

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1)

SA Statement

December 2016

REVISION SCHEDULE

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Vale of White Horse District Council adopted the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1) on 14th December 2016. Work to develop the plan was undertaken between 2007 and 2016.
- 1.1.2 A parallel process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken alongside plan-making. AECOM (formerly URS) took lead responsibility for the majority of the SA process.
- 1.1.3 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft strategy, and reasonable alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising the positives.
- 1.1.4 It is a requirement that SA involves a series of procedural steps. The final step in the process involves preparing a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption.
- 1.1.5 The aim of the SA Statement (i.e. **this document**) is to present –
- 1) The 'story' of plan-making / SA up to the point of adoption
 - Specifically, the Regulations¹ explain that there is a need to: *“summaris[e] how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report... the opinions expressed... and the results of consultations... have been taken into account... and the reasons for choosing the plan... as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.”*
 - 2) Measures decided concerning the monitoring of plan implementation.
- 1.1.6 This Statement considers (1) and (2) in turn, and then concludes by presenting a regulatory 'checklist' in order to clearly demonstrate when and where requirements have been met.

2 THE PLAN-MAKING / SEA 'STORY'

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Essentially, SA must feed-into and inform plan-making in two ways:
- 1) Appraisal of alternatives informs preparation of the draft plan.
 - 2) The SA Report, and consultation responses received during the Draft Plan / SA Report consultation, informs plan finalisation.
- 2.1.2 However, it is typical for the plan-making / SA process to involve additional iterations, and this was the case with the Vale LPP1.
- 2.1.3 This section gives consideration to each of the main plan-making / SA steps in turn. In line with regulatory requirements (discussed above), there is a focus on explaining how sustainability considerations have been taken into account and influenced plan-making, including as a result of alternatives appraisal and other SA work, and consultation on plan / SA documents.

¹ The information to be provided in the Adoption Statement is listed in Article 9 of the SEA Directive / Regulation 16 of the Regulations.

2.2 Early plan-making steps (2007-2012)

2.2.1 A number of early consultations were held, focused on developing a 'Core Strategy'. Each is considered *briefly* below. N.B. For brevity no explicit consideration is given to the SA work.

Issues and Options (2007)

2.2.2 A focus of the consultation document related to the matter of how to distribute the housing assigned to the district by the then emerging Regional Spatial Strategy. Broad options were -

- Within existing towns and villages;
- Brownfield or previously developed land;
- Extensions to the edges of main settlements;
- Extensions to the edges of villages;
- A new settlement; and
- At settlements along public transport routes.

Preferred Options (2009)

2.2.3 The consultation document introduced a number of housing site options for discussion, as well as employment and retail site options. Preferred site options were indicated.

Additional consultation (2010)

2.2.4 This document, which dealt with a relatively narrow range of matters, proposed the addition of a strategic housing site development at Harwell Campus and removal of a proposed strategic housing site in Abingdon-on-Thames.

Internal review (2011 – 2012)

2.2.5 An internal review process was conducted, which included a workshop for the Vale's elected councillors. A Cabinet Report in March 2012 summarised the findings of the internal review process. The internal review considered broad strategy, and included a focus on identifying additional sources of supply due to an extension of the plan period from 2026 to 2029. The review recommended including Monks Farm (North of Grove) as a strategic site, which had previously been presented as a non-preferred option in 2009. Employment was also a focus of the review, given the economic downturn / and revised economic forecasts.

2.3 Draft Plan (2013)

The consultation document

2.3.1 The LPP1 Draft Plan consultation document was published for consultation, under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations, in February 2013.

2.3.2 The Draft Local Plan proposed strategic planning policies for the district; including the number of new homes and jobs that should be provided in the area up to 2029 (NB the plan period has since been extended to 2031). A figure of 578 dwellings per annum (13,294 in total) was established, in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy (which remained extant at that time); and this requirement was apportioned between the three planning sub-areas within the Vale (Abingdon-Oxford Fringe; South East Vale and Western Vale). In relation to economic growth, the plan proposed providing for around 14,300 additional jobs.

2.3.3 The document then went on to propose five strategic sites, which together would deliver 5,150 homes – see **Table 2.1**. Taking into account completions and commitments, this left a shortfall of 1,055 homes to be found through other means (Neighbourhood Plans, windfall sites and potentially a follow-on Local Plan Part 2).

Table 2.1: Strategic allocations proposed within the Draft Plan (2013)

Settlement	Site Name	Number of Dwellings
Harwell Parish east of the A34	Valley Park	2,150
Harwell	Harwell Oxford Campus	400
Faringdon	South of Park Road	350
Wantage and Grove	Monks Farm (North Grove)	750
Wantage and Grove	Crab Hill	1,500
Total		5,150

- 2.3.4 The plan also set out a draft policy approach for a number of thematic policy issues; with a total of 40 policies in the plan.

The Interim SA Report

- 2.3.5 The report published alongside the consultation document essentially presented the information required of the SA Report,² in that it answered three key questions:

1. What has Plan-making / SA involved **up to this point**?
 - Including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
2. What are the SA findings **at this stage**?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
3. What happens **next**?

- 2.3.6 In relation to (1) the report presented information on 'reasonable alternatives' for 19 distinct plan policies areas / issues. Importantly, information was presented in relation to eight spatial strategy alternatives, which varied in terms of both quantum and distribution.

- 2.3.7 Also, eight strategic site options - i.e. the shortlist of strategic sites understood to be 'reasonably' in contention - were appraised. In addition to the five sites ultimately 'preferred' (see Table 2.1), strategic site options were appraised at Wantage/Grove (Stockham Farm) and Faringdon (Coxwell Road), as was the option of a smaller scheme at Valley Park (i.e. a scheme smaller than the preferred option).

- 2.3.8 Economic growth strategy was also the focus of alternatives appraisal, with alternatives defined/appraised for several discrete issues. Thematic plan issues that were a focus of alternatives appraisal included: affordable housing, protection of existing employment sites, sustainable construction, the Botley central area and the Didcot A power station site.

- 2.3.9 The following is a concluding statement from the appraisal of spatial strategy alternatives:

"... with the appropriate mitigation, some of the environmental effects [of higher growth options] may be able to be ameliorated (the same of which cannot be said about any relative poor performance in regard to housing delivery [of lower growth options]). As such, those options that favour higher levels of housing growth have the potential to, on balance, perform more sustainably than those at a lower level of development – this is subject to more detailed evidence on transport... [The preferred option] is a reasonable basis for local plan consultation based on our current evidence base. The housing delivery options will be revisited once the Oxfordshire SHMA has established objectively assessed need."

² i.e. the information listed in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (SEA) Regulations, 2004.

- 2.3.10 In addition to presenting information on alternatives, the Interim SA Report also presented an appraisal of the Draft Plan. The appraisal was high level, but led to clear conclusions and a number of recommendations. Specific recommendations are listed in Table 26.1 of the report, of which some had already been actioned by the time of the consultation, whilst others remained outstanding. Table 2.2 presents two examples of recommendations presented within the report, one which had been actioned by the time of the consultation and another that had not.

Table 2.2: Examples of recommendations presented as part of the Draft Plan appraisal (2013)

Policy	Recommendation	Council response
29 (Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility)	The policy should require comprehensive mitigation in order to ensure that the beauty and tranquillity of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is not compromised by roads infrastructure.	An additional statement has been added to the policy, stating that the council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to ensure that transport improvements are designed to minimise effects on the amenities of the surrounding area.
30 (Sustainable Design and Construction)	The policy should raise the Code for Sustainable Homes Level required for new development from 4 to 5 in 2016 (overall, instead of just for energy efficiency).	We do not agree with this recommendation due to concerns about the impact on the viability of development. No change proposed.

- 2.3.11 The following is a notable conclusion from the appraisal of the Draft Plan:

“Location of growth – the majority of growth is to go on green field land. The Local Plan Part 1 has a range of policies that should serve to mitigate for and loss of amenity / biodiversity on these sites, however there is a concern over the quality of replacement green space and biodiversity under the no-net loss policies. This needs to be clarified in the future i.e. through a SPD.”

Responses to the Draft Plan consultation

- 2.3.12 In total, 2,340 formal representations were received, from 511 different participants.
- 2.3.13 A Consultation Statement was published in February 2014, providing details of the main issues raised and presenting the Council's response. In relation to the spatial strategy, key issues raised are recorded as having been -
- the need for an up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA);
 - concerns about a lack of infrastructure to support development;
 - the need for an up-to-date Village Facilities Study to inform the distribution of growth;
 - objection to the allocation of the Didcot A site for employment development;
 - objection to the strategy of growth at Wantage and Grove, given distance to employment; and
 - the need for greater emphasis on the historic environment, biodiversity, pollution (air, noise and light) and education, including through the SA process.
- 2.3.14 Responses received in relation to specific development site options were also collated, with issues subsequently summarised within the Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper (2014; see Appendix 2) and the submitted Consultation Statement (2015; see sub-area sections). Site specific responses were numerous, and are not summarised here.
- 2.3.15 As a direct result of consultation responses an update was prepared to the Village Facilities Study. The updated study then fed into development of the Housing Delivery Update consultation document (see below), and related SA work.

