

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2

Statement of Common Ground

Between

Vale of White Horse District Council;

and

Persimmon Homes

February 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Vale of White Horse District Council ("VoWH") and Persimmon Homes, hereafter referred to as "the parties". This SoCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 and supporting documents to assist the Inspector during the Examination of the Local Plan.
- 1.2. This SoCG particularly relates to the allocation of land North-West of Grove within Core Policy 15a for the development of around 400 dwellings in the plan period up to 2031, with the potential for more to be delivered beyond 2031. The agreed matters have been structured to help inform the Inspector through the examination.
- 1.3. The Council proposes the site for allocation for housing development in the Local Plan having considered reasonable alternatives including assessing the relevant evidence, and following consultation with stakeholders and the public.

2. Background / Context

- 2.1. The site is located to the North-West of Grove. The site measures 28.35 hectares and consists of agricultural land. It is bounded to the south by the Grove Airfield saved housing allocation from Local Plan 2011, to the east by the Monks Farm strategic site allocation as identified in the Adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1, to the west by agricultural land and to the north by the railway line.
- 2.2. There are no statutory landscape or wildlife designations on this site. The site is designated as being within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's flood risk maps, and as such is not located in a flood risk area. The site is

subject to some rail noise from the adjoining railway land, and lies partly over former Grove airfield.

- 2.3. Persimmon Homes control the land and have the ability to develop the site within the timescales proposed.
- 2.4. Persimmon Homes are progressing proposed residential development of Grove Airfield to the south of this allocation. Outline planning permission was granted for that allocation on 17 July 2017 and work is progressing on reserved matters for the first phase of development. Persimmon Homes intend to deliver Grove Airfield within the plan period.
- 2.5. The parties have met to discuss the site to the North-West of Grove on a number of occasions since it was first proposed to be allocated through the Preferred Options consultation on Local Plan 2031 Part 2 in March 2017. The parties are committed to partnership working, including regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the Site that delivers much needed new residential development in a sustainable location.

3. Agreed Matters

Strategic Matters on which the parties agree

- 3.1. The parties agree that the Council is meeting their own need as well as their apportionment of Oxford's unmet need, which is to be met in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area.
- 3.2. The parties agree that the allocations North-West of Grove and Harwell Campus will support the objectives of Science Vale, including the provision of housing and infrastructure to support strong economic growth.
- 3.3. The parties agree 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.
- 3.4. This site is in accordance with the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan. Both parties agree with the site selection process as set out in Site Selection Topic Paper as being robust and soundly based which is supported by the Council's evidence base. The parties agree that the Council is adequately planning for infrastructure for this site, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered as identified within the Submission Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.5. The parties agree that there is a positive housing market outlook in the area.

Site Specific Matters on which the parties agree

- 3.6. The parties agree that the Site is sustainable, suitable, available and deliverable. The Site is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development in the plan period.
- 3.7. The parties agree that this Site can be delivered in full accordance with the policies contained in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and the emerging policies of the Part 2 plan.
- 3.8. The parties agree the General Requirements and Site Development Template for this site, as set out in the Appendices to the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, identifies the key requirements for this site to deliver, including:
 - provision of 35% affordable housing and a housing mix that is compliant with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire.
- 3.9. The parties agree the Council's evidence base studies, that have informed the site selection process, have demonstrated this site is sustainable.
- 3.10. The adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 allocates a number of sites at Wantage and Grove and these are expected to be delivered through the plan period up to 2031. These include the site at Grove Airfield, which was allocated in Local Plan 2011 and the policy (H5) for this site continues to be saved. It is important that the new development planned for the area delivers infrastructure alongside the delivery of new housing.
- 3.11. The parties agree that the North-West of Grove Site will assist with delivering the North Grove Link Road that will form an important connection between Grove Airfield and the A338, along with contributing to a range of other services and facilities.
- 3.12. The parties agree that allocating this Site will ensure the masterplanning for this site can be considered alongside planning for the Monks Farm and Grove Airfield site, ensuring they are fully integrated.
- 3.13. The parties agree that the Site is capable of delivery within the Plan period in accordance with the Council's stated housing trajectory. It is proposed that the site will deliver houses between the period 2028 – 2031, and that there is potential for additional housing to be delivered in the longer term, beyond the plan period.
- 3.14. There is a clear intention and demonstrable ability to develop the Site if allocated.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. Persimmon Homes support the allocation of land North-West of Grove within Core Policy 15a, and the parties agree that the site is suitable, available and deliverable for sustainable housing development.
- 4.2. The parties will work jointly to enable delivery of the planned development alongside other growth at Grove and will continue to work cooperatively on all matters of mutual interest.

Signatures


Signed on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council



Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning

23/02/2018

Signed on behalf of Persimmon Homes



Christopher Minors
Senior Planning Manager

22/02/2018