



Examination of Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 : Matters and Questions

Written Statement in relation to the site allocation of North of East Hanney & Matter 4.1a

Prepared by West Waddy, on behalf of Pye Homes Ltd

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Written Statement is prepared by West Waddy, on behalf of Pye Homes, and provides information in relation to the questions raised in the Matters and Questions document in the Examination of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 – hereafter referred to as ‘Part 2’.
- 1.2. This document is prepared specifically in regard to the site of North of East Hanney, which is proposed as a housing allocation within the ‘Part 2’.
- 1.3. Questions are raised in Matter 4.1 in relation to 4 sites, one of which is North of East Hanney (4.1a). The matter of 4.1 can be split into 4 logical questions, as explored in section 2 below:

2. Matter 4.1a – North of East Hanney

Are the housing allocations listed in Policy 8a the most appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives in the light of site constraints, infrastructure requirements and potential impacts?

- 2.1. The Vale of White Horse District Council (also referred herein as ‘the Council’) are required to meet their own need and their apportionment of Oxford’s unmet need. Paragraph 3.2 of the Statement of Common Ground between West Waddy/Pye Homes and Vale of White Horse District Council has already set out that there is a clear and pressing need for deliverable sites in the short and long term to meet identified housing needs in a timely manner and to sustain a five-year housing land supply in the short term.
- 2.2. The most logical locations of growth are those sites upon strategic transport corridors, in close proximity to ‘Science Vale’, and/or in sustainable locations with appropriate access to Oxford.
- 2.3. With specific regard to East Hanney, it is a ‘larger village’ as set out in Core Policy 3 of the Part 1, and does have bus connections with Oxford and Wantage. The nearest bus stop to the North of East Hanney site is directly adjacent to the site, on the A338. The larger village does have a number of services, including local store and primary school, and new residents will serve to enhance the vitality of the village and improve the opportunities that may be open to it in the future. It does connect well with local employment centres. The site selection process undertaken by the Council has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 2.4. Development within the local authority should not only be located in large strategic scale sites; this would present significant housing delivery risks to the Council. This is because large sites often have long lead-in times for implementation. It is therefore highly appropriate to allocate some sites of 100 dwellings or less which can be delivered in a timely manner and can pro-actively contribute towards housing supply in the short term. The Framework states ‘Plan-making means that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet development needs of their area’ (Paragraph 14, NPPF). It is much more



appropriate therefore to allocate North of East Hanney, than apply such housing numbers onto other larger sites.

- 2.5. The site of North of East Hanney is in a relatively unconstrained location, with no statutory designations. It is not in the Oxford Green Belt. It is not within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.6. The Council have undertaken a site selection process and have produced a Site Selection Topic Paper (TOPO2.3) which sets out the North of East Hanney site and other sites. In this the Council has included comment from both Preferred Options and Publication Version stages. In the case of both stages commentary is positive on the capacity and limited constraint of the site, and wider comments identify that the location of the site is on a strategic transport corridor.

Are the estimates of site capacity justified?

- 2.7. The site capacity for North of East Hanney comprises 'up to 80 dwelling, subject to masterplanning'.
- 2.8. The site area is 3.44 hectares. As set out previously the site is expected to deliver a high quality, sustainable extension to the north of East Hanney village in keeping with the rural setting and character of the area.
- 2.9. Investigations into site constraints and requirements have taken place and subject to masterplanning 'up to 80' dwellings is justified.
- 2.10. The Council's Local Plan Viability Update provides evidence that all the additional site allocations were fully viable.
- 2.11. There are no objections from statutory bodies in relation to the site of North of East Hanney.

Are the expected timescales for development realistic?

- 2.12. Pye Homes have an excellent track record of the timely delivery of housing projects. We can refer the Inspector to other recent examples within the local area whereby Pye Homes have worked pro-actively with local authorities to deliver sites. This includes Marcham (Willow Farm), Sutton Courtenay (Sutton Fields) and East Hendred (The Portway). In every one of these examples Pye Homes has ensured that the sites are built swiftly and with delivery occurring within 5 years.
- 2.13. In the Statement of Common Ground (SCG13) prepared in February 2018, the Council and West Waddy/Pye Homes agreed that the site was capable of delivery within the Plan period and it was proposed that the site would deliver housing between the period 2020-2022. This remains accurate and realistic.
- 2.14. A detailed planning application for the development of the site is in final preparation and is anticipated to be submitted imminently.