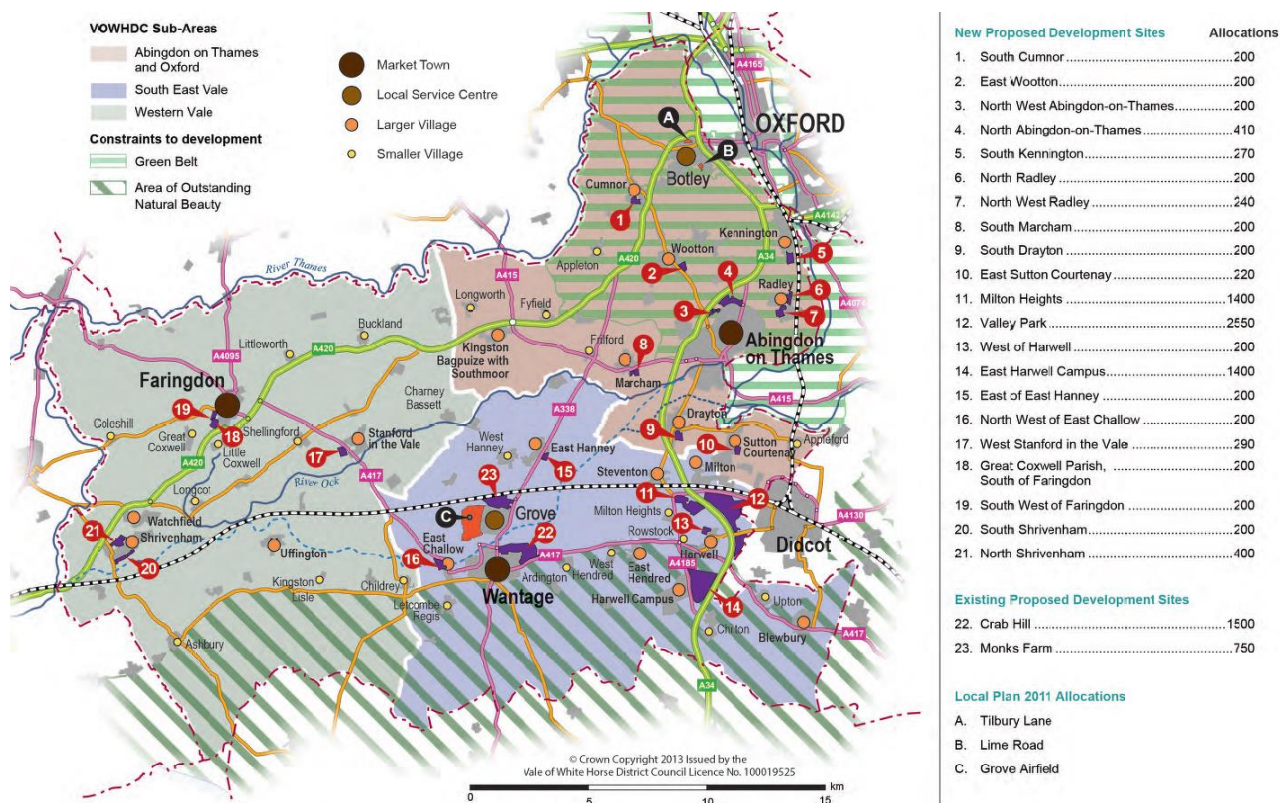
2.4 Housing Delivery Update (2014)

The consultation document

- 2.4.1 The LPP1 Housing Delivery Update consultation document was published for consultation, under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations, in February 2014. The consultation document focused on the matter of housing growth strategy, but the opportunity was also taken to propose some changes to other policies.
- 2.4.2 The need to present an updated housing growth strategy resulted from publication of the Oxfordshire SHMA, which identified an objectively assessed need (OAN) for 20,560 new homes in the Vale between 2011 and 2031. The implication for housing strategy, given a need to provide for OAN, was a need to find sites for about 7,430 more homes than were proposed under the Draft Plan (2013).
- 2.4.3 Four of the five strategic allocations from the Draft Plan – see Table 2.1 - were taken forward. The North Harwell Campus was understood to be unavailable for housing, and so was removed from the strategy. Of the four sites taken forward, two were moving through the planning application process by 2014, with Land at Park Road, Faringdon subject to a resolution to grant permission for up to 380 homes; and Monks Farm, North Grove partially subject to a resolution to grant planning permission (phase 1; 133 homes). The decision was also taken to increase the scale of the Valley Park allocation, from 2,150 – 2,550 homes.
- 2.4.4 In total, the consultation increased the number of proposed strategic allocations from five to 23 – see **Figure 2.1**. This included a clear preference for smaller strategic sites – i.e. sites with a proposed capacity of 200 – 300 homes – given a need to allocate sites capable of delivering in the early part of the plan period (with it being the case that larger sites often require new infrastructure to be put in place ahead of housing, which can delay delivery).³
- 2.4.5 The document was introduced with the statement: *“The responses we receive to this consultation will help us to prepare the final draft of our local plan for publication in mid 2014. We cannot avoid the challenge before us but we welcome your views on any alternative approaches for how we could meet the identified need.”*

³ As stated within the consultation document (para 1.7): *“To ensure that we can achieve and maintain a five year housing land supply and control our planning decisions, around 4,000... homes will need to be deliverable in the first five years after the plan is adopted... This means that we have had to identify within our plans a spread of smaller and more readily deliverable sites.”*

Figure 2.1: Proposed allocations from the Housing Delivery Update consultation (2014)



The Interim SA Report

2.4.6 Again, the report published alongside the consultation document essentially presented the information required of the SA Report,⁴ in that it answered three key questions -

1. What has Plan-making / SA involved **up to this point**?
 - Including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
2. What are the SA findings **at this stage**?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
3. What happens **next**?

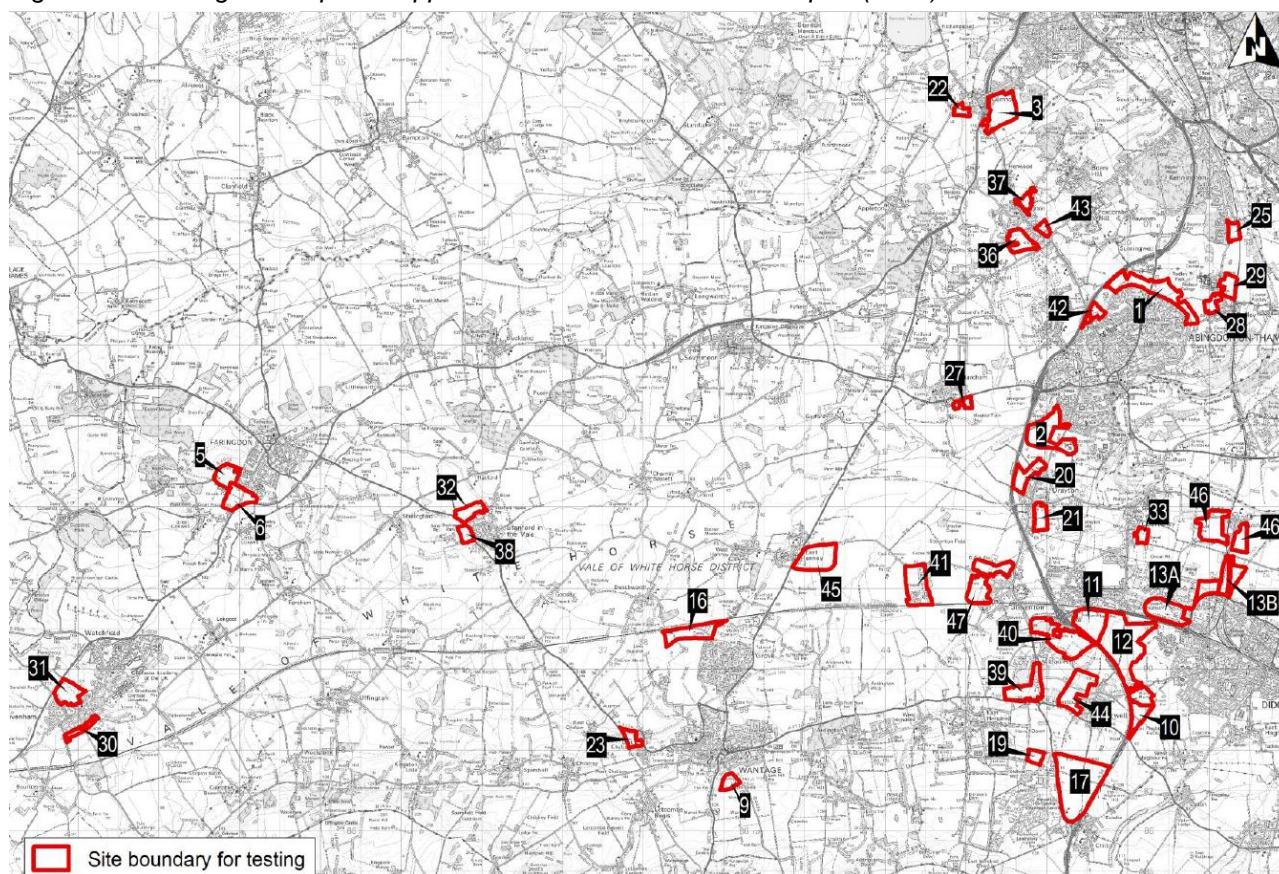
2.4.7 In relation to (1), by way of presenting information on 'reasonable alternatives', the report presented information on 46 strategic site options – see **Figure 2.2** – comprising the eight strategic sites previously considered in 2013 (see para 2.3.6) plus 38 additional strategic site options. The list of site options for appraisal was arrived at through a sifting process led by the Council. A long list of c.300 was arrived at by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), from which a shortlist of 49 was established. This shortlist was then refined down to the final list of 38 following the gathering of information on key constraints and opportunities, and review of feedback received through the Draft Plan consultation.⁵

