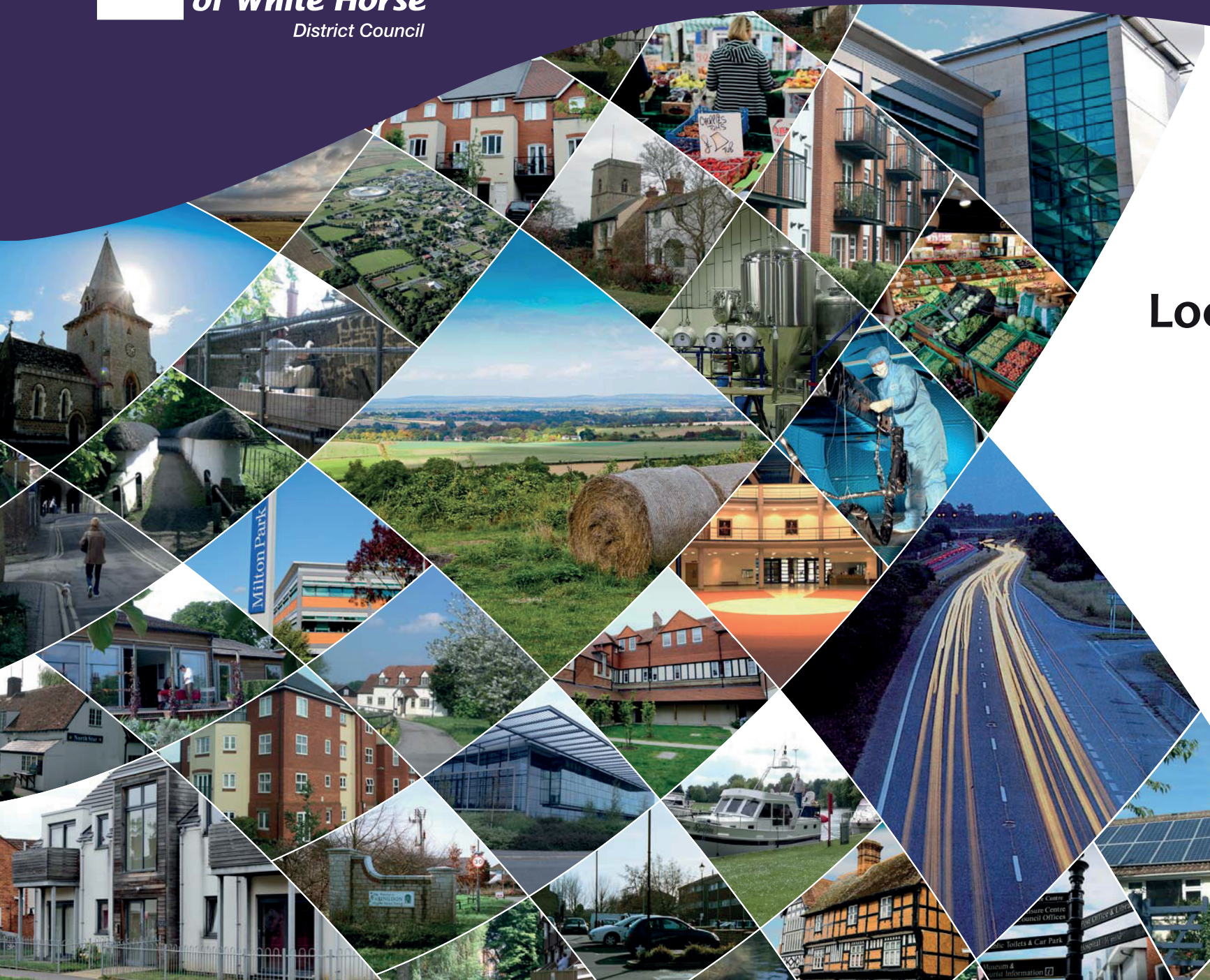
Vale of White Horse District Council

Publication Version
November 2014



Local Plan 2031
Part 1
Strategic Sites and Policies

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How to comment on this document

This is the 'Publication Version' of the Vale Local Plan 2031, which is intended for submission to the Secretary of State in March 2015 for independent public examination.

