analysis for Older People in Oxfordshire, available at: <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/needs-analysis-older-people-oxfordshire>

<sup>18</sup> Wessex Economics (TBC) Joint Housing Strategy for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

- All affordable homes should meet Category 2 (subject to viability)
- Aim for 5% of affordable homes at Category 3 (subject to viability)
- Market homes – 15% should meet Category 2 (subject to viability)
- Market homes – 2% should meet Category 3 (subject to viability)
- The Strategy sets out some options for the Council to consider making more specific provision for specialist housing, which could include allocating specific sites to meet this need or consider opportunities as part of Didcot Garden Town.
- The Strategy suggests there is evidence of a substantial proportion of small properties within the market sector that fall below the new nationally described space standards. This evidence is supportive of a policy which introduces these space standards as a means to improve the space available.
- The Strategy suggests the following standards:
  - All affordable homes should meet the nationally described space standards.
  - In the market sector, the Councils should apply the minimum space standard for 1 bed properties.

2.32 The draft findings of the emerging Housing Strategy demonstrate there is a need in the district to identify Optional Building regulations Part M (2) and (3) at differing thresholds and the Nationally Described Space Standards subject to the outcome of the viability assessment on the former.

### ***Viability Update (2017)***

2.33 The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd. to undertake a viability assessment<sup>19</sup> of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 including both policies and additional sites. The Report tests the effectiveness of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 as to whether the cumulative impact of policies in the Plan puts the Development Plan at risk.

2.34 The report concludes that most of the development management policies related to housing do not add additional burdens to developers. However draft findings from the emerging Housing Strategy have not been tested for viability. Therefore policies in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 related to space standards will be subject to further viability testing during the evolution of the Housing Strategy and the refinement of policies in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

### ***Self-Build Register***

2.35 The Council maintains an up to date Self and Custom Build Register that demonstrates interest in self-build within the district. As of October 2016, there were 114 recorded interests for self and custom build related to Vale and South Oxfordshire districts.

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<sup>19</sup> HDH Planning and Development Ltd. (2017) Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Viability Update, available at: [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2)

## **Informal Consultation Outcomes**

2.36 The Planning Policy Team has undertaken informal consultation with other teams in the Council and key external bodies as part of the early preparation of Local Plan Part 2. The informal consultation responses received have identified a number of issues that have helped inform policy development to date of Local Plan Part 2. Key comments are as follows:

- Housing Team: commented on the need to consider self-build as an affordable housing option, however concerns raised as to how this would be delivered. Further consideration required following the Housing Strategy being finalised.
- Design Team: supportive of a self-build policy and suggests general design criteria are also included.
- Design Team: considered the need for a policy to provide further detail to the NPPF, paragraph 55 in regards to innovative design, however concluded there is no need for an additional policy as the NPPF sets a high design standard.
- Enforcement Team: supportive of a residential annexe policy and suggested the need for the policy to cover detached annexes.
- Equalities Officer: supportive of the Optional Building Regulation Standards to provide adaptable and accessible homes.
- Development Management Team: ensure all policies link to Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy.
- Development Management Team: rural workers dwelling policy should define clearly what it considers is 'the need' of a rural enterprise.
- Development Management and Housing Teams: suggest the need for a policy regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation whilst acknowledging that the Council does not receive many applications for such development and noting that permitted development rights cover up to 6 occupants.

## **Key Issues**

2.37 The key issues to be considered when preparing LPP2 policies, reflecting the above, are:

- National policy and local evidence supports the need for LPP2 to enable self-build in the district.
- The self-build register demonstrates there is a demand for self-build plots.
- The extent of specialist housing needs for the older population and disabled suggests a requirement for this type of housing in the district with LPP1 Core Policy 26 providing strategic direction.
- The draft findings from the Housing Strategy suggest there is sufficient evidence to identify Optional Building Standards Part M (2) and (3) and the National Described Space Standards. The finalised recommendations of the Housing Strategy will need to be considered in developing these policies.
- Clarity is required in relation to rural workers dwelling proposals in terms of the definition of factors that constitute 'the need' of a rural enterprise.

- The extent of need for smaller dwellings in the district.

## **Recommendations**

2.38 The recommendations in respect of housing policies for consideration in LPP2 are as follows:

1. A policy should be considered in relation to self-build which supports the provision of self-build plots in appropriate locations in accordance with Core Policy 3. Further consideration is needed in respect to whether the delivery of self-build should also be an affordable homes option.
2. A policy should be considered in relation to space standards, setting out the district's requirements for the Optional Building Regulations set out in Part M and space standards. The draft Housing Strategy draws on local evidence, including the SHMA and suggests that adaptable housing is required and that some smaller units in the district are not being built to National Described Space Standards. A policy setting out a requirement for these standards should therefore be considered, however the level of requirement needs further consideration.
3. Policies to enable appropriate housing development in the open countryside should be considered, in line with the intent of national planning policy. This includes replacement dwellings, rural workers dwellings and reuse and conversion of dwellings.
4. A policy to enable appropriate subdivision of dwellings should be considered.
5. A policy to enable residential annexes should be considered.

