

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031
(Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies) EXAMINATION
Malcolm Rivett BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI –
Inspector Ian Kemp – Programme Officer

The Examination will take place in two stages. Stage 1 will consider the main strategic issues of the plan covered by the four Matters listed below. These primarily relate to elements of Core Policies 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 27).

If, following the Stage 1 hearing sessions, I conclude that in relation to these issues the plan is likely to be capable of being found sound Stage 2 will then commence. Stage 2 will consider all other matters relating to the plan – primarily Core Policies 1, 7 – 26 and 28 – 47).

STAGE 1 - MATTERS AND QUESTIONS

Matter 1 – Duty to Co-operate and other Legal Requirements

1.1 Has the Council satisfactorily discharged its Duty to Co-operate to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters, including in particular minerals and waste and housing? (see also Matter 4)
The council has not liaised sufficiently regarding the provision of housing, particularly as Oxford City Council is looking to meet some of its own housing need within the Vale.

1.2 Are the likely environmental, social and economic effects of the plan adequately and accurately addressed in the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)? Does the SA test the plan against all reasonable alternatives in terms of the overall requirement for land for housing and employment (see also Matters 2 and 4) and its broad spatial distribution (see also Matter 3)?
**Increasing water deficit not fully addressed. Proposed reservoir not sufficient to meet needs across its catchments area and the Vale. Risk of effluent escape as capacity already close to full leading to pollution risk. Local plan should require all new developments to have a water management plan. All new build should be required to re-use grey water and minimise call for new water.
Local plan does not demonstrate how it will meet the requirements of the Climate Change Act of 2008. This should be included before the plan is passed. There is not a clearly stated requirement for developers to build in accordance with best practice regarding carbon emissions which is a key area of long term sustainability. Plan should require houses to be built to a CHS6 standard which is realistic and achievable.
A clearer commitment to protecting the best agricultural land should be included. Access to affordable land for small scale and sustainable agriculture should be included in plan.
Plans for protecting biodiversity are focused on specific areas. The plan should include how it is to be accommodated throughout the Vale.**

1.3 Is it appropriate for the plan to include only Strategic Policies and Site Allocations and for detailed planning policies and non-site strategic site allocations to be devolved to a Part 2 Local Plan document? Is there a clear justification for this and does it accord with national policy?

Given the length of all the documentation and that we have been consulting on this plan for around seven years there is no justification for the final detail to be omitted.

1.4 Is the plan compliant with: (a) the Local Development Scheme?

Seems to be, but so many different schemes and documentations will lead to confusion, this process should be simplified if people are to engage with it.

(b) the Statement of Community Involvement?

The paperwork and plans are not clear enough, accessible enough or transparent enough for residents to engage with fully.

(c) the 2004 Act and the 2012 Regulations?