Comments to this version of the plan can only relate to the matters of soundness, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework:

- **Has the plan been positively prepared** – will the plan meet development needs and infrastructure requirements and is it consistent with achieving sustainable development?
- **Is the plan justified** – is the plan based on a robust and credible evidence base?
- **Is the plan effective** – can the plan actually be delivered and is it able to respond to change?
- **Is the plan consistent with national policy** – is the plan consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework?

Further guidance on the requirements for submitting comments at this stage can be found on the Council's website at: **www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/localplan** and at local libraries and Council offices.

The consultation will take place for six weeks from Friday 7 November to Friday 19 December 2014.

There are a number of ways you can respond:

1. The Council's online consultation portal: **https://consult.southandvale.gov.uk/vale**

   Once you have accessed the portal, simply click the 'add comment' tab located top right of the page.

2. Visit the Council's offices or local libraries across the District

3. Complete a response form available online **www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/localplan** or at the above locations and send via the following:
   - Email: **planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk**
   - By post: Planning Policy Team
     Vale of White Horse District Council
     Benson Lane
     Crowmarsh Gifford
     Wallingford
     OX10 8ED

A Local Plan newsletter called 'Vale Community' is also available via email, and will feature useful information about the Local Plan document.
To receive this, type 'subscribe' in an email header to the following address: **localplan@whitehorsedc.gov.uk**

Views should be made on the plan using the above methods by 5pm on Friday 19 December 2014.

Foreword

Foreword

This is our Local Plan. It sets out a vision for how the Vale should develop and grow until the year 2031. It includes how and where new houses should be built, where new jobs should be placed, and what infrastructure, such as schools and roads, will be needed to support them.

This Local Plan conforms with the latest national planning guidelines. It is based on the very latest evidence and engagement with the views of people in our communities.

The Vale is a special place. It's uniquely beautiful with a rich natural and man-made heritage, but it's also home to cutting-edge science and technology. It's a great place to live.

Not only is this one of the highest quality places to live in the country, it is also one of the most expensive. Providing more houses will help make housing more affordable and available, and help people build their lives and families in the Vale.

The amount of housing we have to provide will have a lasting effect on the Vale. With this plan and associated documents we will make sure new developments are in the right places, that they suit their surroundings and that they're supported by the appropriate infrastructure.

This plan is to make sure we look after what is best about the Vale; that we help the district grow and develop in a way that protects its historic and rural features, whilst enhancing and strengthening its status as a home for technology and innovation.

This is our Local Plan and it contains our vision for the Vale.

Councillor Matthew Barber
Leader of the Council

Councillor Michael Murray
Cabinet Member for Planning Policy

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Vale of White Horse ***Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies*** provides a policy framework for the delivery of sustainable development across the district up to 2031.

The plan sets out the Spatial Strategy and strategic policies for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area and makes provision for retail, leisure and commercial development and the infrastructure needed to support them.

The Local Plan 2031 has been prepared in compliance with national policy and in particular the National Planning Policy Framework. Significant weight has been attached to ensuring that the plan delivers the necessary sustainable development and has been informed by:

- **Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**

The plan housing target reflects the Objectively Assessed Need for the Vale of White Horse District as identified by the up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire. The SHMA sets out how many new homes are required across Oxfordshire and for each district up to 2031.

The housing target does not currently include any unmet need for housing that may be identified in the future. This may arise if other authorities are unable to meet, in full, their own Objectively Assessed Need. However, the plan does set out, in policy, a positive approach to dealing with any unmet need, should it arise:

- **Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire**

Chapter 2: Key Challenges and Opportunities

The Vale is a predominantly rural area located in the south-west of Oxfordshire. It is an attractive and popular place to live. It contains the historic market towns of Abingdon-on-Thames, Faringdon and Wantage and a myriad of smaller and more rural settlements.

The district includes the majority of the Science Vale area, an internationally significant location for innovation and science-based research and business. Within the Vale, this includes the two Enterprise Zone sites at Harwell Campus and Milton Park. These sites are expanding and will provide for a significant number of new jobs.