Are the site development template requirements – both general and site specific – justified, consistent with national policy and would they be effective?

- 2.15. The site development template for North of East Hanney is justified, consistent with national policy and effective.



- 2.16. The site boundary is correct, and the site area is correct. The key objective is in line with the vision for the site and our work to date allows for a development which is in keeping with the rural setting and character of the area, and that integrates with the existing settlement.
- 2.17. The site specific requirement are supported, as follows:
- 2.18. Urban Design: All matters are noted and have been subject to liaison between West Waddy and Vale of White Horse District Council. These matters are justified, consistent and effective.
- 2.19. Utilities: The likely requirement of upgrading the sewer network is noted and thus the utilities section on the Site Development Template is appropriate.
- 2.20. Access and Highways: A junction capacity assessment is undertaken as part of the Transport Statement and therefore this information will be available. The detail of access arrangements has already been the subject of meeting between Oxfordshire County Council, West Waddy and Vale of White Horse District Council. Contributions will be made where appropriate. This section is therefore justified, consistent and effective.
- 2.21. Social and Community: Contributions to education and healthcare, and other relevant community facilities are anticipated and this is justified, consistent and effective.
- 2.22. Environmental Health: All matters regarding Environmental Health can be mitigated for within the scheme design. The site contains no abnormal matters that would prevent this.
- 2.23. Landscape considerations: This section raises matters which are justified, consistent and effective, and Pye Homes have already been working towards this matter.
- 2.24. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure: This section raises matters which are justified, consistent and effective and Pye Homes have been working towards these matters.
- 2.25. Flood Risk and Drainage: The Site Development Template has requested a Flood Risk Assessment and we can confirm that this is justified, consistent and effective. A Flood Risk Assessment has already be prepared.
- 2.26. Furthermore, the parties of West Waddy ADP and Pye Homes, and Vale of White Horse District Council have formed agreement, as per the Statement of Common Ground (SCG13), that the Council are adequately planning for infrastructure, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the submission of the Part 2 plan

Additional Note

- 2.27. As part of this Written Statement West Waddy and Pye Homes include an Appendix which provides an update on the technical aspects of the project, and demonstrate that the site is deliverable and ready to be validated such that housing delivery can occur in the timeframes outlined.



Appendix – Update on Technical Information

Transport

A detailed Transport Assessment has been undertaken and is ready for submission with a planning application at the appropriate time.

The Transport Assessment is clear in demonstrating that the development is fully in accordance with both national and local policy and in particular confirms that the impact of the development is not severe.

The Council have agreed, as per comments in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement Appendix 3 February 2018, that the impact of the development will not lead to any significant highway impacts.

The site can be accessed via a single priority T-Junction, on to the A338. The junction can be implemented with the appropriate visibility splays in either direction.

Transport Assessment work undertaken has confirmed that the development can be achieved without creating a material impact on the local highway in terms of traffic volume. The level of traffic on the new junction would be well within operational capacity on all arms in the 2021 assessment scenario during peak periods.

The Transport Assessment finds that the site is within easy walking distance of a range of village services, including local store (incorporating a post office), primary school, community shop, sports facility restaurant and the development has the ability to be connected with existing local pedestrians pavements. A pedestrian connection can also be formed to the Ashfields Lane. As a result the site of North of East Hanney is well related to the existing settlement.

The site is in very close proximity with bus stops, and the provision of new housing may help to improve bus frequency. The site is supported by OCC and local bus operators, as commented by the Council in as per comments in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement Appendix 3 February 2018.

West Waddy's pre-application liaison with Oxfordshire County Council has been positive in its progress.

The Site Development Template sets out requirements to ensure the development proposal contributes towards infrastructure improvement along the A338. Likewise the presence of new development could help to enhance local transport options,

Traffic generation of the development would not lead to a significant increase to noise levels in the village.

Flood Risk and Drainage

A site specific Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken to support the proposed site allocation and planning application in due course. The Flood Risk Assessment has been based on Environment Agency data and an accurate Topographical Survey.

The present Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning indicates the site is predominantly located within Flood Zone 1, area of least fluvial flood risk. There is a small area of Flood Zone 2 located to the north of the site. The FRA identifies that the site can deliver dwellings on the site without the need to encroach on areas designated Flood Zone 2, in accordance with the planning aspirations of the NPPF. We confirm that the Masterplan will locate all dwellings within Flood Zone 1.



