

20 November 2017
L 171120 AR Gallagher Gleeson Reps LP Part 2



Planning Policy
Vale of White Horse District Council
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Milton
OX14 4SB

Andrew Raven
E: araven@savills.com
DL: +44 (0) 1865 369 045

Wytham Court
11 West Way
Oxford OX2 0QL
DX 96205 - Oxford West
T: +44 (0) 1865 269 000
savills.com

Dear Sir or Madam

Representations in relation to the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 : Detailed Policies and Additional Sites Publication Version document

Savills is instructed by Gallagher Estates Ltd and Gleeson Strategic Land (referred to as Gallagher-Gleeson) in relation to Monks Farm, Grove. The following correspondence provides a response to the current consultation on the above document (hereafter referred to as the 'PVLP Part 2'). This response should be read in addition to representations made to previous stages of the Local Plan, namely those made on the Draft Local Plan 2029 Part One (May 2013), the Local Plan 2031 Strategic Sites and Policies Consultation Draft (February 2014), the Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (December 2014), the Response to Developer Contributions SPD (January 2017) and the Local Plan Part 2 Preferred Options (March 2017).

The comments in relation to this document are set out below and relate to three key areas:

1. The proposed allocation of additional development land at the north-west of Grove;
2. The proposed safeguarding of land at the site for Grove Railway Station;
3. The on and off-site requirements associated with the development of land north of Grove.

Proposed allocation of land at North West Grove

Core Policy 4a of the LP Part 2 sets out the increased requirements of the District to meet its own housing needs and the additional requirements to assist Oxford City Council in providing for its unmet need. In light of these additional requirements the Council has increased the overall target for delivery over the plan period and has allocated additional sites as part of the LP Part 2 to meet this additional need. This has resulted in proposals to bring forward 1,400 homes within the Science Vale area.

Core Policy 15a of the LP Part 2 has identified additional sites within the South East Vale Sub-Area which include sites within Harwell Campus, Harwell Village and Grove. The Grove site (Land north-west of Grove) borders the Gallagher-Gleeson site on its western edge and provides a logical complement to other allocations within the area, such as Grove Airfield.

This site is not in the control of Gallagher-Gleeson however, the allocation of the site as a logical complement to development coming forward in the area is supported.

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Proposed Safeguarding of Additional Land for Grove Railway Station

The District Council, in its adoption of the VoWH Local Plan Part 1 (LP Part1), identified an area of land for safeguarding for the potential future re-opening of Grove Railway Station. This proposal was identified in response to the ATOC document ‘Connecting Communities: Expanding Access to the Rail Network’ published in June 2009. The safeguarding policy in the LP Part 1 noted an area of land along the A338 to the east of the Gallagher-Gleeson site.

The LP Part 2 Preferred Options consultation in March 2017 set out a significantly expanded area of land to be safeguarded for the rail station, including four separate options for its location. This area has now been substantially reduced in the PVLP Part 2, albeit not to the potential level that may be required; and the number of potential locations has been reduced to two options, both west of the A338. The area of land outlined in pink is from the ‘western’ option included in the PVLP Part 2 Appendix B. The red hatched area is the area that fulfils the requirements for a rail station, including bus access, parking, turning areas and platforms, as understood by Gallagher Gleeson.



Gallagher Gleeson have not been able to review any studies that have been carried out in relation to the requirements for the station or the area defined in the PVLP Part 2. The feasibility work carried out to date has not been made public. The policy should therefore add supporting text making clear that once feasibility studies are complete ‘land not required for the rail station will be released for housing and associated uses as part of the wider development framework for the area.’

The on and off-site requirements associated with the development of land north of Grove

Whilst the policies of the LP Part 2 do not specifically relate to the Gallagher-Gleeson site or its on-site/ off-site requirements, it is noted that the evidence base to support this consultation document includes a Joint Recreational Space, Local Leisure Facilities and Playing Pitch Study (November 2016), a Playing Pitch Study (October 2015) and a Local Leisure Facilities Study (June 2016). All of these documents are updated versions of those used as part of the Evidence Base for the LP Part 1 and the Local Plan Part 2, albeit the most recent update subsequent to the Preferred Options consultation seems to be the removal of 'Draft report' in favour of 'Final report' on the front covers.

The previous representations made by Gallagher Gleeson in relation to the Developer Contributions document included comments on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP, December 2016). The IDP stated that the Monks Farm site should provide 4 x tennis courts, 1 x MUGA, 1 x Cricket Pitch and 1 x Clubhouse Pavilion on site. This was in direct conflict with the evidence base for the LP Part 1 which identified that the site should make off-site contributions towards all of these elements.

The final version of the Local Leisure Facilities report identifies that Monks Farm is expected to provide 4 No. tennis courts on site (paragraph 4.7). Whilst this is not supported by the Sport England calculator (p67 of the Nortoft Leisure Study) for the number of dwellings proposed, this provision has been agreed as part of the wider development framework for north Grove.

Figure 36 and 37 of the final Open Spaces Study identifies that Monks Farm should provide MUGA / youth provision, a LEAP and NEAP. This has been agreed as part of the development framework for north Grove.

The final Playing Pitch Study identifies that new pitches proposed at Grove Airfield and Crab Hill should meet the demands of the wider South East area. As such, no new pitches are proposed at north Grove, although contributions are likely to be made to off-site provision.

The approach agreed through discussions with Vale of White Horse is therefore to provide on site: -

- 1 x multi use games area (MUGA);
- A local equipped play area and neighbourhood equipped play area; and
- 4 No tennis courts.

The MUGA and equipped play areas would be delivered within land controlled by Gallagher-Gleeson. It is recommended that the IDP is updated to ensure it complies with the requirements set out in the evidence base.

Conclusions

The allocation of land north-west Grove is supported as it provides a logical complement to the existing allocated sites and complies with the requirements of the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of housing in the District.

In relation to the proposal to safeguard land for the provision of a rail station at Grove we would note that no evidence has been published to support the safeguarded areas. The LP Part 2 should make clear that when the work that underpins the location and size for a rail station is complete, the land that remains (outside of the required station area) within the development framework should be released to support housing as allocated in the Local Plan Part 1.

Gallagher-Gleeson has previously made comments in relation to leisure, sports pitch and play provision on site. These are re-iterated in light of the 'final' evidence base in order to confirm the agreed delivery strategy for leisure, play and sports pitches in relation to the allocation at north Grove.

Our understanding and approach with regards to the safeguarded land for the rail station (as shown in the masterplan extract above), and open spaces / pitch provision, has been extensively discussed and agreed with officers during the determination of our application, which is now at a very advanced stage. We trust, therefore, that these amendments will be given due consideration in the progression of the Local Plan Part 2.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Raven
Director