The district benefits from many opportunities, particularly those associated with growth and the creation of new jobs. However the district also faces a series of challenges to realising its potential.

For this reason, the Local Plan 2031 identifies a number of key challenges and opportunities that are faced by the district and these are focused around four thematic areas. These are central to the Local Plan 2031 and are carried throughout the document. These are:

- **building healthy and sustainable communities**
- **supporting economic prosperity**
- **supporting sustainable transport and accessibility, and**
- **protecting the environment and responding to climate change.**

Executive Summary

Chapter 3: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

We have developed a Spatial Vision for the district to set out how the Local Plan 2031 will help us to plan effectively for the future and ensure we strike an appropriate balance between meeting the needs of our existing communities and ensuring the necessary growth is sustainably accommodated. **The Spatial Vision establishes the direction of travel for future development and investment in the district.**

Our twelve Strategic Objectives help us to deliver the Spatial Vision and ensure the plan is focused on the key challenges and opportunities facing the area.

Chapter 4: Spatial Strategy

Our strategy makes provision for growth of around 23,000 new jobs, 219 hectares of employment land, and at least 20,560 new homes, to be delivered during the plan period from 2011 to 2031. A map of the strategic growth across the district is shown overpage.

Our Spatial Strategy is called 'Building on our Strengths' and shows where new homes will be built, where opportunities to provide new jobs will be created, and where new infrastructure and services (such as new roads, schools, shops and leisure facilities) will be required.

The Spatial Strategy has three main strands. These are:

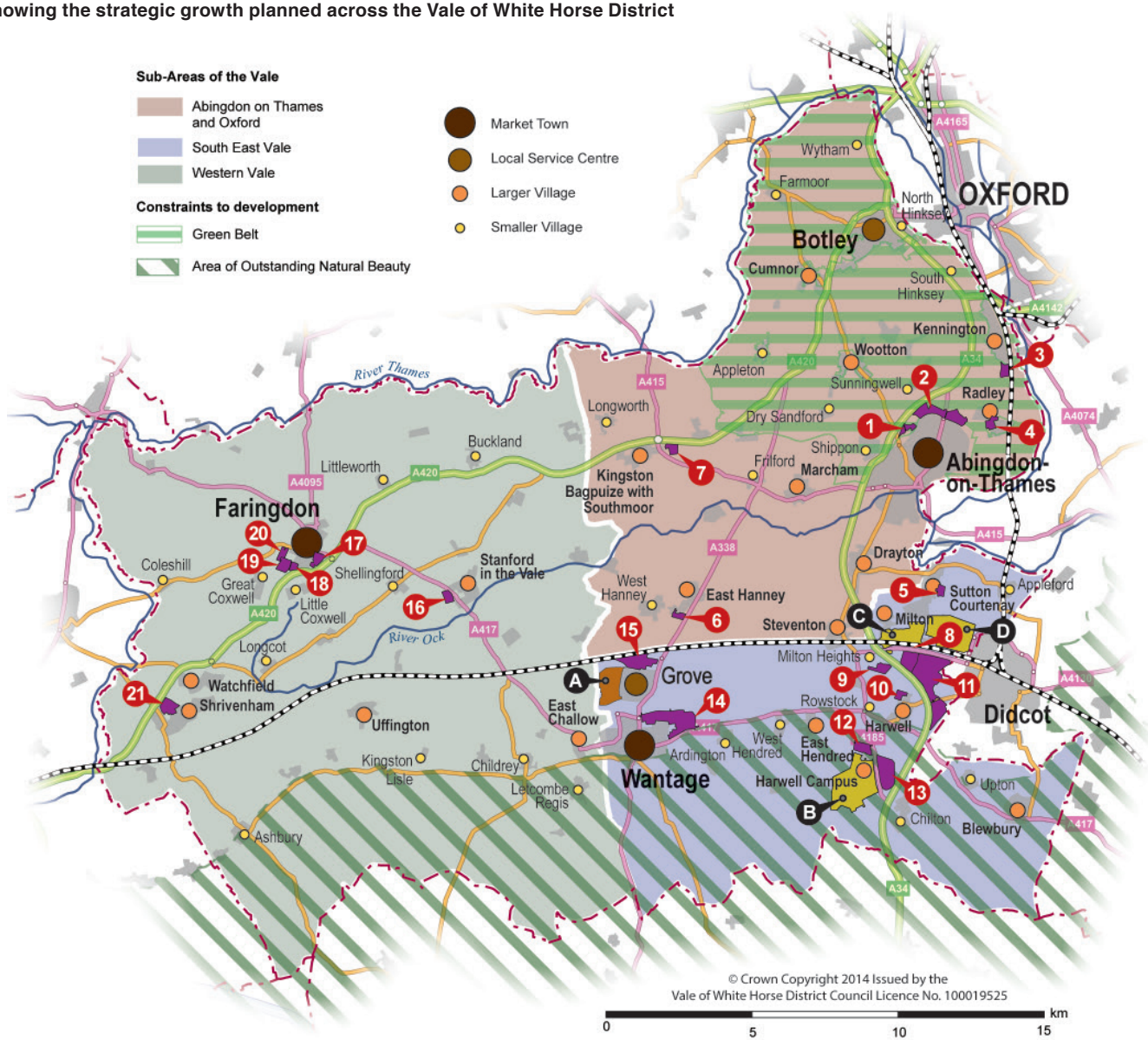
- **focus sustainable growth within the Science Vale Area**
- **reinforce the service centre roles of the main settlements across the district, and**
- **promote thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character.**