2.4.8 The Interim SA Report also presented an explanation of why certain other matters had *not* been the focus of alternatives appraisal. Notably, there was an explanation provided as to why the matters of housing growth quantum and broad strategy were not the focus of formal alternatives appraisal in the run-up to the 2014 consultation (also, see further discussion within Section 2 of the Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper).

⁴ i.e. the information listed in Schedule I of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (SEA) Regulations, 2004.

⁵ Summary information on identifying reasonable site options for appraisal was presented in Section 12.3 of the Interim SA Report, with more detail within Section 3 of the Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper, which was published as part of the consultation.

Figure 2.2: Strategic site options appraised within the Interim SA Report (2014)



2.4.9

The appraisal served to highlight the relative merits of the various site options and, as a final step, the Council provided text, for inclusion in the Interim SA Report, explaining the reasons for supporting preferred sites despite draw-backs established through the appraisal. Notable explanation presented within the report (section 12.4) included –

- Sites 5 (South West Faringdon), 23 (North West East Challow), 45 (Land East of East Hanney) and 17 (East Harwell Oxford Campus) were all supported despite there being a significant landscape impact (set out in the Landscape Capacity Assessment). In each case the view of the Council was that the sustainability benefits of development outweighed the negatives, with all the sites being well related to an existing higher order settlement (i.e. larger village or market town) and/or employment.
 - Notably, Site 17 (East Harwell Oxford Campus) was proposed for allocation despite its location within the AONB, and the Landscape Capacity Assessment indicating no capacity for development. The Council's view was that a compelling economic case existed for making an exception to the AONB presumption against major development, given the site's unique position adjacent to the Harwell Campus, an internationally important science hub with Enterprise Zone status.
- Site 29 (North Radley) was also flagged as having the potential to lead to significant landscape impacts, given the finding of the Green Belt Review, which found the site to contribute to Green Belt purposes. The Council disagreed with the findings of the Green Belt Review, considering there to be the potential for limited development without harm to the Green Belt.
- Site 31 (North Shrivenham) was flagged by the SA as having the potential to lead to significant negative effects due to the adjacent Tuckmill Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, in light of the appraisal, the Council made the decision to only propose part of the site for allocation, in order to avoid impacts to the SSSI.

- 2.4.10 The appraisal of strategic site options formed an important part of the evidence-base to inform the selection of the preferred suite of strategic sites presented within the consultation document. A range of evidence-base studies were also completed, to inform plan-making and SA, including: an updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA); an updated Town and Village Facilities Study; an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP); an updated Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI); a Green Belt Review; a Landscape Capacity Assessment; an Historic Landscape Character Assessment and a Viability Study. The Council also undertook an informal consultation with infrastructure providers and key stakeholders prior to finalising the consultation document.
- 2.4.11 The rigorous site selection methodology employed in the run-up to the 2014 consultation is explained within Section 3 of the Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper, which was published as part of the consultation. Appendix 5 to the Supporting Paper presented a completed 'proforma' for each of the sites subjected to detailed assessment, which included a summary of SA findings, i.e. a summary of the positive and negative 'significant effects'.
- 2.4.12 In addition to presenting information on strategic site options, the Interim SA Report also presented an appraisal of the Draft Plan as it stood at that time. A clear conclusion was reached regarding the draw-backs of the plan in terms of landscape (given several preferred sites having been found to have limited or no capacity by the Landscape Capacity Assessment), agricultural land (given the likely loss of significant 'best and most versatile' agricultural land) and mineral resources (given some sites falling within an area of known potential for minerals extraction). Three specific recommendations were made (Table 15.1 of the report), including that the Council might identify replacement Green Belt, in order to ensure no net loss. The Council's response was: *"This issue has been considered through the 2014 Green Belt review, and no suitable replacement Green Belt land has been identified."*

Responses to the Housing Delivery Update consultation

- 2.4.13 In total, 2,717 formal representations were received, by 1,093 different participants.
- 2.4.14 A Consultation Statement was published in November 2014, providing details of the main issues raised and presenting the Council's response.
- 2.4.15 One prominent strategy matter raised through consultation responses was in relation to the Duty to Cooperate. Concerns were raised that the Vale's plan was proceeding prematurely, given uncertainty regarding the possible need to accommodate unmet housing need arising from Oxford City. Conversely, some concerns were raised to suggest that more detailed consideration should have been given (including through SA) to the possibility of not meeting OAN in full within the Vale, i.e. relying on neighbouring authorities to deliver some of the Vale's need. Duty to Cooperate with Swindon Borough was also raised as an issue, given proximity of growth proposed in the Western Vale to the large-scale 'Eastern Villages' scheme.
- 2.4.16 In respect of comments specifically dealing with the Interim SA Report, these are summarised within the submitted Consultation Statement (2015) and primarily related to -
- Historic Environment - concern the SA did not adequately assess the setting of heritage assets and cumulative effects as well as recommendations for additional historic baseline data to be included in the SA Report;
 - AONB - concern over the lack of formal testing of alternative approaches, including scale of development at the East Harwell Campus site, and insufficient consideration of cumulative impacts on the AONB;
 - Water and wastewater – issues should be established, and explored in greater detail; and
 - Mitigation – a request for the SA to give more explicit consideration to the identification of site specific mitigation measures to address the significant effects identified.

- 2.4.17 Responses received in relation to specific development site options were also collated, with issues subsequently summarised within the Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper (2014; see Appendix 2) and the submitted Consultation Statement (2015; see sub-area sections). Site specific responses were numerous, and are not summarised here.
- 2.4.18 As a direct result of consultation responses a number of evidence-base studies were commissioned, all site appraisals were reviewed and updated (e.g. in relation to water and wastewater) and SA work was programmed to include detailed assessment of alternatives for development around Harwell Campus (informed by the LVIA). Also, an Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation was prepared, setting out how the outcomes of the SHMA would be managed.

2.5 Publication of the Vale of White Horse 2031 Part 1 (2014)

The consultation document

- 2.5.1 The 'Publication' version of LPP1 was published under Regulation 19 of the Local Planning Regulations, in November 2014. The document presented the complete plan, with all policies in a final state that the Council considered 'sound' and ready for submission to Government (for examination by an appointed Planning Inspector).
- 2.5.2 The plan was published alongside a series of nine topic papers, to explain the key matters at the heart of the plan: Duty to Cooperate and Cross Boundary Issues; Spatial Strategy; Strategic Sites Selection; Housing; Supporting Economic Prosperity; Transport and Accessibility; Responding to Climate Change; the Built and Historic Environment; and the Natural Environment.
- 2.5.3 The 'Duty to Cooperate and Cross Boundary Issues' Topic Paper presented a detailed review of evidence, before identifying 19 key 'larger than local' / Duty to Cooperate issues to be addressed through the plan. First and foremost was the issue of ensuring the Vale Local Plan contributed fully to meeting OAN across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA), in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).⁶ The Topic Paper explained the preferred approach of committing - though a dedicated policy on "Cooperation on unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire" - to an early local plan review if required to address unmet needs.
- 2.5.4 The 'Spatial Strategy' Topic Paper explained that the broad strategy, which is entitled 'Building on our Strengths' was first established through an 'Internal Review' in 2011/2012, before being refined and published for consultation as part of the Draft Plan (2013). The broad strategy was then refined subsequently, to reflect the higher housing target resulting from the SHMA, but remained broadly consistent with that developed in 2011/12.
- 2.5.5 The 'Strategic Sites Selection' Topic Paper explained the long site selection process that had been completed over time and, as part of this, explained the significant steps that had been taken in the time since the Housing Delivery Update consultation. **Box 2.1** provides an overview. Ultimately, the Publication version of LPP1 presented 22 proposed allocations – see **Figure 2.3**.