## 3.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 3.1 This section sets out the key issues to be taken into consideration in formulating the community facilities and services policies in Local Plan Part 2, including provision of new facilities and services, the protection against the loss of important local facilities and services.

### National Policy Context

#### *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

- 3.2 A core planning principle of the NPPF (paragraph 17), is that planning should help ensure sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section 8 of the NPPF sets out the Government's policies on 'Promoting Healthy Communities'.
- 3.3 To deliver the facilities and services a community needs, the NPPF (paragraph 70) suggests that planning policies should:
- Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
  - Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
  - Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise.
  - Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 3.4 In relation to supporting a prosperous rural economy, to promote a strong rural economy, the NPPF (paragraph 28) suggests that local plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages.

#### *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Other Legislation*

- 3.5 The PPG outlines what a healthy community is and identifies that active healthy lifestyles should be encouraged. This includes ensuring good access to local services and facilities, making these facilities and services accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and meeting the need of people of all ages, supporting social interaction<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 53-005-20140306

## ***Assets of Community Value***

3.6 Public houses and other community facilities can also be listed by the Council as an 'Asset of Community Value' (ACVs)<sup>21</sup>. The tests for an asset to be listed are set out in section 88 of the Localism Act. To be listed, the Council must be satisfied that an asset has provided community value currently or in the recent past and it is reasonable to think that it could provide community value in the future. The Council has to weigh up all factors in coming to a decision on whether to list or not. The detailed process for designation is set out in the Community Right to Bid advice note<sup>22</sup>. This states that it is up to individual local authority to decide whether designation is a material consideration in planning decisions.

## **Local Policy Context**

### ***Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (LPP1), Adopted December 2016***

3.7 Strategic Objectives 2-4 of the Local Plan Part 1 set out the key objectives for community facilities and services. This includes the need to cater for existing and future residents including the needs of different groups, creating integrated developments that are supported by a sufficient range of services and facilities, and improving the health and wellbeing of Vale residents.

3.8 The following LPP1 policies are of key relevance:

- **Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy** sets out the spatial strategy.
- **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services** ensures new services and facilities are delivered alongside new housing and employment.

### ***Saved Policies in Local Plan 2011***

3.9 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (LP2011) was adopted in July 2006. The majority of policies in the LP2011 were 'saved' by the Secretary of State in 2009. Following the adoption of LPP1, a number of saved LP2011 policies were replaced however some saved policies have been carried forward.

3.10 The saved policies relating to community facilities and services that have been reviewed as part of this process, are as follows:

- CF1 Protection of existing services and facilities
- CF2 Provision of new community services and facilities
- CF3: Cemetery provision in Faringdon

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<sup>21</sup> The Council maintains a listing of Assets of Community Value (ACV). Further information is available to view and access on the Council website at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/assets-community-value>

<sup>22</sup> "Community Right to Bid: Non-statutory advice note for local authorities" Department for Communities and Local Government October 2012

- CF4: Cemetery provision in Wantage
  - CF5 Public houses
- 3.11 An assessment of these saved policies has been undertaken to ascertain if any of them should be included in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or if they should no longer be replaced. Appendix 2 shows the outcome of this process. It is considered that three saved policies should be carried into Local Plan Part 2 with two policies not being replaced. The two policies not to be taken forward relate to the provision of cemetery extensions at Wantage and Faringdon. These extensions have been implemented thus the policies are no longer needed.

## Evidence

### ***Town and Village Facilities Study Update (2014)***

- 3.12 The Town and Village Facilities Study Update<sup>23</sup> (Feb 2014) collated information on the services and facilities that are available in the various settlements across the district. This information was then used to assess the relative sustainability of market towns, local service centres, villages and hamlets and informed Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy.
- 3.13 The Study recorded the key community services and facilities within each settlement, such as; schools, shops, places of worship, pubs, restaurants, post office, building society, medical centres, library, and community or village halls. It also assessed the nearby availability and accessibility to such facilities and services.

### ***Local Leisure Facilities Study (2016)***

- 3.14 Village and community halls are essential facilities for many local communities, providing facilities for community events and a variety of activities. They are often crucial in helping to maintain or in developing community cohesion within existing communities or new neighbourhoods.
- 3.15 The local leisure facilities study included assessment of needs for village and community halls and identified standards for accessibility, quantity and quality of such provision. It recommends to apply a local standard of 120sq m per 1000 population.