The Spatial Strategy is underpinned by five core policies:

- **Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy** – which classifies the settlements in the Vale according to their role and function
- **Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Need** – which specifies the scale and location of new housing ensuring development is built in the most appropriate locations
- **Core Policy 5: Housing Supply Ring-Fence** – which identifies a core area within Science Vale where new homes will be provided to achieve sustainable development in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. The area will have a separate housing and supply target from the rest of the district
- **Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs** – which specifies the scale and location of opportunities for economic growth to ensure that sufficient new jobs are provided across the Vale in appropriate locations, and
- **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services** – to ensure new services and facilities are delivered alongside new housing and employment.

Executive Summary

Map showing the strategic growth planned across the Vale of White Horse District



Strategic Site Allocations		No. of Dwellings
1	North West Abingdon on Thames	200
2	North Abingdon on Thames	800
3	South Kennington (Parish of Radley)	270
4	North West Radley	240
5	East Sutton Courtenay	220
6	South of East Hanney	200
7	East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor	280
8	North West Valley Park	800
9	Milton Heights	400
10	West of Harwell	200
11	Valley Park	2550
12	North of Harwell Campus	550
13	East of Harwell Campus	850
14	Crab Hill Wantage	1500
15	Monks Farm, Grove	750
16	Stanford in the Vale	200
17	Land South of Park Road, Faringdon	350
18	East of Coxwell Road, Faringdon (Parish of Great Coxwell)	200
19	South Faringdon, (Parish of Great Coxwell)	200
20	South West Farringdon	200
21	North Shrivenham	500

Local Plan 2011 saved Allocations

A.	Grove Airfield	2500

Planned Economic Growth Areas

B. Harwell Campus

C. Milton Park

D. Didcot Power Station

Executive Summary

Chapter 5: Sub-Area Strategies

We have developed three Sub-Area Strategies to give spatial expression to our Local Plan 2031 and ensure that it is locally distinctive. These include policies that apply to specific locations and are:

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area -

which covers the northern and north-eastern part of the Vale, which have strong linkages with the city of Oxford. This area contains the market town of Abingdon-on-Thames, the local service centre of Botley and several larger villages including Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Steventon and Wootton. A large part of this area is located within the Oxford Green Belt.

- **Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area**
- **Core Policy 9: Harcourt Hill Campus**
- **Core Policy 10: Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter, Abingdon-on-Thames**
- **Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area**
- **Core Policy 12: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements**
- **Core Policy 13: The Oxford Green Belt**
- **Core Policy 14: Upper Thames Reservoir**

South East Vale Sub-Area -

which includes much of the Science Vale area and contains the market town of Wantage, the local service centre of Grove as well as a number of significant employment sites, including Harwell Campus, Milton Park and Didcot A Power Station. The area also contains a number of larger villages including Blewbury, East Hendred, Harwell, Harwell Campus and Sutton Courtenay.