Infiltration testing has been undertaken across the site which concluded that infiltration is feasible on the site. Through the implementation of best practice sustainable drainage features there will be no increase in surface water run-off from that of the existing pre-developed greenfield run-off rates.

The Environment Agency has confirmed that the area of Flood Zone 2 in the site is not hydraulically linked to the watercourse and is only a result of a low point in the site in the hydraulic modelling.

It is noted that the Environment Agency have formed a Statement of Common Ground with Vale of White Horse District Council, and that the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment received an update in February 2018, and that such parties agreed that this provided robust and up-to-date evidence.

The site is not designated as floodplain. The Council do not require to apply a sequential test for the site selection, given the low risk category of the land.

Foul Sewage

The Site Development Template ensures that the development proposal upgrades the sewer network and liaison with Thames Water takes place.

Open Space

Open space can be provided in accordance with Development Policy 33.

Heritage and Archaeology

An Archaeological and Heritage Assessment has been undertaken at the site. The site is not within a Conservation Area, however the area beyond the grass access strip adjacent to the western boundary of the site is the edge of the East Hanney Conservation Area. The site does not contain any listed buildings and there are no listed buildings adjacent to the site. The nearest listed element is c.180m metres away, situated to the east of the A338, comprising a Milestone Point and the nearest listed building (a barn) is c.140m away, situated off Halls Lane. It is considered that the proposals can deliver a high quality residential development in keeping with its rural setting and character of the area. The Heritage Report prepared can be submitted with any planning application to come forward and assesses the relationship of the site with the Conservation Area. Furthermore the Masterplan can be delivered to have a lower density of housing along the western edge.

The heritage related wording of the Site Development Template is supported by Historic England.

Ecology

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken and identifies the site as a species poor grassland habitat, of limited ecological value. Existing buildings on the site have negligible potential to support roosting bats. There are no statutory designated sites for nature conservation located within or adjacent to the site, or within 2km. Residential development will bring the potential for ecological enhancements. Overall it is considered there are no ecological constraints to residential development at the site and through industry standard mitigations measures there are opportunities to provide a net gain in biodiversity across the site.

Landscape and Visual Impact

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been carried out by a qualified landscape architect and in accordance with GLVIA3. The site is not covered by any statutory landscape designations, nor is the site considered to represent a 'valued landscape'. Furthermore, the site can be designed in accordance with national and local landscape planning policy.



The site is currently used for the grazing of horses with several outbuildings which are associated with equine activities. The northern boundary is defined by an existing field boundary that comprises a mix of post and wire fencing and established hedgerow. Several mature willows, characteristic of the localised landscape setting, are present within this boundary and create a degree of separation between the site and the wider landscape setting to the north. The eastern boundary consists of a mature vegetated boundary which forms a visual separation between landscape to the east which is more open and denuded.

In summary, there are no significant constraints to development in landscape and visual terms and the proposals would not result in significant harm to the landscape characteristics of the area. Furthermore, the proposal provides an opportunity to provide strategic landscape planting to create a strong defensible boundary to the village.

The development can complement the character and setting of the village and is a logical location to extend the village.

Contamination

A Phase 1 and 2 Geo-environmental Assessment has been undertaken. Given the sites greenfield nature there have not been any potential contaminative uses present on site, furthermore soil testing indicates there are no elevated levels of contaminants in the soils across the site. As such, there are no sources of contamination that are present which would preclude the proposed site allocation for residential development.

Education

The development of the site would make appropriate contribution to the education system of the local area. This is picked up within the Site Development Template.

Healthcare

The Council have rightly commented that it is not realistic nor financially viable to expect health care provision in every larger village, and that this does not preclude appropriate development. Contributions as part of a planning application can contribute to the local provision of healthcare and is included in the Site Development Template.

Lighting

Discussion on lighting can occur at the detailed stages, i.e. within a planning application, with the appropriate parties. This does not preclude development.

East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan

The East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan is at an early stage of development and has not been adopted. As a document it therefore carries no weight in planning consideration.

Community Engagement

West Waddy and Pye Homes have previously met with East Hanney Parish Council during the initial stage of design, and the Vale of White Horse District Council has separately met with the East Hanney Parish Council during the preparation of the Part 2.

West Waddy and Pye Homes had additionally previously written to all residents and businesses of East Hanney and taken on board the views which they expressed.