### ***Viability Update (2017)***

- 3.16 The Council commissioned HDH Planning and Development Ltd. To undertake a viability assessment<sup>24</sup> of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 including both policies and additional sites. The Report tests the effectiveness of the Local Plan 2031

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<sup>23</sup> Town and Village Facilities Study (2014); available at:  
[http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic\\_serve.jsp?ID=627990532&CODE=8A68D7264487B3F058DCC613A1DAA55E](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=627990532&CODE=8A68D7264487B3F058DCC613A1DAA55E)

<sup>24</sup> HDH Planning and Development Ltd. (2017) Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Viability Update, available at:  
[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2)

Part 2 as to whether the cumulative impact of policies in the Plan puts the Development Plan at risk.

- 3.17 The report concludes that development management policies related to communities focus on the protection and enabling provision of facilities and therefore does not add additional burdens to developers.

### **Informal Consultation Outcomes**

- 3.18 The Planning Policy Team has undertaken informal consultation with other relevant teams in the Council and key external bodies as part of the early preparation of Local Plan Part 2. The informal consultation responses received have identified a number of issues that have helped inform policy development to date of Local Plan Part 2. Key comments are as follows:

- Equalities Officer: suggested improvements to policy wording regarding making provision for the needs of different groups.
- Development Management Team: commented on how important the loss of facilities and provision of new facilities policies (including public houses) are in decision making; and
- Policy and Partnerships Team: provided information regarding Assets of Community Value.

### **Key Issues**

- 3.19 The key issues to be considered when preparing LPP2 policies, reflecting the above, are:

- National policy and informal consultation has suggested it is important to include policies on protection of existing community facilities and services including public houses.
- National policy and informal consultation has suggested it is important to include policies to protect and support the provision of community facilities and services to serve the existing and new population.
- Local evidence has provided a specific local standard for the provision of village and community halls.

### **Recommendations**

- 3.20 The recommendations in respect of community facilities and services policies for consideration in LPP2 are as follows:

1. Policy should be considered in relation to supporting the provision of new community facilities and services and protecting against the loss of facilities and services.
2. The inclusion of a village and community hall standard should be considered within the policies.

3. A policy on the retention and protection of public houses should be considered within the policies.

## APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 HOUSING POLICIES

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary of Saved Policy</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?</i>
GS6 Redevelopment of buildings outside settlements	Enables new buildings on previously developed sites in the countryside where they are currently occupied by permanent buildings.	Consistent, in part, with the Framework	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain useful in determining this type of proposal.	Yes
GS7 Re-use of vernacular built outside settlements	Enables the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed rural buildings of vernacular built.	Consistent, in part, with the Framework	These policies are regularly used by the Development Management Team and are considered to remain useful in determining these types of proposal. However there is no need to have two separate policies going forward.	Yes
GS8 Re-use of non-vernacular buildings outside settlements	Enables the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed rural buildings of non-vernacular built.	Consistent, in part, with the Framework		Yes
H14 The sub-division of dwellings	Enables the subdivision of existing dwellings	Fully Consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain useful in determining this type of proposal.	Yes
H20 Accommodation for dependant relatives	Enables the extension or sub-division of an existing dwelling or conversion outbuildings for additional living accommodation for certain needs.	Fully Consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain useful in determining this type of proposal.	Yes
H25 Garden extensions	Sets out the circumstances where the extension of garden is appropriate.	Fully Consistent	There are other policies in the Local Plan which can be used to determine this type of development. There is no need to duplicate other policies.	No

## APPENDIX 2: ASSESSMENT OF SAVED LOCAL PLAN 2011 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES POLICIES

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary of Saved Policy</i>	<i>Consistency with NPPF</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Inclusion in Local Plan 2031 Part 2?</i>
CF1 Protection of existing services and facilities	Resists the loss of facilities and services	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain a key policy in determining this type of proposal.	Yes
CF2 Provision of new community services and facilities	Supports the provision of new community facilities and services	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain a key policy in determining this type of proposal.	Yes
CF3: Cemetery provision in Faringdon	Enables the extension of the cemetery in Faringdon	Fully consistent	The extension to the cemetery has been implemented.	No
CF4: Cemetery provision in Wantage	Enables the extension of the cemetery in Wantage	Fully consistent	The extension to the cemetery has been implemented.	No
CF5 Public houses	Resists the change of use of public houses that are central to community life.	Fully consistent	This policy is regularly used by the Development Management Team and is considered to remain useful in determining this type of proposal.	Yes



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Please contact Planning on 01235 422600

**Planning Policy Team**

135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton,

Abingdon, OX14 4SB

Tel: 01235 422600

Email: [planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)