- **Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for the South East Vale Sub-Area**
- **Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station**
- **Core Policy 17: Transport Delivery for the South East Vale Sub-Area**
- **Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements**
- **Core Policy 19: Re-opening of Grove Railway Station**

Western Vale Sub-Area -

which is a more rural area stretching from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the River Thames, containing the market town of Faringdon and several larger villages including East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield.

- **Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for the Western Vale Sub-Area**
- **Core Policy 21: Safeguarding of Land for the Strategic Highway Improvements**

Executive Summary

Chapter 6: District Wide Policies

The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 also includes strategic policies that are necessary to complement those set out in **Chapters 4** and **5**. These policies will apply across the district as a whole and provide greater detail to ensure a balance is met between addressing local housing needs, supporting economic growth and protecting the Vale's high quality natural and built environment, and the quality of life in existing settlements. The policies included are:

Building healthy and sustainable communities

- **Core Policy 22: Housing Mix**
- **Core Policy 23: Housing Density**
- **Core Policy 24: Affordable Housing**
- **Core Policy 25: Rural Exception Sites**
- **Core Policy 26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of an Ageing Population**
- **Core Policy 27: Meeting the Housing Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

Supporting economic prosperity

- **Core Policy 28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites**
- **Core Policy 29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises**
- **Core Policy 30: Further and Higher Education**
- **Core Policy 31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy**
- **Core Policy 32: Retail Development and Other Main Town Centre Uses**

Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility

- **Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility**
- **Core Policy 34: A34 Strategy**
- **Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking**
- **Core Policy 36: Electronic Communications**

Protecting the environment and responding to climate change

- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness**
- **Core Policy 38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites**
- **Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment**
- **Core Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction**
- **Core Policy 41: Renewable Energy**
- **Core Policy 42: Flood Risk**
- **Core Policy 43: Natural Resources**
- **Core Policy 44: Landscape**
- **Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure**
- **Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity**

1 Introduction

Overview

The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sets out a framework for how future development across the district will be planned and delivered and how it will be used to inform decisions on planning applications.

This chapter summarises the role of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and outlines our approach to its preparation.

In particular, this chapter describes how the plan is consistent with, and has been informed by, national policy and how it meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with regard to being:

- positively prepared
- justified
- effective, and
- consistent with national policy.

This chapter sets out two core policies, which underpin and inform the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. These are:

Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire.

1 Introduction

What is the Local Plan?

1.1. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 provides a policy framework for the delivery of sustainable development across the District. It replaces the Local Plan 2011 and is made up of a number of separate parts. The most significant include:

- **Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies.** The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sets out the Spatial Strategy and strategic policies for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the plan period up to 2031. It makes provision for retail, leisure and commercial development and for the infrastructure needed to support them. The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sets out the Spatial Strategy for the location of development across the district and allocates large-scale (referred to as strategic) development sites. It includes district-wide policies to ensure that development contributes to meeting the Strategic Objectives of the plan, such as policies relating to sustainable construction and conservation of the built, historic and natural environment.
- **Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Local Sites.** The Local Plan 2031 Part 2 will contain detailed planning policies to guide day-to-day decisions on planning applications. The document will provide more detailed policies to those within Part 1 of the Local Plan, and identify and allocate supplementary and predominantly smaller (referred to as non-strategic) development sites[1].
- **Adopted Policies Map:** This shows the sites identified for development and areas where particular policies apply. It will be updated as each part of the Local Plan 2031 is adopted.
- **Science Vale Area Action Plan:** A Joint Area Action Plan (AAP) is being prepared in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to set out in more detail how the planned growth across the Science Vale area will be effectively delivered and implemented.

1.2. The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable for preparing each part of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 and is available on the Council's website[2].

The Development Plan

1.3. The Local Plan 2031 prepared by the Vale of White Horse District Council will be used to inform decisions on planning applications across the district, in conjunction with any Development Planning Documents (DPDs) relating to minerals and waste prepared by Oxfordshire County Council, and any neighbourhood plans prepared by the community[3].