⁶ NPPF para 47 states that Local Planning Authorities should "use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework..."

Box 2.1: Overview of the site selection process, as discussed within the Site Selection Topic Paper (2014)

The task in spring-autumn 2014 was to: **1)** Re-examine the 81 sites that were ‘non-preferred’ at the time of the Housing Delivery Update consultation (Feb 2014), which included sites that had already been subjected to detailed assessment, and sites that had not; and **2)** Re-examine the 21 sites that were ‘preferred’ at the time of the Housing Delivery Update consultation.

Focusing on **(1)**, a five stage approach to assessment was employed. Stages 1 and 2 lead to the identification of a 30 site short-list; Stage 3 enabled the short-list to be further refined to 12 sites; and then Stages 4 and 5 involved completing a detailed assessment ‘proforma’ for eight sites - see Appendix C of the Topic Paper. In light of this assessment, three sites were selected for addition to the plan as proposed allocations: East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor (280 dwellings); North Harwell Campus (550 dwellings); and South of East Hanney (200 dwellings).

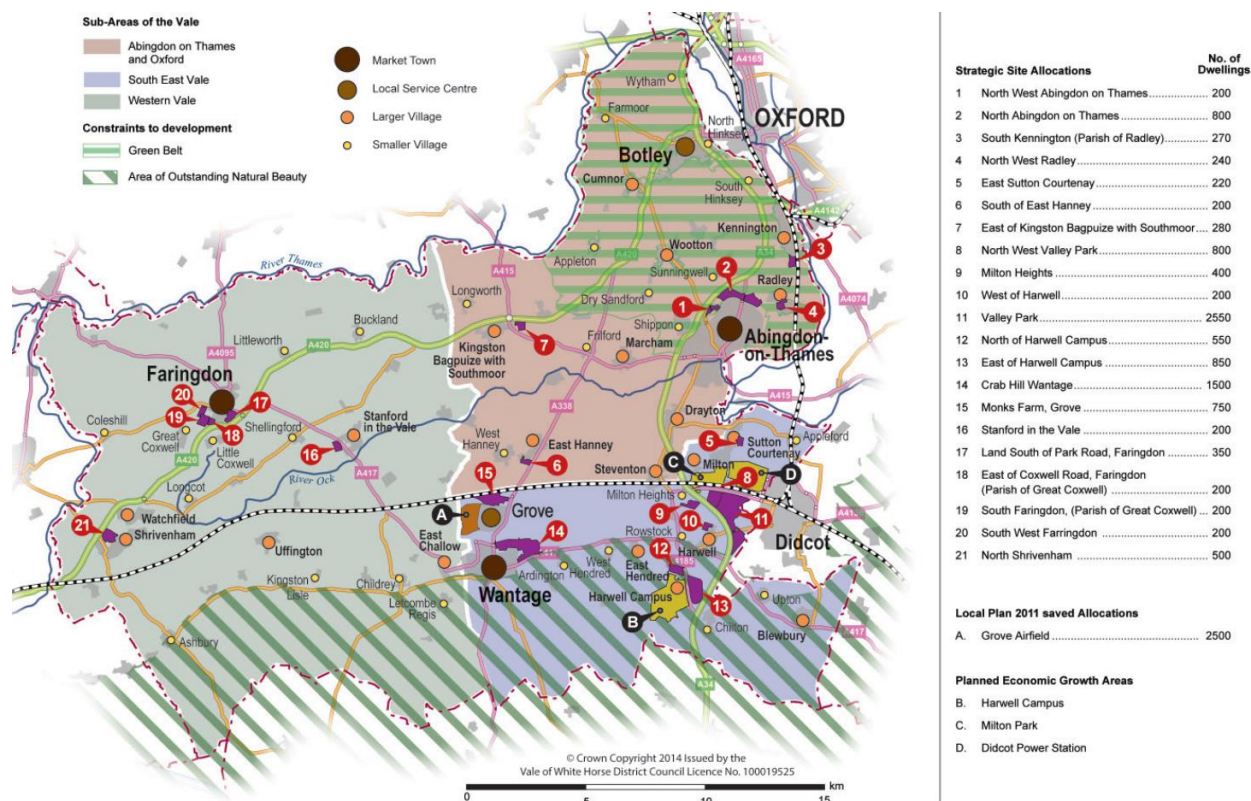
Focusing on **(2)**, detailed assessment findings were revisited in each instance, resulting in a decision to remove the following eight sites from the plan: South Cumnor; East Wootton; North Radley; South Marcham; South Drayton; East Challow; South Shrivenham; East of East Hanney.

Other decisions made, when preparing the Publication version of the plan, included -

- Valley Park site (as included in the Housing Delivery Update Consultation) was split into two sites; Valley Park, and North West Valley Park, and allocated for additional housing;
- North Abingdon on Thames site was increased in size (410 dwellings to around 800) following more detailed landscape advice and to better facilitate school provision and the provision of a full junction on the A34 at Lodge Hill;
- East of Coxwell Road, Faringdon site was re-included, having been previously omitted prior to the Housing Delivery Update Consultation due to a planning application being determined;
- East of Harwell Campus site boundary was amended to reflect more detailed landscape advice, which suggested that only the western part of the site was suitable for development; and
- Milton Heights allocation was reduced in scale from 1400 to 400 dwellings following an objection from Oxfordshire County Council on highway grounds.

Finally, there is a need to explain that one strategic site option was assessed at this time that had not been assessed previously, namely the option of a new settlement (the Oxford Garden City), to be located between Marcham, Steventon and Drayton. This site was not selected as a preferred option for a number of reasons, with SA serving to highlight effects that were not outweighed by benefits – see further discussion below.

Figure 2.3: Proposed allocations from the Publication version of the plan (2014)



The SA Report

2.5.6 The report published alongside the consultation document presented the information required of the SA Report,⁷ in that it answered three key questions -

1. What has Plan-making / SA involved **up to this point**?
 - Including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
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2.5.7 In relation to (1), the report presented information on

- 54 strategic site options (comprising the eight appraised prior to the 2013 Draft Plan consultation, the 38 additional sites appraised prior to the 2014 Housing Delivery Update consultation; and the eight additional sites identified subsequent to the 2014 consultation);
- Broad strategy alternatives (updating the appraisal previously presented in 2013, including to reflect the SHMA-driven housing quantum figure);
- Alternatives for the thematic and spatially specific issues that were previously a focus of appraisal in 2013 (see para 2.3.7);
- Alternatives for one new thematic issue, namely 'Science Vale Housing Supply Ring Fence'; and
- Alternative approaches to growth at Harwell Campus, recognising that by 2014 this was understood to be a particularly contentious / challenging plan issue.

⁷ i.e. the information listed in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (SEA) Regulations, 2004.

2.5.8 In total, therefore, the SA Report presented information on options/alternatives for 20 discrete plan issues. **Table 2.3** presents a *brief* commentary on a selection of these (and in particular the first four issues covered within the SA Report).

Table 2.3: Brief commentary on alternatives appraisal information presented within the SA Report (2014)

Policy issue	Report location	Brief commentary on alternatives appraisal
Broad strategy 1 (or 'Development pattern')	Sections 11.2-5 Appendices IV – V	Subsequent to consideration of initial alternatives, the Council developed two refined options, then a third, further refined option combining the best aspects of the two preceding refinements: Option A Urban Focus; Option B Urban concentration; Option C Building on our strengths - an option recognising that whilst the urban areas will still take the bulk of the housing growth, the rural areas will also have significant but proportionate housing and economic growth. Ultimately, 'Building on our Strengths' was selected as the preferred option. This approach performed well in terms of a number of sustainability objectives, although likely environmental impacts were identified, which the Council then committed to addressing through site selection and policy.
Broad strategy 2 (or 'Housing delivery')	Sections 11.6-8 Appendix XV	The Council's preferred option (Option G – Provide for OAN) was found to perform relatively well in socio-economic terms, but could lead to significant negative environmental effects (albeit with good potential to avoid/mitigate through development management).
Strategic sites	Section 12 Appendices 6-13	<p>It was particularly important that the benefits of potential development within the Green Belt and AONB were explored through the site options appraisal process. In respect of Green Belt sites, appraisal served to highlight that some sites scored well in terms of a range of socio-economic objectives, given their location adjacent to towns and larger villages, and given proximity to Oxford. This information was taken into account by the Council, alongside the findings of Green Belt Review (a study focused solely on the question of whether a given site contributed to the five nationally established Green Belt purposes).</p> <p>Within the plan, one Green Belt site - North Abingdon - had been extended into land not initially recommended for release in the Green Belt review. An expanded site at North Abingdon would better support provision of a new primary school and help fund the A34 south facing slips at Lodge Hill, as well as helping to meet needs arising in the largest settlement where there are limited alternative opportunities for sustainable growth. This proposal is also supported by landscape capacity work.</p>
Harwell Campus	Section 13 Appendix XIV	The Council commissioned a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the area surrounding Harwell Campus and identified alternative approaches to housing growth. The preferred option (medium growth) was supported from a landscape perspective, and also from an economic and infrastructure delivery perspective.

