

APPENDIX 1: Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Extract

4 - Spatial Strategy

Settlement hierarchy

4.7. The Settlement Hierarchy (Core Policy 3) defines the settlements across the Vale of White Horse District into four tiers based on an assessment of their facilities, characteristics and functional relationships with their surrounding areas. Each tier of settlement has a different strategic role:

- Market Towns
- Local Service Centres
- Larger Villages, and
- Smaller Villages.

4.8. The Local Plan 2031 protects and enhances the services and facilities provided by the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and our Larger Villages and ensures that any new facilities, homes and jobs are focused on these settlements. This will help to ensure the delivery of sustainable development because:

- these settlements provide the best range of services and facilities and new development will help to support and enhance them
- locating new homes in the communities with the best services and facilities will enable the residents in the new homes to access them by walking, cycling and public transport, so reducing the need to travel by car
- it will enable more affordable homes to be built where there is most need, and
- the main service providers including the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the County Council and the emergency services, prefer this approach because it will help them to deliver their services more efficiently.

4.9. The settlement boundaries for Market Towns and Local Service Centres are shown by the Adopted Policies Map. These boundaries may be reviewed and updated in the future either through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, or neighbourhood plans.

Meeting our housing needs

4.10. The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 makes provision for 20,560 new homes to be delivered during the plan period (2011/12 to 2030/31). This reflects the Objectively Assessed Need for the Vale of White Horse District Council as identified by the up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire.

4.11. If or when required, any needs arising elsewhere in the Housing Market Area, will be addressed by timely and effective cooperative working in accordance with Core Policy 2 (see Chapter 1).

Sources of housing supply

4.12. A number of sources of housing supply will ensure a continuous supply of housing delivery across the plan period. These sources include:

- strategic allocations made within this plan
- retained Local Plan (2011) allocations
- existing planning commitments
- small scale (non-strategic) sites to be identified through neighbourhood plans, or identified through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, and
- sites not yet identified that will come forward through the development management process in accordance with the policies set out in the Local Plan 2031. These are sometimes known as 'windfalls'.

4.13. The strategic allocations (outlined within the Sub-Area Strategies) are central to the delivery of the Local Plan 2031 and the Strategic Objectives for the Vale.

4.14. To identify the strategic allocations, we have followed a comprehensive selection process, which began with an assessment of land surrounding each of our most sustainable settlements and key business parks. This helped to identify the broad locations that offered the most suitable locations for development, which were then comprehensively tested, including by the Sustainability Appraisal, Evaluation of Transport Impacts Study, Viability Study, Landscape Study and review of responses to earlier stages of consultation.

4.15. The scale of development on these strategic sites will enable infrastructure to be provided that offers wider benefits to their local areas.

Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy

Market Towns

Market Towns are defined as settlements that have the ability to support the most sustainable patterns of living within the Vale through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities.

Market Towns have the greatest long-term potential for development to provide the jobs and homes to help sustain, and where appropriate, enhance their services and facilities to support viable and sustainable communities in a proportionate manner.

Local Service Centres

Local Service Centres are defined as Larger Villages or neighbourhoods to larger settlements with a level of facilities and services and local employment to provide the next best opportunities for sustainable development outside the Market Towns.

Larger Villages

Larger Villages are defined as settlements with a more limited range of employment, services and facilities. Unallocated development will be limited to providing for local needs and to support employment, services and facilities within local communities.

Smaller Villages

The Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.

The Settlement Classifications are:

Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area	
Market Town	Abingdon-on-Thames
Local Service Centre	Botley
Larger Villages	Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Sutton Courtenay, Steventon and Wootton
Smaller Villages	Appleford, Appleton, Dry Sanford, Farmoor, Frilford, Longworth, North Hinksey, Shippon, South Hinksey, Sunningwell, West Hanney and Wytham
South East Vale Sub-Area	
Market Town	Wantage
Local Service Centre	Grove
Larger Villages	Blewbury, East Hendred, Harwell, Harwell Campus* and Milton
Smaller Villages	Ardington, Chilton, Milton Heights**, Rowstock, Upton and West Hendred
Western Vale Sub-Area	
Market Town	Faringdon
Larger Villages	East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield
Smaller Villages	Ashbury, Buckland, Childrey, Coleshill, Great Coxwell, Kingston Lisle, Little Coxwell, Littleworth, Longcot, Letcombe Regis and Shellingford

Those villages not included within the categories described above are considered to form part of the open countryside where development will not be appropriate, unless consistent with the exceptions policies set out in the Local Plan.

*Harwell Campus has facilities and services equivalent to a Larger Village. **Milton Heights has facilities and services within a short walk that are equivalent to those offered by a Larger Village.