1.4. Neighbourhood plans can be prepared by either town or parish councils, or a neighbourhood forum, and make up part of the 'Development Plan' for the district as described above. They can provide an important layer of planning for local areas and set out in more detail how a community wishes to see its area develop.

1.5. Where neighbourhood plans are prepared they must be in general conformity with the policies set out in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and any other strategic policies set out in future planning documents in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012[4].

1.6. The Council will continue to support communities who wish to prepare neighbourhood plans. Details of how the Council can help with the preparation of neighbourhood plans is set out on the Council's website[5].

[1] A number of saved policies in the adopted Local Plan 2011 will continue to apply for planning applications, until they are reviewed as part of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 **(Appendix G)**
[2] http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/lds
[3] Policy H2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan and Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan are also part of the Development Plan. However neither of these policies are relevant to the Vale of White Horse District.
[4] The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/note/madet
[5] http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans

1 Introduction

Figure 1.1: An illustration of the documents that make up the Vale of White Horse Local Plan and Development Plan.

1.7. These documents together make up the 'Development Plan' for the district (see **Figure 1.1**). All planning applications will be determined in accordance with the 'Development Plan' taken as a whole, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy

1.8. Government planning policy and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for achieving sustainable development and is complemented by the NPPG, which provides additional guidance for practitioners.

1.9. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 has been prepared in compliance with national policy. In particular, the NPPF states that for a local plan to be considered sound, it must comply with the legal and procedural requirements of plan making, such as the 'duty-to-cooperate'[6] and demonstrate that it is:

a. positively prepared
b. justified
c. effective, and
d. consistent with national policy.

a. Positively prepared

1.10. The NPPF states that:
"the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development"[7].

1.11. The Vale of White Horse District Council is working in partnership with its neighbouring authorities under the 'duty-to-cooperate' and significant weight has been attached to ensuring that the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 delivers the necessary sustainable development.

[6] CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Para 182.

[7] CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Para 182.

1 Introduction

1.12. To ensure these requirements are fully incorporated the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 is therefore underpinned and informed by two core policies that are described further as follows:

- **Presumption in favour of sustainable development, and**
- **Cooperation on unmet housing need for Oxfordshire**

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

1.13. Sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs[8]. This means that we should consider the long-term consequences of development alongside our short-term priorities.

1.14. The NPPF provides the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. Broadly, there are three dimensions to sustainable development, which need to be considered together. These are:

- **an economic role** – contributing to building a resilient, responsive and competitive economy through the timely delivery of sufficient land in the right locations to support growth and by coordinating development requirements such as the provision of infrastructure
- **a social role** – supporting vibrant and healthy communities through the provision of housing, the creation of high quality living and working environments and accessible local services, and
- **an environmental role** – protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, using resources prudently, ensuring climate change resilience and supporting the move to a low-carbon economy[9].

1.15. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF in accordance with **Core Policy 1.**

Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Planning applications that accord with this Local Plan 2031 (and where relevant, with any subsequent Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and unless:

i. any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole, or
ii. specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

1.16. The Council will work proactively with applicants to ensure that proposals that will achieve sustainable development can be approved.

[8] CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), pg2.

[9] CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) pg2.

1 Introduction

Oxfordshire unmet housing need

1.17. The 'duty-to-cooperate' set out in the Localism Act is both a legal duty and test of effective plan-making. It requires cooperation on issues of common concern in order to develop sound local plans.

1.18. Within Oxfordshire, co-operative working is managed through the Oxfordshire Growth Board (superseding the former Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership Board, SPIP). The board comprises the leaders of all Oxfordshire councils supported by an executive committee and officer working groups. Vale of White Horse also works directly with authorities within and outside the county area where that is necessary to plan effectively on matters of strategic and sub-regional significance or cross border interest that are not Oxfordshire-wide.