- 2.5.9 In addition to presenting information on alternatives, the SA Report also presented an appraisal of the Draft ('Publication') Plan. Specifically, within the report -
- Chapter 29 presented an appraisal of the 22 proposed site allocations, summarising potential issues/impacts, and the mitigation measures proposed through site specific policy;
 - Chapter 30 presented an appraisal of each of the LPP1 Policies in isolation;
 - Chapter 31 presented an appraisal of the Plan 'as a whole';
 - Chapter 32 presented an appraisal of the cumulative effects of the Plan acting in-combination with other plans, policies, programmes and initiatives within the District and in neighbouring areas; and
 - Chapter 33 discussed overall conclusions.
- 2.5.10 A Non-technical Summary (NTS) was also published alongside the SA Report, distilling key messages with the aim of engaging a wide audience. With regards to alternatives/options, the NTS focused on the 'housing delivery' alternatives, strategic site options and Harwell Campus alternatives. It also summarised the situation in respect of alternatives for thematic issues as follows: *"Where the Council has chosen a preferred approach that conflicts with appraisal findings (i.e. the Historic Environment, New Employment Land Provision and Change of Use on Existing Employment Sites policies above) detailed justification has been provided and recommendations incorporated into the final draft of the plan."*
- 2.5.11 In respect of the Draft Plan appraisal, the NTS concluded as follows -
- "In the case of the Local Plan Part 1, the SA process has identified a range of likely significant positive effects e.g. though housing delivery; provision of infrastructure; improved living conditions and job creation. These positive effects need to be balanced against the likely significant negative effects identified. In the case of the Local Plan Part 1, these are related to potential increases in traffic induced through unallocated sites and the support of larger settlements in terms of facilities provision. Note there are other negative effects identified but they have not been identified as significant at this stage... In terms of sites, there is a similar balancing act to be performed by the Council... In this case, likely significant positive effects have been identified for North West Abingdon on Thames; Milton Heights; Valley Park; North West of Valley Park; West of Harwell; East Harwell Campus; North of Harwell Campus; Crab Hill, Wantage/Grove; Monks Farm, north Grove; Land south of Park Road, Faringdon; West Stanford in the Vale; Great Coxwell Parish, South Faringdon; South West of Faringdon; North Shrivenham; East of Coxwell Road, Faringdon. Likely significant negative effects have been identified for: East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor; South of East Hanney; East Harwell Campus; North of Harwell Campus; Monks Farm, north Grove; Land south of Park Road, Faringdon; South West of Faringdon; and North Shrivenham."*
- [Responses to the LPP1 'Publication'](#)
- 2.5.12 In total, 4,680 formal representations were received, by 1,002 different participants.
- 2.5.13 A Consultation Statement was subsequently prepared and submitted alongside the Plan in March 2015, providing details of the main issues raised and presenting the Council's response. Focusing on comments made specifically on the SA Report -
- Natural England questioned appraisal findings in respect of the Harwell Campus alternatives, and requested further information on the strategic alternatives, with a view to better understanding the justification for allocating sites within the AONB, noting that the proposed approach had evolved significantly since the Housing Delivery Update consultation (2014).
 - Natural England also raised concerns over the landscape impact at several other sites, given Landscape Capacity Study findings, specifically: Land south of East Hanney; East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor; and North of Shrivenham.
 - Natural England also highlighted the potential for the North of Shrivenham site to have adverse hydrological effects on Tuckmill Meadows SSSI.

- Oxford City Council suggested that a strategy / housing delivery option should have been tested that would involve meeting the City's 'unmet need', and also suggested a need to formally consider a distribution option, or options, that that would focus development adjacent to or in close proximity to Oxford.
- CPRE raised a number of concerns regarding the SA, including the following -
 - Questioned the reasonable alternatives, including on the basis that options developed 'pre-SHMA' should not be relied-upon.
 - Suggested that appraisal was too high-level, with complex issues/impacts overlooked, including in respect of landscape, and heritage.
 - Suggested that the potential effects of the 'Science Vale Ring Fence' had not been properly assessed.
- Other concerns were raised in respect of -
 - insufficient consideration given to reasonable alternatives;
 - the SA approach to Core Policy 2: Cooperation on unmet housing need for Oxfordshire;
 - the justification for development in the AONB, given insufficient consideration of options involving no development in the AONB (in particular, concerns were raised by East Hendred Parish Council and Save Chilton AONB Action Group);
 - mitigation measures identified through the SA process;
 - justification for the preferred employment growth strategy, given alternatives tested;
 - the SA finding that growth at East Hanney would improve access to services/facilities; and
 - the SA finding in respect of spatial strategy / housing delivery Option G (the preferred option; high growth), with the suggestion that significant effects would in fact occur for objectives 3, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

2.5.14 Given the extent of comments received, some updates were made to the SA Report prior to its submission alongside the plan. No new appraisal work was undertaken, but information on 'reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with' was supplemented, and some information from the appendices of the report was moved into the main body of the report.

2.5.15 The updated SA Report was submitted to Government for Examination, alongside LPP1 and other supporting document, in March 2015.

2.6 Proposed Modifications (2016)

The consultation document

2.6.1 Examination hearings were held from Sept 2015 – Feb 2016, subsequent to which the Council published a first draft of Proposed Modifications. The Council subsequently received the Inspector's Interim Findings on 7th June and finalised Proposed Modifications for consultation.

The SA Report Addendum

2.6.2 Of the 81 Proposed Modifications, just five were 'screened-in' as having the potential to lead to significant effects, and therefore necessitating appraisal -

- Removal of East Harwell Campus and North-West Harwell Campus allocations
- Modified supporting text at Paragraphs 4.21 and 4.22 with regard to the Didcot 'ring-fence'
- Removal of South of East Hanney allocation
- Modified CP24 (Affordable Housing) to reflect a change in national policy
- Deletion of criterion on Lifetime Homes.

2.6.3 The SA Report Addendum reached the following conclusion -

“The overall conclusions of the 2014 SA Report were set out in Table 33.1 ‘Identified significant negative effects and mitigation measures’. There were two significant effects of the Plan identified, neither of which is relevant to the policies subject to appraisal in this SA Report Addendum. It is concluded that the main modifications have no effect on the conclusion of the 2014 SA Report.”

Responses to the Proposed Modifications consultation

2.6.4 The Council received a total of 178 comments from 70 individual consultees. The comments were then forwarded to the Inspector for his consideration.

2.7 Plan finalisation (2016)

2.7.1 The Inspector’s report into the soundness of LPP1 was published on 1st December 2016, concluding that the plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the district until 2031 provided that a number of modifications are made.

2.7.2 The required modifications were broadly those that the Council had previously published for consultation. Having considered representations made on proposed modifications, the Inspector did not consider it necessary to make any major changes, mainly amending detailed wording and adding consequential modifications for consistency or clarity. In a very limited number of instances the Inspector concluded, in the light of consultation comments, that part of some consulted-upon proposed main modifications are neither necessary nor appropriate.

2.7.3 The Inspector’s Report went on to discuss various key issues central to plan-making (and SA), i.e. those issues that were a key consideration when reaching a conclusion on soundness / the need for modifications. Key matters discussed included -

- Whether or not the plan sets out a soundly-based strategy for addressing **unmet housing needs** from other districts.
- Whether or not the identified objectively assessed **need for housing in the district**, the overall distribution of housing and the proposed housing supply ring fence are soundly-based.
- Whether or not the plan sets out a strategy for **employment land** which is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- Whether or not the plan sets out a soundly-based strategy for the **Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area**, including whether or not exceptional circumstances exist to justify the plan’s proposed revisions to the Green Belt boundary.
- Whether or not the plan sets out a soundly-based strategy for the **South East Vale Sub-Area**, including whether or not the housing allocations proposed in the North Wessex Downs AONB are soundly-based.
- Whether or not the plan sets out a soundly-based strategy for the **Western Vale Sub-Area**.
- Whether or not the plan makes adequate and soundly-based provision for **infrastructure** and services to support new development.
- Whether or not the plan sets out a soundly-based housing requirement figure and whether or not a **5 year supply of deliverable housing land** is likely to be available throughout the plan period.
- Whether or not the plan sets out **district-wide policies** which are positively-prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- Whether or not the plan is soundly-based in terms of **economic viability** issues and its delivery, monitoring and contingency arrangements.

2.7.4 **Box 2.2** presents the Inspector's views on the soundness of the broad spatial strategy – a matter that has been a focus of SA work since the outset of plan-making.

