

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031  
(Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies) EXAMINATION  
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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 4 – Unmet Housing Needs

4.1 Is the approach to meeting within the District any housing needs which cannot be met elsewhere in Oxfordshire, as set out in policy CP2, soundly based and does it accord with national policy?

**This does not accord with national policies on sustainability as it increases the need for road journeys to and from employment.**

**Mixed use areas throughout the region in which employment and local services are close to where people live will be more sustainable in the long term.**

4.2 What is the likely timescale for agreement being reached between the relevant authorities on (i) the scale of unmet needs in Oxford City (and any other district) (ii) the most appropriate way of any unmet needs being provided for?

**Not able to comment**

4.3 Is it likely that the spatial strategy, policies and allocations proposed by the plan to meet the district's own housing needs would need to be significantly altered if unmet needs from elsewhere in Oxfordshire are to be accommodated in the Vale of White Horse district?

**There is unlikely to be the resources to increase the rate of development in this scenario.**

4.4 If you contend that the approach set out in policy CP2 is not soundly based should the Local Plan be delayed pending agreement on 5.2 (i) and (ii) above or could modifications to the plan be made to make it sound?

**Modifications are needed to make the plan sustainable.**

**The plan could include requirements for new developments to have plans for the highest standards in:**

- 1. Energy plans demonstrating how they will achieve lowest possible energy usage through design, materials used and low energy appliances.**
- 2. To have plans demonstrating how they will reuse water within the development, manage demand for new water and minimise flood risk.**

- 3. New developments to have a sustainable transport plan taking account of the diminishing supply of fossil fuel and showing how other ways of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport will be made safe, attractive, practical and affordable within the development, not just token gestures towards this.**

**There could be a requirement for developers to contribute to sustainability projects such as cycleway, alternative energy projects and replacing lost biodiversity.**

**The plan could distinguish between land that is to be zoned for development now and land that could be zoned later if the demand is as predicted. At present high figures are assumed and land closest to Oxford will be built on first as this is where the most money can be made by developers rather than where the most sustainable settlements could be situated.**

**A greenbelt review should be undertaken prior to taking land out of the greenbelt.**

**More robust policies are needed to make sure that infrastructure, in particular school places are in place before new homes are completed.**

**New cemetery land needs to be protected.**