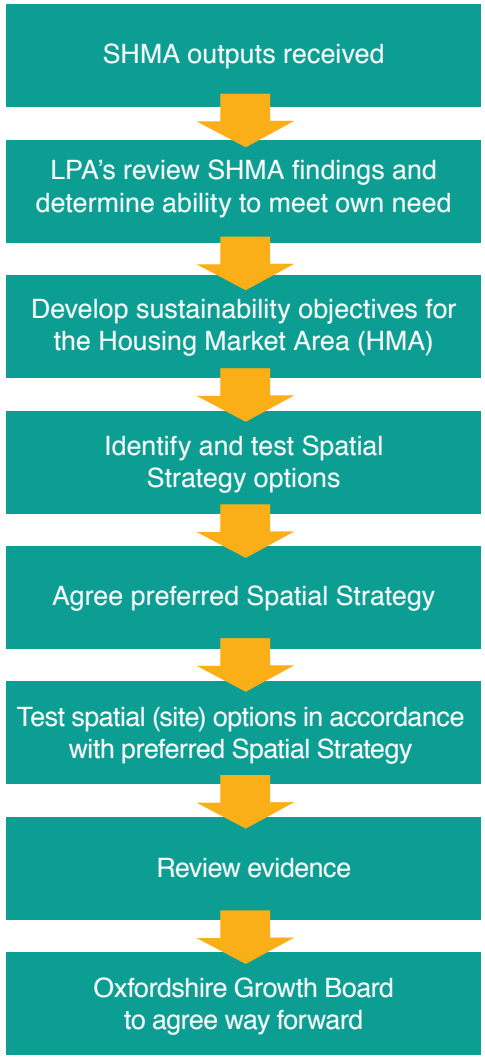
1.19. As part of implementing the 'duty-to-cooperate' the leaders of all Oxfordshire authorities including the Vale of White Horse have agreed a joint Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation[10]. This sets out that all the Oxfordshire councils agree to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in any process that involves the following:

- the preparation of Development Plan documents
- the preparation of other local planning documents
- the planning and prioritisation of infrastructure and investment in Oxfordshire to support economic growth of the area
- activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would impact on more than one of the Parties, and
- the parties also agree to act expediently when undertaking joint working to avoid unreasonable delay.

1.20. In particular, the Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation sets out how the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment[11] would be managed, should any of the Local Planning Authorities in Oxfordshire not be able to meet their full objectively assessed housing need. The statement includes a diagram of the process to review the findings of the SHMA and identify how any unmet need should be met in the housing market area. This is reproduced as **Figure 1.2**.

1.21. The steps identified in **Figure 1.2** are not necessarily sequential and will be applied flexibly and strategically to ensure the process is implemented in the most effective and efficient way. The Growth Board is working with a former senior planning inspector and 'critical friend' advisor to establish a robust process and timetable for this work, which has started, but is likely to take at least 12-18 months to complete with the active participation of all Oxfordshire

Figure 1.2: Proposed Duty-to-Cooperate process for any unmet housing need.



[10] http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/spatial-planning-and-infrastructure-partnership

[11] Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to identify the objectively assessed need for housing in their housing market area.

councils. Supporting technical work is expected to include an Oxfordshire-wide Strategic Green Belt Review, which will be informed by the local Green Belt Review prepared to support this Local Plan 2031 (see **Core Policy 13).**

1.22. Within Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Council's are all reviewing their ability to meet their housing needs as identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, by completing reviews of their Local Plans already at an advanced stage of preparation. South Oxfordshire District Council has initiated a review of its 2012 Core Strategy. Oxford City is undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to inform its ability to meet its own housing needs but has stated that it does not expect to be able to accommodate them in full as the city area is constrained, particularly by areas of flood plain and the Oxford Green Belt.

1.23. The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 will meet, in full, our own objectively assessed need for 20,560 homes 2011-2031 (see **Core Policy 4: Meeting our housing needs**). This is a first and important step towards meeting the full needs of the housing market area without unreasonable delay.

1.24. The Council also acknowledges the need to plan for any overspill of unmet housing from the wider market area in particular Oxford City. **Core Policy 2** (overleaf) sets out how the Council will work cooperatively to address potential overspill of unmet need from other parts of the housing market area in a timely and effective manner.

b. A justified plan

1.25. The NPPF states that:
"the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence".

1.26. To help understand the issues facing the district, the Council has gathered a range of background evidence[12] and taken into account the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) to develop locally distinctive policies.