2.7.5 Finally, it is worthwhile repeating the Inspector's conclusions on the SA process -

“A number of criticisms have been made of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the plan. It has been argued that it should have tested the option of Oxford City's unmet housing needs being met in the Vale through allocations in the plan. However, the law requires the testing of reasonable alternatives for meeting the objective of the plan and, in the context of the level of unmet needs being, until very recently, unknown, it has always been clear that it was not an objective of the Part 1 plan that it should seek to meet any neighbouring authority's unmet housing needs. It is also contended that the SA does not sufficiently thoroughly appraise a range of impacts including, amongst others water resources, climate change, agricultural land and transport effects. Bearing in mind that the appraisal is of a strategic level plan and that more detailed assessment of the effects of specific schemes (including potentially further Environmental Impact Assessment) will be required, I am satisfied that it is adequate. Others disagree with the SA's conclusions on specific impacts. Whilst this is understandable, given that there is often an inevitable degree of judgement in such assessments, its conclusions are reasonable.” [emphasis added]

Box 2.2: The Inspector's conclusions on the broad spatial strategy

"Policy CP4, as submitted, indicates the intention that 13,960 (approximately 68%) of the 20,560 OAN will be provided for on 22 strategic sites of 200 dwellings or more. In the light of my conclusions... MM5 is required to delete references to three of the 22 sites, reducing the total number of dwellings envisaged to be delivered on the strategic sites to 12,495..."

Of the 12,495 dwellings on allocated sites, policy CP4 (as proposed to be modified) identifies that around 54% would be in/adjoining the market towns of Abingdon-on-Thames, Faringdon and Wantage or the town of Didcot (which is just outside the district boundary); approximately 28% would be in/adjoining the local service centre of Grove and around 18% would be in/adjoining other settlements across the district. Whilst concerns are raised about specific settlements and sites the strategy of focusing more than three-quarters of new housing on large allocated site at/adjoining Didcot and the district's three largest settlements is soundly-based and supportive of the Framework's core planning principle of focusing significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

The plan identifies three sub-areas within the district: Abingdon-on Thames/Oxford Fringe, South East Vale and Western Vale and together policies CP8, CP15 and CP20 (as updated/modified) indicate the proportion of the overall housing requirement in each sub-area would be around 26%, 59% and 15% respectively. The Council argues that providing for the majority of the district's new housing needs in the South East Vale Sub-Area is justified, given a large proportion of the need for new housing will be generated by new jobs in this area.

Seeking to co-locate new jobs and houses makes sense in principle although the deliverability of the strategy is an important consideration. However, whilst slower than anticipated delivery of housing on individual sites is always a possibility, the approach of allocating eight strategic sites for housing in the South East Vale sub-area, varying in size from 200 to 2,550 units and across a range of settlement types, appropriately minimises the risk of the overall need for housing not being met because of delays or more fundamental problems on individual sites. Moreover the plan provides for more than a quarter of all housing on strategic allocated sites outside the South East Vale area.

Whilst the majority of new housing in the district will be located in the South East Sub-Area, the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area contains the Vale's largest settlement (Abingdon) in addition to the local service centre of Botley and a number of larger villages, including Radley and Kennington. A substantial part of the OAN arises from demographic changes which points to a need for new housing in this part of the district as well as in the area of greatest employment growth. Moreover, this part of the district is closest to Oxford City which, notwithstanding the growth of Science Vale, is likely to remain a very important centre for employment and services for residents of the Vale. The indicated requirement for housing in this sub-area... is thus soundly based.

It has been argued that the proposed distribution of new housing does not adequately reflect the role of Oxford as a centre for employment, shopping and services for the Vale of White Horse. Aside from its own unmet needs... Oxford City Council has contended that 1,000 more dwellings... of the Vale's identified needs should be located in the Abingdon-on-Thames/Oxford Fringe area. However, there is no detailed or convincing evidence to support this contention. Moreover, whilst the Abingdon-on-Thames/Oxford Fringe sub-area is closer to Oxford, it is true that more than 3,000 dwellings proposed in the South East Vale (the two Valley Park sites) would also be close to Didcot Station with its fast and frequent rail service to Oxford.

Conversely it has been argued that it does not make sense to allocate 13% of housing in the west of the Vale, distant from the new employment opportunities. However, this is a relatively small proportion of all housing, and will (in line with guidance in the NPPF) support the main settlements in this area – the market town of Faringdon and two larger villages.

Concern has been raised that the boundaries of the sub-areas are artificially and inappropriately drawn such that more housing has been allocated to some settlements, in support of Science Vale, than would otherwise be the case. In particular it is pointed out that Wantage and Grove, within the South East Vale sub-Area, are no closer to the envisaged employment growth at Harwell and Milton Park than Abingdon-on-Thames which is outwith the South East Vale Sub-Area. However, irrespective of the appropriateness of Wantage and Grove in providing housing to support Science Vale... and as detailed above, significant housing development in Wantage and Grove are appropriate given their position as some of the district's largest settlements."

3 MEASURES DECIDED CONCERNING MONITORING

- 3.1.1 Whilst the SA Report must present ‘measures **envisaged** concerning monitoring’, this SA Report Adoption Statement must present ‘measures **decided** concerning monitoring’.
- 3.1.2 The proposed monitoring framework was presented within Appendix H of the LPP1 ‘Publication’ document (with links to Policy CP47: Delivery and contingency). The SA Report dealt with ‘measures envisaged concerning monitoring’ in Chapter 36, presenting a list of indicators that the Council might want to consider monitoring, given Draft Plan appraisal findings.
- 3.1.3 Monitoring was the focus of some discussion at the examination hearings, with the result that the Inspector requested that the Council undertake further discussions with interested parties, and then prepare a Statement of Common Ground.⁸
- 3.1.4 A number of changes were made to the submission monitoring framework. Most changes related to the ‘actions’ listed for each indicator, as explained by the Inspector within his report -
- “[T]he Council’s proposed “actions” within the Monitoring Framework are predominantly ones which to seek to get delivery of the plan back on track, whereas as it has been suggested that missed targets should trigger a review of the strategy. In my view both are potentially appropriate, but key to determining which is the most suitable approach in a specific case is investigation of the causes of implementation of the plan not being on track. This is something which the Monitoring Framework, nor related policy CP47, as submitted, do not require... Consequently, for the plan to be effective [a modification] is necessary, altering policy CP47 to make clear that where implementation of the plan is not taking place as envisaged the Council will investigate the reasons for the situation and then implement appropriate action. Accordingly [consequential modifications] amend... the monitoring framework itself...”*
- 3.1.5 A notable modification was made in relation to the monitoring of Core Policy 34 (A34 Strategy). Specifically, whereas the submission plan included no indicator, the final framework includes dedicated indicators, with assigned targets and actions.
- 3.1.6 The final monitoring framework is replicated in full in **Appendix I**.

Table 2.3: Example extract from the final monitoring framework

Policy	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP34 (A34 Strategy)	Progress of a Route Based Strategy for the A34.	To progress the Route Based Strategy for the A34 in a timely manner, in association with the Oxford to Cambridge Infrastructure Review.	Liaise with County and Highways England over challenges of delivering the strategy and framework.
	Progress of air quality monitoring framework for the A34.	To help progress, in a timely manner, the Air Quality Monitoring Framework associated with the A34 No significant deterioration in NOX concentration or nitrogen deposition rate compared to baseline. If a deterioration occurs that exceeds 1 % of the critical level (0.3 micrograms/ cubic metre) or critical load (0.2 kgn/ha/yr) investigative action should be taken. No significant deleterious change in SAC vegetation within the A34 corridor that lies within 200 m of the roadside and is attributable to a parallel deterioration in air quality. If such a deterioration occurs remedial action should be taken. No significant change within the oxford meadows SAC along the A34 (at, at least three chosen locations).	Consider prioritising resource to accelerate progress. Further mitigation measures should be implemented if the monitoring indicates an effect on the SAC. Such mitigation measures will need to be identified and demonstrably effective.

⁸ See http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PHD%202020a_v01_2016_04_28%20Monitoring%20SoCG%20_Redacted.pdf

4 CONCLUSIONS ON THE SA PROCESS

- 4.1.1 In conclusion, this SA Adoption Statement demonstrates that a robust SA process has been progressed alongside plan-making, with appraisal findings feeding-in to decision-making at numerous junctures, and several reports having been published for consultation alongside plan documents, in order to help ensure informed and effective consultation. Most importantly, the SA Report was published alongside the 'Publication' version of the plan in 2014, presenting all of the information required by Regulations.⁹ The report served to inform representations on the plan, and then served to inform plan finalisation.
- 4.1.2 This SA Adoption Statement is the final step in the SA process. Its aim is to explain the 'story' of the plan-making / SA process, and also present measures decided concerning monitoring. Also, this report is prepared for the benefit elected councillors of Vale of White Horse District Council, who are tasked with making a decision regarding adoption of the Plan.
- 4.1.3 The Regulations require that this report presents certain information. Table 4.1 serves to demonstrate that this report does present the required information.

Table 4.1: Regulatory checklist

In accordance with Regulations, the SA Adoption Statement must...	How has this report presented the required information?
Summarise how environmental (and wider sustainability) considerations have been integrated into the plan	This report has sought to provide examples of key sustainability considerations that have been highlighted through appraisal and consultation at each of the main stages of the plan-making / SA process. The appraisal of strategic site options and alternative strategies, in particular, served to highlight a range of significant negative effects, enabling the Council to then take steps to avoid the effect (by selecting a better performing site or strategy) or mitigate the effect (through development management and/or site specific policy).
Summarise how the SA Report and consultation responses received, as part of the Draft Plan / SA Report consultation, have been taken into account when finalising the plan.	The discussion under the 'Consultation responses' sub-headings within this report serve to highlight that numerous stakeholder organisations took the opportunity, over the years, to comment directly on appraisal findings presented within SA documentation. Also, the discussion under the 'Consultation responses' sub-headings serve to highlight that consultation responses more generally tended to focus on the same issues that were a focus of the SA documentation, most notably the issue of site selection / strategy, suggesting that the SA documentation may have helped to facilitate informed and effective debate.
Summarise the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with."	The Council presented their reasons for choosing preferred options within the various Topic Papers published alongside the plan 'Publication' version of the plan in 2014, with explicit consideration given to non-preferred options. The Inspector's Report (December 2016) then presented an explanation of reasons for making certain modifications to the plan. Taking Harwell Campus as an example, the Inspector's Report discussed the merits of an approach involving allocations for 1,400 homes (the submission approach) versus an approach involving nil allocations (the final preferred approach).

⁹ The information to be provided in the Adoption Statement is listed in Article 9 of the SEA Directive / Regulation 16 of the Regulations.

APPENDIX 1: MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Presented below is the final LPP1 monitoring framework.

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Covered by all other indicators within the Framework.	Covered by all other targets within the Framework.	Covered by all other actions within the Framework.
CP2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire	Extent of progress of LPP2 or if more appropriate the full or focused partial review of the Local Plan in accordance with CP2 and the Local Development Scheme.	To progress LPP2 or if more appropriate the full or focused partial review of the Local Plan in accordance with CP2 and the Local Development Scheme.	Consider committing further resource to the progression of the relevant DPD.
CP3: Settlement Hierarchy	Covered by indicators for Policies CP4, CP6, CP8, CP15, CP20, CP27, CP28, CP30, CP31, CP32.	Covered by targets for Policies CP4, CP6, CP8, CP15, CP20, CP27, CP28, CP30, CP31, CP32.	Covered by actions for Policies CP4, CP6, CP8, CP15, CP20, CP27, CP28, CP30, CP31, CP32.
CP4 Meeting our Housing Needs	Number of dwellings permitted and completed by Sub Area and strategic allocation.	To deliver the amount of dwellings planned for in each Sub Area over the plan period.	Undertake measures set out in CP47.
	Housing Trajectory showing: i. Annual dwelling completions, ii. Annual average no. of additional dwellings required to meet housing targets.	To deliver 20,560 dwellings over the plan period based on 1,028 dwellings per annum.	
	Number of dwellings allocated through Local Plan Part 2 and Neighbourhood Plans.	Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plan Part 2 to cumulatively allocate 1,000 dwellings over the plan period.	
	Amount of land available that contributes to the 5-year housing land supply in both supply areas	To provide a 5-year housing land supply of deliverable sites based on Liverpool methodology for the ring fence supply area and Sedgfield methodology for rest of district supply area.	

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP5: Housing Supply Ring-Fence	Housing Trajectory showing for the ring fence area and the rest of district area: i. Annual dwelling completions, ii. Annual average no. of additional dwellings required to meet housing targets.	To provide 11,850 dwellings in the ring fence area over the plan period based on 593 dwellings per annum.	Undertake measures set out in CP47.
	Amount of land available that contributes to the 5-year housing land supply in both supply areas.	To provide a 5-year housing land supply of deliverable sites based on Liverpool methodology for the ring fence supply area and Sedgfield methodology for rest of district supply area.	
	Jobs Growth.	To provide for 15,850 jobs in the ring fence area over the plan period.	
CP6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs	Quantum of land permitted and completed for employment by strategic site and allocation.	To deliver 218 hectares of employment land over the plan period.	Liaise with Economic Development Team and stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery of employment. Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery e.g. LDO or additional land.
	Jobs Growth.	To provide for 23,000 jobs over the plan period.	
	Business Counts.	Increase in Businesses.	
CP7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services	Progress of essential strategic infrastructure items.	To deliver strategic infrastructure items in accordance with the timeframes identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Liaise with infrastructure providers and other stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery. Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery e.g. funding. Review and update Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
	Progress of other strategic infrastructure items.		
	Funding and monies received and spent.	To progress the funding and expenditure of monies including S106 and CIL received in a timely manner to support new development as set out in the plan.	

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area	Number of dwellings permitted and completed by location and strategic allocation.	To permit and deliver the amount of dwellings planned for the Sub Area.	Undertake measures set out in CP47.
	Quantum of land and uses permitted for employment at strategic sites and allocations.	To permit and deliver 3.20 net hectares of employment land as planned for the Sub Area.	
CP9: Harcourt Hill Campus	Progress of masterplan for Harcourt Hill Campus Site.	To agree a masterplan for Harcourt Hill Campus site which guides any subsequent planning application.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around developing a masterplan. Consider prioritising resource to progress masterplan.
CP10: Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter, Abingdon-on-Thames	Status and type of planning permissions granted at Abbey Shopping Centre and the Charter Area.	To permit and deliver planning permissions that provide a redevelopment scheme for the Abbey Shopping Centre and Charter Area that accords with the policy.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery of A1 uses. Investigate mechanisms to accelerate A1 uses.
CP11: Botley Central Area	Status and type of planning permissions granted at Botley Central Area.	To permit and deliver planning permissions that provide a redevelopment scheme for the Botley Central Area that accords with the policy.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery of A1 uses as part of a wider scheme. Consider whether Botley Centre SPD requires reviewing and/or updating.
CP12: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area	Status and type of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	To ensure all relevant planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with County to review permissions granted and impact on the delivery of the scheme/s.
CP13: The Oxford Green Belt	Status and type of planning permissions granted within the Green Belt.	To ensure all relevant planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Review permissions granted and consider appropriate action.
CP14: Upper Thames Reservoir	Status and type of planning permissions granted on land safeguarded.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Thames Water to review permissions granted and impact on the delivery of the reservoir.

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP15: Spatial Strategy for South East Sub-Area	Number of dwellings permitted and completed by location and strategic allocations.	To permit and deliver the amount of dwellings planned for the Sub Area.	Undertake measures set out in CP47.
	Quantum of land and uses permitted for employment at strategic sites and allocations.	To permit and deliver 208 net hectares of employment land as planned for the Sub Area.	
CP16: Didcot A Power Station	Status, type and amount of land permitted at Didcot A.	To permit and deliver planning permissions that provide a mixed use development including 29 hectares for employment uses.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery.
	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded for the Science Bridge and A4130 re-routing.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Covered by action for CP18.
CP17: Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area	Progress of the infrastructure as identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	To deliver infrastructure items in accordance with the timeframes identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Liaise with County and other stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery. Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery of transport schemes. Review and update Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
	Funding and monies received and disbursed.	To progress the funding and expenditure of monies including S106 and CIL monies received in a timely manner to support delivery of infrastructure items set out in the policy.	
CP18: Safeguarding of land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with County to review permissions granted and impact on the delivery of the scheme/s.
CP19: Re-opening of Grove Railway Station	Progress of the Re-opening of Grove Railway Station.	To maintain commitment to progress re-opening of the Railway Station.	Liaise with County and other stakeholders to progress delivery.
	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP20: Spatial Strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area	Number of dwellings permitted and completed by location and strategic allocations.	To permit and deliver the amount of dwellings planned for the Sub Area. .	Undertake measures set out in CP47.
	Quantum of land and uses permitted for employment at strategic sites and allocations.	To permit and deliver 7.38 net hectares of employment land as planned for the Sub Area.	
CP21: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area	Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with County to review permissions granted and impact on the delivery of the scheme/s.
CP22: Housing Mix	Average housing mix of planning permissions ¹⁰ .	To ensure the cumulative delivery of planning permissions for housing developments provides a housing mix that accords with the SHMA.	Liaise with Housing Team to review and consider delivery of housing mix. Consider undertaking a revised assessment of housing mix.
CP23: Housing Density	Average density of housing planning permissions ¹¹ .	To ensure the cumulative delivery of planning permissions for housing developments provides an average density that accords with the policy.	Liaise with Development Management and Urban Design to review and consider delivery of housing density.
CP24: Affordable Housing	Percentage of affordable housing provided on sites of more than 3 dwellings or larger than 0.1ha.	To ensure all planning permissions for housing sites of 3 or more dwellings or sites larger than 0.1 ha to provide 35% affordable housing or in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Housing Team to review and accelerate delivery of affordable housing.
	Tenure split.	To provide for around a 75:25 split between rented and intermediate housing tenures of affordable housing.	
CP25: Rural Exception Sites	Status of permissions granted for rural exceptions sites.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the Policy.	Liaise with Housing Team to review the need and accelerate delivery of schemes.

¹⁰ Illustrate data by sub area

¹¹ Illustrate data by sub area

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population	Amount and type of housing designed for older people permitted as part of strategic allocations and within the district.	To increase the delivery of housing designed for older people and ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Housing Team to review the need and accelerate delivery of housing for the ageing population.
CP27: Meeting the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People	Net additional pitches and sites for gypsy and travellers.	To deliver 13 gypsy and traveller pitches (net) over the plan period.	Liaise with the gypsy and travelling community to establish challenges around providing and delivering additional pitches.
	Five year supply of pitches.	To maintain a five year supply of pitches ¹² .	
CP28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites	Status and type of permissions granted for B uses on unallocated sites.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery. Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery e.g. additional land.
CP29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises.	Quantum of land permitted and completed for employment by strategic site..	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery. Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery e.g. LDO or additional land.
	Status and use of permissions for the change of use of existing employment sites (that are not strategic) for non-employment uses granted.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	
CP30: Further and Higher Education	Progress of further and higher education facilities.	To ensure delivery of further and higher education in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Liaise with County and stakeholders to review and accelerate delivery through appropriate mechanisms.
CP31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy	Status and type of permissions granted for visitor economic developments.	To deliver a net increase in development for visitor economy over the plan period in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Economic Development and Leisure Teams to review the need and aspiration for visitor economy.
CP32: Retailing and Other Town Centre Uses	Status, type and amount of floorspace granted for retail by location.	To deliver a net increase in retail development over the plan period in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with stakeholders to establish challenges around delivery.

¹² As of April 2016, the five year supply target is approximately 3.25 pitches.

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
	Number of permissions granted for retail developments over 1,000m ² (Abingdon-on-Thames and Wantage) and 500m ² (elsewhere in the District) accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment.	To ensure all planning permissions granted for retail development over 1,000m ² or 500m ² in appropriate locations to be accompanied by a comprehensive Retail Impact Assessment.	Investigate appropriate mechanisms to accelerate delivery e.g. allocate land.
CP33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	Average Journey times ¹³ .	To ensure journey times do not significantly ¹⁴ increase based on trend analysis.	Liaise with County on delivery of transport schemes to mitigate increases in congestion, and promote sustainable transport measures.
	Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments over 80 dwellings.	To ensure developments meet sustainable travel targets in Travel Plans.	
	Progress of transport schemes.	To help progress of transport schemes in a timely manner to support delivery of new development in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	
	To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas.	To ensure development supports improvements to air quality and meets the AQMA's standards.	
	Number of road accident casualties ¹⁵	To ensure development supports improvements to road safety.	
CP34: A34 Strategy	Progress of a Route Based Strategy for the A34.	To progress the Route Based Strategy for the A34 in a timely manner, in association with the Oxford to Cambridge Infrastructure Review.	Liaise with County and Highways England over challenges of delivering the strategy and framework. Consider prioritising resource to accelerate progress. Further mitigation measures should be implemented if the monitoring indicates an effect on the SAC. Such
	Progress of air quality monitoring framework for the A34.	To help progress, in a timely manner, the Air Quality Monitoring Framework associated with the A34.	
		No significant deterioration in NOX concentration or nitrogen deposition rate	

¹³ On those areas that are monitored by the Highways Authority.

¹⁴ Assessed on an individual area basis.

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
		<p>compared to baseline. If a deterioration occurs that exceeds 1 % of the critical level (0.3 micrograms/ cubic metre) or critical load (0.2 kgn/ha/yr) investigative action should be taken.</p> <p>No significant deleterious change in SAC vegetation within the a34 corridor that lies within 200 m of the roadside and is attributable to a parallel deterioration in air quality. If such a deterioration occurs remedial action should be taken.</p> <p>No significant change within the Oxford Meadows SAC along the A34 (at, at least three chosen locations)</p>	mitigation measures will need to be identified and demonstrably effective.
CP35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking	Level of cycle movements ¹⁶ .	To increase the proportion of journeys undertaken by cycling locally.	Liaise with County on delivery of cycle schemes, and funding secured for sustainable transport measures.
	New cycle schemes.	To help facilitate the delivery of new cycle schemes.	
	Bus patronage ¹⁷ .	To increase the proportion of journeys undertaken by buses locally.	
	Funding secured for sustainable transport schemes.	To help secure funding to deliver sustainable transport schemes in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	
	Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments over 80 dwellings.	To ensure developments meet sustainable travel targets identified in Travel Plans.	
	Number of permissions granted for major development supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.	To ensure all planning permissions granted for major development to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.	

¹⁶ On those routes that are monitored by the Highways Authority

¹⁷ On a County-wide basis

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP36: Electronic Communications	Compliance with Building Regulations.	To ensure delivery of dwellings is in compliance with Building Regulations.	Enforcement of Regulations.
CP37: Design and Local Distinctiveness	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to urban design officers' advice.	To ensure all relevant planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Urban Design Team to establish challenges of delivering urban design principles.
CP38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites	Number of planning permissions granted for major development contrary to urban design officers' advice.	To ensure all major planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Urban Design Team and Development Management to establish challenges of delivering urban design principles and/or to review why masterplans and/or design and access statements are not being submitted.
	Number of permissions granted for major development supported by an appropriate masterplan and design and access statement.	To ensure all major development is accompanied by a masterplan and design and access statement.	
CP39: The Historic Environment	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to technical advice.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Conservation Team and Historic England to establish challenges of conserving and/or enhancing the historic environment. Prioritise resource/commitment to progressing Conservation Area Character Appraisals and, if required, Heritage Partnership Agreements.
	Number of buildings on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register.	To protect all buildings on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register and facilitate their subsequent removal from the Register.	
	Number of new Conservation Area Character Appraisals.	To agree a programme of the review and production of Conservation Area Character Appraisals and deliver that agreed programme.	
	Progress of Heritage Partnership Agreements.	To ensure the completion of Heritage Partnership Agreements where appropriate for any listed building on an 'at risk' register.	
CP40: Sustainable Design and Construction	Number of permissions granted that incorporate climate change adaptation measures.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Development Management and Thames Water to review the challenges of delivering sustainable design and construction measures and water usage target. Consider additional policies as part of Local Plan Part 2.
	Number of permissions granted that achieve the water use below 110 litres/person/day.	To ensure all planning permissions achieve a water use of 110 litres/person/day.	

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
CP41: Renewable Energy	Status and type of permission granted for renewable energy.	To deliver schemes for renewable energy in accordance with the policy, thereby contributing to the UK's renewable energy target.	Review challenges around delivery of schemes.
CP42: Flood Risk	Number and detail of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	Liaise with Environment Agency and Development Management to review justification for permitted developments.
CP43: Natural Resources	Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling or composting.	To take the opportunities presented by new development to deliver a percentage increase of household waste sent for re-use, recycling or composting.	Liaise with Environmental Health Team, Environment Agency and Development Management to review challenges around delivery of the different criterion of this policy. Consider additional policies as part of Local Plan Part 2.
	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality grounds.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	
	To monitor designated quality Air Quality Management Areas.	To ensure all development supports improvements to air quality and meets the AQMA's standards.	
	Number of permissions granted contrary to technical advice on contaminated land.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	
	Amount and detail of permissions granted on PDL ¹⁸ .	To ensure the delivery of development schemes helps to maximise the reuse of PDL ¹⁹ .	
	The amount of the best and most versatile agricultural land permissions are granted for other uses.	To ensure no loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land unless in accordance with the policy.	
CP44: Landscape	Number of permissions granted contrary to technical advice.	To ensure all planning permissions are only granted in accordance with the policy ²⁰ .	Liaise with the Landscape Team and Development Management to

¹⁸ Consider use of the Brownfield Register as an indicator and target (if and when adopted).

¹⁹ Consider use of the Brownfield Register as an indicator and target (if and when adopted).

²⁰ Using technical advice to inform whether the target is being met including from the AONB Board, in line with EU Convention and District Council technical advice

Local Plan Policies	Indicators	Targets	Action
	Status and type of permissions granted in the AONB.		establish challenges around the delivery of the policy.
CP45: Green Infrastructure	Permissions granted and completions for change in Green Infrastructure.	To deliver a net gain in green infrastructure.	Liaise with the Countryside Officer, Landscape Team and Development Management to establish challenges around the delivery of the policy. Consider reviewing and updating Audit.
	Funding and monies received and spent for Green Infrastructure.	To progress funding and expenditure monies, including CIL and S106 monies, in a timely manner to support delivery of green infrastructure projects set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy or as otherwise agreed.	
CP46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity	Change in biodiversity area and/or sites.	To deliver a net gain in biodiversity area.	Liaise with the Countryside Officer, Landscape Team and Development Management to establish challenges around the delivery of the policy.
	Number of permissions granted contrary to consultee advice on impact on Special Areas of Conservation.	To ensure all planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policy.	