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19<sup>th</sup> December, 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

**CONSULTATION ON VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2031**  
**PART 1: STRATEGIC SITES AND POLICIES**  
**PUBLICATION VERSION: NOVEMBER 2014**

C14 We write on behalf of our client, Radley College ('the College') in response to the above consultation which seeks the views of interested parties upon the Publication Version of Part 1- Strategic Sites and Policies of the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 ('the Plan').

Radley College has land interests within the district and are keen to work collaboratively with the District Council in taking the Plan forwards in a positive and proactive manner. It is important to note from the outset that the College are in **broad support** of the Plan and are keen to work with the Council to ensure that it is found **sound** under the tests of soundness enshrined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The College have interest in land off Radley Road, Abingdon-on-Thames ('the Triangular Field') and through these representations review the proposed release of the site within the Green Belt Review and confirm the college's firm support for the Council's position in this respect. Officers will note that comprehensive representations pertaining to land at Radley have been submitted under separate cover.

**Area 17 of the Green Belt Review:**  
**Land off Radley Road, Abingdon on Thames - 'The Triangular Field'**

C113 Area 17 ('the triangular field') is located on the eastern edge of the settlement of Abingdon-on-Thames and currently comprises a 1.85 hectare triangular arable field which is periodically used for planting crops. The field is currently fallow.

The College supports the findings of the Green Belt Review that the Site currently fails to fulfil the NPPF objectives (paragraph 80 of the NPPF) of including land within the Green Belt, and submits that there is a very clear and convincing case to justify release of the Site for small scale residential development. Development of the site in the short term would represent a logical and sustainable extension to the existing Peachcroft Estate; new housing in this location, by virtue of the specific merits of the site and its natural containment would have very limited impact upon the openness of the wider Green Belt.

The Green Belt in this area is principally designed to protect Oxford from merging with neighbouring towns. Abingdon-on-Thames is appropriately described as a market town and in this location it has little direct relationship with Oxford. The term 'town' is not a description which sits comfortably with the village of Radley, however it is noted that criterion 2 of Table 1.0 of the Green Belt Review (Assessment Criteria) notes that though most of the settlements in the Vale are villages rather than towns (including Radley), '...the Vale would not wish to allow these settlements to merge.'

Release of the triangular field from the Green Belt and future development for housing would not decrease the gap between Abingdon-on-Thames and Radley either physically or psychologically. The current Green Belt designation is not truly reflective of the Site's location or spatial function and it cannot credibly be maintained that development of the Site would represent significant encroachment into open countryside. There is a need for pragmatism in this regard in the interests of good planning and in the interests of achieving the Council's objectives.

The Site does not fulfil any of the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt: the Green Belt designation is entirely ineffective, and its retention within the Green Belt would not represent positive and proactive planning as required by the NPPF. A review of Green Belt boundaries is entirely appropriate through the Local Plan process, and the College has, and continues to be, committed to engaging with the local authority in this regard as the new Local Plan develops. The Site has potential to make a valuable contribution to housing delivery and the five year housing supply within the short term.

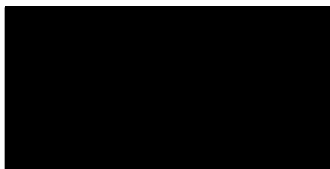
The location of the site on the edge of the existing Peachcroft Estate means that the site would constitute a natural extension to the existing development - the last 'piece of the jigsaw'. The site is devoid of any ecological merit, is flat, tree-less and environmentally unconstrained. The Site can be accessed satisfactorily, and can be designed to integrate with, and sympathetically to, its immediate surroundings.

The College is pleased to note that the Council now recognises that the Site does not fulfil a true Green Belt function and could be released from such a restrictive designation in order to free up the potential for it to deliver small scale residential development in the short term. The College firmly supports the proposed release of the Site from the Green Belt and considers that the approach taken by the Council in respect of this particular piece of land is fully compliant with the NPPF and the accompanying PPG. The Site is fully deliverable - as demonstrated through the recent planning application - and could make a valuable contribution towards housing supply in the VoWH in the short term. It is a logical step forward representing proactive and pragmatic planning that is entirely congruous with national objectives.

### Summary

We trust that the above representations are helpful to you and await confirmation of their receipt. In the meantime, should the Council have any queries or require any further clarification on the above matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Encs.

cc. D. Anderson - Radley College  
A. Ashton - Radley College