1.27. The Council has also taken account of its other plans and strategies and those of other organisations and those produced at the local level, including the Sustainable Community Strategies for the Council, the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP)[13], Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)[14], and the strategies and programmes of the District Council, town and parish councils, neighbouring authorities and other organisations. The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 will help to facilitate the delivery of many of the aspirations and objectives set out in these other plans and strategies.

1.28. A series of reasonable alternatives were developed and considered to inform the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The reasonable alternatives are set out in our previous stages of consultation and topic papers. The alternatives have also been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which is described further below.

[12] A series of topic papers and technical studies are available from the Council website: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidencet
[13] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/local-transport-plan-2011-2030
[14] Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (2014) Strategic Economic Plan- http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.ukt/

1 Introduction

Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire

The Council will continue to fulfil its statutory 'duty-to-cooperate' by working effectively with all the other Oxfordshire local authorities in accordance with the Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation to seek to jointly meet, in full, the objectively assessed need for economic and housing growth across the Oxfordshire housing market area.

The 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies a significant level of housing need in Oxfordshire. The Council recognises that Oxford City may not be able to accommodate the whole of its new housing requirement for the 2011-2031 period within its administrative boundary.

Whilst the extent to which Oxford City can meet its own needs is robustly tested and agreed, the Council will first seek to meet its own housing needs in full, to help ensure that the needs of both the district and the housing market area as a whole are met as quickly as possible.

In tandem, the Council will continue to work jointly with all of the other Oxfordshire local authorities to address any unmet housing need. This will include assessing all reasonable spatial options, including the release of brown field land, the potential for new settlements and a full strategic review of the whole of the Oxford Green Belt. These issues are not for the Council to consider in isolation. These options will need to be undertaken in accordance with national policy, national guidance, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, and the Habitats Regulations Assessment to establish how and where any unmet need might best be accommodated within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area.

If, following this joint work, it is identified and agreed, either through the Oxfordshire Growth Board or through an adjoining local plan examination, that any unmet housing need is required to be accommodated within this district, the Council will either:

- undertake a full or focused partial review of the Local Plan 2031, or
- allocate appropriate housing sites through a subsequent development plan document in conformity with the Spatial Strategy set out in the Local Plan 2031.

The appropriate approach will depend on the scale of the unmet need to be accommodated.

1 Introduction

c. An effective plan

1.29. The NPPF states that:
"the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities".

1.30. To ensure the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 forms a realistic, deliverable and viable plan, we have worked closely with landowners and developers to ensure the proposed strategic development sites are deliverable. A Local Plan Viability Study has been published alongside this Publication Version of the Local Plan[15].

1.31. The Council has worked closely with organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, Highways Agency, Thames Water and Oxfordshire County Council who are responsible for providing or managing key services including water resources, education and transport.

1.32. The Council's commitment to working with our partners ensures that proper sustainable planning can be achieved across administrative boundaries, with examples including:

- the Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation agreed in advance of the publication of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Oxfordshire and ongoing work with the Oxfordshire Growth Board
- a statement of common ground between the Vale of White Horse, Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the Western Vale Villages to ensure cross boundary infrastructure issues are adequately addressed (see **Chapter 5** for more details)
- working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to prepare the Science Vale Area Action Plan (AAP) to ensure we plan effectively for job growth and housing needs along with supporting infrastructure across the area (see **Chapter 5** for more details), and
- a memorandum of understanding with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to agree an approach to delivering strategic highway infrastructure across the Science Vale area, including those that span the district boundaries.

1.33. The approach to preparing the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 is fully consistent with the Localism Act 2011. We have worked collaboratively with local communities, stakeholders and neighbouring authorities and consulted widely to ensure, as far as possible, that the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 reflects a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the Vale. Where communities are working to develop neighbourhood plans, these have also helped to inform the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.

d. Consistent with national policy

1.34. The NPPF states that:
"the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the framework".

1.35. The preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 has involved the testing of reasonable alternatives through Sustainability Appraisal (SA), that incorporate Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). Both reports have been published alongside this document[16].

[15] www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence [16] www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence